



# The Inner Door

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August 2003

## Holotropic Breathwork: Courage and Contribution

### Ray Kelly

October 26, 1946 — May 9, 2003

TRIBUTE

by Martin Boroson

Ray Kelly and I partnered in many of our early Breathwork sessions in the early 1990s in the GTT training at White Sulphur Springs. Ray came to the Breathwork from an unusual perspective: he was an Irish Catholic securities trader from Chicago—a devout Republican as well. He enjoyed joking about his difference from all the therapists, hippies, and seekers who were fast becoming his new tribe. Ray had come to the Breathwork when his old worldview started to crumble, and he approached the exploration of his trauma, the opening of his heart, and his adventure into spirit with enormous enthusiasm, innocence, and wonder. He embraced his truth and new perspectives fearlessly.

He became one of the elders of our tribe, helping and inspiring many people through his contributions to our listservs, particularly responding to newer breathers looking for encouragement. Ray also used these listservs as something of a diary, a way to work out his thoughts and beliefs, and his feelings about his illness, with the loving support of a community he trusted very deeply. In preparing

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### Reflections on Breathwork and Alien Encounter Experiences

by Elizabeth Gibson

*We must assume our existence as broadly as we in any way can; everything, even the unheard-of, must be possible in it. That is at bottom the only courage that is demanded of us: to have courage for the most strange, the most singular and the most inexplicable that we may encounter. That mankind has in this sense been cowardly has done life endless harm; the experiences that are called "visions," the whole so-called "spirit world," death, all those things that are so closely akin to us, have by daily parrying been so crowded out of life that the senses with which we could have grasped them are atrophied. To say nothing of God.*

~Rainer Maria Rilke: *Letters to a Young Poet*, p. 67, as quoted by John Mack, Lightgate Learning Center, December 13, 2002

This winter my husband Lenny and I attended a presentation by Dr. John Mack on his work with the alien encounter phenomenon. Among his many other accomplishments (Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard, Pulitzer-Prize winning author, and founding director of the Center for Psychology & Social Change), John is also a certified facilitator of Holotropic Breathwork™. After his talk, we had the chance to visit, and I asked John to elaborate on how his experience with Holotropic Breathwork has influenced his life and work. Our conversation continued and expanded over the following months to include contributions from Stan Grof and Pamela Cappetta. All three have generously given of their various perspectives as researcher and witness (John), and "experiencer" (Pamela). Stan has consistently embraced and pursued revolutionary observations for decades. All three have faced enormous challenges in their lives and careers as a result of their work in these and related areas, and their examples encourage us all to understand and follow our deepest truths.

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Association for  
Holotropic Breathwork™  
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www.breathwork.com

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Tel: 1.802.325.3619  
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### AHBI Office

Glenn Wilson, Office Coordinator  
 AHBI Tel: 1.520.760.2335  
 AHBI Fax: 1.520.760.7446  
 AHBI Email: office@breathwork.com

### The Inner Door

- Kylea Taylor, Editor  
Email: kyleat@hanfordmead.com  
Tel: 1.831.429.1732  
Fax: 1.831.426.4474
- Ted Riskin, Editor, *Sound Tracks*
- Elizabeth Gibson, Features Editor
- Kathleen Schneider, Copy Editor
- Staff Writers, Features and Interviews:  
Melody Sullivan, Elizabeth Gibson

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# Editor's Notes

## Courage and Contribution



I cried several times while reading the excerpts from Ray's writings in this issue. I remembered his gifts to us—to some, teddy bears and tee shirts, to anyone who needed to talk, his phone number, and to all, his willingness to share his pain, his joy, and his wisdom unreservedly, and his courage to live as he Breathed. I will miss him.

In this issue it is particularly evident that the writers, in the spirit of courageous contribution, share their very personal adventures of self-discovery. Ray's excerpts are, in his own words, "the silent thoughts rarely spoken." Pam Cappetta reveals her own 'alien abduction' experiences and muses on their meaning, and Claire Boucher shares some of her private grieving process through her SoulCollage cards, as a tribute to Ray.

As Editor, I feel particularly fortunate in this issue, not only to have wonderful writing, but also to have the contribution of three other editors! Elizabeth Gibson has been working as a features editor in the background to help produce the last several issues, but in this issue, she steps forward with the very interesting topic of alien abduction experiences in Holotropic Breathwork. Elizabeth requested and received contributions from John Mack and Stan Grof, who are perhaps the most well-known of Holotropic Breathwork's courageous pioneers. Marty Boroson did a wonderful job of excerpting Ray's writings. Ted Riskin, as editor of the popular Sound Tracks column, persuaded Matthew Stelzner to write what is an excellent music column.

### Ray Kelly ~ Continued from page 1

this tribute to Ray, I asked members of these listservs to provide me with any of Ray's postings that they might have saved, and boy was I surprised by how many I received, how many people had preserved something he'd written. So I decided, in this tribute, to let Ray speak for himself. I think he would be pleased to know how valued his wisdom had become.

In reviewing and editing these postings, what struck me was how much Ray's living and dying exemplified the Holotropic Breathwork model. I can think of no one who lived Holotropic Breathwork as a practice more deeply. In my last conversation with him, a few weeks before his death, he said, referring to his wife, Josie, "We sit for each other." He meant something much more of course than giving each other a Breathwork session. He meant that they sat for each other in an ongoing way, as a way of life. This was the practice of Ray's final 'religion,' what he discovered after many years of searching: to witness the suffering and joy of the world, and to share his own suffering and joy without reserve, and to rejoice in any opportunity therein to help heal others.

### EDITORS' NOTES

*Most of Ray's notes were written to holo-cert or holo-interest, listservs of the Holotropic Breathwork community. A few were emails sent privately to members of these list-servs, as continuations of listserv topics. None of them were intended by Ray for publication. ~M.B.*

*Whenever I have asked Ray if I could share something, publish something, edit something of his for publication, his answer was always an enthusiastic, generous 'yes!'. I imagine that he would be pleased to share these excerpts that Marty has chosen. In death he is still our mentor. ~K.T.*

*Ray Kelly's obituary can be found on the web at <http://www.tradersoasis.com/obituary.html>. ~K.T.*

*Martin Boroson is the author of Becoming Me, a spiritual parable for adults and children about the cosmic game ([www.becomingme.com](http://www.becomingme.com)), and he lectures and runs workshops on its themes. He is director of the Temenos Project, an organization that produces spiritual/art projects ([www.temenosproject.org](http://www.temenosproject.org)), and was certified to facilitate Holotropic Breathwork by Stanislaw Grof, M.D., in 1994.*

*Claire Boucher prepared 23 SoulCollage cards as part of her grieving process for Ray. Four of those cards are shown in this issue. Claire was certified as a Holotropic Breathwork practitioner in 2001. She lives in Fair Oaks, California, USA with her son. 916.961.4353.*

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# The Silent Thoughts Rarely Spoken

