

The Healing Breath

a Journal of Breathwork Practice, Psychology and Spirituality

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COMMEMORATING VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

Vivienne Silver-Leigh, from her website	3
Poems by Vivienne Silver-Leigh.....	9
<i>Slow Learner</i>	9
<i>Poem From The Heart</i>	9
<i>To a Surgeon</i>	9
Rebirthing and Integration by Vivienne Silver-Leigh	13
Personal Breathwork Experience: Sufi Breathwork Practices by Vivienne Silver-Leigh.....	15
Integrating Psychotherapy and Breathwork: Awakening the transpersonal through the use of the Breath: A Quaker perspective by Vivienne Silver-Leigh	18
Twentyfirst century rebirthing-breathwork by Vivienne Silver-Leigh	23
Vivienne Silver-Leigh, Obituaries	
Adam Reeves, Vivienne's son.....	25
Adam and Mark Reeves, Vivienne's sons	26
Joy Manné	28
Catherine Dowling	29
Mary Donald	30
Raina Lister	32
From Not Enough To Enough by Lynne Jenkins.....	34
The Therapeutic Process by Wilfried Ehrmann.....	38
Methodology of psychic integration in modern breathing techniques by Tatiana Ginzburg.....	45
Book Reviews	52
Joy Manné, Ph.D, <i>Conscious Breathing: How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life.</i> (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2004)	

reviewed by CATHERINE DOWLING, therapist and rebirther/breathworker.

Reviewed by WILFRIED EHRMANN

Reviewed by BO AHRENFELT, psychiatrist and member of the Board of the Scientific and Medical Network.

Commented on by TULLIO CARERE-COMES, psychiatrist and psychotherapist who has integrated breathwork in his daily practice.

Karina Schelde (2006), *Soul Voice: liberate your voice, enhance communication and unlock creative expression*. (Steele Roberts, Aotearoa, New Zealand.)

Margaret Coyne (2005), *Breaking Down, Breaking Through: My Thorn-Paved Road to Healing via Altered States and Near Madness*. (Self-Published, Dublin, Ireland)

Babette Rothschild (2003) *The Body Remembers Casebook : Unifying Methods and Models in the Treatment of Trauma and PTSD*. (New York: W W Norton & Co.)

Ogden, Pat, Minton, Kekuni, & Pain, Clare (2006), *Trauma and the Body: a sensorimotor approach to psychotherapy*. New York: WW Norton and Company.

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VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

WHAT VIVIENNE SAID ABOUT HERSELF AND HER WAY OF WORKING,

FROM HER WEBSITE



I am registered as a Humanistic/integrative psychotherapist with UKCP (United Kingdom Council of Psychotherapy). I am also Transpersonally trained (to do with spiritual issues). I have trained in Transactional Analysis, and Voice dialogue, two very useful techniques. Member of British association of counselling and psychotherapy.(BACP) Practitioner Rebirther-breathworker- accredited through British Rebirth Society.(BRS).

I first trained as a speech therapist, working in hospitals and school clinics; next I taught in Further Education, while training as a Humanistic counsellor. Later I gained an advanced diploma in transpersonal psychotherapy.(from the Centre for Counselling and Psychotherapy education) I also work with breath work and with Voice dialogue, two techniques that are integrated into my work as a psychotherapist.

Other information

6 sessions or "brief counselling" can be very effective in dealing with a crisis situation; deep transformatory work may need more sessions than this. Voice dialogue is also intensive work which brings about self understanding very quickly.

I work with people who are usually in some kind of crisis; perhaps because of feeling stressed in work or by relationships; who may have suffered serious illness, and need to come to terms with it; who want to become more self-confident. or who are confused and sad. All the people I see are keen to make a change, and prepared to commit some time to this process.

Commitment means making a basic contract of a minimum of 6 sessions; payment for 3 sessions is required in advance.

Some people may be on anti-depressants; therapy is an important back-up.

I have been working as a counsellor, psychotherapist, and breathworker since 1987, and am accredited by recognised organisations (UKCP; BRS) and follow their ethical

practices as required. I maintain Confidentiality with the exception of where there is a threat to life.

I refer clients to other colleagues for specialised help; for sexual disorders ,or for couple counselling.

I am in an on-going peer supervision group, to maintain the standard of my work

VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH'S LIFE IN HER JUNE 04 TALK

**“TO QUAKER OUTREACH ABOUT MY BACKGROUND,
AND ALSO MY VIEW THAT HUMANISTIC THERAPIES
HAVE SIMILARITIES WITH QUAKER BELIEFS.”**

Background to my spiritual life – the effects of the War

Aged nearly 6, I was rather suddenly removed from my home, in London, where my two parents had been bringing me up.. I joined a girls boarding school, and I was the youngest pupil. My life turned into journeys from Paddington station, to Malvern in Worcestershire, adjusting every three months to contrasting environments.

Home and boarding school differences

At home, I experienced Friday night meals, with my mother lighting candles and saying prayers in Hebrew; at school I sang Protestant hymns, and attended communal prayers, learning much about the life of Jesus, There was some attempt to give me Jewish education at the school, on Sundays, but it did not work. I was imbibing the Christianity I was surrounded with, loved the singing and the stories from the New Testament.

The Old Testament.

I had an Old Testament bible, and I loved the Psalms, which I read each night, even at the age of 10. I loved The Psalm, The Lord is my shepherd, I will not fail, he makes me down to lie, in pastures green, he leadeth me, the quiet waters by..” was my mantra. I also adored the hymn – “All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.” Nature was thankfully non-religious, inter-denominational.

Nature and Mysticism influences.

I was very lonely at this school, but the gardens of the school, and the Malvern Hills, were my saving. I used to create miniature gardens in the grounds of the school, wrote poetry, and my only talent at the school seemed to be the ability to read mystical poetry aloud in termly competitions.

Reform Judaism

At 16, I chose to leave this school and return home to London. I wanted to re-connect with my family life. I was directed into the Reform Jewish community which my parents belonged to.

I went to Youth clubs and learned some basic Hebrew and made friends. But I found it hard to adapt to this utterly different scene;. It did not fit with the 10 years I had just experienced, which had left cultural and educational marks on me.

From 18-21 I studied Speech therapy, then went to work in the School Health service and in hospitals. Religion was not on my agenda, only a curiosity about the issues which seemed to be important to my contemporaries, one of which was the State of Israel. At 19 I joined a group of students in 1954 and spent a summer working out there, finding out about it. I had not grown up with knowledge of Israel and its importance, being at boarding school.

Back home, I went to weddings and bar mitzvahas, but going to Synagogue on a Saturday was a painfully foreign experience for me. I went rarely.

Soon the wider world of both work and hunting for a partner absorbed me

However the sudden death of my father when I was 22, changed my life, and I left home. At 25 I returned to Israel, learned modern Hebrew, lived there for 2 years and realised that I was very British, and did not identify with anything much of Judaism nor with the culture of the State of Israel.

I returned to Britain, married someone whose mother was half Jewish, which was acceptable to my mother. I was married in a registry office in Hampstead.

Certain Jewish cultural patterns persisted, into the marriage; at 29 I had never eaten bacon,. I learned to cook bacon and egg for my husband, and moved slowly away from the Jewish scene, but retaining one friend who had also “married out” and we are friends today. None of our children have had a Jewish education. My brother has followed a similar path. Our four children have no contact with Judaism, nor much with Jewish relatives.

The Influence of Therapy and the New Age Groups.

My marriage broke up in 1972, and I sought therapy to help me deal with the role of single parent, which I found very difficult. I grew stronger and more independent, and widened my social contacts; now I was meeting a broader spectrum of people. I still had no conscious interest in religion at this stage.

But the New Age offered many possibilities for personal growth, and I soon found them. Encounter groups, co-counselling, and Yoga training, drew me into a world of deeper thinking and broader views. I was being re-educated, to learn about feelings and emotions.

Other influences along the Way

Studying for a BA at the Open University, I found myself drawn to the mystic poets once again. My education was widened.

I was led to look at different religions, and spent time studying meditation at Tibetan Buddhist centres, and visited Bahai religious groups. None of them held me for long, because I felt the cultural gaps were too wide.

Stirrings of Faith

When my boys were 10 and 12, I had a traumatic experience. Getting Breast cancer in 1979 was my first encounter with a near death experience, and I found myself sitting in the Royal Marsden Hospital chapel, praying just before I had a lumpectomy. I was surprised at how strong my faith was at this time. I became aware that I was some kind of believer in divine presence. The deity concerned was definitely inter-denominational.

Humanistic Counselling Training – a new religion.

By 1985, I had become a Lecturer in Further Education, teaching English classes of foreign students, , when I felt “called” to go back to working one to one with people, as I had done as a speech therapist. I studied counselling part time at Roehampton Institute, and was taught there the philosophy of the American Psychologist and Humanist, Carl Rogers. I was very affected by his ideas, learning about the way you could help people through the core conditions of empathy, congruence and active listening. I now had a new religion; personal growth – my own and other peoples’. I also had a new career: training Counsellors at South Thames College.

I was changing and my belief system was now a long way from Judaism, more into the area of the mystic, the magic of the way we can grow and change, and how we can nurture the inner self by self acceptance

You cannot do counselling without learning about the differences in people, their lives and attitudes and cultural patterns. I had a huge desire to understand and to heal the pains that so many of them were enduring. In the process I was healing a great deal of my own pain, my own ignorance and fears about life. I continued to have therapy, and to study further.

Finding Quakers.

In 1994 by chance I met Margaret Glover, a Quaker artist, and I recall her saying, “Are you a Quaker/ You look like one...” I did not know what on earth she was talking about. She took me to a Quaker meeting, and I was startled to find that here was

somewhere I could be quiet, which suited my temperament, and just relax. No priests read anything, and I did not have to recite prayers in a chorus. It suited my temperament exactly.

Initial difficulties with Quakers

Guilt figured large after I started to attend Quakers. It was a Buddhist Quaker who relieved this; when I said that I was Jewish and did not know how I could be a Quaker; he reassured me that he had two religions; he was a “born” Quaker, and had become a Buddhist priest. This helped me through the hesitation I had.

One Sunday someone got up and ministered at my meeting; reminding us that it was the Jewish day of Atonement, and could we please pray for her Jewish friends” I felt very peculiar, there I was, a lapsed Jew, listening to this, not at the synagogue atoning for my sins.

Another difficulty I had at first was with an elderly man who was what we call a very **Christo-centred Quaker**, and every Sunday he would stand up and passionately talk about Christ and how he died for us, etc. I soon found that not all Quakers take this view, and see the spirit of Christ as a model, without getting into the New Testament details. Most ministry, the word for standing up and speaking when the spirit moves you, today seems to be about issues of suffering and trying to understand the world, and I can usually identify with these.

Transpersonal Psychology

In 1996, I again had further surgery for breast cancer, and radiotherapy. I received great support from Quakers, who put me on a prayer list.

At the same time, I decided to divert myself from the ordeal of radiotherapy, by training as a Transpersonal Therapist. A criteria for entry was that you should be spiritually aware. My Attendance for several years at Quakers was accepted as such.

I studied under Sufi trainers, who introduced me to their mystical religion and philosophers I admire greatly. I read Sufi philosophers, Ibn Arabi, Hazrat Inyat Khan, and was introduced to the poetry of Rumi. I went on Sufi retreats; It was a spiritual training, concerned with the inner life, spiritual living. We were involved in the world of the unconscious, of creative imagination, and of the process of transformation.

This spiritual training deepened my connection to Quakers, and also helped me to come to terms with my Jewish roots. I had to present “my Spiritual journey” as a presentation towards my final examination, rather like I am doing today. In 1996 I applied to become a Member of the Religious Society of Friends, the formal name for the Quakers.

Transpersonal psychotherapy is all about the dimension that we call spiritual, and the unconscious, and I joined my Quakerism to this. Now I practice Psychotherapy, aware of that dimension in all of us. Transpersonal studies, helped to enlarge my understanding of the unconscious, the creative imagination in all of us, and the awareness of the process of the growth to wholeness that Jung wrote about.

Where do I stand today?

Reflecting on my membership of Quakers, from 1996-2004, I feel I have received far more than I have been able to give. My ability to sit on committees for business is nil.

I think I have become a more tolerant person through my membership of Quakers, appreciating that there are many varieties of us, and some are easier to connect with than others.

Through Wandsworth meeting I have met and liked people with widely different views and life styles; and found myself feeling very Jewish at times, because Quakers are often very quiet and low key, and I am after all the grandchild of a Russian immigrant who came here in 1905, my father was a superb violinist and a Communist, and my DNA probably contains some exotic elements!

I am happy that I found Quakers, and draw strength from my membership. I do not forget my Jewish ancestry, but it is to me history. I cherish my independence of belief, and thinking; I hope it will keep me becoming wiser and more tolerant in life, and also more loving.

POEMS
BY
VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

SLOW LEARNER

Slow learner, I see today that I am not
Alone in life. No one is here today or was yesterday, but I am
In the house, and fine, being on my own. Solitary.
In the stillness, quiet moments carry on
And I watch my watch, watching myself watching.

Now, this second is mine, for me, here alone.
I can write, watch birds, and admire the garden.
I thought that I had to be important, to leave my mark, to be worthwhile.
Of course that might be nice, but I can let that go, now, in this second,
I can feel only love. I am the fruit of love long gone, carrying that
Love, only now it's mine
My love of being quiet, and listening to the moment which is mine.
I can ignore the needs to socialise, to smile and chat about tomorrow and the
state of the world.
I can smile and be alone,
It took a lot of time to find my time.

POEM FROM THE HEART

Words dance in my head,
And demand exit now.
Living is meant to be fun
With love the main purpose
So it is said.
I agree with it all but forgot
For a while,
And now I reclaim my time
To be and to do what I can
At last. The poem explodes
And dances away by itself.

To A SURGEON

I lay there, like a stranded beetle, upside down, exposed and helpless.
Worse, I was human, naked from the waist up, and embarrassed.
I grit my teeth and nerved myself to keep still, to let you do
What you had said was necessary.

I am still trying to forgive you, and to forget
The utter disregard of me, the one inside the body,
The one that you forgot.

It was not long, the crude assault into my breast.
Jab after jab, into the anaesthetised gland
I watched as you extracted bits, and put them
Into waiting jars. .For tests.

One jab I expected, but six I did not anticipate,
I was a battle ground, where you jabbed and looked and jabbed again
And again.
Maybe it was hard for you, too,
It seemed you could not get the
Bit you were looking for.
The bit we knew
Would be the clue.

I cried a little, not with pain
But with horror, disbelief and fury
At loss of dignity and my right
To say No, stop, don't jab again.

I should have shouted, Stop.
But you held the power
And I was only an upside down beetle body

Transfixed by your long clicky pin
Into a pained and silent fright.

I weep now, weeks after
At the horror of your act,
Which left me bruised inside and out.
If only you had warned me, let me have
A little comfort, spoken soft, and kind.
I would not hold you in my mind
With fear and fury left behind

REBIRTHING AND INTEGRATION

BY

VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify what takes place in a Rebirthing session, and what exactly is integrated. A client who comes for a Rebirthing session is going to experience a Breathing technique. Modern Rebirth Practitioners are careful, and well-trained, and know about different types of Breathing, and what effects they have.

My clients lie down, after an initial discussion about their reasons for wanting to try the process, which includes taking a Case History, and I ask them to relax, using various strategies to help them. Sometimes I play music, or perhaps lead them through a gentle progressive Relaxation, naming each part of the body and asking them to focus on it and let go.

Most people find this pleasant. I watch the natural breathing and it tells me something about this person. When I see deep diaphragm breathing, which waves upwards to the top of the chest, I could be looking at someone who feels powerful and free. If the breathing is shallow and mostly in the chest, I wonder about that person's psychological blocks and lack of freedom, which may be mirrored in their breathing. I encourage gentle, unforced breathing, rhythmic and long. Sometimes I use a Buddhist Meditation to encourage the focus on the breath "Breathe in awareness of the breath, breathe out awareness of the breath. Breath in calm, breath out calm."

I ask clients to notice how their body is feeling. If they report a tightness somewhere, such as in the neck, or round the ears, then I ask them to breath and focus on relaxing this area. Feelings can be very strong, and clients may re-experience themselves coming out of the birth canal. One client said: "I am feeling upside down, my head is where my feet are, and I am moving, and I am happy," and this was followed quickly by intense sadness and tears, and then she experienced turning the right way up, in her body. It was as if she was re-living early memories of being born, and the feelings she had then. She found it very helpful, as if she had cleared out some bad memories which had lasted until the present time.

What is the point of re-experiencing the past? Often clients get a clarity and awareness about their early life which casts light on their relationships. An image of a favourite aunt suddenly came to a client's mind, in the midst of a birth experience, and she reported feeling much love and warmth coming from her. It seemed very important to her to remember this. Of course Rebirth practitioners are aware of False Memory Syndrome problems, and the need to accept that the memory may be a fantasy, or a desire, but that in itself is worth talking about.

Integration refers to the discussion time, when the therapist listens and the client talks about her inner experience. As a trained counsellor and Psychotherapist, I use all my skills during this part. I am as empathetic as I can be, listening to the story, or the imagery, and letting the client put the interpretation on it as far as possible. I listen a lot,

reaching for the underlying feelings, and helping the client to accept that they have had a certain experience while in the breathing session. That is often enough to bring some insight and a profound relief at getting in touch with it.

