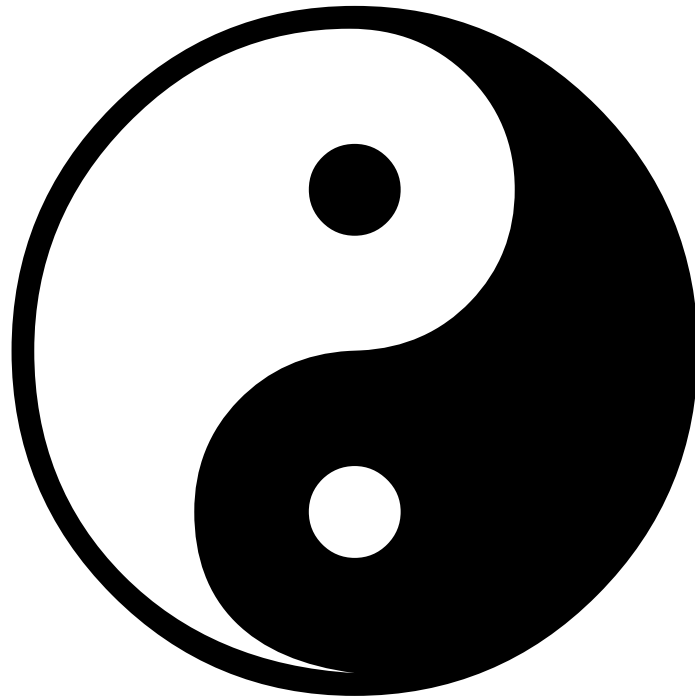


Two John's



*Finding Your
Way*

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank those on earth and those on the spirit level, for their love, teachings and time. I must thank all my teachers, they will know who they are and who they have been, in particular my first teachers, my stepfather Lionel Moore and my mum Sally. Thank you to the people who have worked with me to translate my verbalisations into some form of written English.

I would like to wish many thanks to all the people at all the churches that I have been involved with. These churches provide a service, virtually free of charge, to many people in need of help, in particular I acknowledge the work of the independent churches, which quite often stand alone.

Introduction

Welcome to my book. My name is John Quinn and I will be your guide through this journey of the pages. I must introduce to you my belief that life is much more than most people want to/or are able to see, in other words the physical things. I believe that life can be split into 3 main areas, the physical, the mental and the spiritual, each of which contain multiple levels of ability and understanding, but whatever the level we are on in any area, we are all equal in the presence of the Force, Spirit or God. Within each of us there is a force, you may call this force what you like, I choose to call this force my spirit. When we, as most people call it -‘die’, our spirits are released from the physical area (your body) to move into the spiritual area, this will be covered more later on in our journey.

I have written this book, not because I especially wanted to write it (as anyone who knows me will be aware), but at the request of spirit and on the strength of my own observations and experiences, both as a student and as a teacher of life. I feel this book will be of assistance to some readers and even if I am able to help just a few people, then I’ll feel that this book has been worth while. I had previously produced a small booklet regarding my philosophy of life and the work I do. This booklet proved of use to a number of people, as this number increased I was asked by spirit to extend the booklet into a fuller explanation of who I am, what I do and what I believe. The main aim being to give more information which is then available to a wider range of people.

The purpose of this book is to try to unravel some of the issues that may confuse people or they choose to hide behind in the physical area of life, hopefully to help anyone who wants to be helped in unravelling the mental area of life and lastly, to help unravel some of the mysteries that people choose to wrap around the spiritual area in life, enabling them to see where they truly are physically, mentally and spiritually. Within this book I won’t be using too many long words since it is not in my nature, which is something you will see as we progress through the book. I feel this is a book for anybody, at any level, regardless of what they may or may not believe. If while reading this book you come across a point that you can’t quite get to grips with, then I would urge you to back up a few pages and give the section another try. I have found through my experience that most of the points I will deal with are relevant to most people no matter what the knowledge, position, or status in life of the reader. It is for all people on all levels.

I’ve attempted to write the book in a way that will allow me to share my life experiences, showing both where I have made the right choices and the wrong choices. I have aimed to include the things I have been taught, the things I have seen and the things that I feel would be of help to others. I hope the purpose of this book will be come apparent as you read it; to help you, no more and no less, with the issues in your life that you require help with. There will be simple exercises that may help and there will be guidance regarding places where you can seek further assistance and knowledge.

Before you read any further I would ask for you to read what’s written below. Read it, feel what it says and then make a note, do the same with any other points in this book that you are unsure of. You can then come back to these notes at a later date to see what has changed and how, or for further investigation.

***If you do not have the courage to say when you think you are right,
you will never learn to feel when you are wrong.
Two Johns.***

Two Johns

The first question that most readers will have in their mind at this stage is likely to be “Who are these two Johns?”

As briefly as possible I shall try and explain to you who Two Johns is, and how he came to be called such. Firstly, Two Johns, to deal with his background history, worked for a very large telecommunications company, which he proclaims to be the best in Britain and one of the best in the world. Furthermore he was quite content in his work.

On a scale of importance, he doesn't consider himself to be particularly important in the scheme of things, but he does what he can to teach and help those who wish to hear what he has to say. As with most spiritual things, those who wish to learn will often seek him out, not the other way around. He is a husband, a father, he does spiritual healing, he is a spiritual teacher to some and friendly to most.

It should be apparent by now that Two Johns refers to me, the author. Two Johns is my spiritual name, while I am unknown in wider spiritualist circles in this country, I am very well known to the people that are around me for my fairness, balance and most painfully my truth, which unlike others begins when I look in the mirror.

I have had the privilege and the hard lessons that come with that privilege, of being around some excellent teachers in both the spiritual and physical areas. Within this book it is not my intention to use the names of actual people since I would not like my information to be accepted in any way, shape or form, on an association with any person who is better known than I, within the field of spiritual development.

Either you will read this book and it will seem correct to you, or you will read it and think it is complete nonsense. If the latter case is true then I would suggest you keep the book as I believe there will come a point in your life, where the things I have talked about won't seem to be nonsense any more.

However this still doesn't answer the questions of how he became Two Johns. One of my early teachers was a well known trance-medium called Nick. A Trance-medium is a person who allows a spirit to enter into their body and speak through that body while the trance mediums spirit is temporarily absent. The idea of trance-mediumship was something that I had been somewhat sceptical of and this scepticism remained until one particular evening.

While talking to my teacher Nick, his guide asked if he might be allowed to talk directly to me through Nick. His guide's name was Dwenti-Santi. In a suitably 'mystic' fashion this guide was a Native American Indian. Upon reading this I suspect some readers may be thinking “Oh, here we go...”, so at this point I shall briefly explain why there are so many Native American Indians and Oriental guides, in comparison to other nationalities. The for-mentioned nationalities were much more spiritually advanced earlier in their cultures development, and therefore upon returning to spirit (they have died,) are much more suitable to help/guide those still in the physical area of life, with their spiritual development. Although I can assure you that during your development, you will meet other nationalities of guides.

On the occasion of 'meeting' Nick's guide for the first time, I can only try to describe the vibration that existed in the room. It is important to note at that point in my development I had not yet experienced such a strong vibration from spirit. The presence that I felt in the room had such strength that I felt another person, a very strong person had just entered the room. There was no little breeze or chill in the air, in fact I felt warm. But the hair on my neck felt as if it was standing on end and the face I was looking at, seemed to change from Nicks face to someone else's. Up until this time I had never felt small or weak in the presence of anyone, this felt so real to me that I was almost frightened, but I felt it was a good strength and I was able to relax a little.

When Nick was in Trance he would speak in the voice of his guide. When this occurred Nicks voice would become much deeper, also when Dwenti spoke it was quiet but very strong, slightly broken English with a French Canadian accent. One may naturally express doubts about the credibility of this, but if my teacher was able to train himself to

mimic the voice and accent through which he said his guide was speaking, then I would have been very surprised, and I am not easily surprised. On top of this came my scepticism not just of *how* Nick was speaking, but also of *what* Nick's guide was about to tell me.

I was sitting with Nick when Dwenti spoke "You *are* sceptical, aren't you John?"

To which I answered "I have been taught that you should only believe the things that you have seen evidenced and shown to be true, not just the things that other people say are true".

"This is quite right", Dwenti answered.

My teacher's guide continued, "You were also very sceptical when you were introduced to *your* guide, weren't you?"

I took a moment to recover from the shock of hearing this since it was something that I had never discussed with anyone. It was at this point that I realised that I was either talking to a person who could put on a very interesting accent and was working on the psychic level, or as I now truly believe, I was talking to Nick's body who's spirit was in trance, while the presence and power of another spirit was communicating through Nick to me, with very accurate information that I had not discussed with another living person.

Dwenti said to me, "You have much work to do with your teachers, if you wish, I will come through and talk to you at different times."

I thanked him for this and said that I would look forward to speaking with him again.

He asked, "Does my presence bother you?"

To which I replied "Yes it does actually. It is very strong."

"You need to work at lowering the vibration and strength of your *own* presence when around other people", he added.

I didn't disbelieve him, but I was not entirely convinced of what I was being told, so I said something that I was in the habit of saying, which was:

"I can't see that at this moment in time, but I will hold onto it."

At this point Dwenti said something to me that had not been said to anybody else, according to Nick. He said: "If ever you feel that the energy around you has grown so negative that you can't lift it with your own people, then you may call upon all *my* people."

I can only say this made me feel very, very small, which is a feeling that is very unusual to me.

What Nick had said about Dwenti's statement, was later confirmed on the authority of one of my other teachers, Ireene, who was present at the time and also very good friends with Nick.

Dwenti continued on in his usual tone, which was rather serious, despite the fact that he had a fantastic sense of humour, while a language barrier was occasionally a factor, most people seemed to be intimidated by him purely by the energy of his presence. On several occasions after this I had humorous conversations with him, but on this occasion he carried on in his usual serious tone.

"You have now been given your spiritual name", he said.

"Have I?" I asked, "Well, I haven't heard it yet."

"You have, but lately you haven't listened as well as you should have." He responded.

He was making a reference to some problems in my personal life, on which I have to say he was one hundred percent correct, yet again these were areas that I had not discussed with anyone.

"For your spiritual name you will be known as 'Two Johns'." He said.

In keeping with my usual approach to life, which is to try and keep things on a lighter note where possible, I asked him if that was in reference to my size, since I am quite large.

His voice dropped a few levels and his vibration rose several levels. "Do not always joke Two Johns," he replied, "your size is of no consequence to us. It is the size of your spiritual being, not your physical being, upon which spirit will work."

I answered that I wasn't being disrespectful but that I like to make a joke.

"We know you like to make a joke, but *this* is serious." He finished.

I thanked him and he then left. After this, Nick came back from his trance and I went over the conversation with him to let him know what had been said. It was from this point onwards that my relationship with them both grew.

One of the other things that Dwenti first told me, although I wasn't quite ready to hear it at the time he told me, was that I would work in churches myself, doing demonstrations of spiritual communication. I wasn't too happy with this because I didn't like the idea of public speaking and appearance, but he pointed out to me what I was going to do.

I believe that Dwenti knew that Nick only had a short time left due to his serious illness, he was steadily declining. One of the jobs that Dwenti said I was to be given, was that I was to look after someone whom Nick had been looking after up to that time. The person concerned was also a spiritual teacher and a well-known medium.

Nick would quite often tape record the things that Dwenti had said through him, since he usually had no recollection of what had been said at all. A trance medium doesn't always know what has been said through them while they were in the trance state. The person who induces the trance is in such a deep state of mediation, it is as if they were not present during the time of the trance. There are those people who would claim they are trance mediums, with such people there may indeed appear to be a presence coming through them, together with a change in voice and various other manifestations, but as with all things; judge and feel them on their individual merits as well as personal recommendations.

The joke I made regarding 'Two Johns' concerns my size; I am over 6ft tall and I weigh around 20st, which *is* practically 2 men. Since that time I have spoken with Dwenti and felt an enormous presence when he is around, whether he is linking with me or someone else, I would like to thank him and send my love.

I was informed that the reason for the name 'Two Johns' is that I will be a teacher on the physical level to many people, and I will also be a teacher on the spiritual level to many people. When I heard this I said, as I often did, that I couldn't see it at that particular time but that I would hold onto it.

This is an approach that I would like to suggest to the reader in cases where you receive information from a physical, mental or spiritual source that doesn't seem to be right, or you cannot see/understand at this time. In these cases, hold onto the information and wait, if it turns out not to be right later on then it can be discarded, like the newspaper that was bought but not read. However, if you have held onto the information, rather than just dismissing it outright and further evidence comes to light in that particular area, you will then have to reassess whether the information was/is true or not.

Unsurprisingly, I now know he was completely correct.

My Teachers

Where possible I will try to avoid jumping around in the story to make it easier to follow. I say this, as I am not a writer but more of a talker.

I believe that unlike a lot of people who have been re-introduced to spirit, I was quite lucky. Both my mother Sally and my stepfather Lionel had knowledge in the spiritual area because they were sitting in spiritual circles themselves at that time. My first real experiences started at around the age of fourteen (possibly even younger).

One of my first memories is of an occurrence I wasn't able to explain and caused me a large problem. I was walking my dog one evening when I heard voices behind me, as if I had walked passed an open door where a party was going on and the sounds of the party were spilling out. The voices were not the voices of adults but young people, laughing and happy as if they were at a party and I had caught the sounds of that party.

I didn't take much notice and walked on a little further until the same thing happened again. I remember thinking that if I had just walked past a party in someone's house then how could the sounds be further down the road as well?

It was at that point that I started to think something was peculiar. I looked down at the dog and she had turned around and was looking behind us. I turned around as well so that both the dog and I were looking in the direction we had just come from. The noise stopped. I thought to myself "Right" and continued on down the road.

Hearing these voices occurred on quite a few occasions, not just while walking the dog but also when I was at home, and even when I was in the bath (which almost caused me to jump out of the bath when I heard voices!) In these cases too, it was almost like a party (without the music), with lots of muffled voices and conversation. There was nothing sinister to the vibration which was all quite light and non-threatening, but the simple fact of being alone in the bathroom and suddenly hearing the sounds of 20 people talking was enough to make me jump!

Fortunately for me I was very close to my stepfather Lionel, both he and my mother Sally, had experience in this area, so I was able to speak to them both. Lionel said, "That's interesting." To which I replied that it might sound interesting but I didn't think it was very *interesting*. Indeed I was starting to think I was going mad and hearing things.

At that point I could quite easily relate to anybody who had shared the experience of hearing things. It does, in my mind, make me wonder how many people have been diagnosed as mad or schizophrenic because they thought they were hearing things, when in reality they had instead stumbled across a higher level of communication.

At that time I was introduced to a medium, a very well-known lady, who I will just call Betty, whom I grew very close to before she passed over to spirit. My first teacher was my stepfather Lionel, as a member of a spiritual circle he was getting quite accurate information regarding my situation, Betty was the medium who was running that circle. The same Betty who later became my teacher.

Betty came to visit our house, and while my house saw many visitors to whom I showed the disinterest that is typical of most teenagers, I recall that Betty stood out from the other visitors. By the time of her visit I had become more interested in what my mother and stepfather were learning, as I was having some spiritual experiences myself.

I became more interested in the whole area, and although this was not something that I would ever admit to at the time, I made an effort to get home a little earlier for Betty's visits. My stepfather knew of my interest because I had mentioned my experiences to him, this was why he introduced me to Betty. I was about sixteen years old when I first met Betty, at this point I had been having spiritual experiences for a couple of years but had only just discussed them with my parents, who were then able to share their own experiences and knowledge.

I remember Betty asking me if she could give me a spiritual reading. I still find it amusing today when I recall my reply: "No!" I said, and added, "While I don't want to offend you since you are a friend of my mum and dad, I believe that all this is a load of rubbish!"

To this she said "Oh, that's great!" and laughed.

I was somewhat taken back by her laugh, because it is a laugh that I can only describe as a witch's cackle! I know she won't mind me saying that.

"Well, I can understand that", she said, "but if it is a load of rubbish, then nothing bad or good is going to come from it, so then what difference will it make?"

I had to agree that it would make no difference in my opinion at this time, but I added there was the issue of having to pay for the reading, to which she replied she would give me the reading for free.

At this point I felt I couldn't really say no since Betty had agreed to do the reading for free and as she had said, if it was a load of rubbish then no harm nor good would come of it. For my part all it meant was giving up a little of my free time.

My scepticism of mediumship only served to increase my amazement when she proceeded to discuss with me a number of issues in my life, that I had considered personal and not really discussed with anyone, including my parents.

The first point she made was regarding a uniform, which didn't make much sense to me since I was working as a manual labourer and didn't have a uniform, but it was something she kept returning to. Betty seemed to go into detail about the uniform, describing it as a black uniform with some white and silver on it and a flat peaked cap. I answered honestly that I really did not have a clue what she was talking about, while also thinking to myself that it really was a load of rubbish. She said that she would just leave the point with me, but she was adamant about it and would not take it back or change it.

Unsurprisingly, I now know that Betty had been completely right. This was something that not only did no one else know about, I didn't even know that it was about to happen. This was the arrival of my St Johns ambulance uniform (which was actually about 2 months early), which by the way, you guessed it, was black with white and silver, accompanied with a flat peak cap. The uniform arrived 3 days after Betty's visit. I was at that time, gob smacked.

Let's get back to the reading she was giving me.

"I'll tell you something I have got to do", Betty said, "Spirit have asked me to apologise to you."

At that time my understanding of spirit was that they were people who had died and were 'ghosts', as most people would describe them. I have since learned that spirit do not like to be referred to as 'ghosts', because a ghost should be considered as an after-image of someone who had once lived but has now died, whereas a spirit doesn't die. We all possess a spirit that is currently in a physical body and it is the spirit, the most important part, which moves beyond the physical being to the spiritual area when the human body dies. This separation or temporary release of a spirit from the physical body, can sometimes be achieved through meditation. Suffice to say my understanding of spirit now is completely different to what it was then.

Getting back to Betty's point,

"Spirit have asked me to apologise to you because they have come close to you and you have heard them, they didn't mean to unsettle you." She said.

My immediate reaction was one that I have since seen many times in other people: I looked over at Lionel assuming that he *must* have told Betty about the things I had told him. Lionel said he hadn't told her, but I wasn't prepared to believe that. However the things she would say as she continued with the reading, caused me to take her very seriously.

I had recently finished a painting of a tiger and while I would not consider myself a great artist by any stretch of the imagination, I like to paint occasionally when I have the time. I had not considered there was anything strange or remarkable about this tiger, but Betty said it was a slightly unusual picture of a tiger, because as well as the main picture subject of the tiger, there were flowers in it too.

I had to say I didn't find this particularly unusual, but I was becoming more drawn into what she was saying, this was largely because she was talking about things that I hadn't discussed with anyone else. I now know and totally believe, that despite scepticism of the time, Lionel had not given Betty information beforehand, she had no more need of such input

from people then, than I do at present. However at that time, I was sceptical and this allows me to entirely accept the scepticism of others, since I cannot fail to remember how I felt when I first encountered Betty.

“The tiger is you”, she said, “You’re sitting and waiting, looking at something outside the picture.”

Even though I had painted the picture of the tiger it was something that I hadn’t noticed. When I looked again it was indeed the case that the tiger was looking outside the picture.

Betty continued on to tell me that I had just broken up with my girlfriend, which was also true and was something else that I hadn’t discussed with Lionel, even though my girlfriend had recently been to my house for dinner. Betty told me that my girlfriend was very upset and the reason that we had broken up was my fear of love and commitment. Upon hearing this I took the usual defensive posture that most people take, insisting that I was not afraid and was unwilling to discuss the matter at all.

During the reading with Betty, another point she mentioned that I had not discussed with my parents, was that I kept seeing normal everyday objects changing out of proportion and perspective. Objects around me, such as a packet of cigarettes, would seem to become bigger, almost as if I had become smaller.

In addition to this, I was finding that I was also feeling things. This is not in the normal sense of emotional feelings or regular sensations, but quite often around people I would feel their true intentions even if their speech or behaviour didn’t match. I would often find myself talking to people and listening to what they were saying, but getting the certain feeling that the things they were saying were not what they really meant.

On top of this, I was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with my own behaviour. It was almost as if I was being watched by a caring parent, as indeed I was. In addition, I felt that someone else was watching me and I became aware of elements of my behaviour that I was not entirely happy with.

I became very uncomfortable so Betty said that she was not going to give me any more information. By this point Betty had given me a range of information regarding my work, people around me and other matters relating to my life, and this had taken place over the course of about 15 minutes. I thanked her and said that I didn’t want to take up any more of her time. The real reason was that she had come closer to the truth than I was comfortable with. Therefore, I did what most people do when dealing with the situation of coming close to their fears, which is to cut off the person who is getting too close, so as not to have to face any truths about their fears that they are not ready to deal with at that time.

This was my first introduction to Betty. I met her again after that because she would occasionally give spiritual readings/messages to people at my parent’s house. As well as this she was my stepfather’s teacher in the Spiritual Circle he attended, as Lionel acted as my first teacher, Betty came to act as my teacher as well.

A number of things happened after my first meeting with Betty that made me very glad to talk to her the next time I saw her.

As members of a spiritual circle my mother and stepfather had learned techniques which can be used to close oneself down spiritually/psychically (this is an area I will discuss in more detail later on under ‘Spiritual defence,’) however, upon trying the techniques my parents had learned and passed on to me, things only got worse!

I had already been hearing and sensing things, as well as my visual perception of objects becoming altered. This state then progressed on until I actually saw the figure of what looked like a nun in my bedroom. The figure was dressed in a Blue habit and had a very bright light around her every time I saw her, she always appeared in the top right corner of my bedroom.

Typically I would be half-asleep, I would then see the light and see her smiling at me. She was gesturing towards me, while there was no spoken communication I could sense her message: “Are you really going the right way John? Is that really the way to do things?”

When things reached this point I was only too pleased, as you might imagine, to talk to Betty on the next occasion.

I had also seen Betty working at spiritualist churches, through seeing Betty's demonstrations, I was more interested in the whole area. In addition, at this time I seemed to be getting a lot more spiritual input.

I became increasingly aware of a stronger and stronger feeling that the way I had been doing things in my life was not the right way to do things. This feeling coincided with what my parents had also been telling me for some time, but you probably know how we can all be at times when taking advice from our parents.

Events seemed to be reaching a point of focus. I have since spoken to people regarding their first experiences of receiving spiritual input, I consider myself fortunate that the experience wasn't as frightening for me as it seems to have been for other people, even if at the time I did feel like I was losing my mind!

I spoke to my parents and Betty about the nun that I had seen. I was understandably reluctant to discuss the matter with other people since I did not want them thinking I was mad, on top of thinking it myself! They asked me what it was I felt the nun was trying to communicate to me and I said, "she told me I had to do things differently in my life".

Their advice was to listen to what the nun was saying, see how I felt about what she was saying, and watch how things turned out.

In the meantime, my parents had continued with circle and both Lionel and my mother Sally, had started to give readings with Betty. From what I saw of the readings they gave people, they were both quite accurate in the things they gave but didn't have the level of detail in their readings, that Betty gave when she did a reading.

I found this aspect of my parents quite fascinating because I had often felt things around people but had assumed that everybody felt these things. I have since learnt that this is not the case! I approached my parents about getting into a circle myself, but I was told I was much too young and that a circle wouldn't take somebody of my age (I was 16/17 at that time). I must admit that I was a bit upset about the age issue since I felt that I was already getting input from spirit and therefore someone somewhere, should help and guide me in the correct way to proceed. I did not realise at this time that I was lucky to have Betty and my parents to offer me direction, that was the guidance I needed at the time.

I continued to learn from Lionel and Betty before I was able to join a circle, this went on for around a year or so. Around that time, I changed jobs. I had been working since the age of 16 as a manual labourer on a building site (having left school with no formal qualifications), but I then moved into the security industry.

Security work meant a number of changes in my life. Security work did not pay very well and the shifts were long, this meant I was working a lot and I wanted to spend my free time with my girlfriend. This meant that there was not much time for anything else in my life, so my plans to join a circle were put on hold for a while.

Working as a security guard gave me even more heightened spiritual experiences than I had already had! I would often work night shifts, sometimes alone, which meant I would find myself walking around old buildings, many of which have spirits that tend to move around or come close (in addition to those that wish to come close to give information).

