

# On Fatherhood: An Interview with Kristoffer Alpsjo

Kristoffer Alpsjo has been involved in Clearmind work for a number of years, and until very recently (when his twin boys were born), he facilitated Clearmind Sweden's weekly support group and produced workshops that Duane has facilitated. He has also assisted workshops in Liverpool, London and Dublin as well as in Stockholm, and is just about to start his second year of Clearmind International's online Practitioner's Training. The Ripple spoke to Kris about his experience of becoming a father of not one but two baby boys.

## On being in relationship

A few years ago, Kris moved back to Sweden from London, and set an intention. "I took a good, long look at myself and asked, 'What am I looking for in a relationship?' I worked on my profile for an online dating agency, paying close attention to every word I used, all the while asking two main questions: 'Who do I want to be? (Or, what will I stand for?)" And, 'Who do I want to be with?'"

Kris reports that he wasn't going to just wait for the

universe to drop someone into his life; he was more proactive than that, and did the inner work he felt was required by the situation. "And", he says, "I found my partner Jenny, because I knew what I was looking for. If I hadn't looked at that, I wouldn't have recognized her."

Fast-forward to October 2010, and Jenny was pregnant, a whole new phase of their lives together about to start.

## Two very early surprises

"In the 29th week of Jenny's pregnancy, Jenny started to feel like she was having menstruation feelings - cramps. On Sunday, two days later, she still had some feelings in the womb, and she knew she had to go and get it checked out. I went off to the weekly Clearmind support group that evening, and when I came out from the group, a friend of mine greeted me saying, "Your girlfriend's at the hospital." He told me not to worry, but that they couldn't stop the cramps, and that I should go to the hospital. So off I went, where we stayed for three days. The doctors told us that they couldn't prolong Jenny's pregnancy any longer; she was

starting to give birth. At this point it was week 29 plus two days.

We moved hospitals at that point. I just got on with it; I was not afraid at all. I felt safe. We'd had a good experience so far; everyone treated us so well. The doctors and nurses - everyone who dealt with us - were so respectful, telling us all the information we needed and sitting with us, waiting for any questions we might have. I also noticed that we were well treated because we were also treating the staff well.

Jenny was understandably afraid for a bit, and I tried to use everything I know to communicate to her that this was not in our hands, that it was happening now, and that we needed to just hand this over to the babies, to let them decide if they want to be here now or later.

You know, you're supposed to plan your birthing experience - music, clothing, and so on - and *nothing* ended up how we'd planned. We were having meetings with doctors and nurses and they said, "It's now or... never." They asked us if we wanted to go ahead with

## Clearmind Event Dates

Canada - Vancouver  
Relationship Awakening  
October 28 to 30, 2011

Ireland - Dublin  
The Awakening  
November 11 - 13, 2011

UK - Liverpool  
The Awakening  
November 18 - 20, 2011

Canada - Vancouver  
The Awakening  
November 18 - 20, 2011

Canada - Vancouver  
The Next Step Workshop  
(For PRAC Graduates)  
January 6 to 8, 2012

For upcoming lectures or details on any of these events, please visit:

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



Continued on page 2

# Around the Clearmind World

## On Fatherhood (continued)

a caesarean section, and we of course said yes. It all became really rushed after that moment. Before they started the c-section, after everything was prepared, somebody spoke up and said, "Time out!" and everyone stood around. I think there were 12 people in the room. One by one, they said their name, their title and their function. I think they record this to have a document of it, but I felt that they were presenting themselves to the children. For me it became like a spiritual experience. It was like a ritual for me, and it was very respectful. Everyone introduced themselves to the tummy, saying "Hi guys! You can come out now. My name is Bjorn and I'm going to help you." And then they did it.

I had my iPhone with me and Jenny and I had made a playlist a few weeks before – a Clearmind playlist. It had "That I would be good" by Alanis Morissette on it, and "Angel" by Sarah McLachlan. It was in the middle of that song that we heard Samuel's little voice crying.

We had a really good experience during the whole operation. The nurses were so good; they told us just to focus on our stuff up by the pillow and not think about the tummy, to just be in our space. We were looking in each others' eyes, saying "I love you", and really just saying, "This is it", not being afraid, just handing over, and saying that this was now up to God.

The team brought boy number one out at 4pm, and he was screaming, and there was a lot of energy in the room, and then it went very quiet. Someone said, "Is it one minute yet?" because for the first minute they want the blood to continue to go from the mother to the child as there are a lot of nutrients in there. After one minute, they cut the cord, and ran over to Jenny and I, and showed him to us for about half a second and then took off into another room to take care of him. I was instructed to follow, so I did; they were so professional in taking care of us. Then boy number two came – Elias.

I filmed everything; somebody had said to me at the beginning that if I wanted pictures, to take them now because I wouldn't remember a thing – they were right! I hung my camera around my neck, so everywhere I went I was filming without having to think about it. Afterwards, when Jenny was coming out of spinal anesthesia, I showed her the video and was able to tell her that the boys were fine. So I was able to include her, and it felt really good as a man to be able to do that for her.

