

The Healing Breath

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LETTING GO WITH YOUR BREATH

BY

TRUE ALISANDRE

Release all the air in your lungs
with a loud "AH" sound or quietly
whispered "WHEW" exclamation.

Pause briefly to feel your heart
Beating rhythmically in your chest.

Now, receive a *breath of fresh air*,
First through your nose, then
Through your mouth. Alternate
Between the two filling your lungs
Like a pitcher of water from the
Bottom to the top.

Pause to feel this full, enlivening
Sensation & let go with a sonorous
Exhale once again. Repeat this 3X.

About the Author

True has been practising body-mind healing for 30 years and has incorporated the elements of breath, sound, touch, and movement in his massage therapy profession over the past 10 years. He teaches people in seminars, private sessions, and in publications how to use moments of time to heal and stay healthy. He's currently applying his yoga skills in the field of drug addiction, and is producing 3 x 5 breathing cards and larger 'greeting cards' with his poems, spontaneous art, and healing practices. He can be contacted in Philadelphia at: (215) 389-0512 or by e-mail at: movetrue@hotmail.com

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF “BREATHARIANISM”

BY

JON KLIMO, PH.D.

Keywords : Breatharian, consensus reality, consensus trance, *prana*, *chi*, ether, zero point energy vacuum, transpersonal psychology, creating reality.

INTRODUCTION

Not many people in our current consensus reality are likely to believe that it is possible to forego food or any other sustenance provided to our bodies by physical reality and somehow still survive. This possibility runs counter to all that we have been taught since earliest childhood about the nature of reality and about ourselves. Nonetheless, there have been reports throughout history and continuing to this day, of isolated cases of individuals apparently continuing to live in their physical bodies in spite of ceasing to ingest any form of food.¹ They are said to simply breathe the surrounding air. “Breatharians” is one name that has been used in recent years for those supposedly capable of this feat that, if real, is truly a way of life.

Can all of these cases be explained simply as a matter of fraud, hoax, misperception, misreporting, illusion, delusion, self-delusion, wishful thinking, or other perspectives that salvage our traditional view that no human being can survive for very long without eating? I would like to suggest some ways of thinking about this subject that leave open, for me at least, the possibility that we human beings, or a few of us at least, at this stage of our species-specific evolutionary development may actually be able to continue living in our physical bodies for unusually long periods of time, perhaps even for the remainder of a natural life-span, without taking in food, but only by breathing in the air and by interacting with the immaterial energy domain, such as light, surrounding us.

CONSENSUS REALITY VS CONSENSUS TRANCE

In his book *Waking Up*, psychologist Charles Tart² made a very interesting conjecture. He suggested that we try reframing what we traditionally define as the “consensus reality” as a function of what he calls a “consensus trance:” consensus reality equals consensus trance. What is consensus reality? It is what we agree constitutes our shareable lived experience of what is objective reality and what is possible and to be expected within it. There’s enough consensus among us about the nature of reality that we do not question it. There are, however, realities that we sometimes enter and are able to

¹ Murphy, Michael, *The Future of the Body*; Klimo, Jon, *Channelling*.

² Tart, Charles, *Waking Up: Overcoming the Obstacles to Human Potential*.

experience as a function of different kinds of naturally occurring or artificially induced altered states of consciousness.

Tart's point is that all of us who are experiencing consensus reality have, from birth, been entranced into a shared discrete state of consciousness that gives rise to a particular kind of experienced reality that we mostly all have together in a similar-enough manner so that we do not question that there could be anything else, any other kind of reality for us to experience. Similar to the way in which a hypnotized person will follow the suggestions made to him or her and have particular experiences as a function of being "under hypnosis" and "under" those suggestions, similarly we have all undergone a kind of entrancing process through what we have experienced from infancy. We observe each other as exemplary models of what is allowed and what is possible. We continue growing and learning under the influence of families, friends, schooling, the media, and our entire culture. We are bathed nonstop from the cradle onward in a constant conditioning milieu that teaches us in many ways and on many levels what objective, public reality is and what is possible for us as individuals within it.

Building on Tart's view, we are all entranced into a particular kind and state of consciousness and subsequent existence that gives rise to a correlated particular kind and state of reality that can be experienced as a result. The current consensus trance we are sharing, that we are all co-constituting this minute, is in particular physically reductionistic in nature: Physicality is the primary reality, and the inner life of consciousness, awareness, mind, and spirit, though paid lip service to within the culture, is generally relegated to a quite second-class reality. The general stance that the scientific community takes with regard to the nature of the non-material realm, of consciousness, is that it is what they call an "emergent epiphenomenon" that arises from living physical-level brain/body substance. When that causal, primary reality of brain and body ceases to be viably alive, those emergent inner consciousness-type subjectively experienced qualities simply disappear—dust unto decaying protoplasmic dust.

Although this is the dominant view of physical reductionist Western science at present, I ask that you keep in the back of your mind that the very *opposite* of this view may ultimately turn out to be what is truly the case: that all things physically real are rather, in fact, emergent epiphenomena arising from and dependent upon the causal ground of a transpersonal consciousness field with respect to which our local individual human consciousnesses and inner lives are but infinitesimal versions, subsets, or projections. While I happen to believe this view with all my heart and mind, as you are also embedded within our current consensus trance/reality, I cannot expect many of you to share this view at present. However, just try to stay open to its possibility.

The proof is in the pudding. Our lived experience stems directly from our beliefs and expectations. One's kind and state of consciousness gives rise to what can be experienced at the time. Alter the consciousness and you alter the experience, you alter the possibilities of what can be experienced. If the ultimate underlying reality does turn out to be universal consciousness itself—perhaps even the all constituting and containing consciousness and mind of God—then we local, individuated, transient emanations from this Ground of Being may, over enough time and through having had enough experience, learn how to draw our consciousness from and interact back with the larger consciousness in such a way that what we experience of that larger consciousness field, long thought of as only the physical/objective reality separate from and outside of us, will

be how consciousness creates, responds to, and experiences out of itself.

I believe that the various anomalies that keep presenting themselves to us as a species over thousands of years and to this day are hints and reminders to us that there is a larger reality that exists with all its attendant possibilities that far surpasses our current consensus reality. Still, what we think we are capable of experiencing and knowing as true is according to the consensus trance within which we still remain. One of these anomalies is the occasional report that someone has ceased to eat food and still lives on, in spite of our deeming such impossible due to all of the suggestions, conditioning, and programming across so many levels that is created by and responsible for our entranced, constrained state.

By definition, most of us constituting the current consensus, entranced reality—and especially our scientists and academics—tend to belittle, ignore, or explain away the anomalies that sporadically, doggedly continue to arise for us to experience as a species. Most of us—and especially our scientists—choose not to put much consciousness or care into how we attend to such anomalies. It is much easier to explain them in such a way that they fit within the scientific paradigm that upholds and is upheld by the rest of the consensus reality and its fellow entranced participants. People such as I, however, are exceptions to this rule, even though we partake in much of the same day-to-day consensus reality and tend to see the world through the lenses of roughly the same entranced discrete state of consciousness. That is, I make no claims to having escaped the consensus trance. I have yet to meet Charles Tart's rallying cry for "waking up" from the trance to be able to experience different or larger domains of reality and possibility of the human spirit within them. But some of us can dream; can imagine and speculate; can entertain possibilities; can exercise the proverbial "willing suspension of disbelief." I, for one, exercise what the philosopher and psychologist William James a century ago called "the will to believe," in this case the will to believe that there may be real truth to at least some reports of the anomalies that from time to time rear up for us as a species.

For decades I have chosen to seriously pursue the interrelated disciplines of parapsychology, consciousness studies, transpersonal psychology, new-paradigm thinking and science, and the overarching tradition of the "perennial philosophy." Each of these has its own respective light to shed on reported anomalies, anomalies such as reports of certain people ceasing to eat anything and yet still surviving in about the same physical shape as they would be in if they had continued to eat food in a normal manner. While I have pursued the above-mentioned disciplines for quite some time now, for the past almost 30 years I have also been a professor in higher education, mostly at the doctoral level, and for much of that time I have made my living helping train those who will become professional (clinical) psychologists. So, suffice it to say that I have already focused the lenses of psychology and psychopathology on reports of no longer needing to eat, on those claiming to be able to do this, and on myself as a career academic and researcher who chooses to hold open the possibility that at least some of these claims may in fact be true.

What I am suggesting is that sometimes a few of us here and there escape the consensus trance at least for a while and enter into other states of consciousness and energy in relation to the larger reality, which gives rise to kinds of experience of what is real and possible quite different from what can be obtained as a function of the dominant consensus trance alone. Moving within the clinical circles that I do, I know that some

people who take their leave of the dominant consensus trance trade it for what those still within it understand to be an altered trance state of consciousness of their own that is problematic, estranging, maladaptive, and dysfunctional with regard to the norms of the consensus reality. Thus one can quickly fall prey to being placed within one or more of a variety of psychopathological diagnostic categories ranging from innocuous fantasy-proneness to blatantly psychotic. One can be deemed and treated as being “crazy” vis-a-vis the consensus reality, and I think justifiably so. But not all of us experiencing or being the case of the truly anomalous can be painted with that same crazy-making brush. So while many, perhaps even most, of those of us who diverge significantly from the consensus reality trance enter dysfunctional and maladaptive behavioral and cognitive realms with respect to the norm, nonetheless I submit that at least a few of us who so diverge enter, instead, a realm of experience and possibility long studied by parapsychologists and transpersonal psychologists where other kinds and levels of reality may be experientially engaged, and we may thereby be models and provide useful lessons for the rest of us. Sometimes such divergent individuals have been able to remain successfully living alongside others within the consensus reality trance to be able to lucidly report on, and even provide empirical demonstrations of, what they are differently experiencing. I believe this has been the case with some of these so-called “breatharians.” So long as we hold open the possibility that at least some claims of breatharians may be authentic (veridical), as I do, we are faced with the question: How do they do this? How do their physical bodies stay alive and functioning in an apparent healthy manner if they are taking in no food for periods of time sufficiently long for Western science to assume they would have had to have died? Because answering this question would take too many more pages of conjecture and attempted explanation just to begin this task, I will instead, due to the length requirement of this article,³ provide a brief introductory set of interrelated ideas to leave you with for now in the way of being food for thought, and for soul, perhaps, as well.

“PRANA,” “CHI,” AND ETHER

Most people who talk about breatharianism and related topics tend to bring up terms such as “prana” or “chi,” which are said to stand for an all-pervasive underlying subtle-energy type substance that is associated with, or is in fact, the life force principal permeating all of Nature. In some non-Western cultures, certain individuals have become adept at working with this energy to the point of being able to manipulate it in ways that effect physical reality, including peoples’ bodies. While there have been a great many demonstrations of the purposeful, effective manipulation of this energy, many made to the scientific community, most in that community still choose to treat it as an anomaly that cannot be adequately explained and hence to be dismissed out of hand or just ignored.

Perhaps prana or chi and the “ether” are related. Somewhat more than a 100 years

³ See Klimo, Jon, ‘Cosmological Dissociation: Toward An Understanding Of How We Create Our Own Reality,’ and ‘The Role Of Consciousness In Emerging New Paradigm Science: Toward An Idealist Paraphysics.’

ago, the presence of something called the ether was said by most physicists to underlie all physical reality. It was the sub-space medium through which all energy vibrations had to move and that contained all matter. Then, theorizing that the Earth must be moving through this universal ether ocean, scientists set up an experiment to detect our planet's slight drag on the ether through which it is moving. This was known as the Michelson-Morley Experiment and it conclusively convinced the scientific community that an ether did *not* exist. However, one can argue about some of the presuppositions behind the experiment's design and about the resounding case-closing inclusivity of the interpretation regarding what was found. Interestingly, in recent years, there has been a return, on the part of a growing number of physicists, to entertaining the possibility of the existence of something at least somewhat like that original ether. Such an ether, if it does prove to exist, would be supraordinate with respect to all known energies and matter that must operate within it. There would probably be some kind of top-down, or bottom-up, causal relation between the ether and what it contains that we think of as comprising all that is objectively real. Although it is hardly time to rewrite our textbooks yet with regard to this matter, the door now remains at least partially open to the existence of an ether and what role it may play. For now, it is interesting simply to speculate upon a scenario of us ether-based individual human beings breathing in more of the same universal ether—kind feeding kind.

Related to the concept of an ether is what contemporary physicists call the “zero point energy vacuum” (the “ZPE” for short). If you subtract all known, measurable energy, forces, and matter from space, you would think you are left with a real vacuum, a nothing. However, something very different has been found to be the case. Unlike the ether, there is already empirical evidence of the nature, as well as the existence of, the ZPE. Rather than being a vacuum of nothingness, it has been measured as having almost inconceivably large amounts of energy per cubic centimeter within it throughout all space. The supposed void seems to have, potentially at least, everything within it, in the form of a seething “stochastic” (random) cauldron of raw material virtual particles from which actual particles arise, and all this operating at what scientists call below the “Plank's Length”—so small and short that all sense of space and time break down.

Like the ether, the ZPE is said to underlie and be responsible for all physical reality, including our bodies. A process called “particle-pair creation” is constantly generating physical reality as we know it. Since we are surrounded by virtually endless amounts of energy underlying everything, making what we thought was nothing into virtually everything, there has been a rush on the fringes of our mainstream science and technology to find ways to possibly engineer this ZPE to access its vast potential wealth and wellsprings of energy and to acquire the alchemical-seeming ability to create all manner of objectively real objects and events by successfully getting at and manipulating this ZPE. There are already real examples in what are being called “over unity” engines that generate more energy than is put into them.

Why is the ZPE relevant to anomalous breatharian claims of surviving on air alone? Because, again, the door has already been opened, never to be closed again, with regard to accessing this ZPE. We are constantly surrounded by a nothing/everything paradoxical ether-like ZPE universal environment from which oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen—the stuff of our very breath—as well as all other atomic and molecular constituents of all conceivable nutrients needed by our living physical bodies, as well as

the stuff of our bodies themselves—all come from, and are sustained and maintained by, and in interaction with, this all containing, all providing ZPE. Earlier exploratory research is providing evidence that there may be ways available to us now to locally partially cohere or polarize portions of the normally chaotic self-canceling-out background plenum of the ZPE in order to engineer or harvest certain things from it. Experimentally bringing together two sets of traditional Hertzian electromagnetic (EM) waves of certain frequency and wave shapes that are exactly 180 degrees out of phase with each other leads to wave interference cancellation and the disappearance of the original EM wave energy; yet, paradoxically, at the same time there appears to be an effect of this cancellation taking place within the ZPE that can lead to a variety of engineerable anomalous results back within the arena of space and time, matter and energy, as we know them. We're beginning to see that by effecting the ZPE, we can, in turn, effect local reality arising each moment from it. Experimenters at the very edge of our science are just beginning this exploration.

CREATING REALITY

Therefore, it is no longer so far-fetched to conjecture that a human being and body, taking its existence and exquisitely specific nature at any one time from the latter-day ether of the ZPE could do so in such a slightly altered way that the body receives whatever it needs to sustain itself from the ground of being itself or least from this physically originating level of it. While it may remain a stretch for most of us right now, I suggest we look to what parapsychology calls “psychokinesis” (PK), or the process of mind anomalously effecting matter. I believe the time will come when we learn how to use our mind, consciousness, and intention to interact with the particular level of the ground of being responsible for all objective reality in new, local reality creating and maintaining ways. Calling forth and wielding the underlying prana or chi in such a way as to effect the physical body and other objectively real objects and events, is just one set of terms and one way to look at being creators in the image and manner of our Creator, taking ever more dominion with respect to our surrounded Creation. Though much of this experienceable Creation may remain forever in the ultimate causal hands only of the one all-containing Creator, I believe that there are levels and portions of this Universal Creation that is made available for us to work with it to learn to be wise, responsible, and compassionate creators, in turn.

And so I return to my earlier conjecture that we may someday come to realize that all physicality, all experienceable objective reality, is an emergent epiphenomenon arising from a living universal consciousness field. As part of this field, we individual loci, seats, or souls of consciousness are slowly learning how to garden, grow, maintain, and harvest such emergent epiphenomena to experience, enjoy, and further learn from. I encourage those of us with the courage to awaken enough from the embedding consensus trance and resulting consensus reality to be able to model for others what it is to be more aligned with perhaps God-given universal ways and possibilities, to be the anomalies of today that could be the commonplace of tomorrow.

Some final thoughts about the interactive process taking place between us living organisms and our surrounding and underlying environment: All living things are

characterized as taking in something from the environment, as in ingesting nutrients, and sending something else back out into the environment in the form of various waste products, in a kind of ongoing cyclic inspiration and expiration respiration process necessary for maintaining life. What, then, is the nature of what is taken in and given off? We traditionally see this as an in-kind co-extensive process: The nutrients entering and exiting the living body and the body itself are seen as cut from the same cloth of physicality, the same matter and energy and their relations currently understood by Western, reductionist material science. We do not see ourselves taking in a thought or idea or intention alone and having that feed and effect our bodies. To entertain that we can take in something non-physical that can effect us physically usually involves concepts of everything from the power of positive thinking, to psychosomatic interactionism, to self-hypnosis or auto-suggestion, to the placebo effect, to spontaneous remission, but all of these normally pre-suppose that the physical body is affecting and bootstrapping itself from within itself, but that no external, non- or trans-physical causal agency could be involved, since that would run too much counter to consensus trance reality thinking.

Certain complementary medicine approaches, are proven examples of how something not apparently physical in nature, such as consciousness or intention, can effect something physical, such as the human body. In the practice of homeopathy, some homeopathic preparations have been made where a physical substance has been continuously diluted and shaken over and over until no more physical-level trace of the original substance remains (it falls below the molecular “Avagadro’s number”). Yet it has been shown in replicated laboratory experiments that such a super-diluted homeopathic preparation can have an effect as measured on living tissue that appears the same as the effect the substance would have if physically still there: something seemingly non-physical is effecting something physical.

In radionics, which is a much more controversial practice than homeopathy, nothing more than the consciousness and intention of a human operator using an apparatus that is capable of no demonstrable mechanical, electromagnetic, or other known physical level energy emanation, appears able to effect and heal living plant, animal, and human systems, and to do so at a distance to boot. While mainstream science and law have relegated the practice of radionics to being an illegal act in the USA, it is nonetheless known to work across the international community of those comprising its practitioners, clientele, and consumers. To the extent to which radionics works, our being able to exist by breath and immaterial light energy alone cannot be categorically ruled out.

Ira Prigogine won a Nobel Prize for his work on what he called “dissipative structures.” For Prigogine, the more complex an organizational system is—whether it is a mathematical system, a chemical system, a traffic system, or, at the zenith of all such organization, a living human being—there is some degree of give and take between the system in question and the surrounding environment, with the more complex system, the more fluent that give and take, and the more energetic heat is generated that must be given off or dissipated away from the system.⁴ At the same time, the more complex the system, the more it needs to take in from the surrounding milieu. So, with a highly

⁴ Prigogine , *From Being To Becoming: Time and Complexity in the Physical Sciences*.

organized Prigoginian dissipative structure we see a pattern of that energy and/or information which lies outside the local self-system being taken in by that system and then that system giving off a resulting dissipating emanation back into the environment beyond the self. This flow-through process ultimately might render the opacity of the local system into a kind of functional transparency, sort of like an airport's cylindrical cloth open-toed windsock held horizontally aloft and maintaining its ballooned-open form by the wind constantly flowing through it. Another image is the donut-like toroid shape constantly rotating into its own center, or the vortical or plasmoid shape characterized by substance differentially moving with respect to an adjacent portion of itself maintaining a structural form as a result. We may discover one day that every smallest subcomponent of our physical being has this flow-through property.

In higher-dimensional geometry, there is a figure known as a "Klein Bottle," which is a kind of four-dimensional version of the two- and three-dimensional Moebius strip. The Klein bottle has the unsettling theoretical capacity of pouring into itself from a higher dimension with respect to it. With the correct alignment, there is no telling what can flow into and through us and from us back into the underlying higher-dimensional reality from which we arise at each instant—taking, being given, and maintaining our being. We may discover that the authentic breatharian just has a somewhat different relationship to the all-sustaining ground than the rest of us do—be we hearty meat eaters or purists vegans. Some of us think we need our meat and potatoes from the common ground to survive, while others may be able to relate more as the plants do, taking in sunlight and moist air.

Stanford University psychology professor Albert Bandura developed the concept he called "self-efficacy." Possessing self-efficacy for him meant to be able to construe oneself as having the competency to carry out a particular behavior, to do a particular thing, to see oneself as having what it would take to cause some imagined desired effect, and then subsequently being able to enact the self-efficacious sequence of moving from believing/knowing within that one is capable of doing something to behaviorally actualizing that something. Therefore it may be possible to have and act on one's perceived self-efficacy with regard to being able to carry out never eating physical food again yet nonetheless remain, by all appearances, as healthy as if one had continued to eat. However, as mentioned before, we are embedded within a consensus reality maintained state-dependently as a function of the individual and joint trance state we remain in.

