

ADDRESSING TRAUMA AND GRIEF AND LOSS

**A Personal Journey of Advancement,
Experiences and Techniques Learned**

BY

Sandy MacGregor

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FOREWORD

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Over the last 17 years I have conducted more than 500 two-day CALM Life Skills Seminars. These seminars are about how to tap into and use the deeper inner mind, the subconscious mind, to achieve anything we wish to do, faster and easier ... including accelerated learning, changing or creating new habits, or handling grief and loss - I call it “Life Skills” learning. After I dealt with my own traumatic experience resulting from the shotgun murder of my three teenage daughters Jenny, Kirsty and Lexie, using the methods outlined in this book, I felt compelled to start to teach others and share these powerful techniques.

This book is about dealing with and moving through trauma and the subsequent grief and loss that is experienced. It is important to learn from adversity – the lessons are all experiences for our soul. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately, because we can learn so much) all of us will be facing adversity probably more than once in our life time. We cannot escape things like having friends move away, having to move from one town to another, or losing a pet, or losing a job, or losing a loved one through death.

I have discussed my own experiences in this area during radio interviews, on TV programs including "Sixty Minutes" and "Australian Story", in the written media and during my seminars. During my seminars, or on the telephone, or by email, many people have discussed, questioned, or sought clarification, about many grief and loss issues. I have thousands of words on the subject and I am grateful to my daughter, Lara, for distilling these words into this book which has the purpose of helping others to deal with their own grief and loss.

My major recommendation is always to come to terms with the issues of grief and loss, (never push it down), go through it – and learn from the experience. A major tool that I offer to assist the process of grief and loss and move through guilt, blame, resentment, (and more), and to change negative thoughts like hatred, anger and revenge into acceptance, love and forgiveness (only when you are ready) is to use my meditation CDs: *Acceptance and Letting Go*, *Unconditional Love* and *Forgiveness* and thus gain a sense of understanding and Inner Peace.

Special Addendum for those suffering from a recent tragedy involving a perpetrator

I have found that some people who read this book cannot even allow themselves to think of forgiveness. I agree with you – don't think of it. I have added a special addendum to this book which you may like to read first. It describes my inner thoughts about the subject and can be found in Chapter 6 on page 27.

Take care of yourself, and, be easy on yourself.

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INTRODUCTION

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There is no doubt that life tests us all, and many of us face more challenges than others. There often seems to be neither rhyme nor reason that we can fathom to explain this. Grief and loss is certainly something that all of us are going to have to face in one form or another in our lifetime. It can come about through many situations. Some examples could be the loss of a loved one (even the loss of a pet), loss of a job, moving to another town or city, business failure, a friend moving on to another town or city, a broken relationship, a child changing schools, your own children growing up ... the list could go on.

Dealing with grief and loss, which can include many negative emotions – such as resentment, blame, hurt, fear, anxiety, guilt, anger, bitterness, hatred, jealousy, revenge, and more – is a challenge, and many people feel ill-equipped to deal with this challenge. Know that whatever way you do it is OK – there is no "one way" and it is very individual. It is a good idea however to take a structured approach to it and definitely *DO* something about coping with grief and loss.

This book is an attempt to be of assistance in this very emotional area. In it I have firstly related my personal experience of grief and loss, and then have gone on to offer some different strategies which have come out of this experience. Please know that this small book does not attempt to be or to provide a definitive answer to everyone's grief issues.

It often takes a crisis before we discover our inner strength. When faced with grief and loss, we can allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the pain, or we can choose to work through it and grow from the experience. Going through the emotions associated with grief and loss is a normal part of the grieving process and it is necessary to reconcile ourselves in some way so that we can move on from the experience to become a better, stronger person with a greater sense of purpose in life as a result.

This short book may not be sufficient for you in coping with your particular experience of grief and loss. If this is the case – we offer two potential forms of assistance. The first one is to use 3 of my CDs

- Acceptance and Letting Go
- Unconditional Love
- Forgiveness

The words of the above meditations are included in this book so that you might read them or perhaps you may prefer to make your own tapes. The second suggestion for a next step forward may be attending my 2 day CALM Life Skills Seminar. (Details of which you can find out from my website www.calm.com.au.) In the Life Skills Seminar you learn how to resolve your feelings relating to an experience of loss and grief by understanding how the brain works and by practising the following skills:

- How to consciously relax and release stress any time anywhere.
- How to develop focused concentration.
- How to consciously develop feelings of acceptance, forgiveness and love.
- Developing a process of “letting go”.

- Mind/body exercises to neutralise “negative” subconscious reactions formed out of past relationships, and to program new, more empowering subconscious responses.
- And much more.

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SANDY'S PERSONAL STORY

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On 23rd January 1987 my life was a happy one. I was the father of 6 children, a Civil Engineer and a retired Army Colonel, having been to the Vietnam War (working with US forces - 173rd Airborne Brigade) and being decorated with the Military Cross and the American Bronze Star, for bravery in tunnel conflicts. And then tragedy struck in a seemingly senseless way. My 3 daughters were gunned down and killed in their Sydney home by an intruder. I went to the brink of mental devastation.

I then found what human spirit is all about. This crisis made me a witness to the true power of forgiveness and using our own mind. In this way I saved my life from becoming one of hatred and self-pity. I was able to come to terms with the death of my three daughters. It has been an ongoing process of forgiveness for me, culminating, after 14 years, in having a face-to-face meeting with the murderer of my daughters in February 2001. Now I feel I have completed the process of forgiveness.

I am thankful that I had developed personal skills of meditation and stress release before the crisis. I started investigating this area in 1981 when my eldest son Andrew used it to control asthma and then to save his badly broken leg from amputation. Before the tragedy, being a "prove-it-to-me" sort of person, I proved that the technique worked for me by using it to release 49 pounds (22 kgs) of weight. As well as Forgiveness (and Weight Release), there is a multitude of issues people can work with by using these techniques, including sporting ability, improved learning, self esteem, handling fears, giving birth, healing, unconditional love and letting go.

In 1989 I went on to develop and teach others how to use their own inner strength and apply it to many areas of life. Indeed, I felt as though it was almost my "responsibility" to do so. Now, after conducting the CALM Life Skills Seminar for most weekends since 1990, hundreds of thousands of people have learned of the techniques through my talks, books, audio tapes, videos, website, TV and Radio Interviews and the Press. The most recent television coverage was when I appeared on the "60 Minutes" Program and ABC TV's "Australian Story".

My 14 year Journey of Forgiveness

After the tragedy I went through a turbulent time with all-consuming thoughts of hatred, anger and revenge. On recognising, during meditation, that these thoughts would only bring bitterness, hostility and sickness and indeed make me another victim of the tragedy, I turned to changing my deeper inner thoughts – again using meditation – to acceptance, co-operation, unconditional love and forgiveness. This was my first stage of forgiveness and it happened approximately six months after my daughters were murdered.

The second stage was when I was interviewed on Australian National ABC Radio four years later. This was my first ever radio interview and I was asked: "Have you forgiven Richard Maddrell?" My answer was "Yes, I have" and yet my internal thoughts were vibrating with "What will people think of that - will they think I am mad or something? How could he possibly do it?"

My third stage of forgiveness was when I wrote about the process in my second book: "Switch On to Your Inner Strength" and my fifth book: "Creating Happiness Intentionally" – really declaring my position and where I was coming from.

My fourth and final stage, which really amounts to a 14 year journey, was when I attended a Conferencing Program with the perpetrator, under the auspices of the Correctional Services, in Grafton Jail in February 2001. I did something that was a real challenge. Some people say "I forgave the unforgivable". In a face-to-face meeting, I went through my forgiveness process, ensuring that Richard Maddrell understood the process, and unconditionally forgave Richard Maddrell for the murder of Jenny, Kirsty and Lexie.

I experienced a feeling of freedom, liberation, and a sense of lightness and felt as though a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. (Some people, more learned in these areas, have said that the lightness feeling could be from releasing the cellular memory.) I would never again wonder how I would react if confronted by the murderer of my daughters.

I want people to understand what I mean by forgiveness. I do not condone the action. Neither do I resent Richard Maddrell and I have no hatred, bitterness or hostility towards him - if I have any feeling towards him, it is one of compassion.

By forgiving him, people may think that I 'pardon' him and that perhaps by this I mean that Richard Maddrell should be free; however this is not the case. I think that Richard Maddrell, should be in jail for life, principally for the protection of the community. If Richard Maddrell is freed, I could handle it - this is Man's Law. What I do is far deeper - involving spirituality - it's between me and God.

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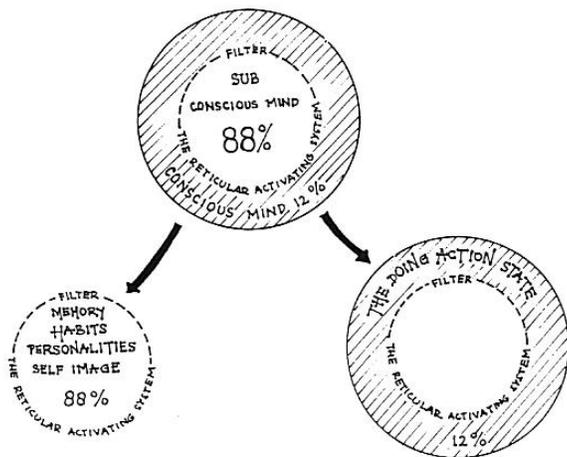
GRIEF AND LOSS CHALLENGES

Influence Of The Subconscious Mind

There is no doubt that time is an important component in reconciling and resolving grief and loss. Eventually it is also important to “Let go and let God” so that we can move on with life. Unfortunately, many feel they cannot do this, or that they are unable to let go of the sadness that they are experiencing. The reason for this has to do with the mechanism of the subconscious mind.

Your mind has two parts, each with separate functions: there is the conscious part, which is 12% of our mind, and the subconscious part, which is the other 88%.

The conscious part is the one we readily identify with. It is our “doing, action state”. It is what we use to perceive the world and to make decisions such as “I like this person!” The language of the conscious mind is words, sounds and pictures.



The subconscious mind stores our memory (“the last time I saw this person we had an argument!”), habits and beliefs (“every time I think of this person I feel sad!”), personality and self-image. It also controls our bodily functions - notice you don’t have to consciously think about doing these things. The language of the subconscious mind is emotion.

The subconscious mind retains a primitive mechanism, which connects each situation with the emotions experienced, and records it all. This is called “conditioning”. If you either think about or actually experience that same situation again, those previous emotions will be re-experienced emotionally in the same

form, either positively or negatively. This mechanism forms part of the way we learn.

In 1972, research scientist Rappaport proved that emotion is not only involved with memory, it is the very basis upon which memory takes place. Have you ever wondered why you can so easily recall a good event or a bad event? You can easily remember the circumstances, where you were, who else was there, you can relive hearing what was said, seeing the surroundings and you can re-experience the feeling – right through your body. The emotion, good or bad, is easily remembered – particularly the feeling you experienced.

So, since we know that emotion and memory are connected, and take place in the subconscious mind, we can utilise this fact to help us enormously. The way through your subconscious patterns is to learn how you can consciously control your emotions and memories, so that painful subconscious feelings and reactions can be neutralised, and new feelings of acceptance, forgiveness and love can be chosen.

Negative Emotions

So, once again, why are negative emotions so impacting? The answer is because they are so easily remembered and relived!

This emotional “baggage” can be a real curse. We can often let it hang around in our mind creating further negativity. Professor Roger Sperry (who received the Nobel Prize for dividing the left and right brain) proved that negative thoughts attract negative thoughts, which leads to negative action and negative reaction. This in turn can lead to fear and anxiety, lack of self confidence and self esteem, depression, illness, disease, and more. And, we help to create this for ourselves by hanging on to the negative thoughts. Perhaps after a while, it’s not even the initial negative event that is the issue, but we have multiplied its effect in our mind and body by not using techniques to handle it, move through it and learn from it. So then emotional negativity becomes a habit.

Internalising or pushing down negative emotions can result in negative consequences. They go to memory which is in the subconscious mind, and are permanently there because as I’ve already discussed, emotion and memory are deeply connected. Then what can often happen, for unexplained, or no apparent reason, one can experience negative emotions like sadness or anger (and more) bubbling to the surface. Negative emotions can become a habit (depression). With a traumatic event, if internalised, this process can lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, including manifestations such as depression, hot sweats, unexplained anger, nightmares, and irrational action can become the norm. Hence, it is extremely important to express your feelings and talk about events, whether it’s with friends, family or a counsellor. This is discussed further in a later section.

There is so much emotion around any traumatic event that the event becomes firmly implanted in our memory. If bringing the negative event to mind causes pain in the way of anger, hostility, blame, resentment, guilt, revenge, hurt etc, then one is hurting oneself and this can be happening to us for many years after the event unless we handle the grief or trauma. Whenever I now think of my daughters I sometimes momentarily think of their horrific death but I immediately replace the negative thought with fond, loving memories.

The following are two examples of ways in which negative emotions and thoughts can have an impact on our responses to experiences of grief and loss.

- ***Guilt***

In many cases, the mental anguish resulting from some experience of grief and loss can become “conditioned subconscious reflexes” and are modified by our subsequent behaviour, often resulting in guilt.

For instance, say that you have an argument with a friend. Later on that day their life is tragically ended in an unrelated accident. Of the many emotions that you may experience when hearing the news, the feeling of guilt arises about having the argument as part of your last encounter with someone you loved and who had always been a good friend. If not resolved, this emotion becomes linked or associated to your

experience of the tragedy. Accordingly when you next discuss or think of the tragedy the feeling of guilt arises within you again. What is important to see is that these feelings arise subconsciously (you don't consciously ask for them to appear!) and are experienced in relationship to tragedy.

- ***Asking “Why Me?”***

Here's another trap that's so easy to fall into. Asking the question of ourselves “Why me?” or “Why do I deserve these things happening to me?” When you ask yourself a question what do you get? An answer of course. Ask yourself negative questions and you get negative answers. At the time of my daughters' death, I did ask "Why me?" and can you imagine the answers that my mind came up with? Things like "You've been a rotten father - you should never have got divorced", "You should have been there"; "You did some bad things when you were a kid ...like”

You can see where the answers to this kind of question lead ... yes, to every bad thing you've ever done in your life, and this brings about more guilt and even more depression. We become more listless, lethargic, tired, weary, exhausted. And all of this reduces our productivity and self esteem, and once again “we've done it to ourselves”. We are the creators.

There is a simple answer. Become aware of your own self talk and when it's negative, change it. So ask yourself a positive question and you'll get a positive answer. It can be a challenge, in the middle of experiencing or re-experiencing a negative event, to think of a positive question. I'll offer one that can be a start and you can modify it to suit you. “What is there for me to learn from experiencing ?” (and then you say the negative event). Do you get the idea? Do this in meditation and write down the answers as they come to mind.

Grief Before The Death Of A Loved One

Sometimes in life we are faced with the sadness of a loved one who is slowly slipping away from this physical world. This could be at home or say in a nursing home or indeed at a palliative care centre. The process is challenging and can generate a prolonged grieving period where one may experience agonising feelings of helplessness and the pain of watching the degeneration of our loved one as they progress towards the inevitable.

During a time like this we ourselves can already be on a path of grief. We don't know exactly when our Loved One will pass away but we are watching them do so before our eyes. Perhaps we may have an image of them in our mind of what their essence was – when they were still in good health. Remember, how our Loved One looks now is not "who they are". On the one hand, as we recall their essence, we can have warm memories and on the other hand, when we observe the change, overwhelming feelings of sadness and hopelessness can overwhelm us.

Sometimes in a situation like this it can actually be a relief when they pass from the suffering of this world into the peaceful, "untouchable" state of death. Nothing more can now harm or damage them. They are in a "better" place. My wife says that when she thinks of her mother (who passed away after a long period of suffering) it is amazing how mostly only the wonderful, warm, loving thoughts and images come through.

Often in this situation we have experienced so much grief prior to our Loved One's final passing that the period of intense grieving after their actual passing may be brief. When we have had an extended period of grieving like this, it can be helpful to have been able to say Goodbye, remember the good times and tell our Loved One how much we love them – even if we think they can not hear us, usually it is the case that hearing is one of the last senses to leave us.

An elderly friend of mine has just lost his wife after a prolonged period of suffering and I suggested to him that at her bedside he speak to her comfortingly and tell her of his love for her. Afterwards, with tears in his eyes he told me what a difference it had made to both of them as his wife, very feebly, had been able to acknowledge that she had heard him.

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GRIEF AND LOSS – MOVING FORWARD

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Talking To Other People

Handling grief is a process and it takes time, sometimes a lot of time, before we will be able to come to the stage of thinking clearly about anything else (shock can often make us feel like a zombie - unable to think clearly and unable to make rational decisions). I don't believe there is any order to coping with grief. All of us are different and we'll do things differently! We go through grief in our own unique way.... however it is important and extremely helpful to reach out to others for assistance (and indeed for others to reach out to the one who is suffering to help them through this time). We need to talk about every single aspect of the event.

One of the ways that helped me to move through grief after my daughters died was talking about it. I was really lucky in that I had many friends around me who were able to keep me talking about every aspect of the girls' lives, my life, the murderer, emotions such as guilt, blame, judgements, anger, revenge, "Why me?" ... everything!

I always stress the importance of talking to friends about grief and trauma; however it may not always be possible. Grief and trauma can take away your drive and persistence to find that person, or sometimes the people around you may not be able to or may be unwilling to listen to you. Sometimes the people around you may be part of the problem or they may have their own problems. Sometimes partners may not understand or you may be a person who won't talk about things or you may feel that you may drive people away if you start sharing your feelings - we all have some insecurity about our relationships.

The key is certainly to express, to verbalise, to live and relive the memories and the might-have-beens. Here are some alternative ways of working through grief and trauma other than talking to a supportive, responsive friend or relative. Remember all the support that is out there in the community, such as Lifeline who are available 24 hours a day (or similar support organisations who are available at the end of a telephone). Another very good organisation which I am pretty sure is world-wide is "Compassionate Friends". Working through grief within a supportive group may be just the perfect thing to take you through a next hurdle in your journey of grief - people who have "been there before" may have new thoughts or ways of coping that you are unable to think of when in deep grief.

