



Interviewee Linda Hall
Age 53
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Location Luppitt, Devon, England

This personal account of a true life story is offered as support and inspiration for your own healing journey. It is not presented as a definitive method of healing, or seen as encouragement to pursue a particular path

Note: Some of the interviewer's questions are included in italics.

A New World

Lin, how did you first become engaged in a process of inner healing?

It started a long time ago, probably when my first husband and I broke up. I think it really got going once I married again. Then my second husband, Robert, died and I went into something. But, it feels like the biggest process of all is the one I'm in now. I think it's all led up to this. There has been a tremendous shift, and I know it's still going on.

I was probably about 34 when my healing began. I had my two daughters. I left my husband. What pulled me out of the marriage was he was physically abusive. He hit me in front of the children. At that point I just said, "That's it, we're finished." I really turned. Then I had to get a full time job, so I worked for a lawyer in a big computer company. They had just moved their headquarters down the road from where I lived. It was quite a glamorous place and that was where I met my second husband, Robert.

We got married, and after awhile I started to feel unwell. I started to feel sick. Robert would say, "What's wrong?" and I couldn't understand why. It wasn't about him, I really loved him. But, I just wasn't happy in the job anymore. He said, "Well, you don't have to earn any money. Leave." I was used to financially supporting my daughters, but I left and I didn't know what I was going to do.

I remember reading Shirley MacLaine's book, *Out on a Limb*. I never reread books, but that book is falling apart. There is something about her that touched me so deeply. Then, I realized I could do something I always wanted to do, and that's to be a psychotherapist, because that's where my abilities lay. I went back to college and I loved the learning. I loved it because it was wonderful being around people more like -minded. It's like, "Oh, there's this world I didn't know about!"

Multi-Dimensions

But then, Robert died. In the middle of my training, Robert died. He had cancer. He found out on his fiftieth birthday that it was cancer and he died within six months. So, that was quite a turning point.

About two months before Robert died, I was still in my training and I'd heard about this guy, [Roger Woolger](#), and I fixed up to do one of his past-life workshops. At that point Robert was getting quite clingy and he didn't want me to go. I said, I knew I had to go. I went, and I had the most incredible experience there connecting with a past life. Roger worked with me in the group with it and that was very powerful. We still had another day to go but then I got a call from Robert. He'd gotten worse and I had to go home. But, it was like I had everything I needed.

When he died, I felt like I experienced his death on two levels. One was how I understood more that we are multi-dimensional. And one was just seeing him in another space. It was like that eye contact, you know, just soul to soul. That was a tremendous loss because it was a good marriage. But, it happened.

From Death to Life

After that I worked around death for a long time. I wondered why was I so interested in death and I realized I was very good at preparing myself. I've done some [shamanic](#) trainings and what has also come out of them is I realized that I wanted to find my own way. I realized that I've never really come into my own life, and that was fascinating. It was very relevant working with death for many reasons, but I never really lived myself. I'd lived to be there for others. Somehow, there is something that I'm taking now that is my own life. Not taking it away, living it. So, that was quite a revelation.

A Faint Lead

My healing accelerated when I moved about two years ago. I gave up my practice as a psychotherapist and a big project that I helped set up, a Hospice at Home project. We were training volunteers.

But, I needed to move to the country. I've always wanted to move to the country and once the girls were off my hands, I knew I had to go, but I didn't know where. I didn't want to be influenced by anyone. I just wanted to go. I felt I had to follow something. It was something that was quite faint, but I just had to follow it.

Guided by a Sense

Before I moved, there was something very relevant. The last relationship I got into was very short, but affected me really deeply. I didn't get involved for long, but it was someone I knew quite a long time. He works with shamanism now, and is quite well known. I knew him way back in my 'other life', when I worked in a computer company.

We had a short relationship and I just almost broke down. I didn't understand why. I knew there was something I had to sort out before I could ever be in a relationship again. It was also because there was a part of me that sensed he could be abusive. Although he wasn't, it was there.

Following Dreams

Then I got really ill. I had no energy. My heart was jumping about and my digestion was terrible. I couldn't do anything really. I knew I had to move. I sold my house and moved to the west country. I rented a place and then I found a house. I didn't know what I was looking for but when I saw this house I knew it was the place for me.

So, I got here and I started having work done on the house. But I got to a point where I could hardly speak to people. I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know how to relate to people. I

felt such a mess. And I looked back and I realized I've always been one that would be "the care-er" and I didn't know how to function if I didn't do that. But I couldn't do that anymore. I couldn't do the psychotherapist bit.

