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BOOK REVIEWS

Tiffany Snow, *The Power of Divine: A Healer's Guide – Tapping into the Miracle*, San Diego: Spirit Journey Books 2004. 226 pp. \$18.95

This is an excellent discussion of spiritual healing, for both healers and healees. Tiffany Snow started her working career writing songs and producing records in Nashville, Tennessee. Her now considerable healing gifts were awakened after being struck by lightning and having a near-death experience. She has become a minister and regularly offers healing in church as well as in individual sessions. People often lose consciousness when they receive healing, entering ecstatic states which are classically described as being 'slain in the spirit.'

What I like about Snow's book is her practical, down to earth attitude, and her openness to learning herself from her work.

...I see my entire life as a classroom in preparation for this healing journey. Many have been the questions as struggle and blessings came across my path, each carrying their own specific burden and lessons. Some of these trappings, most of which were victim-based and religious in nature, I have stumbled on; I have found by tripping I've learned to lift my feet. Looking back, I realize that all the times of my brokenness were simply excellent opportunities for me to choose *love* over bitterness, *love* over fear, *love* over unforgiveness. By exercising the opportunity to use our Free Will to always choose *love*, we allow ourselves to become rebuilt into a better vessel; strong enough to be a flowing channel for Unconditional Love to all people, a true reflection of the nature of the Christ. (Author's introductory note)

While herself practicing firmly within a Christian tradition, Snow is respectful of other healing traditions.

Spiritual healing can be Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, Qigong, Quantum Healing, etc. Spiritual healing has come to mean a variety of methods which may employ some sort of spiritual aspect with the healing, but may or may not include prayer. Also, the person healing may or may not be including his *own* energy in with the healing. *Divine Healing* always includes prayer, cannot activate without it, and healing is *never* done by including any of the person's own energy. It often includes some version of hands-on-healing or 'laying-on-of-hands.' (p. 4)

Snow acknowledges healing energies and imagery/visualizations as being helpful in promoting healing, along with God's will. For others, as for herself, she suggests that illnesses may be helpful lessons. "When You are Down to Nothing, God is Up to Something!" (p. 17)

Snow has interesting observations on medications such as cocaine and morphine-based drugs, which make it more difficult for her to connect with people for intuitive assessments and healing.

Snow has a gift for sharing profound observations in light-hearted manners. She comments on the complexity of human relationships and the healings that may extend beyond the person presenting with symptoms or illnesses.

Sometimes, accessing Spirit is like dialing up on a phone line, and getting a party line! The information you receive may not even be for the situation or person at hand. (p. 33)

Death, points out Snow, is not something to fight, but rather the ultimate healing.

This book is a good read, in addition to its informative content. Warmly recommended for anyone interested in healing.

Tiffany Snow D.D. *Psychic Gifts in the Christian Life. Tools to Connect*, San Diego, CA: Spirit Journey Books, 2003 219 pp. \$24.95

In this important book Tiffany Snow confronts some common misconceptions about the cultivation and use of Spiritual Gifts. She is a healer, medical intuitive, mystic, and spirit communicator, but suppressed her natural psychic abilities in childhood because her family didn't approve of or understand them. She candidly describes the frustrations and heartaches of her early life as a musician and Country-Western song writer and how spiritually empty she became.

God reached out to her through a near death experience after she was struck by lightning. A spirit presence told her, "Welcome to the world of healers!" and she was changed in many ways while in the near death state. Soon afterwards she noticed that her hands would become hot, followed by spontaneous healings, when she touched ailing animals or her own body. Her previously diagnosed breast lumps, uterine fibroid tumors, and torn rotator cuff were healed in this way.

She began to heal friends through touch, and explains how she has learned to use her gift without taking on their pain. She also describes how she discovered her ability to psychically communicate with other creatures, including living and dead people.

Her advice on spirit communication is practical and spiritually sound, "Test everything out first, using prayer (two-way God communication), and your conscious (God-given reasoning ability of right and wrong). And listen to your gut-feeling (God-given intuition)."

Dr. Snow not only tells us what she can do, but inspires us through her book to seek our own 'God Spots.' She makes clear that a person doesn't need to be struck by lightning to gain these spiritual gifts. Readers who wonder how such gifts can be used will be fascinated by the many examples which she provides.

She describes psychically seeing civil war soldiers in a Tennessee field, finding lost children, and clairvoyantly witnessing what happened in the planes which crashed into the twin towers on 9-11. I was impressed that she was able to give helpful descriptions of the hijackers to the FBI based on her communications with their spirits.

The final chapters of the book direct and encourage us, the readers, to use our own gifts with love, tolerance, and deeper understanding of Scripture. This book has value as a testimony of personal transformation, a guide to spiritually-based psychic development and use, and a resource for those who seek Scriptural validation of these abilities.

Review by Rev. Cay Randall-May, Ph.D.

Intuitive Consultant, Medical Intuitive, and Healer; author of *Pray Together Now, How to Find or Form a Prayer Group* (Element Books, 1999) and *The Intuitive Career, How to Succeed as a Consultant, Reader, or Healer* (projected publ. date, 2005)

Marilyn Schlitz/ Tina Amorok, with Marc S. Micozzi. *Consciousness & Healing: Integral Approaches to Mind-Body Medicine*, St. Louis, MO: Elsevier/ Churchill Livingstone 2005.

This book is a marvelously rich sampler of writings by clinicians and theorists in mind-body healing, some of them in original offerings, many as excerpts from previous articles. They are arranged in a coherent pattern, with sections/subsections on

DEFINING INTEGRAL MEDICINE;

MAPPING THE HEALING SYSTEM: Mind-Body Medicine, New Perspectives on the Body, Re-Visioning Illness; Honoring the Spectrum of Life;

HEALING: A MOVE TOWARDS WHOLENESS: Psychology's Move Toward Wholeness, Spirituality Religion and Healing, Essential Capacities;

HONORING MULTIPLE WAYS OF KNOWING: Epistemological Pluralism, Integrating the Wisdom of the World's Healing Systems;

ENVISIONING A NEW STORY FOR HEALTH AND HEALING: Transformations of Medicine, Sociopolitical Transformations of Integral Medicine, Healthy Earth-Healthy Human, Social Healing.

