

Coming to my Edge

Walking into the room, I braced myself against the wall as my head grew dizzy and my stomach lurched. Palms sweaty, perspiration dripping down my back, the temperature must have been at least 100 degrees. My knees were starting to buckle, I could feel my body wanting to melt into the floor. My Lizard Brain, with all its might was yelling, "Run, now's your chance! Get out while you can!"

I had come to do *The Edge* workshop and Duane and Catherine were looking formidable at the front of the room, like two vultures waiting to pounce. And I knew they wouldn't spare me.

It never ceases to amaze me how the feeling of fighting my emotions can feel worse than death. And, yet, allowing myself to feel my emotions allows me to feel more alive than ever. Who thought this stuff up, anyway?

Rewind a few months. It was 2009, I was in my third year of Prac and was having a really difficult time. I was 47 years old, single, hating being single, trying really hard not to be single, and yet, here I was - single. As my own personal development exercise in P3, I took my relationship to relationship to task and said to my classmates, "OK, you guys, I'm going in to untangle this.

Support me here."

Little did I know what I was asking for.

After years of internet dating, I had screened thousands of men. I read profiles, sent and received messages, had many phone calls and more first dates than I care to mention. I was getting more and more discouraged with dating, with men, with relationships, with all of it. I was feeling so frustrated as I just wasn't finding anyone that I connected with. I was trying really hard to be attracted to men I just wasn't

Continued on page 2

Inside this Issue

<i>Coming to my Edge – Marion Baker</i>	1
<i>Duane Unplugged – Duane O’Kane and Karen Goodfellow</i>	9
<i>Act As If – Adrian Longstaffe</i>	7
<i>From the Editor: Choosing Once Again – Elloa Barbour</i>	6
<i>Poem: Choose Once Again – Nige Atkinson</i>	6
<i>Interview: Paul Jeffrey on his Rude Awakening</i>	3
<i>Back from the Brink – Jacquie Johnston-Lynch gives the lowdown</i>	8
<i>ACIM Quote of the Quarter</i>	3
<i>Song of the Month – “Beloved” by Amy Seeley</i>	5
<i>Transpersonally Speaking – Catherine O’Kane</i>	12
<i>Connect with Clearmind Online</i>	5
<i>Ripples of Recognition</i>	8

Clearmind Event Dates

Canada - Vancouver
Relationship Awakening
January 20 to 22, 2012

Canada - Vancouver
Relationship Alive
February 3 to 5, 2012

Canada - Vancouver
The Awakening
February 17 to 19, 2012

UK - Liverpool
Assistants Training
February 24 to 26, 2012

Canada - Vancouver
The Edge
March 2 to 4, 2012

Ireland - Dublin
The Awakening
March 30 to April 1, 2012

Ireland - Dublin
The Edge
April 6 to 8, 2012

UK - Liverpool
The Awakening
April April 13 to 15, 2012

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

www.clearmind.com

Around the Clearmind World

Coming to my Edge (continued)

attracted to, just for the sake of having a relationship. I tried turning myself into a pretzel to be someone I wasn't, and all I was finding was a bigger and bigger hole of unhappiness.

But then... it happened. I was doing my usual search online and there he was. The clouds parted, the angels sang, and I could suddenly walk on water. An internet dating miracle. He was into personal development, he was funny, he was attractive and he was my kind of guy. And, it turns out, he lived two minutes from me. I knew it must be a sign. He lives on a boat in the harbour right outside my front door. I love boats. God was so good to me.

Or so it seemed. Turns out I fell head over heels really quickly. He was new to internet dating and wanted to play the field. He was out pursuing as many women as he could, and I was trying to turn myself into a pretzel so I would be the one he would obviously see as the one for him. I made the most over functioning person you know look like an amateur. I cooked for him, I lost weight, I spent hours trying on clothes to choose the things I looked sexiest in, I spent hours putting together music playlists we could listen to while we were together, I perused the entertainment magazines to find fun things we could do, I spent hours agonizing over cute little emails to send, even though I never got a response. I essentially became a nut bar and lost myself in the process.

I bashed my head against that wall for a few months, feeling elation, great pain, elation, great pain, elation, great pain. I don't remember ever crying so much in my life. It was really fun.

Not.

Finally, my classmates were sick of me. I was having my latest "Oh my God, my life is over" crying jag, when a few of them suggested I do *The Edge*.

"Huh? *The Edge*? What does that have to do with me and what I'm going through?"

I think it was Duane who pointed out that I may have an addiction/attachment issue with relationships.

"What? Me?"

I figured I had nothing to lose. I was on a crazy emotional roller coaster and I wanted to get off.

After I was able to scrape myself away from the wall that was holding me up and drag myself into a chair, there I was. I was going in. One of my classmates was coming in to the room with a relationship addiction issue, and one of the other ladies also said she felt that was her issue as well. Phew! At least there was some company in this personal hell.

It wasn't long into the course when the dynamic duo asked two questions that changed my life. Two very specific questions that addressed addictions

with an arrow straight to the heart and seemed to speak to me, personally. I wish I could share them with you, but then I'd be giving it all away. They changed everything for me.

The rest of the weekend was a blur. And when I walked out, something had profoundly changed for me. It wasn't that my ego wouldn't raise its ugly head now and again. When it did, I now had my own personal set of arrows that would take me back to my happy place.

