

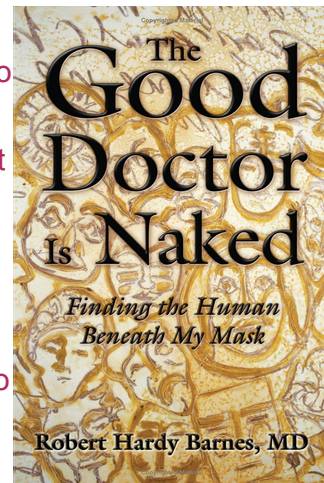
# Presencing

JACK BLACKBURN'S NEWSLETTER

**Presencing Issue 97 New Paradigm Extensions  
Our Client's Gifts Towards a State of Presence XXIII  
Upcoming Webinars:Foot Decompression Somatics  
Table Talking,  
Building Case Studies from Our Sessions  
Touch is Always a Two-Way Connection  
Presencing Pain  
Sciatica Decompression Somatics in Side Lying  
Presencing Somatics Intro**



**Doctor Robert Hardy Barnes:** When I met Bob Barnes he was retired as a physician. He was looking for a supervisor to support his training as a Spiritual Director and I had been recommended. He said he was teaching as adjunct faculty at University of Washington School of Medicine and working as a chaplain at Virginia Mason Hospital. Bob trained and served as a doctor during WWII. Afterwards he continued as a physician for over 50 years. Bob was teaching a course for medical students called "Why Doctors Fear Death." He'd also compiled three huge volumes of research articles about working with pain. Bob told me that his work as a chaplain was not what he had expected. When he changed his white coat and stethoscope for the chaplain's badge no one took notice of him, as he made his new rounds. Dying patients were reticent because in a medical facility, a chaplain is a sign that the system has failed! He wanted to work as pastoral counselor with persons pursuing an inner life! I immediately took a liking to Bob and told him that I'd be honored to work with him.



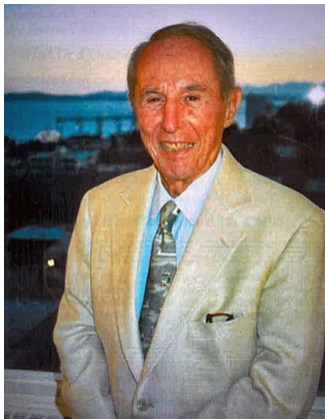
**\*\*About Koito as clairvoyant reader:** But her private *readings* have helped so many people in deeper ways. In Japan she has never advertised. I'm letting you know about Koito's other work, because it is now possible for you to have private sessions thanks to Zoom. You can reach Koito Kusunoki at: [trilliumthrice@gmail.com](mailto:trilliumthrice@gmail.com)

**\*\*Extra CEs for your writings:** I have been including narratives and case reports in these last 6 presencing newsletters. I hope to stimulate you to do the same... and get used to writing your learnings and understandings that come directly from your practice. I am *salting the mine* so to speak. I hope that you will join me and others in this effort. Posting and publishing your writings can earn you extra credits. **\*\*Note: this has never happened before!!\*\***

**Our Vimeo Webinar Library:** Koito has now completed our video library of previous Webinars on our website: [www.presencingsource.com](http://www.presencingsource.com). You can pay much less for

any of previously videoed classes and you can also get home study CEs by completing the NCBTMB requirements and submitting to Barrie Robbins our Home Study coach. [barrie@tragermoves.com](mailto:barrie@tragermoves.com)

**Presencing Motto:** *As we attend more to the sensations arising from within our own bodies, a new essence starts to companion us from within. We start to experience presence as the arising of each moment, as a taste of eternal awareness. All living systems are attuned to NOW. Every event; past, present, and future is a part of this eternal moment. This growing awareness of NOW seems to put many things, especially fearful ones, into different perspectives. The body is temporal. If we pay close attention, we realize that the body only exists now. So that which is implicitly temporal may lead us to experience that which is explicitly eternal!*



**Dr Bob Barnes, My Partner in Exploring Pain:** When I met Bob he had already been accepted in a training program in Spiritual Direction. In our supervisory relationship Bob would discuss various issues in pastoral counseling. Using Active Listening, he was learning to support clients in finding their own inner truths by listening to their own inner guidance. In spiritual direction this is called: "Listening into Being." I would listen to Bob's frank experiences with clients who were spiritually challenged by life threatening illnesses and other difficult circumstances. I would also help Bob with his written reports and share from my own experiences. Because of these mutual sharings we grew quite close. One of the issues that brought us together was finding helpful ways to accompany clients who were experiencing bouts of deep pain and attendant fears. As faculty at University of Washinton medical school Bob had compiled many medical research reports methods for treating pain. We related stories together, Bob from his experiences as a physician and myself from my experiences as bodyworker, EMT, and Hospice volunteer.