An unusual feature of this book is its accompanying Video CD, in which several of the authors are featured in spoken presentations, which add to these authors' written presentations. That is the good news. The bad news is that this CD plays only on CD players attached to TV sets, not on computers (PC or Mac). This would not be much of a problem were it not for the fact that all of the references from the articles in this book are on that CD – making them very difficult and frustrating to access. You would have to sit with the book in hand and search the CD on a TV set in order to identify any of the footnoted references or comments from the book you want to find. As a frequent reader of footnotes and references, I found this discouragingly unmanageable.

A few of the many items that this reviewer found interesting:

From the essay by Candace B Pert, Henry E Dreher and Michael R. Ruff, "The Psychosomatic Network: Foundations of Mind-Body Medicine:" Reviewing HIV in gay men, a study shows that

...the extent to which these gay men were 'closeted...' [revealed that] HIV infection advanced more rapidly in direct proportion to the extent participants concealed their gay identity. The investigators successfully ruled out explanations based on demographic characteristics, health practices, sexual behavior, and antiretroviral therapy. (p. 71)

Booth and Ashbridge's model is reinforced by the many conspicuous metaphors between the mind-brain and immune-healing systems, long ago postulated by the psychoimmunology pioneer George Solomon. Both systems have the capacity for memory; both are designed for adaptation to environmental stressors; both serve functions of defense; both are harmed by inadequate defenses; both are harmed by excessive defenses; and both develop either tolerance or sensitivity to "noxious" (i.e. stressful, antigenic) agents. (p. 76)

Regretfully, as detailed below, it is difficult to the point of being discouraging to find the references mentioned here, as in the rest of the book.

Memorable quotes from the essay by Eskenazi, Loren. "Transformational Surgery: Symbol, Ritual, and Initiation in Contemporary Cosmetic Surgery:"

The history of our lives, our joys and sorrows, has been inscribed upon our bodies. Our bodies remember everything from our first breath to our last dream. (p. 120)

Many years into my daily practice of surgery, I realized that the steps used in the enactment of a surgical operation mirror in pattern and sequence those used in rites of passage, which the anthropologist Mircea Eliade and others have delineated. The parallels between the two sequences, both on the literal and symbolic level, are indeed remarkable.

Summary of the Initiatory Sequence (Rites of Passage)

- A crisis, social or individual
- Fasting and contemplation (separation)
- Purification and stripping off outer life
- Voluntary entrance into sacred space
- Death/rebirth sequence
- Blood or sacrifice ritual
- Regeneration/rebirth

Surgical Sequence

- An illness, accident, or other potential life-changing event
- Fasting (NPO--nothing by mouth the night before)
- Purification and cleansing
- remove garments of outer life
- Enter an inner sanctum (operating room)
- Lay down on an altar (operating table)
- Undergo a death/rebirth (soma/anesthesia)
- Healing/rejuvenation" (p. 122)

David Michael Levin's refreshing chapter, "Meaning and the history of the body: toward a postmodern medicine," chronicles the shifts in popular conceptualizations about the body:

- In the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, from abstraction to concreteness;
- In early modern medicine, from exteriority (theories of humors and dispositions) to interiority ("mechanical, dense and opaque... an extremely intricate machine...")

- Pursuing mechanistic explanations, modern medicine moved from qualities to causalities;
- Moving towards more systemic thinking, from states to processes;
- Shifting from analyzing the parts separately to holistic explanations and systemic integration;

Levin then identifies seven models of the body: rational, anatomical, physiological, biochemical, psychosomatic, psychoneuroendocrinological, and experienced meaning, (p. 93-103)

(For unexplained reasons, Levin's endnotes are helpfully included at the end of his chapter.)

Discussions on spiritual dimensions of health extend our awareness of this end of the wholistic spectrum. Spiritual heart disease. From the essay by Dean Ornish, "Opening Your Heart: Anatomically, Emotionally, and Spiritually:"

In doing this work, I have had a chance to spend a lot of time with the same group of patients over a period of many years. We got to know each other very well. They were about as different from each other as you could imagine--in age, race, religion, socio-economics, demographics, sex, sexual preference, disease severity, you name it. At first, it seemed the only thing they had in common was heart disease. But over time we began to realize that many of them had something else in common: an emotional or spiritual heart disease. By that I mean the sense of loneliness, isolation, and alienation that I think is epidemic in our culture." (p. 307)

This volume is a good introduction to mind-body interactions, particularly for anyone who is new to this field. Those with considerable experience are also likely to find much of interest and value in the rich variety of presentations. This would be a more useful reference book were the references for further readings actually usable. Another hint: The contents start on p. xlix.

Eve A Wood, *Medicine, Mind and Meaning: A psychiatrist's guide to treating the body, mind, and spirit*, Tucson, AZ: In One Press 2004 347 pp HB \$21.95

Written by a psychiatrist who cares deeply for her clients, this book explores ways in which understanding the meanings that guide our lives can help us to sort out various disorders that cause physical and emotional problems.