CHANGING REALITY

There is tremendous inertia that needs to be overcome to change one's mode of interaction with the underlying ground of being, even if it turns out to be a universal consciousness field. It is a tall order. Plus, it appears that we are further embedded within an unfolding developmental or evolutionary continuum such that the potentially plastic, changeable consensus reality at any one slice of that continuum is stage-specific as well as state-specific. This means that we as a species may be locked into some kind invariant developmental pattern and that, given this, except for a few of us as anomalous bellwether exceptions to the rule at any one time, it may be too premature for very many

of us in this lifetime at this point of human history and within its current consensus reality trance state to be able to relate to the rest of Nature like plants or subtle energy light beings, dancing differently with the ether, the ZPE, with Creation and Creator both. We have not yet evolved to the point where we can heal ourselves or each other at will with “mere” intention. We cannot yet walk on water or multiply loaves and fishes out of invisibility to feed the rest of us who are hungry. We must await the rare psychic star or the even rarer Christ or ascended master as exemplary way-showing models to do these things for us; yet, who knows, maybe in these ever more interesting and crazy, non-linear and far-from-equilibrium times, we as a species might get some kind of dispensation from the powers that be, or from the one Power that is, to take a discontinuous quantum jump growth spurt and be more as unto gods than we presently are. Would we deserve this? Will there be emergency conditions enough to merit such a dispensation to short-cut the usual evolutionary pattern. And is that usual pattern just part of the constrained and constraining local reality-creating belief system of the reigning consensus trance and reality from which we could awaken ourselves?

I believe we have the potential at any one time to be able to make something like a conscious, purposeful shift in our relation to the underlying ground of the being, seen as the universal field of primary consciousness or God, so that in a new relationship of figure to ground, of part to whole, of offspring creator to Creator Source and Sustainer, we are able to have our being, even our physical level of being, sustained by a different mode and on a different level of symbiotic interaction. While I believe we are destined to evolve into an ever-closer identity condition relationship with Creatorhood and Creation’s ground both, I nonetheless still pine in the somnambulistic, entranced present for the possibility that more of us, even all of us, would be able to move to that relationship NOW.

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About the Author

Jon Klimo characterizes himself as an interdisciplinarian with creativity at his core. With undergraduate and graduate degrees from Brown University and a doctorate in psychology, he has been teaching in and helping administrate different graduate level programs in higher education for the past 27 years. He is currently Associate Professor of Psychology at the American Schools of Professional Psychology, San Francisco Bay Area Campus (ASPP/Bay Area), in Point Richmond, California. From 1974-82, he was a professor at Rutgers University's Graduate School of Education, In New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he was the Founding Director and principal faculty member for the Creative Arts Education Program, which pioneered new methods for learning, teaching, human development, optimum performance, and problem solving, working with all the arts modes, creativity, intuition, and new directions in information processing. He was next a professor at Rosebridge Graduate School of Integrative Psychology (now

ASPP/Bay Area) for 16 years during which time he worked with masters and doctoral candidates preparing to become licensed counsellors and clinical psychologists, including directing research and dissertation activities. During his continuous 27 years of full-time teaching, he has served on over 100 doctoral dissertation committees, usually as chairperson. For seven years at Rosebridge (1991-98), he designed, developed, and was chief instructor in one of only two doctoral-level academic specialization programs in parapsychology in the United States. He has done extensive research, writing, and teaching in parapsychology, alternative medicine and anomalous healing, consciousness studies, new paradigm thought and new science, metaphysics and the transpersonal domain. He wrote what is widely considered the definitive study on the phenomenon of channeling (*Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources*, Jeremy P. Tarcher & St. Martins Press, 1987, plus six foreign language editions; new expanded edition, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 1998), which he regards as a kind of Rosetta stone for looking at many related anomalous phenomena as well as re-thinking many current ideas about the brain, mind/consciousness, and the nature of reality, physical and beyond. He is dedicated to having ufology/extraterrestriology be given serious academic and scientific consideration, including interrelating parapsychology, consciousness studies, parapsysics, and UFO/ET studies. On the side he also directs an M.A. and Ph.D. degree program in Parapsychology and Paranormal Studies for Greenwich University, a new Australian distance learning school. He is working on four book projects: clinical parapsychology, on helping people with non-ordinary experiences; a study of scientific information from paranormal sources and its possible relation to current forward-edge science and technology; an interdisciplinary study of how we create our own reality; and Close Encounters of the Inner Kind: Channeling Extraterrestrials. He just finished the second year of a five-year research grant for the study of using technological means to receive and record voices and images from purported human spirits who have survived the deaths of their bodies. He presented at a recent conference of the International Council of Psychologists on "A Model of Dissociation for the Normal, Spiritual, Paranormal, and Pathological." He has been the recipient of grants from the Rockefeller Foundation (Rutgers) and co-recipient of a grant from a major U.S. corporation for a British-based study on anomalous medical imaging procedures.

**BREATHWORK TRAINING ACCREDITATION:
THE AUSTRALIAN AND THE IRISH EXPERIENCES
BY
ALAKH ANALDA AND CATHERINE DOWLING**

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QUESTIONS ASKED AND ANSWERED

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WHO WE ARE

Alakh Analda

Alakh is the founder and director of Zentium International, Rebirthing Mastery Breathwork, and is a Yoga Swami and Rebirther trainer. She lived in India for nine years after being initiated into the holy Yogic order of sannyasa as a Swami. On returning to Australia in 1986, she trained as a rebirther and her private practice has been based in Sydney, with trainings in the Chakras, Yoga and Rebirthing delivered in all parts of Australia and in Russia. In 1992 she instigated the Professional Rebirther Training. These are the training courses now accredited by the National Government as vocational trainings. Her passion is the evolution of human consciousness through the Chakras and relating the ancient yogic wisdom to third millennium personal development.

Catherine Dowling

A former teacher, Catherine trained as a rebirther in 1993, as a group facilitator in 1995 and later as a trainer. She runs a private rebirthing practice in Dublin as well as facilitating personal development and stress management courses for various organisations. Her interest is in adult education and she works part time in the development of adult education structures and programmes in areas of economic disadvantage. She is the co-chairperson of the Federation of Irish Complementary

Therapy Associations and the author of *Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation*, Piatkus, UK, 2000.

INTRODUCTION

Over the forty or so years since the discovery of Rebirthing by Leonard Orr, the practice of Rebirthing has, for many practitioners, changed and developed in very distinctive ways. For others it has remained more or less the same. The philosophies, theoretical concepts and methodologies have, in some countries, been transformed almost beyond recognition and in others have remained more or less faithful to the early tenets. Training courses for professional rebirthers are equally varied both in length and content. In Ireland, for example, courses range from a seven day residential to 510 hours over two years, both courses certifying trainees to practice professionally with clients. At one time Switzerland was host to a four year training, there are highly successful three year training courses in Holland and Denmark, and in Australia training times vary from one hundred to nine hundred hours.

In recent years, with the growth of the International Breathwork Foundation, the training of professional breathworkers is coming under review. And with it comes the whole question of accreditation. At the Global Inspiration Conference in Italy in 2000, Jim Morningstar of the United States mooted the possibility of developing an international accreditation system for breathwork training and that debate will continue at the conference this year in Wisconsin. Accreditation can come from many sources – existing colleges, registration bodies, the educational establishment offering the training, etc. – with varied levels of recognition and credibility.

However, to the best of our knowledge, ours are the first breathwork training courses to have secured state recognised accreditation. In Alakh's case, accreditation is from the jurisdiction in which the course is offered. In Catherine's, accreditation has come from the neighbouring jurisdiction of Northern Ireland. Our experiences are varied in terms of costs involved, benefits and drawbacks. As part of our contribution to the development of the work of accrediting breathwork training courses, we have decided to document our respective experiences in this article. We have designed the article as a series of questions to which we both give answers.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

Alakh:

Being given credit for undergoing some training or process. There are a number of Organisations and individuals who give accreditation. Some are National and some International and some within the Educational Framework of the country. Rebirther Trainers, including myself have been giving Certificates and Diplomas for many years to state someone has been trained to the standard set by the Trainer or Trainers. Leonard Orr set a very experiential process in his initial training to recognise a point at which someone was a Rebirther.

However other forms of accreditation are given by Professional Bodies or groups. For example, the Australian Association for Professional Rebirthers, accredits Rebirthers from all ranges of individual training who exceed a bottom line standard. This standard was set in 1997 based on replies to a questionnaire sent to a broad range of Trainers and practising Rebirthers.

Another example is the project of Jim Morningstar who has been working through the International Breathwork Foundation to develop an alliance for standards for “accrediting” Rebirthers internationally. Then there is accreditation within the National Government Training and Education system of a country or state, set down here as the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). As valid as all the above forms of accreditation are, none of this training is recognized as Certificates or Diplomas by the Education and Training systems of the National Government of Australia.

I undertook to have training accredited by the National Government of Australia within the area any professional or tradesperson is trained or educated. Any country that recognizes AQF Certificates and Diplomas will recognize these trainings. When I refer to accreditation from now on I am speaking of the National Government accredited and recognized training. This is education in Schools, Colleges and Universities that covers Vocational Training and Higher Education. From what I understand, Nationally recognised accreditation and AQF, was set in place by the opening of the education system to allow Organisations and Institutions other than Universities and other Government Institutes like TAFE to deliver training for a Profession or Trade, a Vocation.

Part of the accreditation system in AQF is to assess previous learning and experience and give credit where there is evidence of the necessary skills and knowledge, so training does not have to be repeated. Certification is then awarded within the AQF. This is called recognition of prior learning (RPL).

The booklet “Australian Recognition Framework Arrangements”, published by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) says - “ The Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) comprises guidelines which define each qualification together with principles and protocols covering articulation, issuance of a qualification and transitional arrangements” In Australia, there is now legislation that states that if a Certificate or Diploma is issued that is not within the AQF, there is to be a disclaimer on the Certification and on any advertising for the Course. Similarly, a Trainer who is not accredited within the AQF is to state that he or she is not qualified to teach this course.

Accreditation, in the words of ANTA – “Accreditation – the process of formal recognition, based on National Accreditation principles, by the State Recognition Authority or its delegate that the contents and standards of a course or customised qualification are appropriate to the qualification outcome identified: the course/customised qualification and methods of delivery fulfill the purpose for which it was developed: and the content including curriculum and assessment are based on national competency standards where these exist.” A “Competency standard [is] - the specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standards of performance required in the workplace, expressed as a competency standard” Education departments of the Australian States and the Territories came together to form the AQF in order to recognise training or parts of training that was

completed in one State so that students did not have to repeat all training or some parts of training if they continued to study in another State.

Catherine

For many people, with often damaging experiences of mainstream schooling, accreditation is associated with authority, policing, exams, being forced to conform to what the authorities (parent, teacher, school, government..) deem appropriate to learn. These are very negative associations which are, all too often, very well founded. Breathwork, on the other hand, has always been free flowing, free spirited with an absence of external regulations and control. The minimal nature of its structure and the absence of all but the most basic 'rules' is part of its effectiveness as well as its appeal. It would seem therefore, that accreditation and breathwork are mutually exclusive if not mortal enemies.

But this is not the way it has to be. The majority of people in western society have probably grown up in a system known as pedagogy, where learning is authoritarian, top down with the expert teacher filling the empty vessel that is the student. Since the 1960's however, the concept of education has been changing slowly but surely. Governments now speak of "lifelong learning" and at a recent conference in Dublin, Ireland, a representative from the OECD think tank in Paris spoke, not only of personal growth, but of the spiritual aspects of education. Some countries are more advanced than others in this respect, but it does seem to be the trend of the future. And lifelong learning is increasingly based, not on pedagogy but on andragogy⁵. In this system, which underpins adult education, learning is a partnership of equals, the learner is seen as having within themselves everything they need to learn, education is a process of drawing out, not putting in and exams, if they are used, are a learning experience. The methodology of adult education is experiential, learning by doing. The movement has, in part, been inspired by experiences in South America and Africa where pioneering educators and communities saw education as a means of both personal and community empowerment. These key concepts – drawing out, empowerment, lifelong process, experiential, partnership of equals... – would also seem to be key concepts in breathwork. In our experience, with andragogy, breathwork has met its educational equal, a compatible companion in the development of breathwork training.

But all education takes place in a wider society. While, on a very personal level, education and training may be invaluable to the individual learner/trainee, why should we leave it at that? There is a way to give that education currency within the social and economic systems of the wider world. That way is through accreditation. Modern systems of accreditation developed through the growth of adult education, can be an invaluable support to learning, including learning in the field of breathwork. Accreditation has its drawbacks and limitations which we will discuss later, but far from being authoritarian and coercive, accreditation in our experience, has been a very supportive enhancement of the whole training process.

Accreditation, at its best, is a system of support for quality. It promotes clarity, supports healthy boundaries, enhances delivery and in so far as is possible, it ensures that the

⁵ Knowles, Malcom, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, Cambridge Book Company, UK, 1970.

trainees can do what the certificate they receive at the end of the course says they can do. It is only as good as its system of quality control but if that is sound, then accreditation brings a new level of credibility. An additional plus is that if the course is plugged into a recognised, national system of accreditation, the qualification has currency in the wider educational system. Trainees can use it to access other courses of study and work in wider fields of employment. Quality training courses with standards that can be assured are fundamental to the development, expansion and recognition of breathwork as a profession in the world in which it takes place. A good system of accreditation can be an invaluable support to the development of transparent, reliable and recognised training standards.

WHAT WAS THE SYSTEM OF ACCREDITATION LIKE ?

Alakh:

In Australia, the system that is National Government accredited and recognised within the Training and Education system for Natural Therapies is called Competency based training.

Competencies are set and methods of how they will be assessed. This is what gets “accredited”. The course is stated as a series of learning outcomes. The student or participant is told in advance what skills and knowledge will be provided by the Training and the Trainers. The participant is then assessed as “competent” or “not yet competent” in terms of the set outcomes at different parts of the course.

The emphasis is on the Trainer to work with the participant until the participant is competent in each area, or until both agree there will never be competence in that area. There is no system of pass/fail. The training is mostly self paced, allowing for different capacities to learn or attend. There are two systems - one for Vocational training in a trade or in my case, Natural Therapy, and the other belonging to the world of academia called Higher Education, associated with Universities and similar Institutions.

I gravitated to the Vocational training as I have had no experience in the academic world and Natural Therapies are mostly delivered as Vocational training not University study. Besides, it seems the only way people become Rebirthers is from experience, mainly from being Reborned, and Vocational training is practically based. The Diploma and Advanced Diploma levels overlap for both systems.

| Vocational Education | Higher Education (mainly Universities) |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | Doctoral degree |
| | Masters degree |
| | Graduate Diploma |
| | Graduate Certificate |
| | Bachelor degree |
| Advanced Diploma | Advanced Diploma |
| Diploma | Diploma |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Certificate IV | |
| Certificate III | |
| Certificate II | |
| Certificate I | |

I added significantly to my six year old curriculum and practical training and matched that onto the AQF template to create a Pre-Professional Training, a Certificate III in Health, Professional Rebirther/Breathworker Practitioner and a Diploma of Health, Rebirther/Breathworker Trainer, with the submission being accredited in October 1998. This submission is now under self appointed review and I am adding some extras and will resubmit based on my experiences since 1998. One of the requirements of the system is the inclusion of regular feedback and evaluation from participants and I need to show I am responding to the feedback I receive. This includes all aspects of the training including the curriculum and Trainer/s performance.

The Nationally accredited courses all need to be provided by a Registered Training Organisation – “Any Training Organisation registered in accordance with the Australian Recognition Framework providing vocational education, training and/or assessment services. Included TAFE colleges/institutes, private commercial providers, community providers, schools, higher education institutions, enterprises and firms, industry bodies and any other organisation which meets the requirements for registration.”

“Registration [is] – the process of formal approval and recognition by a State Recognition Authority to provide recognised products/services in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Recognition Framework.” I have remained a Training Organisation in partnership with a Registered Training Organisation who keeps all the necessary registration requirements in place, as my intention is to train Rebirthers and Trainers rather than educate myself even further in the details of the requirements. As the official language I have quoted shows, the whole process requires a certain mind set and although I could and may go through the process of becoming an RTO, it has not been a priority to now. An RTO is audited at any time and is subject to keeping all the facets of registration in place at all times. A number of RTO’s can be licensed to deliver a Training, or have done the work to have Training accredited. I am the copyright holder of the accredited three stages of Rebirther and Trainer Training and notify the appropriate departments that I have a license agreement with a single or number of RTOs to provide different or all stages of training.

Earlier in the decade, in Natural Therapy Colleges or Institutes, staff completed the work on submissions, therefore those Colleges or Institutes, usually also RTOs, own their own copyright of courses. Some ten years down the track, Colleges are now more likely to buy the copyright from other owners for courses rather than write their own. With a move to have some modalities like acupuncture be provided in Universities by Higher Education, the costs of the development of a curriculum to Bachelor degree is priced at one million Australian dollars.

Catherine

In Ireland, as is probably the case in most other countries, universities are extremely slow to take on training in new subjects such as breathwork and the process of gaining accreditation through universities is so long that I didn't even try. Instead I examined the national systems outside of the ivory tower of the third level colleges. There are two systems of national government accreditation in Ireland. The most appropriate one is through the National Council for Vocational Awards (NCVA). The system is more or less suitable to breathwork training because it offers course/curriculum developers the opportunity to write many of their own modules. However, it was inaccessible to the Rebirther training course because the NCVA will only work with schools and community learning centres funded by the state Department of Education. As yet no institution has taken on the running of rebirther training so ours was privately run and therefore couldn't access the NCVA system.

The alternative was to look to the United Kingdom, the nearest province of which is Northern Ireland. The UK also has two main systems of national accreditation – BTEC and the Open College Network (OCN). I chose the Open College Network for its low costs, accessibility, and lack of bureaucracy. One of the limits of the OCN is that its highest standard is Level 3 or the equivalent of A levels in the UK's mainstream system. This is university entry level and I would have liked higher. Another very major drawback was that the graduates of the accredited Rebirther training are now eligible for entry to a variety of prestigious colleges and universities in the UK but not in the Republic of Ireland where they live and work. The equivalency within the Republic of Ireland is roughly as follows:

| Open College Network | Mainstream (Republic of Ireland) |
|----------------------|--|
| | Doctorate |
| | Masters |
| | Post Graduate Diploma |
| | Undergraduate Degree |
| | Diploma |
| Level 3 | Certificate |
| Level 2 | Leaving Certificate (second level school system) |
| Level 1 | Junior Certificate |
| Foundation | |

There are 4 parts to getting accreditation through the Open College Network. With variations, these are similar to the stages inherent in accessing all of the UK and Irish systems.

Stage 1: Applying for membership of the network:

This is a way of ensuring that the team of people, centre or institution that proposes to run a training accredited through the system is capable of delivering the training. Information on structure, finances, tutor qualifications, equitable and consistent methods of assessment, ethos, etc. must be produced. (For us verification of our ability to deliver the course was merged with the submission of the accreditation document discussed below,

but for other divisions of the OCN in the UK applying for membership is a separate process preceding accreditation submissions.)

Stage 2: Writing the modules:

This can be quite complicated for people not used to working in this way. However, support is given through a Network development officer. The modules are based on learning outcomes (the same as ‘competencies’ in the Australian system), assessment criteria and modes of evidence: what the learner will be able to do when they complete the module; how you will know they can do it; and what evidence will be produced to show that they can do it. These are brought together in an accreditation submission document which moves the process to the next stage.

Stage 3: Going to panel:

This is a system of peer accreditation. The Network forms a panel of people with some interest/experience in the subject or related disciplines and the applicant can also appoint their own people to the panel. The accreditation submission document is examined by the panel who can ask question of the applicant, make suggestions for agreed changes, etc. When changes are incorporated into the document, it is passed and the course is accredited.

Stage 4: Moderation:

The course is up and running according to the accreditation document. But the network has to stand over the certificates it will issue at the end so it needs to ensure that what is outlined in the document in terms of content and delivery is being adhered to. A moderator is appointed, usually someone who volunteers from the panel and who visits the course on a number of occasions throughout its life. The moderator’s role is as a support to the course staff should they run into any difficulties with the delivery and as an external examiner for a selected sample of students’ work.

WHAT WERE THE COSTS IN DOLLARS/POUNDS AND IN TIME?

Alakh

In 1997, after being a Rebirther in practice for ten years, six years of which I was developing and delivering a Rebirther Training curriculum, I met a consultant for a College, an RTO, that was having Reiki accredited and had already succeeded with one course after years of work. They had been having learning experiences with the process for years. I had been looking into accreditation and I had taken a long time to understand very much at all about the process. These people now seemed to know what it took. So over the next year, I paid out over \$20,000 Australian, then \$15,000 US dollars, in consultant and Government fees to gain accreditation for Pre-Professional, Professional and Trainer Training. That amount does not include any estimate for my time which to October 1998, was six years part time.

While some Trainers may inherit a curriculum from other Trainers, or create a curriculum that is the input of a number of professionals, I had originated one from the viewpoint of all the likely experiences an individual can have in a series of Rebirthing Breathwork

sessions. The submissions went back and forward to the State departments for over a year before being “stamped”, even after the success with the initial (and subsequent) Reiki courses

The six years part time I spent on the process was not to write the contents of the submission, which the consultants did, as I sat with them. That was a matter of a week in time. It was to document all the “likely experiences” of Rebirthing Breathwork and place them into the curriculum from the point of view of what a Rebirther would need to know. Then to provide extensive handouts that cover the experiences in detail. Prior to the recent publications of more detailed books on Rebirthing Breathwork, the textbooks or references for students were not in depth enough to cover the material I was getting accredited. This situation did not exist with other modalities and led me into a much longer time involvement leading to accreditation than for example, someone writing a Homeopathy course where many reference books are available in all degrees of detail.

