

PRIMAL

Summer Newsletter - August 2001

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Primal Circles

Primal heart.

Vera Orlock



By Sam Turton

This year's 29th Annual Convention is Jean Rashkind's vision of what makes the IPA a unique association. We are a community of feeling people that stretches across the planet. Such a community can't really exist, even with telephones and email, unless it gathers, like the great tribes of the plains, to celebrate and be together once every year. Primal Circles, Primal Heart is our chance to do that.

Vera Orlock, our Keynote Presenter, brings a rich background in dance, movement and body/mind therapy to the IPA and will delve into the fascinating area of how our physiology gives us clues to our psychology. In keeping with the theme, Vera will also be staying with us to give two other experiential workshops during the Convention, "Experiences in the Ebb and Flow of Relating" and "Body Systems."

Jean has gathered an impressive array of workshops that include offerings on primal process, primal theory, as well as expressive drama, art, movement, poetry, storytelling, blues, sports, and a special program of holotropic breathwork. Presenters include Steve Austill, Barbara Bryan, Barbara

Findeisen, Harriet Geller, Johanne Hamel, Mickey Judkovics, Sharon Kane, Larry King, Denise Kline, Jane Lewis, Norman D. Lowery, Linda Marks, Yvonne Parma, Jennifer Prull, Alec Rubin, Larry Schumer, Mary Thompson, Lynn Turner, Sam Turton, Oliver Williams, and Fred Zielke. For a brochure, contact Jean Rashkind at Jrashkind@aol.com, 215-732-1659, or visit www.primals.org.

Regular daily activities include Massage & Mind-Bodywork, Women's Group & Men's Group, Mat Track primal group, Community Meeting, Evening Peer Groups, and the always extraordinary Jungian Sandplay Room. This year's community events also include Playback Theater, and a Thursday night concert with Michael DiMartino & the World Beat Music Ensemble, as well as the inimitable Saturday Night Cabaret, Sunday Night Dance Party, and our IPA Annual General Meeting.

This is our event. Let's support it, support us, and take another small step in supporting the world. I'll see you there - with your truckload of friends.

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Next deadline: October 1, 2001

Change of address?

Contact the Secretary

The IPA Spring Retreat 2001

By Harriet Geller

The second annual Spring Retreat in the Catskill Mountains of New York State was an even greater success than the first. My expectations were high after the glorious experiences of last year (uh-oh!) – but they were met in new and unexpected ways.

The staff at GROW II Lodge, where we stayed, were as gracious and available as ever, but I found myself taking the now famous groaning board a little for granted. Ho hum, one more nutritious delicious abundantly varied meal! Should I have the flan or the cherry pie or the chocolate cake for dessert? Maybe just the melon-kiwi-strawberry fruit salad with whipped topping? I think I'll have some of each!

The retreat attendance increased by nearly 70% from last spring – 27 people including five newcomers, Dave Easton from Maine, Alex Tadeskung from the Boston area, Vera Scroggins from Pennsylvania, and Lauren Spiro and Genna Watson from the DC area. We introduced ourselves at the opening circle on Thursday evening, led by the Retreat coordinators, Michele DelGesso and Linda Marks. Then we got down to the difficult but inspiring task of choosing workshops for Friday.

In addition to the pre-planned daily events – men's and women's circles followed by Mat Track (facilitated primal group) in the morning, and small-group sharing (peer group) before dinner – we scheduled Jana Smith's Drama Play Group, so well-received in 2000; Primal Pool with Larry Schumer, a variation on the softball workshops Larry has been conducting at the Summer Conventions for years; and Releasing Fear, a new workshop from Bill Whitesell based on co-counseling techniques.

Friday's Mat Track was facilitated by Jean Rashkind and Sam Turton in traditional fashion. As we moved into our feelings – finding our way in the primal process once again – the gray chill outside was forgotten, and we began to fuse into a warm, loving community.



On Friday evening we welcomed the recent arrivals, planned Saturday's sessions, and savored an extra-special Cabaret. Emceed by Shelly Beach and Dave, the show was held in the "Disco," an intimate space that, for me, is so much more appealing than Appel Farm's professional theater. Nearly half of the community took the stage to sing, dance, read their poetry, or tell a joke. I risked all with a dramatic monologue from the play, Wit. Serendipitously, many of us had taken Bill's workshop in the afternoon and were able to use his shaking technique to ease our stage fright.

The acts that stood out for me were Jean and Walter Gambin's improvisations, Sam's



songs and virtuoso guitar, and a panel discussion with Freud, Janov, and the RC guru, Harvey Jackins, imagined by Bill and realized in high comic style by Barbara Kay Cope, Dave, Leonard Rosenbaum and Bill.

Saturday morning brought sunshine and warmer temperatures for our trek up the hill to the vast nest strewn with mattresses, pillows and blankets that served as our primal room. Our second Mat Track was facilitated by Mickey Judkovics and Bill. The afternoon workshops included reprises of Sam's Meditation Sampler, a medley of approaches for connecting to a peaceful place in ourselves, and my Tribal Walk, a non-verbal exploration of our relationships to nature and one another. We also had new offerings from Jean, Monologues from the Mat, a taste of Alec Rubin's primal theater, and from Mickey, Metaphoric Healing, a visualization methodology.

Unlike last year's washout, the dance party on Saturday night really rocked.

