

PRIMAL

*Supporting Growth and Healing Through Deep Feeling Process*

SPRING NEWSLETTER • MARCH 2006

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Spring  
Retreat  
2006

*Kirkridge Retreat Center  
Bangor, Pennsylvania*



**Thursday, May 4 - Sunday, May 7, 2006**

By Bob Holmes

Greetings IPA members and friends! It's Bob from Canada inviting you to participate in the 2006 IPA Spring Retreat. It has been a very strange winter here in Toronto—hardly any cold temperatures, barely any snow, and weather more like northern Europe than the usual frigid weather of the “Great White North.” Wiarion Willie (Canada’s albino groundhog) has promised an early spring, so by May 4 the mountain-side flowers at Kirkridge Retreat Center should be in full bloom.

It will be our fourth Spring Retreat at Kirkridge and I am really looking forward to attending. Once again we will have the opportunity to come together as friends to rejuvenate body and soul, and to explore and express ourselves in a safe and intimate setting. Ways in which we can do this might involve music, dance, art, massage, primal process, personal sharing, poetry and other interesting workshops.

Of course there is always the option of spending quiet time in your own space, or outside in the natural surroundings. Relax and meditate, or walk in the woods, visit the amazing standing stones and labyrinth, or spend sometime observing the creatures of the pond.

The weekend is yours to enjoy however you wish. There is nothing you “have to” participate in, but plenty you will want to, I’m sure. Joining the fun on cabaret night and “going wild” at the dance party are sure-fire ways to shake off the cobwebs of winter.

The IPA Spring Retreat is the best Thursday-to-Sunday “time out” on offer, and we’d like you to take us up on it. Come as you are and re-treat yourself! Make your reservation as soon as you can, as space is limited. Certainly, if you have any questions or concerns call or email me and I’ll be happy to talk with you.

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Next deadline: June 1, 2006

# IPA Convention 2006

## The Feeling Universe: Consciousness, Emotion and Spirituality A new theme and a new location

By Daniel Miller

The 2006 annual convention is developing into a very special occasion for the IPA this August 21-27. We have a new, beautiful, comfortable facility in the Pocono mountains called *The Country Place* that is easily accessible and is blessed with extras such as a sauna and electronic recording capabilities we have not had elsewhere. The theme itself, *The Feeling Universe: Consciousness, Emotion and Spirituality*, maintains our commitment to prioritizing feelings while expanding the possibility of investigating their relationship to conscious healing and spirituality. We also have enlisted two renowned keynote speakers instead of just one, to address a variety of approaches that will help us to integrate these themes.

One of our keynote speakers, Dr. Dan Benor, is a physician and alternative researcher. He has become a unique practitioner of self-healing through body, feelings, mind, and spirit, assisting children as well as adults to integrate and affirm positive feelings. Dr. Benor is also a renowned researcher who has integrated information about new healing modalities into a book that has become a staple for the healing professions. He will present an experiential workshop using his methods as well as a keynote address. His keynote address, on Friday August 25th, is entitled *Healing Feelings Through Body, Mind and Spirit*. Additionally, he will give a three-hour workshop on Saturday morning entitled *WHEE (Wholistic Hybrid of EMDR & EFT) and Related Self-Healing Approaches*, an original

method he has developed for his practice. His background in training includes primal therapy.

Our other keynoter, Dr. John Cogswell, is a psychotherapist who has studied in India. Cogswell will relate the world of deep emotional psychotherapy to the world of consciousness and spirituality, and how to integrate a sense of self with a sense of oneness. His keynote address on Thursday, August 24, is titled *Walking in Your Shoes: Connecting Deep Emotional with Deep Spiritual Process*. "Walking in your shoes"

is an empathetic way to deeply relate to another through "transpersonal" or non-ordinary means. The presentation will be followed by a three-hour, deeply informative and experiential workshop. Dr. Cogswell will explain and show how, as conscious beings, we are related to all other conscious beings in a larger field of interconnected consciousness.

We have also arranged a special showing of *What the Bleep Do We Know?!*, the highly-praised film that integrates science

into the mix that attempts to explain our humanness. An exploration of the film's ideas will be led by Alan Steinfeld, director of New Realities, an organization bringing avant-garde ideas to public awareness. We are planning a panel discussion and ample time will be given to audience participation. We expect that sparks will fly!



Photos of *The Country Place*

Continued on page 10

# Three Poems

Winter Primal Retreat 2006, Isla Mujeres, Mexico, 2/3/06

By Harriet Geller

I.

iguana mommy frond friend  
turquoise black tan in layers: sea  
gray white curlicues but no blue: sky  
magenta underside of green: leaf  
tufts of pine needles gasping for air

Oh, there's the blue way south  
How many years have these plants been neighbors  
getting along together?

bird circles palm – sampling all those holes in rows  
we wondered about  
is the blue coming my way? I could use it  
to bare my ass today – shameful feelings already bared

boat wake waves gasoline trail  
that's gone now  
conch shell has pink labia exposed

black birds angling the drafts – never see them dive  
shore ghosts of dead sea birds

II.

straw blown  
withered and dry  
clouds in startling shapes  
proud heads on a gray shelf  
washed with cirrus  
backdrop for a bird skimmer  
when do I soar?  
I blame you for the waves  
receding from the shore

III.

Old Navy flip-flop in burgundy,  
shaped orthopedically by foot.  
In return, the crotch between my toes  
is deepened. Your waffled sole

is smoothed and cracked as mine is  
from salt water and sand and miles  
of journeying on your flimsy back.  
We sit together on a beach,

au naturel, you created red  
as a beet, and me longing for some  
of your intensity, but have only  
one more day in the sun.

