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BOOK REVIEWS

	<p>Suzane Northrop, <i>Everything Happens for a Reason: Love, Free Will, and the Lessons of the Soul</i>, New York, NY: 2004. 267pp HB \$24.00</p> <p>Research has confirmed that channeling/ mediumship can provide information that is accurate. Gary Schwartz (2002) performed a careful content analysis of readings by five prominent mediums, including Suzane Northrup, the author of this book. The probabilities that these readings could have occurred by chance are less than one in two and a half billion.</p> <p>Channeling/ mediumship has been popular for well over a century in the Western world, well accepted by the public, but held in great skepticism by the majority of the medical and scientific community. Skeptics suspect that the gullible are being misled by clever charlatans who are preying on the emotions of the bereaved. Most of the people I have spoken with who have consulted good channels have been pleased and satisfied with the opportunity to communicate with loved ones who</p>
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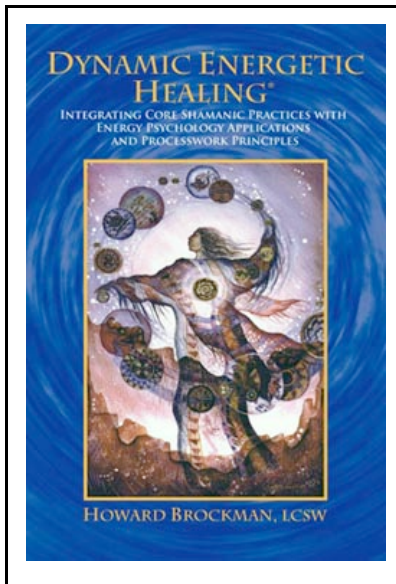
have transitioned into spirit existence. They are comforted in being able to clarify unfinished business, and reassured that the end of physical life is not the end of conscious existence.

In this book, Suzane Northrup brings us a wealth of practical experience and advice about the processes of consulting a channel, and even more helpful, discussions on the meanings of life in the light of these communications. A wealth of heartwarming and enlightening clinical examples illustrate the discussions. I fully agree with the thread of discussion on everyone having soul purposes that guide our lives.

What is unusual in my reading of such books is Northrup's encouragement to readers to open to developing their own abilities to communicate directly with their departed family and friends. She suggests simple, practical ways that we can all potentially learn to do this.

I was also pleased to see discussions on bereavement and on the channeler's ethical responsibility to use careful judgment in conveying information that is received – which may be important for the channel to know but may not be appropriate to share with the client. Communications with pets who were dear to us are often also deeply meaningful, yet neglected in discussions of channeling.

I warmly recommend this book to those who are curious to know more about the processes of channeling and the meanings of life.



Howard Brockman. *Dynamic Energetic Healing: Integrating core shamanic practices with Energy Psychology applications and processwork principles*, Salem, OR: Columbia 2006. \$27.95 464 pp. 5 pp. refs

Howard Brockman is a social worker who also studied Ethics/ Religious Studies, Shamanism, and Energy Psychology, including Emotional Freedom and Tapas Acupressure Techniques. He does a creditable job of discussing the blend of these elements that he developed in his practice, with a clarity and depth that will be helpful to experienced therapists as well as newcomers to wholistic healing.

Items I found of particular interest:

- Brockman muscle tests (asks questions using Kinesiology) around issues of clients who are not fully grounded in their bodies, and helps them to be fully embodied. He finds that this corrects a common block to full release of chronic symptoms.

- He finds that inviting involvement of clients' higher self is helpful:

... Clients tell me their problems, of course, and I then ask them to list their therapeutic goals. After further discussion, I ask them to prioritize what feels most important to address first. When they have done this, I ask them the following questions through manual muscle testing: "From your soul, is this indeed your highest priority goal *at this time*?" and "Is it in your 'highest good' to pursue this goal *at this time*?" When the client's muscle testing answers affirmatively, we proceed on the chosen goal. When the client's muscle testing indicates no, together we test to determine if any of their other therapeutic goals meet the criteria of these two questions. Sometimes their soul chooses a goal they have already identified as a starting point. In other cases, however, the client's starting therapeutic goal is something completely different from what the client initially listed consciously. In either case, we discuss their 'chosen' starting point to ensure that the client is in accord with the entire therapeutic process..." (p. 71)

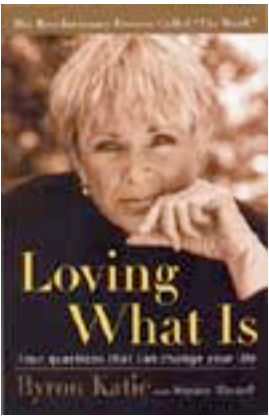
... Being in physical form means that we define ourselves by our physical body and separate egoic self-identify. Spirit is a dimension that is boundless, nonmaterial, and timeless. Yet in spite of being corporeal, we are also Spirit.

