

PRIMAL

Supporting Growth and Healing Through Deep Feeling Process

S U M M E R N E W S L E T T E R • J U L Y 2 0 0 7

Inside

Summer Convention 2007
By Mickey Judkovics
page 2

Snailwail by Linda Marks

Primal Groups
page 3

Remembering Spring Retreat
2007 by Sandy Weymouth
page 4

IPA Calendar
page 5

A Perspective on Mat Practices
By Cynthia McNellis

Member News
page 6

Environmental Bereavement
By Patrick Draper
page 8

New Research: Trauma
Creates Changes in the Brain
page 9

IPA Infomaven
By Harriet Geller
page 10

Aspirations of Primal Process
By Bill Whitesell
page 11

Membership Meeting
IPA Roses
Membership Dues
page 12



**IPA Summer
Convention
August 6 -12, 2007
White Haven,
Pennsylvania**

Finding the Authentic Self

By Mickey Judkovics

The IPA Summer Convention will be held August 6 - 12, 2007 at The Country Place Retreat and Conference Center White Haven, Pennsylvania.

We are fortunate to be able to present three innovators in the field of expressive psychotherapy: Alex MacMillan, founding President of the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy; Franklin W. "Skip" Ellis, LCSW-C, current President of the American and International Societies of Bonding Psychotherapy; and Terry Larimore, a primal psychotherapist who in Houston. Each will bring a unique and valuable perspective to our learning and healing journey.

Alex MacMillan's (below) keynote address will describe the process of full expression of the "strangled affect" and explore the concepts and techniques as they are applied in body psychotherapies, shamanistic traditions and existential psychoanalysis. Questions and discussion during the talk will be encouraged. Alex will also present a workshop demonstration of a body psychotherapy session, built on the principles expounded in his keynote address. Comments and questions



"Summer Convention" continued on page 2

International Primal Association

Toll-Free: 1-877-PRIMALS
(US & Canada only)
Telephone: 248-478-5559
Email: info@primals.org
Website: www.primals.org

President

Bob Holmes
5 Olive Avenue
Toronto, ON, Canada M6G 1T7
president@primals.org

Vice-President

Denise Kline
P.O. Box 602
Hagerstown, MD, USA 21741
vicepresident@primals.org

Secretary

Harriet Geller
77 E. 12th Street #14H
New York, NY, USA 10003
info@primals.org

Treasurer

Bill Whitesell
811 Whann Ave.
McLean, VA, USA 22101
treasurer@primals.org

Board of Directors

Barbara Bryan
Wayne Carr
Carol Holmes
Karuna O'Donnell
Esta Powell
Jean Rashkind (Deputy Treasurer)
Leonard Rosenbaum
Larry Schumer

Member Advocate

Jim Pullaro
advocate@primals.org

Council of Elders

Linda Marks Terry Larimore
Larry Schumer (Schumer is
inactive while on Board)

IPA Newsletter Editor

Esta Powell
editor@primals.org

Contributing Editor

Harriet Geller

The International Primal Association, Inc. publishes the IPA Newsletter. Opinions expressed by the authors are their own and not necessarily those of the IPA. Unless otherwise directed by the IPA Board, the Editor reserves the right to make final judgment as to the publication of all materials received. Unless specifically requested otherwise, the Editor reserves the right to edit contributions.

Next deadline: October 1, 2007

"Summer Convention 2007" cont'd from page 1

with two primal therapists and the workshop attendees will follow the demonstration.

Our second featured presenter, "Skip" Ellis, will give a didactic and experiential workshop that presents the newest theory and practices of Bonding Psychotherapy with an emphasis on deep emotional work. Learn how to repair dysfunctional patterns of attachment and fulfill your basic human needs. Not only will you experience the deep healing of Bonding Psychotherapy, but you can look at the first English edition of Konrad Stauss's book.



Our third featured presenter, Terry Larimore (above), is a leader in the field of emotional shock and trauma. Her three workshops will focus on healing prenatal, birth and childhood trauma. The first workshop will explore the vital differences between emotional shock and trauma, while the second will explain the treatment protocols for shock – containment, resourcing, regression and catharsis. The concluding workshop will consist of a demonstration and question period.

Dr. John Cogswell, one of last summer's keynote speakers, will again present his unique approach to learning compassion. Practice "Walking in Your Shoes" at his workshop, and learn to listen to the impulses of your body and mind. Walk and be walked. Wayne Carr, PhD, last year's convention chair, will return with two important and interesting workshops – "Understanding and Healing Your Shadow" and What Developmental Stage are You In? Come to these workshops to increase your awareness, deal with difficult feelings, and learn how to move to the next stage of your development. We will also offer an introduction to Nonviolent Communication (NVC). More than a communication technique, NVC is a call to be conscious and empathic, not only during ther-

apy sessions, but also in community living and daily interactions with loved ones.

As always, in addition to the workshops, there will be a daily primal group, men's and women's groups, and peer groups. Our traditional Cabaret and Dance Party will be held near the end of the convention week, and there will be plenty of opportunities for jam sessions, sing-alongs and schmoozing on the patio. The Country Place offers a pond for swimming and boating and beautiful grounds for being in nature. Visit: www.retreatpa.com.

Come to this convention and meet yourself and each other in your deepest yearnings and desires. Come learn, heal, explore, express, and bond with like minded people in a joyous celebration of the preciousness of who we are. We look forward to meeting old friends and making new ones.

