

# Looking to our inner selves

By HEATHER CONN

**I**f thought creates reality, then how do individuals transform old thought patterns and beliefs, hence behavior, into new ways of being?

The following self-help books provide workable answers. Unlike many of their genre, which are rich on quick-fix schemes and poor on practical methods, these books dig deeper than intellectual surfaces. Through a broadened, holistic outlook, they link the mystery of mind/body connections, soul and spirit to daily life, serving to re-define self-discovery.

A step-by-step path to positive self-esteem is the cornerstone of Bobbe Sommer's *Psycho-Cybernetics 2000*. The title refers to the mind and nervous system as a "servomechanism," like an automatic guidance system on a plane.

The book's common-sense approach is effective; each chapter moves the reader closer to personal goals and a greater self-image through questionnaires, checklists, inspirational acronyms, idea summaries and how-to's with immediate application.

The ideas presented are not new. The book's program is within reach of any reader — a six-week time frame is provided to set goals and implement changes. Relaxation techniques, Zen breathing and visualizations or "creative imagination" are included.

The author reinforces the idea that answers lie within — not in the hands of some outside "expert."

The book is a revamped version of the 1960 best-seller *Psycho-Cybernetics*, by the late Dr. Maxwell Maltz. (With 30 million readers, Maltz's book on "self-image psychology"

inspired Salvador Dali to paint his own vision of life before and after psycho-cybernetics, which he donated to Maltz in appreciation.)

Author Sommer, a lecturer and consultant, was so profoundly affected

by Maltz's ideas that she quit psychotherapy to become an international speaker. Her enthusiasm fuels the book.

One complaint: the content is marred by too many typographical errors and missing words.

In *How to Handle Trouble*, John Carmody's premise is: "We dwell in the midst of a reality we cannot understand."

For him, "trouble" is the catch-all for every human limitation, from physical pain and "criticizing prejudices" to



of "spiritual nourishment" a how-to is perhaps a misnomer; it needs more nuts-and-bolts methods and practical suggestions. Yet perhaps providing mystery was deliberate; the author, a senior research fellow in religion at the University of Tulsa, says his reward is "to have primed people to hear their own answers."

Barbara Ann Brennan is forging a breakthrough path in alternative healing. *Light Emerging*, in the wake of her best-seller *Hands of Light*, is an exciting, in-depth look at how touch and energy-field techniques promote healing.

Founded on physicist David Bohm's theory that reality is holographic — all energy is relational and all-inclusive — Brennan provides detailed analysis of human energy fields. In her view, illness results from imbalances in these fields, which cause physical, emotional or spiritual distortions. A former

research scientist at NASA, this healer/therapist outlines the vital role of healthful diet, lifestyle, relationships, belief systems, and spiritual practices in self-healing. Packed with information, color diagrams and provocative ques-

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**PSYCHO-CYBERNETICS 2000**  
By Bobbe Sommer, with Mark Falstein  
Prentice Hall, \$24.95

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**LIGHT EMERGING**  
The Journey of Personal Healing  
By Barbara Ann Brennan  
Bantam Books, \$27.95

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**YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BE HAPPY!**  
By Barry Davis  
Reed Books, \$9.95

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**HOW TO HANDLE TROUBLE**  
A Guide to Peace of Mind  
By John Carmody  
Doubleday, \$25.00

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He probes five main subjects: thinking, feeling, sharing, deciding and praying. His own life's lessons add credible weight to his words; he was diagnosed with incurable bone cancer two years ago.

However, despite his avowed Eastern influences, the foundation of his thought seems rooted in the tenets of traditional medicine and religion.

He acknowledges the limitations of counsellors and clergy in healing others, and suggests alternative paths, but his

tions, this book challenges conventional thinking on the nature of reality and the root of disease.

Forms of thought, healthful and unhealthful, are the focus of Barry Davis's *You're Allowed to be Happy!* This workbook, aimed at grades 6 to 8 or higher, is an ideal tool to increase self-awareness in today's youth. Approved by schools across North America, including the B.C. Ministry of Education, it includes group activities, vocabulary development, a board game, teacher's