

The Healing Effects of Higher Consciousness

An interview with Stephen Busby on his 'Healing Circles'



My name is Jeannette Legler and I'm speaking with Stephen Busby today about the regular Healing Circles that he runs and that I help to organize in Switzerland. There are ongoing Circles in several places now and I want to explore with Stephen what goes on there.

*So my first question Stephen is **what do you mean by 'A Healing Circle'?***



Hi Jeannette. Yes these Circles have been running now for almost 3 years and they first came about because the work I was developing seemed increasingly to have a strong effect which we can interpret as a form of healing movement for those people – or *through* those people – who were engaged in it, and which I call a form of collective inquiry. The idea of meeting in a group, as a Circle, is not first of all to produce healing. It's to work with people who are drawn to the whole field of cultivating higher consciousness through their people-work. They may find that there's some kind of healing aspect or healing effect to their work – whether that's healing as they currently understand and experience it, or whether healing is something that's very new for them. It's a phenomenon that they can explore in very good company, with others who are committed to a path of higher consciousness.

So a Healing Circle isn't necessarily for people who are looking for healing – it's more for those from all areas of life who usually work in some way with other people: educators or therapists for instance, coaches or consultants, mainstream or alternative health-care professionals, people in leadership, managerial or supervisory positions, or people who in their private lives want to inquire into the quality of consciousness that comes through them - into its healing effects and its higher potential. These might be effects that they perceive on an individual level or on their wider environments, on a collective level, on society, because I believe the work that we and others are doing here can have a strong impact on our cultures, at systemic levels.

*Often when people attend a group or a workshop they have the intention of getting something from it. **What is the outcome or benefit that people find when they participate in these Circles?***

That goes straight to the core of what we're invoking here. My experience of this work – which is evolving all the time – is that if we consent at a deep level in ourselves to explore our own higher capacities, in a committed way through some form of collective inquiry, then we're brought into contact with aspects of our larger selves which we don't normally give much space to in everyday life. This has a powerful effect on our lives and on those around us. And it connects to many other people doing similar work all over the planet – it's part of a very large field which generally goes unnoticed in mainstream life.

We can picture the effects of higher consciousness work as rippling out in all sorts of ways and directions, at different depths and levels. It touches aspects of our own personal structures: our sense of identity, the way we stand in life, and how we are effective in life. And depending on how we choose to focus our attention, we may perceive some of these ripples as healing in their impact. But I think that's more a question of focus than of 'producing healing.' To engage in higher consciousness is intrinsically transformative, always, because we're consenting to bring ourselves into a much deeper relationship with life, as a channel for the deeper essence of life, and the effect of this – necessarily – must transform. It is a consequence of agreeing to enter into more profound contact in ourselves and with those parts of ourselves which, usually from an early age, and for very good reasons, we have held out of contact with life.

So I don't focus on healing as an outcome and don't encourage people to come to the Circles who want to be healed of something. On the other hand, almost everyone who engages in this work will sooner or later experience some kind of transformative shift in their life, with some kind of healing consequence. It's important that this isn't our aim, but rather that we learn to inquire into it in a very humble and respectful way, and not be too distracted by the outcomes of this inquiry. Does that make sense to you?

*Yes it does! You spoke about the healing effect on an individual level. **What are the effects on us as we are dealing with our personal topics and themes and problems?***

Well again you're really zooming in on the essence of how we do this work. When we're saying that we agree to cultivate a depth relationship to life then we're asking – what is this container that I'm so identified with, as 'me', as the structure of my personality? If I become more flexible in this identification of something as 'me' then my experience - through the higher consciousness work - is that this structure, this 'me', changes. I think it's actually changing all the time. But the lens that we bring – through this work – reveals the higher truth of who we are and the essential fluidity of our structures. It invites us to a more creative relationship with our sense of 'me-ness', with how we stand and participate in life – *as* life.

So not only am I not focusing on healing as an outcome, I'm also not so much focusing on the me who is apparently here and wanting to get something out of an experience, out of a workshop for instance. We're leveraging the fundamental shift that I mentioned earlier through our widening perceptual focus and we're discovering more of the true extent of our inner perceptual capacities – which is to embrace more of life's full hidden richness and depth, more of the subtle realms of life and of that which we perceive as reality – *while* reality is changing through our focus and inner connectivity.

*When I listen to you I understand the spiritual nature of this work, that we could focus on through meditation for example. **Is there any preparation needed, such as meditation, for joining the Circles?***

I think that spiritual practice of many kinds can be a support for the transformative relationship with life that we're invoking here. It deepens our own container and capacity for this work. All we're saying you need in order to come along and participate is to tune-in to your sense of deeper motivation or calling to this work. Not so much because it's good to get clear on why you're coming to a group, but more because when we consciously connect to the deeper stream of motivation coming through us then that helps us come into a much sharper alignment with the deeper purpose that is driving our lives. One thing we do is to inquire – through exercises and inner work – into the felt quality of our deeper life-motivation. Motivation not just in the sense of why I want to be there, not just in terms of my personal story, but rather a shared collective inquiry into the nature of my higher calling – as an impulse that is expressing itself through me. As the stream of my life. And for those who engage deeply in this, what we often find is that although we might identify with this as 'my motivation or calling', in the inquiry it turns out not to feel so personal. It's as if people are coming together through a deeper sense of shared calling, which is translated in different ways in people's lives.