Involvement with different Government training departments sounds similar to Catherine’s process in the UK system, but I was not involved. This included the courses being presented to an Industry panel of different Health Care Professionals for “acceptance” that the curriculum and On the Job training would meet industry standards, all of which was covered by fees to the Consultant or Government and did not have me present. I thought that most of the work would be over then, with the accreditation within the AQF. However, to bring the Courses into excellence, I have worked for many hours a month in the two and a half years since. Most of this work is to fine tune where the participants need to place their attention to become Professional Rebirthers or Trainers, and to cover exactly what they need to know in detail. In spite of this, I am finding that the comprehensive handouts come into play more powerfully once the Professional is in practice. After all, how much detail can be taken in will depend on the individual’s experiences in the training and is individually relative.

The difference in the focus in an accredited training is that instead of training people to be self employed as Rebirther Breathworkers or Rebirther Trainers, it is training people as if they are to be employed in Industry as Rebirther Breathworkers when they graduate. So it has been my focus to provide that degree of skill, information and reference, plus practical experience, even though graduates are most likely to be self employed.

The time I have now spent involved in the process exceeds eight years part time, including writing an original curriculum, comprehensive handouts, assessment sheets, and training compendiums. I am nearing the completion I think. However it is an ongoing process, where there is constant assessment of the process and re-evaluation. It is a mistake to think accreditation is just writing a curriculum submission that gets the stamp from the Government and that is it! I will be working with all parts of the process at different times until I replace myself or sell the whole curriculum and Training as a business. Updating and staying educated in the whole system is ongoing.

Catherine

Approximately IR£700. This includes a 20% surcharge to cover the cost of the OCN operating in the Republic of Ireland and roughly a 30% loss on the exchange rate between Irish currency and sterling. (There are several divisions of the OCN within the UK so the charges incurred in dealing with the one in Northern Ireland may not be a good guide to costs in England, Scotland or Wales). There were no costs involved in

developing the accreditation document because I had experience in this field. In terms of time it took approximately 50 hours for myself and my colleague in the venture, Stephen Gregory to write the programme. This seems to be a much looser, less stringent system than the one in which Alakh operates. Accessing the state system in the Republic of Ireland would not cost much more but would take longer in terms of bureaucracy and would involve piloting the project, evaluating it and redrawing the programme.

WHAT WERE THE ADVANTAGES OF NATIONAL ACCREDITATION?

Alakh

Having Training within a National Government accredited framework definitely adds value for a potential participant. Although I thought it would be years before it really made a difference whether a training was accredited or not, it is already making a difference here that the Rebirthing Mastery Breathwork trainings accredited in the AQF. It is a valid entry on a CV, for example.

For a participant it means, in the future, that whatever other training they do, any part that has already been covered, will not have to be repeated if they have already been assessed competent in those specific learning outcomes. In the current Nationally recognised training that maybe only the Small Business module to date as all the remainder is uniquely Breathwork. However in modalities like Naturopathy, for example, a nurse may not need to repeat Anatomy and Physiology. Government funding for participants is available under certain conditions and may even cover the costs of the training in some circumstances.

Apart from all the above, a great advantage is that the participant-to-be knows exactly what they are getting in their training and when and where. This will be documented and recognised within Industry. The emphasis in competency based training is on the Trainer providing the skills and knowledge in a way that is understood and integrated by the participant. This includes how they are to be assessed and exactly what skill or knowledge the Trainer or Trainings are to provide. Quality assurance is a word used by the RTOs and they are the guardians of this.

However one of the main reasons I have gone ahead with the whole process is that I imagine that the participants who graduate from Nationally accredited training will become part of the referral system in Health. For example, many Medical Practitioners, Acupuncturist, Naturopaths have been Rebirthed, yet they do not necessarily send their clients to Rebirther Breathworkers as professionals. That this will happen is yet to be revealed, however, my intention is to have this happen so all varieties of Health Care Professionals refer their clients to the graduates of accredited training. There are signs that the first few graduates of the Certificate 111 in Health, Professional Rebirther Breathworker Practitioner are creating this in their initial foray into being in business. In one year's time it will be more apparent how many referrals are in place.

Another advantage that I did not foresee and is now becoming apparent is that I have had the Training to become a Rebirther Trainer accredited as well. Since this is the only accredited Training for Trainer, it becomes the National standard. (Remember this curriculum has been assessed by "Industry" before accreditation was given). From what I know to date, as dealing with conflicting information from different individuals within

Government departments, Consultants and others is part of the process, that will mean Colleges or Trainers who are not Rebirther Trainers (Workplace Trainers of Diploma of Education etc), cannot deliver a Rebirther Training curriculum without being highly experienced Rebirthers at the level of accredited Rebirther Trainer.

Now that Rebirther Trainer Training is accredited, only Rebirthers who have been in private practice for some time and have delivered a specific number of groups of their own can deliver the Vocational Professional Rebirther Training. In contrast, for example, a Trainer may not need to be experienced in Small Business to deliver a Small Business training or computers to deliver a computer training.

Catherine

The process of accreditation transformed the delivery of the course. The advantages were too numerous to list in detail but some of the broader categories in which accreditation supported the training are outlined below:

Clarity of Content and Direction:

Previous training courses that I have been involved with in Ireland including the one I trained on and an earlier two year training that I co-ordinated, started off with a curriculum which listed items – birth, water rebirthing, parental disapproval and so forth. These were covered but in ways that were not consistent either in result or emphasis. And when the group dynamic went in a particular way, the curriculum was abandoned. The result was inconsistent training for the job and no means of assessing the effectiveness of the course in training people to be professional rebirthers. So, like Alakh, I would say that it gives consistency and the trainees know in advance exactly what the training will contain.

Accreditation compelled the staff team to draw up very clear aims and objectives and to think carefully and in depth about what they were doing, what the desired outcome of each day's training was to be and how to assess the readiness of trainees to do the job they were being trained to do. The system also ensured accountability on the part of all of the staff that they were delivering what they set out to deliver. The end result of this is that the certificate presented at the end of the course means what it says it means and the moderation of the course by the OCN through the person of the moderator is a verification of this for the wider world of clients, other colleges, etc.

Balance of Task and Process:

Breathwork, as with other therapy training courses, is a mix of personal development and skills/knowledge training: a balance between task and process. I found that the OCN accreditation system was flexible enough to allow for going with the flow of group dynamic and trainees' personal needs but balanced this with the task of training rebirthers. The accreditation document was always there as the blueprint to which we had to return. Sometimes the result of this was that we simply took time out from the document but at its best personal development and academic/skills development merged seamlessly.

It has always been my belief that the distinction people make between personal growth and academic/skills based education is arbitrary and artificial. One flows into the other, yin and yang. It takes skill and imagination as well as experience and training on the part of tutors to achieve this level of seamlessness. We did not achieve it all the time or even the majority of the time, but we were learning. And when we did achieve it, it was education at its very best. This would not have happened without the accreditation system so in this way accreditation became a support to tutors in encouraging them to develop their skills and find new ways of doing things that were more effective and successful.

Safety and Boundaries:

When the balance between task and process is not maintained, particularly when it leans heavily in favour of process, it can become part of a bigger group dynamic. This is one in which healthy boundaries are sometimes sacrificed to “going with the flow” and the very human tendencies of trainers towards guruism and trainees towards following a leader can emerge. This can result in a lack of safety for the more vulnerable or less dominant members of the group. The accreditation system promoted clarity and ensured that the boundaries around the curriculum remained flexible but intact. There seemed to be a spin off effect in other areas in that boundaries became clearer on all levels – interpersonal, time, content, expectations, etc. with a resultant higher level of perceived safety, comfort and security for the trainees.

WHAT WERE THE DISADVANTAGES?

Alakh

The immediate disadvantage was that I more than doubled, nearly trebled the length of the training and the fee. Initially, since the training became possibly the longest training in the area, I did not know if the response would validate the work I had done. It could be a disadvantage that there are only certain sites or venues to be used for accredited trainings.

What became a personal disadvantage in my enjoyment of life was that, after the submission was accredited, I started to restrict my enjoyment of being a Trainer and Rebirther. It took a while for me to realise how much schooling trauma surfaced for me after, not before the successful submission! Since school was the death of my creative spirit at the level I had before five, initially delivering the accredited training was an effort until I cleared the association. It has caused me to clear on a level I did not know was an issue, which is of course an advantage now.

Not surprisingly, nearly every person doing the training is also an experiential learner like myself. However I address the issue of learning/schooling trauma on day one. I have many clients and participants who have not studied in a “formal” training since they left school.

Catherine

There were three distinct disadvantages, one of our own making, the second the result of being the first rebirther training course in the country to operate in this way and the third related to the system of accreditation that I chose.

The first major disadvantage was that there was too much content: The two people who developed the course and drew up the accreditation document were both the product, to varying degrees, of authoritarian educational or social/family systems. Traces of the tendency to bow to authority remained and were transferred onto the OCN. We didn't fully comprehend the concept of peer accreditation, accreditation as support not coercion, and the fact that the only rule we had was to make the training as effective as it needed to be. As a result we crammed our modules with content to please an authority that didn't exist and didn't need to be pleased. At times it felt like too much was crammed into too little time.

This for me was an important lesson about attitude towards accreditation. It works best when it is seen as a support, not as an imposition or an external voice that must be obeyed and revered. Like the child that introjects his parent's rules and regulations, we ourselves became the authority figure that the accreditation body would not become.

Secondly, there was a very high drop out rate. Most courses have an initial dropout rate but ours was very high – over 50%. Some people left the course for the usual reasons people leave courses – they become pregnant and can't manage family and training, they emigrate, etc. But approximately 30% left directly or indirectly because of the accreditation system.

This was not the fault of the accreditation system itself but rather that it was the first time the system had been used within a rebirther training in Ireland. People's expectations of the course before it began were determined by their experience of previous courses. And previous courses involved little or no written work, study groups, or any of the other means of assessment. The emphasis on personal process was often at the expense of skills development and knowledge and this established assumptions about the accredited course that were not consistent with reality. Although trainees were told about the nature of the course and the work required before signing on, this did not adequately prepare them for the new style of training. The lessons here was that in future the nature of the course and requirements for students must be made crystal clear before people sign on for training.

Finally, the system of accreditation that I chose, mainly because there was no real alternative, has very limited recognition. Unlike Alakh's training, ours is barely at the level of college or university and not recognised in the Republic of Ireland by colleges or employers. It is a start in the field of breathwork in Ireland, but it is only a start.

WHAT WERE THE EASIEST AND MOST DIFFICULT ASPECTS OF ACCREDITATION?

Alakh

It has been easy to spend time on because I love it and I love the big picture of Rebirthing Breathwork! It inspires me and moves me. I created a long term intention to make thorough training in Rebirthing Breathwork available for the next seven generations and then accreditation showed up within that intention as well as writing about the subject.

However, many times I have need to re-evaluate the project and recommit to it or change the intention. It has only served to make me more conscious so I cannot say that is a difficulty.

I have made it difficult at times to balance my resources and what I took on. Also to create and communicate opportunities for other Trainers or Rebirthers.

Initially, it was difficult for me to know what I had done as the whole area of accreditation requires one to educate oneself in it as a subject and there is a lot of jargon and terminology that I found alienating. I also needed to undertake training to lead competency based training and it was difficult for me once again with the terms and mind set. It is so different to being with people who are learning to use their breath to become clear.

I did create initial difficulties with other Rebirther Trainers in the way I communicated the project and the successful submission. What is possibly most difficult is there was and still is a lot of misunderstanding about the process.

Catherine

The easiest part was dealing with the accreditation body. I found the Open College Network refreshingly free of bureaucracy, clear in its thinking, flexible and very supportive. Our development officer came to Dublin to meet me on two occasions and she was extremely helpful. I had expected at least some cautious reaction to the proposal to accredited Rebirthing, but there was none. It was treated with the same acceptance as any other subject and the system was flexible enough to accommodate all our needs.

The most difficult part was dealing with the resistance of students who lost no opportunity to complain about having to write notes, questionnaires and essays. The academic requirements were not by any means onerous – one essay and one presentation a year with two page questionnaires at the end of each module – but expectations (see section on dropout rates above) were such that any work of this kind was seen as not part of rebirther training or rebirthing. Another cause of the level of complaining may have been the trainees own attitudes to authority and schooling and this was discussed within the group on several occasions throughout the training. So, similar to Alakh's experience, accreditation brought up memories and reactions to school for the trainees and, on a more subtle level, for the trainers. This is, ultimately, one of the advantages of accrediting training.

HOW DID THE CLIENTS RESPOND?

Alakh

I have only had positive responses so far. The training being self-paced makes it work well. Unlike Catherine's experience, I have not had participants leave because it is an accredited training. Because the training is self paced, it can be picked up again at a later time, which is one of the great benefits to participants. Participating will become part of a life process.

Catherine

The response of the clients (trainees) has been covered in various sections above. They dropped out or they rebelled against the academic aspects of the course. However, it was interesting that the trainee who complained most frequently and loudly throughout the course and at one point accused me of institutionalising Rebirthing, was the one who presented the longest, most detailed written work and who, at the end, said that she wished she were getting a certificate from a university and not just from a body like the

OCN. The end of course evaluation revealed a respect for the process and an acknowledgement that the academic work had been a support to both the personal and professional development of the trainees. This was very gratifying because it supported the vision of the course that I had had from the beginning and it also supported my conviction that as long as it is balanced, the academic aspects of education are invaluable in the development of the whole person. Maybe next time the recognition will come earlier and life will be somewhat smoother.

HOW DID COLLEAGUES AND OTHER TRAINERS RESPOND?

Alakh

Since accreditation is also a process that I had to “work at” to understand, most Rebirther Professionals and Trainers responded from misunderstanding or rather lack of understanding. I also created that with my initial communication.

In relation to National Government accreditation, I have had the reverse experience as a Yoga Teacher. Even though I lived in India for nine years in one of the most highly regarded Schools of Yoga and taught Yoga Teacher Training on behalf of the ashram, my “Certification” from India is not within the AQF. To get that here I would have to go through the same process of RPL and paying out some fees and time. It comes down to a decision of yes or no.

I had thought initially, that each Trainer or Professional would take the information that was there about accredited trainings, decide if it was for them, ask questions if they needed it, and then go ahead and work with the process, or not, and keep doing what they had been doing. Anyone could have done what I did, if an experienced Trainer. It was and is a matter of experience, focus, time and money.

Yet there were a number of reactions, strong and mild. I had kept Trainers informed by letter of my project. Yet once complete, I was asked “who are you to get Rebirthing accredited!”.

The main reaction I think is from a misunderstanding that it is MY course that got accredited. It has taken me sometime to distinguish, to verbalise what I and then the Consultants have done which is to map my training onto the AQF like any experienced Trainer could. It is as if the AQF is a template and the distinctions can be fitted onto it.

In the last two years, out of all other Trainers or Professionals who spoke to me, there are a number who are filling in the gaps in their experience to be able to deliver the accredited courses. So other colleagues and Trainers have all responded differently. There were at first only three who initially seemed to understand what accreditation meant – a Trainer who is psychic, a Rebirther who is an academic, and an experienced Rebirther who spent ages asking me questions so she knew if it was for her or not.

Catherine

Staff on the training were generally positive about the effects of accreditation and although operating within a moderated system was far more alien to them than to me, they approached it with commitment and an open mind. It became a learning experience and a challenge for all of us. I received very little response from colleagues who were not

working on the training. A few made supportive and encouraging remarks, others made no comment at all to me.

Like Alakh's course, the accredited training is not my course. It is available to anyone who wants to run it through the Open College Network. However, they do have to get permission to use the modules from the "organisation" we set up to run the training. They also have to prove to the OCN that they have the capacity to run the course. To date, nobody has taken up that option.

WHAT WAS THE EFFECT ON BUSINESS AND WORK?

Alakh

As I previously stated, for some months, I stopped enjoying my work. The effect now is that I have needed to expand what I do enormously as instead of just focusing on training a course of Rebirthers, I now deliver Pre-Professional and Professional Training and have started Trainer Training with people of all degrees of experience (RPL) as well as with graduates of the Certificate III in Health. My business now requires me to work more deeply with fewer people and it includes being a supervisor and much more individual contact, rather than group contact.

In some ways I have become an "educationalist" instead of a Practitioner so my income needs to come from that process as well as being a Trainer. I have quoted those in the Australian Association for Professional Rebirthers and others interested in having a collective training accredited a substantial sum of money to shortcut the process by using my experience. This may or may not come off. My courses are very comprehensive and I have been told for another course to become accredited, it would need to be more comprehensive again or very different. I have covered a lot of the differences in the training so only something as different as Holotropic Breathwork would come into the category of very different.

The steps for a group of Rebirthers/Trainers to create a Collective Training, once the finances are handled look like:

- 1 Forming a legal body who owns the copyright-to-be, with agreements and clear systems on how alignment will take place on each part of the process and each subject.
- 2 Facilitating the group to create the curriculum and have it be more comprehensive than mine.
- 3 Write the submissions (the easiest part).
- 4 Create the back up material, assessment tools, information packs, handouts, and more from the start or by adapting my material (remarkably involved).
- 5 Educate the members of the group in all the details and requirements of the system including language and delivery of competency based training.
- 6 Form an RTO
- 7 Manage the above for one or two years until all persons involved are at ease with the delivery and other requirements and a Manager or Coordinator can take over in a way that the project keeps running.

In the National Government accredited system, Rebirther Trainers who want to deliver the accredited Professional Training or Trainer Training will no longer receive all the income from a course. In either case of 1) a group or 2) myself having a training accredited by the National Government, Trainers will need to belong to or pay for the services of an RTO and the RTO or Trainer will pay a copyright fee to the owner whether a group or myself. In my package for Trainers to deliver the courses, I have set up a small percentage deduction for National advertising as well.

To be fair and open, I am asking for a very reasonable fee to support individual Trainers in having their individual trainings submitted for accreditation based on my experience, using all their own material. However, I cannot guarantee this will translate to accreditation. In contrast, the hefty fee I have quoted the group is more or less guaranteed to pass based on the fact I will adapt, if necessary, my work to have it done, and resubmit it as I do now. Therefore I am asking for adequate remuneration for the time and money I have put into the process to date.

So the nature of my business is definitely affected by the time and energy I have put into the project. At times, when I was working intently on some parts of the project, my clientele for one to one sessions came to a stop or numbers dropped for the training. But my love was not there for my practice at the time – it was on the writing or documenting. So I have been looking at the long term financial balance in the project, not the immediate, and have needed to create support for this.

Catherine

Being able to describe myself as the co-ordinator of an accredited training gets more attention than when I co-ordinated a non-accredited course. In circles where people are inclined to be sceptical about complementary therapies and particularly the lesser known species like Rebirthing, it caused people to take notice rather than dismiss it. Accreditation gave credibility to me as a member of the staff as well as to the students whose certificates now come with transcripts and recognition by the mainstream system of education. Like Alakh I now charge for consultancy for anyone who wishes to develop a training. However, if other trainers want to use the existing OCN Rebirther Training, I and my colleague need to give permission but there is no fee accruing.

Developing the training did not affect my private client business because it was not such an arduous process that I had to devote as much time to it as did Alakh.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ACCREDITATION?

Alakh

I imagine that, in the future, people who want to be self-employed full-time will spend the time and money on accredited training in Rebirthing Breathwork, with some exceptions. There is the possibility of health fund rebates. Since the course is accredited, I have the pathway for that now, just it is not a priority. The National Government already pays people to study to become Rebirther Breathworkers under certain conditions. The Training is also GST tax exempt as it is for an income earning Vocation. The National Government may eventually put it into the Medicare system (a huge “go-

for”). Here there is a form of free health care with University Trained Medical Practitioners being given Provider numbers and then paid for their services by the Government.

The present National Government system is a support to those who want to train people thoroughly but it could be deregulated in the future. In this case, the time and effort put into the process will be of value anyway. There are however moves to create National competencies in Health, already final for some modalities, and that may extend to Rebirthing, in which case the courses already accredited will possibly become the National standard. However if any parts of the required competencies for Health care practitioners are not in my curriculum, they will have to be added. It is important to understand that what the National Government is looking for is training for people to be able to work to make their living. So I do not see that as anything but a benefit that is going to continue.

Catherine

At the moment the Department. of Education in Ireland is introducing changes which will revolutionise adult education in this country. Within the next few years structures and services will be put in place that will make the concept of lifelong learning a reality that is accessible to everyone. One of the changes already underway is the development of national accreditation systems, making accreditation accessible to everyone who wants to run quality, sustainable training courses. One of the possible consequences of this is that Rebirther training courses will be able to plug into a national system where credits will be transferable to other institutions and courses and will count when looking for employment.

At the same time the Department. of Health is moving towards the statutory regulation of complementary therapies. This means recognition and employment within the health system while at the same time those not registered under the law will be practising illegally. But the price of this recognition is the provision of training that is standardised in terms of delivery and content, with reliable and transparent assessment procedures.

