



HOFFMAN INSTITUTE

LIGHT News

SUMMER 2005

MYSTERIES OF THE BRAIN, MYSTERIES OF HEALING

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR BRUCE PRICE, M.D.

Dr. Bruce H. Price is Chief, Department of Neurology at McLean Hospital in Belmont, MA. McLean maintains the largest research program of any private psychiatric hospital in the world and is consistently cited as our nation's preeminent psychiatric hospital.

Dr. Price is also Assistant Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School, teaching medical students, psychiatry, and neurology residents, and behavioral neurology/neural psychiatry and neuropsychology fellows.

Dr. Price specializes in neuropsychiatry and cognitive and behavioral neurology. He is interested in the relationship between disorders of the brain and mind, the causes and treatment of neuropsychiatric diseases and psychopathology, the biological basis of violence, the effects of use of MDMA (ecstasy), and the prevention/enhancement of aging brains.

Bruce, his wife Eileen, daughter Shannon, and son Doug are Process graduates.

Raz Ingrasci: You have been interested in brain functions and malfunctions as a specialist in neurology. On the one hand, the brain is a biological organ, but it's also a social organ. I think more and more people are recognizing that the brain governs everything including our personality, our temperament, our sense of self, and that it can be changed not only through disease, surgery, and chemistry and so on, but that it grows and changes as a social organ through social interventions, through learning, and through experience. I'm hoping you'll comment on the interface between nature and nurture, and then how the brain changes through the Process experience.

Dr. Bruce Price: Let me give some background first to tell you why I arrived where I am now and what's the driving force, because that plays into issues that the Hoffman Process helped me to recognize. I can't remember a moment, even in my childhood, when I wasn't driven by the question of what makes people do and feel what they do and feel. As a kid growing up in Wichita, Kansas, the world wasn't too large for me at that point, but the question was a huge one.

In college I majored in a combination of sociology, psychology, and anthropology and the theme here is my attempt to integrate. So again it's that question: "My God, isn't the brain the most fascinating organ in the universe?" That was my first attempt to integrate three different disciplines into one cohesive look at human behavior. My mother thought I should be a people doctor, so who was I to question her? Originally I wanted to be a veterinarian because I had an affinity with animals that's very deep, but she put me into the human channel and that's just as well. Then I did medical school in internal medicine for four years and was really going to be an inner city doctor to wipe out hypertension, obesity, and diabetes until I reckoned that the problem was far bigger than me. But that was part

of my zeal from being very involved in the student movement of the '60s and '70s. So, I do think I still have that sense of service to humanity that's my drive.

RI: In our experience of the Hoffman Process we find that high achievers often find that their drive is a combination of an unconscious need to please one or both parents and to prove their value to their parents. Another element is their "calling" to serve. Perhaps one of the contributions that the Process can make to high achievers is to help them reorient their motivation. When the true self is activated, one is following one's calling, which you said you were aware of since your earliest memories. Would you agree with that?

BP: Yes. Here's my small story for what it's worth. Clearly my life has been spent in part to make my mom proud and also fill in her gaps of sadness. So that's been my fuel, unconscious until the Hoffman Process. One revelation I had was, "Thank you, Mother. Now I'm pleased with where your fuel drove me, immensely pleased, but now, from here on out, it's about my actualizing my own path, with my own motivation."

RI: That's wonderful. Trying to meet those unconscious needs produces stress, burnout, and lacks meaning. And it reduces what's called a "healing presence." How important do you think "healing presence" is for a doctor?

BP: The Hoffman Process really gave me a burst of new energy. It made me thankful for what I've done and the position I'm in to help a lot of people. It clearly redefined me as a healer, not just a physician and, really, what it unlocked was a sense of spirituality.

The brain is a pretty awesome organ, and I'm a pretty serious and hard-bitten scientist and I embrace laws of biology. I've had arguments with God,



Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

or at least those who are proponents of God in various religious forms, but what the Process helped me do is to redefine spirituality. Spirituality is not the equivalent of organized religion. I was giving the various organized religions that I've experienced way too much power, to say that's their territory, not mine. If you redefine spirituality in terms of love, sense of inner connection, wisdom, humanity, creativity, hope, kindness, and goodness, that is a whole different acceptable paradigm to me.

RI: Did you find those qualities within yourself?

