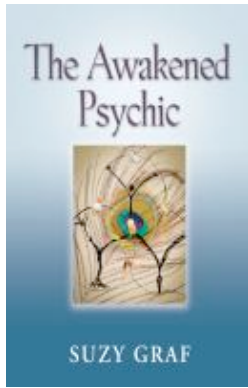


The Awakened Psychic



SUZY GRAF



The Awakened Psychic is an autobiographical account of first psychic experiences; meditating in yoga class, developing as an animal communicator, sitting in mediumship circles, learning Reiki, experiencing healing through past life regression, meeting many spirit guides, and learning how to use crystals and oracle cards for meditating and journeying. Through practice, and trial and error, this book retells the personal journey that allowed the author, Suzy Graf, to heal into the psychic she is today.

The Awakened Psychic

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The Awakened Psychic:

Using Crystal Grids, Reiki &
Spirit Guides to Develop
Animal Communication,
Mediumship & Self Healing

Suzy Graf

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CHAPTER 1

AND SO IT BEGINS...AUGUST OF 2005

To understand what love is, to appreciate your own self worth, as well as to appreciate life, many of us must face the challenges of despair, defeat, and hopelessness. A wise man once said; "To understand you have a heart, oftentimes, you must first feel it break." This was a lesson, a broken heart mended, that I needed to learn. This was the lesson that I am eager to share with you.

Today is my birthday. I'm 47 years old. A fact that I've kept quiet until I turned on the cell phone to hear multiple voices croaking; "Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday Dear Suzy ...Mom ...no... Lover ...Happy Birthday to you!" I smiled, as I listened to the tone-deaf chorus; my children's high pitched voices giggling above my husband's baritone. I was still smiling as I gathered up my paperwork, readying myself for the last workshop of the day. Turning around quickly I bumped into our teacher who asked about my festive mood. Without thinking I replied; "I just received the cutest voice message, today's my Birthday, and I honestly forgot."

"Forgot it was your Birthday!" she exclaimed in dismay. "How could anyone forget to celebrate the anniversary of their life?" she continued, incredulously.

My embarrassed, confused, and panicked look disquieted the obviously impending announcement to our group. I squeaked a plea for dismissal and my teacher allowed the subject to drop, as thankfully, she was distracted when a server brought in a mounded tray of fresh brownies.

“No, no chocolate!” she announced as quick strides blocked the offensive confectionaries from being placed on the table.

Taking advantage of this impromptu diversion, I silently slipped away, into my seat, while the caffeine-laden brownies were extricated amongst pleas of “Oh’s and Awes” from the rest of our group. The rising complaints were disquieted by an explanation that chocolate quells one’s psychic abilities. Once our teacher gained full charge of our group, her gaze fell to her outline, the workshop continued, and my “secret” was forgotten. Whew!

And now the hour is late. The moonlight is beautiful as it reflects across Long Island Sound; slivers of light dance across the water, gentle tide in a near still summer night, time to contemplate, time to reflect...

“Why were you so surprised by your teacher’s reaction Little One?” my companion’s thoughts roused my muse.

Silent camaraderie intruded the stillness. A question unanswered... I searched my brain as to why I struggled to avoid the attention directed towards me in today’s class.

Yellow Dog sat next to me, his proud Native American jaw set, his dark eyes intense in thought; “Think back in time, Little One. Back to when your life path last changed. Review yourself. Examine the past, and the evolution into your present self will become obvious.”

A man of unnecessary words, I welcomed the expected silence. A light sea breeze mixed with the distant sound of a highway removed from view. “What a pretty August evening!” I quietly exclaimed. My mind wondered why I seldom drive out to the beach when I live less than an hour away. I find myself wiling away my free time, sitting on my

butt, watching the virtual reality of the television screen, feeling safe in my cocoon of existence, a chrysalis I'm struggling to free myself from.

The silence stirred memories of why I was here, at a weekend workshop, where I was to learn new techniques in mediumship. How DID I end up here? As if answering my own question, my mind began to wander back to when I first started exploring psychic phenomenon, or rather, the impetus that stirred me onto this odd life path.

It was on an early fall day in 1999. My children, aged 14, 9, and 7, were safely ensconced in a routine weekday school morning when I got kicked. I was leading the horse from the barn to a nearby field. I stopped to open the long pipe gate, and felt the familiar swing of the hinges, the creak of the fence post, and then I was airborne. When I hit the ground my hand opened, and the horse was free, dancing her celebration around the backyard. Ignoring any sensation in my body, I proceeded to retrieve the horse, lest she run down the driveway and out into the country road that bordered the farm. Cursing, I pulled myself up and limped after her.

Oftentimes, chasing a young horse could be interpreted as an open invitation for a game of tag. I swallowed my anger and, like a cat stalking her prey, approached a few steps, and then stilled myself. I was patient and waited for signs that the filly was tiring of her freedom as she ran in circles around an open field. Finally, my patience was rewarded. The filly tired of the game and turned her attention to the nearby field, open gate, and tempting pile of newly fluffed hay. I met the horse inside her original destination, a five acre fenced off pasture. As I reached out

my hand to touch the horse she stood quietly. I saw no apologies in her eye for the kick administered to my kidney, no regret over my aching shoulder and numb hand. I muttered; “Stupid horse” as I unclipped her now filthy cotton lead rope. The horse gave me a blank stare and, like an old plow horse, lowered her head to eat her breakfast. I closed the gate and walked back to the horse barn where I knew dirty stalls were waiting to be cleaned. I shoveled poop that morning while muttering a new mantra; “Stupid horse.”

Over the twenty years I’ve run the family farm I’ve been butted by rams, stepped on by numerous horses, even had a young horse fall and land on my leg while riding, and in every instance, my body healed without any doctor intervention. After getting kicked by the filly I followed the same logic. My plan was to ignore what just had happened and continue doing what I loved; farming and gardening. I assumed that with time, the body would heal. But I was wrong.

On that fateful morning in October of 1999, I was surprised to discover that the pain in my back persisted after I had finished cleaning the stalls. The pain was not unbearable, just a subtle ache. I took an aspirin that evening and woke up with the same soreness. I kept waiting for my body to return to normal. I found myself taking “over the counter” pain killers frequently as days turned into weeks, and then weeks into months. Pain taught me not to raise my right arm too high, and with time, I discovered that the range of motion for that arm shortened. Then I noticed that I was not walking straight, I had a slight limp which favored my right leg. The curious thing was that I still expected to heal with time, but that time never arrived. I became less active

as my body stubbornly hung onto its pain. My life became miserable. My life sucked!

Over the course of a few months I learned how to ask others for help; first with my family, then with friends, and finally, through the professional assistance of doctors. My near solitary life of independence on the farm was transformed into a codependence upon other people. And this “forced” socialization precipitated a new-to-me reality. I learned that when I was around other people I could “sense” what they were feeling. This odd ability I had to predict another person’s mood reminded me why I chose the isolation of working with animals and farming in the first place! I suppose I have always been “sensitive” to those around me. Being psychic was why I must have chosen to NOT work with people more than twenty years ago! I liked my isolation, and now I was stuck in the middle of socialization. I needed other people and did not know how to be around them. Once again I re-iterate... My life sucked!

I am surprised to hear that Yellow Dog is listening to me reminisce as he easily interjects his opinion; “Yes, Little One, man was not created to be a solitary creature. Man needs man, for it is only as a community that people can experience the full range and potential that life on this earth offers. Man’s greatest gift is the opportunity to learn from each other.”

I answer Yellow Dog’s comment; “I didn’t think being around other people was a gift! Allow me to explain...”

When I was experiencing the low, dull, everyday ache of chronic pain, my ability to sense what other people around me were thinking appeared to have been heightened. It was as though the volume controlling the nerves running through

my body was turned on high. I was always feeling pain, and at the same time, I was sensing other people's pain, too! Life became a daily struggle to maintain my individuality as the emotions of others flooded through me. Eventually, I surrendered to what was happening to me. I was no longer the shepherd of my children, the wife of my husband, and the keeper of the farm. Heck, I was no longer always in control of my own body. My right hand would not always open or close when I wanted it to. Heightened neural awareness was causing a loss of my identity, while at the same time my strength started to fail as my body grew more crooked.

And, as if struggling with physical disabilities was not enough, I was also experiencing an expansion of my psychic sensitivity. I started to have weird dreams, or nightmares, which were opening a door into another existence. At first, I thought I was experiencing shared dreams with people I had never met. When the dreams became more vivid, I realized I was tapping into the consciousness of people that were dead. I remember a dream I had late in the year 2001.

