

**B I O E N E R G E T I C
A N A L Y S I S**

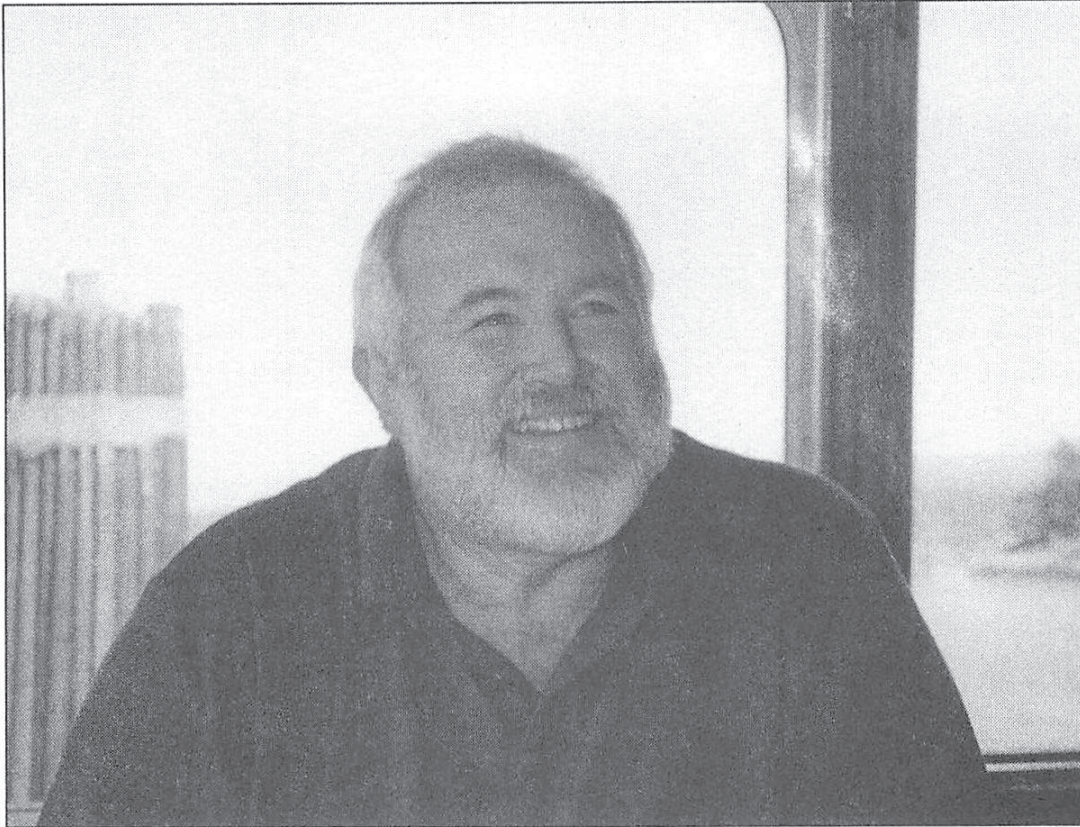
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This Journal is dedicated to

JAMES A. MILLER

November 20, 1942 – March 15, 2001



Today, like every other day, we wake up
Empty and frightened. Don't open the door
To the study and begin reading.
Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways
To kneel and kiss the ground.

Rumi

IN MEMORY OF JIM MILLER

John Conger

As editor of the Journal, I was handed many beautiful letters mourning the loss of this remarkable man and celebrating his courage and humor. Of necessity, I could only put together in this article a tiny portion of the passionate words surrounding his life, passed on to me. I ask your forgiveness for this editing thrust upon me. —John Conger.

I begin with a part of Robert Hilton's Eulogy:

James Arthur Miller was born in DeQueen Arkansas on November 20, 1942 and passed away on Thursday, March 15, 2001 at age 58. Jim is survived by his older brother Larry Miller, his daughter Karen, and a host of friends, students, clients and colleagues whose lives he has touched.

Jim's family, his mother and father, brother Larry and sister Frances moved from Arkansas to California in 1944. Jim attended Inglewood High School and the 10th Avenue Baptist Church. He first went to El Camino College and then graduated from Pepperdine University.

In 1962 he married Jeannie Moore. They had three children, Stephen, Thomas and Karen. Thomas lived for only two weeks and Stephen was tragically killed along with his bride as the victim of a highway accident in 1990 at age 25. Jim also lost his sister Frances when she was only 25.

Jim came from a very devout Baptist family and at an early age decided to prepare for the ministry. He attended the California Baptist Seminary in Covina from which he graduated in 1968. Following his seminary training he worked in the Baptist church as an associate and youth minister and later as a counselor for the Optimist Boys Home and the Chino Boys Ranch. Eventually he decided to make counseling his career.