We stayed in hospital for 6 weeks. The boys weighed 1.2 kilos each when they were born – they were like little birds. They had no fat, only skin and bones. Of course, they were kept in incubators in an emergency room. Jenny and I lived in a room just across the corridor. Every day, we went

across to be with them. There's a kind of neonatal treatment that is specifically for treatment of premature babies. The focus is to create a womb-like environment, so everything is soft, and calm, and close, tucking the baby up in lots of blankets. There are no sharp or loud noises, only soft humming and so on. And of course, the baby has to be close to the mother so that it can hear the sound of her heart. Because we had two babies, the father was needed.

This is the absolute magic of this story! *I went into the womb every day.* The emergency room was the womb; as a man, I could go into the room, put a baby on my chest and lie down for three or four hours at a time, and I was pregnant. *I was pregnant!*

I was allowed, because of the circumstances, to be pregnant with my children for three months. That's a miracle. My children were born with the sounds of my heart too. The understanding hit me as I sat in that room that this was a magical place. They grew with me, not just with the mother. I was so humbled by this. It's just pure magic. And I thought, 'it's not up to me what happens now, but this – this is the meaning of life. This is it.' I said to the boys, "You choose whether you want to be here or not." And they've never had any problems. There haven't been any obstacles. They were healthy from day one, and they've been growing stronger ever since.

*Continued on page 3*

***This is the absolute magic of this story! I went into the womb every day... I was allowed, because of the circumstances, to be pregnant with my children for three months. That's a miracle.***



# Around the Clearmind World

## On Fatherhood (continued)

### Returning home

After six weeks in the hospital, we went home and started to receive visits from a nurse, for a further six weeks, which started the next phase of parenthood for me. We were advised to take three types of time: time alone, and time together without the babies, and time together with the babies.

My years of experience of working within Clearmind have created a base of operating within me which is based on the question, "What do you need?". It's so simple but such a big thing – to bring awareness to my needs, and then to find a way to meet those needs. So even just the beauty of the ability to find out that I need something as simple as a walk is wonderful, because it can be such a mystery to find out what you need sometimes. It's like orchestrating your own life.

### On becoming a parent

In becoming a parent, I haven't decided on the outcome, but I have just decided on the journey, that I want to take this right turn, into fatherhood, and with this woman.

People have been doing this parenthood thing for thousands of years. Two generations back in my family they had 12 children; if they can do it, I can do it. I can have some respect for my ancestors and not be so frustrated, or at least not take it so seriously. I put myself into context and see the bigger picture. There is more than just my own ego that wants to have my own time.

Putting the babies to bed is a circus! But the boys are really kind, because they're really in sync, so they sleep at the same time, and they're not colicky either.

But, what has surprised me about being a dad is... it's easy. It's like I'm being carried. Sometimes it's hard, but we have twins, and they came 11 weeks too early, so given that context, this is a walk in the park. I'm really grateful for the way that it is unfolding, for the way that *everything* is unfolding, and that includes my process with my partner, my understanding of where I am, and even the uncomfortable times. I do what I need to do, I ask for help, and it works. People show up – friends and family – and it works."



### ACIM Quote of the Quarter

***'You do not walk alone.  
God's angels hover near and all about.  
His Love surrounds you, and of this be sure:  
that I will never leave you comfortless.'***

### Clearmind Newsletter Staff

**Editor** Elloa Barbour [newseditor@clearmind.com](mailto:newseditor@clearmind.com)

**Layout** Alison Taylor / Usable Web Designs

**Contributors** Karen Goodfellow

The Clearmind newsletter is published in digital format four times per year.

**Web Site** [www.clearmind.com](http://www.clearmind.com)

# Around the Clearmind World

## From the Editor

What a fall it's already turning into! With the Rude Awakening and the Summit leaving a trail of freshly inspired and inspirational leaders blazing a path of love through their communities and worlds, it is with a sense of anticipation and huge amounts of gratitude that I write these words. To all who have taken or assisted a workshop this summer, I salute you. Your courage, honesty, willingness and vulnerability are changing the world in more ways than you can possibly conceive of right now.

I decided to spend the month of September focusing on the simple, humble act of forgiving everything and everyone that upset me throughout the day. Along with two other Clearminders, we called this The Forgiveness Project. Focusing on forgiveness was present when I went on holiday, while I witnessed struggles in my family and worried about money, while I got to know my newborn Goddaughter, falling deeply in love with her, and while one of my neighbours sadly passed away.

I can honestly say that it has been an incredibly beneficial and enlightening process which has cultivated waves of gratitude in me over the last few weeks; I know I am deeply privileged to have been given such a radical understanding of forgiveness, but beyond that to

have the tools readily available with which to practice it on a daily basis. Perhaps, I wonder, this is why the real Awakening is said to begin on Sunday night - after the official workshop has ended. It is the simplicity of *being willing to see things differently* and the daily act of changing my mind that return me to a state of love and peace, or at least provide the signposts showing me how to get back there when I stray into fear and ego - not anything that is happening externally in my life.