Writing Down Thoughts And Feelings

When you're alone with your grief, one thing that can be really helpful is to write down all your thoughts and feelings as they arise. Writing can be both therapeutic and cathartic. What could you do with your writings? What I would do (and have done) is to call in the Light for the highest good of all concerned and burn what you have written. Some people have mentioned to me that having a diary has been something that has helped

them with their grief journey. It also may be a worthwhile to write letters or e-mails about your feelings or journey to friends who can then read and respond in their own time.

Free-form writing can be very mind-clearing. This entails writing about your thoughts as they come into your mind, without any attention to spelling, grammar, form, etc... You write as quickly as you can and then when you may be in the middle of a sentence and another thought comes into your mind, don't complete the sentence you're in the middle of, but just continue to write about the new thought. So you see, at the end of all this, the writing does not make sense – so I recommend that you don't re-read it. Once again, call in the Light, burn it and let it go for the highest good of all concerned.

Introducing “The Light”

The light is an ageless spiritual concept used by most religions – Buddha was Enlightened, in the Bible we read of Jesus using the Light and similarly in the Koran, Mohammed used the Light. Both poets and philosophers have written about the Light. The Light is powerful and available to us all.

I can explain my point of view by using two analogies. The first one is: there is an energy that runs through us; it can be measured as it runs through our brain on a machine called an electro-encephalograph. If you've seen some medical shows on television you may have seen the electro-encephalograph, which looks like a TV monitor sitting near the hospital bed and it has a little line across the screen which gives a read-out of the energy when the electrodes are connected to the patient's brain. That energy has now been scientifically divided into four different levels – known as brainwave states. The Beta state for instance is the state we live in, the state of action, the state of doing and that's 13 to 28 cycles per second. Then we've got the Alpha state which is the relaxed state and that state is 14 to 7 cycles per second. The Theta state, $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 cycles per second, is the dream state or the deep meditative state. Finally there is the Delta state which is half a cycle per second up to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ cycles per second. Now half a cycle per second is just barely alive and in fact that means coma.

So what do you reckon it means when the line goes straight across the monitor? The heart is still beating, the blood still flowing, but we have no energy in our brain that means brain dead. The energy has gone. Well, where's it gone? Energy can't just disappear, it has to go somewhere, to become some other form of energy. The only difference between alive and dead is the energy of the brain has gone. Incidentally, being brain dead is the legal definition of dead –that's right folks, we've now got a machine that tells us when we're dead. When we're brain dead, that's when doctors can take our heart, lungs, etc, as long as we've signed the bottom line.

What do we call that energy when it's left the body? There are many answers aren't there – here are some: Energy, the Force, God, Prana, Chi, Spirit, Soul, the Divine, spark of the Divine and there are more. Isn't our English language inadequate – same thing, but many different words. Now I'm sure you have heard of near death experiences! In these instances when the body has no energy in it – brain dead – the energy suddenly re-appears. Whatever was outside the body is now inside the body. What's that called? Logic would say that it's called the same – Energy, the Force, God, Prana, Chi, Spirit, Soul, the Divine, spark of the Divine. My personal choice is to say the energy the Divine. So, if I use this word “Divine”, then you know to substitute whatever the right word is for you. The thought of the Divine, or God, being within and without is very comfortable to me. I believe that God is within each one of us.

The second analogy is about a sun ray shining in England, for example, is connected to the sun ray shining in Australia, back through the body of the Sun.

To me, in the same sort of way, we are all inter-connected, because the God in you is connected through the body of God to the God in me. This also helps to explain unconditional love – when I love you I am loving that component of you which is the same as me, that is, the God in you, which is joined to the God in me. Hence, I

am loving me more and for me, it explains why "I can't love another unless I love myself." You can see how this avoids the personality – I may choose to like or dislike the personality, but I always love the God in another. I can also choose to love at a distance.

To actually love at a distance I use and send the *Light*, like the sun, which is a clear, white, colourless light. For instance, I ask for the Highest Good of all concerned and then send my light and love to Jenny, Kirsty and Lexie whenever I think of them, or to anyone else. I also use the *Light* for protection – I ask for the *Light* to fill and surround and protect me for the Highest Good of all concerned. We can all use it and one well known healing modality where the *Light* is used is in Reiki.

Letting Go

A challenging and often essential component of going through grief and loss is that of "Letting Go". I have a complete chapter in my book *Switch On To Your Inner Strength* which addresses this area – I'll briefly summarise it. Monkeys often get caught (and pay for it with their lives) because they won't let go of peanuts or bright crystals. The moral of the story is not that monkeys shouldn't eat peanuts, or play with crystals, or be curious. It's that there are circumstances where monkeys must let go. So too with our old habits, our old ways of doing things, our old opinions, our old attitudes. All of these things may have served us well in their time. But there comes a time to let go. As we progress through life we need to "Let Go Of" many things such as the past, our children, broken relationships, our status, resentment, envy and jealousy, a pet, a home, a business, a partner or a friend or a close relative caused through death, of life itself.

My personal experience of letting go my three daughters after their murder was brought about by some advice that was given to me which stated "that you need to let them go as you may impede their progress". I didn't understand this but I know at the time I was meditating daily and bringing my daughters to my mind with very strong and powerful thoughts. The only thing I could think of to do at the time was to meditate and go through a process of letting go. What I did was akin to "Letting Go and Letting God", which meant that I resolved not bring them up in my meditation any more. Does this mean I don't talk about them or have their pictures around? No, of course not. I have their pictures, and whenever they come to mind now they are those lovely 16 and 19 year olds bringing a smile to my face with pleasant thoughts.

Meditation

A major way I handled my grief was with meditation. When I was in the middle of meditation, a thought came to me which was "If you persist in being hateful, angry and revengeful ... then you're going to end up like that!" In other words, I would become another victim ... and it would mean that I would be doing this to myself (because we move towards our thoughts - negative thoughts attract negative thoughts which in turn leads to negative action and negative reaction ... and the corollary of course, fortunately, is also true). So I sought assistance and worked in meditation with changing hatred, anger and revenge to acceptance, co-operation, unconditional love and forgiveness.

Acceptance And Cooperation

Acceptance and co-operation probably go together. A short explanation of what I mean is that whatever has happened, already is. It has already happened. It doesn't matter how bad this adversity is, whatever has happened cannot be changed, so co-operate with it, accept it, and in other words, don't deny it. Look for the lesson in the adversity. Asking a question of yourself such as "What is there in this event that I can apply to my life?" or "What is there in this event that I can learn and perhaps help others?" As discussed above, asking a question like "Why me?" just sets up guilt. When we ask a question of ourselves the mind goes searching for an answer - and eventually gives it to us.

A way to commence the process of acceptance and cooperation is by quietly thinking about it during meditation. It's a good idea to make this process of meditation a daily habit ... until you feel clear on these issues.

Acceptance, Cooperation and Letting Go Meditation

One tool you could use to help you with the process of acceptance, cooperation and letting go is my *Acceptance and Letting Go* CD. You could either play this CD, or make your own CD or tape by playing some baroque music and recording yourself or a friend slowly reading out the guided imagery words, which are included at the end of this section. The baroque music should be at 56 to 64 beats per minute so that the heart beat becomes more in time with this beat – then you're in the Alpha state – the relaxed state. (I have available two CD's called "Accelerated Learning Music" with baroque music from the Masters.)

Please note that you first need to be able to learn how to get into the Alpha Brainwave State and then you need to learn how to go deeper to the theta meditation state using an induction (see Appendix 6 – Building Peaceful Place and Induction). On my *Acceptance and Letting Go* CD, there are three tracks – Building Your Peaceful Place, getting to your Peaceful Place in 3 minutes and within the Acceptance and Letting Go track, the induction is included.

Words for the Acceptance and Letting Go Meditation

Choose now the challenge you wish to "Let Go" and bring to mind all the aspects of your challenge. See the scene or sense that you see it. Hear what may have been said ... who is involved ... what specifically involves you ... what specifically involves others. Experience this challenge by visualising all its components whilst the music is softly playing.

Music for 1 to 2 minutes.

You imagine this challenge as a sack of sand that you have to carry around with you ... you have to take it everywhere with you. Beside your bed at night, on the car seat when you're driving, on your back when you're walking. It's a huge weight to carry all the time and you feel more tired ... the sand somehow feels heavier ... and more unwieldy ... you feel worse ... you must get rid of this burden as it is effecting every bit of your life. You start the process of "letting go" the sand – letting go your challenge by acknowledging different components of your challenge.

Your challenge already exists. You realise that whatever has happened can not be changed. You realise that it's time to stop denying the challenge. Time to begin to accept it. Time, in fact, to co-operate with your challenge. You start by asking yourself the question "What is there in this adversity, this challenge that I can learn and apply to my life?" Listen for an answer.

Thirty Second Pause ...

You become aware that by asking that question, your level of acceptance and co-operation has allowed you to move on to Letting Go, so that you can move forward in life.

Do you have a belief ... or an expectation of yourself or of others within your challenge? Acknowledge to yourself that you have done the best you can do in this situation. Acknowledge to yourself that any others involved have done the best that they can do in this situation. No matter what you've done up until now, know that you've probably done the best that you knew how to do at the time. One way forward is to make all that OK by saying to yourself "I've done the best that I can do – now that I know more, I'll do better next time." You

accept all the good thoughts and say “yes” to them. You reject any negative thoughts by saying “No” to them. You acknowledge yourself for who you are and know that you are growing. You can love and accept yourself for the way you are. You say to yourself ... “I love and accept myself.”

You re-affirm your decision to move on with your life ... you know it’s time for you to continue your progress.

Now picture and imagine that you take your challenge, your sack of sand, to your favourite beach and you pour your sand onto the beach, making a sand castle. You prepare yourself now to say farewell to your challenge ... your sack of sand ... your sand castle. The tide is coming in. A wave comes in and gently washes around the base of your sand castle ... your challenge. Some of the sand is swept away. A series of waves comes in and removes the base of the sand castle. You can see the challenge starting to crumble. You resolve to remember all the good times to do with your challenge. The remainder gradually disappears as you let go. The waves continue and more sand disappears ... there is very little left now. A big wave comes and the last vestige of the sand ... your challenge ... disappears. Your challenge is gone ... you have let go and only remember the good parts of your challenge, knowing that you can bring those good parts to mind and smile, feeling happy and content.

You are calm and smiling and generating love and affection, knowing that you are doing the best that you can do and that anyone else involved is doing the best that they can do. You accept the situation for what it is, knowing that you have “let go” and that you can move forward in your life. Yes, well done, Congratulations. And now ... you count from 1 to 5 and on the count of 5 you will open your eyes, feeling relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated, knowing that you have Let Go and can move on. No. 1 – you feel the blood flowing to the end of your fingers and toes. No. 2 – you move your fingers and toes. No. 3 – you stretch a little bit. No. 4 – you gently move your head, and No. 5 – relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated, having “Let Go” so that you can now Move On.

Unconditional Love

Loving and forgiving can both be real challenges in life. Whether one works with forgiveness before working with unconditional love or vice versa matters little - it really is personal choice and there are no hard and fast rules as to the order or sequence. Loving the person or the situation that has wronged you, can be a terribly difficult thing to do. Many people may want to make a bargain that goes something like this, “OK! I’m prepared to forgive. Now I’ve done the right thing But love? Why do I actually have to love? That’s going a bit far isn’t it!”

I find that love is a very hard thing to write about, for, as I write these words I am conscious of my shortcomings in the area. In fact there are moments where I am tempted to say, “Do as I say, not as I do.” But this would not be right. I’ve always believed the idea that you should never ask a person to do a thing which you are not prepared to do yourself. In asking you to follow me I am asking you to travel with me to what I consider to be the limit of my leadership capabilities. Love is more than the absence of hate. It’s not just neutral emotion. It’s not just a state of “not hating” or “not being angry”. In fact I think the opposite of love is not hate, it’s probably indifference. Love is the positive requirement to actively desire the well-being of all other life. Love, like forgiveness - which I have discussed before in my books and E-Reports, is an imperative in most religions. In Christianity for example, Christ told his followers that the main “laws” are to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself. Pretty hard stuff to live up to!

For me the challenge about love covered three questions

- * Could I love myself?
- * Could I love others?
- * Could I love the man who killed my daughters?

Love of Self

Often we tend to demand from others what we are most unwilling to give and isn't it strange to think that we could expect, perhaps demand, that someone give us what we are not willing to give - unconditional love. If we expect that from someone to make us feel safe and loved, wanted and desired, we have to understand what it is. We have to feel it for ourselves before we can accept or expect anyone else to give it to us. Unconditional love: loving without limitations, conditions, or reservations. If we provide that for ourselves, then it becomes a point of reference to measure the love that is to fulfil our lives. How would we know what we are searching for or what we expect someone to give to us? How do we express to someone what we need?

So let's explore firstly 'to love yourself'. It is really important for self esteem. I believe that loving yourself is purely taking responsibility for yourself - being a responsible participant in all aspects of your life; you choose to eat and drink only healthy foods, to accept mistakes that you make and grow from them, to use positive self talk, to take responsibility for your own health and healing, to stand up for yourself and express your own opinion, to respond to situations instead of reacting, to take care of yourself so that you can take care of others. (For a much bigger list see my book *Students Steps to Success* page 33.)

The above can be difficult and in fact you may be further challenged by identifying painful experiences and experiences that create anger or bitterness in you. Why did it happen? What was the lesson to be learned in it? We are all on a journey and it is how you look at the lessons that will make the journey easy or hard. Be grateful for the people that were put in your path to help you with that lesson, rather than resenting them for hurting you. It is absolutely impossible to unconditionally love yourself if you harbour bitterness, anger, guilt or any other feelings that are not love.

Exploring your inner self means going back right through your life and identifying issues that hurt you (including hurting others, which in effect means hurting you) - then work with Acceptance and Letting Go.

After this step you can proceed with Unconditional Love - firstly for yourself.

So in learning to love yourself - totally accepting yourself, (warts and all), you become more clear on what it is you are looking for. More importantly, by looking inwards you realise that you provide that love for yourself before expecting someone else to provide it to you - now you're finding unconditional love.

Love of Others

It has been said, and I believe it, that love is the strongest force in the Universe.

Unconditional love does not mean "I love everyone equally." I prefer to say "I love everyone appropriately and in response to their individuality." And, very importantly, unconditional love does not mean unconditional acceptance or condoning of behaviours.

Let's move on to loving others. Often it is not a challenge to love unconditionally a family member - your partner, parent, child or sibling ... although sometimes it may be a challenge. Perhaps the family member you're thinking of is in a distant city or country - you can still love at a distance. A good exercise is to look back in the relationship you have with this family member and identify any outstanding challenges or difficulties - no matter what has happened - if there is any event in the relationship that hurts you then you need to clear it using Acceptance and Letting Go and identify any of life's lessons you have learned from that experience. Then you could be ready for unconditional love.

I found that the analogies I use help me understand unconditional love. These analogies are described in full detail in my book *Switch On to Your Inner Strength*. Briefly, we all have an energy within us - whether we call it CHI, Prana, Life Force, Soul, Spirit, Spark of the Divine, or simply Energy. We are all joined to one another through this Energy in the same way that each and every ray of sunshine is ultimately joined back to each other ray of sunshine, through the body of the Sun. So when I extend my unconditional love to anyone, I

bring to mind that part of the person who is joined to me (in the way just described) and then I say (to myself) "I unconditionally love you and say the name ..."

Love Of Someone You Despise

How is this possible? The key point here to remember is that personality is form whereas soul is formless and that loving does not condone the other person's action. Loving is a decision - we choose to be loving towards ourselves and others. We can take loving actions without having a loving feeling, however the feeling normally follows.

Once again it is helpful to use the meditation *Acceptance and Letting Go* as a starting point to move on in your life. Remember in these negative situations that negative thoughts attract negative thoughts, they lead to negative action followed by negative reaction. In other words if your negativity continues then you become another victim; and who has done it to you? Yes that's right you've done it to yourself and, because you love yourself (take responsibility for yourself), you decide not to move on positively.

I find the analogies I wrote about above are also particularly useful for dealing with someone whose personality may be detestable. In your mind, you bring to mind that part of the person who is joined to you through the body of Energy or the body of the Divine, and you say "I unconditionally love you", and you say their name. You let those feelings register within your body. When you do this in deep meditation you become clear and the negativity is not in the forefront of your mind. It feels great to move on knowing that you can unconditionally love.

Unconditional Love Meditation

One tool you could use to help you with unconditional love is my *Unconditional Love* CD. Either play this CD, or make your own CD or tape by playing some baroque music and recording yourself or a friend slowly reading out the guided imagery words, which are included at the end of this section. The music should be at 56 to 64 beats per minute so that the heart beat becomes more in time with this beat – then you're in the Alpha state – the relaxed state. (I have baroque music CDs available, as mentioned previously.)

Please note that you first need to be able to learn how to get into the Alpha Brainwave State, and then you need to learn how to go deeper to the theta meditation state using an induction (see Appendix 6 – Building Peaceful Place and Induction). On my *Unconditional Love* CD, there are three tracks – Building Your Peaceful Place, getting to your Peaceful Place in 3 minutes and within the Unconditional Love track, the induction is included.

Words for the *Unconditional Love* Meditation

Bring your focus now to your Heart Centre and have loving thoughts ... like I Love and accept myself. Decide to love yourself – after all, you're the only person you'll be with all the time for the rest of your life. Decide now to take personal responsibility for yourself – you choose to eat and drink only healthy foods, to accept mistakes that you make and grow from them, to use positive self talk, to take responsibility for your own health and healing, to stand up for yourself and express your own opinion, to respond to situations instead of reacting, to take care of yourself so that you can take care of others. You say to yourself "I love and accept myself unconditionally. You decide and choose to be easy on yourself. You know that now that you love yourself, you can more easily love others. Focus now on the caring and loving of yourself and feel that nurtured, warm feeling, whilst the music plays. As your thoughts wander about taking responsibility for yourself, loving yourself, you accept all the good thoughts and say "Yes" to them. You reject any negative thoughts and say "No" to them. Remember

that whatever you have done in your life, you can say to yourself “I did the best that I could do at the time – now that I know more, I’ll do better next time.”

1½ minutes music

You now bring your focus to a loved one. Someone who is near and dear to you – your spouse, or child, or mother or father. You may see your loved one often – they may live with you. You focus on that part of them that is joined to you, just the same way as sunbeams are joined through the body of the sun. The energy in you or the Divine in you is joined to them through the body of energy or the Divine.