Our task is to resolve this paradox by integrating the two aspects of being through our awareness and our unique free will. In order to do this, we must have a self-validating, empirically based, firsthand experience that generates a reliable internal reference point. This reference point becomes an accessible inner resource for creating an instant link to Spirit. Unless we are blessed with a spontaneous, archetypal mystical experience, it is typically only through some kind of spiritual practice or discipline that we are able to make this link. Otherwise, our tendency as unique and separate human beings is to shift our thoughts away from Spirit and orient to ego, where conscious connection to the power of intention is lost. (pp 74-75)

The above is also an example of Brockman's clarity in addressing therapy issues, a clarity that is helpfully present throughout this book.

- Using shamanic approaches, he invites clients to connect with compassionate spirits who can be helpful in dealing with their issues. Noting that many in our society are skeptical about this aspect of therapy, he observes that discussions are insufficient to be convincing to many; only experiential understanding of spirit realms can be convincing to them. He also addresses curses, intentional and unintentional, that may contribute to psychological and physical problems and suggests ways to deal with these.

Many more nuggets, anecdotes and discussions make this a highly recommended book. Brockman is a teacher from whom we have much to learn.

	<p>Byron Katie, with Stephen Mitchell. <i>Loving What Is: Four questions that can change your life</i>, New York: Three Rivers 2002. 321 pp. \$15.95</p> <p>Byron Katie came into her healing wisdom through a path of personal challenges with paranoia, uncontrollable rages, and severe depression over many years. Transcending these problems, she awoke one day utterly transformed, having found a connection with a higher power. She went on to create a healing system called, <i>The Work</i>.</p> <p>Therapeutic dialogues with a spectrum of people, some of whom have quite severe problems, illustrate how <i>The Work</i> can rapidly bring about transformations. Katie has a lovely, direct, simple style of doing therapy (and writing) that cuts right to the core of issues.</p>
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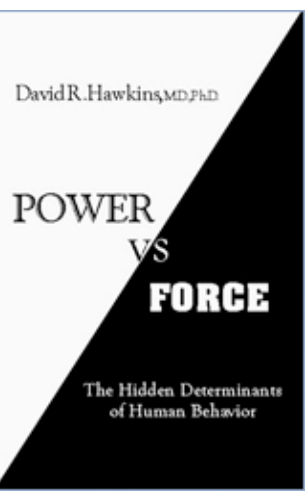
I can find only three kinds of business in the universe: mind, yours, and God's. (For me, the word, *God* means 'Reality.' Reality is God, because it rules. Anything that's our of my control, your control, and everyone else's control – I call that God's business.

While it appears simplistic, the way *The Work* is applied is elegantly simple. The therapist asks a series of questions regarding each problem raised by a client:

1. Is it true?
2. Can you absolutely know that it's true?
3. How do you react when you believe that thought?
4. Who would you be without the thought?

By carefully tracking the statements and feelings expressed by clients, and then shining the light of these questions on what they are struggling with, clarity is rapidly achieved.

This book is warmly recommended as a straightforward method for helping to deal with many of life's problems. Sadly, Byron Katie passed away in December of 2006.

	<p>David R. Hawkins, MD, PhD. <i>Power vs. Force: The hidden determinants of human behavior</i>, Carlsbad, CA: Hay House 2002 (orig. 1995) 341 pp Notes 13 pp Refs 10 pp \$14.95</p> <p>David Hawkins had a spiritual opening in childhood and pursued further spiritual development throughout his life. He shares in this book ways in which we can understand levels of spiritual development; muscle testing methods for assessing degrees of development of people, books, events, etc.; group validation of these assessments; and the value of the presence of the therapist as an instrument for promoting healing.</p> <p>Hawkins points out that logical, left-brain approaches to understanding the world are self-limiting. "... the logical arrangement of data serves mainly to enhance a pattern-recognition system that then becomes 'truth.' But nothing is ever 'true,' except under certain circumstances, and then only from a particular viewpoint, characteristically unstated." (p. 28)</p>
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Hawkins strongly advocates for using intuitive assessments for measuring the value of various truths,

stating that everyone can use intuition with accuracy and reliability. He reports that he has found these assessments to be entirely consistent across a broad spectrum of questions tested and through assessments of multiple individuals and groups of individuals. Where discrepancies were found, he claims that they were invariably resolved through removal of various blocks, reversals, or limiting beliefs that caused distortions in intuitive perceptions. While this claim is supported by what appears to be impressive, statistically significant research (p. 120), he provided no references where any studies were published. This leaves his research open to questions of procedural validity, at the least.

Using this system, he finds levels of spiritual development along a spectrum that includes Shame, Guilt, Apathy, Grief, Fear, Desire, Anger, Pride, Courage, Neutrality, Willingness, Acceptance, Reason, Love, Joy, Peace and Enlightenment. Through kinesiology, he reports consistent identification of numerical values for each level, ranging from 20 for Shame to 700-1000 for Enlightenment. The scale is logarithmic, so each increment is by a factor of ten times the previous, lower numerical level. Thus, a few enlightened beings can counterbalance and raise the collective levels of human development because their contributions are enormously greater than those of individuals at lower levels.

The average person will advance only 5 points along this scale in a lifetime. Through inner work of psychotherapeutic and spiritual growth, we can progress more rapidly from one level to the next.