I had a number of interesting experiences, many of which left the hairs on the back of my neck standing! I quite often had situations where I would feel there was someone in the building, from a security point of view it initially caused me problems because I found it difficult to distinguish whether the presence I was feeling was a physical body, or the presence of a spirit. It took me quite a long while before I was able to tell the difference between the two as I was not a member of a circle at that time, so I did not have the experience and training.

I did not find these experiences too disturbing, certainly not to the extent that I did not want to complete my patrols of the building. However, I knew of some guards who felt so disturbed in some of the buildings that they would either refuse to work in a certain building, or they wouldn't go on nightly patrols. In some cases, even the guard dogs would refuse to enter certain buildings.

One of the worst sites I worked on was a building where archaeological artefacts had been discovered. A dig had been carried out and they came across some kind of ancient

grave. The guard dogs refused to enter this site and most of the guards refused as well. I did go into this site and there was what I can best describe as a very heavy presence about the place. It was like an invisible fog giving the feeling that a strong vibration was moving around.

The security industry supplied me with many interesting experiences, both spiritually (such as in the examples I have just given) as well as through meeting many people. I was very fortunate that I met a lot of interesting people and I got a lot of help from them. My older brother had been working in security, on the strength of his introduction people tended to treat me well. When finding our paths we all need help sometimes, don't we?

In January 1984, while working in security, in a building near London Bridge, one of the major events in my life occurred. I think it was one of the saddest events in my life and like most people I don't think I handled it very well. My stepfather and first spiritual teacher Lionel, died.

It was my first personal experience of death. At that time I would have said that Lionel 'died', although I now have a different view of things. To me it truly felt as if someone had died, he was the first person in my life whose death had made me feel that a part of me had died as well.

To this day I consider him to be my first teacher, not just in spiritual areas, but also for his role as a parent guiding myself and my younger brother Nigel, from the somewhat dubious paths we were treading in our youth, to the paths we now find ourselves on.

The loss of my stepfather left me feeling that a part of me was missing and left me needing something in my life. I suppose as with many other people, it was this that prompted me to look further down my spiritual path. Some people may argue that events such as the loss of a loved one is the reason why people choose to start believing things, but I am a very open minded person and I always question everything. If spirit ask me to do something, I feel I should be able to question them and receive answers that are satisfactory to me. I think this is the approach that everyone should adopt in these matters; I am very sceptical of people who say "Just trust!" and "Just believe!" I like to be taught something and then see it for myself so that it feels true to me, not just based on what someone else has said is true.

Luckily for me I was back with my girlfriend at the time of Lionel's death, the hole that was left because of the loss of Lionel meant I was more receptive to the love that I could feel from her. It was then that I realised that love is not dependent on the title of the person such as a 'dad' or 'brother'. Love is something that can be shared with any person, irrespective of their gender, since it is not the physical aspect of love, but the true love of a person, that is the defining aspect of love.

It was the love of my girlfriend that helped me heal so quickly after losing Lionel. Also, because of the love I received and the way it helped me, I was able to try and help other people deal with Lionel's death.

The person who most obviously needed help was my mother. Something that I did not really taken into account at the time was that I had a partner, it was their love that helped heal the pain more quickly than it would have done otherwise. I don't know if I did the right thing in the way I helped my mum, but I feel I did the best I could at the time and I acted for the right reasons (whether this was seen to be the case or not).

In the period after Lionel's death, I had already been looking into spiritualism and had gone a few times with my mum to spiritualist churches. On occasions Lionel had come through the medium working on that occasion and spoke to us. It was around this time that I started to look more deeply into the whole area of spiritual development.

One of the aspects that I found difficult to understand at the time (although I have been in a similar situation since then and I have learned more from it), was that while my own faith was growing, as was the love for my girlfriend, I felt that my mum's faith and her love were diminishing. I now understand her loss of faith, since losing Lionel her partner, she had lost far more than I had.

I believe that my mother and I became very close. I also became much more truthful with myself and much more able to see and hear what was really going on around me, rather than what I merely wanted to see and hear. A consequence of my new found clarity, was that

my mother and I reached a point some years after Lionel's death, where we both had to decide that we were taking different paths, each for our own reasons.

Interestingly, I had never met my mother's mother - Rose, as I had never met my biological father's father - John. At times when I was in church both my grandfather John and my grandmother Rose came through the medium with messages to help with things between my mother and I. Unfortunately, I was not at a stage of spiritual development where I could use the information in the way that I would be able to now. I probably did not make a very good job of fixing the distance that was growing between mum and I, but certainly did not mean to cause her anymore pain.

Just before Lionel's death, he had done his first spiritual church service where he assisted Betty, he gave his first public demonstration of spiritual communication. Betty was around our family at the time of Lionel's death, as I moved through this painful period I began to spend more time with Betty. Betty occasionally came to our flat and gave spiritual readings/messages to people who were interested or who needed guidance. One of the more interesting messages I got from spirit was from my deceased step father Lionel. At that time, I had married my girlfriend and we were living in a flat, we had just had our first child, Sarah. The message from Lionel was that we would be living in the house where my brothers and I had grown up with Lionel and my mother, and that we would eventually buy the house.

At the time the idea seemed very far-fetched to me, so I said that I couldn't see it but I would hold onto it. It is no surprise to me now that we are indeed living in the house he said we would be living in after my mum agreed to swap the house with our flat, in recent years we have bought the property (or will have in about twenty years time). Thanks Lionel and Mum.

Other information that came from Lionel, such as the way I was feeling about things and events that were happening around me, were very accurate. So on the strength of this correct information, I decided not to dismiss the parts of the message that I couldn't see in my life at that time. As I often say to people now, if some of the information you receive is right but some parts don't make sense, then hold onto the parts that don't seem to fit and see what becomes of them later. Sometimes the information may be so far into the future that it simply doesn't make sense at the time the information is given, or your memory of a certain situation is slightly different to the person/spirit giving the message to the medium.

I tried again to get a place in a circle (or spiritual development circles to give them their full title). Betty intervened on my behalf and introduced me to a couple of very well-known mediums, I then got the offer to join a couple of circles. However, even though I met the people she recommended and was offered a place in both circles, I got the strongest feeling that I shouldn't join either of them, despite the fact that I had been looking to join a circle for some time.

The following week Betty contacted me and asked how I had got on. I told her that I had spoken to both the mediums she had introduced me to and had been offered a place in both circles. But I really felt (and it was not something I could explain beyond the strong feeling I had), that I should not sit in either of these circles. Betty said she had been told the same thing by spirit and said she had another option. Betty took me along to Lewisham Independent Spiritual Church where I was introduced to the chair person and members of the committee, who were all very helpful, they arranged for me to join a circle, I believe only at Betty's request.

When I joined circle for the first time, I was not in the 'beginners' circle, where most newcomers would be placed, but instead I was put in established circle. I was not told the reason for this, but the people who made this decision must have had a reason for doing it. The reason that I joined the circle at Lewisham Independent Spiritual Church, was that Betty was not planning to do any circles herself for the foreseeable future, unfortunately she was becoming quite ill. At the time I didn't quite know the extent of the illness, or should I say, I didn't want to see or feel it. Fortunately I got the opportunity to have many long discussions with her during the time I was sitting in my first circle.

The circle I joined was being run by a woman called Irene, she became my third teacher. Although I had wanted to join a circle, my first evening there was very very

uncomfortable. I was not uncomfortable because of any bad vibrations I felt, but the vibration in the circle made me feel uncomfortable because it was so friendly. Everyone seemed to be very open, friendly, and willing for me to join in, and this in itself made me uncomfortable. This shows where I was spiritually at this time, which was not very open.

Irene was someone I immediately felt both drawn to like a magnet, yet repelled at the same time. I later came to understand that the good part of me, the part that was to grow, was the part that was truly drawn to this person, this would later develop into a love that was very close to the love I felt for my stepfather Lionel. The part of me that was repelled was the half that saw a woman, a very strong spiritual woman, who was not going to tolerate any of my own or anybody else's nonsense, or so I thought at the time.

I had asked spirit when teaching me, that if I could not learn a lesson in a gentle spiritual way at the time, that I be given the lesson in a harder more direct way. I was not looking for a quick or easy route, but at the time, I felt that if I was given the lessons I needed, as directly as a brick hitting me on the forehead, then I was more likely to learn the lesson and quicker than I would with a softer approach. It is not that I feel the philosophers and gentle spiritual types in this world haven't got a message worth listening too, but I did not want to get lost in the philosophy of loving everybody and everything, allowing my truth to get lost along the way.

While I was with my third teacher Irene my previous teacher Betty, died. I use the word 'died' only because I used it to describe the death of my stepfather, but I am now quite happy to say that Betty 'passed to spirit' rather than died.

Lionel has been back to me many times and I took great comfort from feeling his presence with me. I could feel when he had been around, he had also spoken through mediums to me and on one occasion I actually saw him. All of this meant that I found Betty's passing far less painful than I did when Lionel passed over to spirit.

Betty's death wasn't a sad event for me, although I was sad for her family and somewhat selfishly for myself because I missed her company, but I was pleased that she was no longer suffering. In addition, I still had my third teacher Irene whom I could talk to about my feelings, this also made Betty's passing over less painful. I believe Betty knew she was about to leave me and therefore handed me over to Irene as my new teacher.

At this point you might be thinking that I am something of a dangerous person to have as a student. Everyone who starts teaching me seems to die (or pass to spirit)! However, I am glad to say that at the time of writing this Irene, my third teacher is very much alive and well.

Your Teachers

One of the first things most people ask is: “How important is your spiritual teacher?”

If you were to think of any subject, whether it was learning carpentry, painting, sewing or any area you like, if you looked at what the teacher was doing and didn't like or agree with it, then there wouldn't be much point in taking that teacher's class. Naturally as children we may have had teachers whose approach we disliked, but did not really have the freedom to choose an alternative. However, as adults we have more freedom to choose our teachers based on our own values and standards. A spiritual teacher in my opinion is a person who guides you to your path, then helps you to understand the way by their example and your own experiences.

If you then think about a class, for argument's sake in martial arts, where you wanted to learn Judo and the particular techniques of Judo, there would be little point in attending a Karate class. Likewise a Judo class would not be the best place to learn Kung Fu. Whilst these points may seem glaringly obvious it is interesting to consider how little time and thought some people spend when finding a teacher of spiritual progression.

When it comes to 'spiritual things' a lot of people can relate to priests and other religious figures, because of their standing in some religious hierarchy a lot of people will place such figures automatically in a teaching position. I recommend the approach I used for people I have regarded as my teachers, I watched them; I watched how they lived, listened to what they said and then felt for myself whether I agreed with what they were doing. I asked myself whether the way they were doing things was something I wanted to take on board in my life.

Within any subject there will be many teachers and many opinions, many of these teachers and opinions will disagree with one another. At the end of the day it is the direction that you feel you want to go in, that is important to you.

As I have said, I believe the first thing you should do with any prospective teacher is to watch them. You might want to join a class, or in this case a spiritual circle, under the agreement that you can attend for a few weeks and see whether you feel comfortable with the circle. You may also want to check that the other members of the circle, including the teacher, are comfortable with you. Listen to the things that the teacher is telling their class or circle, you might hear an art teacher telling the students to clean their brushes only to see that the teacher has not cleaned their brushes.

I have seen teachers not following the basic rules they have set for the others in their circles or groups. Watch, listen and then feel. We have all had the experience where someone is telling us something and what they are telling us sounds quite believable, but something just doesn't quite feel right. It's in cases like these that your feelings can help you. Do you *feel* you are with the right teacher?

Eventually, you will be able to communicate on a spiritual level, hopefully you will progress to a stage where you get some quite direct input into your life and your path. In time, you will be able to ask direct questions and get accurate feelings and/or answers. Occasionally this will lead to awkward situations where you believe and trust most of what your teacher says, but there will be some points you disagree on. You should feel that you can question, debate and possibly even ask for an explanation on the point that you cannot understand, as this is part of your progression. Remember though, a spiritual teacher may be teaching someone else on a different level, but ask your question you must.

The influence a teacher can have on you as a student, means that the decision you make about who to accept as your teacher is very important. You may need to speak to your teacher about some issue or problem that you may have, but do you feel you are able to approach your teacher? Will your teacher fob you off with excuses or deal with the issues that you present? Do you feel close enough to your teacher to know who they really are? But bare in mind the problem could be with your ability to ask for help and be open, not just whether the teacher is approachable, this is a matter of balance and truth for you both.

Many people say they do spiritual work and it may indeed be the case that they do. However it is often the case that if you are able to get closer to such people you will see that *they* may teach, but the people around them such as their friends and family, don't actually believe in what they do. To me it would seem strange that a person who is supposedly living a spiritual life, only applies that to *part* of their life.

I recall a man I knew who was a teacher (so he said), yet none of his family or anyone around him seemed aware or involved in the spiritual work he did. It was totally separate. It was almost as if on Sundays he was a medium and a teacher, but for the rest of the week he was someone else, like he had two separate characters and the 'spiritual' character had a part-time role once a week.

This kind of behaviour mirrors behaviour I have seen in many martial arts teachers who talk of inner calmness and control, when in reality they are anything but calm and controlled. I have seen such people get into conflicts and fights that were dealt with in a manner that was totally at odds with the values they professed to hold and teach. On the other side of this, I had a couple of excellent teachers who were grossly underestimated by the various martial arts associations to which they belonged.

I feel a teacher's position is to absorb the things that they themselves have been taught and then to apply this experience in life. After this, having lived through the experience, the teachers are able to add their own dimension to it and present the knowledge to their students, not merely repeating what they were taught, but expanding it and presenting it in their own way. Things do get out of date or change, what was correct ten years ago, or even one year ago, may not necessarily be accurate now, for example consider how history books are constantly being revised in the light of new information.

For this reason I feel it is critical that you are able to go back to your teacher to discuss any changes you feel have occurred, or to address areas where you feel short of knowledge or ability. This can be considered re-training, where one returns to one's teacher to update skills or add new skills. However, when you try to talk to your teacher, you may find yourself in the unfortunate position where the teacher is either unwilling to talk to you at the appropriate level, or talking to the teacher reveals inadequacies within the teacher. This is a situation I have found myself in previously, some readers may have either been in such a position or will find themselves there in the future.

When you try to talk to some teachers, when I refer to 'teachers' one should remember that there are many teachers in many areas of life, you may find their manner and behaviour not quite in keeping with their supposed status. I have met school teachers, who despite their vast academic knowledge appear to have no common sense at all. Quite often they are not able to see things in their own lives that are immediately apparent to the people around them. We see such professional teachers as 'experts', but many experts spend most of their time learning more and more about less and less.

I always like to feel that as a teacher, any of my students (or even just people I talk to who don't regard me as their teacher), should feel able to come back and talk to me or discuss a particular point. However, I have learnt that regardless of how fair or open one is as a teacher, there will always be those people who will not come back to talk, worse still, such people seem to have a great deal to say about the teacher behind their back.

Bearing this in mind, I feel that each student owes it to their teacher to give feedback. If you are a student, do you feel that your teacher is still doing what they should be doing? Has the teacher strayed slightly from the path they were on? Is the teacher struggling to cope with some event in their life to the extent that it is affecting their role as a teacher? The difficulty for the student, particularly if the student feels their own knowledge and ability is lacking, is that they may not feel in a position to offer such feedback for fear that it will be seen as criticism of the teacher.

I have had situations that have personally caused me massive problems, but I accepted the input of the people around me and took on board what they had to say, I used my feelings and when I was able, I asked spirit. In such cases I knew that the people close to me were right but I didn't want to see it at that time. I have also been in the position where I had to speak to my teacher who at the time was Ireene. Unfortunately, one of Ireene's friends

called Nick who himself was a Spiritual teacher, for reasons best known to him at that time (and now known to me), decided that he was going to make an effort to pull me towards him as one of his students, away from Ireene. When I pointed this out to Ireene, I was not very popular. Eventually Ireene did come to see the truth of what I had been saying and an apology was given. However, the timing was unfortunate since Nick then died. Again I will use the word 'died' in its typical sense, since I subsequently learned that the only real 'death' is when love dies.

When you approach your teacher and get a response based in emotion rather than truth and balance, then one is left in a difficult position. In such cases, as in all other cases, you have to do what you *feel* is right. When you are choosing a teacher it is important for you to see for yourself that the teacher grows. Your teacher should learn and grow spiritually from the situations they encounter in their life, they should not be so caught up in their teaching that they teach from a single position from which they never move. When a teacher is tied up in the dogma of what they teach, then that teacher is standing still and their students will pass them by. This can cause many problems, for both teacher and students alike.

I believe I have been fortunate in the teachers I have had, but I also found it very difficult because I became quite close to some of my teachers and now, due to *their* behaviour, I find myself at a distance from them. I based my decisions on the truth, when I had doubts I would check with spirit. A mistake I made was to assume that all other people who considered themselves teachers in spiritual matters did likewise.

Having looked at some of the issues I feel are important in finding a teacher, I would like to emphasise a point again. If you do join a spiritual circle, even temporarily, you should *feel* how things are going and consider whether the teacher is the right sort of teacher for you. If it doesn't feel right for you or the teacher isn't right for you, then move on. I was told that someone might well be the best teacher in the world, but if you can't agree or get on with who they are, then they are not going to be the best teacher for you.

Look carefully at your teacher, use your feelings and see if the teacher actually *does* the things they say, or merely appears to act as they speak. I hope that you will all be able to meet teachers who can teach you as much as I have been taught.

Your inner circle

Circles are usually run either through individual teachers, or spiritual churches, the cost of these can vary like any other course. Prices range from a couple of pounds a week for an hour circle session, up to as far as a couple of hundred pounds for a circle course, with a course being twelve weeks and each weekly session would generally be two hours long. With a circle, as with most other things, you pay what you are happy paying and simply paying more, is not a guarantee of quality.

I have found that most circles run for a fixed period of 8-12 weeks and then take a break, but there are those circles that run indefinitely with members changing over time. My guides have advised me that an indefinite course for a circle is not the best way to do things. The members in the circle will be exposed to a lot of spiritual information from the teacher and directly from spirit, the break after a 10-12 week course allows time for the circle members to take that information away and absorb it.

One of the first things I was taught was that although we are all at different levels it does not mean that anyone is better than anyone else. All members of a spiritual circle, including the teacher, are equal as people. We are all answerable to the same rules and we should all be held accountable to the same practices of the circle. It is unfortunate that some teachers appear to forget this; particularly those teachers with academic qualifications seem prone to forgetting that the student is equal to them, also that a teacher has a duty to treat individuals, as individuals.

As a teacher I understand how hard that must be because I have also taught children. In a circle, just as in a school classroom, if there is a disruptive influence then it is the teacher's responsibility to sort it out. Something that people often get confused about is what exactly a 'circle' is, within this book when we say 'circle,' we are referring to a spiritual development circle.

At its simplest level the circle is just that, a circle of people gathered for a joint purpose. The members of the circle will link physically by holding hands, normally at the beginning and end of the circle, which will in turn help them to link spiritually. The purpose of a circle is firstly for relaxation, meditation and then if desired and able, spiritual communication. This can simply be meditation to relax to deal with the stresses of life; a meditation circle, or meditation to gain spiritual input, either for ourselves to help us deal with things in our life, or possibly to even get information that can help someone else with their life.

There are also healing circles where there focus is on, you guessed it - healing. There are also spiritual help circles, these are normally closed circles for experienced mediums and are invitation only.

The main purpose of being in any circle is to sort out the things in *your* life that *you* need to sort out. I have heard quite a few people looking for a circle because they have been told that they could become a spiritual medium. However, for many of the people who say this, I see that there are many things that they need to sort out in their own life before they try and help anybody else with theirs. Such people should use help from spirit to get things right or better in their own life, long before they do anything else. Even if such people became mediums and were able to give help and advice to others, then most people who looked at them honestly would wonder how the advice can be right if the medium hasn't sorted their own problems. A case of 'physician heal thyself'. This links back to my earlier comments about finding a teacher that will allow you close enough to really see if they live their life how they guide others to.

Generally speaking, you should feel comfortable in the circle and you should be able to reach a level of relaxation, that is right for you at the time. Once you have passed this level of relaxation you should then aim to go beyond it to what I choose to call the 'neutral level'. There are many ways to achieve this state, which is simply a more advanced state of relaxation. Within each circle the approach taken by the teacher will vary, and the approach of each individual within the circle will also vary. Many people join a circle initially to help them achieve a state of relaxation, to this end some people find it helpful to listen to music

(and the mood of the music will of course affect different people in different ways). One of the benefits of music for relaxation is that it allows the brain something to focus on and allows the mind the freedom to drift to a more relaxed state. This is similar to the position many of us find ourselves in with our jobs, where certain aspects of the job can almost be carried out on auto-pilot, without a great deal of conscious thought required. I have heard it related, although some people may strongly disagree, that many people find ironing clothes quite relaxing because their brain is occupied with the activity and it lets their mind drift off onto other things, others have shared this experience while they are painting, although I am not sure they drift to the same place.

Basic Meditation

The aim of relaxing in meditation is to reach a point where we are aware of ourselves but not necessarily thinking *about* ourselves or thinking about the rent, the shopping, the work we have to do tomorrow. Ideally all the daily clutter that fills our brains, in particular our problems, are left outside of the relaxed state. The aim is to relax to the extent that we can reach the part of our brain that I will call the 'mind' (although neurologists might disagree on the term), to try and separate the brain and the mind. I like to think of it as telling the brain to have a rest and let the mind run with more freedom than it normally has a chance to in daily life. Another way that I was taught to think of this, which I found quite a useful, is that as your about to reach a level for relaxation, it's as though you slide a card between your brain and your mind while meditating, as if to separate them during meditation, you then remove the card when leaving the mediation.

Music can be a good method to help you relax when first learning to meditate. If you try to meditate without music as a first approach to meditation, you may find that the brain is not very happy to relinquish even a small amount of control, it will make great efforts to interrupt and disturb the peaceful state you are trying to achieve.

I find that a good way to drop into a meditative state is to initially link the physical body into the act, as in many martial arts and relaxation systems, breathing exercises are used. One of the ways that I was shown and have found to be quite effective, is to take a very deep breath in, then as I let the breath out, attach the stresses of the day onto that breath and let it act as an outlet for the tension that may have built up, if need be I can do this over several breathes. This technique works for a lot of people, try it for yourself. This type of breathing technique is also used in stress and anger management.

A small safety note here is that if you are going to be relaxing to this level then you should not do so in the bath or in situations where your concentration is needed (such as operating a machine), since it is obviously dangerous. It sounds silly to say this, but as with all the contents of this book I have known it to be tried, so I do say.

When doing this you should be sitting comfortably with your eyes closed, feet placed flat on the floor and your hands resting upon your legs. As the breath is let out you might want to let go a small sigh, not of resignation but of relief, as you feel some of the weight of the day expelled with the breath. As you let the breath out you should feel your shoulders drop and your body should feel a little lighter.

You should ideally be in a comfortable and safe environment, sat comfortably but not slouching, with your eyes closed and your head held up, not flopping forward. The idea is mainly for relaxation of the mind so it is not necessary for the body to be relaxed to the same extent, so you wouldn't want to be sprawled out in an armchair.

Most people find that they need two or three deep breaths to drop to a relaxed state. If you haven't managed to drop by three breaths then this is not a failure, but you should find that you have relaxed, even just a little. For the time being this will be your practice point, even being able to relax a little is a step forward compared to many, who are not able to relax at all. If I were to ask most people if they are able to sit still and think of nothing, a large number of them would hastily insist that they can. I have actually tried this. I asked such a group of people to close their eyes and think of nothing at all, but I asked that as soon as they

found themselves thinking of something they were to open their eyes as the exercise would be over for them.

Unsurprisingly, most of them were not able to do it. They found, like most people do, that the brain is unwilling to stop thinking about things, even the most tedious day-to-day occurrences; such as where you left the car keys, even for a very short period of time.

For people like this, practice would be necessary to get the brain used to giving up some control in their life. However, these are also the sort of people who would benefit most from being able to switch down, to quietly and gently lower their vibration to a point where they are able to properly relax.

With practice most people should be able to relax with three deep breaths. Once you have achieved this point of relaxation, it can almost be compared to letting go a big sigh and sinking into a nice warm bath. Most people are able to physically relate to the relaxing feel of slipping into a warm bath, but the relaxation I am talking about is not merely physical, it is for the brain, mind and body.

