

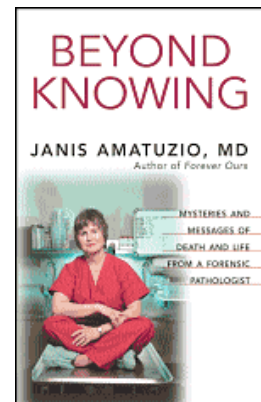
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BOOK REVIEWS

Janis Amatuzio. *Beyond Knowing: Mysteries and Messages of Death and Life from a Forensic Pathologist.* Novato, CA: New World Library, 2006. 205pp. \$21.95 www.foreverours.com

To the outsider, the title of this beautifully written book stands in stark contrast to the science we tend to associate with forensic pathology. After all, the author repeats her own caveat about the investigation of a death several times throughout the book: "Observe, don't judge," which she also combines with the reminder she received from the police: to provide the court simply with the facts, nothing else. So what would then provoke such a fact-oriented scientist to stretch to the knowing beyond the realm of conventional science? Perhaps one of the carefully selected quotations that introduce each chapter in Janis Janis Amatuzio's book captures the answer most eloquently: "Look and you will find it. What is unsought will be undetected." The true meaning of Sophocles' statement has evidently led Dr. Janis Amatuzio to many heart-filled and touching stories that have enriched her personal and professional life.



"Trust yourself; you'll know." These words by one of Janis Janis Amatuzio's beloved mentors and friends, have guided her throughout her career and personal life. Having understood their deeper meaning, namely that the answer is always "found within" which, "of course, ... changes everything" (p. 109), the author invites her readers to visit the realms that lie beyond the visible, tangible, and audible – beyond at least for those who do not wish to see, touch, or hear that which appears to belong in a different realm – in order to share with us the mysteries and messages of life and death. One of the author's friends and neighbors, who also added to Janis Amatuzio's collection of experiences, advised her very wisely, "You realize we don't have it all figured out. You remember to do the best you can with the day you've got. That's what will change the world, Janis." (p. 133). Perhaps we can all walk away with this awareness and knowledge deeply edged into our hearts.

The mysteries and messages presented in *Beyond Knowing* are actually demystified by the author who refers to them as "wisdom of the ages." Janis Amatuzio weaves the theme of revealing secrets through her book, which is divided into seven parts, six of which carry the word secret in the title. In each chapter, the author skillfully blends tales of her personal development with descriptions of her professional learning and growth as a forensic pathologist. She shares insights into some of the challenges of the profession, always accompanied by utmost respect and compassion for the human being, both the dead and the families of the dead. The stories we are told are deeply touching, often through their seeming simplicity, and mostly because all of them carry affirming, comforting, inspiring, and truly heart-warming messages: We are all connected; there is nothing to fear; and all is well – all three of which also serve as

chapter headings. The author herself admits freely, “As a scientist and forensic pathologist, I could not *prove* the validity of these experiences to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, at least not with the tools I have been taught to use. In fact, many times I have laughed at myself because, it seemed, they could not be proved at all.” (p. 137-8).

Kudos to this woman who has the courage to speak publicly through her writing, educating, and lecturing to medical professionals and laypeople about the subject of near-death experiences, bereavement apparitions, visions she experienced herself in her function as a medical doctor, synchronicities, and afterlife. She asks wonderful questions on the subject of perception and awareness, sometimes phrasing her insights poetically: “Awareness can come to you as softly as a butterfly or as the warming of your face in the morning sun. But sometimes it jostles you awake like a gust of wind ahead of a fast-moving storm.” (p. 137). A key question for the author lies in how the shift occurs that allows individuals to move from “seeing is believing” to “believing is seeing.” And, she appears somewhat surprised and pleased that plausible answers are emerging from the fields of quantum physics and cell biology, confirming what many people appear to know intuitively. She cites Bruce Lipton, whose publication *The Biology of Belief* is the only reference provided in her own book.

Instead of always featuring the author’s voice, Janis Amatuzio shares the words and experiences of others with the reader. It is remarkable, though not astonishing, to hear that not only bereaved family members are telling these stories, but also police officers, nurses, doctors, patients, and clergy.