Mickey Judkovics: mjudd@stny.rr.com

Dr. Alice Rose: alicerosephd@yahoo.com

Special Convention Event

All-Years Ark Re-union
Friday, August 9, 2007

All graduates of Noah's Ark are invited to reconnect, reminisce and share new experiences. Contact Marie Regis for more information: (718) 428-1875

mariefregis@aol.com

Bring Stuff for the Raffle and Auction

A fun-filled tradition and lucrative fund-raising event for the IPA has been the annual Raffle and Auction at the Summer Convention. It's success is dependent not only on your succumbing to Larry Schumer's sales patter—an irresistible mixture of humor and lunacy—but on your bringing as many of your cast-off treasures as you can carry.

Look around and start putting aside the jewelry you haven't worn in eight years, dishes, glassware and chatchkes from the back of the cupboard, gifts from well-meaning but clueless loved ones, and clothing that was a mistake as soon as you bought it. Gift certificates for therapy time, massages, hugs, buddying, and other priceless services are also very welcome.

Why I Like Primaling with a Buddy

By Linda Marks

Theoretically, it is a good thing that primaling can be done alone—that is, without a therapist, a group, a buddy, or any witness. All of us at some time have felt relieved by a good cry, or scream, or punching, or throwing of an ill-fated object – in private. Those of us who have trouble trusting others, especially authority figures, may choose to primal alone in order to have control of the therapeutic process. We may be glad we don't need anyone to warm us up, or support us, or help us debrief. When I first read "The Primal Scream," it seemed so simple: open up, let it out, and be cured; no pesky relationships required. However, I have realized recently that what may have made a bigger difference to my well-being than the feeling outlet was the acceptance and sympathy that I got from my fellow primalers.

I never did much solo primaling, having started with Bonding Therapy in which primaling in groups with a therapist and a buddy, including reassuring physical contact if desired, is the norm. The idea is for people to feel safe and cared for, so they let go of pain that might be unbearable without the support. Even in workshops where the leader comes around to check on people and is generally supportive, to my inner child this is less satisfying than having an attentive and caring buddy constantly available.

As I get older and, it seems to me, healthier emotionally, I feel less need to primal. Yet, I now want more than ever the comfort of a witness when I am expressing

strong or vulnerable feelings. I suppose I am more contented with myself than in the past and thus feel more entitled to support and acceptance. Also, I feel for the first time in my journey that, rather than being filled with never-ending pain, my pain is finite and can be felt as I continue to be better. I think that this change came from my ability to seek and absorb the affection and respect that people give me when I share my deep feelings with them. It has also been very gratifying to return this favor to them.

I think that we may inadvertently be reinforcing a childhood attitude of hopelessness when we prefer to primal alone. It's one thing to get in touch with that hopelessness, but as adults the healing happens when we take in the support that is now available. For me, it was a long time before I realized through primaling that I was perpetuating my childhood despair at never being fully loved. Despite getting support, I so strongly believed that I was unlovable that the witnessing of my pain did not matter. My parents had overlooked it for years. Wouldn't everyone judge me as my parents had? I took me years and years to lift up my eyes after a primal and see the love in the eyes of my fellow primalers – and take it in.

Hopefully, all of you have already figured this out. I'm sure that this is one of the reasons we love our conventions and retreats so much. Even those of us who prefer to primal solo or who have difficulty feeling lovable can't be oblivious to the love and acceptance that permeates the atmosphere when we get together.

Advanced Training in Primal Integration



The Advanced Training in Primal Integration was held in Guelph, Ontario in April, 2007, led by Sam Turton and Esta Powell. Coming from across the Atlantic and the Continent, four participants (from l. to r.: Clare Gill, Ireland; Julia Mitchell, Ireland; Etik Tootell, California; Sheila Turner, Scotland) participated in the seven-day residential program which included their facilitation of a five-day primal group of eight volunteers.

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 through Saturday.
esko.rintala@pp.inet.fi
358-9-611184

Primal Theatre Group a la Alec Rubin

New York City
Peer facilitated, nominal cost
Harriet Geller, 212-263-5134

Welcome New Members!

Michael Burns
South Weymouth, MA USA

Ruth Nyman
Vancouver, B.C. Canada

New Lifetime Member

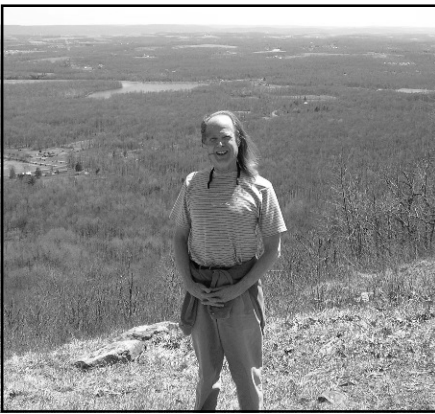
Sandy Weymouth has become an IPAer for life with the purchase of his lifetime membership. Thanks for your support and commitment, Sandy!

For enquiries about becoming a lifetime member, please contact treasurer@primals.org.

Remembering Spring Retreat 2007

By Sandy Weymouth

Photographs by Jennifer "JJ" Jackson



What I love about retreats, conventions, workshops — any time a bunch of people spend several days together — is the sense of group bond, of family, that I yearn for and get a lot of at these things. And I think others besides me,

maybe everybody, felt this occurred big time at the 2007 IPA Spring Retreat in Bangor, Pennsylvania. While we all wish that more could have attended, 15 was a wonderful number for strengthening our sense of belonging to the IPA family.



