

I.P.A. NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL PRIMAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Winter 1983

Message From Our New President — Barbara Valassis

Being elected president of the IPA is one of the most exciting things that has happened to me. It is a high peak in the adventure of my life. The enormous amount of validation and support I have received from so many of you has been the highlight of my year both personally and professionally. I was at Estes Park in Colorado when Stan Grof and Joan Halifax were guest speakers for the IPA. There was a magic in the air at that time, as there was again, this year, with Joan as our keynote speaker.

The theme, "Dimensions of Our Human Spirit," was especially meaningful to me. I believe that, as we clear out the old primal garbage, we make room for the positive aspects of self. We begin to expand and utilize parts of ourselves that have been hidden and covered over. In learning to trust our bodies, our dreams, and our feelings, we open up to new awarenesses which may be of a transpersonal or "spirit" nature. As we journey through our primal process, we each experience an inner force that propels us to face and resolve each issue in our own unique sequence. As we accept and flow with this current, what we need to learn will come our way, as a natural course of events. I believe this inner force is our drive toward self-actualization.

This year's Annual Convention was a beautiful, joyful experience. The unity of the group, the cohesiveness and spontaneity were delightful. I wish we could share this wonderful time with more people. One of my goals as president is to work in that direction. Last year, Charles Ashbach wrote a rough

The Annual New York Conference *1984: The Challenge to Identity*

The IPA is addressing itself to the crises taking place in our society with the theme of "1984: The Challenge to Identity." It is natural that our concerns extend themselves beyond the narrow range of our personal lives to the world around us. This year the challenge is particularly strong; attempts to suppress individual liberties are legion in everyone's experience on personal as well as social levels. Bringing these feelings into focus during the specialized conference workshops will also help participants to find better ways to cope with the challenge to their identities.

A keynote speaker is being invited who has experienced and written about healing ceremonies that resemble primals in primitive societies. In addition, a film called "The Hundredth Monkey," based on the book by Ken Keyes, will also be shown. This film is expected to produce an engaging controversial discussion about how we see ourselves in relation to the world of nature and mysticism. The wind-up festivities include a wine and snacks party until midnight.

The conference will be held on February 4, 1984, at the East-West Institute.

draft for a brochure. I plan to design and print it this year and finally have a descriptive statement about the IPA which can be sent out when anyone inquires. Our close, intimate group is warm and nurturing, but we need to continue to "spread the word" or the normal process of attrition will reduce our attendance. As Alec Rubin said,

we'll "keep the emotional renaissance flowering! We need your sunshine, your rain, your joy and energy, to make it grow, and to keep the IPA alive!" I strongly urge each and every one of our members to bring a friend to our Regional Conference and to our Annual Convention at Appel Farm next year. We want to share our wonderful growing experiences with them.

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IPA Newsletter

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Calendar of Events

- February 4 9:00 a.m. to midnight. **IPA Winter Regional Conference, 1984: The Challenge to Identity**, at the East-West Institute, 116 W. 14th Street, New York City.
- February 5 11:00 a.m. IPA Executive Board Meeting, at Fred Zielke's office, 853 Broadway, NYC, 7th floor, room 10.
- April 28 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **IPA Spring Regional Conference**, tentative theme: *Consciousness*, at the Unitarian Church, Germantown, Pennsylvania
- April 29 11:00 a.m. Executive Board meeting.
- August 29 to Sept. 3 **IPA Annual Convention, Healing the Wounded Self**, at Appel Farm, N.J.

Member News & Notices

The Reality Game: A Guide to Humanistic Counseling and Therapy by John Rowan, to be published by Routledge and Kegan Paul in Autumn 1984. This is a handbook for people who are, or want to be, counselors and psychotherapists. It is written from a humanistic position. The book is dedicated to the memory of Bill Swartley, from whom I learned so much and from whom I would like to have learned more. **John Rowan**

Lost and Found—I have a 35MM camera and a pair of Nike Tennis shoes that were left at Appel Farm. Please call me to claim those items. Larry Schumer, (212) 254-9386.