Both moves will encourage training institutions in all walks of life to access accreditation and will make graduation from an accredited training course more attractive if not imperative for trainees. However, accreditation systems need to be very flexible to accommodate breathwork. It is my feeling that the new systems coming into Ireland will offer that flexibility, but that is not guaranteed. And it is vitally important when choosing an accreditation system to make sure that it meets the needs and enhances the delivery of the course. Otherwise it can become a yolk around the neck of trainers and trainees who will be working towards accreditation for its own sake rather than gaining the knowledge, personal growth and skills they joined to course to acquire.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF BREATHWORK TRAINING?

Alakh

In spite of the time and money I have put into the process, I know that if I wanted to go to a Naturopath, I would ask someone I knew who they recommended. In the same situation, Rebirther Breathworkers and Trainers, accredited or not, will be valuable for

their own individual style and presence. So I think it is still a level playing field and we all have our own niche. I made mine accreditation.

Catherine

Short Term: There is no accredited training running in Ireland at the moment and nobody has followed the OCN route although it has been mapped out for them already. Therefore the short term implications are very personal. For me, the accreditation process affirmed my ideas about the way I want to go with training and showed me that two years is not long enough to train people for such a responsible job. It has also shown me just how much groundwork needs to be done to provide quality, sustainable training courses within a structure that is independent of the people who deliver the training. This takes time so for the moment I am not involved in delivering training and don't expect to be in the near future.

Long Term: There may be some serious long term implications arising not out of the running of a two year accredited rebirther training, but out of all the changes taking place in government policy as outline above. If accreditation, with all its benefits, becomes available to all courses that meet basic standards of delivery and sustainability, unaccredited training courses will not be offering trainees the same value for money as those that are accredited. One of the reasons one of our trainees dropped out was because she discovered that a ten day training course being run by a visiting trainer was promising in its publicity to provide the skills required to work as a professional rebirther. Five years from now, I don't think it will be possible to offer such outcomes from such a short training course.

However, the choice of a rebirther/breathworker, as Alakh has pointed out, will probably continue to be governed largely by word of mouth and personal recommendation. It is just that in this country, if the government goes ahead with its plans, all of the rebirthers/breathworkers will be licensed to practice and that licensing, many years from now, may require that they have completed an accredited training.

WAS IT WORTH THE EFFORT AND MONEY?

Alakh

Sometimes yes and sometimes no. However I am responsible for creating it as a long term project where the end is not yet visible. So unlike being a Practitioner where I am complete with my client at the end of a session or series, I am nowhere near the final outcome. I have experienced different levels of satisfaction at different times. If I do no more, I am satisfied with what I have done. However, within the system I need to be and I am committed to continuing to provide the training. Most of all, I am imagining I will have a big completion when I finish writing the details I have not yet added to all the handouts, which will also create a series of books.

Catherine

An unequivocal yes!

CONCLUSION

Both our experiences of accreditation have been similar in many ways. The main differences seem to be that the Australian system is bigger, more complex and takes longer to negotiate. The reward for this is in the way industry and the employment sectors in our respective countries regard the vocational accreditation systems and the universities. In Australia, there is not a lot of bias either way on Vocational or University training depending on the subject. For example do we want University trained massage therapists? Whereas in Ireland the vocational system is still the poor relation in the field of education.

For people considering accreditation, it is important to keep in mind that many, many hours must be spent analysing every aspect of the training. This involves answering a lot of questions about what we do, aspects of our work that quite often go unquestioned. What is the training? What is its ethos? What are its objectives? What is necessary and what is unrelated and only there because we like doing it? What is the purpose of every aspect of the training? Is it relevant to the development of professional breathworkers, and if so, how is it relevant? What is a rebirther/breathworker? What do they need to perform their tasks competently and safely? Every section of the training must be considered, questioned, put together into a coherent whole.

It is a lot of work, but it brings clarity, accountability, satisfaction and ultimately, if the right system has been chosen, it can foster excellence in everyone involved.

But it is important to approach accreditation from the right frame of mind. If you are considering it solely because it will offer recognition by people and institutions outside the breathwork sphere, because it might attract more participants than an unaccredited training or similar reasons, you may miss out on the real advantages that accreditation offers. It is a personal and a professional process and a very valuable one. It is a developmental tool that can support trainers in developing the best training courses they can conceive of. But it is important to make sure that accreditation serves the training not the other way around. That is why it requires so much thinking time before anything goes on paper. For both of us the advantages have been worth the work involved.

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About the Authors

Alakh Analda

Alakh is the founder and director of Zentium International, Rebirthing Mastery Breathwork, and is a Yoga Swami and Rebirther trainer. She lived in India for nine years after being initiated into the holy Yogic order of sannyasa as a Swami. On returning to Australia in 1986, she trained as a rebirther and her private practice has been based in Sydney, with trainings in the Chakras, Yoga and Rebirthing delivered in all parts of Australia and in Russia. In 1992 she instigated the Professional Rebirther Training. These

are the training courses now accredited by the National Government as vocational trainings. Her passion is the evolution of human consciousness through the Chakras and relating the ancient yogic wisdom to third millennium personal development.

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A former teacher, Catherine trained as a rebirther in 1993, as a group facilitator in 1995 and later as a trainer. She runs a private rebirthing practice in Dublin as well as facilitating personal development and stress management courses for various organisations. Her interest is in adult education and she works part time in the development of adult education structures and programmes in areas of economic disadvantage. She is the co-chairperson of the Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Associations and the author of *Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation*, Piatkus, UK, 2000.

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AN ANNOTATED BOOK LIST FOR A BREATHWORK TRAINING

compiled by

CATHERINE DOWLING AND JOY MANNÉ

Keywords: Breathwork, Rebirthing, Conscious Breathing Techniques; Abuse, Bioenergetics, Birth, Birth Trauma Psychology, Counselling, Couples Therapy, Death and Dying, Ethics, Family Systems Therapy, Holotropic Breathwork, Imagination, Interpersonal and Verbal Skills, Martial Arts, Meditation, Personal Growth, Past Life Therapy, Psychotherapy, Regression, Shamanism, Suggestion, Soul work, Spiritual Development, Voice Dialogue, Yoga.

1. INTRODUCTION

In his article 'Sharing the Breath' Wilfried Ehrmann pointed out that when psychoanalysis was twenty-five years old, its "irresistible rise" was produced by "the growing circle of (Freud's) talented and committed students ... as well as his own persistent publishing." When Reichian bodywork was same age, knowledge about it grew and spread through a considerable body of supporters who "developed efficient therapeutic techniques, structured trainings" and thus "freed Reich's inheritance from its odd elements." Rebirthing and Breathwork are now just about twenty-five years old.⁶ What is happening there is comparable. Talented and committed practitioners and students are coming together in the International Breathwork Foundation⁷ (and possibly elsewhere that I do not know about) to develop efficient therapeutic techniques and structured trainings, and indeed to free Rebirthing from its odd elements.⁸ This journal is itself an attempt to contribute to the creation of a body of peer-review publications about Breathwork.

For obvious reasons the creators of Breathwork trainings today are faced with the same problem the earliest Freudians, Jungians, Reichians, etc. were faced with, namely, insufficient literature on their subject and especially a dire lack of research-based literature. They are trying courageously to build solid trainings where much of the basics do not yet exist. This is why we have come together to produce an annotated booklist for Breathwork trainings. In doing so, we do not claim that we are the ultimate authority on this subject, nor that this booklist should be final. We intend to help, and to challenge, those who are today preparing university level Breathwork trainings with this book list. We hope both students and teachers of Breathwork will be inspired by it.

⁶ *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality*, Vol. 1, No. 3, p.36. www.i-breath.com

⁷ www.ibfnetwork.org.

⁸ Cf. Joy Manné, 'Rebirthing, an orphan or a member of the family of psychotherapies?' *International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine*, Vol.6 (1994), No. 4, 503-517. 'Rebirthing, is it marvelous or terrible?' *The Therapist: Journal of the European Therapy Studies Institute*, Spring 1995, pp.16-23, forthcoming in Minett (ed), *Spirit of Breathwork*.

What happens in Breathwork and Rebirthing?

It would be simpler to ask: What does not happen in a Breathwork session? Our answer would be “Nothing.” Breathwork can lead to analytical work, to awareness work, to regression, to spontaneous visualisations, to altered states of consciousness including meditative and shamanic states. It can lead to the re-experiencing of one’s birth or one’s conception and to past-life memories. It can be both a profound means of psychotherapy, and of experiencing one’s spiritual self – however one defines this: a Breathwork meditation took the Buddha to Enlightenment.

Irresponsible Breathwork can flip people out and make them feel unstable – this is, of course, true for all therapeutic methods: a method being only as good as its practitioners in all cases.

Knowledge of breathwork is not enough

We take the view that Breathwork cannot be taught without at least a broadly based knowledge of psychotherapeutic theory and the interpersonal and verbal skills necessary to help people make sense of their breathwork experience on a cognitive level, i.e. to integrate it. In his article, ‘The Spirit of Breath,’ Wilfried Ehrmann proposes a “success formula” for the advancement of breathwork in society. He says, “...the successful breathwork of the future comes from the realm of love and the heart, has a structure that works efficiently, and well-developed theoretical concepts.”⁹ We believe that a similar formula can be applied to the growth of the individual and that growth through breathwork is most effective and safest when all dimensions of the human psyche: the emotional, the cognitive, and the spiritual, are respected and nurtured. We need to touch into and be able to live out of the realm of love. But we also need to support integration through making cognitive sense of our situation which can lead us to the development of practical mechanisms for negotiating life outside of the breathwork setting. In an unpublished paper, ‘Breathwork Within an Integrative, Body-Centred Therapeutic Model,’¹⁰ psychotherapist Paul Sakey would seem to underpin this argument with his discussion of the potential danger of working with a client in a way which does not engage the ego but focuses almost exclusively on the access breathwork can provide to more emotional, preverbal states. Catharsis is forthcoming again and again but real change in behaviour patterns and therefore in the person’s ability to negotiate and direct their life is more elusive.¹¹ This makes the practice of breathwork with clients infinitely more complex than simply coaching the breath and this complexity needs to be reflected in breathwork trainings.

⁹ *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality*, Vol. 1, No. 3, p.36.

¹⁰ Sakey, Paul, *Breathwork Within an Integrative, Body-Centred Therapeutic Model*, Presented at the Seventh Annual Global Inspiration Conference, Italy, 2000.

¹¹ See Wilfried Ehrmann, ‘Acting out and Integrating,’ *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice Psychology and Spirituality*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2000, at www.i-breathe.com/thb21.

Length and structure of Breathwork Training

We take the view that the ideal minimum length of a Breathwork Training should be four years and that where a training is shorter than this, training directors should work towards this goal. We have therefore structured the reading list over a four-year period.¹²

We are assuming that at least the first year and ideally the first two years of the training will be devoted to personal growth using the medium of breathwork.¹³ It is our experience that in the first one to two years of training, many, if not most, students are too busy dealing with their own immediate process of development to be able to read widely, and we think it is a common observation. We have, therefore, suggested mainly general books for the first and second years. We have, however, included some books pertinent to the early development of the process for the second year covering themes like the physiology of breathing, Birth Trauma Psychology, the Inner Child, and Money Psychology. A Breathwork training is about personal exploration and growth, and all books on Breathwork also contribute to this aspect. As most trainings in Breathwork are equally trainings in relationship skills, we have a brief section on this too. Books in this section will also be useful for recommending to future clients.

Despite the demands of the first two years of a training, we believe that students should be taught from the beginning to read with constructive criticism. We consider it an essential part of any training to develop this capacity. Without it, students risk becoming superstitious, falling into inflation, seeing themselves as gurus or seeking gurus without sufficient concern for these gurus' credentials. Breathwork opens up the spiritual realms of the personality and these need the protection of the intellectual realms otherwise the person becomes gullible. Guidelines for reading with a constructive critical attitude will be found in Manné (forthcoming).¹⁴

Having completed one to two years in which trainees have focused intensively on their own personal growth while gaining experience of breathwork both as client and therapist with their peers, they are ready to focus on skills development, theoretical concepts and the intricacies of the client-therapist relationship as well as well-supervised practice with clients. Our suggestions for the final two years of training aim to reflect this.

By the third year, students have climbed the spiral of development sufficiently to have a view, and are able to integrate new perspectives. This is a good time to reread the books recommended for the first two years. It is also the time when students find their individual way of working, and learn complementary techniques (frequently Relationship Skills, Polarity Massage, Voice Dialogue). We would like to see more complementary

¹² Joy Manné ran a four-year Breathwork training in Switzerland between 1989-1995 through her School for Personal and Spiritual Development/Spiritual Therapy.

¹³ The use of other techniques may form part of a training. Some of the more usual techniques will be given a section below, but it is not within the remit of this book list to be complete with regard to these.

¹⁴ Joy Manné will be publishing a series of Writer's Workshops based on those she gave at the International Breathwork Conference 2000. It is not yet decided whether these will appear on her website – www.i-breathe.com or in hard copy or both, and they may also be published in *Breathe: the International Breathwork Journal*.

techniques such as gestalt practices introduced at this level and their basics taught; a student can go on to further specialist studies later.

As everything can happen in a Breathwork session, and no-one can be an expert in dealing with all psychological and spiritual issues, we foresee the day when it will be necessary to develop Breathwork specialisations. Although these have not yet been formally introduced into trainings – the Holotropic Breathwork™ Training is a Breathwork specialisation in itself – we have indicated basic reading in various specialisations that we find complementary to Breathwork: i.e. whose practice enhances and is enhanced by Breathwork.

Just as we believe that a good breathwork training should balance all elements of the human psyche, so the actual delivery and assessment of the training should also be balanced between experiential work and the more theoretical exercises which empower trainees to process, integrate and communicate their experiences to themselves and others. It is therefore, very important that trainees are given support with their academic work right from the beginning. The essence of academic work is to facilitate the development of an independent and inquiring mind leading to a high level of personal autonomy. Joy Manné has specially written an article, ‘Why Read? Why Write? Why Refer?’¹⁵ to explain this to breathworkers.

About Ourselves

Catherine Dowling, MA, H. Dip. Ed.

Catherine has a masters degree in History and a post-graduate diploma in education. She has several years experience in teaching before training as a Rebirther with the Association of Irish Rebirthers in 1993. Currently she combines a private practice in Rebirthing with running personal development classes for community groups, teachers and businesses. She also works part-time in the statutory sector developing education infrastructure and supporting local education providers in areas of economic and social disadvantage.

Catherine has been co-ordinating rebirther training courses for the past four years and negotiated state recognised accreditation for a two year rebirther training programme from the Open College Network of Northern Ireland. She is a founder member and chairperson of the Rebirthing Association of Ireland, and founder member and co-chairperson of the Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Associations. She is also the author of *Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation* (Piatkus, UK, 2000).

Joy Manné, PhD

Joy has a degree in Psychology and a PhD in Buddhist Psychology. She has practised Vipassana meditation since 1965. She was trained in Spiritual Therapy by Hans Mensink and Tilke Platteel-Deur in Holland, 1986-1988. She had four years of Jungian

¹⁵ Published in *Breathe: the International Breathwork Magazine*, Issue 79, March-May, 2000, pp. 4-8. Made available on www.i-breathe.com with the kind permission of Robert Moore, Editor of Breathe. Breathe website: www.breathe-mag.co.uk.

analysis after her Breathwork training. These are the central influences on her practise of Breathwork.

Joy had her own school of personal and spiritual development in Switzerland between 1989-1995. She is a founder member of the International Breathwork Foundation¹⁶ and its Newsletter Editor between 1997-2001. She is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of the peer-review internet journal *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality* available through www.i-breathe.com. She has written numerous articles, on Buddhist Psychology, Breathwork and the relationship between them, as well as textual studies on the Theravada Buddhist literature in Pali. She is the author of *Soul Therapy* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 1997) which has been translated into Spanish.

Kylea Taylor MS, MFT

Kylea Taylor is a staff trainer for the Grof Transpersonal Training in Mill Valley, CA. She is the author of *The Ethics of Caring: Honoring the Web of Life in Our Professional Healing Relationships* (which has been published in German as *Hilfe für die Helfer*), *The Breathwork Experience: Exploration and Healing in Nonordinary States of Consciousness*, and *The Holotropic Breathwork Workshop: A Manual for Trained Facilitators* and has published articles in several publications in the US and Europe. Since 1991 she has been Editor of *The Inner Door*, the newsletter for the Association for Holotropic Breathwork International. She has 29 years experience counselling in the addictions/trauma recovery field. She is a Marriage and Family Therapist and consultant/trainer in a private practice in Santa Cruz, CA.

Kylea Taylor would rather see the phrase “breathwork facilitator” than breathworker which has the connotation to me of someone who “does” rather than someone involved in facilitating and “non-doing.”

Editors’ Note: Kylea Taylor provided the advanced section on Holotropic Breathwork as well as contributions to other sections marked [KT], and her very valuable encouragement.

Vivienne Silver-Leigh B.A.(Hons) LCST, UKCP reg. Psychotherapist, Counsellor and Supervisor.

Vivienne trained and worked in the field of Speech therapy, with both adults and children, and then taught in Further Education, English, and later Counselling. She is Co-Director of the London College of Holistic Breath Therapy, a two year course, and is currently supervising students on this course, in their practical work. She has a private practice, seeing clients for Psychotherapy, Supervision, and Breathwork, and is working from a psycho-spiritual perspective. She contributes book reviews, and articles on Breathwork and Transpersonal psychology, for *Breathe: the International Breathwork Magazine*, *Positive Health*, and *Self and Society*.

Editors’ Note: Vivienne Silver-Leigh provided the sections on Counselling and on Yoga, as well as contributions to other sections marked [VSL].

¹⁶ Information at www.ibfnetwork.org.

A Modest Note

The strengths and limitations of this list are our own. Who we are tells you about both our developed skills and specialist areas, and about our lacuna – however hard we try, there are bound to be some things that we leave out. We welcome feedback to what we've put forward, and hope to update this article in due course, and perhaps even regularly, in the light of any suggestions that may be made.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ANNOTATED BOOK LIST

To make it easy to find your way in this list we show its structure and the structure of this paper here. We use the word breathwork as an umbrella term covering a variety of “schools” of breathwork that include Rebirthing, Holotropic Breathwork™, Vivation, Conscious Breathing Techniques, etc. Books from a variety of schools are listed together, mostly in sections 3 and 4 because we believe that although a training establishment may specialise in one form of breathwork, it is important and valuable to have a broad range of knowledge of the other schools. Definitions of these “schools” appear in Section 5 with a few suggestions for advanced reading in each. We follow a similar pattern with psychotherapy and counselling listing all the books together in section 5.1 and 5.2.

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3. THE FIRST AND SECOND YEAR

While the personal growth of trainees will continue throughout the training, some training directors may see one year as a sufficient length of time to spend focused on their students' personal development. Others may allot two years to this aspect of training. We have structured our list to accommodate both possibilities. Therefore we have taken the first and second year together, as these are the years when students are deeply involved with their own process and do not have a lot of free attention for theoretical aspects. Nevertheless, it is a good habit to encourage them to read and to think. It will benefit students to read the books below during both of these years. They will get more out of these books read the second time, and this will also help them to discover their increasing depth of understanding of the process.

3.1. General Reading

Students enter a Breathwork training first and foremost to work on themselves and their own life and relationship problems in a practical and effective way. Among the many reasons that they choose Breathwork is that it respects their essential spiritual nature. The expression often used that includes all aspects of personal and spiritual development is "to work on one's own process." There are very few books that describe how to do this with discernment with the result that students are in a situation of dependency on their teachers – for better and for worse. Books in this section will empower the student to assess his own work as well as the quality of his teachers.

Duncanson, A., (ed), Birth of a Rebirther: Stories Of Personal Growth From The Binnie A. Dansby Rebirthier Trainings In England, Germany And Denmark. Stockholm: Archie Duncanson, S  tfr   Verlag, 1996.

This is a collection of articles by Binnie Dansby's students. It gives a very good

and accurate impression breathwork. There are excellent experiential accounts. A must for everyone interested in Breathwork.

Manné, Joy, Soul Therapy, North Atlantic Books, CA, 1997.

This book functions as a guide to the nature of working on one's process with discrimination on the deepest level, called Soul level. It describes the qualities that the student needs to develop to attain this level and therefore, by implication, the necessary qualities in teachers. It takes a constructively critical approach to Breathwork, describing its strengths and pitfalls and introduces the concept of adapting the breathwork to suit the individual. It is particularly strong on the ethical and responsible use of breathwork. Besides breathwork, it encourages and provides criteria for a constructively critical approach to Voice Dialogue and past life work. It provides an introduction to the basic elements of psychotherapy: projection, transference and countertransference in a practical and easily comprehensible way, a framework for systematic personal exploration and has a wide array of accompanying exercises.

The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality, ed. Joy Manné. Available through www.i-breathe.com. 1999 -

THB is the first peer-review breathwork journal. At present there is a dearth of good breathwork literature, while the subject is as important as, e.g. Freudian or Jungian psychology, and perhaps by now attracts as many professionals and clients. THB aims to fill this lacuna at least in part. It publishes reliable research on breathwork of all kinds. Students should be encouraged to read it from the beginning of their training. They should be informed that they are welcome to write for it, and that the editor is willing work with them to get their work to the required standard.

