



SANE Newsletter

Newsletter of the Sensory Awareness Foundation

Fall 2007

In This Issue

Allowing the Breath <i>by Charlotte Selver</i>	1
The Value of Sensing <i>by Charles V.W. Brooks</i>	1
Letter from Richard Lowe, SAF President	2
Lying as an Activity <i>by Charles V.W. Brooks</i>	4
Personal Stories in Sensing . . .	4 & 7
Lenore Tawney	6
A Book about Charlotte Selver	7
SAF Publications	8



Two experimenters at our recent conference.

Note: All class photos in this issue are from the conference compliments of Lisa Goettel.

Breathing as Teacher

By Charlotte Selver

excerpt from Chapter 40, *Reclaiming Vitality and Presence*

Just as our heart beats, breathing can happen without effort, without being directed. The air exchange happens all by itself. When the exhalation wants to become deeper, let it become deeper. Don't direct it. Even the slightest attempt to breathe is unnecessary. It happens by itself.

Do you feel your heart beat right now? You may want to use one of your hands to feel it. You don't have to tell your heart, "beat." It beats by itself. Wonderful! My heart beats! Enjoy it! Here it is, a sign of life. You have no duty; it beats anyhow.

You can even feel how it's easiest for your heart to beat just by being peaceful, feeling the natural movements of your own heart which you don't create. How do

(Continued on page 2)

The Value of Sensing

By Charles Brooks

excerpt from chapter 4, *Reclaiming Vitality and Presence*

Attention to sensing quiets what is compulsive in our thought, so that the mind becomes free and available for its normal function of perception. When the radio in the mind is stilled, everything else can come to life. The camper's lantern is blown out, and the darkness fills with stars as the woods deepen and widen for him. The primitive world in which things appear and disappear, bloom and fade, eat and are eaten can be perceived surrounding us - and including us. I myself have feared this world, in which I have had little practice in living. I have spent much of my life in the half makebelieve world of words and know that, though it may often bore one,

(Continued on page 4)

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Please renew your SAF yearly membership now for 2008

... or become a new member. With your membership you ensure that the Sensory Awareness Foundation can continue with its work through publications, web site, conferences, sponsored workshops and more ...

Memberships are by calendar year. If you have not renewed your membership for 2008 please do so now. Thank you!

For more information and membership benefits see page 9 and 10 and the President's letter.

(Continuing from page 1)

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