Annual Convention

We've already begun to think about next year's Annual Convention and we'd like to hear from you. Your comments, criticisms and suggestions can help. Do you have any ideas about scheduling, accomodations, etc.? How about workshop presenters outside the IPA who have something to offer the primal community? Please include how to contact them and what it is they offer and get it to me by February 1, 1984.

If we're to have any hope of incorporating your suggestions and considering your comments in planning next year's convention we must hear from you as soon as possible.

Art Sichel
68 W. 10th St. #40
New York, NY 10011

Membership Notice

It is not too late to become a member of the IPA for the 1983-84 fiscal year. As a member you will receive all issues of the *Newsletter* and our journal, *Aesthema*, an annual membership list, discounts at the regional conferences, and notices of all events.

All this for only \$15 a year. (Canada: \$20, all other countries: \$25.)

Send your check, payable to the International Primal Association, with your name, mailing address and phone number to Loretta Fogel, 2742 Fernwood Ave., Roslyn, PA 19001

Change of Address

Please let us know if you are moving, or if your name or address is incorrect (see your mailing label). Even if you are not a member, we want to be able to stay in touch with you.

Joan Halifax Revisited

Dear Friends from IPA,

I'd like to begin by saying, "WOW!" What a fantastic event and tremendous growth experience the Annual Convention was for me! This year was my first and I'm sure looking forward to next year. I met so many wonderful people. I was looked at, listened to, and loved. That's still so new to me, so healing and so filling. I feel I received a most precious gift. Thank you all for giving to and receiving from me.

It's been very busy here in Michigan. Our new president is really enthusiastic and there's a lot of excitement and work involved, getting started in this new presidential year.

I've been transcribing Joan Halifax's tape. It's dynamite! Anyone who would like a copy of the transcript, please send a legal size, stamped (40¢), self-addressed envelope and \$1.00 to cover printing to Kathy Mazzetti, 23011 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills, MI 48024

For those of us who attended Joan's talk, the magic of "dancing" with her was a learning experience that most of us will never forget. Joan has a beautiful way of relaying her message. Her humor and wisdom came through loud and clear. She has a way of drawing her audience into her arms and heart until they find themselves one with her words and feeling. As I've been transcribing the tape, I've found that there were times that I got lost in the "moment" and when I sat down with the tape and the earphones and put pen to paper, I realized how powerful her words and teachings really are! For those of you who missed Joan's talk, I'd like to share with you, in part, some of her message:

That the warrior tradition also exists in the native American world is also not that peculiar. 2,500 years ago, a very neurotic monk went to Sakyamuni Buddha and said, "Sir, I'm being asked to keep so many precepts and I tell you all these rules. . . I can't have garlic, I can't have onions, I have to go to bed at this time, I have to get up at this time, I can't lie, steal, cheat, I have to wear this, I can't do that. Sir, it's just too much and I just can't handle it" Sakyamuni Buddha was a very wise and compassionate gentleman and he said "Okay, what if I just ask you to do one thing, just one thing, you think you can do it?" The monk thought for a minute and he looked up and he said, "Sakyamuni Buddha, sure, if it's just one thing" The Buddha said, "Well, I only ask you to do one thing. I only ask you to tame your mind." This is not to make a slave of it. This is to dance awake this dream . . . to become one with the dream that we know and sleep, and to dance awake this dream. To become one with the dream which is now, as one attempts to become one with the dream that we know and sleep and to dance awake this dream . . . to awaken in this dream . . . to awaken the dream . . . to become awake. And so the native Americans who work with dreams in a very deep way and who were indeed just like our Asian brothers and sisters, tremendous warriors, took the metaphor of the role of the warrior and brought it into their spiritual life. Oh, indeed as in Asia, there were those warriors who killed human beings and those warriors who fought over territory and ideals, but the contrary existed as well. There were those warriors who realized that the true battlefield was the unconscious, was the psyche. So they developed immense courage, immense heart, and they entered the territory of their own unknown. The territory of the greater unknown, the greater mystery, the mystery that dances with life and death. For the native American and for most Shamanic people, there is an absence of fear when one moves into the role.