BP: Yes. It's one of those "aha" moments that suddenly makes such sense. So a direct change in my practice of medicine is that I now directly inquire about my patient's sense of spirituality and I go beyond the usual "Religion please." I need to know if there's an everyday presence of that because I deal with a lot of very difficult brain diseases and I need to understand their sense of spirit and that sense of hope. I now assess much more intensely the sense of connection with the family and just how supportive they are. How abandoned does the patient feel vs. how supported? Those are huge prognostic factors, both in terms of quality and quantity of life.

"The HQP gave me a burst of new energy..."

It clearly defined me as a healer, not just a physician..."

fect and significant increases in positive affect. They also measured spirituality – not religiosity, but spirituality. What they saw was that increases in spirituality and forgiveness in the Process participants predicted decreases in depression and other negative affects. To me, that says that there's some kind of healing force at work here.

I think it's fair to say that spiritual experience is subjective. But it turns out that a lot of the things that we really value in life, like love, family, belonging, and meaning are subjective experiences. Perhaps one of the outcomes of the Hoffman Process is for people to recognize that our subjective experiences are important and powerful and should not to be dismissed as irrational.

BP: That actually has a direct post-Hoffman implication for me, to relax a little bit about myself and "let it rip" and not be so entirely caught up in the intellectual critique. It's almost a letting go, a "letting be" of feelings of love, connection, and joy.

Behind that, for me, is trust. Trust is a huge issue. Trust in something beyond our intellect.

RI: Exactly, and your willingness to be in the presence of this mystery, this force. So it seems to me that is a pretty big step for a brain scientist.

BP: Yes, and I would hope that it's immediately felt by

my patients. It is the sense of an emotional bond, not "just the facts, ma'am" – the sense that I am a healer and a certain sense of mutual comfort and trust, which, in and of itself, has therapeutic value.

RI: Are you involved in teaching doctors?

BP: Yes, I teach Harvard medical students, interns, residents, and fellows. I probably teach 50–60 students per year. One of my greatest prides and joys is to try to be as good a mentor as I can.

RI: How has your Hoffman Process experience affected your teaching?

BP: I think I'm lighter on my feet. I think I'm more willing to share emotions and the joy of learning, which is, after all, why I committed to medicine. The learning curve is so amazing and steep and beautiful and unending. So, it's that renewed energy. It's like remembering why I have devoted myself to medicine in the first place. This is at a time when burnout, amongst physicians, is epidemic, as surveys have shown. So this has helped me push upward and forward with energy and not collapse downward.

RI: You talked earlier about how you've discovered there's a difference between religion and spirituality. There are also differences between ways of understanding being human. We are living in a fractionated society in which traditions sometimes keep us in chains and prevent us from changing.

BP: I've been combining disciplines since college. First, anthropology and psychology in college, then clinical brain science as a physician. My new challenge is to integrate spiritual and emotional wisdom into practice and to model this for all of my students. The continued growth beyond my current reality is my new aspiration.

RI: So, to navigate our way through life, we need to own our full humanity.

BP: Yes, that's why I like the Process definition of responsibility, which is "freedom to respond," the ability to respond in an informed manner. It also helped me to realize the power of music and the power of shared experiences, the sense of community from which we emerge.

In neurology – and this is in contrast to psychiatry and psychology – we actually get to touch our patients. The neurological exam is a very physical and somewhat intimate exam and I've recently realized how powerful touch itself can be to the healing process. It conveys a sense of, "Look, I really care and we are in this together." I hadn't noticed that, in practicing medicine for 25 years, until the Hoffman Process. I had another Esalen moment and realized, "Wow, that's amazing." I think in a way it's too bad (physical touch) isn't part of traditional psychology and psychiatry. I recognize the potential for boundary violations, but I think it needs to be revisited.

RI: What I'm hearing is that you are more present to the

Continued on page 10

CYNTHIA MERCHANT —
HOFFMAN QUADRINITY PROCESS TEACHER

In early 1986, I came to the San Francisco Bay Area seeking a deeper connection with myself, a new direction in my life, and peace of mind. I realized – through a series of epiphanies – that in my early life I had abandoned my innate interest in people, healing, teaching, and relatedness in favor of more “impressive” things such as the theories of economics and international relations I had studied in college.

Fortunately, I found myself living with recent Process graduates. The central ideas of the Process – Negative Love, programming, forgiveness, and “No One Is to Blame” – made such good sense to me that in 1987, at age 25, I undertook the old-style, 13-week non-residential Process.