You now bring that part of them that is joined to you and you say “I unconditionally love you (and you say their name).” You could also say to yourself “I am also sending you my love and light for the highest good of all concerned”. You have now taken a loving action. Let yourself feel the warm glow of that loving action and you know that you can unconditionally love another.

Bring your focus to a loved one who maybe is far away. Your loved one may be a good friend who could be in another state or city or country. You focus on that part of them that is joined to you, just the same way as sunbeams are joined through the body of the sun. The energy in you or the Divine in you is joined to them through the body of energy or the Divine.

You now bring that part of them that is joined to you and you say “I unconditionally love you (and you say their name).” You could also say to yourself “I am also sending you my love and light for the highest good of all concerned”. You have now taken a loving action. Let yourself feel the warm glow of that loving action and you know that you can unconditionally love another.

You now go back a little in your life and think of someone who may have harmed you or harmed your loved ones. You detest what this person has done. In fact you may have an abhorrence of this person and the act that has been committed by them.

You recognise that this person’s personality is form, however their soul is formless. You understand that if you continue with negative thoughts or resentment towards this person, that you will not affect yourself positively. You resolve to move forward in your life and be loving towards yourself by affecting yourself positively. You can accept the situation without condoning whatever this person may have done to you. You can move beyond the personality to formlessness.

So now, in your mind, you bring to mind that part of the person who is joined to you through the body of Energy or the body of the Divine, and you say “I unconditionally love you”, and you say their name. You let those feelings register within your body.

Once again you think of someone who may have harmed you or harmed your loved ones. You detest what this person has done. You recognise that this person’s personality is form, however their soul is formless. You resolve to move forward in your life and be loving towards yourself by affecting yourself positively. You can accept the situation without condoning whatever this person may have done to you. You can move beyond the personality to formlessness.

So now, in your mind, you bring to mind that part of the person who is joined to you through the body of Energy or the body of the Divine, and you say “I unconditionally love you”, and you say their name. You let those feelings register within your body. You know that you love and accept yourself – you know that you can

move on in your life, being easy on yourself, caring for yourself so that you can take care of others, staying with that loving, warm feeling. You resolve always to stay in your loving.

And now you count from 1 to 5, and on the count of 5 you will open your eyes, feeling relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated, knowing that you can unconditionally love yourself and others. No. 1 – you feel the blood flowing to the end of your fingers and toes. No. 2 – you move your fingers and toes. No. 3 – you stretch a little bit. No. 4 – you gently move your head, and No. 5 – relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated, unconditionally loving yourself and others.

Forgiveness

My final step was Forgiveness and after going through the steps above, you will know when you are ultimately ready for this part of the process. If there is still anger present, then one really needs to work with getting rid of the anger. (My CD *Letting Go Anger* will help). I first did Forgiveness in meditation by once again bringing to mind that part of the person who is joined to me (once again in the way just described) and then I say (to myself) "I unconditionally forgive you and say the person's name ... for whatever it is". There are a couple of things to remember. Forgiveness is for the Forgiver and NOT for the forgiven, so therefore it is not to be done face to face with the person, unless that person has specifically asked for forgiveness. You can simply do it in your own mind, in meditation. Another thing to always remember is that Forgiveness does not mean that you condone whatever the offence/crime/event was.

The Forgiveness Process should always be a two-fold process – in other words, forgiving the other person and forgiving yourself. Forgive yourself for all the negative emotions and thoughts you have surrounding the particular event or issue. (See XXX)

I believe that Meditation is like Prayer and in fact, when you're doing Acceptance, Love and Forgiveness, it is actually a Spiritual process. If it sits well with you, it could be a good way for you to bring to mind somebody that you consider symbolises the Divine ... or perhaps a personal Guru, Teacher, etc... and "have a chat" to them ... or "ask advice" of them.

Sometimes the personality of a person you need to forgive is absolutely abhorrent to you – that's OK that you feel like this. A LOVING EACH DAY Quote from John-Roger's book *Spiritual Warrior – The Art of Spiritual Living* is really appropriate "We must remember that personality is form, and is therefore limited. Our Soul, however, is formless. It is not limited to a single form, but can function through any form. Our great freedom as human beings is our ability to function through something instead of just functioning in it. Functioning through is freedom." (See www.lovingeachday.org.) So my solution to doing this process is to bypass the personality by bringing to mind "that part of the person who is joined to me" and then saying the forgiveness words in meditation.

I also want you to know that recent studies at the Public Health Institute in California confirm that hostility and resentment tear down your immune system and double your risk of heart attack, cancer and even diabetes. Bitterness makes you sick!

So, please give Forgiveness some deep thought and always remember that to forgive someone, you don't have to agree with what they did. You just have to want your life to work.

Forgiveness Meditation

One tool you could use to help you with the process of forgiveness is my *Forgiveness* CD. Either play this CD, or make your own CD or tape by playing some baroque music and recording yourself or a friend slowly

reading out the guided imagery words, which are included at the end of this section. The music should be at 56 to 64 beats per minute so that the heart beat becomes more in time with this beat – then you're in the Alpha state – the relaxed state.

Please note that you first need to be able to learn how to get into the Alpha Brainwave State, and then you need to learn how to go deeper to the theta meditation state using an induction (see Appendix 6 – Building Peaceful Place and Induction). On my *Forgiveness* CD, there are three tracks – Building Your Peaceful Place, getting to your Peaceful Place in 3 minutes and within the Forgiveness track, the induction is included.

Words for the *Forgiveness* Meditation

Now the first step is to get into a comfortable position, choose a position whereby you know that you'll be comfortable for about 20 minutes or so without moving. What I suggest is that you sit in a chair, with your feet slightly apart and your hands on your knees. You may choose to lie down and if you do, there is a tendency that you may not stay awake and I want you to know that this meditation is an active meditation; you actually direct your subconscious mind with your conscious mind and in doing that you need to be awake.

So now take a deep breath and release it, letting go any cares and tensions of the day as you breathe out. Take another deep breath in, breathing in the loving and letting go any anxiousness remaining as you breathe out ... and now breathe in, down to your abdomen, gently, follow the air to your abdomen and as you breathe out just gently close your eyes. You'll hear the sound of my voice and you'll hear the music in the background and you'll be drifting deeper and deeper into relaxation. You know at all times that you are in control and that at any time that you hear any sound, other than my voice or this music, use that to your advantage by telling yourself as you hear any extraneous sound that you go deeper and deeper into relaxation. Now seek and find your Peaceful Place ... that calm, serene, real tranquil scene that you perceive inside your mind and if you need to go through your relaxed place first and then on your pathway, then do so. And now, at your Peaceful Place, check it out through 360 degrees around you ... just recall it by seeing, or sensing, that you see all the things around you. Are there parks and gardens or forests, mountains or sea, beach, flowers, what other wonderful sights are there. And you can tell yourself that you're seeing all these wonderful sights, maybe you can hear some sounds or sense those sounds, listen for them? Do you hear the sound of water trickling along or perhaps the sound of the surf, or perhaps the wind whispering in the trees. And in your mind what can you touch around you. Is it soft or hard? Is it smooth or rough. Can you feel the warmth of the sun or can you feel the cooling wind. Now you move to inside your Peaceful Place, once again familiarising yourself, checking it out and then sit in your chair ... your special, magic chair.

Think back through your life, and as you do that in your mind you think of a situation where judgement was involved ... you judged someone or perhaps someone judged you. Did you get angry, was there any resentment, did you feel sad, how did you feel towards yourself and how did you feel towards the other person? Now letting that go you think of another situation whereby you did something that you knew was wrong and yet you did it anyway. Who got hurt by it? Was it someone else or did you really feel guilty about it? How do you feel about that now? Are you still carrying the guilt or does the other person still think they're wrong in your eyes. Maybe you've had an argument, cast your mind back and find an occasion when you last had an argument and the result was totally unsatisfactory. Was there blame involved and if not what was involved. Was there anger involved? Who got hurt in the argument, you or the other person, or both of you? Now let that event go and cast your mind back to an agreement that you have made; an agreement which you later broke. Bring that to mind. Who broke the agreement, you or the other person? Do you still hold it against them or do they still hold it against you and how do you feel about that ... and let that go. Are you embarrassed by anything you've done before, something that you've hidden and continue to hide; you know you know it, but you keep it hidden from the world? Does it hurt you? Who's to blame? Do you blame anybody or is this so personal that you just blame yourself. How do you feel about that? Have you not served

enough penance for that? Now let that go ... and just review other parts of your life. Perhaps there are more broken agreements or events involving guilt or anger or judgement or embarrassment. Maybe other things come up for you. What about any belief patterns that you have – for example: “money is the root of all evil” – that you would like to let go. Do you blame anyone for having them? Do you blame yourself or do you blame others. Let that go. What about habits, cast your mind back to any habits that you've acquired, perhaps from your mother and father or somebody close to you and this habit perhaps doesn't serve you. Search your body particularly your heart to see if there is any blame anywhere. Is there any resentment attached to that? And let that go. You now have the chance inside your mind of bringing together all these things that hurt, things that pain you, broken agreements or guilt, or judgement, or beliefs, or embarrassment, or habits and the blame, all the resentment, all the anger and you have an opportunity of ridding yourself of this hurt for it doesn't serve you. Take it all and you put it in to a bag, see yourself stuffing all of it into the bag, one item after the other, in it goes ... leaving you and going into this bag. Now you take this bag and you lock it up, preparing to rid yourself of it in a place where it will never hurt anyone else and you will be rid of it for ever. So you may choose to dig a hole and bury it, or take it to a rubbish tip, or burn it in a high temperature incinerator or you may throw it over the mightiest cliff in the universe; or do you take a magic wand and make it vanish into thin air. Know that whatever you choose to do to rid yourself of this bag it will do no harm. Only good will result in ridding yourself of all the burdens you've been carrying around. Now do whatever you need to do with the bag, inside your mind now, clear it away from yourself, do that now.

Just let your mind float and as it floats you notice with your inner eye a red cloud drifting by, and as the red cloud comes floating by it touches you and you breathe in the colour red. You sense the vibrations in every cell of your body. You gently breathe it out and that cloud passes on by. Its place is taken by an orange cloud which moves in, touching you, enveloping you. Breathe in the colour orange – you can feel the vibration. And then breathe it out. You see or sense the cloud drifting on by. Now a beautiful yellow cloud comes drifting in. See or sense that you see that yellow colour, and then breathe it in, permeating right through you ... and breathe it out slowly ... it drifts on by once again. A green cloud comes in to view – a grassy green colour. You breathe in the colour and you breathe it out again, feeling it throughout your body. It drifts on by and then a light blue cloud comes floating by. It's the same colour as the sky. It touches you and you breathe it in ... hold it ... you then breathe that out too, and it drifts on past. A darker blue cloud comes in ... you're enveloped in it and you breathe that colour in sensing it throughout your body and you breathe it out. It is now replaced by a beautiful purple cloud drifting into you, and as you breathe it in you can feel it going to every cell in your body ... and you breathe it out ... it just drifts on past. And now you see or sense a beautiful colourless white light, like the dazzling sun, coming in and drifting in to you. It envelopes you, flowing through every cell – it nurtures you, it warms you and in fact it builds a wonderful shield of protective light around you. This beautiful colourless white light protects you for your highest good and the good of anyone else concerned. Always imagine this light staying with you, protecting you all the time.

You, release for the highest good of all concerned all the pain all the judgements, the hurt, the guilt, the blame, the resentment ... they've all gone and this beautiful white light just takes over your whole body and you say to yourself I forgive myself for all these things ... and run through those things in your mind and now you forgive others involved by saying “I forgive (and you name that person) for (and you say what for)” ... You forgive your mother for whatever, and you forgive your father for whatever, and now from inside your heart, through the light, this beautiful colourless white light, you send your love to these people. Do this ... send your love and just watch it go through the light to the person involved or the people involved and as that goes you just feel so good, you feel very sensitive, very caring and you feel at peace with yourself. Now knowing that you have forgiven yourself and others and that you can do that at any time that something comes up for you. On the count of five you will open your eyes, feeling wonderful, feeling at peace, knowing that you have forgiven yourself and others No. 1 just feel the blood tingling in your fingers and toes, No. 2 just move your fingers and toes a little bit, No. 3 stretch a little bit, No. 4 roll your neck round, No. 5 eyes

open, wide awake relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated knowing that you are at peace with yourself, having forgiven yourself and others.

5

◆ ----- ◆ **SELF FORGIVENESS** ◆ ----- ◆

Forgiveness is a two-way process - forgiving another person and forgiving self. It is often misunderstood and under valued. With this chapter I will endeavour to add a greater perspective.

Forgiveness in Meditation

I have written previously that forgiveness is for the forgiver, not for the forgiven, and that it is a very personal process. It is done so that we can move on in our lives, instead of harbouring thoughts of bitterness, resentment, hatred, anger, revenge and more. (If we harbour these thoughts then because of the fact that we listen to our own self talk, we move towards our thoughts and thereby become another victim - and ... we've done it to ourselves).

When you do a forgiveness process in meditation, who knows about it? No-one! Don't necessarily tell anyone! Forgiveness is for self. It's personal. Another advantage of doing forgiveness in meditation is that if you are not ready for it, you'll know. You won't be able to think the thoughts of forgiveness when you are in the meditation state - it's like "choking on the words". It is always a good test to see if you have truly forgiven - to do it in meditation.

The Three Selves Concept

A concept I believe is that we have three selves. The conscious self, the higher self and the basic self. The conscious self is easy to understand. The higher self is that part of us that sits between us and the soul. You contact the higher self more in meditation and it is that part of us that knows the lessons that we need this lifetime. The basic self is like the little child inside each of us - it's akin to the subconscious self.

The little child inside always likes to be in its comfort zone, know that it's taken care of, and it doesn't like to be hurt. When any of us goes into self guilt, self blame, self resentment, self anger, self hatred, lack of self worth, we are hurting that child inside of us. That child often cries out to be understood when it is in pain and is hurting. That little child is inside each of us and we need to take personal responsibility for that child. Love that child. Encourage that child. This is what loving "self" is ... taking personal responsibility for self. Forgiving ourselves for all the mistakes we have ever made!

Expanding on Our Own Thoughts

Whenever we tend to slip into guilt, we cause a problem for ourselves. I did that by asking that crazy question when my daughters were murdered. Why them? Why me? Re-framing the question it becomes "What have they done to deserve this? What have I done to deserve this?" When you ask yourself the wrong question then you get the wrong answer. Every wrong thing that I have ever done wrong in my life came up in my mind ... right back to childhood ... "You used to hit your little sister". How did this make me feel? Guilty! And I've done it to myself!

Guilt leads to blame and, guilt and blame lead to judgements. (So I now say that at any time we have a "guilt thought" coming up, then nip it in the bud, straight away. Say something like "Oh no, not that again. Now that I know more, I'll do better next time".)

It's easy to damage ourselves, and, who are we hurting? ... that little child inside. Judgements lead to resentment, jealousy, hatred, anger, revenge, unworthiness and more. We have probably all done it at some point in our lives and we can undo the process of hurting ourselves with Self Forgiveness. I had a lot of things in my life to work on ... all needed my self forgiveness.

Some More Examples of Using Self Forgiveness

Debbie Frank Ogg is a real person who is portrayed in a film that used to be called "Leap of Faith" (not Steve Martin's "Leap of Faith"!). She endured her mother dying of cancer when she was only seven years old. Her father re-married and then died, leaving Debbie with her step-mother. In her child's mind, Debbie's parents had abandoned her and she went through the associated feelings. Hatred of her parents (for "abandoning" her), unworthiness and endeavouring to find love outside of herself (chasing after boys), resentment, blame, no warm childhood memories - only hurtful ones ... and Debbie finished up with cancer, like her mum at the same age. When Debbie realised that things like nightmares were blocking her from working on her cancer, she sought help. The Counsellor helped Debbie to identify issues which Debbie worked on with forgiveness of her Mum, Dad and Self and then in this process she began to "Love herself" - take responsibility for self. After that the nightmares disappeared and she was able to work on her cancer in meditation ... and it went into remission.

It is fairly common in life that someone close to us dies when we have been experiencing some conflict. We often beat ourselves up with the last memories of the deceased such as an argument, or when we stormed out, or slammed the phone down, or hadn't spoken to them for a long time, or spoke badly of them, etc... I'm sure you've got the picture. Some people go into the "If only ..." ... "If only I had done so and so ..." Some berate themselves to the degree that depression sets in and voice the "If onlys" and the "It's too late now" and the "I can't do anything now". These thoughts hurt ourselves. You can express yourself in prayer and/or in meditation and say what it is you want to (or would have wanted to) say ... everything that you left undone. On some level I believe there is communication and you'll make that little child inside you feel better. You can send your Love and Light to the soul of the deceased and then go through the self forgiveness process, e.g. I forgive myself for expressing hateful thoughts the last time I met with ... (and you say their name).

A friend of mine remarried and her new husband sexually abused her daughter ... which she didn't find out about until some time later. My friend has forgiven her second husband (who of course is no longer part of the family) but she cannot forgive herself ... forgive herself for having brought her second husband into the lives of her children, particularly her abused daughter. I imagine that she blames herself ... for seeking companionship, for seeking love. My friend feels guilty. She judges herself as unworthy and as selfish. Can you imagine how much she is hurting herself - her own inner child. I have encouraged self forgiveness and by the time I write this I do hope that she has started the process.

So, please go back through your life and ask yourself if there are any areas that you could serve yourself by taking responsibility for yourself, that is, love yourself, and do the Self Forgiveness process.

6

CONCLUDING ENCOURAGING WORDS

Each one of us has to work with grief and loss at some stage in life. We can make it hard for ourselves, or we can make it easier – it is our choice. I have known some people who have never really let go, never really accepted, never really forgiven and years later, because they've made it so hard on themselves, they remain stuck in that past event, and they must take responsibility for that. Many of these people have become resentful, bitter and revengeful, which ultimately only hurts them. I have friends where one of the partners has moved forward and the other one has remained stuck. The end result has been divorce. What a shame!

I can assure you that if you use the methods described to replace hatred, anger and revenge with acceptance, cooperation, letting go, unconditional love and forgiveness, then they will work. How long does it take? How long is a piece of string? For me, because I knew about these methods and received a lot of help and support, it took me about 6 months. I continually worked on acceptance, cooperation and letting go, actually forming new habits in my subconscious mind. The automatic way to proceed for me was to consider unconditional love, and once I had achieved a really good understanding, I was able to move on to forgiveness. Notice I haven't said that you will forget about any of the events or people involved. Do you forget? No, it's impossible, because it's in your memory. It is possible to dull the pain and whenever any negative thought comes up, you can totally overwhelm the negative thought with wonderful, positive memories about the situation of grief, which may include your loved ones.