I agree with the observation about this book by C. Everett Koop, former US Surgeon General, in the foreword: "It is written by a physician who loves her patients and has come to see that life depends not on the hand you are dealt, but on how you choose to live it." (p. 4)

Wood offers a host of helpful observations, as in the following:

Our biggest blind spots tend to encompass how we choose to look at things, what we choose to tell ourselves, or what we opt to believe. ...we usually see the roadblocks as external. We suffer a job loss, or the death of a dream, and allow these experiences to become the *cause* of our misery. As a result, we are unable to productively move along the life-path. We allow ourselves to be done in or victimized by our pain. We permit our grief to overtake us, robbing us of the joy and fulfillment we are due. We are all, to some extent, tripped up by our own blind spots. (p. 9-10)

Many books offer a spectrum of cases, briefly described. Wood chooses to focus much of her sharings about how she works through a detailed description of the treatment of a severely disturbed

woman who was suicidal. This woman had such low self-esteem that she would repeatedly cut herself when she was upset. It took many years of therapy to help her accept herself and settle into much more self-accepting and satisfying ways of being and relating in a world that she had earlier found hostile and unaccepting.

Many books offer the views and understandings of the author as the primary window into appreciating the author's approaches. Wood chooses to give many pages to the words of her clients, who report how they felt and what it was like to have Wood help them through their difficulties.

Helpful appendices add organizational and informational resources for dealing with disorders of childhood, eating and addictions.

Breaking news: *Medicine, Mind and Meaning* has just been named a finalist in four categories for ForeWord Magazine's 2005 Best Books of the Year (Psychology, Self-Help, Mind-Body-Spirit and Health), a finalist in two categories in the Nautilus 2005 competition (Psychology/Self-Help and Small Press--an honorary category) and received an Honorable Mention in Writers Digest International's 2005 competition in the category "Inspirational." Also, Dr. Wood is one of three finalists in the Benjamin Franklin 2005 Award's "Best New Voice (Non-Fiction)" category.

(See article by Eve Wood in this issue of IJHC.)

Gunnel Minett. *Exhale: An Overview of Breathwork*, Edinburgh, UK: Floris 2004.
241 pp 3pp references, 2 pp resources \$35.00

Gunnel Minett presents an excellent, well-referenced discussion of an enormous range of information about breathing as a therapeutic intervention. Minett states that "Only three per cent of all waste products are eliminated through the faeces, seven per cent through urine and 20 per cent through the skin; the remaining 70 per cent is eliminated through exhalation." (p. 150) This is one of the few places where I would have liked to see more references.

This valuable book includes explanations of the many ways in which breathing can be therapeutic – way beyond the exchanges of gasses, the point at which western medicine generally ends its limited consideration of this topic.

In cultures that recognize the full potential of the breath, its many beneficial effects are usually assigned to three distinct areas:

- A physiological and spiritual cleansing process that can help us to explore and influence the mind.
- A healing power that can be used for medical purposes and to trace the origin of illness.
- A religious or spiritual path that brings us in touch with other dimensions. (p. 23)

Minett enriches her presentation with a survey of many ways in which breathwork has been developed in China, India and Tibet. Here, as in the rest of the book, simple exercises invite the reader to appreciate the benefits of breathwork experientially.

Minett's discussion extends into transpersonal benefits of breathwork, both in ancient and modern traditions. Readers who are not aware of the potent Rebirthing and Holotropic breathwork techniques will be fascinated to read about how people can retrieve and release traumatic factual

and feeling memories from the time of their birth. These memories suggest a variety of ways in which we could bring greater healing to the birthing process as currently conducted in western hospitals.

Minett also suggests broader applications for breathwork, such as introducing this as a simple, easily learned and readily applied de-stressing technique in schools.

This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in learning more about breathwork.

Judith Orloff. *Positive Energy*, New York: Harmony Books 2004. 353 pp
2 pp resources, 2 pp selected readings, Index

Judith Orloff identifies herself as an energy psychiatrist, indicating that she addresses subtle energy aspects of her patients' issues. While Orloff's earlier books focused on her use of medical intuition in psychiatric practice, this book focuses much more on self-healing approaches. (See *IJHC* interview in this issue that explores Orloff's medical intuition.)

In Energy Psychiatry, part of my work is waking the dead. I don't mean the dearly departed, but the parts of us that become comatose to the abundance right before our eyes. Our society's shameless con is the belief that wealth and fame equal happiness. True, if your heart's in the right place and your ego isn't the size of Godzilla, affluence can be magnificent. Still, that's a big "if." Frequently, my patients who "have it all" are the most miserable. What makes them even worse off than others is feeling, "With all my success, why am I so unhappy?" The reason: They experience an emotional poverty that damns their ability to appreciate what they've got. Until I can help my patients resuscitate their hearts, they cannot grasp their gifts, material and more. (p. 321)

Ten sections, titled 'Prescriptions,' address the following issues (p. 12-13):

Awaken Intuition and Rejuvenate Yourself

Find a Nurturing Spiritual Path

Design an Energy-Aware Approach to Diet, Exercise, and Health

Generate Positive Emotional Energy to Counter Negativity

Develop a Heart-Centered Sexuality

Open Yourself to the Flow of Creativity and Inspiration

Celebrate the Sacredness of Laughter, Pampering, and The Replenishment of Retreat

Attract Positive People and Situations

Protect Yourself from Energy Vampires

Create Abundance.

Each section explains the issues involved, has a variety of relevant exercises, and is rounded out with a discussion by a prominent personality.

This book is warmly recommended for its clarity and helpfulness in dealing with a broad spectrum of dis-eases.

Daniel G. Amen, *Healing the hardware of the Soul: How making the brain-soul connection can optimize your life, love, and spiritual growth*, New York: Simon & Schuster/The Free Press 2002. 272 pp HB \$25.00

I found this to be a peculiar book for several reasons. My first “startle” came from the focus by a psychiatrist on the physical brain as an index for emotional problems. Daniel Amen has a wealth of experience in ordering sophisticated SPECT scans of the brain. These provide 3-dimensional images of areas of the brain that are active at the time of the scan. Amen uses these to explain to people with psychological problems what parts of their brains are under- or over-active. He feels it is irresponsible to treat people for psychological problems without the aid of these tests.

Having identified the problems, Amen then suggests medications and/or various mental exercises that can correct the disorders he identifies. Much of what he suggests is in the realm of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

Amen presents a clear and readable discussion, excellently illustrated, on parts of the brain he has identified as showing abnormalities in association with various psychological problems.