It was grueling. I wrote more about my early life than I thought possible. I re-discovered who I was and what really mattered to me in life. Through an experience of excavation, cleansing, and transformation, I came to the simple yet healing realization that I knew who I was – and, more importantly, I genuinely *liked* who I was. No longer would I reject myself and my heart’s yearnings in order to try to be acceptable. I made a commitment to myself to grow toward full self-acceptance – and to honor, develop, and bring into reality my authentic talents and interests, which included doing therapy; gleaning wisdom from the mythologies of many traditions by listening to teaching tales; studying the effect of trauma on the psyche and how to work with it; delving into spiritual practices; exploring expressive arts, bodywork, and movement; and taking advantage of all the vital aspects of myself the Process had served to re-awaken.

I felt I was in a time of preparation. Serendipitously, I came into contact with two of Bob Hoffman’s earliest collaborators, who introduced me to Bob and encouraged me to think about becoming a Process teacher.

As I began the eight-day Hoffman Quadrinity Process in the fall of 1989 as a necessary step toward determining if I would apprentice myself to teach, I was more than a little nervous about how the



genius of the Process could be given over in such a condensed form. Yet the restructured momentum intensified its power. A year later, in November 1990, Bob Hoffman certified me as an HQP teacher. It was the fulfillment of a dream that went back to my earliest childhood fantasies of becoming a teacher one day.

Over the next seven years, I presented the HQP across the U.S., in Canada, Europe and Asia. Experiencing the Process in so many different cultures confirmed for me the universality of this work and how deeply each of us, no matter where or how we were raised, yearns to heal our childhood relationships with our parents in order to re-align ourselves in love with our deeper self, our parents, the world around us, and the divine.

I then decided to become a licensed psychotherapist to enhance my Hoffman work and provide a balance to its lifestyle of teaching and traveling. In my master’s thesis for Pacifica Graduate Institute (1999), I developed my view of the HQP as a modern-day version of the hero’s journey rite of passage. In addition, I proposed a way in which an adapted HQP could be integrated into a program for at-risk youth as a meaningful rite of initiation toward emotional maturity.

Today, 16 years into teaching the HQP, I am excited to be contributing to taking the Process work in new directions. The Hoffman Institute and Youth At Risk are developing a pilot program for young people that will include adapted HQP experiences as a crucial part of a wider program of healing, initiation, and transformation.

Being a Process teacher has been one of the greatest gifts and challenges of my life. In order to be of service to others in their journey toward greater wholeness, I must remain engaged in an ongoing process of growth – a living practice. The HQP is a journey of ritual into the psyche’s underworld to experience the death of old childhood survival strategies and to bring about a rebirth of our true selves. Hence, the HQP can be placed beside ancient spiritual and shamanic rites whose aim has been the realization of our full human potential. ■

“In order to be of service to others in their journey toward greater wholeness, I must remain engaged in an ongoing process of growth – a living practice. The HQP is a journey of ritual into the psyche’s underworld to experience the death of old childhood survival strategies and to bring about a rebirth of our true selves.”

Cynthia Merchant, MFT, is an HQP teacher/coach, and a licensed Marriage & Family Therapist with a practice in Berkeley and Walnut Creek, California, where she works with individuals, children, couples, and families.

In her free time, Cynthia enjoys kayaking and snorkeling on the Sonoma Coast, yoga, hiking, dreaming, and a good story.

To purchase her thesis, “The Hero’s Journey and the Hoffman Quadrinity Process,” contact her via email, cynthia@hoffmaninstitute.org.

SURVEY RESULTS — HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

The Institute was interested in assessing the impact of the Process on the health and well being of physicians and other health care professionals. To obtain data on the personal and professional benefits of Process participation, 494 questionnaires were sent to healthcare professional graduates in October 2004. There were 129 responses, a 26% return. The results were scored in February 2005.