There were enough of us ready to rumble that our combined energy overcame prolonged music decisions and temporary fatigue in aging limbs. For the coda, we turned up the lights and enjoyed a sing-along into the night.

Linda led the last Mat Track on Sunday. She helped us move out of the primal depths by suggesting for the final sharing that we verbalize a newly acquired positive attitude for the group to echo back. Mine was, "I can care about you," and everyone answered, "You can care about us." Wow!

Over the three days, these instances of learning, fun, connection and joy were most memorable:

- Successfully relinquishing my quasi-leadership role as Board liaison into the very competent hands of Michele and Linda.
- A peer group of diversified personalities chosen by lottery (I like this method more and more), Michele, Alex, Jerry Lucrezia, Jana (for the first day) and me, who, after only two meetings, melded into a supportive family as cohesive and nurturing as any I have experienced at the six-day Summer Convention.
- Practicing Ping-Pong and sensing a growing



mastery (at least until I saw how I was out-classed – as opposed to just beaten – by Sam).

- Fully expressing my infantile longing while gazing endlessly into Mickey's steadfast eyes.
- The women's circle as a continuous source of information about myself, whether by empathizing with someone's story or by being triggered into my defenses.
- Dancing at the party and feeling sexy.

- A perfect balance of support and teasing – and a lot of laughs – in a game of pool with Dave, Jane Lewis and Larry.

- Learning to pronounce one another's names in a puppy pile at the end of the Tribal Walk. From now on, Bill will forever be Blichhh.

It toasted my cockles at the closing circle to see how much everyone – veterans or neophytes, Americans or Canadians, juniors or seniors, lions or lambs – had taken in the nurturing of the IPA community and had grown. Some of the much-appreciated

participants were Sharon Kane, Denise Kline, Judy Lucrezia, Cate Lund, Jessica Nooney, Mandi Cope, and Marie Regis. I can't wait to hug you all again in August.

New Members - Welcome!

The IPA needs new energy and ideas to build our community and make primal life more available. This year seventeen new members have joined the IPA community. We thank you for your support and involvement. Take a bow!

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Linden Aalfs | Acton, Massachusetts, USA |
| Joan Aalfs | Northampton, Massachusetts, USA |
| Diane Alther | Pt. Jefferson Station, New York, USA |
| Lee Bourque | Fitchburg, Massachusetts, USA |
| Barbara Cheppaikode | Madison, Wisconsin, USA |
| Joseph Covelle | Melrose, Massachusetts, USA |
| Dave Easton | Oakland, Maine, USA |
| Bob & Carol Holmes | Barrie, Ontario, Canada |
| Renate Marek | Urunga, New South Wales, Australia |
| Amanda Penel | Cammeray, New South Wales, Australia |
| Rita Rashkind | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA |
| Karl Reis | Bethesda, Maryland, USA |
| Lisa Samson | Northville, Michigan, USA |
| Lauren Spiro | Falls Church, Virginia, USA |
| Alexandra Tadeskung | Framingham, Massachusetts, USA |
| Pat G. Torngren | Edgemead, Cape Province, South Africa |
| Nancy Noel Voll | St. Petersburg, Florida, USA |

Members News

Primal Integration Center of Michigan Intensives

Fees include food, lodging, and airport pick-up. Led by Barbara Bryan and Sam Turton.

September 21-22 (\$140.00)

Friday 7:30 pm – Sat. 4:00 pm

November 9-11 (\$270.00)

Two-day intensive from Friday 7:30 pm – Sunday 4:00 pm

December 14-15 (\$140.00)

Friday 7:30 pm – Sat. 4:00 pm

For details, contact:

248-478-5559

babryan@concentric.net

Initial Training in Primal Integration

Primal Integration Center of Michigan

October 7-13, 2001

This intensive training is for those who wish to develop their skills as a facilitator of primal-style or deep-feeling work.

- 70 hours of training with Certificate
- Early Registration: \$800 US before Sept.10, \$850 US after
- Leaders: Barbara Bryan, MA, CSW, and Sam Turton

For brochure and information, call **248-478-5559** or visit www.primalworks.com/training.html

Yvonne Parma & Fred Zielke

Do you live in the Boston area? We hold free monthly meetings for primal people, with a sharing go-round, optional mat time, discussion and a potluck dinner.

For more information, contact

781-395-7466

yturtle@aol.com

Sam Turton

Sam's primal centre and home, only 45 minutes from Toronto, is ideal for individual or group residential intensives, with a separate bachelor apartment. On Wednesday nights join the *Feeling Path* drop-in sharing group. For more information:

519-763-5881

sam@primalworks.com

www.primalworks.com

Renewal Time

In the past, many of us have waited until the Convention to pay our membership dues, but there are many costs associated with Convention preparation and other projects that require a regular influx of funds. If you can renew your membership as soon as possible, it will make things work even more smoothly, and prevent Sharon Kane, our Treasurer, from spending excessive hours on the mat!

The IPA is in an exciting period of expansion, both as a community and an information source for world-wide primal awareness. Your membership dollars are needed to support the continuous efforts of volunteers who work to make IPA initiatives happen. When you renew, please consider asking a friend or family member to join us.

