

# HAKOMI NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE HAKOMI AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION INC. ISSUE 12. JANUARY 2006.

## I need to change, but don't change me.

Hakomi Trainer and Somatic Psychotherapist, **MANUELA MISCHKE REEDS**, introduces some key concepts from Continuum Movement and illustrates how a simple movement instruction can be used as a therapeutic intervention in Hakomi Therapy.

***Continuum Movement is a movement practice developed by Emilie Conrad, a 71 year-old somatic pioneer who has devoted her life to understanding how we can liberate the body from its culture-bound identities through movement. She has developed a new protocol for working with clients that have suffered severe spinal cord injuries and teaches internationally as well as in her Santa Monica (US) studio. I have been practicing and teaching Continuum Movement for the past 12 years and have been experimenting how to bring specific Continuum Movement explorations into Hakomi sessions with my psychotherapy clients.***

LAUREN WAS A 39 YEAR OLD BUSINESS OWNER. SHE RAN a 100 person construction company. She was an attractive, petite and very thoughtful woman. She was well taken care of financially and had a loving family around her. Single, with no children, she described her life as busy with work, yet emotionally a little empty. She had a string of failed relationships, including two unsatisfying marriages, suffering through domestic violence and both ended in divorce. She wanted to change her life, wanted more meaning and above all she wanted a loving relationship. "That isn't too much to ask, is it?" she asked in our first therapy session. Weren't all my clients interested in change and loving relationships? I must know something about that? She looked at me intently with great hope, as if I had a magic formula that would ripen her life to perfection. What she did not want was to go over these dreadful past relationships and dredge up what went wrong. After all it was these unsafe and despicable men

that caused her so much grief. What she wanted was a sensitive, caring man, the ones she read about in alternative healing magazines, or like her massage instructor whom she adored. She was convinced that if her inner, radiant light shone brightly enough, a sensitive man would appear and make her happy. "I just need change", she sighed, "but I don't want you to change me". And with that our first session concluded.

I WAS STUNNED. AFTER THE SESSION I REFLECTED ON her statements, the way she showed her confident plan for relationship as only a matter of her inner light shining more brightly. Tracking her body, I noted the classic signs of a Sensitive-Analytic Character body type. She was tall and thin, with a shallow breath that appeared every time she mentioned a relationship. Her upper body appeared frozen, stiffly yet elegantly held as if on display. Her eye contact would range from making fleeting vulnerable contact to distantly dreaming of another life. She was untouchable in a delicate way, her soft-spoken tone almost hushed, revealing that she needed to be treated lightly. She had a rich inner life, filled with fantasies about her being light, radiating any pain of depression away. I knew that introducing mindfulness would be a challenge. Turning her attention into herself and looking at what is truly being revealed, would be met by dreaming herself into another reality, a world that was safe. I knew that her body would resist any experiments I would suggest. They would be met by her "light body", her instant

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**HAKOMI  
AUSTRALIA  
ASSOCIATION**

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**Hakomi News is published by the Hakomi Australia Association, a non-profit organisation incorporated in NSW. Please send your comments, editorial submissions, questions or suggestions to <haanews@hakomi.org.au>**

## **HAA committee update**

I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR THE BEGINNING OF 2006. Our application to join PACFA was addressed at their last board meeting. PACFA reviewed all of our documents and they have accepted our application, albeit with one matter outstanding.

THE MATTER OUTSTANDING IS THAT OF OUR ETHICAL Grievance Procedure. PACFA require some significant changes to the procedure. "The major issues stem from what appears to be a complex relationship between a professional association and a training body. This document appears to have been written essentially for a training institute and not a professional Counselling Association" (PACFA audit, 2005). As the HAA Ethical Grievance Procedure was developed from the Hakomi Institute International's Ethical Grievance Procedure, it reflected much of the Institutes regulatory structures. Our task is now to revise the Procedure to reflect the Association's key role and the Institute's minor one.

WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING TO EMPLOY A COMPETENT person to take on the project of revision of the Ethical Grievance Procedure. If you feel you could help or provide a suitable referral please contact myself on 0419 681 040.

– Philip Hilder, For the HAA Committee of Management.

## **from the editor**

WITH SO MANY PEOPLE BRINGING YEARS OF EXPERIENCE and knowledge to their study and practice of Hakomi, I thought it would be interesting to see how people integrate their different worlds: how they bring other modalities into Hakomi, or how they take Hakomi into their other work. Manuela Mischke Reeds, Sandi Plummer and Linda McClure share their experiences and give us an opportunity to open up to other practices via the language of Hakomi. I'd like to thank them for their insights, time and energy in writing a feature article for this newsletter. I'd also like to thank Suhari Bohm for her Supervision piece and regular contributors Ryta Kunciunas, Narelle Scotford, Monika Mischke-Renner and Philip Hilder.

As John Perrin has taken a well-earned break from the editing, design and production of this newsletter, I've had the opportunity to experience how much work he so often does single-handedly! Thanks for your relentless effort, John.

And finally, congratulations and blessings to Philip Hilder and Sarah on the birth of their little girl, Metta.

– Lorella Ricci, Co-Editor

# Talk and Touch.

Bodyworker, **LINDA McCLURE** gives us her perspective on the dance between psyche and its physical expression.

**AS A HELLERWORK PRACTITIONER AND A GRADUATE OF the two Hakomi trainings (Developmental & Trauma) I have had a unique chance to see how the principles of these two therapies intermingle and support the way I do my work. At their base or foundation there is a commonality that abides. The following is an attempt to explain how I use the principles of Hakomi in my Hellerwork practice and how this mix deepens the work of integrating soma with psyche.**

## WHAT IS HELLERWORK?

IN A HELLERWORK SERIES WE TAKE OUR CLIENTS through 11 sessions of bodywork, movement and dialogue where each session has a psychological theme that is loosely linked to childhood developmental issues. Because of my Hakomi training these themes provide a wonderful framework for discovery and growth for clients. We introduce topics such as what inspires them, and where do they feel support in their lives. The first 3 sessions are working with the superficial tissue and from the psychological point of view are based around the early years when survival, nourishment and sense of self are some of the lessons we hope to learn. The next four sessions work deeper with the core tissue, and correspondingly we open up the topics of control and surrender where ideally we learn about healthy control, and when to let go and trust. Dialogue also touches upon our ability to listen to our body and intuition, where we learn to trust what our body is telling us. We also open up the topic of our emotional expression and creative power and whether we hold back our self expression. As we progress through the program we start to look at the 21st century disease of being “all in ones head”, balancing our passion with reason, and having a whole body experience that invites communication between the head and the heart. The next section is called the integrative section where more mature topics are introduced, such as masculine and feminine energies and values, integration and completion.

## COMMONALITY

THE PRINCIPLES OF HELLERWORK AND HAKOMI HAVE much in common. In Hellerwork, like Hakomi, we hold

as a premise that all living systems have a kind of innate organizational capacity given their shape, size condition, (story) which gives rise to the living expression of what/who they are. If we are able to understand this we can begin the healing process. When we pay attention and listen we are being mindful – we get to find out what the body is trying to tell us. The Hakomi therapist and the Hellerwork practitioner hold in common a basic premise that we take time to study the client’s experience. In Hellerwork this kind of mindful attention could be expressed in how the practitioner took time to meet and greet the tissues of the body – both client and Hellerwork practitioner could study how that is – does the tissue feel receptive, or is it somewhat guarded. In hanging out

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Based on what my client comes in with,  
I am looking at how this person is organizing themselves around the abiding force of gravity.  
I am looking for what moves and what doesn’t move in their structure. What is held or frozen, and how they are negotiating around it.

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with it we discover more. Often the tissue is expressing something to us if we take time to listen with our hands. This is where I think Hellerwork mirrors Hakomi’s principle of non violence. Listening to the tissues and taking time before moving in to a bodywork stroke creates a collaboration with our client and a permission from the body’s tissue that is felt as a kind of ease. This could be construed as a contradiction when you consider the depth and intensity of some aspects of Structural Integration; however, we can go deep without damage if we listen and get permission. There is the lovely dance of following and leading in a Hellerwork session, where we have an overall experiment unfolding that involves seeing what happens when a person’s body moves towards being aligned in the gravitational field. We study the process as we go, seeing what the rules are and where the psychological and physiological stances intertwine and how they

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# I need to change, but don't change me

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## Cell Regeneration

The body regenerates itself cellularly every 7 years. Cell death happens slowly without the apparent outer structure of the person changing. Most of the cellular structures are being rebuilt (some organs don't). We are capable of renewing, "shedding our" skin like a snake for cellular renewal. Cells are able to decide to commit suicide and self destruct. To make this more palpable here a few facts of how long some cellular regeneration takes in different regions of the body of our approximately 75 trillion cells:

- Brain – 1 year
- Blood – 4 months
- Skeleton – 3 months
- DNA – 2 months
- Liver – 6 weeks
- Skin – 4 weeks
- Stomach lining – 5 days
- Taste buds- 6 days

*(adapted from Dr. George Malkmus)*

## What makes a cell decide to commit suicide?

THE BALANCE BETWEEN:

1. the withdrawal of positive signals; that is, signals needed for continued survival, and
2. the receipt of negative signals

If we take the withdrawal of positive signals and receipt of negative signals as a metaphor, we can view, how critical it is for us humans to be in relational exchange that confirm us in a positive way. How we are being perceived by others and how we feed ourselves becomes not just psycho emotional health but also has an impact on our cellular health.

meditation away from the present moment into a state of perceived healing and well-being.

"SCARED, VERY SACRED", I COULD HEAR MYSELF MUMBLE as I reflected on her being in the world. Yet there must be a determination to change, otherwise why would she make the effort to come to therapy. Some part of her knew that is was time.

LAUREN WAS CONFIRMING HERSELF IN A POSITIVE WAY through her light meditations and affirmations, but her body told me a very different story. Internally she kept reaffirming very negative and destructive beliefs about safety and how to be in relationships. She looked like she carried a few bumper stickers saying: "Don't come close, I will break into pieces. If you come closer I will have to disappear, not exist. So better not feel myself." Her refuge was another world, private and unavailable for others to enter. She looked like a very unhappy woman on a path towards restriction and pain.

CONTINUUM MOVEMENT, HAS LONG MADE THE CLAIM that our stiff, rigid bodies are more a product of our emotional attitudes than a lack of exercise. We pay little attention to cellular health and regeneration as it intersects with our beliefs and attitudes. The way we feed our own negative thinking has a direct impact of how we feed our cellular body. There is a known link between healthy immune system functioning and positive experience and physical health.