I find that clients who are open-minded, and wanting to make changes in their lives, will take to Rebirthing easily. Actors, musicians, and creative people or those who want to be creative enjoy what is known as a right brain activity. You are not asked to be analytical, to use your left brain, and this can be very relaxing for someone who runs a business, or organises bank staff, to switch off their work, and focus on their own inner self for a while. High pressure jobs may keep people stressed and unaware of their own inner needs.

Stress reduction is definitely one benefit from Rebirthing practice. However, people who are suspicious or frightened may not get so much out of it, because they may not want to relax deeply. Fears of being controlled by the therapist are quite unfounded. It is the process of breathing which produces the results, the therapist is the accompanying support, giving the client total attention, and being aware of the need to let them lead the way. As in Yoga, there are many benefits to both the mind and the body, due to the awareness and practice of conscious breathing, but the results are different.

We all breathe automatically, but breathing consciously can alter our states of mind. Yogis know it, Tai Chi practitioners know it. Buddhists know it. Sufis practice it, and so do music therapists and Alexander teachers. Books on soul and spirit development always include chapters on how to breathe correctly. Books such as the *Tao of Natural Breathing* (Dennis Lewis, 1997) or *Soul Therapy* (Joy Manné, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 1997) give a lot of information about its effects. I recommend also *Breathe – You Are Alive* (Tich Nhat Hanh, 1996) and for a comprehensive view of Rebirthing and allied breathing therapies *Breath and Spirit* (Gunnel Minett, 1994).

Conscious Breathing can also be used with Affirmations, to remove negative and long-entrenched thought patterns. These are positive sentences, chosen by the client – for instance, “I accept myself” may help to change a long running “I am a failure in every way” belief.

Suddenly finding you are immensely happy, just lying and breathing, may bring tears of deep joy, and a renewed connection with one’s inner spirit which has been lacking for a long time, because of the pressures of everyday life. It is lovely to see a smile on the client’s face as she/he relaxes and enjoys breathing fully and freely, bringing vitality and increased energy to every part of the body.

PERSONAL BREATHWORK EXPERIENCE: SUFİ BREATHWORK PRACTICES

BY

VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

I became aware when I started my Advanced Psychotherapy training in 1996, that the course was housed in the same building as the Sufi Centre. My Tutor, Nigel Hamilton, was not only Director of the Centre for Counselling and Psychotherapy, but also was a Sufi leader, and that my fellow students who had been on previous Psychotherapy courses all knew about Sufi practices.

I had no knowledge of Sufism at this point, but I now have learned some Alchemy and am studying a certain Ibn Arabi, who is a sort of Sufi prophet, and taught Creative Imagination. I can't explain it, as it is a magical course, and you need a spell which we seemed to get put on us each week by our Tutor. I have found the course fascinating and mystifying at times, because indeed it is a Mystical based course.

Gradually I realised that there was something called Practices, which Sufis do, and that some of these were Breathwork. I learned that they have special Air, Earth, Water and Fire exercise, and made a mental note to find out more.

Information has percolated through to me from my fellow students, and from attending two Retreats. The first was a Group Retreat which was led by Atum O'Kane, an American Sufi who gave us Breathwork sessions which was extremely powerful, and I also learned some exercises combining sounds (Arabic) and head movements with breathing.

As part of this course, I have recently completed an individual Retreat, for a week, "on silence" and alone, in a little hut in a large garden, overlooking a river, and visited daily by a Retreat Guide, who was both a Sufi and a Quaker. I had no idea what to expect, and went armed with some uplifting books and some classical music for my walkman. In my hut I had a bed, a table, a chair and a tiny belling cooker. There was a window with a great view of the river. Each day my Guide visited me and gave me Practices to do. These encourage you to access the Divine within you, and here I was, now being introduced to Sufi breathwork exercise, since this was in fact a Sufi Retreat. These involved counting breaths, and carefully monitoring which nostril you are using, etc. Details of some of the basic ones will follow.

I enjoyed going out alone into the garden in the early morning (I was not a prisoner in the little hut) where I did my Chi Gung routine combined with some Yoga. The birds loved it, and I loved watching the ducks, swans and boats on the river.

The Retreat was challenging for me. I structured my day, spent most of the morning on the Breathing practices, made myself breath fast, washed up, then collapsed and slept soundly, letting out all the tension from my ordinary life. In the afternoons, I read my books, such as *Quaker Faith and Practice*, Bede Griffiths' writings, *The Bowl of Saki* by Sufi Inayat Khan and the *Gospel of St Mark*, which I found beautiful.

I had an emotional disinclination over doing some of the practices, with Arabic mantras accompanying breathing exercise, until I decided to do them in both English and Arabic. But I wanted to experience what these religious words would do for me, because they are supposed to contain divine vibration. I preferred the English version, being of a prosaic nature.

On the third day, I suddenly got very angry at the lack of cupboards in the hut, and the arrival of the very simple evening meal, which for three days was the same rice and cooked vegetables. What could I do with this anger? I immediately gave myself a session of Conscious Breathing, and found that I soon came through it, and stopped feeling angry and instead felt rather silly! I reminded myself that Nelson Mandela and Terry Waite had lived long periods imprisoned, alone, and coped wonderfully, and certainly did not have cupboards and probably not a great variety of food either. I was trying out only a week, voluntarily, away from the world, and getting irritated at stupid things. Seeing the humour in this, I then found myself starting to enjoy the complete lack of pressure, the time on my own, and the freedom to draw and to listen to Requiems and just rest on the bed. The sun shone, and I had a tiny space behind the hut where I could lie and sunbathe – surrounded by plants and flowers, and write my Journal.

I think this combination of Sufi breathing practices done every morning, and the conscious connected breathing that I decided to do each evening, helped to make me feel very strong and to enjoy this unusual break from my normal reality. I slept a lot, and came back refreshed and wishing I could have stayed a further week. For me it was better than an ordinary holiday, because the input of stimulation was reduced and my over-tired brain could forget about my computer, my work and every one else expect me. It was a process which is meant to promote self-understanding and hopefully I have gained something from it.

SUFI PURIFICATION BREATHS

1. EARTH: in through nose, out through nose.

Visualise breathing in energy and magnetism from the earth through every pore into every cell and atom of your being. When breathing out, visualise letting go of all toxins and pollutions draining out through base of spine and feet back into the earth to be re-generated.

Stand on earth if possible.

2. WATER: in nose, out mouth.

Visualise a fountain of light and water above your head on the in-breath; when breathing out visualise the water cascading over your body and cleansing your whole being inside and out, again allowing any unwanted thoughts/feelings /emotions to drain back into the earth.

3. FIRE: in mouth, out nose.

Visualise the colour orange at the Solar Plexus on breathing in (hot coals). On breathing out see them burst into flame and visualise a golden light all round your heart centre and shoulders on the out breath.

4. AIR: in mouth, out mouth

Visualise being scattered into the cosmos on the out-breath, and reconverge on the earth on the in-breath.

Each purification exercise is performed five times. There are other Qasabs which are intended to clear and balance the channels of the breath, rather than energise them. Then you move on to the breath retention exercise, and they are somewhat similar to Pranayama yogic exercises.

**INTEGRATING PSYCHOTHERAPY AND BREATHWORK:
AWAKENING THE TRANSPERSONAL THROUGH THE USE OF
THE BREATH:**

A QUAKER PERSPECTIVE

BY

VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

**UKCP registered Psychotherapist (humanistic/transpersonal)
and Breath Therapist**

INTRODUCTION

I work in private practice as a transpersonal psychotherapist, having studied in London, UK at the CCPE on the advanced transpersonal Psychotherapy diploma course.

Prior to this I had trained as a Humanistic counsellor, at Roehampton Institute, and have seen a variety of clients since 1987. I began by working voluntarily for a Bereavement project as well as counselling foreign students in the College where I was teaching English. Later I taught Counselling at the same college, for five years, continuing to see clients at home in private practice. Nowadays, I see clients who self refer for Breathwork, and receive referrals from Employee assistance providers, of business employees for short term crisis counselling. Other clients take therapy as part of their counselling courses. My website and my membership of professional organisations brings me referrals.

My first profession, Speech therapy, taught me the anatomy and physiology of respiration, and its application to speech, voice and movement, and later Yoga meditation introduced me to the effects of breathing on the mind. I studied Buddhist meditation also which consisted of counting the breaths repeatedly.

In 1994, I learned rebirthing for two years, in UK and since then have regularly travelled abroad to study further at the International Foundation of Breathwork conferences, to learn more about Breathwork practice in different countries.

I integrate a process of breathing with awareness into my work. This seems to lead to a consciousness of spiritual connection in some clients. It is this **awareness** which I wish to consider in this paper

It is perhaps relevant to give some details of my spiritual journey, which has led me away from Jewish roots, to exploring Buddhism and ten years ago I settled into being a member of the Religious society of friends (Quakers). I quite happily sit in silence on Sundays and connect with the silence and the peace, aware of my breath and the transpersonal element of my being. I do not separate this aspect of my self from my work. (William West found from his research that this is true of other Quaker thera-

pists. I believe firmly in the one and only Quaker credo – that “there is that of God in every one” and this belief underlies all my work.

Counselling skills and Breathwork can be integrated successfully. Clients wanting Breathwork (or rebirthing) usually receive from half an hour to an hour of counselling, focusing on the reason they are coming right now, exploring birth traumas, physical health, family history, and relationships. This is the first part of a breathwork session with me. Then the actual breathwork session takes place, the client lying on a firm mattress, in a warm and pleasant room, with candles, and music to create an atmosphere which encourages relaxation. This is very important, as relaxation is the first stage of any breathwork session. I watch the rise and fall of the client’s chest and abdomen to determine the quality and quantity of the “normal” at rest breathing and this gives me information about the client’s state of mind also.

It is easy for to see where there is a lack of breath power, where the breathing is minimal, just enough for survival, while in some cases you can see that a person breathes deeply and powerfully, using the whole of the chest and bringing the diaphragm into action. A powerful personality breathes powerfully too. I look for where there are “blocks” where there is the potential for increasing the depth of the breath. We breathe to live, and the breath mirrors the amount of power we currently put into our lives. I relate to the Eastern concept of energy, Chi, or Prana and the current state of this is mirrored in the breathing. For

The effect of asking a client to lengthen the exhale is noticeable. The rhythm changes, and then the inhale automatically becomes stronger as well. At first some clients find this difficult to maintain, although others immediately say they feel much better, that blocks have been released. In either case I am getting information about the energy and the life force that is within the person, and how they are accessing it, or avoiding it. Maintaining a low level of energy with poor breathing leads to lethargy and illness, and a resulting build up of frustration in many areas of life. In stressed individuals, the breathing is often fast and shallow, and in the upper chest without much abdominal involvement. The language of the Breath communicates quite clearly the underlying mental state.

This process of becoming very deeply relaxed and then turning the mind to focus on the breathing rhythm for a variable period of time, usually brings people in touch with emotions after a while. Enjoyment of space and time to just lie there, just being, relieves the stressed out executive who rarely stop and make time for not-doing. . Recognising that they are able to just “be” and not have to do more than focus can be the start of a new awareness, and the regular breathing rhythm helps to begin to create an altered state of consciousness, an alpha rhythm in the brain, which other writers have explained in depth (see Grof).

A client reaching this “altered state” is experiencing something different from a typical counselling session. There is some interaction with the clients as they lie and breathe with awareness at the start of Breathwork sessions, when clients are not sure what to do and want to check out that they are breathing “correctly”. My role as therapist is to gently lead the breath to deepen, if possible, without causing stress as a result. I try to speak as little as possible, just gently encouraging the conscious breathing to flow. The client becomes more focused on their body and what they are experiencing.

Most clients are able to breathe freely and fully after a while, and then I ask them to move their awareness on to any feelings in the body. In some cases, clients report strange physical effects, such as a sharp pain in an ear, a strong ache over the heart, or muscle tension in the shoulder or leg. They are asked to focus on the area mentioned, to breathe consciously and continuously, and imagine the area in more detail. Imagery plays a part in helping clients to free up “blocked” parts of the body, with the aim of creating a freer sensation in the body. These blockages are often metaphors of emotional blockages and are very significant. Some clients report the opposite, a sense of extreme pleasure and freedom, both physical and emotional. It usually takes a few sessions for clients to feel at ease with the experience of letting go, breathing more fully, and becoming aware of their bodily sensations and thoughts, and able to relax more deeply and for longer periods. There is a progression from session to session, as clients become familiar and at ease in the practice, and realise that they are free to control the way they breathe. Quite often tears start to flow, as emotions surface, and I do not ask at this stage what is being experienced. It is sometimes volunteered, sometimes talked about afterwards.

Many clients report spontaneously that they feel a new happiness, a great joy, free from anxiety. I may tentatively suggest that they consciously breathe into their “source” or whatever creative force they believe in. (I find that I must myself be fully aware and connected to my own spiritual belief system. I take time before the session to bring myself to a point where I am ready to give my attention to the client from this perspective) (W.West research into Quaker therapists, etc.)

Case History

C. a French woman, aged 35, came from a family of practising Jehovah’s witnesses. She had married at 20 to a suitable Jehovah witness husband, but then caused displeasure and excommunication from the society by divorcing him. She had come to UK to get away from this, and proceeded to have a series of relationships which did not last. She cried heavily for several Breathwork sessions, and we spent time discussing the story of her life in the counselling session before the breathwork. She had recently broken up with yet another man, and was feeling lonely and unhappy. After each breathing session, she seemed more able to see it from a new viewpoint. She started to lose the guilt she felt, and wanted now to strengthen herself in all areas of her life. By session five, she was keen to get into the breathwork session, had stopped crying, and surprised me by a dramatic change from looking very gloomy and weary, becoming glamorous and chic in her clothes and make up. She also commented that she felt a great deal of joy and pleasure in her life now. She reported that her friends were noticing her new attitude, and she was no longer miserable. She laughed when she recalled that she had cried so many sessions.

A Breathwork session, as we have seen, is generally divided into three parts:

Counselling for half an hour or so. Taking a case history, finding the reason for coming. Finding an Affirmation to “take into” the breathing session is sometimes useful. For example: “I am a happy and loveable person” may be the Mantra that the client focuses on during the breathwork.

Breathwork session – lying down. From 50 –90 minutes

Recap and consideration of the breathwork process, what insight the client has received from the experience. This part is frequently the most interesting, as clients may have had images or memories or understandings that they did not expect and are keen to discuss further. Regression to early life stages may have occurred. If clients have such experiences, I honour them, and accept that they have some meaning for the client. I am aware of the danger of “false memory syndrome” and the need for caution. In one case, D. aged 40, remembered appalling physical and sexual abuse by a nurse when living abroad, and this was verified by a sibling, who had been similarly abused. Open discussion of this helped the client to express his anger at his parents who had not been able to prevent it from happening, since they had not known about it anyway. He spent many sessions offloading his anger and pain about this, and eventually came to the point where it was no longer of importance to him. He was happier in his work as a Manager and found far more pleasure in his family and in his voluntary work with the local church. He found that each time he came for a breathwork session, he accesses this early pain, and cried a great deal until suddenly it finished. He did not need to confront his one surviving elderly parent, as it no longer mattered as he had reconciled himself to her failure to know about the situation when it occurred.

Case History

P. came for a breathwork session, saying he was in a state of transition, not sure what to do about his career. Having quite a formal professional training, he now felt he needed to work with people, but was not sure in what capacity. He also said he needed freeing up, to help to access his true self. Breathing steadily for only five minutes, he started crying and moaning, and eventually this led to strong kicking of his feet. It looked to me like a baby stage, very primitive. After this he breathed steadily and quietly, and with a serene expression on his face. He became aware during the session that he had a difficult relationship with his parents, whose expectations were of a formal academic career.

COUNSELLING AND INTEGRATED BREATHWORK

A counselling session may be helped by introducing some breathwork, without the client lying down. A comfortable chair is necessary, and I have one that actually extends backwards so that the client is almost supine.

Clients gain from sitting down in a chair, breathing quietly with eyes shut, when strong emotional feelings arise in a counselling session. Healing of painful emotions of loss, of bereavement, can be helped by being allowed to cry and breathe consciously through this release.

Clients who get into excessively stressed narration of every detail of their problems, recited in a monotonous tone, may be helped by being asked to stop, breathe quietly, relax the body totally, and then return to look at the situation from a calmer perspective. For example, I noted that a client was lulling me to sleep by a detailed account of her troubles, and apparently she was bored by hearing herself too! She switched off, and listened to her breathing, and became aware that there were strong underlying feelings that she was ignoring. We continued the session on a deeper level after this focus.

BREATHING FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

A. is an executive, happily married and enjoying his job and did not admit to any particular difficulty in life except that he knew he was stressed, and wanted to learn to relax. I had worked with one of his family, who suggested he try out Breathwork. He is someone who has not had much contact with this kind of therapy at all. I explained to him about levels of brain activity, altered states of consciousness, going from a beta state to an alpha state, and this was a new concept to him.

He had a breathwork session, lying down, with gentle music accompanying it, while he breathed deeply from the abdomen.. It was apparent he was a strong and fit person, breathing powerfully. To my surprise he had a birth experience in what looked like very relaxed session. He had an image of being in water, and being a baby in the water. His reaction after the session was amusing, as he was so astonished what had happened, and became aware that he could be so deeply relaxed in a way he had not experienced. I lent him tapes to enable him to practice this at home and a book on Stress Management. The purpose of the sessions is to get him aware that he has control of his life, and that changing the breath rhythm is a way to do this.