Fast forward to now. I'm happily married.

What I learned in *The Edge* was that I could be happy with or without a man in my life. I don't need a man to feel fulfilled or happy or content. Who knew?

I stopped pursuing a relationship. I took my profile off the internet dating sites, I spent more time with friends, got more exercise, and caught up on movies and good books that I had been missing out on.

I was in love with my life just the way it was.

So, what happens? God plunks a man in my life. He is an old flame from years ago who held a candle for me for a long time. We met again by chance, on Facebook, and the rest is history.

So, now I have a whole new set of issues. The juicy kind of issues that come with getting closer to someone than I ever have before.

Not always easy, but luckily, I happen to know where there is a workshop for that.

P.S. If you friend me on Facebook, you'll see a photo of my sweetie and me in the rainforest on our wedding day.

Marion Baker

I figured I had nothing to lose. I was on a crazy emotional roller coaster and I wanted to get off.



Around the Clearmind World

The Rude Awakening: A Microcosm of Life

The Rude Awakening is one of Clearmind International's keystone workshops.

The highlight of every summer for the last 14 years, it generates a buzz that reverberates around the global Clearmind community throughout the year.

The energy associated with the Rude seems to grow stronger and more intense year after year. Here to spill the beans on what was an epic 2011 workshop is the hugely funny, effervescent Paul Jeffrey.

Hi Paul! Six months on from the Rude Awakening, how's life? Could you tell us how you and your life have been affected by doing the Rude Awakening? What did you learn, and how are you weaving that into your life?

I'm just a lot more aware of the way I think. That's possibly the best way to summarize

where I am. [He then goes on to divulge in quite some detail how his life has been changed by doing the Rude, which is just what we were hoping for!] Basically, what happens coming off *The Rude* is that you're on an immense high and then you land back at home [in Paul's case, the UK] – back into the 'real world' and there's a buzz lasts for... oh about a day. All of a sudden, there's a huge crash.

There was, for me, almost an elastic band effect where initially I was actually worse than before I went [laughs]. You come back so happy, and it can easily trigger those around you, and then you in turn. But you bounce back, and find you're in a much better position than you were before because you have an appreciation of your own behaviours, your own thoughts and your own feelings.

Since doing *The Rude*, I've got a clearer understanding of what I think about myself and therefore what that means in any given situation when I'm dealing with somebody else. I also have a better

understanding of what other people are thinking or not thinking; what other people are acting FROM when they're talking to me. I think that's one of the biggest learnings actually. I used to... as a professional addict, I could obviously mind read, and saw that everybody had it in for me – and there I was, reading people's body language completely incorrectly.

What *The Rude* has enabled me to see is that everybody is dealing with their own past when they're dealing with the present. It just gives you an opportunity to catch yourself. It doesn't stop the bad thinking or behaviours, but what it does do is buy you some time.

Doing *The Rude* has bought me some time in the moment – sometimes only a couple of seconds – just enough to catch myself and change my mind in the given situation.

I have emotional lows, like I used to do before, but I'm now able to stand outside of them, which I wasn't before. Rather than being reactive to my own feelings, I'm MORE able to differentiate myself and CHOOSE how to respond. That's a massive gift.

Did the teachings from your first workshop, *The Awakening*, take a while to land?

Not for me, no; I'm an open book. I was aching for the workshop when I did it, and it added a richness to the work I



was already doing on myself. I saw doing this work as being given a second chance [at life]. In dealing with the guilt from my past, the Clearmind work took it to another level. It's a chance to do more than just talk. The teachings landed quickly for me because it's experiential. It's not presented theoretically even though there is a lot of solid theory underpinning it, which you learn more about on *The Rude*. In Prac [Clearmind's accredited Practitioners Training programme], you go through the theory in a lot more depth with Maria and Steve – Prac is like *The Rude* in slow motion.

But the Rude? The Rude is a microcosm of life: everything that happens in life, happens on *The Rude*, and you're just coached with how to deal with it. You're living it as well as learning it. [Ed - potential new Clearmind slogan alert!]

ACIM Quote of the Quarter

"Accept the holy instant as this year is born, and take your place, so long left unfulfilled, in the Great Awakening. Make this year different by making it all the same. And let all your relationships be made holy for you."

T-15.XI.10:10-12

Continued on page 4

Around the Clearmind World

The Rude Awakening (continued)

Tell us about your Rude highlight, lowlight and breakthrough.

Well, because I'm a negative so-and-so, I know my lowlight straight away: I had a really bad day on *The Rude*. We were doing our goals and steps towards them, and someone chipped in about me getting my head shaved. Stuff came up for me about not displeasing my wife. I couldn't handle not doing it, and I couldn't handle doing it. I didn't do it in the end and it was for the wrong reasons. That sent me off on a spin for about three days. Then, in the sweat lodge, I had a bad back and my thinking was really negative. I spun out. It felt like I lost three days and that *The Rude* was passing me by until I pulled myself together and sorted my head out.