Great things happened: a special cabaret skillfully hosted by veteran thespian Walter Gambin with wonderful performances by just about everybody, followed by a singalong to the masterful piano accompaniment of Gene Long. Gene also was DJ at the wild and slovenly Saturday night dance, much of which was conducted flat on the floor, puppy-pile style, inspired by his very effective and more genteel Contact Improv workshop earlier in the weekend. Decency was never seriously challenged at any time, mind you. Not even close.

All the workshops were great. Gene ran one on holotropic breathwork, and IPA Secretary Harriet Geller led us in a silent journey through the area's beautiful woods culminating in primal connection through poetry. I'm particularly fond of the Kirkridge Retreat Center where we were, because it's on the Appalachian Trail, allowing the possibility of a stroll to Georgia or Maine. It's at the west end

of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Anybody want to go camping there?

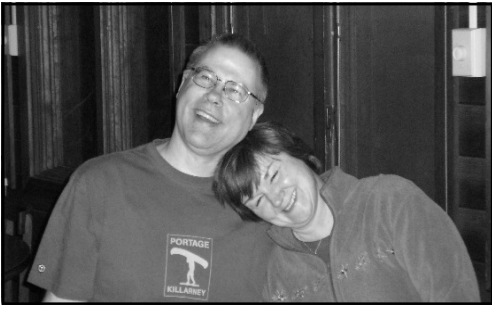
Kim Mellor ran this year's painting workshop (with materials generously supplied by Karuna once again). On Sunday, just before leaving, Kim cleverly left one of her paintings—very Jackson Pollock—in the whistle-clean dining room waste basket where everyone could know the painting was available for appropriation. It now awaits framing at my place. Mickey Judkovic's workshop was Authentic Self Through Core Needs: focus deeply and emotionally on your core needs and their fulfillment and you'll experience peace and connection with your authentic self. That about right, Mickey?

Alex Tadeskung led Monologues From the Mat which attendees said went particularly well. IPA Treasurer Bill

Whitesell led Psychodrama and Group Presence workshops. I'm particularly sorry I missed Group Presence—I was in some kind of collapse mode and missed a lot of workshops; my loss. I come from a group therapy background and feel that group work brings unique dynamics to the therapeutic process.

Who else was there? IPA Vice President Denise Kline





brought her hearty laugh and chronic good nature. Jennifer "JJ" Jackson brought her infectious vulnerability and purity of heart. I brought my old friend Pat Jackson, who played on the edges until Bill gently drew her into things just the way she needed. Leonard Rosenbaum brought his wry wisdom and serenity, and Jean Rashkind her deceptively quiet knack for the wicked and the fun.



It wouldn't have been complete without our venerable president, Bob Holmes. He's done lots of these retreats and gave great support to Karuna, who pulled all of this together and managed it flawlessly while we were there. Karuna didn't fool me. I know you can go nuts with a thing like this, but she played it so cool and easygoing. Lots of advance work to get you to that place, right Karuna?

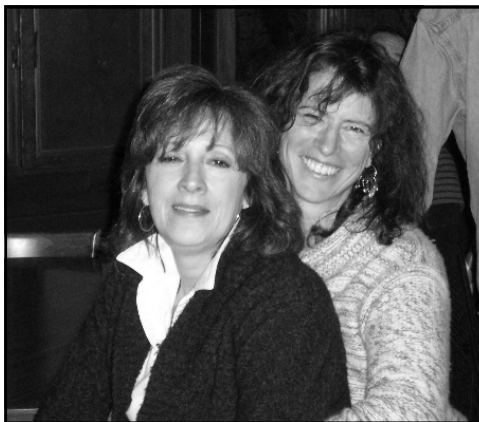
Mat track is, of course, at the core of any primal gathering. Can't speak for others, but I know I got plenty from all of them. Didn't miss a one. I did sleep through one of my peer groups which I really regret because I had such a great group. You'll have to ask the ladies about the women's groups, but for me, the men's groups were a killer. I did my standard cathartic trip about which many have expressed doubts, shot my mouth off, and

felt super.

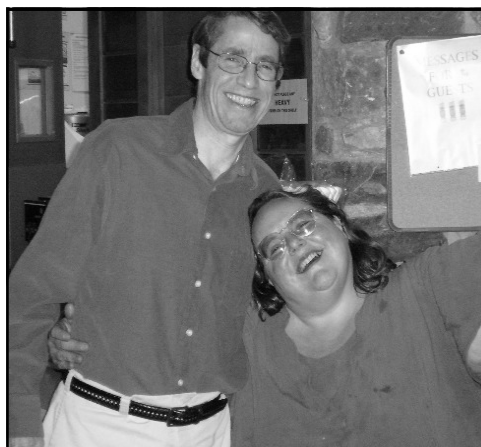
Walter and I wrestled. It took him longer to pin me this year. He is a trained



wrestler; I mean, he's got to be to pin me, right? I'm doing a wrestling workshop one of these days. Give it all you've got, but don't hurt anything or anybody, least of all yourself. Great for the body and soul.



More of you guys need to show up for this thing. It's incredibly fun and enriching, and, as I say, it does so much to tighten the IPA community bond. I think it does. Love you all.