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY REBIRTHING-BREATHWORK

BY

VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH

Unfinished article

The rebirthing- breathwork therapy scene in Britain has changed since I wrote "Breathwork Practice" five and a half years ago, in *Self and Society*, Volume 26 No. 5 November 1998. Now there are five thriving training schools, and many well qualified practitioners who have spent four years learning rebirthing-breathwork. They can choose to apply for recognition to the British rebirth society, which monitors standards. Practitioners may be also qualified in counselling or psychotherapy these days and understand the importance of Supervision, so peer groups have been set up.

The International Breathwork foundation (IBF) founded in 1993, is flourishing too, and also monitors the ethical standards of Breathwork training , throughout the world. Trainers meet up from different countries on a regular basis. Each year there is an opportunity for breathwork-rebirthers to connect with others, and learn something new. Last year's Global Inspiration conference in Australia was a bit far for some of us, but we will meet up this year in Estonia. We will have a week packed with lectures, workshops and dancing in the evenings. I have attended wonderful Voice workshops in Italy, heard Russian research scientists discuss breathing, met Holotropic Breathworkers from Stanislauf Grof trainings in Spain, and studied Pulsing, a hands on body work approach which can be added to rebirthing.

A book of Lectures from 1994-9 is available, containing the work of psychologists, scientists and researchers from many countries who all have something to say about the use of the breath in therapy.

There is also now a peer reviewed academic journal, *The Healing Breath*, produced on line by Dr. Joy Manne, with papers on the use of the breath in therapeutic settings. Several books have appeared in the last few years, including *Rebirthing, Freedom from your past*, by Deike Begg, and *Rebirthing and Breathwork*, by Catherine Dowling.

I recently went for a warm water breathwork session, in order to deal with issues which I could have talked through with a therapist. I met with highly trained rebirther-breathworkers who work a great deal with birth issues, and this served me very well. In the water, I experienced a powerful regression, to about eighteen months, and released an enormous amount of feeling. The outcome was more than I had anticipated, a great feeling of freedom and happiness.

I use the breath in two different ways. Firstly, integrated breath into psychotherapy, in a somewhat cognitive way. My clients sit in a comfortable chair, and I monitor the breaths per minute, using a watch and checking the breaths. Sometimes clients are breathing 12 shallow breaths per minute, and have tight shoulders and anxious expressions. Asking clients to slow down, and bring the number of breaths to under 8, will give an immediate feeling of calm and relaxation. Once the point is grasped, that

you feel differently when you relax and breathe slowly, then that can be a useful tool during sessions. I have a chair which can move from vertical to horizontal, so that clients can relax in a lying position. This is not always appropriate, where someone is nervous or embarrassed. But many people arrive quite stressed and are delighted to find they are suddenly able to feel deeply relaxed, and say how enjoyable this is.

Deep relaxation and slow breathing, and a period of quiet, can move clients from anxiety to sadness, or to peace and happiness. This is a different way of using the breath from rebirthing-breathwork.

Rebirthing-breathwork training covers many subjects, counselling, hot and cold water breathing, birth experiences and their influence on the child, and the patterns of feeling which develop, which we mostly forget. . During a rebirthing-breathwork session, clients talk for about an hour about their current issues, then lie down on a comfortable bed, or mattress, fully clothed, in a warm room. They are asked to relax, sometimes with the assistance of music playing, and to breathe continuously. A strong in-hale is usually emphasised, while the exhale is softer and more relaxed, creating a soft sound like waves rising and falling into the sea. Having the mouth open for a while helps to make the sound stronger, and to start the “activation process” of bringing up feelings.

Rebirthing-breathwork is often highly enjoyable, bringing about release of pain and sorrows. Tears may roll, transforming into smiles of pleasure. What is going on internally is a mystery for the therapist, who must wait patiently until the end, when the client will describe what happened. These days ...

OBITUARIES

FROM ADAM REEVES, VIVIENNE'S SON

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this special tribute edition of the Healing Breath, and especially Joy, for having the idea and seeing it through. It means a great deal to both myself and my brother Mark that my mother, Vivienne Silver-Leigh is being honoured in this way. I gave Vivienne her first rebirthing session, some 15 years ago when at the time I was fully immersed in a breathwork-based humanistic and transpersonal psychotherapy training in Sheffield and wanted to share my enthusiasm and inspiration for the work. Although Vivienne had been into more mainstream counselling and therapy approaches, her attitude towards me doing all this way out rebirthing stuff was that I'd taken it all just a little bit too far, but she was willing to give it a go...

She enjoyed the session I gave her, enough to make her go and explore it independently for herself with some private sessions. Within a few years she was a joint partner and assistant with the London School of Breathwork. Her academic background as both a speech therapist for over 20 years and a teacher for 30 years, as well as a wealth of experience as a psychotherapist, brought a strong sense of groundedness to the breathwork world. She would always speak her mind and strived to raise the level of training and ethics in the UK rebirthing/breathwork scene.

I always felt so proud of the fact that my mum had become a powerful figure in breathwork and I loved it that she would trot off round the world to annual IBF conferences returning with stories and experiences, (very often hilarious!).

So here's to Vivienne... I know she would have felt so proud to have been honoured in this special way.

Adam Reeves, Brighton, 15/11/2006

alkreeves@earthling.net

**TRIBUTE TO VIVIENNE SILVER-LEIGH
(TAKEN FROM POSITIVE HEALTH MAGAZINE, OCT 2005)
MAY 7 1933-JUNE 14 2005**

BY HER SONS

MARK AND ADAM REEVES

On June 14 Vivienne Silver-Leigh, our mother and regular contributor to *Positive Health* passed peacefully and gracefully into spirit. Vivienne meant so much to so many people, and we, as her sons, sold like to share with *PH* readers something of her life and death.

Vivienne was born into a middle-class Jewish family in north London in the early 1930s, but was evacuated to a an all girls boarding school in Worcestershire during the war. After leaving home she trained as a speech therapist.

Vivienne was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1979, when the two of us were 11 and 13. She had lived through a broken marriage, and traumatic divorce followed by ten years of single motherhood and always faced challenges full-on. Courageously she refused a mastectomy, opting for a lumpectomy supported by a course of homeopathic mistletoe.

After a visit to the Bristol Cancer Centre, she embarked on a new holistic lifestyle, much to the bemusement of the two of us. Frozen pizza and fish fingers were out; nut roast, mung beans and muesli were in. If she wasn't concocting some peculiar wholesome dish in the kitchen, she might be found standing on her head in the living room. It was around this time that she also took up playing the harmonica. Despite the slight embarrassment of having a quirky mum, actually we were both proud of her courage and originality. As a single mother, at a time when it was not commonly accepted, Vivienne did a brilliant job.

Her illness did not deter her from activities in the community. During the 1980s, she ran support groups for parents, was involved in a local cancer support centre and taught a disabled yoga group.

During the 1990s, Vivienne blossomed. Free of parenting, she seemed to us to become an entirely different person. She increasingly saw life from a deeply spiritual perspective. She became a Quaker and left her teaching job to become a psychotherapist and breathwork therapist, as well as training and supervising counsellors.

After 17 healthy years, the cancer made a re-appearance and Vivienne was again forced to face her biggest demon. She had a course of radiotherapy and now had to learn to live with cancer again.

In March this year, Vivienne discovered she had cancer of the womb and was admitted into hospital for a hysterectomy. What should have been a straightforward operation led to complications, which necessitated a second operation. She was in hospital for six weeks a very difficult time, but there was light in the darkness. Vivienne was profoundly touched by the realization of just how much she was loved and fully allowed herself to to receive the support that was flooding her way.

She was forced to let go and put herself in the hands of others while endeavoring not

give her power away to the medical profession. Throughout the toughest challenge of her life, she maintained her dignity, which was expressed through her surrender, her humour and her refusal to be anything other than herself.

Bravely, Vivienne discharged herself, simply announcing that she'd had enough and was now going home. After three challenging yet comforting weeks where she was cared for by close family and friends, she was suddenly admitted back into hospital. We were told categorically that she was dying.

The following days, although immensely sad, had an exquisite beauty and magical quality. We kept vigil, making sure that in her unconscious state, she knew she was surrounded by love. It dawned on us both that she had brought us into the world, and we were now being called upon to help her journey into the next one.

As she breathed her last breath, the atmosphere was radiant and full, with a feeling of lightness and joyous release.

The next day we were launched into full organizational mode. Planning a funeral can be overwhelming and strange, when all one wants to do is reflect and be still. Suddenly you are catapulted into the role of coordinating an event. It seems like the last the last thing in the world you would want to be doing, but no one else will do it for you, so it just has to be so.

We were doubly blessed with help from the Quakers, who stepped in to orchestrate the funeral service and also alternative funeral directors Green Endings. Rather than providing a conventional undertakers service, they became personally involved in helping us to create an event in keeping with the spirit of our mother. From the outset, Green Endings were sensitive, caring, emotionally connected and fully with us in our process.

The Quaker service is one whereby all sit in silence for one hour, and at any point anyone present may stand up and speak if they feel so moved. This felt more inclusive than having someone lead the service and all who wanted to were able to actively participate. Later that day, Vivienne was cremated at Putney Vale crematorium. The auspiciousness of the timing did not escape us; it was midsummer's day and a full moon. Her bamboo woven casket was adorned with fully bloomed flowers and ivy from her garden. It could not have been more beautiful.

For us, the experience has been one of letting go of her human form, but allowing ourselves to feel at one with her spirit, which has been very much present in our lives these last few weeks. She would often joke about when she finally 'popped off', as if would be like just popping to the shops. Strangely, it does feel like she has just 'popped off'.

Vivienne was always a prolific writer. Her column in *Positive Health* was a way of expressing her feelings about life and she hoped that at least some readers might resonate with her viewpoints. Her experiences as a psychotherapist, healer, teacher and mother were synthesized and expressed passionately in these pages. Thank you to all of you who followed her column. We hope her words touched your lives, just as her presence touched ours.

By Joy Manné

I met Vivienne at the meeting of Breathworkers in Sweden that led to the creation of the IBF. We were instant friends, and Vivienne organised some workshops for me in London after that. She was a lovely person to work with and we became good friends.

Vivienne was a very rich character. She knew so much. She had a range of qualifications. She was a speech therapist, yoga teacher, and an early member of Relate, a rebirther. She was always extending her boundaries. When I met her she was teaching Counselling. She seemed eternally young. In her 60's she took a training in Spiritual Therapy. She taught and did supervision. Her website was a model of clarity for what she offered and what she charged. And with all of that, Vivienne was completely modest. She was small – of stature – and large of heart and imagination and giving.

Vivienne was a sensible, grounded member of the British Rebirthing Society and several times when arguments there threatened to create chaos, it was Vivienne who, in her quiet, way, brought people together. Once she even had the courage to organise a party for the BRS. I was lucky enough to be invited, as I was in the UK at the time. Her most recent project, which Claire Gabriel will finish in her memory, was a collection of articles by British Rebirthers. Making this collection was leading Vivienne to write her own book. Sadly, now, this will never be finished. It is not only Vivienne who the Breathwork community has lost, but all of her skills and wisdom.

Vivienne could find the good in, and be positive about every one and everything. She wrote an uplifting column in Positive Health. Her book reviews were kind, positive and erudite.

Vivienne is much mourned by her sons and family, and by the larger breathwork family

There's a very large hole in my life where Vivienne used to be and I miss her. There were so many things we shared, emails that quickly told the news, sharing the fun things on the web too, sharing our vision for Breathwork. I miss Vivienne. When, in a moment of great longing to tell her something, or to ask her advice on something, I looked up her name on the web. There was a tribute from someone whose whole life she had changed – the woman had had a heart attack, and Vivienne had got her speaking again. I did not know that Vivienne performed this kind of miracle. I think most of her friends and colleagues did not know either.

Vivienne had cancer for many years. She did not “fight it.” She took it on with courage, determination and intelligence. She went for 17 years from her first encounter with this illness to her next, and then there were several years of being resourceful and sensible. Not fighting – Vivienne was too gracious a person for that: I would choose the word – “outwitting” the cancer as long as she could, not letting it dominate her life or stop her adventure with life and her creativity. She kept up her morale against the doctors who did not respect her body, and through whose carelessness, in the end, she died.

A quiet person, a mentor to many in Breathwork, an example of how to grow older.

This is the part of Vivienne Silver-Leigh that I knew. Other tributes follow.

(Joy's tribute was first published in *Breathe: the International Breathwork Magazine*, editor: Robert Moore. www.breathe-mag.co.uk/)

Catherine Dowling

I first met Vivienne at the Global Inspiration Conference (GIC) in Spain. I had seen the brochure for the training course she ran with Mary McGlynn in London and approached her to ask her for more details. We sat by the lake in the sunshine for hours, talking about everything and anything, missing workshops and nearly missing dinner. It was my first conference, I was finding it incredibly difficult, and Vivienne's company was such a comfort. That conversation led to a lovely, gentle friendship that lasted until her death.

Vivienne and I worked together on a couple of projects. She invited me to London to help with the restructuring of the training course that eventually became the very successful In-Breath under the guidance of Gerd Lang and Jane Okondo. Vivienne was ready to leave training behind at that stage and was pleased to hand over the reins to Gerd and Jane. She was getting into writing more and more and had an idea for a book.

Always generous, Vivienne's idea was to invite rebirthers from the UK to contribute a chapter each which she would edit and put together as a book about British rebirthing. I felt privileged when she asked me to make a contribution but felt obliged to point out that I'm not British. Vivienne was never very big on Anglo-Irish relations. I always thought she should be writing the whole book herself. If nothing else, it would have been easier than trying to coax other rebirthers to put pen to paper. But the real reason I thought she should write the book was because she had such a wealth of experience and knowledge which she herself didn't recognise. And because she didn't recognise it, she persisted in trying to encourage others to share their wisdom.

But the chapters didn't materialise. So finally Vivienne began to write some of her own. I was very pleased to receive them via e-mail and they were good. Vivienne knew her stuff but glossed over it so quickly she needed someone to tell her to write more, turn a single paragraph into a chapter, showcase all that she knew. Unfortunately she became ill for the last time and her book was never completed. It's a huge loss for rebirthing but more than that, it is such a pity that Vivienne didn't get to see her ambition fulfilled.

But my fondest memories of Vivienne have nothing to do with work. They relate to her wonderful sense of humour. It was gentle, but so sharply observant, respectful but so irreverent. And so unexpected from the gentle little 'English rose' she appeared to be. Vivienne was a great mimic. Those of us lucky enough to spend a long night in the bar with her at the Italian GIC, were royally entertained by her impersonations of everyone who was anyone in the International Breathwork Foundation at the time. We shared a not very politically correct opinion of the lectures and lecturers at the Wisconsin GIC. We tried them all, me sitting on the floor by the wall, Vivienne in the chairs. Then sooner rather than later, she would look over, roll her eyes and we would both get up and head for the bar. That was Vivienne's last GIC.

Vivienne came to stay with me in Dublin to attend a workshop by Wilfried Ehrmann. I still have the basket of plants she gave me then. They are thriving and remind me of her every day that I sit in my living room. I stayed with Vivienne in her lovely home in Wimbledon and met her every time I visited London. Our last meeting was over dinner in a restaurant in Putney shortly before she died where we laughed off the ef-

fect some of the hurtful unpleasantness that was going on in rebirthing circles at the time.

Vivienne was a lovely woman, a wonderful therapist and a friend who is sorely missed.

Mary Donald

Vivienne, an inspiration in life and in death!

I first met Vivienne in 1992, when she was a student on a Breathwork Training Course I was running. From the beginning, she was someone I admired a lot. She acted as a catalyst in the group because of her honesty, integrity and spontaneity. I still remember, as if it were yesterday, the weekend we worked on "*Healing the Inner Child*". Vivienne became a very naughty and stubborn little girl, who spurred the others on into all sorts of mischief and rebellion. I remember finding it almost impossible to keep a straight face as Vivienne, in her stubborn little girl voice, said "*Can't make me*", when she was asked to do something. She looked radiant and empowered; she was having a lot of fun and, because of her, we all did! The following year, Vivienne assisted me on the course and we grew closer as colleagues and friends. Over the years when I was bringing up my children, she kept me in touch with what was happening outside in the extended Breathwork Community when she attended the International Breathwork conferences that were held in other countries.

Vivienne and I worked together again as close colleagues in the late 1990's when we ran a Diploma Course in Breathwork Therapy with Gerd Lange. Vivienne's high academic standards and commitment contributed enormously to the course and her integrity and determination to remain true to herself, in sometimes challenging situations, was an inspiration.

I always admired and respected Vivienne, but never more so than in the way she dealt with the recurrence of her cancer, her illness and her death. Vivienne got breast cancer 25 years before she died. At that time she was bringing up her two young sons, Mark and Adam, alone, so there was no way she was going to succumb to the illness! She was devoted to her two boys and she was determined that she was going to be there for them as long as they needed her. Vivienne had radiotherapy again about 7 years ago followed by another period of remission. She was determined that she would not go down the chemotherapy route if the cancer recurred as she wanted to live her life her way, with dignity and without the fear of being taken over by the medical system. She got cancer again early in 2005 and had a hysterectomy. Complications developed after the operation and by the time Vivienne was readmitted to hospital things had gone too far. She was given a choice between having another operation, which had very little chance of success, and accepting that she was dying and only had, at the most, a few days left. Vivienne chose the latter!