My highlight was one of the days in particular [which as the Editor, I am not naming to ensure future participants are kept in a state of anticipation!]. In *The Awakening*, I couldn't get into certain processes; at *The Rude*, I was able to scream at myself. I felt so free. I was on a massive high, a huge high. It was the first time I'd felt any sort of release in myself, probably in the whole of my life. It was an amazing experience.

I was able to follow on from that to choose my *Rude* name. I had my name well before the official time came to choose it. My *Rude* name is, "The Daddy of Loving Ideas". I basically facilitate workshops

in marketing, so I help people have ideas; also my children are loving ideas. So I came back knowing what I'm here to do in life. I think I possibly knew deep down but wouldn't believe it, and I came back pumped, thinking "This is it; this is what I do"

I create loving ideas, and I facilitate and encourage loving ideas, and I'm the Daddy of it because I need to step up and take a little bit of responsibility with it, but not without a little bit of fun. So that's where the word "Daddy" comes from rather than "Father".

The people on the workshop would be another highlight. I made so many good connections and friends. Before recovery and working on myself, I lived my life in such a shallow way; I used to pride myself on not having feelings. To have two weeks of connection was quite a revelation for me. At first I didn't think I could do it. But now I'm continuing it with Prac and actually, I've found it quite easy.

And there's another highlight. [Ed - Not bad for someone so apparently negative!] One of the things I was asked to do was get people to sign a white t-shirt with what they thought of me. That was painful – it was painful to do it. But now I've got this t-shirt, and every time I'm feeling negative, I go and read what they've written. That alone was worth the entrance fee. What it gives you is a different way of seeing yourself. It gives

you a way of understanding who you are, and being able to appreciate yourself for being you, rather than criticising yourself as someone you think has failed other people or let them down. It helps me see that I've got just as much of a right to have a happy life as everyone else, and I can accept that this is what people think of me, as opposed to making assumptions about what they think of me. It teaches me to catch myself and realise that maybe what I think isn't right; maybe my interpretation of the events unfolding in front of my eyes might be wrong.

The thing about *The Rude* is that it's not just about you. It's about other people; you get to see them grow too. At the beginning, when you're in a bad head space, you can

think, "I'm going to have to sit through 24 people's processes here". But actually, it's a shared experience. Each participant is a stimulus for something you learn about the human condition or directly about yourself. At the end of the workshop, you're part of their journey and that in itself is... wonderful. I play the *Rude* music every day at home - I've got "Calling All Angels" on repeat.

I travel a lot for my job, and I was sitting on a plane coming back from somewhere or other, next to this girl. I had my headphones in and was listening to Aimee Mann, "it's not going to stop" ["Wise Up"], and I was in tears! [Laughs]

Continued on page 5

*The Rude?
It's two weeks out of your life.
It's nothing - and it's everything.*

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Around the Clearmind World

Song of the Month

If you only listen to one song this month, listen to this...

Beloved by Amy Seeley

Melancholy piano chords, lyrics that cut straight to the heart of the human experience: Amy Seeley's *Beloved* is a song that stops me in my tracks every time I hear it. Despite countless plays, I inevitably still find myself unable to do much except to stop what I'm doing, take a deep breath in, and sink deeply into the moment and into my body. This is a powerful song.

As each word is sung, slowly and oh so beautifully, layered only with the lilting piano chords that accompany it, the lyrics unfold like a flower gently blooming, revealing a tender

wound at the centre of the human soul – a suspicion of self that I can certainly relate to: you're small... you're not good enough... and you'll never be. Even more beautiful though is the correction that takes place as the song gently leads you towards its climax. This isn't just a song to listen to. Like so much of the music we work with in Clearmind workshops, it opens a doorway to forgiveness and is one of the staple songs in my collection whenever I'm in need of correction. Click on the link below, stop what you're doing, and let it in.

[Click here to Listen to "Beloved" by Amy Seeley](#)

Rude Awakening (continued)

[Did you white water raft? How did it affect your life?](#)

I certainly did. Oh! Do you know what? That's the highlight of my trip! One of my big issues is 'not being a man'. I've been pushed aside at times, and have let it happen, because I have a belief that I'm not very manly or practical or an archetypal man. Doing the white water rafting, I made sure that not only did I go down the hard course but that I sat at the front.

And I LOVED it.

I came out exhilarated because I thought for the first time that I wasn't a wuss, which is how I see myself. That was really cool. It triggered me out of a three-day slump I was in. It was positioned to "go and have some fun at the weekend" but actually, for me, it was an integral part of my process.

[Speaking of archetypes, if there was a movie made about your life, what themes or archetypes would be present?](#)

I can think about songs: "Embarrassment" by Madness. That's the before song, not the after one. Obviously. [Laughs].

My life was only heading one way in the past - for divorce, because of the way that I was handling the way my wife was handling the situation. And, I'm now handling that a lot better. Doing this work has given us time to recover together.

Thinking about archetypes; before, I was the Joker. Now - I'm just the Everyman I suppose. Just normal. I don't have to be anything other than a normal person - I don't have to live life in a mask. It's a work in progress, but this work lets you be yourself a little bit more. It's an incredible shift you get from *The Rude*, but you can only do so much in two weeks. Catherine and Duane made the point right at the beginning of the workshop that once you've been through this, you can't go back. My thinking has now been changed forever. My feelings haven't - but now I've got the tools, and the awareness.