If you have managed to reach the level of relaxation where you could call yourself neutral, then well done, this alone will help you in your life. You are then ready to link to the 'spiritual internet' so to speak, but that's up to you. If you are ready to look at getting some spiritual input I would suggest that you join a circle.

I believe that the first stage before starting a spiritual meditation is to say a prayer to whoever or whatever you believe in, God, or the spiritual force (regardless of any religion you may or may not have). This is not a religious act but simply one of respect. I am not a god, but if you came to my door and knocked, then stood there without introducing yourself and stating your intention, I might well ask you "What do you want?" If of course you are one of the many people who say you do not believe in good/positive or bad/negative energy, then there is no need to ask for protection or help is there? However, my personal prayer is to ask for protection, guidance and teaching, this is generally done by the teacher leading the circle, this is not necessary for a relaxation circle.

I normally start my spiritual development meditation by asking for help and guidance at a level that I am ready to understand, I also ask for protection in case there are any non-helpful spirits around at that time. I would normally suggest that if you are going to go beyond this point in a meditation to get some level of spiritual input, then it is best to do so under the guidance of a teacher in a circle. I do know people who have taken this path of progression by themselves without the assistance of a teacher, but it can be very difficult to make sense of the input that you may get. I found that along my path it was difficult to make sense of much of the information I got, until I met my teacher and then my own spiritual guides.

The Blackboard Method

One of the methods I try with students in my own circles is as follows. Once you have dropped into your meditation, (I only use the description 'dropped' as this is how students have described it to me), which is to say you are in a fully relaxed state and your brain is not bothering you with daily trivia, then imagine you have a large school blackboard in front of you.

Your eyes are closed so you are not trying to see this blackboard with your eyes but instead you are using your mind to visualise the blackboard. How you may first come to 'see' things may be via the blackboard method, although an important point to note is that you should not consider anything that you see to be 'silly'. You may see a moving image, or a drawing in either cartoon or classic style that seems to have no significance to you at all, you may be embarrassed to say anything about it to somebody else because it doesn't seem to make sense, I was taught to say what I saw and only what I saw, do not dress it up, be as truthful as you can.

An experience I recall while in my first circle, was that when in my meditation and visualising a blackboard, I saw a chalk drawing of a sailing boat that started in the top left hand corner and moved down towards the middle of the blackboard. As it got down towards

the middle of the board I could see what looked like smoke coming from the boat –there wasn't a hand drawing the smoke on the board it simply appeared on the blackboard. I saw a little matchstick man (which I found quite comical), trying to pull something that appeared to be a tube but nothing was happening, the matchstick man repeated this with other tubes but nothing happened.

This image then cleared away and I remember thinking to myself, "Right! Super!" Eventually we all returned from our meditations, this took me a long time as I found it difficult to relax at that time, therefore it took me a long time both to reach a state of meditation and to return from it afterwards, like many things though this improves with practice. I then sat waiting for our teacher who asked us to tell the others what we had received in the meditation.

One of the things this teacher always said was "We don't want any painters and decorators." What she meant by this was, if you receive some information in a meditation then simply present it as you got it, without adding anything to it. If you saw a woman in a dress then what you saw was a woman in a dress, if you didn't see or feel a blue dress then don't say that you saw a woman in a blue dress. This is one of the main points I now teach as well.

Bearing in mind what the teacher had said about not embellishing the things we receive, I sat waiting and wondering how I was going to present what I received in my meditation. I was still struggling with my situation, as a somewhat manly man feeling very uncomfortable in the company of eleven women, I had to tell them what I had seen in my meditation. I felt awkward and silly but braced myself for what I had to do. I decided the best way was simply to say what I saw, since trying to give an interpretation of it would have been difficult, as I didn't know how to interpret it at all.

I described what I had seen in my meditation not knowing at all what reaction to expect from the group. One lady put her hand up and said, "I can accept that."

I looked at her and said "What?"

She replied, "What you've just got."

I expressed some doubt, but she again confirmed she could accept it. My teacher commented that I looked surprised, I said that I didn't feel that what I had got was for anybody in particular and that it was just something that came to me in the meditation. The lady asked the teacher if she could explain and the teacher let her do so.

"We have just bought a boat", she said.

"That's nice" I replied.

"A sailing boat", she continued, "and you aren't going to believe this because you've only been here a short while, but that was very accurate. The boat is on the river Medway and your boat moved midway, as you were telling it I thought to myself 'that is our boat, it's moved Medway'".

"I didn't get anything like that" I said.

At that point I was thinking to myself that it is possible to make things fit if you really want them to fit. I thought that in this instance the lady was trying too hard to make something from my meditation fit in her life.

I let her continue. "My husband and I have just had a discussion about the safety equipment on the boat, a heated discussion I should say." She said. "One of the things we discussed was safety flares, because they are expensive. We got flares with the boat but were told that we couldn't be sure if they are any good or not."

I commented that it was not a good idea to have flares that may or may not work, since you would only find out when it was too late. "What you have just got in your meditation," she said, "has confirmed for me that we are getting new flares for the boat."

As you might well imagine I was quite taken back by this, but it does serve as a small example of something that I got using the blackboard method, that I had visualised during my meditation.

I can give other examples of images that other people in circle have got when trying to use the blackboard method. A lady in circle said she saw images of farmyard animals; cows and horses on her blackboard, but it wasn't like someone had crudely drawn them on the

board but rather they were detailed images that were animated and moving on the blackboard. She said she found it fascinating to simply watch them moving around the board.

However, together with the images of the farmyard animals she said that she also got a very strong feeling that it was something to do with an anniversary of some sort. Unsurprisingly, she found the anniversary part hard to understand and she did not know whom the message was intended for. The teacher started talking to her about what she had seen, I added that I had feeling that this lady had seen something after the farmyard animals but had not mentioned it.

The lady admitted that she had seen something else and that it was a crab.

At that point another lady in the circle said, "Well that's just clinched it! That message was for me."

We asked her if she would care to explain and she agreed. "I had an aunt who has passed away and who used to own a farm. We would visit the farm as children and pester my mum and dad for animals; as children do! So what my aunt did was she bought us some toy animals and we used to take them back to see her, in fact I still have a couple of them now."

She continued, "It's actually the anniversary today, of her passing to spirit. But the thing that really clinched it for me is that my birth sign is Cancer and the sign for Cancer is a crab."

I was still a little sceptical so I asked the circle, "Just out of interest, is there anyone else in the circle whose birth sign is Cancer?"

Another lady said that she was a Cancer too so I asked her if she could have taken any of the message as being for her to which she said "Not at all, it didn't make any sense to me at all."

This experience showed me, together with the lady that received the message, that simply because a message makes little or no sense to the person receiving it, that doesn't mean that there is not meaning in it for someone else. Also, the person who was able to take the message was cheered up by it, this made the lady who saw the animals in her meditation feel good for having passed on that message.

Advanced Meditation

The other method we used in meditation was, for a few people, a little more difficult to get used to, but much more fulfilling and not as flat as the blackboard approach. I will describe this second approach now.

The initial stages where you reach the calm state required for meditation are the same as for the blackboard approach; in fact in this section it is only the method we will use to receive messages that will be different i.e. no black board. All the actions of dropping down, sitting comfortably, the breathing and so on will be the same. So after 3 deep breathes the agitation, negativity and business of the day are exhaled, you should then be at a point of calmness. My teacher Ireene always used to say, try and leave your troubles at the door before entering circle.

For the second technique you will use the final breath to let yourself drop. Imagine, if you will, that with the final breath out you will drop down through the floor. If you like, you can consider yourself to be dropping levels, from the busy active brain-state of normal life, down to a much calmer and receptive mind-state. Some people would argue that you are not 'dropping' to communicate with spirit, you are actually going to a higher level not a lower one, which is true since you would be going to a higher level of communication. However, from our normal mental state it seems most people feel the need to drop *down* to relax, before we can communicate upwards, this is another example of a physical link to a spiritual level.

Having dropped down on the third breath you should find yourself in a state that we will call *nothingness*. This is not intended to be all mystic and otherworldly, but simply that the state your mind has reached should be such that there is nothing there. Instead of the black board you are in a place of neutral darkness. This might sound alarming to some people, but this is not a dark place in a scary or uncomfortable sense, but in the sense that you don't look

around you but feel around you instead, you can feel but there is nothing to see. A better description is to call this place the *neutral level*.

It could be described as follows. Imagine it is a very hot day and you are very hot, uncomfortably hot, then you walk inside to a cool corridor that seems quite dark. In this cool corridor you are not uncomfortable with the dark, it is merely neutral. However, as I have said, it is a state for the mind and not the brain, but the brain will try and interfere with this neutral level by churning out thoughts about daily routine such as forgetting to buy some meat on the way home, or the fact that the tyre on the car needs to be checked but you still haven't done it. To be at the neutral level you need to tell your brain to be quiet because you need the space and time for the mind, an extra bonus is that it gives your brain a rest and can reduce stress, but the brain will fight you as if its sometimes scared to give up any control.

Once you have dropped to the neutral level you shouldn't really be aware of anything under your feet, anything above, below or anywhere around you. It may be the case that you are not aware of any particular orientation of your body at all, which is to say you may not be able to tell if you are in a standing position, sitting or even upside down! You may have noticed when you are walking in the physical world there are many physical aspects that you notice; although they are so commonplace that the brain usually ignores them. For example, when you walk you will rock slightly as you step, or if you look to the side you will normally catch the view of your own nose, these are obviously caused by our physical presence in the world. When you are in a meditation you generally will not experience any of these physical traits, you don't normally see your body.

When you have managed to reach this level you should find the experience very relaxing. It is not necessary to have communication simply because you are in the neutral place. It is possible to use this place quite simply as that, a place that is neutral from the daily matters that tax the brain and wear us down.

Spirit are not in a rush to communicate with you normally, nor to force lessons upon you if you are not ready, they will guide and teach you if that is what you require and more importantly, if you *ask*. You *have* to ask. Spirit are not in the habit of interfering and encroaching into people's private lives. I have not known spirit to do this, but there are exceptions where a person under direction from spirit may approach someone who has not directly asked spirit for help and guidance. Such cases are very unusual and spirit will only do this if the situation requires drastic measures. If you happened to be sitting next to someone who is a spiritual medium or training to be one, they should not be constantly giving you messages, although a psychic medium might.

The good thing about the neutral level, or the bad thing as some people have said to me, is the nature of the experience when you get input or messages come to you. Using the blackboard approach, if you where to see some water then you may see a representation in terms of wavy lines, but in the neutral place water will feel like water and the sensation will be that of being in water. You will feel the temperature change, the current and the strength, you will feel your fear, what ever that fear may be, with the same all round depth.

Imagine then if you are someone who cannot swim and is afraid of the water. If you are using the blackboard and you see a representation of water, you might be mildly worried by it, but in the neutral place the experience would be one of being in water. The neutral place is a very much a place that lets you deal with your fears, do not try to face your fears alone.

For example one of my students had a fear of water, in fact to say so is to understate the case! If she was around water and you were to flick water at her and it caught her nose or mouth she would panic, although I am glad to say that she is now learning to swim. However, even with what I do and who I am, it was difficult to get her to trust me, to believe that I wasn't going to let anything happen to her when she was learning to swim. It could be quite hurtful at times, but such was the extent of the fear that it was not so much a lack of trust in me, but more the grip that the fear had over her, so I had to learn to put my emotional feelings away to help her with this fear.

The point here is that one should never underestimate the power that fear has over people. You should never mock or belittle someone for their fear, since what may seem trivial or silly to one person, may literally be a matter of life or death to someone else. A fear of

something is as real as anything else we consider 'real'. For this student the neutral place was a place where she could experience water, it meant that she was able to challenge her fear within her meditation in the spiritual area, as well as in the physical area in a swimming pool, lake, river and sea, in doing this she has also challenged her fear in the mental area.

Another way of looking at the neutral level is that it gives you a blackboard that completely encapsulates you. This is not a flat surface but a complete field of vision and feeling. Something that the blackboard method is not as good at showing for example, is trying to pick up the vibration that someone is watching you. If you were to try this using the blackboard approach then you might see a pair of eyes on the blackboard watching you, but then you might consider that someone is looking at you from the front, whereas in the neutral place you can get some idea of where someone is watching you, possibly from a distance.

Most people have had an experience where they have felt someone is watching them, the feeling is not 'flat' like a blackboard because quite often you can feel the direction from which someone is watching you. Likewise, in the neutral place you can get the feeling where someone is moving outside your normal field of vision, but you can also feel their presence.

Through meditating in the neutral place I have learned some of my main lessons and dealt with some of the bigger issues in my life. As I said before, there is nothing wrong with using the neutral place simply for relaxation, and unless you invite spirit in and achieve the correct level for communication, then they will not just come into your neutral place. It is not spirits' intention to scare anybody, rather to try and help.

When you are able to reach the neutral level using the meditation approach I have outlined, as many people are able to do, then you should notice a change in your life. You should be calmer and more in control, you should have more of an idea where you want to go in life; whereas it is possible that at times in the past you may not have had any idea where your life was going. When people get stressed in their life it is like walking in a fog, as you get more and more wound up by events and circumstances, the more lost you become.

If you have reached a stage of mediation where you feel ready for communication with spirit and it is your intention to do so, then you have to be aware that you do not specify the level that you will be taught at, that will be decided by your teacher/spiritual guides. If I was to ask each reader of this book to describe a word, draw a picture or paint a cupboard, then it is likely that each person would do the job in a different manner and to a different level. It is the same with meditation. It depends on what stage of development you are on in your life and what level you are ready to communicate on.

If you have tried the blackboard approach and found it successful then you will probably want to move onto the neutral level approach, where you will get more than just images as it is a 360 degree experience, you are much more immersed in it. The advanced method may not necessarily make much more sense at first, but you should progress onto a point where the advance input you get does make sense. For example with the black board method, you might see the image of a car, a red car with a 'sold' sign on it, whereas within the neutral level you may well be in the car which you drive to a car dealership, only to find that someone in the circle has just sold their car and is planning to buy a new one.

Moving through a circle is very interesting because of the amount of things that people get told. Things such as anniversaries and spirits wishing to be remembered by other people are just some of the communications that go on, but there are hundreds of different ways in which communications can be represented.

What is also interesting, is that the way you may remember something is not necessarily how someone else may remember the same thing. For example, you may get a message of a jeep going through deep water and a nice pair of high-heeled shoes getting all muddy, but when you offer this out to the circle there may be no-one who can take the message. Sometimes you get messages, or images, but at the time of getting the message no-one is able to see that it is meant for them.

However at a later point, the week after maybe, someone may come and tell you that they have remembered an event and that the message was for them. The person might recall a time when an uncle now in spirit, was taking them somewhere and they got stuck in the

middle of a low level water crossing and had to get out of the car, which spoiled their shoes. The anniversary of the uncle passing into spirit was what caused the message to be passed on.

The nature of the communications from meditations can range from things that are very simple, to things that are very intricate and presented in great detail, but sometime no-one seems able to take as being for them. At a point where no-one seems able to take anything from a meditation or message, then it is the role of the teacher to say what they feel or have been told by spirit.

It is possible, that firstly, the person that the message is for is not here. Secondly, someone isn't remembering the situation at this time and therefore isn't taking it that the message is for them, or lastly, that you have gotten certain parts of the interpretation on the meditation wrong. Cases where the meditation is not clear to you, or the teacher feels you have added to or have left parts out because you are unsure what to say, is why the role and guidance of the teacher is very important.

Another way communication may come through is symbols, and the difficulty with this lies in the meaning of symbols. Different people may interpret the same symbol in entirely different ways, so it is important that you are clear what certain symbols mean to *you* because the message will be given to you. For example, I might see a hammer and consider that it is to be used for pulling up boards (if the hammer is a claw hammer), whereas someone might only consider a hammer to be used for hammering in nails.

For this reason it is important to get as much detail as possible in the meditation, but without adding any detail that was not actually there. Using my example, if I simply said that I saw a hammer, then each person's interpretation will be different because each person has their own image of a hammer and its use, so by giving details I can help people form a clearer idea of what I got in my meditation.

I have talked quite a lot about images you may see when you are meditating. The term that is normally used for this ability to see things spiritually is *clairvoyance*. Its general meaning is an ability to see things beyond the normal sense of physical vision. I have worked in churches where the medium declared that there would be a demonstration of clairvoyance, but myself and other mediums usually stated that it would not necessarily be clairvoyance since this was to 'see' things. Sometimes we will experience *clairaudience*; which is where we *hear* rather than seeing something, or *clairsentience* which is to feel/sense something. Therefore I would say that I am going to do a demonstration of spiritual communication, as it may come through in any of the forms mentioned.

Some people consider *clairvoyance* as seeing on a psychic level, whereas others consider it as seeing on a spiritual level. There is a difference between the two, which I will cover later. A medium would consider themselves as someone who communicates spiritually, this may take a number of forms: *clairvoyance*, *clairaudience* or *clairsentience*. The last form, *clairsentience*, is where you know something without having learned about it through the usual senses. Quite often you will simply feel something and it is as real as any real physical thing or event, or you will know something as surely as if someone had told you or you had seen it your self or on the TV news.

When we move to a level of meditation where we can achieve communication in the form of symbols/images, we can consider this as *clairvoyance* (even though the meaning of the symbols may not be immediately apparent). Together with these symbols I find that an amount of *clairsentience* occurs, where you can feel or sense things above what is the normal level for most people.

The way I see the communication process is that different spirits, just like different people, will be able to communicate with me on different levels. On top of this, is the issue of the level that I have trained to reach, which is that if there is not accurate communication from spirit then it may not be any fault of spirit, but possibly that my level is not sufficient to reach out to them.

If you have dropped to your neutral state and are meditating then you may experience *clairvoyance* (or *clairsentience*), you may feel that a particular communication you've received was for Fred. Hopefully when you present what you have seen to Fred then he should respond truthfully, it is important that the person responds truthfully, although I have

found that this is not always the case. Even if he can't take all of the message he should say something like "I don't understand this part, but the other parts definitely made sense to me."

Someone else in the circle may say that they can understand the part that Fred couldn't. In such cases you might well have a confused message, but ideally you shouldn't get messages for more than one person at a time. It is better to get a single message for one person, if there is another message for someone else then it should come separately. Obviously this just aids clarity when you receive the message and later deliver it.

Clairaudience is an experience akin to you sitting in a chair reading a book or a newspaper and hearing your name being called, only there is no-one else in the house at the time. As you progress with communication with spirit you may find yourself in a position where a spirit will be around you and you can feel them around, sometimes you may hear a voice. However, if you were to cover your ears you would still be able to hear this because it is not an actual noise you are picking up with your ears, but rather it is being picked up through your mind. For example, a person who says they heard voices while they have their hands over their ears, this is because they are not hearing it physically.

When you are communicating with spirit, whom you can see or possibly feel, you will be talking without actually opening your mouth to form words, just as you are not really listening with your ears to what is said, the whole communication takes place as if by telepathy, but is actually occurring spiritually; spirit to mind.

Ideally, people who wish to become mediums will do a lot of work on themselves first and will learn to become *spiritual mediums* and not *psychic mediums*.

There is a significant difference between a psychic medium and a spiritual medium. A psychic is someone who has learned to use the higher level of a natural ability that we all have. We are all familiar with the basic five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, but a psychic will use the *sixth sense*. Once you have learned to use the sixth sense effectively, then it is a natural step to move up from this psychic sense to a spiritual level of *clairsentience*. However, this step is a very large one and it is a large step of trust.

At a psychic level, people usually like to know when they are right or wrong and what the ins and outs of a given situation are. Quite often when you are working spiritually you will give someone some information and they won't ever come back to you to say whether you were right or wrong, you have to trust the information that has been given to you by spirit.

I don't want to give the impression that there is something wrong with using your psychic level, on the contrary, it is quite normal. I tend to look at the psychic level as a shorter range radar system. In my experience the information I have received psychically has always been short range and close to me, but information I have received spiritually has often helped me over a much longer time span, years in some cases. The spiritual information I have received has been effective short-range too, however it should be stressed that this information is not for the purpose of looking into *other* people's affairs but to help me deal with things in *my* life.

It would be easy to use such an ability to look at, or into, other peoples' lives and to judge them. I normally tell people that when they wish to judge someone else they should start by taking a good hard look in the mirror. When you have judged *yourself* enough that you can see nothing else wrong with *you*, then the chances are that you will no longer want to look at other people and judge them.

Spirit's role within circle

By the time you have reached a level where you can communicate with spirit, there may be numerous spirits around in the circle. It is important to understand that when you are in a spiritual circle you are actually also forming a physical circle; by virtue of the way circle positions are laid out. However there are spiritual beings within that circle, namely yourself and other members, although you are still on the physical level you are linking with spirits on the spiritual level.

If you were to talk to a range of people you would find differing levels of communication and differing pieces of information that you could take from each person. Likewise for spirit there are differing levels; not all spirits want to come back to be helpful and not all spirits will want to come back to pass on knowledge. Occasionally there are some spirits who are far from helping people, they can actually end up being a nuisance and upsetting them.

This again is where the role of the person leading the circle is very important. The leader of the circle will open the circle and invite spirit in, it is their guides that will be looking after the whole circle and this is quite a big responsibility. If you are in a circle, you may be fortunate enough to be given the opportunity by the teacher, to keep your eyes open and watch everyone else when they drop to the meditative state. If you do get a chance to do this, then I think you will be amazed at what you can see and feel going on in the circle.

Occasionally there are times in life you meet someone for the first time when they come and introduce themselves, it can be the same with spirit. In other words you don't always meet people in the physical area or spirits in the spiritual area through association.

When you are in a meditation a spirit may introduce themselves to you and say something like: "Hello John, my name is Roger. What we are going to talk about today is..." I might think that's fine we can discuss the matter. Providing I feel comfortable with and feel to trust Roger, I can then possibly have a meditation, this could be a very visual meditation even though Roger initially introduced himself through Clairaudience.

I am often asked whether I trust all spirits. I usually reply that I do trust all spirits in the same way that I trust and love all people. The key point is my interpretation of the words love and trust, which is not as simple as 'I do' or 'I do not,' there are many levels to these words. For example someone can love you but still treat you very badly, or you could trust a thief to look after your children, there are different *degrees* of trust and love involved.

If a spirit, Roger for arguments sake, is telling me something that is not particularly vital, then I will listen to it, take it on board and see what the outcome is. It could simply be that Roger has a piece of information for the circle, happens to be moving past at that particular time and passes the information on to someone. Similarly, if you were going about your daily tasks and you saw someone struggling with something that you understood or knew about, then you might give them some snippet of information, advice or some small amount of help as you passed by.

If however this spiritual representation called Roger, seems to be coming into your space of mediation regularly and helping you with your particular lessons at the relevant times, you may find that Roger has actually been allocated as your individual spiritual guide. However a guide would normally introduce themselves as such, even if it was just for that evening or meditation. This basically means that Roger will work with you for the relevant period of time that your spiritual learning and his knowledge, are aligned.

This all sounds very simple, but it's not necessarily. I have had students whose guides are represented by cartoon caricatures that do not speak and therefore are working with that particular student almost by mime, moving towards *clairsentience*. As a teacher I have found this level of guide to still be very helpful and accurate. This particular student matured spiritually and was handed over to a less dynamically entertaining guide who actually introduced himself verbally, or more accurately, through *claireaudience*.

I have watched many students in circle progress from one guide to another, it is my opinion that this has occurred because the student has moved forward sufficiently and can work with a more knowledgeable guide. This is very similar to the way we all move from nursery, to primary school, to secondary school and so on. I myself on my path was very fortunate in my spiritual teacher and guide allocation, they always seemed to fit the level that I needed.

An observation of my own life and others around me, is that when I'm spiritually moving in the right direction, it always feels like I'm moving slightly uphill. Therefore if you ever feel that you are standing still, in real terms you are actually moving backwards, because nothing in life, absolutely nothing, stands still. So I would suggest that if you must, take a

break, have a rest, then get back on with what you need to do and learn, as life never stops moving.