I was a well dressed woman. I wore a nice designer shirt and new high heeled shoes. I was on the cell phone talking with a loved one. Afraid, but more annoyed at the mess, angry with the inconvenience, I found myself in a darkened, dusty space. And then I could feel the floor collapse out from under my feet. Falling, falling, falling was the sensation. Surprise was the reaction. So acute was this feeling of falling that I woke up, crying. I was experiencing the last moments of a woman that died during the collapse of the World Trade towers!

The dreams from the victims of the twin tower bombing continued. A few nights later, I dreamed the thought of a different spirit: *I'm a man. I'm dressed in a business suit, papers on my desk. I'm trying to get this project done. Deadlines! I'm on the phone as I'm writing and reading a report. I'm frustrated and worrying about this project. Then I pan back, I am no longer within this man. I am seeing from outside of his eyes. I am seeing the smoldering site of the twin towers. I am seeing that the tower is gone.*

I woke up from this dream sweating and crying with sympathy. It was after this “dream” that I KNEW I was sharing memories, or thoughts, with a person who was dead. I felt this man was so focused on his desire to complete the paperwork he was involved with while the plane hit the building that he didn't realize that he was killed instantly! I felt that the business man who I just shared my dream-state with was stuck reliving the last few moments of his life. I woke up wondering if the dead man's consciousness was forever trapped in a state of not knowing he was dead. The dream I shared with the man was so vivid, I knew this happened! I could feel this man, or rather the spirit of this man. But I didn't know how I could share what I was experiencing with other people without appearing, well, crazy.

Reliving the memory of how I first opened up as a psychic was, once again, stirred by Yellow Dog's opinion; “Crazy is but a definition, a misunderstanding, a variation from the average. Man chooses to experience life, and so he also chooses to stay focused within life existence on earth. Those that vary, those that question other realities, they disrupt the average, the norm. You are not average, Little One. You

are not the norm, the norm of all. You have greeted your own uniqueness. Remember how the path towards healing the body was entwined with your new sixth sense into the spirit world?"

I could feel the loving, prodding tone of Yellow Dog's voice. With a sigh, I started to think back. Let's see, I first got hurt the fall of 1999. I think it was back in February of 2002, almost two years since the horse kick, when I went to my first physical therapy session where I was diagnosed with a torn rotator cuff injury. I was told that the muscles of my shoulder had healed improperly and were pulling on my back, neck, and sinuses. I continued to see physical therapists into the month of April to rehabilitate my damaged shoulder. I followed prescribed exercises and was surprised to discover that moving my damaged body could alleviate the pain! Over the course of those few months, my muscles started to realign as my back pain started to subside. I relearned how to trust and use my right arm, and I began walking straighter. Finally, after two years of pain, I was feeling better!

Slowly, I started to understand what the therapist was teaching me. Pain had taught me to move in an odd manner, and physical therapy was re-teaching me how to heal my confused body. I was progressing nicely when my insurance company decided that I'd had enough physical therapy. I didn't know what to do without the guidance of my therapy treatments. I had learned some exercises, but I was afraid I was going to hurt myself without the seemingly unending knowledge of my therapist. I felt alone as I confronted how to cope with my re-emerging pain.

The same night I discovered my insurance company had refused to continue my therapy treatment, I went to bed thinking about how I was going to go forward managing my pain without physical therapy. I woke up the next morning experiencing a very vivid dream, or a detailed memory. I remembered being with a yoga teacher who taught part of my physical education class when I was a freshman in high school. I haven't thought of this woman in over thirty years, and I honestly couldn't remember her name but, curiously, I could see her in my mind's eye as if I just saw her yesterday! The experience in my dream was wonderful! My body was free of pain as I moved and stretched into the yoga poses. When I woke up that morning, I lay in bed and wondered if yoga could replace my physical therapy sessions. That same morning I saw an advertisement in our weekly newspaper for an eight week beginner's yoga course which began on May 20, 2002. Happily, I called the telephone number and signed up.

I attended my first yoga practice with trepidation and mimicked what I could remember from the class at home. I wanted to move like my teacher but my back and neck still hurt. Sometimes, just moving the wrong way would hurt! I harbored a lot of fear of re-injuring myself during class, and I lingered in impatient frustration over the damned pain! At first, I found yoga practice to be a crap shoot; maybe I'd leave the class feeling better or maybe I'd leave feeling a lot worse. Stubbornly I persevered, and with time discovered that I could achieve a peaceful state beyond physical pain. That state was called meditation. Even though I started to practice yoga as an aid for relief of bodily tension through

movement, with time, I discovered relief from my suffering through the stillness of meditation.

The last ten minutes of each yoga practice was devoted to lying on the floor surrounded by twenty other students. I felt a little silly, like a kindergartener at nap time, as I lay on my yoga mat and listened to our yoga instructor read us stories, or share some philosophy, or simply allow silence to overcome the room. Her monotone voice was relaxing, but I had a hard time grasping what she was trying to accomplish. I contemplated leaving early, maybe sneaking out of the room unnoticed. But the yoga studio was one large room and I feared my escape would be obvious to the other students, let alone my teacher. So I would lie still and struggle to relax my body. Over the course of a few weeks I did learn how to relax, and with relaxation, my mind would drift. I lost awareness, or I would fall asleep, for what felt like a few seconds was actually ten minutes. Yoga taught me to learn, and enjoy, the silly stillness of this meditation.

In July of 2002 I attended my last yoga practice at this center. Before our group was led into meditation, or what I considered our “nap time,” one of my classmates had asked if there was a ghost in the studio. And as she asked about the shuffling noise that she had heard in the stairwell my fellow students shared what they had experienced, too. The studio grew alive with chatter and stories of odd noises and apparitions. I was amused by the chaos, but our teacher was not. I heard her soft voice coach the questioning crowd to lie back down. As one, we all acquiesced and lay prone on our yoga mats, in what is called corpse pose, and succumbed to the rhythm of her voice. I easily slipped into a sense of

nothingness and peace; a place in my mind where I could no longer sense my aching body, no pain, just peace.

I was thinking of nothing in particular, and enjoying this sense of relaxed bliss, when I saw a little girl, in my mind, behind my closed eyes, like a memory I never had. She was dressed in pilgrim clothes, and I sensed her walking amongst the people lying on the yoga mats. She appeared curious as to why we were there and what we were doing lying on the floor. I was experiencing her feelings like I've experienced the twin tower "ghost's" feelings before. The images came, I was experiencing the little girl, and then the sensation was over. In that millisecond of sharing the little girl's thoughts, I was left with an understanding of what SHE was thinking. I couldn't wait to share my new insight once the meditation was declared "over" by our teacher.

I heard my teacher ring the little chimes that she kept next to the pillow she sat on. Ting, ting, ting she rang the brass. This was the signal that the class was finished. Eagerly, I popped back into a seated position and happily shared my impressions of the ghost in the stairwell. I shared what I knew; she was a little girl, dressed in period clothing of the 1700's, and then I explained that the ghost/girl was simply curious about what we were doing. Then I eagerly waited to hear what my fellow classmates "saw." Since there was such a lively conversation before the meditation, I assumed that my fellow students must have other impressions to share. But I was wrong! The teacher became quiet. My fellow students avoided eye contact. I could feel the mood in the room shift, as though I was isolated in this room. I felt I was being judged as a liar, or even worse, as a kook! I left that evening without resolving the piercing energy forming

around me which emanated from my fellow students. I felt blessed to have seen the little girl and smiled as she followed me part way down the hallway stairs, wishing that the people that I left in the studio were as kind as the ghost girl felt.

Yellow Dog's voice interrupts my reminiscing; "Those that don't sense can't understand, Little One. Perception is one of choice and many choose to live in a space of touch and sight. Do not judge those that choose not to peer into other planes of existence, for this is their chosen path."

Defensively I answer; "What confused me, Yellow Dog, was that the others couldn't see the little girl. We were all meditating. The group of students all confirmed that there was a presence near. Then why didn't anyone else see her?"

With a chuckle in his voice Yellow Dog stated the obvious; "Many did see, it was the sharing, the admitting, that was lacking. Do not judge those that cannot accept, for this is not their choice, their path. Do not judge, for each individual chooses the parameters of reality."

Yes, I suppose my 'parameters of reality' were expanding, changing, but the shift was gradual. I longed to return to my "old life" of simply running the farm and enjoying my family, my horses. But my body rebelled when I would ride the horse, or garden, or even clean the house. Practicing yoga helped some. That is when I would practice. Most of the time I sat in frustration, and slowly, I began to accept life with chronic back pain. My three dimensional life of living in the physical was gone, and I was on the dawn of a new reality.