Being able to be myself. That's what the *Rude Awakening* has given me.

[Any closing thoughts or reflections for Ripple readers, Paul?](#)

If you're reading this and you haven't done *The Rude*, it's a bit glib to say you must do it. But it's something everyone should give consideration to. I've had a life full of difficulty and then I had two weeks full of self-care and growth and spirituality - stuff I wouldn't have spoken about two years ago.

The Rude? It's two weeks out of your life; it's nothing - and it's everything.

To enquire about the Rude Awakening or other Clearmind workshops, contact Satu Springer at workshops@clearmind.com

Connect with Us Online

We'll be adding our oft-requested videos to the [Clearmind YouTube Channel](#) on a regular basis. We hope you'll share the link to this channel and pass it along.

Help us grow the Clearmind community; [follow us on Twitter](#). Not only will you receive weekly one-sentence nuggets of knowledge, you'll also help share the Clearmind experience with others. When you follow us, your followers will see this, and may be inspired to check out our tweets and learn more about Clearmind.

[Join us on Facebook](#) at Duane Catherine O'Kane and connect with over 200 members of the international Clearmind community.



Around the Clearmind World

From the Editor: Choosing Once Again

Reaching the end of a calendar year coincided quite conveniently with completing my second reading of the Text from *A Course in Miracles*. The closing chapters in *ACIM* are beautifully written, unequivocal in their message and very powerful. At a time traditionally associated with reflection and intention setting, I have been potently aware of how my ego is trying to confuse me, leading me down meandering pathways that promise the earth but deliver me to a barren land, unmapped, littered with quagmires and quicksands of aloneness and confusion. Reading *ACIM* has been a bit of a Godsend.

A few weeks ago, I was hell bent on writing goals for the New Year. 'What should I change in 2012 to make it my best year yet?' I wondered worriedly. What is missing in my life? Why this sense of guilt in my relationships with my partner, my family and my friends? What to do about my finances, my career, the big, important life I am (my ego implores) supposed to be living?

How can I stop being me and become someone else? Because who I am is inadequate. I believe that much. There is something drastically wrong with me and next year, I am going to fix it and get rid of it.

My oh my, how slippery my ego is! It manages to dress its curriculum up in the language of personal development, but one quick look at where these

thoughts and beliefs leave me – and where they're really coming from – tells me everything I need to know. *ACIM* reminds me that 'complexity is of the ego', and immediately the confusion that fogs my thinking and muddies my sight begins to clear a little, as I remember that the ego's primary maxim is 'seek but do not find'. My pursuit of that one magic element that would finally make me feel complete and fulfilled, at peace and on purpose, free from pain forevermore (and which has consistently eluded me) – my very own idol – has been foiled! It is nothing more than an illusion, a hoax and a path *away* from my true purpose. Because the life I'm supposed to be living is something that emerges from inside of me – *not from without*.

The realization dawns on me that I have been trying to walk about 63 different paths all at the same time – and I haven't been getting anywhere with any of them. This is a deeply entrenched pattern of mine;



back in 2004 when I did the *Rude Awakening*, I thought that my *Rude* name should be, "Jack of all spiritual trades, master of none". Luckily, Duane and Catherine in their wisdom thought otherwise.

This year, I am choosing something different. I am not promising to myself that I will do more, be more or achieve more – not that there is anything wrong with having goals. I have indeed made some goals, choosing one area of my life to focus on in particular. But I have crystal clear understanding that my true purpose this year is to accept my position as a Teacher of God and teach only love. Somehow, this year, I know that what I most need is to simplify my life and build it around the truth of who I am. Rather than continuing to seek for a new path that will give me everything, I will be choosing instead to choose once again.

"Trials are but lessons that you failed to learn presented once again, so where you made a faulty choice before you now can make a better one, and thus escape all pain that what you chose before has brought to you. In every difficulty, all distress, and each perplexity Christ calls to you and gently says, "My brother, choose again." T-31.VIII.3:1-2

I am reassured when I read that, "you *will* hear, and you *will* choose again. And in this choice is everyone made free." What is it that you will choose this moment, this day, this month, and this year? Will you choose to be a Teacher of God with me? Will you choose to simply let your brilliant light shine? Remember; it isn't how many times you forget, but how many times you remember that counts.

Love,
Elloa

Choose Once Again

By Nige Atkinson

For-getting

For-giving

For-getting

For-giving

For-getting

For-giving

For-getting

For-giving

Around the Clearmind World

Act As If

I'm writing this article to share my ongoing struggle with spirituality. Not because I think I hold any particular truths, but because I suspect that there may be others out there in the Clearmind community who are in a similar place.

For me there is a deep paradox between *A Course In Miracles*, much of which I find virtually impossible to buy into, and the Clearmind psychology which I find powerful, ethical and deeply effective.

I am a trained scientist. My Ph.D. is in biological science, in immunology. I live in an evidence-based universe. For me, belief – by which I mean anything which is not a verifiable fact, either objectively or within my subjective experience – is deeply suspect. This is not to say that I don't have beliefs but that I try to restrict them to a minimum and hold them with a degree of healthy suspicion. I grew up in a Christian household – we were regular churchgoers and I gave myself to Jesus as a teenager.