Informal Observations on Living, Dying, and Holotropic Breathwork

by Ray Kelly, edited by Martin Boroson

SEPTEMBER 7, 1999

Following my truth, and being open, is a very painful experience. I cannot say it has made me happy. I can say it has made me whole. I am trying to work on happy.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1999

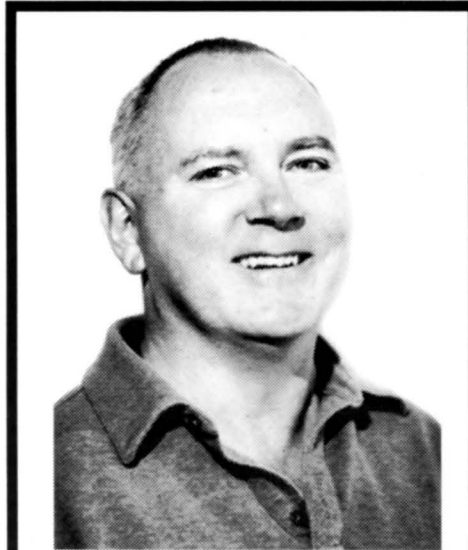
I have discovered that my addiction is STRIVING. I need to strive, to work, to help. When I get close to accomplishing something I am striving for, I sabotage it. I see myself doing it. Somewhere I picked up that the work ethic of "striving" gives me [acceptance]... Striving has his own agenda. He will not be safe if there is nothing for him to strive for. HONESTLY, I have no concept of NOT striving. ... It is such an old pattern. It is totally absurd on my conscious level and yet I sense it is there below the surface. I just want to walk in my garden, see the stars, read a non-business non-striving book without having to force myself to do it. Yet the hard-wiring in my system has me working. The thought of laying on a beach on a blanket, doing nothing, is not comfortable.

APRIL 17, 2000

I had about three horrific situations in my life. Regardless of any attempts to "fix" things they only got worse...far worse. I came to California and intended to build a healing center over a period of time. I spent far too much money on it and then lost my job. I had a total break with my family of origin in a very ugly situation, and found my "best-friend" was embezzling from our business account.

My family of origin all knew what was best for me and kept telling me what I "should" do. I have tried to do the "right" thing my whole life. That was my disease. Despite all my Breathwork training, when the boat is caught in a whirlpool you do not think of logical things. You want out. Dying was a logical answer. The problem was that my beliefs do not allow suicide. My old Catholic upbringing made it damnation but worse, my new Eastern beliefs told me there was no escape and that suicide would not even defer what I needed to deal with. I never really thought seriously about it, but if I could find an "acceptable" way to leave, it was okay with me. My body and the earthly part of my mind and spirit were not trying to destroy me,

they were trying to help me find a way to solve this problem I perceived.



Ray Kelly

October 26, 1946 — May 9, 2003

*I am appreciative of the breath between breaths and the silence between silence that is so full of exquisite joy and boundless knowledge that I never discovered before. I would never have found this space without this journey. I am grateful for the breathwork which has allowed me to open to a whole new level of consciousness and to my friends both old and new. Peace to you and yours.*

Love,  
Ray

[posted one day before death, May 8, 2003]

I know it may sound weird but when I was diagnosed with cancer I was strangely elated. What a great solution. My family could not get mad at me for getting this disease. Cancer could never be blamed on me. Getting cancer also got me in touch with my own mortality. It brought to me the reality of the permanence of my decision. I had to fight it so my family would think I was trying. Then a strange thing happened. Once I stopped "trying" and accepted the cancer, a greater energy pushed through. It showed me how all my things I was stressing over were silly. It showed me that the stress was created by me as was the cancer. Now, I am not saying this is the same for all people. If you have a disease and are reading this, do not think that I am saying YOU created your own disease. I am talking about myself. My life is the only gig I have first-hand knowledge of.

MAY 12, 2000

I had this vision of a man in a hot air balloon holding on to the rope that keeps him on the ground. He is too frightened to take flight and will stay that way until the rope breaks. After that, he grabs at anything to keep him grounded, when the balloon is totally prepared to take him to wonderful other places....

MAY 12, 2000

The pain helps me understand. Of course, being of stubborn stuff, it takes a lot of discomfort to get my attention.

JANUARY 12, 2001

A child from [a dysfunctional background] does not learn proper action. It learns how to ape actions to get approval. The child can act with compassion without having any. It can cry at a funeral without having any feelings.... When I [first] allowed myself to open emotionally it was like a giant tidal wave was in front of me. I did not want to go back but [the] emotions were overwhelming. It is a normal question to ask yourself, "Why go forward if it means the feelings will bring pain?" I still ask myself that. As a mentor of sorts,

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~JOHN MACK'S PERSPECTIVE~

INITIAL BREATHWORK EXPERIENCES

My own first direct experience with Holotropic Breathwork occurred in 1987 with the Grofs in a small-group setting at the Esalen Institute in California. During the two-hour session, I experienced intense feelings of loss associated with the death of my biological mother when I was 8½ months old, as well as a profound sense then and in subsequent sessions of both her suffering with peritonitis before she died and my father's grief following her death — emotions about which I had spoken extensively during my two personal analyses, but which I had never been able to access in such an immediate way.

During that session, in which two Soviets were also participating, I had my own introduction to the transpersonal realms of the unconscious, namely, a powerful experience of identification with a person, other being, object in nature, or force that lay outside of my personal history. I "became" a Russian father (in what seemed to be the 16th century) who was unable to protect his four-year-old son from being beheaded by the Mongols. Out of this experience, my capacity to identify with Soviet fears, and with what appeared, at times, to be unrealistic political defensiveness, increased greatly. This enabled me to become more effective in the psycho-political work on the Soviet-American relationship in which I was then engaged. Subsequent sessions of my own involved equally powerful and valuable biographical, birth-related, and transpersonal experiences.

ALIEN ENCOUNTER INVOLVEMENT

The "conception" or "birth" of my alien encounter involvement occurred a few years later at a [Grof Transpersonal Training] training module at Pocket Ranch in March 1988. During the module, Stan [Grof] gave me a chapter that Keith Thompson (author of *Angels and Aliens*) had written on the UFO phenomenon for a book he and Christina were editing on spiritual emergencies (alien encounters being one such example). I have no idea why Stan thought I would be particularly interested in that subject. When he gave me the paper he asked me to return it at the end of the module, as it was the only one of the chapter manuscripts for which he did not have another copy. I read the chapter with much interest, although I kept asking myself, "But is it true?" Were people really being contacted by humanoid beings or the like? Keith was offering a kind of Jungian interpretation of the experiences and was ambiguous on this subject.

When the time came to leave the module, we were instructed to carry our luggage up to the main lodge on our way to breakfast. I held the chapter separately in order to return it to Stan, but when I got part way up the hill I realized it was not in my hand or anywhere among the rest of the things I was lugging. Needless to say, I was upset, as I had promised Stan I would take care to return the paper to him.