CHANGE IS CONSTANT, YET THE HUMAN PSYCHE HAS the hardest time getting friendly with that notion. We desire change, but when faced with it, we remain faithful to old patterns, fearful of the unknown or that what we will encounter will be even worse. And with that fear we stay in a cycle of restriction in our bodies, not allowing new experiences to change us.

WE DON'T USUALLY INVITE CHANGE INTO OUR LIVES. Change comes upon us, unexpected, unwanted. When faced with hard or challenging circumstances, we desperately long for it. Like Lauren, longing for a life that would be filled with love, kindness and a life partner. Her waking hours often spent daydreaming about the life she could have had. Her daily life riddled with fears, too common for her to even detect them being a problem. The fears were "part" of her, almost like a personality trait, accepted long ago in the confusion of love turning into threat.

When change arrives, we find fault. We don't like how change looks: "Oh no, not that person, that can't be, they are supposed to look tall, beautiful ... life partners are supposed to be perfect, ... they don't fit my idea of a life partner ... they should be more like ..."

ENGAGING IN THE PRACTICE OF CHANGE MEANS consciously participating in opening the body and mind into the fears and dreams of changing. This is a very physical event. It means: seeing, feeling, sensing and being with the textures of longing and desire. It also means befriending the textures of fear and the patterns of negative thinking, feeling the embodiment of fear. That embodiment is of course the medicine in how to be with these fears.

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Continuum Movement has long made the claim that our stiff, rigid bodies are more a product of our emotional attitudes than a lack of exercise.

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THE PRACTICE OF CONTINUUM MOVEMENT IS A detailed process for gaining self-discovery on a cellular level. Through sounds, breath, and small micromovements, the body is explored as itself just, as it is. Small, incremental movements that are already occurring in the body are tracked and entered into as a conscious dance of present-moment sensation. Moment-by-moment the mover arrives into being present with what already is occurring and what unfolds from there. Awareness is brought to the fluid system, the blood pulsing and streaming, cerebral spinal fluids moving in tides and waves. The sensations are experienced and followed as movement without any stories or past. The Continuum mover follows the inner songs and dances of the body, listening deeply to what nature has already designed so magnificently.

THE UNDERPINNING OF CONTINUUM MOVEMENT IS THAT we are movement, we are change, we are in flux; our task is to join the ride and discover. The goal is to get comfortable with the constant change that is occurring in our bodies and, therefore, metaphorically in our lives. Rather than clinging to the static views and the fears of what will disappear on us. In Continuum we call this a kind of culture boundedness, a psycho-emotional and therefore somatic limitation that keeps us spinning in familiar and limited emotional territory. Our perceptions narrow and we are in a vice of our own body-mind.

THE PRACTICE OF CONTINUUM ENGAGES DEEPLY THE process of change that we are as an organism. We are process in motion, yet we like to believe we are our views, attitudes and physical belongings. When practicing Continuum, the mover can experience extraordinary states of consciousness, ranging from the ordinary fears about the body, aches and pains, aging and loss, emotional stories emerge stored deeply in the memory cells of the body. These are passing events, not to be dwelled upon as the identities we have subscribed to faithfully for most of our lives. We mistake the meanings of our pains as life itself, forgetting that we are here to experience fully, to evolve and change.

THERE ARE ALSO STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS TO BE reached that offer a new and more liberating view on all of this. States of ease and flow, being in the movement and fluidity of the body, even with great physical limitations and injuries (Continuum is practiced with severe spinal cord injury patients with great success). Feeling one's fluidity, feeling space, feeling and sensing the body beyond its confinement of the mind and body – all these can bring great peace and bliss. Of course this can be perceived as threatening to the psyche, which likes to have concrete meaning and a plan. Entering into Continuum Movement as a practice is giving up this little bit of comfort and diving head-on into the mystery of life.

FEELING ONE'S BODY IN THE FLUIDITY OF SELF ENABLES A new perception of oneself and the old identities can begin to loosen, subtle changes enter the mover, new places in the body are found that are free from pain, free from stuckness. Change is then on the way.

THE CHANGE I AM SPEAKING OF, OF COURSE, IS THE change of "being changed", the very thing my client asked not to do. This had to be done carefully and experientially without revealing my intention. Lauren had to experience herself in fluidity, so she could explore safely what had made her so fearful in the first place. Without the motivation to want to find out what organized her fear therapy can be challenging. The therapist needs to ally herself with the client's motivation for change, providing a major force in the process of transformation.

CONTINUUM MOVEMENT OFFERS A VARIETY OF BREATHS to be explored. In the usual circumstance of a Movement practice the mover lies on the floor, explores herself in movement and breath. This can be too threatening in the context of psychotherapy. Especially given Lauren's apprehension regarding not wanting to change, an invitation to lie on the floor would have ensured that our first movement session would have been our last. In the comfort of

the therapy chair, the client can begin to alter her breathing patterns, and she can also be introduced to some simple movements that do not require shifting out of the seating position.

“Lauren, I am noticing that your breath is moving shallow in your upper chest, when you talk about your past marriage partner.” She nods and confirms this as her experience, “I wonder if you would try something here with me?”

Having established her shallow breathing pattern she was eager to understand how to “fix” that.

The process instructions are simple:

1. Shift the attention to the intention of the breath – “notice how you are breathing right now, and see what is and wants to happen?”
2. Introducing a simple “to do breath” for exploration – in this case I introduce the Lunar breath.
3. Waiting for the impact – giving space for the client to explore and notice as well as tracking on the therapist’s side for their experience.
4. Asking the client to open her attention to what IS occurring (not what has happened) – keeps the explorations current and continuous.

“I feel a tightness, I don’t like it” Lauren whispers, holding her body even more tightly.

“Lauren, you notice that when you stay with the shallow breath, a tightening happens and uncomfortable feelings arise.”

Now, this is a critical moment, as this client is phobic to experiencing any pain, change or hardship, so she will inevitably go towards resistance or avoidance, or aborting the experiment of self-discovery.

I follow up by: “Let’s try the Lunar breath right here with me.”

THE LUNAR BREATH IS A SOFT, LONG SUSTAINED EXHALE that resembles the image of a silken mist diffused in the morning summer sun. It involves an exhale through the nose, mouth closed, in the back of the throat. Barely audible, it streams out of the nose with its intention to soften any boundaries or hardness in the body. With the Lunar breath one is invited to sink, soften and release into oneself. A normal inhale follows and again the slow, deliberate exhale stream through the nasal passages and back of the throat. The attention softens and can be directed at times towards body areas that want to be engaged, such as a tight place in the chest or neck.

LAUREN TRIES THIS AND FINDS GREAT PLEASURE THAT she can “do” something. As doing gives her great comfort she is more pliable in trying this. This is, of course, feeding the part of her that wants to fix her state rather than change herself. I invite her into sensing, into open attention of what is occurring right now. She experiences a softening in her breathing and in her chest and reports a spaciousness and an opening, which surprises her. “Feelings of anxiety are not there right now”, she says. “I didn’t know you were anxious”, I reply. “I wasn’t either. I think I live most of my life in fear, in fact, there is no safe place anywhere”, she bows down her head with that last statement. She has clearly entered a feeling state.

IN THE SPACIOUSNESS OF THE MOMENT SHE IS FEELING herself, a first in the session. Without having to make it explicit she is feeling her un-safety in a contained way. The vehicle of the lunar breath gives her the safe structure to explore and yet, paradoxically, opens her into deeper layers of herself. I direct her into more of the lunar breath. She is discovering small movements that want to follow in her shoulders and neck, she has renewed energy and curiosity to follow this now. Gently, she is changing before my eyes.

INTRODUCING SMALL BREATHS AND MOVEMENT explorations such as these can be a tremendously valuable pathway into the body and into working with deep-seated belief systems. They can provide a physical way into what the client might otherwise argue with or try to understand desperately in her mind.

SHIFTING THE REFERENCE POINT OF THE THERAPY INTO breath, movement, and sounds can be in itself a shift in perception of how we are doing therapy. Therapy can be heavily patterned and the therapist can fall prey to their predictions and routines. Even in Hakomi Therapy, where we are striving to stay with the present moment, our interventions can be at times repetitive and predictable. We can be in danger to “know” what the client’s experience will be or how it will unfold. The more experience we have with clients, the more we are in jeopardy to get sleepy with our perceptions. To stay fresh, curious and innovative in how we “see” our clients is a real challenge as the skill of the practitioner grows and masters her techniques. Exploring movement with our clients can help us to train our eyes to see anew, allowing ourselves to be delighted in the small expressions of our clients.

IN CONTINUUM MOVEMENT THE EMPHASIS IS NOT ON being expressive but rather staying tuned to the moment-to-moment experience of one’s body. The client’s deep journey into themselves is in itself a gift to the client as well as Therapist.

IN LAUREN'S CASE, HER FROZEN CHEST BECAME A THEME in the therapy. It emerged in many different facets: frozen feeling parts, frozen in dialogue with people that mattered in her life. Frozen became the bumper sticker of her life. Over and over again we explored this theme until she was able, with small micromovements, to gently thaw the frozenness she had experienced all her life. She intellectually had grasped the pattern of frozenness in her life, but it was only as she explored it with breath and movement that she somatically understood the physical implications of such a belief. She began to befriend the frozenness, turning fear into fearlessness.

THERE CAN BE A DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "letting the body explore" whatever a client experiences in the moment compared to guiding the body gently with a particular breath or movement, such as in Continuum Movement. Some clients don't know how to enter into a moving experience. It is often with much judgment, shyness or shame that clients approach the attempt to "move" their body. Moving can be perceived as acting, dancing or performing.

IN SUPERVISING BEGINNING THERAPISTS, I OFTEN HEAR instructions such as: "Just let your body move. How does it want to move?" That offer can be too big and inviting the inner judgments, therefore stifling the very attempt the therapist is making towards explorations and freedom. By giving very deliberate and small instructions that have the attitude of open explorations, the client can warm themselves towards movement without threat: "Notice how the chest is moving ever so slightly, what is that like? "If you could imagine the breath slowly streaming out of your nose right now, what do you notice in your chest?" "As you move your attention to this area of holding, what small movement do you detect right there?" The client is invited into what is already there: there is no new thing to make up, or to get to; we are just changing the focus of our bodily interaction. As the client slowly orients around this, a sense of doable achievement arrives and the client is invited into themselves. In that exploration the client finds variation, play, and change as they begin to experiment: "I am noticing when I exhale even longer I feel a sense of peace in my belly, I can stay there a little bit." These discoveries can produce much excitement and pride.

CONTINUUM HAS MANY BREATHS, SOUNDS AND movements, with different intentions (e.g. to dissolve one's boundaries, or to infuse ones body with more energy), but most of all the intention of Continuum is to allow the mover to experience themselves as free from identities that confine and restrict the body and mind.