My second “startle” came from Amen’s advocating spiritual awareness as an important aspect of psychiatric intervention. On closer scrutiny, it becomes clear that he views spirituality as being based on values of a humanistic nature. While I found no direct statement about this, he appears to view a belief in God as a cognitive belief, influenced by brain functions.

Amen observes:

Our spirituality is influenced by how the brain functions. It has been my experience that when the brain is healthy for people with religious beliefs, God is experienced as loving, compassionate, forgiving, and present. When these people struggle with brain problems, God is often perceived as angry, vengeful, controlling, rigid, judgmental, and distant. Brain physiology impacts our perception of the world, including our perception of God. (p. 26)

It will be most interesting to follow the research that comes out of these avenues of study, to see whether the brain activity Amen finds associated with negative spiritual beliefs is causal in producing these beliefs or the result of the beliefs. Both hypotheses are supported in research. That is, there are areas of the brain that determine perceptual and cognitive abilities on the one hand, and on the other hand there are structural changes in the brain that result from exercise of particular perceptual and cognitive functions.

My own opinion is that the brain is a transducer of spiritual awareness, much like a radio or TV set, making possible the communication of Spirit with and influences upon matter. A damaged receiver can make it difficult for Spirit to communicate to consciousness or for consciousness to be aware of Spirit. I believe further that physical life is an expression of spiritual development. This is consistent with research in spiritual dimensions, such as the NDE, reincarnation memories, channeled information and more (which I will shortly be publishing in *Healing Research*, Volume III).

Amen suggests a variety of ways, mostly in the realms of CBT, in which negative thinking can be shifted towards positive perceptions and beliefs about self and others. Among his approaches for releasing negativity, Amen recommends Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). In addition to finding this a powerful intervention for releasing lingering, troublesome residues of

negative experiences (which is definitely the experience of this reviewer), he observes that EMDR produces observable changes in the brain.

EMDR calms the focal overactive areas of the brain. In PTSD, for example, we see a *diamond pattern* on SPECT, which is excessive activity in the anterior cingulate gyrus (top point of the diamond), basal ganglia (two side points of the diamond), and limbic-thalamus (bottom point of the diamond). This pattern fit nicely into the symptomatology of PTSD. People who have been traumatized and develop PTSD symptoms (such as flashbacks, nightmares, worries, quick startle, anxiety, depression, and avoidance) are frequently overly concerned and worried (anterior cingulate traits – get stuck), anxious and hyperalert (basal ganglia), and filter everything through negativity (limbic-thalamus). EMDR calms all of these areas on SPECT. (p. 191)

Those who feel supported by laboratory tests for clinical interventions will find this a ground-breaking, helpful book. Those who feel comfortable with clinical interventions based on careful history-taking, supplemented by personal observations and interpersonal interactions with clients, may find this book out of line with their beliefs and practices.

Wayne Dosick and Ellen Kaufman Dosick. *Spiritually Healing the Indigo Children (And Adult Indigos Too): The Practical Guide and Handbook*. San Diego: Jodere Group, 2004. 254 pp. \$ 24.00

By now, many readers are familiar with the term Indigo children, a term coined by Nancy Ann Tappe, and made popular by Jan Tober and Lee Carroll in *The Indigo Children* in 1999. Even though Indigo children possess high intelligence, intuitiveness, creativity, and energy, they are also described as having trouble fitting in, appearing highly sensitive to various aspects of their environment, and exhibiting many symptoms that are often identified as ADD or ADHD. So far, most publications have focused on Indigo children in the context of their physical and emotional health. In *Spiritually Healing the Indigo Children (And Adult Indigos Too): The Practical Guide and Handbook*, rather than working in the cognitive domain, co-authors Wayne Dosick and Ellen Kaufman Dosick address the spiritual health of Indigos for the following reason:

Our Spiritual Guidance teaches that our Indigo Children come to Earth holding a vision of a perfected world. Their great pain comes from the dissonance they feel between their vision, and the wildly imperfect world they see and experience. Their pain is at the spiritual, emotional, energetic-soul-level. (p. 3)

As the subtitle indicates, this publication is intended to serve as a manual with practical exercises for Indigo children and adults that will allow for healing to occur (including the sub-category of Platinum Indigos).

The book consists of three major sections: First, the authors identify, define, and categorize the Indigos. They present three different healing processes for Indigos depending on the age of the individual. What follows is an in-depth outline of the YOUNE games, an energetic therapeutic technique intended for children between the ages of 7 and 15, called *The 17*. The title derives from the authors' thesis that there are 17 "emotional wounds," which exist "on the spiritual, energetic level." Therefore, "they are defined differently from the way they would be on the rational cognitive level. Each wounding is sourced in the separation from God, and the bewilderment and pain that results." (p. 28).

It becomes clear the reader must accept these basic premises by the authors in order to apply the well-described, detailed, illustrated and extremely prescriptive exercises for each of the 17 wounds. Each wound is also “centered in a unique place in the physical body,” an aspect that is carefully crafted into the exercises that are worked out in the form of games between a parent and a child. Healing this wound is believed to bring about life-changing transformation and to affirm the children’s “soul-vision of a perfect world.” (26).

I can see a child participating willingly in this form of YOUNE games, but I seriously doubt their appeal to teenagers. It seems to me that devising an activity for such a huge age span from 7-17, where development on a cognitive, emotional, mental, and spiritual level undergoes enormous changes, is too ambitious a task to be credible.

The second section focuses on parents of children under seven years of age. The authors have devised a 15-minute sacred ritual, called *GraceLight*, in which the parents serve as surrogates for their children as a form of “interim” healing. The authors contend that these children are not old enough to “take psychic responsibility for their own spiritual healing” (p. 173).