I then recalled that as I had been leaving the cottage via the porch I had heard a soft clicking sound, which I had ignored at the time. Now I realized the sound might have been the paper dropping on its edge on the porch. I raced back to the cottage, but the paper was not on the porch. Then I reasoned that the only thing that could have happened was that the paper had fallen to the ground below through

a crack between the boards. Indeed, I could see it on the ground underneath the porch. Now, here is the most amazing part. The paper was about twenty pages (single sided), and the cracks between the boards could not have been more than an eighth of an inch wide. Yet somehow the paper had managed to fall in such a way that it was perfectly aligned with one of the cracks and had consequently passed through.

By now I was even more upset. The porch was very low at the place the paper had dropped. The space underneath was too small to admit a human body. I walked around the cottage and saw there was another place (in the front, I think) where the edge of the porch was high enough that I could begin to crawl under it. The paper was about ten feet from that "entrance." So I began to crawl and squeeze on my stomach through this space, which narrowed as I approached the paper (due to the tilt of the ground). I was just able to get my hand on the paper, grab it and crawl back out. I was, of course, covered with dirt when I emerged.

About nine months later Blanche Chavoustie, one of my Grof group siblings, told me of New York artist Budd Hopkins, his work with abductees, and his belief that alien contact is indeed real. I was skeptical but visited him anyway shortly afterwards. This was really when my interest in the whole subject was born.

RELATIONSHIP OF BREATHWORK TO ALIEN ENCOUNTER PHENOMENON

The Breathwork training fundamentally is about the experience of consciousness opening up to other dimensions of reality. Once that happens, the floodgates are open, and there is a framework for taking in many levels of information, including transpersonal and multidimensional experiences. Through Breathwork I became open to the fact that the universe might be full of entities, which we call spirits, gods, archetypes, angels, mythic beings or whatever. The humanoids encountered by abduction experiencers seem to be one such type of being. What has placed this phenomenon on the fringe of even the transpersonal movement (where Stan himself has said it sits) is that these entities seem to cross over into the material world. Even Grof trainees can find this phenomenon to be a stretch, especially since we have all, to a degree, sanctified the physical world by separating it from the unseen world or implicate domain.

People's alien encounters do sometimes come up during Breathwork sessions. But generally speaking, I don't recommend Breathwork as the best way to "treat" alien encounter problems, as people can go on and on in session after session expressing intense emotion and letting off a lot of steam related to what is stored in them as a result of the encounters without necessarily much therapeutic result. Hypnosis (I don't use that term much, because of all the baggage that goes with it), *i.e.*, the use of relaxation to achieve a non-ordinary state, is generally better. With this approach the facilitator can have a focused conversation with the experiencer about details of the experience as the intense emotions are being expressed and can help the person relate these emotions to the experience. People who have had encounter experiences are often traumatized but also can develop strong bonds with the beings, and can be powerfully

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transformed if they receive appropriate support. The alien beings are often understood as intermediators for the creative principle in the cosmos, and many experiencers become stewards of the earth, dedicated to its preservation.

The real story is not the alien abduction experience but that the western materialist world view is inadequate and doesn't account for most of reality. The abduction experience is not especially unique in any way. It's important to respect all anomalies, such as crop circles, near death experiences, psychic phenomena, etc. We need to be open to the extraordinary that is part of the awakening and also return to the roots, to what we have forgotten.

Our job is to: (1) awaken from the slumber of ordinary consciousness, to wake up and speak our truth; and (2) to develop a science of human experience. As we open up and include more of the past and expand the possibilities we combine it with, then the possibilities for transformation increase.

The prevailing worldview is male: domination of nature, conquest and control. A different worldview is essential for the continuity of life, a worldview that incorporates intuitive, holographic knowledge. Ultimately the worldview will have elements of the masculine but also the deeper, open-hearted aspects of the spiritual. The emergence is at its foundation about love and will move in the direction that so serves.

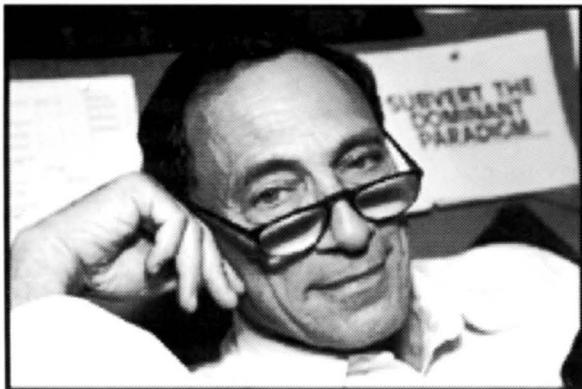


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**John E. Mack, M.D.**

*John E. Mack, M.D., is a certified Holotropic Breathwork facilitator, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He founded the department of psychiatry at the Cambridge Hospital, and a nonprofit organization, the Center for Psychology & Social Change ([www.passporttothecosmos.com](http://www.passporttothecosmos.com)). Concurrent with researching the spiritual and transformational elements of alien encounters, John has encouraged an understanding of how shifts in consciousness can invite sustainable, equitable, and peaceful ways of living.*

**~STAN GROF'S RECOLLECTIONS~**

**EARLY YEARS AT ESALEN**

John and I met in 1987 at a meeting in the Big House of the Esalen Institute, a beautiful mansion perched on a cypress-covered cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and the Big Sur Coast. This

small working conference was organized by the Soviet-American Friendship program, initiated by Michael and Dulce Murphy as a channel for "grassroots diplomacy." It involved four prominent Soviet scientists and representatives of foremost American academic and research institutions, including John Mack, Candace Pert, and Dean Ornish.

Michael Murphy invited me to join the group and give a talk on transpersonal psychology and the challenges it presents for the current scientific worldview. During my talk, I mentioned the work Christina and I had been doing with Holotropic Breathwork. This generated great interest among participants and they all wanted to have a personal experience of this technique. The group decided to forgo the afternoon program on the next day and have a Holotropic Breathwork session instead.

Holotropic Breathwork was very popular at Esalen and it was easy to find enough people who volunteered to be sitters for this special group. As could be expected, bringing a powerful experiential element into the meeting completely changed the nature of this international encounter, which up to that point had been strictly intellectual. By the end of the afternoon, the Russians were in a close emotional and even physical contact with their American sitters, and we felt an atmosphere of genuine friendship.

The sharing group was very powerful and moving. The experiences involved regression into childhood and infancy, birth experiences and, in several instances, transpersonal and spiritual elements. One of the Russians had a profound experience of union with God and, to the surprise of everybody present, was willing to talk about it. "Of course, I remain a Communist," he concluded his sharing, "but I understand now what people mean by God." Dr. Belkin, the leader of the group, was so touched by the experience that he later arranged an official invitation from the Soviet Ministry of Health for Christina and myself to come to Moscow and give lectures and workshops.

