

PRH Australia e-Newsletter

Issue seven, May 2014

What a great few months it has been for PRH in Australia.

Many people have been involved in a variety of workshops and one to one sessions which have inspired them to move forward in their lives with renewed determination.

I find this work so life-giving for me – seeing people grow fills me with wonder!

This edition is full of personal experiences of growing. You will read about a person’s break through after great difficulties; a new realisation that a father had about himself; new discoveries that came from an exploration of deep sensations; ways to stay inspired throughout the year; a person finding a PRH workshop surprising in the way it works.

There is also community news within Australia and overseas and what is happening with the motto competition.

Find out about the new PRH publications **“Standing Up ... the Art of Existing”**, a book on how to assert yourself using the PRH approach and two personal journals **“A Personal Growth Workbook”** for beginners in writing a journal and **“A Journal for Personal Growth”** for those who have used journaling for a while.

And of course there are the workshops: **“Growing in Personal Solidity”**, **“Clarifying My relationships”** and more can be found on our website: www.prhaustralia.com.

I hope you will find this edition of the PRH newsletter uplifting and inspiring.

Zofia Di Stefano
for the E newsletter Team: Maud, Debbie and Kathie.

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PRH Australia

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Getting Inspired by Andre's words

by Maud Briscoe-Renaud

"It is of utmost importance not to make a mistake when it comes to our identity. Until we find it, we float from one sense of self to another and we sometimes act in line with our self-image, or according to an ideal or to others' expectations, sometimes in a purely instinctive way, and only sometimes in faithfulness to our best self. And this leads to chaotic and disharmonious behaviour. It is at the deep level that we can discover our true identity."



André Rochais Founder of PRH

As André says, it is so important to discover ourselves and to have an authentic and truthful relationship with ourselves.

Connecting to our being is connecting to our identity, who we really are. By discovering our being, the core of ourselves, then we can lead a truly free life.

Questions for Reflection:

- Are there areas of my life where I am lead by my self-image, by some unrealistic ideal or by what I believe others think or expect of me?
- In which area am I motivated to connect to my being and act from my deeper positive self?

The workshop "Discovering the Core of My Identity" explores a way to discover your being. It is offered several times over the year.

Look up the website to get the upcoming dates:

<http://www.prhaustralia.com/#!self-knowledge-and-growth/c201q>

Theme: “My Relationship with Myself, My Relationship with Others”

My Experience of Discovering My Being



This is written by a person who had just completed a PRH workshop aimed at exploring the being. Here is her experience.....

I feel incredibly excited to have become conscious of the existence of my being and to have a framework for understanding how I operate internally. Almost everything else that I have looked at in search for understanding and integration has made me feeling pathologised or weird or somehow deficient, whereas I have found this process one which is incredibly accepting, optimistic and empowering. It also makes enormous common sense – like it feels intuitively right. Instead of seeing my childhood as indelible marks on my soul, I can see them as constraints that can now be released – it makes me feel incredibly hopeful and delighted.

I actually feel like all these light globes that have been flickering at the edge of my consciousness have become clear and steady, and the work of the workshop has helped me make sense of my journey of the last decade. I realise that my beginning was actually a long time ago, and that already, by somewhat convoluted and accidental path, I have started on the growth journey and that my being has begun to guide me, sometimes with the protestations of my “I”. However, I can also look really positively at my “I” and see its strengths and why and how it has guided me as it has. In many ways, this all feels like an enormous relief – and best of all, I now feel like I have a structure and tools to accelerate my progress of healing and growth.

I can see so many ways of using the GPA process (questions that guide participants in their exploration) not just in my personal life, but in policy making, reflective learning and so on. However, before I go outside again, I am keen to consolidate my own understanding and practice. I really want to work with my husband and family on some of the things to enrich our relationships and life together.

An Analysis of My Relationship with Myself

by Dorothy Douglas

Hello, I am Dorothy. I live in Melbourne with my husband and two sons, and work as a Shiatsu practitioner and trainer. I was drawn to PRH because I sensed that through it I might be able to know and accept myself in deeper ways. I have been learning and practising PRH analysis for six years. Every workshop and accompaniment session I attend helps me to build my sense of myself, and the cumulative work has strengthened me to travel further within than I had previously thought possible. The analysis I share here with you feels like a departure for me. It has a feeling quality in it that I have not expressed before.