New \$30 Overseas Membership

Thanks to a new Overseas membership category, there is a more affordable choice for primal people all over the world to join the International Primal Association. No longer will the harsh realities of currency exchange rates and the problems of distance from our US-based activities dampen the incentive for people around the world to join and maintain a membership.

To realize the IPA's vision of a truly world-wide primal community, becoming a member is the first step. With enough overseas members, regional IPA activities can be held in other countries, counteracting the isolation that primal people often feel.

So join today, invite a friend, and help make the IPA truly International.

For more information on membership, please contact us.

Toll-Free Tel: 1-877-PRIMALS
Email: bkcope@bellatlantic.net
Website: www.primals.org

The Board goes to Washington

By Harriet Geller



Gently encouraged by President Yvonne Parma and nurtured by our gracious hosts, Bill and Dale Whitesell, the Board marched through the agenda at the April meeting. Our reward, after two long days of conducting business, was an IPA-style social soak and swim in the elegant indoor pool at Bill's lovely home in McLean, VA., near Washington, DC.

A good part of our time was spent wrapping up details for May's Spring Retreat, a complete financial and primal success, and discussing the myriad issues still pending for the Summer Convention at Appel Farm in August. In search of a better, cheaper Convention site for 2002, several Board members visited Ramblewood, a sprawling rustic venue in the woods of Maryland, first scouted by Denise Kline and Leonard Rosenbaum. Unfortunately its large size, implying that our group of 75 would be unpleasantly diluted by attendees of other events, as well as other shortcomings, removed Ramblewood as a possibility. The committee is still actively hunting for a site for future Summer Conventions and welcomes your input.

The progress of the IPA into cyberspace is continuing. Our website, www.primals.org, has a new webmaster in Larry Schumer and is expanding rapidly. The IPA discussion groups under Yahoo turned out to duplicate other arenas and have been eliminated. For Convention attendees, we invite your participation in the E-wail internet support group.

IPA memberships are up for renewal this month. Our fiscal year, the 12-month accounting period that every organization adheres to, begins August 1st, which is when membership dues are payable. Keep this in mind when registering for the Summer Convention: to receive the IPA member rate, you need to respond to your renewal letter and be paid up for 2001-2002. To accommodate new members who may be joining any time during the year, we approved a policy of extending memberships

that start in January or later through the next fiscal year. We also made it easier for "overseas" members to participate by reducing their dues rate to \$30 per year.

Other news from the April meeting:

- The long-awaited non-profit status application is ready for submission to the IRS. Thanks to Bill and Taff Welch for their diligence.
- Denise's Membership Development Committee is continuing to recruit regional primal contacts throughout the world.

The committee has contacted members of sister organizations (NIP and Bonding Psychotherapy) and is looking forward to establishing a Speaker's Bureau.

- The Board is addressing the issue of the aging of the IPA's professional base by focusing on the training of new therapists.
- On the financial front, see Treasurer Sharon Kane's article on the new IPA funds for special needs. Also, we will be engaging in fund-raising at the Summer Convention via a raffle and the sale of video tapes featuring Bill Smukler.

- Jean Rashkind is creating song books with an updated repertoire for the Convention.

- The Board discussed the Colorado legislature's rebirthing ban in reaction to the death of a young girl. Although the issue is an important one for the IPA, we decided not to publish an official response at this time.

- For those of you who have a drawer full of IPA T-shirts, here's good news. This summer's Convention souvenir will be a large mug that can be used for your hot libations at Appel Farm as well as at home.

The Board's processing this year has been so productive and pleasurable that almost all of the Executives and Directors up for election (see Slate) are planning to run again. Nonetheless, we sorely need new people for future vacancies in some of the bigger jobs, especially Secretary and Convention Chair. We have learned that becoming qualified for these responsible positions requires at least a year or two on the Board. If you'd like to know more, talk to the Board members at the Convention, and consider joining the Board to train for these or other important functions.



From the IPA Treasurer

A year ago, I became Acting Treasurer and was happy to have found a way to give back to the IPA after all the years of receiving. I expressed some rather hopeful aspirations for the IPA's financial path. I am really happy to say that we have realized all the goals I had presented in my first Treasurer's letter:

- Our QuickBooks computer financial program is working smoothly now that I can talk to it.
- All our business licenses are now current.
- We have a sensible and workable budget plan for the coming year.
- We are beginning the convention with a positive bank balance!
- We will be applying for Nonprofit status at the end of our fiscal year (July).
- We have our own credit card merchant account.
- We have a Development Fund for projects related to spreading the word about primal and connecting us to like minded individuals and organizations.
- We will shortly be introducing a scholarship fund so that we can begin to make it more possible for people who need assistance to get connected to primal.

The skeletal budget we implemented for this year helped us arrive at the convention with a positive bank balance. I thank everyone on the board who committed to the leanness of the budget. It was tight and rather rigid but it was successful. We will use this model for the coming year with the hope that there will be a little more room to stretch and develop.

In the last newsletter I mentioned that upon combing through our finances I realized that costs for the conventions had been gradually increasing but our convention fees were not keeping up. That was a large part of why we had hit rocky waters. Harriet Geller, Jean Rashkind and I have come up with convention fees more in balance with our costs. The price of the convention will be higher this summer but we still believe it's a "good deal." To make the fee raise more palatable, Jean has managed to bring our beloved cook, Lynn Snyder, back to feed us in the nurturing and artistic way that we have come to love and hunger for.