Very shortly after making the decision, she slipped into apparent unconsciousness. I say "apparent", because, having had the privilege of being with her a lot of the time during her last 48 hours, I saw something wonderful and, on some level, very conscious, taking place. Vivienne created a beautiful space filled with light and love in which to die. Yes, it was a room in the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, but there was some of her favourite classical music playing softly in the background and candles burning throughout the day and night. Her two beloved sons, Mark and Adam, kept a constant vigil at her bedside, and in private moments together, they were able

to tell her what a wonderful mother she had been and how much they loved her. Adam also introduced Peta, the girl who was later to become his fiancée, to Vivienne in that room and Peta, who is a healer, was able to add her loving energy to the abundance of love that was already there. Close family and friends came and spent time at her bedside, but the thing that filled me most with awe and wonder was that, while this was all going on, Vivienne had her breath connected the whole time. She was lying in her bed, seemingly unconscious, but having one marathon Breathwork session! Of course, I cannot know for sure what was taking place on a deeper level, but my feeling was that Vivienne was taking this opportunity to finally fully receive and integrate all the love that was there for her. I saw it as a truly inspirational way to take her leave of this material world.

When Vivienne finally took her last breath, it was when only Mark and Adam were in the room. There was no fuss, no calling the medical staff and no panic. There was just love and gratitude towards the mother who had brought them into this world and had done her very best for them their whole lives.

Vivienne had been part of a weekly meditation group held at my house on Tuesday evenings and, since it was a Tuesday, we had asked Mark and Adam if they would like us to hold the meditation in her room that evening. We arrived a half an hour after she had died. There was a beautiful sense of peace and serenity in the room as Mark and Adam invited us in to give our love to Vivienne and to honour her life. We sat around her bed and meditated and remembered her with love and humour.

Mark and Adam, created a beautiful send-off for Vivienne. They located a beautiful casket, made of willow and decorated it with fresh summer flowers. On the evening before her funeral, they placed the casket in her back garden surrounded by candles and invited close friends and family to join them for a vigil. It was a truly magical evening!

Her funeral service was in the Quaker style, which was what Vivienne had loved; many people from the Breathwork community as well as family and friends came to honour her life.

It is over a year now since Vivienne died and I still cannot bring myself to erase her telephone number from my mobile phone! On the window-sill in my study where I am writing, I have a photo of her in a silver frame. Attached to the frame is a beautiful embroidered butterfly with its wings spread in flight, because that is how I imagine Vivienne now – flying free.....

Raina Lister

Some memories/thoughts about Vivienne Silver-Leigh

Highest integrity.

- walked out of her long-term job as EFL tutor at a FE College over a policy decision she regarded as unsound.
- left the British Association Of Counselling over their naming & shaming strategy.
- passionate that organisations with which she was involved should be professional, but not at the expense of their humanity.
- Continuously trying to professionalise the BRS but seemed to me that almost despite herself, she loved its right brain qualities.

Initiation into Rebirthing

- Allowed herself to listen to the recommendation from, open up to and trust her younger son Adam – in his early twenties – who gave her her first rebirthing session.

Family

- immensely proud of both her sons – both successfully following and, (in Mark's case, leading in) the personal development path from their early 20s.

Funeral

- exquisitely beautiful – “green” – wicker coffin covered in pink roses. When some of her BRS colleagues chose to speak of her – during the Quaker service – more than one admitted that they hadn't much warmed to her at first – then when they got to know her better, they came to hold her in deep respect and affection.

Surprises

- a secret writer. Anecdotes and musings about life – especially in relation to her then teenage sons – hidden away in a folder labelled “bills”.
- Widely varied circle of friends who came to participate in the evening celebration of Vivienne's life.
- shared a poem that moved her deeply after 9/11 called something like “Let's wage peace”

Generous

- with her time and advice to others – reliably sound.

FROM NOT ENOUGH TO ENOUGH

BY

LYNNE JENKINS

CONTRAST HOW IT WAS THEN AND HOW IT IS NOW.

I learned Rebirthing in the mid 80's when it was simple, uncomplicated and the focus was on mastering the self. To become a Rebirther I had to take three people to completion, offering them ten free sessions each. This was the only requirement because after that it would be a covenant between the Creator and myself. At the completion of my apprenticeship, I still did not feel ready to go out into the world and take on clients, thus I went to California and trained there for two weeks with Rebirth International.

Now Rebirthing has become a lot more professional and training can take anywhere from one week to four years depending upon the training undertaken. It is my understanding that the International Breathwork Foundation is pulling together a universal course that should create standardization. This will be good.

Twenty years ago it was a simpler world and the New Age was just emerging. Things have changed since then and the natural therapies are now big business. Therefore the stakes have risen and there is much more competition and much is expected of us. It has become a lot more demanding, professional and conservative.

In Canada the medical profession has lost over one third of its revenue to alternative therapies. We are required to be licensed from a reputable Government-approved teaching institution. They are coming down hard on the alternative therapies especially those without research to prove their validity. Twenty years ago the public was in love with "way out there" seminars and therapies but times have changed and the public wants to know what they are getting. It is no longer the case of finding a healer by word of mouth or by sticking one's flier on a health food store bulletin, or setting up after a weekend course because one is guided or intuitive. Generally the laws which apply in the medical profession also apply to alternative therapies.

The point is that a lot of the old ways of doing Rebirthing are no longer relevant, nor in some circles even accepted. One is much more accountable and expected to act in a professional manner. Since the little girl was murdered in Colorado last year by a therapist performing attachment therapy, the spotlight is on natural therapies. However, not in a good way. This is more than worrisome as the media claimed the incident was due to a Rebirther.

In North America the Colorado incident has been in every newspaper, on every TV documentary, murder programs, and the gossip in every hairdressing salon or doctor's office. Rebirthing is in hot water and in fact, there is an order before the United States government at this time to ban Rebirthing. This will affect us all.

Since 9/11 life has greatly changed. Toronto is a very cosmopolitan city and being Canadian we are also a bit more reserved than the rest of North America. My friends and I have found that we are staying home more, hanging out with family, friends and creating community. There is a pinched in energy as if we were all waiting with baited breath for the next crisis. There is a weariness of Spirit that can be seen in the faces. Many of my healer friends have gone out of business or are having to work harder and harder to get clients.

This stuck energy is not only happening in natural therapies but a friend who organizes seminars told me that where they used to get over 100 for a course, now they are lucky to get even 20. There is a lot of fear and general depression.

HOW HAS THE METHOD CHANGED?

Thankfully it has become a lot more professional and down to earth. We have been fortunate to have some well-known and well-spoken Academics writing about Rebirthing in a more serious tone and with well-documented research such as those books by Colin Sisson, Gunnel Minnett, Joy Manné and Catherine Dowling.

While I have no problems with the spiritual side of Rebirthing, I don't believe we should be influencing each other or our clients with our spiritual beliefs. Especially at this time I find it very unwise to be pushing our spiritual beliefs onto anyone. Just as all lamps are lit by the same source, so too there are many spiritual teachers. Babaji was one, Jesus was another, as was Buddha and Mohammed. They are all valid teachers. We need to be focusing on how we teach breathing, and show love and compassion.

Rebirthing is breathwork and Rebirthers are breath specialists. When we try to be everything to everyone and cover all the bases by doing other therapies with Rebirthing, my belief is that we dilute the work. Once I was doing some work for an Aids group here. We were not allowed to mix therapies. If someone came for Therapeutic Touch that is what he or she wanted and what they were given. We had to keep the sessions clean and also were not permitted to sell the client anything. This makes sense. Specialize, specialize, specialize!

WHAT ASPECTS OF THE ORIGINAL PHILOSOPHY HAVE YOU RETAINED AND WHAT HAVE YOU LET GO OF?

I have let go of everything that is not connected with the breath, birth, and self responsibility. In the beginning, I thought the work was too simple and no one would pay me for just sitting there while they breathed. I played evocative theme based tapes that would push buttons. One man told me I was manipulating him because I was playing a tape about birth. Now I simply play music and let their soul take them to where it needs to go. As the intensity of the emotions ebbs and flows, I will lead and pace with my own breath near their ear so they can hear me. All talking is done before the session begins and I do not touch. Leonard Orr stressed that if we touched the client we were interfering with their process. Two hours is devoted to breath and moving

through the energy cycles. This is not talk therapy. There just is not enough time to be everything to a client.

HOW HAVE I INCORPORATED THE METHOD INTO MY LIFE?

I have incorporated spiritual purification on a daily basis but from a Native Indian aspect, not the eastern way. Also, I have been trying on different breaths such as those taught in Chi Gong, Pilates, Yoga, The Flower of Life and the Art of Living.

WHAT OTHER METHODS/APPROACHES/VIEWS HAVE INFLUENCED ME.

Memory patterns can be held in the emotional body from lifetime to lifetime. We can give someone an affirmation but because of cellular memory it may not have an affect at all because the material in the cell could not even be ours from this lifetime.

As if this was not enough to boggle my mind, I am currently reading a book entitled "The Healer" by an 84-year old British man, Jack Temple. Jack is a dowser and uses his pendulum to correct imbalances in a person's DNA. He also can read auras and he believes that we can have health effects in our aura from ancestors dead thousands of years ago.

Another book catching my attention is "Power versus Force" by David Hawkins. By using kinesiology, he can measure the consciousness of everything. David believes, as Jung did, that there is a database of consciousness. He found that at a very deep level well below conceptual consciousness, the body "knew" the truth. By asking a series of "yes" or "no" questions he could muscle test his clients for the truth. Hawkins' research found a way of calibrating a scale of relative truths by which intellectual positions, statements or ideologies could be rated on a range of 1 to 1,000.

I am currently working with these two theories. For example, I can dowse a person to find out where their blocks are by asking a series of questions and then having the client breathe into and focus on these areas. I do this in the first ten minutes of the session before the client gets into a breathing rhythm. If someone comes in with a specific issue I can muscle test to determine whether this is what needs to be worked on or not. Something else I have incorporated into some of my sessions is to rebirth people on an assortment of balls on the floor. This system is especially profound with people who have a hard time relaxing or are control freaks. Depending upon the size of the balls, they break down the body fascia and make the session more intense.

A book I recommend to clients is "Excuse Me Your Life Is Waiting" by Lynn Grabhorn. Basically Lynn asks us to focus on what we want, not what we don't want.

The importance of detoxing is also stressed with my clients. As our systems clear out, it is like seeing life through a new pair of glasses. Things are much clearer and we be-

come more focused. We don't have to recite endless affirmations; we just start making healthier choices for ourselves.

I think all rebirthers should be advising their clients to detox if they are rebirthing. If one does a cleanse while one is rebirthing, the results are quicker and less painful. At the very least we should be advising our clients to drink plenty of water for the next few days after a session to flush out any toxins the emotions have released.

WHERE DO YOU SEE REBIRTHING GOING?

I think breathwork will be more and more important in the years to come. Unfortunately, our society is fast-paced and always seeking something new. In Canada Rebirthing was much more popular ten years ago when Sondra Ray and Leonard Orr had books out every few months and were coming to the city to do seminars. Many Rebirthing books are out of print and I have noticed in the bookstores here that there is not even a section on Rebirthing. I also do Reiki and it has its ups and downs too. However, Reiki is becoming increasingly popular over here because each month there are several new books coming out on the subject. This creates an audience. We can be the best bakers in town, but if no one knows we are baking bread, it will not do us much good. The question is how do we get the general public informed about Rebirthing?

IS THERE A SOCIETY OF REBIRTHEES/BREATHWORKERS IN MY COUNTRY?

Not at the moment. Canada is so huge and spread out that it is very difficult to know if there are rebirthers in other provinces. Also, over here, many rebirthers are very individualistic and prefer not to be organized, myself included.

Become a better breather yourself and the way to influence people is to show off your health. One of the first affirmations I was given in Rebirthing was "I am enough, I have enough, I do enough." Focus on the breath. It is enough and so indeed are we enough.

About the Author

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THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

BY

WILFRIED EHRMANN

How do therapeutic processes evolve? Are there common patterns of development or is each process unique? Do psychic healing processes have their own inner logic of development comparable, for example, to the sequences of development that have been identified in the field of child psychology? Or does every internal journey of discovery begin at its own unique point of departure and lead to some other point which cannot be predicted, taking, on its way, routes and detours which are different in every case?

It seems clear to me that all paths of self discovery and healing are different, each being formed by individual conditions which cannot be compared, and by the individual personality which predetermined. Nevertheless, I have learned from my long experience in breath therapy that there are places on the path which have to be visited if healing is to be holistic. We can see these places as s in a process as long as we keep in mind that this is an abstract model: i.e. the sequence of the stages does not slavishly follow a fixed pattern. Rather the individual development process determines the sequence of the phases and not the other way around. This is, of course, a general framework. Any therapeutic process is a lot more complex in reality than what I am describing here.

THERAPY AND SPIRITUALITY

In this article, I am looking at the therapeutic process from the viewpoint of holistic healing. Healing does not only mean the treatment of symptoms, resulting in the reestablishment of day to day functionality and social reintegration, nor does it mean the healing of an illness according to the model defined by medical science. Holistic healing means the uprooting of all impediments to a free, happy and fulfilled life so that eventually the person acquires an unconditional acceptance of reality as a whole and of each single experience just the way it is. Thus we talk about comprehensive psychic transformation with a spiritually defined goal (cf. Manné 1997).

We find two different levels of approach in breath therapy. There are clients who are looking for better health in one or more aspects of their lives: sleeping problems, asthma, disturbed blood pressure, breath restrictions, lack of self esteem, depressions, inappropriate social behaviour, etc. Other clients want “to move further in life,” and to “experience more fulfilment.” They are looking for growth on the level of the soul and not simply the removal of symptoms. As breath therapists, we can often see that these two levels come together naturally. Releasing the breath solves the sleeping problem and opens the door to a new world of inner freedom and cosmic space at the same time.

FOUR STAGES OF THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

Stage 1: Building up trust

At the beginning of every therapy a solid basis for trust has to be built up. Therapy cannot be effective when there is mistrust between client and therapist. Honesty and willingness to open up to and accept insights that may be unpleasant can only grow in a climate of trust. This is why the consolidation of confidence is the most important step in the beginning. In breath therapy, this can start with problems the client has with lying down and closing his eyes through fear that something dangerous might happen to him in this helpless position. He might also be afraid of being observed and judged negatively. Some clients need time to adjust to the room, its atmosphere, colours and smells. The most important adjustment, however, is that of becoming familiar with the therapist. The crucial focus of the therapist at the beginning of therapy should be on the relationship dynamic with the client so that all possible disturbances can be identified and displaced.

It is also necessary for the client to develop trust in the most important element of breath therapy: in the breath. There are clients for whom several sessions are necessary to build up trust in their breath before they are willing to accept its healing power and, with its support, to approach deeper energy blockages. They get to know the breath slowly and they unfold its power carefully. Others enter into the breathing process the first time with fierce courage as if they are intent on forcing intensity and depth. They need to find a deeper trust in the more subtle effects of breathing.

Finally trust is needed in the healing process itself, which means in the usefulness of starting a way of self exploration and leaving behind old habits of self denial and projection. The priceless value of discovering truths about oneself has to be recognised. Only then is awakened the inner willingness that is necessary for going along the holistic healing path along with the commitment that is required and the courage to take on the hardships and painful experiences which are an unavoidable part of it.

Stage 2: Getting to know the soul

For most people, the unfolding of internal psychic energies means opening up to their feelings and impulses. Emotions which are not expressed bind energies and limit aliveness and perception. The liberation of feelings is therefore the central issue in this stage. Feelings want to be recognised, experienced and understood.

At this stage, working in a cathartic way with the body is indicated because it helps to experience the energy patterns and dynamics of emotions directly through reliving traumatising situations. The therapist induces the expression of feelings, initiates body movements, encourages impulses, offers resistance and makes use of all the other tools of emotional work in breath therapy. Thoughts and belief structures have to be taken care of in this stage as well, as they are closely connected to emotional processes (cf. Ciompi 1997).

It is at this stage, that the client needs supportive guidance for the changing circumstances in her daily life. Her feelings will come up with more force in work as well as in the family environment. She will be more sensitive to incongruencies and

hidden aggressions, and unable to overlook them. She will be unable to hold back the angry and painful feelings she could restrain before, with the result that all of her relationships become challenged. The therapist has to help to deal with these problems to enable the client to integrate her new insights into her daily life. When breathwork is combined with careful integration work, the client develops the necessary strength for the act of balance between the urge to express her feelings and her social reality which offers but little space for them.

The therapeutic process will swing between stage 1 and stage 2 for a lengthy period. During this stage too, the issues of transference and countertransference will arise and be acted out. (cf. Ehrmann 1998) The inner support for finding one's own path is mainly an outcome of Stage 3.