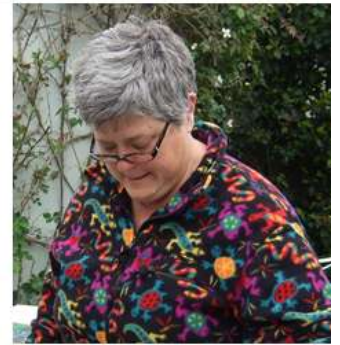
I sense a calling reaching in towards my centre. I sense its firmness and persistence. I sense a stirring within me. It has mass and density. It is unformed; there is a sense of it being bound. In its movement it expands, and unfurls; it becomes, to occupy more space, and spread. It opens to become visible, its interior revealed. Its substance is spread before me. It is like silk - its colours catching light and reflecting shadow – light yet strong. The breath flows through me. My desire rises up, seeking to meet this invitation. I have warmth and water in my eyes.



Dorothy has a love of life.

The Awakening

Fiona lives with her family in Canberra. She is writing her PhD at the moment. Fiona's poem is full of hope because it shows how a person can grow out of great pain.



I have lived afraid in the dark places of my soul
For many years - scabbling around for
Scraps of love to feed myself, like a
Cave-living carrion eater. I have known
Hunger as deep as my passion - gnawing,
Bone-splitting, soul searing emptiness
Across two marriage beds. I have been
Afraid I would vanish without the reflected glow
Of love from another to give me substance.

In this darkness, lust served as intimacy -
The warmth of another carrion-eater a comfort.
Perhaps he would bring food for my soul.
Perhaps in sex, he would touch me and
Fill the void - I would become whole.
I would toss day and night once laid
With the torment of emptiness still unmet -
Yet too afraid to look into the darkness
Of my soul to find the answers.

Two marriages dead, nearly forty years a cave-dweller
And I am only now standing up to find the roof.
This place I am is no small crevice for scuttling in -
It is spacious, high-domed - a natural cathedral for my soul.
I take candles into the dark places to touch and see
The fearful creatures hidden in my soul corners
The dream monsters of my childhood darkness
I discover instead the inside walls of myself - textured
With dark and light, rich, moist and moss-laden.

This journey into my own light and wholeness,
Into grace and wisdom is one I must do alone -
It is the growing up, the growing into myself -
No longer seeking to fill the hunger from outside,
To find another half. I know at my core
That the oneness is within me - wet and new
Like the wings of a chrysalis as it emerges
To butterfly beauty. Body, soul, mind -
As one at last - unfold wings ready to soar

My “Be”ing Ritual

by Debbie Bishop

For a few years now I have chosen a “Word of the Year” or “One Little Word” with limited success: by success I mean I haven’t really seen any lasting change from having chosen a word and concentrating on it for a year. But last year was different. I chose the word “Be” and anticipated focussing on it in different ways...



- ❖ *be mindful – meditation and times for being*
- ❖ *be compassionate – to myself and others*
- ❖ *be delighted > connect to my inner child*
- ❖ *be strong – through inner solidity and strength*
- ❖ *be self-assured – have faith and trust in myself*
- ❖ *be creative*
- ❖ *be positive > stop expecting the worst*
- ❖ *be authentic – be me, be true, don’t worry what others think*
- ❖ *be in the moment: release and let go*
- ❖ *be: just breathe*
- ❖ *be open-minded – be open to new ideas, perspectives and experiences.*

Yep, you can probably see it better than I did at the time, my “I” was over-reaching, expecting too much; aiming at impossibilities.

Fortunately my Being knew better and my “be” journey became much simpler.... during the year I did a course where the facilitator encouraged us to make to-do lists. I am not a fan of to-do lists as I feel discouraged when I haven’t crossed enough off the list by the end of the day, but I dutifully got in and made my lists during the course.