The questionnaire probed four categories of post-Process change:

1. Personal Changes
2. Family Relationships
3. Professional Changes
4. Professional Relationships

Positive change was reported in every segment. Among the highest percentage of positive change experienced were the following:

- 89% more present and self-aware
- 86% more compassionate
- 84% more aware of feelings
- 85% more experience of giving and receiving love
- 84% more self forgiving
- 82% more balanced and grounded
- 80% more balance in personal and professional life
- 80% more life satisfaction
- 77% less depressed and anxious
- 79% more integrated in interactions with others
- 80% more spiritual
- 75% more committed to family
- 78% more empathic listener
- 88% better partner
- 91% better parent
- 77% better listener with patients
- 77% more open in communication with patients
- 78% more connected with patients
- 75% able to establish deeper connection with patients
- 80% address all aspects of patients (body, emotions, intellect, spirit)
- 78% more present to people in their suffering
- 77% able to perform with greater ease

73% suggest power of prayer/meditation/spirit in bringing emotional & physical healing

80% combine professional excellence with compassion

78% established healthier boundaries

86% increase in personal growth

The survey also included space for health care professionals to express other post Hoffman changes in their own words.

The following are some statements from physicians:

- "My marriage would not be in existence had both of us not done the Hoffman Process. I can let my children 'be' much easier without taking their presence or absence in my life personally.

"On the whole, I loved my practice before...(doing the Process) but it became easier since. It's really hard to remember because the experience has so incorporated itself into my life. I am less self-accusatory when patients express dissatisfaction during the healing."

- "I am more willing to use the self that I have increasingly come to love as a therapeutic instrument in my work and my parenting."

- "I was able to join Team Leukemia and raise money and finish a marathon, 26.2 miles. Prior to doing the Hoffman Process I never did anything requiring physical training."

The Institute is deeply gratified to the health care professionals who participated in this survey and we are pleased to learn that the results have been so positive and strong in their personal and professional lives.

Of course, personal and professional pressures and stress affect all professionals. While we have documented the Process benefits among health care professionals, we can infer similar strong benefits in other fields of endeavor. ■

HOFFMAN INSTITUTE

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Some 200 Hoffman Process scholarships are awarded each year by the Hoffman Institute Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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ARIZONA

Phoenix/Scottsdale

Contact Ann Salmon
98dragons@cox.net
or Eric Davis
480/967-7538

CALIFORNIA

North Bay

3rd Wednesday of month, 6:30–9 PM
Contact Tessa Alburn
tessa@hoffmaninstitute.org
415/485-5220 ext. 24

East Bay Women's Group

Contact Linda Elmer
linda@energylightyoga.com
510/381-3094

South Bay & Peninsula

Contact Joyce Weissman
southbayhoffman@yahoo.com
(email preferred)
408/268-0242

Santa Barbara

Contact Linda Ruffin
LRuffin4@aol.com
805/569-6859

Los Angeles Area

4th Monday of month
Contact Roberta Falke
310/273-5266
or Joe McCue
kototama@earthlink.net

San Diego Area

Contact Brian Carvalho
sbodyman@cox.net
858/245-5130

COLORADO

Boulder

1st Sunday of month, 4–6 PM
Contact Ann Singer
asinger912@aol.com
720/565-1947

South Denver

2nd Wednesday of month, 7–9 PM
Contact Cindy Rold
coachcindy@cindyrold.com
303/734-9776

CONNECTICUT

Contact Ann West
cellobrations@sbcglobal.net
203/453-0291

GEORGIA

Atlanta

1st Monday of month
Contact Michal or Shmuel Spiegelman
m_spiegelman@yahoo.com
770/605-8313 (Michal)
404/457-3300 (Shmuel)

IDAHO

Boise

Contact Andi Saucerman
andisaucerman@aol.com
208/345-7096

ILLINOIS

Chicago

2nd Monday of month
Contact Linda Dean
creativeessence4@aol.com
847/328-7904

KANSAS

Kansas City

Contact Crystal Jenkins
rcretreat@aol.com
913/441-0821

KENTUCKY

Louisville

2nd Monday of month, 7–10 PM
Contact Holman Wilson
holmanw@insightbb.com
502/228-1824 (h)
502/552-6590 (w)

MAINE

Contact John Kellar
jkellar@kellarassociates.com
207/252-5611 or
617/594-6736

MARYLAND

D.C./S. Baltimore

Meets every other month
Contact Jody Cutler
jodycutler@comcast.net
301/854-3318
(please also see Virginia listing)

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

1st Wednesday of month
Contact Madeleine Weinreich
603/357-2343 or
Hilary Illick
hbug@verizon.net

MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids

Contact Lisa Helm
lhsnickers@netzero.net
616/696-7244

MINNESOTA

St. Paul/Minneapolis

3rd Sunday of month, 1–3 PM
Contact Maisie Wolszon
651/222-6722 or
Nancy Blasberg
rocketcoach@comcast.net