Then you will return to the rear  
of the closet, and my foot will walk  
the cold concrete, protected  
by layers like a lifetime's armoring.

## IPA Events

### Spring Board Meeting

Saturday, April 22–Sunday, April 23, 2006  
Farmington Hills, Michigan, USA  
**Barbara Bryan: 248-478-5559**  
[president@primals.org](mailto:president@primals.org)

### Spring Retreat 2006

Thursday, May 4–Sunday, May 7  
Kirkridge Retreat Center  
Bangor, Pennsylvania, USA  
[www.primals.org/activities.html#retreat](http://www.primals.org/activities.html#retreat)  
**Bob Holmes: 1-877-258-9315** (toll free)  
[link.2.holmes@sympatico.ca](mailto:link.2.holmes@sympatico.ca)

### Summer Convention 2006

Monday August 21–Sunday August 27

*The Feeling Universe: Consciousness,  
Emotion and Spirituality*

Keynote Presenters: Daniel J. Benor, M.D.  
John F. Cogswell, Ph.D.

Country Place Retreat & Conference Center  
White Haven, Pennsylvania, USA  
[www.retreatpa.com](http://www.retreatpa.com)

Details announced at:  
[www.primals.org/convention.html](http://www.primals.org/convention.html)

**Co-chairs: Wayne Carr and Daniel Miller**  
[convention@primals.org](mailto:convention@primals.org)

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## Member News

### Primal Integration Center of Michigan Intensives

\$160.00 fee includes food, lodging, and airport pick-up. Friday 7:30 p.m.–Sat. 5:00 pm. Led by Barbara Bryan and staff.

**April 7-8, 2006 (\$160)**

**May 26-29, 2006 (\$375)**

Friday 7:30 pm through Monday 4:00 pm. Led by Barbara Bryan, Bob Holmes, and Michael Hoyland-Young.

**1-Day Free Primal Intensive! Saturday, June 17, 2006**

Part of the Intermediate Training In Primal Integration

**July 7-8, 2006 (\$160)**

**Contact: Barbara Bryan**

**248-478-5559**

**babryan@twmi.rr.com**

### Training in Primal Integration

Sponsored by the Primal Integration Center of Michigan. Intensive training to develop facilitation skills for primal-style or deep feeling work.

Leaders: Barbara Bryan, MA, CSW, and Sam Turton

**Advanced: March 12–18, 2006**

**Intermediate: June 11–17, 2006**

**Initial: October 15–21, 2006**

Call 248-478-5559 or visit [primalworks.com/events.html](http://primalworks.com/events.html)

### Sam Turton UK Experiential Training & Intensive

May 14–20, 2006

Harnham Farm, Somerset

Led by Sam Turton, assisted by Esta Powell, MA, MS.

£630 includes workshop and full board and lodging. Three daily supervised co-therapy sessions, 8 participant limit, with demo sessions and post-session discussion with constructive feedback.

For more information and registration, contact:

Julia Mitchell

[jpol1400@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jpol1400@yahoo.co.uk)

[primalworks.com/events.html](http://primalworks.com/events.html)

# Snail Wail: Seduced by Psychodrama

By Linda Marks

Since Susan Aaron presented Psychodramatic bodywork at the IPA summer convention some years ago, I've fallen madly in love with psychodrama. In fact, it has been so exhilarating that before I knew it, I found myself training to be a practitioner. I'd like to share some of what I've experienced and why I feel psychodrama is such a wonderful complement to primal. Like primal, psychodrama is an alternative to talk therapy. It revisits old feelings to heal old wounds. It values action, spontaneity and catharsis. It works on the body and on the unconscious. Like primal, it really works. You can see people change.

Psychodrama is conceptually more complex than primal, however. It deals deeply with the importance of human connection through the sharing of feelings and studying the roles people play. It also emphasizes "concretization," making important entities and concepts palpable and visible so they can be contemplated, manipulated, and ultimately changed in the psyche and in the unconscious. This has all given rise to a rich repertoire of terrific techniques for bringing up, clarifying, and sharing feelings and attitudes.

Psychodrama is typically done in a group and tends to be unhurried and very interactive. It is carefully orchestrated so that everyone present gets to share feelings verbally with others a number of times. The intense release of feelings we're used to in primal is never forced and usually happens only during brief moments of catharsis achieved spontaneously by the chosen protagonist in a drama.

Warm-ups are carefully planned and executed to gradually build trust, safety, and spontaneity in all participants. People are expected to participate in warm-ups that involve physically moving around as well as simple statements. "Spectograms" involve lining up in the order of who came the farthest, for example, or who has been doing psychodrama the longest or who is the most

anxious (infinite variations). People may be asked to tell their neighbors why they placed themselves in their spots in the line. "Locograms" involve each choosing which of several labeled locations on the floor appeals to him and telling someone why. Examples: Feeling, Thinking or Acting; Role of Parent, Sibling or Child; Feelings of Anger, Sadness, Fear, or Happiness (again, infinite variations). We not only get to contemplate our choices, we get to see at a glance how many and who have made similar or different choices. We can see how we fit into the group. The same goes for "step-in" warm-ups that participants can help formulate. The group stands in a circle and someone steps in and says, "Who likes to read?" or ". . . has a pet?" or ". . . is feeling stuck?" (Yet again, infinite variations). Those who agree, step in too. The last

warm-up is often: "Put your hand on the shoulder of someone who might, "understand your feelings about . . ." or "could support you in. . ." or eventually, "whose drama would you like to see (yes, infinite variations, again). Emotions are gradually warmed up.

People simultaneously share feelings with others and make connections. Empathy is created. The respectful environment reminds me of the one that reigns at the wonderful IPA Convention women's group. It can feel like a warm bath: very moving!