After the course ended I found there were two things I wanted to continue from the to-do list activity so I found a “To-do list” app for my phone and I put in two reminders, one for OGT (one good thing) as a practice of gratitude, and the other I simply called “be”. For the “be” task I think about my day and think of a time I was authentic, or if I showed myself some compassion or took a little risk to show myself. This has become a pleasant evening ritual for me: both a celebration and an encouragement to be authentic. It also helps me pause at different moments through the day and say “Yes” to opportunities to truly be myself particularly in the face of possible ridicule or misunderstanding from others.

Even though the year has ended and I now have a new word of the year (Release) I have kept up this “be”ing ritual so now I have months and months worth of little comments in my phone that celebrate my authenticity and care for myself: * art journaling while listening to Lior; * quiet lazy day creating, playing and some chores; * accompaniment session with Zofia; * scrapbooking; * stuck to my guns with so-&-so; * went to the art gallery; * let myself cry at work even though I didn’t understand why (at that time); * had a nap instead of a drive; * washed my bed linen (don’t you love that clean linen feel and smell!); * looked after myself through stress with music; * emailed silliness to so-&-so; * went for a walk on the beach etc . I can look through this list and acknowledge my strength, my compassion, my courage each day, and that gives me further motivation to do it all again the next day and the day after that.

It is such a tiny simple ritual and yet I find it incredibly powerful in my quest to be authentic and honest.

New Publications arriving in June!

We are excited to announce that three new publications have just been released by PRH International!

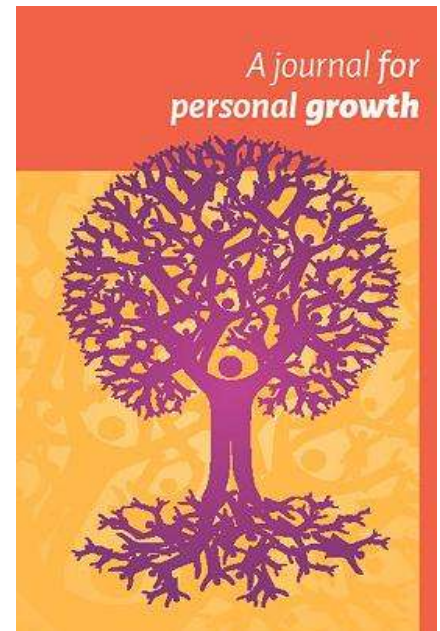
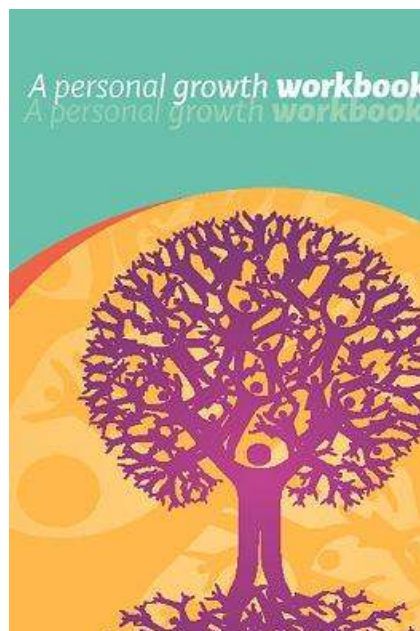
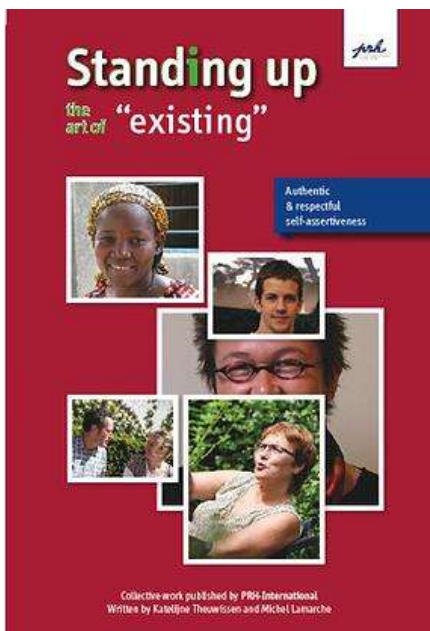
"Standing Up: The Art of Existing" explores our personal assertiveness and how we can stand up in who we are, especially in our relationships.