One of the most amazing stories among the many shared in this book must be “The Tale of the Dragonfly.” a story that comforted a young boy whose uncle had died. It had become his favorite story, one in which a water bug set out to find out what would happen if it climbed up on a lily pad – after all, none of the water bugs that ever set out to explore the lily pad appeared to return from that journey. The water bug managed to climb onto the pad, sunned itself and noticed that none of the other water bugs paid any attention to its presence above them. After waking up from its sleep, this water bug knew something had changed – it had been transformed into a beautiful dragonfly. Despite its numerous trips to the water, touching the surface, and sending its love to the water bugs there, it realized none of them became aware of it; none of them even looked up. The mother who created this story and told it to Janis Amatuzio added that this young boy was killed as a 19-year old in a car accident. The day of her son’s funeral, a dragonfly appeared and sat on the mother’s lapel – and she simply knew.

It is evident that these stories do not diminish the impact the death of a loved one may have on the family. They illustrate rather how individuals may transcend the sadness, despair, and loneliness, realizing they are not alone. Even though she admits that “many times all does *not* seem well, ... the extraordinary experiences so often brought to my attention, especially while practicing forensic pathology, have put me on another path, the path of my own truth. These experiences cause me to wonder and to open my heart to my own inner wisdom and sensibility. They lift me to a new level of clarity and understanding of life, and God – which seem to be names for the same thing.” (p. 181).

Beyond Knowing is a powerful book that positions birth and death as opposites with life, as a continuum, marked by birth and death as important events in that life story. This book is written in an inviting, warm, and non-threatening fashion that allows readers from all backgrounds and with divergent personal, religious, and spiritual beliefs to relate to the material Janis Amatuzio offers. She summarizes these immortal mysteries or truths, as she calls them, in six simple statements in the epilogue of her book:

- There is a rhythm to life, and a season.
- Trust life, God, and trust the process, have faith.

- You are safe. All is well. Life will always go on. That means your life and the life of all others.
- You are deeply loved and never alone.
- You will see your loved ones again and again; and just the power of your thoughts will draw them near.
- You are more than you know, and you are more than your body. Care for all aspects of yourself. Care for all others as well. Be care-full. Be generous and humble. What you do for one made in the image and likeness of God, woven from the immortal threads of Forever. Have no fear. Be well. (p. 201).

This book attests to the possibility that society at large is indeed awakening, as Janis Amatuzio suggests. Perhaps we as humans can finally give ourselves permission to combine – once again – science, precision, intuition, and awe in order to create a more expanded vision of life and living that is steeped in inner knowing and wisdom.

Book review by Rev. Martina Steiger, ThD, IJHC Assistant Editor, Dean, Holos University Graduate Seminary



Katie, Byron and Mitchell, Stephen. *A Thousand Names for Joy: Living in Harmony with the Way Things Are*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing, 2007.

Byron Katie shares her personal experience of how she remains in a constant state of acceptance and joy through the process of inquiry called “The Work.” In her previous books *Loving What Is* and *I Need Your Love—Is that True?* she offered readers a detailed description of how ‘The Work’ can be used – by anyone in any circumstances –

when that person is ready to find the truth within themselves and thus change her or his life. However, in this text she provides only a few examples of how her facilitation of “The work” helps others with their issues.

In *A Thousand Names for Joy*, Katie describes experiencing an ongoing peaceful state of being, which she models for the reader regardless of the personal challenges she faces. She demonstrates how she has found inner peace with the more mundane life experiences to the more complex challenges she faces, such as a tumor on her face or an illness that is making her blind. She has arrived at bringing forth profound insights through a phenomenal epiphany, which she had in a half-way house one morning. Ever since that time she has embarked on the journey of questioning every one of her beliefs and thoughts. This completely changed her life from a place of chronic depression to a place of continual Joy.

The process of the inquiry which Katie has developed is based on the following questions and the resultant turn-around produced through addressing these questions, a process which she claims allows people to experience the opposite of what they believe. These four questions are:

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? (p. 270)

From my perspective the most unique aspect about her simple, self-healing modality and her writings is that it seems to embody so much of what has been presented in theory by so many authors who may have experienced enlightenment but may not have been able to demonstrate the application of such a powerful experience in such a humble and basic format. It was her

husband who had immersed himself in ancient texts who noticed the well-spring of ancient truth coming through Katie's voice.