This issue of The Ripple then is dedicated to forgiveness. May it help you remember that who you really are is magnificent, powerful beyond measure and perfect just the way you are.

**Elloa**  
x



## Thank you Kelly!

If you haven't noticed we have a new Ripple editor. Her name is Elloa Barbour. She is picking up the reins from Kelly Nakatsuka who held the post for the past few years. Kelly now lives on Vancouver Island with his wife Sarah, both of whom have provided undying support of Clearmind's good work for many years now.

Kelly has been the author of the spirit and professional publications of our Ripple newsletter. Kelly, who also is employed as a journalist for CBC radio on Vancouver Island, has always leaned towards reporting from the slightly offbeat, humanitarian and artistic perspective. From music reviews to articles on altruism, Kelly has established the look and content of a



Kelly Nakatsuka

wonderful tradition that Elloa is respectfully committed to continuing.

We thank you Kelly for all of what you have given and wish you, Sarah and your soon to arrive first child a continued rich life of love and success.

## Clearmind Goes Live with Social Media!

### Facebook:

Clearmind International is now on Facebook. Invite [Duane and Catherine O'Kane](#) to be friends if you haven't already.

### Twitter:

Follow [@Clearmind\\_Intl](#) for weekly nuggets of wisdom from Duane and Catherine.

### YouTube:

Announcing the Clearmind channel... coming soon!



# Around the Clearmind World

## Inside Assisting: Reflections on Level 1

Assisting an Awakening and doing the Assistants Training was something I had put off for years thinking I would be no good. I felt I was too flawed and damaged and that I needed the healing, help and support myself so much that I did not think I had anything worthwhile in me to give to others. I did three Awakenings, a couple of HugFests and then the Rude Awakening before I finally felt ready to be of service to others.

I knew everyone on the training, even though people came from different parts of the country. We spent a bit of time going around the circle saying our names and how we were feeling. We spoke about ground rules for the group such as punctuality and confidentiality. At first I confused myself with being a participant rather than an assistant but I readjusted my mindset to this new role.

We were split into pairs of Level 1 trainees, with a Level 2 trainee who would be our guide and support throughout various exercises. The exercises I remember most vividly include a 'breathe' and a 'four step'. We did these in exactly the same way it would be done in an Awakening. When I was practicing how to assist in a 'breathe,' my Level 2 helped me by encouraging me, suggesting things I could say and do to my fellow trainee who was in the experience of the 'breathe'. The Level 2 assistant was also there if I got stuck and needed to ask questions; it was about trying it out and learning from it. My fear before doing this exercise was

that I would under-function and distance myself from the participant, yet during the exercise I worried was I giving too much hands on input. I thought I might be interfering with the participant's process so later I asked for feedback. The person I had assisted with the breath work said they did not experience me as being overly directive, they sensed me as being supportive yet felt I could have been a bit firmer in my tone of voice with them at times. I know myself to be passive and this was good feedback for me to work with. We later had a group feedback session where we could talk about how we felt we did in this exercise and our Level 2 assistant could give feedback on how they thought we did.

Doing the four step exercise, I was allowed to say the words from the booklet (but then I worried I might not know the words in a real Awakening when the time comes - go away ego!), and like in the 'real' Awakening, started with a joining of hands and a prayer to set the intention. So I had to direct the Level 1 trainee and the Level 2 in this and explain about them expressing their emotions in a powerful way. I'm not sure if I did this accurately, as I may have been influenced by the fact that the trainee had been on an Awakening and was familiar with the four step process but I am aware that with a participant who had no experience of a four step process I would have to explain more in depth. I felt that I went through the rest



of the process quite well and sensed the moment that the trainee went into step two, the vulnerable self. The Level 2 was there mainly as the witness but could also give guidance and support if needed. Feedback was given by both the reporter and the witness/Level 2 trainee. I had some difficulty keeping track with the timing of the exercise as I seemed to be more engrossed in following the procedure of the process accurately and this kept my focus off the time.

The practicing of these exercises, and other information we spoke about regarding exercises such as the reenactment process and ethics, made me realise the responsibility attached to this role. My fears began to grow again about how I am not good enough, I will get it wrong and that I could damage vulnerable people with my perceived incompetence. I know that I would be a shadow

assistant first but this did not allay my fears. At the end of the training we did a final check in and I spoke about my fears and received some wonderful feedback. Other people believe in me and have faith that I will do a good job. If I let my fears conquer me, I will never try being an assistant on an Awakening. I need to just give it a go and learn from it. Doing the Assistants Training helped me make my intention to assist on an Awakening more concrete. It also helped me to see and voice my fears which have stopped me doing this sooner.

Thanks to all the wonderful people who were at the training weekend with me and to Jac for facilitating the work and Chase for his kind, loving support.

All my love to the wider Clearmind community.