The PRH "Personal Growth Workbook" and its companion "Journal for Personal Growth" offer guidelines, examples and exercises for delving into our inner world and exploring the energising and life-giving properties of our being. These guidebooks support us as we explore and document our personal growth at our own pace.

These titles will be available in June but may be pre-ordered through our website.

Please go to our publications page to read more:

<http://www.prhaustralia.com/#!/publications/c1zmy>



Life Giving relationships

Meeting Myself

by Lee Affleck

Lee lives with his family in Canada. He wrote this article just after he attended a PRH workshop.

I feel different this morning. I feel very grounded in myself and I feel a sense of peace that perhaps stems from a measure of self-discovery. I know that I am a gentle person and knowing that makes me feel grounded this morning.

I would not feel this way if I had not gone to the workshop last night. I am enjoying feeling this way.

I want to know more about myself. I think there is something there that will give me strength and stability, if I can only discover what it is.

I am a kind and gentle person. This is something that I can rely on. I see it when I interact with my children. They are innocent, kind and give love freely. I feel at my best when I am around them, because I don't have to hide who I am. I can laugh, sing, play, dance, cry and be at peace in front of them because they don't know what "should" be and they don't care what I am. I can't do this with adults in my life: not all of them anyway.

I am confident of my kindness and gentleness. But when I am troubled, my actions, my thoughts and my feelings do not bear this out. When I am with those who unconditionally love me, accept me for who I am and are willing to allow me to be, I can feel that this is who I am.

I am reluctant to be kind and gentle with myself. Most times I forbid it. When I am kind and gentle with myself, hope springs up like it does at no other time. Judgment, especially self-judgment falls away and allows me to see who I am without feeling ashamed, fearful or resentful of what I see.

A great mystery for me is that I know that being kind and gentle with myself feels right, yet very often, I refuse this for myself. I can be kind to others because they need it and they deserve it. Perhaps I need it and deserve it more than anyone, but some unresolved belief in me says that I do not. It is a belief that I have accepted and refused to let go. Perhaps I was not aware that I even had that option.

I think I know now that I do. Being kind and gentle gives me a sense of security of knowing part of who I am, but it also brings happiness to know that I can turn that part of me inwards and apply it to myself.

*When I am kind and gentle with myself,
Hope springs up like it does at no other time.*



My experience of a “life-giving relationship”

by Maud Briscoe-Renaud

I have recently been practicing more Times for Being and I find this tool so life-giving!

Yet, I had always struggled to take time for Times for Being... Something happened recently though, while I was doing a GPA (Guidelines for Personal Awareness) on “actively using my being for my growth” that shifted my perception of Times for Being.

Here is what I wrote:

“I feel drawn to become more familiar with my being and to do so to spend more time with it.

I realise my “I” limits its perception of my being to a closed area, like a geographically defined area, where I feel called instead to recognise its boundless reality.

I am my being, it is not just a part of me, it is my identity. I feel called to spend time with myself, to imbue myself in it.

This sheds a new light on times for being for me. My motivation to have times for being suddenly takes a completely new volume and meaning in me. To take time with myself, so as to know myself better and become accustomed to my inner truth more so as to be closer to it and be able to draw from it with more ease.

What a revelation!”



“Times for Being” are offered each month through the year.

These times are an opportunity to step away from your everyday life and connect with this vital part of yourself so as to return to your normal routine energised and refreshed.

Click on the link for more information: <http://www.prhaustralia.com/#!meditation/c21ap>

Recent Workshop

Mary in Brunei



Mary travelled from Kuala Lumpur to Brunei recently to run a two day workshop “Where am I? Where am I going?” for the parishioners in Father Paul’s parish. The participants gained a lot from the work.

Here is what Mary had to say about the experience:

“...they were delighted to have had the opportunity to be in touch with the depths of their inner world.”

“...they were enriched by their discovery and their learning of the Diagram of the Person.”

“... there was an openness and acceptance of the participants with their unique needs, and strengths.”

Well done Mary and thank you to Father Paul for inviting her.