Finally the protagonist gets chosen and the drama begins. The director walks the protagonist around clarifying what she wants out of the drama. The protagonist chooses people to play significant parts of the drama. (People can refuse). Sometimes they play people and sometimes parts of the protagonist's psyche, wisdom figures, or even important objects. For those who know sand play, it's like enlarging your sand tray, having your friends be the objects, and then giving them lines. If you don't get to be the protagonist, you may find yourself playing someone's wicked step-mother, their fear or compassion, their Higher Power, or even their

*"A rich repertoire of terrific techniques for bringing up, clarifying, and sharing feelings and attitudes."*

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# Is This Safe Primal Therapy?

By Pat Törngren

*This is an abbreviation of the article, How Do We Know if we Are Getting Safe Primal Therapy? originally written for the Primal Institute Newsletter in 2004.*

When Primal Therapy was first described by Dr Arthur Janov in the early 1970s, it was considered revolutionary. But today, many therapists around the globe are using primal techniques in their practices, with varying degrees of success, from highly successful to potentially dangerous.

By using a few simply described methods, it is possible for almost anyone with the knowledge of psychological techniques to get people into reliving childhood traumas, and sometimes even birth. So what is it that makes certain therapies very safe and supportive, and others dangerous for the patient undergoing the process?

I believe the answer lies in the context in which the reliving takes place. The relationship between the therapist and the patient is probably as important as any technique. In the *Primal Institute Newsletter* Jan/Feb/March 2004, Barry Bernfeld addresses one of the most important aspects in his article *Protecting the Primal Revolution*. He says, "The unconscious will only give up its secrets, will only reveal the pain from within when there is true safety."

We now know that it is not desirable to smash through someone's defenses with a sledgehammer, or pry open the unconscious with a crow bar! This "busting" of people's defenses was done in the very early days. It is to the credit of the Primal Institute that the danger of this is understood and such techniques are no longer practiced at the P.I., as it can take the person into breakdown rather than healing.

The most important factor in safe and successful therapy is long-term follow-up by one main therapist with whom the person works over time—a therapist with whom one is able to form a "transference relationship," and can count on to be there well into the foreseeable future. It is only as the person learns to trust this relationship that the unconscious will allow deep pain to emerge.

This does not mean that we can't work well with several therapists or buddies, but

there needs to be at least one constant and stable person who will be there over time to create true safety. I have been in therapy with the same therapist, once a week—with emergency sessions in between when needed—for the past 10 years. This has proved helpful for me.

On rare occasions I have had to work with a colleague of his when he was away, and initially had an interesting experience in this regard. A few years ago I had my first primal with my therapist's locum—over the telephone, before I had even met him! The traumatic death of a beloved pet had triggered early birth feelings, and I couldn't hold them down till my first appointment.

So I called my therapist's locum, whom I had never even spoken to before. I could barely introduce myself before saying, "I am in pain right now, can you be there for me?" The locum, who had received my call on his cell phone, asked me to give him a few minutes to pull his car off the road, and was then happy to give me his full attention.

I explained to him that I didn't need him to say anything, and within seconds I was deep into the primal, crying like a baby. We arranged a follow-up session, and later that week when I arrived for my first appointment he admitted that this was something he had never experienced before.

We did some very good work during the weeks that my therapist was away, but I have to admit that I was very happy when he returned. He has consistently provided solid containment for me for almost a 10-year period. As a result, though the depth of my primals may not be dependent on him, my level of healing is due to the fact that I can count on him to be there for me and offer me a secure and safe space into the foreseeable future. As a result, my birth pain has emerged spontaneously because he made it safe for my unconscious to "offer up its treasures" of its own accord. Without that kind of support, revisiting my birth could have been dangerous for me, because I was born "clinically dead." It is also important that my therapist has never pushed me to go there, and my primals have gone back through second-line connections before any very early pain emerged spontaneously.

## Member News

### Esta Powell

Esta has over 12 years experience as a therapist in Europe and US, and has specialized training in Psychosynthesis, Gestalt Therapy, Psychodrama, and Primal Integration. She recently moved from Columbus, Ohio, to Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, and joined Dr. Lisa Berger's practice. Dr. Berger is a registered psychologist in the province of Ontario, and the services offered in her practice are covered by extended health care plans. Esta offers counseling and deep feeling/primal work for individuals and couples. Phone sessions available.

[www.primalmatters.com](http://www.primalmatters.com)

614-893-3527

[www.janiceberger.com](http://www.janiceberger.com)

905-836-4555

### Susan Cowan-Jenssen

#### *Primal Psychotherapy* chapter

Susan is the author of the chapter *Primal Psychotherapy* from the book entitled, *How Does Psychotherapy Work*, edited by Jane Ryan and published by Karnacs, 2005 ([karnacbooks.com](http://karnacbooks.com)).

This chapter describes the work of the London Association of Primal Psychotherapists. The author discusses the role of memory in the light of current research in neuroscience. Many of Janov's theoretical ideas have proven very prescient. Jenssen argues, however, that the need for emotional expression is not in conflict with the discipline and boundaries of more conventional therapies, and that both elements are needed for a successful therapy. The chapter includes two vignettes which illustrate the clinical work.

[www.lapp.org](http://www.lapp.org)

## New Members

Welcome to another new member of our growing, world-wide IPA community!

### Julia Mitchell

Gloucestershire, UK

*Continued on page 11*

# An AFGO\* Par Excellence

*Mini Primal Intensive, Enniskerry, Ireland, January 19–23, 2006*

By Jacqui Marsden

I had very much looked forward to this time in Ireland for the months and weeks preceding it. Five of us gathered in Enniskerry, near Dublin, for a long weekend—a girly weekend with a difference!