Releasing

I went to see someone I knew through one of my trainings. She works with body therapy and could see that I was traumatized. I had no idea what she meant. And I just said to her, "I'm in such a state I just don't know what to do. I don't know what's going on." So I went to see her and she said, "Yes. You are suffering from shock trauma."

I'm still working with her, but not so much now. What came up was stuff I didn't know was there. I released stuff I hadn't acknowledged. I knew about my first husband. I knew about my mother, and I kind of could see what my mother was like. But, I didn't know the stuff around my father, and that's what came up. That really blew me away, because I didn't know it was going to be there. It was almost like everything was up for grabs.

Rescuing a Lost Part

Something else started to click in. It was almost a relief because I could understand then why I had an abusive first husband and somehow it was almost like a part of me I couldn't quite get to grips with. Gradually, I just got more and more clear.

It feels like having to go right back to being very young. And that's why I think I've felt so vulnerable. It's like rescuing a part, really. A part that has been so lost.

Being back in that place, being back in that child?

Yes. It's living that.

I had terrible nightmares and bad dreams and terrors and panic attacks, all sorts of stuff I've never had before because I've always had this image of me within my family. I would know what was going on with my brother and sister, who was going through her stuff, and my parents. But I had no idea what was going on for me. I thought I was all right. It was almost like, "Oh, they're the ones who are suffering and I'm all right." Then, I began to realize that I wasn't.

You were caring all the way back then?

Yes. Tuning in.

Building a Safe House

It was like having to go back into my own body and find out what was going on. It was very unnerving. I could see how people flip. I can understand stuff that I was not connected to before. In my family situation I had been aware of everyone's trauma but there was no point in connecting with my own because there would be nowhere to go with it – nobody to help me.

So, you started working with a psychotherapist?

She's one person who understands trauma. There are not that many people who work with it who really understand. She worked with the safety aspect, making a safe place. She asked "Where are you safe? What's safe for you?" I said, "Well, the trees. Nature. That's safe." She asked, "People?" I said, "No, people aren't safe." I hadn't realized I felt that way.

Gradually I learned to build a house and make it safe. I learned to go back and use a teddy bear, which I never used. Things like that. Learning how to take care of myself, because I didn't have a clue. For me it was easy to tune in to somebody else, which I have a great ability to do. But, it has not been serving me. It has just been taking energy and it's not been coming back. I haven't known how to let it come back in. My body's been so constricted all my life. All tense. And I've had a lot of trouble with my gut.

Creative Expression

So, it's the whole work about releasing what is held. Then, of course, the memories have been coming. The memories really surprised me. I didn't know what was there. But it did help, because it made sense of a lot of things.

It feels like now I'm getting the icing on the cake because as I start to get better I realize I had no idea that my whole way of relating in the world was not how I could do it. I tried to use my mind and my head, but I couldn't. It was almost like I was dyslexic. What I realized is that I don't function well that way anyway. I function very much with my senses and movement. I've just been taking a step at a time. I haven't learned really what I'm doing in my head. So it was like following something deeper that was working with and talking through my dreams. And my physical symptoms began speaking to me.

I started in movement and painting. It's helping me with so much stuff I have inside. I do have quite an understanding of what's going on energetically but I've never known how to explain it. So, it just stayed inside. This is a way of bringing it through.

It's incredible what's been happening. There's a whole story around what's going on with my legs. The therapist I've been seeing said, "Your legs have given up. It's like there is no life in them." I was like, "What are you talking about?" But, what I realized is, they have given up and as life starts to come back to them they tell these stories. The abuse stuff starts to go, as I let that come through with dance. It was always my dream when I was young to dance. But when I was young it was about performing. Now it's not about performing, it's about my expression. It helps me to get in touch with something deeper. It's my spiritual connection and I'm following it and I cannot believe that I can do that now. It's like a dream come true.

I'd be thinking, "Well, I'm 53. How can I be doing that now?" And I can. It's not like I'm going to stand on the stage in a tutu. It's about movement. It's about bringing through the stuff that's locked in. It's a way of bringing it through, which is also making my connection to spirit much more authentic for me. It's hard to put it into words. It's taking me to some places that I haven't been able to get to somehow, making more connections.

Getting to Know Myself

Somehow, through all that terrible, shitty stuff, there was something in me that said, "Keep going." I seem to have to keep letting go of people. I'm moving away from my family and following something I need to do. I don't know what it is, but I've got to do it.

Even though that was a very faint calling, something very strong inside of you knew you had to follow it?

Yes, because nothing else was really working. I realized that something wasn't right. The anxiety kept growing because my mind couldn't work it out and I was worried that I was getting obsessive

about myself. I realize I didn't know myself at all. I have a tremendous ability of adapting and tuning into another, which is good to a point. But, I was quite abusive to myself, the way I was dealing with it. I had no idea what was going on for me at all. Being a therapist, you'd think I'd have some idea, but I didn't. I was so shut down to it.