Thanks to Harriet Geller and Bill Whitesell whose gentle guidance and suggestions enabled me to learn how to present accurate and complete financial reports. Thanks to Linda Marks and Michele Delgesso who took charge of the Spring Retreat this year and enabled us to earn some more money. And thanks in advance to Barbara Kay Cope who has undertaken our upcoming Raffle happening at the convention. It should be great fun!

Enjoy the summer and see you at the Convention!

Love,

Sharon Kane



Putting the "I" in the IPA!

You don't have to be on the IPA Board of Directors to have some fun and get involved. Even if free time is limited, your interests and talents will be a big help to our many exciting volunteer developments, new initiatives and activities.

To find out how you can enjoy the IPA community all year round, contact

Sharon Kane
skmg@juno.com
508-881-5678

Please Bring Raffle Items!

When you're packing for the Summer Convention, please remember to think about the services you can donate or the items you can bring to the IPA Fundraising Raffle – household goods, sandplay objects, "white elephants," handmade items, massage sessions, peer time, therapy, tennis lessons – whatever you can give that someone else can use.

There'll be lots of prizes, lots of winners, and lots of fun! Let's make it happen!

The Board Nominated Slate for 2001–2002

The IPA Executive and Board of Directors are feeling very content. Sticky issues have been resolved, hard work has been tackled, and exciting new initiatives launched. When nominations for President, Vice President, and Directors were discussed, almost everyone wanted to return for another term. In my opinion as editor and board member, the Board is functioning at a superlative level, and I strongly endorse all of the candidates, especially Yvonne and Larry, who are invaluable to the successful functioning of the IPA.

The annual meeting and election of Officers and members of the Board of Directors is held on Monday during the annual convention. The Board of Directors, serving as the nominating committee, presents the following slate:

President
Vice President
Treasurer (returning)
Secretary (returning)

The IPA Board of Directors

Barbara Bryan
Wayne Carr
Harriet Geller
Denise Kline
Earl Klotz
Jean Rashkind
Leonard Rosenbaum
Sam Turton
Bill Whitesell
Fred Zielke

Yvonne Parma
Larry Schumer
Sharon Kane
Barbara Kay Cope

running
undecided
second term
running
second term
running
running
running
second term
running

Memories, Primals, and Reflections

by Belden Johnson

"The older I get the more clearly I remember things that never happened."

– Mark Twain (attributed)

During the first week of my intensive in 1974, I began experiencing feelings and movements that the Harvard-trained scientist in me insisted couldn't be happening. Another part of me was saying, "My God! I'm re-experiencing being born!" At that time I'd never heard of anyone having such feelings. My therapist was as non-directive as was humanly possible. He wasn't sure what was happening himself and called in his supervisor, who simply encouraged me to "go with the feelings and not try to figure them out," something I've been passing on to clients for a quarter century. At no time did either of them label my experience as "birth feelings." After two weeks I knew that I had re-experienced a goodly portion of my birth. I did not think maybe I had. I knew it. I didn't need to convince anyone else of this fact or to sue the obstetrician who'd let me languish shoulder-stuck for what seemed an eternity. My focus was on how great I now felt and how I didn't need to be stuck anymore in my present life. I also no longer despised men in white coats.

A few months later I talked to my mother to check on her reality of this mutual experience. Previously the only fact I had known about my birth was that she had searched "high and low" to find a doctor and hospital that would consent to a drug-free, "natural" birth. "Mom," I said, "did I have trouble getting out? Was I stuck by my shoulders?" Her eyes widened ever-so-slightly.

"Why, yes!" she said. "Your head popped right out, but your shoulders wouldn't come for another hour."

Amiably, we proceeded to verify several more specifics of my birth. What really touched me was that she simply accepted that I could know such details.

This story illustrates three kinds of truth: (1) my subjective truth, (2) objectively verifiable truth, and (3) a legal truth established by a jury.

During therapy, people will tend to make sense of feelings by pigeon-holing them prematurely. Clients and even some therapists do so because most people are highly uncomfortable with ambiguity. We like a clear story rather than a fuzzy ghost.

Early in my training as a primal therapist, I had a client whom I'll call Sorrel who was certain that Satan was (a) real and (b) coming to get us. As she shrieked in absolute terror in the total darkness of the windowless basement room of the Center, I must admit that, despite my skepticism about the reality of the Devil, I was keeping a close watch on the door.

After all, I hadn't believed I could re-experience birth; I no longer had a narrow mind about the limits of the possible. And she clearly believed the Devil was now bending over her. She saw him. During a brief break in her terror, I asked her what he looked like. "Red face, ugly! Awful! All black all around him! And, and, something white just under his chin - Ohmygod!"

The white under his chin turned out to be a clerical collar. Over several more sessions Sorrel pieced together that this figure she'd symbolized as the Father of Evil was in fact an actual man, a priest at her Catholic school who had sexually abused her. After several more months of therapy, she had enough faith in her subjective experience to want to check it out more objectively with her sisters, each of whom confirmed that she, too, had been similarly abused.

They did not sue the Church or the school. They spoke with the abuser and his superiors. He was persuaded to step down from shepherding young people and enter treatment.

