

# human potential

EXPLORING

WAYS OF BEING

*Spring 1992*

**£2.00**

PSYCHOLOGY FOR HUMANS BEING



**FINDING YOUR  
SOUL-MATE**  
Karmic Reunions

**JOANNA MACY**  
Deep Ecology  
or Shallow  
Environmentalism

**BRETT NIELSEN**  
Extraordinary  
Ordinary Man

**NOMAD LOVE**  
A Man Who Almost  
Never Sleeps

**The Reconciliation of the Sexes  
painted by Pamela Matthews**

**PLUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS, NOTICE BOARD AND RESOURCE DIRECTORY  
FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING WHERE IN THE HUMAN POTENTIAL MOVEMENT**

# DEEP ECOLOGY WORK

## Toward the Healing of Self and World

**JOANNA MACY** moves us from our shallow environmentalism to 'deep ecology', showing how our environmental concerns are ultimately a spiritual problem – of reconnection to the whole planetary system and its inhabitants.

**A** new paradigm is emerging in our time. Through its lens we see reality structured in such a way that all life-forms affect and sustain each other in a web of radical interdependence. This organic interconnectedness is what we call our deep ecology.

"Deep Ecology" is a term coined by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, to contrast with "shallow environmentalism," a band aid approach applying piecemeal technological fixes for short-term goals. Deep Ecology teaches us that we humans are neither the rulers nor the centre of the universe, but are embedded in a vast living matrix and subject to its laws of reciprocity. Deep ecology represents a basic shift in ways of seeing and valuing, a shift beyond anthropocentrism.

Anthropocentrism means human chauvinism. Similar to sexism, but substitute *human race* for man and *all other species* for woman. [It's about the human race being oppressive to other species and the environment.]

When humans investigate and see through their layers of anthropocentric self-cherishing, a most profound change in consciousness begins to take place. Alienation subsides. The human is no longer an outsider, apart . . .

What a relief then! The thousands of years of imagined separation are over and we begin to recall our true nature. That is, the change is a spiritual one . . . sometimes referred to as deep ecology.

– John Seed

There are, of course, manifold ways of evoking or provoking this change in perspective. Methods of inspiring the experience of deep ecology range from prayer to poetry, from wilderness vision quests to the induction of altered states of consciousness. The most reliable is direct action in defense of Earth – and it is spreading today in many forms.

### *The Greening of the Self*

Something important is happening in our world that is not reported in the newspapers. I consider it the most fascinating and hopeful development of our time, and it is one of the reasons I am so glad to be alive today. It has to do with what is occurring to the notion of the self.

The self is the hypothetical piece of turf on which we construct our strategies for survival, the notion around which we focus our instincts for self-preservation, or need for self-approval, and the boundaries for our self-interest.

The conventional notion of the self with which we have been raised and to which we have been conditioned by mainstream culture is being undermined. What Alan Watts called "the skin-encapsulated ego" and Gregory Bateson referred to as "the epistemological error of Occidental civilization" is being unhinged, peeled off. It is being replaced by concepts of identity and self-interest which are much wider than the conventional ego

. . . by what you might call the ecological self, co-extensive with other beings and the life of our planet.

At a recent lecture on college campus, I gave the students examples of activities which are currently being undertaken in defense of life on Earth – actions in which people risk their comfort and even their lives to protect other species. In the Chipko, or tree hugging movement in northern India, for example, villagers fight the deforestation of their remaining woodlands. On the open seas, Greenpeace activists are intervening to protect marine mammals from slaughter. After that talk, I received a letter from a student I'll call Michael. He wrote:

I think of the tree-huggers hugging my trunk, blocking the chainsaws with their bodies. I feel their fingers digging into my bark to stop the steel and let me breathe. I hear the Bodhisattvas (note: a Buddhist term for an enlightened, compassionate being) in their rubber boats as they put themselves between the harpoons and me, so I can escape to the depths of the sea. I give thanks for your life and mine, and for life itself. I give thanks for realizing that I too have the powers of the tree-huggers and the bodhisattvas.