(cont'd on page 7)

Dear Barbara,

Welcome to the Presidency! I, and members of the board, wish you luck and good health and energy and extend our arms across to Michigan to say we're glad to have you. Let me share some of my feelings about stepping down from the presidential post after a two-year tenure: I went in in 1981, after being on the Board of Directors for nine years with a great deal of trepidation. Was I a good enough organizer? Could I run a meeting without letting it run away with itself? Would I be able to gain support to initiate and implement new growth activities? What if I formed a committee and no one showed up and I got burnt out from seven major involvements? Was I good enough to represent the IPA "in the world." What I dreaded feeling the most was: was it all up to me, and could I get no help without feeling that I was imposing on reluctant and too busy committee members? After all, wasn't it finally my responsibility?

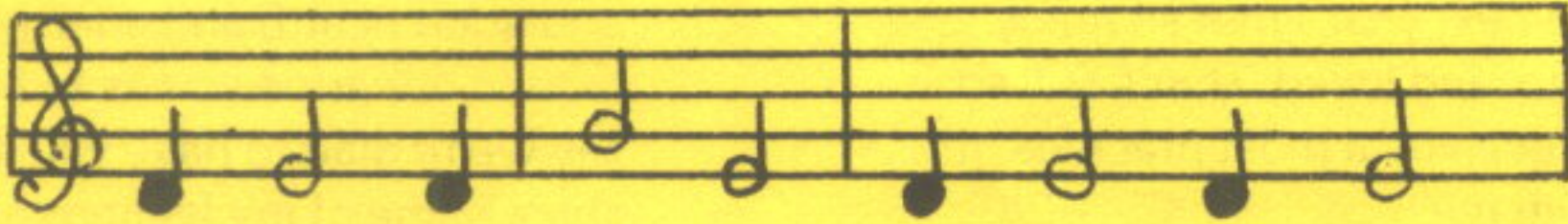
Things somehow got done. Don't take anything for granted, pick up the telephone, be straight, and ask for help until you get it. Get some good resource people and places. It'll be a little tough from Detroit, but on the other hand people (me) will be more willing to put themselves out (reach out) to help from that distance to make things go and make it easier for you.

The last two Annual Conventions have been high points in the history of the IPA. The themes have been important — sexuality and spirit — and were implemented with fervent energy, commitment and awareness. I think we've set a precedent that feels like a rolling snowball. We all need to get with the momentum — therapist, patients, friends, potential members — and explore, and slowly and surely extend, inside and out. We have to find ways of doing this that feel right. I want to help.

Love, Alec



We are the flow, We are the ebb,



We are the weavers, We are the web.

Dancing with Change

by Larry Schumer, 1983 Convention Chairman

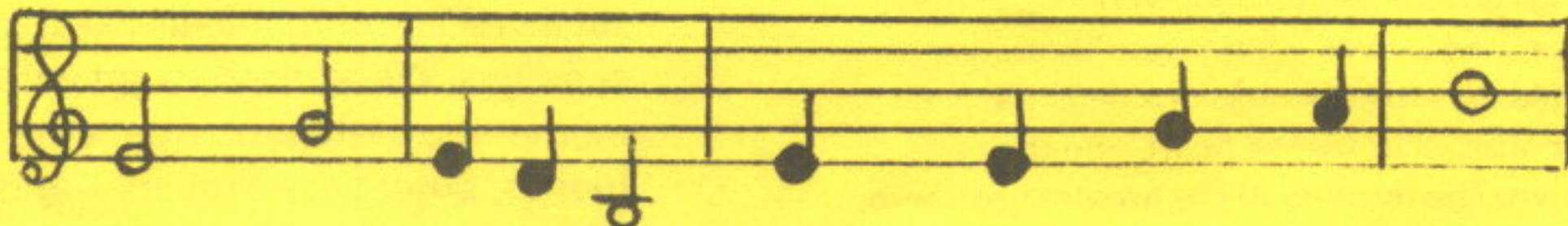
As I drove down the Jersey 'Pike on Wednesday morning, I could feel my stomach begin to churn as I thought about the next five days. The rain on the windshield did little to boost my spirits. Thoughts kept running through my head—will the tent people be on time? How will Ross and I construe the pyramid? How am I going to do the opening ceremony? What's going to happen Friday night on THE QUEST? Will Joan make it in from Omega? Am I going to make it through this convention?

