

WHOLISTIC HEALING PUBLICATIONS

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BOOK REVIEWS

McGilchrist, Iain. *The Master and his Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. New Haven: Yale 2009. 544 pp. \$25

This is an amazing collection of research on right and left brain functions, with wonderfully erudite and detailed discussions on how humans shape their world through their perceptions and understanding of reality – as perceived, processed and comprehended by each of the specialized hemispheric functions. Wonderful discussions of how these shape our lives, and how we – through our R or L hemisphere preferences – shape our world.... And now, how we endanger our world... McGilchrist is also a historian, and discusses the influence of LH and RH through recorded history.

See an expanded discussion of this book in the Editorial Musings of this issue of IJHC.

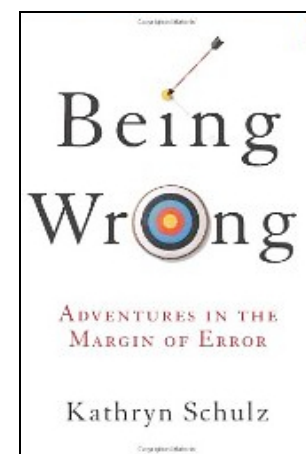
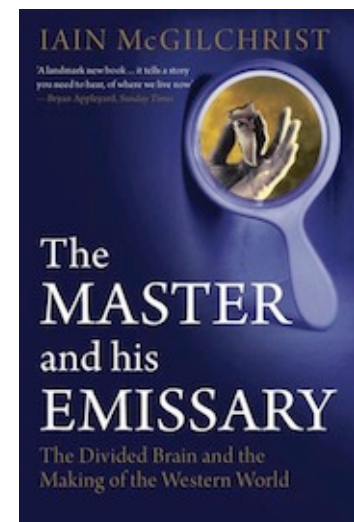
Book review by Daniel J Benor
 IJHC Editor-in-Chief

Kathryn Schulz. *Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error*. New York: Ecco/ HarperCollins 2010. 405 pp 47 pp. of thoughtful notes and references \$26.99

This is a truly amazing book! This book deserves to be required reading in every school, business, hospital and government office. It has the potential to transform our world.

Kathryn Schulz is a sushi master with words and concepts. I take this image from the art of slicing seafood in various ways so that the original morsel looks and tastes different in each variation that is served up on the sushi platter and in different dishes.

Prior to reading this book, I had the mistaken idea that I understood how wrong I could be. Schulz showed me that I was incredibly wrong in that assumption. After reading this treatise on wrongology, it is clear that I will never feel confident in anything I am aware of again – other than that I am likely in one way or another to be wrong about it.



Being wrong is far more complex than it might appear on the surface.

There are slips and lapses and mistakes, errors of planning and errors of execution, errors of commission and errors of omission, design errors and operator errors, endogenous errors and exogenous errors. (p. 12)

Schulz meticulously analyzes varieties of errors that everyone regularly makes, due to four types of problems.

1. Misperceptions

Although we are highly adept at making models of the world, we are distinctly less adept at realizing that we have made them. (p. 99)

2. Misinterpretations of information

The point here is not that we are bad at saying “ I don’t know.” The point is that we are bad at *knowing* we don’t know. (p. 82)

We look into our hearts and see objectivity; we look into our minds and see rationality; we look at our beliefs and see reality. This is the essence of the ‘Cuz It’s True Constraint’: every one of us confuses our models of the world with the world itself – not occasionally or accidentally but *necessarily*. (p. 107)

3. Erroneous basic beliefs that shape our understandings of the world (or lack thereof)

No matter the domain of life, one generation’s verities so often become the next generation’s falsehoods that we might as well have a Pessimistic Meta-Induction from the History of Everything. (p. 9)

We feel that we are right because we feel that we are right: we take our own certainty as an indicator of accuracy. (p. 74)

4. A pervasive human frailty of being reluctant to admit we are wrong

I believe this is the most insidious and undermining problem.