In my work with my therapist, Yig, I've gotten to know myself and my patterning. I said to her, "I feel this is all so complicated." But, she said, "It's actually not. It all comes from something very basic, your family, your environment, and your belief system." She kept it very simply, which helps me. I make it complicated in my mind, but she says it's not. So, I'm learning.

I keep analyzing myself. All I've ever done in my life is analyze myself, then I can't do anything. I had enough money to buy a nice house, but I told myself, "I shouldn't buy it, it feels wrong, that's not what you do." Then I panic, "What about the world? What's going on in the world? What am I doing? How can I help if I'm just doing this and I can't even be a therapist anymore." So, I have to let go of helping or caring for anything or anyone. Which really freaked me out. I felt so out of control because I hadn't realized that that was what I held onto.

Drawing My Dreams

My dreams spurred me on because they kept helping me. I have been through so many art books of drawing my dreams. What I'm learning is, if I have an image it's better just to get the energy down. At first I was quite childlike, just drawing the dreams. I wanted to see whether there was a thread. There was a thread but I didn't realize it was there. It started to come out around my father. It was very helpful. I just kept drawing and drawing them. The patterns would just keep repeating.

And you were able to not analyze them, you were able to just stay with not knowing and just drawing...

I realized how I was analyzing everything I ever do, so basically, I was destroying it. So, I couldn't move. "I can't do that because of this" -- instead of just following an impulse, naturally. I analyze so then I can't go anywhere. It was a strong feeling to draw them and so I tried. I thought, "I'm just drawing it, don't think about it, because then it gets in the way."

There have been so many days and weeks when I've gone back to bed and thought, "What am I doing here in the middle of nowhere." And yet, as soon as I rested more within the silence, in the nothing, then I knew I was on the right track. I had to let go of everything else, and then I would know it was all right.

A Tiny, Tiny Voice

About eight years ago I felt that I would die at about this age. What I realized is, if I hadn't followed this I probably would have died, because there wouldn't have been any point. I've always found I could get over something so I wouldn't get down. I always thought that this was quite a good ability, but I don't know if it was, because it was just drowning the other noises that were going on. It was like this tiny voice was saying, "Help!"

It was my heart, it was jumping around so much I couldn't do anything but go to bed. I started to listen, and there was this tiny, tiny voice. I started drawing the images that were coming out and what it was trying to say. Sometimes I've felt I was just making it up, but then I go back and realize where this stuff comes from. What is there? It comes from when I listen.

Going Into a Nightmare

When Robert died I was 42. We'd been married for five and a half years. That was hard. Then, my father dropped dead. It all happened at once. Suddenly a lot of things happened. His mother, his ex-wife, and his daughter gave me such a hard time when Robert died. I had to deal with so much stuff from them. It was a bit like going into a nightmare, really. That was another difficult time.

I know I learned a lot at that stage. It certainly taught me to stand up for myself. It was too easy for me to find the good in someone and then I ended up in abusive situations again and again. That's the pattern that runs through.

Away from Everything

You were able to hold on to yourself in some way, after Robert's death, when you had to deal with all that, his ex-wife and mother...

Yes. It's strange. I'm just kind of tuning into that time. There was something that was driving me, almost inspiring me. I'm not sure what it was. I thought, "When all this is gone, I'll change, and I'll come into my own." It didn't seem to happen. I was working, and finding myself getting tired and feeling there's something missing. It was quite frightening because if you admit there is something missing, it might mean that you have to live with that. I wouldn't let myself go there because I didn't know what it was. Now, I can see what it was. I realize that I've just suppressed anything that would come from me.

Now, I'm moving into the creative stuff and it's linking in with my father's stuff. I've spent my whole life feeling there's something I want to do and feeling really frustrated. I thought, "Well, everyone feels like that," and I realize that a lot of people don't. I've been trying to keep it down. I'd think, "Look what I have," instead of, "but there's still something missing." I would just push it away. It took having to come away from everything and everyone to see what was going on for me. I kept too immersed in things. I was too lost in other people.

Letting Go of Everything

It's almost as if you had to strip yourself of all your identity, your titles and your names.

Even letting go of being a therapist. And "Oh, my God, what will people think? What will people say?" "Oh, she's not doing anything." I'm used to always doing things. I have to let go of that law. Then I thought, "Why I might just keep getting ill and die." And I actually began to accept that, well, maybe I will. It was like, "Okay, so what if I do. It's all right. If I do, I do, and that's it."