OF COURSE THE TRAP IN OFFERING SUCH INTERVENTIONS is that they can be perceived as directive or guiding towards an agenda of the therapist. I view this in the way I approach any intervention we make in Hakomi Therapy: as an experiment. We are offering in the attitude of the experiential mind so that the client can gravitate towards or away from the suggestion. The outcome is not known, with the intent being to offer something helpful for the client to explore so they can view themselves from a different perspective. They can see their belief enacted in the stories of their body-movements. Once that is somatically felt, the client has a much easier time accepting this reality and is able to engage with the deeper meaning levels of it as well.

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AS FOR LAUREN, HER EXPLORATIONS WITH SMALL micromovements – breaths of safety, as she called them – opened her to experience her body on a more realistic level. After a few sessions she was able to sense and feel in the present moment, rather than taking refuge in abstract ideas and fantasies. She was able to feel her body, and her relationship with me, and therefore begin the journey of experiencing the sadness and grief in her chest. A life long held pain of not being seen by her father emerged. The patriarch of the family that expected her to run the family business as a man, he never saw his daughter and never wanted to acknowledge the sensitive woman she had become in teenage years. Her blooming sexuality threatened him and he negated her existence by treating her as non-existent.

SHE BEGAN TO CHANGE, AND SHE ENJOYED HER change. Changing was something her father did not allow her when she was growing up. He wanted her to be his girl, yet had not wanted to acknowledge her womanly features and beauty at the same time. He wanted her frozen in time, and demanded that she run the business like a son would.

IN ONE PIVOTAL SESSION SHE WAS ABLE TO LOOK AT ME in a sustained eye contact and express that she felt "safe

# Update from the Hakomi Pacifica Team.

With so many trainers and teachers in town for the 8th Segment of the Sydney training, the Hakomi Pacifica team took advantage of a rare opportunity to hold its annual meeting locally, rather than the US, which meant that nearly all the team could attend.

Team administrator **LORELLA RICCI** gives us an update.

*Pictured L-R: John Perrin, Halko Weiss, Maya Shaw Gale, Neil Rodgers, Suhari Bohm, Moshe Perl, Jules Morgaine, Manuela Mischke-Reeds, Lorella Ricci and Marilyn Morgan. (Julie Murphy and Halka Beseda were unable to attend).*



Hakomi is taught throughout the world under the auspices of the Hakomi Institute, a non-profit educational organization, founded in 1980.

The Faculty is divided into a number of regional teams. The Hakomi Pacifica Team comprises the teaching staff and organisers who work in Australia and New Zealand. The current team are:

**TRAINERS:**

Halko Weiss, Marilyn Morgan, Manuela Mischke-Reeds, Maya Shaw-Gale and Julie Murphy.

**TEACHERS:**

Suhari Bohm, Jules Morgaine, John Perrin and Neil Rodgers

**ORGANISERS:**

John Perrin (Sydney), Halka Beseda (Perth) and Moshe Perl (Melbourne)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Lorella Ricci

NOT SURPRISINGLY, THERE WAS A NOTABLE DIFFERENCE between this meeting and our usual disembodied phone conferences that we have during the rest of the year. Not only did it mean that we had extra time to devote to more time-consuming areas such as future planning and the processing of more thorny issues, but it was a lot more fun and nourishing. For some reason, it's a lot easier to make decisions in person than it is on the phone.

One of the big decisions was the exciting and inspiring news that John Perrin and Neil Rodgers have officially been appointed Hakomi Teachers. John is currently apprentice teacher on the Sydney Training, was a tutor on the previous training, is the Sydney organiser, an HAA committee member and a rather large slab of the foundation of Hakomi in Australia. Neil Rodgers, equally prolific, is a tutor-come-apprentice teacher on the current Sydney Training, the continuity teacher on the Perth training, has taught on various segments in New Zealand over the past two years and is an HAA committee member. On behalf of the team, I'd like to send them both our best wishes and gratitude for their hard work and dedication to Hakomi and the development of its students.



Another decision was around the certification process for students in Australia. Whilst the details will be finalised within the next couple of months, the development of a Certification Program is finally underway. The program will be offered to qualified graduates, as a way of developing skills and having their work overseen by teachers and trainers. As entry to the program will require a certain criteria and a level of experience, the traditional system of getting tapes approved by two trainers will still be in place.

So that you have a sense of what the Hakomi Pacifica Team are working on at the moment, here is an outline of the other agenda items covered at the meeting: formalising procedures for staff development; centralising teaching materials; presenting at Australian conferences; curriculum development; administration; redesigning the Hakomi logo / branding; teacher feedback; business development; strategic planning and long-term development; and yearly scheduling. A huge agenda, especially when you're hoping to achieve this with a spaciousness to allow a natural unfolding and also attend to, and honour, all the individual aspects of this group.

It's hard to summarise two days of meetings without getting pedantic and detailed – so I'll convey two main strands that really stood out for me. Firstly, there was a focus on attending to the relationships, such as the relationship between the teaching team and the organisers and the relationship within the teaching team itself, and how to make this as clear, supportive and mutually beneficial as possible. The other main aspect of the meeting was working on a business development for Hakomi, including the development of a viable business model for this region, through to the establishment of long-term plans for trainings, workshops, introductory workshops, supervision programs and post-graduate programs.

It took a lot of concentration and energy to stay focused, especially considering that the majority of the team had just finished teaching a 9-day segment.

As a treat, Moshe Perl (Melbourne organiser) gave us a compelling presentation on Neuro Feedback, which received a vibrant and enthusiastic response from everyone. It was great to get a bit of professional development in the middle of it all.

Even though the team are spread out around the world, we are in constant email and phone contact, have a team phone conference every three-four months and meet up once a year face-to-face, if possible. If you'd like to share anything with the team, individual teachers, or ask any questions, you can send me an email and I'd be more than happy to pass it on.

*Lorella Ricci, HPT Administrator*  
**HPTadmin@hakomi.net.au ■**

## Right Use of Power: The Heart of Ethics

Announcing the publication of Cedar Barstow's book: *Right Use of Power: The Heart of Ethics*. For those of you who don't know her well, this approach to ethics comes from an integration of Hakomi theory and experiential methods, ceremonial work with the four directions, and her passion for using power to promote the well-being of all.

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**“When the generativity and responsiveness of our power is guided by loving concern for the well-being of all, we will have an ethical and sustainable world. Power directed by heart. Heart infused with power. This is the key to right use of power.”**

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I'm happy to let you know I have now completed a second book about the right use of power. This book is smaller, narrative, perfect bound, and focused toward the needs and interests of health care practitioners, leaving out the sections designed for teaching this program. This new book is selling well and available for sale (USD \$24 and 254 pages) at her website: [www.RightUseOfPower.com](http://www.RightUseOfPower.com). According to a map on her wall, book owners live in all but 10 states and in 20 countries. She has now trained 106 people to teach *Right Use of Power Ethics*.

A quote from the book jacket - *Right Use of Power: The Heart of Ethics* is a dynamic, inspiring, and relational approach to ethical awareness. In a time of great misuse of power, it offers sound guidance for an emerging ethic that brings compassion to power. Original and engaging, the approach highlights four dimensions of personal and professional power: **Be Informed, Be Compassionate, Be Connected, Be Skillful**. This book provides the skills to use power with heart.

# Dialectical Behaviour Therapy and Hakomi

As a specialist in issues of complex trauma, Canberra based Psychologist, Hakomi student and former Lecturer, **SANDI PLUMMER, PhD**, has undertaken various trainings in behavioural strategies and somatic therapies in the search for a mindful, validating and compassionate response.

Yet the integration of these approaches is not always an easy path.

SOME MONTHS AGO I WAS ASKED IF I WOULD BE prepared to write an article for the Hakomi Newsletter about Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and how it “interfaces” with Hakomi. I am a trainee in Hakomi and I study, teach and supervise in a modified DBT approach. As I still feel like I have so much to learn in Hakomi, and DBT, for that matter, my thoughts were that I don’t know enough to prepare such an article, yet I jumped at the opportunity. As I started, I found it hard to distil the truth of “What is DBT?” or “What is Hakomi?” Both Hakomi (as we are being taught) and DBT are relatively new therapies which have managed to integrate previous therapeutic strategies into new and evolving approaches. In other words neither approach seems to be static or finished in its evolution toward providing a therapeutic approach to facilitate change in an accepting and collaborative manner.

IN ADDITION, I ALSO HAVE PERSONALLY STRUGGLED WITH integrating these two approaches in my own therapy. I have personalized DBT and have watched the various Hakomi teachers personalized the Hakomi method. So how could I write an article to compare and/ or contrast these approaches when they are both still evolving and I personally find myself in conflict between the two approaches?

WHAT I DECIDED TO OFFER IS A BROAD ACCOUNT OF DBT which allows me to make statements relative to my interpretation of DBT with my clients and my own personal style. Within this I will highlight where I find some of the conflicts and similarities, hoping that others may be able to use the dialectic to resolve these conflicts. If you want to know more about the “real” DBT follow the references at the end, especially those by Marsha Linehan. For research purposes, the Linehan camp seeks to have DBT practitioners adhere to particular regimes. Practitioners in the field however are applying DBT to wider and wider areas, relying on the principles delineated by Linehan, but

not adhering to all the regimes.

## WHAT IS DBT?

DBT is a treatment for individuals of various age groups (adolescents and adults) with complex, difficult to treat and multiple difficulties. These difficulties may be present in clients meeting the criteria for:

- Borderline Personality Disorder, especially with suicidal and self-harming behaviours
- Depression and Anxiety
- Complex PTSD
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Abuse and other Addictive Disorders

DBT **may** therefore be applicable to clients with more complex mental health difficulties than Hakomi.

DBT HAS BEEN USED IN OUT-PATIENT, IN-PATIENT, PARTIAL in-patient, community, and forensic settings. It is used by psychologists, nurses, community health professionals, correctional institutions, and community service providers. It does not see itself as a psychotherapy but as a psychological evidence-based therapy. It emerged from a therapist, Marsha Linehan, who has a strong behavioural, Zen, and 12 Step background.

## THERAPEUTIC UNDERSTANDINGS

I SEE DBT AS A THERAPY WHICH WEAVES TOGETHER Developmental, Behavioural, Zen, and Dialectical Understandings. Assumptions from the behavioural point of view include: all behaviour has causes and effects, complex behaviours have complex and interconnected causes and effects, new behaviours can be learned, learned behaviours can be and are constantly changing, behaviour is functional, and bodily responses are learned. Many of these assumptions are similar to Hakomi, with DBT recognizing the complexity of the mind body interface and of complex operations of feedback loops and mind body systemic interactions.