Well, it looks as if I not only survived, but experienced one of the best conventions for myself yet. In spite of my fears and anxieties, I let all the love of the IPA reach me. I relaxed and enjoyed. My friends were supportive and loving, and the convention sailed smoothly from Wednesday to Monday. The feedback I received at the convention was overwhelmingly positive. Everyone seemed to have a good time—playing, learning, and growing. What more could I ask for? Well, there

was more. Joan Halifax. Her presentation on Saturday mesmerized everyone as she spoke of the wounded warrior, compassion, and change. Thanks again, Joan. You definitely added a Dimension to Our Human Spirit.

And congratulations to our new officers, Barbara Valassis, President, and Art Sichel, Vice President. With new leaders come new ideas; I look forward to working with both of you in the upcoming year. I now turn over the Annual Convention responsibilities to Art, who will be the chairperson for 1984. So my life now goes through a transition—back to normality.

As we left on Monday afternoon, once again relaxed and fulfilled, I thought of all that had led to our five days of sharing at Appel Farm—many hours of discussion, writing, and organizing. But none of this happens in a vacuum. If you joined us at Appel Farm and liked something in particular, or were upset by things that were or weren't there, please let us know *now*. We need and welcome your input *before* things are planned for next year. Your input enables us to learn and continue to evolve—as Joan Halifax said, we must learn to "dance with change." Let us all dance together!



Oh, Great Spirit, Earth, Wind, Sun and Sea,



You are inside, and all around me.

Letter to the editor:

I am still savoring the good experiences I had at the recent Annual Convention. It was a good convention; good people, old friends and new ones, good interactions, good energy. I enjoyed the presentations that I attended, and received good feedback and energy from the ones I gave. Joan Halifax's keynote presentation was a peak experience. So were several of the other large group activities: Alec Rubin's "Welcome;" Ross's and Al's "Quest."

As Loretta Fogel says, "We transform the place with our energy." That's true. It's felt immediately as one arrives. But is it possible to find and assemble at a comfortable site that needs less transformation?

I am also concerned about the dwindling convention attendance. Does site have something to do with this? I feel program content, in theme presentations, professional-experiential presentations and social interaction, has been getting better over the years. Why is there a consistent drop in attendance at the Annual Convention? It seems to me that in the last eight years there has been a 50% drop in convention attendance and consequent drop in general membership of the same proportions. It's an issue I raise periodically, as some of the present and former board members know. I'm bringing it before the general membership with this letter to the editor of the *Newsletter* for the total membership to become aware of a critical membership situation.

This is not to say that Larry Schumer and committee did not do a superb job of organizing this year's Annual Convention and providing us with good company, good experiences and good fun. My compliments to them all. And, my best wishes and support to Barbara Valassis, our new president.

Arnold Buchheimer

Dr. Michael Holden—A Dialogue

At the Annual Convention, Larry King shared with us the tape he received from E. Michael Holden. The following are excerpts from the correspondence between Larry and Dr. Holden. Thank you, Larry.

Dear Dr. Holden,

I had the pleasure of meeting you at a lecture you did with Dr. Janov in New York City in the fall of 1972. I have just heard a rumor that you are no longer with the Primal Institute.