*So you're saying this work is not so personal. I think that everyone experiences obstacles at some time in their path, or that **they feel this higher potential but that something is blocking it in them. How is this taken into account in this work?***

Yes that's a core part of what we're doing here. The essence of the work is to learn to explore together how we habitually prevent ourselves from a deeper sense of connection with what we're calling here the stream of life-energy that incarnates through us as ourselves. So we look at those aspects in our personal structure, in our personal identity which - as I said earlier - learned to move out of contact with life. They learned to become protective, defended, to not be in conscious contact, perhaps because that was unsafe at the time. Or because through our conditioning – at a personal, social or cultural level – we were taught to suppress those aspects, as undesirable or invalid, or as just non-existent. We all have such aspects of our structures. They mean that we learned to focus in life – perceptually – in a very particular and narrow way, focusing on some parts of life – through our acceptable mainstream senses – at the cost of taking in the wider and unimaginably deeper whole spectrum of life, to which actually we are – or we can learn to be – more finely tuned. We learned to cut ourselves off from a much richer perceptual palette.

When we explore bringing back into contact those parts of ourselves which had been unconsciously suppressed and not developed, not brought into relationship, then we become much more sensitive to the subtle realms of life. These are realms where all the information of life, everything we need, is available to us - just beyond our everyday ordinary focused attention span. So we're cultivating an ability to become again much more sensitive to the subtle realms of life and to their richness, to become more fluid containers for this information to come

through us, through our clearer containers, so that it flows into our lives and has an impact in ways and in places which, through our narrower focus and conditioning, surprise us. An impact which, again, and depending on our focus, we might perceive as healing in its effect.

What inspires you to do this work and to start and run these Circles? And what is your deeper motivation?

Well I came to this work initially through a healing crisis of my own – I was very ill. And I found several teachers in my searching. One of these lead to one strand of this work which is known as systemic constellation work, or family constellation work in one of its many forms. Essentially what that work is doing is exploring – through our embodied somatic intelligence – what it means to bring ourselves into contact with the deeper field of life. And to explore the potential healing impact of that – which often shows that the healing which we seek or think we may need is not necessarily part of life's larger agenda, we could say. The systemic work is very revealing, because it's essentially through our somatic connection with life – *as* life – that we can cultivate contact with these higher sensitivities. We don't have to do this through systemic work, it is just one path.

I also met other teachers who are bypassing the systemic focus to work more directly with levels of consciousness available to us when we consent to come into a depth relationship with life. And this is work that typically takes place in collective containers – large groups of people who are committed to inquiring in this way. This also obviously embraces our somatic experience, because we are embodied beings, Cultivating the consciousness that we're invoking here demands that I consent to more embodiment actually, at a physical and a subtle level, as I learn at the same time to dis-identify only, exclusively, with the bodily self.

So there are different strands to this work, and whatever path you're called to pursue you might find a place for it in these Circles. You don't need to have a belief system or a theory of life that must fit in with what we're doing here. Just come in a spirit of inquiry and a sense of connection to this deeper motivational impulse in life that you feel is calling, perhaps quietly and persistently, in your life. Learn to listen to this more. And I would say that my deeper motivation – to answer your question – is Love, which I'm learning to explore and allow more in my life and work.

What's the form or structure of this work – what can people expect when they come into the room? What happens?

They'll probably find themselves in a group of between 15 and 25 people, and the work is usually a mixture of exercises that we do in pairs or in small groups, or through large-group dialogue. There are teachings and inner meditative activities too, and sharing time – the whole makes for a very rich mixture and I guess caters for people's different learning preferences. The form of this work is constantly evolving and there's no fixed pattern or programme we're following here. It emerges through the group as it sinks into deeper inquiry.

And the way you hold that group space is already part of this work?

Yes, because one of the subtle sensitivities that we're exploring is how to 'hold space', energetically, and to witness the impact of this, which again can be healing. How can we experience ourselves actually 'as space' in ways which bring us into a more strongly aligned relationship with life? This necessarily is more spacious.

Thank you Stephen for giving us a flavour of this work and what people can expect from it.

Thanks Jeannette – let's invite all those who feel some kind of inner calling to - or curiosity about - this work to join us, in London, or Zurich or in Germany for example. You'll be very welcome there!

You can find out more about Stephen's work, as well as his next upcoming events in different countries – the Healing Circles, and the trainings he runs, especially in Europe and North America, as well as other interviews and resources, on www.stephenbusby.com