You can imagine how we feel about being wrong. For one thing, we tend to view it as rare and bizarre – an inexplicable aberration in the normal order of things. For another, it leaves us feeling idiotic and ashamed...in our collective imagination, error is associated not just with shame and stupidity but also with ignorance, indolence, psychopathology, and moral degeneracy... Our errors are evidence of our gravest social, intellectual, and moral failings. (p. 5)

This aspect of being wrong is highlighted and explained in my Editorial Musings in this issue of IJHC, in the context of another book review – of Iain McGilchrist's *The Master and His Emissary*. In brief, McGilquist reviews extensive research literature on Left and Right Brain Hemisphere (LH and RH) functions and preferences. LH functions with linear reasoning; analyzes perceptions, thoughts and relationships; and creates personal models of the world. LH believes strongly in its models and resists changing them, even in the face of evidence that contradicts them. Western society today is very strongly entrenched in LH modes of thinking and of relating to the world around us. This is a deeper

explanation for why it is difficult for many people in our society to consider – much less to accept – that we may be wrong.

Schulz suggests that how we deal with being wrong can be both an art and a healing.

In 1987, after facing a couple of high-profile, high-cost malpractice suits, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky, became the first hospital in the nation to implement an apologize-and-disclose policy for medical error. In the thirty-plus years since then, the hospital has gone to court only three times. Over that same period, its legal fees have dropped dramatically, and its average per-patient settlement has been surprising when you consider a few others – for instance, that 40 percent of medical-error victims say that a full explanation and apology would have prevented them from seeking legal action. (301)

In the end, though, nobody but you can choose to believe your own beliefs. That's part of why recognizing our errors is such a strange experience: accustomed to disagreeing with other people, we suddenly find ourselves at odds with ourselves. Error, in that moment, is less an intellectual problem than an existential one – a crisis not in what we know, but in who we are. (p. 21)

In a broader frame of reference, it is vital and essential to improving ourselves and our world to identify when we are wrong in order to be able to correct the errors of our thinking and of our ways.

This book will be a major contribution to anyone who has paused to consider why it is so difficult to bring about changes in this fraught world of ours. This will also make an excellent talking book, as Schulz's cogent and clever observations and engaging turns of phrases are delightful.

Taleb, Nassim Nicholas *The Black Swan: Second Edition: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. New York: Random House 2010. 480 pp \$17.00

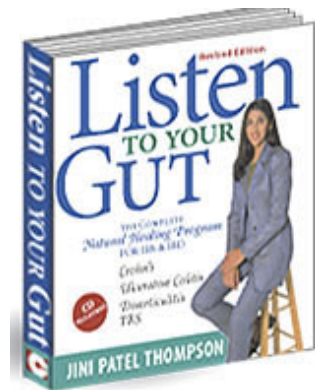
Book review by Daniel J Benor
IJHC Editor-in-Chief

Jini Patel Thompson. Listen To Your Gut: Natural healing and dealing with inflammatory bowel disease and irritable bowel syndrome.

Vancouver, BC: Caramal Publishing 2000. \$36.95

<http://www.listen2yourgut.com/>

This book is a very empowering example of Biofeedback and self-reinforcement conditioning. The author was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 1986. After medical treatment for three years and getting worse she embarked on her own path of discovery via research and trial and error. She claims to be symptom, medication, and surgery free for the past 10 years.



Jini Patel shares her healing journey with confidence that the readers can heal themselves as well. This teaches a way to begin to pay attention to how our body reacts to internal and external stress and how we can then take action and be responsible for our health. We can do this by treating causes of symptoms, then maintaining this healthy balance, while preventing future episodes of distress. This is something most of us probably do not realize we have the power to decide.

The book begins with the etiology and pathogenesis of IBD and IBS. It looks at one's self concept then describes herbal therapies and supplements helpful for inflammation, ulceration and bleeding,

fissures, mouth ulcers, immune system strengtheners, anemia, heartburn, diarrhea, constipation and weight loss/ malnutrition. Healing diets are then described, beginning with the maintenance diet, minimize gas and bloating diet, reduce diarrhea diet, stop intestinal bleeding diet, bowel rest elemental diet, and the testing for food sensitivity diet. One uses biofeedback to decide which diet is needed, depending on the stage of intestinal distress, graduating to the next diet as symptoms abate.