IPA Calendar

IPA Summer Convention 2007

Finding the Authentic Self

**Monday, August 6–
Sunday, August 12**

On-site registration begins
Monday, 4 pm

The Country Place Retreat
& Conference Center
White Haven, PA, USA

Details announced at:
www.primals.org

Thursday, August 9
Membership Meeting
and Elections

Thursday, August 9
Fundraising Raffle

Friday, August 10
Board of Directors
Meeting

Special Convention Event All-Years Ark Re-union

Friday, August 9, 2007
All graduates of Noah's Ark are
invited to reconnect, reminisce
and share new experiences.
Contact Marie Regis for more
information: (718) 428-1875
mariefregis@aol.com

Citigroup Annual Donation

Citigroup has made another
\$500 donation to the IPA,
in support of Denise Kline's
volunteer work for our
organization. Thank you, De-
nise, for your dedication and
effort and for applying every
year to your employer
for this grant.

Member News

Primal Integration Center of Michigan Intensives

Sept. 21 - 22, 2007 (\$160 US)

Led by Barbara Bryan and staff. Food and lodging are included in the fees. Please call Barbara at 248-478-5559 to reserve your space.

Primal Psychodrama Weekends in Columbus, OH Led by Esta Powell

August 31 - September 2, 2007

Cost \$175, breakfast and dorm-style accommodations included. Group size limited to eight participants.

For more information visit:
www.primalmatters.com
or call 614-893-3527

Ireland – Group Primal Intensive

Oct 21 - 28, 2007

Slí Na Bandé,
Newtownmountkennedy,
Co. Wicklow, Ireland

- 7 day primal intensive group , €555
- 7 nights (6 full days) food and accommodation, €420
- Biography and some emotional release experience recommended
- 8 - 10 participants, 4 facilitators
- Each participant will receive at least 2 individual sessions a day

Facilitators:
Sam Turton, Clare Gill, Julia Mitchell and Sheila Turner

For more information visit:
www.primalworks.com

A Perspective on Mat Practice

By Cynthia McNellis

In the time since I have been part of the Primal Support Group and the IPA I have met many unique and wonderful people and read copious amounts of information about primal and related topics. It has been interesting to notice so many different viewpoints, ideas and opinions about primal practice. I would like to share some of mine.

I would venture to say that we all come to this work because we are suffering and more or less desperate to heal our pain. Is there anyone who isn't carrying pain from the past and being affected by it in the present? It seems as if I were always looking for a way to feel better.

My quest for happiness and understanding has brought me to Eastern and Western philosophy, yoga, the women's movement, the human potential movement, natural health, mind-body medicine, twelve-step programs and different psychotherapies and therapists. I studied the teachings of a variety of spiritual traditions, including a number of modern day masters.

My first encounter with primal-type therapy happened about ten years ago with a good-hearted and patient therapist who helped me to express and become comfortable with all the powerful feelings I was experiencing. This was crucial because I felt desperate and I was sure there was something seriously wrong with me. I was relieved to understand that releasing the feelings was actually healing. I had read *The Primal Scream* but that had been many years earlier.

Around the time that I was working with this therapist, I met Gordon, a man who had done many years of primal therapy. I was impressed with the level he had reached with his therapy and the fact that he had several awesome spiritual experiences as a result of his mat work. We became friends and because of his vast experience in this business, he also became my mentor. We both have the understanding that mat work is an advanced form of spiritual practice and we're both in this for the long haul.

Gordon helped me to stay on track when I worried about doing something "wrong." When I read about "connected" primals I was upset about not having clear and totally relived experiences every time. Gordon assured me that even a fragment of memory was fine. Anything that happens when a person goes to the mat and is surrendered to the process is good work. Even if there is no emotional expression, we are learning about ourselves.

Here's an illustration from Gordon's experience of how a person can be off track and not even be aware of it. His therapists and fellow primalers had been very impressed with his horrific screams and body movements. But it wasn't until his second intensive that he realized that he hadn't actually known what a feeling was. He was using a ritual to get to major eruptions but had been disconnected from normal, natural feeling states.

I learned how to self-primal out of necessity; I couldn't afford to pay for more therapy. I still had ongoing issues and intense feelings to deal with and I was past the point of turning back. Over time I came to realize that the healing and personal development that happened through therapy resulted in spiritual unfoldment. They were different names for essentially the same thing. I had been a serious yoga practitioner for some years and gradually came to associate the emotional catharsis to the movement of prana (life energy), the awakening of kundalini, and the working out of negative karma.

I agree with most primalers who say talk therapy doesn't ultimately do the job, but it can be a good step along the way. It's been very helpful for me to have objective and caring support and someone to talk to. I have found many non-primal books and modalities, as well as esoteric spiritual writings and practices that have contributed to my growth and understanding. I believe if we don't learn about and incorporate therapeutic principles into our life, then we aren't getting the whole package. If we don't

understand projection we'll blame others for our pain.

There are other benefits to doing this work. Candace Pert has shown in her scientific study of mind-body medicine that tension in the body is the result of repressed pain and that these tensions are the precursors to disease. So primal practice is key to healing the body. Tension is also a contributing factor to aging, so mat work helps to keep us young.

I am now for the most part a self-primaler. It's probably better to have a good grounding and some years of experience before trying to do this work alone and I have been fortunate to have a first-rate teacher. I've heard it said that you shouldn't do birth primals in particular without a therapist. I can only say that I have had nothing but success and satisfaction from working on my own.

