



Presencing

JACK BLACKBURN'S NEWSLETTER
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Embracing Our Fears

ALERT: Jack's email address has changed to jackpresence@gmail.com

Embracing our Fears and Going Where we are Called

Inner Guidance: In 1979 I, and my family, departed Palo Alto and after some months of travel and exploration we settled on Orcas Island. What had led to this move came as a result of many messages, which I heard inside. The messages started when I took a ten-day solo-backpacking trip in the High Sierras in California. I had fasted before the trip and was determined to continue the



fasting until I became aware of my inner guidance. Some parts of that trip were uncomfortable, some were risky, and some were exultant. Each day I became more and more aware of an inner voice that was guiding me. I would ask which way to go... I could hear things and see things in nature that I had never experienced before... like the sounds of panpipes in the watery music of streams. After only eating dry rations for four days I came to a patch of wild onions right near Virginia Lake. I was the only one there. It was late afternoon. I decided to cook the onions into a stew... after I ate the onions a tremendous rush of energy came into my body. I felt exuberant



and after rolling out my sleeping bag I decided to explore the region around me. These were west facing slopes so it took quite awhile for the light to fade. There seemed to be deep meaning and a feeling of awe and mystery all around me. I found a sacred ritual space I had known as a young man where I meditated and called out my .gratefulness for guidance. That night I lay awake for hours in my sleeping bag listening to a nearby stream... I could feel that I was not alone... *something* was accompanying me inside helping me feel my choices. I now know that something was presence.

Walking with Enrique: That *something* has been in my conscious awareness ever since. On the way back to Palo Alto I heard that it was now time to leave the Bay Area. After selling our home we headed to Orcas Island where we spent



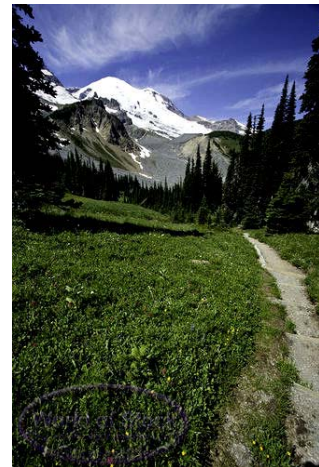
about three months checking it out. Then we traveled back down the west coast, visiting friends and checking out other possible living spaces. When we came to San Diego I decided to visit my friend Enrique who was living close to Laguna Beach. He and I met up in Laguna and walked back and forth along the beach and talked for eight hours straight. Because I knew that Enrique was very good at following his own inner voice, and because of the strength of guidance I had acquired in the

High Sierras I asked him: How can I tell that it is my own inner guidance speaking and not just my ego preferences. Those of you who remember my story of Saint Francis in Issue 4 of *Presencing* will remember that Francis was perplexed by the same issue, which is why he retreated for days in a cave. Anyway Enrique gave me a response that has been with me ever since. Enrique told me: "I do everything I hear to do inside... because I always honor that commitment my ego, which is run by fear, gets quieter and quieter." I resolved to follow his advice and find out if it was sound. Remember God told Francis "you will know it is my voice because I will tell you to do what you fear to do."

Go where you fear to go: Putting these experiences together has led me to a certain guidance which I know has been very helpful in finding the exuberance of eating the wild onions: "Go where you fear to go." What I have discovered is that when I follow those words I can feel the energy of fear convert into feelings of awe and mystery and I feel exultant. I believe that life and our inner guidance is always showing us the way. We are called and if we choose to follow that calling in spite of our fears, our



lives change for the better. And the way I have found that is best to be true to that path is to Presence the fear that I feel inside. Fear can be confusing - there are all sorts of reasons not to go into our fears. We can find much support for our rationalizations for not doing what we feel called to do. Also we have to be open to making mistakes. We can often lose the trail. In those times we can become still in presence and listen for our inner guide who takes us back to the path. Lastly I repeat that when we make an agreement to go where we fear to go... our whole lives change. Much more love, energy, friendship, and insight



flow to us.

Trillium Institute – A Shared Vision: I’m writing about fear because Cornelia Gifford, former director of Brian Utting School of Massage and I, are making a proposal that brings up many fears. She and I have independently had a similar



vision and calling for over ten years: Trillium Institute. Imagine what it would be like to attend a graduate school that is dedicated to providing training and other services to licensed Bodyworkers and other professional caregivers. We hope that you also share our vision. Please read about our vision in Part B of this issue of *Presencing* and give us your feedback... especially by filling out the on-line survey form and spreading the word to friends and colleagues

who are Bodyworkers in the Northwest. We have been planning this venture now for some months and think we have found a physical space and are incorporating and choosing a Board of Directors.