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you have to sit, for example, where is it easiest for your heart to beat? Some people slump and that's not easiest. Some people straighten up, and that's not easiest. Where is it easiest for you? Just you. This one person in the world which is you.

In the same way, you could be permissive to breathing. As I look out the window right now I can see a tiny breeze outside. Perhaps one or the other of you can see the fine way in which the breeze moves the curtain. The muscles inside are like that curtain, if you permit it. Like the curtain is moved by the wind, so we are moved inside by our breathing, without doing anything for it. If you gently give up doing it, you will experience that it comes all by itself. We should not be the educators of breathing. Breathing should teach us how it wants to be without our admonishing it.

There is this wonderful nervous system which we all have, from our foot soles up to the top of our head. Everywhere it feels. You can feel whether here or there your breathing is going on, without your doing. Or, as Elsa Gindler would say: "Don't hinder it." When you don't do it and don't hinder it you will feel what happens. Something is going on. From moment to moment, whether you are asleep or awake, there it is. So you don't have to worry about breathing. Who enjoys the idea? No worry! Breath and heartbeat: there they are, and you feel there is something happening-beating in me and living and doing something in me. And I don't do it.

I would suggest when you wake up in the morning that you don't jump out of bed right away. Lie therefore a little

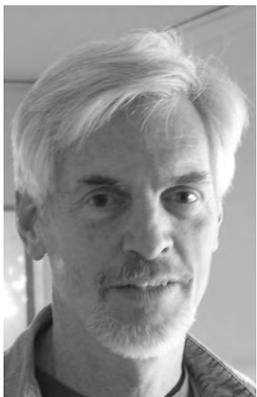
while as you move from sleeping to being awake and feel how breathing goes. You can learn a lot from it. And you can feel also when you are doing breathing. Many people have learned to do breathing. It's terrible. It's as though we spit creation in the face. Breathing goes all by itself, no matter what we are doing.

I remember one time in class with Elsa Gindler we worked very quietly, and I fell asleep. I woke up and I thought, "Oh, I fell asleep." And my next thought was, "Nobody could see it." I had my eyes closed. But when I opened my eyes there stood Elsa Gindler right next to me and she asked, "Was it good?" That was a great moment. I will never forget that.

Without us knowing, breathing goes on and on. Thank God! You can hinder, but you have to permit at least a little bit of it. When you do too much, you become unnatural; when you do too little, you become stingy. You can feel for yourself what you need, and just allow it. You trust your own feeling. You might feel that you have always denied breathing, that you have always hindered it. Many children, when they are afraid of their parents, don't dare to breathe, really. They don't know it, but they hinder breathing.

You can feel the slightest bit of unnaturalness when you do breathing, even just a tiny bit. I warn everybody who wants to work on breathing to give up these ideas of how breathing happens - just be very quiet and feel what happens by itself.

Letter from the SAF President



Dear friends,

In my first letter to you as SAF President I am pleased to report on many important developments which have positive implications for our future. Let's begin with the success of our recent conference at Mt. Madonna Center. In addition to making over \$5,000 our goals of attracting new students to Sensory Awareness (what we call "the work"), and of bringing together many of those who lead others in its study were both achieved.

Adding to the beautiful residential setting and frequently glorious weather was the growing openness and camaraderie among the participants, reminding me of what Charles Brooks once wrote: "In working together even for very short periods in Sensory Awareness, a group of people develop a sense of respect and affection for one another which is not often met with." Indeed the simple power of this work is quite remarkable.

The SAF has been sponsoring these conferences partly as a way to bring many approved teacher/leaders together for a few days. We feel it's important that there be ongoing opportunities for leaders to share their work and explore creative ways to help support the development of this valuable study in the world.

This year the leaders who attended the two day leaders' meetings held prior to the general conference worked diligently with a facilitator and the newly elected president of the Sensory Awareness Leaders Guild, Virginia Veach, to identify and then prioritize the most important issues they felt facing the Guild and the work. As a result there was much discussion about the Guild itself, its structure, purpose, by-laws and how its members could best improve communications between each other.

In addition, the group also approved the forming of a Guild advisory council to explore creating possible criteria for the approval of new leaders. Since Charlotte Selver's passing there has been no agreed upon way to approve new

leaders, and a growing number of Guild members believe that the time is now to tackle this delicate question. This advisory group will attempt to get feedback from the full Guild membership with the intent of eventually making a formal proposal for its members to vote on.

Recently the SAF Board has begun the very important process of strategic planning with the help of a facilitator. The intent being to help focus the Foundation's energies and resources on the most effective ways of ensuring a stronger future for Sensory

photo by: Peggy Crawford



Awareness and spreading its influence. Work on this should be completed in February and we will share the results with you in our next Newsletter.

As many of you may know, the SAF has recently sold Charlotte and Charles' summer home on Monhegan Island in Maine. This was a particularly difficult decision for the Board as this home holds many dear memories for those of us who have been fortunate to experience its charm. Happily the new owners are long time Sensory Awareness students and leaders Bob and Penny Smith, who, like the house, are something of island landmarks themselves. They have assured me that fellow students will be welcome to visit the house whenever they are on the island.

This decision was based on what the Board felt would be ultimately in the best interests of the work and the Foundation, particularly in light of a declining trend in donations and membership since Charlotte's death. The funds from this sale will greatly enhance the SAF's ability to help the work grow and develop, and will also enable us to explore more creative and effective ways of fund raising and increasing our membership.

And as for membership, as we near the end of the year it's important that you to please renew your membership dues and donate what you can so that together

we can, indeed, continue to build a stronger future for Sensory Awareness.

In closing I would like to give my appreciation to the many people who made our conference so special. Three stand out: Sara Gordon, Stefan Laeng-Gilliatt and Ruth Denison. For so many years Stefan and Sara have worked tirelessly and unselfishly to support the Foundation and the practice of Sensory Awareness. Where would we be without them? At the conference and during its planning stages they helped out in a multitude of ways and were a great support to me.



photo by Stefan Laeng-Gilliatt

One of the particular highlights of this year's conference was the lively participation and spirit of Ruth Denison, pictured above joyfully driving Terry Ray's scooter through the conference room at the end of our final session. As a well known and respected meditation and Sensory Awareness teacher in her own right Ruth came to the conference simply to experience the work as a student/participant. As such she exemplified what Sensory Awareness is all about. At age 85 her energy, enthusiasm and playfulness were wonderful to behold. Her passion for this work should be an inspiration for us all.

With warm wishes for the holidays and the new year,

Richard Lowe

SAF Newsletter

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