A few months ago I had my first birth primal. I re-experienced being stuck in the birth canal around the neck and throat area. My whole body was trembling and I was kind of gasping with my mouth closed, struggling to fill my lungs. I felt intense fear, like I was going to die, for a time. Finally I was out of the birth canal. I started crying and then had the relieving and pleasant sensation of taking a complete breath.

I try to get to the mat every day. I would describe my practice as a form of active surrender. It's not a push to get to something I want to work on but rather a tuning in and yielding to what's there - to what my body and emotions are prompting me to do. I see this as connecting to my inner guidance and I go wherever this takes me. It almost always starts with a present feeling and then flows into the past. What happens in a typical primal is a spontaneous discharge of emotions with the accompanying physical movement. Often it's sobbing or maybe a tantrum. Sometimes it's a verbal torrent of anger. Frequently this is followed by a feeling of relief and relaxation. Sometimes there's not much but my stream of consciousness. If this annoys me it just might move me into something more. Whatever happens is worthwhile because I'm getting to know my inner landscape.

I have come across many references in the esoteric and spiritual literature that agree with my comparison of primal to spiritual practice - and to the necessity of doing this work to reach the highest states of awareness and personal power. Don Juan Matus, the Yaqui Indian shaman of Mexico and teacher of Carlos Castaneda, calls it recapitulation and says that losing your personal history is a requirement. After many years of rigorous effort the Buddha finally broke through and

put an end to his suffering when he sat under the Bodhi tree and re-experienced every life he had ever lived. He was in such a clear and objective state at this point that even during this agony and anguish he was able to delight in the absolute justice and balance of it all. Osho called it "throwing." Christ said in Luke 14:26-33 that you could not be his disciple (and get to where he was), unless you hated your father and mother, your wife and children, your brothers and sisters and yourself as well. [Editor's Note: Christ was probably referring to the need to renounce your family and your worldly life in order to follow him, not, as may be implied here, the need to experience your primal anger.]

A recent find is a book on Kripalu yoga, (Thanks, Mickey!). The fifth and final stage of this yoga is a spontaneous and effortless surrender to the movement of prana through the body with the resultant freeing of physical tension, emotional catharsis and healing. I found it very similar to a mat session. The author claims that it awakens the dormant superhuman powers or siddhis that occur along the way to spiritual mastery.

Rebazar Tars, the Tibetan ECK Master, refers to this same thing as "surrender to the Master," by which he means surrender to Divine Spirit. He says, "this sense of inner rhythmic attunement takes time to acquire, but once we gain it, we have the key to inner assurance and permanent peace of Soul."

One could describe this process as the gradual and purposeful dismantling of our armor to reveal and become who we really are, or as waking up from an unconscious trance. Every mat experience is different, but, each time, we are attempting to close the gap between what we are actually experiencing and

our ideal of the perfect state. We are working in the invisible and gradually obliterating the devastating effects of our old imprints. We are reaching mastery by degrees. This work is exceedingly tough, and not everyone is up for it. Rebazar Tars acknowledges this when he says "only the bold shall know God."

I think the objective of many people undergoing therapy, especially traditional mainstream therapy, is to be able to fit into and function well in society. Success in the world is an honorable goal, and everyone is free to pursue their idea of happiness. I realize now that my goal all along has been of a more profound nature; complete contentment regardless of situation and becoming a Master myself. According to ancient and modern Masters, this is not beyond our reach if we are willing to devote ourselves to the task.

"I have come across many references in the esoteric and spiritual literature that agree with my comparison of primal to spiritual practice - and to the necessity of doing this work to reach the highest states of awareness and personal power."

Environmental Bereavement

By Patrick Draper

I have been doing primal therapy for well over a year now, and, throughout, I have been trying to figure how to connect my deep feeling work with my passion for a sustainable way of being in the world. Given the obvious links that fields such as eco-psychology are making between the destruction of our planet and our psychological neurosis, I felt there needed to be some way to connect primal and the environmental movement.

I recently attended a workshop entitled "Climate Change: Despair & Empowerment," facilitated by Australian Rainforest activist John Seed, which did just that. The workshop provided a container for the expression of feelings surrounding the destruction of our planet. As with our personal process, making the felt connection helps us move through denial - that nothing is wrong - to acknowledge the reality we know and to feel this fully. We can then move to a place of empowerment, which, for those of us trying to shift this culture off its destructive path, is deeply necessary.

I believe that most people know intellectually about the destruction and insanity that is civilization and our current way of life, but this knowing does nothing to change behaviour until there is a felt connection. Environmental bereavement, grieving for the loss of non-human life, reminds us of our connection to the rest of nature and allows us to release the feelings that are there. As in Primal, it is a process of un-learning repression and accepting the feelings that lay buried within.

Given my passion for living an ecologically sane life, my primal process has helped me understand the deep-rooted trauma and repression that enables us to cause such widespread destruction. As I have peeled back the layers of my own trauma, I have had to confront the pain of feeling disconnected from the more-than-human world. Tears have been shed for my mother just as they have for The Mother - the earth. This process, as with all connected releases, has helped me to reconnect with this world around me and relearn to value the wildness of it.

While psychology has conventionally focused solely on individual human trauma, both ancient wisdom and modern science (including fields such as eco-psychology) help us remember that we are not closed systems. We interact every moment of every day with our environment. Our breath is a beautiful gift exchange with the plant world. Our skin is a porous membrane which is constantly taking in the environment. Food, which becomes our body, is the life force of another being. As we touch the bark of a tree and smell its earthy aroma, so too does the tree touch our skin and smell our scent. The world around us is alive and constantly interacting in a dynamic process of evolving life. Believing that we are not a part of this world is an illusion that occurs only to the traumatized. Understanding our inter-connectedness

allows us to expand our sense of self to the universe around us - to an ecological self.