The third part of this book provides the adult Indigos with *The Point of Essence Process*, a technique that identifies and offers healing for the seven ways in which this segment of the population spiritually “dis-claimed” their true identity. In this case, each Dis-claimer also manifests itself in one of the seven chakras from the crown chakra down to the root chakra.

All three parts of this book, in which the authors repeat their basic definitions each time, follow the same format. Each exercise is delineated in a clear fashion, including visuals for each intended movement. Considerations are given to the importance of all aspects of the sacred ritual, in which participants engage through these techniques. Testimonials in the form of short statements or lengthier anecdotes support each of the techniques.

Out of the three short segments that follow the main sections of the book, only one appears of direct importance to the subject at hand, which provides the background to the creation of this material. ‘Accompaniment I’ states for the first time that all of these materials come from ‘Spiritual Guidance’ and are actually completely channelled, from the games, exercises, and motions to the exact wording used for invocations, blessings or other phrases. I therefore must assume that most of the remaining portions of the book also convey channelled material, although this is not explicitly clarified.

I strongly disagree with the placement of this vital piece of information towards the end of the book. This ought to be shared with the reader from the outset in order to prevent any possible confusion and misconception. From the start, the authors expect the reader to accept their basic premises, without receiving references to other works in the spiritual healing field or scientific data in support of their claims. Imparting openly and clearly the information regarding the source of the channelled materials would at the very least provide a context for the many sweeping statements and assumptions which are presented throughout the book and unfortunately, stimulate many provoking questions and doubts on the subject of the authors’ knowledge, background, and integrity. For instance, how do these authors know their claim is valid that 80 percent of the children being born are Indigos? As another example, I would like to draw attention to the group of children and adults identified as Platinum Indigos (60 percent of the current Indigo children), who carry a “cellular imprint from his/her most recent previous lifetime” (p. 44). The authors then arrive at the assumption that these individuals’ deaths were drug-related and/or occurred in combat in Vietnam. Given such statements, I find it difficult to give credence to other aspects of the book.

The authors clearly appeal to their audience to engage the right brain and yet, the exercises do not allow for any creative engagement in the process as stated repeatedly and explicitly - a contradiction that is difficult to resolve. "To be effective – to work at all – the YOUMEES must be played exactly according to instructions... By changing even one word or one motion of the YOUMEES, we dilute the purpose and the power of the ritual-games, and they will not work" (p, 36). Nowhere else in the process is there room for the creative intuitive input of participants. How can a target audience comprised of deeply intuitive individuals, as Indigos are understood, not be asked to engage their inner wisdom?

Overall, *Spiritually Healing the Indigo Children (And Adult Indigos Too)* reflects the complete confidence the authors have in the effectiveness of their channelled materials, which they did offer, unsuccessfully, to the scientific community for research. This manual may indeed provide possible solutions to those parents and other adults who are searching for alternative spiritual approaches to their own healing and that of their children. Even though the actual exercises do not appear to be rooted in any particular tradition, no associations are made to other techniques, and no rationales are provided for claims and exercises, the authors' program seems to enjoy popularity, which leads me to speculate that at the very least positive results may occur through this process because of the power of intent and suggestion.

Indigo Book review by Martina Steiger, ThD, *IJHC* Assistant Editor

INDIGO—the Movie: An Extraordinary Experience

The weekend of January 29 and 30, 2005 turned out to become a major event for many people around the globe because of the premier showing of the movie INDIGO. Let me begin with a brief synopsis of the movie. The story revolves about Grace and her grandfather Ray, a man whose family life fell apart due to several fateful decisions he made. While on the run to protect the ten-year-old girl, Ray encounters the many gifts this Indigo child has to offer, which affect the lives of the many people they encounter, most significantly those of the members of her own family.

"Take a vital role, an active part in bringing your extraordinary experiences forward...You are it. You are the message and the messenger." These words by Neale Donald Walsch, co-writer and convincing actor in the role of Ray in INDIGO-the Movie, are indeed crucial to understanding the wider implications of what this film might represent.

I am writing this article from Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, where the movie attracted a crowd of about 550 people at two venues. Each venue offered the viewers a post-movie panel discussion, hosted by educators, social workers and energy workers, all of whom were experienced in the field of spiritual healing or working with Indigo and Crystal children. I was very fortunate to co-host with Dr. Karin Cremasco (a gifted energy practitioner and teacher) a post-movie session where the audiences felt that the opportunity to exchange comments, questions, answers, and concerns in the hour following the film greatly enhanced their viewing experience and understanding of Indigo children. Perhaps many attendees realized that this movie is truly about each one of us. As the director Stephen Simon reiterated, "We're the ones we've been waiting for."

Standing on its own, the movie presents a few challenges. If it is intended to inform the average citizen about who Indigo children are, then the story line does not offer insights into the broad spectrum of who these children actually are. Grace, the principal character and an Indigo child, is such an extremely gifted child that few people are able to relate to her gifts as relevant to most other

children. Even in addressing those who are already genuinely interested in the topic, the movie was lacking information that would be helpful to parents or educators in a practical sense. Some parents even felt that their children might be perceived as second- or third-rate children because they do not compare to Grace. With regards to appealing to Indigos themselves, the apparent mission of the film would have been better served if more attention had been given to the spectrum of sensitivities these children display. One frequent comment from young attendees at the viewings was that “the movie was too violent”, most often in the form of a threat of violence rather than visible violence. Jan Yordy (Energy Connection Therapies) points out: “With enhanced awareness, their (the Indigo children’s) highly tuned system picks up the negative emotional and environmental energy from their surroundings like a sponge. This causes Indigos or Crystals to become ungrounded, scrambled and often energetically reversed leading them to make poor choices and to self-sabotage.”