In 1973 he began his training in the Southern California Institute for Bioenergetic Analysis where in time he became a trainer himself. In 1976 he moved to Edmonds, Washington and bought his present home. In 1983, wanting a place where he could continue learning as well as provide for others, he along with his second wife Bobbie Newlin and his colleague Bennett Shapiro opened the Whistler conferences near Vancouver, Canada. Jim soon became an International Trainer in Bioenergetic Analysis and continued to teach extensively in the United States, Canada, Italy, and South America....

I first met Jim in 1966 when he came as a student to the seminary where I was a professor of counseling and homiletics. Homiletics means the art of preaching. In that role, Jim came to me one day because he was asked to be the master of ceremonies at a Seminary banquet and wanted my help. He wanted some kind of joke or opening line for this occasion. I told him that he could say that he felt like a mosquito in a nudist colony. He knew what to do he just didn't know where to begin. He jumped on that idea right away. That evening at the banquet I was sitting near the head table and could see that Jim was very nervous. Jim stands up, the crowd is quiet waiting for him to speak and he begins, "I feel like a mosquito in a nudist colony. I know where to begin, I just don't know what to do. No, no, I mean I don't know what to do, No what is it anyway." And of course the crowd was roaring with laughter and he had them in his hand.

I left the Seminary in 1967 and went into private practice as a psychotherapist. I began a ministers' counseling group that Jim joined along with two of his future life long friends and colleagues, Paul Oas and Bill White. In 1968 I began my therapy and training in Bioenergetic Analysis and introduced the group to the writings of the Founder Alexander Lowen.

When in 1972 Renato Monaco and I began the training program in Bioenergetics in Newport Beach, California Jim along with his friends soon became among the first trainees. Our personal journey moved from student, to trainee to colleague to friend to fellow traveler in our mutual journey of love and personal healing.

Jim was always a little bigger than life. He was a Renaissance man of many talents and passions. He was among other things too numerous to mention a champion athlete in wrestling and football, an artist, musician, poet, fisherman, boatsman, gardener, carpenter, auto mechanic, computer expert, gourmet cook and the list goes on and on. Jim loved to eat and during one visit to my home he opened the refrigerator door, looked inside, which looked a little like old mother Hubbard's cupboard, said to me and my wife Virginia, "You guys really aren't into food are you."

But as large as he was as a man of size and passion on the outside, he became such a man on the inside. With the death of his beloved son Steve, Jim was unable to hide his broken heart, which he had done as a child, and instead he embraced his grief fully with all of its soul wrenching agony. Slowly, out of this tragedy emerged a man, now more than ever prepared to surrender to life.

The 13th century Persian poet Rumi became his guru. He was now full on Rumi, reading all of his books, memorizing numerous poems and lis-

tening to all of the tapes Rumi's translator, Coleman Barks had made. ...

Jim became a grounding force for me. When I looked into his eyes I saw a man who had faced the ultimate sorrow and thereby could hold mine. I could fully sob, feeling his strong arms around me and surrender to my life.

A few days after his stroke when he could hear but could not speak, I called his room and the nurse put the telephone to his ear. I was able to talk to him, hear him breathe and cry with him. At the end, to signal that he knew I was there he would hum a sound. This experience of our spirits communicating together has stayed with me. Now whenever I begin to grieve his loss, I hear that hum...I feel I would not be representing Jim without some of his favorite Rumi Poems.

The way of love is not
A subtle argument

The door there
Is devastation

Birds make great sky-circles
Of their freedom
How do they learn it?

They fall, and falling,
They're given wings.

When the soul first put on the body's shirt,
The ocean lifted up all its gifts.

When love first tasted the lips
Of being human, it started singing.

I saw grief drinking a cup of sorrow
And called out,
 "It tastes sweet,
does it not?"
Grief answered,

“and you’ve ruined my business.
How can I sell sorrow,
When you know it’s a blessing.”

Alexander Lowen writes:

I first met James Miller in the early 1970’s when I made some trips to Southern California to introduce Bioenergetic Analysis to therapists in that area. He was one of a small group who responded to my ideas...He was the first trainer to make video tapes of the concepts and practice of Bioenergetic Analysis. These tapes became an important part of the training and I have several of these tapes which I treasure and which I found very helpful in the teaching program...

Among the pleasures I enjoyed with Jim Miller was fishing for salmon in the waters of Puget Sound. This led to a friendship between us which continued over many years until his unexpected death.