Conventional psychology has also pathologized feeling pain for something outside ourselves as symbolic of some inner trauma. This has supported the repression of feelings of pain for the world around us. When I cry because I see only objects in the forest around me, instead of living, breathing beings with whom I can communicate, it is not symbolic for other pain. It is real in its own right, just as is the pain of disconnection from a mother.

Life is diminished to the extent that we live inauthentically. This is as true for our own lives as it is for the life of those around us, including the non-human world. I believe that most, if not all, social and environmental ills arise because civilized humans are damaged and our neuroses leak out destructively. Life tends toward wholeness, and the primal process, as I understand it, is nothing more than the natural healing force that calls us back to a life lived wholly. As we are called to greater authenticity and wholeness, we will learn to live in harmony with each other and the rest of the natural world, as our tribal ancestors did for the majority of human history.

I know intuitively that my authentic self is embedded within the world and that growing into this expanded self means coming home into the world. The world has been waiting all along, inviting us to rejoin the circle of life.

Sedona

While once I danced in muted shades of brown and gray
I now delight in pinon pine and juniper 'neath cobalt sky
And crimson swaths of Chimney Rock and
Coffeepot obliterate
This eastern wood of childhood
And April day.

Ants

The ants are out
This scout that scout
Come about
And dart the waves of leafy oak and beech
No Odyssey nor plot of human hand
But serendipity and the queen's command.

Jean Rashkind
April, 2007

Written in Harriet Geller's workshop at the Spring Retreat.
Inspired by Wordsworth's "Daffodils."

New Research: Exposure to Trauma Creates Changes in the Brain

The American Psychological Association issued the following news release.

WASHINGTON ~ Exposure to trauma may create enough changes in the brain to sensitize people to overreact to an innocuous facial gesture years later, even in people who don't have a stress-related disorder, says new research. It appears that proximity to high-intensity traumas can have long lasting effects on the brain and behavior of healthy people without causing a current clinical disorder. But these subtle changes could increase susceptibility to mental health problems later on. These findings are reported in the May issue of *Emotion*, published by the American Psychological Association (APA).

Evidence that trauma can have long-term effects on the brains of healthy individuals was demonstrated by measuring adults' reactions to emotional stimuli several years after witnessing a trauma, said lead author Barbara Ganzel, PhD and colleagues. In the experiment, 22 healthy adults viewed fearful and calm faces while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to measure their bilateral amygdala activity (part of the brain that judges emotional intensity and that forms and stores emotional memories) between 3.5 and 4 years after September 11, 2001.

All of the participants had some level of exposure to the events of September 11. The authors wanted to determine whether close proximity to a traumatic event - September 11 - sensitized parts of the brain to emotional stimuli 41 and 48 months after the terrorist attacks. Eleven of the participants were within 1.5 miles of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and the other 11 participants lived at least 200 miles away [control group]. The control group - those participants living at least 200 miles from New York on 9/11/01 - subsequently moved to the New York metropolitan area at the time of the MRI scanning.

According to the study, participants who were within 1.5 miles of the World Trade Center on 9/11 had significantly higher bilateral amygdala activity to fearful versus calm faces compared to those who were living more than 200 miles away. These results show that exposure to traumatic events in the past was associated with emotional responses several years later in people who were close to the initial trauma. Yet, the

participants did not meet the criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD, depression or anxiety at time of imaging. All the participants were screened for psychiatric, medical and neurological illnesses.

This finding indicates that heightened amygdala reactivity following high-intensity trauma exposure may be slow to recover and can be responsible for heightened reactions to everyday emotional stimuli, said the authors. Furthermore, the group closest to the World Trade Center on 9/11 reported more current symptoms and more symptoms at the time of the trauma than the group farther from 9/11. These symptoms included increased arousal (e.g., difficulty sleeping, irritability, hypervigilance), avoidance (e.g., not wanting to go downtown when they used to enjoy doing so), and intrusion (e.g., recurrent and distressing memories or dreams). And, those who reported 9/11 as the worst and most intense trauma experienced in their lifetime also had more brain activity when viewing the fearful faces.

"Our findings suggest that there may be long-term neurobiological correlates of trauma exposure, even in people who appear resilient. Since these effects were observable using mild, standardized emotional stimuli (not specific trauma reminders), they may extend further into everyday life than previously thought," said Dr. Ganzel. "We have known for a long time that trauma exposure can lead to subsequent vulnerability to mental health

disorders years after the trauma. This research is giving us clues about the biology underlying that vulnerability. Knowing what's going on will give us a better idea how to help."

Full text of the article, "The Aftermath of 9/11: Effect of intensity and recency of trauma on outcome," B. Ganzel, PhD, et al, *Cornell University Emotion*, Vol. 7, No. 2. is available from the APA Public Affairs Office or at www.apa.org/journals/releases/emo72227.pdf

"...heightened amygdala reactivity following high-intensity trauma exposure may be slow to recover and can be responsible for heightened reactions to everyday emotional stimuli..."

*"There is sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love."
-Washington Irving*

News from the IPA Infomaven: Farewell!

By Harriet Geller
July 2007

This will be my final article about the doings of the IPA Board of Directors. After six years of composing the Meeting Notes and conveying the highlights to you, I have been kicked upstairs to the official Secretarial position.