While it is true that people in and out of therapy will tend to symbolize old feelings in present dramas, by doing the hard labor of feeling those feelings through to the primal roots of the experience we will eventually arrive at a subjective truth which no one can steal from us. This truth is in itself liberating: "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

However, we must remember that the standards for scientific or legal truth are quite different. The fact that many of us knew for a certainty that neonates are quite conscious did not impact the medical establishment and birthing processes until clever researchers began to construct ways of objectively demonstrating this fact.

In the legal arena, it looks to me that there is a remarkable lack of clear thinking. Legally, the entire "false memory syndrome" debate is but a red herring: what does it matter whether a memory is accurate if there is no substantiating evidence? In that case you simply have a "he says/she says," standoff. The real issue is not false memory but false accusation. If, on the other hand, a woman remembers, many years later as in the Franklin case, that her father sexually abused and then killed a young girl friend of hers and can lead investigators directly to the skeleton, it looks to me that there is clear evidence that the girl was done in. We do not, however, have conclusive evidence that it was the father who did it. Why would a court even consider convicting someone of a major crime based upon someone else's memories or perceptions without substantiating evidence? Similarly, since what happens in therapy usually involves only two people, isn't what happens between them one person's word against the other's? If therapists are going to be presumed guilty of "implanting" memories or sexual abuse simply on a client's



say-so, therapists are going to be driven out of the profession. Those of us who come from a bodywork-oriented tradition have had to pull way back from the kind of work we did in the 70s. I now do bodywork only with clients who have been in therapy long enough to be clear and to have the capacity to inform me of their limits. When any of us begins descending into deep feelings, we can symbolize those feelings in mythic forms, such as Satan. We can see things that aren't there. Even a year into my work with another woman who had been sexually abused as a child I intuited that I should never even shake her hand. One day when she was sitting up across the room and avoiding my eyes, I asked her if she was having trouble looking at me. "Yes," she said, clearly ill at ease.

"Do you know why?"

"Because you don't have any clothes on."

You've probably had one of those common dreams in which you show up for work and find people staring at you because you've forgotten to dress. I'll admit I glanced down just to check. Thank goodness, I was quite presentable. We now know that a great many more children are sexually abused than we ever believed was the case. Sadly, most of the perpetrators will escape without ever being called to account for their crimes. We know that sexual abuse wounds children

and usually has significant effects upon the adults they grow into. We know also that some charges of abuse are false. How are we to deal with these societal problems in a way that is fair and protects both the children and those falsely accused? Using the courts to attempt to achieve justice in these issues looks to me like a crap shoot. But then, as you can probably tell, I am not a great fan of our system of jurisprudence. I can certainly understand that an incest survivor would wish to manifest his or her new personal power by attempting to bring a perpetrator to justice. Such an action might even be therapeutic. And, although sexual abusers are unlikely to be deterred by the fear of going to court, given the compulsive nature of their aberration, if the threat of legal action makes even one potential abuser think twice I believe it's well worth it. It's worth extraordinary effort to protect our children.

While there are no quick and easy answers to these questions, I am thankful that we are beginning to ask them.

Belden Johnson is a primal therapist, a co-founder of The Primal Center, a poet, a husband and a father. He lives in Nevada City, California, where he is currently enjoying bucking up the downed trees from the winter and playing softball.

Editor's View - The Colorado rebirthing ban

On April 18, 2000, 10-year-old Candace Newmaker was killed in a staged rebirthing session. In the 70 minute videotaped session, loosely based on rebirthing and attachment therapy, the facilitators wrapped Candace in a twisted blanket, applied pressure to her body to simulate contractions, and urged her to come out to her adoptive mother. An unwilling participant in the procedure, she resisted with many phrases including "I can't do it," "I can't breathe," and "I'm going to throw up." The facilitators countered with statements such as "You're a quitter" and "If you don't have the courage to live, it's easier to die." She eventually became still and quiet for the last 20 minutes, and was eventually unwrapped – unconscious, not breathing, and without a pulse. Candace was airlifted to hospital and the next morning pronounced dead of asphyxiation.

On April 17, 2001, Governor Bill Owens of Colorado signed a bill into law that prohibits the use of "rebirthing" techniques by mental health professionals. Candace's adoptive mother and the therapists involved are facing criminal charges of varying degrees up to a maximum of 48 years in prison. A CNN report states that Owens has indicated that "Therapists who use the rebirthing technique, which is supposed to simulate the birth process, would be subject to criminal penalties."

This horror for Candace is a tragedy on many fronts. Any argument against the legislation will be seen as a callous and unfeeling insult to Candace's death in particular, and children's rights in general. To me, it all boils down to one

thing - the danger of coercion and neglect. It was parental coercion and neglect that created the problems in Candace, and it was the application of coercion and neglect "for her own good" that killed her.

If a patient dies from malpractice on the operating table, we do not ban surgery. If a team of inept and insensitive adults coerced a little girl, neglected her calls for help, and then suffocated her, there is no need to ban all birth-process work. They killed her, and there are laws for that.

Techniques resembling rebirthing are sometimes used as a part of primal process work. But unlike the terrible approach of Candace's facilitators, the primal ethic is about respecting the needs of people,

whether they are a fetus, a newborn, a 10-year-old, or an adult. In the IPA, clients control their process by various means including the phrase "Stop, I mean it!" If Candace had been with any IPA therapists or peer workers I know, she would have been let out of the blanket as soon as she protested.