My experience in circle

I can highlight some of these points by relating to my own experiences of joining a spiritual circle at one of the independent spiritual churches. It was my second teacher Betty, a medium herself, who introduced me to this particular spiritual church in Lewisham, (although it was the church that my stepfather Lionel used to attend for circle,) I became a member of the church. There was a small yearly membership fee that I paid because I was quite happy to support what they were doing.

Although I had felt for some time that it was something I should be doing, I put off joining a spiritual development circle for a long time, but eventually I was introduced into my first circle by Betty.

I entered the room, which was about the size of a small kitchen; it was plainly decorated with a picture of Jesus on one wall. This did not bother me since I can relate to that image and the example set by that spiritual teacher.

I was introduced to the lady who was the teacher of the circle and I was immediately struck by her presence. I am physically quite a large person and she was obviously much smaller than me, but I was still very aware of her strength. This strength presented itself in a way that I found quite unusual. She was a very elegant looking person with long dark hair, she was very knowledgeable looking with the sort of face you can look at and almost recognise in someone that you have seen before.

We exchanged our introductions and I then looked around the circle to see that there were about eleven women (including the teacher.) So I found myself sitting in the circle, the only man, something of a manly man (as I was at that point in my life.) Everyone was very friendly, open, and more than happy to share their experiences and pass on their knowledge. All of this, together with the very good spiritual feeling I got from the teacher, only served to increase my discomfort.

All the other members knew each other and had been in circle for a while, all of them could communicate with spirit ranging from the very basic level, to a level where the person could take a place on a rostrum and work as a medium in a church. I was quite taken back by the difference in levels of the various members of the circle, and I felt that some of the members were at a level where they would no longer need to be sitting in a circle for spiritual development. I took it for granted that the teacher of the circle would be at that level, but assumed that the other members would be far below that level, this was not the case at all.

At the start of the circle I was informed that it was customary for all present to link hands and the teacher would say a prayer; this would be to ask for protection for the members of the circle and also for some spiritual input. I didn't have any problems with the prayer which I found quite pleasant, different members of the circle would be asked to give the prayer on different evenings, but the holding hands bothered me. We would each have our left hand facing upwards and our right hand facing downwards, with person next to me having their downward facing hand on my upwards facing hand, this was repeated until a circle was formed. At the time I found it all very airy-fairy and not comfortable at all.

I was quite comfortable with holding hands with my family but not with other people. It was not a reflection on the people in the circle but was to do with my own restrictions at that time, which is to say, being somewhat closed and not able to express myself.

For the first couple of weeks I found it hard simply to be in the presence of my teacher and in the presence of the other members, who seemed to be so willing to accept and talk openly about things that I had always held back on. I was quite reserved and quiet in circle to begin with, which people who know me now might find hard to believe.

One of the first points I raised in circle was that I found it difficult that there were a couple of people around me, not a great number, but a few people that I just couldn't seem to get along with. I had looked at my own behaviour, as well as at them and their behaviour, but I still couldn't pin down what it was that troubled me about these particular people.

My teacher then told me something that has stayed with me since.

"If you are the best person that you can be", she said, "There will always be someone that won't like you." She continued on, "If you are the most truthful person that you can be, there will be someone that won't like you telling the truth. If you are the strongest person that you can be, there will be those that won't like your strength, especially those that use their strength to put other people down."

I listened to what she said and resolved myself to think about what she had said a little more.

"Don't you understand what I said?" She asked.

I answered that I was not used to having lessons on that level and that it was a struggle for me just to be sat in this circle each week. I told her that I found it hard to hold the hands of the people next to me and listen to someone saying a prayer. Moreover, to be involved in a group where all the members were so friendly towards me, was causing me a very big a problem.

"I will think about what you have told me and hopefully at some point I will understand, but at the moment it is a bit above me", I said.

It appeared that everybody else in the circle had understood quite clearly the point our teacher was making. She never put things in a way that was confusing and she would try to express herself as simply as she could, so that everyone could understand what she was saying. This way of explaining things was a quality that I liked and respected, it is something that I have tried to do myself, although I have not always managed it successfully!

"Let me put it to you another way", she said.

"I would appreciate that."

"If you were a thief do you think you would want to be friends with a policeman?" she asked.

"It's unlikely", I replied.

"That's the answer." She said. "And if you were a bully, would you want to be around someone who would stick up for the person you were bullying?"

"OK, I think I've got that point now, thank you very much." I said at last.

I also said "I would try and think about the other things that she had told me". I wrote a few things down to take away and spend more time on.

There was one lady I particularly remember from the circle. I became quite friendly with this person and later with her husband also, she had an uncommonly pleasant manner about her. When she said a prayer it was like listening to a poem and I found this quite lovely. I found myself thinking that she had a very spiritual way about her, she was indeed a very spiritual person (able to speak quite spiritually), but while I found this a nice quality I couldn't help but think that it wasn't really me.

I was under the misapprehension, as many people are, that to be a spiritual person one needs to be a particular way. This isn't the case at all. I don't feel that I have changed my personality too much from the person I was when I first entered into this area. I don't speak poetically and I am apt to swear now and again (although not while in church and I try to moderate my language when I am teaching a circle). I have been told that swearing represents a lack of ability to adequately express myself.

Eventually it came to my turn to say a prayer in circle. We were all sitting holding hands and I said what I considered to be a prayer. It went along these lines: "Good evening to everyone. Welcome to everyone and welcome to spirit. I ask that you will protect and guide us this evening, also that some of you will come in and give us teachings. We ask that love, protection and healing be spread throughout the world."

I have no trouble with this simple prayer now, but you would not believe the job I had to say that prayer at the time. Some men might possibly be able to understand some of what I was feeling. I was in the company of eleven women, who were all nice people and in comparison to me, were very spiritual people, while in this group I had to express openly something that I would say as a private prayer. This was an important step in the move towards learning to be comfortable with myself spiritually.

I was in this circle for quite a period of time and one of the first communications I got really shocked me. My physical position in the circle was with my back closest to the door, facing my teacher. It was something of a joke in the group that I was the 'doorkeeper'. In spiritual terms your 'doorkeeper' is your guide in spirit, they control who has access to you, so in other words, it is someone who is watching your back or protecting you if needed. Hence the joke.

I was trying to meditate while dealing with my own problem of simply being in that environment and attempting to relax, (for the purpose of making myself receptive to spiritual input). On this occasion I sat and meditated with nothing much happening. I sat and meditated some more until I suddenly got the feeling that the teacher was going to say "Right, can you all come back to the circle now," this was common when the teacher wished to reel us all back in from our various meditative states.

It was at this point that I saw an elephant. I believe it was a pink elephant (although it was some years ago). The elephant was actually a candle in the shape of an elephant and I got a message on behalf of a particular young woman in the circle.

When we all returned from our meditations the teacher went around the circle asking the members what they got from their meditations. I was keen to hear the others in the circle since I was very interested to hear what they got and what they had to say about it. There had been a few weeks where the teacher had gone past me without asking me to speak about my meditation, so I had grown comfortable simply listening to the other members of the circle. In retrospect, I can understand why my teacher would pass over me at that time, since I have done the same thing as the teacher in my own circles, where a member of the circle is uncomfortable and making them speak would make them even more so.

On this occasion, instead of going round the other members of the circle my teacher looked straight at me and said: "You've got something to say tonight!"

The thought crossed my mind "how did she know that?" But I already knew how she knew, I had after all joined a spiritual circle for personal development along those lines. I confirmed that I did have something to say and asked if I might be allowed to address someone. I spoke to the person concerned and gave them what I got from my meditation. I didn't change anything and I didn't add anything to it. I simply told them what I received; a pink elephant candle that had just lit up.

To my surprise the person I told this to became very upset. She was crying and in quite an emotional state, not a silly emotional state but she was quite moved by what I had told her. At this point I was thinking to myself "Oh dear, what have I done?"

I was concerned that I had upset someone, but my teacher looked over to me and said the person was happy because it was a memory of someone very special to her. This made me feel a little better about what had happened so I said "I'm glad she's happy because I would not want to see her when she was *upset*." There was a little laugh in response to this.

I sat in a circle for many weeks and I watched the teacher Ireene, when members of the circle would have meditations but not be quite sure of how to interpret them. I watched how she would deal with the people and how she would help them to understand their meditations.

There was quite a wide range of ability within the members of the circle stemming from the differing levels of knowledge and capability of the individuals. Some members had performed demonstrations of spiritual communication and worked with the teacher when she was working at churches as a medium.

I found myself very drawn to the immense spirituality I felt about the teacher; while being bothered by her at the same time. She said to me that firstly I needed to learn how to relax and to try and relax in the company I was in (by which she meant in the circle). She said that I needed to be able to switch the brain off, the way she used to describe it was that once we switch the brain off, or at least get it to be quiet, we allow the mind to start to work, but while the brain is busy the mind cannot work.

She used to talk of the idea of sliding a card between the brain and the mind. Some people found this concept difficult but I found that it worked quite well for me. In other words, with the 'brain' being the part of you that deals with the everyday matters such as

having had a bad day at work, the car sounding a bit funny on the way to circle, or the argument you had with auntie Doris last weekend. All the daily issues that we need to deal with, rent, taxes and the other joys of everyday life are all dealt with by the brain.

Irene used to insist that all this stuff should not be brought into circle.

“Leave it all at the door”, she would say, “Leave all your mental baggage at the door. You can pick it up on the way out.”

She said that once we came in and closed the door we should all be glad to see one another, be able to relax and leave the other daily baggage until after the circle.

Eventually I became more comfortable with the process of letting go the clutter of daily life and being able to relax. I was able to hold hands with the circle members and listen to the prayer being said and on occasion, even took my turn at saying the opening prayer.

Circle proceeded for many weeks, stretching out to possibly as many as 15-20 weeks. It eventually became such that I *wanted* to go to circle and I enjoyed being in the company of the other circle members. I went from one extreme to another: from being closed down and reluctant to open up, I moved to wanting to be open all the time. I mistakenly formed the view that anyone who is inside a spiritual church *must* be a very spiritual person.

I put some of my views and impressions to the circle. I was told that everybody is a spiritual person whether they know it or not, because everybody has a spirit within them. The acceptance of that spirit and the acceptance of the way to behave in one’s life so as not to hurt other people, is the basis of leading a spiritual existence.

To make things a little clearer; at that point I was looking at everything through rose coloured glasses. I felt that everything must be rosy! Everything in every spiritual church must be rosy and all spiritual people are wonderful. Spiritualist churches and the people in them would not be affected by the sorts of problems that affect lesser, non-spiritual institutions and organisations. I then had another talk to my teacher and she shared some of her experiences with me.

“Why would anyone be involved in spiritual churches if they weren’t really a good, spiritual person?” I asked.

“A salesman might tell you all sorts of things you want to hear, regardless of the truth of the matter, because they want to get a sale”, she answered. “Someone who is involved in this may tell you the things you want to hear so that they can draw you in and get you more involved with their particular group.”

I begrudgingly accepted what she said.

Another significant lesson I learnt at this time was that everything with a label on it proclaiming ‘this is spiritual’, is not necessarily so. Equally, things that have no label on them, things we might dismiss as plain and ordinary that we would walk past without paying any attention to at all, are often deeply spiritual. Many of the things we take for granted in our busy physical lives are the things that we should take time to stop and appreciate.

Obviously we cannot stop and talk to the trees and the grass all day, we might find it difficult to pay the mortgage were we to do so. Perhaps if we all took the time to do this, we could all live in caves eating rice, but *would* we have plenty of time to talk to the trees. Maybe not!

I found it hard to accept that my teacher, someone I viewed as a very spiritual person, was telling me that not everything that appears to be spiritual *is* spiritual and not everything that appears non-spiritual is without spiritual worth. I agreed to hold onto that notion, since I found it rather difficult to take in at that time.

To conclude this chapter on circles, you should feel good when you have been in a circle that is working spiritually. If you don’t feel good or if you feel drained, then something is not right. Do the checks previously mentioned with regards to looking at if it is the right circle and/or teacher for you. However, also bare in mind that it is possible that you are dealing with a difficult spiritual lesson and it is you or your learning that is actually the problem, you should always speak to the teacher about any problems.

If things still don’t feel right for you or don’t improve, then it is also possible that you are not supposed to be in that particular circle. Find another circle or another teacher, but make sure you have examined yourself first. As I have said, there are various places where

circles are held, such as at individuals' homes or spiritual churches. It is for you to look and feel your way. I would suggest personal recommendations.

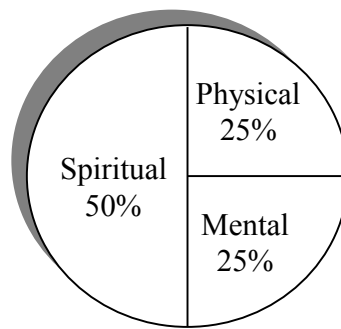
Balance

The simplest way to broach this subject is to consider what most people would think, when looking at the word 'balance'. We use the word to describe many aspects of the world around us, for example, in the most absolute physical sense we could talk of balancing an object, or there is the metaphorical sense such as balancing our budget or the balance of power.

Within this book, as well as for anyone looking to develop spiritually, balance is fundamental. It is a key element. It is the foundation and should be at the beginning of everything that you do.

If you took the example of decorating a room, you might decide to paint the walls green and have a pink carpet. However in doing this, either knowingly or not, most people would aim to have what they see as a balance between the colours of the room, using various furnishings and textures. We tend to apply balance quite a lot in our physical lives; indeed walking on two legs is a balancing act that most people are quite competent at!

Before I go any further on the subject of balance I would like to present a sum, or equation, that I use to reflect on life and which might explain a few things to people, if they were to apply it to their lives. I have arrived at the sum, as we shall call it, through my meditations and my own progression on the path that I have followed. I have also asked spirit about this issue and been given the following model as a guide:



Although the model may seem like an over simplification, it is something that I have taken a great deal of notice of and from my experience the sum is accurate.

If you took your whole life in its entirety as 100%, then the physical area of your life only accounts for 25% of it. The mental area contributes only another 25%. The remaining 50% of your life is the spiritual area, unfortunately this is the area that so many people either do not acknowledge or deal with.

From this model it should be clear that in my opinion and experience one half of your life is concerned with you as a spiritual being; whether you accept this or not, does not change the sum. What I would like is for you to keep this sum/ model as a guide for living your life.

If you were to look at your life honestly you may say that you have the physical things one might desire. You may have a house, a wife, nice kids, a good job, enough money and food on the table. You may well argue that you have the things in life that people need, and it is easy to forget that there are many people in the world who do not even have these physical things. People who are homeless, who don't have money to support their family or the means to go and buy the food they need, such people are lacking in the physical area of their life. Most of the people reading this are more fortunate and are unlikely to be in such a position.

If we look at the mental area of life we can consider a simple question such as "Do I think I am doing something worthwhile?" Do the things you do in your life matter? Certainly you may be working hard to support a family, so what you are doing matters to you and them, but on a wider scale does your role in life mentally satisfy you? You might think about whether you are paid fairly, or whether it is the job you want to do.

While many people enjoy their physical lives they often do so without applying themselves mentally. Did you think carefully about buying a house? Did you plan to have the children you have? Did you look at your financial position before you got a loan to buy a car? Do you enjoy your physical life without mentally considering the costs further down the road? For many people the answers to these questions will be 'NO!' However, even if you are in the fortunate position that you are satisfied both physically and mentally you may still find that there is something missing.

If you are physically and mentally satisfied, which in itself is not always easy or possible, then how can you still be unhappy if the physical and mental aspects are the sum total of life? It is quite clear by the number of people who look for 'something more' in their lives, that the sum of our lives is not defined by just the physical and the mental: The spiritual side is half of our lives.

I think that all of us, whether we choose to admit it or not, believe that there is more to life than just our physical existence. For thousands of years mankind has pondered and fought over whether or not we lead a merely existential life. The idea of some force or being beyond mere mortals, has many forms. Whether you want to call it God, group-consciousness, or a spiritual level; makes no difference. The main point is that most people believe (to varying degrees,) that there is more to life than the physical.

If we can keep the life sum/model in the background then we can try and balance things out when we look at our lives. It may be that the physical area of your life seems ok and you cannot see any obvious issues in the mental area, but you still *feel* there is something missing. Alternatively, your feeling may simply be that you don't feel happy. In such cases you will need to use the spiritual area of your life sum to assess the other aspects.

Physical Balance

Thus we move back to the word 'balance'. Let's consider a simplified example. While out and about you might see a mansion that appeals to you, and you might decide that it is just what you want, it has a pool and stables for the horses! It is just what you *want*. If we look at the other side of this physical equation then it is clear that the mortgage for such a mansion would be several thousand pounds per month, assuming that you find a lender who would be prepared to extend a mortgage for such a property. Quite clearly there is a problem with the physical balance. What you *want* is far in excess of what you can actually afford. Most people would be able to see the problems in such a case. However, if we took this down to a slightly more realistic level, I can give examples of people around me who live beyond reasonable means and quite often get caught in what I call the 'overtime trap'.

People will often see properties that they can realistically afford, but be swayed by other more expensive properties that they *want*. The reasoning of such people is that although they cannot really afford the more expensive property, if they include their overtime into their regular income then they can afford the house they *want*. The logic of the argument may seem reasonable until you apply balance to the equation. Most sensible and balanced people would see that borrowing money to buy a house based on income from overtime is fraught with dangers; the overtime might stop tomorrow, but the cost of the loan will remain the same.

Applying balance to such decisions means you are having to be honest about what you can afford and what you want. It is convenient to ignore the fact that overtime is not guaranteed because there is something we want, therefore we do not want any counter-arguments that would come between what is sensible or balanced and what we want.

Balance requires that you be truthful with yourself. What you may tell other people is a matter for your own morality and conscience, but it is essential that you are truthful with yourself or you will find yourself in desperate trouble within a very short space of time.

Mental balance

If we were to consider applying balance to a mental situation then we could take the case of couples and the relative incomes that they each contribute to the household. I have heard a male in a relationship state to his partner "You earn less than I do", and his partner had no choice but to agree that this was the case.

The statement made by the male was true but a lack of balance meant they failed to take into account the other side of the equation. The statement was made in a 'manly' way, such statements are often made rashly and regretted later. His partner responded to what he had said.

"Of course you earn more than I do", she began, "because you don't have to drop the children off to school in the morning."

"Hmmm" he replied, somewhat sheepishly.

She continued, "And I also have to pick them up again in the afternoon once school has finished, so I can't start a job at the normal time and I can't finish at the normal time. In fact, I can't work full-time at all."

He had to concede that this was the case and he hadn't actually thought much about it. However, since he had started the argument his partner was keen to continue stating her case:

"Also, when I come home from work I don't sit in front of the television or go to the pub like you do", she added. "I'm doing washing, ironing, cleaning, cooking and washing-up, because I do a part-time job I take on a much larger amount of housework. If I was to work full-time then I would earn more money, but half of that extra money would be spent on a child-minder and you would have to take on half of the responsibility for jobs around the house!"

At this point the male partner realised that he had dug himself a hole with his comment and decided to sit back and have a think about what he had said. He had to admit that he could see his partner's point.

I then chimed in with my take on the situation, giving the example of me and my own partner. In my relationship whatever I earn is irrelevant. My partner works very hard around the house, looking after our children (although I also look after the children and find it a pleasure not a chore,) as well as her own job. Together we earn an amount of money and it is this total amount that is for our home and family. I earn the larger amount because I spend more hours at work, but my partner works just as hard as I do, indeed between working at her job and working at home she may actually work harder.

We see our money as a shared income, we also see there are jobs for our home and family that are shared between the two of us. Children need dropping off and collecting, housework needs doing, food needs to be put on the table. The amount of money coming in and the amount of work that is done needs to be considered as a whole within the relationship, not just each person's job.

I'm glad to say that the male partner picked the concept up quite quickly and didn't make such an unbalanced comment again.

One of the areas where I see the largest imbalances is that of couples in relationships. I use the term 'couple' which will usually be a man and a woman, but it also covers same sex couples, since other than the sexual side of the relationship a same sex couple will have the same problems linking with one another. The physical, mental and spiritual problems are still the same.

Any religion or belief system should teach tolerance. If someone believes that a same sex relationship is right for them and the two people are happy in their relationship, then it is nothing to do with anyone else. I really can't see why so many people have such a problem with this area. If someone suggests a way of life to you that you don't find acceptable, then you can of course say so, but you should not be judging how other people live their lives.

Within a relationship balance is one of the key elements. Without balance the stronger person will basically do whatever they want and the weaker person will go along with it. This kind of relationship will continue either until the weaker partner reaches their limit and leaves

the relationship, or until the behaviour becomes so ingrained that the weaker person becomes like a doormat that the other person wipes their feet upon regularly. This is clearly not an ideal or balanced model for a relationship.

I believe that when you look at the word 'partnership', 'marriage' or 'relationship', then you are entering into an agreement with someone you love. You owe it to them to do the best you can by them, and that they do the same by you. This doesn't mean that you *assume* they are doing the right thing in their life, you should be able to see if they are doing the right thing. If you feel it is right and appropriate to behave in a particular manner, then it is only right that both of you are happy to behave in that way.

It saddens me the amount of men I have spoken to who believe it is quite alright for them to have sexual partners outside of their marriage, however if you suggest to them that their wife might be enjoying the same privileges, then the response you get is often outrage and aggression. For people like this I would say that they are not really in a relationship, even though most of them would protest that they love their wife and don't wish to leave their families. Such people are going to do whatever it is they want to do, and if their partner doesn't know about it then the partner can't worry about it. This is not a balanced way to carry on in a relationship and will eventually lead to a pathway of much pain and heartache.

Spiritual balance

If we consider balance in a spiritual context, then the whole issue becomes much more complicated. You may find that you are content in all other areas of your life (as far as you are able to judge), but for some reason are still not feeling happy or fulfilled. If you were able to drop down and meditate on your own life then you should be able to see the area that is troubling you. Despite the complexities of life there are a number of key areas that can be looked at, any number of which may display signs of being out of balance spiritually.

You might consider your relationship with your partner, or other relationships in your life such as those with friends and family. Are your work relationships going well? Mentally you can apply the balance by considering whether you think you are treated fairly by people around you, is there anything around you that is not right and that has been occupying your thoughts? If you look honestly then you should find a couple of points in the physical area and a couple in the mental area.

If we have identified issues on the simpler physical and mental areas and found that these are not really the core problem, then we need to look at if the spiritual area is balanced, as this is the bigger area, yet the more commonly overlooked. If you want to apply balance to the spiritual area, then the first place to look is in the mirror. Am I balanced? Am I fair? Do I do the right thing, or am I too busy trying to judge what other people do?

For many people it is easy to look at someone else and think 'Well, Bob behaves worse than I do so I am better than Bob', then we might look at Steve and see his behaviour is worse than our own too. At this point you might start to feel quite pleased with yourself since you are looking around you seeing people whose behaviour (in your opinion), is below your own. This is a dangerous road to follow. If you find yourself doing this then I would urge you to stop and look around for someone who sets an example by their behaviour that you would find difficult to follow.

I don't mean someone who can cook better than you, or fix their car more efficiently, find someone whose behaviour in life you could observe, someone you would consider handles people and situations with balance. For example you might see this person deal with an argument but not get aggressive in response to aggression, whereas you feel in your own case you might have responded aggressively, even though you know this would achieve nothing and simply block the flow of communication.

Alternatively, you could look at people around you and find a single good point in each of them. If you look at a range of people you know, you should find a range of differing qualities that are strong in some but not others. One person may be very compassionate while another stands for no nonsense and gets the job done. Some people listen well, others talk well, some are good with children and some mix well with adults. Look for qualities in people

that you like and then look to develop those same qualities within yourself. If you have seen qualities in others that you admire but feel you would have to strive to achieve, then these are the qualities you should judge yourself against, not against people whose behaviour is worse than yours, but against those whose behaviour is better.

This is how you begin to look spiritually at your balance. It is most unfortunate that *most* people seem to think that spiritual balance starts when you are able to see, hear and sense things that other people cannot. When you are able to achieve spiritual communication on whatever level that may be, the first thing that you should see are your own faults, when you have got something wrong, you should be hearing constructive criticism of yourself. Eventually you should be sensing when you are about to do something wrong before you do it, therefore you should be able to take action and not actually get it wrong.

When you have straightened out all of the things that need straightening out you will probably find that there is not much time left in the physical area in this life. It will probably take the next life to put into practice the things that you have learnt in this one.