Breathe: The International Breathwork Magazine. Editor, Robert Moore, 7 Silver Street, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ 11 0BQ, Great Britain. Email: www.breathe-mag.co.uk.

The first magazine devoted to Breathwork. It was established in 1981 as the Rebirth Society Journal, and taken over by Robert Moore in 1984 as *Breathe*. Growing from a background in Rebirthing and once associated with the British Rebirth Society it is now an independent publication taking a general interest in all forms of Breathwork. Often theme based - past issues have included birth, breathwork in business, Holotropic Breathwork - and reader-led, each issue offers personal experience as well as more in depth views of breathwork. Essential reading, and a great outlet for sharing experiences.

Manné, Joy, 'Why Read? Why Write? Why Refer?'

Published in *Breathe: the International Breathwork Magazine*, Issue 79, March-May, 2000, pp. 4-8. Made available on www.i-breathe.com with the kind permission of Robert Moore, Editor of Breathe. Breathe website: www.breathe-mag.co.uk.

A guide to breathworkers on weaving the fabric of knowledge through reading, writing and reference. Indispensable, and with the advantage of being brief. If breathwork is to become recognised as the science it is, informed practitioners and an informative literature are essential.

3.2. The Earliest Breathwork Books

Introduction

Many contemporary breathworkers have problems with the earliest Rebirthing books. They are in general very poorly written, make extravagant claims that cannot be maintained, and are dogmatic in their imposition of a certain ideas, including a commitment to Physical Immortality. While some schools of Rebirthing follow these texts to the letter, others have moved away from many of the philosophical teachings to the extent that they no longer use the term 'rebirthing.' We believe that people now using Rebirthing seriously as a therapy and trainees in Rebirthing need to know the roots of Rebirthing and its ancestry. They should know where their therapy came from if for no other reason than to be able to deal with criticism of it by those who still think it's mired in its early stridency. The early Rebirthing books should be viewed as a product of their time. They should be read together with **Albery's** book (see next section) as a basis for teaching constructively critical thinking and reading and Joy Manné's articles in *The Spirit of Breathwork* and elsewhere.

Orr, Leonard and Sondra Ray, Rebirthing in the New Age. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA, 1983 (Revised edition. First published 1977)

The first Rebirthing book – the book that launched Rebirthing, for better and for worse. This book presents the elements typically associated with early Rebirthing: the Five Biggies, birth trauma psychology, the doctrine that 'Thought is Creative,' the Personal Law, affirmations, Babaji, hyperventilation, and the Rebirthing teachings on physical immortality, money, politics and weight. There are also case histories. If this book is read carefully, it shows that many different types and rhythms of breathing are used in Rebirthing, not only hyperventilation with which, unfortunately, Rebirthing has become identified.

Leonard, Jim and Laut, Phil, Rebirthing: The Science of Enjoying all of Your Life, Trinity Publications, CA, 1983.

An early guide to Rebirthing, later re-published as *Vivation: The Science of Enjoying all of Your Life*. A basic guide that goes through the process of Rebirthing/Vivation giving useful detail on types and patterns of breathing. A little dated in its style and adherence to immortalist philosophy but still useful.

3.3. More Recent Breathwork Books

3.3.1. Rebirthing Manuals

Introduction

We use the term manual to distinguish between books on breathwork which can be used as a detailed guide to the process by practitioners, and more general books on the subject. A manual gives details about the various aspects, stages and components of the technique

being used, possible effects and outcomes. Manuals can be used as reference books for conducting breathwork sessions.

Dowling, Catherine, Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation. Piatkus, UK, 2000.

One of the rare informed and objective books on this subject. It is an excellent basic guide to the process of breathwork, particularly Rebirthing, including the problems it can help to deal with. It takes a sensible – as opposed to dramatising – attitude to what Rebirthing can bring up, e.g. past life memories. It is clearly written and suitable as a manual for Rebirthers as it describes the process step by step. It goes into issues such as hyperventilation and blood gas balance, energy cycles, types of birth, and their influence on character, and core beliefs and Empowerment. It explains the psychological theories underpinning Rebirthing and links Rebirthing theory to its psychotherapy ancestors. It includes personal exploration exercises. This book is complementary to **Morningstar's** book (see below) and does not replace it.

Morningstar, Jim, Breathing in Light and Love: Your Call to Breath and Body Mastery. Transformations Inc., 1994.

Morningstar is one of the first certified Rebirthers. His book is well written, gives a good and sensible account of Rebirthing, and comes from a grounded and dedicated spiritual basis. It is strong in its presentation of the relationship between breath and body. It relates Rebirthing to Bioenergetics, and has recommendations on how best to do breathwork with Lowen's different body types. It contains many excellent case histories. This book is suitable as a manual for Rebirthers. It is complementary to **Dowling's** book and does not replace it.

3.3.2. General Breathwork Books

Albery, Nicholas, How to Feel Reborn? Varieties of Rebirthing Experience – an Exploration of Rebirthing and Associated Primal Therapies, the Benefits and the Dangers, the Facts and the Fictions. Regeneration Press, 32 Addison Avenue, London W11, UK. 1985.

This is the first book to take a constructively critical approach to Rebirthing. It sets it in the context of primal therapies and compares with it the work of Janov, Frank Lake, Stan Grof, Leslie Feher and others in the field of birth trauma psychology. It names Rebirthing's 'wilder fringes' – i.e. those of Leonard Orr's ideas that are 'eccentric and irrational in the extreme.' It contains interviews with Orr and Janov. In the context of hyperventilation, it questions whether Rebirthing is ever dangerous. There is also research into the varieties of rebirthing experiences – perhaps the first real research on this subject.

Begg, Dieke, Rebirthing: Freedom from Your Past, Thorsons, UK, 1999

This book is an enthusiastic account of Rebirthing. While it lacks references and the acknowledgement of other contributors to breathwork, its strong point is its lively and enticing approach.

Hendricks, Gay, Conscious Breathing: Breathwork for Health, Stress Release and Personal Mastery. Bantam Books, NY, 1995.

A compendium of breathing techniques designed to achieve various results. It introduces the concept of various forms of breathwork simply and with diagrams as well as giving a basic introduction to the physiology of breathing. It refers to earlier research in the text but does not provide the references so the reader cannot check or follow up information. This makes it useful for teaching the art of critical reading.

Lewis, Denis, The Tao of Natural Breathing: For Health, Well-Being and Inner Growth. Mountain Wind Publishing, San Francisco, CA, 1997.

This very well-illustrated book is strong on the physiology of breathing, the relationship between breath and feelings, and the relationship between energy and breath. Its many interesting exercises are well described both in words and through diagrams. Although it is based on the exercises of Master Mantak Chia, I imagine that many Breathworkers will find, as I did, that they are spontaneously and naturally using similar exercises. A pleasant thought.

Minett, Gunnel, Breath and Spirit: Rebirthing as a Healing Tool, Aquarian Press, UK, 1994.

This book links Rebirthing to its eastern roots, puts it into its psychotherapeutic and spiritual context. It is an excellent guide to the wider world of breathwork, examines breathing, its physiology, the effects of hyperventilation along with the intelligent exploration of the process of Rebirthing. It is well referenced and well written.

Sissons, Colin: Rebirthing Made Easy, Total Press, NZ, 1985.

An early and still useful guide to Rebirthing. While the psychological theory put forward is worded in the language of the early days of Rebirthing, the book explains the basics of the energy cycle, integration and so forth. It lacks references and takes a unequivocal and at times over-simple approach to the concepts of “thought is creative” and the death urge, but its sections on anger, blame, etc. are useful for beginners in breathwork.

Swami Ambikananda Saraswati, Principles of Breathwork, Thorsons, UK, 1999.

A short and very useful book that approaches breathwork from a more body oriented position and sets it in its briefly sketched scientific context. Good for the breadth of its textual references and the contrast in approach to that of the books on Rebirthing and the more psychotherapeutic angle.

Taylor, Kylea: The Breathwork Experience: Exploration of Healing in Non-ordinary States of Consciousness, Hanford Mead, CA, 1994.

The Holotropic approach to breathwork is explained. This is an accessible exploration of the concept of non-ordinary states of consciousness brought about by breathwork but not explored in many of the earlier books. It covers the pre- and peri-natal experiences as well as the transpersonal and explores the use of breathwork with addiction, post-traumatic stress disorders, etc. as well as giving definitions of forms of breathwork. Well referenced.

3.4. Personal Exploration and Growth/Relationships

3.4.1. Books by the First Rebirthers

Introduction

Rebirthing is associated with relationship work, in particular with the Loving Relationships Trainings invented by Sondra Ray.

Note from Joy: When I started Rebirthing my despair was so great that I needed excessive promises that happiness was attainable and simple processes towards that goal. I worked extensively in Mandell and Ray's books. They helped me to avoid bringing the problems of my first relationship into my second one. I remain grateful to them for their contribution to my present happiness and success in relationships. I continue recommend these books to clients who need to learn how to relate.

Mandell, Bob, Open Heart Therapy. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA, 1984.

Heart over Heals: 50 Ways Not to Lose your Lover. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA, 1989.

These books are a lot of fun. Use them for work and play.

Ray, Sondra, Loving Relationships. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA, 1980.

Lots of solid psychotherapy hidden in simple language. The early Rebirthing philosophy on Physical Immortality is largely present. There are many useful Affirmations.

The Only Diet There Is. Berkeley, California: Celestial Arts, 1981.

An excellent training in self-esteem through Affirmations.

I Deserve Love: How Affirmations Can Guide You to Personal Fulfillment. Berkeley, California: Celestial Arts, 1976.

An outstanding workbook to repair one's capacity for having loving relationships including good sexual relationships.

3.4.2. General

Introduction

This is a most difficult section to compile. It could be much longer. Our choice is highly personal, dependent on what has helped us most and provided us at an early level in our training with the best framework for understanding clients.

Beatie, Melody, Co-dependent No More, Hazelden, USA, 1987

A simple, and very useful guide to relationships and the phenomenon of co-dependence, how to cope and how to change.

Dowling, Catherine, Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation. Piatkus, UK, 2000.

A substantial section of this book is devoted to the exploration of human growth and development and the possible effects of life events on the individual's mental and emotional well-being. There are lots of self-exploration exercises throughout the book which will be of use later in a training and when working with clients.

Casement, Patrick, On Learning From the Patient. Routledge, 1986.

When we start working, we believe we have to know a great deal. I think it is true, but that knowledge comes with practice, and grows throughout our working lives. What we can best do, at the beginning, is to learn from our clients, to learn to perceive their needs, follow them, and contribute to their awareness from this basis. An outstanding book on the psychodynamics of the helping relationship. There are sections on inner supervision, and many case histories, and the author generously admits his mistakes and shows how he learned from it. To be read every year of a training, and regularly afterwards!

De Mello, Anthony, Awareness, Fount Paperbacks, UK, 1990.

De Mello was a Jesuit priest with strong Buddhist influences. He combines the psychological with the spiritual but in a way that is practical and personal rather than theoretical. The style is humorous but pulls no punches. Provides a lot of food for thought.

Gendlin, Eugene, Ph.D., Focussing. New York: Bantam Books, 1981 (2nd revised ed.)

An excellent guide on how to pay attention to the body and to feelings. This book explains why in a therapy session of whatever kind “nothing” can happen. The explanation applies perfectly to breathing sessions. There are exercises to do with clients to teach awareness, and to take them by gentle means beyond the stage of “nothing happening.” Basic reading.

Hay, Louise, You Can Heal Your Life, Eden Grove, UK, 1988.

A good introduction to affirmations and cognitive reprogramming. Needs discernment because some of the affirmations suggested are too long and complex but a good starting point for teaching people to develop the language that is emotive for them and to use their body as an indicator of effective words.

Humphreys, Tony, *Myself, My Partner*, Gill & Macmillan, Ireland, 1998.

An anatomy of relationships which begins with relationships with parents and oneself and shows simply and clearly how needs and patterns are repeated in intimate adult relationships.

Caroline Myss, Ph.D. *Why People Don't Heal and How They Can: a Practical Programme for Healing Body, Mind and Spirit*. London: Bantam Books, 1998

As the language of therapy enters daily communication and becomes common, "people are confusing the therapeutic value of self-expression with permission to manipulate others with their wounds." Myss calls this "woundology." Essential reading.

Sparks, Tav, *The Wide Open Door: The Twelve Steps, Spiritual Tradition & the New Psychology*, Hazelden/Hanford Mead. 1993.

This book connects The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to some of the world's greatest spiritual philosophies, Jungian psychology, yoga, the Tao, tribal rites of passage, and more. The book invites us to rediscover the Source behind the Steps through direct personal experience within ourselves and with our Higher Power. The author discusses the experiences of surrender, death and rebirth, and wholeness. He also describes Eleventh Step techniques, such as breathwork – those inner experiences which maintain and deepen recovery. [KT]

Stone, Hal and Sidra Winkelmann, *Embracing Ourselves: The Voice Dialogue Manual*. San Rafael, CA: New World Library, 1989.

The best account of sub-personality theory, and very practical. It's emphasis on the role of the Aware Ego and the importance of developing it is unique in the field.

4. THE SECOND YEAR : ADDITIONAL READING

Introduction

It is not a basic rule that students in the first year are still struggling so hard to make sense of their process of development that they don't have any energy spare for reading, and in any case, during this struggle, which everyone goes through several times in a lifetime, quality literature can give as good guidance as one's trainers or one's therapist.

4.1. Breathwork

Fried, Robert, *Breathe Well, Be Well*, John Wiley & Sons, Inx. NY, 1999

Explains the physiology of breathing in detail with in depth explanations of hyperventilation and the effect of breathing on the body. The book is more rooted in the medical model of illness and health with limited attention to psychological issues such as depression but a very good grounding in the science of breathing. Controversial reliance on the theory of chronic hyperventilation.

Minett, Gunnel, ed. *The Spirit of Breathwork*, International Breathwork Foundation, 2001

A collection of lectures delivered at the Global Inspiration Conferences. Provides a wide range of perspectives on breathwork and related issues and contains most up to date thinking on breathwork, its strengths and weaknesses. Invaluable for generating critical thinking.

Grof, Stanislav *Psychology of the Future* State University of New York, 2001

Talks about nonordinary states of consciousness, the Grof cartography of the psyche, including the stages of birth and the possible symbolic representations of these stages in breathwork. Important for deepening the understanding of the range of experience possible in breathwork and interpreting the more symbolic and transpersonal aspects.

4.2. Birth Trauma Psychology

Introduction

Leonard Orr's Rebirthing got its name because as it was originally practised it induced people to relive their birth trauma. At the time Rebirthing began, many people all over the world were working with the birth trauma including Elizabeth and Leslie Feher in the USA, Frank Lake and R. D. Laing in the UK, and others, and many of them used the term 'rebirthing' to describe their work. Where once Orr's Rebirthing was centred on the reliving of the birth trauma, this is now set among the many powerful experiences that it and many other forms of Breathwork lead to. Nevertheless, the birth trauma comes up, and a Breathwork therapist should know how to handle it, including basic midwifery skills.

Chamberlain, Dr. David, *The Mind of Your Newborn Baby*, North Atlantic Books, CA, 1998

Recent research on pre and peri-natal psychology in a highly readable form. Links birth and in utero experiences to traits and patterns of behaviour in adults. Well referenced and essential basic reading on the psychological and spiritual effects of birth.

Dansby, Binnie A., *Ecstatic Birth ... conceive the possibility*. CD ROM available from www.ecstaticbirth.com

Binnie is a leader in the field of ecstatic birth in water. This CD has pictures, conversations and teaching. It is *wonderful*. A truly marvellous way to convey breathwork and birthwork. Listen to the lovely breathing in the background and go with it into relaxation and joy.

Feher, Leslie, *The Psychology of Birth: the Foundation of the Human Personality*. London: Souvenir Press, 1980.

R. D. Laing learned his rebirthing techniques from Feher who based her work on her mother, Elizabeth Fehr's natal therapy which originated in 1969. An approach by a

psychotherapist which is very rich and valuable.

Gaskin, Ina May, *Spiritual Midwifery*. The Book Publishing Company, Summertown, TN, 1980 (revised edition).

When people relive their birth trauma, they often need to be delivered, as babies do, and go through many of the same movements. It is useful to know some midwifery in order to know how best to support their process.

Grof, Stanislav, *Beyond the Brain*. State University of New York, 1995

Includes a history of psychology and psychiatry and an in depth look at Grof's theories regarding biographical, perinatal and transpersonal experiences in non-ordinary states. Also a thorough description of Grof's COEX systems which can include linked experiences in all three categories. [KT]

Leboyer, Frédérick, *Birth without Violence*. London: Wildwood House, 1975.

A classic. For some this is the book that started awareness that being born was associated with strong feelings including suffering.

Mauger, Benig, *Songs From the Womb: Healing the Wounded Mother*. The Collins Press, Ireland, 1998.

A very moving and compassionate account of birth from the perspectives of both mother and baby by a Jungian psychotherapist. The book also covers the psychological effects of pregnancy and birth, the influence of old unresolved issues and relationships, how birth affects the development of the child, and more. An essential read for anyone concerned with the field of birth psychology.

Ray, Sondra, and Bob Mandel, *Birth and Relationships: How your Birth Affects your Relationships*. Berkeley, California: Celestial Arts, 1987.

How birth affects relationships. This book devotes chapters to various types of birth, gives examples from the writers clinical work and includes lists of characteristics for each birth type with appropriate affirmations. Mandel sensibly reminds the reader that while he and Ray are presenting their knowledge gained from their own experience, far more research is needed on this subject before a reliable cause and effect relationship can be established. It is, therefore, not referenced but is a very useful guide to the effects of birth.

Verny, Dr Thomas, *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child: a remarkable and controversial look at life before birth*. London: Sphere Books, 1982.

A classic. One of the books that started the contemporary interest in the pre-birth period.

Journals

***The Inner Door*, Quarterly Newsletter of the Association for Holotropic Breathwork International, P.O. Box 7167, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-7169**

Primal Health Research, Primal Health Research Centre, website:

www.birthworks.org/primalhealth

The Editor of this journal and website is Dr Michel Odent, a leading influence with regard to gentle childbirth practises.

***The Journal of Pre- and Peri-natal Psychology and Health*, website:**

www.birthpsychology.com/apppah

A North American journal presenting the latest research in the study of the effects of birth on human development. Lots of articles on all aspects of the subject.

***The International Journal of Pre And Peri Natal Psychology And Medicine*. Mattes Verlag, P.O. Box 103866, 69028 Heidelberg, Germany. Website:**

www.isppm.de/index_e.html

A European journal presenting the latest research in the study of the effects of birth on human development. Lots of articles on all aspects of the subject.

4.3. The Inner Child

Introduction

The Inner Child has had a long innings in the new psychotherapies to the extent that it has become almost a cult. Sometimes it is a form of manipulation: “you who are an adult must look after my inner child as children must be looked after by adults, and are less capable of being responsible than adults.” Where we certainly need to take care of our inner child, we need to cultivate an empowered Inner Adult to accomplish this task. Some constructively critical reading on this subject is necessary early on to help cope with this powerful archetype.

Bradshaw, John (1990), *Home Coming: Reclaiming and Championing your Inner Child*, London: Piatkus.

A classic, but with a tendency to encourage victim consciousness

Capacchione, Lucia, Ph.D., *Recovery of your Inner Child*. Simon & Schuster: New York, 1991.

Guided imagery and art-work to find the Inner Parent who can contact, nurture and heal the Inner Child

Hillman, James, and Michael Ventura (1993), *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World's Getting Worse*. San Francisco: Harper.

Essential reading to avoid making the Inner Child into a cult. This book makes a good case for the development of the Inner Adult alongside the healing of the Inner Child.

Caroline Myss, Ph.D. Why People Don't Heal and How They Can: a Practical Programme for Healing Body, Mind and Spirit. London: Bantam Books, 1998

As above, 3.4.2.

Missildine, W, Hugh, *Your Inner Child of the Past*. Pocket Books: New York, 1982

Rich in case histories, this book shows how to take responsibility for one's Inner Child, and thus how to succeed in adult relationships.

Whitfield, Charles L., *Healing the Child Within: Discovery and Recovery for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families*. Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, Inc. , 1987. [2nd ed 1989].

An approach through co-dependency.

Wolinsky, Stephen, *The Dark Side of the Inner Child: The Next Step*. Norfolk, Connecticut: Bramble Books, 1993.

The Inner Child is not all innocence and light. Some people become identified with their Inner Child and lose all of their inner adult capacities. Essential reading to avoid this trap.

4.4. Money Psychology

Introduction

Many Rebirthing trainings include a Money Training which usually lasts 3 days, although this practice is fading fast and so the ideas put forward in a money training can no longer be considered to be an integral part of Rebirthing philosophy.

While a good money training uses money as a focus, it is really a self-esteem training, and is where the deepest pain often surfaces. When the deeper meaning of this training does not come through, students and trainers too develop fear of poverty, a tendency to judge people's worth by the levels of their prosperity and to lay the blame for poverty on the people who are poor and a "You are as good as your bank account, is sometimes the attitude." In other words, when a money training goes wrong, it can end up mired in the cultural values of western capitalist society and therefore becomes culturally inappropriate for large sections of the world's population.