So, I let go of the idea of anything coming out of it. I didn't know this was going to come out of it. I had to let go of it somehow. All I could do was just take the next day, or the next step, and then see. When I stopped trying, things started to happen. What comes back very strongly, I think maybe from an ego perspective, is "But we do all have a purpose." I had to let go of that, really.

I got very encouraged by a friend of mine to stay in the emptiness. She said, "You just stay with it. I thought, "Well, hers seems so obvious. She is a writer and in my mind she knows what she is doing. Mine feels very different. It's not so tangible." I thought, "Well, what can it be? I like to dance, so what does that mean?" But, something is coming. Something that I still don't know the full extent of. Yet, it makes sense.

Back to a Feeling

When your friend was encouraging you to stay with it, you found yourself comparing. Something was more concrete for her, but it wasn't for you. How did you just stay with it? You kept going and you kept having to let go of any result. How did you do that?

I began to find that each time I tried to find something or I would push, I would get unwell. My body is very sensitive and how I understand things is through my body. As soon as I started to push or try, I would get worse again. So, it's almost like I have to go back to a state of just resting more and more.

I didn't actually have any option. That was it. I got to the point where I thought, "Well, here I am, and I can't be a therapist. Not when I'm like this. I have no desire to be one anymore. So, what is there?" I'm living in a house that I love. That feels right. My connection with nature is very important and the full extent of how it shows me things hasn't come clear yet. And that's all I know. So, all I can do is keep coming back to a feeling.

Listening to the Subtleties

I think it was because I couldn't go out and see people because I wasn't well enough. Sometimes I did, and then I would crash. So, I kept getting thrown back. It's like, "Well, maybe something's going on here. Am I going to listen?" It's almost like, "You're not listening." So, the quieter I was, because I couldn't do anything, the more I started to listen. "Oh, you're listening, right. Okay." I think it was because I didn't have much choice.

In the past, I had a very strong will. I would overcome. Then I realized that was what was destroying me. I kept overcoming, and going out there, instead of listening to the subtleties of what was going on. I started to make connections. With the work I did in the hospice, the home support, we trained volunteers to work with people in their homes. I also worked with the patients which I loved to do.

Behind the Form

There was one woman who will always be with me. She really touched me. The work I did with her was quite profound. She could not move. She couldn't speak. She could sometimes make a sound, but she couldn't move anything. She was gradually degenerating. Her husband was trying to help, but he got cancer and was sick as well.

I would go in and spend time with her. I was thinking, "What would I do here?" "How do I get to you?" I remember [Ram Das](#) saying, "You go behind the form." It's just incredibly subtle what I was sitting with. I liked that. It was something very subtle. You know, you forget most things. What was there left? She was giving me no feedback so I didn't know what she could be thinking. What I started to do was work with senses. I'd bring stuff from outside to get her to smell it.

The reason I'm saying this is because it came up when I was going through this on my own. She kept coming up. I kept seeing her. It was almost like she was saying, "But, look what you did with me. You've never done that to yourself. You've never listened in that way." I thought, "Well, I didn't think about listening to myself in that way." Then I was reminded of one particular image that often comes up about a past life in a convent when I am dying and looking up at God and feeling totally left and unheard. I had been putting God outside of myself and not listening to what was inside. The anger was so huge that I froze up inside.

Finding My Own Way

The whole thing about God goes into another track because my background is quite religious. My grandfather was a Methodist minister. My father was always very religious, very into the church. That feels quite relevant to me. This whole thing about father and God. This whole thing about “they know and I don’t.” I realized I always tried to do what I thought was right and good. I tried to guess. I tried to find out. So it always had to do with the outside. “Is this right by God?” “How can I help what’s going on there,” and “This is terrible.” There is so much. It would wear me down.

Which made your father very “good?”

Yes. Oh, you know, he was always at the Sunday School, teaching. I thought about being good, and never measured up. I always felt I was bad, actually. The abuse only made it worse. So, I’ve always had to try and be good, and better. I could sense what was going on, then I would feel I was responsible. It would make me frantic.

This is all entanglement with God and what that means. I know it’s important, but how does it all fit together? I tried to work it out. I’ve explored shamanism, being taught by males, by females, and realizing I’ve got to find my own way. I’m gradually finding, it’s all right. It’s not waiting to attack me when I’ve do something wrong. It’s so different than that.

It sounds like God’s not going to tell you one way or the other.

No, he’s not going to, and it’s all right. It’s not his intention. It’s not about being right or wrong. What I’m learning is the most important thing is to follow what’s inside. And that touches me very deeply because there is this universe that is waiting to help me. I have this image of these kind beings saying, “We’re waiting to help you, but, you’ve got to ask.”