If you are fortunate enough to be around a spiritual teacher then lessons seem to come in much faster than they otherwise would. These lessons help with the correction process and your teacher should be able to explain how the lessons fit in your life, eventually you should be able to see for yourself how and where many of the lessons relate to your own life.

When I talk of lessons I don't mean in the manner of a class where a lesson is given, but rather an event in your life from which you learn. For example, if you had a bicycle and didn't check the brakes were working properly then it is likely that you will have an accident. If you did have an accident then the obvious lesson is to make sure the bicycle is properly maintained, but the bigger lesson is to make sure you check and fix the things that need doing, sooner rather than later.

I can give an example of balance, or rather lack of balance, from a friend of mine who wouldn't mind me recounting this story. Having known this person for a long time I was pleased to see that he had reached a point where he had learnt a lesson to do with money, in relation to cars in particular. He had a big problem with cars. His pattern was to buy a car, spend a lot of time and effort doing them up and then sell them for a small amount more than he paid for them; but not enough to justify the time and effort taken in preparing them for sale. He gradually moved up to better and more expensive cars until he was using loans and credit to buy cars.

The amount of resources, time and effort that this person wasted on this pattern of behaviour was significant. He eventually reached a point in his life where he was settled, married and was thinking about having children. The balance point he was grappling with, was how important money is in your life and how important the other things are. The lesson in this case was not to do with cars, but finances and balance in particular.

Further on in his life he had reached a point where he and his partner were saving for something and he had formulated an equation to do this. His equation was such that he knew they had to save a certain amount each month and they had planned their finances around their regular expenses. However, they found themselves in a situation where they needed to go and talk to a counsellor about their relationship.

There are counsellors who work charitably and do not charge a fee, but as I also mention later on with healing, the down side to this is that you will often have to wait a long time before such a counsellor will have an appointment free to see you. While the service is free, it is no good if you have to wait four to six weeks when you feel you really need to discuss something right now.

Counsellors which you have to pay, are more likely to be able to see you at short notice, but can be quite expensive. The level of service you think you need and best suits you, will be a matter for your own judgement and funds. My friend and his partner opted for a counsellor whose prices were in the mid-range, allowing for their savings plan this meant they could only go to counselling twice a month.

I pointed out something that was apparent to me about their plan, namely that if they needed to save a certain amount for their goal (buying a car or whatever it was) then this would limit the amount of help they could afford to receive at any given time. For example, if

my friend and his partner needed to see their counsellor more than twice in a month, that would mean they could not afford to see the counsellor for another four to six weeks having spent the next month's budget in one month.

I reminded my friend about something he had been told by spirit, about him making a mistake in his life to do with money. He said that he had been so happy that he had been able to work out a balanced plan that allowed him to put away some savings and also see someone for counselling. However, he conceded that the flaw in his plan was that he had missed the point that seeing the counsellor was more important both to him and his relationship with his partner, than saving the money.

This person was not someone who is awash with money, but also it is not someone who is poor, but clearly he had missed the main point of balance and how money can, if you let it, undermine the real balance in a relationship.

The point is quite simple: Is it more important to save up (for whatever it may be), or is it more important to use your physical and mental energies to correct things in your relationship for the long term? Many people in my friend's situation may have simply put the emphasis on the savings thinking that the purchase of a new car or a bigger house will fix the problems in their relationship.

Such people may convince themselves that their 'need' for this new thing means that they can't afford to have counselling (or some other help), in the end they could be left with a nice new house or car, but no relationship. Therefore possibly needing to sell the new house or car, to split assets at the end of the relationship.

In the case of my friend it was an issue of balance. However, I am pleased to say that on this occasion (unlike many other occasions in the past), a brief discussion was enough for him to stop, see what was about to happen and correct the situation before it went wrong. I pointed out to my friend that I had given him guidance, just as my guides have spoken to me when I was on the verge of making mistakes.

It may often look like I don't do anything wrong, but this is not to say that I was never at the point of being about to do something wrong! By the time some events have unfolded, I have already discussed the matter with my guides and been given information that has helped me to make the right choices in my life, avoiding some of the mistakes that other people make.

Balance helps you to make informed judgements about situations *before* you step in and make the mistake. This is not simply being overly cautious about everything, since that path can also lead to mistakes and can mean you fail to act when you should. You should aim to weigh up a situation from a position of truth and balance, allowing you to then make a decision on what course to follow.

In the spiritual area balance can be more difficult. I considered myself to be a very strong person, that is to say of a strong character, much stronger than my partner. My partner on the other hand is a very nice person but she is a bit too soft. People who know my partner but don't know me, would be likely to imagine that her partner is somewhat under the thumb. She often comes across to people as being strong, organised, to the point and with no time for nonsense and gossip. They might well think that her partner gets a hard time from her, which is quite amusing since our relationship is based on total sharing.

I have learned that in a relationship it is the responsibility of the stronger partner to balance the relationship, and it would be foolish to think that it is always the man who is the stronger person in the relationship. From my experience certain things in life are self-evident; you would not give unlimited funds to someone who squanders money. You don't give someone mental tasks that are vastly beyond their ability. Spiritually you don't put someone in situations that are going to crush them.

In a relationship the stronger partner assists the other partner and together you both take care of money and physical matters. On the mental you both discuss problems and issues such as finances or bringing up the children. Spiritually if my partner needs to be in front to learn certain lessons, then she can be sure that I am just behind her. I am not talking about a body width behind, but in the spiritual sense I am just behind her for support.

When looking for balance I have found in my experience that if you are the stronger person in the relationship then it is your responsibility to let your partner know that you want a balanced relationship. Some people reading this may disagree and argue that you cannot ever have a totally balanced relationship, since one person will be stronger in one area and the other person will be strong in another area. This is of course correct and is exactly what I have been talking about.

A simple example from my own life that illustrates this. If I wanted to type a letter I would have a problem because I can't type and it takes me a long time to get the computer to do what I want it to do. In such cases I will ask my partner to help me. Likewise, if my partner had a problem in the spiritual area and needed some help, they would ask me. In this way, the relationship can balance out.

Problems arise when you have someone who doesn't want to aim for balance and doesn't want to give any power to the other person. The same is true for someone in a relationship who doesn't want to take the responsibility that comes with a balanced relationship. For example, a husband might jealously guard control of the household finances not wishing to allow his wife to deal with any financial matters, even though it effects both of them. Conversely, a husband might let his wife deal with all matters concerning their children's schooling because he doesn't want to share that responsibility. In each case the problem is one of balance. The wife in the first instance may want some more control of the household money so she can act more independently, and in the second case the wife might want the husband to contribute more in the big issue of their children's education.

Applying balance to ones self is quite difficult, but is where spiritual balance should start as mentioned earlier. An area where you can easily look at balance (or a lack of) is when two other people are having an argument. I prefer the term 'discussion' to 'argument,' because an argument suggests an amount of aggression and someone forcing their opinion on somebody else. A discussion may be heated, or you may even have a 'frank and forthright discussion' (as politicians diplomatically say), but you should try not have an argument.

Quite often we get very tied up in our own side or opinion of heated discussions, whereas if we were an outsider looking at two other people having the same discussion, then we would be better able to take a balanced look at both sides. We might look at Peter and Tom's discussion and see that there are valid points on both sides and that the balanced point of view is somewhere near the middle. We would need to ask why Peter cannot see Tom's point and vice versa. What you will probably *feel* (and notice I say *feel* and not *think*), is that there is more to the argument than is being said, from one, or both sides.

If you apply balance then you will have to look at both sides and be fair, but to be balanced you have to be truthful. If both of the people in the argument were also being truthful then they would admit the background issues. Peter and Tom might be arguing because Tom spent more money this month than they had both budgeted for and Peter is annoyed about it. However, Peter might confess that it is not really the issue of the money being spent, but rather that Tom went out and didn't invite Peter along, which he found hurtful.

If you apply balance and truth to something like a disagreement then you should nearly always find an answer to a problem.

Balance in Lessons

When I talk of lessons I mean the events in life from which we learn something, hopefully we are able to use this lesson to help direct us when we face similar situations later. If we took some simple lessons and apply balance to them then the answers seem like 'common sense'. Most people know not to put their hand in a flame. If you were to ask them why, they would answer that the flame will burn you or that the flame is hot and this will result in pain. This is a lesson most of us were told as children but didn't really understand until we had experienced it ourselves.

Despite having learned the flame lesson people will still take out a loan to buy something even though the loan is actually more than they are able to pay back, based on some unpredictable income such as overtime work. As we discussed earlier this is a bad lesson as far as balance is concerned. Indeed, if you did such a thing you might almost expect it to all go wrong just to teach you that you shouldn't have done such a thing in the first place.

One of the most common reasons for balance to be thrown out the window, is when our own desires come into the equation and balance shows our desires in a bad light. Rather than look truthfully at the thing(s) we desire, we instead remove balance and convince ourselves of how much we need something, how it isn't as expensive as it seems, or any other justification that lets us get the things we desire.

There are two terms that people normally use when expressing a desire for something. The first is very common; I want! The second is not so common; I would like. At first, the difference between the two seems like merely playing with words, but the difference goes far deeper than that.

I would recommend that people learn to use the phrase 'I would like' rather than 'I want'. Again the difference might just seem like a subtle play on words, but when you start to express your desires in terms of 'I would like,' then you should start to *feel* the difference. When you can *feel* the difference, then you will have understood the difference in the intention of the two phrases.

If we looked at something like getting a new car, one person might say "I want a car." Therefore it is quite likely that this person will set about getting a car even if the other circumstances in their life are not best suited to buying a car. The 'want' element overrides balance. If a person was to express a desire that they 'would like' a car, then the chances are that although they desire a car they will not get one until the time is right to do so.

I can give you an example from my own experience. Several years ago I passed my motorcycle test and my thoughts were along these lines. "I would like to have a motorbike at some point. I don't need one right now so I'm not going to buy one, but I will wait and when it feels right I will have one". For me this is how the 'I would like' difference works. It fits in with balance to the other things in your life. The other approach I could have taken was to think that I had passed my motorbike test, I want a bike and I'm getting one now.

If you think about instances in your own life where you have said "I want that," then it is likely that you haven't looked at the matter with much balance and you probably weren't being very truthful with yourself. In such cases if you looked at it truthfully you might well have realised that you were doing something that wasn't the best thing to do, also meaning that you probably didn't want to discuss it with your partner or your mum and dad either.

Quite often when people are about to do something they know is not particularly wise, they avoid the advice of people they know will apply balance to the issue. If you don't want to apply balance yourself in case you realise that what you want to do is not the best thing to *do*, then you certainly don't want to talk to third parties who are going to spoil your plan with balance and rational thinking.

I would like to marry this person. I would like to buy my own home. I would like a new car. I would like a motorbike. If we follow the essence of the 'I would like' approach, we see that things we may like are held back until the timing is right. Clearly this is not a policy for the impatient! Six years after passing my motorbike test and thinking 'I would like a motorbike', the plan came to fruition.

Applying balance and giving up some power (in several senses) to my partner, the bike I wanted changed in style from a large 600cc off-road style bike, which my partner wouldn't have been able to even sit on let alone ride; to a scooter. We chose a scooter between the needs of us both. I would have liked a large scooter (since I am quite big) and my partner would have preferred a smaller scooter to suit her smaller build. We compromised and got a mid-sized scooter that suits us both.

The end result came from the 'I would like' approach. If I had selfishly decided that I wanted a motorbike and went out and bought one, then we wouldn't have the machine we have now. We are both able to use the scooter and it gives us a second form of cheap transport for getting around town. It was a balanced decision and it only came about because my

partner and I were prepared to wait until the time was right before we acted. Also, it was interesting that the nature of the machine changed since I hadn't originally thought that my partner would want to ride a motorbike or scooter, but by waiting we achieved an end result beneficial to both of us.

In approaching the situation with balance I also had to give power to my partner. I didn't need a large off-road bike and I didn't really *need* a scooter either. I came to feel that it would be nice for my partner to have the same flexibility of transport that I would have, for those times where the car is not available or the traffic is bad. Due to this I gave up my preference to choose a full-size motorbike, had my decision been based on 'I want,' then I would not have been so happy to compromise with my partner and indeed, probably would have refused to.

These kinds of principles have been applied to almost every major purchase and decision that my partner and I have made. When we were looking for a car we reconciled our needs for a larger car against what we were able to afford. We then looked at the types of car we would have liked and tested them to make sure that they were equally suited to both a small driver (my partner) and a very large driver (me)! We applied balance to the equation and have been very happy with the car we bought.

Any examples I may give in this book are tried and tested, even the mistakes! They are things I have done and lived. I am not trying to preach to people and I am not saying that my way is the best, or that everyone should live their life the way I live mine. What I am saying is that if you use the balance and the principles that I have been taught, then I can confirm that I have seen these principles work well for a lot of people in a wide range of situations.

If you apply balance in *your* life and the way that *you* wish to do things, then you will find *your way* forward, with balance and truth your way will hopefully be much smoother. Everyone's life has disruptions and traumas, but quite often it is the way in which you look at them and deal with them (and how the people around you deal with them), that determines whether the problems are mountains or molehills.

My beliefs in life mean that I am not as distressed as other people when close friends and loved ones die, or as I believe, pass over to spirit. Likewise, there have been physical areas where I have had problems, but due to the help I received and the strength of the relationships I have formed, I was helped massively through these periods and I now find myself helping some of those people through their trying periods. They have a mental respect and they have a spiritual knowledge of who I am and what I stand for. Relationships like these can only be for the good and mutual benefit of the people in them.

Balance in Spiritual development

Having spent some time dealing with balance there are still a few points that need to be clarified. For example, where does 'balance' come into your spiritual development? Most people (not all people because everybody is different), are able to experience an inexplicable level of feeling at one time or another. To give a simple example; you are driving along the road and the traffic light is at green for you to go across, but you reach for the brakes. You may not even consciously remember thinking that you had to brake. It is almost like your foot has found its way onto the brake pedal by itself, then suddenly a truck comes across the junction you were about to cross, the light is green your way so you had no reason to expect a vehicle to be coming. You hadn't seen the truck, but at some level you felt the danger and responded to it automatically.

Similarly, if I was to try and hit you on the head, then the reaction of most people would be to close their eyes and duck. At that point you wouldn't be consciously thinking of ducking but instead you would be reacting to the danger that you see before you. Unfortunately this is not a particularly good automatic reaction. Firstly, in closing your eyes you lose the ability to follow the incident or action through its entire course, therefore your movements may do more to harm than good. For example, if something was falling

downwards towards your head and you were to duck, you would only cause yourself to be more compressed towards the floor.

Therefore accepting that there are automatic reactions that we all do, the best thing to do is to try and guide our automatic reactions to a more useful conclusion. So instead of closing your eyes completely - force yourself to blink, instead of the body automatically moving to the duck position - raise both your arms to cover your head. With your improved view, you may now be able to move to the side of the event or falling object.

A more common experience that most people will have had, is where they visit a place for the first time but get the strongest sense that they have been there before. *Déjà vu* is by no means an unusual phenomenon. It is the feeling that an event has happened before, even though you may be quite sure that in your physical lifetime you have not visited a certain place or met a certain person for the event to have happened.

Another example is where you meet someone in order to do business, but when you shake hands with that person your feeling is that you don't trust them. It may be nothing to do with what they do business wise or anything you have seen or heard about them personally. Quite simply you get a strong *feeling* that you don't trust them. Conversely you may have the complete opposite. You may meet someone and know nothing about them, but still get the feeling that they are a person you can trust. It may feel like you already know this person and feel very comfortable with them despite the fact that you've never met them.

For many people these events are everyday occurrences but if we are honest about such things we will see that most of us are brought up to demand scientific proof for all things. Children are often dismissed for seeing people and things that are not there (at least not that adults can see), they're told they are being silly and such things are imagined. If something can't be seen and touched by all, then it isn't there, according to most.

Most people go along with this 'standard' view of things quite happy to accept things as they are presented to them. People might argue that aliens don't exist because they have never seen one, however they claim that Australia exists despite the fact they have never been there and seen that either. Such scientific sceptics might claim there is no God, but be quite happy with the notion of being in love with someone, both being equally elusive in terms of being able to see and touch.

Naturally it would be impossible to dismiss all the things that have been discovered about the world in which we live. Evidence I have seen in books and other sources leads me to believe that Australia does exist, but I will have to take that on faith since I have never been there to verify for myself that it does actually exist. I can accept such conventional knowledge, however here are other things that are much more challenging to believe and rightly so!

One of the things I will say within the area of balance is that you should be balanced enough to have your own opinion. Don't be rigid and stubborn for the sake of it, but unless something has been proven otherwise to you, then balance dictates that you must stick with what *you* believe to be the truth. I have no time for cults and other groups that seek to tell people what they should believe. In all cases you should be guided. You should be given the information and left to your own judgement in deciding *your way*.

This is what I do with the people that are around me for teaching/guidance. If they need to walk off for six months because they have reached a point where they have had enough of learning at the time, then I accept this. Their own system of balance will have said to them that they have taken in what they can and need a break, or they are avoiding dealing with something. My balance dictates to me that I have to let them go. If they are telling me that they need a break then I am compelled to let them go. However, my balance also tells me that if they have left in the correct manner and without ill-feeling, then there is no reason for me to be annoyed or disappointed and I try not to be.

It is often the case that many of the people who feel they need to take a break have difficulty doing this because of their own issues to do with communication, therefore they don't always tell me directly that they need a break, but I still try not to allow this to upset me. However even as a teacher I find I am still learning, because with this statement of 'I need to take a break,' they supposedly do this to deal with whatever the thing is that they are finding

difficult. However it is my view as a teacher, that to 'take a break,' means to stop instead of having a rest, but if people are receiving help with their issues, it makes absolutely no sense to take a break. If you are struggling while receiving help, how are you going to deal with it by yourself? The statement 'I'm taking a break', actually normally means I'm giving up and I do find it sad when people give up, as this is not a game of monopoly that you can just walk away from. The nature of being alive means you are in the game and you will play regardless of how hard it is or gets. Rest if you must, but find help and keep moving forward on your way.

I don't get angry with people for the mistakes they make because I have made most of the same mistakes too. From a balanced point of view, I have learned and now teach that it is not particularly clever to be getting things right, since such lessons are probably things that you already know, it is when you get things wrong that you learn the most. To be making mistakes means the area is one where you don't have the answers or have misunderstood something.

When we get things wrong in our lives it is an opportunity to learn something, whereas the things we get right are usually issues that we have already learnt and dealt with. If we apply the life sum/model discussed earlier (where life is one quarter physical, one quarter mental and half spiritual), together with truth and balance, and this enables you to get things right, then you will have truly learnt something worthwhile.

Making mistakes is a natural part of life and everybody, including myself, makes mistakes; but it is what one learns from these mistakes that determines how you move forward in your life.

Balance using your 6th Sense/feelings

Returning to the subject of the 6th sense. The ability to sense beyond the usual five senses is often called the '6th sense', meaning that we can sense or feel things that it would not be normal for us to feel. Sometimes people describe this sense as, Women's intuition, a gut feeling or even a hunch. The fact that such a sense is not considered normal can be attributed in a large part to our development as a species, but animals in the wild (and even some in captivity), still use this sense. Most people appreciate that wild animals are able to sense fear or strength in other animals and are able to use this in order to sense danger to themselves. In the wild the reason for this is simple; the animal's life depends on it being acutely aware of its surroundings.

You will often hear of people telling someone confronted by a dog not to show fear since the dog will sense it and react. The irony of course is that the person is afraid of the dog biting them and that is why they are showing fear, which may lead to them being bitten as a result. Ironic or not, it is actually true. Some circus people have said that when they are working with the lions or tigers, that any fear shown by the performer to the animals, gives the animals a power lever with which to intimidate. The way that a big cat will intimidate is to bite or strike out with a claw, so these circus people were saying that it is essential to look the animals in the eye and show them 'I am stronger.'

This is a lesson that also applies to children. It seems that really strong people don't usually have to lay down the law to children, but really nice caring people get caught between being too nice and being too soft.

How do we apply balance to our sixth sense? Since this is a sense that many people experience but are unwilling to acknowledge, the issue of balance becomes more difficult. If we experience something, then we may think about it and not be satisfied or happy with the outcome, we then create reasons to discredit our feelings. Conversely, we can convince ourselves that we felt something on a sixth sense level because we *wanted* it to be so.

Let's look at the example mentioned earlier where you are driving up to a junction with the lights Green for you to go but you felt to slow down, only to see that a truck had jumped their Red light and gone across the junction. Did you see the truck in your peripheral vision? Did you see other people at the junction looking in the direction of the truck? Did you hear something? Had you had experience before of someone else jumping the lights? Were

you thinking about the danger at the junction? There could be many reasons why you slowed down, but if none of them were due to your usual sensory input or some mental appraisal of the danger, then the reaction was a sixth sense response.

Likewise, in the case of the business deal where everything looks fine (physical area), sounds fine and everything adds up in your head (mental area), but you are getting the feeling not to do it (spiritual area). You hold back and appear to have missed out on the deal because your sixth sense is screaming at you not to do it. If you hold back and someone else enters into the deal, then you may eventually find out exactly why you weren't supposed to go into the deal.

It can sometimes be hard for us to make decisions based more on our feelings than our brain, because most people are not used to doing it. Many of us have been brought up to use our brains to work things out, you might actually be criticised by people around you for using your feelings instead of logic. This means that it is vital that you apply balance. If you use your sixth sense level as often as you have the opportunity to and look at the results with balance, then you should be able to see when you were right; and more importantly, when you were wrong.

You need to be clear whether you were using your 6th sense and applying balance or whether you were *thinking*. If you get a feeling not to do something but it was something that you had been thinking about and didn't *want* to do anyway, then you should check it again. Did you really get the *feeling* not to do it, or did you convince yourself that you got this feeling in order to support your case, because you didn't want to do it in the first place. Conversely, if you got the feeling not to do something and it was something that you *did want* to do, then this case is more likely to be right because your brain is saying 'yes,' but your feelings are contradicting it. I would also check this case just to make sure!

You will need to check cases like these until you are clear in yourself when you are getting a strong feeling about something, this will be your balance and truthfulness working on the sixth sense level. When you have the correct balance for your *feelings level* (6th sense feeling), you will find it to be a very useful tool in your life. It is an extra sense that you can train to be accurate, it is unfortunate that most people don't bother.

Obviously if you are going to make use of your *feelings* in life, then you need to know that they are reasonably accurate (if you intend to listen to them on a regular basis). In order to test your feelings you can, as I said earlier, try them on the minor issues in your life where it is not disastrous if your feelings do not seem to be in tune with what is going on.

For example, a friend may say "I'd really like to come to your party, but I'm really busy that night," but you feel there is some other reason behind what they have said that isn't being discussed. You need to make sure that you are keeping a degree of balance and not being paranoid or letting some bad attitude creep in, leading you to think that the person doesn't like you. Your feelings should be independent. You shouldn't be angry, you shouldn't be sad and you shouldn't be overly happy either. The feeling you got is neutral. It is a sixth sense level and you simply felt that there is some bigger issue behind what was said.

Later on you may find out from someone else at work that your friend had a date with someone in the office on the day of your party. With smaller lessons like this the hidden issues often reveal themselves. Your friend was keeping their options open by not giving the real reason for not coming to the party.

Situations like this provide an easy way for you to check your feelings and the best part is that the confirmation can be private. You have confirmed something you felt and it is then up to you whether you wish to act on it or just keep it as an example of your feelings being accurate.

In terms of how accurate these feelings will be, this will be totally dependent on how much you use them and how well you practice balancing them, hopefully you should be able to check the accuracy on less important things. However, being able to use these feelings accurately doesn't mean that you can start jumping up and down on everybody's head every time you have a situation like the example given earlier. This is not what these feelings are for. They are to help you in your life.

If you used your feelings every time you spoke to anyone and got upset every time you felt that they weren't telling you the truth, then you would most likely have a fairly miserable life! What is also likely is that you would stop talking to about 95% of the people in your life (or possibly even 99% of people you know).

You can use these feelings to give you an extra bit of insight in your life, but there is a danger that such feelings will lead you to pass judgement on other people, you must use your balance and control your emotions. You must not become judgemental. Don't judge other people because they don't tell you the truth. If you look at yourself honestly then you will probably see that you do the same thing, I used to and I believe that most people do at one time or another in their life.