**Sue Scullion**

# Around the Clearmind World

## The Journey towards Magnificence

Before I can write anything at all I need to bust my ego and expose my fears. I am pretty scared about writing this article and my fear is that I don't have anything valuable to say and that I'm not good enough to be writing for this newsletter. Ah, that feels better already.

Right, now that the ego's had its time to play, I can move on and write about what I really wanted to share with you. Since Elloa asked me to write an article for *The Ripple*, I have been wracking my brain to come up with such an inspiring, funny and clever story that I will go down in *The Ripple's* history as the best author ever (well, at least that's what my ego wants). But nothing worth writing about popped into my mind... until a few days ago when I read the commentary in *A Course In Miracles* on Littleness versus Magnitude (ACIM, Ch.15, III). This section has become a source of inspiration, strength and faith to me, and it is the signpost on my current path of uncertainty.

When I read the lines, "Be not content with littleness. But be sure you understand what littleness is, and why you could never be content with it. Littleness is the offering you give yourself. You offer this in place of magnitude, and you accept it... Littleness and glory are the choices open to your striving and your vigilance. You will always choose one at the expense of the other," I kind of felt caught out, because this is exactly what I have been doing for so many years.

Stuck in my ego's defense systems and suspicions of self, I lived in littleness and made every attempt to find joy and happiness in worldly things. I always felt this urge inside me for more, for better things, for higher things, without knowing exactly what it was. I had an insatiable hunger for more and nothing could really content me for long.

And ha, there comes the explanation. I was never content because I was determined that living in my own littleness could and would content me. By that I mean that I was too scared to move out of my belittling thought system and step into my higher Self, into my full magnitude. For example, I always wanted to sing but never took lessons or went to a choir. Why? Because I didn't value myself enough to do something that brings me joy and pleasure. 'Ah, it's not really that important, you don't really need that, you don't really deserve that anyway'. Those were my ego thoughts and they sure did the trick.

Over the years I denied myself of so many 'contentment-opportunities' or holy instants as ACIM would call them, because I didn't judge myself worthy of experiencing happiness and joy. How mad is that?! These self-limiting ego thoughts are captured in the lines, "Yet what you do not realize, each time you choose, is that your choice is your evaluation of yourself. Choose littleness and you will



not have peace because you have judged yourself unworthy of it." Ding-dong. Light-bulb moment. So whenever I believe in my own littleness and unworthiness of glory and joy, I make choices and decisions that ultimately confirm these ego beliefs. I reinforce my suspicions of self that I don't 'deserve' to shine and to step into my magnitude. (I would have liked to use the past tense here but unfortunately I am still doing these things from time to time).

This actually reminds me of something that Marianne Williamson talks about in her book *A Return to Love*. She suggests that our biggest fear is not our own inadequacy but "that we are powerful beyond measure". And this is where the *Course's* teaching about our littleness versus our magnitudes offers hope and salvation. By assuring us that only if we choose to accept and stand in our full light we will be content, we will come home. We may spend a long

time trying to find contentment by being little, but ultimately this doesn't work. I defiantly spent a long time looking for happiness by staying small, and to be honest, I still do this now at times, but I also know that by doing so I am actually moving further away from my ultimate goal of growing into and extending my highest Self.

The *Course* also makes a very good point by reminding us that this way of thinking requires discipline and vigilance (two virtues I'm not very much blessed with). It encourages us to uphold and stand for our magnitude, especially when the world around us appears to be 'little'. I guess it is like the saying you can only keep something by giving it away. I can only keep hold of my magnitude if I extend it into the world. And I can only step into my glory if I judge myself worthy of it and continuously ask myself in every decision I face, what am I giving tribute to, to my magnificence or my littleness.

*Continued on page 11*

# Around the Clearmind World

## The Decision to Forget

Recently I conducted an experiment in conscious dying, where I took the length of time from when dad was diagnosed with lung cancer to the day he died – 104 days in total – and asked myself the simple question: if I only had 104 days to live my life, how would I live it?

In the 104 days that followed, I faced some of my darkest fears: fear of dying, fear of living, fear of life itself. As the experiment deepened, I took life by the scruff of the neck and treated every breath as if it was my last. And when I reached the final day of the experiment, I said okay, and left. I didn't fuss about it – I had arrived at a place of acceptance and peace. I simply said my goodbyes and left my body.

A few months have now passed since the experiment ended, and I have been struggling: struggling to live in a body that I never left (because it was just an experiment); struggling to be in relationship; struggling with living from day to day. What this revealed to me is that all of us in some shape or form have an unconscious death urge, and are driven by a domineering unconscious thought system which wants to kill us.

No one is excused from this because it is part of the rules of living in a body, where supposedly we are born, we live for a few years, fill our

lives with as much junk as we possibly can, and then *die* – unexpectedly, because you're not allowed to die: it's against the rules. The ego is all about self-preservation, and doesn't tell us what is going to happen to us, even though the signs are always there. We all know we're going to die really, but when it happens, there's a sense of having been betrayed by life, that this somehow wasn't supposed to happen to *us*.