He finds that the entire cosmos is imbued with Spiritual inspiration and energy.

Man thinks he lives by virtue of the forces he can control, but in fact, he's governed by power from unrevealed sources, power over which he has *no* control. Because power is effortless, it goes unseen and unsuspected. Force is experienced through the senses; power can be recognized only through inner awareness. Man is immobilized in his present condition by his alignment with enormously powerful attractor energy patterns, which he himself unconsciously sets in motion. Moment by moment, he is suspended in this state of evolution, restrained by the energies of force, impelled by the energies of power." (p. 37-38)

Force is the use by individuals or groups of physical or psychological means of coercion to achieve their ends at the expense of others. Power is the manifestation of Spirit in the world through the *presence* of people at higher levels of development. "Whereas power always results in a win-win situation; force produces win-lose situation..." (p. 167) The levels of Courage (200 on his scale) and above are positive; below that, negative in their spiritual effects in the world.

I fully agree with Hawkins' observations that

It's as though every individual is exploring life with a compass that has a unique setting. (p. 113)

Concordance emerges from the organizing patterns hidden behind apparent chaos; thus, the evolution of mankind progresses despite the apparently aberrant signals of individuals at any given moment. Chaos is only a limited perception. Everything is a part of a large whole; everyone is involved in the evolution of the all-inclusive attractor field of consciousness itself. It's the evolution, innate to the overall field of consciousness, which guarantees the salvation of mankind, and with it, all of life. The nobility of man is in his constant struggle with his own unasked-for existence in a world that is a house of mirrors – his sole support, and his faith in the process of life itself. (p. 113-114)

This book is a treasure of wise observations about the human condition, development of higher awareness, and the evolution of consciousness.

I feel that a caution must be sounded, however, regarding Hawkins' overconfident statements about the certainty of his intuitive assessments and those of others he has tested. My own experience is that intuition is correct some of the time but not all of the time. The degree to which it is reliable appears related to the levels of development of the individuals making the intuitive assessments.

There are also questions raised by several specific statements in the book. I find a glaring discrepancy between Hawkins' assessment of Walmart as a business that cares for its employees and those of most of the reports from Walmart employees – finding that Walmart is a crass exploiter of manufacturers and staff, and primarily dedicated to earning profits, regardless of the human costs. Hawkins also contradicts himself, stating on the one hand that no "...reliable result [can] be obtained from inquiry into the future; only statements regarding existent conditions or events will produce consistent answers." (p. 61) Yet he makes diverse recommendations later in the book for using intuition to predict successes in business and other endeavors, suggesting that one can rely on these predictions.

Greg Tamblyn. *The Grand Design* www.gregtamblyn.com

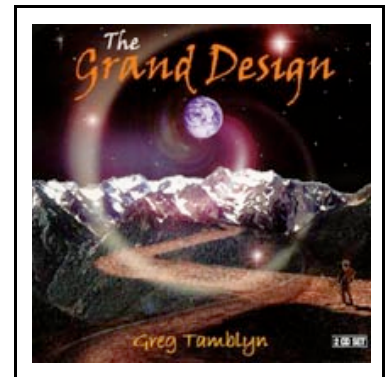
DOUBLE CD SET: One disc of helplessly funny, intelligent, live acoustic musical humor. Another disc of enlightened songs about consciousness, connection, science and spirituality.

Wonderfully entertaining , psychologically astute humor. I particularly liked the following tracks:

Holy Now – pointing out that all IS – NOW

All These Atoms – acknowledging our interconnectedness with all living things

Writer's Block – looking at how we can tie ourselves into knots of disbelief and poor self-confidence.



Angi Sullins. *A Knock At The Door*, Kennesaw, GA: Duirwaigh, Inc. \$20
www.duirwaighgallery.com

Enter a world filled with mystery and magic, awe and wonder, where faeries, winged beings and a rising Phoenix play in the fields of imagination. You have just stepped into the brain and heart-child of whose 1997 post surgical experience left her body paralyzed for a time, but her soul open to creative healing. She is that Phoenix who rose from the ashes, triumphant and brimming with ideas to grow an 'inspired artists' agency.'

Duirwaigh (Gaelic for doorway), produced a DVD/book called "A Knock AtThe Door." I was introduced to it as an e-movie a year or so ago and was enchanted by the merging of music and imagery and was tempted to remain in that realm. Various transformational artists are represented in the montage that invites the viewer to dare to dream their deepest hearts' desires.

The gift sized book presents the text that is displayed on screen and when read aloud, as I heard it on Christmas Eve this year, took on an effervescent feel, like a million Fourth of July sparklers going off in my heart.



I invite you to pass through that doorway, with the wide eyes of a child who remembers knowing that mystical creatures are indeed real and that your imagination is the key that opens the door. Check it out and allow your heart to dance with delight and be woven into the sweetness of it all.

When you purchase the DVD/book Duirwaigh will donate a portion of the proceeds to The Make A Wish Foundation

Review by Edie Weinstein-Moser, a free-lance journalist, speaker, creative guide and consultant, interfaith minister, massage and reiki practitioner. www.liveinjoy.com

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