Perhaps a further word of caution is needed, Grace, the Indigo child, plays the role of the rescuer of the adults around her. Parenting the parents should never be the recommended role of children, no matter who they are. She is also the only character in the movie that remains unchanged and demonstrates no feelings. Several viewers remarked, “she was unreal in the sense that we could not empathize with her at all.” Her detachment removed her from the playful world of children that was only accessible to the audience through the remarkable pictures shown to us in the opening scene of the movie and later, very briefly, in the orphanage.

Most importantly, though, the production team, headed by James Twyman, Stephen Simon and Neale Donald Walsch, really did accomplish a number of feats. First, INDIGO ignited enormous excitement around the world on the topic of intuitively gifted children. Very often these days, we are inundated with negative press about youth. Rarely do we take time to celebrate children, and even less their spirit. INDIGO invites all of us to realize that all of us are children and all children possess gifts, even though those may be very subtle, as James Twyman highlights in the preamble to the movie. Indeed, we are all special. The movie certainly transmitted this message very clearly, and hope remains that it never is too late to make changes.

Second, INDIGO highlights the spiritual aspects of these children, their strong intuitive skills, and their reliance on inner knowing and wisdom. Grace feels she has a lot to say and communicates telepathically with her friends, which works, according to her, because “we’re all connected with each other.” This message resonated with many audience members who voiced their concerns about compartmentalization and separation. We also tend to place responsibilities on others rather than search for our own imaginative way to deal with challenges that arise and to accept them as an invitation to growth so we can relate better to each other.

The title of the movie, and of course labelling certain groups of children as Indigos, presents a paradox in itself: “I don’t like being put in boxes,” states Nicholas, the second Indigo child portrayed in the movie. As one grandfather remarked to me after the movie, “I’m convinced now that I am ‘dimensionally challenged’ to some degree (Grace’s description of Ray) even though I thought of myself as rather open-minded. But now I think that I’ll keep in mind that most likely it’s me who tends to put others and myself in a box rather than stay open to what surrounds me. Maybe I’ll be able to listen differently to my grandson now when he doesn’t seem to pay attention to me and notice what he’s actually talking about.” What a wonderful realization that may open many doors for both grandchild and grandfather, and most likely all others involved in their lives.

The third major message the movie was able to transmit to its audience is to LISTEN and BELIEVE. This movie “invited us to listen to our children and to ourselves and to believe that there is motivation for our children’s behaviour that is absolutely real to them even if, and perhaps, particularly when,

this motivation remains invisible and incomprehensible to us”—in the words of a couple in the audience, both of whom are educators and parents of teenagers.

Another parent was struck by Grace’s quotation of Einstein: “What makes you think imagination isn’t real? After all, something has to be imagined before it can be created!” We are invited to ponder the question how much room contemporary society at large reserves for imagination and thus nurtures the soul. Educational institutions, from junior kindergarten, to high school and university, have become more of a training ground that emphasizes factual knowledge and career training rather than education that nurtures the whole person. Little room is given to quiet contemplation and the inner voice. Grace asks us to believe, to give ourselves permission to accept the invisible, that which is different, inconceivable and impalpable. Then “parenting becomes an intentional spiritual discipline when we practice the art of understanding,” as Tobin Hart argues in *The Secret Spiritual World of Children* (2003). It then facilitates the differentiation between wants and needs of each individual, including the adults’—often unconscious—projection of their needs onto their children and other people in their environment. Ray reaches this conclusion after his precognitive vision towards the end of the film, when he apologizes to his son, admitting his errors and wrong choices, realizing he had not allowed his son to accept responsibility for himself: “Sometimes the things you want are not the things you need.” How many of us remain caught up in wants and do not listen to the inner voices of the heart that sing the songs of our needs?

The fourth important message of this movie resounds in the word “mystery”. Grace emphasizes that mystery is sometimes better than exact knowing. Children display a natural curiosity that often is squelched because the rational adults run out of patience trying to explain and perhaps feel put on the spot for not knowing the answers. INDIGO challenges us to “try to love the questions themselves” (Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*). It would be fascinating to show this film to a group of children and adolescents and partake in their discussions afterwards.

I am convinced that all those of you who had a chance to see the movie feel enriched even if it is in the form of more questions and mysteries. Perhaps that will bring us closer to the wondrous world of our children. To all those of you who have not yet had a chance to watch INDIGO, count on a heart-warming experience!

Indigo Movie review by Martina Steiger, ThD, *IJHC* Assistant Editor

WorldSpirit DVD by Alex Grey and Kenji Williams

Format NTSC 16:9 Widescreen \$29.95 USD Includes 28pp full-color booklet featuring Alex Grey’s art and lyrics.

Features:

DVD:

- 1-hour video of the live performance interwoven with Alex Grey's art - in both 2.0 stereo and 5.1 surround-sound audio
- 1-hour 'art only' video featuring Alex Grey's art set to the soundtrack of the performance - in both vocal and instrumental versions
- 40-minute documentary on the creation of WORLDSPIRIT
- 3 bonus music videos by Kenji Williams

- Chapel of Sacred Mirrors Animation
- English, French, Spanish, German, and Japanese subtitles

CD

- Soundtrack of WORLDSPIRIT performance
- Additional bonus tracks by Kenji Williams

Let me start this review by mentioning that I have been a strong fan of Alex Grey's work for many years. Grey's pictures resonate strongly with my involvement in wholistic healing, speaking to me of bioenergy and spiritual awareness. I particularly like his Sacred Mirrors. A personalized, signed print of The Cosmic Christ hangs prominently on my wall at home, in a place I look frequently – reminding me to reflect on the spiritual in my life that resonates with Grey's work.

The WorldSpirit DVD was a lesson to me in where I am in this world – though almost certainly not as its producers intended.

The core of this DVD is a concert presentation of Kenji Williams' music, wonderfully enhanced by Grey's images that are projected simultaneously on three screens. The blending of images and music is masterful and inspiring. I experienced this as Grey's images enhancing Kenji's music, rather than the reverse.