John was very surprised and impressed by the depth of his own experience, which included a convincing episode of a past life in Russia. As he told the group, this session took him deeper into his unconscious than he was able to reach during the years of his training psychoanalysis. He was interested in further exploration of Holotropic Breathwork and asked me for advice. I told him about a training group for facilitators that we were about to launch in the near future, and he decided to enroll. The first meeting of this group took place in March of 1988 at Pocket Ranch in the Santa Rosa Mountains north of San Francisco. The second module, in September 1988, was in the beautiful setting of Hollyhock Farm, Cortez Island, British Columbia.

It turned out that during our initial discussion about the Breathwork training, John and I had somehow failed to communicate about the format of the program. Coming to Pocket Ranch, John thought that this twelve-day meeting was the entire training, rather than what it was — the first module of a comprehensive three-year training program. But by the time he discovered his error, he was so fascinated by the phenomena he was witnessing that he decided to continue and became a very respected and well-loved member of the group.

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## Alien Encounters ~ Continued from page 6

### THE SPIRIT OF A GENUINE AND OPEN-MINDED SCIENTIST:

At the time we met, John was very deeply involved in the peace and antinuclear movement, but professionally he was very “mainstream” — a brilliant academician, critical and skeptical, and committed to the traditional scientific world view and to Freudian psychoanalysis. I will never forget seeing John on the first day of the Hollyhock training on the deck overlooking the ocean, having breakfast and reading a mainstream newspaper; I believe it was the *New York Times*. Since the training took place in an isolated and remote location, he was concerned that for twelve days he would lose connection with the world. To prevent this, he arranged to have the newspaper delivered to him daily at the Hollyhock Farm.

However, unlike many mainstream scientists who are closed to any new information that threatens their worldview and who cling to their beliefs with the tenacity of religious fundamentalists, John showed an extraordinary open-mindedness and intellectual honesty. He embraced the new experiences and observations with deep interest and intellectual enthusiasm, as a genuine scientist should, whether these were his own inner journeys or those of the other group members.

During the training, Blanche Chavoustie, another group member, brought to John’s attention the phenomenon of alien abduction experience and mediated his contact with Budd Hopkins, one of the foremost researchers in the field. I also gave him a copy of an article by Keith Thompson about UFO abduction experience as a trigger of spiritual emergency. Fascinated by the phenomenon, John again reacted in the spirit of a genuine and open-minded scientist: he decided to conduct his own extensive research. And it certainly is a further tribute to his intellectual honesty that he was willing to publicize his findings, even if it meant jeopardizing his tenure at Harvard.

After many years of knowing John and having witnessed his transformation from a brilliant traditional scientist to an avant-garde researcher spearheading the paradigm-breaking study of “anomalous phenomena,” I feel deep admiration for his intellectual courage and integrity. He represents for me a model of what a scientist should be — an individual embracing challenging and potentially revolutionary observations, feeling excited about them, and pursuing them

with great determination, even when it means facing ridicule and ostracism from the rest of the academic community.

~PAMELA CAPPETTA:

### ENCOUNTERS DURING BREATHWORK SESSIONS~

*Alien abduction is a phenomenon we don't understand.*  
~Stan Grof, 1996.

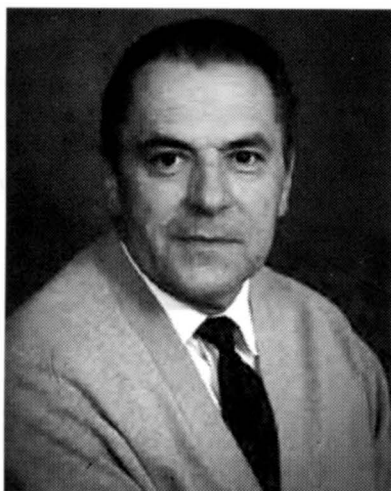
During my training to become a Holotropic Breathwork facilitator, I came face to face with that phenomenon more often than I wished. Those Breathwork sessions were both terrifying and real. Stan’s words comforted me, then as well as in the years following, as I attempted to process the experiences. I shared these Breathwork sessions with several colleagues and openly began to explore the inner meaning. Mentioning abduction outside sacred space was an unwise decision. Like John Mack, but in a much different setting, I nearly lost my career. There seems to be some belief that presupposes you’re unstable if you have such experiences. But I’ve watched John Mack and the brave folks who often appear with him try to explain his research on a variety of television shows. I have admired their bravery, courage, and determination. Today I venture again into that space of bravery to share my story.

Before the Breathwork training, I had never been interested in abduction or alien experiences and had never been a fan of science fiction. In fact, even though I had always thought of myself as an open-minded person, I refused to see any movies or read any books on the subject. My first husband loved science fiction and wanted me to enjoy this area of interest with him, but I couldn’t get beyond the first page of a sci-fi book.

My initial “conscious” experience of an alien encounter happened during my first Holotropic Breathwork session at my first training module in February 1994. Even before the session I was already unnerved, because the room I had been assigned to sleep in reminded me of a cabin where I had nearly been raped as a college student. I started my Breathwork session and immediately became more panicky. I called Stan over to talk. I wanted to leave and return home to Virginia. He reassured me that I would be safe and said to try to go with the experience that was emerging. (The memories are all mixed up now. I recorded my recollections later in my room, and when I tried to listen to them again, the tape was blank.)

The energy presented itself in the form of a magical purple particle field. I felt engulfed in what seemed like the love of the universe: pure devotion to loving me. It felt addicting and all-consuming, and if it had been a drug I would have wanted to inject it. I wanted to lose myself in this energy and never return to my life. This force was my alien father, and it convinced me that I was needed to help others understand. (*What I needed to help them understand, I don’t remember.*)

When the purple particle field disappeared, three or four little “gray things” appeared and began exploring every orifice of my body. I was terrified. The pain was excruciating! The screaming was horrific! I felt my life would end there on the mat in California, and that I would never return to my family. At the beginning of this exploration, my head was lowered and forced to hang over the edge



Stanislav Grof, M.D.

*Stanislav Grof, M.D., is a psychiatrist with more than forty-five years of experience in research of non-ordinary states of consciousness, conducts professional training programs in Holotropic Breathwork ([www.holotropic.com](http://www.holotropic.com)) and transpersonal psychology, and gives lectures and seminars worldwide. His newest book is *Psychology of the Future*. Others include: *Beyond the Brain*, *The Adventure of Self-Discovery*, *The Holotropic Mind*, *The Cosmic Game*, and *The Stormy Search for the Self* (with Christina Grof).*

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**Alien Encounters ~ Continued from page 6**

of an examining table. An instrument was inserted down my throat, and all the other orifices of my body were explored in a similar manner. Perhaps most alarming were the coldness and cruelty of how these little grays did their experiments. By the end of the first module, I wanted to go home. I agreed to stay, and Stan talked to me about John Mack's soon-to-be published book, *Abduction*. When Stan arrived back after the weekend, he brought me his typed copy. When I finally read the book, I was dumbfounded by the fact that many of the reported experiences had occurred within a 50-mile radius of my childhood home in Pennsylvania.

