

FEB '07

SAFE HAVEN

RENEW
WITH
Dr. Stew
and
Hillary

PERSONAL
GROWTH TOPICS
Insight
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Teachings
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A Biography

An internationally acclaimed speaker and teacher, Dr. Stew Bittman has lived in Lake Tahoe for over 25 years. It is there that he has slowly recovered from his over-educated, uneventful mid-baby boom New York City upbringing. His life is rapidly catching up to his dreams. He has a deep love for the land, discovering God in the many flowering meadows and sun-kissed mountain lakes.

His reverence for life extends to everyone, from the young to the young at heart. It is his mission to empower people with the possibilities of heaven on earth; to offer a glimpse of a truth that, once realized, can become the guiding light behind all our choices, all our moments, all our actions, all our thoughts, words and feelings. Dr. Stew has left no stone unturned on his own journey in order to facilitate each person's healing of themselves thru rediscovering their own true nature and the healer within.

Safe Haven Chiropractic is a healing center based on a donation-only system allowing all to achieve wellness. Dr. Stew has helped thousands of individuals and families to embrace their gifts, pursue their dreams and find the peace and wholeness (health) that already reside within.

He has traveled the world teaching the principles of chiropractic and life and has participated in six chiropractic missions to Central America, bringing those principles to life for thousands of people. He shares these experiences and encourages these principles as a way to a healthier life on all levels.

Dr. Stew's current mission is to encourage our children about the good choices they can make every day to not only "grow big and strong" but also to feel good about themselves and know how special they are. His topics include healthy foods, how to express our emotions and how our thoughts affect our health, as well as how important the earth is to our future and how important our choices are for the earth. As with all his topics, Dr. Stew imparts his message with warm and personal wit and inspiration.

Stew's wife, Hillary, would like to add, "I think Stew would say that he is proud of what he's accomplished: a chiropractic practice that has literally changed the lives of thousands; a family that is very close and loving and that enjoys doing everything together; a balanced life which allows him to serve, to share his gifts and to live his dream. His mother-in-law thinks he is an angel. And, lest you think he sounds like a saint, I assure you that he is at least as full of schmootz as anybody else".

Dr. Stew is available for speaking engagements, seminars and workshops for kids of all ages (3-103...). Topics range from personal growth and transformation to coping with everything from day to day stress to terminal illness. Workshops include couples retreats, prosperity living, forgiveness and self-discovery/holotropic breathworkshops.



Dr. Stew Bittman and
Hillary Bittman

Directors of SafeHaven
Chiropractic, a donation
based community health
and wellness center,
South Lake Tahoe, CA.

[more info online at www.drtahoe.com](http://www.drtahoe.com)

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Published Author of
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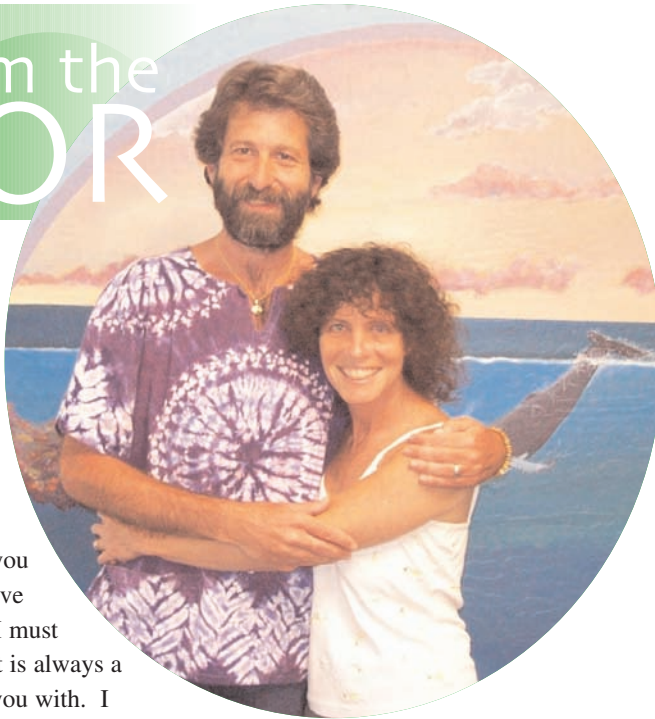
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A letter from the EDITOR

