

# ► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

The Newsletter of the Scientific and Medical Network

## ► EDITORIAL

### Meaning and Mental Resilience

BY DAVID LORIMER



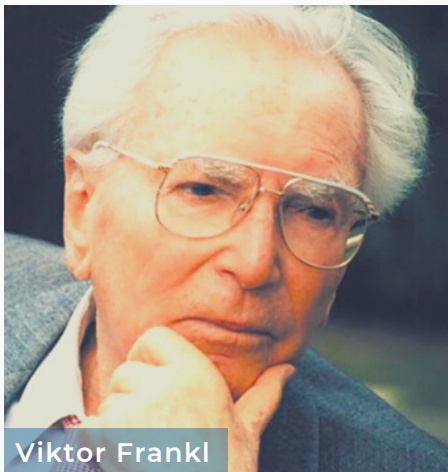
In the summer of 1983, I spent a day of strange and stark contrasts, visiting Goethe's elegant house in Weimar in the morning and Buchenwald concentration camp in the afternoon. On arrival, the visitor is greeted with the motto *Arbeit Mach Frei* (Work Makes Free) still posted over the gate and it is hard to imagine the harsh conditions endured here, especially during bitter winters, as described in Viktor Frankl's classic book *Man's Search for Meaning*.

I myself had an arresting experience while visiting what had been the site of the incinerator. There was a small room with wooden panels, and I wondered if anyone might have left a final poignant message carved on the wall. I crouched down in a corner, and sure enough I was able to decipher three words etched as if by drawing pin into the wood: *Croire, Esperer, Prier* (Believe, Hope, Pray). As you can imagine, this was a deeply touching moment of contact with

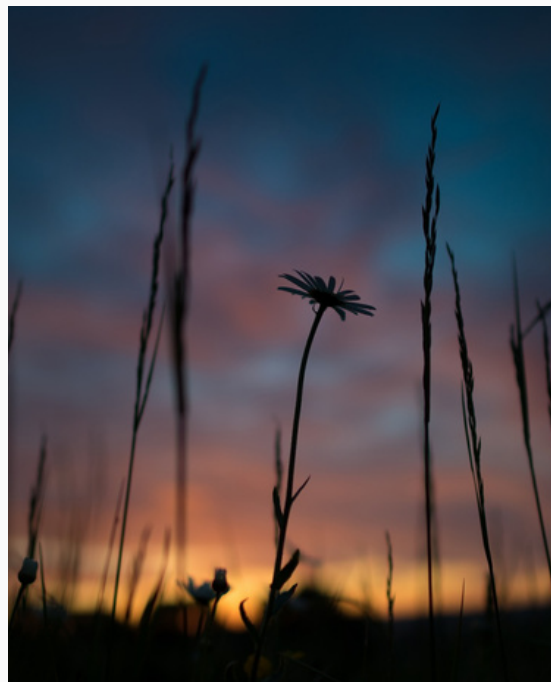
a past inmate and perhaps no one had ever read these words. I turned round to show another visitor while speaking in French, to which he replied "Ach ja, glauben, hoffen, beten", which jolted me back to the present.

In a book of lectures entitled *Yes to Life in Spite of Everything* (recently published in English for the first time, from talks

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Viktor Frankl



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The neuroscience of spiritual retreats, p.4

## ► FEATURED BLOG



### Louise Livingstone: Our Hearts Are Speaking.

Louise is Director of the Heart Sense Research Institute and also a member of the SMN team. In this post on her website, she draws on depth psychology, history and the great wisdom writers to help describe her struggle with severe depression, anxiety and agoraphobia, and the revelatory experience that led her to re-tune her awareness to the guidance of her own heart.

*'One night in the mid 2000s, I was at my lowest ebb and could not see any way to proceed with my life. At this point, I heard a voice. And it came from my heart: "Please, please stop this! You're killing me! This conflict is your own creation yet you also have the power to change it." In this moment, I saw my heart – as if for the first time. And, most importantly, I felt my heart – as if for the first time – a dear friend of mine.'*  
Read the full post [here](#).

