



**Nancy Hopps**

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## Press/Media Room/Articles About Nancy

### **New CDs offer path to wellness.**

**By Aria Seligmann/ EUGENE WEEKLY JANUARY 24, 2002**

Starting with simple deep-breathing exercises, Nancy Hopps, on her CDs and tapes, invites her listeners to relax. With soothing music playing in the background, Hopps' smooth, mellow voice and her warm approach to the material quickly lulls the listener into a deep peaceful state.

Breathing, letting go, relaxing the body, emptying the mind of thoughts, and guided imagery are some of the processes in her newest wellness series: **Relax into Healing**. Two new CD Resource kits, **Finding the Peaceful Place Within** and **Deep Healing Sleep**, were both released in October, expanding this Eugenean's library of offerings that already include **Relaxation/Affirmation Techniques**, **Relax Quick!** and the **Relaxation Gift Set**.

Each Resource Kit contains a 60-minute CD, reminder cards with affirmations for 28 days, and a 16-page booklet that describes how the relaxation processes can be most effective for this listener, with tips on diet, exercise, yoga, meditation and related approaches.

"My life is quite full, so finding ways to stay centered and maintain balance is essential for me on a personal level," says Hopps, who balances motherhood, performing, counseling, teaching, leading workshops and public speaking. She uses her own techniques to "keep from going over the edge" when her life gets busy and says she's seen "incredible changes in people's lives as they've learned to integrate these techniques."

Her **Relax Into Healing** series and other recordings were born out of a class Hopps taught at LCC and the UO in the 1980s in which students focused on a particular goal while learning how to integrate meditation and the creative power of thought, imagery and feeling into their everyday lives. The classes led to individuals coming to her for private counseling, and Hopps began working with clients on wellness, stress management, weight loss, smoking cessation, anorexia, depression, cancer and more.

Her client and students began asking for relaxation exercises to be recorded so they could use the guided visualizations she was using in class on their own time.

Now, Hopps' CDs are distributed throughout the U.S. and Canada and recently Music Design catalog placed her CDs right next to Deepak Chopra's in a rundown of top quality spoken word recordings.

Her CDs have been endorsed by leaders in the field of body/mind healing, including Bernie Siegel and Joan Borysenko. Jack Canfield, co-author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, says, "Nancy's work is very impressive. Material of this quality and integrity is rare. I recommend it highly."

Hopps is also a certified hypnotherapist and bioresonance therapist. Her work with so many clients has shown her over and over that what happens on an emotional level affects the physical plane.

"We all have an innate inner wisdom," she says. My job is to help guide the person to that place."

Using breath – "an incredibly powerful tool" – as the foundation, Hopps helps her clients find blockages and release that bottled up energy to restore balance. "The body/mind system wants to be in a state of health," she says. "We need to get out of the way."

A personal test came from Hopps in December 1998, when she was diagnosed with uterine cancer. She used her own techniques as well as diet, bioresonance, a partial hysterectomy, "incredible support systems and deep, inner spiritual work," to come through what she calls her "cancer healing journey."

During the year and a half she was dealing with cancer, she had to learn to let go of her many responsibilities. "That seemed to be one of my most important life lessons," she says.

But that experience led her to wonder what she was really here to do. The answers seemed to come easily. Within months, her **Relaxation Gift Set** was off and running; a year later, she released the **Relax Into Healing** series.

She continues to work on new CDs, hold speaking engagements, and is beginning to write a book. Hopps is heartened to know her work, once seen as rather "woo-woo" is now accepted in the mainstream model. She has been involved in research projects funded by the National Institute of Health, the National Institute of Mental Health, and has presented at numerous national and state organizations.

But now she is ready to push the envelope a little further. "I call it 'Coming out the God closet'—having the courage to speak in more direct spiritual terms," she says. "I truly believe peace does begin within each one of us. And with the world events as they are, the time to create peace is now."

Nancy Hopps will discuss her work and lead an evening of guided relaxation at the UO Bookstore on Jan 31st from 7:30 to 9 pm. The event is free.