Joanna Macy

---

**The awakening to our true self is the awakening to that entirety, breaking out of the prison-self of separate ego.**

---

---

**It says in the Lotus Sutra that the bodhisattva hears the music of the spheres, and understands the language of the birds, while hearing the cries in the deepest levels of hell.**

---

What is striking about Michael's words is the shift in identification. Michael is able to extend his sense of self to encompass the self of the tree and of the whale. Tree and whale are no longer removed, separate, disposable objects pertaining to a world "out there" (outside of humans and inside the environment); they are intrinsic to his own vitality. Through the power of his caring, his experience of self is expanded far beyond the skin-encapsulated ego. I quote Michael's words not because they are unusual, but to the contrary, because they express a desire and a capacity that is being released from the prison-cell of old constructs of self. This desire and capacity are arising in more and more people today as, out of deep concern for what is happening to our world, they begin to speak and act on its behalf.

Among those who are shedding these old constructs of self, like old skin or a confining shell, is John Seed, director of the *Rainforest Information Centre* in Australia. One day we were walking through the rainforest in New South Wales, where he has his office, and I asked him, "You talk about the struggle against the lumbering interests and politicians to save the remaining rainforest in Australia. How do you deal with the despair?"

He replied, "I try to remember that it's not me, John Seed, trying to protect the rainforest. Rather I'm part of the rainforest protecting myself. I am that part of the rainforest recently emerged into human thinking."

This is what I mean by the greening of the self. It involves a combining of the mystical with the practical and the pragmatic, transcending separateness, alienation, and fragmentation. It is a shift that Seed himself calls "a spiritual change," generating a sense of profound interconnectedness with all life.

This is hardly new to our species. In the past, poets and mystics have been speaking and writing about these ideas, but not people on the barricades agitating for social change. Now the sense of an encompassing self, that deep identity with the wider reaches of life, is a motivation for action. It is a source of courage that helps us stand up to the powers that are still, through force of inertia, destroying the fabric of life. I am convinced that this expanded sense of self is the only basis for adequate and effective action.

Three developments converge in our time to call forth the ecological self. They are: 1. the psychological and spiritual pressure exerted by current dangers of mass annihilation, 2. the emergence in science of the *systems* view of the world, and 3. a renaissance of nondualistic forms of spirituality.

### **1. Current Dangers of Mass Annihilation *Pain for the World***

The move to a wider ecological sense of self is in large part a function of the dangers that are threatening to overwhelm us. We are confronted by social breakdown, wars, nuclear proliferation and the progressive destruction of our biosphere. Polls show that people today are aware that the world, as they know it, may come to an end. This loss of certainty that there will be a future is the pivotal psychological reality of our time.

Over the past twelve years my colleagues and I have worked with tens of thousands of people in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, helping them

## DEEP ECOLOGY

We could use other terms for it – like the systemic, self-organizing nature of reality, or the dynamic immanence of god or goddess, or the *Jewelled Net of Indra*. Vietnamese monk-poet Thich Nhat Hanh calls it "Interbeing." The term "Deep Ecology" is perhaps preferable, for reasons of religious/secular inclusiveness and also conceptual specificity – incorporating, as we do, scientific insights from the ecological and systems view of the world.

We turn to this optic of radical interdependence – whatever name we use for it – because it can serve the healing of our world and its very survival. It can shift the way we perceive ourselves and each other, replacing isolation and fear with a living sense of our deep mutuality. It can broaden our sense of self and self-interest, uncovering our wider identity with the living planet itself. Revealing the dependent co-arising of systems, it helps us see levers for change in the institutionalized forms of fear and greed that are destroying our world. It shows us that scope of our freedom to act on behalf of all beings.

To benefit from this paradigm and put it to work in our lives, we must make it experiential, immediate, and practical. That is the purpose of Deep Ecology work.

**Joanna Macy**



---

## JOANNA MACY

will be giving a training course entitled the "Theory and Practice of Deep Ecology Work" from May 23 -29th, 1992.

The workshop is sponsored by the Gestalt Centre. Contact Them At 0727 864 806

---



Participants in the Council of All Beings speak formally and spontaneously on behalf of other species.

confront and explore what they know and feel about what is happening to their world. The purpose of this work, which was first known as *Despair and Empowerment Work*, is to overcome the numbing and powerlessness that result from suppression of painful responses to massively painful realities.

