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FREEDOM IS!
A Conversation with
BRANDON BAYS

Accessing the Ancient Wisdom of Women
SOBONFU SOMÉ

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Freedom Is!

A Conversation with Brandon Bays

By Donna Strong

The founder of a form of spiritual transformation known as the Journey work, Brandon Bays had a major wake up call fifteen years ago. While meditating one day, Brandon received a very startling message: what was happening in her belly was serious. By the time she was able to get an appointment with a specialist, she looked quite pregnant. With symptoms that would have daunted the most intrepid of souls, even after she was diagnosed with a huge tumor, Brandon persevered. She decided to open to the greater intelligence and see what healing was possible in a month.

When this was occurring fifteen years ago, Brandon was already aware of current research about cellular healing and knew the potential of the body's capacity if she could access the issues involved in the tumorous growth. Through her sitting and asking, as a heartfelt and poignant inquiry, she did achieve access to the pain-filled consciousness that was stored and as this consciousness was released from cellular holding, her body regained its healthy balance. Pivotal understanding that was gleaned during this healing is now the basis of the Journey work.

An American citizen, she now resides in Wales with life partner, Kevin Billett, the Journey Inter-national Managing Director. At home only about two months of the year, Brandon spends the other forty-four weeks as a globe-trotting facilitator, giving workshops to bring her spiritual tool kit to people around the world. She is a passionate advocate and sparkling example of the gift that expanded presence brings into our lives. With the publication of her second book, "Freedom Is", Brandon is coming back to share more of the Journey work in America.

Awareness: Let's start at the beginning, with the event that sparked your life work.

Brandon Bays: The tumor was a pivotal point in my life. Like yourself, I have been certified in many different healing fields. I was traveling on the road presenting the Living Health Seminar for Tony Robbins, teaching people how to create vibrant health. I thought I was doing everything right — drinking filtered water, eating organic food and working out every day. More important than that, I had really done a lot of work to clear issues. I had a beautiful family, and a job that was very fulfilling.

So the last thing I ever expected was to get sick. You know, you are told that you get sick because you are stressed, and I didn't feel stressed. I felt at a peak of vitality and was at peace with myself. So when my tummy began to grow I couldn't believe it. One day, sitting in meditation, I opened into a bath of peace inside. Out of nowhere came a gut knowing that I might be seriously ill and needed to get to an orthodox medical doctor.

I did get an appointment, but not until months later. By the time I got to the doctor, I was diagnosed with this basketball-sized tumor. I asked to be given time to heal it naturally. The doctor finally agreed to a month, with the proviso that if it wasn't significantly healed in that time, she would take it out.

It set me catapulting into a spiritual awakening and healing experience. Part of the gift of it was that I uncovered a means to get direct access to what I call the 'Infinite Intelligence'. To access the boundless awareness that we all came in as, I had to turn the flashlight on at that depth and uncover repressed cell

memories.

A strong emotion that is repressed releases a chemistry into the bloodstream that will go to certain cell receptors and block them. If the cells remain blocked over a long period of time, then if disease is going to happen in the body, it happens where the cells are blocked. Conversely, science has found that when we remain open, relaxed and natural like a child with our emotions, then our cell receptors remain open.

When the tumor happened, I knew that the people who had healed successfully without drugs or surgery had gotten access to these old repressed memories and somehow spontaneously released the consciousness in the blocked cells, so the body could heal.

You can know all the science on the planet, be totally inspired by “What the Bleep Do We Know”, but unless you have a method, it is no more than inspiring example. That is where I was. I had read the case studies and knew cellular healing was possible. But there wasn’t a method.

Through grace, it was the great gift of my life to open into the boundless presence and uncover a direct means for all of us to get access to these old cell memories and release what is stored. It is then that we let the whole memory go — the consciousness and the pain, and put the whole thing behind us. Through forgiveness, the consciousness in the cell isn’t repeated, so the next cell generation is born devoid of that old block. It is born as a new regenerative cell.

***Awareness:** When you began talking about how you were at this peak and a pivotal event occurred that was such an important catalyst, I recalled the understanding that love urges us to let go of what is unlike itself. This feels like a consummate example, because there was this inherent urge of love to bring grace, and to clear away what didn’t resonate with the rising tide of love in your life.*

Brandon: That is a very accurate way of putting it! I was leading a very healthy life in so many ways. Yet the old patterns that are stored at the cellular, almost DNA level are putting out an impulse, and they do their job. The memory I uncovered was one of childhood abuse and violence. I thought I had this issue so handled, but what I had really done is come to a place of acceptance and understanding. You can accept what has happened, and if you accept the story, then you get to drag that baggage with you.