So here I am, with a computer that has a virus, and in some ways this is an apt metaphor; the ego is like a piece of malware which attaches itself to our thinking and can be extremely pesky and very difficult to get rid of. This virus is the decision to forget, as our natural inheritance becomes buried in layers of guilt and shame. Fortunately we have at our disposal a superior antivirus in the form of the Holy Spirit. This is a term used in *A Course In Miracles*, which is otherwise known as the Voice for God, but it doesn't really matter what cultural, religious or ethical background you come from as long as you understand that *fear breeds fear and love breeds love*.

Forgetting and remembering is a moment-to-moment process, which requires the discipline of hyper-vigilance, especially if we are to be fully alive. It mirrors life's cycles, the expansions and contractions that we all go through, the ebb and the flow.



When I speak about hyper-vigilance, I am talking about practicing the simple ability of catching a thought and with the help of Spirit, transforming it into something loving. This is the work we all have to undertake while we walk this planet in a body. Some days, it can be harsh as we unravel the layers of guilt and shame, but in my limited experience the results are well worth the effort involved.

One thing is certain: peace is a decision that I must make.

*"Give up gladly everything that would stand in the way of your remembering because God is in your memory. His Voice will tell you that you are part of Him when you are willing to remember Him and know your reality again. Let nothing in this world delay your remembering of Him, for in this remembering is the knowledge of yourself."*

ACIM

Whatever pace you want to work at is really okay – sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly – but you cannot change the curriculum: what is false is false, and what is true, is true. You can't have it both ways.

We all have core issues, and there is no escaping the lessons that we must eventually face. Otherwise, what is the point of being in a body? I don't care if I forget, as long as I eventually remember. That is the work; the work of remembering. Remembering that only the love is real. Remembering to stop and smell the flowers. Remembering to *breathe!* Remembering to laugh, to cry, to sing, to dance and remembering to say "Yes!" to life.

The journey continues; I will continue to walk this path of healing and honesty. After all, what else is there to do?

**Nigel Atkinson**

# Clearmind News and Views

## Duane Unplugged

Duane Unplugged is a new column where Duane speaks about how education meets experience; it is a heart to heart glimpse that captures how our lives are our curriculum and how we can all transform the world... one thought at a time.

"Unplugged" in the music biz means going acoustic instead of electric... intimacy instead of mass, purity over power.

Here's Duane, as interviewed by Karen Goodfellow.

**Karen:** *In Keith Richards' biography "Life", he had this to say about leadership:*

*"When they got me into the Scouts, I was a patrol leader in three months. I clearly like to run guys about. Give me a platoon, I'll do a good job. Give me a company, I'll do even better. Give me a division, and I'll do wonders. I like to motivate guys, and that's what came in handy with the Rolling Stones. I'm really good at pulling a bunch of guys together... It's not a matter of cracking the whip, it's a matter of just sticking around, doing it, so they know you're in there, leading from the front and not behind. And to me, it's not a matter of who's number one, it's what works."*

*This surprised me. It struck me that, even in the middle of his difficulties (addictions, for example), he still stood for something both in terms of himself (his legendary guitar playing) and his sphere of influence (the band members).*

*In your view, Duane, how does "standing for" something equate to leadership... even in the most unlikely of places?*

**Duane:** What else can leadership be, but a way of standing for something? We are "given" leadership rather than "taking" leadership. Leadership is granted by those that follow because the person given the reigns represents the living embodiment of the values that are being stood for. However, it does not necessarily mean that they ARE the living embodiment. It does mean that they represent that vision or goal of what they "stand for".

In the case of Keith Richards, his addictive personality could take second place to his profound skill and vision, as is the case of many leaders whose vision in one sector of life is not necessarily consistent with behaviours in other sectors of his or her life. President Clinton would certainly be an example of that, or President Kennedy for that matter. Both stood for profound humanistic principles and became leaders of the most powerful nation on earth as a result.

Is it possible that there are individuals whose new cutting-edge thoughts emerge out of the struggle beneath? That new paradigms emerge out of the wrestling match between what that leader stands for and inconsistent behaviour elsewhere in their lives?

Winston Churchill rallied a

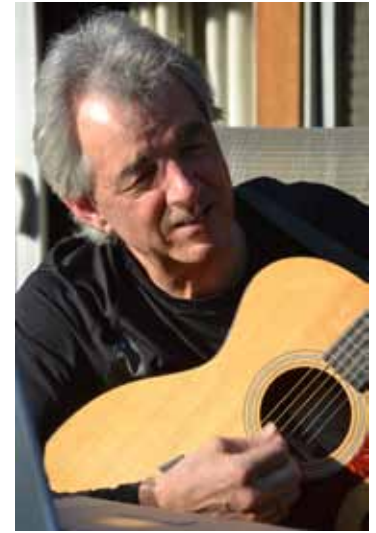
nation to fight the Nazis in the 11th hour, while he was in the middle of a bi-polar episode. What he stood for was stellar and certain. However the internal conflict beneath the surface in Churchill's psyche was that of a man who was anything but stellar and certain.