Finding My Beliefs

This is totally upside-down, because even when I think I’m in touch with this universal truth, I’m still doing the same “God thing.” I learned about shamanism, and about goddess stuff, and I was still putting on old morals about “they’ll get me.” I can get caught, because it’s the way I translated the universe. Since I’ve been unwell, just lying there and watching nature, I’ve realized that there’s no one out to destroy. It’s just the opposite, actually.

When you got into the goddess and the shamanism, you could see the old way of thinking about God would creep into that, too?

I hadn’t quite realized I was still doing it. I got quite disturbed with some of it, even in the women’s shamanism group. I really enjoyed it, but I got quite perturbed, and I began to realize I don’t agree with it. She would maybe be talking about the Native American Indians and what they had to do. I really respect her, but she was talking about all this exactly the way my father would talk about the people who need it – the “needy.” I remember saying to her, “You know, in the west we have to deal with other stuff just as bad, but you talk about it as if we are not spiritual.” You see what I mean? They’re the ones that are good and we are the ones that are bad. It made me angry, in a way. So, this gave me a real opportunity to start to find out what I really believe.

I did the year with this teacher and then we carried on for a while in a group. I realized that I questioned the beliefs, but I was actually beginning to follow them. I thought, "No, I want to get off. I don't want to get caught in the form." It's so easy to get caught into something. If I don't feel it, it has no meaning for me. I'm just trusting it more now.

So, you had to keep releasing the form, the roles, everything.

Yes. It keeps getting in the way. I'd think, "Oh yes," —and it's in another package and it might look "new age-y." I'd realize it's such a trick, like, "oh, no, it's there again." It's trusting that it's just there, and it's not innately bad. At first I believed that whatever came from me was bad, and, of course, it's the opposite. It's just where I am.

Was original sin part of your upbringing?

Yeah. It's all that. I'm still trying to clear myself of it. I'm not bad. I've always had such a strong sense of feeling bad all the time. Anything that would come out creatively would be "Can't have that, because I don't know what it is."

So, that voice is still inside of you sometimes?

Oh yes. It's coming up more strongly if I'm pushing through. What is interesting is that there is something that I hear that I just know and I follow, even though I don't know what it is.

Finding My Voice

It's like seeing this dance therapist. I heard about her through a string of coincidences and what stuck in my mind was that she worked with movement and art and writing. She lives miles away.

I spoke to her on the phone and I said to her, "I doubt if I can put into words why I want to see you, but I need to be around someone who works in this way because I'm not used to being around people who are creative. "I want you to help me bring something through that is so lost somewhere." I was actually saying something I didn't really know about. It was just a sense of "can I really follow this?" I went to see her and it was very exciting. And it's starting to get stronger now. It's quite enlivening, actually.

All those days of being ill, and trying to hold onto form, and then being pushed back to being ill again, and just trying to listen to the subtle, subtle, subtle voice. When you said that to her, it was like the first time that subtle voice really found its words. Before, you said you weren't able to talk to people. It sounds like that phone call, saying what you said to her, was a major doorway, a real turning point for you.

Yes, it was. To actually put voice to something and saying, "I don't know what this is, but I want to follow it."

Not Comparing

What was happening was that nothing got me excited anymore. I had always gotten excited about things, but there was nothing, anything at all. A voice inside of me would say, "What's that got to do with anything? Look what's happening in the world. You've got to do something about it" It felt so away from that. So, I'm doing the opposite. I'm having to let go of everything like that. I can see again how that pattern is changing.

You can feel a changing. Your legs can.

My legs. I even had a dream about them. It's all to do with me, about trusting what comes out of me. That's it. What has come up very strong for me is this word, "comparing." I'm wondering what would life be like if we never compared, if we didn't know what that meant? Not thinking, "Oh, I don't know anyone who does it this way." For me, that can negate how I function, and I'm only just finding out.

Empty Moments

In those times of having to be really, really quiet because I couldn't deal with anything else, as I let go it's almost like something else took over. There was that feeling of "It's all right." It's like a tiny, "It's really all right, no matter what happens, it's all right." I get scared. I keep getting scared. But, actually, in the end, it IS all right. I do feel quite small in all this.

You feel quite small in all this?

When I'm lying there and not doing anything and I'm just here. I'm not really doing anything and it's as if it didn't matter. You know what I'm saying? It's like, "Oh, I'm just part of everything." It was in those empty moments when I couldn't do anything else. I don't think I would have ever gotten to it if I hadn't been forced down to my knees. Basically, "I give up. I can't do it. I give up." Now I just trust. It's kind of learning to read the signs. And what I do is not "turn against," my heart. My heart is "not trying to get destroy me" It's the opposite, it's trying to help me.

I read a question somewhere, and found it very helpful, "How is this helping me?" Everything is helping me, nothing is trying to destroy me.