Alex Grey reads a narrative script during the presentation. The first portion is rhymed, and a copy of the words is included in the DVD booklet. The remainder is spoken text. While the spoken words add to the presentation, the rhymes detract from the flow as a whole. Grey does not come across with an inspiring stage presence. These factors detracted from my enjoyment of the presentation. I have seen Grey in small group presentations where he was much more spontaneous, dynamic and inspiring.

The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors animation is a beautiful framing of Grey's work. You are led, after a brief whirlwind imagery trip (that is probably intended to suggest spiritual essence but missed the mark for me), into a virtual hall where the Mirrors series appears on the circular room walls. The tour is brief and brisk, ending without the flair of it's introduction. The accompanying music is appropriate to the rhythm of the tour.

As musical presentations enhanced by imagery, I give this DVD a high score. For those who are at home with [Martina – please help me with words to categorize Kenji's music!] music, this is inspirational.

My disappointment in these presentations comes from my years of quiet contemplation of Grey's images. I was expecting a central focus on Grey, but found the music to be the focus, with the images adapted to complement the music. I was particularly disappointed in the rapid pace of the virtual Sacred Mirror Temple tour. I would have been happier with the pace of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* or Smetana's *Moldau*, which might have allowed me to deepen my appreciation of Grey's work.

For more information on Worldspirit: Susan Mainzer susan@sugar-lab.com 213-840-0077.

The Monroe Hemi Synch music

The Monroe Institute produces a fascinating system for healing through frequencies that are generated in the listener's brain. Pulses of different frequencies are played in each ear, and an interference pattern is set up in the brain that is said to be healing. Covering music is included in all the tapes, including a variety of compositions (some well known pieces that were not created for this purpose, and some specifically crafted to enhance the process).

The Monroe Institute website provides the following succinct summary:

Hemi-Sync® is an audio guidance technology that works quite simply by sending different sounds (tones) to each ear through stereo headphones. The two hemispheres of the brain then act in unison to "hear" a third signal - the difference between the two tones. This is not actual sound, but an electrical signal that can only be perceived within the brain by both brain hemispheres working together.

The Hemi-Sync® process has been refined with over 40 years of research and development. These efforts have resulted in the development of scores of individual products for specific applications such as focused attention, stress management, meditation, sleep enhancement, and pain management, to name a few.

Hemi-Sync® can help you experience enhanced mental, physical, and emotional states, by combining verbal guidance, music, pink sound and/or other audio effects with the binaural beats.

I had heard from numbers of people about this music and have been curious for a number of years to experience it but had had no opportunity to explore these, and was grateful when Brian Daily, MD kindly mediated the *IJHC* office receiving a set of review copies. I am an avid music listener, preferring classical music, having gone through phases of listening particularly to guitar, flute, and country or Irish fiddle pieces. I prefer to work most of the time with music in the background. I am, however, missing a link between my ears and my vocal chords. A person close to me once spent several hours during a long drive in attempts to get me to sing 'Happy Birthday' on key, and finally agreed with the opinion of my erstwhile childhood piano teacher that I am simply tone deaf.

I was therefore eager to explore how I would experience the 'metamusic' – starting with the CDs titled, *Remembrance* and *Higher*. I was disappointed to find that I felt no effects, either with earphones or without, but assumed this was due to my missing auditory link. I therefore forwarded several of the CDs to two other people whose sensitivity and judgment I value. The comments of one of these people follow. (The second person's comments were similar, but for reasons beyond her control she was unable to type them out.)

Music and Meditation

As a long time meditator, it is nice to have meditation aids, especially while traveling. As a "music person" I find myself to be particularly responsive to audio tones. I, therefore, often use music recordings to aid my meditation. This is especially useful, when done with headphones, in noisy environments, such as hotel rooms.

The tones that seem to be most effective for me are those which are quiet, not distracting and soothing in nature. The more musical tonalities may make pleasant listening or even background music, but can be distracting.

As my favorite form of meditation is 'heart based' or in the realm of loving kindness, I am particularly attracted to tones that resonate in the 5th chakra. Amongst these would be the sounds of brass bowls or Tibetan bells. I find their tones to be deeply resonant in the middle chakras and 'drop' me into a meditative state readily. Environmental sounds also work nicely to soothe the anxious meditator.

In addition, there have been multiple CDs produced which can be described as "designer" music. These recordings are produced to create a neuro-physiological state of relaxation. My first experience in this realm was with Doc Childre's 'Heart Zones' and 'Quite Joy.' Doc is the founder of the Institute of HeartMath (Heartmath.org). The institute has been focused on studying the health and educational impact of emotional shifting and meditative techniques. In general, these techniques are based in appreciation, love and caring. These HeartMath CDs have been created to bring the listener into his/her heart area and are meant to be accompanied with a practice, such as the HeartMath 'Lock-in' techniques. This is an appreciation-based practice. In combination, the music and Lock-in practice have been demonstrated to improve autonomic nervous system tone very effectively in multiple research projects (see for instance "Quiet Joy" by Doc Childre, HeartMath.org).

Another 'designer' set of CDs are the recordings of the Monroe Institute. These recordings use 'Hemi-sync' technology to stimulate the brain into a greater sense of balance. The theory is that by playing alternating tones in each ear with similar, yet slightly different frequency the brain will find the middle tone between the two. In trying these CDs (Inner Journey, Hemi-Sync Meditation) I found an unusual occurrence. I did feel a sense of balance or evenness in my brain-body, however I also experienced a sense of agitation. I even experienced some twitching of my fingers in response to the music. This was a unique experience for me. I also noticed that I was less relaxed with using these CDs than with other forms of meditation music or tones. To be fair, however, the Monroe Institute suggests taking one of their courses and that the CDs are just one piece of their process.

The most important recommendation I have for you is that trial and error works. It is my belief that individuals respond differently to different sounds and music. I do believe that simple is better as musical complexity can be distracting for most people. Enjoy the adventure.