I think it is a bit of mistake to assume that those that stand for something have integrated the principles themselves at every level. They are not gods. They are human. They are learning and growing as well. There have been many questions about Martin Luther King and adultery, as well as reports of Mother Theresa having a fierce temper. The same has been suggested of Marianne Williamson.

In the case of Keith Richards, is it possible that his ability to crack the whip may actually require the most "unlikely of places" to give birth to this ability to stand for something? I think so.

**Karen:** *In a biography on Bono of U2, (Bono - in conversation with Michka Assayas) he says that he would always choose a band over going solo and he says he needs to be challenged by his mates. Bono felt that the Beatles, "these luminous, extraordinary talents" didn't do as well on their own when they "lost the tension".*

*He discussed it with Bob Dylan. "Bob Dylan, in a way, has always been there for me. His music*



*and occasionally the man himself...I remember him saying to me once how lucky I was to have a band. It was the at the height of 'Joshua Tree' madness, Time magazine, singles...it was exciting but a head trip too. He said 'Imagine going through all that you are going through now, on your own'."*

*What are your thoughts on either going solo or having a group of people you love providing feedback? What about the line between having inspiration coming through in our life purpose undiluted rather than a combined effort?*

**Duane:** The Beatles represent both sides of the equation that is presented in your question. Having been a band as well as four solo artists, the juxtaposition renders some startling observations.

Despite the obvious intelligence of the Fab Four's brilliant always-clever song

*Continued on page 9*

# Clearmind News and Views

## Duane Unplugged (continued)

writing and arrangements and the mastering of melody, I doubt that any of the individual members of the band ultimately knew what they were dealing with or were creating. The relationships between each other spoke more to their brilliance and creativity than their individual talents. This, I believe, is evident in examining the quality of their music as individual artists after the break up.

Pursuing their solo careers with a vengeance, the individual projects certainly topped the charts, but it would be naïve to suggest that any of their individual accomplishments reached the quality of what occurred as a group.

The reason is the Beatles were more than a sum of their parts. The lines that joined them even in harmony as well as adversity called on something greater and spoke a language that touched the collective soul and plight of man that transcended the individual.

As individuals there is more opportunity to recycle what one already has and knows as opposed to the natural creative evolution that occurs when two or more join together or rub up against each other.

Bono is also making reference to the collective consciousness that can shoulder and weather storms together. The same group creativity emerges profoundly within

the relationships of the group facing difficulties, crossroads and passages. That is, providing the group stays together and commits to remain through it all. If any group can hold together and also hold a value that drives them, the highest and the most creative thought will eventually find its way to the surface and lead. This applies whether it is a musical group, a family, a committee, a jury, or a marriage.

This can result in a song, a direction, a stance, a communication or a loving gesture.

**Karen:** *I saw Carlos Santana the other night and I was impressed by his ability to hang out with the audience and share his words of wisdom (not to mention his stellar guitar playing abilities). One of many things he shared on the subject of happiness was that "many people are happy only if they are miserable. Another thought I have is that many people think that God is vengeful, angry, and wrathful. That isn't God...that's Godzilla". If you were hanging out with Carlos, what would you share on the subject of happiness and/or God?*

**Duane:** First of all if I was hanging out with Carlos I would hope he would have an extra guitar lying around because I still know how to play the lead in 'Black Magic Woman' even though it was 40 years ago when he released that song!

God is not somewhere else,



something that is earned, or someone that is watching over us ready to judge. If there were a God in that form then the latter indeed would be Godzilla. We are incapable of understanding the complexity of the infiniteness of the God mind when we possess such a finite mind ourselves. In other words we create a God in our likeness, thus we reduce him/her/it to a human form and a judgmental one at that. Just like ourselves.

We are so incapable of knowing what God is. We can only know God in experience. The experience of entering the present moment is daring to witness the full clout of heaven that is held hostage in the middle of each and every moment. This is where God resides. Right here. Right now.

Entering the moment is like

splitting the atom and releasing a nuclear explosion. There is nothing more powerful than this in the entire Universe.

ACIM calls this the Holy Instant. The moment of no ego. Carlos knows this in the middle of a solo as does any artist who enters the middle of the creative moment, in the middle of the note or the canvas. For everyone else it can be finding the experience of God in the middle of relationship, a conversation, a project, saying goodnight to your child, a workout or writing an email. Every moment, every exchange holds the experience of God in it.

That is what I would say to Carlos, but only after I did my best impersonation of Pete Townsend leaping into the air windmilling a power chord or two!

# Clearmind News and Views

## Music from the Heart

In my day job at CBC Radio I get to listen to a lot of the new music that is coming out in Canada. And there is A LOT of great music being made right now so it's a fun part of my job. I'm sharing a few artists that I think deserve attention, and whose music I believe resonates with the spirit of the work done at Clearmind. You can hear music from all the artists below at [www.cbcradio3.com](http://www.cbcradio3.com). That site is an archive of thousands of independent Canadian musicians and each of these artists has a profile page there, as do most of the artists mentioned in previous issues of The Ripple.