DBT IS MORE LINEAR IN ITS FOCUS THAN HAKOMI AND believes more strongly in the possibility of predictability of complex behaviour. DBT also does not use touch and places much more emphasis on cognitive and behavioural interventions than on sensory or body work. DBT is primarily a learning/ teaching approach.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS ALSO HAVE SOME similarity to Hakomi Principles. Assumptions that change occurs over time, that early influences are embedded in physical and cognitive structures, that change is neither random nor arbitrary, that there are individual differences in learning and make-up, and that there are common drives, may be more or less shared with Hakomi. Therefore there is an acceptance of a type of organicity, however the belief that healing is an act of self-recreation, and that the individual holds the strength for healing themselves is not seen as necessarily the case. Many organic processes are known to turn the body against itself and DBT sees this as the case for some clients. That is that the normal organic processes may lead to short term resolutions with long term detriment, avoidance being a case in point. Therefore DBT takes a more psycho-educational role in the change part of the therapy than I see in Hakomi.

TO MY MIND, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THEORETICAL strands in DBT are the assumptions that flow from the emphasis on Dialectics. These are also some of the most compatible with the spirit of Hakomi. DBT is based on a notion of synthesis of what appear to be opposites. This synthesis provides the opportunity for change without conflict or over-reliance on confrontation. It allows DBT to be much less violent than many of the older behavioural models. Assumptions flowing from the dialectic include: that the world is neither polar nor dichotomous, that learning is neither didactic nor one way, that possibilities for change emerge from within, that all humans exist in relationship and in a holistic and interconnected manner with complex oppositional and inter-relationships, and that most importantly for the method that the world is full of paradox which can be dealt with by expanding possibilities and allowing change. There is much emphasis placed on the notion that learning is willing and not wilful. These assumptions fit nicely with non-violence, mind/body holism and unity Hakomi Principles. DBT however also stresses that change is and can be controlled. Many of the skills teach clients to control the change process.

FINALLY DBT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ZEN PATH TO Enlightenment. When I teach DBT, these assumptions become a very important part of the DBT process. Some of these assumptions include a warning against reification of concepts into reality. This is especially important when

using maps such as diagnostic categories, or labelling individuals with certain personality or other disorders. It is important to remember that the map is not the territory. This leads to a notion that concepts are judgmental illusions, that rules are often arbitrary and yet necessary, and that experience is the only way to know the world. DBT works in the present moment and relies on a middle and non-compromising way. Within a DBT framework it is easy to see that "there is suffering, there is an end to suffering, and that there is a path or way to obtain an end to suffering in that moment."

#### **MINDFULNESS**

DBT INCORPORATES MINDFULNESS BOTH AS A PRINCIPLE of practice, and a technique for achieving a therapeutic relationship, and an optimal level of arousal or window for change. In DBT however, there is a set curriculum for teaching mindfulness. And while this learning process is based on willing or allowing mindfulness, it is nevertheless a taught rather than discovered quality of presence.

#### **VIEW OF THE CLIENT**

THE DBT MODEL VIEWS CLIENTS AS SKILL- OR CAPABILITY-deficient in terms of difficulties in self-regulation of emotions, interpersonal relationships, and distress tolerance. The model also views the client's developmental and current environment, internal and external, as motivationally dysfunctional, in terms of invalidating the client's reality, punishing the client's current skills and reinforcing dysfunctional behaviours including avoidance.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE CLIENT'S PROCESS OF SELF-organisation or organicity is conflicted by external invalidation of their process which then causes the client to turn to outside sources for self-understanding, while still being driven by internally directed processes. A simple example might be a child who gets upset when the environment is changed and their emotion is invalidated by a parent who says you should be happy about this change. Obviously, the more the invalidation a child has the greater the internal conflict. Childhood sexual abuse is one area in which there is on going invalidation of the child's inner reality, but there are many more which may be more subtle and nevertheless just as destroying of a sense of self.

AS THE CLIENT DEALS WITH AN INTERNAL VIEW OF SELF which is not supported externally, the client learns to invalidate themselves and to try to stop or avoid the emotional responses which have been deemed to be abnormal. Avoidance of emotional reactions leads the client to greater sensitivity when the emotion inevitably re-occurs. This leads to many responses such as drug and alcohol abuse, self-harming, top-down management, and numbing in an attempt to quell the emotions. As this continues

the client may also increase the intensity of their response so that it might match how they feel. "I feel like death warmed over so if I try to kill myself others might see how much I hurt." I see clients as being SIPS or sensitive invalidated people.

DBT ASSUMES OF THE CLIENT THAT THEY ARE:

- Doing the best they can
- Want to improve
- Need to do better, try harder, and be more motivated
- Have not caused all their problems
- Must solve their problems
- In lives unbearable as they are currently being lived
- Must learn new behaviours in all relevant contexts
- Cannot fail

DBT ASSUMES OF THE THERAPIST THAT THE

- Most caring thing a therapist can do is to help clients change and come closer to their own goals
- Clarity, precision, and compassion are the most important elements
- The therapeutic relationship is a real relationship between real people
- Principles of behaviour are universal, affecting therapist and client
- Therapists working with these clients need support
- Therapists can fail
- Therapy can fail even when therapists do not.

### STANDARD DBT FORMAT

THE STANDARD FORMAT FOR DBT IS QUITE DIFFERENT from Hakomi. DBT is comprised of Skills Training Groups, Individual Therapy, Telephone Coaching, Case Management, and Consultation Groups for the Therapists.

### GROUP SKILLS TRAINING

IN DBT THERE IS A SET CURRICULUM THAT IS PROVIDED for clients in a 2 1/2 hour per week Skills Training Group. This group runs for 6 months with four 12 week modules. The clients may repeat the 6 month training.

THE MODULES INCLUDE:

**Mindfulness** – Teaching the client to pay attention to their experiences by observing and describing what is perceived and focusing on one thing at a time in a non-judgmental and effective way. This skill allows clients to note urges to react before reacting and to stay with emotional experiences long enough to learn about them. DBT does not believe that the awareness that comes from mindfulness is sufficient for change. They do believe that it is essential for change. DBT constantly calls for a balance between acceptance, and change or intervention strategies.

**Emotional Regulation** – Teaches the client how to analyze and modulate their emotions. It teaches them how emotions are typically expressed and how to recognise emotions. Again this is a taught process and not a discovery process.

**Distress Tolerance** – Teaches clients crisis management and acceptance skills. These include self-soothing, distraction, radical acceptance, changing the moment.

**Interpersonal effectiveness** – Teaches clients how to recognise different types of interpersonal interactions and how to skilfully ask for their needs to be met and how to skilfully say no.

### INDIVIDUAL THERAPY

IN ORDER FOR THE CLIENT TO STAY IN THE SKILLS Training Group they are required to have individual therapy for one hour per week. This therapy, with the primary therapist, focuses on problems from last week using chain analysis, developing alternatives and exploring blocks to change. In both the individual therapy and the Skills Training Group the client is expected to complete homework which has a practice component and a self-analysis component. There are standard diary cards and analysis processes.

### TELEPHONE COACHING

CLIENTS ARE PROVIDED WITH TELEPHONE COACHING from the primary therapist or someone trained in DBT. This telephone contact is to allow coaching on skills learned in therapy and skills group at the time that the client is in need of using the skills. Often this will be at the time that the client is in crisis or has urges to self-harm or suicide. Ideally telephone coaching would be available 24 hours a day seven days a week. This is rarely practical; however one does have to be available outside of the normal 1 hour per week during business hours. The coaching is always focused on how the client can use learned skills and is not a therapy session.

### CONSULTATION GROUP

ALL THERAPISTS ATTEND A CONSULTATION GROUP IN which DBT principles and skills are practised, and therapists experience analysis of their own behaviour, with the assistance of others in the group. There is a facilitator who rotates and the use of a mindfulness bell to remind therapists to come to and practice mindfulness. The content is learning to work better with specific clients.

### GENERAL WORKING STYLE

WHILE THE FORMAT OF DBT IS VERY DIFFERENT TO Hakomi, THE general working style is not incompatible with Hakomi. There are, however, differing emphases.

DBT, THROUGH THE USE OF THE DIALECTIC, FOCUSES ON achieving a balance of acceptance and change. Validation of the client, somewhat similar to contact statements, is used to demonstrate acceptance. This validation often provides a “missing experience” for the client and provides an opportunity for change.

THE GENERAL WORKING STYLE WHICH PROMOTES THIS balance of acceptance and change includes 1) *validating*: respect for different values, encouragement, focus on capabilities, searching for the “kernel of truth”, staying near and in contact with the client. 2) *accepting*: active observing and listening without bias, verbalising unverballed experience back to the client, active searching for the validity of the experience, 3) *mindfulness* 4) *dialectical-inclusive – expansive*: tolerating and modelling ambiguity, “and” not “but”, “yes/also”, extending, allowing, willing not wilful, 5) *collaborative*: curious, experimenting, commitment-enhancing, building on the client’s desire to change, using homework, 6) *balancing*: stability balanced with compassionate flexibility, nurturing balanced with benevolent demands, focus on capabilities balanced with facilitation of skills development, problem solving balanced with validation of now, emotion regulation balanced with mindfulness, acceptance balanced with change, and 7) *oriented to building more skilful means*: encouraging the development of a structure for analysis and experiments, encouraging an increase of mindfulness of now, allowing for the possibility of positive change and reinforcing and generalizing the person’s chosen positive change.

FINALLY DBT WORKS IN STAGES WITH A LOT OF EMPHASIS placed on what they call pre-treatment. During the pre-treatment phase the therapist establishes a collaborative therapeutic relationship and facilitates the client to state a focus for the change work. The therapist and client develop a contract and commitment from the client. During this time the therapist would also introduce mindfulness and, work to stabilise the client’s self-harm. Goals start with life-threatening behaviour, next are therapy-interfering behaviours, and finally quality of life interfering behaviours. In treatment, the therapy works on stabilization and behavioural and cognitive control, followed by feeling better, changing quiet desperation into non-traumatic emotional experiences, opening the client to experiences of ordinary happiness, resolving problems of living and finally finding joy.

#### SUMMARY

While much of DBT is compatible with the Hakomi Principles, the techniques and formats are quite different with DBT being much more cognitively structured education rather than body experiential. DBT is gentle and non-violent, emphasizes relationship and mindfulness,

acceptance and change. DBT encourages self-study and awareness through mindfulness, encourages staying with emotions and experimenting with change, and contacts the present experience of the client in a respectful and accepting manner. The major, and for me most difficult to resolve or synthesize, difference is that DBT believes that change is created through effort following awareness and that awareness and organicity are not sufficient for appropriate change. The therapist and client are therefore much more doers and thinkers. As an Industrious Over-focused person, I find DBT easier because it is harder or more effortful. I guess I feel more competent when I am doing. It also works for me and for most of my clients.