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given in Vienna in 1946) Frankl reflects on his experiences and especially on meaning in relation to suffering. He argues that *'we give life meaning through our actions, but also through loving and, finally, through suffering.'* He continues: *'how human beings deal with the limitation of their possibilities... how they behave under these restrictions – the way in which they accept their suffering under such restrictions – in all of this they still remain capable of fulfilling human values.'*


Multiple studies have found high levels of psychological distress among young adults during the Covid confinements. One article notes that *'a year of lockdowns, mask-wearing, isolation and depriving youngsters from seeing friends and grandparents has caused a surge in kids committing suicide, self-harming and suffering other mental health issues.'*

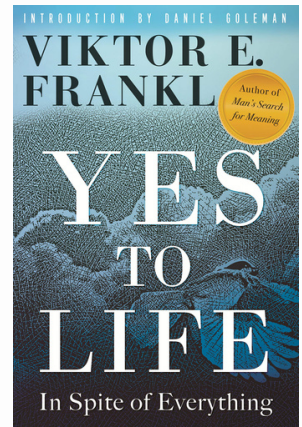
I can't help wondering if this level of distress is in part due to the dominant materialistic story that life is a meaningless accident and that fulfilment comes from consumerism – Frankl himself thought as much when he

*"We give life meaning through our actions, but also through loving and, finally, through suffering."  
– Viktor Frankl*

associated extreme reductionism with nihilism. Camp survivors were nothing if not resilient, and Frankl remarks that *'it is not we who are permitted to ask about the*



*meaning of life, it is life that asks the questions, directs questions at us – we are the ones who are questioned.'* He insists that we always retain the capacity and inner freedom to choose a positive attitude to deprivation and suffering rather than see ourselves as passive victims. 





## ► VIDEOS OF NOTE

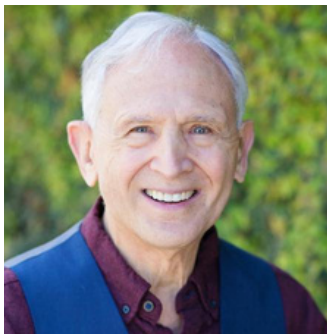
### Emerging Proud: Stories of spiritual crisis and transformation

Emerging Proud is a social movement focused on widening the conversation around spiritual awakening and it has produced a film of people telling their stories. Here, Jessica Corneille (right), the Communications Coordinator for the SMN, introduces it...



'A few weeks ago, I was invited to speak at one of the SMN's Virtual Wine Bar sessions on the topic of spiritual awakening. As both an experienter and psychological researcher of spontaneous awakening, I was excited to mention Emerging Proud, a grassroots initiative brought forward by a very special team of volunteers. The aim? To encourage people to come out of the spiritual closet through storytelling – 'reframing 'madness' as a potential catalyst for positive transformation', as they put it. Emerging Proud contributes to a larger movement led by mental health experts who demand the abolishment of the default pathologisation of spiritual experiences within mainstream psychology – calling, in parallel, for the de-colonisation of mainstream mental health perspectives, and inviting the discipline to adopt a more multi-cultural approach to intervention.' Learn more about Emerging Proud on their website [here](#). And watch their documentary film [here](#).

### Peter Levine: Trauma and growth



Peter Levine is the founder of The Somatic Experiencing® method, a body-oriented approach to the healing of trauma and other stress disorders. The approach can also be used as a powerful tool to help facilitate deeply embodied awakening experiences. In this discussion, on the Rebel Wisdom

YouTube channel, he discusses the origins of the method, some of the principles behind its effectiveness, and also explains the power of what he calls 'somatic resonance' to help to guide clients during sessions. Watch it [here](#).

## ► FEATURED BLOG



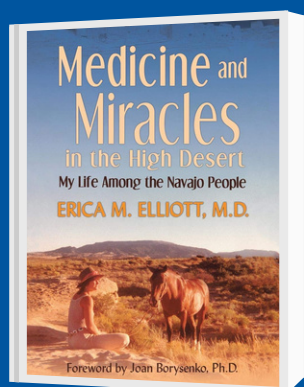
### Azriel ReShel: [Science says that silence is vital for our brains](#)

In this post on *Uplift*, Azriel ReShel reports on studies that show the negative impact of noise stress on our health and the corresponding regenerative effects of quietness on our brains and bodies.

*'Silence is replenishing and nourishes our cognitive resources. Noise makes us lose our concentration, cognitive powers and causes decreased motivation and brain functioning (as backed up by research into the effects of noise), but studies show that spending some time in silence can amazingly restore what was lost through exposure to excessive noise. The ancient spiritual masters have known this all along; silence heals, silence takes us deeply into ourselves, and silence balances the body and mind. Now science is saying the same thing.'*

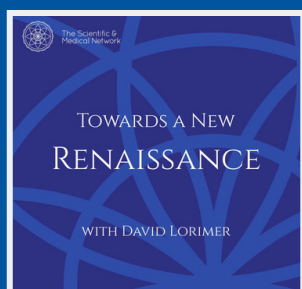
Read the full post [here](#).