I suppose living on a farm and following the cycles of the seasons turned me into a creature of habit. When I was

riding the horses regularly, I looked forward to Veteran's Day weekend, and would travel to a weekend long convention for horse enthusiasts called an *Equine Affaire*. Even though I wasn't riding the horses anymore, that November of 2002, I drove into Massachusetts searching for a day of seminars, and, possibly, inspiration to continue to try and ride my horse. I drove to this annual pilgrimage with no expectations, and I didn't even look at the schedule of presenters until I walked into the fairgrounds. I was surprised to see a demonstration entitled "yoga for equestrians" when I looked through the schedule of exhibits. Yes, yoga practice was nudging itself back into the parameters of my reality.

Once settled into my bleacher seat I listened to the thin woman standing alone in the center of a small, sand filled, horseback riding arena. The agile lady smiled as she introduced her yoga "students" while they walked into the arena. I watched as young women wearing horseback riding jodhpurs and breeches easily bent and twisted into yoga poses. I never thought of mixing horseback riding with yoga before! My interest in yoga became re-ignited that afternoon, and with a newly purchased book full of illustrations tucked into my purse, I drove home that Sunday inspired to try exercising once more. Once again, I started to practice yoga on a weekly basis.

I found a yoga class offered just a few miles away from my own home. My new teacher did not use Sanskrit terms and simply stated the English version of the pose. I started to understand that with breath, a pose caused the body to stretch comfortably, thus allowing the body to adjust naturally. I learned that my mind, or maybe my ego, pushed my body into poses that it wasn't ready for. I learned that by

relaxing, and allowing my breathing to take over, I could actually enjoy stretching. With deep relaxing breaths, deep relaxing muscles, and deep relaxing movement, my body toned and mended. I learned about balance, how to listen to my body's abilities, and slowly, I began to lose my fear of re-injury. I learned to enjoy yoga!

In the first year practicing yoga I also learned about my Spiritual Body; chakras, energy flow, and how the mind had the ability to direct positive or negative energy. I was coached in visualizing how to move "energy," and with practice, moving energy became natural. Slowly, my own personality became more peaceful, perhaps due to a newfound ability to brush off life's irritations through visualization. I was learning to find peace. Yes, I still became angry. But I learned to vent my anger by visualizing it leaving, and eventually I conditioned myself to recognize anger as a negative energy that I could move out of my body, my muscles, and my life. My spiritual awareness had awakened, and my physical pain started to subside.

While using the visualization exercises in the class, I also found "a stillness" in my mind where spirits, ghosts, and unseen beings, once again, started to invade my thoughts. I remember one vivid experience that happened which left a profound impression on me; *I was laying down in class, on my back, concentrating on how to properly use my stomach, my abdominal muscles. I listened to the instructor as I awkwardly tried to isolate which muscles I was supposed to be using. But the harder I tried, the more my damned neck hurt! I felt frustrated, and angry, as my stupid body insisted on pulsing in pain. Then I remembered on how to visualize the frustration leaving my body. I stopped fighting and*

focused on allowing my body to relax. My mind was drifting, not thinking about anything. I might have been asleep. When I heard the woman next to me speak; complaining that she was experiencing problems with the movement. I lay still on my mat and half listened to the teacher as she explained the details of the movement to the woman next to me. I closed my eyes and followed the teacher's words, visualizing my own body, my own posture. When suddenly I felt human hands touching my stomach! I opened my eyes and no one was touching me! I turned my head to the left and watched the teacher as she helped my classmate and realized that no one was close enough to have physically touched me!

With my eyes open my logical mind deduced that I must have sensed something else; maybe a fly was in the room and landed on my stomach, or perhaps the fan was blowing on me. Satisfied that there was a logical explanation for what I had just felt, I rejoined the class. I closed my eyes and started to visualize the teacher's spoken words, when it happened again! Hands, I could feel the energy of invisible hands, as they came up out of the floor and gently, lovingly, pushed down on my abdominal muscles. This time I was not surprised. I knew there was no teacher standing next to me, but accepted what I was feeling. I kept my eyes closed and contracted the muscles where I sensed the hand pressure that wasn't really there and, sure enough, those were the muscles that our instructor was teaching my neighbor to use, the same muscles that I should be using. The experience was way weird. But it worked. I learned that day how to use my abdominal muscles. The odd experience of sensing invisible teachers continued...

Another day, another meditation; *I was relaxed, enjoying the moment of, well, nothingness. My eyes were closed, and then I saw a neon purple blob forming under my closed eyes. I watched as this color purple moved behind the sea of grey nothingness and began to take the form, the outline shape of an eye. Like a grey and purple cartoon, this clearly defined purple eye was looking right at me! Startled out of my bliss, I opened my own eyes!*

Wondering if I had fallen asleep and had missed the end of the meditation I stole a glance around the yoga room. My teacher was still reading from her book and my fellow classmates littered the floor of the studio; smiling faces, closed eyes. I looked at the clock which confirmed I had only been in meditation for less than one minute. Convinced that I couldn't have been asleep and dreamt the purple eye, I decided to rejoin the group's meditation time. I closed my eyes, and the purple eye was still there! Staring back at me was a human looking purple eye; pupil, iris, eye lashes, all clearly defined. It seemed alive! It would blink, and then look directly at me. I spent several minutes staring at this eye as it stared and blinked back at me! Then I heard the familiar "Namaste," which announced the end of our practice, and the purple eye behind my closed eyes quietly dissolved leaving the dull grey of my inner eyelid.

"Our first visions are usually the clearest kept in our minds, Little One. I'm always surprised at how people in your culture negate those in the spirit world, just as I was surprised to learn your reluctance to share these visions with other people."

"Yes, Yellow Dog, I suppose my feelings were still hurt when I shared my visions of the little girl the previous year

after yoga practice with my first yoga teacher. At the time I had these experiences I didn't understand the concept of the spirit world as you later explained to me. But something inside me understood that these invisible body parts; the hands, and later, the purple eye, were from some higher source; strange, unbelievable, but somehow, comforting."

CHAPTER 2

PET PSYCHIC

By November of 2003, my yoga practice, and a slowly developing positive outlook on life, was improving my body. Time, life, was passing quickly now, and it was hard to believe a year had passed. My body was mending, and little revelations during yoga meditations had spurred on a new curiosity into psychic phenomena. I drove to the horse conference called an *Equine Affaire* eager to attend another yoga workshop. But I didn't see the same lecture I attended in 2002 called "Yoga for Equestrians" listed in the pamphlet handed to me when I walked into the convention. I was a little disappointed as I poured through the scheduled demonstrations in equitation, colt breaking, and show jumping. When my eyes settled on a set of workshops offered by a "Pet Psychic" I felt a rush of coolness step through me. This was a lecture I had to attend!

Having reserved a room at a local hotel, I planned on making the most of a mother/daughter weekend away with Sam. At 11 years of age I didn't expect my daughter to sit through any hour long demonstration, let alone a lecture that didn't include watching a horse move around an arena. I walked into the *Pet Psychic* seminar expecting a half-crazy woman with half-baked proof that she could talk to animals. I expected a brief interlude of entertainment, which would wane within fifteen minutes, and then we'd leave and check out another exhibit. I was looking to be unconvinced that psychic phenomenon was real. I was wrong.

When we arrived at the lecture hall a pleasant looking lady of slight build and blonde hair talked candidly about her

experiences when she “talked for animals.” Sam was amused, and I thought the short lecture compiled of complex, wordless ideas understood from strange horses seemed, well, farfetched! Yet, the “matter of fact” way this woman talked made me wonder; “Could a person **really** know what an animal could be thinking? Who would pay to hear what their animal was thinking? Was this presenter simply acting, pretending like an actor in a play for my, and the rest of the audience’s amusement? How do you know if this was all for real?”

The presenter was convincing, and after her lecture portion of the workshop was finished, I was intrigued. Sam and I decided to stay for the exercise we were promised. I chose Sam as my “partner” and we were instructed to focus on a color. I was to receive the color from my partner, Sam. I listened to the woman’s words as she led us through a meditation, and as I had learned in my yoga practice, I tuned out the woman’s voice and allowed my mind to drift. I was greeted by the image of a purple drape of a rich, undulating velvet, behind my closed eyes. The texture and color was so pretty, the image so vivid, that I knew it must be what Sam was thinking of. I opened my eyes and told Sam; “purple.” She smiled as she told me I was correct!