As their grief and fear for the world is allowed to be expressed without apology or argument and validated as a wholesome, life-preserving response, people break through their avoidance mechanisms, break through their sense of futility and isolation. Generally what they break through into is a larger sense of identity. It is as if the pressure of their acknowledged awareness of the suffering of our world stretches or collapses the culturally defined boundaries of the self.

It becomes clear, for example, that the grief and fear experienced for our world and our common future are categorically different from similar sentiments relating to one's personal welfare. This pain cannot be equated with dread of one's own individual demise. Its source lies less in concerns for personal survival than in apprehensions of collective suffering – of what looms for human life and other species and unborn generations to come. Its nature is akin to the original meaning of compassion – 'suffering with'. It is the distress we feel on behalf of the larger whole of which we are a part. And, when it is so defined, it serves as a trigger or gateway to a more encompassing sense of identity, inseparable from the web of life in which we are as intricately interconnected as cells in a larger body.

This shift in consciousness is an appropriate, adaptive response. For the crisis that threatens our planet, be it seen in its military, ecological, or social aspects, derives from a dysfunctional and pathogenic notion of the self. It is a mistake about our place in the order of things. It is the delusion that the self is so separate and fragile that we must delineate and defend its boundaries, that it is so small and needy that we must endlessly acquire and endlessly consume, that it is so aloof that we can – as individuals, corporations, nation-states or as a species – be immune to what we do to other beings.

This view of human nature is not new, of course. Many have felt the imperative to extend self-interest to embrace the whole. What is notable in our situation is that this extension of identity can come not through an effort to be noble or good or altruistic, but simply to be present and own our pain. That is why this shift in the sense of self is credible to people. As the poet Theodore Roethke said, "I believe my pain".

## 2. Science and the Systems View *Cybernetics of the Self*

The findings of 20th century science undermine the notion of a separate self, distinct from the world it observes and acts upon. As Einstein showed, the self's perceptions are shaped by its changing position in relation to other phenomena. And these phenomena are affected not only by location but, as Heisenberg demonstrated, by the very act of observation. Now contemporary systems science and systems cybernetics go yet further in challenging old assumptions about a distinct, separate, continuous self.

We are open, self-organizing systems; our very breathing, acting, and thinking arise in interaction with our shared world through the currents of matter, energy, and information that flow through us. In the web of relationships that sustain these activities, there are no clear lines demarcating a separate self. As systems theorists aver, there is no categorical "I" set over and against a categorical "you" or "it".

One of the clearer expositions of this is offered by Gregory Bateson, whom I earlier quoted as saying that the abstraction of a separate "I" is "the epistemological fallacy of Western civilization". He says that the process that decides and acts cannot be neatly identified with the isolated subjectivity of the individual or located within the confines of the skin. He contends that "the total self-corrective unit that processes information is a system whose boundaries do not at all coincide with the boundaries either of the body or what is popularly called 'self' or 'consciousness'".

He goes on to say, "The self is ordinarily understood as only a small part of a much larger trial-and-error system which does the thinking, acting, and deciding."

Bateson uses the example of a woodcutter, about to fell a tree. His hands grip the handle of the axe. Whump, he makes a cut, and then whump, another cut. What is the feedback circuit, where is the information that is guiding that cutting down of the tree? That is the self-correcting unit, that is what is doing the chopping down of the tree.

---

**Deep ecology serves as the explanatory principle both for the pain we experience on behalf of our planet and its beings, and for the sense of belonging that arises when we stop repressing that pain and let it reconnect us with our world.**

---

---

**It becomes clear, for example, that the grief and fear experienced for our world and our common future are categorically different from similar sentiments relating to one's personal welfare.**

---

In another illustration, a blind person with a cane is walking along the sidewalk. Tap, tap, whoops, there's a fire hydrant, there's a curb. What is doing the walking? Where is the self then of the blind person? What is doing the perceiving and deciding? That self-corrective feedback circuit is the arm, the hand, the cane, the curb, the ear. At that moment that is the self that is walking.