There is a mystery that happens when you forgive. You put it quite beautifully. I had gotten healthy in my life, and I was finally ready to finish with it. For every emotion a biochemistry takes place in our body, so when I had come to a place of peace and wholeness, the body responded.

***Awareness:** One of my favorite lines from a teacher in the healing arts: “The body never lies.” So the consciousness in our body tissues is the real litmus test to express when the chemistry of an issue is really resolved.*

Brandon: Yes! This experience was just the beginning of a lifetime journey of opening into this Infinite Presence and falling in love with this radiance, this beauty inside that is what we all are.

***Awareness:** Well, you absolutely shine like crystal! In the book you write about opening into grace. These finer aspects are quite subtle, and so not particularly easy to language, yet your book is able to touch upon it with words in a clear and lucid manner.*

Brandon: All of the Journey work and the Freedom Is work is born directly from everyday experiences we all go through. This book was written to give a direct sense of opening to the presence of stillness inside yourself right in the face of living in the world. There are actual silent saboteurs that rest in our body, working at a subterranean level that shut us down, just as our potential is coming out. The book is designed to be a daily companion so that the reader can go after some aspect of closure or

contraction in your life and find a way to open and find freedom in that area. It is a choice, even if we don't think we have one, but the book actually teaches you how, right from the beginning to bring your awareness right into the moment.

Awareness: *It does. There is an underlying coherence that you can sense. It is a potent healing vortex!*

Brandon: As beings, humanity is at a point, we are ready now to go deeper, to go into the presence that is our essence. When we are born and come into this life, a young infant feels themselves to be part of and in everything. They feel themselves to be an ocean of love. Everything they see that comes into their vision is themselves. We all come in as this enlightened awareness. Unfortunately it gets covered over, with layers of shutdowns, blocks and vows of limitation. The Journey is here to give the tools to peel back those layers and open into and through those emotional layers to come back home into the love which you came in as.

Awareness: *Here in the U.S., it seems like we don't trust feelings. An apt example from just a couple of years ago, I witnessed a middle-class mother with her small son, telling him with vehemence "Stop feeling angry." I was cringing.*

Brandon: Yes, when we come in, we feel wide open, we feel like we are an ocean of love and life is happening in us. Then we get to be around two years old and mother says, "Oh come on, dry your tears." You have been wide open and experiencing everything as it comes and suddenly, mother says, "Come on, come on, we have got to get going." Then the infant gets it, "I am not supposed to feel this emotion." This is how the first shutdown happens. We all have a series of shutdowns where we have closed ourselves off. Yet in trying to protect ourselves from life, we have closed off being open to ourselves. The Journey helps us to penetrate those layers and reclaim our openness to life — to joy, creativity, and the freedom that is your own being.

Awareness: *You have talked about forgiveness. I would like to ask how it is to get someone to take that leap.*

Brandon: We all know we should forgive. It is one thing to know that with your mind, and quite another to go through a process of genuinely forgiving. I had read in an enlightened master's book that the root cause of all illness is the lack of forgiveness. That is lack of forgiveness of ourselves, of life, of others, of God. If in each moment, we were just open and surrendered to say, life happens, and forgive life, we wouldn't have anything stored inside ourselves. We wouldn't get ill.

Most of us didn't learn that. We fight against life, we feel hurt and betrayed and have a lot of unforgiveness stored inside the body. We try to figure it all out and change the events of life. Yet lip service forgiveness does nothing. It takes more, it takes a willingness to go back and open to the real rage, the blame, the hurt, the betrayal and really release that stored pain. Ultimately, when you have finally spoken out what you were never able to express — even to the air, it doesn't have to actually be to the person — to release what has been stored and pent up — and feel the pain, only then can you really forgive. Then we are free to really let it go.