In the second part of the exercise Sam, too, guessed the color that I was thinking of. Part of me assumed that Sam and I knew each other so well that we simply guessed what color the other would have chosen. The workshop concluded with instructions to return the next day with a photograph of your pet or horse. I was not convinced that this woman, or Sam, or myself, were psychic, but participating in the

exercise was fun. So we went back the next day for another lecture offered by this woman.

Sam and I eagerly settled into the bleachers with our pictures of Ginger the horse, and Lily the dachshund. After a brief, introductory lecture, we were instructed to exchange pictures with someone we didn't know. A shuffle of people rearranged themselves on the metal bleacher amidst a murmur of introductions. Once new partners were understood, I found myself holding a photograph of a pinto horse, and looking into the round face of a woman I'd never met before. We were both novices, and somehow, I volunteered to practice reading her horse first. I stole a glance at Sam who was happily paired up with another child. Confident that everyone was secured, I settled in to play.

We followed a guided meditation led by the pet psychic who used the same color imaging we practiced the day before. I quickly lapsed into sensing myself being "in" the horse in the photograph. "I like my hay, I like my hay," I felt this horse repeat over and over again. As coached earlier in the lecture, I asked this voice talking in my mind for clues, or some sort of validation that I could use to convince her owner that I was sensing the horse "talking." Or was I searching for validation that would convince me that this wasn't my imagination? "I like my hay, I like my hay" repeated over and over again in my mind. I didn't understand why I kept getting the same phrase and questioned if the pinto horse I was reading from the photograph could be simple minded. Just when I was about to disconnect from trying to talk to this horse, I saw an ever so brief glimpse of a white furry leg that ended at cream colored hoof. Along with this "vision" was the sensation of

pain in my own feet. Immediately, I knew this horse had sore feet, but I didn't understand which hoof was hurting the horse. Similar to talking about her hay moments before, this horse kept showing me the same thing over and over again; a white, hairy lower leg that ended in a cream colored hoof. I wanted more, but our time was up, the meditation was ending, the lecturer stopped talking, and the vision disappeared.

When I opened my eyes, I was curious to see if this horse had just one white leg. I looked down at the photo I was holding in my hand, and was surprised to see that it was just a photo of the horse's head. It didn't show her feet. I then talked with the owner who explained that the mare was a filly; a baby horse who was only three years old. I was intrigued because the youth of the horse could explain the infantile repetition of thought that I was receiving. I questioned the owner about the mare's feet and learned that all four legs were white haired with cream colored hooves. I asked if the horse had a sore foot, and the owner nodded her head in confirmation. She explained that she was teaching the filly to pull a cart by driving the horse on a blacktop road without having shoes put on the horse first. The owner held guilt in her eyes when she admitted the filly's bare feet on the road's hard surface had hurt the horse's feet. The horse had worn down all four feet and was very lame. I didn't get WHICH foot was affected by the lameness or soreness, because ALL FOUR feet were affected! This was weird... way beyond coincidence!

The room was abuzz with laughter and sharing when our presenter coaxed the group into trying another meditation with a different partner. Shuffling, squeaking of the

bleachers amid the murmurs, and then we all stilled, eager to try the next photograph. My second partner shared a photograph of a brown horse. I listened to the guided meditation and easily drifted into another state of awareness; *I saw a chain link fence, and a Rottweiler-type dog barking against the fence. The scene changed, and I saw a big, beach-ball sized ball.* Then I was back in my body analyzing how I was feeling. I noticed that this horse felt more serious than the pinto filly I had read moments before. This brown horse had a strong sense of dislike that bordered on the emotion of hate when I saw the Rottweiler dog. But this same horse had a very playful or happy feeling when I saw the big ball behind my closed eyes. I sensed an emotional attachment to the ball, like a dog would feel about its favorite squeaky toy. I was enjoying sharing the complexity of this horse's emotions, and sighed with disappointment when I heard the lecturer call us back from the meditation.

When I talked with the horse's owner she confirmed; "Yes, there was a dog close to where the horse was stabled. The dog barks a lot and sometimes lunges, slamming his body against the chain linked fence."

Thinking that a neighborhood Rottweiler could be just a coincidence, I needed more proof. I asked about the beach type ball. The owner's mouth turned from quizzical into a knowing smile as she confirmed that her horse used to have a ball. She looked past me as if remembering and said; "He would pick it up in his teeth and throw it around. Come to think of it, he played with that darn ball so much it fell apart and I had to throw it away. But that was a few years ago.

How did you know about that ball?" I think that conversation ended with a silent promise to buy her horse a new ball.

The two people that read my animals had interesting results as well. The first was a photograph of my dachshund, and the woman who read my dog's picture later shared; "She saw feet, lots of big feet. The dog was afraid of the big feet." I listened to her exclamation, and silently thought; "Ok, the picture was, after all, of a dachshund. Of course being stepped on would be an issue."

I wasn't prepared for the next, obtuse comment as the woman announced; "This dog likes tents!"

At first I didn't understand the comment. My family does not use tents, and the dachshund has never been in, or around a tent. Sam had joined the conversation with the interruption; "Mom I understand! Lily (our dachshund) sleeps under the covers. From Lily's perspective, being under the covers would be like being in a tent!"

My other partner, a woman who "read" my mare's photograph, had an equally impressive insight. Our conversation began with a declaration that my horse liked my daughter and felt honored to be responsible for her. I was not awed by this prediction since the photo that this woman "read from" was of my little daughter riding my horse in a show ring. When the woman pressed on with a declaration that my horse liked the attention of being in a horse show, I remained unimpressed. Then the woman said; "I saw big, giant, orange things. Sort of like big fat carrots. The horse liked these big, fat, orange things."

I echoed; "Big fat orange things?" and like my Rottweiler friend moments before, I paused to think. Then a light went on in my brain, and I blurted out; "butternut squash!" I

explained. In my back yard, the squash vines had spilled out of my vegetable garden and grew into the horse pasture this year. I have noticed that teeth marks were appearing on the squash just as it was ripening. I've been a little frustrated that a wild animal had developed a taste for my butternut squash. I never thought that my horse, Ginger, was the offender! Weird!

"I laugh, Little One, at your inability to believe. Remember back when you used to teach horseback riding to others, how you would 'know' what the horse was thinking. Or when you took riding instruction from another and you 'knew' that the instructor was wrong. Don't doubt yourself. Your perception of the ability of consciousness was limited, and now you are aware of the limitless."

"Yes, Yellow Dog, but I first needed to understand more. I needed to be convinced. I decided to look for a few books where I could read about what other people already learned. I questioned if the British lady I watched on the television was really genuine. I also needed to understand that becoming psychic was like playing the piano. Anyone can learn how to be psychic; it just takes time, patience, and practice."

I read two books that winter; *"Psychic Pets; The secret life of Animals"* by Joseph Wylder, and *"Psychic Development for Beginners"* by Bill Hewitt. I read about exercises to meditate, I read about the amazing abilities others seemed to possess, and I began to experiment on my own.

The following March, in 2004, I was meeting a friend to ride our horses together in the state forest, what horse people call a "trail ride." Our trucks and trailers were parked side by side, and I struggled with the weight of my western

saddle as it nestled onto my horse, Ginger's, back. Pausing to catch my breath, and to allow my aching shoulder to recover, I glanced at my friend's trailer. Her horse stood obediently tied to the stock trailer. My eyes drifted across his smooth black coat, and I noticed a shallow, yet raw, wound on his hip. Concerned that he hurt himself on the trailer ride over, I asked what had happened to the horse. Placing her hand on the wound as she talked, my friend confessed that she didn't know what happened. At night the gelding was fine, and the next morning he had this wound. It wasn't a deep wound, just red, raw, and unsightly. I don't know if I would have ridden my horse that day if she had a similar lesion. But this wasn't my horse, and his management not my business. I enjoyed our brief ride together that afternoon, and I forgot about the blemish until late evening. I was curious as to how the gelding hurt himself, and decided to use a new meditation technique to "discover" the answer.

I lay in bed, quieted my mind, and practiced getting into a meditative state. I thought about sitting on a beach, alone; *sitting on the sand, listening to the surf, hearing the tide roll in and lap against the shore*. Then I started to think about laundry. Damn! I started over again, quieting my mind, I was back on the beach; *the waves were coming in, and out, in, and out*. Then I remembered I didn't buy any orange juice when I went grocery shopping today. Damn! I did it again! I needed to find a different way of staying focused. I decided to try thinking of my friend's horse. I've been around him quite a few times. I knew some of his habits. I thought of this horse and started to imagine him being on the beach with me; *I was on the beach and could feel the sand under my bare toes. Then I saw the black gelding standing on the*

beach with me. Suddenly my perspective changed. I was the horse! I became my friend's horse. He showed me a bale of hay. I knew that the hay was what hurt him. He pulled back. I was out of the horse. I was out of the meditation. The sensation of being with the black horse, of BEING the black horse, was so brief, but so real! Weird!