So far we've covered using your feelings for small things in your life to check their accuracy. Once you are comfortable with your feelings then you can begin to use them for the larger things. I can give an example from a few years ago when one of my students was looking to buy a second hand car. Anyone who has bought used cars will know that it can be a tricky business in terms of the quality of car that you end up with. Even though he has a good knowledge of cars, he didn't like the way my approach and his differed in selecting cars to view.

He would come to visit with the used car magazine and he would have circled 5 or 6 potential cars to buy, I would go down the list and write numbers one to six -without looking at the details of the cars. Not knowing the cars' details my partner and I would simply *feel* which of the numbers called strongly. We might get the feeling that number two and number five were the ones to look at. We would then check our feelings back against the original list to see if the feelings we got were in line with what he was looking for.

It could be argued that because he had already chosen 6 cars it could have been pot-luck that we chose number two and number five. However, if all the cars were equal contenders then how do you distinguish between them without knowing the car already or going to visit the car? There is not enough time to go and visit all potential cars (since each visit requires travelling and time to look over the car), so each week we would reduce the list using our feelings and then visit the shortlisted candidates.

This process continued for a few weeks, possibly even a month, the student became a bit despondent because we weren't going to look at many cars. Even those we did go to visit often differed wildly from the description given by the owner. In many cases the phrase 'excellent condition' seemed to be another way of saying 'rubbish'. People were being completely dishonest in their descriptions and we were wasting a lot of time and effort travelling to see the cars.

In one case we got to the road where the car was and I spotted it on the side of the road. I pointed it out to the student and he said that couldn't be the car because the advertisement in the magazine had said 'excellent condition'. That car was so bad that we didn't even get out to look at the car. We pulled up beside the car, looked at the owner (sitting on the wall next to the car), looked again at the car and then drove off.

This process continued for a while until my partner and I came across an advertisement for a car that we were both really drawn to. In fact, so drawn were we to the car that we offered to go and look at the car for him (because he was busy doing shift work at that time). The car was reasonably local so we said that we would go and have a look at it and if we thought it was worth buying, we would contact him and get him to look as well.

My partner and I went along to have a look. The car was owned by a head teacher of a school and the car itself looked like a new car. We were looking at it and thinking to ourselves that it was so good that had we been looking for a car ourselves we would have bought it there and then. The feeling that I got from the car was 'buy me, you can't go wrong!'

Unfortunately, despite the positive feelings I got about this car it was not the colour that my student was looking for. We mentioned our finding to him, but around that same period of time he had found a car that had been advertised and he had gone to take a look at it. He had been to see the car in the daylight but by the time my partner and I came along for the second opinion it was dark; anyone who knows anything about cars' will tell you that you

should never go to view a second hand car in the dark since it is much harder to spot any defects, even if you know what you are looking for.

I told the student that I wasn't happy looking it over in the dark but he insisted he checked it quite thoroughly during the day. I checked it over as well as I could, which by my standards means I went over the whole car with a fine tooth comb (our checking was so thorough that the owners probably thought we were going to dismantle the car!)

Towards the end of the viewing when no one was around and the student was discussing price with the owners, I put my hand on the car and asked for guidance from spirit. I asked spirit to check whether the car was OK. It *felt* alright to me but I wanted some confirmation from spirit that there was no lingering problem associated with the car that we had missed. Spirit told me that there was no problem with the student buying the car, the car was not perfect but it would serve him and his family well.

To conclude, he bought the car and took it home, cleaned it up and he was quite pleased that it was all running well. A few weeks later a friend of ours asked me, somewhat awkwardly, whether I had looked at the colour of the students' car. I admitted that I had only seen it at night when he bought it and I had not had a chance to get a good look at it since then. When I looked again at the car I noticed that it had 3 different shades of red in the paintwork. To be fair, each of the sections that had been sprayed were all done well and there was no problem with the individual sections. The problem was that each of the sections was a slightly different colour to the other sections.

Any of the panels or parts that had been replaced or fixed had been done well, but the colour matching was very poor. I asked the student how he had managed to look at the car during the daylight and not noticed the colour differences. In his defence I think that most people might not have noticed the differences at all, but I expected him to have spotted something like that. He admitted that the reason he didn't see the paint problems was that he *wanted* the car.

Having realised that he had paid quite a bit of money for a car that had such defects because he was influenced by *wanting* the car, he then became quite worried that there may have been some other, more major problems that he had also failed to spot. I calmed him by telling him that I had *felt* the car and was also told that the car was OK for him to buy.

These events were many years ago, the car served him well. The car was very reliable and although it needed some work doing, it was nothing beyond what you can reasonably expect from any used car, things like a clutch or water pump. The car was a good buy, although there was a problem with the paintwork, this would most likely have been grounds for knocking down the price rather than rejecting the car completely.

I used my spiritual feelings and what I had felt turned out to be completely right.

My partner and I applied the same principle when we purchased our car. We bought a nearly new but used car and we were able to sit in and see how it *felt* to us. After trying out many makes and models we settled on the car that felt right for us, the main feeling we got in the car we eventually purchased was that as soon as we sat in the car it felt like it was *our car*. When you get a feeling like this you need to check carefully all the other details that can trip you up. Make sure the price is right, that the car is mechanically sound and all the other details like that. After all of that, if you get a feeling like we got, then you will know that car is the one for you.

Returning to the main issue, I was discussing balance in relation to your sixth sense. I have shown how I used my *feelings* level for bigger things in my life, but the advice I would stress to people new to using their feelings, is to use them often for the smaller things and check them as often as you can. In this way you will build up a catalogue of experience where your feelings have been proved right, this will give you the confidence to trust your feelings (or sixth sense) when it comes to the bigger issues in your life.

My balance

I think the key issue for balance is with yourself. To give you some insight into me; I can openly tell you that I have always had a weight problem. People might look for reasons

for it and ask whether my mum let me eat too much when I was young and so on, but I have to answer honestly that this wasn't the case. In fact my mum took quite a bit of time and effort taking me to the doctor about my weight and trying to help me with diets.

I never really felt that it was due to my eating outrageous amounts of food. At the time of writing this book my weight was around 20 stone at a height of 6 foot 2 (in metric that is about 127 Kilograms for a height of 189cm). This was not 20 stone of complete blubber since I did a fair amount of training and I had an active job, most people would have underestimated my weight. At that time I would have liked to have been three to four stone (about 20 kilos) lighter than I was.

For me, the balance issue I need to look at is: "Why am I fat?" I could argue about the unfairness of it, because I know people who consume more food than I do and are nowhere near the weight I am, in fact I know people who are as thin as rakes and eat far more than I do. If I apply balance then I have to concede that it doesn't really matter what other people eat, it's what I eat that is of relevance and quite obviously I am putting more calories into my body than it needs for daily life. These extra calories get kept and stored up as fat.

The science is extremely simple. Eat more calories than necessary, you get fat. Eat about the right amount of calories, you remain stable. Eat less than required and you will lose weight. I need to reduce my calories down gradually to a point where it becomes natural for me to eat less. As I naturally get used to the reduced calorie intake I can reduce it further until each day my exertions mean that I am having to use up a small amount of my stored energy (or fat as most people call it!) This should continue until there is not quite so much store left, or at least to the point where I am happy with the amount of store that is there!

To look at this situation from the other side I can argue that there was a time when I was almost 24 stone (152 kilos). With the tireless help of my partner I was able to reduce that figure to 20 stone. So I have come some distance and I have further to go, but what sustains me in this is that I can look at myself with balance. When I look at myself in all 3 areas of life, I can say that I love myself (not in a narcissistic way,) I value myself as a good person, but I don't love the way I look. I would like to look better for myself and I would like to look better for my partner, because although I know she loves me; how she sees me is important to me too.

By applying balance, my major problem reduces into very simple parts: I have a weight problem. It is my fault. If I want to do something about it then I have to take action and do it myself. There are people who will help me, if I need help all I need do is ask.

As a young man, (or should I say more accurately, a young person) like many people, the word 'love' didn't easily come from my lips. Even now, it doesn't easily fall from my lips, but for a different reason; now it must be meant. One of the biggest problems I encountered was that, like most young people, I started to have feelings towards a partner that were comparable to the way I felt towards my close family.

I was still young at this time and the strength of these feelings frightened me. Consequently due to my fear of commitment and thinking that I was still young and should be getting around, I was concerned at how serious I was becoming with this very attractive young lady. I believe now it was solely my fault that we split up on several occasions, which was something that caused us both an amount of heartache, but also something that taught us both some valuable lessons that we hold to this day. I needed to learn the spiritual understanding of the following 4 words; love, trust, truth and balance, but in particular - love. This example can be applied to other words and many other situations.

Trusting someone that has not earned your trust will also cause you pain, or not trusting someone that you should, it's variable. Likewise with truth, you may tell someone the truth based on what you were told, therefore you may have just passed on a lie. Please realise that to protect yourself and those closest to you, you must only believe what you are able to prove, this is where most people get it wrong; they believe what is *easy* to believe or what they *want* to believe, therefore truth is also variable.

My thought process and way of thinking used to be, 'I love you' or 'I do not love you,' 'I trust you' or 'I do not trust you,' 'this is the truth' or 'this is not the truth,' 'this is

balanced' or 'this is not balanced.' Now I love and trust everybody, but the level varies. For this reason I am now able to love people from the basic level of being part of life, up to and including loving them personally, as they love me. My suggestion to all people is to apply balance to your love, you really must try to have love flowing backwards and forwards at a comparable level or it absolutely will not work, if it is not balanced, love will cause you pain.

The problem with rushing into relationships in the physical area, in other words – sex, is that you get a heightened feeling of closeness. This is fine if it just remains as a physical relationship, however this heightened feeling of closeness is not as it initially seemed, if the relationship develops past what was just a physical relationship. When you get to know someone mentally and even a little spiritually, there may be enormous differences in who you both are, therefore relationships fail more quickly when approached too fast in just the physical area.

If you were drawn to a person spiritually first, that is a connection of the higher level, you will then mentally find that you are more compatible. Following that, whether or not you initially found each other physically attractive, you will then find that the physical element of attraction develops, this is due to the intimacy/compatibility on the two higher levels already being established. Most of us don't realise that being intimate with someone is not reliant on the package in which they are wrapped, in other words - the shape or form of their body. At this point I have to say please take this as a general observation, although it is accurate. Your own specific situation will be different, so use this as a guide in observation of relationships.

Balance, we should then see, is important for all aspects of your life, but it becomes particularly important for spiritual communication. Without balance and truth your first steps from the level of sixth sense ability to spiritual ability will either be very confusing, slow or will not happen at all. Many people find the move up from the sixth sense level is usually through *Clairsentience*, this was the case for me. I moved from a psychic or sixth sense level to the spiritual area where I received information through *Clairsentience*, in many cases my understanding/interpretation of the communication was not always clear to me. Therefore, as previously stated I would recommend where possible, that development in this area is best undertaken with a teacher and eventually your own spiritual guide.

I have heard people complain that teaching information they were given spiritually was not clear or they didn't understand it, but as a student at the time I always said that I didn't know enough about spiritual communication/teaching to be stating the manner in which I felt I ought to be taught. I observed that many people are very reluctant to say openly when they don't understand something, this only leads to further confusion. I was happy with the information I had received and I was confident that I would be able to progress along the path that was right for me, with the help of my teachers and guides. At this point I should add that although I trust my guides now, I was somewhat sceptical of them initially.

If I am not balanced and not truthful with myself, then when I do receive information from spirit, the chances are that I will translate or interpret the information incorrectly. It will be given to me correctly; but I will misinterpret it because I am going to be adding *my* opinion to it. With spiritual information *my* opinion doesn't come into things very much, if at all, neither should yours. Balance is very important in order to receive information in a neutral manner and not colour or alter it with our own opinions and prejudices. For example if I were to show you a nice painting of the Sea and you were wearing red glasses, what would you see of the Sea?

Counselling

In this section I will attempt to explain some issues that many of you may be familiar with, to varying degrees. The word 'counsellor' will have different meanings and connotations to different people, but I will give you my interpretation based upon my own experience and consultations I have had with people who have visited counsellors. I believe a counsellor is someone who, for a given situation, listens and may give advice. Counsellors generally have an area of expertise, so for example, you may have a physical counsellor (or fitness trainer), a legal counsellor, sexual counsellor, bereavement counsellor, emotional/life counsellor or spiritual counsellor.

I have had many people come to me to seek spiritual counsel, advice and guidance, many of these people have already been to see traditional counsellors; such as private counsellors or counsellors recommended by a doctor. One of the things that many of these people said was that they didn't consider these counsellors to actually be counsellors. Instead the counsellors were more like *professional listeners*.

When I heard this I offered to clear up a point for them. Counselling starts when you ask for help, because at the point where you are able to ask for help you have admitted to yourself that there is something not quite right in one area or another, so you see it would help you to talk to somebody about it. If the problem happens to be with your partner then you may well feel unable to talk to your partner about it and in such cases it is often necessary to talk to a third party. A warning at this point, depending what it is you need to talk about, be very careful who the third party is and what you tell them, as most peoples' idea of confidentiality is that they only tell one or two other people.

The people who described counsellors they have met as *professional listeners* may be making an accurate assessment from their viewpoint, but such assessments might be seen as unfair. A counsellor's first role is to listen to the people who come to visit them, through this act the person talking to the counsellor is able to listen to themselves talking about various issues. For many people just this act in itself is enough for work to begin on the problem. On occasion, simply being able to talk about the problem allows the speaker enough of an objective viewpoint that they are able to see their problem clearer.

However, I have also had instances relayed to me where counsellors didn't offer any input or guidance, but the person visiting the counsellor in this case was looking for something more than someone to simply listen. In some cases it is as if the counsellor is reluctant to give any input, to even make a suggestion or give a different opinion. There seems to be an unwillingness for counsellors to overstep their bounds or have a disagreement with the people that go to see them.

Clearly it would not be beneficial if the people visiting counsellors had huge arguments with the counsellor, since they would simply not go back again. Conversely, if the counsellor is never able to make a value judgement on anything, then in the case of a couple each side can air their grievances without having to listen to the other person and the counsellor won't step in, even if both parties need that kind of intervention.

For me, the counselling role varies depending on what counsel is being sought. I have someone around my daughter who acts as her football counsellor, he gives her advice/counsel on technique, playing, eating, diet, fitness, attitude and a whole range of other issues. With the benefit of such counsel my daughter has become quite a good footballer (although a large part of that is probably due to the fact that she seems to have a football glued to her foot most of the time.)

My role as a spiritual counsellor

The counselling role that I have tried to follow is that of a *spiritual* counsellor. What this means is that I can counsel people on physical aspects of their lives, as well as mental problems, but the people who come to see me as a *spiritual* counsellor are generally people who have already been to see regular counsellors. In most cases like this, these people have

come to talk to me because they have issues that they say cannot be resolved with the regular counsellor. This may have been because they felt unable to open up to a sufficient degree with the counsellor, but more often than not, the problem is that the counsellor is not able to work in the spiritual area or at that level of the problem.

When someone comes to me one of the first things that I make clear is that I don't charge. I have a system whereby people make a donation for the service I have provided, I will then pass this money onto various charities and other causes. I don't offer counselling to people with the intention of making money, but I do feel that people should make a donation for the help they receive. I emphasise to people that they are not paying me, it is not about the money, I do not personally benefit from their donation, I have a family and I teach.

If someone pays to see a counsellor and chooses to waste their money by not talking to the counsellor, then that is their choice, but if they come to see me I don't allow them that choice. When I do counselling it is to help people and not for me to make a living, which means I am more demanding of the people that come to see me. If they are not happy with these demands then they are free to go and find someone else to talk to.

I feel it is important that there is an understanding between myself and the person coming to see me. For my part I will always give 100% (or more) and therefore it is important that I get a lot back in return from the person coming to see me. If the person wants to make a real effort to sort their problem then I believe I can help, but if they simply want someone to talk to about their problem (and I am not criticising this approach,) then I am the wrong person to be talking to.

If I don't have an answer for something that I am asked as a counsellor then I will probably be able to find someone else who *does* have an answer. For example, I have been involved in counselling where part of the problem was a legal matter and the person has asked me whether I would mind getting involved in that area of their problem. I told them that their solicitor or legal representative would probably advise them to see a particular counsellor or psychiatrist who was specialised and would be able to deal with legal matters, (this is what they had been advised to do). I then advised the person to use the specialist for that area of the larger problem, I added that if they wished to continue seeing me for the non-legal areas then they could do so.

It is important for me to know when to use people who have more knowledge than I do in a particular area. I am not a lawyer or a doctor and in cases where I have felt that the person requires medical advice, then as part of my counselling I have sent people to see a doctor, to the hospital, and even to visit a psychiatrist. However, generally the people that come to see me have come through other people who know me and what I do, these people usually have some spiritual issue or problem that seems to be tying them down.

It is important that you have a clear idea of what I mean when I talk about spiritual counselling. If you consider the regular counselling services that are offered by police forces for victims of rape or other serious crimes such as murder, then it is clear that some traumatic events have such a profound effect on peoples' lives, that they need counselling to help them deal with them. Some events in life may be so traumatic that beyond any immediate physical and mental damage that may occur, people may actually find they are spiritually struck; as if their soul has been hurt or damaged.

Some people may deal with this spiritual loss through religion and the support of a local church, others may use the love and support of their partner or family. Some people deal with such loss by seeking out someone who in their opinion is able to help repair some of the spiritual damage - this is my role.

For me, counselling in the spiritual sense requires me to go slightly past the point where the person I am talking to is comfortable to go. Some traditional counsellors may scorn this approach saying that it pushes the person beyond where they are comfortable, but I feel that it is necessary to do this and I will say again that the move is only *slightly* past the point of comfort. It is important to remember also, that if you do have spiritual input, then you are bound by certain commitments rather like an oath. I am bound by spirits, my spiritual level, my god, or whatever name you are happy to use, to keep confidential anything that is said to

me during counselling. This may appear to be the same as the confidentiality expected of any counsellor, but when working as a spiritual counsellor the agreement is at a far higher level.

Another consequence of the agreement is that when counselling, or any time at all really, I am not allowed to go any further into someone's life than they have consented for me to go, when we initially start our process. I have counselled people where every time I tried to talk to them I got the feeling that large gates were closing and walls arising to block communication. I will normally stop at that point and say to such people that whatever the issue is they obviously don't want to talk about it, which I can relate to if it is causing them so much pain that they are unable to talk about it. However, if I have been spiritually told to go in that direction and the other person closes the door, then there are two ways that the situation can be dealt with. Most people when confronted with a door in this way will either walk away or try and break it down.

It is not my job as a spiritual counsellor to spend my time breaking down people's doors. If someone has closed a door on me and I am counselling them then I may well talk about the door, the fact that it has been closed and where I feel the counselling needs to go to be of most benefit to the other person. I try to make it clear that I am simply talking about the fact that the door has been closed, but I will not use any spiritual ability to look behind the door if the person has closed it.

This causes a problem for a great many people I deal with. Quite often if I have been accurate about things in a person's life, they will be afraid that I know *everything* else about their life, including things that they didn't want me to know.

What I try to do is reassure people that this is not the case. When I am talking to someone and I feel resistance arise, I will only go as far as the other person allows. If I was helping you in a counselling capacity, then you could consider it in the following way. Imagine you are holding my hand and we are walking along together down a path that may have become quite a dark path. You may be afraid, this is something I can relate to from the many times in my life, where I too have been afraid. While walking along the path I may feel you start to drop back so that my arm is being pulled backwards. At this point I don't then apply extra strength and drag you down the path, but instead I will stop and turn and say: "You don't want to go any further and that's fine for now, but let's talk about where we are *now*."

What I must do and what you would need to do if you were to visit a spiritual counsellor, is to look at where the real problem is. We all produce mountains of debris in the physical and mental areas and place it in front of a counsellor: My mum doesn't like me, my boss hates me and doesn't appreciate the hard work I do, my friends are not supportive of me. A regular counsellor will be able to go through all of these things with you since they may be genuine problems, but a spiritual counsellor will go through them all a lot quicker. This means that the person who visits a spiritual counsellor has to be prepared to do the work because they will not be able to hide behind the more superficial problems in their life.

I have had people around me who have been willing to do some work towards the problems in their lives but then they reached a point where, in their words, they had to "take a break until they are strong enough to deal with what they have to deal with". Some of you may have read that and found it a little strange, even laughable perhaps, but this is the type of remark that people have actually made to me. Obviously the sort of person who would make such a remark is so caught up in their own issues/fear that they fail to see the irony of such a course of action. They are working with a counsellor who can help them deal with their problems physically, mentally and spiritually, but they are going to take a break from that support until they are strong enough to deal with their bigger issues.

It should be apparent to most people that what that person actually means is "I don't want to deal with the things that I need to deal with so I am going to take a break," they are avoiding issues. At this point they will release my hand and I will say "I wish you all the best and I hope everything goes well. You know where I am, so if you need me then call."

Tools for counselling

At this point it might be appropriate to discuss why someone would want or require spiritual counselling at all? If you take the case of a general counsellor, I do not mean this in a derisory or negative way, then you may find that they have had quite a comfortable and untroubled life. Certainly their intentions may be good and their heart is in the right place, but can they truly appreciate real hardship and trauma in the life of one of their clients if their own background is completely different.

On the other hand, if a counsellor had experienced large amounts of grief and turmoil in their own life then they may tend to dismiss the problems other people have as trivial. None of us like to be told that our problems are trivial because we each have to deal with our problems on the level we are on. While other peoples' problems may appear small and easy to fix, it always feels like our own problems are much bigger and much harder, but there is someone further down their path who thinks that our problems are simple and easily fixed compared to their own.

Something I always try and emphasise, is that however trivial someone else's problems or fears may appear to you, they should be treated with respect because those fears are *very* real to the person concerned. To give a simple analogy, a poor old man might worry about being able to afford a loaf of bread, while the baker is worrying about his business, the mayor is worrying about local businesses closing down and the Prime Minister worries about the state of the economy.

A counsellor should obviously be trained for an awareness of their own background and the character it has given them, but at the end of the day a counsellor has a range of human experience and this must be a factor in how they issue counsel to the people they see. I always felt that I didn't want just one person's opinion on an issue because that opinion could be just as wrong as my own, although as I discussed earlier I feel I was fortunate that I saw qualities in my early teachers that I had not seen in other people, and that is reason they became my teachers.

When I want to get some input on an issue I aim for what I call the 'triangle' approach. How this works it that I will go to visit the people that I call spirit or my teachers and I will ask for input from three sources; this puts me in the middle of a triangle, hence the term. I place myself in the middle and accept information with three different viewpoints, three different knowledge levels and three different strength levels. Taking information from these three differing levels I should be able to get answers (and more questions too usually), ultimately arriving at a solution for my problem.

I always say to people that if they are dealing with a problem that doesn't need spiritual level intervention, which is to say a problem that doesn't require the help of a teacher, then they could take a similar approach to the one I take when grappling with spiritual issues. If you were to take three people that you regarded as reasonably balanced and sensible, upon presenting your problem to them, somewhere in the three answers you get back would be the solution to your problem. Whether or not you are happy hearing what they have to say is a matter for you to deal with, but they would be able to give you the answer to your problem.

However, when it comes to these three sensible, balanced people dealing with their own problems then they will have to go and find someone who is even more sensible and balanced than they are, who is more truthful and has more experience. This leads us to a problem. If you consider yourself to be a person who generally gets things right and tries to help other people then who do *you* go to when you have a problem?

It is for exactly this reason that I choose to be in touch with a higher level to help people as a counsellor. Quite often I am dealing with sensible, balanced people who have problems that they are not able to sort out, if left, these problems will inevitably pull them out of balance and stop them being quite so sensible. To be able to help people like this I work with spirit, I ask them to help me by being totally truthful so I can be as balanced as possible. If I am going to try and help people then I really need to try and get things right myself, as I try to set an example for others in the things that I do. People need to see that I actually do the

things myself that I guide them to do, the last thing I would want to become is the sort of teacher/counsellor who gives guidance to others, only to not follow that guidance in my own life.

Types of counselling

Some people find that when they attend sessions with a regular counsellor that they become comfortable with the counsellor and the counselling sessions. If you were to go for *spiritual counselling* then you would most likely find that you were *not* as comfortable because the idea of spiritual counselling is for you to address the underlying problems in your life that need to be sorted, not to feel comfortable.