Stage 3: Empathic observation

When, according to a dictum of Freud, the Zuydersee is somehow draining – Freud's way of symbolising the transforming of the contents of id to insights of the ego (Freud 1978, p. 68) –it does not mean that there are no more feelings in this transformed human being. But the way of handling feelings has changed. The impulse to project feelings to the outside diminishes because they are no longer experienced as overwhelming; they no longer have to be protected by a lot of fear. Feelings have been discovered, recognised and deprived of the illusion of danger. They can be observed without fear. But observation does not mean that feelings are experienced as being alien or not part of one's own being. It means that the client has learned to participate in her feelings without being swallowed by them. A common expression for that is: "You are not the feeling, you just have it."

In the breathwork session the focus will no longer be on loud expression: on entering into the feelings with the whole body, but on experiencing body sensations and tiny impulses connected with them in an ever more subtle way. Thus intense sessions can happen while the body lies peacefully and quietly. The dynamic is more on the inside. The therapeutic outcome does not lie in the intensity of the expression but on the subtlety of inner listening. Only here does real disidentification and distancing from the feelings happen. Feelings then are no longer basically governing elements of life but only partial aspects. The principle of "awareness in detail" as taught in Vivation (Leonard & Laut 1983, p. 55) comes into action.

Thoughts are treated in the same way. We observe them, while they are thought, and recognise them as what they are: simply thoughts that come and go. Compulsive thoughts lose their power, and thinking gets liberated from its normal tracks.

Learning empathic observation will help in dealing with daily life. The client will feel his feelings without needing to express them automatically as a reflex. He can insert rational decisions between experiencing and expressing feelings which helps him to discern whether the situation is appropriate for an explosion of anger or an outburst of tears, or indeed whether it is better to leave the feeling inside and stay calm on the outside.

Stage 4: Meditation

When the client has developed sufficient practice in self observation, she is less in need of a therapist than of a meditation teacher. The therapeutic companion becomes more of an adviser or master. He is someone who knows about the way of inner growth and its difficulties and who passes on advice based on his own experience.

In this stage, the focus no longer lies on disentangling unconscious ties and projective identifications or healing old wounds, but on taking responsibility for the holistic healing path. The journey of discovery of the depths of the soul as it is done in therapy is not left behind but rather is transformed into the practice of meditation. The self discipline which is required for learning any kind of meditation reflects the step away from dependency on a therapist and into taking full responsibility for one's own process of growth.

This transition can only succeed when the disciple builds up her own meditation routine. For this she needs the ability to stay independent of moods and emotional states. The clear decision to direct her way of life towards holistic healing and growth becomes a predominant part of her life.

THE BREATHWORK SESSION

In almost every breathwork session, we can find a holographic representation of the whole structure of the therapeutic process. In the beginning, trust has to be built up: in the therapist, in the environment, in the breath. The first conscious breaths introduce to the power of the breath, and as soon as the client can trust this power, it can take the lead in the process further on. Thus the breath starts to work and bring hidden feelings and impulses to the surface. When the client is able to experience them consciously – with or without expression – and accompany them in their own development, they lose their dominance and grip and a space opens up for detachment from them. Then it becomes possible to stay focused on the breathing even when sensations and feelings are still being experienced internally. When the power of the breath is allowed to lead, eventually there is a period of total relaxation and release of time and space and a meditative mood in which the client can feel at one with all.

Case Histories

We can begin with a case history of a breathwork session:

Ricardo comes to his session with the issue that he wants to strengthen his internal feeling of safety and self trust. He is experienced in connected breathing and it is easy for him to get into a slow, deep and relaxed breathing rhythm. He quickly builds up trust in his surrounding, his body and his breath. After some time, his breath accelerates by keeping up the full volume. His body starts to shake involuntarily; tensions become visible which dissolve when the therapist suggests to just observe the sensations without wanting to change them. After that, he comes into a stage of a slower breathing rhythm in which he hardly breathes but is fully present in a blissful and deep relaxation. He needs a lot of time to come back to normal consciousness and seems totally relaxed. After the session, he shares that he feels very much strength-

ened and that he had never before encountered such a deep state of connection to himself by being in a floating meditative realm at the same time.

The following is a case history of the sequence of the first four sessions of a long term breath therapy:

Jo Ann takes about a strong inner pressure when she comes to her first session in breath therapy. She often feels depressed and powerless and in her life she misses joy which is becoming more and more difficult to find.

The first session is calm, relaxed and gives her a good feeling of strength. After the session, she is surprised that more feelings did not come up and that the pressure went away anyway. But after a few days, the pressure returns, and more precisely she can feel a block in the belly area.

In the second breathing session more feelings come up, mainly sadness. She is able to express them supported by body therapeutic interventions. By acting out and feeling into these emotions, the pressure is lightened so that she feels very relaxed at the end of the session again.

The third session is even more intense. The feeling of pressure arises in her arms and hands also this time. It dissolves after she has beaten the mattress strongly with her hands and feet.

Jo Ann comes to the fourth session with a cold and she is tired. She says that she has learned to accept the process as it is. Her impatience has diminished. She has realised how much she has increased her pressure by wanting to get rid of it as soon as possible. The breathing is very calm, deep and relaxed this time and lasts more than ninety minutes. Jo Ann shares just afterwards that she felt in a vibrant floating state most of the time. She leaves in silence.

The therapeutic process continues after these experiences for several months. She encounters and unravels the roots of her tensions more and more, returning to the different s of the process from time to time.

Here is a case history of a multilevel therapeutic process:

Geoffrey shares about his drug problem when he comes to a breathing group. He consumes cocaine, not on a regular basis but sometimes he is unable to control his habit. He is experiencing ever more problems in his relationship as well as in his job because he often loses conscious influence over his behaviour after taking the drug.

In the first breathing sessions in the group, all of which were guided by a member of the group and supported by assistants and the group leader, Geoffrey slowly builds up the contact to his body and feels a deeper trust in himself without having any extraordinary experiences. In the next stage, deeper feelings open up with the help of interventions on the body level. He experiences strong anger towards his father. In addition to what he gradually can clear in his relationship to his parents, he notices the effects of the drug on his body. But he is still not able to bring his behav-

jour into alignment with his intention to become clean. In addition to the breathing group, he begins an individual therapy on a verbal basis to work on his family and childhood problems. As he has had some deep meditation experiences in the breathing group he decides to join a weekly Buddhist meditation group in which he learns to distance feelings and behavioural impulses.

With the help of several levels of self exploration he gradually succeeds in getting away from his addictive behaviour. To the degree that he gets to know the roots as well as the effects of his self-destructive behaviour and to the degree that the inner space in breathing experiences and meditation opens up, the drug experience becomes shallow and uninteresting.

HOLISTIC HEALING

A holistic vision of healing and growing in consciousness has the therapeutic process starting anew again and again. When one level finds a beneficial completion, the next level soon presents itself and reveals its issue which sometimes arises internally, sometimes externally. Even if the structure of the healing process is identical in principle, the degree of responsibility and willingness to take risks is increased and the quality of the insights improved. Processes tend to accelerate, and changes become persistent and deeper-rooted.

The path of holistic healing not only changes the relationship to oneself but also to life and to the world as a whole. The transformational process starts with building up more trust. This is connected with more courage. There is increased willingness to enter conflicts, stronger willpower and self confidence, and the increasing development of an attitude of surrender and acceptance towards the whole of life. The position of the sage at the end of the journey includes the willingness to trust the flow of life and to accept in gratitude what the ups and downs of life confront him with. Instead of fighting, whining, complaining and justifying, there is an unconditional acceptance of life in the plenitude of its phenomena. From this point, awakening is not far away. Whenever we discover a piece of this attitude in ourselves, we get a glimpse of redemption, an idea of our Buddha nature.

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METHODOLOGY OF PSYCHIC INTEGRATION IN MODERN BREATHING TECHNIQUES

BY

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One of the aims of integral approach is to be able to accept and integrate within oneself each of the below-mentioned remarkable areas – intentional, behavioral, cultural and social with due respect» (Ken Wilber, *The Eye Of Spirit*. P. 43. Shambala,)

INTRODUCTION

This is an article about modern breathing techniques (Breathwork), particularly the Western techniques for personal and spiritual development and psychotherapy which I call psycho-techniques, and which include Rebirthing Breathwork, Holotropic Breathwork™, Vivation and free breathing.

In this article, I am going to base my conclusions on postulates based on the following: Stanislav Grof's theory of Holotropic Breathwork™ as well as many other modern schools of psychology (gestalt, NLP, holodynamics,¹ etc.) state that an adult person has a traumatized psyche. As result of these traumas, the psyche functions in uncoordinated ways that do not have integrity. This non-integrity in psychic functioning can be traced through inner contradictions such as: "I want, but I can't." "I want, but I don't know how to do it." "I want, but I don't do it." "I want this and that at the same time." "I don't want it, but I have to do it." In the case of psychic wholeness, the thoughts, feelings and action of people are non-contradictory, coordinated and complementary.

It is thought that the psychic traumas, which people receive in life, leave a trace in their consciousness which comprises the factors which have caused a trauma, as well as the traumatic experience itself. For example, where somebody has been hurt by dog, the trace in his psyche include the indications(factors) of the situation like dog, darkness, concrete street in the city where it has happened, and traumatic subjective experience like pain in leg, feeling of fear and anger. This trace disturbs psychic processes. It may block psychic energy. In the course of time, protective behaviours come into being. In our example, this person comes to avoid this street, dogs, and darkness and he may even come to love cats to give himself a reason to have to avoid dogs. These behaviours frequently trigger the repeating of the previous traumatic experience.

¹ V. Vernon Woolf, Ph.D – www.holodynamics.com

To denote parts of, as opposed to the whole psyche, different terms are used in various schools of psychotherapy: pattern, engram, matrix, holodyne (V. Vernon Woolf, 1995), block, incomplete gestalt, program, among others. Grof uses the term COEX (system of condensed experience).

“A COEX system can be defined as specific constellation of memories (and associated fantasies) from different periods of life of the individual. The excessive emotional charge which is attached to COEX systems seems to represent a summation of the emotions belonging to all the constituent memories of a particular kind.” (Grof, 2001, p. 68)

I shall use the term COEX further in this article.

To resume, the postulates, I mentioned above are firstly that a human being has within his/her personality different COEX systems that contradict each other; his psyche is traumatized, and this leads to the emergence of inner conflicts. Secondly, that breathwork helps to achieve inner integration, i.e. the integration of different COEX systems within one whole psyche. It should be noted that Holotropic Breathwork™ means “the breathwork leading to wholeness.” Kholov has said the same about Rebirthing Breathwork: “Rebirthing is a particularly direct and efficient method to trigger integration.” (Kholov, 2001, p. 45)

A NOTE ABOUT MY OWN BREATHWORK EXPERIENCE

I have had experience of Western breathing techniques for about ten years, both as subject and as therapist. During that period I was trained by the leading breathing-theory teachers in Russia (S. Vseksvyatsky, V. Kozlov, V. Maikov, G. Shirokov) as well as international recognized breathwork teachers, including Leonard Orr (USA) (Orr, 1983) who invented Rebirthing Breathwork; Dan Brule (USA) – one of Orr’s first followers; Nemi Nath (Australia) – founder of the school “Breathconnection”; Jim Morningstar (USA) – leader of a spiritual school, author of *Spiritual Psychology*, and one of first 12 people granted a rebirther certificate by Orr; Cliff Lloyd (England) – exchairman of British Rebirthers Society; and many others besides. I have also communicated in person with Sandra Ray and Bob Mandel (USA) – creators of the LRT (“Loving Relationships Training”), Deike Begg (England) – author of the book *Rebirthing. Freedom from your past*. For the last six years I have been giving individual breathwork sessions in different styles (Rebirthing Breathwork, Holotropic Breathwork™, Vivation). I have conducted trainings in groups orientated both at therapeutic and teaching purposes. I have seen that Breathwork itself has a huge potential for integration, for bringing about wholeness in the psyche. However, my experience of learning and teaching in groups shows that the Breathwork process does not necessarily bring about integration. In fact, integration frequently fails to take place.

I use other psycho-techniques as well and believe that the Western breathwork techniques belong to most efficient; they contain huge, as yet unrealized potential. It is this potential that I would like to discuss below.

THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION IN BREATHWORK SESSIONS

Let's consider a structure of typical breathwork session.

I will distinct several stages in the structure of the session:

- a) General theory – the trainer tells the participants about the history of the technique, the potential results, the patterns of consciousness.
- b) Instructions given by the trainer for the session – the ways of breathing, its duration, the necessary accents, etc.
- c) Breathing session – the participant's independent work following the instructions.
- d) Sharing (there is as well a mandala drawing stage in Holotropic Breathwork™) – sharing what the participants felt during the session. It is this stage that is deemed to be the most efficient for integration.

Now I want to go deeper. The question I will explore is: what is the logic of the integrative process as seen through the breather's perception? I was unfortunately not able to find a model in the literature devoted to Western breathwork techniques, so my colleague (Gennady Shirokov) and I undertook a research project at the St. Petersburg School of Breathwork. It resulted in the following model for the consequences of the integration stages:

Activation of COEX (pattern, block, engram....)

Generation of link

Diffusion of emotional experience along this link

Generalization of emotional experience

Insight

Let me describe these stages in more detail: the client takes up the position agreed upon (for example lying on a mattress) – and starts the breathing session:

1. The first thing that happens to him when he gets involved in the process is that his energy level grows and the activation of specific feelings or sensation or thoughts occurs as a consequence. That means that one COEX become prominent and captures all of his attention. For example: the breather may feel cold or develop tetany, or become extremely irritated, for example, by the music. Sometimes outward stimuli can activate one specific COEX. (“Certain elements of the setting or specific events during the session can activate a COEX system which has associated features») Grof, p. 69)
2. Next, if the process is working, a link may appear between the local experience and some central problem: an association or a thought will emerge. To give a personal example, cold is what often happens to me and it really is my urgent problem. I feel very cold quiet often in my life.
3. The emotional experience gets diffused along this link: the cold is sensed as if perceived both now and in numerous other situations that are not just recollected, but, rather, relived anew. A person recollects how he was frozen on a

hike in his youth, how cold he was because he was inappropriately dressed, and he goes on feeling cold right now in the process. In this case he finds himself in extended state of consciousness (ESC), when he is simultaneously here and there, in the past and in the present).

4. There may take place a process of generalization of emotional experience, i.e. the client starts going through some aspect on a total scale. The cold becomes total, and the man realizes that the feeling of cold penetrates all his life, that he is cool to his folks, that the girl-friend who he parted from not long ago left him precisely because of his being cold. At this stage what dominates the process shifts from the recollection and re-experiencing of the external factors forming the situation (COEX), to the emotional aspect of the experience, and the person goes through some feeling in an all-absorbing way.. To get to this phase, the client has to allow this emotional experience absorb him completely, and at the same time, this is not so easy to do, as this phase is full of uncertainty – one never knows when it will end. It is a sort of jump into the abyss. However when there is complete surrender, this phase comes to an end: the client exhausts the emotional experience and an exit is found to the next deeper stage.
5. There is then a leap forward which brings with it a global transformation to a new quality. It reveals a new context, insight, the idea that brings the solution to all of the entanglements. For example: simultaneous understanding why I feel cold, how I could get warm – now and in principle, what factors could help me in the past and in what way I could become warmer towards the others and myself in the future. “The positive solution of a problem situation is accompanied by emotional upsurge, inflow of energy” – (Tytar, Alim, 1996)

Now I will compare a typical breathwork session with the above integration model, to find the key points which may be affected to increase the efficiency of the process. In my opinion, a typical breathwork session stimulates just the first stage of the integration process (see above). Something gets activated rather rapidly – one feels ache or compression, or tetany can be felt, or some emotions are activated - pleasure, fault, shame, offence... And this is not followed by deepening of the process.

These are the reasons that the process does not proceed or shift to further stages:

- 1) Low activation. The level of activation is not sufficient to have a link generated. This often happens because the recollected emotions and feelings seem to be unusual and unpleasant, and the breather strives to get rid of them as soon as possible. He or she does this by either releasing the breath, or changing its pattern/rhythm, or removing the initial external stimulus which may be the partner accompanying the session, smell, music or something else that generates the original local emotional experience. This may also be achieved in an intellectual way through shifting the focus onto something else like starting to think of some images, or looking for purely an intellectual positive context, like “all is love”, or just withdrawing from the process through the excuse of sickness, hunger or something similar. Normally the breather/the client does not do it deliberately, he just feels unable to breathe as before be-

cause he suffers from discomfort, or does he may not even notice that he has got rid of the reason of activation, for example, by changing his posture or opening his eyes. In everyday life, in fact, we are always doing this. If we feel uncomfortable while sitting, we change our posture; if we dislike a smell, we air the room; if we dislike our partner – and we are able to – we leave. All the above are frequently used methods for escaping unpleasant emotions in daily life, and they work during breathwork session as well.

Thus it often happens that the breather reaches some stage of activation and stops there. But simply through the contact with the COEX he acquires some energy, and, in general, develops a positive attitude to breathwork.

- 2) Sometimes the reason for poor or insufficient activation is the breather's mistrust and fear of showing a certain emotion, if, for some reason, he believes that the trainer or other group participants may treat his expression negatively.
- 3) Sometimes the reason is the breather's prejudices. For instance, in the case of tetany, (severe muscle spasms), if the client/breather is a medical doctor, he may believe that tetany is harmful in all situations, and that its only cause is hyperventilation. He therefore fails to consider any other options, for example that his clenched hands show that he suppresses his emotions severely, in particular those that he is feeling that moment. Were he able to give way to his emotions – in this case, his anger – and allow them to overwhelm him, it would lead to relief and breakthrough.