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**Sandi Plummer, PhD**, psychologist and past lecturer at the University of Canberra is currently a Hakomi student. She was the Head of the Community Counselling Program at the University of Canberra for over 18 years and has been working in private practice for over 25 years.

*Sandi currently specialises in issues of Complex Trauma, working with individuals and organisations providing services to people with complex trauma issues and self harming behaviour, particularly those meeting the diagnostic criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder. She has undertaken specialised training in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies, and Body Centred Therapies. ■*

# Touch and Talk.

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are expressed in movement and attitude. In Ron Kurtz's seminal book *The Hakomi Method*, Ron writes about how deeply held beliefs, guiding images and significant early memories effect behaviour, body structure and all levels of physiology, from cellular metabolism and the strength of the immune system, to blood flow and the distribution of heat and muscle tone in the body, to the expression of these beliefs in posture, movement, gesture and facial expression. He goes on to say briefly that there are of course influences that body has on mind – from the inheritance of talents and dispositions to the moods that are part of having a diseased liver. Dancing in both camps I can see how the mindful touch of bodywork and dialogue deepen the whole process of a bodywork session. You could say that Hellerwork structural integration happens best when utilizing the Hakomi way of “being with”.

## WHAT HAPPENS?

THERE IS A SAYING, “YOU CAN'T CHANGE WHAT YOU don't know” so one of the first things I focus on in a Hellerwork session is to find out all I can about this unique individual. Initially we are dealing with the obvious – their concerns and things that they can remember from their personal history, and of course what I can see visually. Based on what my client comes in with, I am looking at how this person is organizing themselves around the abiding force of gravity. I am looking for what moves and what doesn't move in their structure. What is held or frozen, and how they are negotiating around it. In the beginning I am taking care of the client practitioner relationship and building rapport, so I go through a rather pragmatic process of taking down information which also helps to ease in to the session. I get them to show me where their discomfort is and I also look at their structure and postural inclinations – this is often somewhat challenging for people as I have one wall in my office that is all mirror. People don't usually get to see themselves so fully. Often clients initially complain about those extra few pounds, or how they used to look much better last year when they were going to the gym/running/playing sport etc. In each client I see an innate beauty – it doesn't matter what they look like, or think they look like, I hold a space of wonder at how this being is expressing themselves, not only at an obviously physical level, but at the emotional and spiritual level as well. Once they understand that I am not judging how they look, a certain sense of relaxation occurs and they find within themselves a permission and curiosity to really start looking at themselves. We look together and

begin the fascinating journey that takes them through the 11 sessions of Hellerwork Structural Integration.

CLIENTS ARE USUALLY IN MY OFFICE BECAUSE THEY ARE in the middle of some kind of internal battle that is making its presence felt through the body. It might be a painful shoulder or low back, or a general awareness that they are succumbing to gravity and are starting to feel the effects of being compressed. As a person goes through the sessions, their body slowly starts to unwind, shift and change. As these changes occur, the way they take in the world starts to subtly alter and in turn the way the world receives them also starts to change. As Ida Rolf, the founder of Rolfing Structural Integration said, it was easy to get a person to change their mind if she could get hold of their body and change it first. I guess it also has parallels with the behavioural psychologists who say that if you can change behaviour, you can often influence the mind.

## CHARACTER AND ITS PHYSICAL PREFERENCE:

BECAUSE OF MY HAKOMI TRAINING, KNOWING ABOUT character is of great benefit to me in my Hellerwork practise. Some clients are strongly organised around a particular strategy and I can almost predict where their body is likely to break down over time and what areas will be most difficult to work with. It is very interesting when one looks at how we are defined by what we are aligned to (such as a belief system that says “I have to do it all myself”), and how these preferences are eventually seen as physical patterns of contraction and vibrational expressions in our nervous systems. If this person has an accident and their body posture is compromised by physical injury, it can profoundly affect the way they are able to take in their environment and how they experience the world. When injury compromises how a person uses their body, and where the ability to physically “do it all” is lost, it can deeply compromise their ego structure and in turn their psychological health. It can alter how they present and how they are perceived by others. The self reliant strategy is no longer possible and they find that they are thrust in to the experience of dependency. Their whole world changes as they are suddenly forced into what their ego structure has been organised against – being dependent on others. In contrast, someone organised around an oral strategy may not have such a strong reaction – they would likely take all the time they needed, and more, to recover, and have many people helping them to do so.

## OUR BIOLOGY IS OUR PSYCHOLOGY:

WHAT COMES FIRST, THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG? IF WE take a body posture that has become a habit, like a forward tilting head and the depressed ribcage that restricts

a full breath, we can see how body posture can affect a person's sense of wellbeing. The head falls off its vertical axis making the back and shoulder muscles work harder. The back and neck start to hold the necessary tension associated with holding up the 12 to 14 lbs that the head weighs and the ribcage and diaphragm work harder to get a breath in because of the depressed chest. When breath is restricted, more stress hormones are created by the subtle and not so subtle physical demands that are being put on the immune system, which in turn start to effect health and wellbeing. At a very primal level when the body doesn't get enough oxygen there is a message sent out that something is slightly amiss. It goes into a yellow alert – not enough to make it a red alert, but enough to have the autonomic nervous system engaged at above normal. Further, in this posture, to maintain verticality through the whole body the pelvis has to slightly alter its position, and in this case pushes forward and jams the whole torso down on to the back of the hip joint. The low back to counter this braces arches forward - this is the classic sway back posture. Whatever job this person has, whether it be in a clerical situation where they are sitting at a computer for extended periods of time, or if they are active and moving (nursing, mother with small children etc) the body will not like this posture. Over time they may present with the physical symptoms of low back problems, difficulty with breath, neck issues, lack of vitality from lack of oxygen, and possibly over time low grade depression. They start to not enjoy their work, and their relationships with others start to dull and suffer. Life starts to become hard which is further expressed in postural contraction. There is always the discussion of what came first the psychological depression or the postural dysfunction – in my view it's a non linear experience and it is all happening at the same time in layers.

OUR WHOLE CHEMICAL MAKEUP CAN CHANGE WITH A shift in either attitude or circumstance which in turn influences every system in the body. Candice Pert says in her book 'Molecules of Emotion', that the mind as we experience it is immaterial, yet it has a physical substrate, which is both the body and the brain.

IT MAY ALSO BE SAID TO HAVE A NON MATERIAL, NON physical substrate that has to do with the flow of that information. The mind, then, is that which holds the network together, often acting below our consciousness, linking and coordinating the major systems and their organs and cells in an intelligently orchestrated symphony of life. Thus we might refer to the whole system as a psychosomatic information network, linking psyche, which comprises all that is of an ostensibly nonmaterial nature, such as mind, emotion, and soul, to soma, which is the

material world of molecules, cells and organs. Mind and body, psyche and soma.

COMPARED TO MOST MAINSTREAM MEDICAL PRACTICE which is more focused on symptom, Hellerwork is very interested in causation. As in Hakomi, we see that the person brings in their whole story – it is a mind body issue, not just their sore back or neck symptom. We are interested in helping our client to get a sense of just how they live in their body on a daily basis with the premise "from awareness springs change". Of course our posture is something that we pretty much unconsciously create and over time it becomes our innate expression of who we are. It is the result of how we organize our experience. Some aspects we integrate and grow from, and some we are wounded and stunted by. These pieces of unintegrated experience are what I see as pieces of the body frozen in time, causing us pain and discomfort. One of the premises of quantum physics is that energy is matter frozen in time, (the good news being that they are interchangeable), so it is fascinating to see this energetic truncation expressed in a body posture. Of course posture when it is combined with movement is a powerful image creator. We can see someone we know from a distance and recognize who it is straight away from how they are moving, well before we can see the detail of their face. Why? Because they move in time and space in a very particular way. I see movement as an expression of our character, and that is why in Hellerwork we play with movement awareness.

IN A WAY, THE WHOLE PROCESS OF HELLERWORK IS LIKE an experiment. I am constantly checking in with my client "so how do you notice that?" I invite them in to their inner body experience, into the world of sensation. As students of Hakomi we discovered that we often did not have a vocabulary for our inner sensational experience and could not really describe the sensation that went along with sadness – how do you know that it is sadness? In a Hellerwork session I teach clients to study the body sensations that go along with their experience of receiving bodywork and in turn there is the invitation to study the sensations that go along with any emotions or thoughts that may come up. In a Hellerwork session I might also invite my client to notice how the pain in an area might intensify in certain positions, when they moved in a particular way or when they are feeling an emotion or thinking a thought. When I slow it right down, they usually find out other things they are doing alongside the discomfort they are experiencing – often a deep breath will bring awareness, and as only the body can do, from awareness things change. What they were experiencing as extreme discom-

# Touch and Talk.

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fort moves in to something else. They did not notice until they took a breath, that they were scrunching their shoulders right up to their ears which was pulling and grating on that sore spot in their neck. The thought they were having at the time was about going back to work and the abusive atmosphere they would have to endure. They realized that they were bracing themselves all the time, and not just at work.

THE WORK I DO CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AND CHANGE.

However, using the Hellerwork series I blend the Hakomi principles and Hellerwork dialogue with the powerful experience of structural integration to create an awakening, where a person has the unique opportunity to move towards more balance and ease within gravity, where they are the conscious choreographer of their own experience. The on-going discussion of touch and talk will no doubt continue, and all I can say about it is that it is a powerful healing tool and one that is definitely more than the sum of the parts. This is where magic happens.

I hope that this can open up further discussion.

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*Emotional Anatomy*: Stanley Kellerman

**Linda McClure** has been a certified Hellerwork Practitioner since 1989, and completed the Hakomi Developmental and Trauma Trainings in 1996 and 1998 respectively.

She has studied extensively with Judith Aston in movement therapy and is a certified Aston movement coach since 1996. She has also been on the faculty of the Hellerwork Foundation since 1996 and currently chairs the Foundations Board of Education. Linda lives on the Gold Coast of Queensland Australia and runs a private practice with her partner Sean Petersen, and is a Director of the Australian School of Hellerwork Structural Integration.

Linda can be reached at [info@hellerwork.com.au](mailto:info@hellerwork.com.au) ■

# I need to change ...

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enough to be in the world.” At that moment it was the first real direct eye contact between us (this is 6 months into the therapy), and she was able to face herself, who she was and had become. She took a sabbatical from her work, much under the protest of her father, intensely studied alternative healing modalities and enjoyed herself tremendously. She then returned to the business on the condition that her father was to step back in his roles and she was to run the business on her own. He complied and she turned this business into an environment that she favoured, with new environmental policies and internal new business structures that supported women in this male-dominated business: equality of pay, and processes for disgruntled workers to have a voice.