What is unique about this writer's genuine accounts is that she had not been introduced to the theories of ancient texts prior to her development of this method of inquiry. Her husband, Stephen Mitchell, provided the modern English version of the *Tao Te Ching* which is used for the epigraphs that begin each chapter of this new book. In the preface, Mitchell offers insights into how this book came to be so intellectual and yet so humble.

The author presents the means to apply ancient theory to her everyday life, means which spring from her naturally. Through the examples given from her own life history, she demonstrates how to live in this world without projecting fear. No matter what the circumstances, this process of inquiry allows her to project only love for what ever is happening within her or in her surroundings in the now moment. She sums this up so movingly:

A clear mind is beautiful and sees only its own reflection. It bows in humility to itself: It falls at its own feet. It doesn't add anything or subtract anything; it simply knows the difference between what's real and what's not. And because of this, danger isn't a possibility.

A lover of 'what is' looks forward to everything: life, death, disease, loss, earthquakes, bombs anything the mind might be tempted to call "bad." Life will bring us everything we need, to show us what we haven't undone yet. Nothing outside ourselves can make us suffer. Except for our unquestioned thoughts, every place is paradise. (p. 101)

I am excited about this book for it allows me to see an avenue by which I can experience my life in this simple, truthful way, which from my perspective includes all the theories that have been brought to humanity by so many ancient and modern masters. I would recommend Katie's writings to spiritual aspirants, to holistic-minded health professionals, and to ordinary citizens who are looking to transform their present inner and outer conditions.

Book review by Inge Turner, Doctoral student at Holos University Graduate Seminary



Keith-Scott Mumby, *Virtual Medicine*, Timpanagos Publishers, 2005 256 pp \$19.99

Keith-Scott Mumby, PhD, has taken us on a journey from the earliest twentieth century to the present and into the future – in terms of Cybermedicine, Virtual medicine, Energy medicine.

Early in the 20th century, a neurologist, Albert Abrams, made a serendipitous discovery that by tapping on certain areas of the abdomen, he could diagnose certain hidden diseases such as tuberculosis and cancer. BUT the body had to be situated in a East-West position, and the diagnostic sound disappeared when the body was rotated otherwise. He concluded that unknown

waves were being emitted by the diseased tissue. From that he developed an instrument called the Reflexophone as an energy detecting and quantifying instrument, capturing and measuring these "strange" emanations. From this beginning, a whole host of instruments has been created through the 20th century, reflecting what the Tibetan (Mahatma Master from Tibet, and teacher of Alice Bailey) had predicted, that in the years to come we would be dispensing with material agents for diagnosis and even for surgery, replacing them with the Force of energy.

In this comprehensive, remarkable and very readable book, Mumby takes us from this early discovery by Abrams on to the present, where we now are developing energy researchers, energy practitioners and even energy dentists. The biological dentist is discovering that the teeth are very important sources of energy and pathology and therefore potential agents for disease or for healing. Sad to say, biological dentists are rarities in the United States, but they have begun to appear on the scene. But most importantly, we find that East is meeting West, forecasting the presence of a combined approach to healing. This is very well said by Mumby in a quote from the preface of this book:

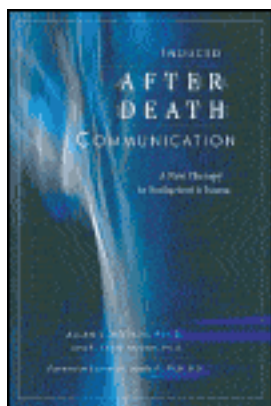
Then suddenly in the last quarter-century of this millennium we have discovered that our 'advanced physics' is beginning to meet ancient systems of the mind, such as Tao and the Vedas. That is to say, science is catching up with older wisdom, not the other way round. There is a remarkable and quite stirring concordance between texts written thousands of years ago and what scientists working at the leading edge of knowledge are discovering about today's reality.