Mary Chuah is a PRH Associate who is training to become an accredited PRH Educator. She is being mentored by Zofia Di Stefano, the co-ordinator of PRH Australia. Mary travels to Australia regularly for her training.

She is currently a counsellor in Kuala Lumpur working with refugees that come into Malaysia.

PRH AUSTRALIA MOTTO COMPETITION

Thank you for all your wonderful contributions.

The PRH Associates have been stewing over the many entries for the PRH Motto Competition but we still have not come to an outright winner.

So we have shortlisted the entries to 12 and we are asking you, the readers, to choose your favourite.

Just email: zofia@prhaustralia.com with your preference.

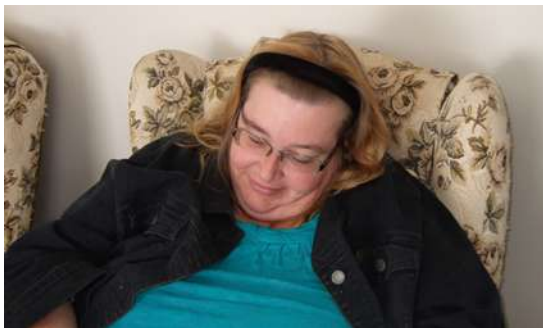
Here they are

SUGGESTED MOTTOS
1. Know yourself: grow yourself.
2. PRH: the gentle path to inner peace
3. Your soul's oasis
4. A journey of love, a journey of growth
5. Transformation starts within
6. Live a richer, freer more fulfilling life - inquire about PRH today.
7. For your harmony and happiness: PRH education
8. Maximise your potential (with PRH)
9. Live the life you're born to (live)
10. Let your light shine
11. A journey into yourself
12. Unfolding who you truly are

More Community News



Zofia turned 65 on April 14 during the workshop “What is the Meaning of My Life?” So Vittoria, Maud, Annemaree, Debbie, Ann, and Dorothy made it an occasion. There were 3 birthday cakes and lunch at a local cafe! Zofia is also celebrating being a PRH Educator for 16 years this year.



Participants at the workshop
“Growing in Personal Solidity”
exploring the wonders of their
interior universe!



Upcoming workshops

Growing In Personal Solidity



This workshop introduces us to the important pivotal centres of the human person: our "I" (our personality), our sensibility (our feelings), our Being (the core of ourselves), our body (our physical reality) and our deep conscience (the place where we make our decisions). We discuss the roles of these areas and the way they work together.

We also look at our material and human environments and ask: how do our current circumstances and our relationships help or hinder us in knowing ourselves and living the life we truly desire?

We then consider ways in which to progress and ask: what is important to me and my growth? What feels right for me? How can I best progress at this time? Over this weekend workshop we delve into each of these areas in depth through writing and discussion.

Each person is encouraged to go at their own pace and experience their own unique insights in this gentle and nurturing environment.

This is a fantastic workshop for anyone who is interested in knowing themselves better and learning how to love the life they truly desire.

Dates: Weekend September 20 & 21, 2014

Time: 9am - 5pm

Cost: \$255/\$200 conc.

Venue: Mt Waverley, VIC

Register by: Friday September 12, 2014

Karen Wright writes about her first experience of doing a PRH workshop.....



I was asked for a new person's response to PRH. I just attended the Growing in Personal Solidity workshop. I must say that when I was invited to attend, I was a bit worried that it would be all mumbo jumbo because I was really struggling with what Personal Solidity might turn out to be. Imagination is a wonderful thing. I was very pleased to discover that I understood the concepts as Zofia unpacked them for us. It was encouraging to resonate with the model described. It helped me to develop a trellis for the flora of self understanding to grow on.

I really enjoyed the chance to spend some time on myself which was quality time in a peaceful setting and to learn something of ongoing benefit to myself. I found the other group members supportive and I found that Zofia was particularly affirming and attentive to our little gifts of self disclosure which we shared. I have bought the journaling book so that I can continue to do some exercises and I'm meeting with a friend who was also on the course to share this process with her.

I believe that I will attend another workshop later in the year and I'm considering the meditation days also. I have spoken with some other friends about PRH who are also interested in the concepts, so it seems to have broad appeal.