For the entire two weeks, I was sure I would be abducted from my room at night. I found myself mesmerized by the redwoods and the stars and began remembering these same experiences as a child in rural Pennsylvania. These fears persisted after I returned home. My black lab Barney lay by my side every night for months as I attempted to process the terrifying sessions from the training. My body had been so mangled by the experiences that afterwards I could barely walk, and I had to use a wheelchair in the airport on the way home from the training. My chiropractor thought I'd been in a terrible car accident with severe whiplash.

Within a year I experienced the arrival of my alien mother in a Breathwork session. She was cold and detached and curious as to why I had such a big heart. She couldn't seem to understand why I was so loving. Then there was a session where my belly blew up like I was eight months pregnant. My belly contained the "alienated" part of myself. And I gave birth that day, with episodes of coughing and pulling out a thick, milky honey-like substance from my throat. This process repeated itself many times throughout my early sessions.

**PERINATAL AND MEDICAL TRAUMAS**

My birth by Cesarean section in 1949 was not typical. Sometime during her pregnancy, my mother fell down the stairs. Then at eight months gestation she went into early labor, which could not be stopped. The Breathwork memories of my birth were later confirmed by my mother. I came to accept that the core of my codependency started when I was born. A decision was made regarding whom to save first, and my mother was chosen. I lay across the room saying, "Let me die." Many years later my healing brought me to that memory where I made a different choice: I chose to save myself.

When I turned 50 my mother called and left a voice mail for me: "I can't believe you lived! We always thought you would die." Today I believe the experiences of my birth and the valiant efforts made to save my life mirror the abduction sessions in the Breathwork. Many sessions evoked memories of in utero trauma, birth trauma, and significant medical trauma. During my month-long stay in the hospital in an incubator, the staff would bundle me in blankets and transport me to a small radiology office away from the hospital for x-ray treatments on the enlarged thymus in my neck. My mother was never permitted to be present during those times, nor was she allowed to cuddle or hold me longer than a few minutes.

No one ever knew what I weighed at birth, but I had to weigh at least five pounds before I could leave the hospital. Early photographs show a "failure-to-thrive" baby. I almost looked like a little alien baby in a bonnet. Mother described in detail the hours upon hours

required to feed me. She used a medicine dropper to get milk down my throat. And she held a suppository in my rectum until it melted to soothe the pain of the anal fissure I was born with. Urinary problems developed early in my life as well, and extensive, excruciating treatments were performed while I was awake. I learned then to dissociate and leave my body and float above the examining table, where I could watch my dolly have the treatments instead of me. Those treatments continued until I was in early grade school.

Memories of surgeries at age three and four bring chills even today. Isolation, fear, and confusion predominate these recollections. Core trauma issues of abandonment and physical harm are wrapped around the loss of a significant attachment figure, as well as the betrayal of the words, "I won't hurt you," when a medical professional stuck a needle or other object into my body. My mother recently confessed to me that she was never told about the surgery when I was three. She'd carried around the shame since then that she had never authorized that procedure. I can vividly see her face walking into the children's ward as I was pinned to a mattress in a crib with a lid that made a cage. The screams then were horrific too.

**CLARITY?**

I remember as a child sitting on the side of a ridge, looking up into the sky and asking someone to please save me from those people (i.e., my parents). If abduction exists in reality as well as in my memory, then I was abducted many times from my room in that home where I was little. I was taken and tortured. And I was tortured in my own home by my own parents. They weren't well and had little support emotionally or physically.

These experiences have left me with many questions. Was the abduction material a "more comfortable" way for me to process perinatal and biographical memories without losing my mind? Was it a way to deal with trauma without placing faces to the folks who tortured me? Was it a way to remember without remembering the energy of the doctors and nurses and aunts and uncles who said they

**Alien Encounters ~ Continued on page 8****Pamela Cappetta, Ed.D.**

*Pamela Cappetta, Ed.D., L.P.C., L.M.F.T., N.C.C., is a Holotropic Breathwork practitioner, certified in 1996. She is the creator of Being with Yourself: A Guided Meditation & Relaxation on CD. She has published in the areas of family therapy and family medicine as well as chronic pain. Pamela has explored the relationship between stress and illness/surgery for over twenty years. She is in private practice in Williamsburg, Virginia, U.S.A. and is listed in Who's Who in the World and Who's Who of American Women. She specializes in addictions, trauma, stress and diseases, and maintains a chronic pain management group for an addictions treatment program for impaired professionals. drpamm@mindspring.com.*

## Alien Encounters ~ Continued from page 7

wouldn't hurt me and did? A purple particle field is safer than a depressed, impotent shell of a man who hated himself and his life and wanted to die. My alien mother was as cold and detached as my biographical mother. Was this the way I could remember love?

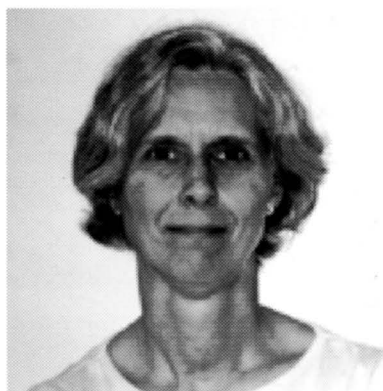
And now that I've birthed the alienated piece of myself, am I whole? Will I ever be able to watch science fiction without feeling as though I've lived through nearly every experience? Will I ever be grateful that when I read a story, I stay with my own meaning and not the meaning the teacher wanted me to pick? Can I finally allow myself the right to my own perceptions and my own understanding of events without dismissing myself? And can I give myself permission to continue practicing psychotherapy even if others believe "I'm a danger to the community" because of my beliefs and my experiences?

Stan promised me in 1996 that someday I would understand this alien abduction thing. I do. And then again, I still don't. Time will tell. Perhaps more will be revealed. I pray that you who read this cherish these words and experiences as though they belong to you. Please hold sacred space for our healing.

### ~JOHN MACK'S OBSERVATIONS~

I have a general impression, as Pamela herself suggests, that there is some connection between the deep unconscious patterns in the psyche of the individual and the nature of the abduction experiences that come to them. For example, Pamela had a cold relationship with her mother early in her life, and some other significant traumata from surgery. Her abduction encounters seem to have qualities that are in some ways similar to her early childhood traumas. In some other cases I have seen, when the person has not been overly traumatized in early life the aliens may play a healing role, but that does not seem to be true in her case.