Although I am not an advocate of contrived processes like rebirthing, I am concerned for the therapists and facilitators who handle "birth work" in their primal practice. If you are in Colorado, and your client's actions on the mat indicate a birth process, what will you do? What if, at the end of a session of writhing and twisting, your client tells you they were having birth feelings? Will their family lay charges when they find out? Candace is gone, and now the type of deep feeling work that can prevent the pain that she suffered is in danger.

Which legislature will act next?

"It all boils down to one thing - the danger of coercion and neglect."

Contacts Across the Globe!

In the last newsletter, we introduced a new IPA service – our Regional Contact List. The idea has taken off and we have virtually doubled the number of contacts. A special thanks to all our contacts, and a big invitation to all other primalers to join in.

For regular updates on new contact people in new areas of the globe, check out our website at www.primals.org

IPA Regional Contact List

For those who want to know more about primal from IPA members, we are offering regional contacts who would be glad to speak with you by phone or respond by email. Refer to the following list, pick the area closest to you, and give our volunteer members a call.

If you would like to be a contact person, please advise Denise Kline at 301-791-9237 or dkline43@aol.com

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leonardleonard1@cs.com

Midwest U.S. & Detroit

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Peer Priming Groups



By Bill Whitesell

Six of us sit and chat together in the living room, waiting for a few latecomers to arrive. A new member of the group talks of her previous experiences with healing methods. We adjourn to the primal room, leaving a message on the door for the last straggler to come in. After a few introductory

words, we have a go-round, indicating what we think we'll work on and who, if anyone, we'd like to work with. Then we take to our mats. Some work alone, others with a witness. Two people go into the bathroom to use

the 80-pound punching bag. One couple is arranging a birthing posture. Another pair sits facing each other, holding hands, co-counseling style. One woman is lying gently on top of her partner, using a technique from bonding psychotherapy. The room is filled with crying, gasping, shouting, and writhing sounds.

After 45 minutes, a timer goes off and someone says, "Second shift." Witness/facilitators who haven't switched with their partners begin to take their turn at releasing.

On completion of the second half, we come together again. It is much different from the initial go-round. Now each person seems to be lying on top or astride two or three others, and reaching out to touch still more. Faces are more relaxed, warm, and expressive. We can't restrain our radiant smiles. Giggles and playfulness abound. We each have a chance to talk about our work and then articulate appreciation for ourselves and for others. After a round of hugs, we adjourn for some snacks and lighter conversation. Gradually, all depart.

The Washington D.C. area peer priming group began in 1999 and meets roughly once a month. New members are allowed only if they have had experience with deep feeling therapy, are self-starters in doing such work, and do not need professional intervention. Members respect one another's processing and, as peers, emphasize responsiveness when acting as facilitators; the client is in charge of his or her own session. We began with four or five regular attendees, and now

have about 12 people on our email list, but only six or eight typically make it to a session. Most of us had been working alone and in other therapy programs. It's been wonderful to develop a sense of community with each other in sharing these healing experiences. With a small group, we eventually get a chance to work with each of the others, and the closeness that develops is profound.

Moreover, our members have had a diverse range of previous types of feeling work and that has added to the richness of our processing with each other.

I encourage others to begin peer priming groups, even if at first only

two people are interested. I believe that a long list of do's and don'ts is unnecessary, as individual groups will want to explore various options regarding the style of their meetings. In my view, one key aspect is to recognize that an occasional peer facilitator is not a therapist and should be rather restrained when considering whether to intervene in another's work: let the client call the shots. There is an advantage to having a large processing room so that all can work together. Hearing another's process can be helpful in leading to greater access to similar types of material for oneself. Group processing can also create a powerful sense of permission to work more deeply on difficult material. And finally, the closeness and warmth that develops with each other is absolutely priceless.

The trickiest issue for the group may be the criteria for allowing new members. We have attracted interest only by word of mouth, and then, for screening, we rely on the reputation of a possible newcomer among existing members. To get our group going, we had the advantage of several IPA members in the area, along with much larger communities of Reevaluation Counseling and Bonding Psychotherapy. A more aggressive outreach activity would presumably impose the need for interviews or some other method of screening applicants before inviting them into the group, to make sure that they are self-starters who can work safely within the mat track framework without professional assistance, and without disrupting the closeness of the peer priming community.

"The closeness and warmth that develops with each other is absolutely priceless."

A Cautionary Letter to the Editor

I am a psychotherapist in private practice in Australia. I specialize in Guided Imagery and Music (according to the Helen Bonny method). I have had a long association with Primal Therapy and was an Ark participant in 1998.

I'd like to respond to an article in the march issue of the IPA newsletter - "Should we expand the mission of the IPA" by Chris Wright. I, like Chris, need the primal process to keep myself feeling fully alive and wish that more people would avail themselves of what seems to me a simple and natural way to become and stay emotionally well. I have always admired the IPA's openness and willingness to share its philosophy and its therapeutic techniques with the community at large. It somehow demystifies the therapy and draws people to it.

I would, however, introduce a word of caution. For many people, including myself prior to my first primal intensive, the expression of deep, often long repressed feelings was very frightening. I would not have gone into primal therapy without knowing that I had trained and experienced therapists by my side and monitoring my therapeutic progress.