**Working with Bob's Pain:** In his early years Bob attended Virginia Military Institute and trained as a cavalry officer. As the USA was entering WWII, Bob realized that riding horses in warfare was totally out of date. And so he entered the Medical College of Virginia and worked as a military psychiatrist during the rest of WWII. It turned out that during his training on horses, Bob sustained some pretty severe injuries to his neck. And as we were meeting together he started to feel more and more neck pain. He went to an osteopathic surgeon who x-rayed his neck and told him that two of his vertebrae were fused and with ageing and arthritis it was likely that his condition would get worse and worse. The Dr was recommending surgery. Bob was curious about my practice as a bodyworker, but we had not broached the possibility of me working on him. I told him that in my experience of working clients who'd had neck surgery, I wasn't convinced they had benefited. Bob wanted to try my session. I told him that everything I would do would be very gentle. I had already observed that Bob had what I would call a *military neck*... quite straight with little cervical curve. So I was curious what would happen if I worked along the cervical muscles and spinus processes and created some slight uplift in the vertebrae. I was using a soft combination of Trager rotation as I proceeded up and down his neck. I could feel the vertebrae that were fused and I made no effort to move them separately. But what was starting to happen as Bob became more relaxed in his neck, the stiffness started to dissolve and I could feel the fused vertebrae joining in the rotations. When we finished the neck work I placed a soft but firm bolster underneath to give support to his cervical curve, while I worked with the rest of his body. Bob was sighing; incredulous that he could feel no pain in his neck and shoulders. In fact every

place I gave him movement and support only added to the comfort he was already feeling in his neck.

**Bob becomes a convert:** He not only started sending me numerous clients, especially ones with difficult prognoses, but Bob joined me with his curiosity about some of the mysteries of touch in patient care. As a boy Bob had accompanied his rural doctor uncle, who made the rounds of patient's homes in his Model T. Bob had never forgotten his uncle's caring and assuring bedside manner, palpation skills, his ability to diagnose and treat on the spot, and the ways he would use the tools and small supply of medicines in his "Doctor's Bag." As such Bob also realized that his uncle was used to patients' arrivals and departures... They were part of his interface with patients and families. We discussed various aspects of clients' relationship to pain and the sympathetic reactions caused by fears the pain induced. I was experimenting with ways to help clients approach their pain by interacting directly with the sensations without the attendant mental conjecture. Once Bob had felt the releases of his own pain, he realized that sympathetic responses to pain are the biggest contributing factor to suffering. We explored that discovery together over our years of working with clients, myself using bodywork, Bob using pastoral counseling.

**Our Our Meeting with Dr Paul Brand:** In my readings about pain, I came across a book in Brian Utting's School library called: Pain the Gift that Nobody Wants written by Paul Brand, who was a hand surgeon, who had worked with lepers in India over many years and who had been director of a in depth study of Hodgkin's Disease in the United States. I was totally fascinated with Dr Brand's book and his life story. It turned out that he and his wife who was an eye surgeon, had retired in Seattle. I called them up and arranged for Bob and I to meet with them. Bob and I were overjoyed! I suggest you read Dr Brand's book, which is now called: The Gift of Pain. Here is a secret that has continually affected my work with client pain ever since, and I know that Bob Barnes would agree. Paul Brand discovered that the most fruitful way of working with pain is to go directly into the pain! I said to him in our meeting: "Paul, in reading your book I realize that the patients you write about changed their live by going directly into their pain!" He responded: "I am now 84 years old, and I don't know if I have another book in me, (he did) but if I do that would be the book I would write!" That meeting with both Brands, who were both children of missionaries in India, was one of the most fruitful in my life, and Bob would say the same!