Awareness: *I see, quite literally, the truth of our feelings does us set us free!*

Brandon: We are literally learning a way to really forgive ourselves. In the beginning of Journey work, it is about forgiving everyone else; how life has let you down and for the times you were hurt. Eventually you run out of people to blame. Eventually the flashlight turns back to ourselves and we turn inside and say, 'Okay, what have I done that I am not proud of? In what ways have I tried to fit the mold, to say what was expected instead of following my own heart? How have I pretended to be more than I am, or less than I am? We need to go through a process of true self forgiveness and to find real peace.

As mothers, we bury the times we shouted to our children, “You are not allowed to feel that anger!” Then we forget that the incident happened, but it goes on to do its work inside of us. Journey work is healing and liberating on all levels of being; emotionally, physically, mentally, spiritually. It is a way to come home to yourself.

Awareness: There were many beautiful descriptions in the book that really access a quality of certain experiences. One of my favorites was the relationship between gratitude and grace.

Brandon: For me, there has been an underlying gratitude ever since the tumor. Where I was aware that I could possibly not even be on this planet, it was that dire. A deep appreciation for just being allowed to breathe, just to smell — to feel life and how beautifully vibrant it is. Gratitude is an undercurrent that informs all of my life.

I am aware, it has been nine weeks since I last was with my beloved lover, my husband. When I get on the phone with him, I could bemoan the fact that I don’t get to see him or I could just open deeper, and realize that hearing the deep rumblings of his grace-filled voice is nourishing for me. We are so fortunate to be able to share with one another about the beautiful healings that happen and how people find freedom.

What happens is, more is added unto the one with a grateful heart. That is my experience. When you are filled with gratitude, life says, ah, they love what they have, they feel blessed, well let me give more to them. When there is a feeling of I don’t have enough, of anger, or feeling less than, we tend to manifest what we focus on.

It doesn’t matter whether things come or go. I have had the tumor. In my first marriage, our house burned down, the IRS took all of our money, my ex-husband fell in love with another woman and left. At one point everything got taken from me that I considered to be essential — my lifestyle and my marriage, yet what remained was gratitude for life.

I am fully aware that everything coming into my life is all on loan. Material things come and go, lifestyles come and go, and then there is this essential love, that does not come and go. To rest in that eternal presence allows you to really honor and feel deep gratitude for what you do have while these gifts are on loan.

Awareness: The passages in “Freedom Is” about your work in [South Africa](#) were so rewarding. To close, please share with us how gratitude is growing through this [Journey Outreach](#) initiative.

Brandon: We do some Journey work with kids from the slums that house three million people in [South Africa](#). There are 500 kids between the ages of one and eighteen who have lost their parents to AIDS. They have nothing. Some of the one-year-olds are living in cardboard boxes. In the last four years the community found a little hollowed-out building and the kids have come together there. In the beginning, all the community could afford to do was to offer them two meals a week. Now with Journey Outreach these kids are getting two meals a day.

We are now in the process of acquiring a community center so that they have some kind of shelter. The kids are all getting Journey work consistently, because we have taught it to the grandmothers and the social workers. Now when I go to visit these beautiful kids, they are so full of light and love and gratitude! They shine like the sun and they have nothing.

I will bring three hundred balloons and we will blow them up and toss them in the air. Most of them have never even seen balloons before. I cannot tell you of the screams of joy from tossing a balloon in the air. Talk about living a life in gratitude! So how can grace resist that? We have to add more unto that.

Now, through donations and what the Journey gives, we are going to create a community center. So from

this I would offer, if you want to create abundance in your life, start from knowing what you already are and thanking God and life for that abundance. Taking a breath and having a human form, is the most priceless abundance of our lives. To live in that presence of abundance means living each moment in gratitude.

Something happens when you start writing down and expressing all the ways that you are blessed. You find yourself swimming in an ocean of gratitude. Even as we are talking now, I am aware that I am luckier than I could possibly thank God, life and the universe for. The heart sings when gratitude is here.

If you really want to experience the deep love that is the core of your being, take ten minutes to sit down and write 'What am I most grateful for?' and count the blessings you have. I know it sounds like a Pollyanna thing to count your blessings, but I suggest that the readers of Awareness try it and see what happens. If you want to be a magnet for grace, start with gratitude.

For more information, please visit: www.thejourney.com The first chapter of Brandon's new book, "Freedom Is", can be downloaded from her website.

Donna Strong is a writer living in Huntington Beach, CA. Her first book, "Coming Home to Calm", will be published in 2007.

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