As a result of my subsequent life experience, I struggle with the beliefs I held then – a belief in a loving God, a belief in some form of salvation, a belief in a benign creation. Ha! These beliefs are re-shattered every time I turn on the six o'clock news. For me, this is not a friendly universe. And I'm angry about that, very angry.

The core of my anger lies in the Christian assertion that

when we were given free will, we screwed up. The concept of original sin. In my work as a therapist, I see evidence – time and time again – that we, mostly, do not screw up from conscious choice but through the unconscious programming we acquire through family rules and early experience. What loving Creator would design a psyche like that and then make it our fault? Aaargh. I have to respect *ACIM* however. Many of my friends – including my friend Joseph whose integrity is solid gold – find *ACIM* supportive and useful. The problem lies within me – and I own that.

So. Where does that leave me? On the one hand, a spiritual belief system which finds no holding place in my soul and on the other, a psychology I find real, loving and effective. Go figure.

It might look as if I live in a spiritual desert. I don't. I do experience what I call "The Grace" – something present for me in bucketloads in Clearmind workshops, something I experience flowing through me from somewhere else when I am "in the groove" leading or teaching. It is compassion, it is integrity, it is empathy, it is love, and – probably – something more. I have had the privilege of seeing many hundreds of people over the years with their emotional clothes off – there is Grace at the centre of every human spirit. No exceptions. This is evidence-based. Evidence I can buy into.



So – how do I square the circle? How do I resolve this paradox? In psychosynthesis, the psychospiritual paradigm which was the basis of my early training, we have a phrase – almost a mantra – which says, "this is not the truth". I hear a useful echo of this in the Clearmind prompt that questions our negative interpretations: "Is this true?" Psychosynthesis has a number of models which are very useful in understanding how we operate: the concept of higher, middle and lower unconscious; the concept of subpersonalities (for instance inner children, the inner critic, inner male and female); the concept of primal wounding (very similar to the Clearmind conceptualisation of development which Duane calls the amoeba).

And in psychosynthesis, we were taught to say to ourselves in respect of the models – "this is not the truth" – but if we **act as if it was**, then we might find some useful and rewarding ways of seeing the world differently.

So – this is where I am. My challenge to myself is – "How would it be if I acted as if some of the *ACIM* assertions were true? (For instance "You will never lose your way for God leads you."). I still struggle with "God did not create that war, and so it is not real."

So I'm confused – I find it difficult to engage with concepts which hold no meaning for me but I perhaps it might be worth making the experiment – in a way, this is what *ACIM* is asking. "You are merely asked to apply the ideas as you are directed to do. You're not asked to judge them at all. You are asked only to use them. It is their use that will give them meaning to you, and will show you that they are true".

Perhaps I'll start with a modification of the four step assertion "... but I may have been mistaken."

Make the experiment.

Act as if.

Adrian Longstaffe

Around the Clearmind World

Back from the Brink

In 2008, Jacquie Johnston-Lynch travelled from Liverpool to Springbrooke to participate in *The Summit*. She describes it as a significant week for Liverpool! Why? Because she gave birth to three amazing dreams out there:

1. **The Raucous Caucus Recovery Chorus** - a choir for recovering people

2. **Big Spirit** - a networking and social group for people in the field of therapy, spirituality, and health and social care

and last but not least,

3. **The Brink** - a bar with no booze that acts as a central hub for the recovery community

and those who enjoy a refreshing night out without a sore head the day after.

In November, Jacquie finally launched *The Brink* to huge applause from far and wide:

[Freshly Squeezed: Life at The Brink](#)

[BBC News](#)

[Back from The Brink](#)

[The Liverpool Echo](#)

The main venue acts as bar with myriad forms of live entertainment – from poetry nights to acoustic nights, film nights and even craft fairs - with fabulous, highly acclaimed

food and non-alcoholic drinks. The rear part of the building provides services directly to people currently needing support and counselling in relation to addiction issues.

Jacquie said, “Clearmind’s renowned Ripple effects have truly hit Liverpool. It took three years to bring all three dreams to fruition, but with the help of the amazing Clearmind community here, we did it!!”

The hugest of congratulations to Jacquie and the team of miracle workers who have brought *The Brink* to life. It has already made its mark in the UK as an award-winning venue, and most importantly, it offers a soft yet exciting, creative place to land.

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.

“**Jen Meloff**... Thank you so much for spending a half hour with me and walking me through the nuances and gadgets of Facebook so that we can serve our community better! Now I know when to use Groups versus Pages, what social plug-ins are, and how to best optimize Facebook for what we want to accomplish: connection! This is a great

example of sharing our communal knowledge for the greater good.”

Karen Goodfellow
(Director of Marketing)

“Hats off to **the Clearmind Alumni** for hosting the annual Vancouver Christmas Party (promoting, cooking, cleaning up, setting up, getting silent auction bids...you name it). We added a Christmas Craft Fair for community members to sell their arts and crafts while visitors could check people off their gift-buying list. The Silent Auction - no small undertaking - raised over \$2000 for the Alumni Scholarship Fund and \$140 to the Alumni Operational Fund. Tons of warm socks were donated to the homeless.

Attendees had lots to do: donating, buying, bidding, singing carols, visiting, eating and munching. A good time was had by all!!”

