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## A Psychological De-Tox with the Hoffman Quadrinity Process

*Now available in 13 countries worldwide, the Hoffman Quadrinity Process is known as the 'Rolls Royce' of personal change courses. Tim Laurence, head of the UK Hoffman Institute, speaks to Odyssey about how it changed his life.*

For most of his life Tim Laurence had thought to himself: surely there must be more to life than this? Even in his early teens in his native UK, he had observed how many people are funnelled through the school system, struggle through their working life, get married, have children, grow old, and then die, yet seem never to have really lived.



It seemed to him that there had to be more to life than this, so he set out on a 15-year quest to discover if this were so. Along the way he studied Zen and yoga, hitched overland to Afghanistan, took a degree, spent time in India where he studied meditation and bodywork, and finally ended up in San Francisco

There he studied literature and psychology, became involved in Gestalt, Primal, and Encounter group work, taught at the University of Berkeley and worked at the Berkeley Holistic Centre. Yet he had still not found the something more that he was seeking

There was Encounter - say whatever you feel like in a group, tell one person you were in love with them and another that you hated them. There was Gestalt, encouraging us to integrate all the parts, including the parts we would rather not reach. And there was Primal, always seeking a deeper scream. In San Francisco everything was on offer, from A for Anger Release to Z for Zen Meditation.

"Yet something indefinable was missing. I still would feel more or less depressed and still would move from one adrenalin-fuelled relationship to another" he says.

The biggest shock came one day when a soon-to-be-ex girlfriend said to him: "You know, I bet you're just like your father". "No way", he wanted to scream back. "He's boring; I'm interesting. He's conservative; I'm progressive. He isn't into personal growth; I live for it."

But once he'd cooled off a bit, Laurence started thinking the unthinkable: 'What if I've spent a those years travelling the world and never on my own doorstep?'

Then, on a street in Berkeley, he bumped into a friend who had recently completed a week-long course called the Hoffman Quadrinity Process

"I immediately braced myself for the sell, the spiel born out of the eagerness of the recently converted. But as he started to tell me of his experiences he said one thing that caught my attention, something like: "You know, it wasn't until I did this course that I saw how much time I'd spent trying to get my parents' attention. But with you I get the feeling that you're trying to rebel against them. And you know what? Its the same thing. We're still living our lives trying to get their attention. But they're just not there any more"

When he finally decided to do the Hoffman Process same 18 months later, Tim Laurence found that he had been right all along - there definitely was more to life.

That was in 1986, and today Laurence heads up Hoffman International, a worldwide network that offers the process in the USA, Canada, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, the UK, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. In November 2001 the first 8-day Hoffman Process was offered in South Africa at Paarl.

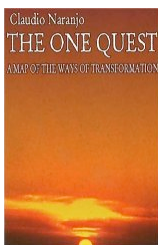
It is now 33 years since an American psychic named Bob Hoffman blended his own channelled and intuited insights with the psychological teachings of the noted neurologist and psychiatrist Dr Siegfried Fischer to

create the Hoffman Quadrinity Process. To date more than 30 000 people have become Process participants.

But what is it? And what needs does it seek to address?

A succinct answer is provided by renowned family therapist Virginia Satir, author of Peoplemaking and Conjoint Family Therapy:

"Most of us are familiar with the power of the messages about how to live our lives received early in life, when we were too young to know better. Many of us believe that these early messages were the best we could get, considering all of the human factors. However, many of these messages had the effect of crippling our present lives."



The internationally esteemed Chilean psychiatrist, Claudio Naranjo, author of *The One Quest* and a pioneer in the evolution of the Hoffman Quadrinity Process, states categorically: 'The Quadrinity Process is the best method I know for the realignment of relationships with parents and parent surrogates and, more generally, a powerful tool in the service of the development of love for self and others'

Cape Town management consultant Michelle Sparks is in total agreement. Now convenor of the Hoffman Process in South Africa, she did her eight-day Process at the Hoffman Institute in the UK five years ago. Her own story is fairly typical: "When I was four years old, my parents split up. My mother went to live in Cape Town, taking my three sisters; I stayed in Johannesburg with my father, who remarried."