I urge you to read the Appendices for even more information. I personally find peoples' questions most interesting so the Q & A may cover some answers for you. One question I really had to give some deep thought to was "How do 'Rehabilitated criminals' come to terms with being reminded of past sins"?

I would like to close with a story from an unknown source which illustrates the power of forgiveness ...

The Sack That Gets Heavier:

A teacher once told each of her students to bring a clear plastic bag and a sack of potatoes to school. For every person they had refused to forgive in their life's experiences, they were told to choose a potato, write on it the name of the person, and put it in the plastic bag. Some of the bags were quite heavy. They were then told to carry this bag with them everywhere they went for one week, putting it beside their bed at night, on the car seat when driving, and next to their school desk. The hassle of lugging around this bag soon made it clear to them what a weight they were carrying unnecessarily, and how they had to pay attention to it at all times... how they could not forget it or leave it in embarrassing places.

*Naturally, the condition of the potatoes deteriorated to a nasty slime.
This was a reminder of the price we pay for keeping our pain and negativity. Too often we think of forgiveness as a gift to the other person.*

Clearly, it is for ourselves!

Take care of yourself, and, be easy on yourself.

◆ ----- ◆

SPECIAL ADDENDUM FOR RECENT TRAGEDY

◆ ----- ◆

A Few More Words of Introduction

I would like to offer some words for those who have suffered recent tragedy through homicide. I certainly believe in the right sentencing to fit the crime. I am against the death penalty, as I believe that nobody - not even the State - has the right to take a life. Incidentally, I also think that living out a long sentence in jail is harder than the death penalty.

I know that Justice needs to be done and needs to be seen to be done for the sake of social stability in society.

Forgiveness is definitely a personal issue and I believe only done so that one can move onwards in one's own life. The fact that forgiveness is personal and that it can be done in meditation means that no one else need know about it - not even the public nor the perpetrator. It is done for self only. Forgiveness does not condone the crime. I would never encourage mass forgiveness, for example, say for a person like Hitler. I am not involved, nor are any of my relations (with Hitler) and therefore forgiveness of him on a personal basis would not arise for me. Mass forgiveness would not be appropriate as far as social stability is concerned and I would never encourage it. It is an individual thing - I am sure that many people within the Jewish race who have been involved have done "private forgiveness" and I am equally sure that many Jews are still embittered and live a vengeful life which takes its toll on their own health.

With me Forgiveness has become public knowledge – I believe it is part of my responsibility to explain it.

What I really am about is helping people to achieve more in their lives. To move on from trauma by using tools and techniques which are easy to do. To move forward in our lives there are many other actions before forgiveness is even considered. I do believe that forgiveness (including forgiveness of self) can be very therapeutic in one's life and can lead to happiness.

To this end I have written an E-Report titled “NEVER FORGIVE - until you are ready” reproduced below.

NEVER FORGIVE - until you are ready

I've wanted to write this for quite some time because many people have said to me that they could never forgive. My response has always been that that's OK. I might add that when people have heard that I have forgiven, I have, amongst many positive reactions, also received a few negatives ... ones like "I am betraying my daughters", and "Why would I make the perpetrator feel OK?", and "It's sending a message of condoning of the murders" and "Only God can forgive" ... and more.

All these reactions or statements are understandable. They are the same kind of things that I said to myself when I was first confronted with the thought of forgiveness. The other thing that I believe these statements show is a different understanding of the topic, or the process of forgiveness, to my own. And as you may know, the understandings I have, were gained through a lengthy process of dealing with the painful experiences of the murder of my three beautiful teenage daughters.

Don't Even Think Of Forgiving

When the wounds (or the deaths) are really raw (close to the event) then I believe that nobody should even think of forgiveness. If you are a supporter of anyone dealing with tragedy, then at this stage, don't even mention forgiveness. The process of hatred and anger and thoughts of revenge are natural and I believe healthy in the early stages of grieving.

When the victim of a tragedy (the survivor) is feeling extreme bitterness, hatred, unbearable ongoing hurt, anger, revenge, then do not even think about forgiveness. Every time you do (think about forgiveness) you will only feel more upset and hurt yourself. There has been enough hurt - you don't need any more. I say to express your rage! Vent your spleen, as much as you can, on the perpetrator, society, circumstances ... whatever you need to do to release your anger and hurt. In your mind this will help, because by doing this, you will be preserving the love for your departed one(s), you will not condone the actions of violence, you will not help the perpetrator, right now this is a way of reassuring yourself that you are being loyal to your loved ones.

Forgiveness is a choice. Only when you can bear to find out its meaning will you be able to investigate the purpose of forgiveness.

Handling The Trauma And Some Questions

Before I start on my explanation I want to pose a situation that too many people confront. Six months on, or even twelve months (and more) after a tragedy in which you have lost a loved one, every time you think of the event, or the lost loved one, or the perpetrator, then you are hurt. This hurt upsets you and you may become angry or you may show other emotions. This has perhaps become a habit. I know of a number of situations that by doing this it has affected relationships - one partner wants to move on and the other stays stuck in grief - a form of loyalty to the lost loved one.

To continue, another way the loss may be handled is not to think about the event. Every time you think about it, you are hurt and emotional. And as you don't want to do this to yourself, so you attempt to banish the thoughts from your mind. I know of a situation whereby the parents of a lost loved one did not allow even the mentioning of that child's name in the house. So for a while you feel you can cope with life. Can you ever forget? No! Never! Your subconscious mind, your deep inner mind has always got the memory (and the habits). This is the same mind that is your dream mind, but you don't have control over it. So what happens? Hot sweats, nightmares, unexplained anger, irrational actions! Familiar? This is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) caused by not fully processing the tragedy. Today we have counsellors who help to do this. It is always extremely important to talk and talk and talk ... do not bury your thoughts.

Let me ask a question. How does your lost loved one want to be remembered? I'll bet that they wouldn't want you to be hurt or emotional every time you think of them! I think they would say something like "Hey Mum, remember the time when and we laughed and laughed" Only happy memories would be their answer. Ask them ... see if you get an answer inside of you! You are the master of what you do to yourself.

Here are another series of questions to ask yourself when you are ready. How are you handling your loved one's murder or death? Does it hurt? Is it painful? Do you get angry? And now the big questions ... Is this making you feel better, or worse? Is this helping or hindering you to handle life? And lastly, the questions ... Who has power over this? Is there an alternative?

What is the Purpose of Forgiveness?

Forgiveness is for yourself only. It is to help you to move on. It does not condone any crime. It does not give the perpetrator a signal to go out and do it again. It is, I believe, a spiritual act and God is involved. If we agree with God being omnipotent and omnipresent then we are not separated from God. God is within each one of us. We therefore, in the process of forgiveness of the perpetrator, we can do what is within our power. What does the perpetrator do with your forgiveness? That's up to them. The perpetrator may make peace with God, may be remorseful, may understand how many lives they have severely affected, and may ask for forgiveness from God. Whatever they do is not your responsibility. You are primarily responsible for yourself only.

One way of forgiving can be done in meditation. Why do I recommend this way? Because it is a test of whether you really mean it or not. Whether you have released the bitterness, anger, hatred, resentment, etc... It may be easy for some to say out loud "I forgive you" and not mean it at all. When you do this in meditation and you don't really mean it, then you will choke on the words. You won't be able to say it in meditation if you don't mean it. What do you do then? Work more on releasing anger, acceptance, letting go, and unconditional love.

So, please only forgive when you are ready and always, yes always, remember the good events. Flood any negative memories with those good events by visualising them taking place again inside your mind. I encourage you to practise forgiveness in every day life and observe how you feel - only when you are ready.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – New CDs *Moving Onward – 2 Pack*

To work through grief and loss I have, within this book, suggested the use of 3 CDs. I have also given the words of the guided imagery spoken on the CDs and a guide on how you can make the meditation tapes for yourself if you choose to. Many people have actually requested the CDs so I offer them to you as a special *Moving Onward – 2 Pack* at the price of \$50. (Plus postage and packing \$6 within Australia.) Building your Peaceful Place and Getting to Your Peaceful Place in 3 Minutes are the first two tracks on the *Forgiveness* CD – these need to be played as a first step, that is, prior to any meditation. Both *Acceptance and Letting Go* and *Unconditional Love* are on one CD.

Acceptance and Letting Go

There are many circumstances where “letting go” helps us to move on in life, eg. the death of someone close or even a pet, the end of a relationship, children as they grow up and change, our status. Acceptance and co-operation are important and doing this meditation has a cumulative beneficial action.

Unconditional Love

A great start is loving and accepting yourself. We always have a choice to be loving. There may not be a “loving feeling” behind the decision to take a loving action, but we can have a choice and make the decision to take the loving action anyway. You learn how to Unconditionally Love at a distance.

Forgiveness

This meditation is spoken over *Early Morning in the Rain Forest*. Forgiveness is such an important element of daily living. Coming to terms with yourself and others in areas such as judgements, anger, resentment, guilt or blame is a key to your own progress.

I would recommend that you do everything at your own pace and move forward only when you think you can. The CDs can be done in the sequence listed above doing at least one meditation daily. After you have built your Peaceful Place (PP) and done the shorter 3 minute track to go to your PP, then you do not need to do this again – just do the meditations on the CDs. (If you have any challenges with PP then visit the Q & A section of my website www.calm.com.au and go to the area of Peaceful Place – you’ll find it helpful). Remember if there is an enormous amount of anger present then an additional CD called *Letting Go Anger* may be required – you’ll know if you need it.

Appendix 2 – Questions And Answers

Question 1 – Does Time Heal?

I have yet to come to terms with the suicide of my friend. I do not know the reason. However I know it had to do with his girlfriend - I think she 'dumped' all her problems on him and he could not find the solutions for her or himself. There is the overwhelming loss of a vibrant person that I, and my sister, can no longer love (in this life). There is a sense of hopelessness that we were not able to help him when he was in pain. Resentment is always present. I think we just learn to cope with the pain. Does time heal - I do not think so?

My Answer. Time doesn't heal - you do the healing. Note that I say "you have to go through this". Now that it's happened you can't avoid it. What you do in the process to come to terms with the situation is extremely important and it's necessary for you and your sister to go through a very similar process to the one I went

through so that you can move on in your life. It's important you don't waste your own life by falling prey to continual negative thoughts and influences. Forgiveness is a process. Sometimes we're not ready for forgiveness, so what's important then is to work with releasing anger, hurt and resentments. Of course the most important commencement to this process is to make a decision that you do want to move on in your life. This process would never, ever mean condoning actions or forgetting your friend. In fact your friend can be "always with you" in your thoughts, particularly thinking of all the good times.

Question 2 – Will Forgiveness Help? And, How Do I Handle My Guilt?

I was also a victim of an act of violence. My friend and I were walking at night after a long deep conversation. We were discussing a lot of personal issues and developed a stronger friendship because of it. We walked past a group of drunken yobbos who thought my friend looked gay. Within a few seconds my friend was on the ground being bashed and his head was repeatedly being kicked. I received a few thumps because I tried to help him. I was in shock and was terrified. I didn't know what to do, I felt so helpless. I have never believed violence is an answer to any situation so the thought of retaliating never occurred to me at the time.

After they eventually left him, I turned him onto his side as he was choking on his own blood. So I guess I at least saved his life with that act. He was in intensive care for quite a long time. He didn't regain consciousness for several months. After about 8 months we could talk together again but only for a short time. He suddenly died due to a blood clot that went to his lung. The offenders are now charged with murder. I have not recovered from this experience and I don't think I ever will. I still feel very guilty that he was the one that was bashed and died and I didn't. Just because he fitted the gay stereotype and I didn't, he was bashed to death and I wasn't. I can rationalise that there was nothing I could do to stop it but there is always that feeling in the back of my mind that says I should have been dead too. I can't shake the guilt.

I have never thought that violence - as in taking revenge - is an answer to any situation. I think it was Ghandi that said, "An eye for an eye till the whole world is blind". However I can appreciate other attitudes and would never judge anyone for feeling that way.

Although I have never felt the feeling of revenge towards the offenders, I can't quite bring myself to forgive them either. I guess what I am asking here is: Do you think that forgiving them will help me with my own recovery? Maybe I think that if I do forgive them, that will justify and intensify my own guilt. I guess I probably think that by forgiving them, in effect I condone what they did and I could never do that. My own self-image has deteriorated quite a bit since this happened. I think that is all tied in with the guilt. How can I forgive someone else when I hate myself for what happened?

I am sorry to put all this on you like this but I have just been going around in circles about this and I am not really getting any closer to dealing with it. I really admire you for what you have achieved with your own inner peace and I also think you are very courageous for talking about it in a public forum (60 Minutes) as you would know that people would judge you for what you said. I would appreciate any advice you could give me on this. I was just hoping that I might regain some self-confidence from your strength.

My Answer. Thank you for your e-mail and for sharing with me some of what is happening in your life right now. I am so sorry that you are having to go through all this. Remember that the real lessons come from going through adversity – it's a sad fact of life that we never get "life lessons" from going through good events in our life!

It's important for you to have an understanding of what forgiveness is and why you do it. You are not in any way condoning the actions of the offenders – the forgiveness process is for the "forgiver" not for the "forgiven". The offenders must indeed suffer man's law and it is up to you to do your utmost to make sure that you play your part in this.

One of the good results of what has happened is that your friend recovered after 8 months and you were able to speak to him in some sort of coherent way before he died. I'm sure all of this was quite a healing time. I believe that when he died because of a blood clot going to his lung that the "higher powers" were just playing their part and that it was your friend's time to die - untimely though it is.

Now that this terrible thing has happened you can't avoid it. What you do in the process to come to terms with the situation is extremely important and it's necessary for you to go through a very similar process to the one I went through so that you can move on in your life. It's important you don't waste your own life by falling prey to continual negative thoughts and influences. It is extremely important that you handle the guilt using meditation - acceptance, cooperation, unconditional love (for self and others) and SELF forgiveness. A very useful statement is "I did the best that I could do".

I have a book called "Switch on to Your Inner Strength" which talks about the forgiveness process. Sometimes we're not ready for forgiveness- and that's OK. I believe that when you are ready the process of forgiveness of the perpetrators will help you heal. You can work gradually through releasing anger, guilt, hurt and resentments. Of course the most important commencement to this process is to make a decision that you do want to move on in your life. From what you have said to me in your question I realise that you feel violence and revenge is not the answer.

All this would never, ever mean condoning actions or forgetting your friend - in fact he can be "always with you" in your thoughts, particularly the good times you shared. One of the best coping methods that I have is to be able to use and utilise what I call the "Peaceful Place" technique - briefly going to a spot inside your mind where you relax, release stress and be "at peace".

Question 3 – Where do you put the anger? When do you get your say?

I have found it interesting to read the responses to the seminars you have held and the personal stories of these people. I do not generally discuss emotion, nor personal issues, but I think there is a time when you need to drop your guard and be real with yourself and the issues life presents you with. I have a rational way of thinking about the events that surround me in life, though I probably am not terribly good at dealing with them.

About a year and a half ago I lost my father whom I was very close to. He was shot by another man in the town where I grew up. I was at uni at the time. The circumstances around the death were 'tainted' so to speak and there was a large amount of publicity surrounding it. Anyhow, this publicity doesn't effect me terribly, because I have spent a large portion of my life dealing with the opinions of outside people including newspapers and television about the life my father led. Though what seems to effect me is the amount of time (around his death) that I spent consoling, protecting, answering for and defending people related to and unrelated to the life of my father. That is, I had to defend him, and myself from what seemed to be an attack on the person he is, the person I am and the relationship we have. I seem to have spent a lot of time and energy dealing with everyone else's insecurities, grief, anger and despair, taken all of their stuff on board and never dealt with mine. I don't think I have unloaded everybody else yet.

Then there is the issue of knowing that the person who shot him is not somebody who enjoys killing people, but is guilty of the crime, will be out of jail next year to lead a loving life with his family and most of all will be able to experience the weddings of his children, his grandchildren, growing old, etc.. Though I am sure his life will never be the same again he has made sure that mine and my family's life will not be the same. He seems to have taken the control of one's self away (from me). I know the control can be taken back, but he took all control away from another person and killed him and that can not be taken back. I am angry that he

altered and disturbed my life and put me in a position where I have had to see the effect that his actions have had on his family, and feel sorry for him. I don't want this letter to be about him.

I know that there is no good in being bitter and angry because it is only detrimental to the self and you can not change the past nor the opinions of others. But where do you put the anger? When do you get your say? Where are the answers? When is life not consumed by this? The thing that I fear the most is that I will forget! Rationally I know that won't happen, but I have a whole life left and his voice is not heard anymore. I also know that time is a healer and life goes on. Anyhow there are many confusing things surrounding the death of someone close and if you can help people deal with this and live their life to the fullest I think it is a wonderful thing. It helps talking to someone who has first hand experience of loss and grief.

My Answer – The sentence that your father's murderer received (from my calculations - about 3 years?) seems to be very light. I can certainly understand your grief and despair rising again as a result of the perpetrator's imminent release. Was the sentence a fair one? I suppose there is not a lot you can do about this now, so really I guess my question is irrelevant. It does seem to be totally unfair that the perpetrator will see his family, his children get married and his future grandchildren, etc., when of course your father and you have had all this taken away. But then again sometimes Life is not fair. Some "lessons" and experiences we go through seem very harsh and hard to understand. To move forward, I think one of the first steps for you is acceptance and co-operation with what has happened. I believe that the next steps are unconditional Love and Forgiveness. This is a huge topic and I do address it in both my seminars and my book "Switch On to Your Inner Strength".

You ask: "Where do you put the anger? When do you get your say? Where are the answers? When is life not consumed by this?" Anger needs to be released and let go - this can be done in meditation, and, as one works in meditation with Acceptance, Love and Forgiveness, one's Life will automatically not be consumed by this. As to "when do you get your say" - there is a system of "Conferencing" between Offender and Victim in NSW. It's a wonderful way of being able to get your say and being heard.