I began to analyze what I just experienced. I knew the horse's owner, and she was cheap. She only fed enough feed to sustain the horse and definitely **would not** waste hay bales by allowing them to be situated where the horse could grab one. I was curious about what really happened to the horse. Or maybe, more curious, if I could be right. So I called the horse's owner the next morning and shared my "vision." After a brief silence the "Aha" moment arrived. She told me that the horse's run-in shed was located next to the hay barn. She also shared that the black horse had been digging a hole at the foundation that separated his run-in shed from the hay barn in an effort to get at the hay, and had succeeded in pawing a rather substantial hole. Since the creation of this hole, my friend shared she has frequently walked into the shed and found him crouching down, on his knees, pulling mouthfuls of hay out of the hole. As she shared this story I was privy to colorful language as she expounded on "taking care of" the situation.

I half listened to her ranting and mused the question; "How did the gelding hurt his hip?" The run-in shed that the gelding used was primitive with no "kick boards" lining the space; two by four beams dotted the interior. Did the horse reach down to pull out the hay and somehow, while in this crouched down position, knock his hip on a two by four as he stood up straight? I never got confirmation, such as finding

hair hanging off a piece of lumber, but the idea was intriguing. Was I formulating all this in order for me to feel I was right? Was my mind creating logic that would develop into affirmations? I needed more proof that this wasn't all just my imagination. Within weeks, I received the proof that I wished for.

My next story starts a few months earlier, in January of 2004, when I drove my daughter to our local pet store and spent "Christmas money" on a bird cage, bird food, bird toys, and a pretty blue parakeet that Sam named Periwinkle. She was a friendly bird; was happy to perch on the finger and would walk towards my nose and touch her beak to my lips. Periwinkle was cute, but seemed sad. I thought she was lonely. In order to keep Periwinkle dependent on us, her human companions, the lady at the pet shop assured us that we should only buy one bird. But I could feel that this bird was lonely, and against earlier advice, we returned to the store a month later, only to discover fewer birds in the large walk-in cage. I learned that day never to choose a parakeet when there were only a few left in the cage because there was a reason why those few birds were not purchased. It took the pet shop worker five minutes to net the green bird we choose. Our new bird, Shasta, was much different than Periwinkle. Shasta was the bird from hell.

Where Periwinkle would stand on my finger, Shasta was rather fond of grabbing the cuticle around my fingernail and would bite down hard, shaking his little beak while I'd try to pry him off. Where Periwinkle would sing a pretty song, Shasta would squawk loud, obnoxious noises, especially when I tried to watch the television at night. When Periwinkle lived in her cage alone, she was so quiet I usually

forgot she was around. Now Shasta squawked his ugly loud noise early mornings, late at night, and especially anytime you wanted to hear the TV. He seemed to know when we wanted quiet; for, as if on cue, he'd squawk, and squawk, AND SQUAWK. I was learning to hate that stupid bird!

Sadly, Periwinkle ceased to be friendly, and even worse, Shasta taught her to squawk an ugly noise too! The bird cage was placed in the TV room, opposite of my favorite easy chair. When the house was quiet I sometimes meditated, which oftentimes lapsed into a brief nap. It was one of these afternoons, when I was meditating, practicing what I have read about, and trying to concentrate, when the bird's ugly noise stirred me out of the meditation. At first I was annoyed with the interruption, but then I decided to take advantage of an opportunity. I concentrated on Shasta. I wanted to know why his personality was so belligerent. But instead of reading his mind, his thoughts, I joined my awareness with Shasta...

...I was in his body. I was seeing through his eyes. I could feel my head dart left, right, left, right in a quick jerky motion. I pulled out of the "meditation" and wondered if I just experienced some sort of semi-dream. As I started to analyze this strange experience, I received more thoughts or memories of "being Shasta." While "in the bird" I saw an object. I was seeing something through the bird's eyes. I sensed this was a bird toy. It looked like the toy balls we would buy for the cats to play with; a plastic skeleton of a ball with a bell inside. This bell/ball was connected to a string which was also attached to a mirror. The combination was suspended from the top of the bird's cage. I also saw a sticky clump of bird seed hanging from the top of the cage which I

already understood was called a "honey treat." I opened my eyes and looked at the bird's cage that stood across from my chair. When we first bought Shasta there was a honey treat in the cage. I looked at the cage once more and noticed that the honey treat was no longer there. My daughter must have removed it or the birds ate it. I sat in my chair and wondered if I was crazy to actually think that this bird wanted me to buy it a toy and a honey treat!

I had nothing special to do that afternoon, and I was intrigued, so I drove to our local feed store and perused the bird aisle. I picked up another honey treat and went looking for the bird toys. I was surprised to see that hanging bird toys do include the plastic balls I saw in my "meditation!" I found a bird toy strung together with a mirror and a plastic ball with a bell in it, and brought it home. Previously, whenever a new item was placed in Periwinkle's cage, she would hover cautiously in the far corner of the cage for several hours until the new object was no longer new. I figured that Shasta would react the same way, do his usual irritating squawking, and by tomorrow, maybe, he'd investigate the toy.

I was surprised to discover I was wrong, for as soon as my hand closed the cage door, that stupid bird jumped over to investigate the freshly hung toy. He squawked and chortled as he looked at himself in the mirror, pecked at his new bell in the ball, and then jumped over and pecked at the honey treat. While Shasta was investigating his new possessions, Periwinkle eyed the intruding items suspiciously and kept her body plastered at the far side of the cage. Seeing such a strange and unexpected reaction from Shasta made me question if I really was able to read his mind!

It was the end of March when I found myself meditating in an effort to “talk to” Shasta again. I had returned home from a shopping trip and when I walked by the bird cage I almost dropped the groceries I was carrying! The bird cage door was wide open and the birds gone! I looked down at the floor and panicked. There were feathers! A sense of dread overshadowed the room as I spotted another pile of feathers on the floor. Crying, I laid my cheek against the floorboards in an effort to see under the furniture, I saw a flash of bright green under the plant shelf. Shasta was alive and under the shelf! I had let my three dogs outside when I first arrived home so I knew I didn’t have to worry about them hurting Shasta. But before I moved the shelf I carefully surveyed the room for my two cats. They didn’t appear to be in the room, so I moved the shelf and was surprised that Shasta let me pick him up. A cursory glance showed no life threatening wounds on the bird, just a lack of feathers. I put him in the cage and turned my attention to looking for gentle Periwinkle.

Wiping the tears from my face, I followed the trail of blue feathers. Like a character from a horror movie, I was afraid to find what I’d see, but I needed to know. In the kitchen more feathers, and into another room, still more feathers. Oh no, poor Periwinkle must have gotten eaten! Beneath my tears I could sense the bird’s presence, which helped to still my anxiety. I took a deep breath and laid my head on the floor’s vinyl. I could hear Periwinkle! I could hear him hiding! As if I shared Periwinkle’s consciousness, I sensed him thinking; “shhhhhh.” I placed my face at a new angle and saw two sets of parakeet toes peeking out from under the closet door. If I wasn’t so worried I would have laughed at

the comical toenails sticking out under the door. I opened the door and there, standing alone in the closet doorway, was teeny Periwinkle, bald, yet alive.

Both birds were missing most of their back and tail feathers, and even though they were mauled, they didn't appear to have any broken bones. I was curious as to what happened to the birds. If one of my cats had attacked them I wondered why the cat didn't eat the birds.

Later that evening I had the time to meditate and "talk to" the birds. I easily slipped into a meditative state and focused on Shasta. I sensed Shasta, the quick movements of his body, and then I saw two gargantuan white paws and a big white nose. The vision was so clear, and large, that I pulled out of the meditation. When I brought my awareness back I started to reason what I had "seen." My one cat was a Siamese, and the other cat was black. I didn't own a white cat! What was the white nose attached to? Then I understood that what I saw was my sheltie's white nose and paws. Molly, my little Lassie dog, was so gentle. I wondered why on earth she would hurt my parakeets.

I was not consciously meditating but I felt as though I was attached to Molly. As if Molly could read **my** mind. I heard the dog's consciousness in the back of my mind reason; "They bark too much." Then the connection was gone.