We enjoyed magnificent hospitality together, including some wonderful candle-lit dinners (with well over 20 candles)! One enjoyable evening was spent at Johnnie Fox's pub—its claim to fame is that it is supposedly the highest pub in Ireland—with a sawdust-strewn floor and characteristic décor full of reminders of days gone by. Unfortunately we missed the live music—maybe another day. The surrounding countryside in County Wicklow is truly beautiful—a therapeutic environment in itself. Dreamy views beckoned from the windows, and some of us managed to venture out into the village and surrounding areas for some brief walks.

Members facilitated one another as we did deep feeling work for three full, uninterrupted days. So many things were learned or re-learned or understood on deeper, experiential levels.

I learned to receive comfort on a very deep level, to cry deeply with another. This had not been a dimension for me before—not like this. I learned more about protecting myself from disrespect, abuses, violations or boundary crossings by not unconsciously giving permission for it on deep levels, unknown even to myself. A blind spot revealed! I learned, once again, about the power of projections, and how deeply they can damage relationships!

I learned how emotional need can cloud my judgment and skew my perceptions—I thought I knew this. I obviously needed to re-learn this lesson. I learned that the common denominator with myself and those who may have projected onto me is our brokenness. I learned to own and express my feelings more fully.

I remembered that I am not responsible for other people's feelings. I learned experientially how easily I can slip back into the feelings of a hurt child—this child needs attending to. I learned again about the necessity of absolute trust and congruence for any real therapeutic encounter. I re-learned the extent to which I am contaminated by my past experiences, and how very clever my unconscious mind is—much more clever than I am in attempting to complete unfinished business by re-constellating the original dynamics that caused me such pain. Incredible!

I learned to trust my own instincts more, to listen more carefully to my hunches, to remember that the small things



*From left: Clare Gill, Julia Mitchell, Esta Powell, Jacqui Marsden, Sheila Turner*

really are the big things. I re-learned that defense busting is never a good idea. I learned that I should schedule in a week of integration time after an intensive to process such a deep experience. This is called good self-care.

I re-learned (experientially) that abusive relationships in our past, whether emotional, physical, sexual or spiritual, strongly influence our ability to discern our own boundaries accurately. It is as if the ability to protect ourselves has become compromised. I knew this, but now I felt it on a much deeper level—a big difference! Because our boundaries have been violated, we need to re-build them. This has to be done within a deeply trusting and safe relationship. We need to actually experience what it feels like to be seen and known and fully accepted in our pain before we can value ourselves sufficiently to not allow further abuses to take place.

I am now able to take more time for myself, and hope that the above challenges will ultimately strengthen me and make me live more fully and more consciously.

I came away from the intensive feeling as though I had a “book” inside of me that I would be reading for a long time to come, a book full of wisdom, insight and truth, a book full of both sadness and joy. My responsibility to myself is to create the time in my full life to “read this book,” and to fully process what happened to me.

My responsibility to my family and friends is that I shall be more aware of boundary crossings from my professional life that could intrude and rob them of my availability. My responsibility to my clients is to continue to apply what I have learned in my counseling practice.

Thank you, all of you, and very much including our generous hosts, for making this enriching weekend possible.

*\*Editor's clarification: AFGO: Another Fucking Growth Opportunity.*

# March Madness?

## No, *The Primates Intensive in Ireland*

By Julia Mitchell

It's taken a long time to be able to get this down on paper. I think it's because the result of the weekend primal meeting was unexpected, intense, and took some time to integrate and begin to make sense.

As someone who fills her days with work, rushing about, stress, and struggle, the prospect of three whole days of meaningful contact and time was one that lifted my spirits and was a focus of happiness and excitement. With car parking booked at Bristol Airport, 18-year-old son bribed with money as compensation for gallivanting mother (though he enjoys the opportunity to entertain friends), and holiday time taken from work, I made my way to beloved Ryan Air (whose frequent sales mean I can fly to Dublin cheaper than getting the train to London).

The idea for the weekend had started out as just socialising, a couple of us visiting Clare. Then the Scottish contingent suggested that this was a golden opportunity, and to structure it a little, so we made arrangements for a space to work. As with many processes that occur at the right time in the right way, it all just came together, and soon we had five, coming from Scotland, Lithuania, South Africa, England, and Ireland.

We had three days of morning and afternoon sessions with enough time for relaxation, eating, and taking in the calm and healing atmosphere of the precious home Clare has so lovingly created. Her poor husband was given the opportunity to escape, but bravely stayed—we enjoyed his company in the free times. I feel very grateful to him for his generosity and tolerance.

So what was it like? Sometimes I read glowing reports of groups or conventions that sound so warm and wonderful, and I felt a little skeptical—could it be that good? I loved being there, having the contact with my dearest friends, people I value who have become so precious to me. I have deep and enduring appreciation for them. I loved seeing the animals, Jessie in particular. She

is a little black mongrel with eyes that show the fear that cruelty and neglect did to her before she was rescued. I loved seeing the birds outside the window, and the peace of the garden, with the trees and the plants and the sky . . . the same sky that is over me when I return to England and suffer the terrible sense of loss, leaving those treasured moments of feeling and contact. In spite of all this, however, the weekend wasn't all good for me. Situations happened—within and without—that were difficult.

So we met over the three days and worked and worked. Talents of some of the finest women in the world (in my opinion) pooled together and created an intensive that was remarkable in its depth and creativity. What I didn't reckon on was that as with any group, there are processes that occur, dynamics and systems that evolve. I knew all the people in the group, and I think I related to them individually rather than as a group. Because of this I paid little attention to the beginning, middle and end processes. As a

result, the end came too fast and was messy for me. Huge reactions and feelings had risen from deep in my unconscious, from my past, and from my present belief systems. This was a three day group however, and not enough time to resolve such issues.