So you can keep asking yourself that and if it's not helping you, then you can say, "no."

Gentle Silence

It's realizing that you can be so gentle with yourself. It's like inner silence. It was just a feeling of everything is really gentle. It's like I didn't hear it because I was so busy trying to do something, kind of frantic. What came out of the work with Yig is that she said, "The thing is that you're traumatized. Your whole body is in a space of fright. You're just waiting for something to happen." My nervous system would never stop.

It's always poised. So you're always un-poising, un-posing.

It's like I'm unfreezing somehow. It's like melting, yeah.

It's almost as if to not poise, you have to fall apart.

Falling apart is terrible, I realize. It's made me realize just how awful it is to fall apart, to feel incapable of knowing. It's a weird feeling. I don't know what has to be anymore. I don't know how to function. If you don't let go of functioning one way, maybe you do fall apart.

Symptoms I have are classic of trauma. A terrible digestive system – I couldn't eat properly. And my heart was jumping about, which is the sort of thing you can get around menopause. I would get very tired and achy as well. To hear people talking would be tiring, I couldn't converse properly with people. Even watching television—it's almost like it's too much. Everything is too much.

Just going around taking in and taking in and not actually connecting with what is there inside of me.

And then you're overloaded and that short-circuits you. It overloads all your circuits.

That's it. It's total overload.

How is it now, Lin?

I always have to watch and be careful because it's recognizing that my body took so much. Space is important to me. Being in nature. If I was getting worse, I was comparing myself to everyone, "But they're doing this and I'm not doing anything." It would be very helpful to be outside and watch the animals just eating grass--the cows out there. Or watching the ducks sometimes, because there was nothing else I could do.

Dreamy Images

I am treasuring more. I'm in those dreamy states and my aim is something about "dreaming is an art." I want to know how to be more dreamy because in that place there is an opportunity for more to come in. How can anything come in if I'm "doing." I also realize I want this greater connection and yet, when do I expect to get the time? It comes when I'm not trying or when I'm playing. That's something that's coming in, being more playful. "Yes. Oh, yes, there it is!" When I'm not trying, or getting tense about it, everything opens. The images come to me then.

I could never understand why these images of someone lying in a hammock kept coming. I wondered, "What's that?" "What is that person doing?" Images kept coming, and dreams kept coming. "Oh, here it is again, it must be saying something." It's trying to show me something, and if I'm not paying attention it just kept repeating. Dreams have changed now, they've gotten much quieter and I can sleep better because, I suppose, I have paid attention.

Your dreams offer unlimited, helpful images, and in your dreams there's no comparing.

They are incredible. I'm fascinated by the whole thing about dreaming. What I love is that the dreams come from you, and they are totally different from anyone else's. We are all so different in our ways, yet we live, in the west especially, where we've all got to try and stay the same. It makes it safe, I suppose. I mean, it's that consensus reality -- "Let's all stay in this world and say this is the way it is."

Questioning

Since I was young I've had this feeling. A lot would happen to me and I would think I knew what was going on, but I used to turn it in on myself. "Why are they saying these things? They're saying these words and I'm feeling something different. It doesn't add up. What is really going on here?"

At night I used to see lots of images. My mother termed me "hysterical" because I used to have weird nights. I would see so much. It seemed to freak my mother out, so I tried to find ways of curbing myself, trying to keep myself in check. I would question why people got ill. I would have this ongoing thing with my father. He used to say, "Why do you get so intense about things, and why do you have to question things?" He would get very angry with me. I used to say, "I want to

know why. Why do people get sick, what's going on behind?" But he would turn it around, you know? It was almost like it was frivolous to do that sort of thing.

There was always something running within me, something running. I'd be wondering. . . that doesn't feel right to me, but somehow... It's quite difficult when there is no one else to confirm your reality.

Still Running

Your senses were tuned into a reality that was always running like an inner movie? You always had some sense of something being played out?

Yeah. I've always had a sense of seeing other things. I've always just known there is something going on in my life – a knowing that I couldn't quite put into words. But, I realize, only really recently, that since working with Yig, I've really gotten to know my reality more. She has encouraged me to really bring it out and explore it. That's quite interesting, because that's what I've always done with other people. Imagine if, as a child, those aspects were brought out or affirmed. It would be very different.

Just Mine to Know

There was a time, when you were young, there was a knowing, and it was always there, like a stream always flowing. But that got covered by everybody else's knowing, and everybody else's form. Then, that got to be really dependable. I mean, that was your life, but it wasn't your life. It was the life that was given to you to lead. Then, that was all stripped away, and even though the knowing was still running, there was a point at which you didn't even know that anymore? Maybe that was the subtle voice?