AT THE TIME OF THERAPY TERMINATION SHE HAD NOT been in a lasting relationship, but began to date men. “I would never notice them before”, she described in the last session, “They are so nice and normal, not the ones I usually would gravitate towards.”

HER JOURNEY FROM FEELING UNSAFE IN THE WORLD TO becoming a powerful, safe-enough woman in the world, was truly remarkable. Our last couple of sessions were filled with much laughter and mischief as she recounted the new adventures she was making in her romantic life as well as her pride in her work life. She felt like change wasn't so bad after all.

**Manuela Mischke Reeds**, M.A., MFT, certified Hakomi Therapist and Trainer, and Somatic Psychotherapist, training in the Hakomi Method in San Francisco and Sydney. Manuela specializes in integrating somatic psychotherapy, attachment therapy, pre-perinatal psychology, movement therapy and somatic trauma work. She is adjunct faculty at JFK University, Institute Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto and CIIS, San Francisco. She co-developed “Waking up from the Family Trance”, a somatic approach to exploring and transforming internalized Family Systems and is an authorized Continuum Movement Teacher, leading regular Continuum classes in SF and abroad.

She holds a MA in Somatic Psychology, a BA in Dance Therapy and has trained in various methods of working with trauma. She has extensive training in the field of arts, movement/dance, and Buddhist meditation and maintains a private practice in Menlo Park, working with individuals, couples and children. ■



# What brings you here?

Roving journalist **RYTA KUNCIUNAS** talks to Hakomi student **GAI LONGMUIR**

about what first attracted her to Hakomi.

## **WHAT DREW YOU TO HAKOMI?**

A workshop I did with Maya and John, and a strong sense of the inherent restraint in Hakomi. I guess as someone who is quite emotional and intense, I found it very liberating to see a tradition of psychotherapy that's really about self-study, pausing and going deeper, and not about being cathartic or expressing and dramatising the feeling state. I love the focus of non-violence and mindfulness.

## **WHAT'S HELPED TO SHAPE YOU AS A PSYCHOTHERAPIST?**

I think respect and kindness. Perhaps I've been shaped by the personal as political notion, and I think that we live in a profoundly troubled world in lots of ways.

## **HOW DID YOU AND HAKOMI 'FIND' EACH OTHER?**

A good friend, Subhana, had done the training. I did a workshop in Brisbane and just remember having a really powerful experience of coming home to myself on some deeper level. It felt very in tune with my values, having had quite a strong background in meditation and a focus on non-violence and mindfulness.

## **COULD YOU BRIEFLY TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND?**

I've lived for close to thirty years in an intentional Buddhist-inspired community on the north coast of N.S.W, with a focus on living simply, respecting the earth and cultivating an intimate, small village life. My main working life has been broadly in social-welfare, domestic violence and am currently working in mental health.

## **YOU'RE ABOUT TO FINISH THE TRAINING, ANY COMMENTS?**

Three years have flashed by and sometimes I feel like I'm still in kindergarten. I think I understand and live by the principles, but the skills are very subtle and far-reaching. It's been a really wonderful learning for me and I feel that I've become much more robust as a human being. I have a real sense of gratitude about it.

## **ANY THOUGHTS ON YOUR FUTURE WITH HAKOMI?**

I hope to do the Relationship Training with Halko. The Hakomi training has felt like an apprenticeship in an area of life where I'm not ripe enough to move on from. I feel it would deepen the work we've done over the last three years, and yet create a slightly different channel.

## **HOW DOES YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE INFORM THE WAY YOU WORK?**

I've got a reasonably strong sitting background from both Vipassana and Zen meditation, Christopher Titmus in the Vipassana Insight tradition and Robert Aitkin in the Diamond sangha. I feel like I'm a person who's had enormous privileges and maybe that's why I want to work with people who've had much tougher times than me. I love the Dalai Lama's line of "my religion is kindness" and another from the Desert Monks tradition of "Live love, let love invade you, it will never fail to teach you what you must do". That's what interests me in spiritual practise.

## **ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT WHO YOU ARE THAT YOU WANT TO ADD?**

I think we're in a time of enormous suffering and a time of enormous material inequity, and maybe that's what spurs me to work in a N.G.O in mental illness (but it could be some other kind of field). I don't know that I feel particularly called to do private practice: there's something that I love about working in a good functioning team, but really bringing the Hakomi principles into the nature of the work that I do.

## **WHAT ARE YOU READING RIGHT NOW?**

I've just finished Irving Yalom's wonderful, "*Momma and the Meaning of Life*", which I just loved.

## **IS THERE A THERAPIST WHO'S INSPIRED YOU THE MOST?**

I was enormously inspired by Halko, seeing his capacity to really touch the essence of people in a really brief moment. I also have a great regard for a sort of fierceness that I see in Manuela, a real warrior woman quality that I love.

## **WHAT IS HAKOMI 'GAI' STYLE?**

Having fun and feeling at ease in myself. Learning to be in my 'back' and holding my practice lightly. I suppose there's a generosity and a warmth that I like to bring.

## **WHAT SUSTAINS YOU ON YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY?**

Nature, flowers, gardens, ancestors, music, the love of my friends and my fantastic relationship with my daughter.

## **ANYTHING YOU WANT TO ADD?**

Maybe my final thing is that I think I underestimated what a deep and profound process this has been. I'm really grateful for all the trainers and tutors along the great way. ■



# Could this turn into a type of “Spiritual Bypassing?”

In our ongoing series that looks at common problems of therapeutic practice, Hakomi trainee **CAROL PERRY** invites Hakomi Teacher **SUHARI BOHM** for suggestions on working with a meditation practitioner yearning for liberation.

**CAROL:**

*Margie is a committed meditation practitioner. We have had two sessions so it is very early in the process to be offering a case study. She is yearning for liberation and is looking for a “Buddha” as she put it to show her the way. I have been cast into that role.*

**SUHARI RESPONDS:**

HOW DO YOU AS THE THERAPIST EXPERIENCE THIS TRANSFERENCE? What does that evoke within you? Where do you go with this ‘demand’?

**CAROL:**

*There is also a belief about “who am I to experience liberation?” There is a lot of tiredness and along with this oceans of sadness sequencing into frustration and anger. There is probably quite a lot to explore in the anger.*

**SUHARI RESPONDS:**

SHE WANTS YOU TO GUIDE HER TOWARDS LIBERATION BUT IS ALSO defended against it. Who am I to experience liberation she says? The tiredness suggests perhaps deep-seated anger and depression perhaps. Lots of energy is needed to hold it down. That is tiring.

I WONDER ABOUT HER NEED TO HAVE SOMEBODY SHOW HER THE way. It feels child-like, a child needing the guidance of an adult to show her the way. Oceans of Sadness about having to know it all??? To be good, productive, etc. Experiment around that. Notice what it is like when I take you by the hand and lead you? Two things might emerge: 1) resistance or 2) relief. Also, further exploration around the tiredness, such as a probe “It is OK to rest” and study the defence.

**CAROL:**

*It is relatively easy for her to access sensations and to see her resistance to having lots of strong emotions. There is also strong judgmental rejection of her resistance: “I can’t even be with what’s there, and I know that’s what I have to do”. Along with this belief there is some shame.*

**SUHARI RESPONDS:**

SUGGESTION OF MINDFULNESS AND STUDYING THE DEFENCE, contacting, deepening keeping at the same time also honoring her defence. You are here working at the barrier, no nourishment is getting through.

IT IS REALLY HARD TO HANG OUT WITH THAT HUGE LEVEL OF judgment and shame around not getting it. Lots of support is needed. Really supporting the child that was shamed about NOT GETTING IT. Also supporting the part that is so industrious and achieving.

**CAROL:**

*Because it easy for her to be mindful of the sensations of sadness (we haven’t got to the anger yet) she accesses a very pleasant, open and receptive experience and can stay there. I checked whether there was room for the sadness in this openness and yes, the sadness was experienced as a fluid movement through this place and there was no resistance to it.*

**SUHARI RESPONDS:**

THE “SPIRITUAL” PLACE IS A RESTING PLACE, A SAFE SPACE FOR A shamed and judgmental person. It needs to be supported and honored. I am also wondering about her mindfulness. Is she truly witnessing or just hanging out in a nice quiet space?

CAROL:

*I am interested in how this could possibly turn into a sort of "spiritual bypassing" of what needs to be explored here.*

SUHARI RESPONDS:

THE SPIRITUAL PLACE IS ALREADY A BYPASS. IT DOES NOT FEEL only like witnessing or meditation.

CAROL:

*The character style seems to be Industrious. There is a lot of smiling and there is a signature movement in the form of a dismissive laugh when we uncover some aspect of her process. It is as if she is constantly dismissing herself.*

SUHARI RESPONDS:

HER FORMATIVE EXPERIENCE OR CORE BELIEF MIGHT BE "I AM not good enough just for myself" / "I have to produce in order to be loved".

THE SUPERVISION REALLY HIGHLIGHTS THE QUESTION HOW does the practitioner work with this transference and what serves the client? Can I be Buddha for a while until she finds it in herself? Can I just enjoy her for what she is and at the same time start working on making core beliefs conscious.

HER MISSING EXPERIENCE MIGHT BE TO BE SIMPLY ACCEPTED, to just have loving kindness just because she is a human being.

THIS IS VERY SHORT CASE AND EARLY IN THE PIECE. OTHER facets of her being might show up a bit later. Like always we hold our ideas and insights lightly and let them go, should the client choose to explore something else.

**SUHARI BOHM** is a certified Hakomi therapist and Hakomi teacher. She is a qualified medical doctor (Germany) and naturopath (New Zealand). She leads workshops in Healing Relationship and Loving Presence and is currently teaching on the Hakomi Professional Training in Sydney. Suhari lives in Dunedin, New Zealand, where she offers supervision and teaching days for Hakomi graduates. She has over 20 years experience in the field of personal growth and has a particular interest in trauma work and clients presenting with psychosomatic symptoms. ■

**IF YOU'D LIKE FEEDBACK ON A CASE**  
**please email the HAA News Editor at**  
**<haanews@hakomi.org.au> with a short**  
**summary of your case and your dilemma.**

## Sydney Group Supervision with Karen Workman

Sydney-based Hakomi therapist Karen Workman is to offer a further series of group supervision sessions, commencing February 2006. Aimed at Hakomi therapists and students, the supervision will be offered in Sydney on the following dates:

**Fridays, 3.00pm - 5.00pm:**

February 3

February 17

March 17

April 7

April 17

These sessions offer a **deepening of the underlying principals** of the Hakomi method in the realm of **spiritual practice**. They include **understanding Loving Presence** and developing 'personhood' as a therapist.