In my own training as a psychotherapist I was taught the importance of screening people to assess their ability to undertake deep feeling work. This modality was contraindicated for people suffering psychoses, schizophrenia or in some cases, even those suffering severe emotional damage. For these people another form of therapy may need to be recommended. Close monitoring of their ego strength was stressed and adequate support systems were established throughout the course of their intensive therapy.

If we create more primal communities and invite everyone to join us what happens to screening, safe environment and follow up? It seems to me that we need our qualified primal therapists and our intensive centres, not only for people's emotional safety but also to maintain our reputable professional base at a time when many suspect therapies are being promoted indiscriminately.

Thank you Chris for a stimulating article! I admire and share your passion for the primal process.

Renate Marek, Urunga, Australia



Practicing the Presence

by Mickey Judkovics

Take the time to be here.

Take the time to be here.

Are you here now?

What does that mean to you?

If I say to you now, "Be here now in your body," does that change your experience of being here now?

It does for me. If I sense my body now, I sense something in the cheeks of my face and go away from it with the thought, "My mother wants to kill me."

Steve Parkhill compares this reservoir of unexpressed emotions to the reservoir of poison which forms from a tarantula's venomous bite. Something which must be lanced out, treated and healed.

After all these years to have these undigested thoughts, feelings of fear, and feelings of outrage at what was done, at what wasn't done and what was only thought. How come? How come?

What could I have done then or even later and what should I do now? Years of meditation, of expressive therapy, of self observation, of self remembering and avoidances then and now.

What am I avoiding now? What can I do now? Breathe and stay in my body. Breathe and stay in my body. Sense my Existence.

Look outside myself. See what there is to see. Sense the existence of the other. Am I threatened? Am I threatening? Are you threatening? What do I sense? What do I see?

Be here now.

Be Present.

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202-393-2885

Book Review: *Changes of Mind*

Changes of mind: A holonomic theory of the evolution of consciousness by Jenny Wade (State University of New York, 1996)

by John Rowan



This is one of the best, and one of the most important, books I have ever read. It is stunningly simple and stunningly erudite. The simplicity lies in the fact that the author takes us through the stages of psychospiritual development one by one in a systematic way. The erudition lies in the fact that the author seems to be aware of everything that has been written on developmental psychology, and handles it with consummate ease.

For example, unlike most developmental theories, which start at birth or even some while after, Jenny Wade starts with pre- and perinatal experience. And her 36-page chapter on this is simply the best account I have seen of this important period of our lives.

And instead of taking it for granted, as psychology usually does, that consciousness is totally dependent upon the brain, and that therefore the foetus can have no other consciousness than something very limited and primitive, this author starts from the premise that there are two sources of consciousness: the brain and central nervous system on the one hand, and the transcendent source on the other. Each chapter of this developmental story charts the progress of both sources of consciousness, the one Newtonian in its basis, and the other not.

Jenny Wade takes us, chapter by chapter, through reactive consciousness, naive consciousness, egocentric consciousness, conformist consciousness, achievement and affiliative consciousness (two aspects of the same thing), authentic consciousness, transcendent consciousness, unity consciousness and after-death consciousness. "Hold hard," I hear you say, "isn't this a bit like Ken Wilber?" Yes, but it is not derived from Ken Wilber: in fact, the author is here and there quite critical of him. Although this book came out in 1996, it quotes nothing of Wilber's after 1990 and thus includes none of Wilber's later thinking, making it an original book.

One important difference from Wilber is that Wade does far more justice to the gender issue. She follows the ideas of Mary Belenky and her colleagues, saying that after the Conformist level development splits into two, at times along gender lines, with men tending to go the Achievement route, and women tending to go the Affiliative route.

I was of course particularly interested to see what she says about the level of consciousness which characterizes humanistic psychology. This comes in the chapter headed 'Authentic Consciousness,' which closely resembles what Wilber calls the Centaur self.

People at the Authentic stage accept that relativism, conflict and change are the nature of the world, yet they still knowingly commit to their own positions, accepting full responsibility for their choices and remaining open to new information. (p. 165)

This seems to me a good statement of the always paradoxical nature of this stage, which I have written about in my book *Ordinary Ecstasy* 3.

For anyone who is interested in human development this book is a must. Ken Wilber himself finds it so valuable that he includes it in his recent book on integral psychology.

The trouble with books like this is that they make one dissatisfied with most of the writing in the field of psychology, psychotherapy, and consciousness. The vast majority of such writing simply assumes that there is just one level of development – the one belonging to the writer. Yet we are all familiar with the ideas of Piaget, Erikson, Maslow, Aurobindo, Kohlberg, Loevinger, Belenky and her colleagues, etc., all telling us that there are different levels of development in which people often get stuck. Wade brings all this together and, so to speak, rubs our noses in it, to the point where we dare not deny it any longer.

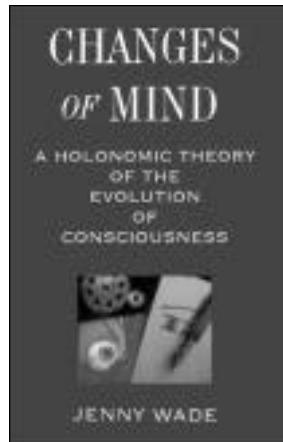
Although Ken Wilber has some criticisms, he also says: "Wade has an exceptional gift for assembling innumerable details into a coherent presentation . . . this is a superb contribution on the part of Wade, and it will have, I believe, a lasting impact on the field." In my own opinion, anyone who writes about human beings in general is going to have to take this terrible knowledge on board.