**Sayonara Dr Robert Hardy Barnes:** Bob and I stayed in touch over the years, in spite of the fact that I was teaching in Japan as well as the United States. We were able to trade stories and further develop our work with clients. Bob was one of the founders on Hospice in Seattle, I had been one of the founders of Hospice on Orcas Island and I was able to teach Doctors and Nurses in palliative care facilities in two cancer hospitals in Japan. I helped Bob with his book: The Good Doctor is Naked, in which, like Dr Brand, Bob tells his life story which starts with the beginning of discovering his father's dead body when he came home from school at 10 years old. Due to the 1929 stock market crash, his father had suicided. Bob had never revealed that fact until he was 70 years old. His mother had insisted that it remain a secret, rather than bringing shame upon their Virginia based family. In writing his book Bob was also exposing some of the dilemmas of medicine in general. Medical authority figures hold many secrets, not revealing their own doubts and insecurities. Bob was very honest with me, and we had many good laughs together. Many of his pastoral care clients were Doctors, and other public authority figures who did not want anyone to know they were dying. Bob did keep their secrets, and I did as well. In the last years of his life Bob became an open book, incredibly happy and full of fun! When Koito and I visited him in his Harmony House retirement and care center, in the last of his 91 years, we had a great conversation and then Robert Hardy Barnes danced... for Koito!



**Generating Case Reports From Our Practice:  
Writing: Our Client Sessions, Methods, Records**  
**\*\*September 15, 18, 20, 22nd. Time 4pm PDT\*\***  
**2CE hours per class, Cost \$160**  
**Posting Online, Publication = up to 2 extra CEs**  
**NCBTMB Approval in Process**

**Writing down the bones - a joint enterprise:** I'm planning to start a Webinar in September aimed at the Bodywork community in general; to take us through steps in writing and publishing about our real experiences and learnings from our work, using touch therapeutically. In 2004 I first became aware when writing articles for the *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapy*, that most of my colleagues were not writing about their sessions with clients. I realized that if we do not communicate publicly about our work, and what has been happening in our sessions, the public and other caregiving professionals would not really understand the full benefits of touch, and the unique things we were learning. But now, after three years of Covid, I realize that the other caregiving professions only partially understand bodywork. Even less is understood by a touch-wary public.

**Thinking about your practice over the years:** What stands out for you? What clients and learnings do you recall from those relationships? What insights and curiosities did you receive and how many of those *gifts* are you still keeping inside? Undoubtedly it would be good for all of us if we could share them with all our colleagues. For 12 years I hosted an inter-professional supervision group biweekly. The group included professional caregivers from medicine, psychology, physical therapy, psychotherapy, bodywork, and theology. We found that we all were dealing with similar situations as helpers for others. We all shared personal difficulties as well as insights derived from our work with clients. What a treasure trove of sharings those group meetings were. I came away realizing that it's important that we end the false *hierarchy of care*. Professional touch has a very significant role to play in personal healing, well-being, and self-empowerment.

**The many unique elements of professional touch:** Touch is a form of communication that's deeply effective in releasing pain, tissue constriction, sympathetic autonomic states, and creating somatic awareness. Using touch, we learn that when we teach our clients to feel directly into their places of distress and interact in ways that release those discomforts they increase their own bodily confidence. We can also use touch to encourage client self-awareness by entering a state of *presence*, which helps to release them from past regrets and future worries. Every session is a lesson in body mechanics for ourselves as well as our clients. We can also teach our clients to practice *inner touch* and *felt sense* that they can practice by themselves, and to create their own movement patterns that free up areas of restriction. Finally, we can empower our clients by teaching them to interact with our hands and our words in ways that give them equal authorship of their session's results.





**Jack Blackburn, LMP, Master's in Theological Studies, Certified Spiritual Director**, specializes in body centered spiritual growth and healing. He has been a Trager® practitioner since 1986. He has been a Trager tutor since 1993, has taught Trager electives classes since 1996, and teaches a variety of classes to care giving professionals. He is a NCBTMB Approved Continuing Education Provider and AMTA National Presenter. He is a Focusing Trainer and teaches Bodywork Focusing classes for professionals. Jack is also a Reiki Master and teaches levels I, II, III and Advanced Reiki for Bodyworkers.

**\*Note\* Jack's personal email address is: [jackpresence@gmail.com](mailto:jackpresence@gmail.com)**

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