Next, lifestyle and environmental factors are discussed as we examine our food, beverages, exercise, air quality, noise where we live, and whether our job “builds us up or tears us down.” She describes how much control we actually have regarding how to eliminate toxins such as smoke, car exhaust, air pollutants, and power line effects. She tells the benefits of organic food and beverages, preserving the nutritive value of food, eliminating sugar, and implementing change.

Absorption through the skin can be a problem from products we put on our bodies, including chlorine in our water, which many people are sensitive to. She suggests water filters for drinking and showering.

Biofeedback is constantly helping us to learn to attain optimal health if we can love ourselves enough to give it our attention to what our body is telling us. The author asks us to examine our attitudes and beliefs about our body and its functioning, and to seek kinder gentler ways to effect healing in a manner that supports the whole body, because this kind of healing is holistic and long-term.

Each chapter ends with questions for further exploration to lead us to a greater awareness of our situation, so that informed decisions can be made. The author rates bodywork therapies she herself has found helpful such as craniosacral therapy, naturopathic medicine, meditation (such as cultivating stillness), dialoguing with your body, colonic massage, and exercise – to name just a few. The book ends with Mind control and visualization techniques such as affirmations, healing visualizations, direct healing, overall healing, balancing/ calming, and exercises for controlling the bowels and transforming pain.

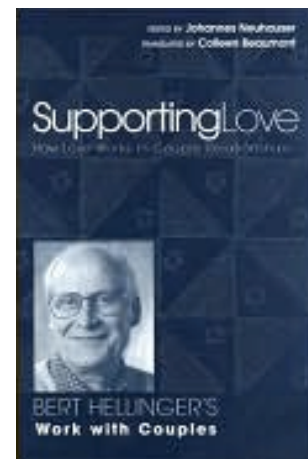
I liked this book immensely, as the experience of the author successfully healing herself from such a serious illness is inspirational.

Book Review by Marilyn Morlock, RN

Student in the Wholistic Transformational Therapy course, of the Integrative Energy Healing Program Langara College, Vancouver, BC

Bert Hellinger. *Supporting Love – How Love Works in Couples Relationships*. Phoenix, AZ: Zieg, Tucker & Theisen, Inc. 2001. 280 pp. \$34.95

Bert Hellinger is a wonderfully innovative psychotherapist who developed the family constellation method for helping people release interpersonal and intergenerational issues. In using this approach, the person who is being helped (I will use the term 'focus person' for brevity's sake) states the issues needing help and then invites other participants in the workshop to stage a representation of her or his family members, including the spouse/partner, their children, the focus person's parents. Previous partners, any children brought into the family through marriage, and all significant others are also included. Workshop participants are not familiar with each other, and very few details are shared by focus people about their families. (To this point, this method resembles the ['family sculpting'](#) approach.)



The constellation therapist asks each of the family representatives how they feel in the starting positions that the focus person has designated. Intuitively, the participants cue into the collective consciousness to respond – often with outstanding accuracy, as acknowledged by the focus person (and their spouse or partner if they are also present). The therapist then suggests various shifts in sculpted positions, asking for feedback from the participants after each shift.

For instance, a sculpted child may report feeling uncomfortable positioned next to one or the other parent. The therapist suggests shifts in position and in facing towards or away from other participants until more comfortable feelings are reported by all. In the process of sorting out the discomforts that are reported, in turn, by each family representative, many family relationship issues are clarified. At the same time, conflicts and residues of old traumas and other feelings are rapidly cleared.

At times, the rapidity of positive shifts is sometimes unsettling and difficult for participants to digest and accept.

Hellinger: It's almost insulting for some people if the solution is too easy.

Steven: Yes, because it questions the validity of everything that has already happened.