Time does soften the sharpness of the pain and loss - you will never forget your father nor is it desirable. What you must do for your own sanity is to accept what has happened without (in the long term) continuing the negative self talk of anger, hatred and resentment otherwise you may become another "self-made" victim (because negative thoughts attract negative thoughts which leads to negative action and negative reaction) and you don't want your father's murderer to "win" again. It does help to talk about it - maybe a really good Counsellor or the Homicide Support Group can help. You're welcome to call me on 1 300 731 900.

Question 4 – Does Religion play a Part

I wonder if you would be kind enough to answer two questions for me.

1. Does Christianity (or other religions) where the ethos of 'turning the other cheek' is often espoused, play any part in your present stance towards the killer of your daughter, and are you are a committed Christian?
2. What is the attitude of your former wife, the girls' mother, to the killer? There seemed to be no mention of her in the program (except for the fact that she was invited to participate), and I was wondering whether you had both mutually arrived at this resolution.

My Answer – I was brought up in the Anglican faith. I would now describe myself as a Spiritual person - and I believe that we are all along a Spiritual journey. (**In fact I really believe that we are soul, housed in a body having a physical experience.**) I also subscribe to that oft quoted saying "religion is the politics of Spirituality". My personal beliefs are that I believe in God and in Jesus the Christ. More of this is found in

my books "Switch On to Your Inner Strength" and "Creating Happiness Intentionally". As to my former wife, I do not speak for her. The way we have handled the tragedy is different - she is re-married and coping.

Comment 5. We Have a Choice!

On the Sixty Minute Program it was amazing to see the contrasting views regarding forgiveness and responses to what is in anyone's books a very bad crime that warrants punishment...i.e. the killing of innocent children.

Sandy MacGregor is an example of human evolution. He didn't say it was easy, or fair...just that he is making a choice to be happy again and free. Free of the pain that anger, hatred, and blame that victimisation bring. He didn't make the other guy wrong...which is also a big step in evolution. To get away from right/wrong thinking. Again, not easy but a choice. Made me recall something I read from a book called "The Course In Miracles" that said..."Would you rather be right or happy". Thanks Sixty Minutes - good to see such contrasting views together...giving us a good look at the choices. Neither right nor wrong! Just which one gives the best result. I vote for a happy ending. We see what the other brings. More pain.

My Comment. Excellent point. My choice was "Do I want to become another victim - a self made one"? The answer was pretty clear for me. I had the responsibility of my family and myself none of whom would be served with me becoming "sick" with hatred, anger, revenge, resentment, blameand more.

Question 6 – Eradicate the bastards - will you??

I remember your daughter's murders very well. I do not and will never ever agree with forgiving the piece of living bile that killed them and their friend. I more lean toward Mark Middleton and his desire to eradicate from our planet people like his daughter's killer. Given the chance I would love to help him.

I am happy for you in the way you have come to terms with your inner turmoil but sorry mate, the killer of those 4 girls should be as dead as the dodo in my book. Same with all the other killers like Anita Cobby's killer. We waste millions in feeding and housing these people while others must suffer forever. They get TV, exercise, often playing arenas and swimming pools. Just who is the victim??

Give me revenge any old time. I have listed what I think is so very wrong with our society, why crime is rampant and over 700 homes burgled daily in Australia. And no Sandy, I do not for a second think the death penalty would stop murder but it sure would make a lot of people feel safer from paroled killers and save millions to the taxpayer. Not to mention, and you will no doubt disagree, but many victims could put their heartache to rest knowing their relatives killer has been eradicated.

I am curious, are you religious?

Q: Parole?

A: Never!

Q: Death Penalty?

A: YES

Q: Concurrent sentences?

A: NO. Accumulative sentences. Stack em up.

Q: Life = 15-20 years?

A: NO Life is 'the bastard stays until the body dies'. Even if it takes 100 years.

Q: Amenities and luxuries like smokes, TV etc etc?

A: NO Harsher and more severe penalties. Do the hard crime, do the hard time.

PS: Yes Sandy, my best friend was murdered. And no Sandy, I never forgive.

My Answer. Obviously we think differently and that's OK. My feeling is that you don't understand my understanding of the forgiveness process. It is done for yourself only and in no way at all condones the action of any perpetrator. There is no sense to me in becoming another victim - we can become another victim so easily by having angry, hateful, revengeful thoughts, and this only leads to our own illness - the perpetrator "wins" again. The negative process is also very harmful and hurtful to lasting relationships and this is why we often find that divorces or separation is the result for those that are left behind.

I certainly believe that a life sentence should mean Life. I also believe that a jail sentence of Life is a far harsher sentence than capital punishment. I have spoken to Mark Middleton and fully support him in his endeavours to have the NZ government keep that perpetrator in jail for Life ... without the added luxuries (TV, smokes, etc...). I am a good friend of Anita Cobby's parents - Garry and Grace Lynch and happen to know that they are living without feelings of hatred and revenge - having gone through the forgiveness process. Do they think that the perpetrators should be released? No, of course not.

I would describe myself as being a spiritual person - the difference being that I am not involved with religious creed or dogma. I believe that religion is the politics of spirituality. Yours in Personal Peace.

Question 7 - How do 'Rehabilitated criminals' come to terms with being reminded of past sins?

I admire your conviction, and your ability to heal and forgive. I have witnessed a similar situation but from the other side. When I was working for the department for Education, a new person joined us. His name seemed familiar - but I could not place it. He worked hard and conscientiously, always friendly, always helpful. He seemed to treat each day as a gift rather than an expectation.

Then one of the local papers decided to do an article on 'Rehabilitated criminals'. It turned out that my co-worker was an ex bank-robber and a rapist. And that my manager (who I had great respect for) had been involved with drugs and attempted murder. For several weeks their lives were misery.

The department with standard government knee-jerk reaction tried to get them dismissed on the spot. Questions were asked, and fingers pointed. Finally it all blew over, but the effect on them was saddening. I wondered how they themselves could heal when no-one else would let them. How do 'Rehabilitated criminals' come to terms with being reminded of past sins?

I truly felt for them. They had done their time, served their prison sentence and as my manager was now a committed Christian I could see how his past deeds weighted on his conscience. Thankfully it is people like yourself who has the inner strength to go on, and forgive, that can enable people who have committed crimes to mend their lives and go on to be better human beings. For that example, I thank you.

My Answer. Thank you for your e-mail and your supportive words. There are a few things that are mixed together here. One is Man's Law, one is God's Law and then there is Society. In this case, after they had served their sentence (Man's Law) they were burdened by Society. This also may be a way that God's Law plays a part in that things done in the past can never really be buried but we must really come to terms with them in such a way that thinking about them doesn't cause pain. Pain caused through guilt can often be handled by "I have done the best that I could with the tools that I had at the time. Now that I know more, I will do better next time".

I have had cause to write about this before and I will include that below - with some adjustments - in attempting to address the issue. It's written as though it is going to somebody who has offended.

Our journey through life and the experiences it brings us is often referred to as Karma. A belief that I subscribe to is that negative Karma must be balanced as we move onward through life. It's a fact that we have blocks in our lives. Sometimes these blocks can be avoided by "walking around them". Have you ever noticed that when you do "avoid" a block it surfaces again, only this time it's a bit bigger. The blocks can grow from mini, minor size to truck size, to jumbo size, to train size, until it can no longer be avoided. Then we must work with it, to get through it, and learn the lessons that come out of dealing with it. These lessons are experiences for our soul. In spiritual terms it is the job of the higher self to ensure we learn life's lessons.

In much the same way we can have experiences in life that we don't deal with. An example of this is the journey by many soldiers dealing with experiences in Vietnam. Indeed, even the Government of the day aided and abetted soldiers to put their memories behind them by advising soldiers to not congregate in pubs and talk about their experiences. "The war is over. Put it out of your mind. The people don't like it, and so on. So, memories were pushed down and sometimes "forgotten". Where to? To memory. Where is Memory? In the subconscious mind. How does the subconscious mind handle it? This is the dream mind, so "hot sweats", "nightmares", are common, as is "irrational action" and unexplained anger". This is called Post Traumatic Stress with Repressed Memory. The ex soldier has to handle this and come to terms with it or go through their experiences, not "push them down".

I don't pretend to understand what has happened to you, nor to understand "prison justice" or "society justice" - perhaps I could call this an extension of "man's law". What has come up for me is that others in Society may believe that the debt has not yet been paid in full. Let me go a step further - when one is released from custody, my thinking is that the media may eventually find out and therefore the public will know as well. In other words the release will be public knowledge and this could make things harder for anyone in these circumstances.

I think, prepare for this eventuality - don't put it out of your mind. I know, that you know, that you committed an enormous crime. You have made great strides towards coming to terms with this by expressing your remorse. You may have further to go, so don't push down the event and try to forget it - you must, for your sanity, come to terms with it. So how do you do that - come to terms with it?

I think the ultimate process is the same one that I went through - acceptance, co-operation, unconditional love and forgiveness.

One thought, at the commencement of this process, is to separate the event from the deeper inner you. The deeper inner you is the spark of God within you, or the soul. The event is an experience that your soul has and now it's up to you as to how you handle that. It is the lessons from the event that the soul will experience. So when you go to forgiveness, bring to mind that part of you that is the deeper inner you and forgive yourself. (You may be really angry with yourself - if this is the case then the anger must be handled before the forgiveness process can take place). Forgiving yourself can be coupled with asking God for forgiveness. All these processes are best done in deep meditation.

If you want to proceed with any of these processes I would certainly talk about it to a trusted Counsellor and if possible, give me a call. Whilst you go through all of these inner processes then "Man's Law", "Society's Law", and "Prison Justice" has to be handled. It is handled by the personality which will draw strength from these inner processes. Whatever happens in the jail, or once you are released, or when you are free in society, can be cruel. You will be reminded of the event in many different ways and it is not until you've "handled it" that you will be able to deal with these circumstances by drawing on your inner strength.

So, in conclusion, don't push down the event, handle it with co-operation, acceptance, unconditional love and forgiveness and you will be able to deal satisfactorily with "Society".

Question 8 - Can one ever forget traumatic events?

Deep down nobody can forgive what crime that bloke committed! But life goes on and to your credit you can keep it at the back of your mind so it does not interfere with your daily routine but it's always there. Can one ever forget traumatic events? Or deep down ever forgive -I don't think I could.

My Answer. No - you don't ever forget. I don't think it is desirable to forget. I often think of my girls who are always 19, 19 and 16 years old - or younger. I will always know that they were murdered by Maddrell. If my mind now goes to the traumatic events I immediately, almost an automatic action, think of my daughters and then only good events that involved them. However, just remember, that it's the lack of forgiveness eg. hostility, anger, hatred, resentment, revenge, blame ... that eats you up - so I didn't want, and don't want, to be "eaten up" so I am not consumed by negative thoughts when I think of what happened. And yes, I have definitely forgiven - it certainly doesn't mean condone.

Question 9 - Are you aware of "A Course in Miracles"?

We have been students and teachers for many years now of A Course in Miracles. As you probably know the main focus is forgiveness as the only way out of the mess we all seem to have got ourselves in to. I couldn't help noticing your smile when you talked about forgiveness compared with the sad or angry look on the faces of those parents who could not yet find it in their heart to forgive.

You are such a shining example of the very practical application of forgiveness and I would like to deeply thank you for the help you have given many others. There seems so much to be done when the mass media seem to focus on victimhood and revenge as the only practical course of action but your voice is the voice for truth. You have my admiration. The Course says in the Manual for Teachers *"If you would be heard by those who suffer you must speak their language"* and who better than you to help those who have gone through what you have.

"Forgiveness is acquired. It is not inherent in the mind, which cannot sin. As sin is an idea you taught yourself, forgiveness must be learned by you as well, but from a Teacher other than yourself, who represents the other Self in you. Through Him you learn how to forgive the self you think you made, and let it disappear. Thus you return your mind as one to Him Who is your Self, and Who can never sin." A Course in Miracles

My Answer. Thank you for your kind comments and the quotes which are so valuable. I'm often reminded about "no soul will ever be lost" and if I can touch one soul then I know that I will have made a difference. Yes, I am aware of the Course in Miracles - I haven't done the course, although I've read quite a bit about it. I've also read Maryanne Williamson's book *A Return To Love - Reflections On The Principles Of A Course In Miracles*.

My teacher who helps and guides me along my Spiritual Journey has said "if we could but experience 10% of the pain experienced by the perpetrators of a crime, all we would want to do is to forgive." My spiritual teacher is John-Roger who is daily quoted in a wonderful free email message for all. Any one can choose to participate by going to <http://www.msia.org> and clicking on the Loving Each Day Icon.

Question 10 - Any advice on coping with life and at court please?

(From Sandy - I have slightly modified this story and....I've kept the essence). After seeing your story on 60 Minutes tonight, and how you have overcome your feelings of anger and revenge to achieve an inner peace,

my heart and admiration go out to you. I am soon to face a court appearance, for the committal hearing with regard to the sexual assault involving my young son. My son was forced at knifepoint to hold down a friend's young daughter, whilst his older relation raped her. I am being called as a witness to the events leading up to the actual crime.

My greatest fear is the anger that I have, and that when I face the perpetrator for the first time since the events came to light, I will totally "lose it". I have attended counselling for nearly a year as has my son. I have worked through the process of anger, but am afraid of what will happen in court - even the Prosecutors are terrified that I will totally lose it when I face the perpetrator.

Are there any strategies that you could recommend that will help? I am afraid that I cannot afford any seminars that you may hold. I am now living on the sole parent's pension - with 3 young children. You see to add to my woes my marriage has broken up through all of this as my husband has a hard time believing the children.

I do not wish to forgive the perpetrator for his sake, but for my own peace of mind, and I feel that if I find this forgiveness, I will be a calmer person in myself, which will help me deal with the frustration that I am experiencing. My son has disclosed that the perpetrator has molested both him and his younger brother on many occasions, but he was too afraid to speak out as he had been threatened with a knife at his throat on many occasions. I feel that if I can find some inner peace and forgiveness, we can get on with our lives. Only then can the perpetrator's grip of the current misery of our lives be shaken. As I said before, I do not wish to find forgiveness for his sake, but for ours.

One thing that keeps me going is looking on the bright side - at least my children are alive, and they will survive this. I am a practising Roman Catholic, and have tried to get solace from my religion, but it does not quell the anger that I still feel. Hoping you can advise me.

My Answer. Thank you for your e-mail and for sharing with me some of what is happening in your life right now - I am so sorry that you are having to go through all this. Remember that all of us really learn from adversity - I'm reminded of the old adage, "it's not what happens to us that's paramount - it's what we do about it"!!

One of the best coping methods that I have is to be able to use and utilise what I call the "Peaceful Place" technique. This is a fast relaxation and focusing method which, besides releasing stress in that moment, will also act as an "interrupt mechanism". It will help to dispel negative thoughts and stop the upset and anger from taking emotional control of you at times like "being in court". I will send to you my cassette tape so that you can "Create, and go to your Peaceful Place" - as a gift. When you've created your Peaceful Place (PP) you can practise going there very fast so that in the court room, when you feel yourself becoming upset with the offender, then immediately go to your PP - it will help you to calm down very quickly. I do suggest when you have time to go to a Library and see if you can find my book "Switch on to Your Inner Strength" - it will help. There is no doubt that you not only need to work with yourself but also with your children.

If you are able to go to my website www.calm.com.au and peruse the papers on "Letting go Anger" and "Forgiveness" - these may also help. Good Luck and Take Care of yourself.

Question 11 – Are there any books you can recommend which deal with grief?

My answer: Here are the names of some books that may be helpful with grief (along with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's books, which are some of the best-known ones). "Life After Life" mentioned below, has an Introduction by Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross:

Name of Book Author ISBN #

Coping with Grief Mal McKissock 0-7333-0236-X

Life After Life Raymond A Moody, Jr., MD 0-553-24452-3

Life After Death Neville Randall 0-552-11487-1

Everyone's Guide to the Hereafter Ken Akehurst through G.M. Roberts 0-85435-414-X

The Awakening Heart Betty J. Eadie 0-671-55878-1

and my book "Switch On to Your Inner Strength" may be helpful

Question 12 – I am really struggling with my attachment to my ex-partner. I have purchased your tapes, but I can't recall all of the topics - is one of those useful for learning to 'let go'? I seem to be quite stuck - any thoughts?

My answer: I don't have a specific tape for letting go, however 2 thoughts come to mind. The first is that we really don't need the love of another person to happily survive, if we love ourselves enough - the tape (or CD) PP13 - *Inner Peace & Harmony* is the tape that really addresses this area (sometimes I recommend the tape (or CD) PP10 - *Self Worth & Confidence* when I perceive this to be the issue).

The second thought that comes to mind is that the process of letting go was discussed and observed in the film "A Leap of Faith" during the seminar and we saw how Debbie actually "said" to her dead parents that she needs to let them go to get on with her life (I've just realised that you haven't done the seminar yet). I actually address this in the book "Switch On to Your Inner Strength" so perhaps this book may be an avenue of assistance.

After understanding both the above processes, make a decision to let go and then actually bring the person into your mind during meditation - send all your love to that person "for the highest good of all concerned" and then say "I now let you go" - do this several times. A meditation tape (or CD) that you could play while doing this is PP5 - *Meditation*.

Sandy's note – since this answer was given I have produced the CD – *Acceptance and Letting Go*.

Appendix 3 – About The Sixty Minute Program On 1 April 2001

The 60 Minutes program on Channel 9 showed two men dealing with the murder of their daughters in very different ways.

Mark Middleton is from New Zealand. His ten-year-old stepdaughter was brutally murdered and the offender received 17 years jail. Mark wants him kept behind bars for life and is hell bent on revenge.

Sandy MacGregor is from Sydney. In January 1987 his three teenage daughters were shot down in cold blood, in their home, by an intruder – a mentally unstable man on a cocktail of drugs, infatuated by one of the girls. Sandy has found it in his heart to forgive the offender.

Appendix 4 – Live Chat Following Sixty Minutes Program

This highlights the different approach of Sandy MacGregor and Mark Middleton

Australian National TV Channel 9 presents the 60 Minute Program. In April 2001 there was a segment which featured Sandy MacGregor from Sydney and Mark Middleton from New Zealand. Immediately following the program Ninemsn in association with 60 Minutes presented a live chat with two guests Mark Middleton, whose stepdaughter was murdered, and Sandy MacGregor, whose three daughters were shot dead; two men dealing with tragedy in very different ways. What follows is a transcript of the chat:-

Mark Middleton is from New Zealand. His stepdaughter was murdered and the offender received 17 years jail. Mark wants him kept behind bars for life and is hell bent on revenge.