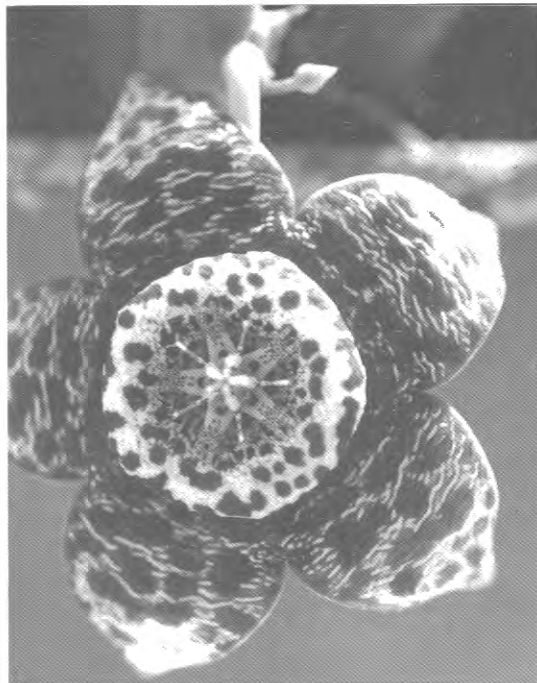
Bateson's point is that the self as we usually define it is an improperly delimited part of a much larger field of interlocking processes. And he maintains that:

This false reification of the self is basic to the planetary ecological crisis in which we find ourselves. We have imagined that we are a unit of survival and we have to see to our own survival, and we imagine that the unit of survival is the separate individual or a separate species, whereas in reality through the history of evolution, it is the individual plus the environment, the species plus the environment, for they are essentially symbiotic.

The self is a metaphor. We can decide to limit it to our skin, our person, our family, our organization,

or our species. We can select its boundaries in objective reality. As the systems theorists see it, our consciousness illuminates a small arc in the wider currents and loops of knowing that interconnect us. It is just as plausible to conceive of mind as coexistent with these larger circuits, the entire "pattern that connects" as Bateson said.

Do not think that to broaden the construct of self this way involves an eclipse of one's distinctiveness. Do not think that you will lose your identity like a drop in the ocean merging into the oneness of Brahman. From the systems perspective this interaction, creating larger



wholes and patterns, fosters and even requires diversity. You become more yourself. Integration and differentiation go hand in hand.

### **3. Non-Dualistic Spirituality *The Boundless Heart of the Bodhisattva***

A third factor that nourishes deep ecological consciousness in our world today is the resurgence of nondualistic spirituality. We find it in many realms – in Sufism in Islam, Creation Spirituality in Christianity, and in Buddhism's historic coming to the West. Buddhism is distinctive in its clarity and sophistication about the dynamics of self. In much the same way as systems theory does, Buddhism undermines categorical distinctions between self and other. It then goes farther than systems theory in showing the pathogenic character of any reifications of the self, and in offering

*continued on page 29*



---

## **WORLD AS LOVER, WORLD AS SELF Joanna Macy's Newest Book**

Joanna Macy's book "World As Lover, World As Self" was published in 1991 by Parallax Press. In it she describes two prevailing world views: the *world as a battlefield*, where good and evil are pitted against each other, and the *world as trap*, from which we must disentangle ourselves and escape. But both these views continue our estrangement from ourselves and our environment.

Joanna Macy's answer to these destructive and distancing ideas is a radical shift in perspective where we see the "world as lover" – as a partner with whom we have a most gratifying relationship. In this partnership we rediscover the "world as self".

Her previous book, "Despair and Empowerment in the Nuclear Age" is well-known, and she did workshops on that topic in London and around the world.

---

methods for transcending these difficulties and healing this suffering. What the Buddha woke up to under the Bodhi tree was paticca samuppada, the dependent co-arising of phenomena, in which you cannot isolate a separate, continuous self.