Karen Goodfellow

“We had a great Assistants’ Training weekend. Lots of love, love, love, and **the third year Prac students** were amazing. Despite a few glitches, they did really well. There was hardly any anxiety and it felt really solid and good. Yay!”

Satu Springer

“Thanks to **Cath and Duane** for a brilliant, memorable (and even healthy!) Christmas party and New Year’s celebration.”

From all in Vancouver

Community Cheers



Congratulations to Kelly and Sarah Nakatsuka on the birth of Amelie Hazel Joy Nakatsuka!

Born on November 18th 2011, a week past her so-called due date of 11/11/11, she was 7lbs 8oz but not for long, dropping a few ounces off the top and then piling them back on – and she has kept going from there.

She was born at home in East Sooke, in a big pool overlooking the ocean. Needless to say her parents are totally blissed out right now. Also, she’s sleeping like a champ for which they are very grateful (even though that may change... like tomorrow).



Clearmind News and Views

Duane Unplugged

In *Duane Unplugged* Karen Goodfellow continues her ongoing dialogue with Duane O'Kane.

Amy Winehouse and Suspicion of Self

Karen:

I was deeply saddened by the death of Amy Winehouse. I was also curious about my own fascination with her music, given her blend of darkness, burning honesty, and torch singing vocal ability.

Amy gathered evidence of her Suspicion of Self (SOS) and got rewarded and recognized with Grammy awards for lyrics like "I cheated myself like I knew I would, I told you I was trouble and I'm no good" and "I tread a troubled track, my odds are stacked that I'll go back to black". She was even nicknamed Amy Wino due to her battle with drugs and alcohol.

Duane, can you share more about "gathering evidence" for our SOS? Also, what role do we have in feeding into others' SOS's?

Duane:

We often give ourselves a sad and incorrect reputation which we live up to, and do the same to others. We wrap our identities up in our Suspicion of Self personality, perpetuate a family tradition of keeping it alive, and rarely escape it. And why would we? This 'personality' worked

for preserving our position in our families. Without that personality we fear we wouldn't have one. If you were the family scapegoat when you were younger, you would find a way to replicate this in your adult relationships as well... because, in a very strange and perverse way, it works.

I recall that a friend from my childhood, who was abused and treated like an outsider in his own family, later became a successful punk musician and changed his name to "Joe Dork".

It's a sad testament to our times, how we seek to prove that that is all we - and others - are. All unconsciously colluding together to keep the false conclusion about ourselves and others unchanged. We keep other's SOS's alive by projecting our own onto them (and by allowing their projections to keep our SOS alive). In doing this, we are keeping alive, and at worst romanticizing, our family of origin dynamics... and in the case of many musicians, like Amy particularly, with tragic results.

Without intervention, education or soulful reflection, we will tend to "Fall to our Fate" rather than "Rise to our Destiny". Our evolutionary task is to rise rather than fall. This really sums up all of our work here at Clearmind. That is, when posed with the temptation to look in the mirror and conclude all of these ancient and outdated morbid conclusions about self, to instead stop long enough

and ask ourselves if these conclusions can possibly be true. The answer is always "No". Our task is to go where no one in our family system has gone before us. To "Rise" and realize and actualize our true identity. There's nothing else to do.

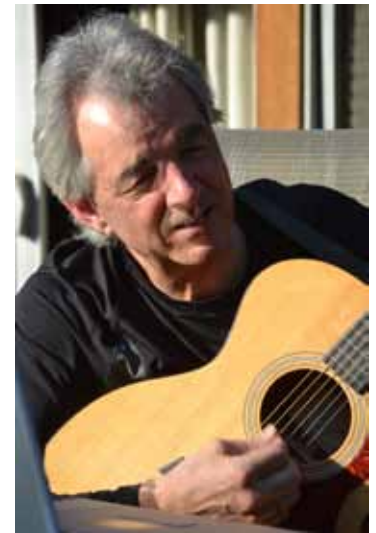
Ringo: The Unsung Hero

Karen:

Don Henley of the Eagles said "I don't care what anybody says about Ringo. I cut my rock-n-roll teeth listening to him." Aside from the musical talent perspective, what thoughts do you have on Ringo's role in the success of the Beatles? Those among us who aren't necessarily in the limelight play a key role in the success of mankind - what words would you offer the oft-unsung heroes?

Duane:

I suspect that any musicians out there inspecting the Beatles arrangements would note the clever, economic and creative backbone that Ringo carefully and effortlessly contributed to those extraordinary musical creations. Ringo's drumming didn't jump out and command attention. It became a colour, a necessary colour that could only emerge from him, which transcended the tapestry of sound into art. Ringo's drumming provided a frame: a backdrop for John and Paul's melodies and vocals to flourish and grow in. Such is the case for the success of any group.



The dynamics between the membership speak quietly, but contribute more towards the final product's success than the leaders that stand up front. I suspect that once the Beatles disbanded in 1970, the following years of the leaders' solo careers lost this pivotal element in their overall sound. Despite commercial success for a time, the individual Beatles' solo productions lacked the depth of the background, the frame, the conversation, the tension, that give the song a context and transport it from being a great performance to a profound comment on the human condition.