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## **MEET THE AUTHOR™ - April 2003 BookWire speaks with...**

### **Nancy Hopps, creator of Relax Into Healing**

**Neela Sakaria:** Please tell our readers about your background, and how you came to produce the *Relax Into Healing* audio series (both *Finding The Peaceful Place Within* and *Deep, Healing Sleep* ).

**Nancy Hopps :** All my audio products, including the *Relax Into Healing* series, evolved out of my teaching and counseling experiences. I began teaching at a community college in 1981, then was adjunct faculty at the U of Oregon for about 7 years. This led to doing talks and workshops for civic and professional organizations, getting involved in a number of stress-related research projects, as well as maintaining a private practice. So basically, the tapes (and later, cd's) came into being in response to students' and clients' requests - they'd tell me how well they relaxed in class, but had difficulty reproducing that state on their own. So, in 1989, I produced my first tape with a little cassette recorder and Radio Shack microphone in my living room, and ran off about 50 copies.

The response was very surprising to me - local bookstore owners immediately sold out of the copies I'd consigned with them, and urged me to "get it out there!" on a wider scale. One thing led to another, and before I knew it, I was in the publishing business, with continued demand for new products, which in turn led to more demand for speaking engagements, and so on...

It really has been an amazing process, one for which I am deeply grateful... and never could have planned!

**Neela:** Especially in light of current events in today's society, it seems there would be a great demand for the advice you provide with this program. Have you seen a demand for information about relaxation/healing grow in the past few years - post September 11th, etc.?

**NH:** Absolutely. The focus of my work has always been based on the premise that any change in the outer world first must begin within. That inner peace is a matter of choice. That we don't always have control over the things that happen around/to us, but we do always have the choice how we respond to it. So by learning how to find that place of peace within, even and perhaps especially in the midst of such uncertainty and distressing situations around us, we not only feel better ourselves, but we are truly helping to create a more peaceful world.

It's like a pebble in a pond: the ripples reach far and wide, and we often have no idea what a powerful, positive influence simply our centered presence can have on those around us. I feel so strongly that each of us has a personal responsibility to do our best to find that place of peace, for only then can we be truly happy, healthy and fully contributing members of society, being of service in our own unique, important and wonderful ways.

And what's been so heartening since 9/11 is that I find I can sort of start on a "deeper" level with people - people are sincerely seeking. They're ready for change, and are incredibly receptive to learning and really using these approaches that can make some pretty profound changes. Again, watching those changes occur....well, I sure can't think of any other kind of work I'd rather be doing!

**Neela:** How big of a problem is insomnia in this country?

**NH:** Huge.

To quote the opening of my ***Deep, Healing Sleep*** booklet, "According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, 'More than 100 million Americans, of all ages, fail to get a good night's sleep.' " That's pretty astounding, isn't it? And I continue to be amazed at how many parents tell me their kids - as young 4 and 5 year olds - are using my cd's at bedtime! They may not relate to all the words, but apparently the combination of the music, the soothing voice quality and the overall relaxing energy of the recordings really work, even for very young children. Some parents of older kids say sometimes they listen together, to unwind from stressful days at school and work.

And then of course there are older people, for whom deep, restful sleep is often a challenge, as well as for those experiencing chronic pain... there are many reasons, at all ages, why sleep can be less than optimum.

**Neela:** Who is the target audience for your tapes/CDs?

**NH:** Well, as I was saying, they seem to appeal to a broader audience than even I imagined! It's a challenge, actually, when it comes to marketing, because there really is no set target market - I mean, do you know anyone, of any age, who doesn't feel stressed-out sometimes? I suppose the majority of purchases are made by middle-age

professionals, but then again, the personal letters and emails I receive continue to confirm that the demographics - who actually ends up using these CD's - and the reasons they feel they need this sort of product, are all over the map - literally and figuratively!

**Neela:** How does the audio program work? Should users follow the sequence of segments that you outline, or can they pick and choose?