Hellinger: You feel that there was so much that was all for nothing. (p. 72)

Several aspects of family constellation work are truly remarkable. First, the participants in the workshop stage the family groupings of people they have never met before. Despite their complete lack of information about the family, they report detailed emotions and cognitions that are verified by the focus person. Second, there are many times when uncomfortable feelings – particularly sadness, depression and grief – are reported by participants. Upon closer questioning of the focus person, a previously overlooked death or other severe trauma in the family is identified that explains these emotions. When these emotions are cleared through verbal interactions between the constellation workshop participants, the focus person often experiences major emotional releases and relief from feelings that had been troublesome for many years.

A family system requires the full inclusion of all of the members. That is, each member of the system must have a place, with the same right to belong as every other member of the system. If a child dies young, as was the case with your father's sister, that child is often forgotten or is no longer counted as one of the children in the family. Sometimes the other family members forget about loving that child, or don't say good-bye to the child properly. If something like that happens, then the forgotten person will be presented by another member of the system in order to keep the place open. There is a systemic pull to restore the missing piece through another representative. An innocent family member is then drawn into service by the system. No one chooses this or tries to make it happen, nor does anyone want it to happen. It simply arises from the depths and an identification is established...

The question is how to resolve it. An identification has the effect of making me feel like another person. I can't see that other person clearly, because it's almost as if I am the other person. In the constellation, you can stand facing the other person and look at him or her... and you allow love to flow to her. This direct love resolves an identification...

That's the first step, but that alone is not sufficient. The next resolving movement is for the child to move out of the sphere of the burdened family system... (p. 80-1)

Hellinger was a priest and missionary in Africa for 16 years. His spiritual journeys and awarenesses contribute to the breadth and depth of the constellation work.

A constellation provides an image that you have to let work in your soul. The picture will have an effect and then, all of a sudden, the soul will see which way to go. Then you know what you

have to do. There's no intervention from the outside that determines how you should act, but rather an inner development that comes from your own soul's taking responsibility. This is true of all constellations. These images are impulses for growth and you have to wait to see how the soul reacts. (p. 148)

The book presents a series of family constellations and demonstrates how Hellinger helped the participants work through the situations that were presented. I find much of Hellinger's work brilliant. Here are just a few of many examples I like:

For the parents, it's important for them to look at their dead child together and then at each other. They have to say, "This is our child. We wanted this child. Now, we'll let it go, but we will keep a place in our hearts for this one." (p. 196)

The basis for a grudge can be summed up in one lovely question: "Whatever have I done to you to make me so angry with you?" The turnabout begins when you can see that you have hurt someone, and when you acknowledge it. Then the partner is honored and can feel reconciled. (p. 22)

A separation works well when the partners can say to each other, "I have loved you very much, and everything I've given you, I've given gladly. You have given me a lot and I'll hold that in a place of honor. I accept responsibility for my share of what has gone wrong between us, and I leave it to you to take responsibility for your share. Now, I leave you in peace." Then the separation is clear and each can go his or her own way. (p. 187)

At times, however, Hellinger makes categorical statements with which I disagree. For example, he states:

When one partner cannot produce children, regardless of the cause, he or she can't hold onto the partner. He or she has to say, "It's my fate and I'll carry it alone." It's also necessary, within one's self, to release the partner and let him or her go free. (p. 193)

Balance cannot be restored by forgiveness. Forgiveness destroys the exchange and the relationship. When my partner does something that hurts me, I tell her, "For the sake of our love, I'm doing something that hurts you, so that our relationship won't be destroyed. But I'll do less to you out of love." This little bit less opens the way for a new exchange of good. (p. 140)

I get the feeling that embodied in these sorts of cut and dried recommendations are opinions of Hellinger that he would like to believe are universally true. In the increasingly common situation of childlessness, my strong preference in couples and family therapy is to help the couple sort out their own preferences and resolutions to such challenges. I see forgiveness as an aspect of compassion, and strongly encourage people to reach into their healing awarenesses to connect with these avenues for healing – not only for their personal relationships, but also for relationships within the entire collective consciousness.