Sandy MacGregor is from Sydney. His three daughters and a friend were shot dead by an aggrieved boyfriend and Sandy has found it in his heart to forgive the offender.

Host amicus_9msn: Mark and Sandy, thank you for joining us tonight to talk about this most personal issue and also the painful memories.

Mark and Sandy: Hello everybody.

Host amicus_9msn: Mark, can I begin by asking you to share with us your particular situation?

Mark: My situation was my daughter was murdered 12 years ago and her killer is now coming up for parole. I've given the government two options: to lock him up for life or I made some threats for which I was convicted. I just think that her killer deserves life forever.

Host amicus_9msn: Thank you Mark. Sandy, could you tell us your story also?

Sandy: Basically, my three daughters along with one of their friends were murdered on January 23, 1987 by Richard Maddrell. He's still in jail. I guess you could say I am at peace with what happened; I've gone through the forgiveness process. He's probably in jail for at least another three years.

Host amicus_9msn: Now we will go to questions from our users, as there are many here supporting you both.

Jover: Mark, firstly I do understand your point of view, but there was one thing that struck me while I was watching. I have never seen such intense hate in a face when you were talking about what happened to your daughter. How does this affect your life? Do you carry this hate every day?

Mark: I don't carry hate every day. I am not prepared for this murderer to ever be released into my country and I fully intend to prevent him from murdering again. Perhaps you should replace the word "hate" with "determination". This man is too dangerous. It is every civilised society's right to defend itself.

Salma: Sandy, how did you find it in yourself to forgive the offender?

Sandy: It's a long process. The process started when I ultimately started meditating again soon after the murder and I realised in meditation that hatred, anger and revenge will only make me another victim. That's when I started to work within meditation, towards acceptance, co-operation, unconditional love and forgiveness. That was first done in meditation.

Then two or three years later I was asked about it on radio and I said that I had forgiven the murderer. And I had written it in two or three books - in chapters on forgiveness. One book is called *Switch on to Your Inner Strength*; the second book is called *Creating Happiness Intentionally*. I mention this because there was a complete description in these on how it works.

The last thing is that I have recently seen Maddrell face to face and have done the forgiveness process face to face with him. That was very emotional for me, but I want to reiterate that I did it for me, not for him. It doesn't give him carte blanche to go out and do it again – I don't condone his action.

Bruce: Mark, I can only guess how you feel. I believe the government should finally get tough on crime and that means making prison a deterrent, not a holiday camp! Would you agree?

Mark: I think that a lot of men in the lower security jails have problems like illiteracy and abuse and a lot of those men are part of victimless crimes and believe sincerely that they can be rehabilitated. We need to show forgiveness and human kindness and understanding to those. But to the violent rapists and murderers and child kidnappers, we should show no mercy. They should be locked away for life.

Lou: Sandy, you lost not one but three daughters; did you ever at one stage think you would go after the killer?

Sandy: Yes, I had it offered to me to have him done away with in jail and when I thought about this for a week or so, I realised that the tough justice that there is in jail would be a far greater penalty than if he was killed. From my knowledge of what Maddrell has had to go through, I know that that has proven correct.

Ree: Mark, do you advocate the death penalty?

Mark: Yes, in some instances and I'd like to qualify that by saying that science has moved on a good 40 or 50 years now and the arguments against the death penalty can be nullified with DNA, forensic science etc.

Fred: Sandy, do you believe in the death penalty?

Sandy: No, I don't believe in the death penalty. I believe that it is far worse to live out your life incarcerated in jail than it is to be humanely killed.

Lenny: Mark, do you fear for your life because you are making these threats towards the murderer of your daughter? Aren't you worried his family or friends could get to you before you get to him?

Mark: I come from a position of strength, not weakness.

Ez: Sandy, I think you are a brilliant man and a true inspiration. If it were up to you, however, would you wish to release your children's killer from jail? Do you feel he should be made accountable? What does your forgiveness entail?

Sandy: I believe that Mans' Law takes its course. We, the society, through the politicians, make the law. It's man's law and it's the best we've got. If the law says that he is to be released, then so be it. It then is on the heads of the people who made the decision – it is their responsibility if Maddrell re-offends; all schizophrenics are not aggressive – however 85% of those released in UK have re-offended – so for society's sake those responsible need to be really careful when making this decision.

Lee: Mark, you probably won't be able to answer this without compromising yourself to the so-called justice system, but have you ever thought of hiring someone on the inside to do the job for you so you can get on with your life?

Mark: I come from a cultural background with a set of values and morals and law that will not allow me to let other people handle what is essentially a cultural thing for me.

Mylo: Sandy, where is your wife, the mother of your girls? Did she ever forgive the killer as you have?

Sandy: I don't speak for my wife and our journeys are different.

Mum-of-4: Mark, you speak of your stepdaughter as "your baby". Obviously you were a father to her and one who loved her deeply. I just want to know, are you still with her mother and does she feel the same way as you in regard to revenge?

Mark: Carla's mother feels that murderers such as Paul Dally should be executed. There are cultural reasons why I have separated myself from my family.

Hayley: Sandy, I think you are incredible for your forgiveness, are you a religious person?

Sandy: I would describe myself as more spiritual than religious. I was raised as Church of England, but am not into any particular religion. I do believe in God and Jesus Christ.

Craig: Mark, as a copper I always remind my victims that we are the good people, always will be. Is what you're intending to do going to change your position as the "good person"?

Mark: I am an ordinary man, my main motivation is not revenge for Carla, but to protect any future children and women and families against a predatory, raping, torturing and murdering offender.

Rodney: Sandy, although the results are similar, the actions leading to both incidents are very different. If your daughters had suffered the pain that Mark's daughter did, would you still have been able to forgive?

Sandy: It's very difficult to be hypothetical, however the situation Mark has with the perpetrator and the situation that I have with the perpetrator are completely different.

Kimmy: Mark, is it revenge you want or is it the security of knowing that he would not be able to do the same to others?

Mark: It's the security of knowing that he won't do this to any other families. The damage is too great and I intend to make sure that Carla was his last victim.

Jover: Sandy, I understand that you have forgiven within yourself for your own inner peace, but surely there must be times when the memories come back to you that you feel hate and anger towards the killer? And how do you cope with that anger and hate?

Sandy: I don't feel anger and hate towards the killer any more. I often think of the girls and when I really indulge myself I also think of the grandchildren I could have had, but it doesn't last long.

Merv: Mark, I get the feeling that the authorities consider you a criminal and not the victim, do you agree?

Mark: The authorities have to sit up and take notice now. My followers and supporters had one of the largest demonstrations in recent history and there was not a single arrest nationwide. That doesn't sound like an unruly mob to me and with that support, I will stand for Parliament.

Lou: Sandy, your website is great, very informative. Have you ever thought of doing seminars for parents dealing with the loss of a child?

Sandy: I do seminars nearly every weekend and it's all about using the power of the mind to achieve [things] faster and it goes into the areas of pain release, healing, creativity, love, letting go and forgiveness. See my website: www.calm.com.au

Kimmy: Mark, do you think your daughter would want for you to destroy your life by getting revenge?

Mark: Two weeks before she died she was in a "keeping yourself safe" program at school and came and asked me what I would do if she was taken and murdered. I told her I would exact retribution and asked her what she would want. She went away for half an hour or so and came back and said, "Don't let anybody take me cheaply, make sure they pay".

April: Sandy, I truly admire your supreme strength and courage, however I find it hard to believe that you think your girls' murderer is sitting in a cell somewhere repenting for what he did. Do you believe in the idea of "what goes around comes around"?

Sandy: I believe in karma and from that point of view the answer is yes, I believe in what goes around comes around. As to Maddrell repenting, I think he does every day. Remember that Maddrell was totally high on a cocktail of drugs and was ultimately considered by nine psychiatrists (one – the Police psychiatrist disagreed) to be mentally unfit to be able to stand trial, hence he was not found not guilty. Today the Mental Health Tribunal has found him mentally fit and ready for release. I am aware that Maddrell is repentant.

Keri: Sandy, I know how much you loved those girls. Wouldn't you agree that in a way you really ARE finding revenge by showing this guy your strength through sheer courage and inner spirit?

Sandy: I agree with all the words you said except the word "revenge". Replace revenge with inner strength and that's fine, thank you.

Neal: Mark, do you believe that the NZ government is forcing your hand in this situation and if there was truly truth in sentencing, you could let go of your hatred and move on with your life secure in the knowledge that the animal that did those things to your daughter was incarcerated for the rest of his life?

Mark: If he was incarcerated for the rest of his life and I knew he could cause no further harm to society, I would forget about him. At the moment, I am getting on with my life, but I fully intend to make sure that the NZ government and its related authorities fully understand the consequences of their actions. Again, I do not come from a position of weakness; I come from a position of strength.

Ree: Mark, apart from the obvious way that we would all like to deal with this animal, what do you think needs to be done to change the system?

Mark: I think that we need "life means life" for some murderers. I think we need the death penalty for the worst and there should be degrees of murder.

Tiger: Sandy, I was a year below the twins at Roseville and always remember their smiles. Have you ever thought of writing a book about your road to forgiveness?

Sandy: Thank you for asking, contact me if you like, I'd love to hear from you. My book on this particular subject is actually called *Switch on to Your Inner Strength*. Look at the site www.calm.com.au.

Helen: Mark, do you think a killer can change as a person, regret what he has done and be a so-called normal human being ever again?

Mark: No.

Aussie: Sandy, what do you think you have experienced in your life that has made you better able to deal with your tragedy?

Sandy: First of all, learning about the power of the mind, secondly, learning about the power of meditation and thirdly, learning about the power of unconditional love and forgiveness.

Exbuster: Mark, if you met the killer right now, what would you do?

Mark: I will not repeat my threats, but you must understand by now what will happen.

Quackers: Mark, do you know of a petition we could sign to keep these people in jail?

Mark: There probably needs to be someone who is prepared to stand up and make a petition and gather support from around your country. I'm sure there is plenty of support, because so many Australians have supported me through the years and I'm extremely grateful and thank them for their concern, so someone organise a petition if your laws need changing.

Host amicus_9msn: Mark and Sandy, thank you for joining us tonight and talking about this very personal and painful tragedy. Are there any final words you would like to say to our many guests, who have come here tonight to support you both?

Mark: I'd like to thank the people of Australia for sharing my concerns about the release and secret of so-called rehabilitated murderers. I fully intend to do something about it and I will fear no-one.

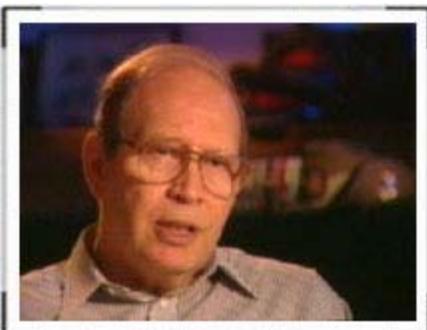
Sandy: Thanks for everyone's support; I really felt it back in 1987. I know it still exists. I guess my main message is that forgiveness is always done for yourself so that you might move towards inner peace instead of harbouring bitterness and revenge, which can only make you sick. I want you all to know that I also support Mark in his battle of keeping offenders like Dally incarcerated permanently.

Host amicus_9msn: Once again Mark and Sandy, thank you for joining us and good night.

Appendix 5 – Australian Story Summary 19 July 2001

For full Australian Story Transcript, see:

<http://www.abc.net.au/austory/transcripts/s329667.htm>



The Devil You Know – Introduction

*"I felt a chill go through me...I had to think about Sandy facing the murderer of his daughters."
Sandra MacGregor, wife*

*"To peacefully confront someone who's killed your own loved ones, in cold blood, takes a lot of guts."
Charlie Barnett, former Army colleague*

Australian Story on July 19 tells the story of Sandy MacGregor, decorated Vietnam War hero, father of six, and now meditation teacher.

MacGregor was a Colonel in the Army when he became the first to lead soldiers into the tunnels of Vietnam, to conduct underground warfare. He was subsequently awarded the Military Cross.

In 1987 a knock on his door changed the direction of his life. A uniformed policeman had arrived to tell him his three teenage daughters and their 19 year old girlfriend had been shot dead by Richard Maddrell, a paranoid schizophrenic fixated on one of the girls.

In the aftermath, Sandy's son Andrew (the only remaining child from his first marriage) taught Sandy relaxation and meditation techniques to help both of them combat their grief and distress.

Twelve years later MacGregor shocked many by appearing on Sydney radio and declaring that he had "forgiven" Richard Maddrell. He argued that continued hatred and loathing would only make him another victim of Maddrell.

These days he teaches other people - many of them prominent business people - the meditation techniques he believes can improve every aspect of their lives.

But he felt his personal journey would not be complete until he finally confronted his daughters' murderer in prison.

The Devil You Know

Producer: **John Millard** Researcher: **Kristine Taylor**

Hello, I'm Ita Buttrose. When I first heard Sandy MacGregor at a conference, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. He had such compassion, guts and belief. A highly-decorated soldier, Sandy lost his three teenage daughters and their friend when they were shot dead 14 years ago in their Sydney home. Few people would ever get their life back together again after such an event, but Sandy went much further than that - further than most would believe possible, or perhaps even desirable. This is his story.

Appendix 6 – Testimonies From Seminar Participants

You may ask “How effective are these techniques of the CALM Life Skills Seminar?” Please read these letters from two of my seminar participants:

It is very hard to put into words exactly what your seminar has done for me. It has certainly been very profound and is still happening. The thing that really fascinates me is that the effect is not only on me, which I understand, but on people I deal with who have not attended your seminar, know nothing about it, and to whom I have certainly not said anything.

I must include some background to explain:

My husband, Don, and I met when we were both serving in the R.A.F. during WWII. I was 17½, and he was 21½. It was love at first sight. At first we thought that marriage was out of the question. We came from different countries, background, socio economic groups, religions, i.e. everything was against us. However after a few months we decided that life without each other was not worth living, and that we would overcome all the obstacles. We were married 13 months after we met. Don was English and when his overseas tour was over I was sent to England with him.

Since we got engaged we started investigating different religions and philosophies. Though neither of us was religious in the accepted sense we felt a strong need for a common 'belief'. The more we talked and read, the more we discovered that fundamentally all religions believe in the same thing: Love thy neighbour and do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It was not until Don was at Uni (1946/7) that we entered into discussion with a friend of his and were introduced to the concept of a continuing Spirit, a life after 'death', E.S.P. etc. It all made immediate sense and followed rational thinking. All natural laws stipulate that nothing disappears. It may change but does not vanish. From that time on we became involved with meditation.

Don died 4½ years ago and my world fell apart. We had 49 years together, working, living, and all leisure time. It was an ideal marriage (that was my ration of heaven on earth!). During his last 2 years here, he was completely dependent on me, I was 'on call' 24 hours a day and was perfectly happy to be so. I really loved him unconditionally. When he died, even though I realised that for him it was the best, I fell apart and went into a deep clinical depression, and was quite unable to cope. I realised that I needed help and asked for it. I got it from counselling, friends and family. After about 3½ years I started to cope, I had lost my bitterness, but then I developed a guilt complex. It was as though I was being disloyal to him by being able to cope. It was this guilt which I was able to get rid of at your seminar.

Since then I have had a complete change of outlook on life. I have fully accepted that he is happier now and that I have a right to go on with my life as best I can. I have been much calmer and more settled. Yes, I still miss him and know that I always will, just as I shall never stop loving him. I have found my outlook to be much more positive. I have gained a measure of self worth which I have not had before. Be it imagination or a different perception of what people say to me, I am constantly being told things which reinforce and boost this worth. Recently I had occasion to go to a conference, and for the first time ever I made the first approach to people I did not know. For the first time I offered an opinion from the floor of a symposium. All this may not seem like much to some people, but after the last 4 years of being in hell (I have always believed that we experience our heaven and hell in this life), for me this is a giant step in the right direction. I guess you can help others because you have been there yourself. Thank you.

Note from Sandy: This wonderful participant has asked us to keep her name confidential. I'd like to add that at the seminar this lady announced that all she wanted to do was die – to be with her husband. Initially, she had her husband in her Peaceful Place. It was marvellous that during the meditations she 'let her husband go – let go and let God'. Of course a few tears were shed, and very soon after her father appeared in her Peaceful Place – this indicated to me that she truly had let go, and was now allowing others into her life. I'd really like to thank her for sharing such a personal and inspiring story!

Dear Sandy,

I thought I would write you a letter about the most amazing experience I have just had. As you know it's been about 1½ years since I did your seminar and I regularly practise your meditation techniques. Recently while visiting relatives in NZ I found myself driving past a cemetery. I suddenly realised that this just wasn't any cemetery. It was where my father was buried. Realising that I would not be back here for quite some time I quickly slammed on the brakes to visit his graveside which would be only my second visit in 20 years. After a short search of the cemetery I found his tombstone and while reading the inscription was overcome with an incredible chill as the anniversary of his death was the next day – and I did not even know it!

I went back to the car in tears. I just knew this was a sign that something was happening here. Many people had told me that my father's death was still influencing me but I could never understand what they meant, nor could they clearly explain their meaning. My father died when I was seven - 21 years ago - how could I

possibly understand the implications of that situation now? His death hadn't been an ordinary event and neither was my experience of it. I will give you some background which I hope will make that clearer.

When I was growing up I was one of those children who was continuously full of mischief. I always had the feeling of being "forever" in trouble as I created one drama after another. In response my father was my disciplinarian who had little hesitation in using his belt to curb my wayward behaviour.

On his last day we went deep sea diving with friends. As they prepared to dive I was sitting in the front cabin of the boat next to some oxygen tanks. All of a sudden the boat was tossed by a wave and listed. Another oxygen tank placed on the seat rolled against the one on which my hand was resting, crushing it! In intense pain I screamed, and my father rushed in to see what the problem was. Seeing me in pain he comforted me and said "If you don't want me to go diving I won't. I'll stay here with you and look after you - but if you're OK I'll go". Feeling as though I needed to be a brave little trooper I said "No dad, it's OK - you go. I'll be fine - you can go" and so he did. He finished putting on his diving gear, hopped over the side of the boat and that was the last I ever saw of him.

