

Forward by Ken Page

In February of 1993, I began to share my stories in a workshop I was conducting in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I did so, first because I was asked, and second, because I was presenting a new body of material concerning the importance of moving out of polarity consciousness. Previously, I had used my life experiences as examples during private sessions, when it became apparent that many of my clients had sailed the same troubled waters as I had. I decided to write this book for the same reason. I realized that my life and my path, if I was able to document it and relate what I had learned, could save a lot of emotional wear and tear on others. It could also assist in providing understanding for what may be happening during this time of accelerated transition and change. These stories were also written so that my children and grandchildren would understand a part of me and my life and would have the choice to explore other paths.

There are experiences in this book that I am not proud of. Many of the stories that follow reflect the hardship and pain that I either inflicted on myself or others in the name of some self-righteous belief in the victim/savior mentality. As a child, I had always dreamed of being a hero.

I now know that I created all my experiences in the name of a fantasy that was fabricated in my own mind. The hero inside me was for me alone. I have found that my old ideas and beliefs limited my creativity and I could only imagine within their confines. If I continued to hold onto these old ideas and beliefs, I saw that I would keep recreating the same patterns over and over. I finally learned to let go and trust myself. There are no victims, only creators.

In realizing that I am a responsible creator, owning and recognizing my creations, I found quietness in a world of pandemonium, timelessness in a world of chaos, and peace in a world where strife is running rampant. Maybe by sharing my stories, it will help me to ease my own disappointments, and my regrets concerning the painful situations that I have caused. I have played hard - I have left my energetic signature along the way for others to follow. I believe my stories can provide valuable guidance through the maze of emotions, sensations, physicality, and experiences, that we call life on earth. That's why I'm here. That's why I've come to this place. I'm a traveler, and this is my legacy to you.

Preface by Simon Peter Hemingway

This book is the result of many hours of interviews with Ken Page, archival materials, my own experiences as a student-practitioner of MCH™ (now HSH™), and the divine flow of the universe. This project was first initiated by Shirley Holly, who contributed several drafts before retiring to pursue the writing of her own life. Although this work is original to Ken and I, Shirley's hard work contributed to its final shape and form.

Shortly after I began work on this project, I realized that its success was ultimately dependent on Ken's willingness to completely bare his soul in our interviews, for his emotional life quickly became the book's structuring narrative. In this sense, Ken was a biographer's dream come true. He never once protested or answered evasively, even when I asked him the most personal of questions. I watched his eyes fill with tears many times as I queried him repeatedly about the various losses in his past, and those tears set the standard of honesty that I strove to adhere to in writing the story of his life.

Ken was also unstinting in his willingness to allow me to write about times and events in his life that many of us who have had similar experiences would prefer to have forgotten. Although he confessed to a feeling of wanting to close his eyes as he read certain parts of this book, he never once complained to me or asked me to censor any detail. In fact, his only concerns were with the fairness with which the other people in his life were portrayed. The quote from John Fire Lame Deer that prefaces this book is directed toward those readers who believe that their healers should be something other than completely human.

Both Ken and I felt as I was writing the book that we were part of an exciting and unique process, which I hope you as reader will share in. This is as much your story as it is Ken's. We are all each other, after all.

I would like to thank all of my friends at Book People here in Austin, the finest bookstore I have ever been in, for all of their invaluable help and assistance, particularly the staff, past and present, of their Coffeehouse, where I spent two months writing this book. I would also like to thank Sandy Saunders, Daniel Rogers, Mary Darragh, Shirley Holly, Dianne Cooper and Caron and Geoffrey Cash as well as all of the other readers who volunteered to read the first draft and offered their suggestions for revisions. As always, I have Jeri Moses to thank for offering me constant encouragement and irrefutable proof of the existence of angels.

I would enjoy hearing from readers of this book, and am always interested in new writing ventures. Please contact me in care of the Institute for MCH™ if you have something that you wish to share with me.

Austin, Texas, 1996

Chapter 1: Near Death

I stared down the telescopic site of the rifle. It was still muggy at four in the morning; I was nervous, and stinging droplets of sweat kept fouling my vision. The black tarpaper under my knees was warm, verging on hot, and I could smell the faint sour reek from the rooftop drain vents. In front of me was a kind of narrow alleyway between houses that opened onto the most vulnerable side of the wood-framed building beneath me. The back of the building, which sat out on piers over the lake, I wasn't worried about. The police car in the parking lot and my employee lying in the bed of his pickup could take care of the rest.