By Hillary Bittman

I have been the editor of this Safe Haven newsletter for over 10 years. Mostly, we have shared it with the hundreds of folks who have graced our chiropractic office, and at a few other places in our South Lake Tahoe community. So, for those of you coming to these pages for the first time, I welcome you with all my heart. In my piece, I have been told that I ramble quite a bit. I must confess to the truth of that and yet it is always a piece of my heart that I am gifting you with. I am proud to say that, in these pages, I have shared myself and my spiritual journey in a very open, vulnerable and real way. I have found that when I reveal myself, I take away my imagined place of safety where I can hide and actually free myself to be more of who I am. Indeed, there is no place for any of us to hide anymore, it is too late for that and the world has gotten too small. So, in sharing my own process to healing, sometimes not very pretty and other times quite elating, my hope has been to inspire others to look within and find the courage for their own exploration to wholeness.

For, you see, we are not what we think we are. The world will tell you this is a hard place to live, full of gloom and doom; and that you are here to live a sad life filled with countless fears and struggles to survive. Your neighbor will say there is not enuf to go around, not enuf food, not enuf shelter, not enuf jobs and certainly not enuf love. Our bodies tell us there is physical pain and suffering and only death awaits. That would be very disheartening if it was our only truth. But, in reality, we are not our bodies, we are not even our thots, we are spiritual beings. Deep within each of us is a sacred and vast well that holds our divinity. At our very core there lies only beauty, peace, strength, wisdom. This is the truth of us. The list of adjectives is endless...all those priceless gems we have been looking for everywhere, except where they truly lie. The good news is that wellspring is available to us at all times, even when we are most thirsty and believe the lies of what the world will say about us.



There have been so many times I have been locked in a prison of my own making with my pain. I have felt so alone with that pain. And that pain broke my heart. And in that breaking I discovered a pearl of great price; I learned that I was not alone, indeed, I know now that I am never alone. With me, and within me, there is always a power, an intelligence, a presence; I call It Source, Beloved, Creator, and God. There are many names for this gift, I beg you to not let the naming scare you away. You can also call it Love or Peace (I do) or simply Life. For you cannot deny, if you are reading this, that you are in a body and there is precious life animating it. This life has wisdom and an intelligence of its own and it is the Spirit of you, the real truth and beauty of you. Many religions name this Source outside of ourselves. And it is, in that it is everywhere present. Yet, if it is everywhere present it is within us as well as all around us. Indeed, it IS us. Every cell of our body is divine material, every thot in our head is of One Mind and every single thot affects that One Mind and the collective consciousness. Regardless of how we have grown up, our 'disadvantages' and who has told us what, even with all the mistakes we've made and no matter what our life looks like now, the thots we hold true for ourselves right now can and will create a different world for us. Our mind can create from love as easily as it can create from fear. It is time for us all to choose love.

Come join with us on this wonder-filled journey to true Self. Be with yourself as your own sacred witness and learn to separate from your thots, recognizing when you are perhaps not acting in your highest and best interests. Come celebrate the Self that says yes to its magnificence and all its divine birthright.

NOTHING is as bad as WE THINK

With the exception of the minor glitch of 10 inches of snow in my driveway on October 10th, this has been an insanely long and gorgeous autumn in Lake Tahoe. Even after a few rainy and windy days of late, there are still some golden aspens here and there, which is highly unusual for November 8th in these parts. Yesterday we even saw an aster still in bloom, actually looking pretty robust. That's incredible. This fall fell on the heels of an equally and unusually long and gorgeous summer, and the aster brot back memories of the breathtaking fields of wildflowers we hiked thru well into September. All these beautiful gifts were at least partially attributable to the monstrously wet winter we had, which at one point manifested in 4 inches of water flowing down my driveway in a raging cascade toward my garage. This is yet another example of the universal truth that goes something like: "Nothing is all bad" Tho I must admit that wildflowers and aspens were not on my mind as I was wading thru the bone-chilling torrent that day attempting flood control. And it probably wouldn't have helped if you'd been there whistling refrains of "April Showers Bring May Flowers". Anyway, and alas, the weatherman states with his usual unjustified confidence that winter is looming large, and whether or not I choose to buy into it, undoubtedly it won't be too long before the snow blower once again earns its keep and just-

fies its rather humungous presence in my garage. Winter—I love it while it's happening and yet there's always a sense of dread upon thinking about its arrival. Interesting. There's something about its severity, its length, its power, its ability to force one into inactivity and reflection that threaten my illusion of control, maybe. Or maybe this simply points to another universal truth: "Nothing is ever as bad as the way I think about it".