The Beatles were more than the sum of four extremely talented musicians. They were in relationship, albeit sometimes adrift with tension and angst as well as compassion and sensitivity.

Continued on page 10

Clearmind News and Views

Duane Unplugged (continued)

Ringo, the one in the background, as well as George, the quiet Beatle, were all part of a communication or a continued conversation, not just with the world as a collective but individually with each other from song to song.

Like any family, business, creative organization or relationship, the underlying conversation - whether bold and up front or behind the scenes - provides the element of attraction or success or conversely undermines it. All members are vital. We are not alone. We are never alone.

The unsung heroes are rarely noted mostly due to our egoic view in the Western world of stars, leaders and glamour. Nor do the unsung heroes require the pomp or adoration that the leaders require. They reap their dividends in a quiet knowledge and satisfaction of defining themselves as part of, rather than as leader of, a project, and by celebrating the relationship of which the project becomes a metaphor.

The recording of Eleanor Rigby was as interesting story. It has no drums at all. Ringo's contribution was actually to not have one. Once Paul submitted the song to the rest of the Beatles and George Martin the producer, the conversation swung to Ringo to initially propel the song with a back beat. Ringo passed claiming that percussion in this instance would take away from the

power of the sombre quality of the song. Now isn't that interesting? If you have iTunes, download the song now and listen to the space provided for the soul of Paul's voice to fill. Heroic deeds are not always bold and omnipresent. They are sometimes not only quiet or subdued, but involve stepping aside for another to flourish.

Conversely, the leaders that appreciate and acknowledge that their apparent power lies more in the relationship between themselves and the supporting cast have long lasting careers as opposed to becoming one-hit wonders or flashes in the night.

This is evidenced by the music of U2 and the continued manner in which Bono defines himself more by his mates in the band than the photo ops afforded him at every turn. In contrast, the leadership of President Obama is sadly undermined by an adversarial unresponsive Congress, effectively making his leadership impotent.

We long to return to the power of relationship rather than separation. We are attracted to it. We may not know it, but at an unspoken level we recognize the dynamics in successful leadership which embodies this humility of recognizing support and connection. Every member, every note, every word - whether quiet or loud, every step - whether seen or unseen, every thought -



Duane daydreams of being in the Beatles

whether verbalized or not, is nonetheless felt and impacts the world we live in. We have all written the song that the world is listening to.

Let's make it a song of love. Just tap your foot.

"Please tell me who I am."

Karen:

"Won't you please, please tell me what we've learned? I know it sounds absurd, please tell me who I am." (Supertramp, Logical Song). In my mind, these lyrics were one of the biggest examples of a band's self-fulfilling prophecy and an expression of the times in the world at large. As a huge Supertramp fan back in the day, I was dumbfounded when Roger Hodgson left Rick Davies and Supertramp at a time when they seemed to have etched out their place in progressive rock music. I couldn't make sense of brilliant

artists going their separate ways when millions of fans couldn't get enough of them. Hodgson left for family reasons and wanted to pursue a spiritual path (which made no sense to me in my early 20's).

"... please tell me who I am" smacks of being externally-referenced, which seems to be prevalent in our current stage of evolution. I wonder if Supertramp is living that out to this day. Over the decades, the norm for them seems to be artistic differences, members quitting based on principles, some regrouping, some solo albums, some comeback tours, and this year an anniversary tour... but separately!

It makes me want to say to them "Won't you please, please tell me what you've learned? I know it sounds absurd, but tell me who you are."

Continued on page 11

Clearmind News and Views

Duane Unplugged (continued)

Is this behaviour a testament to their journey of finding out for themselves who they are internally, or to looking externally, or a bit of both? Are they playing for the love of music regardless of the format (because they've discovered who they are) or are they flogging a dead horse and trying to recapture the past?

Duane:

In grade three, I had a serious crush on Kathy Walters. We went together as much as two eight year olds could possibly be together. The summer came. She and I parted our ways in the summer, having different ideas about the direction we should be heading in. My friends thought I was crazy to leave such a girl behind. After all she brought great desserts with her lunch that she openly shared with all of my pals at school. I tried to explain that our relationship was more complicated than that. Holding hands in the schoolyard was just going too far. Besides she didn't like playing goalie with my friends in street hockey. What kind of future could we possibly have?

As silly as this sounds, partnerships of any kind are partnerships in a shared station in life... in a life that wants to evolve. Each person matches, complements the other, or functions as a catalytic agent to the others' evolutionary personal growth. This isn't necessarily comfortable. It can be, and usually is, quite tense. It

is supposed to be. The activity of the relationship is in some ways a conversation, sometimes quiet... sometimes loud. It is a conversation that provides each person the opportunity to experience something new and integrate new possibilities. A higher thought. Evolution.

Musical collaboration really is no different than the joint art piece of making a relationship work. Both are activities that want to give birth to a higher thought, even in the middle of struggle. To discover what has to be said when there appears to be nothing to say.