We all have problems to address in our lives and if at any time the problem becomes easy or comfortable, then the chances are we have given up really trying with the problem and have simply convinced ourselves that we are doing OK. I have a problem trying to control my weight. For me it is a major problem in my life and I can never relax and feel comfortable with it because it means I have stopped trying.

If you feel *too* comfortable in your life then you probably need to ask yourself whether you are dealing with the issues in your life or whether you are just marking time? Provided you are working your way through the debris, that is to say the surface problems of your life with the aim of getting to the underlying issues, then you are making progress. However, if you attend counselling simply to satisfy yourself that you are doing something to address a problem, without really making a genuine effort, then the problem is likely to remain, in fact it will grow and spread.

If you go to a spiritual counsellor (or someone whom you believe to be a spiritual counsellor), then you should be able to distinguish them from other regular counsellors in the way they help you with your problem. They ought to be able to tell you things about yourself, without going too far and making you too uncomfortable, although most people do tend to become very uncomfortable when told things about themselves that only they know. If the counsellor is telling you, not asking you, but *telling* you things that no-one else knows and you *know* that they are telling you the truth, then the chances are that you are in the presence of a *spiritual* counsellor.

A spiritual counsellor has a spiritual connection and uses it for the good it can do in counselling, but doesn't go beyond a point where the person seeking help is able to understand that level and is willing to try to deal with the point at that time.

An example of this is my first teacher, my step-father Lionel, he gave myself and my brother counselling time and time again, he also taught and instilled certain values into us. When he disciplined us it was done in a manner that would cause us to think about the things we had done or not done, rather than simply giving us a punishment. It was something we both really hated at the time because we knew he was absolutely right, when you have just done the wrong thing either deliberately or by mistake, you don't want to know that somebody else is absolutely right!

We weren't aware at the time, but Lionel used to put things in a very gentle, kind way. It is my opinion now that it doesn't really matter how you put things, most people will take it the way they want to, depending on which colour glasses they are wearing, therefore I don't try to be kind; I am truthful, balanced and most would say, blunt.

It wouldn't have been possible for Lionel to teach/counsel us by trying to be physically dominant, since my brother and I were not the type of boys this would work with, it would only have made us rebel. However, with common sense, balance and truth he always got his point across, not that we were always prepared to admit it at the time. We both understand now and I have spoken to Lionel since, he knows that we understand now. More importantly, when he looks at how we live our lives now he can see that we learnt the lessons he tried to teach us and have made use of his counsel.

When might you need counselling?

I have already touched briefly on when you need counselling and I shall return to it again because it is a significant question. When do you require the services of a spiritual counsellor? I will say again that in society there is still some stigma attached to the idea of needing counselling, but I say to people that at some point in our lives we all need counselling.

I always look at things in a simple way and try to encourage others to do the same, when I have a problem and I can't work it out by myself (for whatever reason), then I need to ask somebody with a higher knowledge who can help me work it out. However, for many people the big label of 'counselling' causes them a real mental block, even though lots of us have counselling, but don't see it as such.

I tell people that if they are not happy telling others they are having counselling, then they can tell them that they go and talk to somebody they know. They can say that he is a family man but in his spare time he helps people with their problems, so that in their minds they take away the stigma of the label of 'counsellor'.

Counselling, at its simplest, is talking to someone and having them talk to you. Obviously the content of the conversation will distinguish counselling from just chatting, but for some people even just chatting about apparently unimportant topics, can act as a form of counselling. When I need to talk I have someone around who fulfils that need.

I feel lucky because my partner and I have made great efforts in our communication and I am pleased to say that my relationship with my partner is excellent. Generally if I need to talk to someone I will talk to my partner. I consider her to be one of my best friends as well as being my partner. Also, my brother is one of my best friends since our relationship is completely honest and open at this time.

I am fortunate to have two people I can turn to when I need to *talk*. As well as my partner and my brother I can also talk to my teachers/guides in spirit, as the needs arises, to other spirits whose information has a bearing on events going on around me. As I often tell people, it is not that I get everything right in my life, but rather that I generally check and feel what I should do *before* I do it. This is a facility that everybody has the ability to learn, but mainly choose not to learn or use it, instead they check *after* they have done something, therefore they are firefighting instead of *not* fire lighting.

I have said that I view 'counselling' as an exchange of information with someone who you feel can help you or offer advice, so what kind of circumstances would lead to *you* feeling that you need to see a counsellor? Many people have difficulties in their relationship and if their partner was someone they had always turned to for advice and leaned on in hard times, it may be the case that you can't talk to your partner about the problem. There may be some issue that just can't seem to be resolved and every time they are discussed it leads to an argument. It seems as if there is no way past the problem, and every little row and disagreement leads back to the same point.

Take a hypothetical example and imagine that I am in a relationship and I have had an argument with my wife about the washing machine. This argument was like so many in recent months, what started off as a minor point soon blew up into a major row. Was the argument really about the washing machine, or was it about the fact that I like to go drinking three times and week while my wife never seems to go out at all? Was it my change of plan that meant the quiet night in with my wife was cancelled so that I could go out and see a movie with my mates?

It is questions like these that one needs to ask oneself honestly. If you have looked deeply and truthfully at an issue like this and still cannot understand what is going on then counselling is probably in order. If the problem is in the relationship then it is fairly clear that most people will benefit from having a third party involved who cares about the two individuals, but is neutral in terms of 'taking sides' and giving advice.

To many people, it seems an extreme measure to have counselling, but I usually give this simple example, not because I consider you the reader to be simple, but because I am happy to have things expressed in simple terms. Someone might ask me what I would do if

my tap was dripping constantly? I might answer (like most people), "well, if it wasn't dripping too badly then I might leave it". Some of you may find a familiar humour in that kind of approach. Eventually the tap will reach a point where it is starting to annoy me and something needs to be done about it.

I would need to ask myself a question: "Do I have knowledge to do something about this problem?" I do quite a bit of D.I.Y around the house and I am a fairly handy person, but I can't really say that plumbing is an area that I know a great deal about. However, I would probably remind myself that I have an uncle who has a great deal of knowledge about plumbing, so I will call him and say: "Hello uncle, could you give me some counselling please! I need to talk to you about plumbing."

At this point some readers might cry foul and say that getting help in such a way is not counselling. I will concede a little in that direction, since it is more a case of asking him to teach me something rather than actual counselling, but the important point is that I am still *asking for help*. Because the example is practical most people would not have any stigma attached to asking someone for help in this way, but for any problem certain principles apply. If you are not able to do a job/task yourself, not because you are too lazy, but because you either don't have the skills or the knowledge, then you would ask someone for help.

One of the interesting points I found through doing counselling was financial. I will state again that I do not do spiritual counselling for financial gain, but I used to ask people to make a donation and that brought up interesting points about money and the value people place on things.

If you had a leaking pipe and were not fortunate enough to have an uncle who could tell you how to fix it then you have no choice but to pay the rate that a professional plumber charges, this may cost £50-100 per hour. Similarly, if you took your car to a garage you may pay labour charges of £50+ per hour for the work. People accept that a range of trades who provide services charge a high rate, yet the same people complain that they went to see a counsellor and had to pay £40 per hour!

It is important to remember that people go to see counsellors to help with problems they (possibly together with their partner) cannot fix. It is almost as if people attach more value to the work done by a plumber who fixes some broken pipes, than they do to a counsellor who may help fix a fundamental problem in a person's life.

If *you* are not functioning properly because of all the problems in your life then the chances are any relationship you are in is not going to be working properly either, this is a time to be more concerned with dealing with major life issues than dripping taps. Don't worry about the new car. Don't worry about whether you can stretch and get the big mortgage for the big new house. If you were to sort out the problems in your life then you would be happier living in a tent with the person you love.

I have had the strange situation where people have come to me having already seen other counsellors and they have some difficulty with the fact that I am 'cheaper'. People struggle with the fact that it doesn't cost money to see me and I have to explain to them that counselling is not my job. Working as a counsellor is something I do with certain people when I am guided to do so or they have asked for my help, I do it in on a voluntary basis.

I have had people come to see me and say that I am worth more than the professional counsellor they have already seen because I have helped them more. I usually say that I am happy I could help them and they should feel free to make a donation to charity, I usually suggest 'Wateraid.' Interestingly enough, although some people would protest that I am worth more than a professional counsellor, their donation did not reflect this and it should be noted that I therefore started to specify a minimum donation that was lower than the hourly rate of a cheap professional counsellor.

It would seem that people have their values somewhat back to front. When it comes to getting a tap fixed people are prepared to pay a plumber and have it fixed properly. However, when it comes to something that is so important that their whole life could depend on it, for example the stability of their marriage or relationship, people suddenly become frugal.

The difference is explained partly by the fact that the dripping tap is a visible problem and once it has been fixed it is clear what the money was used for. The problems people have in their lives are often less visible, to them at least. When I help someone fix something in their life I often get comments from people around them who have noticed a change in that person. To me, the results of fixing the tap are no more visible than the results of helping someone to fix their life. Most people seem happy to spend money on the physical things in their life, but are unwilling to spend money on what should be considered the most important thing in their life, their own wellbeing.

To conclude this chapter I would say that if you have a problem in your life that you don't feel you can fix then you should seek help. If it makes you more comfortable, then to start with don't think of it as counselling, but look at it simply as a third person who is able to give an independent viewpoint, who can offer you the benefit of their experience and knowledge. Your counsellor should be strong enough and truthful enough to tell you if you are being unreasonable, either with yourself or your partner. You should use this as criteria to find your counsellor, in the same way as I suggested when you look for your teacher.

Hopefully, if you see a counsellor who is spiritually inclined, they will be able to give a little bit of *extra* guidance, with that guidance, as I have found through personal experience, counselling can help you find *your way*.

Healing

My definition of Spiritual Healing is as follows; the healer basically calms themselves and drops to a meditation level or lower, which in effect is like raising a radio antenna. They then tune into the relevant spiritual level where they receive the energy that they are looking for to pass healing on to the recipient. This works much in the same way as radio station signals that are floating around us all the time, but until the antenna is raised and the radio is tuned into the chosen station, the signals cannot be received and passed onto the listener. The healing energy that I use is a very naturally occurring energy that is around everybody. When even a minor cut or abrasion occurs, physically the body starts to heal itself mechanically, there is a spiritual energy that also assists the body to heal, all I do is receive it at an amplified level and pass it onto the person i'm working with.

The first thing I would like to let everyone know about healing, is that I had no intention what so ever of doing healing, I had no intention of even considering doing healing. Put simply it was not something that I ever thought I would find myself doing.

In general the idea of healing is referred to as the laying on of hands. Although it was something I had not considered doing myself, my step father Lionel practiced healing, as did my mum, having received healing from them at various times I saw that they both seemed to be quite effective at it. I met a medium, a very spiritual lady in one of the circles I attended, she found that the ability to give off love and healing was something that came to her very easily.

Although I had no intention of getting involved with healing and having shown no real interest in it, she asked me if I ever considered doing healing. I said that I hadn't considered it at all, to which she replied "well, I think you should, because I can see the healing energy around you." The phrase, having something 'around you' is a term you will hear a lot when you talk to psychics and spiritual people. When I heard that healing was 'around me,' I remembered thinking "Oh yeah! My clothes are 'around me,' but that doesn't mean I want to become a tailor!" Sensing my lack of interest she said "there are those people who have stronger energy in certain areas," this was something I could understand, but said that we would leave it at that for the time being.

Healing is an area about which many people are confused. I can only pass on my own experience, which I feel may be relevant to many people because I have questioned many things and many people. I very rarely accept something unless I can question it and get some level of proof for myself, this level may not be satisfactory for other people, but if it is satisfactory to me, I will accept it. Some people may call this faith, but I like to believe that I question things on a level where it is proved to me. If you are being honest with yourself, use all your facilities and take into account what you feel, then you should be able to tell when something feels right to you.

Healing is one of the things that eventually I became more involved with and gained a greater understanding of. There are a huge number of levels attached to healing. There are those people who may use crystals, colours, shakra's, healing oils and so on. I believe that healers use differing methods, but all link into the same power source, as with people who use different methods to give spiritual readings

Another form of healing, is faith healing. People have asked me to explain the difference between spiritual healing, as I use the term, and faith healing. I believe that a faith healer is someone that regardless of whether they are working with a group or on a one to one basis, needs the other person(s) to believe that the healer has the ability to heal. There is an amount of faith required by the person being healed, for the healer to be able to do their healing work. However, I have observed spiritual healers and from what I have seen (as well as what I have experienced in my own healing work), they will still be able to work with people who are sceptical of the whole healing idea or think the whole healing concept, is a load of rubbish.

I would often say to such people, that I can understand the way that you feel as I thought it was a load of rubbish too at one time, but I don't need you to have faith in me or

spiritual healing, for it to have an effect. I know that my faith in what I believe is the link to the energy that is necessary to hopefully bring on some improvement to the persons condition. Most people, including some of my family at various times, accepted this approach as I am not asking them to believe in what I am doing, but merely to accept that I believe in what I am doing. Even if the healing appears to have no effect, then they have lost nothing in trying it, the person receiving healing does not have to deal too deeply with whether or what, they believe in or not.

When any of us get injured, there is a natural healing process that takes place, the cells regenerate and the scientist would explain that certain chemicals and hormones behave in a certain way to help the body to heal itself. All of this is true, but as well as this, the healing process is dependent of their energy level, not just their physical vitality but also their spiritual energy. Whenever you are around someone who is injured or ill you will notice that their energy level is lower than it would normally be. My belief is that if you are able to increase some ones inner spiritual energy level, you will be able to bring extra energy to the whole physical healing process.

This process works in much the same way that a car with a low battery, can be helped to start with a set of jump leads from another car that has a healthy battery. While the car will not start unaided due to its low battery (or low energy), it can be helped to start, which will in turn result in the car being able to charge the battery and restore its own vitality. To continue the automotive analogy, once the car has been jump started and driven, the battery should then charge up and provide enough power to keep the car working. If the battery keeps running down to a point where it won't start the car, then there is some mechanical problem. For people, if their energy keeps running down, then there is a problem either in the physical, mental, or spiritual area.

Mediums, psychics and spiritual people can see that there is an energy flowing around us everywhere, it surrounds us. A spiritual healer will tune into this energy, rather like turning on a radio and selecting which station you wish to listen to, a healer will tune into this force or spiritual energy and then redirect it around the person they are trying to help.

I rarely ask people what's wrong with them when they come to me for healing and there are a number of reasons for this. To start with, the problem may be personal or of an intimate nature and asking them might make them embarrassed. Secondly, as I was taught and then found to be true for myself, if you ask someone what is wrong with them, they might well say that their knee is the area troubling them, this may lead the healer to concentrate on that area, where as the healing they really needed was for stress and the problem with the knee was just the symptom of a larger problem. It is also possible that they have an injury or illness somewhere else that they are not even aware of, but because their knee is the most painful at this time, it is the focus of their attention.

To avoid these pitfalls, I work in the following way. I link with spirit and relax, tune into the level that I feel to and connect that energy through me to the person I'm healing. At that point I would normally be drawn to any particular issues, or I may just feel to place the energy around the whole person and not pick up an individual ailment. By following this process, the healing energy is going where it is needed, not where the other person may think it is needed, or causing me to focus on one place instead of the whole person.

While following this process I am still aware of my movements, which is important as a healer, especially when working with a member of the opposite sex, who may not be too happy with hands being placed inappropriately! As a healer I am responsible for the things I do, I try to take the necessary actions to make sure that I am seen to be doing the right thing, in addition to simply doing the right thing. In my case, if I am working with a female, I make sure that there is somebody around, normally my partner or the partner of the person receiving healing, this is a requirement put in place for the protection of all involved. Although this is a very uncomfortable subject for all, it must be approached and never avoided, for your own security and protection as well as that of any vulnerable people, it is advisable for a healer to always have a chaperone present.

People often ask me 'does healing really work?' I tell them that I can show them how it is possible to change a vibration using just a piece of music, one piece of music may lift

someones vibration, whereas a different piece of music may lower it. I believe that when a healer tunes into where they need to and sends this energy towards a person, it will have an effect, this is something that I have proved to myself and this is how I perceive healing to work. Try healing and prove it or disprove it for yourself, please try more than one healer though.

I have had experiences while doing healing that have proved quite interesting. I have worked with a person and felt a massively strong vibration around their head, which I could only describe as static electricity hitting my hands, I then saw the most amazing colour blue while moving around them, although I usually work with my eyes closed, which means I was seeing *Clairvoyantly*. I then moved around the same person to a different position and have felt a cold vibration around a leg or a joint, this being an element of *Clair-sentience*. I will then tell the person afterwards that I was drawn to their knee/lower leg and will describe the vibration I got around their head, which is something that I tend to see/feel when someone is very stressed, as in this case. I also take into account that the person may be stressed because they are in an environment they may not be particularly comfortable in, one where they are receiving healing.

I don't always ask people who come to me for healing to close their eyes, this is because some people won't be comfortable with this and I try to make the person feel as comfortable as possible. I sometimes put on some music to help them to relax, although I am not trying to get them to meditate or reach a meditative state, I am just trying to relax them.

When we relax we are calmer and more open and receptive to input. Although most people could learn to tune into the healing level through calming/quietening themselves through meditation for self-healing, somebody who has practiced more (like a healer), would be able to do this more effectively, they have a bigger antenna and would therefore be able to receive and transfer more of this energy to the recipient.

I believe there are a number of people who I have done healing on that would say they have felt an effect from the healing I gave them. This is not something that is unique to me, I don't claim to be a great healer. On a very serious note I have done healing on terminally ill people and I feel as they did, that it wasn't about curing them in this instance, it was about assisting them on their path to where they needed to go i.e. peace of mind and spirit.

A healer will always work in conjunction with modern medicine and your personal pathway choice. Unfortunately healing in the same way as medical science, does not guarantee a cure and should be thought of at its lowest level, as an assistance towards a cure if possible. I would suggest that you always follow medical advice and use healing in addition. The results of the healing I have delivered have been varied, which is to be expected, the benefits of which can only really be commented on or assessed by the people who have received it and certainly not by the healer themselves.

I don't cure the blind or help the lame to walk, but I do healing at the level I am able to at the time. I am sure there are other people doing healing on a much higher level than I am with much greater input and ability, just as I am sure there will be people just starting out learning healing on a level below my own.

What I would say to anyone who is suffering from an illness, or feeling low, is that most of the spiritual churches offer healing, it is not as expensive as private healing as it is not done to make a living. Usually the spiritual churches let their healers train new healers and the whole thing is usually done in a professional and open way. I do not feel that healers need to take people into little side rooms, healing can be done in an open hall and there is no need for the person receiving healing to feel uncomfortable or hidden away. It is my belief therefore, that healing absolutely works, as it will do no harm and can be free or quite cheap, healing should always be tried when not feeling your best in the physical, mental or spiritual areas.

Therefore I will end this section saying something I have said before, personal recommendation is a good way to move forward and then to feel whether this particular healer is the one for you.

Other forms of readings:

As mentioned previously with healing there are many different ways or styles that people can pass on healing, although it is the same spiritual energy source being accessed, just in different ways. This is also true of spiritual readings. We have discussed spiritual mediums giving readings in spiritualist churches, but spiritual readings can also be given in different ways using different objects, styles and processes, but again everybody is accessing the same energy, god or force, just in their own way. It would appear in the examples below that they are also using what you would now know to be *claire-sentience*, in addition to their style of presentation or reading.

For example, in my experience many people, including those that do astrology, will plot, plan and work out all the things they need to, but while watching an astrologer work I asked about something he had written down, to which he replied that it was something he had felt while plotting his chart. I asked him where the feeling had come from and where it fitted into the astrological plan. The notes he had written about the planetary positions were from tables and charts, but it was the bit that he felt that was of interest to me. He said that he simply 'felt' it when he was working, he added that he quite often got an insight not directly from the astrological charts, but simply from a feeling.

I have watched people work with Tarot cards. I confirmed that certain cards in combinations were believed to point to certain things, but I then asked why the card reader had said something different. They answered that what they had *felt* in my case was something different. So there it was again, the person was basing some of their reading, or chart, on their feelings.

I also met someone who would use a crystal ball to give readings to people, another person who would use normal playing cards to give readings, and there are also those people who use tea-leaves to the same end. I now jokingly say to people "I will give you a tea-*bag* reading", or "Give me your car keys and I will give you a car-key reading". The point here is I believe that the way all of these 'readings' work, is that all of these people are tuned in to one level or another, to spirit or a God-force, whoever you believe your god to be, or 'the force,' if you are a Star Wars fan.

Each of these people use their spiritual ability in their everyday life, using Tarot cards, crystal balls, tea-leaves or any other method through which they give readings. I believe they are all using the same force but their interpretation of it differs. I always say that the interpretation you may get from such people should always be assessed with an open mind. In other words, is it accurate? Have they been right in the past? Has the advice they have given you been worthwhile?

If the answer to these questions is yes, then it doesn't *matter* if the person giving the reading thinks they are reading the tea-leaves, crystal ball, or Tarot cards. It doesn't even matter if the person gives you a 'glass of water reading'. If the person has been able to help you and you are able to say that the things you were told were correct, while being truthful with yourself, then the information they have given you has some value, regardless of how the information was presented.

One of the most important things when receiving information is to be truthful with yourself. This is something you must always try to do, if you lose the ability to be truthful with yourself then you will never see anything for what it really is, this is a very dangerous position to occupy in this very physical world in which we live.

Whether the person giving a reading is working in trance, through a crystal ball or Tarot cards, is not really relevant. Watch the things you see, listen to the things you hear and most importantly, *feel* what you feel.

Self-Protection

At this point I can feel many of you will be pulling faces and wondering; ‘what is Two Johns talking about?’ Well in life, although we don’t necessarily look at it like that, we learn things from a very early age which enable us to protect ourselves from harm. These are normally very basic things to start with and once we’ve learnt them, they get put to the back of our mind and we don’t normally have to then consciously think about them, we just know.

For example, how many of you can remember what it felt like learning to count to 5? Learning the difference between a square and a circle? Or being so upset because your mum abandoned you at nursery (dropped you off!) As you got slightly older, maybe 5 ... the first time you touch something hot, ouch! You will tend not to do that too many more times deliberately during your life, you also learn to watch your adults (and hopefully your adults are watching you) while you’re out shopping, as that one time you walked off and got lost was so distressing! You tend not to do this as you get older either.

An obvious one that springs to mind is that once you are taught how to cross the road, you tend to remember that for the rest of your life, except for the period of being a teenager where you are car proof and walk in the road using your phone. Younglings, please don’t do this. It is such a waste of a life, don’t cross the road on your phone and not pay attention, it is something you have been taught to do from 6 or 7 years old, if you’re lucky you may just get broken legs, pay attention!

On this note, most of you will be taught the standard way to cross the road, I will add a little more knowledge for you. If you have learnt about the country code as well as the highway code, you will be taught to always try and walk facing the traffic so that you can see what is coming towards you, not just assume that you are safe on the pavement or pedestrianised area. In light of certain unfortunate circumstances in a few countries, this may have saved some peoples’ lives, of course someone can still drive across the road and come up behind you.

This is where I hope that after reading the book and potentially learning some more, your ability to use the 6th sense/spiritual level could give you some warning that something is not quite right. I am now going to break self-protection down into the 3 areas of life as previously outlined: physical, mental and spiritual.

Physical Protection

We could argue where to start with any point, so please don’t worry if you think I have any of this in the wrong order, if there’s anything else you can think of, pat yourself on the back and try to pass it onto other people. The first area where I’ll start physical protection is me, myself and I, in other words self-defence. Most people generally are not that violent, which is a good thing, but in certain situations we are forced into or confronted with violence. This can range from its lowest level of a child kicking out while having a tantrum, to its highest level of someone being killed. Therefore it would be my recommendation that all good people do a basic self-defence course, as the other type of people in the world prove regularly that they are capable of and know how to be violent.

I would like to give you a personal example, I trained at a karate club for quite some time, the teacher and his two sons were very good. On one occasion when meeting his wife, their mother, she actually said: “with the three men in my life trained to such a high level, I don’t know anything about how to look after myself if something happened.” This made me decide that anybody close to me would be taught at least basic self-defence. I am very happy to say that my partners and my children have done much more than basic self-defence, this is good for them and me.