## ► THE BOOKCAST



### Healing Paths

Three books on health are featured in this episode. Firstly, an extraordinary autobiographical account by Dr Erica Elliott about her time with the Navajo – *Medicine and Miracles in the High Desert*. Then a book by Mária and István Sági, entitled *Healing with Information*, on the work of Erich Körbler in the field of vibrational medicine. And finally, Janet Edwards' account of her healing journey through the cancer minefield – *Choosing to Heal*. Each of these books contains powerful messages about our capacity to heal ourselves. Listen to the episode [here](#).



Find the full bookcast on [RedCircle](#), [Apple podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [Stitcher](#).

## ► ARTICLES OF NOTE

### Could post-mortem cell regeneration reframe NDE's?



Glial cell from a rat's brain

A newly published study from the University of Illinois Chicago describes how glial cells, responsible for maintaining homeostasis, forming myelin, supplying oxygen and nutrients to neurons – and which even appear to affect the preservation and consolidation of memories – may live on and even grow for up to 24 hours post-mortem. While it is difficult to infer much at all at this stage and while replication is warranted, it is worth asking: how might these results fit in with our current understanding of near-death experiences – and how might they shift our perception of death altogether? Read an overview of the study [here](#). And find a PDF of the study on Nature.com [here](#)

### The neuroscience of spiritual retreats

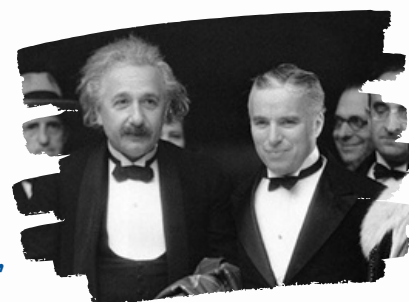
A 2017 study by the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health at Thomas Jefferson University has found that a spiritual retreat environment can alter the neurochemicals of attendees in a way that may produce 'spiritual' states. The study, funded by the Fetzer Institute, focused on an Ignatian-style retreat, which included prayer, reflection and meetings with a spiritual director. Post-retreat brain scans showed changes in the participants' serotonin and dopamine levels. Andrew Newberg, the director of the Institute, said: 'Since serotonin and dopamine are part of the reward and emotional systems of the brain, it helps us understand why these practices result in powerful, positive emotional experiences.' Read a report on the study on Jefferson University's website [here](#).

### Quote

In 1931 Charlie Chaplin invited Albert Einstein to Los Angeles to be his special guest at the premier of his film *City Lights*.

Einstein: "What I most admire about your art, is your universality. You don't say a word, yet the world understands you!"

Chaplin: "True. But your glory is even greater! The whole world admires you, even though they don't understand a word of what you say."





## ► UPCOMING EVENTS ONLINE

### Sheldrake, Shriver, Schlitz and more...

• **Friday, 30 April, 7.00-8.30pm.**

**Dr Rupert Sheldrake: A New Science of Life**

• **Saturday, 1 May, 6.00-7.30pm.**

**Interview with Tim Shriver: The Call to Unite**

• **Wednesday, 05 May, 7.30-9.30pm.**

**Prof Marilyn Schlitz: Grateful Ageing**

• **Wednesday, 12 May, 7.30-9.30pm.**

**Prof Michael Grosso: Miracles in an Age of Disbelief**

More details at [www.scientificandmedical.net/webinars](http://www.scientificandmedical.net/webinars)

### Recent webinars - recordings now available!

These are all now available to view for [Network members](#).

- **David Lorimer: A Quest for Wisdom**
- **Galileo Commission Summit II: All sessions**
- **Dr Bill Plotkin: The Journey of Soul Initiation**
- **Prof Bruce Greyson: After: A Doctor Explores What Near-Death Experiences Reveal about Life and Beyond**

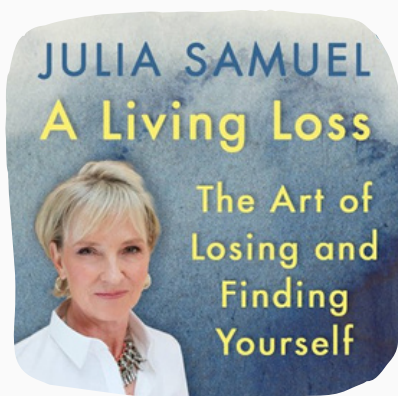
Free access to our webinar library is just one of our member benefits. To learn more click [here](#).