What it has to say is really an expression of the emerging growth of the relationship itself. Whether it is Hodgson and Davies, Lennon and McCartney, Jagger and Richards, Bachman and Cummings, or Noel and Liam Gallagher, the dynamics of the relationship are the expression of the relationship trying to become what it wants to be. And as in romantic relationships, the expression will continue to grow and thrive if the relationship itself continues to grow and thrive. From 1964 to 1970 is all we had of the Beatles. Only 6 years! But how many stations on their own evolutionary ladder did they climb together? From teenage heart throbs to bringing Eastern mysticism to the millions of minds in mainstream Western culture. All of the musical collaborators mentioned above fought, laughed, wrestled, struggled,

celebrated, and created in their dance together. The sparks from the friction would become the fuel for a higher thought and creative and evolutionary expansion. This creativity wants to find a canvas somewhere, whether it is a song, a painting, a home, or a vision. Until it has witnessed itself. Then it is done.

As much as we wish these duos had remained together, we aren't privy to the true dynamics of the relationship. As much as I would give a year's salary to have Lennon and McCartney write together again, if indeed that were physically possible, it might be as pointless as my staying together forever with Kathy Walters in grade three. Or is there another possibility?

That it was pointless staying together would be the truth if the lessons of the relationship were exhausted and completed. Having said that, it is also possible that those lessons were ignored, avoided and lost in ego driven fantasies of self obsession and personal accomplishment.

Both possibilities exist. We might consider our own previous primary relationships... did they end because they had reached the end of being useful for growth any longer... with no more lessons to offer? Or were the lessons avoided? It is the embracing of the lessons that provide the energy, the spark, the direction and the creative expression.

As ACIM states in the Teacher's Manual: There are three types of relationships... all involving lessons.

The first can be a casual and brief meeting in an elevator where two people have an opportunity to use that time together to remember something perfect, even in an elevator. Then it can be goodbye. Thank you. Done.

The second is when two people come together for an extended period of time with a limited amount of lessons to learn together and it eventually ends as there is nothing left to learn. Then it can be goodbye. Thank you. Done.

The third is when there is a lifetime's worth of lessons together that provides a perpetual supply of fuel for growth together. These relationships are for a lifetime and last a lifetime, providing the lessons are being recognized and embraced. If not, the relationship dies. It becomes goodbye even when it would be premature. Not done.

With Supertramp and the Beatles... was it premature because the ego got in the way? Or was it done? You can ask yourself the same question concerning the lineage of your personal relationships.

Continued on page 12

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.

What is your perspective on chemistry in relationship - where it comes from and whether it is required? For example, should I keep dating even if I don't feel it and my date is a nice person?

In my opinion, 'chemistry' is important to a relationship to the extent that it can provide motivation for partners to work through difficulty. ACIM would call this 'specialness': the feeling that someone else has what you need to be whole or complete. Romantic attraction is created when we have a certain amount of difference, and a certain amount of similarity. Too much similarity, and you will call this person a friend, too much difference and you'll call them an enemy. When we have that ideal balance between similarity and

difference we feel attracted... there is enough difference so that we perceive the other as having something we don't, and yet we can also relate to each other.

The difference is what creates both challenge and the opportunity for healing. That idea that someone else has something you don't is a mistake. At some point in time, you disowned certain aspects of yourself and took on false beliefs about who you are. For example, if you grew up in a family that discouraged emotional expression, you might believe yourself to lack passion. When you then become attracted to someone you perceive as 'passionate', you feel wonderful at first! However, when your partner's expression starts to invite your expression, the first thing you'll feel is the pain associated with your past when your natural inclination to express your feelings was inhibited. You are likely to misperceive the source of your pain, and complain about the very thing that initially attracted you.

The opportunity in this is that you can take responsibility for the true source of your pain (your past and mistaken beliefs), and heal that rather than project it. The element of chemistry provides motivation to hang in there when these challenges occur, long enough to potentially move through them rather than just bounce off of them and move on.

'Enemies' (people you don't like) provide the same opportunity but without the motivation!

Now, in terms of your question, you might want to consider what beliefs you may already be projecting onto the situation, before you pull the plug. What kinds of people are you typically attracted to? Are you attracted to 'nice' people? If not, how come? I also believe that it is possible to fall in love with almost anyone if you really get to know them. Adopt a position of radical curiosity with this person, guard against making any assumptions, and see where you end up.

Duane Unplugged (continued)

When I listen to the solo songs that emerged after the Beatles' breakup, I can only imagine what songs like 'Imagine', 'Maybe I'm Amazed', and 'My Sweet Lord' would have been with the rest of the Beatles tweaking each other's songs and working out the arrangements. Imagine. That would have been quite the album. Or were those songs brilliant in the absence of the others? Were the Beatles

moving towards something separately or running from something?

My personal conclusion is that Supertramp and the Beatles both actually ended long before the destined end. The very reasons that they broke up and separated were the reasons they should have stayed together. To heal egocentric self obsession. They could have written about it. It was the next lesson rather than the end of the lessons. Such is the case for most of our past relationships. They ended no doubt just when the next chapter was about to begin. I'm still looking for it.

Personally I read every publication offering a new twist to the biography of the Beatles. And each time I read the story of their origins at the Cavern in Liverpool, the all night bars of Hamberg, going overseas to Shea Stadium in New York, and lastly their rooftop performance atop the offices of Apple in London, I hope this time they don't break up.

How often do we mistake the end of a verse for the end of a song, or the end of a chapter as the end to a book?

And for the record, Catherine still refuses to play the nets in front of our house. I won't give up.