Pamela's interpretation follows the line of many critics of the phenomenon, i.e., it must be either that she was literally abducted or that the abductions represent a screen for elements of human-related traumatic events. But in my own experience it is not either/or. People can have both human-related traumas and alien encounters. The likelihood of confusing alien encounters with human traumas may be greater when we are dealing with events occurring around the time of birth when the mind is less mature or less able to sort out among different traumatic experiences (difficult at best even when the traumas occur at a later age). In any case, the human traumas tend to be more deeply disturbing for the person's relational life than do the alien encounters, and by working with a therapist or facilitator the person can learn to distinguish which is which. In cases such as Pamela's it can be helpful to sort out the traumatic, torturous, human-related experiences of childhood from those related to alien encounters.



Elizabeth Gibson, M.S., is a writer and Holotropic Breathwork practitioner who offers workshops together with her husband Lenny in Pawlet, Vermont. She is a features editor and writer for The Inner Door. [egib@vermontel.net](mailto:egib@vermontel.net). [www.dreamshadow.com](http://www.dreamshadow.com).

**Elizabeth Gibson, M.S.**

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## Ray Kelly ~ Continued from page 3

I should have an answer. I do not. I have faith that there IS an answer. I fully realize that it is that faith I need to exist as I blindly move through the waves in the sea of life.

**FEBRUARY 12, 2001**

My comments are as a straight parent of a gay son. ... When [years ago] my son [Ray, Jr.] called from college, he said he had to talk to me about something urgent. My wife suggested that it might be a sexual orientation conversation. To this day, she says it was instinct and not foreknowledge. She certainly had more instinct than I. I was upset by her thought and angrily huffed into my office ...

When he came home he nervously "came out." I realized this was probably the most important point in his life. I stalled as my numb head grasped for time to find answers and the right words. I decided to stop looking and to allow my heart to speak. I asked as if my words were coming through my heart. I asked, "How long have you known?" He said, "I have always known I was different. I have had the label for the last 5 years." I said, "What do you think I am going to do about this?" (I was still stalling for time.) He said, "I think you are going to kick me out of the house." I was taken

aback but my heart said, "Ray you say you have known for 5 years. I have only known for 5 minutes. I don't pretend to understand but you are my son. I will never kick you out of the house. I will never stop loving you."

I don't remember much more about that night but I remember crying for several months. In the next couple days, I cried so hard I could not touch my face. All the time, keeping my pain away from him. He had enough of his own. It was time for him to heal, and me to attempt to understand why God would give me so much pain. I could not go to my church ...

I went from one group to the other to find the truth. Some embraced gays while others tried to convert them to "God" through denial of who they were. In studying all the beliefs I was just as confused about the answer several years after our Thanksgiving conversation.

It was in Breathwork that I realized the feelings and dreams of the death of my son were really the death of my own ego. After some of the pain and the grief was released I came to realize that my pain was

**Ray Kelly ~ Continued on page 9**

Ray Kelly ~ Continued from page 8

about MY dreams, and MY thoughts about what a son should be, and the white picket fence with the grandchildren was MY sense of life. While I have a right to dream, I do not have a right to the destiny of another. I came to see this.

One day in Breathwork, I took about two breaths and I saw these beings on a cloud. It seemed like a table at the last supper. ... I felt the pain of the world, all the suffering, and cried out, "Why have you sent me here (to this incarnation on Earth)?" They said, through telepathy, "We did not send you, you chose to come." I asked, "Why would anyone choose to come here?" They said, "You have lessons to learn."

I had waited for this moment my whole life. I would commit these answers to memory no matter how long the answer to my next question. I said, "what are my lessons?" They said, "to overcome fear and to give unconditional love." It seemed so simple and yet so deep. But as long as I had them here I asked another question, "why did you make my son gay?" They said, "We did not make him gay; he chose to be." Once again I asked, "Why would anyone choose to be gay?" They said, "SO YOU WOULD LEARN TO LOVE." ...

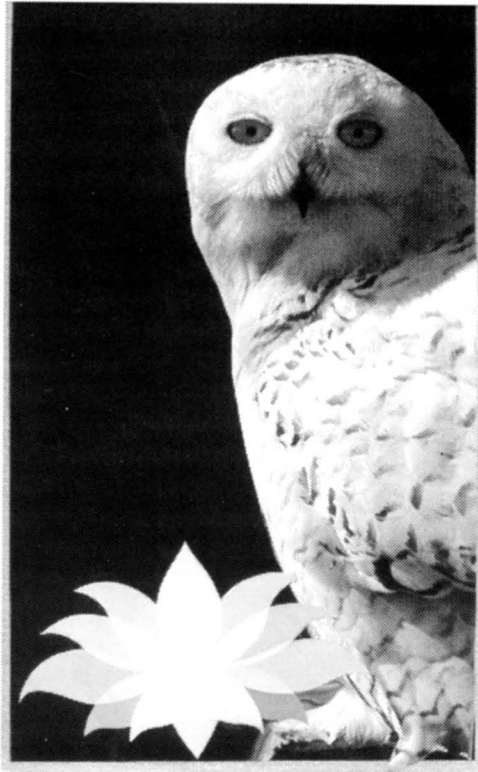
FEBRUARY 22, 2002

When I get depressed, and I do, I let the depression have some time to express itself. If I need to cry, I call my sitter (my wife) and she knows I do not expect her to solve my problems but to simply be there. After all, laughter is the way the body processes joy. No one tries to stop you from laughing. Tears are the way the body processes sadness, but everyone wants to stop you from crying.

JUNE 23, 2002

I believe that the gift of the body was given to me, and I should honor it by taking care of it and preserving it to the best of my ability. Sadly, I have overstayed my welcome at McDonald's a few times too often but I am human, dust myself off, and try again. ...

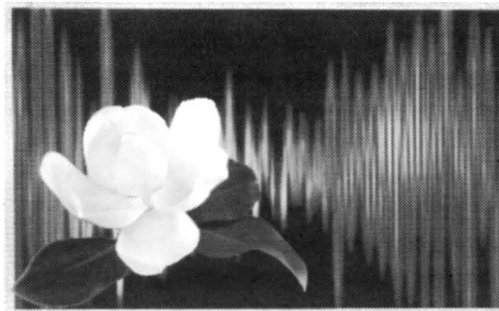
Once I was in a Hindu temple in my Breathwork. Another time I was pure consciousness and awareness. Many times I processed anger and sadness. A few times I experienced absolute joy and a



SoulCollage Card by Claire Boucher

*I see you, Ray, in these eyes.  
Telling me to fear nothing.  
Dying into life.  
And living into death.  
Love and beauty  
in darkness.*

~C.B.



SoulCollage Card by Claire Boucher

*Ray,  
I love your writings on  
consciousness and the waves  
of energy of which we are all  
one.  
I am with you now.*

~C.B.

merging with Divinity. (I couldn't hold that for long but I had the experience that it was definitely there and joyous beyond words.) I actually became certain animals and saw plants as living things. I learned a respect for all life, and for myself.