As I continue to learn and experience different approaches and techniques, I see certain common truths that prove their usefulness over and over. I wish we had paid more attention to the timing of the group, acknowledging the stages it went through. I wish we could have resolved some unfinished business that had occurred. But I also know that these processes do not confine themselves to within the group, indeed I feel much communication has been expressed in a roundabout way since the group ended.

Would I do it again? Yes. At the blink of an eye. I might try harder to pace myself, might attempt to find some closure, however small, but I value the opportunity given and thank all those involved for the honesty, commitment, and love that created that space of possibility and growth.

*“three whole days of meaningful contact”*

## Primal Groups

**Barbara Bryan**

Farmington Hills, Michigan  
Thursdays from 7:00–9:30 pm  
Some primal experience required  
babryan@twmi.rr.com  
248-478-5559

**Bill Whitesell**

McLean, Virginia  
No charge to participate  
wmwhitesell@yahoo.com  
703-734-1405

**Esko and Marja Rintala**

Helsinki, Finland  
Weekend groups Friday evening  
and Saturday. Experienced primallers and first timers welcome  
esko.rintala@pp.inet.fi  
358-9-611184

**NYC Primal Theatre Group**

Peer facilitated, a la Alec Rubin  
Wednesday evenings  
Harriet Geller: 212-263-5134  
Jean Rashkind: 718-609-1941

## Member Links

The Primal Links page of the IPA website contains a section called “Member Links.” The IPA offers a free listing in this section for the websites of IPA members. If you want your website listed on this page, [www.primals.org/links.html](http://www.primals.org/links.html) please contact the webmaster at:

[webmaster@primals.org](mailto:webmaster@primals.org)

## Primal Voice

Primal Voice, the IPA Member e-News, is a great success with a monthly offering of announcements and events in the IPA world community.

To post an announcement about upcoming intensives, workshops, retreats, gatherings or any other primal-related news, send your information to the editor before the end-of-month deadline. If you aren't receiving Primal Voice and would like to start, contact the editor with your email address.

Carol Holmes, Editor:  
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# GIPT and Primal Therapy in Germany

By Reinhold W. Rausch  
Translation by Jacqui Marsden

GIPT (Gesellschaft für Integrative Primär Therapie—Association for Integrative Primal Therapy) is the organization of primal oriented psychotherapists in Germany ([www.integrative-primaertherapie.de](http://www.integrative-primaertherapie.de)).

The GIPT was founded in 1985 by a group of doctors, psychologists, and healing practitioners. At present there are about 20 members, after a maximum of about 40 members a decade ago. The GIPT will only accept as full members those who can prove that they have undertaken serious PT training. So far the association is not open to lay-people or clients. The GIPT-plenum meets twice a year for one and a half days.

The purpose of these meetings is to exchange experiences, discuss books, hold supervision groups, plan publicity work (including internet presence), and attend to internal organisation. Protocols are created and distributed to all members. Beyond this, no other regular internal communication, periodical, or mailing list exists.

The percentage of primal therapists in Germany affiliated with GIPT is approximately 40%, which means that apart from the 20-odd GIPT member therapists, there are about 30 known others who practice independently. Some of them work within the Osho communities, which still exist in some places in Germany.

## GIPT Today

The GIPT is an association of therapists who base their work on A. Janov. Their aim, however, is to develop the work further by integrating his approach with others, for example:

- systemic family therapy/family systems
- pre- and perinatal psychology
- the psychology of trauma
- transpersonal psychology and spiritual aspects

The stated visions of the GIPT include:

- an exchange of experiences by members
- training and continuous professional development
- organisation and implementation of supervision
- research in the area of integrative PT
- the production of brochures and publications
- a database of therapists for referrals

## GIPT and Arthur Janov

In 1994 the association managed to invite Arthur Janov to Heidelberg for a weekend workshop, which was well received. As a result of this, many therapists joined the GIPT, which then experienced a considerable boom.

An important outcome of this workshop was the fact that A. Janov agreed to arrange a training course for interested and experienced therapists. This course was four weeks long and

was offered in Los Angeles. Ten German therapists took part in this course.

## Challenges

It remains unclear why the upsurge of interest into a formal organization of primal therapists was unable to be maintained. Some answers that I have received in this regard include the following:

- the general tendency of people to keep their primal experiences to themselves
- the lack of primarily oriented publications in Germany
- the split which formed in the GIPT after A. Janov's visit

This division might be called the “orthodox” vs. “integrative” conflict. On the one hand there were those who subscribed to A. Janov's neutral, scientific and partly confrontational style. On the other were those who, depending on personal preference, wanted to include other approaches in their work. These approaches included other humanistic methods as well as eastern, shamanic and spiritual techniques.

As a result of this split about half of the GIPT left. This division was perceived to be traumatic to the organisation, and has resulted in the present emphasis on consolidation, group cohesion, and avoidance of conflict. This, however, resulted in a relatively slow decision-making process and an almost complacent passivity.

With German primal therapists today it seems that traces of the above conflict—orthodox vs. integrative—remain. An unaffiliated primal therapist, when asked about his reluctance to join the GIPT, claimed that his reserve was due to their openness to transpersonal and spiritual perspectives.

## Certified GIPT Training

One important activity of the GIPT is the organization and supervision of PT training courses.

Since 1979 the GIPT have trained about a hundred people as PT's with a 3-year group process. The GIPT estimates that less than half of these graduates have gone on to practice as therapists. Others did the training to inform their own process and then chose not to work as therapists.