We think, "What do we do with the self, this clamorous 'I', always wanting attention, always wanting its goodies? Do we crucify it, sacrifice it, mortify it, punish it, or do we make it noble?" Upon awaking we realize, "Its just a convention!" When you take it too seriously, when you suppose that it is something enduring which you have to defend and promote, it becomes the foundation of delusion, the motive behind our attachments and our aversions.

Consider the Tibetan portrayal of the wheel of life, that mythically depicts all the realms of being. At the very centre of that wheel of suffering are three figures: the pig, the rooster and the snake – they represent delusion, greed and hatred – and they just chase each other around and around. The linchpin of all the pain is the notion of our self, the notion that we have to protect that self or conquer on its behalf –or do something with it.

The point of Buddhism, and, I think, of deep ecology too, is that we do not need to be doomed to the perpetual rat-race. The vicious circle can be broken. It can be broken by wisdom, meditation and morality –that is when we pay attention to our experience and our actions and discover that they do not have to be in bondage to a separate self.

The sense of interconnectedness that can arise, is imaged –one of the most beautiful images coming out of the Mahayana – as the jewelled net of Indra. It is a vision of reality structured very much like the holographic view of the universe, so that each being is a jewel at each node of the net, and each jewel reflects all the other, reflecting back and catching the reflection, just as systems theory sees that the part contains the whole.

The awakening to our true self is the awakening to that entirety, breaking out of the prison-self of separate ego. The one who perceives this is the bodhisattva –and we are all bodhisattvas because we are all capable of experiencing that –it is our true nature. We are profoundly interconnected and therefore we are all able to recognize and act upon our deep, intricate, and intimate, inter-existence with each other and all beings. That true nature of ours is already present in our pain for the world.

continued on page 30

# AABTT

**Director: Glyn Seaborn-Jones, Ph.D. Consultant in Psychodynamics.**  
**ASSOCIATION FOR ANALYTIC AND BODYMIND THERAPY AND TRAINING**

If we have shelter and enough to eat, what stops us enjoying being alive? We have studied the most effective ways of eliminating fears and false beliefs, so that enthusiasm, curiosity, confidence, adventurousness and high spirits can be revived.

Regular Experiential Weekends and Talk/Demonstration/Discussions, FREE TALK: (Glyn Seaborn-Jones) How to enjoy transforming your life: Questions & discussion. Address below and written applications now.

**THERAPY:** Much unhappiness is caused by 'forgotten' traumatic experiences. These are shocks which the growing organism cannot face or make sense of. These shocks imprint false beliefs and destructive attitudes, which can be changed when the adult mind makes feeling connections so that the person is freed from the damaging effects of old traumas

1. **HYPNOPRIMARY THERAPY:** A powerful new method which combines hypnotherapy with PRIMARY THERAPY. Individual sessions as needed.
2. Individual bodymind sessions with Glyn or one of his co-therapists at graduated fees (no seriously committed person in need is turned away). Safety for any form of expression. Consultation. 081 883 5418.
3. Regular weekly Bodymind Self-expression and Problem-sharing Group conducted by an experienced psychotherapist, Tuesday evening 7.30 - 9.30. Applications now. **FREE INTERVIEW: 081 883 5418.**
4. Couple Therapy with Glyn Seaborn-Jones. 081 883 5418.

## TRAINING

1. The 2 year **DIPLOMA COURSE** for present or future Therapists, or for people with some experience of groups or therapy - includes **HYPNOPRIMARY TRAINING** and **GROUP DYNAMICS. APPLICATIONS NOW.**
2. Weekend Training: Conducted by Glyn Seaborn-Jones. Whole group activities, Voice Dialogue: Discovering Our Many Selves, interacting in groups of 2 or 3. **22nd/23rd Feb; 4th/4th April 1992. APPLICATIONS NOW.**

Rooms for hire for individual or group therapy and for self release by individuals. Consultation or free interview; **AABTT, 8 Princes Avenue, London N10 3LR. 081 - 883 - 5418**

## Piers Myers

• Psychotherapist  
• Holistic Massage  
Practitioner/Teacher  
50 Burma Road,  
London N16 9BJ

081-549 9583

## INNER-LINK

CENTRE FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

Offers Psychotherapy and counselling  
brief and long-term  
to individuals, couples & families

(081) 348 8989

## The London Association of Primal Psychotherapists

Low Cost Therapy available with trainees.