I lowered the rifle to swipe at my forehead with my shirt sleeve. Maybe it was my imagination. Maybe I hadn't heard anything after all. I rested my aching arms on my knees, hoping that my family was asleep. Even my wife didn't know what I was really doing. Almost every relative I had in the world was checked into the hotel below me. My hotel. They thought I was worried about a weather disaster. That's how I had explained the boarded-up windows to everyone when they showed up for the family reunion. What I was really worried about was someone stepping around the corner of the building in front of me with a match, and a glass bottle with a gas-soaked tampon taped to the side. All they would have to do was run forward a few steps, light the firebomb, and then throw a pass that even the worst armchair quarterback in the world couldn't miss. I calculated that I'd have at the most three seconds in which to drop them with a bullet. If I hesitated, or missed, they'd have time to hurl the bottle under the hotel's pier and beam foundation, and I would be sitting on top of a five alarm inferno with my entire family inside.

The problems with bikers had begun almost on the day that I bought the hotel and had steadily compounded, like interest on a bad debt. I didn't have many rules, but the few rules that I had to insist on, like banning knives or gang colors inside the bar, infuriated them. Finally they became enough of a nuisance that the police chief had no choice but to run them out of town. The police chief had called to tell me the bikers had promised to burn my resort to the ground on their way out.

A lone cricket chirped forlornly in the darkness. I thought I saw a bat rip through the cloud of moths around a floodlight like an airborne knife. Then I heard it again. This time it was unmistakable. Someone in boots was walking directly toward me. I raised the rifle, steadying my elbows against the roof's raised parapet, and pressed my eye once again against the sight. It felt like my blood had been replaced with a mixture of pure adrenaline and rage. My finger started the slow squeeze of the trigger that they had taught us in the army. I was primed and ready to kill. I was ready to commit "justifiable homicide."

The footsteps grew nearer. "Burn my bar?!" I wanted to scream, "kill my family?!" I'd show them. I'd teach them a lesson they'd never forget. By now I could hear the crisp sound of gravel crunching under foot. The arrogant bastard wasn't even trying to be quiet. I pressed the rifle stock deep into my shoulder, trying to stop the gun from shaking. I felt like I could almost hear him breathing. The footsteps were so near now that I knew he would be stepping out from behind the nearest house in just a few seconds. I had to be ready. I had to be ready. Then the footsteps suddenly stopped. In my mind I could picture the glow of the lighter as he held it to the side of the molotov cocktail he was going to use to kill my family. I felt something harden within me. All time stopped. I knew that I would kill. A moment later I heard the solid whack of a screen door slamming shut. All of the air went out of me as I folded up over the borrowed rifle like a mother over a dead child. "My God," I whispered, rocking back and forth. "My God." My eyes stung but no tears came. "My God," I whispered again. A blurred rectangle of light winked on and off on the second floor of the building across from me. That was Shane's room. Shane was my neighbor's teenaged son. He came into my bar all the time to buy sodas. I'd nearly killed him.

A single tear fell from my eye to the warm black tarpaper, darkening it momentarily before it evaporated and was borne away by the breeze. An uncompromising hatred rose up like a snake within me, a hatred of myself, my life, and all of my wretched possessions. I wanted to reduce everything I had to the size of a stone and throw it into the sea. I had followed my father's advice to the letter and worked longer and harder than anyone else to become a millionaire. Yet something had never felt quite right. Now, for one brief shining moment, God had parted the curtains to show me what I was really worth. The building beneath me felt monstrous and alien. I would have torched it myself to learn what I had learned that night. Nothing I had was worth killing for. Nothing I had was worth dying for. Nothing I had was worth anything at all.

I pushed the gun away and collapsed backward. A patch of stars wheeled through the clouds overhead. I felt the roughness of the roof against my palms. The sound of blood pounding in my ears slowly gave way to the lake's gentle lapping at the dock. I made many vows that night. I would end up breaking most of them, again and again, until the time when I myself was finally broken.