As I think about it, my life continues to hold my interest, to say the least, ebbing and flowing in a swirl of surprise, mystery, manifestation, magic, challenge, frustration, fulfillment, near-fulfillment, bliss, sadness and delight. Sound familiar? And lately the whole process seems greatly accelerated, as dreams appear to be realized, then crushed, then resurrected with even greater promise almost overnight. Thru it all I feel firmly anchored to the Truth, and that helps me makes sense of all the apparent paradoxes. As chaos appears to increase around me, my faith continues to grow. While doubts and frustrations try to nibble at the corners of my vision, that vision continues to grow and glow in clarity and power. In the face of some of the greatest challenges to ever "come my way", my excitement for life and my feeling of OK-ness with every moment of it continue to blossom. Despite the fact I've opened to net-



Make snow angels this winter.

working and community like never before, I continue to work most earnestly on myself. Confronted with daily news lending evidence to the perception that chiropractic is rushing down the toilet, I am more than ever certain of its principle within my own heart. Nothing is ever as bad as the way I think about it, and the good news is I'm thinking about it less and less.

Nostalgia

My life has been overflowing with nostalgia lately. I guess it all started in March; right around the time Hillary tried out and made it into the cast of a local production of "Hair". By the time the show actually went into performances, I could've understudied any role in it, and the songs brot me directly back to that wild and crazy time of so much hope and freedom and war and frustration. Those songs are finally beginning to leave my head, where they've been floating around constantly for 5 months. Then came Hillary's 50th birthday (I still have a few months to go), followed immediately by Ari's 18th birthday (ouch!), and, 2 days later, Father's Day, the 1st without my dad's presence on this earth plane. Within a week, I heard from 2 friends that I hadn't connected with since chiropractic school. Apparently this nostalgia energy is not isolated to me. Maybe there's a collective mid-life crisis going on or something. Anyway, this month also marked the 20th anniversary of my licensure as a chiropractor and, more significantly, the 15th anniversary of the moment when chiropractic principle became the beacon for my life's purpose and direction.

In all this traipsing I've been doing down memory lane I've noticed with some sadness that a lot of things don't seem to have changed at all. You could change a handful of names and words here and there in "Hair", for instance, and it would all still apply. The situation in chiropractic remains hairy as well. But in looking back I've also noticed great changes, both personally and professionally. (For one thing, I've gotten way less "professional"!)

I've also noticed that a big part of me keeps working to pull me back to the present moment. And I've had help. This spring and summer, while on our frequent hikes, I've



been literally surrounded by butterflies, sometimes dozens at a time. They've landed on me, danced around me; one even kissed me on the lips. And it seems like every time my mind enters nostalgia mode, a butterfly flies right at my face. Butterflies bring the message of transformation, I've heard, and they seem to be telling me that my own ongoing transformation depends on me being present, right here and right now. Indeed, it feels as if I'm currently going thru some of the biggest changes of my life (and again, it seems I am not alone here), and I need to stay awake. Nostalgia is fun, and may help sell a lot of compilation CDs, but this present moment contains both the seed and the fertile ground for transformation and growth.

This is all rather ironic since for the 1st time in my life, about 16 months ago, I would have told you that I was pretty satisfied with who I was. That I wasn't looking for much in the way of transformation. Well, my heart and soul and Innate apparently disagreed, and I've been

challenged, tested and worked. As I look back, tho, I can see that it has all been perfect, that everything that's happened, "good" and "bad", was all exactly what I needed. I see that my transformation can never stop as long as I have a mission to serve. And back here in this present moment, I realize I am "suddenly" on the verge of manifesting a bunch of very exciting parts of the vision for myself that I've held these past 15 years. Parts that I could never quite figure out how to manifest on my own, and therefore doubted I ever would. Everything and everyone in my life now seem to be lined up to help me create my dreams. Thank you, God.