MISSOURI

Kansas City-North

3rd Tuesday of month
Contact Mary Calvillo
mhc104@sbcglobal.net
816/587-6824

MONTANA/WYOMING—SE

Contact Anne Giuliano
awgiuliano@bresnan.net
406/896-1667

NEW HAMPSHIRE/VERMONT

Contact Madeleine Weinreich
603/357-2343

NEW YORK CITY

2nd Monday of month
Contact Jane Wong
for email of monthly events
jhwnewyork@excite.com
212/689-4074

OREGON

Portland

3rd Friday of month
Contact Brooke Gaab
brookegaab@aol.com
503/977-9053

TENNESSEE

Nashville

Contact Scott Weiss
nashhqp@comcast.net
615/298-5862

VIRGINIA

Potomac Falls/N. Virginia

1st Wednesday of month
Contact Emily King
king_emily@bah.com
703/728-4668

WISCONSIN

Madison

3rd Thursday of month
Contact Kelly MacVittie
608/293-1639 or
Beth Kubly
bkubly@earthlink.net



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California:

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August 5 – 12, 2005
August 19 – 26, 2005
September 9 – 16, 2005
September 30 – October 7, 2005
October 14 – 21, 2005
October 28 – November 4, 2005
November 11 – 18, 2005
December 2 – 9, 2005
December 9 – 16, 2005
January 6 – 13, 2006
January 20 – 27, 2006
February 10 – 17, 2006
February 24 – March 3, 2006

Massachusetts:

Site in **Sheffield**
September 23 – 30, 2005
May 12 – 19, 2006

Rhode Island:

Site in **Little Compton**
November 4 – 11, 2005
February 17 – 24, 2006

Wisconsin:

Site in **Madison**
October 28 – November 4, 2005
April 28 – May 5, 2006

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NEW HOFFMAN TEACHER: LAUREL CALLAN

Congratulations to Laurel Callan, who was certified as a Quadrinity Process Teacher on Saturday, June 11, 2005. There are currently 18 members of the teaching faculty.

Dean of Faculty Anne Simon-Wolf said, "Laurel has successfully completed her training, interned in eight Processes, and has written a paper on 'The Three Battles for Self In the Process: Anger, Vindictiveness, and the Dark Side.'

"She was supported in her training by mentors Linda Ruffin, Raz Ingrassi, Devi Razo, Cheshta Buckley, Cynthia Merchant, and Linda Hartka-Reiss. Laurel also had the benefit of Barbara Comstock's teaching wisdom,

especially during the first part of her training.

"Laurel has been assisted by the entire teaching body, for, as we all know, it takes the entire teaching body to develop a teacher."

Laurel holds a BA degree from Mt. Holyoke College, an MBA from Northwestern University, and has 20-plus years of experience in investment banking and corporate training. She brings wisdom, leadership experience, warmth, and humor to her teaching.

We are very happy to welcome her to the Hoffman faculty. ■



TELECLASSES

***Relationships in the Light* with Anne Simon-Wolf**

August 10, 2005, Wednesday, 6:00 PM Pacific time

On this call, you will look at common areas of negative patterns in relationships so you can disengage from those hurtful patterns and heal. Negative relational patterns affect your perceptions and reactions in past and in current relationships – all your relationships – i.e., your boss, attorney, doctor, friends, loved ones, etc. Learn how you can better perceive, communicate, and relate from a place of Spirit.

***Spirit Guided Living* with Raz Ingrassi**

September 14, 2005, Wednesday, 4:30 PM Pacific time

Oftentimes, many of us find it challenging to live day to day from a spiritual place. On this call, we will discuss and explore key steps to achieving success in spirit-guided living: cultivating self-compassion, creating a daily practice, and embodying your spiritual guidance (taking light-guided action!). We will also explore the power of “spiritual emotions” like unconditional love, non-referential joy, deep gratitude, and compassion.

***Renewing Work Spirit* with Kani Comstock**

September 28, 2005, Wednesday, 6:00 PM Pacific time

***Intuition* with Barbara Comstock**

October 6, 2005, Thursday, 6:00 PM Pacific time

***Gratitude* with Ed McClune**

November 9, 2005, Wednesday, 4:30 PM Pacific time

Each class is one-hour long, and the fee is \$25. Calls are limited to the first 40 graduates who register. Don't miss out! Register today – call us Monday–Friday, 9–5 PM Pacific time, and speak to someone on our enrollment team: **800/506-5253** *Courses Fill Fast!*

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Grow and build deep bonds with other like-

minded individuals in this graduate-led course. Trained facilitators for this series are Boston grads Hilary Illick and Madeleine Weinrich.