The current training group is led by four experienced GIPT members. The course length has been increased to four years and includes 76 days in the group.

50% of this time is dedicated to mat work. According to the detailed curriculum brochure, subjects covered during the rest of the time include: process, body work, resistance and defense, transference and counter-transference, history-taking and contracts, genograms, questioning techniques, family constellation/systems, supervision, crisis intervention, case-studies, realizing autonomy.

Details of these trainings were formed in a GIPT-plenary meeting. It is necessary to complete a dissertation and an exam in order to receive the GIPT certificate. Seven people are currently taking part in the course which began this year.



## Primal and Other Methods

When speaking with Mrs. Beecken, a PT trainer and GIPT member who integrates PT and family constellations, the following was noted. Occasionally protracted and repeated primals do not seem to resolve certain emotional complexes. Her experience has proven to her that the use of family constellations can be useful to determine whether one might in fact be dealing with an issue that spans over generations.

Beecken gave the example from her practice where a client was repeatedly trying to resolve feelings in relation to sexual abuse, but her fear remained unchanged. It was then discovered, almost by accident, that the client's mother had been a victim of rape. After using some family constellation ritual work the client was finally able to release these feelings of fear which she had not been able to do with mat work alone.

I find this example interesting for many reasons. Let me enlarge a little. If one currently asks German PT's about their case loads, one discovers that the demand for primal therapy has decreased during the last years.

One reason for this is probably the increasing demand for systemic and family constellation work. The German psycho-market is characterized by hundreds of family systems courses, and these quickly become fully booked. In this context it is interesting to note that Bert Hellinger, the inventor of family systems in Germany, was himself an early client of Janov's.

After his time in LA, Hellinger worked in Germany as a PT before becoming the internationally celebrated representative of his so-called "family systems brief therapy." He also withdrew from PT and became in a way its opponent. Instead of facing, feeling, and expressing the old pain in cathartic reliving and with the possible outcome of reconciliation, his therapeutic work concentrates on reconciliation by means of, for instance, ritual submission gestures.

Perhaps some rather complacent PT's should perceive this unfortunate polarization rather as a challenge than a threat. Such a perception could provide the impetus to communicate with those who hold different views and approaches. These kinds of discussions could prove to be enormously productive and keep the channels of communication open. Dialogue would also create a sense of belonging to the wider therapeutic community and give an occasion to inform the general debate about primal.

## Publications on Primal

The general German publications of PT, whether in original form, or in printed translations from English, have remained virtually zero for the last ten years. One original publication from 2002 is Klaus Bieback's *Mitten im Schlamassel*, a primal travel diary.

Some translations into German have appeared, including A. Janov's two books, *Biology of Love*, and *Why You Get Sick and How You Get Well*, and P. Vereshack's *Help Me—I'm Tired of Feeling Bad*. Unfortunately these have only been published on the Internet—there are no printed books to be found on bookshelves. The GIPT therapists regard this as a real

deficit, and this predicament also seriously reduces the demand for PT.

This does not demean the importance of internet-based publications of German primal literature. Without the engagement of the following people and web pages, almost no German texts about PT would be publicly available: John Speyrer ([primal-page.com/german.htm](http://primal-page.com/german.htm)), Sieglinde Alexander ([www.emak.org](http://www.emak.org)), Ferdinand Wagner's private A. Janov translations ([www.dieontonenetischeseite.de](http://www.dieontonenetischeseite.de)), and Olf Dorlach's sanctuary for books about abuse and regressive healing ([www.utopie1.de](http://www.utopie1.de)).

## Summary and Future Prospects

When I summarize my impressions about PT as one of the many therapies that are offered in Germany, it is as though I see a colorful meadow with many different flowers. Those who are really looking for it may find the rare and tough herb of PT. It is a plant that unfortunately has learned to exist without much contact with its fellows. The fact that some may regard it as a poisonous plant does not seem to bother it much. The typical answer to this is a smug reproach of ignorance.

This plant does not seem to be particularly interested in taking part in laborious dialogues with the outside world. It knows about its inner strength and lives out of this same strength. Competition, success and proof of competence are regarded as an abhorrence—an acting out that doesn't prove anything.

This is how it happened that the child, who was born with a loud, unwanted scream has now become quieter. What a shame—it would have had a lot to say. Could it not provide real alternatives if it would have been heard? Could that exchange not serve to provide nourishment even for itself? If it is true that systems stay alive and develop by communication and exchange with their environment, what has happened to PT in Germany today?

It is my impression that barriers have been erected, and prevented the development of much potential. It is my desire to remove these barriers, and I invite all of those who share my vision to contribute to the communication and exchange of PT, and to re-double their efforts in doing so.

PT should not shy away from engaging in discussions with other psychological disciplines, as A. Janov has so convincingly demonstrated with his most recent publication. It is especially within the dialogue with other approaches that PT can demonstrate its natural and unique approach. In this way new synergies may be discovered, as shown by my earlier example between PT and family constellations.

At the same time the research of other disciplines like neurology and psycho-traumatology are beginning to dovetail with PT. It should be relatively easy to tie in their findings with PT. Again, this provides a good opening for debate, which in turn provides an opportunity to both sustain and develop the inner dynamics of PT. One might consider informing paediatricians about the efficacy of primalling for children who remain particularly open to this natural ability to heal through reliving trauma.

*“Snail Wail” continued from page 4*

refrigerator (yet again, the possibilities astound!) Sometimes the protagonist uses group members’ bodies like clay to make a sculpture portraying his situation. He can change it later if he wishes. The protagonist gives most of the lines, but occasionally players (called auxiliaries) get to improvise. Everyone is expected to monitor his own feelings and the auxiliaries get to monitor the feelings in their roles as well. There is a lot of role reversal, usually allowing the protagonist to demonstrate and experience all of the parts she is putting out. Hopefully, there is a catharsis. Then there is some kind of closure for the drama.