I would like to put to you my second point, what would hurt you more ... someone hitting you, or walking through the door after work or college to find a family member on the floor and not knowing what to do or how to help? First aid training is absolutely essential in life. We are fortunate in this country that our fire brigade and police are first aid trained, as

well as having excellent ambulance and paramedic staff. However, depending on the situation it could take them between 15-20 minutes to get to you, or a lot longer, so having at least some basic knowledge yourself is essential.

Also after you've used your self-defence and hopefully prevented yourself being seriously injured, you can then use your first aid training and help yourself even more. There are a few organisations, St Johns Ambulance, St Andrews Ambulance and The Red Cross, to name a few, that do both short and full first aid courses. You should also have first aiders at your place of work, college and universities etc. If the opportunity arises, always put yourself forward to learn some first aid. Trust me, as with self-defence, you won't need to go looking for trouble, any training you have will be with you when you're in trouble, please note I didn't say *if* you're in trouble.

To continue with physical protection, in the home, no front door should have just one lock on it! All of your doors and windows should have locks, a house alarm is always good and you should have at least two fire extinguishers, smoke/heat detectors and a carbon monoxide monitor. These things are reasonably small and can also be bought and used abroad on holidays, think about the cost of your holiday and the cost of these two devices, you should also pay attention to escape routes, fire exits etc. With the addition of your self-defence and first aid training, you should have a successful holiday and indeed, life.

On a slightly less serious note, an alarm on your car is always advisable, using locks on your bicycles, of course whilst wearing a helmet, high vis and lights. Don't carry too much cash, don't wear excessive jewellery or use your phone, Ipad and headphones excessively whilst walking down the street. You should always be paying attention when you're out and about at any time, being particularly aware of those dark short-cut alleys and your own physical vulnerability. Physical self-defence is anything that you are able to learn or do that can help you avoid physical harm and pain.

Here is a link to my self-defence site, which contains a lot of very useful and worthwhile information even if you just read it.

www.thewayself-defence.org.uk

Mental Protection

The mental situations that we find ourselves in, become oh so much easier once we have learned to find our own balance, but where do we start? The approach I have followed and learned is also widely written about and accepted, so feel free to investigate further, but I would suggest you try it. To slightly simplify the situation, if the brain were a muscle and we didn't rest it adequately, we would suffer from strains, sprains, muscle and ligament tears. Then if still not rested, potentially permanent damage and disability.

So to begin, let us look at the basic ability to rest our brain, which we have done in more detail previously in the meditation section. For example, some people like to read a book, others watch T.V, listen to music, play games and all the other activities which would appear to allow the brain to rest, but I'm afraid it takes more effort and discipline than that. These can be distractions that cause you to think your brain is resting, but its working in the background. What I would say is that it would benefit everyone to learn and practice basic meditation for relaxation.

Briefly, to sit quietly listening to a quiet, relaxed piece of music while stopping yourself thinking about the business of the day, this is particularly important prior to bed time. I know many people who think they relax by watching TV before bed, but this would ultimately depend on what they were watching. For example, a diver underwater swimming around a reef full of fish would be quite relaxing, in comparison to a news reel showing another war, famine or political debates, which I know would not leave you very relaxed, but possibly tired. Therefore you drift off to sleep and your brain could be thinking about the lovely fish swimming around the reef, or it could be thinking about the famine, war or politics.

Sometimes your brain will continue to think about things when you don't necessarily want it to and it's not the most productive thing to do. So to give ourselves a better chance of a better sleep and therefore better mental rest, I suggest you listen to some soothing, easy listening, non-lyrical type music or sounds, this should make it much more likely for restful sleep to be attained. I am absolutely certain that most of us will be aware of a programme, problem or incident, replaying in our brains while trying to get to sleep and when asleep. This explains why a lot of dreams are actually extensions of our brains work or focus during the day.

For those of you who are more advanced, I am sure that you do what I do; I watch whatever I watch before you go to bed. I then do a mini meditation and a spiritual close down, which means I sleep and rest incredibly well, do you? If you aren't sleeping well, feel stressed or anxious it is always worthwhile talking to your GP and/or a counsellor or therapist. Please do not attach stigma to this, as if you had an injury to a muscle or a problem in other areas, you would seek the help for that particular problem, this is absolutely no different if you are having problems in the mental area or are unsure if you're having problems in the mental area.

At this point I am going to put a very personal note to all men, if you find you are having a problem with your sexual ability, in other words erectile dysfunction, DO NOT under any circumstances ignore it, make sure you seek help immediately if the problem occurs more than once or twice. You also need to be absolutely sure that you communicate to your partner that you're having problems, so that you do not increase any issues and cause someone else to feel unwanted or rejected. This problem can be treated in many ways and can be an indicator to underlying physical or mental problems, including stress.

There is much written on the subject of stress, and it is a very scary subject, I will be writing some information on fear later on. For the purpose of stress, I don't wish to be-little anyone's pains and their achievement in getting past very difficult stressful situations, but anyone who has achieved the ability to get through and learn to deal with stress, will realise once on the other side of the problem, that most of the stress, if not the initial starting problem, is not real outside of your own brain. Stress is actually how you're feeling about your perception of lack of control or ability to direct or change any particular situation. So stress equates to a feeling of futility. In my own experience there are very few situations that you can do absolutely nothing about, if you break the situation down using our basic life sum of physical, mental and spiritual, you will have a clearer view and therefore the ability to see what you can do, hence avoiding stress.

Unfortunately I am watching many companies at the moment absolutely and deliberately load stress onto their work forces to achieve 'smarter working.' Which in English means the same or more profit for the company for the same or less pay for the worker, with all sorts of complicated graphs, seminars and waffle to convince the staff of non-existent better ways to do things. I have spoken to some people recently, and these are reasonably intelligent people, who were trying to explain to me why their job which pays a set salary for a set number of hours a week, required for them to do 10-15% additional hours per week with no additional pay.

I absolutely find it immoral that anybody should be working for a profitable company working additional hours without additional pay. It is my opinion that this is comparable to slave labour. Upon speaking to these people I have asked them 'who said you had to do that?' They replied: 'well no one, but it was said, that we all have to do a bit extra sometimes.' My reply was; 'I gather the person who is telling you that, is a manager on twice as much money as you're on? And just because you're told something, doesn't mean it's right.' You must use your own moral compass, you go to work to earn money and make profit for the company, if the company is making profit, morally no one should be doing any 'free' additional hours, or being made compulsory redundant.

There is a new phrase that is going to be more widely heard, I've been using it for a while, 'moral capitalism.' The truth is communism isn't right, but capitalism is not right either, the human race needs to find some balance in between. All of these things add to the pressure being applied to the work force, in other words, individuals. Look at what you're

being told, check the rules, get some advice and find a reasonable work/life balance, no one deserves to be stressed, life is difficult enough without anyone deliberately making it harder.

At least by meditating and relaxing you will be able to see, think and feel more calmly, this will help you be less stressed and more relaxed. I absolutely believe that psychiatrists, counsellors and therapists are as important as any physical doctors or help can be.

Spiritual Protection

As with the physical and mental areas, there is also a protection that can be used in the spiritual area. It is much harder to understand and learn to use, although if studied with a teacher, you will quickly realise that most people use it quite naturally at the lower levels, but need to learn how to classify and quantify what they are doing themselves. As a little example, imagine that you became aware of someone throwing a pebble at you and you used an evasive manoeuvring technique, or you use your shield to block the pebble, but you don't really know how you do it or where the shield comes from, then how effective will you be if, as always happens, life or someone throws rocks at you occasionally.

There is a spiritual energy that envelops everything in the universe including you, there is a technique that I've been taught and I use it constantly as do my students, which you can describe as spiritual force projection protection. Basically, from a calm balanced place, which you can all now achieve having read the previous chapters and practiced for many years ... or minutes! From that calm, balanced place, if you now try to visualise your spiritual energy being that of a mid colour Blue that you can see through, all be it not completely clearly, into a tennis ball sized sphere hovering around your sola plexis area (which is basically centre chest.)

Take a large breath in and breathe out slowly, while releasing the stress of the day, at that stage envisage the sphere has grown to about the size of a beach ball. Take a second breath in and breathe out again slowly relaxing even further, making sure that your mind is relaxed and you have released the stresses of the days situations, now envisage the sphere will be the size of a gym/exercise ball. Finally take a third breath and completely relax as you breathe out slowly, envisaging the sphere has completely encompassed you.

So in your mind you see yourself, standing, laying, sitting or kneeling, in the equivalent of a spiritual Blue washing up liquid bubble, this particular exercise can be and quite often is taught in spiritual development circles. Also there are many martial artists who may not realise that when they use their chi or kai to break boards etc, they are actually using a spiritual force projection technique to enhance their strike.

To try and put it as simply as I can, imagine the different power levels of the people around you, your child gets up one morning and says, 'Morning! I'm watching telly now!' and you as a parent or guardian proceed to say: 'oh my little Prince/Princess, we have to get our little fairy bubble ready to go to school' or as you should do in a more powerful tone, say: 'don't speak to me like that or it won't be a good morning, and no you're not watching T.V you are getting ready for school.' I know which one is more likely to be successful and so do you, this is an example of you raising the tone of your voice, but in reality your body language and more importantly your spiritual energy would be what causes what you want to happen, to happen.

When talking to other people you are actually talking to other spiritual power levels, either nice, neutral or stropky. Before entering the space of other people or their spiritual energy, if you learn to employ this technique of spiritual force projection protection (Spiritual Bubble,) you will find yourself much less effected by the general blah blah and negativity that is around most of you a lot of the time. There is a relevance to the blue colour of the sphere/bubble, which is that it is a low level healing colour and works very well to promote wellbeing, it should be used all the time and in particular if ever you are not feeling 100%. It would help if you had a cold, it would definitely help if you were suffering from stress and it

would spiritually block low level negativity. All of which would help most people, most of the time.

If you were to encounter a stronger level of negativity, in other words you were still aware of its presence having used a blue bubble, then you can visualise the bubble changing to a translucent Silver colour. This bubble may cause some people of a lower level spiritual energy to not feel so comfortable sitting close to you or being around you. The other side of that is that it may cause some people to be drawn towards you, but within this Silver bubble you should not still be feeling the same level of negativity that was around you, before using it.

If you feel seriously threatened or in danger, envisage your Silver bubble changing to a translucent Gold colour bubble, and this should block all but the most serious level of negativity from effecting you. You can always use these bubbles if you're slightly unwell, slightly stressed, in a self-defence situation or when people are being negative towards you, from the basic right up to the very serious level of each of these examples.

A warning note, do not use or attempt to use any form of Spiritual protection bubble if you yourself are being negative. Imagine this picture, you are in a tank, you are under attack and throw a grenade outside having pulled the pin, then shut the hatch. However, being negative in a bubble is the equivalent of being in a tank, popping the pin from the grenade without throwing the grenade outside of the tank! A bit like cooking yourself in a microwave.

You must first practice and learn the ability to relax and calm yourself and release any negativity through the three slow breathe technique. I can feel some of you mumbling now, well I can do it in two breathes, and there is someone out there saying they can do it in one, well once you've practiced and become very efficient, there are people that can put bubbles up in the time it takes to blink. They can also break bricks with their head and I myself can eat two pies. The point being we are all different, we all learn at different speeds and we all have different capabilities, a bubble when you are able to put it up completely and correctly, will help you in almost any situation; how to read aggression, not to allow your fear to control your movements, to be calm when going into an interview, or in my recent experience, to be calm when undergoing my last 6 medical procedures.

If you are using a bubble regularly for any length of time it is good to visually check your bubble, its colour, its shape and that it seems to be working as it should. Also of course you should be aware of why you are using whatever strength bubble you are, when you are. This could be something you need to look at to help improve or move your life forward as well. You could use your spiritual projection training on the end of a physical strike or block, at this point you would be using your physical defence training, your mental defence training and your spiritual defence training. If you reach this stage you will have the most effective capability that is available on the earth plain.

If you require any further information on spiritual development or defence, I would recommend you find a spiritual teacher and/or join a spiritual development circle. We have a website which offers some more information, insight and training. Here is the link:

www.spiritualcircle.org.uk

Fear

I am going to break the fear section down, as I've done with other subjects, into the 3 main areas of life; physical, mental and spiritual. Please be aware that it would be impossible for me to write a complete set of scenarios, as there are just far too many variables in life. As always, apply your own experience and if that does not appear to be enough to help you, then take responsibility and seek guidance, as you obviously require more detailed help.

Physical Fear

There are some very wise and ancient tribes/groups within the history of our world, I try to quote these where possible, just as examples. You, like myself, will have to think about these examples and see how they fit into your life and belief system. For example, Inuit's (or as most people know them; Eskimos') and North American Indians, allow their children to play with what we would consider sharp knives. They are of course supervised and in real terms are actually learning very important lessons, through play. They explain to the children the different parts of the knife, they demonstrate the dangers and how the knives cut, at a later point they also show how the knives should be maintained and looked after.

Unfortunately in modern society, parents appear to over protect their children, rather than teach them. We do this by stopping them from doing things, rather than allowing them to do things and teaching them the dangers. It is my observation that this is normally due to the parents fear, not love; as they would choose to think, this can result in the children actually having to encounter a real danger before they learn the fear and deal with it. As a parent/teacher, loving my children/students means I take the time to teach and train them, as well as finding ways to take this teaching and training further if necessary, not to hold them back due to my own fears and restrictions.

Inuit's and North American Indians also have an interesting philosophy about knives and other objects being referred to as 'tools', as do some older civilisations around the world. The reason for this is; if you refer to a knife as just a knife, it can be no more than a knife, and if you limit how you think about it, you will limit how you think you are able to use it. However, if you add the knife to a pole it becomes a spear, if you use it to bang in a nail, it acts as a hammer. Therefore, these wise people view anything as a tool, as it can be used for more than which it was designed. They tend to look at teaching their children from what we would consider in the West, a very early age and in a way that we would view as quite dangerous.

The problem is, as a teacher now, I am not very comfortable watching some adults using knives, as they don't seem to be aware of the potential damage that could be done through their uneducated movements. My own experience is that anyone who has suffered a reasonably serious cut that has required stitching, will probably laugh and react when I say, if you do that movement again going near that injury, you will find yourself flinching or wanting to pull your hand back, this is quite obviously a physical fear reaction and acts in general for self-survival and protection.

Similarly, there are some places in the world that are very hot, you would like to have a swim, but are there Hippopotami around? Or Crocodiles? Or Alligators? Or if I jump in this quarry with my young friends, do we have any way of getting out? And how cold and deep exactly is the water? Fear on this level tends to protect us and keep us safe, by making us analyse the potential dangers of a given situation. The thing I am about to say will be obvious to some of you and not to others, the knack is to analyse the potential dangers *before* you get into the given situation, or at least try to.

Mental Fear

Things get a little bit more complicated here, if you think about it, it makes sense. Mental fear starts from physical fear and goes up to spiritual fear. Therefore, it can range from

the perfectly understandable and acceptable fear of sharks when you're in the sea, or fear of falling off of a ladder even though you're quite secure, to phobia level fears; the fear of water in a bath, a sink or even a glass, or a fear of buttons.

Again, this seems to be a theme all the way through my book, one has to apply truth and balance. My example here is this: I used to have an extreme fear of needles, but as I am diabetic and now have to inject myself up to 10 times a day, I no longer have problems with small needles. I don't seem to have much of a problem having a blood test done, but due to multiple visits to the hospital, I still find it necessary to balance, centre and calm myself when the hospital staff approach me with cannulas.

Basically it is a larger needle that needs to be left in a vein with a tap on the end of it. They are not particularly painful although the staff do seem to have difficulty doing them on me, so it is surprising that I have such a large reaction to them but am completely comfortable using some quite dangerous power tools. Whatever the reasons for this are, I apply safety when using my power tools and I apply logic, balance and calmness when it comes to cannulas, hospitals and operations, as these are obviously necessary sometimes.

I wouldn't suggest to anyone that they are weak or a wimp if they find themselves particularly adverse to medical type things, but if you allow that fear to stop you going to the doctors for a blood test or investigation, then you are allowing that fear to potentially threaten your life, and you are quite obviously out of balance and not calm. Using the techniques mentioned earlier in the book; meditation, calming oneself and using protective bubbles, you will be able to face most fears. Again, if you find this doesn't work for you, then you require more in depth assistance or help, maybe counselling or a spiritual teacher.

As I'm sure most of us should be aware, there are many types of mental health problems. If you add fear, logical or illogical, to any mental health situation, it will obviously cause stress, as well as causing further problems. If you find yourself feeling vulnerable, fearful, stressed or even unhappy, talk to someone; anyone to start with and keep talking to find the help that you require. Life is hard, it's harder if you're stupid by not talking to someone or doing anything to fix it. By the way, burying your head in the sand doesn't count as fixing it; that's called avoiding it.

Spiritual Fear

This fear level is much more involved and can be completely linked to the other areas, or completely independent of them. Due to the fact that spiritual fear comes after mental fear, this could also be described as the 6th sense fear, so a fear above the normal ability to fear. A small example of the sensations that people experience at the beginning of this level and often refer to, is that they experience a tingling sensation, someone walking over their grave, the hairs on the back of their neck standing up, or a cold chill passing down their spine, these sensations will generally cause concern or frighten them.

Another problem with this level is that it is largely interpretive, therefore it is largely open to misinterpretation, either deliberately or through lack of experience. I don't know many people that I would trust to interpret their own spiritual fear. To learn a lot more about this level, it would be advisable to be in a Spiritual Circle, under the supervision of a Spiritual teacher and your own guides.

I have met children, who as we all know are much more open. The reason for this is that they have not been closed down physically or mentally by the events and negativity of the world around them, or spiritually by the adults around them, yet! They have seemed very brave, but upon further observation, investigation and analyses, I have seen that they're just naïve. They don't yet know what they should fear.

Recently I have seen one of the strongest physical and mental people that I know, withdraw from the spiritual challenges of life, or at least that's what he thinks he's doing, however he is just choosing not to see the spiritual challenges of life, they are still there and he is still going through them, but without his teacher and guide. He doesn't wish to see, as people don't when they're getting things wrong or when in fear, just how clear his path has been up to the point of him quitting. He had three warning posts set by his teacher, he took a

break from his spiritual learning to think about and clarify things, he stepped away from his guide, lost communication with spirit, and gave an instruction to his teacher that he doesn't require the teacher's spiritual input.

Since then there have been a couple of physical level failures, there will be a couple of mental level failures and eventually, maybe in this life or his next, he'll return to the point where he quit, and he may then be able to see his spiritual failure and the reason for it.

Let's be clear people, you can quit your job, your partnership, your role as a dad, as a friend, as a student, as a teacher, but you cannot quit life itself. Therefore, whatever spiritual test or fear has brought you to this point of being unhappy and wanting to withdraw, will not be gone, you are just deciding to ignore it at this time.

As with any problem in any of the three areas, this does not mean it will go away, in my experience it means it will get bigger and manifest itself in such a way that it can be difficult to realise what was going on, and this is before it spreads to other levels and eventually the other areas of your life. This is why counselling can become such a long process, because there is a lot to then untangle and understand. I like to call this example, a 'chicken issue,' yes another one of my little stories.

A friend and student of mine, whose Garden slabs I was laying with her husband, had a serious objection to making me a cup of Tea, it appeared. Upon investigation it actually turned out that she had a problem making her husband a cup of Tea, not me. Seeing as he was working hard in their Garden at this time, even this wasn't clear for her to understand. With more investigation we discovered that she wasn't actually objecting to making him a Tea at the time, the real issue was that on multiple other occasions when she had been busy, she felt that he thought it was beneath him to make her a cup of Tea. The fact that this appeared to be focused at me initially, is when I then said to her, 'this is a chicken issue.'

I'm sure you now realise, this basically means there is a pre-existing issue that isn't necessarily connected to the events at that particular time, this often then comes up at the wrong time, in this case it was brought up to the wrong person and at the wrong time, therefore if you were right, you're not at that point. This happens with people all of the time, when you say good morning to someone at work and they mumble and grumble, it's almost certainly a 'Chicken issue' and nothing to do with you. Although as is usual with things in this life, it could be completely to do with you. Balance, truth and love will help you untangle this Matrix.

At this point I'm sure most of you would have realised but I will explain, the reason I have called this sub level cross over of issues the 'chicken issue,' is because with this particular person on their path, the first time I was able to point this behaviour out to them and prove it, yes you've guessed it, was to do with some chicken! Or not, as I went on to prove.

Unfortunately the truth you will see, if and when you're ready to look at it, is that you were afraid to deal with these points when you should have done, your fear will then start to confuse what the point was initially about. Eventually the fear will also make you not want to talk about something that started off as quite a minor point, but will end up with you being unhappy because you cannot say what you want to say. This actually leads to a spiritual imbalance within yourself, and in the examples above caused quite an amount of imbalance and unhappiness which never just stays within that one area to do with that one point/person. Something to think about; does one medium sized problem cause less stress than 5 small problems that have bunched together and become interlinked? It's about being honest with yourself and untangling individual points, so they may be looked at with balance and truthfully.

Spiritual fear, as mentioned earlier, can start with something as small as sensations and awareness, or indeed just starting to look at the subject, ultimately it can lead to a crisis of faith, (whatever that faith is) and a complete collapse of your life. If you have fear, especially within the Spiritual area, I would advise you to seek help from those more spiritually aware than yourself, if possible a spiritual teacher.

Fear conclusion

Fear, if out of balance in the physical area, can cause you to run into danger not away from it, or indeed run into a larger danger from what is essentially a smaller danger. To quote a saying: to jump out of the frying pan into the fire.

Fear, if out of balance in the mental area can be much more incapacitating than physical fear, in that it can actually manifest itself as a complete lack of clarity of what to do in any situation. Unfortunately adding any mental health issues to this area of fear, or fear to a mental health issue will only confuse matters further. Physically if you're in a fog, you can't see what way to go, its worse when you're in a mental fog as some of you will know, because you can completely lose your self-orientation. Get help from someone you trust, who in your opinion normally does the right thing, even if that's just a friend.

Fear, if out of balance in the spiritual area, will restrict and eventually block your input, causing you to cease to be able to use your spiritual level.

I have already said this, but fear also serves a purpose, being afraid of a loaded gun is sensible, being afraid to get in the water if there's a Shark is also rather sensible, that is why if you find yourself in difficulty, get help! You need truth balance and love in all three areas, when in doubt, talk to someone, anyone to start with.

If I may be so bold as to make a recommendation, which I am now able to follow myself; when you are aware there is a problem, you do need to deal with it as soon as possible. Try not to leave any issue more than a week, because I can assure you that even at just a week, there will be many occasions when people will say they 'don't remember' or 'it's complicated,' which it is if you don't deal with things as they arise. A very useful mantra in this situation is; grant me the serenity to accept the things I alone cannot change, the courage/truth to see and change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Oosar *bow.*

In conclusion

A finishing note from Two John's. When you consider all the variables in life on different levels, in the three areas, it's a wonder that anyone gets anything right. When we get things right, we are mainly just repeating what we have done/learnt before. I try to look more at when I am wrong, because it is from these experiences that I have something new to learn, and believe it or not people, you can actually enjoy being wrong if it enables you to learn new things, or old things a better way.

Another saying: you *can* teach an old dog new tricks! So don't be too judgemental with others or overly hard on yourself, be truthful, apply balance and love yourself as well as others. You are the most important person/spirit in your life, without you we would not be discussing your life, this is not to be taken in a physical narcissistic manner, but a spiritual one. Good luck, enjoy your way. Two Johns.

If you enjoyed my book or it helped you, please pass it on to others and make a donation, not an excuse. Donate to a charity, my preferred ones are Water aid or your local spiritual church.

To all students of *The Way*, past, present and future, there is an interesting poem that I recommend you read, called 'Don't quit.' As a note from Two Johns, most of you at the point where your way moved to a different direction, would have had to deal with a spritiutal test. If you now feel that you have dealt with that spiritual test or are ready to do so, be reminded that nearly all of you would be welcome back, but you would of course have to feel if the time is right in this life on your path, for you to rejoin *The Way*. Love and peace. Two Johns

A Pause From Me ... The Beginning For You