When: Thursday evenings from Mid-September to Mid-November. Tuition is \$80. Call the Institute to register, 800/506-5253. ■

IN COMMUNITY
WE DISCOVER
OURSELVES

GRADUATE GATHERINGS: SUPPORT GROUPS

Hoffman Graduate Gatherings are meetings led by volunteer graduates in order to serve their community, create light connections, and provide a space for graduates to convene and share what is in their hearts. The Institute assists in lending program materials that are in line with the principles you learned at the Process. You can be part of your light community, by attending a meeting in your area.

If you don't see a current listing near you, contact Tessa Alburn in the Graduate Department to see what options might be available. We suggest that you continually check back as new meeting areas are constantly evolving. Visit the Grad pages on our website, www.hoffmaninstitute.org

mystery of the healing presence, the mystery of how healing occurs, and more aware that your own emotions, your ability to connect with the person, and your interest in connecting with the other person, and seeing them as a whole person who has some illness, are all incredibly important to you now.

BP: Yes. And to be comfortable with the mystery all the time, wanting to understand it more because I do think there are some principles by which it operates and if we can find these well, my goodness, shouldn't we infuse all health care providers with that, with those tools?

RI: Have you found you're willing to follow your intuition a little more since you've done the Process, and has that been helpful?

BP: Yes, my emotional intuition, which I had previously guarded against because I thought it might be too subjective for medicine. To use a metaphor, my heart now wanders in search of connection. So there are intuitive forces in play that lead me in places I hadn't gone before.

RI: This is interesting and I'd like to say it's just wonderful that your interests led you into taking the Hoffman Process.

BP: Well, thanks to my two children and my wife. As I said, the brave soul that I think I am, I sent my two children to the altar first!

RI: My perception of doctors is that they're often so committed to their practices that their family lives suffer. Has your family life benefited from the fact that so many of you have done Hoffman? Is it the kind of contribution that other doctors could benefit from?

BP: Yes. I am in a relative position of luxury because I'm a senior physician at this point. I have lots of people working with me and I do have the luxury of some choices and some ability to modify my lifestyle substantially. I'm not sure I would have been able to do that 10 or 15 years ago, though that doesn't mean you can't. Maybe I just couldn't or wasn't informed enough to do that. But most doctors I'm aware of have a very unbalanced life and in that imbalance something has to give and it's usually the individual or the family. And that impairs your ability as a physician, as we know. It's all circular.

RI: Are you an advocate for the idea that as you heal yourself you become a better healer.

BP: Yes, there's little doubt about that. Here's how I incorporate the Hoffman Process into my day. In the shower I do my "three Ishes and one Om." Once a week I do my Quadrinity check and then I hear myself say, "Bruce, don't take yourself too seriously." I need to remind myself to *Skip and Whistle*, because those were my childhood experiences, which brought me such pure joy. *Skip and Whistle*. I try to do this discretely because

at a psychiatric hospital, it could be misinterpreted! "There goes Skipper the whistler."

RI: Those are your keys to tapping into your own joy.

BP: Yes, and joy is so contagious. So contagious.

RI: As you know, Bruce, we've done a survey of health care professionals who've done the Process and we find that physicians responded in very high levels, in the high 80 percentages, that they do feel more present, self aware, more compassionate. All the physicians and health care professionals who participated in this survey have done the process a year or more ago, many of them five, seven, or eight years ago.

BP: That's what's amazing. Multiple moons ago I went to Esalen and it was beautiful. Three months later I still said, "That was great," but it hadn't fundamentally changed me. I then did Outward Bound, which is a little different obviously, but a great high, lots of good feelings about yourself, but it doesn't have the enduring power that I think the Hoffman Process does.

RI: Well, the research shows the changes are still there a year later and I think the reason is that we are working at a level that must effectively change the brain.

BP: Yes, and by the way, I'd like to give you some huge things we've learned about the brain that require us to abandon many of our previous dogmas about how the brain operates. First, the mind and brain are indivisible. That's profound for doctors to be saying, because it turns out we're the product of the interaction between genes and environment, and there's a remarkably complex interplay between brain structure and social forces. So, I can say that the Hoffman Process most likely fundamentally alters brain function. The question becomes, how long?