**Kelly Nakatsuka**



Kate Reid



Sarah MacDougall

**Kate Reid**

I think Kate is one of the better young songwriters in Canadian folk music right now. She writes songs of healing and redemption, liberation and celebration. In her music Kate explores issues like self-discovery, sexuality and sexual identity, gender politics; and all of it in a brilliantly lyrical, literate, and often very funny way. Her music can be heartbreaking one moment and hilarious the next. She has just released her third album called 'Doing It For The Chicks'... And like her previous releases, this one is a dandy! You can find her at [www.katereid.net](http://www.katereid.net).

**Sarah MacDougall**

Like Kate Reid, Sarah is another young Canadian-based musician who is a really strong songwriter. She's originally from Sweden (with apparently Scottish family roots) though she's calling Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory home these days. Sarah's new CD called *The Greatest Ones Alive* landed on my desk this summer and it quickly made its way onto my personal playlist. She has a maturity in her lyrics and music that sounds like it's coming from someone with twice her experience. With her European roots she often tours there so Clearmind'ers overseas should have a chance to see her live sometime. [www.sarahmacdougall.com](http://www.sarahmacdougall.com)

**Tarun Nayer**

Tarun is a producer and DJ based in Vancouver who is one of the principals behind the very popular world fusion group Delhi 2 Dublin. (WELL worth checking out: [www.delhi2dublin.com](http://www.delhi2dublin.com)) Earlier this summer, Tarun released his first solo album, called *22° of Beatitude*. It's a collection of recorded sounds and music by Tarun, much of it local ethnic music found during his world travels, which he then mixed and produced with his own music, textures and beats. The result is a rich, beautiful, hypnotic, and uplifting musical experience. [www.tarunmusic.com](http://www.tarunmusic.com)

## Community Cheers!



This column celebrates and acknowledges our community members' achievements, breakthroughs and simply who they are. Use this opportunity to shine your light and the light of those around you. Send any congratulations or celebrations to [newseditor@clearmind.com](mailto:newseditor@clearmind.com).

To **Ang Baff**, who just bought her first home in Vancouver - in less than 12 hours - congratulations! We hope you are extremely happy there.

To **Lisa Marie and baby Kiara Maria**, incredible congratulations and boundless love to both of you. You are both the light of the world.

**Satu Springer**, who has had an amazing adventure around Dallas and New Orleans, is our travelling inspiration!

To **Jacquie**, who has realized a three year dream and has launched The Brink, a revolutionary new bar and eatery in the heart of Liverpool, we salute your vision, commitment and leadership. [www.thebrinkliverpool.com](http://www.thebrinkliverpool.com)

# Clearmind News and Views

## The Journey... (continued)

However, even after nearly a year in Clearmind (which I believe is still really early days) I am sometimes (well let's be honest here Anna, its more an "often" than a "sometimes") still struggling to believe in my greatness and I do choose to stay small. There are times when I still judge myself as unworthy of joy, peace, love and happiness and do believe in my suspicions of self and in my ego's self-limiting perceptions of myself. Yet, I also know that there is a different way now. I know (no I don't just know it intellectually but I know it experientially) that I feel only truly blissful and at peace with myself and the world when I stand in my full glory and richness. When I am stepping into my true Self and extending my full magnificence into the world. When I allow myself

to fully let my light shine, my whole heart feels like it is going to explode with love and joy. It is in this moment that the holy instant occurs, a moment of pure bliss and contentment and free of all judgments. The moment when I am home.

I wonder what the world would be like if we would all believe in our greatness rather than in our littleness; if we made choices based on what would nurture our highest Self and allowing our lights to shine in the full brightness.

Maybe it's worth finding out. Maybe it's time for me to stop wondering and to take actions. Actions based on teaching what I believe in. And what I believe in is my magnificence.

**Anna Sperlich**

## Ripples of Recognition

Paying tribute to the generosity of our community members, this column is a way of giving thanks and sharing gratitude, and we're inviting you to participate! If there is someone you would like to acknowledge or say thank you to, send an email with your thanks to [newseditor@clearmind.com](mailto:newseditor@clearmind.com).

To **Duane and Cath**, thank you for a great experience at the staff retreat in August. What a fantastic time – thank you for that.

To **Trish and Marjorie**, on behalf of Duane and Catherine and the rest of us folks at Clearmind, we'd like to personally thank you for the referrals you made to the lecture held in September. We appreciate you.

To **Jacque and Chase**, huge ripples of recognition and gratitude are sent this fall especially for you, for all that you give, and particularly for organizing the astonishing Assistants Training weekend. You are both amazing.