I really don't know how as a 7 year old kid I dealt with that situation. No one knew about that final conversation between my father and I. My guess is of the many things I may have felt at that time, I think part of me felt responsible for what happened. I was in trouble again! This time I had done the worst thing imaginable. I had facilitated my own father's death! This was in part confirmed many years later by my mother who thought it a bit strange that after the day my father went missing all I did was play non-stop with my toys not saying a word. I guess I must have been feeling incredibly guiltily, holding onto the worst secret imaginable, too afraid to speak for fear of the consequences.

I remember only crying once during that time, and that was as the coffin went past during the funeral service. After this, that secret too was buried, like him, inside me.

We never spoke about his death. I never thought about him again. My mother had previously had bad experiences with my father's side of the family. They lived in the southern part of the country and I never really had any contact with them either after that. Even today I don't know who they are. I had only visited his graveside once, 11 years after the event, while at the funeral of a friend.

Well, when confronted with all this I didn't know what to do. What can you do! I went home and looked through the family photo album and found a few pictures of him. When I looked at him I felt nothing. He had no meaning to me. I intuitively felt that this was wrong. When you think of your parents you should only feel love (despite everything that happens!) because they are the reason you come into this world. Your creation is an act of love. So I grabbed the only photo which was a positive image of him and I, and took it back to Australia with me.

Every morning I looked at it and I meditated and asked myself some questions. How was his death meant to help me? How was I supposed to become a better person because of the tragedy? I did this every morning for 2 weeks. I guess through this process I was opening myself up to receive some sort of answer from either my subconscious or God knows where else. I also remember from the seminar that the question you ask yourself is important - "Ask the wrong question and you'll get the wrong answer" - like "Why me? What did I do to deserve this?"

Then one day while walking to work I was suddenly overcome with emotion to the extent I could no longer stand (20 years of repressed emotion was on its way out!). My head began to fill with this vision of him. There he was in my mind, an angel in heaven but as I looked into his face he was sad. Not because he was in heaven, (he was happy being there!) but sad that I had forgotten him. I also realised in that moment the significance of his death. It was the most selfless act of love, the greatest gift imaginable, because in his departure I became free to live my life the way I wanted to. Unfortunately some parents can unwittingly cast a shadow over their children through their desire to want the best for them, to the extent that the children develop a compulsion to live up to their parents' expectations because they want to be loved by them, instead of being true to their own talent and potential and living their own life. Without him here I would not to be concerned with that (as he was from all accounts quite dictatorial).

I believe parents are responsible for inculcating many influences into you. Fathers in particular I feel teach their sons many things such as social decorum, persistence, self discipline and how to be a "man". When you lose a parent and nobody else is fulfilling that role you must learn these things for yourself. Here lies an

advantage. While other children are “given” these skills, upon losing a parent you must both discover these skills and learn them yourself. Although learning and teaching yourself these things may take longer for you to master, when you do, you have greater clarity about both their meaning and their use.

So that moment was a wonderful and significant turning point for me. A lot of my personal journey came into a clearer perspective and I felt a lot better about what happened and about me. I now have his photograph on my desk at work and I think of him and my mum everyday, knowing they are the reason I am here and the source of every great thing I’ve done and everything else I would like to achieve.

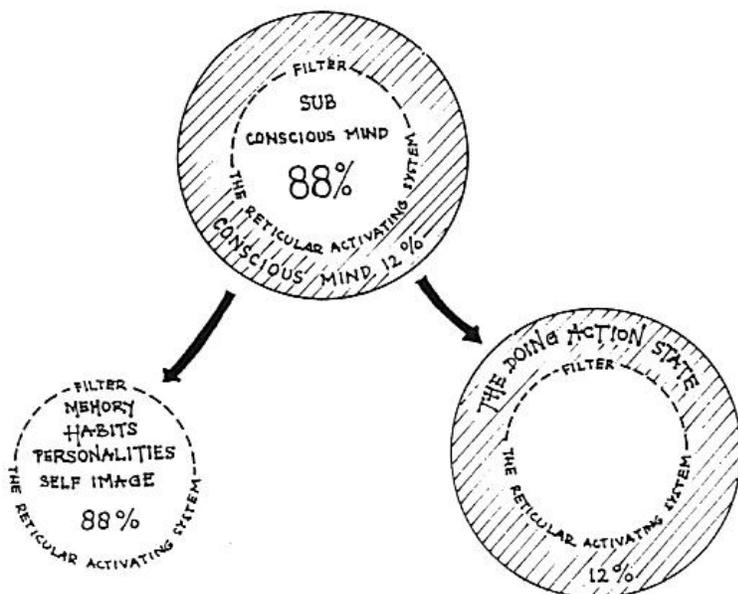
Thank you for your help Sandy, for giving me the tools to resolve this within me. I hope this letter is some source of encouragement to anyone else who has found themselves in the same position and that it gives them a few ideas as to what they can do.

V J Duckmanton NSW

Appendix 7 – Building Peaceful Place And Induction

It’s best to explain “Why Relaxation” and “What is Meditation” with a bit of science about the mind. Many psychologists talk about the mind having a conscious and a subconscious *part*. That’s OK – I choose to say subconscious mind and conscious mind. It makes no difference. The circles below represent the mind. The shaded area shows the 12% which is the **conscious mind** and the clear circle is the remaining 88% of the **subconscious mind**. The following are stored in the subconscious mind:

- Habits and beliefs
- Memory
- Personality
- Self image

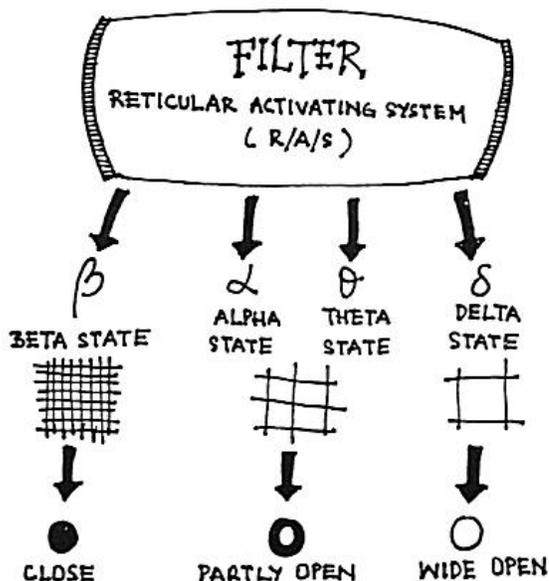


Between the conscious and subconscious minds is a ‘filter’ (dotted line) which is part of the **Reticular Activating System** (RAS). This Reticular Activating Filter either lets through or blocks out information that the subconscious mind receives. Once information gets past the Filter it’s in your subconscious mind, which is your

long term memory. Science has estimated that 70 to 80 percent of what the conscious mind deals with does NOT make it into long term memory.

When you are relaxed, this filter opens and allows information into your subconscious mind, and hence memory, more easily.

The relaxed state is called **ALPHA**. It is one of four brainwave states that scientists have identified. The others are:



BETA (the busy state), **THETA** (deep meditation and sleep dream state) and **DELTA** (deep dreamless sleep state).

In the diagram on the left you will see that in BETA the RAS filter is tightly closed and no information can get into your memory. In ALPHA and THETA it is partly open and in DELTA it is wide open.

Although the filter is wide open in DELTA, it is the deep sleep state, and science has proved that it is not a time for learning!

If you wish to go further using these techniques, then in my book '*Piece of Mind*' I expound on how to use the *Peaceful Place* method to relax in 30 seconds.

Why You'll Find it Useful

Using this 30 second relaxation technique, you'll be able to:

- Relax whenever and wherever you want
- Accelerate your learning
- Be relaxed for exams
- Improve your exam results
- Remain calm during disagreements
- Increase your memory and recall

- Improve your creativity
- Achieve your goals faster
- Substitute new habits for ones no longer serving you
- Release physical hurt quickly
- Increase your self confidence
- Remain calm during embarrassing moments
- Improve your reading speed and comprehension

When You'll be Able to Use it

You can improve your performance by using the 30 second relaxation technique before:

- Talking in a group
- Talking in front of the class or an audience
- Debating
- Drama
- Asking for something
- Sporting events – swimming, surfing, tennis, etc.
- Painting, writing, sculpting.

We will be using the Peaceful Place method described in this book to facilitate relaxation. (I love that word – facilitate. It comes from the French word ‘facile’ – to make easy). You first build the Peaceful Place inside your mind and then get back to the same relaxed state, the Alpha brain wave state, in three minutes. Once you have done this there is an induction process using further guided imagery to take you into the deeper relaxed state of Theta, that is, to the meditation state. Once you're in the state of theta, even more guided imagery helps you to direct your subconscious mind with your conscious mind. You can do this with any topic you choose. It's a powerful way of achieving goals, changing habits, releasing pain, improving your immune system, using creativity and more (a list of the guided imagery tapes available in the Peaceful Place series is on page 289).

So firstly, let's go to “Building Your Peaceful Place”. During this entire exercise you have total control whilst journeying to a place inside your mind – to a place where you know you have previously experienced relaxation. You reconstruct this place in your imagination, describing it to yourself in pictures, sounds and feelings.

From this place of relaxation a magic pathway opens up. You go along it to what is called your **Peaceful Place**. This can either be a place you know in reality or one of total imagination. Maybe even a combination of the two.

It is a setting where you have perfect peace. Every time you go to this place in your mind you will experience automatic relaxation and stress will vanish.

You are in fact going to be the architect, the designer and the builder of this setting inside your mind. You will build the walls, floor, ceiling, (even if they are made of air) inside, outside, every detail.

Your ultimate aim is to be able to get to your Peaceful Place in a couple of minutes. It just takes practice. Remember, every time you go to your Peaceful Place, relaxation is automatic.

First of all just read a summary about the steps to building your Peaceful Place:

Step 1 – Building My Peaceful Place

This takes twenty minutes; you just follow the guided imagery on any of Sandy MacGregor's meditation CDs. If you do not have a meditation CD, there are other methods you can use to complete this exercise with the help of a friend, or make your own tape, slowing recording your own voice reading out the guided imagery words.

Step 2 – Getting there in 3 Minutes

This takes only 3 minutes. Play the second track of the same CD or repeat the method you used for Step 1.

Now, before you start, you need to be in what is called a **Comfortable Position**. Sitting down in a chair, with your feet flat on the floor is probably the best position. Put your hands on your knees. Maybe you could sit in a yoga position, absolutely comfortable, with loose clothing, and seated in a chair. You then commence to breathe deeply – down to your abdomen. This helps you relax. And remember, 20% of the oxygen in each breath goes to feed your brain.

STEP 1 – BUILDING MY PEACEFUL PLACE

You now use guided imagery to build your own Peaceful Place, a place where relaxation is automatic and stress goes.

- 1. Allow yourself 20 minutes of uninterrupted time in a quiet place to complete the next stage.**
- 2. Get into a comfortable position.**
- 3. EITHER ...**

A) Play Track 1 of any of Sandy's meditation CDs, (the words are below)

OR ...

B) Play some baroque music and your friend can slowly read out the guided imagery words to you (the baroque music I have is at 56 to 64 beats per minute so that the heart beat gets, and stays, in time with this beat – then you're in the *Alpha* state – the relaxed state). A two-tape set called "Accelerated Learning Music Tapes" with baroque music from the Masters is available.

BUILDING MY PEACEFUL PLACE

First, get into a comfortable position – a good idea is to sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor – your hands resting on your thighs. Now ... take a deep breath And let it all out And take another deep breath in, feeling it going right down to your abdomen and ... this time ... let out any tensions and anxieties as you breathe out. Let them all go. And now, softly breathe in and gently ... close ... your ... eyes and as you listen to the sound of my voice, you follow along the guidance offered with the music in the background, knowing at all times that you and you alone are in control Now in your mind seek and find a relaxed place a relaxed place that you know that you've been to before ... and there you had such perfect relaxation now in your mind rebuild that scene using your five senses first of all bring in all the sights that are around you are you in the open is there green grass are there flowers is there a forest are you on a mountain top is there snow or are you inside a house ... or a special place see what's around you... and now recall and hear the sounds can you hear any wind or ocean ... or water is anybody saying anything to you and now you just get a sense of that place like touching and feeling ... and smelling ... all the things that are around and from your relaxed place you look around and you either get the sense of, or you see or you feel yourself being drawn to a magic pathway it's a pathway that's just opening up and leading off where is it leading to is it going up in the air is it going to mountain tops is it going across the sea is it going to another universe is it going through parks and gardens

or forests and as you feel yourself being drawn along this magic pathway you go ... because you know whatever is at the end of this pathway ... is just so real for you so wonderful ... so magical because it is your Peaceful Place you are the architect you are the builder .. and you are the owner of this Peaceful Place and every time you get to this Peaceful Place you are relaxed ... and stress goes you start building your Peaceful Place by deciding on the floor what is it made of is the floor in fact grass or is it timber ... or is it cloud is it air is it glass whatever it is you build it ... so do that now and now you build the walls ... in the same way you choose the material ... do you have any walls or is it out in the open whatever it is you choose the material and you build it and now you build the roof in the same way do you have a roof or are the stars your roof is a canopy of trees your roof ... or glass or tile or timber whatever it is you build it and now inside your Peaceful Place you look outside you may need to put in windows ... so you do that and as you look outside you put in all the scenery ... that you either see or you want to see... from your Peaceful Place ... so whatever it is, you do that, right around you and now, inside ... your Peaceful Place ... you put in all the things that you really want with you ... what are they? Do you have your favourite furniture, your favourite pictures? Do you bring in your favourite hobby? Whatever it is ... you bring in, and decorate your Peaceful Place. And now, in your Peaceful Place, you place a chair ... do you sit on a special chair ... something that's soft that you sink right into ... or do you sit on the ground, or the floor. This magical chair, it has so many wonderful powers for you. Every time you sit in it, you know that relaxation has begun, and that stress goes ... and you're able to do anything you want in this magical chair ... So now you stand up, and you walk through the entrance of your Peaceful Place ... You give yourself some sort of combination, or some sort of switch, some sort of sign perhaps, or some sort of word you use, to gain entry into your Peaceful Place. So as you exit, you look back, knowing exactly how you gain entry. Do you press a button? Or is it your body that just lets you through. And so now you move down the magical pathway, knowing that at any time you will be able to get back to your Peaceful Place, and that any time that you get back there, relaxation has begun, and stress goes. So as you move down your magical pathway, you move into the first place you started from, which was your relaxed place, so that once again you become familiar with it What is there around youwhat do you see and hear and feel? And now from your relaxed place you return to the present on the count of 5, you're going to open your eyes.

And when you do, you will be relaxed and alert and well, and invigorated, and ... you will know that you will be able to get back to your Peaceful Place at any time, and when you do, you have relaxation and stress goes. ... so on the count of ONE, you can feel the blood flowing to your fingers and your toes ... on the count of TWO, you move your fingers and toes a little bit, and THREE, you stretch your body a little bit ... and FOUR, you just move your head ... and FIVE, your eyes open, wide awake, alert, well, healthy and invigorated, knowing that you can get back to your Peaceful Place at any time.

STEP 2 – GETTING THERE IN 3 MINUTES

Step 1 took about 20 minutes to do. Now you are going to go back to your Peaceful Place again, this time in just a few minutes.

- 1. Allow yourself 5 minutes of uninterrupted time in a quiet place to complete the next stage.**
- 2. Get into a comfortable position.**
- 3. EITHER ...**
 - A) Play Track 2 of any of Sandy's meditation CDs, (the words are below)**
 - OR ...**
 - B) Play some baroque music and your friend can slowly read out the guided imagery words to you.**

MY PEACEFUL PLACE IN 3 MINUTES

Let's just take a deep breath ... now let it all out ... take another deep breath, and gently close your eyes ... And once again, in your mind, find that magical Peaceful Place ... that calming scene that you built yourself inside your mind. Find that quiet restfulness, that peacefulness, that oneness, and imagine so much calmness, as you now are totally relaxed. See or pretend to see hear or pretend to hear feel or pretend to feel your quiet Peaceful Place. Just pretend that you're really in your Peaceful Place. See the scenes that are around you, and hear the lovely restful sounds. Hear the calming music, it aids and comforts you. An abundance of warmth and flow of good feelings are in your Peaceful Place. And so easily you can return to your Peaceful Place where you're in the Alpha brain wave state..... You do it so easily – straight to your Peaceful Place Now, on the count of five you will once again open your eyes and you will be relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated. ONE, TWO, you just start moving your fingers, THREE you stretch a little bit, FOUR you move your head, and FIVE, eyes open, wide awake, relaxed, well, healthy and invigorated.

CHECKPOINTS

Here are a few hints about your Peaceful Place:

- Your Peaceful Place can be one of total imagination, total reality or a combination of both. Your 'Relaxed Place' and your Peaceful Place may also be one and the same. Whatever you choose is just fine.
- Now, what is really important is that you have only **one** Peaceful Place – not two or three. It can be changed and added to if you wish, but it is important to have only one. When you accidentally cut yourself and you want to relieve the hurt and stop the bleeding, you don't want to think "Hey, which Peaceful Place shall I go to?" You want to go straight there with no hesitation, so as to be able to start releasing the hurt and stop the bleeding immediately.
- Do you have people or pets in your Peaceful Place? That's OK, just as long as you are still in control – this means that they leave when you ask them to. You can invite them back in later if you want to. If they do not leave, then build yourself a new Peaceful Place.
- You can also invite people in to be your adviser for a short while. You can invite them in and say "I want some help and I've got some questions for you" – and it's amazing how many answers you get. You can do this all in your imagination. The key thing is that you control it. You are the boss.

INDUCTION

Basically this process is used to help you go from the Alpha state to the theta state, that is, to deeper relaxation. You know you are in the theta state when you can't feel your arms or legs. That's right when you're in deep relaxation you don't even know what position your arms or legs are in because you can't feel them – it's just great. I'll put the words of the Induction here and then when the words of a specific guided imagery are quoted in the rest of the book I just refer to the word "Induction" and you can follow that by the written words of the guided imagery. If you're playing the appropriate CD then the words of the induction will be in the CD. If you're having a friend read the guided imagery, or making your own tape, then just use these words:

Now the first step is to get into a comfortable position, choose a position whereby you know that you'll be comfortable for about 20 minutes or so without moving. What I suggest is that you sit in a chair, with your feet slightly apart and your hands on your knees. You may choose to lie down and if you do, there is a tendency that you may not stay awake and I want you to know that this meditation is an active meditation; you actually direct your subconscious mind with your conscious mind and in doing that you need to be awake.