**NH:** Each of the ***Relax Into Healing*** titles is designed to allow the listener to create a custom program, by listening to the entire 60-minute recording in sequence, or by choosing a single segment, or combination of segments, depending on their needs. For example, you might find that one day doing a progressive physical relaxation process - tensing and releasing various muscle groups - is all you need to de-stress after work and recharge you for your evening's activity. Another morning you might choose to listen to a guided imagery process, taking you to the Stillpoint within, to counteract the heavy feeling of having listened to the morning news.

I designed it very carefully, so that each segment stands alone, and/or combines well with any other segment. For example, if you only have 10 minutes - great - you can do some quick but very effective breath work, and be on your way! Another time, you might choose the deluxe treatment after a really rough day, to help you relax your body, release pent up emotion, and calm down all those swirling (and re-swirling!) thoughts, then be soothed into a gentle, nurturing countdown to sleep.

**Neela:** Can you offer our readers some brief tips on sleep and relaxation from your program?

**NH:** Regarding sleep: Another one of the lines from the ***Deep, Healing Sleep*** booklet that I often quote in my workshops is, "How well you sleep at night depends largely on the choices you make during the day." It's kind of a Catch -22: if you allow your body/mind system to get too overstressed during the day, then it's harder to fall asleep at night, and you're also less likely to get really deep, restful, healing sleep. So by learning and practicing simple relaxation techniques during the day, you may not even need to be concerned with tips on sleeping! But aside from relaxation techniques (such as the ones I'll share in just a moment), there are some basic factors, like simple bedtime rituals, regular rhythms, nutrition, and exercise, all of which I discuss in the booklet, which can help tremendously in establishing good sleep habits.

As far as relaxation tips go, I always begin with the breath. The first page of my web site, ***www.RelaxIntoHealing.com***, guides you through taking a couple of deep breaths. Simply by focusing your awareness long enough to breathe deeply and slowly into your belly (diaphragmatic breathing) for a breath or two, you initiate the "relaxation response", which makes amazing physiological changes in the body/mind system. Then by adding the power of thought, or mental suggestion, you can deepen

this experience even further. One of my favorites is to simply suggest to yourself as you breathe in , "I AM.....", and as you breathe out, ".....RELAXING....." Repeat this a for a few cycles of deep, relaxed breath, and see how you feel! It's so incredibly simple, but not always easy to remember to DO IT when you really need it!! (You could even try it right now!)

My various CD's contain many different breathing exercises, affirmations, guided imagery, and other processes, all designed to relax the body, release emotions and calm overactive minds... and to help the listener find that "peaceful place within".

**Neela:** How can our readers purchase your programs if they are interested?

**NH:** They can order through my website or through various other websites. My titles are all available through local bookstores, as well. If they're not in stock, you can request they order them through the publisher, Synergistic Systems, (or you may order directly if you prefer), by calling (541) 683-9088, or the bookstore may order through their favorite distributor (Baker & Taylor, Partners West, New Leaf, Music Design, Dempsey, etc.).

**Neela:** Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

**NH:** Well, sure....hours' worth! But I think I can summate by saying that I believe our thoughts, images and emotions...our very breath!... are incredibly powerful forces that can be focused to create peace.....within ourselves, and in our world. And I am so very grateful to be able to offer my work with that intention.

**Neela:** Are you working on any other projects?

**NH:** Always! Right now, I'm working on my first book, which will deal with the above topics, among other things. It's been growing within me for years, and is now ready to be birthed. It's an exciting project, to finally compile the last couple decades of learning into written form.

**Neela:** Thanks for your time, and good luck!

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This BookWire's Meet the Author interview was conducted by Neela Sakaria. After working as the Content Editor for BookWire.com and the site's electronic newsletter, Bookwire Monthly, Neela now conducts freelance interviews for Meet the Author . The views expressed in this interview are not necessarily shared by Neela or the staff at BookWire.com and R.R. Bowker .