As I take my journey to death (as we all do) it is made more real by the disease I have been graced with. Sometimes my body gets afraid, angry, depressed, or sad. I watch the sadness in those I love and realize that I am really loved by them. It is pain and gratitude all at the same time. As I lose my ability to lift weights or to run as I used to, I realize the miracle of life and the wonder of simple movements I always took for granted. The flowers are prettier and the air I breathe has meaning.

In the Breathwork I have not been roped into a specific doctrine. I have expanded my worldview. This is not to say that any doctrine or belief or rituals of reaching communion with the Divine should be abandoned. Quite the contrary. However, when everything starts to fall away and death approaches, it is nice to understand that God/Divinity is larger than us, has more dimensions, and each striving struggling suffering soul on the planet must find a way that speaks to him/her.

JUNE 23, 2002

As my body gets weaker and the pain lasts for longer periods of time, I hold out hope for a cure but also deal with the reality of my situation. How many men and women held out for a "miracle cure" ...? I have heard it said, "Jesus (respectfully, substitute the name of your favorite deity) can heal you if you ask him." I have heard many people "ask" for a cure and then die anyway. Somehow excuses are made or I have even heard it said that "he/she must not have had enough faith." What is that grasp of ignorance about? If you have real faith, you don't worry about the act of living and dying; you leave that alone and do the best you can with what you are given.

JULY 4, 2002

My bones ache every day. If I breathe deeply I can feel each rib light up. There is no such thing as a small fall anymore! Hey, look

Ray Kelly ~ Continued on page 10

Ray Kelly ~ Continued from page 9

on the bright side — I just got my priority parking sticker! ... I have pills that ease it somewhat. It may sound weird but in a way I like the pain. It makes me feel more alive (It is weird even to me.) ...

I fight depression once in a while. I have not been able to work for two years and have not been able to die. Medicine and bills eat up the family resources. My children stay close and do not go about building their own lives. My family wants me to fight on and secretly I do not wish to do so. Dying is easier than living in America when you are caught in the in-betweens. The bills keep coming in, decisions have to be made, dramas and traumas unfold around and about the dying person. If you admit to depression, you start another dynamic that you have to put energy into. ...

JULY 4, 2002

I have a couple of full-time sitters on the other side.....I have seen them once in a while and they make me understand that all is as it should be.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2002

Yucca [many years ago] was my first Breathwork away from Illinois. It was about my sixth Breathwork. It was also the most memorable. When I saw all the people there smiling and laughing in the line for registration, I cried. There were actually people in this world that felt like I did. Where had they been hiding all my life? ... I met a holocaust survivor, a pilot from the Vietnam war, a Navajo shaman (I called him that), a young man who had lost his parents, a host of others, and myself. My first mandala was a pizza with sausage as I had never heard of vegetarian before and found myself face to face with no meat for a whole 5 days!

NOVEMBER 9, 2002

I know people who look in the mirror and wish to make themselves look younger. There is a part of me that plays with the fantasy once in a while. I don't like sunspots, flab, or moles. I told my wife not to ever let hair grow out of my ears! More often I think that I am just as I am supposed to be. I had the experience of being young. I am having the experience of being old too. Of course the inside is younger than the outside. Our spirit knows there is no such thing as age. The mortal body is what it is. It is a vessel for experience. We will leave it sooner than we are prepared and go on to another experience. While we are here we have a choice as to how we see ourselves. When you look in the mirror look beyond the wrinkles or gray hairs to the inner beauty. You will be amazed how many others will see it also.

NOVEMBER 9, 2002

Fall is the one thing I miss about the midwest. I love the seasons but the winter simply got too cold for me. The leaves always remind me of the impermanence of life and that all change has a rainbow of ritual. The leaves changing remind me of age and growth, death and rebirth. Where I lived in Wilmette, Illinois they had huge oak and maple trees on each side of the street. It was like an outdoor cathedral. In fall the colors were explosive and in winter the ice bent the branches and they formed a perfect symmetry over the roads. When they melted the sun danced and created tiny rainbows in the branches. They still do, but it

seems as we get older we have to keep reminding ourselves of daily magic.

NOVEMBER 18, 2002

With my disease, I always thank Stan [Grof], et al. for allowing me a way of dealing with life that is "aware." I go through so much pain from the body, to the insurance companies, to the insensitivity of some in the medical profession. Yet, the Holotropic Breathwork makes me realize that all of life is precious, and that I can deal with it. When I went into the GTT [Grof Transpersonal Training], I wanted to save the world. I hope I have influenced it a little. However, the one I saved was myself. That was enough of a job for one lifetime!



SoulCollage Card by Claire Boucher

Ray,  
I know you and Josie shared a deep, profound Love.  
I felt it and heard it in your writing.  
The card here represents the spirit of you and Josie transformed by love. ~C.B.

NOVEMBER 25, 2002

You can go through the motions of "love" and imitate "love." You can even fake "love" enough to satisfy a partner. In my relationship I told my wife I loved her, and I did to the best of my knowledge, when we got married. However, due to my background, I did not have the capacity to extend love to another because I did not really love myself. I was conditioned to the fact that I was somehow flawed. Everything I did in my family of origin was not enough. ...

Before a Breathwork [GTT training] module one of my friends introduced me to the spiritual side of Ecstasy. I had never taken any drug before and we used the Holotropic Breathwork model of sitter and breather. It was the absolute first time I could see myself as loveable, worthy of love. My sitter was experienced and kept me inside myself. Then I went to the module and processed this. Over time I came to understand that self love is about stripping off all the lies imposed when we are children. The "Divine child" is how we are born, and we need to uncover it in us. After that, I could love

Ray Kelly ~ Continued on page 12

# Sound TRACKS

# Music

for Holotropic Breathwork

CDs with Many Usable Cuts

# Matthew Stelzner

Guest Columnist

Ted Riskin, Column Editor

Editor's note: While attending a module in February, I heard a really nice set of music, and guessed (correctly) that it was put together by Matthew Stelzner. Though his teaching schedule prevented him from doing the very next column, we do get his recommendations in this issue. —T.R.

I'm very excited to share some of the great breathwork music I've found recently. As with many other certified facilitators, the music has become a personal passion, and I love creating new sets for our workshops. My strategy for this article will be to cover as many new CDs as I can in this small space, with just brief descriptions of the pieces. Several of the CDs are what I call "one hit wonders," with just one (or sometimes two) cuts that are usable for breathwork. My personal philosophy of purchasing breathwork CDs is that if there is at least one great piece on the CD, then my money has been well spent.

This philosophy came after the purchase of dozens of CDs that I took a risk on, which ended up not having even one usable cut.

First, I want to mention a few CDs that are not "one hit wonders," that actually contain many great cuts. The first is a compilation called *Tribal Groove* on the new label Music Mosaic. Almost every track on here is usable, with several good for the first hour, but there are also second and third hour tracks. The diversity is remarkable, with some tracks having a wonderful world fusion quality, and others with a more authentic indigenous sound. I particularly like track 13, by the group **Tribe**, and have used it as part of a breakthrough sequence. Music Mosaic seems to be a great new label. I've purchased two other compilation CDs they've put out, *Didgeridoo Trance Dance* and *Lotus Groove*, and found several great cuts.