I started to analyze what I had just experienced. In an obtuse way, Molly's comment made sense. My little sheltie was the alpha dog in my small pack of housebound dogs and cats. Molly, as a pack animal dog, didn't want to kill the birds but simply wanted to reprimand them for not respecting her dominance and overstepping their bounds. It was up to

Molly to chose when the pack should bark, not the birds. So I believe my sheltie pinned the birds down until they accepted Molly as their leader.

I realize this sounds farfetched, but the birds were unusually quiet after the de-feathering incident. I suppose their silence could be attributed to not feeling well physically. Maybe the birds were embarrassed at being featherless. Whatever the reasoning was for their strange silence it didn't last. It was early May when I once again noticed the birds squawking. The odd thing was that the dogs would bark first, and then the birds would join in with squawking. The birds would make noise if Molly was outside, but they would never squawk indiscriminately when Molly was visible from their cage.

CHAPTER 3

MEDIUM

“Yes, Little One, you advanced quickly through your understanding of those that dwell in the animal world. But you are human, and as a human, those are the spirits that destiny has outlined. Those are the beings that you were to greet; the human spirit, that special part of you.”

“As usual, you are right Yellow Dog. People had hurt me deeply, and so it was the human spirit that haunted me? Perhaps haunted is the wrong word, for our society describes haunting and spirits as something scary and very negative. Yes, I did feel that the spirits who appeared in my bedroom at night were scary. But there was an underlying feeling as well, a knowing, that someone in the spirit realm cared very deeply for me. And there was also my own damned curiosity that demanded to understand exactly what my mind was creating for me... or, perhaps, what REALLY was standing in my bedroom watching me sleep. Allow me to explain further...”

Around the same time that the parakeets came into my home, at the end of January in 2004, I woke up from a vivid dream to the image of a young man, bloodied and cut up. The man was wearing a beige soldier’s uniform and seemed frustrated, as though he was angry to be dead, or, perhaps, angry to sense me. I remember seeing him so clearly while in my dream-state that I was startled awake by his grotesque appearance!

At first I was confused, and lay in bed, allowing my heart to slow as my mind woke up. Then I rolled over and checked the clock. It was early morning, around 2AM, and my

physical body was ready to return to sleep. I was awake enough at that point to consciously realize that I was safe. As I stared at my bedroom ceiling I reasoned that the “vision” I just received in my mind was just another dead guy, maybe another victim of 911, or perhaps, a victim of the new war in Iran. What I wanted was to simply return to my “sleep” state. I honestly didn’t care WHO the soldier guy was. I decided to roll over and forget about the whole thing. I nestled into my bed covers, and was thinking about nothing, feeling my body floating when ...CRASH! Something fell downstairs!

The crash was loud enough to cause a shockwave through the floor of my bedroom. My body jolted in reaction to the vibration I felt through my bed. Once again, I found myself wide awake! With a sigh, I stared at the dark ceiling of my bedroom. I struggled to bury my growing curiosity, and reassured myself that whatever fell downstairs would still be there in the morning. I convinced myself that I would wait until the sun was up and then I’d investigate. Minutes ticked by. I couldn’t get to sleep. Damn! I needed to know what broke downstairs!

I wriggled past the sleeping dachshund next to me, while Greg grunted from being pushed and lazily rolled onto his side. Quietly, I eased my way out of the bed and groped along my familiar hallway, onto the stairwell, and finally made my way into the galley kitchen that separated my old farm house from the new in-law addition. The nightlight above the counter illuminated the space enough that I clearly saw one of my antique lithographs, an 1890’s print of a little boy and his St. Bernard dog entitled “Comrades,” lying in the middle of the floor.

I turned on the overhead light and inspected the print. The glass was not broken and the frame itself felt secure and solid. I was curious as to why the print would have fallen so I inspected the backside of the picture. On the reverse side I noticed that the picture-wire on the back of the heavy frame had somehow untwisted itself. I re-twisted the wire over the little screw eye that was imbedded into the frame. Then I suspended the wire from my hand and gave it a few shakes. Feeling satisfied that the print was now safe to re-hang; I replaced the print on its nail, turned off the light, and using the wall as a guide while my eyes readjusted to the dark, groped my way back upstairs, back to the warmth of my bed.

I closed my eyes, snuggled deep into the covers, and savored the warmth and comfort of being ensconced in bed. It felt wonderful to be warm, I let go of my curiosity, and started to drift off to sleep... when... an ever so realistic picture of a man appeared behind my closed eyes!

This time the soldier appeared less repulsive; the bloodied face was gone, he was thin and tall and looked Eastern European, with an olive complexion, black-brown neatly combed hair, his uniform was pressed and clean, and I think he was wearing riding pants. I shared a sense of frustration as we stared at each other, each wanting to communicate, and not knowing HOW to communicate. We looked at each other and then he was gone, as if simply acknowledging this man's existence was all the spirit required. He left my bedroom, and I slept until daybreak.

A few nights later I had a vivid dream that I barely recalled. I was sharing some sort of adventure with this soldier spirit person and all I remembered was the date 1894 and the country Russia. I woke up and lay in bed, stared at

the ceiling, and struggled to remember more from my “dream.” But the mystery of who this man was and what he wanted, remained.

Coincidentally, that next day, a friend called and invited me to a “Psychic Faire” at a small metaphysical shop. I’ve never paid for a psychic reading before and decided to accept her offer. The next afternoon I found myself sitting next to my friend in her car driving off to have readings with a psychic. I remember thinking; “What was I doing! Was I crazy, or naïve, to be seeking out the ability to talk to dead people?” I was excited, apprehensive, and a little embarrassed, about the upcoming “reading.” An overbearing curiosity of understanding my soldier spirit friend urged me onward.

We traveled to an old, industrial part of town, where brownstone buildings now stood as retail space. I’ve been browsing here for years, but I never before noticed the small metaphysical store nestled between a local theatre, a British tea room, and various antique shops. Carved out of a large, industrial building, the inside of the shop was small, dark, and very cluttered. A long shelf of apothecary jars lined the far wall, while crystals, candles, and various knick knacks struggled for space in this odd retail store.

I felt slightly claustrophobic as I approached the woman behind the counter. Clipboard in hand, her smiling face asked which psychic I wanted to see. Feeling like a cowboy picking out a saloon girl, I glanced at the small group of “readers.” I felt a connection with the only man, maybe because of the saloon image that burst into my mind. The shop’s clerk introduced him to me and ushered us to a small table set up in the corner of the room. I soon learned that

this lean, gray haired gentleman of slight build and mild speech used tarot cards to work. I didn't understand how "cards" could tell someone anything, but I listened as he laid out "the cards" and told me what he felt I needed to know.

I have watched the medium, John Edward, on the television, and I knew that I wasn't supposed to give any clues while I was being read. The host of the "Crossing Over" series, John Edward, constantly coached his audience not to say anything. I thought that I wasn't supposed to be helping this psychic either, so I listened, and waited, while he shared visions of my future and impressions of my current life. The psychic must have sensed my longing, for in midsentence he stopped his predictions, and looked at me. Like a puppy quizzing an odd noise, he tipped his head and looked in my eyes. Then, as though he was no longer thinking for himself, this man asked; "Why did you come here today? What is it that you need to know?"

A sigh left the room as I shared the visions that I had of my soldier spirit. My curiosity was infectious, and my newfound psychic friend shared his passion; he loved history, especially Russian history! And before I could question him, the man announced that he could ask his pendulum for more answers. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a velvet pouch. Carefully, tenderly, he opened the drawstring and pulled out a pendulum, a small piece of colorful, cut stone hanging on a long chain. He held the chain above the small table we sat at and then asked a question. I watched as the stone swung from side to side. The psychic seemed pleased that the stone gave him an answer. I was stymied that this man actually thought he wasn't moving the

stone. I focused more on the man's hand as he announced a "yes" or "no" to the question he proposed.

"Is Suzy's spirit from the 'red' army?" he asked. The rock at the end of the chain rocked, and the man announced; "No!"

I couldn't tell how the man was achieving this magic trick, how the stone moved, but I was entertained. As the minutes ticked forward I discovered that my soldier spirit was from the white army and died during the revolutionary war in Russia. With more of my allotted twenty minutes remaining, the psychic announced that we could also discover the spirit's name by using the pendulum.

I glanced at my friend absorbed in her "reading" across the room as my psychic recited the alphabet with his pendulum hanging limp at the end of its chain. I was unimpressed by this pendulum thing; a, b, c... the stone was quiet, my twenty minutes was almost over. When the man said the letter "i" we both saw the pendulum move. The psychic was impressed and eagerly began reciting male, first names, that could be Russian. I felt as though I was involved in the closing seconds of a game show. My psychic friend was the contestant eager to glean information from this stone before... BUZZZ.... our time was up! When he said the name "Ivan" the stone started to swing. The psychic allowed his breath to explode; my Russian spirit's name was Ivan!