Within the group, we will explore and discuss cases using **both** the **developmental** approach and the Sensorimotor Psychotherapy Method for **Trauma resolution**.

The 2 hour sessions will be a mix of case study, discussion, theory and experiential work.

To participate fully, you will need to be committed to growing as a therapist while using this method. You can expect to feel refreshed, inspired, and empowered to use your skills with clear intention following each meeting. These sessions are for **professional development** and as such, will not involve personal processing.

This series is the 2nd offered, and if requested, will lead to advanced supervision.

The **fee for the 5 sessions is \$250.00 and is payable in advance**. To register or inquire please call Karen Workman on 9233 3396 or by email: [kworkman@nectar.com.au](mailto:kworkman@nectar.com.au)

**KAREN WORKMAN** is a Certified Hakomi Therapist, Psychologist and Supervisor (NSW Psychologist Registration Board)

# HAA Book Reviews

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## The Schopenhauer Cure

**A Novel by Irvin D. Yalom**  
**Reviewed by Narelle Scotford**

THIS IS THE LATEST BOOK BY IRVIN YALOM BEST SELLING author of *Love's Executioner*, *Momma and the Meaning of Life*, *Lying on the Couch*, *When Nietzsche Wept*, *The Gift of Therapy* as well as several classic textbooks on psychotherapy including the monumental work that has long been the standard text in the field, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*.

IN THE ACKNOWLEDGMENTS YALOM DESCRIBES HIS BOOK AS 'this odd amalgam of fiction, psychobiography and psychotherapy pedagogy'. Yes I checked that last word and it does mean teaching or more accurately the science of teaching.

AS A PRACTISING WRITER, ASPIRING NOVELIST AND FORMER therapist I was first of all intrigued at this odd mix of genres conscious that I have tried to cross genres myself and found it very difficult. I was thus interested to see how an accomplished writer who was also a well-known and highly respected therapist did this. I also wanted to understand his approach to therapy particularly to working with groups and how this compared to my own experience and to my Hakomi training and practice. And last but not least I was interested in my reaction as a reader and whether I would recommend this book to other readers and in particular to Hakomi therapists and students.

FIRST THE STORY. SUDDENLY CONFRONTED BY HIS OWN mortality where by he is given only 12 months of useful life left distinguished psychotherapist Dr Julius Hertzfield finds himself re-examining his life and work. Has he really made an enduring difference to the lives of his clients? He searches his files and his memories discovering that in most cases there is evidence that he has, that is until he comes across the case of Philip Slater whom he considers to be his biggest failure. Twenty-three years ago Philip consulted Julius for sex addiction when his only form of connection with humans was through brief sexual interludes with countless women, and Julius' therapy of three years did nothing change this. For reasons he cannot at first understand Julius feels compelled to seek him out.

HE MEETS WITH PHILIP WHO AGREES THAT HIS THERAPY DID nothing for him but who claims to have cured himself by reading the iconoclastic 19th century German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer. Julius is surprised to learn that Philip has become a philosophical counselor who now requests supervisory hours from Julius so he can obtain his license to practice and in return he offers to tutor him in the work of Schopenhauer. Julius is shocked to think of him becoming a therapist since it is obvious from their current encounters and the attendance at one of Julius' lectures that Philip is still the same arrogant, self-absorbed and uncaring person he has always been. And in every way it seems to Julius that he resembles his mentor Schopenhauer a brilliant thinker and writer but a deeply flawed, isolated and unhappy person. Eventually they strike a Faustian bargain. Julius agrees to supervise Philip provided that he first joins his therapy group and attends as a participant for at least six months in the hope that being in such a group will help him develop the relationship skills Julius feels are essential to becoming a therapist.

PHILIP ENTERS THE GROUP AND BEHAVES IN A WAY THAT JULIUS has never seen in a new group member before. In the very first session he stands with his back to the group examining the books on the shelves and makes no eye contact with anyone as he speaks about his beloved Schopenhauer the man who said : a happy life is impossible the most that a man can attain is an heroic one. It becomes apparent that Philip is more interested in educating the group in philosophy and in particular Schopenhauer than he is in their individual problems, them as people or how they are in the group, and that he has no interest in learning anything about himself. Soon using very different approaches he and Julius appear to be competing for the hearts and minds of the group members and all of this is in the context of Julius' imminent mortality. Who or what approach will win and will there be real change for Philip, the other group members and even for Julius before he dies?

I MUST ADMIT THAT I HAD NEVER HEARD OF SCHOPENHAUER and have not been a formal student of philosophy except in the context of my Psychology studies but I soon became hooked on learning more because of the engaging way this book is structured and written. For interspersed with the story of the Philip, Julius and the group is a chronological account of the life and work of this undoubted genius who I was surprised to learn developed ideas that were the pre-cursor and direct influence on later great

thinkers and writers such as Nietzsche, Freud, Hardy, Wittgenstein, Mann, Beckett, Ibsen, Conrad etc. Yalom's account is written from the perspective of a psychotherapeutic investigator trying to understand how such genius could co-exist with such a misanthropic personality and failure in everyday life, work and relationships. So we see details of Schopenhauer's early life and his relationships with his parents all in the context of the turbulent times in which they lived. These passages include compelling excerpts from newly translated letters and diaries as well as Schopenhauer's lifetime of scholarly and personal writings. Each of these chapters is headed with one of his sayings or aphorisms such as No rose without a thorn. But many a thorn without a rose which in themselves show the paradox of this man whose writings were largely ignored in his lifetime due to his own pessimistic, suspicious and isolated character, his crippling anxieties, compulsions and self destructive behavior. And this is the man whose major seminal work published in 1818 with a second volume in 1844 is described by Yalom as 'a work of astonishing breadth and depth offering penetrating observations about logic, ethics, epistemology, perception, science, mathematics, beauty, art, poetry, music, the need for metaphysics and mans relationship to himself ... Many scholars believe that with the single exception of Plato there are more good ideas in Schopenhauer's work than in any other philosopher.'

BUT WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT HIM FROM THESE CHAPTERS which are interspersed with the present day story is also an account of bizarre family dynamics, history and genetics and in particular it reveals via letters one of the most destructive mother son relationships ever recorded. In one letter, Joanna a lively creative woman who after the suicide of her oppressive husband became a successful writer, the Danielle Steele of the 19th century, says to her son in the face of his admittedly irritating and overbearing disposition.....'such a living literary journal as you would like to be is a boring hateful thing because one cannot skip pages or fling the whole rubbishy thing behind the stove, as one can with the printed one.' Eventually they severed all contact and Arthur did not see his mother for the next 25 years!

AS A WRITER YALOM MANAGES TO KEEP US INTRIGUED WITH this ongoing saga at the same time as we are immersed in the life of the therapy group. There is much to be entertained by and to learn from the verbatim accounts of group sessions. Told mainly from Julius' perspective we get inside the mind of a therapist as he is working and relating to the group; we are observers of the group interactions and process; and gradually we learn about the people themselves and their stories.

FOR HAKOMI STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS THERE IS MUCH to admire in his here and now approach to group therapy and his belief that each member can learn from their current reactions, responses and behavior in relation to each person in the group as well as the therapist. Present time feedback amongst members of the group is skillfully facilitated by Julius who articulates that therapy starts when blame stops and responsibility begins and that therapy is first emotional interaction or activation followed by understanding or integration. Gradually all the dilemmas of therapy emerge in the face of Philip's challenges and Julius' reactions to them and his own awareness of approaching death to which we as readers are privy. Herein lies the drama of the novel with the teaching for the most part effortlessly interwoven. The dilemma of the therapist regarding self-disclosure is highlighted by Julius' situation where he finds himself vacillating between a therapeutic stance and his very real and urgent need for nourishment. How group members respond to this is instructive as is their response to Philip's interventions given so impersonally but so apt or 'on the mark' as one recipient responds. Julius is puzzled by the success of such coolly delivered missives however they are often so accurate that despite Philip's manner it is obvious he has been listening intently and we all know how powerful that can be.

AS WE SEE MORE OF EACH PERSON IN THE GROUP HAKOMI watchers can have fun observing their character strategies and body types and also see the many opportunities lost for deepening experiences into the body since by and large, despite a passing reference to Fritz Perls this therapist, and presumably Yalom, does not go there. There is one great opportunity where Rebecca a beautiful young woman who entered therapy because people did not pause to look at her any more when she entered a restaurant, reports a tightness in her sternum after being challenged by some of the group members for her preening towards Philip.

JULIUS OBSERVANT AND ACTIVE AS EVER JUMPS IN WITH: Give that tightness a voice. What is it saying? It's saying "How will I look. It's shame. It's being found out", replied Rebecca. Julius responds to this by giving a lecture about Gestalt therapy saying he thought there was much of value in it but did not ever use it in therapy because as is happening now people get defensive when others spot us doing things we are not aware (!!)

NO MINDFULNESS IS TAUGHT OR USED HERE AS IT WOULD BE IN Hakomi group work as described by Maritn Schulmeister a Hakomi therapist working in Germany and Switzerland and I could not help thinking how powerful this interven-

tion might have been had Rebecca been able to explore this more slowly and deeply. It is puzzling that the whole thrust of somatic and experiential psychotherapy is ignored here particularly when we see highlighted in other parts of the book how a century before Freud Schopenhauer developed ideas about the body as the source of experience and direct knowledge of the world and the unconscious.

YALOM TELLS HOW SCHOPENHAUER ALSO USED GREEK MYTHS to describe the dilemma of human existence. Ixion was a king disloyal to Zeus who was punished by being bound to a fiery wheel, which revolved in perpetuity. Tantalus who dared to defy Zeus was punished for his hubris by being eternally tempted but never satisfied. Schopenhauer believed human life revolves around an axle of need followed by satiation and that almost immediately boredom sets in and we are propelled into motion. (The Hakomi Sensitivity Cycle via Greek mythology and 19th century Philosophy!)

AND WHAT IS THE MOST TERRIBLE THING ABOUT BOREDOM according to Schopenhauer? It is a distraction free state, which soon reveals underlying unpalatable truths about existence-our insignificance, our meaninglessness, and our inexorable progression to deterioration and death- not just pessimism but Buddhist-like wisdom it would seem.

BACK TO THE STORY OF PHILIP AND THE GROUP FOR GRADUALLY it is this and how Julius reacts which consumes our interest and propels us forward.