There was always something. Something in me knew, something just knew. I always had a sense of something else. I don't know if I can get this out right, but I'll try. I think that is what made me open to abuse. When I think about my relationship with my first husband, it was almost like because I knew there was more to him than that, and more to me than that, part of me thought, "Well, maybe it doesn't matter what's happening." It's quite hard to describe.

I always had this knowing, which really annoyed him. He was terrified of death and I knew there was much more in death. And I knew that as I got older I would have a chance to explore it. I knew that, and it made him very jealous because it was almost like, "You've got something that I want." Yet, I always felt that with my mother. "You know something that I don't know." I've always had that feeling. Somehow, it ties in with the abuse, because it's that feeling of "Yes, I do know there is something, and you want it. Because I feel more in touch with it than you seem to, then you can just treat me how you like." It probably doesn't make sense as I say it, but I felt it made sense at the time. It's almost like I have to make amends because there is something that I do know. Even though it might be a long way away at the moment, I always know something. Even though I'm scared. It doesn't mean I've been very brave about things – if that makes any sense at all.

This may sound simplistic, but it's almost like it wasn't okay for you to know. Something always happened to you to disqualify that knowing, or invalidate that knowing, or have that knowing taken from you. And now, your knowing is just yours. Now, nobody or nothing is threatening, or controlling, or maneuvering around your knowing. It's like now you know and it's all yours, just for you to have.

Yeah, that certainly makes sense. You said something really important – that I can't quite connect—it's just mine. It's got nothing to do with anyone else.

Gift of Self

It's that whole thing about God. God says you have to go and love your neighbor. It's almost that what you have you have to give away. That's it. There's been a distortion there that got me all confused. It's like, "Oh well, yeah, I'm lucky I've got this, so do what you like with me." You know? That has always been there. But now I realize it's only in there. I can't give it to anyone because you have to find it for yourself. And it is there inside.

It's a tremendous relief, because I always felt so responsible. "How do I say what this is? I don't know." Now I realize, I can't. It's someone else's journey. I can't do it. I realized that the biggest gift is myself, and then it happens anyway. It's not like, "Oh, I have to go out there and tell people." I don't. I'll find a way that suits me, and then there is this amazing ripple-out effect, and it doesn't have to drain me. So, thank you. That's really helpful.

A Feeling Way

I think about what you did for that woman. Somehow, you may have borne witness to her knowing, which could not be expressed in any way. She lost all her capacities to express that knowing, and somehow you bore witness to it.

Yes. I watched people come in and talk to her, but they talked to her as if she was like you or I. But she wasn't in that place. She was in another place. Instead of admitting that she's just in another place, people will not go there. But, I'll go there. That's it. I'm quite fascinated to go there because it's quite special.

And probably nobody ever, in her whole life, went there with her. Went to her, really to her. And you gave her that gift. And now you get to have that. It's almost like you had to die, or be on your deathbed to bear witness to yours.

To hear that subtlety, that little voice of my heart saying, "Do you remember that time when you listened to your patient? Now I want you to do that for me?" It was hard to believe those words coming out of me. I understand much more now.

Bringing It Through

The other day I promised myself I'd start to spend serious time following my art and movement. Just finding out what's inside.

I've been having a problem with the builders because the carpenter was not getting on with the work. Oh, I got really angry. Then I deal with it and I think, "Well, I dealt with it." Then I suddenly thought, "Well, I'm not getting on with what I am supposed to be doing!!" I had to stop and listen to what I was really saying. It's all there, but I've not been listening.

And it sounds like you are constantly being brought back to that awareness.

Absolutely. It's almost like this voice says, "Have you heard what you just said?" It's helpful to get things out because then I hear what I'm saying, or I see what I'm doing, or I hear what my body is trying to tell me. There's something about bringing it through instead of just leaving it there inside. It gets stronger.

Trust and Love

And it's so interesting that the everyday relationships there for you to do that with are the builders.

That's it. I keep questioning myself "What am I doing? Am I running away from life? I'm living here, and what am I doing?" Especially when the builders ask me 'What are you doing living out here? What is your job?"

Then, I realize, "No it's perfect. It's all right. Trust. It's back to trust. It's all right. Whatever is happening is fine." Instead of "Am I good? Am I bad? Am I doing this right?" It's just accepting that I'm fine the way I am.

It feels like everything I was brought up to believe is the total opposite of what life is really about. Just turn it on it's head and that's how it is! What love really is. That's what it feels like. Learning what love really is. It's not what religion told me was love, you know.

Even your body is turning upside down, going from living in your head to living in your legs!