Laut, Phil, *Money is My Friend*, Mass Market Paperback, USA, 1999.

Money trainings form an essential part of Rebirthing philosophy. Wounds to self-esteem show in one's way of coping with money. A classic.

Lockhart, Russell A., et al. (1982), *Soul and Money*. Dallas: Spring Publications.

Jungian analysts on the theme of money. Very insightful.

4.5. Relationships

Introduction

Many of the books in the previous sections are useful for understanding relationships, including those in section 3.4.1 & 2, and in the different parts of this section.

Greer, Jane (1992), *Adult Sibling Rivalry: Understanding the Legacy of Childhood*. New York: Fawcett Crest.

An absolutely marvellous book. Essential for counselling on sibling relationships – and for improving, or at least understanding one's own!

Rosenberg, Marshall B., Ph.D., *Nonviolent Communication*. Del Mar, CA: PuddleDancer, 1999. Press.

An enlightened book with many practical exercises for all occasions.

5. THE THIRD YEAR AND FOURTH YEAR

Introduction

Breathwork is not completely separate from or radically different from other therapies¹⁷ as human problems are the same whichever therapy is used. For this reason we believe that Breathworkers need a certain formal general knowledge of psychotherapy. Further, we believe that Breathworkers should not be giving paid sessions until they have had two years practical experience in a school. These two years are devoted to becoming professional breathworkers and therefore should focus on psychotherapy, ethics, client-therapist relationships, verbal skills, etc.

In those unfortunately all too rare circumstances where trainings exist that are this long, the fourth year is often used as a training in group leadership. In this case at least some literature on this subject should be obligatory. Too many emerge from such a trainings with no perspective on the 'guru' or 'teacher' archetype, and are therefore swallowed up by it with the result that they try to turn their students into followers. This is disempowering on both sides. Group facilitation is a very skilful job that requires specialised knowledge and experiential training. It should not be assumed that because a person has worked extensively on their own issues and has participated in a group process that they are capable of facilitating group therapy or group process. For trainings that include groupwork training elements, we have included some reading on groupwork theory and practice. It should, however, be emphasised in breathwork therapy training courses that a groupwork module, if it is included, does not necessarily qualify trainees to run groups.

We have not repeated the books given in earlier lists. They can all be read and reread as the students knowledge of the process deepens. Nor do we expect students to read all the books below. Rather we hope that they will become launched into their chosen subjects of specialisation, and will discover more books along the way.

¹⁷ See Manné, Joy 'Rebirthing, an orphan or a member of the family of psychotherapies?' *International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine*, Vol.6 (1994), No. 4, 503-517 and 'Rebirthing, is it marvelous or terrible?' *The Therapist: Journal of the European Therapy Studies Institute*, Spring 1995, pp.16-23.

5.1 Therapy and Psychotherapy

Introduction

We consider a basic knowledge of psychotherapy to be essential for Breathworkers. We do not consider it useful to list all the major works in this area as the list would be too long but some of the books we have included cover the development of psychotherapy from Freud to the present day showing how one school developed into another. In illustrating the main tenets of each school breathwork trainees can find their roots and explore alternative maps of the psyche to those usually presented with breathwork such as rebirthing. These books are well referenced with bibliographies so students can explore further in areas that interest them. At least some of the great innovators in the field: Freud, Jung, Adler, Reich, Lowen, Berne, Rogers, Maslow, etc., should be read, so that the sources of the Breathwork method can be appreciated. An overview of Breathwork's roots in classic psychotherapy can be found in Manné, Joy 'Rebirthing, an orphan or a member of the family of psychotherapies?' *International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine*, Vol.6 (1994), No. 4, 503-517, and 'Rebirthing, is it marvellous or terrible?' *The Therapist: Journal of the European Therapy Studies Institute*, Spring 1995, pp.16-23 reprinted in *The Spirit of Breathwork*, ed. Minett.

5.1.1 General Reading

Bowlby, John, *Child Care and the Growth of Love*, Middlesex: Harmondsworth, 1953.

Attachment and Loss: Vol. 1, Attachment (2nd ed. 1982) London: Hogarth.

Vol. 2, Separation, Anxiety and Anger, London: Hogarth, 1973.

Vol. 3, Loss, sadness and Depression, London: Hogarth, 1980.

And his other books and articles. Well written books based on quite ethological observations of children and their caretakers. You will learn a lot from these. They changed my life. [JM]

Burns, David D., MD, *The Feeling Good Handbook*, Plume, NY, 1999.

The concept that what we think and believe shapes our experience of life is a fundamental part of breathwork theory. It forms the essence of cognitive therapy and this book is cognitive therapy for everyone. Full of useful exercises as well as diagnostic tools and a large section on medication with its effects, side effects, contraindication and various generic and commercial names. The book also contains a chapter on diagnosing moods which is very useful when trying to assess the suitability of clients for breathwork.

Corsini, Raymond J. & Contributors, *Current Psychotherapies*, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., USA, 1979

An overview of psychotherapeutic theories and practices from psychoanalysis to the human potential movement. Not the easiest book to read but worth the effort. All the roots of breathwork as a therapy are there with references for further exploration.

Erikson, Erik, *Childhood and Society*, Penguin Books, UK, 1965.

The psychoanalytic approach to human development which contains an account of Eriksons eight stages of development. Good for insight into the workings of the subconscious, the area of the id which is not examined in most breathwork literature. Also compares child rearing practices in various cultures and sets human psychology into a cultural framework which is quite subversive of New Age theories.

Gilligan, Stephen, *The Courage to Love*, W. W. Norton, 1997.

A theory of Self-Relations which introduces easy concepts such as “sponsoring the neglected self in self and others”, “both/and” and practising presence in relationships, especially therapeutic relationships.

Grof, Christina & Grof, Stanislav, *The Stormy Search For The Self: Understanding And Living With Spiritual Emergency*, Thorsons, UK, 1995

A good guide to the differences between spiritual experiences that can arise through breathwork and episodes of psychosis which often appear similar in symptomology. A good basic guide to recognising psychotic episodes in clients which indicate a need for referral to more appropriately trained health care professionals.

Hough, Margaret, *Counselling Skills and Theory*, Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 1998

A comprehensive and easy to digest review of the major psychotherapeutic theories from psychodynamic to behavioural and cognitive approaches. Shows how one approach develops into another and compares and contrasts the different schools. Also deals with client therapist relationships as well as interpersonal (counselling) skills.

Manné, Joy, *Soul Therapy* (3.1)

The basic concepts of psychotherapy: projection, transference and countertransference are presented in a simple and practical way with exercises.

Miller, Alice

Everything by her, but don't be taken in by her admiration for J. Konrad Stettbacher. What was a discovery for a Freudian analyst, i.e. of a holistic body therapy approach, is the norm for professional breathworkers, and they do the work better! They have more experience!

Rowan, John, *The Transpersonal*, Routledge, 1993

A readable and informative historical view of the arrival and development of the Transpersonal Psychology movement, with the emphasis on Ken Wilber's map of consciousness and its relevance to therapy approaches. It includes brief overviews of the works of many well known Transpersonal authors: Jung, Grof, Maslow, Mindell, James Hillman, and Hans and Sidra Stone (Voice Dialogue) among others. Accessible and highly recommended.

Stafford-Clark, David, *What Freud Really Said*, Penguin, UK, 1992

Freud developed the key concepts of therapy and key terms used and misused by therapists including breathworkers. This is a short and useful book for defining terms such as ego, transference, life and death urges, etc.

Wilber, Ken, *Spectrum of Consciousness*, Quest, Wheaton, 1977.

This is the first of one of many ground breaking books by Ken Wilber, introducing his new and influential map of psychospiritual development.

5.1.2 Family Systems Therapy

Neither of us are trained in Family Therapy. For a while now I have been successfully combining Bert Hellinger's Family Energy Systems approach (see 5.12) in individual sessions with excellent results. I hope to be publishing on this subject soon in this journal. I have observed that people with vast amounts of breathwork or other good therapeutic experiences often stagnate, turning round and around the same problems. As soon as the contribution of the family system to the problem is dealt with, huge leaps forward are made.

Family systems therapy deals with some problems that are known in Rebirthing, for example, that the children try to solve the parent's problems, often by taking these onto themselves. These "hidden loyalties" are noble and to be respected as they are based on spontaneous caring and natural gratitude. As they continue through generations, family therapy takes an intergenerational approach, looking at the "intergenerational legacy:" the influences from grandparents and previous generations, onto their own children, grandchildren, etc. Family Systems Therapy looks at the relationship between giving and receiving, and obligation within a family. When these are energetically in harmony, much is healed. The influence of historical events, too, such as the holocaust, is respected.

Family systems therapy is sensitive to children's needs to belong. It is against blame, which is healthy and unusual in therapy. Individual therapy tends too often to blame the parents, and discount the "hidden loyalties." Rebirthing's "Parental Disapproval Syndrome" can be interpreted to do just that when used insensitively.

Barker, Philip, *Basic Family Therapy*, Blackwell Science, 1998 (4th edition)

A solid introduction. Use it as a reference book. I would not call it readable! [JM]

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan

Everything he has written. It's heavy stuff with a strong Freudian bias, but worth the struggle.

Byng-Hall, John, *Rewriting Family Scripts: Improvisation and Systems Change*, New York: The Guildford Press, 1995

Compassionate and interesting. He explains family scripts, attachment theory, and the issues of continuity, repetition and change in family relationship. Good case histories. Excellent references.

McGoldrick, Randy Gerson and Silvia Shellenberger, *Genograms: Assessment and*

Intervention. W. W. Norton and Co. 1999.

This book explains a system of mapping repetitious patterns in families through the genogram. It is illustrated with the genograms of the rich and famous. Exposing them in this way made me feel uncomfortable. Where are limits to privacy? It is a classic, however.

Hellinger, Bert (see also 5.12)

Everything he has written and all the videos. This approach is the closest to a breathwork approach. Pure energywork at its best.

Satir, Virginia

Another great expert and founder of the subject. Read whatever you can. Some are a bit turgid, being lists of energy relationships without examples to illustrate them.

Schwartz, Richard C. *Internal Family Systems Therapy*, New York: The Guilford Press, 1995.

Using the family systems model with subpersonalities. The writer combines Gestalt, Voice Dialogue and imagery techniques into an interesting method.

5.1.3 Counselling and Interpersonal And Verbal Skills

Introduction

We believe that a key element in the therapeutic process is the therapist; the totality of who they are which includes their level of personal development, skills and attitudes as well as life experiences. The following books focus on the point of contact between two people, therapist and client, and the verbal and non-verbal interaction between them. The quality of this interaction influences the course of the session as much if not more than any technique used including the technique of breathwork. In addition to these books, we draw your attention to Wilfried Ehrmann's articles in *The Healing Breath: a Journal fo Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality* and in *ATMAN*.

Hough, Margaret, *Counselling Skills and Theory* (see 5.1 above)

Outlines the stages of the therapeutic relationships and the verbal skills such as reflecting and challenging which are appropriate to each stage. Contains very useful practice exercises which can provide opportunities for skills development and feedback.

O'Farrell, Ursula, *First Steps in Counselling*, Ireland: Veritas, 1988

More detailed and advanced than the O'Farrell book it covers the essential elements and skills but also has chapters on depression, anxiety, more complex personality disorders, death, suicide, addiction, etc.

Rogers, Carl R., *On Becoming a Person*, Constable, UK, 1967

Important reading for anyone planning to work in a therapeutic capacity with others. The nature and key elements of the client therapist relationship are

outlined by the man who defined them and the stages of development of that relationship and the issues that arise are discussed. The attitudes and actions of the therapist are examined. A good book to balance the sometimes excessive faith placed by breathworkers in therapist intuition and the tendency to minimising the breathworker's role in the session.

Steiner, Claude, *Emotional Literacy*, Bloomsbury, 1997

This is an excellent handbook of Transactional Analysis showing clearly how to manage relationships through communicating.

Bolton, Robert, *People Skills*, Prentice Hall, 1986

This is a communication skills handbook which is very practical and easy to follow. It explains how to assert yourself, listen to others and resolve conflicts. It includes methods of preventing and resolving conflicts.

Amy and Thomas Harris, *Staying OK*, Pan Book Ltd, 1985

This is a very practical application of Transactional Analysis. It contains many examples of dialogues which are ineffective, and shows how they can be improved. The message is maximise good feelings and minimise the bad ones, and live life to the fullest. Common sense and realism, with plenty of examples and anecdotes.

5.2 Ethics

Taylor, Kylea, *The Ethics of Caring: Honoring the Web of Life in Our Professional Healing Relationships*, Hanford Mead Publishers, CA, 1995

Essential reading on the subject of client-therapist relationships specifically written based on experiences with breathwork situations. It deals clearly and thoroughly with the ethical issues that arise within breathwork sessions and provides a comprehensive guide to the possible areas of danger as well as the recognisable signals that might indicate future difficulties. Well written, well referenced.

5.3 General Breathwork

Introduction

The Breathwork books in the previous lists should be read and reread as experience grows. The books in this short section expand and deepen the information contained in books listed for the earlier years.

Johnson, Don Hanlon (ed.), *Bone, Breath & Gesture: Practices of Embodiment*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1995.

A hugely inspiring book with interviews and articles by contemporary breathing and bodywork teachers from diverse schools, including Elsa Gindler, Charletto Selver, Carola Speads, Marion Rosen, Ilse Middendorf, F.M. Alexander, Moshe Feldenkreis, Ida Rolf, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Judith Aston, Irmgard

Bertenieff, Mary Whitehouse, Gerda Alexander, Emilie Conrad Da'Oud, Elizabeth A. Behnke, Thomas Hanna, Dean Julian. The breadth of the field is impressive. Moreover, most of these people have written their own books about breathing, so it is a great source for further reading.

Timmons, Beverly H. & Ronald Ley (eds.) *Behavioural and Psychological Approaches to Breathing Disorders*. London: Plenum Press, 1994.

Psychological Breathwork has hardly begun to make its contribution to knowledge of breathing disorders, as this collection shows. It includes physiological explanations of breathing, the role of the nose in breathing, breathing control, abnormalities of breathing during sleep, the hyperventilation syndrome, etc.

5.4 Breathwork Specialisations

Introduction

The books in this section are, in a way, indicators. They are the books we know and recommend, and we are aware that there is a huge choice in any of these areas.

5.4.1 Breathwork and Bodywork

BioEnergetics

Bioenergetics was developed by Alexander Lowen from the work of Wilhelm Reich. It is an excellent technique for resolving tensions in the body. It includes a strong breathwork element and people often take both BioEnergetic and Breathwork trainings. They are complementary.

Lowen, Alexander, *Bioenergetics: The Revolutionary Therapy That Uses The Language Of The Body To Heal The Problems Of The Mind*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1976.

The basic text.

Mindell, Arnold, *Dreambody: The Body's Role in Revealing the Self*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.

A Jungian approach to the hidden significance of physical sensations and body experiences. Breathing is taken into account.

Rosenberg, Jack, et. al. *Body, Self and Soul: Sustaining Integration*, Humanics Ltd., USA, 1991.

A very interesting account of Integrated Bodywork Psychotherapy which combines breathwork, bodywork and verbal therapy. Excellent for its system of body related issues as well as an analysis of the stages of human development explained in an intelligent and well written style.

Martial Arts

We have no experience of martial arts but we do know they interest themselves in breathing and many have breathing exercises

Nancy Zi, *The Art of Breathing: Six Simple Lessons to Improve Performance, Health and Well-Being*. Glendale, CA: Vivi company, 1997

Video: *The Art of Breathing: Six Simple Lessons to Improve Performance, Health and Well-Being*. ISBN 1-884872-73-5

Nancy Zi has invented *chi yi* – the art of Breathing, influenced by *chi kung*, the ancient Chinese art of breath manipulation aimed at generating inner vigour. The exercises are aimed mainly at singers, as Zi herself is a singer, and at public speakers, but they are useful for anyone and unusual, and therefore fun.

Yoga

Yoga books relevant to breathwork will have good sections on pranayama. Classic texts tend to have line drawings, diagrams, while modern ones have attractive photographs of asanas. Personally I prefer the modern ones. (VSL)

Kent, Howard. *New perspectives: Yoga*. Element Books, May 2000

Written with all the wisdom of Kent's 80 years, thirty of which have involved running the Yoga for Health Foundation, which emphasises breathing as a healing tool when incorporated into Yoga.

5.4.2. Breathing Work

I learned about “breathing work” as opposed to “breathwork” on Mike Grant White's website, www.breathing.com. I quote,

“It is helpful to think of basically three schools of breathing: 1. breathwork, 2. breathing work, 3. breathing/pulmonary/rehabilitation.

Pulmonary rehabilitation is what you get from the hospital. They are masters at keeping people alive in the surgical arena. But due to their audience being largely comprised of emergencies and or sick people, they rarely get opportunity to work with optimal breathing techniques. So their clinical research is centered primarily around illness instead of wellness.

Breathing is hopefully just “natural” balanced breathing. But few know what “natural “ breathing looks, feels, sounds and acts like. Because breathing drives the autonomic nervous system like the lead horse in a team of horses, balanced breathing is indispensable to wholeness and mind body spirit integrity. Breathing work is more about the mechanics of the way you breathe as they relate to healthy ways of being and significant life extension. Because it takes in so many aspects of one's life it is sometimes referred to as “multitasking systems for bio-integration”.

Breathwork is more about strong Energetics, altered states of

consciousness, spirituality and rapid personal transformation with little or no regard to optimal function. Breathwork seeks to explore the awesome expansiveness of the heaven on earth, plus the occasionally confusing, and sometimes terrifying inner spaces of our deepest, darkest consciousness.

Resolution of emotional trauma occurs with both modality. Because it seeks to restore normal equilibrium, I believe, because of its balancing natures, trauma is more dependably resolved with breathing work. Breathing work seeks to restore peace and personal power; being the way you want to be. Breathwork seeks to explore one's psychic interior. Freedom of spontaneous expression is encouraged in both breathwork and breathing work. In its desire to restore balance, optimal breathing work supports breathwork. Breathwork can hinder breathing work by challenging one's homeostasis. And sometimes this is good as in the case of opening up to new ways of thinking and feeling, more enlightened ways of seeing our inner and outer world. Breathing work makes change more safe and gives the person a grounded home base to return to after the heavenward journey of spontaneous altered states of consciousness of breathwork. They are quite compatible but rarely interchangeable. Breathworkers should know all about breathing work. Breathing workers should respect the power, dangers and boundaries of breathwork.”

(Mike

White,

<http://www.breathing.com/articles/differences.htm>)

Hale, Teresa, *Breathing Free: The 5-Day Breathing Programme That Will Change Your Life*, Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 1999

A readable guide to the method of breathing work developed by Konstantin Buteyko which is reputed to be particularly useful for the control of asthma. Hale makes very grandiose claims for the technique and is critical of almost all other forms of breathwork and breathing work. However, it is a good account of the technique and could be useful for some breathwork clients.

Kent, Howard, *Breathe Better, Feel Better: increase energy, control anxiety, improve health and relax with simple breathing techniques*. London: The Apple Press, 1997.

A very inspiring, beautifully illustrated book with outstanding exercises to improve many particular aspects of breathing and to use breathing to energise and relax, and to alleviate problems such as eyestrain, jetlag and circulation.

Speads, Carola, *Better Ways to Better Breathing*, Rochester, Vermont: Healing Arts Press, 1992.

A basic text on breathing work, with explanations, exercises and illustrations. Speads is from the Ilsa Gindler school. Mike Grant White (see below) told me that she did her breathing work to age 98.

Mike Grant White website: www.breathing.com.

Mike White collects information on both Breathwork and Breathing Work on his

website, publishes a Manual, and various tapes. It is a very valuable resource and is developing all the time. It was his website that inspired my insights into this separate category of Breathwork. [JM]

5.4.3 Holotropic Breathwork – Advanced Reading

There is no advanced book for HB other than Grof's *Beyond the Brain* (4.2) and *Psychology of the Future* (4.1). The basic principle of HB is simplicity, with the facilitator learning from experience more and more about how to “not-do” rather than how to “do” and studying esoteric and psychological studies of all kinds so that he or she will be able to accept and validate the kinds of things that can happen for the breather. The Grof Transpersonal Training encourages certified facilitators to return for additional trainings for their own inner work, for the experience of community, and for remembering the value of non-doing. [KT]

Hand, Robert, *Planet's in Transit*, Whitford Press, 1981.

Grof has found that no standardised tests accurately predict the content of non-ordinary states experiences, but that the transits of the outer planets to the person's natal chart do accurately predict in an archetypal way (relating to Grof's perinatal cartography also) the content of such sessions. We hope at some point that Rick Tarnas and Grof will publish something on this, but it hasn't happened yet.

5.4.4 Breathwork Meditation

Introduction

Note from Joy: I started Vipassana meditation in 1965, came to Rebirthing in 1984, and have a Ph.D. in Buddhist Psychology and Texts. It was inevitable that my practise of Breathwork would be influenced by my knowledge of meditation techniques and Buddhist texts, although I am careful not to impose a Buddhist belief structure on my clients. Combining Breathwork and meditation seems to me a valid specialisation in Breathwork.