CD review by Lee Lipsenthal, MD, ABHM

Further editorial observations:

The Hemi-Sync music alone is only part of the Monroe Institute program for exploring personal development of OBE experiences. They offer a broad series of workshops for training in connecting with many levels of intuitive awareness. Helpful references include:

Felser, Joseph M. *The Way Back to Paradise: Restoring the Balance between Magic and Reason*, Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company 2005. *Personal experiences with Monroe Institute workshops – providing the following reading suggestions.*

Russell, Ronald (ed.). *Focusing the Whole Brain: Transforming Your Life with Hemispheric Synchronization* (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads 2004. *Basic introduction*

Atwater, F. Holmes. The Hemi-Sync Process, June 1999 (available by request from the Monroe Institute), *Workshop uses of the Hemi Sync*

Masluk, Todd Joseph. Reports of peak and other experiences during a neurotechnology-based training program, *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 1998, 92(4), 313-401; 1999, 93(1), 1-98.

Steve Alexander & Karen Douglas. *Crop Circle Year Book 2004: A pictorial tour of crop circles and their landscapes*. Gosport, Hamps, UK: Temporary Temples 2005. 28 pp
\$16.50 + \$4.00 postage to US

This is a marvelous, richly illustrated book of crop circle pictures from the 2004 summer crop season in the UK. The photos are clear, the patterns varied, engaging, and challenging the imagination to propose meanings for them.

While skeptics continue to assert that these must be fakes, it is difficult to maintain this hypothesis. The circles are 150 – 300 feet across, with series of circles and other formations extending over 600 feet. Most of the pictured circles are in wheat. The patterns are highly intricate. Many appear overnight. It would take a large group of people to make all of these, particularly if done overnight. It would be difficult to make these in the dark, sometimes while it is raining. So far no one has come forward to claim, much less demonstrate how they could produce circles of these sizes and intricacy.

Figure 1. East Field,
Alton Barnes, Wiltshire
20 June 2004



In past years, there have been descriptions and photos of the swirled patterns of crops whose stems are bent at ground level and whose stalks form swirls, sometimes in regular, almost woven patterns, that often enhance the designs of the standing crops in the figures. The laying down of the swirls without breaking the stems of the crops, allowing them to continue to grow horizontally, has been another feature defying a hypothesis to explain it. (The patterning is not addressed in the current Year Book, other than in the long-distance photos which suggest this feature.)

Despite the challenges to produce a method, motive or “criminal” to explain the circles, the authors hint that some of the formations left viewers with questions about their authenticity, but provide no further explanations.

While definitive explanations are lacking, those who visit the circles often feel they are partaking of a mysterious spiritual experience. Karen Douglas observes:

Looking at the shapes, walking within the shapes, are experiences which trigger a process of realization. Starting in our unconscious with our awe and fascination with the meaning and mysterious appearance of these shapes; slowly emerging into our sub-conscious minds through our exploration of their geometry and proportions; finally reaching our fully-conscious mind via the symbolic/ synchronistic connections between the archetypal truths expressed by the crop circle shapes and their psycho/spiritual counterparts.

Figure 2. Aerial view

Figure 2. Closeup



Honey Street

Alton Barnes,
Wiltshire

16 June 2004

Videotape

Michael Glickman & Patricia Murray, *The Crop Circle Lectures 4: History and Geometry*, Crop Circle Reality, PO Box 1188, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 3WF, 2002

michaelccr@hotmail.com

This excellent video presents a spectrum of crop circle images, with brief discussions of some of the recurring and progressing geometric patterns over the years.

The most impressive is a video of the formation of a crop circle pattern over the period of several seconds, preceded and accompanied by two pairs of balls of light that moved over the area during and after the formation of the pattern.

While no answers to the mystery are forthcoming, the segment on the formation of the circle is a classic.

Anne Herman, *Meditations for Cats: Favorite Feline Philosophies*, Kansas City, MO: Andrews McMeel 2002. 80 pp. \$9.95

A delightful collection of feline photos, felicitously matched with sage quotations.



You must learn to be still in the midst of activity
and to be vibrantly alive in repose.

– Indira Gandhi



An object in possession seldom retains the same charm that it had in pursuit..

– Pliny the Younger



Remember, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, but she did it backwards and in high heels.

– Faith Whittlesey

Christopher J. Moore. In *Other Words: A language lover's guide to the most intriguing words around the world*, New York: Levenger/ Walker & Co. 2004 127 pp \$14

This is a wonderfully enriching collection of juicy words from cultures around the world. The author is to be commended for the breadth of his trolling in the waters of many nations to bring together this feast of insights – into national and cultural diversities, humor, pathos, and creativity, suggesting aspects of the human condition that we may have overlooked, and enhancing our appreciation of life in its infinite variations.

Here are but a few of the many new terms I learned:

Drachenfutter [*drach-ern-foot-er*] (noun) Meaning the “dragon fodder,” this is the offering German husbands make to their wives-breathing raging fire at the cave entrance-when they’ve stayed out late or they have otherwise engaged in some kind of inappropriate behavior. A nice box of chocolates, or some flowers perhaps to mask the beer fumes. (*German*; p. 27)

ilunga [ee-lun-ga] (noun) This word from the Tshiluba language of the Republic of Congo has topped a list drawn up with the help of one thousand translators as the most untranslatable word in the world. It describes a person who is ready to forgive any transgression a first time and then to tolerate it for a second time, but never for a third time. (*African – Tshiluba*; p. 79)

Caim [kyem] (noun) The word means literally ‘a sanctuary.’ It’s an imaginary circle made around the body with the hand. It serves as a ring of protection. (*Scottish/Gaelic/Irish*; p. 112)

sian [shee-ern] (noun) Soft and sorrowful music full of enchantment, which can be heard coming from a fairy knoll. (*Irish*; p. 113)

Book reviews are by Daniel J. Benor, MD unless otherwise noted.

