

# A Circle of One

## by Jan Day, August 2006

OK, the workshop was wonderful and I'm feeling more alive than I have for years, but how do I look after it? How DO you look after this way of being that you experienced during the workshop, without the structure and support of the group around you and with the challenge of all the habits you have in place to maintain the status quo? DO you look after it?

I want to share some of my own personal experience with this because it matters so much to me. After immersing myself in all kinds of workshops for some years, I decided it was time to live this way of being back in "the real world" I returned to my work as a scientist in a multi-national company. After a couple of years I noticed my shine had faded, the vibrancy I'd felt when I was immersed in spiritual community had faded. At about that time, life nudged me. I lost my unborn child mid-term and plunged into an abyss of grief that eventually led me to my first Art of Being® workshop with Alan. After 2 days I'd got what I went there for: a feeling of being able to be alive WITH the grief and the loss. With it, came the remembrance of what I'd felt so often before: that vivid vibrant aliveness that filled my body, heart & soul. It was a poignant reminder that in those few years I'd lost not only my baby but my real life.

I went to many more of Alan's workshops and they kept me going and kept me growing. I glowed and faded and glowed and faded. My life was moving in the right direction and I made some changes and I danced a lot, but I still easily got lost in my everyday life. It was at a time when I was facing another crisis that I was given a treasure that serves me to this day. I'd been going through a pretty rough time and I was very

unhappy. A friend suggested that I try getting up before dawn (about 6am). I've often suspected that he meant for me to do 101 things before breakfast but that wasn't what happened. Instead magic happened and it captivated me just as my first workshop had. I sat and watched the sunrise, watching the blackness of night fade through blue until the first rays of sunlight shone over the lake of Luzern. I sat with myself, a candle and a beautiful Buddha statue that my father had given me to cheer me up, listening, writing a little, reading a poem, waiting to see what moved me. I stayed there for about 2 hours without any agenda except being with myself. It felt so good that I even got up a little earlier the next day to have more time - unplanned time which gradually came to have some structure, although it continually changed and evolved, and still does. I began to recognize elements of The Art of Being® Circle in what I was doing; a commitment to being there, a willingness to listen and to let myself be with whatever was going on; and to tell myself the truth.

I began to call it a Circle of One, realizing how it was connecting me with all that I valued in the Art of Being® circles: a circle that connected me to this one that I am and reminded me that we are "all one". This Circle of One became a time when I called to God, a time when I explored my darkest thoughts, poured out my gratitude and my sweetest feelings, when I cried, and laughed and sang, wrote, meditated, challenged myself, a time for reaching out with and for forgiveness, for listening to my heart's longing and facing what I was afraid of. Above all, it gave space for me to listen to what arose if I wasn't busy distracting myself, but rather allowed myself to be disturbed

by all the thoughts and feelings that would otherwise be buried. Not to indulge in reaction and self-pity but to challenge myself and to give myself a time every day when I could break open, when I could tell myself the truth, feel it and love myself in all of it. In other words, learning and practicing how to love and befriend myself, just as I did in the workshops. It was the most precious gift I could give myself and it helped me to bring the Art of Being® into my daily life and make it my way of life.

For a while, after I met my husband, I abandoned my Circle of One. Relationship has its own challenges and the mornings lured me into being loved by the other. But there came a time when I remembered how much I still needed my circle of one, and happily my husband soon realized how much it gave our relationship. It was a lovely moment when he told me recently what a difference it makes to HIS day to now also give himself this time.

Most of us know how to do it; it's just very easy NOT to do it. I remember my first yoga teacher telling me regarding a daily yoga practice, "the hardest thing is going to be getting on the mat". And it seems to be the same for giving ourselves time to look after all that we found in the circle. So I write this to remind you, to encourage you, to give yourself this gift. If you want some suggestions or inspirations to help you find YOUR circle of one, you can go to [www.artofbeing.com](http://www.artofbeing.com) and look under "publications" for Circle of One. You'll find some resources to draw on to inspire and encourage you to explore the beauty of who you are each day.

Wishing you happiness in every day,

With love, Jan

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