## ► FEATURED PODCAST

### Julia Samuel A Living Loss

BY CHARLOTTE LORIMER

A Living Loss with psychotherapist Julia Samuel is a new podcast that examines loss in all its forms. In the first episode with journalist Elizabeth Day, Julia makes connections between her guest's living losses, which include a move to Northern Ireland, her three miscarriages and her divorce. The two women also talk about gaining a sense of self and how pain and adversity can lead to growth and resilience, often referred to as post-traumatic growth. Listen [here](#).



## ► SMN VIDEO CLIPS



### Galileo Commission Good Advice

In this video a number of Galileo Commission advisers, including Dr Anne Baring (pictured), Dr Larry Dossey, Prof Marilyn Monk, Dr Iain McGilchrist and Prof Jeffrey Kripal, among others, share the best piece of advice they would give to their younger self. Watch 10 minutes full of gems and wisdom! See the clip [here](#).

## ► TOWARDS A NEW RENAISSANCE

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**Disclaimer:** The selections in this newsletter are personal – the Network has no consensus view on the material covered. Readers need to draw their own conclusions on the basis of evidence and reason.

**For all enquiries click [here](#).  
[scientificandmedical.net](http://scientificandmedical.net)**

► WE'D LOVE TO  
HEAR FROM YOU...



We are excited to bring you *Towards a New Renaissance* on a regular basis and the response has been brilliant. We would also love to get your feedback and ideas on how we can make the newsletter even better and more relevant to you. Send us comments/suggestions on our contact form [HERE](#)

If you have been enjoying this monthly digest, would you also consider making a supportive donation?

Any amount would be a great help toward our costs of time and labour. And a regular donation – even as little as £2–£5 a month – can allow us to plan ahead with new ways to bring you great content.

Click here to choose a donation level via PayPal - and thank you!

[Donate](#)

## ► JOIN THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK...

...AND ENJOY ACCESS TO THE RECORDINGS OF  
ALL OUR RECENT ONLINE EVENTS

The last twelve months of restricted movement has produced a sharp increase in high-quality online presentations and events and the Scientific and Medical Network has been fully participating in this wave of activity. As a result we are delighted to be able to offer our members a growing number of excellent webinar recordings as a part of their full membership package. A few of our recent ones are below:

MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2021  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

ON THE CUSP OF GREAT CHANGE:  
HOW SCIENCE 2.0 CAN SUPPORT  
A NEW ENLIGHTENMENT  
WHAT IF ENERGY WERE SEEN  
AS THE BASIS OF ALL REALITY?

• Dr Sally Goerner •

WEDNESDAY, 31 MARCH • 7:30-9:30 PM (BST)  
WWW.SCIENTIFICANDMEDICAL.NET

MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2021  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

A QUEST FOR WISDOM  
HOW DO WE CRAFT  
A PHILOSOPHY FOR LIFE?

• David Lorimer •

WEDNESDAY, 7 APRIL • 7:30-9:30 PM (BST)  
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ACADEMY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF POSTMATERIALIST SCIENCES  
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PRESENT

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Pin van Lommel Marilyn Schlitz Rupert Sheldrake Dean Radin Marjorie Woolcott Larry Dossey David Lorimer

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EXPANDING SCIENCE – VISIONS OF A  
POSTMATERIALIST PARADIGM

WHAT IF CONSCIOUSNESS IS FUNDAMENTAL AND EVEN PRIMARY?

Lorne Schussel D. Hennacy Powell Neal Grossman Natalie L. Dyer Gary E. Schwartz A. Moreiro-Almeida Mario Beauregard

FRIDAY 9 AND SATURDAY 10 APRIL • 4:00-8:30 PM (BST)  
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MYSTICS & SCIENTISTS EXTRA 2021  
ONE MIND, ONE PLANET, ONE HEALTH

THE SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK  
PRESENTS

THE JOURNEY OF SOUL INITIATION:  
AN INTRODUCTION  
FOR SCIENTISTS AND MYSTICS

WHAT IS THE JOURNEY OF SOUL INITIATION AND WHY IS IT  
ESSENTIAL TO PERSONAL REVELATION, VISIONARY LEADERSHIP,  
AND CULTURAL RENAISSANCE?

• Dr Bill Plotkin •

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