This book and the Family Constellation method bring out wonderful awarenesses of the living, collective consciousness. Constellation therapists call this 'the field.' By accessing this in a group setting, very rapid and deep healings are possible.

The dramatic shifts in consciousness and relationships of the focus person – in response to the identification of unresolved issues from previous generations – invites speculations on how this is possible. This suggests that either through biological energies and/or through consciousness we are connected with others in our family.

My own belief is that this field extends beyond the family, into the collective consciousness of humanity and of the All. Even greater and broader depths of healing are possible when we access these levels of our being.

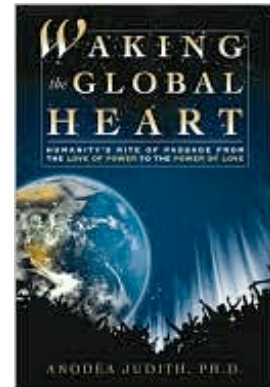
See also: Payne, John L. *The Healing of Individuals, Families & Nations: Transgenerational Healing & Family Constellations*, Forres, Scotland: Findhorn 2005. ([Book review](#))

Benor, Daniel J. Using any therapy as an opportunity to heal the collective consciousness and our planet: lessons from Ho'oponopono and WHEE (Editorial), [International J Healing & Caring, 2008, 8\(3\), 1-19.](#)

Book review by Daniel J Benor
IJHC Editor-in-Chief

Anodea Judith. *Waking the Global Heart: Humanity's Rite of Passage from the Love of Power to the Power of Love.* Santa Rosa, CA: Elite Books 2006. 400 pp \$17.95

In this book, Anodea Judith takes us on a fascinating journey through the twists and turns of our collective history and provides a new vision for humanity based on cooperation rather than competition, co-creation rather than procreation, networks rather than markets, and sustainability rather than exploitation. It is a good fit to Module 9 as contrasts are highlighted throughout the text. In particular, the author focuses on the balance between masculine and feminine in society, indicating that achieving this



balance is one of the most necessary social healings that we can make at this time. The content of this book is rich and dense as it follows the evolution of civilization from the Paleolithic period, 80,000 to 100,000 years ago to the present day.

Well known for her work in describing individual development through the lens of the chakra system, Anodea Judith extends this lens to collective evolution. For example, in the individual, the root chakra awakens at birth when the task of consciousness is to learn to survive in a physical body. The Paleolithic era or era of the Great Mother as she calls it, corresponds to humanity's first chakra development. The first chakra is associated with the element, earth, and with Mother Nature. The first humans depended entirely upon Mother Nature for nourishment, just as an infant child depends upon her mother for food, shelter and support.

To move from the first chakra to the second chakra is to expand consciousness of a child beyond its mother; to learn about the dualities of the world. In this Neolithic period of history, humans learned to farm, domesticate animals and develop village life. Images of male gods began to appear. The expanding population required more food, water, land, and most of all, greater social organization. This pressure stimulated the awakening of the next era, namely the third chakra phase of power and will which in individuals is associated with the ego-identified individual self. Society shifted from a culture in which people were dominated by Nature to one in which people dominated each other. As power fell to males, the reverence for birth was replaced by its opposite: the fear of death. Cultures that had been peaceful established armies for defence. Social order became established through the creation of laws.

For the past 5,000 years, the central organizing principle for human culture has been built on force, measured by the amount of damage that can be done. The author states that as a collective, we are now ready to come of age in the heart, the fourth chakra, to enter a rite of passage that can transform the ego-centred self-interest into an embodied expression of love, relatedness and a more transcendent consciousness. As we individually reclaim our disconnected parts such as the wounded

child and bring our inner masculine and feminine into balance, our collective task now is to face our hidden shadow of violence, greed, and domination; to balance the powers of masculine and feminine; and to emphasize emotional intelligence, nurturance and wisdom. This involves developing the upper chakra realms of communication, vision and spirituality, and integrating them with the lower chakra attributes of emotion and personal power. However, the heart remains the key to our survival as a collective. The heart, as the centre of love, provides the primordial force that calls things into relationship. With modern technology, especially the internet, we now have the potential to awaken the global heart as a new organizing principle for the planet. This book gives me hope that we can learn from our past and transform the opposites from the love of power to the power of love. It may be our last chance to do so.