## All You Need Is... A Hug!

September 11th was - unsurprisingly - a monumental day this year; the tenth anniversary of the falling of the Twin Towers, a day which nearly went down in history as a moment when fear and hate dented the very composition of our society. However, the stories of love, courage and compassion that arose from the burning embers of those two gigantic buildings have had an equal and possibly even a greater impact than the terror which was intended to be inflicted. Many lives were lost, and many hearts lost hope, but many also were - and continue to be - transformed. We stand on the threshold of

two worlds. One is a world of fear, violence, terror and war. The other is based on love, innocence, understanding and compassion.

In 2010, members of Clearmind International's community gathered in Vancouver, Dublin, Liverpool, London, Victoria, Stockholm and Cork to spread the message that all you need is... a hug. Duane created [an amazing film](#) to mark the work that took place on that day. Take a few minutes to reconnect to the love that is at the heart of every human being, and pay tribute to the message of Hope and Peace on the day when humanity almost forgot.

Dear Mr O'Kane

I wanted to relay a little story from Liverpool UK, that took place today whilst shopping in the city. My companion and I were walking between shops when we were stopped by not one but several people all giving out "free hugs". We were a little perplexed by the idea but joined in anyways, both receiving a big hug from, I am sure he will not mind, a large balding gent. I asked "What's all this about and what's the cost?" He laughed and said "No reason just free hugs."

You know we both left the area still perplexed but smiling like fools and even as I write this after reading through your website I am not sure what it is all about, but whatever it is, its really is nice to see, and in this day and age people with a smile and free hug can do nothing but help.

So well done to all involved and thanks to the large balding gent making our day.

Best regards  
Steve

# Transpersonally Speaking

with Catherine O'Kane



You are invited to submit questions for Catherine's next column, in the winter edition of *The Ripple*. Do you have a burning question for Catherine to answer? Send your question to [newseditor@clearmind.com](mailto:newseditor@clearmind.com).

I have a question about what is going on as I send my kids off to school for the first day this year. New teachers that I don't know, kids are in new classes... why the flip should it bother me? It does! I've got anxiety - is it that I am fused and feeling their anxiety?

My 7 year old son was dragging his feet getting out the door. I gave him many warnings as we were walking out the door to catch the bus, he hadn't got his shoes on, and so on. So I said "Okay, hurry and catch up. Close the door on your way." So anyway, he got stuck closing the garage door and that caused tears and frustration. He caught up to me half a block down the street. He was crying and I immediately started berating myself in my head and I felt like hell, knowing that I could

have stopped him from feeling like that by babying him. But I know it wouldn't have helped him. Why do I have to feel the intensity of the emotions when I know he's just learning? Is that fusion? I feel like bawling my head off, going up to the school for lunch to make up to him, even though these are his own lessons to learn!!!

I would love some help as I don't think it's healthy for me to have such intense feelings whenever my child cries, and also when the kids are going through their own stuff I feel like it's me going through it.

I am finally doing better with my daughter now that she is almost 17, and doing pretty well herself!!! The task here is to be aware of how you're indentifying (fusing) with your kids, and deal with your own past in relation to that. You will be most frightened of your children experiencing what was painful for you as a child, and so most vulnerable to unconsciously taking action to defend them (really to defend *yourself*) against that. As we watch our children grow, we literally get to re-experience our own childhoods, and to the extent that you're aware of that you can disentangle and parent your unique child instead of parenting yourself.

For me the biggies were watching my daughter's struggles with friends, both in grade school and high school, because that was such

a struggle with me. I was one of those kids who was 'in' one day, and 'out' the next, and I was never quite sure what I had done to cause either situation. As I result, I felt incapable and insecure in relationship, and was left with the suspicion that there was something wrong with me, something unlikeable that I couldn't quite figure out (my 'suspicion of self' as we say).

I had to move through my past in order to appreciate my daughter's unique difficulties and support her in a way that would actually be helpful, and not leave her with the same suspicions about herself that I had. As ACIM states, this is what our defenses do, no matter how well intentioned... defenses create what they defend against. This applies to our children as well. For example, over-functioning with my daughter in terms of her friendships is only going to leave her feeling incapable herself.

I know a little bit about you, so will use a personal example as well. Based on what I know, I imagine you would have a

tendency to 'baby' your kids because guess what, you didn't get much of that yourself. Your mother was an alcoholic, and you learned early that you had to take care of yourself because you didn't have her attention, you weren't her first love (alcohol was). You didn't have someone tuned in and responsive to you, which is an important thing to have, particularly at the earlier stages of a child's development (up to age 5-ish depending on the child).

So your job is to face your own losses, and move through the anxiety you have about becoming your mom, and learn what your son, a very unique little being, actually needs to grow and develop. I'm using this one as an example; you get the idea... whatever losses you have in your childhood will play themselves out in some way with your current parent/child relationship, and you have to work through those past experiences to be able to see and appreciate who your child is, instead of seeing yourself in them. That is the ongoing process of good parenting.

To register in a workshop, or make an enquiry, please email Satu at [workshops@clearmind.com](mailto:workshops@clearmind.com).

**Clearmind**  
International Institute