AS A READER I FEEL LESS IDENTIFIED WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF the group whom we only encounter via group interactions. The exception is Pam whom we see seeking help elsewhere at a meditation retreat in India. She is an English Professor, an attractive strong character obsessed with hateful thoughts about her ex-husband and married lover who has dumped her. How she returns to the group and becomes the epicenter of the group drama and Philip's ultimate fate is at the heart of the story and its resolution. Melodrama it is but it keeps you turning the pages more so than Julius' wise teachings and insightful reflections on his own life and death. As we enter the last third of the book the group sessions are summarized as if there is an urgency to complete and indeed there is because Julius has already told the group it will finish at the end of the year when he is expecting to die. By now Philip is engaged in the group and there is no mention of him leaving. The tussle between the importance of caring therapeutic relationships and the personhood of the therapist versus the development of understanding and insight via the wisdom of a great thinker is at the heart

of the conflict played out between Julius and Philip and eventually Philip and the group.

LESS OBVIOUS BUT NONETHELESS IMPORTANT IS WHAT IT IS that contributes to the changes in the group and its members. Is it the entry of Philip into the group challenging an overly comfortable group system and culture where people could hide and not reveal themselves fully; or is it the extraordinary circumstances of a group therapist who is dying and who also inevitably changes his approach; or is it due to all the hard work Julius had put into the group in the past as their empathic and competent leader?

I WILL NOT TELL YOU HOW IT ALL ENDS BUT SUFFICE TO SAY IT IS more related to the teacherly aspects of this book than its drama and success as a novel. Most books these days do not stand a second read or a close encounter. This is an exception. There is much richness, teaching and drama here enough to make you want to read more of this author as well as Schopenhauer who must have the last word: *Mankind has learned a few things from me, which it will never forget.* ■

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## The Gift of Therapy

**Another Novel by Irvin D. Yalom  
Reviewed by Monika Mischke Renner**

Irvin Yalom calls this little book (260 pages) "an open letter to a new generation of therapists and their patients". You have most probably read some of Yalom's books and know him to be an existentialist firmly grounded in the here-and-now. So you might ask "what is the relationship to Hakomi?" and I have to say "none, really". On the surface, that is. But when you look at just some of the chapter headlines you will find that there is a deeper connection, a connection that binds all therapists, whatever their modality or method.

- Empathy: Looking out the patient's window
- Let the patient matter to you
- Therapist transparency and Universality
- Avoid the crooked cure
- When your patient weeps

You might not agree with Yalom's here-and-now approach but he has a beautiful way of illustrating his view with case histories and his unique, quirky way of writing makes for really good reading. ■

## regional round-up

### New South Wales

It was all hands on deck in December for module eight of the current Sydney Hakomi training, when Co-lead Trainers **Manuela Mischke-Reeds & Maya Shaw Gale** were joined by Guest Trainer **Halko Weiss**, Teacher **Suhari Bohm** and Teacher-in-training **John Perrin**.

The Sydney training winds up in February with the final module led by **Maya** and **Manuela**. They'll be joined by teachers **John Perrin & Suhari Bohm**. A new training is planned to commence in Sydney in June.

**Maya** will stay on in Sydney to offer a three day workshop in February 2006, *The Power of the Healing Relationship*.

To cap off a busy month, **Halko Weiss'** extended Interpersonal Skills Training, Experiential Disidentification, which has attracted strong interest, gets underway in Sydney in late February.

### Queensland

Hakomi trainer **Marilyn Morgan** and newly-appointed teacher **John Perrin** will join forces in Brisbane in March to offer a two and a half day introductory workshop, *A Taste of Hakomi*.

Sydney Organiser, **John Perrin** ■

### Western Australia

I cannot believe it is already time for another newsletter update! A very warm hello to everybody from Perth.

Our training continued in October with Segment 3, facilitated by **Julie Murphy** from the US and assisted in the teachings by **Neil Rodgers**. What a blessing to be part of such a wonderful group – as the trainees delve deeper into the Hakomi

method their journeys start to unfold and so do ours. As usual, the Perth tutor group (**Rosalie Sharon, Fiona Halse, Elizabeth Sugars & Leeanne Smit**) do their own magic by allowing everything to run so smoothly and their subtle support has been highly appreciated. Thus, in terms of the training: we all are on a journey over here and each one of us explores their own story.

Also in October we welcomed **Jules Morgaine** here from NZ for a workshop entitled "The Creative Language of Healing". We spent three days together and explored the ways we use language, with all its riches and limitations, and saw how our own intellectual intelligence can trick us in so many ways. Jules has an enormous talent to take the participants on a transformative journey straight to their hearts. **Fiona Halse** and **Jennifer Solly** assisted – thank you both for your time and wonderful contribution to Hakomi in WA.

Next year shall bring Hakomi to full life in Perth. **Neil Rodgers** will offer two 1-day workshops in January – one on Loving Kindness and the other on Working with Couples. In February the training group will meet for segment 4 with **Marilyn Morgan** from NZ, **Neil Rodgers** and the tutors walking a short path of their journey together again. In March we will have a 3-day workshop with **Jules Morgaine** on "Nourishing the Heart – the Art of Self-Care", where we will be looking at what our hearts desire to prevent stress and burn-out. And in April we shall be offering a treat to our WA community by opening segment 5 of the training to the wider professional community. We have made 10 spaces available for professionals to join us for a Hakomi Intensive on Character and Structure, a 9-day experiential training course.

This will be our treat for the year – if anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact me as soon as possible as these rare spaces are filling up quickly.

To welcome another year the Hakomi training group WA will be meeting early January for a Family Picnic in the park – an event to include all our family members and an opportunity to thank them for all their support and encouragement they are providing to our trainees.

Well, I guess that's all from Perth. Sometime, somewhere, I came upon a quote that read: "Seek the wisdom of the ages but look at the world through the eyes of a child". With that I hope that the festive season will leave you with plenty of memories of wonder, insights, joy, peace and of course much laughter!

Perth Organiser, **Halka Beseda** ■

### Melbourne

Hakomi teacher **Jules Morgaine** presented a three day workshop in November, *Coming Home: Cultivating Full Human Beingness*.

**Jules** will return again in June to offer a three day workshop, *The Creative Language of Healing*.

Melbourne Organiser, **Moshe Perl** ■

For more details see page 24

### BECOME A TUTOR

*If you're a Hakomi Graduate and are interested in becoming a tutor on the next Sydney training, commencing June 2006, please contact John Perrin on: [john@hakomi.com.au](mailto:john@hakomi.com.au)*

## diary dates

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SAT 28 AND SUN 29 JANUARY 2006

### Perth Introductory Workshops

Neil Rodgers

Neil will present two one-day workshops: one on Loving Kindness and the other on Working with Couples.

Contact: Halka Beseda

Tel: (08) 9438 2365

E-mail: <hakomiwa@hotmail.com>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

FRI 17 - SUN 19 FEBRUARY 2006

### Sydney Workshop

Maya Shaw Gale

*The Power of the Healing Relationship*

Learn how to cultivate your own presence as a powerful transformational tool.

Contact: John Perrin

Tel: 0412 114 861

E-mail: <john@hakomi.com.au>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

25 FEBRUARY - 5 MARCH 2006

### Sydney Relationship Training

Halko Weiss

*Experiential Disidentification*

The first of Halko's three Module advanced relationship skills training will commence in February 2006.

**Segment One:** 25 Feb - 5 Mar 2006

**Segment Two:** 2 - 10 December 2006

**Segment Three:** 24 Feb - 4 Mar 2007

Contact: John Perrin

Tel: 0412 114 861

E-mail: <john@hakomi.com.au>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

FRI EVENING 10 - SUN 12 MARCH 2006

### Perth Workshop

Jules Morgaine

*Nourishing the Heart -  
The Art of Self Care.*

A workshop on looking at what our hearts desire - and the art of preventing stress and burnout.

Contact: Halka Beseda

Tel: (08) 9438 2365

E-mail: <hakomiwa@hotmail.com>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

FRI 17 - SUN 19 MARCH 2006

### Brisbane Workshop

Marilyn Morgan & John Perrin

*A Taste of Hakomi*

Experience the simplicity and power of Hakomi Experiential Psychotherapy in a supportive setting. This workshop will qualify as part of the prerequisites for applying to join the three year Hakomi Training.

Contact: John Perrin

Tel: 0412 114 861

E-mail: <john@hakomi.com.au>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

SAT 22 - SUN 30 APRIL 2006

### Perth Training / Workshop

Julie Murphy, Suhari Bohm,  
Neil Rodgers

*Hakomi Experiential Character Training*

Ten spaces available for professionals to join the current Perth training for an intensive on Character and Structure.

Contact: Halka Beseda

Tel: (08) 9438 2365

E-mail: <hakomiwa@hotmail.com>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

FRI 16 - SUN 18 JUNE 2006

### Melbourne Workshop

Jules Morgaine

*The Creative Language of Healing*

Support the development of curiosity and non-judgemental attention in clients in order to be able to accurately perceive and name experiences.

Contact: Moshe Perl

Tel: 0412 299 099 or (03) 9533 0555

E-mail: <mperl@ozemail.com.au>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

COMMENCING IN JUNE SYDNEY, 2006.

### Sydney Professional Training

Contact: John Perrin

Tel: 0412 114 861

E-mail: <john@hakomi.com.au>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

Fri 17 - Sun 19 FEBRUARY 2006

FRI 16 - SUN 24 SEPTEMBER 2006

### Perth Training

Lead Trainer: Julie Murphy

*Module 2 (1)*

The commencement of the second module of a three year comprehensive training in the Hakomi Method.

Contact: Halka Beseda

Tel: (08) 9438 2365

E-mail: <hakomiwa@hotmail.com>

Web: <www.hakomi.com.au>

## classifieds

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### HAKOMI BOOKS

*Body-Centred Psychotherapy:*

*The Hakomi Method*, by Ron Kurtz

*Grace Unfolding: Psychotherapy in the Spirit of the Tao Te-Ching*

by Greg Johanson and Ron Kurtz

Available from Phoenix Rising

Web: <www.phoenixrisingbooks.com>

*Experiential Psychotherapy with*

*Couples: A Guide for the Creative Pragmatist*, by Rob Fisher

Available from John Perrin

E-mail: <john@hakomi.com.au>

### RON KURTZ VIDEO TAPES

Highlights of a four day advanced seminar with Hakomi founder Ron Kurtz, Melbourne 2000. Eleven demonstration sessions, talks on the Method, stories and lots more.

\$260 for NTSC (U.S.), \$210 for PAL.

Inquiries to Gaby Jung.

Tel: (03) 9853 9954

E-mail: <gaby@thereef.com.au>

### HAKOMI FORUM DOUBLE ISSUE

The new Hakomi Forum Double Issue (#14-15) now available for USD \$ 20.00, hard copies still available.

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