I experienced Jim as a very warm person despite the tragedies that befell him. He shared my feelings that the body is the person and that the conscious mind is only a relatively small aspect of the individual. I believe that we understood each other and shared many feelings. His death is a great loss to me and to the Bioenergetic movement. He introduced me to a book called *The Spell of the Sensuous* by David Abram which deepened my understanding of human nature. His death was completely unexpected by me and leaves an empty place in my heart, but his memory will be part of my life as long as I live.

Louise Frechette writes:

I just heard about Jim Miller’s death. I feel immense sorrow...He was a mentor, he was a colleague, he was a friend. Thanks to him, to his support and to the wonderful bioenergetic community he and Bobbie made possible, year after year in Whistler, I grew from a young CBT into an international trainer. Jim, I have such a hard time to imagine that you are no more here, with us...

Eleanor Greenlee writes:

...Your part in the creation of the Pacific Northwest Conference was one of the greatest gifts you gave to those of us wanting to spread our wings, risk saying what we believe in, putting our self out there in the public eye, you believed in us. For all the ten years you were the driving force of energy that we all wanted to be with and to share...

You have been one of my best friends in life, and I will miss you. There will hardly be a time that I fish, cook, garden, travel or attend a 79er meeting that I won't think of you. You and I shared many of these experiences, your spirit is a part of them, for me, forever.

Bill White writes:

Jim and I always had a heart connection... Jim always had an earnestness, a seriousness of purpose, which absorbed others along with him. At the same time he had an immense laugh... I am also personally thankful to Jim for the challenge which he brought to me at times, to be more straightforward and less muted with my thoughts and feelings. In that sense he could be pushy and challenging, impatient with my avoidance or minimizing of things. I think that I am still in shock about the seriousness of Jim's illness. We knew he had diabetes...

Myron Koltuv writes:

Over the years, I would run into Jim at various Institute functions, and I experienced a pretty comfortable relationship with him; sometimes he would tell me how I had been an asshole—always in a fashion where I could hear him which is not a small feat with me—and I would return the regard at other times.

I've been thinking of when I first developed my affection for Jim, and memory being what it is, I'm not sure the following is a defining moment, but it carries some of his quality for me:

It occurred at a trainer's meeting a while back. Al Lowen was in front of our group deep into his autonomy stance, and describing the rectitude of not needing anybody.

At some moment during this monologue, Jim slung his chair around like a toothpick and leaning forward over its back, attempted to enter into a dialogue with Al, essentially working with Al for him to see that it was O.K. to need, even to need the trainers. Al was not an easy sell, and as the two of them went back and forth, Jim's bulk and energy made its impact as Al tilted back in his chair to the wall behind him. Jim kept going in an easy fashion, unconcerned about the wrath of our leader. Hmm, I thought, a man of bulk and balls.

Edsel Steil writes:

...I remember your passion and lust for life. You were, during the time I knew you, a true Sufi...

Not only have I felt cherished and loved by you, Jim, but as in any close relationship, I have also felt betrayed. In response to my telling you of my betrayal you wrote me some words that I will never forget, "You are right, Edsel, I did betray you, and I hope you can forgive me, but the fact is that you may never be able to forgive me." I had never before heard anyone give me the permission to never forgive them. And it was with this permission, to feel the depths of my betrayal, that I was able to melt and reconnect with you...

Jim, you wrote to me 5 years ago that you had attended a Sufi ceremony on the 17th of December, the anniversary date of Rumi's death, or as sufi's put it, the anniversary date of his marriage. You said the Sufi's danced with their arms out with the right palm toward heaven to receive the blessings of God, and their left palm turned toward earth to spread the blessings they received. I am sure that you would be honored if we could celebrate your marriage with a dance, extending our arms, just as you did at the celebration of Rumi's marriage, with right palm toward heaven to receive the blessings of God, and the left palm turned toward earth to spread the blessings we have received. And in so doing honor your marriage with the universe.

A certain preacher always prays long and with enthusiasm for thieves and muggers that attack people on the street. "Let your mercy, O Lord, cover their insolence." He doesn't pray for the good, but only for the blatantly cruel. Why is this? His congregation asks.

"Because they have done me such generous favors. Every time I turn back toward the things they want, I run into them. They beat me and leave me nearly dead in the road, and I understand, again, that what they want is not what I want. They keep me on the spiritual path. That's why I honor them and pray for them."

Those that make you return, for whatever reason, to God's solitude, be grateful to them. Worry about the others, who give you delicious comforts that keep you from prayer. Friends are enemies sometimes, and enemies Friends.

There is an animal called an ushghur, a porcupine.

If you hit it with a stick, it extends its quills and gets bigger. The soul is a porcupine, made strong by stick-beating. So a prophet's soul is especially afflicted, because it has to become so powerful... Rumi