The inhibitory effect can also be caused by breather's ideas about what should be involved in the process, for example, the breather is expecting to go into other worlds, or to have transpersonal emotional experience, etc. These ideas and expectations prevent the breather from using what is available here and now, such as feeling of coldness; the sounds produced by the other breathworkers; tactile contact with the sitter. He will think that these sensations are very ordinary and thus unworthy of his attention.

- 4) Sometimes the intensity of emotional experience is the problem. Then the breather may go so far astray that he is unable to function as an observer any more, and thus his ability to comprehend the things around him weakens considerably.
- 5) The process may stop at the stage of generalization of emotional experience because of the fact that the breather fails to surrender himself to the process entirely, while at this stage, in order to achieve insight, one has to surrender to this state exhaustively.

Thus, for the process to proceed from one stage to another, the following is needed to happen to the client:

1. Permanent activation – through the breathwork and also through the external stimuli.
2. Permanent observation of what is going on within: i.e. the emerging sensations, emotions, feelings, images.
3. Perceiving and treating any external factors as parts of the process.
4. An active search for links between the states being activated.

5. Flexibility in search of a correct context.
6. The ability to surrender totally to the emotional experience at the stage of generalization.
7. Willingness to accept any solution of the problem.

HOW CAN THE BREATHWORKER INFLUENCE THESE STAGES?

1. The breathworker should set a precise format for the process and give precise directions, and should follow it at all costs. It is good practice to create a clear format so that the breather can identify whether or not he is following it even from his deepest altered states of consciousness. The format should comprise the pattern of breathing to be followed, directions for the intensity, the position of the body, the duration of the process, and the possibility to move in space. Other format-related factors are important too: the participation of the partner, the group, subjects (anything from material world can be included to the process, for example clothes or toys or mirrors could be used for special type of activation); synthesis of techniques, change of breathing style in the process and many others. It is helpful to inform the person who is working to master the techniques when he goes off the format.
2. By handling available parameters (music, bodily work, breathing) so that they lead towards greater activation.
3. By setting orientation to accept all the outward factors as parts of one's internal process, not the hindering external conditions that must be removed tacitly.
4. By setting a context supposing that every emotional experience has its sense, and a person may find it, the same way like the links between the COEX activated in the process and the topical life problems.
5. By setting a context supposing that the purpose of the process is integration.
6. By creating the atmosphere of trust for any revelations of the participants.
7. By communicating and demonstrating different integration options.
8. By developing reflexivity during the sharing, so that breathworkers were more attentive to the session details during the subsequent processes.

Thus:

Process Facilitation Methods	Typical reasons of process inhibition
Clear-cut format plus extra activation through avail-	Low activation as a consequence of sup-

able parameters	pression
Creation of atmosphere of trust	Low motivation due to distrust and unwillingness to express one's thoughts sincerely
Orientation at acceptance of everything that takes place, search of one's own explanation of surrounding things	Restricting views Rigid expectations
Context aimed at integration and cultivation of reflexivity	Too intense emotional experience with loss of observer's qualities
Orientation at acceptance and giving away	Inability to surrender to the process entirely

CONCLUSION:

The experience of St. Petersburg School of Breathwork leads to a conclusion that the probability of integration may be enhanced substantially, and this may be affected using the above methods.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Joy Manné, Ph.D, *Conscious Breathing: How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life*. (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2004) reviewed by CATHERINE DOWLING, therapist and rebirther/breathworker.

Reviewed by [WILFRIED EHRMANN](#)

Reviewed by [BO AHRENFELT](#), psychiatrist and member of the Board of the Scientific and Medical Network. First published in the *Network Review*

Commented on by TULLIO CARERE-COMES, psychiatrist and psychotherapist who has integrated breathwork in his daily practice.

Karina Schelde (2006), *Soul Voice : liberate your voice, enhance communication and unlock creative expression*. (Steele Roberts, Aotearoa, New Zealand.)

Margaret [Coyne](#) (2005), *Breaking Down, Breaking Through: My Thorn-Paved Road to Healing via Altered States and Near Madness*. (Self-Published, Dublin, Ireland)

Babette [Rothschild](#) (2003) *The Body Remembers Casebook : Unifying Methods and Models in the Treatment of Trauma and PTSD*. (New York: W W Norton & Co.)

[Ogden](#), Pat, Minton, Kekuni, & Pain, Clare (2006), *Trauma and the Body: a sensorimotor approach to psychotherapy*. New York: WW Norton and Company.

[Cozolino](#), Louis (2006) *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships : Attachment and the Developing Social Brain*. W.W.Norton & Co., New York.

Joy Manné, Ph.D, *Conscious Breathing: How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life*. (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2004) Review by CATHERINE DOWLING

Joy Manne has studied the Buddhist texts extensively, has wide experience of shamanism and is a very well known breathworker who has run her own school of breathwork in Switzerland. In this book she brings all her learning and experience together. In it she puts forward the thesis that shamanism and breathwork are far more closely related than people have thought up to now. This is a relatively unusual concept in modern breathwork wiring. Although touched on in other breathwork books, *Conscious Breathing* takes the idea to new depths and goes into it in far greater detail.

Manne analyses the shamanic experience, the life events that lead to initiation as a shaman, the forms of initiation and so forth. She analyses the path to breathwork, the breathwork experience, initiation in breathwork, etc. in the same way and finds interesting parallels and mergers between the two paths of healing. Manne contends that in breathwork we enter shamanic states using only the breath (p. 257) and that in the path to becoming a breathworker we encounter many of the same milestones that form pivotal points in a shaman's life journey.

This concept is very valuable and particularly so because of the grounded and accessible way Manne writes about it. But the book is also a very important addition to the list of breathwork books because it analyses the breathwork experience in detail. Manne deals with all the important issues that arise in breathwork emphasising grounding in a solid foundation, good sense and a very practical approach to the issue of spirituality. She has the utmost respect for the spiritual aspects of the human being and breathwork but her feet are on the ground. The result is a view of the spiritual experience as a normal part of daily life rather than what Manne has elsewhere called spiritual egotism.

This book is well written, accessible, a valuable text for all breathworkers. It also has an extensive resource list at the back, a large bibliography and is very well footnoted. Highly recommended.

Catherine Dowling

Joy Manné (2004), *Conscious Breathing. How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life.* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA) reviewed by WILFRIED EHRMANN

Joy's new book is a rich book: rich with practical experience, case stories, practical exercises and background information. It shows how different the effects of breathwork can be. The book consists of four parts and ten chapters. The first part describes the breath as language, a topic which also has been addressed by Joy in a presentation at the breathwork conference in Austria in 1997. The second part introduces the basics of breathwork. The author mainly refers to Rebirthing Breathwork, Holotropic Breathing and Consciously Connected Breathing Techniques, a method in breathwork which she developed.

She separated the pattern of a breathwork session into four phases: activation, integration, insight and vision. The range of experiences which can come up in breathwork sessions is described in detail: trance of the inner light, trance of regression and progression, healing trance, existential states as well as shamanistic and religious trance (p. 58-64). These states of trance are compared and distinguished from those arising in hypnosis.

The third part describes breathwork for beginners. The most important access exercises for starting the work are teaching grounding and awareness.

“Grounding and awareness lead naturally to insight and vision because they reduce our level of activation. The less activated we are, the more clearly we observe our thought and behaviour patterns and perceive connections between our previous experiences and current behaviour.” (p. 109).

Connected breathing which means the connection of in-breath and out-breath without a pause is considered as an advanced technique by Joy which is recommended by her when grounding and inner awareness have been established firmly.

The author writes a lot about the topic of verbal interaction during the breathwork session and compares their advantages and disadvantages very knowledgeably. Different breathing rhythms and patterns are presented and enriched with technical hints about

how the therapist can intervene. There is a strong emphasis on respecting the client and on a careful examination of the intentions of the therapist.

Under the heading: ‘problems with conscious connected breathing’, Joy’s description of hyperventilation and tetany shows that she has softened her rather strict condemnation of any states of cramp during breathing in her first book (Soul Therapy, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 1997). Now she admits that these experiences can be of relative value in therapy.

The fourth part is dedicated to advanced breathwork. Here we see the influence of the author’s long lasting experience in Vipassana meditation. The inner universe which opens up by letting the breath flow is limitless. The insight can be refined level by level. This is the area where therapy becomes meditation.

The final chapter justifies the subtitle of the book. Breathwork is compared to shamanism, its assumptions and practises. Joy succeeds in pointing out several parallels:

“Shamanistic experiences come naturally through conscious breathing without any need for inductions; they can also be induced.” (p. 232)

But the relationships go even further. Joy starts in describing the shamanistic experiences of the Buddha which leads her to the conclusion:

“The shape of both my Breathwork experiences and Buddhist psychology became evident. The pattern for both was the same, and it was shamanic!” (p. 238 f)

This is how breathwork remembers a highly respected ancestor.

Why is it that we should again and again reconsider the breath and its healing power? Should we not be content to simply living and solving the problems in life in a practical way?

“Being human is, in itself, a condition that requires healing. From conception onward, the occasions for being wounded – for losing our power through being activated beyond the protective strength of our grounding and awareness – are innumerable, and they occur for everyone. Nobody is exempt. We all share this condition and its need for healing.” (p. 252)

Wilfried Ehrmann

Some notes on Joy Manné’s book “Conscious breathing: How shamanic breathwork can transform your life” by TULLIO-CARERE COMES

I have read Joy’s book not as a breathworker—which I am not—but as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist who has integrated breathwork in his daily practice. Her idea of a “shamanic pattern” has intrigued me since I heard of it, for two reasons. Firstly, the 20th century produced hundreds of schools of psychotherapy and thousands of psychotherapeutic theories. What we badly need now is not more theories, but patterns. Patterns of what happens in real practice, independently of the therapist’s theories. This is the *common factors approach* to therapy, which aims at identifying the structure of the process of change and growth underlying every therapeutic endeavor. Secondly, the research in this field has pointed to a small set of basic factors, which can be organized (my suggestion) in a model of the therapeutic field defined by two orthogonal axes connecting four cardinal factors, corresponding to the four basic developmental figures: the Mother (unconditional acceptance) and the Father (confrontation) on the

horizontal line, the Scientist (knowledge) and the Artist-Mystic (openness to the unknown) on the vertical line. Virtually all therapeutic-transformational interactions happen somewhere in the field described by the two axes. The shamanic pattern, as Joy describes it, corresponds almost exactly to the vertex of the field where the therapist takes on the role of the artist-mystic.

Of course, huge theoretical problems arise in the way of this mode of proceeding. For instance: what exactly is a pattern? How can one say that a pattern is anything different from a theory? Is it not just one more theory disguised as a pattern? Are we not calling patterns our theories in order to be exempted from the obligation of putting them to rigorous empirical test? But Joy's book does not belong here. She is a very practical breathworker, she is not interested in sophisticated theoretical questions. There is another ground, usually called *heuristic*, that is different from the theoretical to the extent that what one looks for here is practical rules, models or patterns that one needs to orient oneself in one's everyday job and journey. The rules or patterns that one heuristically finds or builds are intuitive constructs. They are not scientific theories, although they are the material with which the scientists build their hypotheses. I do not mean at all that the heuristic enterprise is something lower or inferior to the scientific one. A theoretical approach can get in the way when a heuristic one is required, and vice versa. They are two different approaches, relatively independent of each other, which have much to learn when they dialectically interact, but which can also go their way without caring too much of what happens on the other side. Therapists usually move mostly heuristically, as researchers move mostly theoretically. Some like to foray in the opposite field, others not.

Having clarified that with Joy's book we tread the heuristic, not the theoretical ground, we can go on. Why do we need a shamanic pattern, in the first place, both in breathwork and in psychotherapy? Many psychotherapists, and most or all breathworkers, accept that there is a spiritual or transpersonal dimension to the work. But why call it shamanic? Most breathworkers, to begin with, do not agree. In a pre-conference discussion we had in April-June 2004 (<http://cyberpsych.org/sepi/shaman.htm>), in preparation of a panel on shamanism to be held at the Amsterdam SEPI Conference, the breathworkers (Tilke Platteel-Deur, Catherine Dowling, and Wilfried Ehrmann) were paradoxically the ones that more vigorously objected to the use of the term, whatever it meant, whereas the non-breathworkers (Hilde Rapp, Geoffrey Samuel, and myself) were more willing to consider its usefulness, at least as a "a place holder, a conceptual marker for something we intuitively apprehend but don't yet know quite how to describe" (Hilde). Or, in Geoffrey's words, "there is *something* there which needs a label, and so far 'shamanic' seems to be the best and most general word we have". Forget theory and clear-cut concepts, they say—the shamanic pattern is something we heuristically need.

Well, this does exempt Joy and us all from precise descriptions. The point is, as she puts it (in our on-line discussion) "*what experiences breathwork clients have, and what behaviors breathworkers do, and whether there is a pattern to them*". To the first question, one can spell out a number of experiences, but a list is not a pattern. A pattern is "a regular or repetitive form, order, or arrangement" (from my on-line dictionary). A series of things can be called a pattern to the extent that we can discern something like a form or an order to it. Now, can we discern such an order in the experience of the breathwork clients? Yes, we can. Every breathworker knows that, if

breathwork works, one gets to a point where breathing somehow “takes over”, where one does not breathe any longer but “is breathed”. At that point breathing is no more just breathing, but is perceived as inhabited by a healing, transforming or regenerating power: *respiration* becomes—or reveals—*spirit*. This is the core pattern of breathwork, we could all agree on this. But why should we call it shamanic? Joy emphasizes the shamanic initiation, with its three stages of suffering (passion), death, and rebirth, as the core process of breathwork. But this is the same in Christianity, one could object. I am sure that Joy would reply: Of course, this is because Jesus Christ was a great shaman (in fact she did not write that, only because she chose Buddha as her great shaman of reference). But the shamans were there before both Buddha and Jesus were born, they set the stage for all subsequent spiritual developments and traditions. And they are still here, in both modern Western and pre-modern non-Western shamanic practices. The appeal of the shamanic versus Christianity, Buddhism or other forms of more sophisticated spirituality, may lie in its direct connection with the source of inspiration and healing, without the intermediation of religion with its personality cult, devotion, institutional rules and dogmas and all the paraphernalia of the clerical approach to spirit.

Besides, as Geoffrey puts it, “so far ‘shamanic’ seems to be the best and most general word we have”. A shaman is a mystic, insofar as s/he is open to and is guided by the spirit (even in its plural form, spirits), but unlike the mystic s/he does not look for ecstasy for the sake of ecstasy: inspiration is searched for in the service of the community. A shaman is an artist (“creativity is shamanic”, states Joy), but again, the shaman does not aim at producing works of art, his/her creativity being in the service of healing and guiding people. I myself chose the figure of the artist-mystic to represent the function of Openness to the unknown only because ‘shamanic’ is still too suspicious a word in the psychoanalytic community—where instead ‘mystic’ is almost accepted, after Bion.

So much for what experiences breathwork clients have. With regard to *what behaviors breathworkers do*, can we find here too a pattern? There is a variety of suggestions that breathworkers make, but one of these seems to me to have the distinction of a pattern, namely the connected breath, or *consciously connected breathing*, as Joy calls it. It is the invitation to “consciously connect our inhale to our exhale and our exhale to our inhale, in order to eliminate the breathing pauses that usually occur between them”. Right, this is the instruction we usually give in the beginning: breathe in a circular way, without pausing between inhalation and exhalation. However, the real pattern might be not connected breathing, but *connecting breathing*, i.e. the breathing that connects (mind and body, past and present, feeling and thinking, micro and macro cosmos...). In fact, in my experience small silent pauses between inhalation and exhalation are not a problem to the skilled breather, to whom the connection can even be facilitated. The basic connection, the one with which I usually start, is in my view that between the top and the bottom of the spine, as illustrated by the image of the caduceus: two currents of breath flowing bottom-up and top-down along the spine, connecting the sacrum with the head. But of course, every breathworker would agree that connected breathing is just a technical device to bring about all the different connections. My observation is just that if we look for patterns, then *connecting* might be preferable to *connected* breathing.

One last observation on the controversial topic of *hyperventilation*. If we take this word in the basic meaning it has in medicine (an increased depth and/or rate of breathing greater than demanded by the body needs leading to abnormal loss of carbon dioxide from the blood), we must admit that breathwork, in which the depth of breathing is usually increased, often implies hyperventilation. However, this word is also used for the rapid shallow breathing that often occurs as a manifestation of anxiety. Joy is right when she insists that this word should not be employed for any kind of breathwork, if she has in mind (as she has) the second meaning of the word. But other breathworkers are also right when they use the word in its first meaning.

In conclusion, Joy's effort to clarify the pattern of breathwork in connection with shamanism results in my view in a better understanding of both breathwork and shamanism, and should therefore be praised as an important contribution to the advancement of our field.

Tullio Carere-Comes

Joy Manné, Ph.D, *Conscious Breathing: How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life.* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2004) and Gunnel Minett, *Exhale.* (Floris Books) reviewed by BO ARENFELDT, and member of the Board of the Scientific and Medical Network. First published in the *Network Review*.