Following a bumpy year in 2005-06 - weathering the sudden death of Convention Co-chair Daniel Miller and mediating painful and time-consuming issues between members - we have emerged this year with expanded energy, a new Newsletter editor, Esta Powell, and a fresh coterie of officers - Pres. Bob Holmes, Vice-pres. Denise Kline, Treasurer Bill Whitesell, and me as Secretary. We are all eager to build on the work of our esteemed predecessors and move the IPA to the next level.

Our biggest challenge is to increase turnout at our Summer Conventions. Maybe this sounds familiar, and it should, as we have been dealing with dwindling attendance for several years. We are perplexed at the disparity between the hours of effort put into our six-day events (and their resulting high quality) and the number of people who show up. We have changed the venue to cater to creature comforts and to offer students and educators an earlier week in the summer. Do these factors really matter?

We have adjusted and re-adjusted the balance of experiential and didactic and support workshops to accommodate practitioners and people at all levels of Primal experience. Is this important? We have sought presenters from the whole spectrum of deep-feeling modalities and beyond. Is there someone we missed?

We sincerely ask for your feedback, especially if you have stopped attending the Conventions on a regular basis. How can we entice you and your friends and colleagues to join us? A membership questionnaire on these and related issues will be sent out soon, and I urge you to respond as thoroughly as possible.

This year's Convention, which is a few short weeks away, is chaired by Mickey Judkovics and Alice Rose. Their enthusiasm and great energy have resulted in a jam-packed program on the theme of "Finding the Authentic Self," a quest that reaches to the heart of our Primal work. I am looking forward to going to that deep level with all of you in August. We hope that our expanded mailing in May will bring in many new faces.

Another ongoing challenge for our events is finding a

venue that has the facilities, comfort, accessibility, exclusivity, and, above all, affordability that we need. Kirkridge, where we have held wonderful Spring Retreats for the last few years is almost priced out of our market, and The Country Place, our latest Summer Convention site, is a bit tight for space. So the search goes on, with several Board Members brain-storming, web-surfing, and visiting a variety of alternative locations. Contact Denise Kline, our 2008 Convention Chair, or Jean Rashkind with suggestions. And did I mention our membership survey? Please use that as a means for corresponding with us.

Our website, www.primals.org, ably managed by Larry Schumer and Carol Holmes, is ever growing, and now provides access to an up-to-the-minute Membership List - for members only. Email webmaster@primals.org with the Subject "Membership List" to get the user id and password. We have also posted a revised Ethics Document - a work in progress expressing our latest attempt to deal with evolving issues. And as part of our outreach goals, Cynthia McNellis has made contacts to exchange website links with sister sites. Take a look at primals.org/links.html for the latest sites.

Other outreach initiatives that we are discussing take advantage of new technologies. They include posting IPA information on Wikipedia, finding appropriate and available videos for YouTube, and using new conference-calling functionality

to allow IPAers world-wide to spend time together or to offer the public ear-to-ear access to Primal expertise. Of course, re-creating our regional contact network is always on the outreach agenda.

On the financial front, we are looking to cut our expenses wherever possible because of reduced income from the Conventions. To this end we eliminated one Board meeting this year, saving considerable travel costs with no loss in productivity, as we do a lot of IPA business by email. It remains to be seen whether the loss of emotional contact that supports us is justified. Also, our Convention Chairs and On-Site Coordinator, Bob Holmes, have agreed to accept reduced Convention scholarships. This is a most appreciated sacrifice, and one that Mickey and Alice may already be regretting as the full impact of their responsibilities comes to a head in July. Many of you may not realize that we are a fully volunteer (i.e., unpaid) work force, and scholarships are the only monetary compensation we offer. For three of our hardest-working members to accept less than their due is indeed an act of great generosity.

"We sincerely ask for your feedback... How can we entice you and your friends and colleagues to join us?"

"Infomaven" continued on page 11

Aspirations of Primal Process

By Bill Whitesell

We know we can recover from emotional hurts and trauma through primal release, but are there aspirations of our primal process that go beyond the recovery phase to a higher level of self-actualization and realization?

Arthur Janov and other primal theorists have called the state of healing to be one in which we are connected or integrated. Harvey Jackins, in Re-evaluation Counseling theory, stated the goal as becoming a fully emerged human. For Daniel Casriel and Bonding Psychotherapy, a key objective is a deep understanding that one's needs are a pleasure.

These traditions share in common the idea that, through emotional release, we may reach a self-knowledge far more profound than that which can be obtained merely from the conceptual level of our brains. We may generate many cognitive interpretations of what it all means, but the real understanding lies at a deeper level. It goes beyond bringing unconscious episodes from our past into present awareness, though that may be part of it. We can become attuned to the emotional sub-strata of our true nature. We can gain access to the full range of our emotional capacities, from despair over helplessness, grief over devastating losses, an overwhelming sense of terror, rage at injustice, and, on the other side, exultation over triumphs and a wide-open heart full of love. We can become – not just connected – but re-identified with lost fragments of ourselves. By going deep enough to bond once again with the wounded child, we can gather up dissociated aspects of our personality and make

“We may also enhance our capacity to be with others in their wounded feelings, becoming better able to take them in and hold them in our hearts.”

their energy and life available to our current adult self.