I am quite active in the International Primal Association, which is open to anyone interested in primal therapy, be they therapist, client, researcher, or just searching. The IPA will shortly be having a convention. I am enclosing a flyer with hope that you will be interested and able to attend.

I would not do this if you were still a part of the Institute because I have heard that Dr. Janov has consistently rejected the IPA's suggestions of his participation, but scuttlebut has it that you have left.

In fact, I've heard that deep religious feelings played a role in your leaving. I don't know how much of this is accurate, but if it is, it is remarkable, because I am hearing more and more of others who are also discovering a path of primal experiences leading to spiritual feelings.

So strong is that interest that the IPA convention this September has taken as its theme: Dimensions of Our Human Spirit. Perhaps you would not only like to attend but would like to lead a workshop; as of this writing there is still a time period or two open. You would be most welcome either way.

Very truly yours,
Larry King

Dear Larry,

I left the Primal Institute in October 1981. I stopped needing to primal on August 12, 1977.

In mid-'79, I had an extraordinary series of profound religious conversion experiences which continue to the present. I rapidly became a born-again Christian.

Primal is interesting, but it is not the way. Jesus Christ is the way. For your benefit and anyone else who'll listen, I've enclosed a tape you may play anywhere—even at the IPA convention if you want!

Sincerely, In Christ,
Michael Holden

Dear Michael,

What a blockbuster your tape proved to be.

I played it twice at the International Primal Association Convention so everybody got a chance to hear it. Some listened to it a second time, some took extensive notes and some taped it so they could study it further. I also made a copy to loan out so it could be listened to at home and I've many requests for it.

The reactions were varied: some felt you were right-on and others wondered how "a man of science could go so far astray," with most being somewhere in between. Many said they wanted to study or think further about what you said.

You seemed to make the deepest impression on those who had the strongest early religious training and the least on those who were antagonistic to deep spirituality in general.

There was so much in the tape that many are still discussing it, absorbing it, trying to sort it all out. I am one of them.

Everyone in the IPA was very appreciative of the time and interest you took to join us via the tape; to that I add my own personal thanks.

I hope to hear more about your experiences, will share what I can of mine with you, and trust that we shall someday meet.

Most sincerely,
Larry King

From workshop feedback. This was sent to Dr. Holden:

Excellent revelation. . . I wished we had a go around to receive people's input and reactions to the process Dr. Holden went through. . . nowhere in the tape does Michael talk about any social contact, loved ones, the people sharing his life and if anyone stops breathing for three minutes, primal or nonprimal, they are very likely to hallucinate about the white light of the laboring room. The white-coated Doctor Savior? . . . Holden's a brilliant headman but where are his feelings?

Dear Larry,

I am a very emotional and feeling person. I cry very easily if hurt. I experience joy every day. The tape was for revelation of the Lord, not for discussion of feelings. My experiences were in no way hallucinations.

From 2/74 to 3/76, I put in more than 500 hours of agonized newborn crying, with *dozens* of birth and prebirth scenes. I know my birth in detail. All that stuff was done, over, finished, complete, by 3/76. I have no need to dredge it up again. The fact that I have a stable, loving wife and two neat kids, no doubt helped my therapy—but per se, they had nothing to do with my revelations from God.

Sincerely, In Christ,
Michael

Convention Feedback

From tape-recorded comments gathered by Mae Sparks and Barbara Valassis at the conference.

Ruth Green: This is the first IPA conference I lived in. I gave a workshop in Cherry Hill two years ago. I think that what I see here is a lot of people who have cleared a lot of distortion away from their being, so they can be closer to their truth and then allow their truth to penetrate their relationships with others.