Above all, it has given me some hope that I will grow towards autonomy.

What is a FRIENDSHIP?

We easily refer to someone as "a friend". But we seldom say of a relationship: "This is a friendship". What, then, is a friendship?

Friendship requires deep sharing

If we only talk about superficial things, even quite freely, it would be better to refer to it as a companionship or a friendly relationship.

We can only call it a friendship if there is a sharing of inner life and exchanges about life's deep values.

There is friendship only if it is mutual

Deep sharing must be mutual. However, when we share much of ourselves with the other we tend to speak of friendship. Yet, when analysing what is experienced in some relationships where we share intimately, we become aware that the other person does not share much of themselves. The other listens, accepts and loves but does not share what they are living. It is therefore not a friendship since there is no mutual exchange. This can nevertheless be a most life-giving relationship if we feel loved, accepted, recognized and encouraged to "exist" fully.

Or this can happen the other way around where I am the listener, the helper and where I don't get the opportunity to share myself deeply. This is not a friendship. It is a helping relationship.

A friendship requires connection and harmony

There must be connection and harmony at all three levels: being, sensibility and "I".

- Connection at the being level, that is, sharing the same deep values.
- Connection at the sensitive level, and even at the physical level of the body. Different tastes at the sensitive level, however, are not an obstacle to friendship.
- Connection at the level of the "I". That is, sharing of ideas, at least in essential matters. The harmony we are referring to here is like a "harmony" of personalities, in the musical sense of the word. We have to admit that such a relationship is precious and rare.

A friendship is tested by life, and in time

We know from experience that some relationships, which we once called friendships, no longer exist. How do we account for this?

- The term friendship may have been applied to superficial relationships based on connections at the sensitive level, on ideas, or involvement in the same activity.
- The term friendship may have been applied to a growth relationship. Once the need that had bonded us to the other had disappeared or was satisfied elsewhere, the relationship ended.
- At the time there may have been a certain harmony between us. Then I grew, my interests changed, our activities took on different orientations. In short, I journeyed a lot while the other stagnated or progressed at a slower pace or in another direction. We are no longer at the same level. Or it may be it is the other who is growing away from me while I stagnate or evolve more slowly.
- A friendship can neither be sought nor willed. It is received and welcomed as something spontaneously given, a gift from life.

(adapted from the PRH Observation Note 37 "My Affective Relationships")



Clarifying My Relationships

*Do you want to understand your relationships better?
Would you like to live your relationships with harmony?*

In this workshop we observe and analyse the different types of relationships in our lives to understand how they function and how we can live them more authentically.

This workshop will help you:

- improve your present relationships.
- clarify what you are experiencing in each relationship.
- shed light on difficulties in communication and dissatisfactions that you may be experiencing.
- gain a realistic perception on the various types of relationships and how you can live each one well.

The workshop is run over five consecutive days. Participants look at their own unique relationships, exploring them in writing and through sharing. Each person is encouraged to go at their own pace and experience their own unique insights in this gentle and nurturing environment.

Dates: Sunday June 29 - Thursday July 3, 2014

Time: 9am - 5pm

Venue: Mt Waverley, VIC

Cost: \$520-\$320 (sliding scale according to income)

Register by: Friday June 20, 2014



Finding My Place in Groups

My family group, my friendship group, my work group, my community group etc....

- Clarify your experience in the groups to which you belong.
- Become aware of group phenomena and acquire keys for understanding.
- Shed light on some factors related to efficiency and harmony in relationships.
- Progress in the way of being a member of a group and taking your place.

Areas covered include: Understanding group phenomena, tensions and conflict, sense of belonging, existing and finding one's place in groups, committing and adapting to groups...and more.

The workshop is run over five days (one weekend and then three consecutive days). Participants look at their own experiences of groups, be they family, workplace related, recreational, political etc., exploring them in writing and through sharing. Each person is encouraged to go at their own pace and experience their own unique insights in this gentle and nurturing environment.

Dates: August 16, 17, 29, 30 & 31, 2014

Time: 9am - 5pm

Venue: Mt Waverley, VIC

Cost: \$520-\$320 (sliding scale according to income)

Register by: August 8, 2014