RI: You're saying the changes can last for years.

BP: Clearly the Hoffman Process works through neurobiology. The extraordinary thing we have found out about is the concept we call "plasticity," that the connections and functions of the brain at all its levels of organization respond to social forces. We can actually take normal people and look at them and see what's going on inside. For example, we think we actually know, in general, where romance is mediated in the brain and where complex mental thoughts occur and how they're organized and change over time.

Brain imaging technology allows us to study the brain in action. It would be remarkably interesting to study participants' brains pre- and post-Hoffman.

RI: That's very exciting. Thank you, Bruce. I know that everyone will find your perspective to be enlightening. ■

"I can say that the Hoffman Process most likely fundamentally alters brain function."

NEW HOFFMAN OFFICE

After 11 years in San Anselmo, the Hoffman Institute is moving to a larger space.

Increased growth and anticipated future growth have required more staff/office space. The new office will be in downtown San Rafael on the corner of Fourth and "C"

Streets. The new address is 1299 Fourth Street, Suite 304, San Rafael, CA 94901.

The telephone numbers will remain the same: 800/506-5253 and 415/485-5220, Fax 415/485-5539. ■

DINING ROOM AIR-CONDITIONED!

As anyone who has been to White Sulphur Springs Inn & Spa during the summer will attest, it can get *hot*. Although the Process classroom has always been air-conditioned, the adjacent dining room has not. Now a generous gift by a Hoffman graduate has changed that.

Board member Randy Perkins of San Diego has just donated an air-conditioning system for the dining room at White Sulphur Springs, thereby insuring that future generations of Hoffman students (as well as anyone attending Integration dinners) will eat their meals in comfort.

Thank you, Randy, for your fabulous and much-needed gift!

On a similar note, Hoffman teachers Kani and Barbara Comstock recently donated air conditioning for the Facilitator House, where most of our teachers stay while they are teaching the Process. Thank you, Kani and Barbara!

To learn how you can contribute to the further enhancement of White Sulphur Springs, please telephone the Institute at 800/506-5253. Your donations, whether they are in cash or in kind, are tax deductible. ■

MONTHLY PROCESS INFORMATION TELECALLS

Share the Process: On the first Tuesday of the month at 5 PM Pacific time, the Hoffman Institute presents a wonderful introductory telecall led by Liza Ingrasci, Hoffman's managing director, and a Hoffman Process teacher.

People can call in and ask questions, or simply listen. Hoffman graduates are also

invited to join the call and share their experiences. Most people who join the calls later take the Process.

Invite your friends and family to participate. No reservations required. Just call and input the pass code. That's all there is to it.

We look forward to meeting with you and your friends. ■

When: First Tuesday of every month at 5 PM (Pacific time)

Number: 866/332-7998; pass code 86157# (you must include the #)

Cost: Free – No RSVP is required. Just call in and input the pass code.

THE HOFFMAN INSTITUTE NEEDS AN OUTSIDE AUDITOR

California's Nonprofit Integrity Act 2004 has required all nonprofits above a certain size to have an outside independent audit. This requirement starts for the Hoffman Institute with our Fiscal Year ending December 2005. We are now looking for an audit firm in the Bay Area that can provide us with an independent audit, and we

would prefer people in some way associated with the Process.

If you can suggest anyone or you are an auditor and would like to help, please contact Giles Bateman, the chair of Hoffman's Board Audit Committee. He can be reached at gileshlb@acmeih.com or 858/259-5458. ■

THE JOURNEY

By MARY OLIVER

*One day you finally knew
What you had to do, and
began,*

*though the voices around
you*

*kept shouting, their bad
advice —*

*though the whole house
began to tremble and you
felt the old tug at your
ankles.*

"Mend my life!"

each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.

*You knew what you had to
do,*

though the wind pried

with its stiff fingers

at the very foundations,

*though their melancholy
was terrible.*

It was already late

*enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.*

*But little by little, as you
left their voices behind,*

the stars began to burn

*through the sheets of
clouds,*

*and there was a new voice
which you slowly*

*recognized as your own,
that kept you company*

*as you strode deeper and
deeper into the world*

determined to do

*the only thing that you
could do —*

determined to save

*the only life you could
save.*



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