The man was as pleased as a Cheshire cat. I agreed with his enthusiasm but was convinced of some sort of sleight of hand. "A rocking stone could not actually talk," I silently reasoned to myself. And the Russian name of Ivan appeared so, well, cliché! I never told the psychic, but I had already given the spirit a name, I had started to call my soldier spirit,

Bob. The psychic might be right, the soldier's real name might be Ivan, but he'll always be Bob to me.

I can't say that I learned any deep secrets from the psychic I saw that Sunday at the Psychic Faire. But it was interesting to see how the pendulum moved and how convinced the psychic was of his ability to understand it. And I also saw an advertisement at the shop announcing a "mediumship class" that was to begin in the spring. The price was high, so I barely gave the flyer a thought. Little was I to know that I'd be back in this little shop come May.

Less than a month later, I was searching an internet site for Victorian porch furniture. I typed the words "Victorian wicker" into the auction site's search engine. Amidst pictures of ornate chairs and settees, I was surprised to see the same book listed over and over again. I wasn't interested in any book, so I perused the Victorian wicker furniture, but soon became frustrated with what promised to be over priced shipping costs. I decided to save money and look for my new furniture through local antique stores. But I was curious as to this book listed with the furniture, so I clicked the link and read about the book.

"Lily Dale: The True Story of the Town that talks to the Dead" was written by a woman named Christine **Wicker**, and the back cover talked about **Victorian** buildings. Satisfied that I now understood the "Victorian Wicker" key words that allowed this book in my search engine, I read more about the book through the listing. Lily Dale was a town located sixty miles south of Buffalo, New York. The author, Christine Wicker, went to this town to evaluate whether mediums could really talk to the dead. I was intrigued. I sat at the

computer to find Victorian furniture and stumbled upon a book about; “talking to dead people.” What a coincidence!

I ordered the book and devoured its content, marveling at the possibility of a whole town full of people like John Edward. In my reality I’ve only watched “mediums” on a television show, and I have only actually talked with the psychic at the metaphysical store. In this little book, I read comprehensive descriptions of spirits and Spirit Guides. Ms. Wicker interviewed one medium who believed he “worked with” three different Spirit Guides; a protector guide, a comforter guide and a teacher guide. I wonder if my soldier spirit friend, Bob, could be my protector Spirit Guide. Reading this book made me eager to learn more, and while I was pondering who I’d go to for information, I remembered the flyer I got from the little metaphysical store. I called that day to sign up for their Mediumship Class being offered in May.

May 4, 2004, was the first time I ever attended a class to “develop” oneself as a medium. I drove to that evening class with great expectations; wanting to understand, or rather, be understood by the beings that were traipsing through my bedroom while I tried to sleep at night. I knew I could see spirits in my dreams, and I could feel their presence when I woke up. Hell, I sometimes even knew what they knew, their thoughts. Yet I had no control over any of this. I would be sleeping, I would experience a “ghost,” I would wake up, they would be gone. I was determined to gain control over my life, and this class appeared to be the only option. I walked into the little metaphysical shop with expectations.

I strolled to the back of the long room where I saw a circle of eight metal card-table chairs. Five ladies, and one

man, were already seated, and a dull buzz of nervous chatter filled the space. I recognized one of the women as the shop owner, and my eyes followed hers as she continued her conversation with the lone man. Concluding that he must be “the medium” that was going to teach the class, I stole glances at him. He looked normal; pleasant smile, relaxed manner, he wore a polo shirt and casual pants. He didn’t wear ornate jewelry, sport strange tattoos or piercings. There was nothing about this man’s appearance which would suggest he could “talk with the dead.” I started to wonder if he really knew what he was doing. The man that gave me the reading this past winter looked as though he just stepped out of a Renaissance Faire. And the woman that this supposed medium was talking to, the shop owner, well, she dressed like a medieval witch; waist length dark hair, flowing cotton black dress, multiple necklaces, and a large stoned ring on almost every finger. I sat quietly, waiting for the rest of the scheduled pupils to arrive and surveyed the room, which seemed staged from an old Vincent Price horror movie; one back wall was lined with glass jars full of herbs, crystals were crammed into the display cases, strange pendants hung overhead. There was even a resident cat asleep in the back corner. The longer I sat in this “circle” the more I started to feel crowded and cramped. The uncomfortableness was getting worse, my sinuses started to throb, and the room was closing in. I was about to excuse myself and leave this weird place when the man started to talk. With the class officially starting I decided to swallow my mounting claustrophobia and learn.

We were coaxed into introducing ourselves and given a brief overview of objectives for the class. I was somewhat

disappointed that tonight we were scheduled to learn something called “spiritual healing.” Four of us would remain seated in our chairs while the other four people in our group would stand behind the chairs. We were instructed to touch the person seated in the chair and allow the “healing energy” to flow out of our hands. Our hands were restricted to touching the other person above their shoulders only; don’t lean too heavily on the person seated, and don’t place your fingers in their eyes or mouth. The shop owner laughed at this implied “joke” while the rest of us let out a nervous giggle. I wasn’t sure why we were to do this “healing” because I came here to learn about talking with dead people. Feeling trapped in tonight’s class, I acquiesced, and considered myself lucky that I was one of the four still seated.

The teacher played droning, meditative music on a portable tape player. I heard him coaching the ladies standing behind the chairs; “Relax, allow the energy to flow.”

I tried not to move my head and struggled to peek around the room as my eyes looked to my right, then to my left. I watched. Some of the ladies seemed to know what they were doing. They would move their hands from one position to another with great purpose. I stole a glance at our teacher who was seated, eyes closed, with a stupid, pleasant look on his face. I waited.

I didn’t “feel” anything other than annoyed that someone I didn’t really know was standing close to me. I felt annoyed that this woman was putting her hands on my head. This “healing” was annoying, and just as I was getting ready to excuse myself, the teacher announced that we were through.

“Good!” I thought; “Let’s get to the fun stuff!”

When I heard the man instruct us to change partners I almost let out an audible sigh. Miserably I pulled myself out of the chair and awkwardly exchanged places with the woman that stood behind me moments earlier. The button on the tape player clicked. The music started. I put my hands on the shoulders of the lady sitting in front of me, tried my best not to lean on her shoulders, and waited. I felt silly as I stood behind this stranger. To alleviate my boredom, I mimicked the other ladies standing behind the other three chairs. I watched them and allowed my hands to move while I waited for the music to end. It seemed like I was pantomiming forever, when finally, I heard the tape player click.

Yellow Dog interrupts my story; “Healing yourself is the first step towards enlightenment, Little One. To understand the truth of the soul, to understand and commune with spirit, one must first accept and release the demons that dwell within.”

“Yes, Yellow Dog, you are correct. But in the society I grew up in I was taught to hide my demons. I felt focusing on what bothered me was a sign of weakness. And to share what was bothering me with other people, well, this was admitting that I was flawed and needed to be helped. At the time of this mediumship class I had just healed my body. My psyche needed healing, yes, but that same psyche, myself, was not prepared to accept help.” And so I lingered onward in my search on how to “talk to dead people”...

...I returned to my seat amidst the shuffling of chairs reforming into a circle, and listened as our teacher explained about the next part of our class. Before starting the

“message circle” portion of that class, we were instructed to “call out loud” to our helpers and spirit guides. Our teacher demonstrated as he confidently “called upon” a whole host of spirit guides and spirits. He spewed forth titles of unseen beings and their purpose which reminded me of the *“Lily Dale”* book I had bought. I was struck by the odd coincidence that I happened to purchase the *Lily Dale* book and was now experiencing a class which had the same philosophy as Wicker outlined in her book!

“I call upon Joseph, and Michael, and Ezekiel” our teacher bellowed. “St. Germaine, Mother Mary, and Sacred Owl Feathers” he continued. “Stephen, Clair, Grandmother Peirce...” I began to wonder if our teacher would ever end with his list of spirits and helper spirits! The *Lily Dale* book talked about only three guides and this medium had close to thirty! When he announced that he was through the woman next to him recited her affiliations with the spirit world which, thankfully, was less than a dozen beings. The next woman started listing her helper spirit guides and my mind raced as I organized what I was about to say. I thought about the medium in the book whose three main guides were considered; a comforter, a protector, and a teacher. My soldier spirit friend, Bob, would be my protector. I never really thought about assigning the title of a teacher guide to any spirit, and wondered if the hands that reached out at my yoga class, and the purple eye that looked at me, could be that of my spirit teacher guide. Then I began to formulate who my teacher guide really might be.