As for my workshop, it was a high-energy group and a lot of them are healers and therapists. They are looking to grow and expand their consciousnesses into other states and realities. All I did was give them permission, and tell them it's wonderful to do and you don't need much more than a loving compassionate heart and the wish to help somebody through the darkest passages. So my experiences here have been of intimacy and growth. I was able to go back on stage as a child and totally experience my playfulness and my aliveness. I thank God for that.

George Cohen: I'm drunk. It was my first IPA Annual Convention and a very thorough experience; very cleansing, on a lot of levels. One thing I really liked was the range of workshops offered. The theme being spirituality in the broader sense. There were people with energy on a wide range of things which gave a depth to the convention. Not just concepts of primal therapy and in-depth therapy in the sense of the traditional that we know but, to something larger including the arts, creativity, special feelings of all kinds. People came here, including Barb, who gave a workshop that was new to my experience. Ruth Green and others, too. That, to me, was wonderful. Great workshops, nice people, a lot of openness. I think the challenge of a convention is, after five days, to take this home and integrate on deeper levels into one's own life. I think it is as Ruth Green said, we take it to a different level and reinforce, center the truth. I had a wonderful convention. Thank you.

Kate McAteer: I thought the workshops were great. I thought for some reason this year they were a little different. I didn't feel like I was going to the same old workshops over and over again. There was a great amount of sharing that went on in the workshops that I particularly liked. It was less of people getting up and talking at the group and more of them presenting ideas and then letting them share about this particular feeling. I liked that they more or less incorporated the theme rather than just being workshops. In Gro's workshop people really shared a lot about their own reality and their own feeling about spirituality and it was really moving; to have people not just generalize about something, but to specifically take an idea and relate it to their lives.

Gail Clark: I thought the workshops as part of this convention were really excellent. I found myself being interested, involved, welcomed by the workshop's leaders and the people attending the workshops. I am not good at talking on tape, ask me some questions.

Interviewer: What did you think about your peer group?

Gail: That was a special time for me to come back to earth, sometimes I kind of flew out into outerspace during the day or into a hole in my own being. Coming to peer group was a chance to touch base with people. I arrived here Wednesday so it was a whole blossoming process that was happening this week and it was really nice.

Art Sichel: The peer group was special; I don't know what others were like, but ours was special. In it was a remarkable opportunity for us to open our souls and share with people who were there when we needed to be ourselves, to have somebody be there for us. What's to say about that, except that it made a very big difference in how I felt and what I got out of the convention.

Interviewer: What did you think of the convention as a whole?

Art: I'm really sad it's over.

Gail: Me too.

Interviewer: Me three.

Art: I haven't heard of a single workshop that was a clinker, they all felt new and in every one I was in or heard about, something special happened. Gail and I did a dream workshop every morning and every morning someone showed up, even this morning [the last day of the convention], and it wasn't because we changed format—we didn't.

Gail: We stayed with a basic format except for one morning. The workshop changed because there were different people each morning.

Art: Gail and I aren't real experienced as workshop leaders, so mainly we really wanted to feel people got something from our workshop and they did. It was wonderful that they would come and use it. Some people there really turned some things around for themselves that seemed big and important. It was wonderful to watch and to be a part of.

Gail: The other thing was getting up every morning at 7:45; that was hard. People made it worth getting up so early each morning.

Andrew Dislanger: It is my suggestion that they set aside free time, what we call "Nite Flite," when people could present a workshop or have a discussion. Have a bulletin board that allows for people to sign on so they don't have to go through a lot to sign up.

Mary Thompson: This has been very, very special for me. Everything, workshops, just being with people. It seemed to be at the right place always. You get away from people for a long time and, in the course of all of the business, forget how much they mean to you. Deep down, it's still there. It's nice to come and renew, to touch base, and this has become base.