On the purely physical plane, as Janov emphasizes, we may develop a healthier body, with a stronger immune system, lower stress levels, and better hormonal balance. Our brains may be quieter and less susceptible to triggering. And those physiological changes may be accompanied by a more flexible intelligence. As Jackins highlighted, we may be able to see the unique features of each new situation and formulate the most innovative and apt responses, rather than react with emotional charge to the reminders of our own unhealed hurts.

We may also enhance our capacity to be with others in their wounded feelings, becoming better able to take them in and hold them in our hearts. Our own needs for further healing may no longer intrude and cause us to space out at such times. We may thus expand the range of circumstances where we are able to be fully present with genuine feelings of compassion and empathy.

And we may experience a new, pervasive, and resilient attitude of appreciation for ourselves. The ties to old patterns of blame-the-victim and identify-with-the-aggressor may be broken as we recover identification with the hurt self within us and the self that was present before the hurt. We may develop a robust confidence in our inherent worthiness and deservedness that can never again be shaken by an oppressive power. In attaining a new level of safety within our own minds, we may become empowered to reveal to others, with confidence, our deepest belief in ourselves. We may realize the freedom to express sheer delight in who we are, to exult in the precious uniqueness of our own individual being.

“Infomaven” continued from page 10

Speaking of scholarships, we have decided to restructure our Convention Program Scholarships. Previously, recipients paid “room and board” costs, but as this has become a greater proportion of the total Convention fee, we are now offering half of the total early bird fee as a scholarship. We are not granting an Overseas Scholarship this summer, even though this program has been a resounding success in the past few years, while we allow for replenishment of the fund.

Another potential boon to our finances is the achievement, after five years on “probation,” of permanent non-profit status, thanks to the impressive work of our own T-Bill. We hope more people will take advantage of the tax deduction as

they contemplate contributing to the Scholarship and Development Funds along with their membership dues.

The last Board project I want to discuss, the scientific basis for Primal, is dear to my heart. Cynthia is getting a small handle on what could be a huge undertaking by researching the Primal and clinical literature, and Alice is interested in studying how primaling affects blood pressure. We know, of course, how efficacious Primal is, and now we would like to bring some hard evidence to the world.

Thank you all for reading about some of the behind-the-scenes mechanisms that bring the IPA's mission into fruition. If this interests you, I hope you will attend the Membership Meeting at the Convention on Thursday, August 9. In addition to the election of officers and directors, we will discuss our work and the concerns of the membership.

Annual IPA Membership Meeting Announcements

Thursday August 9, 2007

ELECTIONS

Two Officers and up to six Directors will be elected. Note that the two other Officers, Treasurer and Secretary, and three Directors will be completing the second year of their two-year terms.

The Board of Directors, as nominating committee, presents the following slate for the Officers. Additional nominations for these positions can be made at the meeting.

President—Bob Holmes

Vice President—Denise Kline

Directors will be nominated at the meeting.

BY-LAWS CHANGE

The following change to Article One of the IPA By-Laws has been agreed to by the Board of Directors to improve clarity and will be submitted for approval by the membership.

"The directors shall be elected at the annual meeting of the membership. Nominees for the board of directors must accept their nomination either in person or in writing. Elected nominees must accept their positions either in person or in writing." changed to, "To stand for election, nominees must accept their nomination either in person or in writing. To serve as officers, elected nominees must accept their position either in person or in writing."

IPA ROSES to . . .

- Mickey Judkovics, Alice Rose and Sandy Weymouth for going out of their ways to see the sites – for IPA future events.
- Denise Kline for spearheading a major mailing campaign for the Summer Convention including obtaining bulk mailing permits.
- Jean Rashkind for stepping up to design the Summer Convention brochures and helping to get them out to an expanded audience.
- Wayne Carr for initiating a mailing-list connection with AHP (Assn. for Humanistic Psychology).
- Cynthia McNellis and Esta Powell for making contacts to exchange website links with sister sites.
- Special contributors to the Spring Retreat: Karuna O'Donnell for graceful coordination; Walter Gambin for hosting Cabaret; Bill Whitesell, Bob Holmes and others for extra kitchen duty; and Jennifer "JJ" Jackson for recording it all her beautiful photos.
- This issue's many contributors—Patrick Draper, Harriet Geller, Jennifer "JJ" Jackson, Mickey Judkovics, Cynthia McNellis, Linda Marks, Jean Rashkind, Sandy Weymouth, Bill Whitesell.

IPA Membership Dues

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Joint</u>
Lifetime Membership (payable over five years)	\$1000	\$1500

Annual Membership (based on income)		
\$100,000 or more	\$110	\$165
\$50,000–99,999	\$75	\$112
\$25,000–49,999	\$60	\$90
Less than \$25,000	\$50	\$75

- Membership fees are tax deductible

- Membership for \$30 per year is available to overseas residents, full-time students, and individuals who support themselves exclusively with public assistance.
- All dues cover the fiscal year from January 1 to December 31.
- To qualify for joint membership, both members must live at the same address and pool resources. Joint members will receive one mailing per household.
- Please make out your check to the IPA in US funds. Canadian checks (in US Funds) are accepted with an additional \$5 service fee.
- International money orders are accepted with additional \$7 service fee.
- Pay by credit card (MC or VISA). Indicate credit card type, number, exp. date, and 3-digit code on back. Mail to the address below, or pay by calling (703) 734-1405.
- Mail your complete name and contact info (including email) to:

IPA, 811 Whann Ave., McLean, VA, USA 22101