While recognizing that those doctors who are pioneering in the practice of energy medicine are threatened with excommunication by their conventional colleagues,-nevertheless (to quote Mumby again):

Well I'm pleased to say that things have begun to change. We are seeing a rebirth of the philosophy of Vitalism, the understanding that the world we experience is structured and takes its cues from life itself. Not from some meaningless clockwork motor which God or somebody installed 'at the beginning' and has run ever since. Life is no longer some menace that got into the perfect machine but is the creator of all. It is a living and conscious universe where energy and dynamic process are the basis of reality.

We now have a better and more functional model of health and disease. The age of energy medicine is here.”

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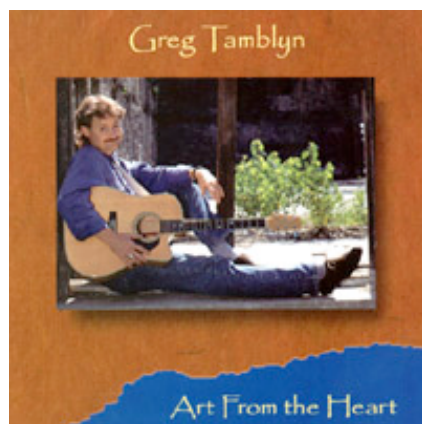
Allan L. Botkin with R. Craig Hogan. *Induced After Death Communication: A new therapy for healing grief and trauma*, Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads 2005. 202 pp \$15.95

Allan Botkin is a psychologist who worked for many years in a Veterans Administration Hospital in Chicago. He had been using Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) for several years to help veterans of various wars process post traumatic stress disorders (PTSDs), with excellent results from this treatment.

He was surprised when some of the people he treated reported spontaneous communications with the spirits of people who were involved in the traumas that caused their PTSDs. Veterans who had been releasing their long-buried fears and hurts from major wartime traumas were transformed by the messages they received from the spirits and by being able to converse with them. This was all the more impressive because many of the Vets had had no prior belief in or experiences with spirit communications. Botkin himself had not had any such beliefs or communications, having trained in hard-core behavioral psychology.

Botkin found that he could regularly induce these experiences through specific ways of using EMDR. He came to call this Induced After Death Communication (IADC). In a series of 84 people he treated with IADC, there was almost 100 percent success in producing profound positive changes.

This book provides clear details of successful therapies and instructions for others to use EMDR similarly for this transpersonal therapy. I highly recommend this to anyone who is interested in spiritual dimensions of psychotherapy.

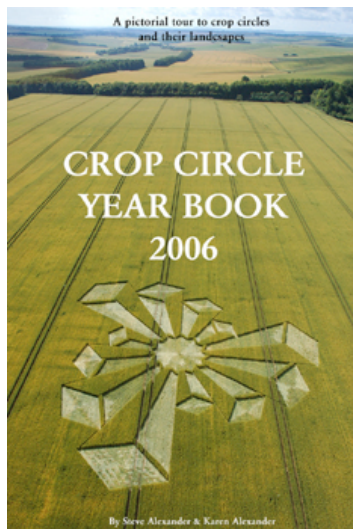


Greg Tamblyn. Art from the Heart. (CD)

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Steve Alexander and Karen Alexander. *Crop Circle Year Book 2006*, Wickham, England 2006.

www.temporarytemples.co.uk

This year brought some spectacular crop circles, even though 2006 had a short growing season due to climate change, and there were many fewer crop circles than in recent years, and the distribution shifted away from the usual locations.

The formations this year repeated the number 12 frequently in the features of the circles – as in the highly unusual one on the cover at the left. As yet, there has been no generally accepted interpretation of the meanings of these still mysterious ciphers in summer landscapes. My own reading

of this one, going clockwise, is that here is a suggestion that humanity might do well to consider downsizing our industrial structures.

I continue to be impressed that these crop circles are genuinely produced by powers that are beyond ordinary human capacities. I cannot believe that people would be capable of producing these with the speed of appearance of structures hundreds of feet in diameter (usually overnight), with the precision of complex features, and with intricate interweaving of the crop stalks that are laid down in precise patterns within the overall figures.

Steve and Karen Alexander present clear descriptions of the circles, placing some of them in historical contexts that may help to explain them some day.

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