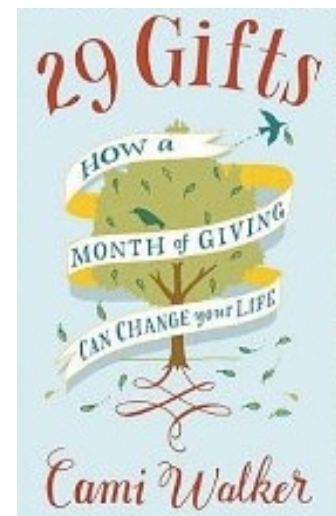
Review by Vera Lagasse

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Langara College, Vancouver, BC

Cami Walker. *29 Gifts: How a Month of Giving Can Change your Life.*
Philadelphia, PA: Perseus Books Group 2009. 226 pp. \$19.95

Cami Walker developed severe Multiple Sclerosis one month after her marriage. Over a period of two years she suffered weakness, incoordination and visual problems that limited her abilities to continue her writing career. She also suffered from severe pains. Numbers of consultations with neurologists and emergency room doctors led to her taking many drugs, including pain killers and sleeping pills. She was becoming seriously depressed, having difficulty sleeping, and suffering panic attacks about becoming totally incapacitated. Her husband was exhausted from caring for her on top of working to support the couple.

Walker was lucky to have a neighbor, Mbali, a medicine woman of South African origins. Mbali gave her a self-healing prescription: Give away 29 gifts in 29 days.



Healing doesn't happen in a vacuum, Cami, but through our interactions with other people. By giving, you are focusing on what you have to offer others, inviting more abundance into your life. Giving of any kind is taking a positive action that begins the process of change. It will shift your energy for life.

In addition to giving the gifts, you're supposed to keep a journal for those 29 days. If you skip a day for some reason... it's best to start over, to release the energy that is building and allow it to begin building again. (p. xxvi.)

It's a good idea to keep a journal to record the experience and to be mindful of both the journal and the gifts so that they can do their work of transforming you. She mentioned, too, that starting each day with a short meditation and an affirmation can help.

The gifts can be anything from space change to a kind word or thought. Along with giving them, the prescription involves thinking of things to be grateful for each day and reflecting on the tradition of giving in your family.

"Gratitude keeps your heart open. When you give with an open heart, you receive the profound gift of humanity", Mbali explains. (p. 14-15)

While it seemed strange at first, this proved to be transformative for Cami.

After less than a week of giving, despite my early skepticism, there's no denying that something intangible has relaxed inside me. Last time I spoke with Mbali I tried to explain this to her, but she already understood. "It's weird. It's like I'm being supported everywhere I look," I told her, "And the more I give little things, the easier it's become for me to accept assistance and love from others. Instead of being tied up in knots all the time." Mbali had seen this effect many times and wasn't surprised. (p. 29)

Walker also did a lot of other work on herself. For example:

I awoke at 3 a.m. from a peaceful sleep, sat straight up and yelled out loud: "The symptoms are the cure!"

This woke up Mark, and I began an elaborate, frenzied explanation of this message and vision from my dream.

"Think about how the MS disease process works," I rambled to him. "My immune cells attack my nerve cells, which exposes the nerve. Immediately my body begins to try and repair the damage by forming scar tissue and growing new neural paths to restore the functions associated with that specific area of the nerve. What if the symptoms are actually coming from this healing process – from my nervous system trying to repair itself?" He stopped me after a couple of minutes and told me I should get out of bed and write what I was telling him. I wondered at the time if this might be a ploy to get me out of the room so he could go back to sleep, but I'm so grateful he told me to record my dream because I often refer back to what I wrote that night.