When the drama is over, all are invited (thought not coerced) to share the feelings that came up during the drama, for them in their roles—and/or personally. Occasionally someone will share in action rather than verbally, showing us their feeling rather than telling it. (I’ve seen more than a few anger releases in this category). This last being rare, we might think people would all go home full of feelings, needing to primal, but I found that more often than not, it was the opposite for me. All that

*“It makes me feel seen and heard and accepted and respected—like an IPA convention!”*

sharing of feelings—both verbal and in action, telling and hearing so many stories, empathizing and connecting with so many people so simply and so profoundly—turned out to be very nurturing. Again, it reminds me so much of the IPA women’s group. It makes me feel seen and heard and accepted and respected—like an IPA convention!

I’ve found that adding psychodrama to primal and sand play has worked synergistically for me and expanded my work in all three modalities. It has added cognitive clarity. It has given me concrete images to crystallize my inner chaos. It has improved my ability to connect and empathize with others. It has helped me to see myself in roles and in groups more clearly. It has also taught me to be more patient with myself and to “trust the process” more. It has even deepened my spirituality in truly unexpected and spontaneous ways. (More about that later). I highly recommend it!

There are psychodrama practitioners all over the world. (Surely they have a website). New Yorkers can call the Psychodrama Training Institute. All certified practitioners are extremely well trained, tested, and qualified. If it appeals to you, I urge you to try it. A little goes a long way.

*“Convention” continued from page 2*

We also have a highly respected roster of 20 or more workshop presenters who will examine primal, consciousness and spirituality through the lens of their own unique experiences. These presenters will enrich the convention with directed experiential workshops and deep discussions about the convention theme.

We are very excited about our new venue, *The Country Place Retreat and Conference Center* ([www.retreatpa.com](http://www.retreatpa.com)). The Country Place encompasses the best of Appel Farm and Wisdom House, with lots of goodies thrown in. Nestled into 450 acres of woodlands and meadows, the Country Place provides a beautiful natural setting on a spring-fed pond. The buildings are fully modernized, elegant and comfortable. A special treat is the massage building with two infrared saunas and a sound and light healing chamber. They have lots of sporting equipment, a paddleboat, a labyrinth, a fire pit, and hiking trails galore. There are many rooming options, from tenting and dorms to shared rooms and private rooms with baths. We think the Country Place will be a treat for everyone!

If this isn’t an exciting, cutting edge conference that will bring the IPA deeply into the 21st Century, then what the bleep is?! Mark the dates in your calendar—August 21-27, 2006. If you wish, there is still time to send your proposal for a workshop to the convention chairs via email to:

[danielwmiller@earthlink.net](mailto:danielwmiller@earthlink.net)  
[waynecarr@remoteviewing.com](mailto:waynecarr@remoteviewing.com)



*Photos of The Country Place*



*“Safe Primal Therapy” continued from page 5*

In fact my therapist only ever “busted” me on one occasion, and the results were dramatic to say the least. It was near the end of a session, and he said, “I can’t help you, Pat.” This immediately threw me into my birth sequence (needing help in order not to die). This was more than I could integrate, and later he apologized.

At the time, the shock of what he had said made me go completely numb, and for the rest of my session I was barely able to speak. My therapist had no idea at the time what danger I was in, but I was in so much pain that I was nearly hallucinating. In spite of that I had no primal access, as I had gone into shock.

It was only in the car on the way home that the feelings emerged, and I started having a birth primal on the freeway during rush hour traffic! Fortunately part of me seems to have remained in control, even though I was primalling my way through a complicated cloverleaf fly-over, with the cars bumper to bumper, while I was slumped over the steering wheel of my own car crying like a newborn baby.

I called my therapist as soon as I got home and he picked up the phone right away. I was able only to say, “Can you be there for me now?” before I went straight into the primal again. Later he told me that after the session he had the gut feeling that he might have triggered me in a way he hadn’t intended, and had been ready to offer support if I needed it.

Well, I did get home safely—probably due to the fact that my car seems to know it’s own way home since this is not the only time I have primalled while driving! But I don’t recommend it, and my therapist doesn’t either. At my next session he apologized and told me that he felt uncomfortable with what he had done and that he would be careful never to do it again. He never has.

So, while primalling early pain has helped me enormously, I believe that for many people it is safe only when there is a long-term follow-up over time, in a very stable and contained patient/therapist relationship. People temporarily attending a centre from a distance should probably not be encouraged to get into very early pain unless some other means of long-term containment with a supportive therapist (or very competent buddy) can be provided when they return home.

A very real danger is the fact that those of us who actually “died” in the birth canal often become suicidal when reliving this trauma. This was certainly true for me since I was born “dead on arrival” after a long and complicated labor. It ended with an emergency forceps delivery and resuscitation with an injection of adrenaline into my heart and CPR.

My body instinctively learned from this experience that when I was in pain, death was the only “way out,” the only relief from unbearable torture that seemed to go on forever. I think what has saved my life in the present is the fact that I didn’t “choose” to die in the birth canal, but was in fact “crushed to death” by my mother. As a result my suicidal impulses have been passive death wishes rather than

active urges to kill myself.

Reliving this very early pain has resolved a lot of important issues in my life, but what has made it constructive rather than destructive is the fact that my therapist has been there for me over the years. His continual availability has made the process safe for me. This point was brought home to me dramatically a couple of years ago when he was taking a Christmas vacation during a time I had a great deal of pain coming up.