So, those of us who hold large visions for who we are and what we do, let's take heart. Simply holding those visions has moved us in that direction. Simply opening up to and allowing the transformation toward who we really are has accelerated the process. Simply becoming the change we've wished to see in the world has indeed changed the world. The truth of this transcends appearances. When will we actually see it? Well, one of my teachers once asked us how long it took a pot of water to boil. The answer was, in an instant. Getting to the point of boiling is the variable, and that duration depends on the source of heat. I know now that even when I doubted my ability to live my dreams there was some simmering going on; that there was still some fire under my pot coming from the divine heat Source within me. I know that the more I have transformed and moved from my head to my heart, the closer I have come to those dreams being realized, even when it didn't seem so. And that we are all vital players in each others' visions. Thank you all for contributing to all my wonderful nostalgic memories, and thank you even more for contributing to the love and beauty that exists right in this moment. And please, feel free to remind me of all this in a few months when my 50th comes around!

holotropic

One of the things we do at our workshops is called holotropic breathwork. I used to think the word “holotropic” meant “circular”, as that is the type of breathing involved, with no pauses between the inhale and exhale. I just read, however, that the word literally means “toward wholeness”. I really like that, and it definitely describes the breathwork process. Toward wholeness. That is the direction spiritual paths tend to lead. Toward wholeness, toward love, toward God. And as my life continues to flow merrily down the stream toward wholeness, I notice the ongoing manifestation of my dreams, even if at times it seems as though I stumble into them blindly, backwards, and by accident. I think that’s just God’s wonderful sense of perfection as well as Her sense of humor.

As you may already know, the word “whole” comes from the same Greek root from which we also get the words “health” and “holy”. Hmm. All these words denote facets of what we really are in our normal state. And wholeness is a wonderful place to be. From a place of wholeness I need not seek approval, love, joy or peace from outside myself. From a place of wholeness there is no conflict, no separation, no need to make you wrong so I can be right, no defensiveness, no resistance to life’s flow. From a place of wholeness I feel the winds of Spirit at my back. From a place of wholeness I become the way of God instead of being in the way of God. From a place of wholeness I live my highest vision and become the change I truly wish to see in the world.

It’s sort of paradoxical that we need to move toward wholeness, since wholeness is what we are in essence. If I am indeed an individualization of God, what could possibly be missing in me? When I was born, I’m sure I had no sense of anything but wholeness. But, for some reason or another, I spent the first 35 or so years of my life forgetting and denying that wholeness, all the while gathering evidence that I was separate, deficient and lacking, having to manipulate my environment and my brothers and sisters so that I could continue to feel safe and good about myself. And, of course, when my environment and my fellow travelers didn’t choose to cooperate, I chose to suffer. Nuts. We are like 1000-story skyscrapers and yet we only know the top floor. Now I have to lie on the floor and breathe heavily and rapidly, screaming and crying and moaning, in order to discover my other floors and move back toward wholeness. There are other ways, of course, many of which are gentler, but you get the idea. Why did I leave in the first

place, and why must I work at getting back to some place that I never really left?

Well, maybe a better definition of holotropic would be “toward the awareness of wholeness”. And I can see the truth of that, as well as the progression of that, in my life. The world projected an image of separateness and lack and I bought into it. Then, thru Grace, I caught a few brief glimpses of my wholeness. This progressed into a belief in the possibility that wholeness was indeed my normal state. What followed (and still follows) was a lot of work on myself to get out of the way, which has resulted first in acceptance, then in direct experience, then in gratitude and acknowledgment of the Source, then in (hopefully) the maximum expression, of that wholeness. And with each step my fulfillment and my impact have grown.

“We are like 1000-story skyscrapers and yet we only know the top floor.”

The Hopi elders advised us a few years back that the time of the lone wolf is over, that we need to let go of the banks and let the river take us as we, together, keep our heads above water and not take things, especially ourselves, too personally. I’m extremely hopeful sharing this holotropic river with all of you, and I rejoice in our connection.

Just because we are whole does not mean we don’t need each other.

Our connection, our communion (“common union”) with a shared vision and intention, transcends our individuality without eclipsing it, just as with members of a symphony orchestra. Together, as we continue to move toward an awareness of our wholeness, we can create a symphony of such sweetness and harmony that it plays eternally on the hearts of all people, everywhere.

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Dr. Stew seminars and workshops available locally or globally.

Why am I here?