I say 'terrible' because once we think in this new way, we have to acknowledge that we ourselves are standing on a particular level, and speaking to, and about, others who are at the same or different levels. For example, most people in the world, according to Kohlberg, are functioning at levels no higher than the Achievement and Affiliative stage. A smaller number are functioning at the Authentic stage, and smaller numbers again at the higher stages. Yet the first stage at which we can use the type of logic necessary to use the idea of stages with any real freedom is the Authentic stage. This means that this logic will sound like nonsense or error to those who have not yet reached this level.

Let those who dare read Jenny Wade!

John Rowan is a long time IPA member, Primal Integration therapist, founder member of the Association of Humanistic Psychology Practitioners, and a Fellow of the British Psychological Society. John is also the author of a number of books, and lives with his wife in North Chingford, London.

You can contact John at JohnRowan@compuserve.com or www.professionalpsychology.co.uk/rowan/



Bring your stories to Appel Farm

Primal stories are extremely valuable to the growth and availability of this essential healing process. Although theory is important, it has a limited ability to touch readers – it is the personal accounts that make this process real to those who are wandering in the desert of their suffering.

At the Convention, a *Stories of Joy & Pain* workshop series will be held for the sole purpose of collecting stories - by tape, type, or scribble. When you're packing for the Convention, please bring entries from your journals or session notes. Be primally expressive - we have a revolutionary story to tell.

- submissions can be anonymous
- 250–500 words or less are ideal for the newsletter. Selections up to 2000 words are better for the website or a book. Short selections are often the most inspirational.
- Express from your personal perspective, and refrain from using names unless you have written permission from the individuals mentioned.
- Choose subject matter that has deep personal meaning for you and speaks of your primal life and experience.
- Please bring to the Convention or submit via email to sam@primalworks.com

New *Aware Baby*

Aletha Solter, the keynote presenter at the 1999 IPA Convention, has released the new, completely revised edition of her book *The Aware Baby*. This edition contains current, cutting-edge research, as well as new insights from her extensive experience as an international consultant and workshop leader.

The revised book presents an understanding of babies' emotional needs from conception to two-and-a-half years of age, how to meet those needs, and how to help them heal from pre- and perinatal trauma. This work has been enthusiastically endorsed by Thomas Verny, David Chamberlain, Martha Welch, William Emerson, and Paul Vereshack.

For more information, contact

The Aware Parenting Institute
Phone & Fax: 805-968-1868
solter@awareparenting.com
www.awareparenting.com

Memories of Debby

Long-time IPA member Debby Caplan passed away Sunday, October 8, 2000 in New York City. Here is a fond memory from Appel Farm of Debby, with Susanne Bersbach on the left and Mary Thompson on the right, submitted by her husband and IPA past-president Larry King.



Be On The IPA Referral List!

This is an application to be on a list of IPA members who represent themselves as offering primal work. The listing will be published by the IPA and will include the following statement: "The IPA does not endorse the expertise or experience of these individuals. Each member has submitted the following brief description of their services."

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Country _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____ Fax _____

Email _____ Website _____

Description of services and credentials: (Maximum 35 words)

May we also include your listing on the IPA website? Yes No

Make your check for \$30 (plus membership fee if due) to the IPA. Send check and this completed form to:
Barbara Bryan, 23011 Middlebelt Road, Farmington Hills, MI, 48336, USA

Questions? Call Barbara at 248-478-5559



Roses to:

- “The Label Committee” – Barbara Kay Cope and the Three Musketeers, Kevin, Freddie, and David, for slaying the multi-megabyted Cybermonster.
- Bill and Dale Whitesell for hosting the April Board Meeting/weekend peer-process sleep-over in DC. Great service, great food, great space, great pool, great blossoms!
- Larry Schumer, Jane Lewis, and Sam Turton for slaving over the IPA website and getting the Convention Web brochure out across the internet.
- Michele DelGesso, Linda Marks, Harriet Geller, and Sharon Kane for co-ordinating another successful Spring Retreat full of the sublime – and the ridiculous!
- Jean Rashkind for all the work and organization involved in planning the Convention. I can’t wait!
- Newsletter contributors Belden Johnson, Harriet Geller, Sharon Kane, Renate Marek, Mickey Judkovics, John Rowan, and Bill Whitesell for their deft wordsmithing.

IPA Membership Dues

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Joint</u>
Lifetime Membership	\$1000	\$1500
Annual Membership (based on income)		
\$100,000 or more	\$110	\$165
\$50,000–99,999	\$75	\$112
\$25,000–49,999	\$60	\$90
Less than \$25,000	\$50	\$75

- Membership for \$30 per year is available to overseas residents, full-time students, and individuals who support themselves exclusively with public assistance.

- All dues cover the fiscal year from August to July. To qualify for joint membership, both members must live at the same address and pool resources. Joint members will receive one mailing per household.

- Please make out your check to the IPA in US funds, and send with your complete name and contact info (including email) to:

IPA, c/o Sharon Kane, 18 Cedar Hill Road, Ashland, MA 01721, USA

International Primal Association

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Address correction requested

NOT A MEMBER YET?
The IPA needs your support.



Feel Different.®