This past winter, while practicing the “beach of time” exercise, I learned from the book *“Psychic Development for Beginners”* by William W. Hewitt, I frequently “imagined” a

yogi on the beach with me who sat in full lotus pose. This yogi spirit never said anything; he simply sat there, meditating. Something about being in the presence of this yogi reminded me of the hands from my yoga class. For lack of a better name, I called this yogi spirit teacher guide, David. David must be my teacher spirit guide and Bob my protector spirit guide. I was wondering if I should mention Bob and David by name when I heard the teacher call out my name.

Startled back into the reality of the mediumship class, and the little shop, and feeling a little ashamed that I knew my spirit guides by the unimpressive and rather common names of David and Bob, I fumbled out the words; “Whoever is out there please help” and hoped the next woman would quickly “call in her guides” as a diversion. I was wrong.

The teacher, and a few star pupils, picked up on my faux-pas, and immediately reprimanded me for not formally calling my spirit guides by name. “Spirit needs to know that you want their help,” coaxed one lady while my teacher spewed; “You need to be specific in who you ask for help.”

The chastising finally slowed, and the next lady announced her guides. I didn’t like the group’s critiquing and felt embarrassed, and a little angry. Outwardly I smiled and accepted their criticism while inwardly I was offended and quite frustrated.

With the “calling in of our guides” portion of the exercise completed, we were then instructed to close our eyes and concentrate, concentrate on blankness, and “throw out” any images that arise. Like “calling in the guides,” this “throwing out of impressions” had rules too. The teacher demonstrated by formally announcing; “Suzy, can I come into your

vibration.” I was instructed to formally answer with a “Yes.” Then the reader, in this case my teacher would then say what he saw, such as; “I see a man standing beside you, he’s a tall man with a scar on his face. This man is pointing at something, I think it is a book. He wants you to be reading more. And there is a dog too, a small dog, a white dog. I feel this was a special dog to you when you were a child.” Then our teacher instructed us to formally end this statement, or reading, with the phrase; “and I leave you this with blessings in spirit,” to which the sitter should respond, as an affirmation of understanding by saying the phrase; “thank-you.”

As the “message circle” progressed, our teacher spewed forth all sorts of stuff. And although I found his observations to be pretty general, he was entertaining. He demonstrated his reading forte on a few more ladies, and then the woman that owned the shop started to “give messages.” Her technique was a little rougher than our teacher, and I questioned if she was “making up” some of what “she saw.” When the shop owner finished her “readings” the room grew silent.

Our teacher tried to coax the six of us into talking with encouraging words; “Perhaps a symbol, a thought, a phrase, a song, a color, whatever comes into your mind. Simply try, try to use your imagination.” My fellow students apparently shared my apprehension. The silence persisted and our teacher acquiesced and “closed the circle.” The class was over. It was time to leave.

As I drove home that night, I lamented how awkward I felt following the rules of mediumship. I was disappointed that I didn’t “sense” spirits like I do in my room at night. I

was disappointed that I was forced to say things a certain way. And I didn't like performing in front of others. I felt comfortable, and was rather efficient at practicing meditation alone, at home, or at the end of yoga practice. But that night, while I drove home from my first mediumship class, I felt somehow cheated that our teacher didn't simply show us a great secret, a formula that would open up my understanding with the dead. That night our group was told that we had to "develop" our imagination. I knew I had imagination. What I didn't know was how to differentiate imagination from divination! How does one learn to differentiate? Yes, I left that night frustrated, sad, and with more questions than answers.

"Life is but the opportunity for experiences, Little One. If you knew all of the answers, then what would be the purpose of living? Enjoy the adventure, reap the rewards of an answer, and marvel at the path traveled. Life is truly a gift."

"Yes, Yellow Dog, I agree about the opportunity to learn, but there was an element of frustration when I did not understand the rules."

"Do you mean that you were frustrated at the thought of being incorrect? Being incorrect is simply not harmonizing with the masses. And when one does not harmonize this is not bad. On the contrary, being incorrect opens the opportunity to learn, to understand through a different path of thought. Allow the light of understanding to open, Little One. Allow yourself to see more than just the "dead people" you talk about. The otherside of life is not simply voices and opinions of those unseen. The otherside of life is an

existence without restraint. Allow yourself to question your values, and you will be rewarded tenfold. Allow and learn.”

“Thanks, Yellow Dog, I appreciate your insight. You do have a talent for delving into my psyche without damaging my ego. And I did finish up those classes. But I never experienced any profound phenomenon during those six classes. My dreams, or meditation at home, however, were peppered with strange occurrences.”

On one Thursday afternoon I had fallen asleep while watching television and woke up confused. I was startled awake because the parakeets were chattering, and their noise coincided with what I was experiencing in my “dream.” My grasp on reality was thin, and as I woke up, I struggled to understand. I sensed a girl, maybe 10 years old, who was glowing a ghostly white. I could make out a smile beneath her sweet face, and she was in the same room as me, looking at my parakeets in their cage. She felt so real that, at first, I wondered how a little girl ended up in my living room. But then I started to wonder why she was glowing, and my mind struggled into an awakened state; I heard the birds, I heard the television, the girl faded, and then I was awake! I struggled to understand. Did my dream morph to accommodate the noise of the parakeets I heard, or was a ghost girl actually just standing in my living room which excited the parakeets into chirping?

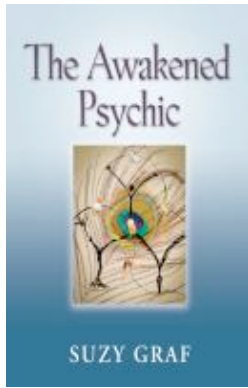
A few days later I was asleep in bed at night when an ache in my shoulder stirred me into an awakened state. I adjusted my body in a feeble attempt to alleviate the stiffness, moved again, and then acquiesced and opened my eyes, prepared to stare at the all too familiar bedroom ceiling. Orbs! Three bright lights, three orbs, were moving

above me, silhouetted by the dark green-grey of my bedroom ceiling! Startled, and somewhat fearful of their brightness, my eyes snapped shut, as I felt myself physically shake. I was afraid and wanted those lights, whatever they were, to disappear! With a wish "Go away" echoing out of my mind, I cautiously opened my eyes. My bedroom was once again the still darkness of night. More awake than I cared to be, my mind started to wonder who, or what, the lights were. Curiosity kept me awake. Minutes ticked by, and my bedroom remained dark. My shoulder felt better, my eyes grew heavy, I fell back asleep wondering if I'd ever be brave enough to try and interact with the lights dancing on my bedroom ceiling. That was, if they ever appeared again!

Thankfully, my sleep interruptions were starting to occur at a time slot more agreeable to my biological clock. I woke up 30 minutes before I usually got out of bed, instead of the middle of the night. I knew I was dreaming about something but couldn't remember any of the details. I had this odd, anxious feeling. I knew I had to record thoughts from my dream. I found a piece of paper on my desk and scribbled down the word "Insight." Once I wrote one word down, the hand holding my pen wrote the following without my mind knowing what I was writing; *with human's instinctual desire to reproduce and raise children that have more opportunities than ourselves, the conscious of the species improves, evolves, with every generation, every incarnation. Thus, humans are a perfect venue for teaching and evolving, developing, perfecting the spiritual soul through incarnations and re-incarnations.* I don't know why I wrote such an odd statement. I wish I could remember something about the dream I was involved in.

“Little One, you were starting to understand the meaning locked within your own mind, the meaning of you. And yet you struggled in your learning; a lesson, yes, but also an opportunity. When your first training, your mediumship classes, was finished, your mind still remained impatient.”

“Yes, Yellow Dog. I was exposed to guided meditations, a drumming circle, spirit message circles, and, of course, the blasted Spiritual healing. I even purchased three books from the metaphysical shop; Rosemarie Altea’s *“The Eagle and the Rose,”* Ted Andrew’s *“Animal Speak”* and a book about a form of energy healing called Reiki. Like pieces of a puzzle, I was slowly starting to understand. But this process into understanding how to speak with the dead was hard, and was taking too much time!”



The Awakened Psychic is an autobiographical account of first psychic experiences; meditating in yoga class, developing as an animal communicator, sitting in mediumship circles, learning Reiki, experiencing healing through past life regression, meeting many spirit guides, and learning how to use crystals and oracle cards for meditating and journeying. Through practice, and trial and error, this book retells the personal journey that allowed the author, Suzy Graf, to heal into the psychic she is today.

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