I used to love Mad Magazine when I was a kid, and I especially liked the “Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions” department. I thought about that recently when I was waiting for Blue Go and a woman came up and asked, “How long has it been since the last bus came?” I refrained from saying something like, “about 15 minutes, and I didn’t get on it just so I could stay here and tell you”. Someone once said that the quality of our questions tends to determine the quality of our lives, so I had too much compassion for the woman to lay my sarcasm on her. Besides, I know from listening to my own questions and observing the results that I still often ask lousy ones, too. So here they are, for the New Year and all its resolutions, the 5 Questions, in order of value for me:

Why? This is the ultimate; the biggie. “Why am I here?” represents my purpose, my mission, my vision for life. It becomes the guidance system behind my every choice. But I only get to ask it once. Once I know my ‘why’ and have put it out into the universe, any additional ‘why’ questions are counter-productive. As in “why do these things always happen to me” and “why does he/she/they always act/think/talk that way”. These ‘whys’ keep me in victim mode and usually stop me from focusing and acting on the better questions to follow. They cloud my vision and they slow its manifestation. They interfere with the divine process of perfect unfolding that I am. They prevent me from being the change I wish to see in the world. They stink, basically.

Where? I put this slightly ahead of ‘what’, because my ability to do what is mine to do depends on where I am. So the most important question I can ask myself in any particular moment is “where am I?” Am I right here in this place and present moment, or am I elsewhere? Am I in my heart or my head? Am I going with the flow or trying to swim upstream? Am I in a space of serving God or serving me? I find that things happen, much better and faster, when I’m around, especially when I’m in my heart.

What? “What do I choose to do right now that will bring me closer to my ‘why’?” This question is vital, as is following through on the answers that come. Again, I put ‘where’ first because I only tend to ask this question when I’m present, and also because I need to know the source of the answer that comes

back. My brain provides all kinds of answers, mostly crummy; my heart gives me the one that brings peace, even when it seems impossible to my little head. So another wonderful and intimately related question is, “What can I do to clear out all this crapola and tap more into my heart?” And another, perhaps easier one for me to remember is, “What am I grateful for?”, because when I remember to be grateful my heart opens and the universe opens to me. This ‘what’ question helps me to be in the right ‘where’.

When? This one falls far behind the others, and just a tad ahead of ‘how’. The only valuable ‘when’ question for me is, “When should I do the ‘what’”, which, of course, needs to be as close to ‘now’ as possible. “When is it (love, money, whatever) coming?” is weak because that’s not my responsibility. It also tells the universe I don’t already have it and therefore reinforces my illusions of lack and separateness. “When will I start thinking, speaking and acting in accordance with this truth” is a decent question, as long as I allow it to motivate me and don’t beat myself up for having to ask it.

How? As one of my teachers says, “When the ‘why’ is big enough the ‘hows’ take care of themselves”. The universe works perfectly, and I let it do its thing. How can my body do 600 septillion things in each second? I don’t know, but it does. How does an entire universe remain in balance, even with absurdly arrogant and interferential contributions from mankind? I don’t know, but it does. How do intention and love inevitably lead to creation and manifestation? I don’t know, but they do. So I needn’t concern myself with how. When I focus on my big ‘why’ (and the ‘wheres’ and ‘whats’), the ‘hows’ come to me in the form of teachers, books, people, circumstances and inner guidance at just the right times.

Well, there you have it, and I realize now that I left out “who”. Oh well, put it in there somewhere with the top 3, especially if I’m asking “Who am I?” and not “Who’s to blame?”

In this New Year, I wish for us all to find the most joyous and fulfilling answers to our best questions. And if someone comes into your store and asks for 3 bottles of Tahoe water, one of each color, be compassionate!

DR. STEW'S THOTS FOR KIDS



THERE HAS NEVER BEEN, AND
THERE NEVER WILL BE,
ANYONE EXACTLY LIKE YOU!



YOUR BODY DOES
600,000,000,000,000,000,000,000
THINGS EVERY SECOND!

LISTEN TO IT!!



THE GREATEST DOCTOR IN THE
WORLD IS INSIDE OF YOU!



IF YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE THE
INGREDIENTS, DON'T EAT IT!



YOU ARE SPECIAL! LOVE YOUR-
SELF! EVERYBODY IS SPECIAL!
LOVE EVERYBODY!



OUR BODIES, JUST LIKE THE PLAN-
ET EARTH, ARE MOSTLY WATER!
DRINK LOTS!



OUR BODIES ARE BETTER THAN
MACHINES. THEY GET BETTER
AND STRONGER THE MORE
WE USE THEM. THEY ESPECIALLY
LOVE TO MOVE. MOVE THEM
AROUND A LOT!



OUR BODIES HEAR EVERYTHING
WE THINK. THE MORE WE THINK
ABOUT LOVING
OURSELVES AND EVERYONE ELSE,
THE BETTER OUR BODIES WORK!