Another great CD I discovered recently is titled *Collective Unconscious* by the group **Didjworks**. This CD features many amazing cuts that blend the didgeridoo and world-beat dance grooves in a wonderful way. Most of the pieces are excellent for the first hour, but some could probably work in the second hour. I personally don't always love the didj when it is played solo, but it really blends in awesome ways on this CD with powerful drums, vocals, and the sitar. I particularly like tracks 2, 4, 6, and 7. I also purchased **Didjworks'** more recent CD, *Tranceformation*, but found it much less powerful, and mostly unsuitable for breathwork.

My most favorite recent soundtrack comes from the winner of this year's best foreign film Oscar, the German film *Nowhere in Africa*, and is composed by **Niki Reiser**. This is a truly great score,

## CDs REVIEWED

*Tribal Groove* ~ [compilation]

*Didgeridoo Trance Dance* ~ [compilation]

*Lotus Groove* ~ [compilation]

*Signs* ~ James Newton Howard

*Road to Perdition* ~ Thomas Newman

*Mystic Spirit Voices* ~ Lesiem

*Genetic Drugs and Jasmen* ~ Spacecake

*Near Eastern Lounge* ~ Claude Challe

*Mantrica* ~ Anant Jesse

*Without Within* ~ Bob Holroyd

and features a rich blend of East African vocals and Western orchestration, with almost every track probably usable (mostly second hour). Although this score suffers from the usual problem of short cuts, there are several that are longer, and I'm sure that excellent loops and mixes will be created. My favorite track is #6. It's only two minutes long, but it is so good that it deserves to be looped into a six-minute piece, and it would work excellently on the downward slope after the breakthrough. By the way, this is not just a great soundtrack, but also one of the best films I have seen in recent years, and should not be missed.

Two other great soundtracks from 2002 are from the films *Signs* and *Road to Perdition*. While *Signs*, scored by **James Newton Howard**, has a pretty creepy horror sound in general, track 13

would work as an amazing addition to any breakthrough sequence. *Road to Perdition*, scored by **Thomas Newman**, is one of my new favorites, and there are several great cuts here for the second and third hours. I especially like cuts 7, 13, and 26. *Road to Perdition* is also an excellent film!

Now on to the "one hit wonders." There may be more than one good cut on each of these, but for my ear, really only one excellent standout cut. First, I want to mention an unusual CD titled *Mystic Spirit Voices*, by a group called **Lesiem**. For this, think **Pink Floyd** meets Latin choir, and you'll have some idea of what it's like. While the whole CD is pretty cool, there is really just one cut I would use for breathwork, track 3. This is a very powerful second hour piece, with a driving epic quality. Another unusual CD is the intriguingly titled *Genetic Drugs and Jasmen* by the group **Spacecake**. This is a mostly "too weird for breathwork" electronica CD that has one amazing cut, track 7, which is excellent for early in the first hour. This cut features a powerful Middle Eastern voice and a driving dance beat. Another cool world-fusion dance CD with a great cut for breathwork is **Claude Challe's** *Near Eastern Lounge*. I used cut 9 in the first hour of a session at our most recent workshop, and it kicked major butt.

I want to mention two more CDs with just one or two cuts that would be very worth purchasing. The first is titled *Mantrica*, by the group **Anant Jesse**. This CD features a blend of Indian mantras with powerful drums and electric guitars. I particularly like track 1,

Sound Tracks ~ Continued on page 12

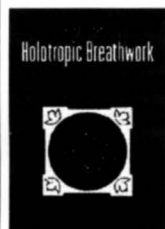
**Sound Tracks ~ Cont. from page 11**

which works great in the early part of the first hour. Lastly, **Bob Holroyd** recently released a CD titled *Without Within* that Tav Sparks turned me onto. This is a really nice CD, which blends indigenous vocals with harmonious western instrumentation. I particularly love track 1, which works well played either first or second in the first hour. Happy mixing!

Matthew Stelzner is a student of transpersonal astrologer, Richard Tamas, Ph.D. He was certified as a Holotropic Breathwork practitioner in 1998 and teaches astrology in the Grof Transpersonal Training. He is a full-time professional astrologer and Holotropic Breathwork Facilitator in San Francisco, California, U.S.A. mstelzner@aol.com.

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**Ray Kelly ~ Continued from page 10**

others better and was not so desperate for their approval. My love for my wife became a constant warm fire rather than an on and off fluctuating energy. After that, I could extend myself to others because myself was more intact than ever before.

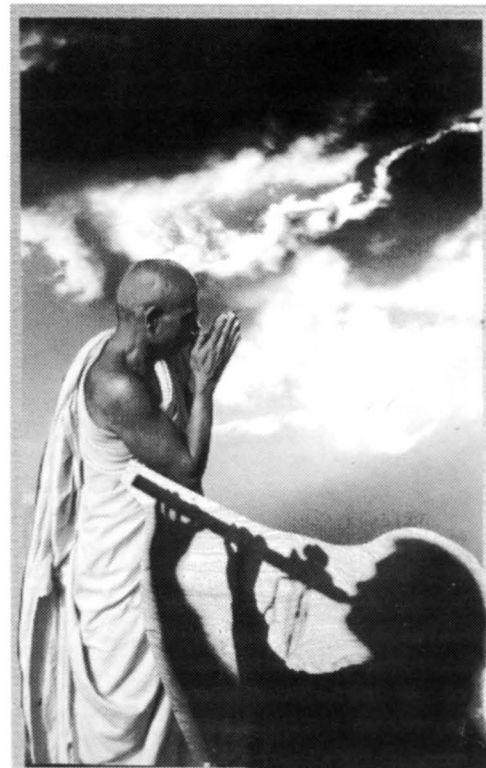
NOVEMBER 25, 2002

I love so many people now that I like to bask in the wonderment of people. I like the experience of love, because as I see it in myself, I appreciate it in others. When I was younger, sex and love were synonymous. Since my operation, I have been impotent. I deal with other men who get lost in this "trauma". Yet it has allowed me to see another side of love. I can hang out, laugh, cuddle, and "be" with no agenda. My wife and I make love just by being together, playing backgammon, and snuggling under the covers. When you love yourself it transforms every aspect of love. Some people will not "get it", but the right ones do.

DECEMBER 31, 2002

Sometimes I use this forum to write to myself. I beg your forgiveness and invite you to use the delete key if you do not have the inclinations to read some musings of an old man. I want to organize my experiences and thoughts into something that makes sense.

... As I write this, I hope to share with you what is seldom shared. They are the silent thoughts rarely spoken.



SoulCollage Card by Claire Boucher

Prayer, song, and thanks to Ray ... a great teacher of life and death. ~C.B.

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