My legs are saying "We want to be." And as they wake up, I've had some senses, life senses in my legs. I'm back to saying, "I realize I have my experiences the way I have them." It's back to not comparing. If something comes through, and that word "compare" comes in, it destroys. It's a big learning.

Not Suffering

It is. It's really living in the emptiness and then stripping away everything that defines you and your life and the life force.

The life force. Realizing the life force wants to live in a way that's right for me and for other people. It's not about suffering anymore. That's what is amazing. It feels like a turning point in many lives. I have to say I do have a very, very strong sense it's about many lives. It's about moving forward and not suffering anymore. You can live and you can grow, but you don't have to suffer.

That's about healing. That, for you, is your healing.

Yes. And it feels quite ancestral as well. To me, in other lives, whatever that is, it goes deeply into, "You have to suffer." You don't. It's not about suffering. But, I've been more comfortable in suffering, you see. So, to be comfortable, to have money, to have this or that, has been quite hard for me. You know, "Hang on a minute – surely I have to suffer to be healed or to get better!" No.

Finding My Way

And I suppose the healing is what my wounding is. It's ongoing, isn't it? It feels quite important, not holding onto it, but remembering, "Oh yes, it's that. Oh yes, it's this." It's so easy to get caught in it. But somehow, knowing myself, having a map is part of the healing, because if I know, then I can help myself. Something might happen and I'll go back into it, but somewhere there'll be this reminder, "Oh, but hang on a minute, this is what I do." The old pattern. So, if I know myself I can keep on with this kind of healing process. I don't just get caught in the old wheel that goes round and round and round. It's like moving up within a spiral.

But it has to be your map, not somebody else's.

That's right. It's so easy to get caught into that, and it doesn't work. I can get inspired by someone, learning that that's how they would, but, how do I function? It can be another trap. I want to find the way I function. I want to find out how I function, because I actually don't know how. It's very easy for me to try and copy someone else. But it's just from words. I want to know how I would be. How I would do this with people I worked with. I don't want to go to a workshop and see what someone else does. I want to find it for myself.

I knew that this was important. There's no point in me just trying to copy someone else, because I tried to do that all my life and it just doesn't stay. It has to come from within, because it keeps going then, it doesn't fit any other thing.

An Upward Spiral

If there was a way for you to identify analogies, or images, to represent the phases of healing for you, does anything come to mind?

It's a bit like peaks and troughs and ups and downs. How do I say it? I have this image of having been on a wheel that has kept going on around and around, lifetime after lifetime with no change. It feels like now I'm moving and I am going around but I am also going up as in a spiral. I feel like I've come off the wheel.

I realized how easy it would be just to stay on that, because it's familiar. Almost like I'm suffering and I feel I don't want to do this anymore. I want to move. There is something about shifting now, shifting in a spiral up. It's like, "I can do this, I can get off this now!" – which is very exciting.

Knowing Myself

If you were to define what healing is, what would you say?

I would say, it's knowing myself. And then, healing follows automatically. That's what it feels like. I would not have been able to answer that not long ago. It seems to all come out of that. I mean, really *knowing* myself.

Down in your body...

Knowing myself.

Stay with It

If there was someone that you saw who was in the hardest part of their healing process, what would you want to share with them?

I just really want to encourage them to stay where they are. Stay with it, and trust. I'm less inclined to want to pull people out now, because it wouldn't have been helpful to me to have someone try and pull me out and make it better. I'm thinking of my friend Kay, because she didn't come up with niceties. She just encouraged me to stay with it. She's honoring when you are really struggling. It's almost a kind of, "it's okay to be there."

She'd encourage me to stay with the void. She'd say, "You can't avoid the void. That's where everything comes from." It is the kind of dark night of the soul. As I've got to know it a bit more now, I see it in a different light. It's actually a very powerful place.

It's true, so, it's actually great to be supported in staying in that place instead of saying, "Oh, come out, and let's have a good time." That's no good, that's no help. The trouble is, that's when you feel the shittiest, horriblemest. Maybe if someone recognizes that it's all right for you to be there, then it would help, instead of making it all nice.

Stay in there. Somehow stay with it and trust that there is something going on, even if you don't have a clue.

The following websites are provided as sources of information about resources mentioned.
To order books referred to, go to

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/home/redirect.html/103-6433792-7663803>

Shirley MacLaine, Out on a Limb

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/search-handle-url/index=books&field-keywords=Shirley%20MacLaine%20Out%20on%20a%20Limb&search-type=ss&bq=1/103-6433792-7663803>

Roger Woolger

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/search-handle-form/ref=s_sf_b_as/103-6433792-7663803

Shamanism

<http://www.shamanism.org/>

Ram Dass

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/search-handle-form/103-6433792-7663803>

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