Every living system pulsates. The pulsative quality is a distinctive mark and characteristic of any living system, including the human being. We breathe for example. That breathing is important to us in many different ways can be seen on the Web. When I used Google and searched for 'breathing' I got 11,400,000 hits! And 'breathing and health' got 3,280,000. You can get any thinkable perspective on the subject.

However, psychotherapists and doctors alike usually underestimate breathing as a healing tool. The former do not realise that breathing is a gateway to the unconscious or can help the client focus and become present in the now. The latter do not realise that it also can be a part of a somatic mind-body healing process. Or, if they understand this theoretically, they do not practise it with their clients and patients. In other words, there is still room for educating health care workers from many different fields and also the lay person for self improvement. Two new books are out on the subject, both by members: Joy Manné's *Conscious Breathing* and Gunnel Minnet's *Exhale*. Both authors have a background in psychology. We meet two breath therapists with long experience, from whom most of us can learn. Both have released books before. Joy's *Soul Therapy* is from 1997 and Gunnel's *Breath and Spirit* from 1994 are both translated into several languages.

Joy's new book *Conscious Breathing* is an attempt to describe her version of breathwork in full and is divided into four parts in a logical train of thought. In the very short first part we follow her personal journey into breathwork via Vipassana meditation, a rather heavy Rebirthing process where she did not only learn how to do rebirthing, but also learned how not to do the work, Holotropic breathwork and Kundalini yoga.

In the second part the author maps her territory; breathwork is shamanic in quality and essence and consequently, it is not only a method for personal development but also an energy work as well as a spiritual one. We get a vocabulary and a notion of what

we can expect being a client in this type of breathwork. One of Joy's own lessons as a client is that one needs to be prepared for what is coming. It is an educational discourse we enter with examples and illustrative case studies, which support her claims and ideas throughout the book.

In Chapter 4 she describes what a normal session looks like from the start, through the personal work to the integration of psychological material and closure of the session. We get introduced to the process in individual and group work and even to breathwork as a self-help tool. This part is very informative for a novice and shows the benefits of this type of work. Joy is not claiming that she has the answers to all our problems or that her work is a solution to everyone in pain. "Too many Breathwork books make exaggerated claims for healing." (p76) She walks her talk and there are explicit words of warning; severely disturbed people such as early disturbed, pre-psychotic, schizophrenic or psychotic should not be treated by regular breath-workers as the training needed to take care of and help these types of clients does not exist in the different schools. Soothing words for a psychiatrist who has seen more than one patient coming from not so competent practitioners in psychotherapy, bodywork, energy work, meditation, dream work, breathwork, guided imagery etc. However, breathworkers with adequate training in psychotherapy are well suited to work with some of these patients. Likewise, she warns for using breathwork with somatic illnesses like diabetes. The book gives me a very professional impression through Joy's forwardness regarding the limitations and strengths of this kind of work.

Who is suitable for this type of work then? This is also explicitly declared: normal problems of everyday life. Relationship or sexuality problems, a lost emotional life through stress, a negative self-image, minor depression etc. In other words, people who do not need years of building a self, in order to treat it. However, I get surprised when she writes:

"Neither psychotherapy nor meditation is possible unless the sense of identity or ego is mature and well grounded." (p 250)

This was true for psychotherapy many years ago, decades in fact, but today we treat all types of patients with psychotherapy, even schizophrenics. I agree however, to her scepticism regarding meditation for people without a functioning self or ego.

The last two parts consist of two thirds of the book, which is clinically oriented. The presented vocabulary comes into practice. She gives us a number of exercises, case studies and good advice how to actually do it. Body-workers and other psychotherapists in the humanistic field will recognize themselves. Joy is pedagogical and logical in presentation, illustrative in the clinical case studies and has many interesting and stimulating thoughts and ideas. It is in her 'small talk' we see her experience. The book is full of thoughtful sentences like 'Nothing is as powerful as gentleness', which makes an inexperienced reader aware that good work is far beyond technique or acting out.

For the beginner the exercises are easy and useful. The series of grounding and awareness exercises will be beneficial to almost anyone. The novice will also get a good idea what it would be like to go deeper into a personal process in breathwork in general and Conscious Breathing in particular.

The main philosophical thread in the book, that bodywork is shamanic, is explained here in more detail. At the same time her experience in Buddhism and inspiration from CG Jung comes forth. Here we find another series of exercises that can be stimulating for those on the spiritual path like meditators, Qigong or yoga practitioners, as well as people in mind-body medicine or psychotherapy. In the last chapter she tries to squeeze a lot, maybe too much, into her theoretical frame: Buddha was a shaman, so were Freud and Jung. The last chapter feels unfinished and would have needed a bit more working through. However, that does not take away anything from the rest of the book nor the ideas presented there.

In the bibliography we find references from expected areas like meditation, body psychotherapy, transpersonal psychology, Buddhism, shamanism and, of course, breathwork. It is a good way forward for the interested reader who would also benefit from a list of journals and websites as well as a list of practitioners with names and addresses from Europe, US, Canada and Australia.

In *Exhale*, Gunnel Minett defines breathwork as

“...the intentional alteration of the breathing pattern for healing and mind-expanding purposes” (p 42).

She puts this definition in a cultural context. The book is divided into four parts. First we get an overview, then she explains the potential and benefits in this type of work, in chapter three we look into the physiology of breath work and neuroscience and in the last chapter she tries to foresee the future of the work. Her intention is to highlight the role of breathing in our lives and how we can use it to develop as human being on a psychological and spiritual level. Throughout the book the reader can get a personal experience of the work through trying out the presented breathing exercises on their own.

After the introductory chapter with a number of exercises we meet breathwork in a cultural and historical context in chapter two, which is one third of the book and very interesting. It is not a how-to-do-it book in spite of a number of exercises. The discourse is kept on a theoretical level and gives a wide introduction to why and how breathing and breathing techniques have been used in various ways by different cultures throughout history. The chapter is called *The Power of the Breath* and is an attempt to give the reader as broad information as possible from ancient times to nowadays. This makes the chapter a bit “loose” logically, yet it is very informative for a newcomer in the field. Gunnel hosted the first Global Inspiration Conference for breathworkers 1994 and her interest in and knowledge about other cultures is obvious. The emphasis is on the Asian cultures, where her heart seems to belong. She guides us through ancient Chinese and Indian knowledge and how they used the breath in various ways. We first learn about Qigong, Yoga and what one can expect from a Kundalini awakening before she introduces the reader to other cultural backgrounds like Tibet, Greece and Egypt as well as Islamic and Christian perspectives and tribal societies. Then she discusses modern breathing techniques and its role in psychology and psychotherapy and how Freud, Jung, Rank, Reich and Perls are related to and have contributed to this work.

Rebirthing is then introduced with long quotations from Leonard Orr, the founder of the method, with her own ideas about it. She seems to be a loyal follower and for the reader this part is a good introduction to the Rebirthing. A number of pages deal with

the foetus and the birth situation before she turns to Holotropic Breathwork and transpersonal experiences such as NDE (Near Death Experiences) and mystical experiences. The perinatal situation and transpersonal psychology is important to her. She points out that there is an important difference between Rebirthing and Holotropic breathing in that the former is more focused on the breath itself, whereas the latter is not intended to create a specific breathing pattern and is more directed towards mind. However, both methods can create perinatal and transpersonal experiences.

Chapter three contains a presentation of the physiology of the breathing system and a discussion about the two worldviews we can see today, which have a strong impact on modern medicine. Here she returns to the Eastern approach and discusses the medical assumptions regarding illness and health from Indian, Chinese and Tibetan perspectives. When she explores the Chakra system in a very pedagogical way, she also includes Caroline Myss' contribution as well as Christian and Kabbalah correspondences. The last part of the chapter discusses the brain, memory function and how breathwork can help the client to get in touch with experiences from a time earlier than the developed brain, so they get a chance to interpret and integrate the memories and become happier and more integrated.

The last, very short chapter, is about the future. As a specialist in the field she holds the understandable position that breathwork can influence almost anything from politics, via environment and education to peace. She is right in theory but probably a bit overenthusiastic about the possibilities to implement breathwork into the society as a whole. Between references and index the reader gets a number of web pages for further studies. The reference list is also a good way forward into Gunnel's perspective of this field.

What is striking with both books is that breathing techniques in the West are not isolated to a psychological area in a Freudian sense. Beyond that aspect we come into a spiritual or transpersonal territory. Stanislav and Christina Grof opened up this perspective many years ago in the West and it is by now spread into other areas of psychotherapy and body therapies. No wonder both authors refer to and ground themselves in other cultures and traditions where breathing has been used for millennia for personal and transpersonal development.

My conclusion is that you need to be rather well functioning to benefit from breathwork, which puts regular breathwork outside the psychotherapeutic field. However, those of us who use breathing techniques in our daily life for our well-being and personal development, privately and/or professionally, will benefit from both books. As always, it is very stimulating to read what experienced and competent colleagues are doing in their work. We find new techniques in well-known areas and get new ideas for our own practice from both books. They are complementary in content and partly in direction. What I miss in the one I get in the other and vice versa. I can recommend the two books to anyone who is about to start a breathwork process or who is already in it and wants to deepen their understanding about what is going on during and between sessions. Together they are a splendid presentation of what breathwork is. I can also recommend them to experienced psychotherapists who want to broaden their repertoire of techniques into the body and breath area. As they are complementary, I would start with *Exhale* with its broader theoretical aim before reading *Conscious Breathing*, which is more clinically oriented.

Karina Schelde (2006), *Soul Voice : liberate your voice, enhance communication and unlock creative expression.* (Steele Roberts, Aotearoa, New Zealand.)

If you have ever worked with Karina Schelde you will welcome this book with joy, and give it generously to friends and family as a present. Karina's poetic and passionate energy is as fully in her book as in her personal voice teaching. When she says that "the written word ... is living energy" (p. 10), hers certainly is. Here's her guidance on doing her numerous inspiring exercises:

Give yourself lots of credit each time you embark on an exercise. Receive the information as a guide for your heart to experience and interpret. Don't try too hard or be too goal-oriented. Enjoy all the steps as wisdom and food for the soul. Get out of your own way and let it happen. Allow yourself to explore like a child, to get excited, and feel passionate about your progress and discoveries. (p. 11)

What a generous approach!

The first chapter, *The Origins of Sounding*, concerns the healing effects of sounds and the benefits we can obtain through learning to use our voice freely. Chapter Two describes the benefit of listening to dolphin and whale sounds "which activate our life force and awaken higher consciousness." (p. 28) Chapter Three is about developing our listening skills and really conscious listening. Chapter Four is about breathing and sound, and contains interesting diagnoses of voice-tone and character. For those of us who are professionals in breathwork, this adds a further breathwork skill – sounding. We can tune our body into our soul's purpose through making freely the sounds that wish to come.

Chapter Five is about the problems we have with relaxation and the importance of detachment. Chapter Six is about visualisation. Unlike the usually rather glib texts on this subject, Karina advises us, "go into every corner of your being and be sure that what you ask for is really what you want. Do not be fake whatsoever." (p. 60) Visualisation with surrender and inner listening so as to hear our guidance, is her wise message. Chapter Seven is about our typically suppressed emotions: fear, anger, grief with exercise that enable us to release them, and then a laughing exercise to bring us back to our joy.

Chapter Eight is about becoming a "sound healing instrument." Karina says so wisely, "our ability to heal through sound frequencies is dependent on our ability to take the very best of ourselves as essence and, from that point, consciously direct our expression to the recipient through sacred intent. To develop our sound healing qualities, our intuition continuously needs to be strengthened and refined through training of subtle listening, intention and faith." (p.77)

Chapter Nine teaches us how to make overtone sounds and explains their particular healing purposes. Chapter Ten explains how to work with the chakra system and sound. Chapter Eleven explains Earth healing and working with the elements, Chapter Twelve with spirit animals. Chapter Thirteen concerns the importance of rituals, Chapter Fourteen deals with prayer and peace.

Throughout the book there is reference to children's spontaneous use of sound, and how adults tend to squash that out of them. Chapter Fifteen is devoted to children.

Finally, Chapter Sixteen concerns "Using sound with alternative therapies," Chapter Seventeen takes us into "Visions for the future and global telepathic sound healing," Chapter Eighteen summarises what the Soul Voice method can do, and Chapter Nineteen is about certification. There is an overview of the abundant, precisely described, accessible exercises from baby babbling through vowel sounding and much more. There are abundant case histories and a Reference section so that we can go further.

This book is written on a very high vibration and lifts us onto that vibration. Its passion and poetry has made it difficult to choose quotations as I could happily have quoted all of it. Every sentence deserves slow reading and deep inner listening – and then, of course, sounding. There are beautiful pictures with uplifting messages throughout. I find my mind opening up and insights flowing in as I read and reread it. It is truly a sacred book that reminds us who we really are.

Joy Manné

Breaking Down, Breaking Through: My Thorn-Paved Road to Healing via Altered States and Near Madness by Margaret Coyne. (Self-Published, Dublin, Ireland, 2005)

This book is about one woman's difficult, often agonising journey to emotional and spiritual well being through Holotropic Breathwork. And what a journey it has been. In 1992 Coyne's brother-in-law who was also one of her closest friends died. This kick started a period of deep depression when she "couldn't even bring myself to carry out basic hygiene functions" (p. x) The depression was characterised by frequent episodes of altered consciousness which she could not talk about to anyone. She was also drinking heavily. Finally, in early 1994 she met a therapist who eventually introduced her to Holotropic Breathwork. Over the next two and a half years she attended 30 breathwork sessions. Some were one day events, some held over three days. This book is the diary she kept throughout those years.

Coyne meticulously chronicled her breathwork experiences. Even if the diary entries were written immediately after each session, her power of recall is astonishing. Each session is documented, the insights gained are listed and even her feelings on each day following the session are set out under the headings of 'morning', 'afternoon', 'evening' and 'night'.

Coyne's was a tough journey. She worked through incredibly painful feelings and experiences of childhood sexual abuse, fostering, adoption by parents who were at times nothing short of abusive, an eating disorder, her birth, multiple losses, etc. Her writing style is very direct, almost painfully so, as she evokes the pure terror of episodes in her life. The effect is that the reader can feel the rawness of the experience, the emotional wrenching apart of a child subject to abuse, of a baby being born, of a woman losing control of her life and desperately in need of help. The writing is at times powerful and it evokes deep empathy with the author and with the suffering some people have to go through in life.

This book is a very raw and real illustration of the pain that can arise from events children appear to have survived unscathed: birth, adoption, fostering....It's also a very graphic description of what it is like to revisit the old wounds through Holotropic

Breathwork. Coyne does point out that many holotropic sessions are quiet and peaceful, but the majority of what she describes was very dramatic as well as physically and emotionally painful. As a rebirther I certainly have never experienced or witnessed anything like what Coyne describes. I don't know whether the anguish of her experience would put people off going for breathwork sessions or attract them. For this reason it might be risky to give this book to prospective clients. It could, however, be very valuable for existing clients who still aren't sure of how the process of breathwork unfolds as well as for students of breathwork. It would be a worthwhile addition to the reading lists in schools of breathwork around the world.

At the end of her thirty sessions Coyne fell into a very deep depression for which she was hospitalised for a short time. She sees this as a spiritual emergence prompted by breathwork, rather than a breakdown. After the hospitalisation she took a break from breathwork. But for Coyle, it was all worth it. She was "privileged...to experience [her] suffering." (p. 251). The 'breakdown' "was in fact heralding the beginning of [her] breakthrough to recovery. Sadly, not everyone saw it that way." (p. xiii) She was heavily drugged in hospital and had a difficult time getting off Seroxat afterwards. Part of her hope in writing the book was to "encourage these people to reconsider their routine use of strong sedation of patients on their immediate admission to hospital, especially cases of deep depression." She left hospital "high as a kite without ever once having dealt with the underlying cause of [her] depression." (p. 250)

For people who have never been exposed to the phenomenon Grof describes as spiritual emergence, the concept can be tough to swallow. And this is where Coyne could really come into her own as an author. She has experienced it, she has been hospitalised and has survived. Her opinions therefore are not just based on a crazy theory. They have the credibility of experience behind them. But the emergence and hospitalisation come right at the end of the book. There is no room to go into detail about either and I think she needs to do this if she is to have an influence on the state mental health system. The book is self-published and therefore, as the author points out, does not benefit from the services of a professional editor. This is a pity. A professional editor might have curtailed the diary format which can be repetitive at times. This would have created space for a discussion of the spiritual emergence and the inappropriate treatment of it in hospital. Hopefully Coyne will turn her very obvious writing ability to this aspect of her experience in the near future. Such a book would have a good chance of attracting a publisher.

Babette Rothschild (2003) *The Body Remembers Casebook : Unifying Methods and Models in the Treatment of Trauma and PTSD.* (New York: W W Norton & Co.)

