



BOOK REVIEWS

Self-Help 2.0: A New and Improved Path to Break Free from Stress, Anger, and Codependency

By Larry Burton

Larry Burton is a father, a coach, EP practitioner and ACEP member. He tells the story of his own spiritual hejira, from growing up in a dysfunctional family with an alcoholic father, serving in the Air Force, and the challenges in his marriage and having to face his own demons of anger and codependency. He learned a lot working through the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, becoming a coach and practicing NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming). But there were limitations to these methods, which were rooted in what he calls a “2D” paradigm. After he began studying Energy Psychology he had his “AHA!!!” - *everything, including ourselves are forms of Energy*. We are energetic beings in fields of Energy. He began working with what he calls a “3D” paradigm - addressing mind, body and energy - and found the healing and transformation he was looking for.

Burton has developed a concept he calls “Energy Intelligence,” (EnI), similar to Daniel Goleman’s concept of Emotional Intelligence and related to Martin Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. He defines EnI as a skill, “the ability to understand your body’s energy system, to identify disruptions in your energy system and to restore balance, harmony and flow to your system..” He envisions a world where being attuned to and consciously working with our energy bodies is as natural as using our hands, eyes and ears.

A confession: I (John Freedom) actually dislike many self-help books - even though I’ve written one myself! As with many books in this genre, Burton’s formulations and prescriptions can come across as being simplistic. Addictions and codependency are very complex issues; working through them can be like riding a roller coaster, with seeming breakthroughs followed by setbacks and relapses. I would have liked to hear more both about his personal struggles with these, as well as a more nuanced approach to working through them.

Burton has created a unique method which he calls the “Pondera Process.” Its etymology comes from *pondera*, the Latin word for “balance”; he sees the method as a powerful tool for releasing limitations and empowering people. The process works by balancing the energy around an emotion, belief or memory in a person’s energy system. It is similar to other EP techniques, in that it involves attuning to a stress, taking a SUDs level (Subjective Units of Distress), and then repeating a series of statements while breathing and doing the “Healthy

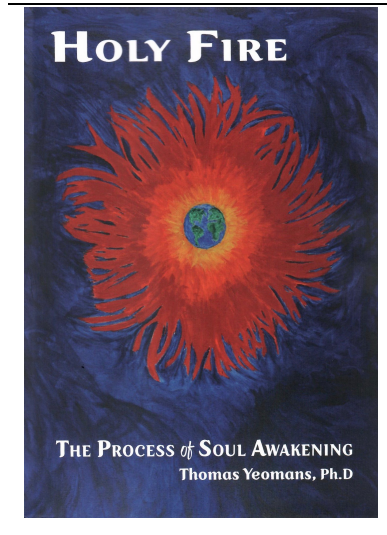
Heart Hold,” similar to John Diepold’s Heart Assisted Therapy. This method lowers the SUDS levels. Burton believes that “the heart acts like the motherboard of our energy system.... the central communications point through which the energy in all parts of our being are connected....”

Self-Help 2.0 is a fascinating read, and highly recommended to anyone wanting a deeper understanding of EP, energy healing and themselves.

Reviewed by John Freedom, CEHP

Holy Fire: The Process of Soul Awakening By Thomas Yeomans PhD

Tom Yeomans has written a book that is part prose, part poetry, part visionary painting and full outpouring of soul. His varied career is hard to pigeon-hole, as it includes stints in academia (Harvard, Oxford and the University of California), pioneering work in cross-cultural education in the Soviet Union (where he co-founded the International School with Russian colleagues), training in soul mentoring through his Concord Institute, as well as painting (the cover of this book), folk singing, plus writing a children's book, six professional books and four volumes of poetry.



This book is a reflection of that multi-faceted background, and Dr. Yeomans uses the milestones of his own growth process to illustrate the hallmarks of the Soul Awakening process which this book explores. He describes in some detail his own soul awakening and the healing of his Soul Wound, and that story serves as an exemplar for all of us. His own personal awakening in the catalytic presence of Dr. Roberto Assagioli, the founder of Psychosynthesis, is movingly described, and will resonate strongly in all seekers. The book also includes a listing of his seminal influences (literary, poetic, artistic, psychological and spiritual).

I was expecting to read a series of case reports that illustrated how different symptoms and disorders responded to his psychotherapeutic treatment methods. Instead, *Holy Fire* is more of a workbook and a mirror, including a series of exercises that allow the reader to directly participate in the process of soul awakening. As he notes, he's more of a spiritual guide or mentor than a resolver of symptoms, and once this shift in perspective is understood, the book gains its full power for the reader. Topics that are covered include Soul Physics (Holy and Unholy Darkness, Soul Identity, Soul Infusion, and more), while the Soul Process work describes the patterns of transformation that are available to all of us, should we heed the call to work with our soul allies and spiritual adversaries on our own archetypal journeys of awakening. Using imagery work, poems, journaling, gestalt role playing and mindful compassion, we begin to sense how the present moment can be doorway to an embodied experience of Soul.

I'm not a neutral reviewer, by the way. I've had the good fortune to know Tom for over 10 years, first as a colleague working to bring a psychospiritual perspective into a mainstream psychology training program, and more recently as my two-mats-down classmate in a weekly yoga class in Western MA. His light shines brightly in the foothills of the Berkshires, and thanks to this book, that light will now be spreading more widely, reaching the sphere of global healing that his work has always been aimed at, so that we can all "learn to live as souls on Earth."

Concord Institute Publications, Concord MA, 2020. ISBN 978-1-7327843-5-2
Reviewed by Rick Leskowitz ,MD