We also give supervision to other  
practitioners who are interested in  
our methods.

Contact the Training Co-ordinator  
**L.A.P.P.**  
**18A Laurier Road**  
**London NW5 1SH**  
**071 267 9616**

## STRESS

Two day practical course

Also

**Three weekend Diploma in  
Stress Management Techniques**

Venue

**St. Pancras Hospital**  
Contact

The Institute of Stress Management,  
P.O. Box 23, North P.D.O.,  
Manchester M7 0RG (SAE please)  
Tel: 061-792 1654

## training

## Body Psychotherapy

at The Boyesen Training Centre

FULL TRAINING IN THREE  
CERTIFICATED MODULES

**Module one** is a ten-week part-time pre-training course in Bio-release. Bio-release is an experiential educational programme based on the principle that the body-mind has an inherent capacity to regulate itself organically and can thus, if we follow its signals, restore itself to well-being even after severe traumas. The course also has an anatomy, physiology and massage content which leads to ITFC certification in holistic massage. Pre-training courses start in January, April and September each year.

**Module two** is a two-year basic course in Biodynamic Psychiatry (physical therapy) with clinical practice. This course is a certificated module within the four-year psychotherapy course. It runs parallel to the first two years of the four year course and leads to the Satisfactory Completion Certificate in Biodynamic Psychiatry.

**Module three** is the third and fourth years of the four-year training course in Biodynamic psychotherapy, which leads to qualification to practice as a registered Biodynamic Psychotherapist.

LOW COST TREATMENTS FROM  
THIRD YEAR STUDENTS

For further details contact Alice Jacobus  
178 Acton High St. London W3 (081) 993 6351

When we turn our eyes away from that homeless figure, are we indifferent, or is the pain of seeing him or her too great? Do not be easily duped by the apparent indifference of those around you. What looks like apathy is really the fear of suffering. But the bodhisattva knows that to experience the pain of all beings it is necessary to experience their joy. It says in the Lotus Sutra that the bodhisattva hears the music of the spheres, and understand the language of the birds, while hearing the cries in the deepest levels of hell.

One of the things I like best about the ecological self that is arising in our time, is that it is making moral exhortation irrelevant. Sermonizing is both boring and ineffective. As Arne Naess says,

The extensive moralizing within the ecological movement has given the public the false impression that they are being asked to make a sacrifice to show more responsibility, more concern, and a nicer moral standard. But all of that would flow naturally and easily if the self were widened and deepened so that the protection of nature was felt and perceived as protection of our very selves.

Please note this important point: virtue is not required for the greening of the self or the emergence of the ecological self. The shift in identification at this point in our history is required precisely because moral exhortation doesn't work, and because sermons seldom hinder us from following our self-interest as we conceive it.

The obvious choice, then, is to extend our notions of self-interest. For example, it would not occur to me to plead with you, "Oh, don't saw off your leg. That would be an act of violence." It wouldn't occur to me, or you because your leg is part of your body. Well, so are the trees in the Amazon rain basin. They are our external lungs. And we are beginning to realize that the world is our body.

This ecological self, like any notion of selfhood, is a metaphoric construct and a dynamic one. It involves choice; choices can be made to identify at different moments with different dimensions or aspects of our systemically interrelated existence be they hunted whales or homeless humans or the planet itself. In doing this the extended self brings into play wider resources courage, endurance, ingenuity like a nerve cell in a neural net opening to the charge of the other neurons.

There is the sense of being acted through and sustained by those very beings on whose behalf one acts. This is very close to the religious concept of grace. In systems language we can talk about it as a synergy. But with this extension, this greening of the self, we can find a sense of buoyancy and resilience that comes from letting flow through us strengths and resources that come to us with continuous surprise and sense of blessing.