The purpose of this book is "to inspire psychotherapists working with traumatized individuals to learn as much as possible about theory, tools, and treatment so that they can be well-equipped in working with the unpredictability of trauma and the diverse needs of clients." (p. xiii) This is a book that offers methods as tools of the trade, and supports common sense: "laying aside or changing a technique or protocol that makes a client worse, putting off the approach to potentially distressing material until the client feels safe..."(p. xv)

Part One, Theory and Practice, reviews Rothschild's earlier book, *The Body Remembers* (see review-article "Potential Breathwork Specialisations: Trauma Treatment, a Review Article" by this reviewer in *The Healing Breath*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2003), including her ten foundations for safe trauma therapy. It also resumes the methods illustrated in this book: Somatic Trauma Therapy (Rothschild's method); Body Psychotherapy; psychodynamic psychotherapy; Transactional Analysis (TA); Gestalt Therapy; Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) – "a combination of several methods all based on the principle that how we think influences how we feel and behave;" Eye Movement Desensitizing and Reprocessing (EMDR); Levine's SIBAM model; Body-dynamic Running Technique; Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP); Attachment Theory; and Psychopharmacology. Rothschild reminds us that her selection does not mean that methods left out have no worth (p. xvii); that not all of the methods she describes have been tested; that her case histories are anecdotal evidence (xix); and that if patients are consulted, they will know which method works best for them (p. 23).

Part Two contains the chapters with case history illustrations of the use of the various techniques individually or in combination. Many of the techniques are based on grounding techniques and keeping the client in the present. (Chapters 4 and 5)

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) clients may lack the ability to think rationally or to self-nurture, and Chapter 6 illustrates how a combination of techniques can be used to remedy this. Chapter 7 is about emphasising resources. Chapter Eight, "No techniques required," shows Rothschild making her self a very safe person for a very frightened person through sensitively following her patient's needs. Chapters 9 - 17 treat working with traumas related to episodes of victimisation; controlling intrusive inner images of the trauma; the feeling of alienation from his family of the child abused by a stranger; a traumatic job dismissal which resulted in the loss of livelihood; feelings of danger; traumatic parenting; the effect of being burgled; the feeling of isolation; and rape.

Rothschild is very courageous in describing some of her mistakes in Chapter 18 on Learning from Mistakes and Failure, and again there is her appreciation of the role of common sense. The next chapter is about applying common sense to the use of theories.

In her Summing Up, Rothschild again reminds us that there is no theory or method that is right for everyone.

There is a section called "Reader Selfcare" early in the book (pp. xix-xxi) on vicarious traumatisation where Rothschild reminds us that reading about traumatic experiences can be traumatising in itself and gives us advice on self-containment and protection.

There is a section of Further Information and Reading on Therapy Models. There are References and an Index. There is no Breathwork in the Index.

In my review article referred to above, I argued that many aspects of Breathwork are ideal for trauma treatment. Rothschild says, "The goal of trauma therapy is to integrate the aspects of the trauma – the sensation, image, behaviour, affect, and meaning – bringing them into consciousness and creating a cohesive narrative." (p. 165) Breathwork sessions do that whether traumas are minor or major, as long as the

breathworker does not push the process insensitively, and knows enough psychotherapy to contain the process.

Rothschild cannot train in every method. I long for the day when Breathwork's own Rothschild comes forward, with research and case histories, to show what Breathwork can do in trauma treatment. Until that happens, let breathworkers read this careful book carefully, so that they can deepen their work with traumatised clients.

Joy Manné

Ogden, Pat, Minton, Kekuni, & Pain, Clare (2006), *Trauma and the Body: a sensorimotor approach to psychotherapy*. New York: WW Norton and Company.

This book was sent to me for review, and so I am reviewing it – or at least the part that is interesting for me. It is what I call “heavy psychotherapy” – the stuff that is burdened with theory, burdened with jargon, and burdened with science. For a Breathwork journal and for breathworkers, only a few paragraphs are interesting, but before I get to that, this is what the book says it is about on its inside front cover:

First of all, the announcement that it is innovatory:

“The body, for a host of reasons has been left out of the ‘talking cure.’ With these opening words the authors announce the expansion of traditional talking therapy – building on skills ingrained after decades of accepted mental health practice – and identify a unique approach to the treatment of trauma.”

And then follows:

“We know the profound extent to which traumatic experience results in sensorimotor reactions – intrusive images, sounds, smells, body sensations, physical pain, constriction, numbing – and the need for a holistic, mind-body approach for effective treatment. Yet, conventional models of therapy, while fundamentally helpful, exclude discussion of the body, focussing predominantly on the idea that change occurs through narrative expression. No one has yet to combine our understanding of trauma and its effects with somatically-driven treatment to give a sound, comprehensive theory and treatment model.”

Of course, this book claims to do this.

Enough! Heavy theory keeps people safely separated from their primary emotions. Jargon is the intellect's creation of a hiding place from real emotional pain. Science lags behind practical experience. Example: I'm sixty now. When I was twenty, science knew nothing about the high fibre diet; every alternative or complementary practitioner was familiar with it.

Now to the few paragraphs about breathwork:

“Breathing is directly related to the regulation of energy and arousal. We breathe faster and harder under exertion, slower and deeper during relaxation; under threat we may hold our breath in an effort to stop movement (Conrad, 1997). In Western medicine, respiration exercises have been recognized as useful in the treatment of trauma since the 1800s (Janet, 1925), perhaps because autonomic arousal almost invariably results in respiratory changes. It is important to realize that there is no ‘correct’ way to breathe; different ways of

breathing are appropriate in different circumstances (Aposhyan, 1999). However, two primary breathing patterns that can be problematic tend to be observed in traumatized clients: overbreathing (tending towards hyperventilation) and underbreathing (tending towards hypoventilation) (Levine & MacNaughton, 2004). Clients can be taught to notice their breathing tendencies and the sensations generated from them, then alter their breathing to study the difference in sensation and arousal. They are asked to note whether their breathing is shallow or deep, centered or more in the chest or the belly, fast or slow, and so on. Instructing clients to place their hands on their ribcage while experimenting with breath can help them notice whether they are breathing from the chest or diaphragm.

Awareness of breathing tendencies and working with deepening the breath stimulate intrinsic core movements. Generally, clients observe that emphasizing the inhale increases arousal, whereas emphasizing the exhale decreases arousal and supports relaxation. This awareness can be useful for stabilizing both hyper- and hypoarousal states. Because breathing exercises are potent and can rapidly destabilize trauma clients, they should be used with caution and with an emphasis on awareness and integration of resulting sensations (Levine, 2004). (p. 225f)

This is a very cursory and superficial coverage of the amazing and wonderful freeing that comes through working well with the breath with all problems and at every level of consciousness. Breathwork is a very effective means of getting people through traumatic experiences. In a book published in 2006, there is no excuse for such a rudimentary approach to something so essential to life: if we do not breathe, we die! This journal has been available online now since 1999. Nothing from it is cited. No professional breathworker's book is cited or even in the index. Yet, in my own book devoted to breathwork, *Conscious Breathing: How Shamanic Breathwork Can Transform Your Life* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 2004. I don't even mention *Soul Therapy* (1997) as "breathwork" is not in its title), there is a vast amount of information on the relationship between how we breathe and our state of consciousness, and many case histories. And there are many more good breathwork books available. Stan Grof created Holotropic Breathwork™ and all of his books show how trauma can be released through his method. None of his works are mentioned and there is very little mention of meditation. It is obvious that the authors have made no online or in depth research into the many effective breathwork methods available. There is, however, a section teaching mindfulness (pp.193-195) and many references to mindfulness in the index.

Real Science is a wonderful thing. It means looking with new ideas all the time: expansion, search, enquiry beyond boundaries; searching with questions beyond any found answers – beginner's mind all the time! That way knowledge expands. Conventional science, as this book demonstrates, is a weak and limited thing. It works within a hermetically sealed container, and is endlessly fearful of going beyond its own circumscribed boundaries, always unwilling to do more than re-chew what is already agreed, rewrite it, claim that it is new, etc.

Lots of unwell people do not want to get better, or not much better. This is a sad truth. It is so much easier to be unwell, to blame, to accuse and to find excuses. For these people, the science and the methods in this book are "safe." But if you really want to

become well: more conscious, more self-responsible, able to develop your creativity to the full and live your life courageously, and to integrate the trauma that has come to you to help you grow – find a good breathworker!

Joy Manné

Cozolino, Louis (2006) *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships : Attachment and the Developing Social Brain*. W.W.Norton & Co., New York.

The vision of this book is that by teaching how their brain works to psychotherapy clients they will acquire the confidence and skills to heal from traumas and enable them to function well in society. One can only admire the invincible optimism of Cozolino in his aspiration for this level of self-responsibility from a public indoctrinated to the culture of naming and blaming and victim consciousness.

This book is divided into six parts. Every chapter contains a case history to illustrate the relationship between brain and behaviour. Part I concerns the Emergence of Social Neuroscience. In the Introduction, which has the wonderful sub-title, “I-Me-Mine,” Cozolino says, “We are just waking up to the complexities of our own brains, to say nothing of the way brains are linked together. We are just beginning to understand that we have evolved as social creatures and that all of our biologies are interwoven.” (p. 3) Each of us is not simply an individual, or an individual within a family; we are also part of a whole that is a society, and our brain has evolved to function in this whole. Just as brains have synapses that allow neurons to communicate, so there is the social synapse, “the space between us. ... the medium through which we are linked together into larger organisms such as families, tribes, societies, and the human species as a whole.” This book is about exploring the social synapse: “how people, like neurons, excite, interconnect, and link together to create relationships.

Chapter 1, The Social Brain, shows how our brain is constructed to favour the creation of relationships, and that its development depends upon these relationships being healthy and wholesome from conception onwards. In Chapter 2, the Evolving Brain, Cozolino explains the development of the brain, hemispheric specializations, and social communication. He reminds us here just how many social tasks the brain has to deal with.

Part II concerns The Social Brain Structures and Functions. Chapter 3 is devoted to The Developing Brain and its components. It includes insightful sections on the Teenage Brain and the Adult Brain. Chapter 4, The Social Brain: A Thumbnail Sketch, describes how different the brain structures perform social functions. Chapter 5, Social and Emotional Laterality, describes the different functions and development of the left and right hemispheres.

Part III is called Bridging the Social Synapse. In Chapter 6, Experience-Dependent Plasticity, Cozolino draws our attention to the complex evolutionary accomplishment that is sustained social engagement, and how important the brain’s plasticity is in this. Chapter 7, Reflexes and Instincts: Jumpstarting Attachment, presents the social equipment of the newborn, including the social effects of shared gaze, the delicious smell of a baby, imitation and touch, and the brain part that is activated when these social interactions occur. In Chapter 8, Addicted to Love, we learn how being in love affects the brain’s chemistry. Chapter 9 concerns Implicit Social Memory: “the mem-

ory that includes sensory, emotional, and procedural [e.g. learning how to walk, how to hit a tennis ball] memories, as well as stimulus-response conditioning,” (p. 128) and the brain systems that control it. “Attempting to uncover implicit memory and integrating it into conscious experience is one of the central tenets of the therapeutic process.” (p. 130) Sections deal with Lack of Recall, Superego, and Transference. Chapter 10, Ways of Attaching, shows the relationship between the mother’s attachment experience and what she is able to offer her children, and how brain structures are influenced.

Part IV explores Social Vision: The Language of Faces. Chapter 11, Linking Gazes, is about the role of eyes and eye contact; Chapter 12, Reading Faces, concerns on the role of faces in reading emotions and physical attraction; Chapter 13, Imitation and Mirror Neurons: Monkey See, Monkey Do, and Chapter 14, Resonance, Attunement and Empathy, are about the role of mirror neurons in our important ability to predict what is on another person’s mind.

Part V concerns Disorders of the Social Brain. Chapter 15, Impact of Early Stress, explains the consequences of intrauterine and early post natal stress; Chapter 16, Interpersonal Trauma concerns interpersonal stress and abuse. The other chapter headings explain their content: Chapter 17, Social Phobia: When Others Trigger Fear; Chapter 18, Borderline Personality Disorder: when Attachment Fails; Chapter 19 Psychopathy: the Antisocial Brain; Chapter 20, Autism: The Asocial Brain.

Part VI is called Social Neural Plasticity. The juicy part of this book, for me, is here!

Chapter 21, From Neurons to Narratives, argues that “while storytelling serves to teach the lessons of culture, it also serves as a means of homeostasis and integration of brain functioning.” (p. 303) Narratives teach us ways of overcoming obstacles. We identify with the hero, learn about ourselves, and learn solutions.

We need each other and our stories to discover ourselves, regulate our emotions, and heal from traumatic injuries. Humans serve as external neural circuits that we can use to help each other bridge dissociated neural networks, provide us with new ideas, and activate feelings within us that we may be unable to access or have forgotten to remember. When loving others link their brain with ours, the result is a vital integration. (p. 307)

This chapter contains a model of what is necessary in the therapeutic relationship to take advantage of the plasticity of the brain. This model includes educating clients about their brains. As I commented earlier, it presumes a very large ability to be self-responsible in clients, and as the case histories show, many do not have this – according to Cozolino through inadequacies in their brains. Chapter 22, Healing Relationships concerns the importance of love: “The Loving Brain”:

There is no doubt that evolution has shaped us to love one another. That may be why so many of life’s most gratifying experiences are those that are shared. Loving relationships help our brains to develop, integrate and remain flexible. Through love we regulate each other’s brain chemistry, sense of well-being, and immunological functioning. And when the drive to love is thwarted- - when we are frightened, abused, or neglected – our mental health is compromised. (p. 214)

This chapter also deals with “The Fearful Brain.” Activation – suddenly finding ourselves responding to one situation with responses we learned in a similar situation in the past – is explained in Chapter 1:

We need to have the participation of our entire brains to fully process experience. When we are overwhelmed by traumatic experiences, our brains lose the ability to maintain neural integration across the various networks dedicated to behaviour, emotion, sensation and conscious awareness. When memories are stored in sensory and emotional networks, but are dissociated from those that organize cognition, knowledge, and perspective, we become vulnerable to intrusions of past experiences that are triggered by environmental and internal cues. In the process of psychotherapy, we attempt to reintegrate these dissociated networks by consciously processing traumatic memories. This reintegration, in turn, allows the networks of conscious cortical processing to develop the ability to inhibit and control past traumatic memories. (p. 32)

In this chapter (22) he explains the role of the amygdala:

Anxiety and fear are endogenous signals to help us stay clear of danger. The problem is that the amygdala has a great memory, loves to generalize, and is always adding to the ‘things to avoid’ list. ... As a therapist, I am always trying to get my clients to learn to use their anxiety as a navigation device. ... in order to learn to feel safe, we have to approach our anxiety by looking others in the eye. (p. 322)

In Chapter 23, *Social Brain and Group Mind*, Cozolino talks about his teacher on a Zen retreat, and especially the Buddhist purpose of “seeing through the illusions of the senses, the self, and the ego and detaching from beliefs and possessions. (p. 328) But while evolution has put a lot of energy into reading the minds of others, he argues, it has given little attention to self-awareness. His teacher’s vision was that “living itself can be healing if you are able to connect with others and be productive,” and he comments, “Like Freud, Sensei [the teacher] believed that *love and work* were at the center of human life.” (p. 331) Cozolino considers that radical individualism in the West is the reason why we have a higher incidence of psychological distress. He is particularly interested in an exercise the Sensei gave a rich businessman. He had “to list all the people he had known in his life and everything he had received from each of them. No gift, kindness, or courtesy was too small.” (p. 330) Gratitude is a great healer, as all Breathworkers and people who facilitate Family Constellations (Bert Hellinger’s method), among others, know.

Cozolino has some positive things to say about aging and wisdom. “Wise elders often have stronger support systems, which in turn support higher brain functioning. ... I suggest that we take a new look at aging. What we call wisdom may be programmed into the way brains are selected and shaped to hold families and tribes together.” (p. 341)

This book has a heavy evolutionary bias. In every chapter evolutionary purpose and brain-area components are linked. By the time I got to Chapter 21, I felt burdened by so much “mechanical model” material. If we are each only ‘brain and behaviour’ – if “every child is [but] an experiment of nature” (p. 332) – how can we account for indi-

vidual lives and purposes? If all that we are is programming, the sooner medicine and machines can take over, the better. Let there be less suffering!

Questions shout out. Where is the Soul in all of this? Where is the spiritual? What about the role of karma, destiny, or any other higher purpose? And if there is none, why bother to do anything? Why do research? If life has no purpose, why even bother to do therapy? On what grounds are these difficult subjects denied existence in the brain? This vast emptiness remains a huge challenge for scientists and the Darwinian model, but to avoid it gives the lunatic fringe and 'intelligent design' fanatics their chance.

However, in the last chapter, the vision and search for meaning that gives life its purpose is stronger than the author. Here Cozolino's vision is soul-inspired!

Although our brains have evolved to predict what others are thinking, they are lagging behind in self-knowledge. Whereas projection is reflexive and lessens anxiety, self-awareness requires effort and a willingness to tolerate the anxiety it can create. Expanding and enhancing self-awareness is an evolutionary frontier that stretches ahead of us. (p. 341)

So is his insight into problems with the evolution of consciousness:

The sheer brain power we now have for abstraction, conceptualization, and imagining the future leads us to the point where we are able to be afraid of things that are not even possible. ... The evolution of consciousness will involve remembering who we are. (p. 341f)

And his perception of our task, which is, therefore, to expand mindfulness.

Getting to know another person requires that we know who we are. Although this might seem obvious and simple, knowing who we are involves an extremely high state of awareness that includes self-insight, curiosity, wisdom, and a still point from which to experience the world. ... Placing our individual views into a social perspective, knowing our limitations, biases and prejudices, and appreciating the importance of human relationships have the potential to lead us to a more loving world. (p. 342)

Joy Manné