Gro Robinson: When I went to my last workshop—Loose Ends, by Larry—Ross said something about the fact that he was not overwhelmed this year, but instead was whelmed. I felt that way, too. I loved our theme this year; loved seeing seeds planted, sprouted; and loved to see what happened to people. The Quest was really a very, very special time, I was aware of it building up. My own workshop

(cont'd on page 7)

Summary of Presentations

by Barbara Valassis

Arnold Buchheimer's presentation, "Return to Birth," was based on interviews he conducted in several cities — Denver, Berkeley, New York and Boston — about birth experiences during primal therapy. He described regression to birth as a sensory experience, and presented various theories about regression.

Bill Smukler's workshop was based on his book, "Dream Revelations," which described 412 of his dreams over the period of a year. He discussed methods of working with dreams and then demonstrated, using one of the participants' dreams. Group members each imagined they were part of the dream and then gave feedback on what they experienced. Then Bill worked very intensely with another person, helping her to become a very scary part of her dream and then to own the power of that part. Someone else was triggered by the heavy emotional impact and Bill helped her to work through her feelings also. Bill's timing and use of role was powerful.

Joan Halifax

(cont'd from page 6)

It occurs to me that most of us know the courage and the strength it takes to delve into the unconscious, the primal pain and the battle within that requires us to be strong warriors. It's a role I hadn't personally thought about. Yet, it's very clear to me that if there is a battle to be fought, I am open to the knowledge of what it means to possess the tools to win! Joan goes on in her talk to teach about those tools and awarennesees that a strong warrior needs to know. I think her message is so valuable and I feel such joy in being in the position to pass it along.

Wishing you all a happy year and I hope to share with you again next year.

Love, Kathy

Convention Feedback

(cont'd from page 6)

was a quest for reality as our key to our own spirituality. That's really what's happened for me. The deeper I go down to my roots the firmer my feet are planted on the ground. I go barefoot in this wonderful grass, take in the stars at night, dancing feels like our spiritual dimension. The Cabaret just blew my mind. I think we in the IPA have something very special.

Cynthia Robinson: I've taken more risks at this convention and gotten more out of this convention than the law allows. Being on stage in the play was real scary, scarier than any other risk I've taken here, and it was so much fun. I didn't even get tongue-tied! That's what risking is all about.

Clifford Jackson: I came to the convention with several issues in my life with which I felt incomplete. While I was here those surfaced as dreams. It was my good fortune to have the opportunity to work on them in a creative manner. In the form of a workshop — "Dream Away" — which was presented by Art Sichel and Gail Clark. I was given the opportunity to present my dream, redream it, draw it, and get feedback. I really appreciated Art and Gail's skills.

The other dream workshop I attended was presented by Bill Smuckler. Bill wrote a book on dreams which seemed almost encyclopedic. Bill explained some of his various techniques for dealing with dreams. If you can give the dream a title you have practically explained the dream.

Congress Report

by Arnold Buchheimer

I attended the first International Congress on Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology in Toronto. It was organized by Tom Verney, a keynote speaker at the IPA regional conference in New York in 1982. It was an exhilarating experience. The content of the papers can be divided into four parts: 1. Prenatal and perinatal research. 2. The advocates who state loud and clear: "give birth back to the woman and take it out of the stirrups." 3. Several very interesting tapes that presented corrective birth-abreactive experiences by adult clients. 4. The psychohistorian interpreting history through birth and its attendant traumas. The Canadian Broadcasting Company presented a three-part series entitled "Coming into the World." You may send for the transcripts to CBC in Toronto. The publication of all the abstracts of the presentation is available from the Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology Association of North America, 93 Harbor Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. If you want a copy of my presentation there, entitled "Memory: Preverbal and Verbal," write to me: Arnold Buchheimer, Rossiter Road, Richmond, Mass. 01254.

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I breathe in through all of my pores,
your lovingness, your gentle caring,
It fills me full, it heals my hurt,
It lights my fire of life, it cleanses me,
It has set me free to be all that I am to be,
I breathe in through every pore and release to you
through all of me, all that enters,
and the cycle of life goes on.
As you give to me I return to you,
our spirits touch and our love is forever free.

Mae Sparks, October 1983

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