### DEEP ECOLOGY WORKSHOPS

In *Deep Ecology Work* we draw on all the developments described above. We let them deepen our understanding of our own experience and heighten our capacity to take part in the healing of our world. We interweave the emotional, the cognitive, and the spiritual – and begin to harvest the vast resources available to us. Through tested methods that include interactive exercises, ritual forms, meditations with breath, body and imaging, and plain, honest sharing, we rediscover wider reaches of ourselves and build courage and skills for social action. The stages of the workshop progress from mourning or despair work, to the exploration of our interconnectedness with all beings through space and time, and on to the power that is unleashed by the experience of this deep ecology.



Deep ecology remains a concept without the power to transform our awareness, unless we allow ourselves to feel – which means feeling the pain within us over what is happening to our world. The workshop serves as a safe place where this pain can be acknowledged, plumbed, released. Often it arises as a deep sense of loss over what is slipping away ancient forests and clean rivers, birdsong, breathable air. It is appropriate, then, to mourn for once at least, to speak our sorrow. As participants let this happen, in the whole group or in small clusters, hopelessness is expressed.

There is also something more: a rage welling up and passionate caring.

Our interconnectedness emerges as the ground of this anger and grief. Why else do we weep for other beings and those not yet born? There's no cause for so great a sadness if at root we are not one. Deep ecology serves as the explanatory principle both for the pain we experience on behalf of our planet and its beings, and for the sense of belonging that arises when we stop repressing that pain and let it reconnect us with our world.

As organic expressions of life on earth, we have a long and panoramic history. We are not yesterday's children, nor are we limited to this one brief moment of our planet's story; our roots go back to the beginning of time. We can learn to remember them. The knowledge is in us. As in our mother's wombs our embryonic bodies recapitulated the evolution of cellular life on earth, so we can now do it consciously, harnessing intellect and the power of imagination. We can reclaim our history in order to know a fresh our deep ecology. Certain methods help trigger this remembering. Guided visualizations can take us through our four and a half billion year story, making it present and vivid.

It has been discovered that nonhuman memories can surface with particular intensity and authenticity when consciousness is altered by special accelerated patterns of breathing. Stanislav and Christina Grof developed what they call holotropic breathing to permit subjects to recapture and resolve significant experiences surrounding their birth. They have found that the material that comes to light often goes beyond the biographical and even the human realm to include phylogenetic sequences and episodes of conscious identification with other species and life forms. These are so real as to produce remarkable insights into specificities of animal behaviour, botanical processes, and even interactions of matter at the suborganic level.

After Years of such work, Dr. Grof concluded that:

In a yet unexplained way each human being contains the information about the entire universe or all of existence, has potential experiential access to all its parts, and in a sense is the whole cosmic network, as much as he or she is just an infinitesimal part of it . . .

Now we don't require holotropic breathing to realize that ordinary consciousness

is certainly sufficient to allow us to shake off for a while our solely human identification and imaginatively to enter the experience of other life-forms. It is as satisfying to do this as to resurrect a half-forgotten skill or sing, after years, a once familiar song. The workshop helps us feel our way. In the ritual form known as the *Council of All Beings* we choose – or as I prefer to put it, let ourselves be chosen by – another life-form. We give it our attention, we give it our voice, hearken to inner intuitions, stretch to see and feel what lies just barely beyond our human knowings.

As participants in the *Council of All Beings* speak formally and spontaneously on behalf of other species, a vaster sense arises of the drama of our time and of the resources available to us in the web of life. They are especially alert to this because of cognitive work we have done on open systems. With our recognitions of the radical interrelatedness of all that is, self doubt and discouragement begin to fall away. Fresh vision and vigour is gained for our work in the world.



To apply them in our daily lives, tools are needed, as well as skills and networks for action. These we begin to fashion in the closing stages of the workshop. Deep ecology as a lived reality has distinctive implications for the teacher, the parent, the psychotherapist, the manager, the community organizer . . . so we help each other discern and clarify the distinctive role that each person can play in the healing of our world.

In so doing we discover our capacity for mutual empowerment. Trust awakens, and joy in the gift of life. It is good that this is so, for the crises we now confront demand more of us than business-as-usual. They require depths of wisdom and courage that appear to exceed our individual supplies. Yet these become available to us, as we break free of the prison cell of isolated human ego and open to our deep ecology. ■