The most frightening incident happened in the supermarket on a Sunday evening. I was wheeling my packages out of the crowded center when I passed a security guard with two loaded guns in his belt. On impulse I had the overwhelming urge to lunge at him, grab a gun, point it at my right temple, and pull the trigger. (I was not feeling even remotely suicidal at the time; it was just a pure impulse). Fortunately I was able to stop myself, and I managed to get home, badly shaken up, but safely inside my house where there are no guns.

But I remained obsessed with guns, terrified of them, and scared of what I might do in the future. Fortunately a short while later, I made the connection. During my birth, death and relief from pain came to me right after experiencing a tremendously sharp pain in my right temple, caused by the forceps that were used to pull me out. As soon as I made the connection, the impulse to shoot myself in the exact same spot (to get relief) disappeared and has never recurred. The whole incident, however, was rather frightening when it happened.

What is of interest to me is that my therapist was away at this time, and though his locum is a great facilitator, he doesn’t offer me the same degree of containment that my own therapist offers. My therapist does this in a very unobtrusive way by gently helping me to get a cognitive overview of what is happening if I need it. This helps me to “keep my head on top of the pain” when too much early stuff is being triggered by the circumstances in my life.

To return to the important theme of continuity, I believe that it is also very helpful to work with other primallers in small groups. But once again I feel that these groups should be ongoing, and that people should not be encouraged to open up to very deep pain in a group that is suddenly discontinued.

When I was in therapy at the Primal Institute in 1977, we only had a “big group,” which was rather impersonal (though sometimes helpful). So I was glad to hear that soon after I completed my time at the P.I., patients there were put into small, ongoing groups. In these groups they could use the dynamic of interacting with each other and triggering each other’s primals, while at the same time receiving support and continuity of care.

I think the whole subject of safe primalling can perhaps be summarized by that one word—care. When it is there, no matter how deep the pain, therapy can be a safe process. If it is not there the patient will know it and neither “feel” safe, or “be” safe. So to my understanding, it is in this context of personal caring that the future success of Primal Therapy lies.

*“when there is a long-term follow-up over time”*

# An Ode to Fear Memory Integration

By Reinhold W. Rausch

If you want to know:

what primal therapy, “neurosis in reverse,” Janov, homeopathy, “likes cure like,” and Hahnemann all have in common (you’ll be surprised);

rather than germs and genes, that an imbalance between a person and its environment, inadequate nutrition and inadequate detoxification is the cause of disease;

why chronic and constant fear memory retrieval and re-repression causes a process of endogenous toxification;

why primal therapy, as a psycho-homeopathy, differs in traditional psychotherapy in that the first supports self-curing of the causes whereas the second contents itself with the treatment of the symptoms;

why imprints in primal therapy and fear memory in trauma psychology are basically identical;

why neurosis and PTSD can be understood as a continuum and that both concepts are widely interchangeable;

how PTSD-related memory studies (Van der Kolk, LeDoux, McLean) scientifically back primal theory (you’ll be surprised again);

why, on a cellular basis, re-parenting and re-patterning shortly after a primal makes perfect sense, to say the least;

how stress and the inability to change fragments memory formation;

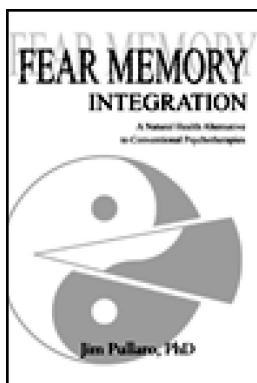
how in the emotional and sensory and motor aspects of primals, flashbulb memories, at best, prevail, and that expecting a “movie” in primals is misleading;

why (infantile) dissociation is a gradual , as well as ubiquitous protective mechanism that is reversed by feeling the pain in small doses, and how it is reversed in primals;

how trusting the brain “governor” (Stone) and not “brain surgery” (Janov) makes primal therapy a safe and truly naturopathic process;

how, in a relatively simple but valid setting, practical outcome studies on the results of primal therapy can be performed (what a need, ahhh!); then Jim Pullaro’s PhD thesis and book *Fear Memory Integration* is a must read!

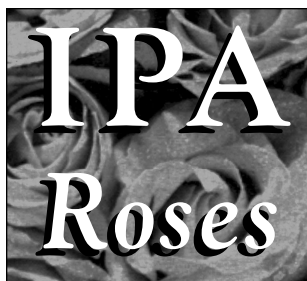
In my eyes, this is a cornerstone of primal theory, with more junctions to other theories of the psyche than any other primal book I’ve read.



Thank you, Jim!

*Editor’s note:* Jim’s book can be ordered online at:  
[www.iuniverse.com/bookstore/book\\_detail.asp?&isbn=0-595-36514-0](http://www.iuniverse.com/bookstore/book_detail.asp?&isbn=0-595-36514-0)

Jim’s thesis is available on the IPA homepage at:  
[www.primals.org/Thesis/pullaro%20thesis4.pdf](http://www.primals.org/Thesis/pullaro%20thesis4.pdf)



- to Jean Rashkind for finding a great new location for the 2006 Summer Convention. Applause please!
- to Shelley Beach for organizing the unofficial winter getaway in Isle Mujeres, Mexico. ¡Gracias!
- to Clare Gill for hosting the mini primal intensive in Ireland. What’s this about Guinness Integration?
- to Esta Powell and Maja Zilih for all your work on this issue. It’s truly an international effort.
- to Barbara Bryan for hosting yet another IPA Board meeting. I think you hold the World’s record.
- to this issue’s many contributors—Harriet Geller, Bob Holmes, Linda Marks, Jacqui Marsden, Daniel Miller, Julia Mitchell, Reinhold W. Rausch, and Pat Törngren.

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