Brazier, David, *Zen Therapy*. London: Constable, 1995.

***The Feeling Buddha: a Buddhist Psychology of Character, Adversity and Passion*. London: Constable, 1997.**

Outstanding books on how to combine Buddhism with Psychotherapy. Brazier is a priest, as well as a Rogerian and eclectic therapist. He has his own meditation centres in France and in the UK. www.amidatrust.com.

Claxton, Guy (ed.), *Beyond Therapy: The Impact of Eastern Religions on Psychological Theory and Practice*. Dorset, UK: Prism Press, 1996. (1st published 1986 by Wisdom)

A leading book in the field that shows the variety of approaches. Contains Joy Manné's 'Buddhist Psychology: a paradigm for a Psychology of Enlightenment,' as well

as articles by David Fontana, Malcolm Walley, Padmal da Silva, and Claxton, among others.

De Mello, Anthony, *Sadhana, A Way to God: Christian Exercises in Eastern Form*, Image Books, NY, 1984.

A lovely book of simple meditations from both Christian and Buddhist traditions.

Epstein, Mark, *Thoughts Without a Thinker*. Basic Books, HarperCollins Publishers, 1995.

A Freudian psychoanalyst's way of incorporating the Buddhist approach in his practice. Some rather weird projecting onto the Buddha, but much insightful material as well.

Ital, Gerda, *The Master, the Monks, and I: a Western Woman's Experience of Zen*. Wellingborough, UK: Thorsons, 1987.

***On the Way to Satori: A Woman's Experience of Enlightenment*. Dorset, UK: Element, 1990.**

Very good accounts of practice, and of conditions for practice in Japan.

Kawai, Hayao, *Buddhism and the Art of Psychotherapy*. Texas A & M University Press, 1996.

A Japanese Jungian psychoanalyst, and how he uses Buddhism in his work.

Kornfield, J. (1993). *A Path with Heart: A Guide Through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life*. New York: Bantam.

A meditation teacher's guide to help students sort out their feelings and experiences on their spiritual path. [KT]

Kornfield, J. (2000). *After the Ecstasy, the Laundry: How the Heart Grows Wise on the Spiritual Path*. New York: Bantam, Doubleday, Dell.

Down-to-earth description of the phases and moods of the spiritual path with humor, compassion and wise counsel. [KT]

Manné, Joy, *Soul Therapy* (see 3.1, 5.1)

This book has a place in this section as well. There is a section on dealing with Suffering through the Four Noble Truths.

Pickering, John (ed), *The Authority of Experience: Essays in Buddhism and Psychology*. Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1997.

Includes Joy Manné's review article, 'Creating a Contemporary Buddhist Psychotherapy,' of Brazier (1995) and Epstein (above) as well as articles by Eleanor Rosch, Padmal de Silva, Herbert Guenther, Pickering, Brian L. Lancaster, Elizabeth Valentine, and John Crook.

Rosenberg, Larry, *The Liberating Practice of Insight Meditation*. Boston: Shambala, 1998.

A Western meditation teachers interpretation and explanation of the *Anapanasati Sutta* – the teaching on in and out breathing.

Thich Nhat Hahn

Everything by him! He is a great inspiration and some say he is Enlightened – in the Buddhist sense of the term which is not lightly used. He has a meditation centre in France.

Watson, Gay, Stephen Batchelor and Guy Claxton (eds.), *The Psychology of Awakening: Buddhism, Science and our Day-to-Day Lives*. London: Rider, 1999

A collection of readings. Contains Joy Manné's, 'Mindfulness of Breathing and Contemporary Breathwork Techniques,' in which she suggest ways of using Breathwork to deal with problems that arise in meditation. There are also articles by the editors, and by John Welwood, Mark Epstein, and John Crook, among others.

5.4.5 Rebirthing: advanced reading

Rebirthing had a particular philosophy at the beginning including the defence of hyperventilation, a commitment to physical immortality, exercises in physical purification, etc. This has changed considerably over the years to the point that now, in many Rebirther training schools, Rebirthing is viewed as a form of psychotherapy. As such the early tenets and concepts listed above (hyperventilation, physical immortality and physical purification) no longer form part of the programme. There was also a strong reliance on theoretical formulae like the Personal Lie and a very literal version of "thought is creative." The interpretation of thought is creative has become far more compassionate and the allegiance to Physical Immortality has almost disappeared in some countries.¹⁸

The emphasis in the Rebirthing style of breathwork is on filling the upper chest on the inhale with a gentle, unforced and uncontrolled exhale. Inhale and exhale are connected. While catharsis during Rebirthing is perfectly acceptable, rebirthees are encouraged to use their breath to integrate activated emotions and issues.

Some of the difficulties that may be associated with Rebirthing are a lack of respect for persistent resistance, an over-reliance on theory, sometimes to the point where the client is made to fit the theory rather than the other way around and, in some countries, rebirthers practising with as little as seven days' training. At it's best it is an exceptionally effective, safe, gentle and often pleasurable path to mental, emotional and spiritual transformation and well-being.

Books about Rebirthing are in 3.1, 3.2, 3.3. Begg (3.3.2) specialises in combining Rebirthing and Past Life work. Hendricks (3.3.2) is doing Rebirthing under another name. See also Sissons (3.3.2) and Minett's excellent *Breath and Spirit: Rebirthing as a Healing Tool* (3.3.2).

¹⁸ See Mandel, Bob: *Featuring Bob Mandel*, Breath and Inspiration: the IBF Newsletter, Nov. 1999.

Journals that publish articles on Rebirthing include *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality* (3.1), *Breathe: the International Breathwork Magazine* and *ATMAN*, a German journal of high quality edited by Wilfried Ehrmann. Articles from *ATMAN* are frequently translated for *The Healing Breath*. Advanced reading includes:

Dowling, Catherine, *Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation*. Piatkus, UK, 2000.

Kravitz, Judith, *Breathe Deep, Laugh Loudly*. Free Press Ink, CT, 1999.

Except for its unfounded claims for originality, Chapter 4 is an excellent chapter on the typical development and use of techniques in certain types of rebirthing session. Chapter 5 provides ways of diagnosing the breath and is very interesting. It would be an outstanding project for Breathwork to test Kravitz' ideas through research. I would call this part of this chapter (pp. 39-49) essential reading at all levels in a breathwork training. Otherwise the kind of introductory book with too much hype and too many miraculous promises.

Manné, Joy, *Soul Therapy*, North Atlantic Books, CA, 1997.

Contains a constructively critical approach.

Morningstar, Jim, *Breathing in Light and Love: Your Call to Breath and Body Mastery*. Transformations Inc., 1994.

Relates Lowen's body types to breathwork practice, with recommendations. A first.

5.5 Relationships

Hafner, J., (1994), *The End of Marriage: Why Monogamy Isn't Working*, Trafalgar, USA.

Excellent book on the intricacies of relationships from both the male and female point of view. The dynamics behind relationship difficulties and the effect being involved in a long term relationship has on both partners.

Johnson, Robert A. *HE: Understanding Masculine Psychology*. New York: Harper and Row, (1989).

An outstanding short book that gives a lot of insight. All of his books on relationship are worth reading.

Stone, Hal and Sidra Winkelmann, *Embracing Ourselves: the Voice Dialogue Manual*. San Rafael, California: New World Library, 1989.

***Embracing Each Other: Relationship as Teacher, Healer and Guide*. San Rafael, California: New World Library, 1989.**

If you hope to succeed in your relationships, these two books are indispensable. They show how sub-personalities can make or break our relationships. (See also 4.3.2.)

5.6 Trauma and Abuse

Introduction

Recent years have seen an outbreak of accusations of sexual abuse within the family, and rancorous discussions among the protagonists of each position rather than explorative attempts to discover the truth. In the psyche, the “truth” is always in evolution: how we understand the events of yesteryear today will inevitably change as we grow older and mature. This is an important issue in all therapy including breathwork, and we include many books on the subject here. However, while sexual abuse is currently a very live issue in the media, another important area under this heading is domestic violence. As up to 25% of women in the Western countries are abused within relationships, the chances of this issue arising in breathwork sessions is high. With violence, it is vital for the physical safety of the client that the therapist understands the issues involved, and for therapeutic work that he/she understands the dynamics of abusive relationships.

We draw your attention to our articles in *The Healing Breath: a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality* (available through www.i-breathe.com): ‘Rebirthing and Domestic Abuse’ (CD, Vol 1, No. 3); ‘Sexual Abuse: Myth Dream or Reality – a Breathwork Case History (JM, Vol. 2, No. 1).

Bass, Ellen and Laura Davis, *The Courage to Heal: a Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*. HarperCollinsPublishers, 1988.

A very controversial book which indoctrinates everyone into the idea that they must have been abused. The reader needs to defend herself against that, but if you can, and can stay with your real truth, it has useful exercises towards healing.

Loftus, Elizabeth, *The Myth Of Repressed Memory: False Memories And Allegations Of Sexual Abuse*.

This book puts the issue of lost memories in question. If one cannot put one’s beliefs in question, one risks living in prejudice. Some cases of repressed memory will be valid, others will not. A good book.

Dineen, Tana, *Manufacturing Victims: what the psychology industry is doing to people*. London: Constable, 1999.

A wonderful title, a poor book, not worth buying but worth glancing through in a library to become aware of the problems.

Draucker, Claire Burke, *Counselling Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*. London: Sage, 1992.

A sensible and thorough book.

Finkelhorn, D., Gelles, R. J., Hotaling, G. T., & Strauss, M. A.: (1983), *The Dark Side of Families: Current Family Violence Research*, Sage, Beverly Hills, CA, USA

A good book for understanding the dynamics of abuse within families, the effect on children, the very real dangers, etc.

Haaken, Janice, *Pillar of Salt: Gender, Memory and the Perils of Looking Back*. London: Free Association Books, 1998.

An extraordinarily good book. It looks at this subject in the greatest depth and with the most imagination and perception of all those I know. It examines the trauma model, the influence of psychoanalytical feminism, remembering, hysteria, testifying, and the problem of therapy and the problems therapy can cause in abuse cases.

Ofshe, Richard & Ethan Watters, *Making Monsters: False Memories, Psychotherapy and Sexual Hysteria*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994.

Like the Loftus book, this one makes the case against repressed memory. There are sufficient case histories showing how recovered memories can be manufactured through poor therapeutic techniques for this to be required reading in this subject area.

Sinason, Valerie (ed.), *Memory in Dispute*. London: Karnak, 1998.

An excellent collection of articles.

Stordeur, R., Stille, R., (1989), *Ending Men's Violence Against Their Partners*. Sage, CA, USA.

Why do men abuse and why do women take it. Ways of working with men to end abusive behaviour. Working with abusive men is a specialised skill and the therapist can be easily fooled by the skilful manipulation that goes hand in hand with domestic/relationship violence. This book should help therapists to understand what they are dealing with.

5.7 Working With Groups

Introduction

Students who graduate from a four year training will have substantial experience of what it is like to be a member of a group and if the training course is well structured it will include ongoing evaluation of the course and group process with students and trainers. This will supply students with an overview of the general characteristics of groups. If they are to run groups themselves we recommend that this experience be developed by formal training in group facilitation and by reading. Many issues arise in groups and groupwork which can be difficult to spot. The untrained facilitator is open to very human foibles of becoming a guru themselves, creating guru followers or allowing potentially damaging situations and relationships to develop within the group. For this reason we recommend as a minimum the following books.

Benson, J. *Working More Creatively With Groups*, Routledge, UK, 1991

A very easy to read, well structured book on the developmental stages of groups, the needs of group members at each stage, issues such as hidden agenda, balancing needs, roles and more. An essential basic book on groupwork.

Bion, W. R., *Experiences in Groups*, Tavistock, UK, 1961.

A classic of groupwork from the Tavistock Institute, one of the leading institutions in groupwork and group therapy.

Kramer, Joel, and Diana Alstad (1993), *The Guru Papers: Masks of Authoritarian Power*, Berkley, California: North Atlantic Books/Frog Ltd.

A book that shows all the dangers of following gurus, and is itself written in guru style, typically with no references. Nevertheless it is essential reading. It will help you to avoid becoming influenced and controlled by your trainers' or your own guru instincts!

Yalom, Irvin, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, Basic Books Inc., NY, 1975.

This is a big book but well worth reading. It covers in depth group development, stages, needs, etc. but also relationships within groups, the role of the facilitator/therapist, difficult group members, transference and countertransference, projection and much more. A must for anyone who is contemplating running a group.

5.8 Imagination

Introduction

Imagination, Regression, Dreams and Art are all products of the unconscious that contribute to healing. Techniques of suggestions stimulate the imagination and can induce regressions, dreams and art work. Regressions, dreams and art can frequently be worked with in a similar way. This is our reason for making this into one category.

Techniques of Suggestion that are integral to Rebirthing include its position that "Thoughts are Creative" with its logical corollary that if we change our thoughts this has an effect on our lives. The use of affirmations is the basic technique in Breathwork for changing thoughts.

Therapists and Breathworkers routinely use suggestion, and the effective use of suggestion is what Neuro-Linguistic Training is about. The distance between suggestions and manipulation is sometimes a question of interpretation! (See Manné, Joy, *Soul Therapy* for a section on this subject.) There have been many cases where accusations of sexual abuse have been retracted through the accuser realising that the therapist had suggested the abuse, rather than lost memories of the abuse reliably coming from the accuser's unconscious. (see section on Trauma and Abuse, 5.9).

5.8.1 Art Therapy

Introduction

Art is a very efficient means of integrating experience. It is an integral part of Holotropic Breathwork™. Art therapy cannot be learned from books but requires a practical basis. Nevertheless the books below are interesting and useful.

Capacchione, Lucia, *The Picture of Health: Healing Your Life with Art*. Santa Monica, CA: Hay House, 1990.

An excellent, well illustrated book with a very practical approach.

Frost, Seena, *SoulCollage: An Intuitive Collage Process for Individuals and Groups*, Santa Cruz, CA: Hanford Mead Publishers, Inc. 2001.

Describes how to create a beautiful deck of cards that have deep personal meaning and use the language of symbols, dreams, and archetypes to answer life's questions. SoulCollage can be used as a personal spiritual practice or as a satisfying way to encourage identification and expression of inner feelings in other educational, spiritual, or therapeutic group settings. The interactive website shows cards from the personal decks of others in colour at www.soulcollage.com.

[KT]

Tessa Dalley (ed.), *Art as Therapy: an Introduction to the use of art as a therapeutic technique*. London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1984.

A book of theory rather than practice, it shows the way people think about Art Therapy, and so is valuable for setting the background of information necessary for constructive criticism.

Rhyne, Janie, *The Gestalt Art Experience: creative process and expressive therapy*. Monterey, CA: Magnolia Street Publishers, 1984.

Clear and well illustrated, with many case histories and good exercises.

5.8.2 Dreams

Introduction

Dreams have been called the royal road to the unconscious. I call Breathwork the TGV (high-speed train) to the unconscious. Clients will bring dreams to sessions, and can then do breathwork into their dreams. [JM]

Delaney, Gayle M. V., Ph.D., *Living Your Dreams: Using Sleep to Solve Problems and Enrich Your Life*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988 (revised ed.)

A very good practical book on working with dreams.

Gendlin, Eugene T. *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams*. Wilmette, Illinois: Chiron Press 1986.

Breathwork is a body therapy, and much of what has to be explained to people using verbal therapies is obvious to Breathworkers. Where this book is specially useful is

in the examples it gives of making associations to dreams, and how to use these for interpretation.

Mattoon, Mary Ann, *Understanding Dreams*. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1978.

Jung's method of dream interpretation presented in an accessible way.

Watkins, Mary, *Waking Dreams*. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1984.

A Jungian approach and an excellent source of information. This book gives an interesting and useful background to attitudes to dreams and to waking dreams in the psychoanalytic tradition. The work of Janet, Freud, Jung, Desoille (who created guided imagination – *reve éveillé dirigé*), etc.

5.8.3 Imagework, Suggestion, NeuroLinguistic Programming (NLP), Hypnosis

Bandler, Richard and John Grindler, *ReFraming: Neuro-Linguistic Programming and that transformation of Meaning*, Real People Press, Moab, Utah, 1982.

Reframing has become an in word. This book will teach you how to do it. The NLP version of "thought is creative."

Cameron-Bandler, Leslie, *Solutions: Practical and Effective Antidotes for Sexual and relationship Problems*. San Rafael, CA, FuturePace, Inc. 1985.

A very good book on relationships. The various methods taught sharpens awareness skills.

Cameron-Bandler, Leslie, *The Emotional Hostage: Rescuing Your Emotional Life*. San Rafael, CA, FuturePace, Inc. 1986.

An NLP way to work with your emotions. You might even learn to choose them!

Gawain, Shakti, *Creative Visualisation*. San Rafael: New World Library, 1985.

A classic in the field, and used by many Rebirthers and Breathworkers.

Glouberman, Dina (1989), *Life Choices and Life Changes through Imagework: the Art of Developing Personal Vision*. London: Unwin Paperbacks.

My favourite book on using imagery. It is full of effective techniques and useful exercises. (JM)

Haley, Jay (1973), *Uncommon Therapy: the Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, M.D.* New York: W W Norton & Company.

Erickson's work is the basis for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Erickson is described as a hypnotist. There are, however, many questions around what exactly hypnotism really is: Breathwork induces many forms of trance or altered states of consciousness and I would not call it a hypnotic technique. Erickson was a

marvellous therapist. It is well worth reading this and other books about him, as well as his own case histories.

Krasner, A.M., *The Wizard Within*, American Board of Hypnotherapy, US, 1990.

A good, simple introduction to hypnotherapy and the power of suggestion.

Erickson, Milton H.

Everything. He is a most inspiring therapist.

5.8.4. Intuition and Channelling

Introduction

Through breathwork one is likely to develop one's intuition, and it may happen that people start channelling in a breathwork session. We live in an age where it sometimes seem that everyone wants to become an "intuitive," and the many books that teach easy options to this goal, also attest their authors' ill health, confusion, vanity and unreliability. Here are three reliable books.

**Gawain, Shakti (2000), *Developing Intuition: Practical Guidance for Daily Life*.
Novato, California: New World Library.**

An excellent beginner's book.

Judee Gee, *Intuition: Awakening Your Inner Guide: a beginners' book; complete instructions*. Samuel Weiser, Inc.: York Beach, Maine, 1999.

This book is an outstanding introduction to the use of intuition, which, for this author includes psychic gifts, healing, and creative visualisation. This is not a soft-option book that promises easy results without effort. It is a clear and honest book with many good case studies that illustrate well the discipline and techniques it teaches. If one wishes to develop one's intuition, one has to work sincerely at one's own process to develop clarity. If you sincerely want to develop your intuition, this is the book for you. This is not a beginner's book.

Klimo, Jon (1998), *Channelling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources*. Berkley, CA: North Atlantic Books. (revised and updated edition)

Channelling has become a phenomena of our time. The ability to channel is, however, only as clear as the channeller! Many people who have done some personal development start to be sensitive to alternative sources of information. Once again, developing an attitude of constructive criticism encourages a person to put in question what they believe they are channelling from a reliable source, to question the quality of the information and their own capacities. This avoids deceiving oneself and others. Klimo defines Intuition under *Open Channeling*. It is useful to become aware of this context for Intuition.

5.8.5 Regression (Past life therapy)

Introduction

When we do past life work we have to be careful that we are not producing results for our therapist or for our vanity. Joy Manné's *Soul Therapy* has a constructively critical section on past life work which anyone embarking on this sort of exploration would be well advised to read.

See also 5.8 below.

Begg, Deike (see 3.3.2)

She has trained with Woolger, and uses Rebirthing to induce past life experiences.

Woolger, Roger (1988), *Other Lives, Other Selves*. New York: Bantam.

Woolger is a Jungian analyst. This is a sensible book and may be the best on this subject.

5.9 Past Life Work

Introduction

We have this subject in two sections (see 5.7 above) to draw attention to the fact that this kind of work can as easily be due to the unconscious seeking healing through the imagination and narrative as through genuine past life experience. We are not sure what the value is of insisting on the veracity of the experience and prefer to concentrate on its healing function.

Moody, Raymond A. Jr., M.D., *Life after Life: The Investigation of a Phenomenon—Survival of Bodily Death*. New York: Bantam Books. 1975.

A classic in the field, rich in case histories.

Netherton, Morris, Ph.D, & Nancy Schiffrin *Past Lives Therapy*. New York: Ace, 1978.

A classic in the field, rich in case histories.

Stevenson, Ian, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*. Charlottesville, Va: University Press of Virginia, 1974.

One of the first attempts to find proof of reincarnation. Very interesting.

Woolger, Roger (see above)

A good clear explanation by a Jungian analyst

Dowling, Catherine, *Rebirthing and Breathwork: A Powerful Technique for Personal Transformation*. Piatkus, UK, 2000.

There is a small but useful section on past life rebirthing containing questions for those interested in embarking on a quest to re-experience previous incarnations.

5.10 Dying, Death and Mourning

Introduction

As they say, Death is the most predictable experience in life after Birth! Therapists and clients will have experiences with death and loss. It is essential for the Breathworker to have some insight into the process, as well as for anyone interested in their own personal and spiritual development.