I spent the rest of the wee hours of that morning alternating between meditating, writing in my journal, and going in and out of a "lucid dream" state – this happens when your body is asleep but you're conscious of the dream and you can manipulate it. During the journaling, I drew a bunch of diagrams of what I saw as my "disease process." While I was in the meditative state, I felt that I was watching what was going on in my body on a cellular level. It was as if I was looking at diagrams in a medical textbook. I could see the instant one cell would light up and attack the other. Every time I saw this happen, I would talk to the cells and tell them to stop. Over and over I would watch this process begin and then reverse, knowing that if I could see it, I could change the picture. There wasn't anything frightening about it to me. I felt oddly detached, watching my cells in action.

At the time, my main symptoms were memory problems, blurred vision in my right eye, back pain, and numbness in my hands and "my claw" – which happened when a spasm would leave my fingers curled up.

At some point during my meditation, I fell asleep. When I awoke fully in the morning, I had feeling back in two fingers on my right hand and the vision in my right eye was clear again. A message seemed to resonate in the room around me, telling me over and over: "Feel and experience every symptom. The symptoms are part of the healing process." (p. 40-41)

This book will be an inspiration to anyone suffering with a chronic disease, depression, or with self-doubts and self-criticisms. It is an easy and enjoyable read, while offering many gems of wonderfully wise advice and experience.

By day 27, I am astounded by the magical and miraculous shifts in my life:

- I am feeling happier, healthier, and more in awe with life.

- I find myself smiling and laughing more and more every day.
- My body is stronger and I am recovering from the MS flare that has plagued me for months - I was even able to stop walking with my cane by the end of week two.
- My business has exploded with new opportunities.
- I have started reconnecting with my amazing community of friends and family, people I had been pushing away out of fear since my MS diagnosis.
- I am beginning to form a community of new friends and clients in Los Angeles after feeling isolated here in my new home for several months.
- I am experiencing deeper intimacy in my relationship with my husband.

And this is only the beginning. (p. 167)

Read more about ways in which Walker developed her self-healing in this great book and at the www.29Gifts.org website.

Book review by Daniel J Benor
IJHC Editor-in-Chief

Martina Steiger, ThD. *The Extra in the Ordinary*. Kitchener, ON: Creative Consciousness Transformation, Inc. 2011. 104 pp. \$14.95 Available at www.martinasteiger.com

Martina Steiger, one of our IJHC editors, shares in this book some of the highlights from her three decades of helping people explore their issues and find new ways forward – through or around blocks in their lives and/or learning to accept where they are on their paths of living and learning.

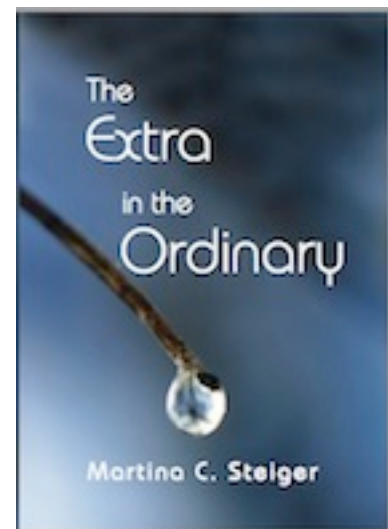
This sparkling gem presents sixteen facets for readers' consideration, contemplation, and exploration. The sections focus on topics such as anchoring; show up and be present; success and the power words; are you listening, really listening?; and more.

Each section is headed by a well chosen, thought-provoking quotation. Having struggled with compulsively being on time, I especially appreciated this one:

*It ought to be plain
how little you gain
by getting excited and vexed.
You'll always be late
for the previous train,
and always in time for the next.
- Piet Hein*

Each topic has one or more suggestions for exercises the reader can practice in order to understand experientially how to grow in desirable directions. The range and variations in topics and practices provide a generous spectrum for self-improvement. This book will travel far. I predicts it will spread virally, because once you read it, you will want to share it with others.

Book review by Daniel J Benor
IJHC Editor-in-Chief



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