So now take a deep breath and release it, letting go any cares and tensions of the day as you breathe out. Take another deep breath in, breathing in the loving and letting go any anxiousness remaining as you breathe out ... and now breathe in, down to your abdomen, gently, follow the air to your abdomen and as you breathe out just slowly close your eyes. You'll hear the sound of my voice and you'll hear the music in the background and you'll be drifting deeper and deeper into relaxation. You know at all times that you are in control and that at any time that you hear any sound, other than my voice or this music, use that to your advantage by telling yourself as you hear any extraneous sound that you go deeper and deeper into relaxation. Now seek and find your Peaceful Place ... that calm, serene, real tranquil scene that you perceive inside your mind and if you need to go through your relaxed place first and then on your pathway, then do so. And now, at your Peaceful Place, check it out through 360 degrees around you ... just recall it by seeing, or sensing, that you see all the things around you. Are there parks and gardens or forests, mountains or sea, beach, flowers, what other wonderful sights are there. And you can tell yourself that you're seeing all these wonderful sights, maybe you can hear some sounds or sense those sounds, listen for them? Do you hear the sound of water trickling along or perhaps the sound of the surf, or perhaps the wind whispering in the trees. And in your mind what can you touch around you. Is it soft or hard? Is it smooth or rough. Can you feel the warmth of the sun or can you feel the cooling wind. Now you move to inside your Peaceful Place, once again familiarising yourself, checking it out and then sit in your chair ... your special, magic chair. Just let your mind float and as it floats you notice with your inner eye a red cloud flying by, and as the red cloud comes floating by it touches you and you breathe in the colour red. You sense the vibrations in every cell of your body. You gently breathe it out and that cloud passes on by. Its place is taken by an orange cloud which moves in, touching you, enveloping you. Breathe in the colour orange – you can feel the vibration. And then breathe it out. You see or sense the cloud drifting on by. Now a beautiful yellow cloud comes drifting in. See or sense that you see that yellow colour, and then breathe it in, permeating right through you ... and breathe it out slowly ... it drifts on by once again. A green cloud comes in to view – a grassy green colour. You breathe in the colour and you breathe it out again, feeling it throughout your body. It drifts on by and then a light blue cloud comes floating by. It's the same colour as the sky. It touches you and you breathe it in ... hold it ... you then breathe that out too, and it drifts on past. A darker blue cloud comes in ... you're enveloped in it and you breathe that colour in sensing it throughout your body and you breathe it out. It is now replaced by a beautiful purple cloud drifting into you, and as you breathe it in you can feel it going to every cell in your body ... and you breathe it out ... it just drifts on past. And now you see or sense a beautiful colourless white light, like the dazzling sun, coming in and drifting in to you. It envelopes you, flowing through every cell – it nurtures you, it warms you and in fact it builds a wonderful shield of protective light around you. This beautiful colourless white light protects you for your highest good and the good of anyone else concerned. Always imagine this light staying with you, protecting you all the time.

You'll note that the words of the induction start by guiding you to use your Peaceful Place quickly. Therefore you go to alpha and then you go through the colours of the rainbow, starting from the outside – red and finishing on the inside – purple. By that time you will be close to theta. The colours will help you go deeper. The red colour has the biggest wave length and then the wave lengths decrease as the colours come from the outside to the inside of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, green, light blue, dark blue and purple.

Many participants in my CALM Life Skills seminars report that they feel the vibration of the colours change as they bring in each colour – it’s exciting, I feel them too but I still don’t ‘see’ them.

Another technique that meditators often use to go deeper – from alpha to theta – is to imagine that they are on the top of a flight of ten stairs; at each step downwards they say the number, starting at ten, going down to nine and so on, and imagine that they are going deeper and deeper into relaxation. At the number one, the last step, they are deeply relaxed and in the theta state. Make yourself a tape and see if you like this ‘induction’ better than using colours.

What do all the colours make? White? Not quite white, they make colourless light. So the tape asks you to picture and imagine colourless, bright light, like the sun – light filling and surrounding and protecting you for the **highest good of all concerned.**

Appendix 8 – Sandy’s Available Books, CDs, Videos And Seminars

Sandy’s Books, CDs and Videos

A leap of consciousness is the most significant evolution which mankind is currently undergoing and I offer this information as an instrument towards accessing the power within you.

BOOKS BY SANDY:

Piece Of Mind **\$22**

Sandy’s first book is about how to use the 88% power in your subconscious mind to relax and release stress, accelerate learning and to achieve goals faster.

Switch On to Your Inner Strength **\$22**

Not until we’re challenged by adversity do we experience our inner strength. This book is about how to use your inner strength, at any time, to enhance your peace and power.

No Need for Heroes **\$25**

A true story about the Engineer Troop commanded by Sandy in Vietnam 1965–66. These original “Tunnel Rats” give hair raising and hilarious accounts of their adventures.

Students Steps to Success **\$33**

Designed as a work book for students over 13 years or supportive parents, which imparts empowering life skills and accelerated academic learning techniques. This book has been acclaimed by professors, teachers and principals.

Creating Happiness Intentionally **\$27**

It’s about determining and working towards your Life’s Purpose. Often many of life’s challenges are in the way, and need to be resolved when working towards your Life’s Purpose. This book will show you how to do it.

PEACEFUL PLACE (PP) TAPES or CDs:

In all my meditative tapes and CDs I have used the wonderful inspirational music by **Ken Davis.**

PP No. 1: Instrumental **CD: \$25**

Relaxation, study and inner peace. The music *Infinite Joy* created by Ken Davis especially for Sandy MacGregor.

PP No. 2: Guided Imagery **CD: \$25**

Guided Imagery is used to create and reinforce your Peaceful Place and your Emotional Anchor. Porpoising and putting it all together to achieve your goals faster is included. Sandy does the guided imagery over *Infinite Joy*.

Any three from PP Numbers 3 to 15: Tapes: \$50 CDs: \$65

PP No. 3 – *Releasing Hurt* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Endless Emotion* from *Crystal Clear*. Pain is a signal for the body that there is something out of balance. It sometimes serves as a warning (for example the imminent birth of a baby) and what you can often do is to release the intensity of the hurt in the pain.

PP No. 4 – *Healing Yourself* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Our World* from *Pan Flutes with Nature*. Using guided imagery and your own visualisation you work towards attacking your illness by directing your mind and activating your own immune system. Remember this technique is to be used in combination with others including having faith in your doctor, your treatment, yourself and your spiritual faith, whatever is true for you.

PP No. 5 – *Meditation* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Celestial Journey*. The meditation helps to relax and release stress at deep levels by concentrating on breathing. If you prefer to use it for spiritual growth, you can actively, silently or aloud, chant names of God eg. “Hu”, “Ohm” or perhaps “Love” or “Peace”.

PP No. 6 – *Forgiveness* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Early Morning in the Rain Forest*. Forgiveness is such an important element of daily living. Coming to terms with yourself and others in areas such as judgements, anger, resentment, guilt or blame is a key to your own progress.

PP No 7 – *Tapping Your Creativity* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Soaring* from *Pan Flutes with Nature*. Your own creativity can be accessed as it resides in your subconscious mind. You can use it for solving problems (as did Einstein) or for inventions (as did Edison) or for writing, poetry, sculpture, art, painting, etc. (as did Salvador Dali). It's exciting!

PP No. 8 – *Weight Release* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Fly Like a Bird* from *Atmospheres*. What do you want to do when you lose something? That's right – find it again! Hence the term “weight release”. This tape works with your goal, changing habits, increasing your metabolic rate and a quick way to stop eating between meals – all without stress.

PP No. 9 – *Letting Go Anger* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Calling You* from *Crystal Clear*. Anger involves aspects relating to resentment, guilt, blame or judgements – of self, or others. Acceptance is a great way forward and your own self esteem just grows.

PP No. 10 – *Self Worth and Confidence* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *I'm in Heaven* from *Love*. It's great to know that you are a truly wonderful, special person; that you are worthy and that your confidence grows and grows. One of the biggest keys is unconditional love.

PP No. 11 – *Achieving in Exams & Effective Study* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Radiance* from *Atmospheres*. Wonderful, practical hints for achieving more, without stress, by using your subconscious mind. Gain clarity and focus both in exams and whilst studying.

PP No. 12 – *Making Sleep Easy & Useful* Tape \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Blissful Sleep*. You spend one third of your life sleeping (or trying to sleep). This tape shows you how to achieve an easy, restful sleep and to make it useful, by first clearing your mind of all the day's activities and then by using your subconscious mind to help you succeed in whatever is happening the following day.

PP No. 13 – *Inner Peace and Harmony* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Dreaming of Angels* from *Pan Flutes Over The Ocean*. My experience of inner peace was to work through, during meditation, acceptance and co-operation; secondly to have unconditional love of self and others and then to apply a process of forgiveness. All our journeys are different and I'm sure these techniques will assist.

PP No. 14 – *Improving Relationships* Tape: \$20 CD: \$25

This meditation is spoken over *Dreaming of Angels* from *Pan Flutes by the Ocean*. “To be the person that I would like to spend the rest of my life with” is where your relationship starts. This tape has a number of powerful exercises on it which guide you through knowing what you want, and then demonstrating that in your life. Why? Because what you give out, you get back.

good for meditation and releasing stress, accelerated learning techniques such as Lazanov's Passive Concert, and for guided imagery and creativity. Use it as background music for studying – from mathematics to languages, or at work. Relaxation increases productivity.

Video of Sandy's 3-Hr Seminar – live in Perth \$30

Ask for Further Information or look at the website to learn more about ...

* **How to LEARN FASTER Kit – 2 DVDs & 7 CDs + \$325**

* **The CALM Life Skills Seminar on 4 DVDs, 5 CDs & a Workbook \$345**
Used by people unable to attend the Seminar or for revision.

* **Students Success Seminar on 2 DVDs + \$135**

CD – THE GIFT OF RELAXATION \$27

With the guided imagery you build a Peaceful Place and then using the colours you go to a deeper meditation state; the CD finishes with thirty minutes of Infinite Joy. The CD can be used for relaxation, meditation, creativity, sleep, etc.

THE CALM Kit and Workbook: \$250

The Calm Kit is the CALM Life Skills Seminar – on video, audio and book. With the CALM KIT you will get powerful tools and techniques to use the power of the subconscious mind to relax in 30 seconds, reduce stress, improve memory, sleep deeper, release weight, stop smoking, improve confidence, pass exams, improve sports performance, and more ...

Contents of the Calm Kit: Videos (1 hour each)

Video No. 1 – How to Use the Power of Your Minds.

In the first half of this video Sandy describes his personal journey and experiences in becoming aware of how to use the power of the subconscious mind.

The second half provides an educational perspective into its use, including:

1. Practical demonstrations of using your subconscious power.
2. The science of the mind – Left/Right, Mind Charting, The RAS Filter, language of the subconscious mind and four different brain wave states.
3. Proof and demonstration of Alpha waves using technology – the IBVA and the Alpha trainer.
4. Testimonials.
5. An overview of seminars, books and tapes.

Video No. 2 – Highlights of the CALM Life Skills Seminar

Actual seminar highlights edited to show, teach and revise powerful mind techniques.

Audio Tapes

A PP No. 2 – Guided Imagery – Building Your Peaceful Place, Relaxing in 30 Seconds, Your Emotional Anchor and Goals.(CD Only)

Three Audio tapes you can use in your car for empowering techniques:

Tape A: Side 1 – The Science of the Mind

Side 2 – Introduction of CALM Concepts

Tape B: Side 1 – Discussing Alpha and Using Emotion

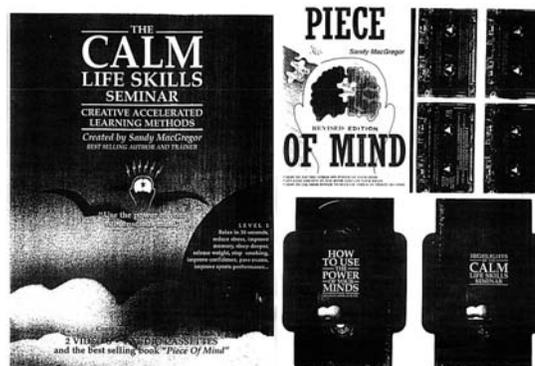
Side 2 – Goals, WIIFMs and Visualisation

Tape C: Side 1 – 8 Steps to Achieving Goals Faster

Side 2 – 7 Steps to Accelerate Your Learning

Book

The Australasian Best Seller *Piece of Mind* showing how to switch on to the 88% power in your subconscious mind, in 30 seconds, to relax and release stress, accelerate learning and to achieve goals faster.



DVD:

***Using The Subconscious Mind in Alpha – Seminar Highlights* \$44**

In this 65 minute DVD Sandy summarises ways in which Alpha State is used – good revision of Day 1 CALM Seminar

Sandy's CALM (Creative Accelerated Learning Methods) Seminars

We have a team of qualified facilitators throughout Australia who conduct the following seminars:

LIFE SKILLS (Two Days):

First Day:

- ❖ How to release stress and relax in a few seconds (for insomnia, anxiety, arguments)
- ❖ Accelerated learning (memory, recall, exams, concentration)
- ❖ Achieving goals faster (eg. releasing weight, sleeping easier, increasing confidence or sales, etc.)

Second Day: working with the mind at deeper levels to –

- ❖ Take control over your own body
- ❖ Relieve pain and take the first steps to healing yourself
- ❖ Obtain the deeper meditative state
- ❖ Tap your creativity

CHI – Creating Happiness Intentionally

This is a four day live-in seminar for which the pre-qualification is the two-day Life Skills Seminar. CHI is about getting on track with your life and using mind techniques to decide:

- ❖ What is your life's purpose now?
- ❖ What are goals to support your life's purpose?
- ❖ What are your values to support your goals?
- ❖ How do you change your values or goals to support your life's purpose?

TTT – Train the Trainer for CALM Seminars

This is a six-day live-in seminar for those who wish to teach the seminars. Pre-qualifications to attend TTT include CALM Life Skills Seminar, CHI Seminar, Enthusiasm, Interest and Selection. Prior to working as a qualified trainer there is a requirement to work with qualified trainers over 6 to 8 CALM Life Skills Seminars.

STUDENT SUCCESS – 14–18 years

The key outcomes include:

- ❖ Learn lifelong skills to increase confidence and self esteem.
- ❖ Learn methods to handle the challenge of change.
- ❖ Effectively deal with all study and exam stress.
- ❖ Learn efficient life skills goal setting techniques.

STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS

This seminar is similar to Student Success (above), however they can be tailored to suit individual school demands.

CORPORATE

In the main they are two-day seminars which can be done in four sessions of 3 hours, tailored to suit the client, with agreed outcomes.

The range includes:

- ❖ Achieving With Managing and Releasing Stress
- ❖ Strengthening Organisational Change
- ❖ Achieving Goals Faster
- ❖ First Steps to Enhancing Skills Development
- ❖ Foundations of Team Building
- ❖ The Precursor to Maximising Customer Service

SUPPORT MECHANISMS

We believe that it is important for a personal development company to be able to offer ongoing support to participants. We do this in various ways:–

- ❖ Telephone support
- ❖ Regular Follow-up evenings
- ❖ Repeat privileges for those who do the seminars

- ❖ Various Shorter Seminars which serve as an introduction for friends or for reinforcement for the Life Skill Seminar participants or for teaching relaxation in 30 seconds.
- ❖ **Free Web Site Newsletter** covering other peoples successes in various areas, practical hints, question and answers and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PRODUCTS OR SEMINARS

AUSTRALIA: **CALM CENTRE**
 PO Box 36
 Mt. Kuring-gai NSW 2080

Website **www.calm.com.au**

TELEPHONE: **1300 731 900** **International: 61-2-9457 7133**

FAX: **1300 731 901** **International: 61-2-9457 7122**

E MAIL **calm@calm.com.au**

WHAT MOVED ME TO DO THIS WORK

Here is my personal story. I share it with you because it demonstrates why I “walk my talk” using this technique. When you see how a “prove-it-to-me”, professional, military person such as myself witnessed so clearly the power of our minds ... you may be more able to see the power you have just waiting to be tapped ...

On 23rd January 1987 my life was a happy one. I was the father of six children, a retired Army Colonel decorated in the Vietnam War with a Military Cross for bravery in tunnel conflicts, and a Civil Engineer. I had a bright future.

And then tragedy struck in a seemingly senseless way. My three daughters were gunned down and killed in their Sydney home by an intruder. I went to the brink of mental devastation. I then found what human spirit is all about. This crisis made me a witness to the true power of our minds. By using a powerful mind technique, I saved my life from becoming one of hatred and self pity.

I was able to come to terms with the death of my three daughters and I found that when I was “stressed out”, I could literally release that stress in 30 seconds. Thankfully, I had developed this skill before the crisis.

I started investigating this technique in 1981 when my eldest son, Andrew, was using it to control his asthma attacks. The profound power of it was demonstrated when Andrew was in an accident. He used this technique to save his badly broken leg from amputation.

Using the same technique, I released 22 kilograms. I went on to find that I could triple my learning rate, take on new challenges without stress, and switch focus of my concentration in 30 seconds. I then taught my two younger children the techniques which they then used to read between 600 and 800 words a minute, touch type at 35 to 50 words per minute and to release hurt, gain confidence, and lots more.

This technique is powerful in both your personal and business life.

Over the years I've had so much experience with witnessing the proof and power of this technique, that I feel it's my **responsibility to teach how to develop this crucial life skill**. To this end, I have written four other books:

- *Piece Of Mind* – Showing you how to tap the other 88% Power of the Mind.
- *Switch On to Your Inner Strength* – We've all got it! It's about how to tap and use your Inner Strength.
- *No Need for Heroes* – Vietnam experiences with the Foreword by Lt General John Sanderson, Chief of the General Staff
- *Students Steps to Success* – Foreword by Associate Professor David Smith, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney.
- *Creating Happiness Intentionally* – will show you how to determine and work towards Life's Purpose. Endorsed by Ita Buttrose and Allan Pease.

I now run a company dedicated to assisting others to access the power within them. Together with my Trainers, we present to the Public, Educational and Corporate Sectors. My seminars, books, tapes and videos teach about the application of the power of the subconscious mind, using scientific facts (**replacing hype with proof**) in a very experiential way, showing *how* to harness the power of your mind, step by step so you'll have it “on tap” forever.