Kirton, Isabella M. (1998), *Spirit Child: Healing the Wound of Abortion*. Scotland: Findhorn Press.

The way one woman coped with an abortion and the terrible pain that this brings, and how she was guided and the pain transformed into a blessing. A useful book if one has to support a woman who has had to undergo this loss.

Kübler-Ross, Elizabeth *On Death and Dying*. London: Tavistock Publications, 1970. *Death, the Final Stage of Growth*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979.

A creative empowering way to face death and dying. She talks of the stages people go through.

Levine, Stephen, *Who Dies? An Investigation of Conscious Living and Conscious Dying*. Bath, UK: Gateway Books, 1986

Levine is a teacher of Buddhist meditation and this book is based on the Buddhist tradition of living and dying. It contains helpful guided meditations.

Mindell, Arnold. *Coma*. Shambala Publications, 1991.

How to work with people in coma through body, breathing and really seeing, hearing and touching them.

Moody, Raymond A. Jr. M.D., *Life After Life: the investigation of a phenomenon – survival of bodily death*. New York: Bantam, 1976.

A study of Near Death Experiences.

Nuland, Sherwin B., *How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.

A realistic book which faces the fact that for most people, Death is painful and disagreeable. Nuland writes kindly and truthfully about death from cancer, Alzheimer's, murder, accidents, AIDS, viruses, when to stop treatments and Near Death Experiences.

Callanan, Maggie and Patricia Kelley, *Final Gifts*. Bantam, 1993

A ground-breaking older book by two hospice nurses who write beautiful stories about the metaphorical communication that many dying people begin to do and how to receive these gifts and communicate appropriately in response. Much of

this applies to symbolic communication of people in other nonordinary states like Breathwork also. [KT]

Savage, Judith A., *Mourning Unlived Lives: a Psychological Study of Childbearing Loss*. Wilmette, Illinois, Chiron Publications, 1989

A Jungian analysts approach to dealing with the loss of a child before it is born. It covers archetypal patterns of mourning, including the search, the recovery and Rebirth – resolution of mourning and the expansion of consciousness and has a section on clinical practice.

Schiff, Harriet Sarnoff Schiff, *The Bereaved Parent*. London: Souvenir Press, 1977.

Coping with the loss of a child. It covers grieving, guilt, powerlessness, marriage, siblings, communicating, religion, and the rest of the parents' lives.

Wakerman, Elyce, *Father Loss: Daughters Discuss the Man That Got Away*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1984.

This book discusses the father-daughter relationship, the impact of losing one's father early in life through ailment, suicide or divorce, having the mother as head of the household, stepfathers, self-image, and relationships for the woman who lost her father early.

5.11 Shamanism

Introduction

It is hard to define shamanism in a sentence. Eliade has said that the shaman is the great specialist in spiritual questions. Ellenberger, writing in the context of consciousness describes the shaman as an intermediary between the worlds of men and of spirits, someone who exorcises, prophesies, watches over the life and prosperity of the people and cures illnesses. Breathwork naturally evokes shamanic experiences and the breathworker needs to be able to recognise and work with these. The choice of books is huge and growing.

Achterberg, Jeanne, *Imagery in Healing: Shamanism and Modern Medicine*. Boston: Shambala, 1985.

This book shows the natural connection between modern medicine and shamanic healing practises including the use of imagery. There are many case histories.

Eliade, Mircea (1964), *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton University Press: Bollingen Series, 1972.

People have agreed and disagreed with Eliade. This book is worth reading. His knowledge is encyclopaedic.

Ellenberger, Henri F. (1970), *the Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychology*. London: Fontana Press, 1994.

This book reads like an adventure story. It is thoroughly enjoyable and difficult to

put down. Absolutely worth reading for the insights it gives into different approaches to the unconscious.

Goodman, Felicitas D., *Where the Spirits Ride the Wind: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

How body postures have been used throughout history to induce trance states.

Gore, Belinda, *Ecstatic Body Postures: an Alternate Reality Workbook*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Co., 1995.

This book develops Goodman's work. Many body postures are illustrated, their individual capacities to induce trance are explained, as well as how to work with them.

Halifax, Joan, Ph.D., *Shamanic Voices: A Survey of Visionary Narratives*. London: Arkana, 1979.

A collection of accounts by contemporary shamans of their initiations and journeying.

Harner, Michael, *The Way of the Shaman*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1990.

A classic in the field.

Kakar, Sudhir, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors: A Psychological inquiry into India and its Healing Traditions*. London: Unwin, 1982.

A book about the healing of mental and psychosomatic orders by a variety of traditional healers in India.

Manné, Joy, *The Way of the Breath*, available at www.i-breathe.com/wayofbreath

The first breathwork shamanovel. It really conveys the altered states of consciousness that breathwork can lead to.

Noel, Daniel C., *The Soul of Shamanism: Western Fantasies, Imaginal Realities*. New York: Continuum, 1997.

This book shows the relationship between Western shamanism: including the Merlin tradition, against the new shamanism coming from Casteneda's shamanovels, and the refinding of ancient shamanic traditions. Essential reading.

Ripinsky-Naon, Michael, *The Nature of Shamanism: Substance and Function of a Religious Metaphor*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.

A study of the rituals, mythology, symbolism and cultural process around shamanism.

5.12 Working with the Soul

Breathwork covers the personal and leads to transpersonal experiences. It is Soul Level work.

When it comes to working on Soul Level, we have every chance to be deceived and deluded by ego and egoism: all the traditions tell us so. Here we give books that have taught us and convinced us that their ideas achieve this level.

5.12.1 General

Hillman, James, *The Soul's Code*.

This book is very good on the element of destiny in human lives. It's argument is demonstrated through case histories of familiar people like Picasso and Judy Garland.

Manne, Joy, *Soul Therapy*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1997.

This book is a manual on how to do one's inner work on Soul Level.

Morningstar, Jim, *Breathing in Light and Love: Your Call to Breath and Body Mastery*. Transformations Inc., 1994.

See above.

Moore, Thomas, *Care of the Soul: a Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1994.

This is a basic book on this subject.

Taylor, Kylea: *The Breathwork Experience: Exploration of Healing in Non-ordinary States of Consciousness*, Hanford Mead, CA, 1994.

See 3.3.2.

5.12.2 Bert Hellinger

Bert Hellinger is a specialisation in his own right. He has taken family systems therapy to Soul Level. His way of working is energy based, religious and uncompromising, in the best understanding of these terms: there is no compromise possible in Soul Work: compromise belongs to ego. Reading about Bert's work is no substitute to taking part in his workshops, or in workshops by people who really understand his method. We have listed the books that we know in English. There are many more in German.

Hellinger, Bert & Gabriele ten Hövel, *Acknowledging What Is*. Phoenix, Arizona: Zeig, Tucker & Co., Inc., 1999.

Case histories from and Bert Hellinger's workshops and discussion with him about them.

Bert Hellinger (1997), *Touching Love: Bert Hellinger at work with Family Systems. Documentation of a Three-Day Course for Psychotherapists and their Clients*, edited by Bert Hellinger, Hunter Beaumont, Colleen Beaumont and Jutta ten Herkel-Chaudhri. Heidelberg: Carl-Auer-System Publishing.

Verbatim transcripts from workshops. Illustrates well the nature of this extraordinary work.

Bert Hellinger (1999), *Touching Love: a Teaching Seminar with Bert Hellinger and Hunter Beaumont; documentation of a three-day course for psychotherapists and their clients*. Volume 2. Heidelberg: Carl-Auer-System Publishing.

Verbatim transcripts from workshops. Illustrates well the nature of this extraordinary work.

Hellinger, Bert with Gunthard Weber & Hunter Beaumont, *Love's Hidden Symmetry: What Makes Love Work in Relationships*. Phoenix, Arizona: Zeig, Tucker & Co., Inc., 1998.

This book explains Hellinger's work.

Videos

There are many videos available in both English and German which illustrate Bert Hellinger's work. They are well worth studying.

CONCLUSION

We have tried to make this list as broad and comprehensive as possible so that the directors and designers of training courses and their trainees will have a range of books to choose from. It is therefore a very long list and covers aspects of breathwork that may not be part of the curriculum of many training establishments. It would not be practical, nor is it our intention to suggest that all of these books should be read. Instead the list is intended as a bibliographical support for trainers, course directors and students.

It is the prerogative of every school to slant its curriculum in ways it deems appropriate. We have tried to cover as many angles as are within our collective range of expertise and experience. However, we would suggest that if a breathwork training is to have depth, substance and credibility, then almost all of the books from sections 3 and 4 are essential reading along with a comprehensive selection from sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3. We believe that all of the other sections are of relevance to the practice of breathwork as a profession and need to be addressed in training, but the depth of an exploration in these areas will vary according to the particular orientation of the training establishment.

BOOK REVIEWS

[Johnson](#), Don Hanlon, (ed.) (1995), *Bone Breath and Gesture : Practices of Embodiment*. Berkeley, California : North Atlantic Books, 1995.

[Manné Joy](#), *Soul Therapy*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Johnson, Don Hanlon, (ed.) (1995), *Bone Breath and Gesture : Practices of Embodiment*. Berkeley, California : North Atlantic Books, 1995.

For a long time, as Breathworker, I felt like a puzzle piece looking for the rest of the puzzle. Eventually, I could see that Rebirthing experiences related to various methods of psychotherapy and to Indian and Chinese breathing methods. Having read this book I realize that Breathwork, having been “fringe” for so long, is going mainstream, in the field of *Somatics*. Somatics is defined by Thomas Hanna in an article in this book as “the field of study dealing with somatic phenomena: i.e. the human being as experienced by himself from the inside,” (p.343) as opposed to being studied from the outside by doctors, psychiatrists and so forth.

There are sections on Bone, Breath and Gesture, as its title says. In the section on breath and the senses, aptly called *Coming to our Senses*, there are articles by or about the early breath and body workers: Elsa Gindler (1885-1961), Charlotte Selver (b.1901), Carola Speads, Marion Rosen (b.1914) and Ilse Middendorf (b.1910). These articles contain much informaton of interest to contemporary Rebirthers and breathworkers. Else Gindler says about the breathing pause, “If one wishes to carry breathing all the way to completion, it is necessary to be able to carry through the four phases of breathing: inhalation, pause, exhalation, pause. These pauses and the conscious feeling of them are of the greatest importance. The pause, or rest, after exhalation must not be lifeless. It should never be a matter of holding the breath. On the contrary, it should most closely resemble the pause we experience in music—which is the vital preparation for what is to follow. It is wonderful to see how inhalation emerges from this living pause. There is an opening of the cells: the air enters easily and silently and we feel fresh and toned up.” Gindler goes on to discuss this pause, and conscious and spontaneous breathing in general. (p.10f) Charlotte Selver criticizes breathworkers, “I do see the danger that when people become very involved in studying breathing, for instance, or becoming quiet, that this will become their world, so that they lose connection with all that is happening in the world, and by that narrow their own viewpoints and their participation with life.” (P.17) It would have been more interesting if she had been precise about what exactly she is criticizing. The formation of the IBF shows that many Rebirthers and Breathworkers are fully and responsibly participating in life and society.

There is an article called “Ways to better breathing,” excerpted by Carola Speads from her book, *Ways to Better Breathing* (Great Neck, NY: Morrow, 1986). Speads includes a short history of breathwork. Apparently a major contribution to breathwork was developed by a singer with voice problems (in the 19th century). This makes sense. Singers need to breathe well for their profession. Speads mentions the Rotenburger Breathing School in Germany. Does anyone know of it? Here is something inspiring (!)

from her article: “Good breathing habits should be established early in life. Mothers and all those who care for infants should be alert to the process of breathing recovery. Most people who pick up a baby in distress think they can lay the infant down as soon as he has stopped crying. But they should hold the baby closely, continuing to pat his back and comfort him, until he draws a deep breath. Only then has the infant’s breathing normalized itself, and only then should you lay him down. This is a process so easy to observe that anyone alerted to it cannot possibly miss it. Good breathing habits, instead of poor ones, would thus be promoted.” (P.41) Clients who cry during Rebirthing sessions need the same treatment. Frequently they have regressed to traumatic events from their infancy that they were unable to integrate, i.e. during which they were unable to come to normalized breathing. There is much for Breathworkers and Rebirthers to think about in this article.

Ilse Middendorf has studied the breath since before many of our parents were born. She is over 90 and still working and teaching. As she says, “If a person finds his way based on the experience of his breathing, he finds his own power and creativity.” (P.69) This is what Rebirthing is about, after all. Middendorf is the author of *The Perceptible Breath: A Breathing Science* (Paderborn, Germany: Junferman Verlag, 1990, and has produced tapes about her method.

In the “Bone” section, called appropriately *Structural Wisdom*, the subjects are interviews with followers of F. Matthias Alexander, Moshe Feldenkreis, and Ida Rolf, all of whom created the techniques which bear their names. There are also articles by contemporary practitioners and creators of techniques: Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen who says interesting things about the origins of in- utero problems (p.202) and who created the School of Body-mind Centering, and Judith Aston who created Aston-Patterning.

Ida Rolf describes some work that she did with Fritz Perls, founder of Gestalt, who had been diagnosed with a heart condition. During the session she gave him, in her own words, “Fritz goes stark unconscious. I had a very bad two minutes, and I said to myself, ‘You bloody fool, taking a man who is dying of a heart failure, putting him through rolting, you deserve what you’ve got. See, the man’s dead. This is the picture of a man under anesthetic, not a dying heart failure.’ And so I said, ‘Well, I’ll just wait and see what happens next, and pray to God he doesn’t know where he’s been.’” But God was out to lunch. When Fritz came around, the first thing he said was something that indicated he knew perfectly well that he’d been unconscious. He said that he had once been injured by an anesthetist in surgery. When he had got out of anesthetic he had accused the anesthetist of having injured him: the anesthetist said it was impossible. So you see, when I got into his neck, I began to raise that whole trip. After that he had some minor things which disappeared after a couple of month(s) but he never had another bad heart attack.” (P.167) This could as easily as easily have happened in a Rebirthing session as in a Rolting session.

In the “Gesture” section, called *Moving Intelligence*, there are interviews with Irmgard Bartenieff, a contributor to dance therapy who introduced bodywork to Freudians, Mary Whitehouse whose work with movement is used by many Jungians, Gerda Alexander who invented Eutony, and a piece whose words dance by Emilie Conrad Da’Oud, the founder of the school of movement awareness called *Continuum*. Most of these people have had miraculous results - scientifically recognized, not just “claimed” - in their work with disabled and handicapped people.

Finally, in the last section called *Piecing Together* there is a very useful and practical article by Elizabeth A. Behnke on using the NeuroLinguistic Training technique called matching in bodywork with oneself. This technique of “inner bodywork” is interesting to do with oneself and will be useful in some Rebirthing situations. Thomas Hanna defines somatics in his article *What is Somatics?* And there is an excerpt from *Job’s Body: a Handbook for Bodywork* by Deane Juhan.

As I read this book, I realize that the contribution of Breathwork to mental and physical well-being is in its infancy and has enormous, as yet unexplored potential.

All of these breathworkers in the first section are at least 80! Each of the creators of a technique is a wounded healer. Sometimes we may have felt we were orphans, but we have parents, wonderful, gifted parents, and a whole family of relations to learn from and be inspired by.

Many of the articles come from a journal called *Somatics: Magazine-Journal of the Bodily Arts and Sciences* (1516 Grant Avenue, #220, Novato, CA 94947, USA).

Joy Manné

Manné, Joy (1997), *Soul Therapy*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Soul Therapy is like a smorgasbord of personal growth information and exercises. It is divided into three parts. Part one defines what the author means by ‘soul’. This is followed by some very sound and sensible exploration of the ‘therapy’ element of the title and concludes with some very balanced and down to earth chapters on how to choose a therapist and a therapy.

Manné is a psychotherapist with very strong Buddhist training and orientation and the combination finds expression throughout the book, but is defined in the first section. She explains ego and soul as “different energy states” (p. 2). In this way she avoids the pit fall of many new age writers who seem to regard the constellation of functions Freud called the ego almost as an enemy to be eradicated. Ego, in Manné’s words is the “...part of the person that is conditioned and that is identified with being conditioned. Ego is a kaleidoscope of ever-changing energies: thought energies, emotional currents, instinctual forces, the energetic tensions in every personal history and in every nationality, the energy that sustains likes and dislikes, the energy of sub-personalities co-operating and conflicting. It is what we refer to when we say ‘I-me.’” But the ego also “seeks to find the meaning of its life:...” (p. 1) Rather than being an enemy, the ego is the instrument by which we are propelled on to what Manné calls our Soul Path.

Soul, she describes as “...that part of the human being that cannot be described, but that can be sensed as perfect balance, absolute harmony, absence of all conflict and separation, full awareness, being centred, Unconditional Love, Peace, Truth...” (p.1) When ego and soul work in harmony, the results are spectacular. “These are moments of intense harmony and peace. We watch a sunset; there is neither oneself nor the sunset; no separation, just oneness. We perform an action: there is no actor and no action; no separation, just oneness...When the Ego is in communication with Soul, we honor the Earth and all beings.” (p. 2) *Soul Therapy* is the process by which we “...learn to live on Soul-level.” (p. 3)

This book is focused on the blurred line where psychology blends into spirituality. Soul "...is not attached to words or belief systems or religions; it is , however, religious in the best sense of that word, and profoundly and absolutely honest and ethical." (pp.4-5). Manné acknowledges her forerunners in this area including Jung, Perls, Grof, etc. and charts the advantages and traps inherent in this path. She is not an advocate of any one technique. Many techniques can be employed in Soul Therapy and everyone we meet is potentially our therapist. On this path there is no right or wrong, no success or failure, "...only learning, only adjustment." (p. 15)

Part two of the book applies the soul therapy structure to a very wide range of human activity, to almost all aspects of life. It is about the skill of soul questing and there are chapters on ethics, self-responsibility, values, self-esteem, gratitude, humility, love body, energy hygiene and many more. These are very useful chapters. They combine western psychology with the more eastern philosophies and practices, offering insightful information as well as practical exercises the reader can do themselves. The psychology of human development and interpersonal relationships is blended with a very useful and accessible description of the eastern energy system and chakras. This latter is not esoteric. It is practical and useable on the journey the author calls Soul Path.

In part three, Soul Therapy Skills, Manné elaborates on aspects of self-development she flagged in Part One. This could be described as developing discernment in choosing our teachers/therapists. "On the Soul Quest, we are all teachers, we are all therapists, we are all students, we are all clients." (p. 111) What follows is a constructively critical analysis of the basic components of therapy: therapists, training and the teacher-questor relationship. Manné deals with the difference between the very formal client-therapist relationship in the older therapy systems and the more informal, more equal relationships of the newer therapies. She believes it is acceptable for clients and therapists to become friends but only when the client is read for it and at that point the therapist ceases to be the therapist.

This section is addressed to both students and therapists. Manné calls a spade a spade: therapy involves influence, suggestion, manipulation, all of which can take many, often subtle forms. There is nothing wrong with this when the therapist is "...working with us in the direction of our healing and not manipulating us for their own convenience." (p. 128). But how do we know the difference? Her advice is, "If you are learning about yourself and becoming autonomous and empowered, you have a good teacher or therapist. If not, have the courage to change." (p. 128)

Psychological terms such as projection, denial and transference are explained. These terms are often poorly understood and have acquired very negative connotations. This book is characterised by its balanced view of its subject matter and here Manné points out the very valuable and positive aspects of these concepts as well as the dangers inherent in their misuse. This balance applies also to the area of containment. Therapists provide protection and safety but in time the client learns to 'contain' themselves. This involves being able to manage suffering as well as happiness because "Happiness and unhappiness are both part of human life." (p. 137)

This section concludes with a chapter on Skilful Transformation which is described thus: "Experiences are transformed from Ego-level to Soul-level through integration and forgiveness. Integration means working with and taking the time to discover fully the meaningfulness of our pleasant and unpleasant experiences, how they

happened, and their effect upon us. Forgiveness gives our experiences a different dimension.” (p. 139) Integration requires recognition of suffering and a willingness to be vulnerable. Forgiveness only happens when “...we have integrated our suffering.” (p. 146)

In the final section of the book, *Skilful Methods*, Manné gives a constructively critical analysis of two techniques with which she is very familiar – breathwork and voice dialogue. On p. 137 she cautions against what she calls “wowie-zowie” books and teachers who “claim that if only we follow their method we will be happy, healthy and rich all of the time – non-stop!” Breathwork literature has suffered from this approach and *Soul Therapy* is one of the first books, along with Minett’s *Breath and Spirit*, to take a step back from this stance. In keeping with the balanced approach of the whole book, Manné points out the incredible advantages of working with breathwork and voice dialogue but also deals with the limitations and the potential for abuse inherent in these methods.

This is a well-written, accessible and sensible book. It blends western and eastern approaches in a very digestible form. While at first the concepts of Soul and Ego may seem a little like new age publisher’s catch-phrases, Manné explains them in ways which put them beyond the realm of marketing tools. This book is at once serious and accessible, compassionate and balanced. It is well worth reading and recommending to clients and students.

Catherine Dowling