"I regarded my stepmother with the kind of hatred and loathing you would only read about in fairy stories. I would lie in bed at night thinking up various ways of killing her. By the time I did the Hoffman Process I was totally depressed and neurotic. It was impossible for me to form any lasting relationships. Suicide really looked like my best option.

Today a mother of two and running her own consultancy, Michelle Sparks has reunited with her biological mother, and has become 'best of friends' with her stepmother.

It wasn't just a simple matter of forgiveness. It was more than that, it was about obtaining complete freedom over compulsive self-defeating behaviour - that's what makes the Hoffman Process so different. It is demanding, powerful and deep; and the results it produces are simply astonishing.

Founder Bob Hoffman, in his book *No One is to Blame*, believes that 'beneath the surface of human negativity there is a perfect diamond, the essence of the real you. By removing the encrusted dirt from the diamond, the real loving self can be set free. This is our essence, our true spiritual, perfect self'



The Hoffman Process seeks to endow each participant with four outcomes: emotional healing and freedom, compassion, forgiveness, and spiritual awakening. It is based on the principle that the persistent negative behaviour, depressive moods and attitudes we experience as adults have their roots in the experiences and conditioning of childhood. Until this original pain from childhood is resolved, it continues to dominate our adult lives through thoughts, emotions, and actions, whether we are aware of it or not.

With the aim of healing and transforming these negative, self-defeating patterns, the Process seeks to bring about a powerful realignment and integration of what Bob Hoffman describes as the four fundamental dimensions of our being - the Quadrinity of intellect, emotions, body, and spirit.

Tim Laurence describes how the Process works out of his own experience in San Francisco some 14 years ago: "The first few days were intensely bound up with the courtroom drama of looking at what our parents had done, and therefore what we had learned as a reaction. Many were the shouts of anger; many were the tears of pain and forgiveness."

It was a very deep purging of the early formative years, a catharsis in its true meaning of 'healing'. And each time we thought there was no more to be done, the Hoffman team brought out another surprise to take us further. "I felt as if I were on a roller coaster ride, with my normally

prepared and watchful mind kept at bay and my emotions encouraged to surface."

The Process itself uses a variety of techniques, including visualisation, bio-energetics, Gestalt exercises, journalling, silent meditation, and group discussion. Says Tim Laurence: "The days were full of richness, in which one discovery led to another. Gradually we could let our armour down and contact our inner truths. Of course this can be painful but, as the 14th century Sufi mystic Rumi said, "the cure for the pain is in the pain".

'As I found out for myself, the doorway for pain and the doorway joy are one and the same. By protecting my heart from hurt, I had also closed myself down to joy and love.'

'As the days went on, I became much softer and touched feelings that I thought were no longer possible. I got in touch the young boy who had been spontaneous and curious about life. Suddenly the world looked brighter, more colourful. One day I walked outside and saw the wind in the leaves and the colours of the flowers like never before. That was truly a natural high.

Laurence says the Process changed him in fundamental ways. Healed of shame and distrust, for the first time he was able to stay in a relationship. He is now happily married with two children, To his great surprise, he says, he experienced an intense desire to return to the UK after an absence of 17 years. "The land in which I grew up is now the land I feel closest to, a place where can nourish my deep roots and continue the work of helping others to heal the past".

The list of Hoffman Process graduates is impressive and sometimes surprising. It includes the likes of international management guru Ken Blanchard and Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell. It contains an abundance of psychiatrists (like TM doyen and author Harold Bloomfield) as well as professors of psychiatry.

It also includes the glitterati - among them actress Serena Gordon, who starred with Pierce Brosnan in the James Bond thriller Goldeneye. And while she may not be the most famous of actresses on the Hoffman

Process list, she qualifies for mention for one reason: Serena Gordon is Tim Laurence's wife.

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*When you're serious about change*

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