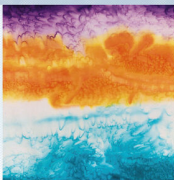


*Susan Kanor, Vellie Helfaer, Stephanie Shelley &
Peter Shelley*

Obituary Philip Helfaer

International Institute
for Bioenergetic Analysis (Ed.)

Bioenergetic Analysis
2023 (33)



Psychosozial-Verlag

Bioenergetic Analysis

32. Volume, No. 1, 2022, Page 9–10

Psychosozial-Verlag

DOI: [10.30820/0743-4804-2023-33-9](https://doi.org/10.30820/0743-4804-2023-33-9)



Reviewers for this issue:

Maê Nascimento and Vincentia Schroeter

Translators of abstracts for this issue:

Claudia Ueros (French), Rosaria Filoni (Italian), Thomas Heinrich (German), Rebecca Liu Jianpu (Chinese), Angelina Samartova (Russian) and Maê Nascimento (Portuguese)

Consultant for online subjects:

Rosaria Filoni

Submissions for consideration for the next volume of *Bioenergetic Analysis* must be sent to Maê Nascimento (maenascimento@terra.com.br) between June 1st and September 1st, 2023.

Bibliographic information of Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (The German Library) The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

2023 Psychosozial-Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Gießen, Germany

info@psychosozial-verlag.de

www.psychosozial-verlag.de



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). This license allows private use and unmodified distribution, but prohibits editing and commercial use (further information can be found at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). The terms of the Creative Commons licence only apply to the original material. The reuse of material from other sources (marked with a reference) such as charts, illustrations, photos and text extracts may require further permission for use from the respective copyrights holder.

Cover image: © Vincentia Schroeter

Cover design & layout based on drafts by Hanspeter Ludwig, Wetzlar

Typesetting: metiTec-Software, www.me-ti.de

<https://doi.org/10.30820/0743-4804-2023-33>

ISBN (Print) 978-3-8379-8429-3

ISSN (Online) 2747-8882 · ISSN (Print) 0743-4804

Obituary Philip Helfaer

Susan Kanor, Vellie Helfaer, Stephanie Shelley & Peter Shelley

Bioenergetic Analysis • The Clinical Journal of the IIBA, 2023 (33), 9–10

<https://doi.org/10.30820/0743-4804-2023-33-9>

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

www.bioenergetic-analysis.com

Philip Helfaer passed away from leukemia on October 11, 2022, at age 89. His wife, Vellie, was by his side.

In 1982, Phil joined the IIBA, established the Massachusetts Society for Bioenergetics Analysis (MSBA), and started the first MSBA professional training program. In 1984, with excitement and pleasure along with hard work, he published and presented the first edition of the IIBA clinical journal, *Bioenergetics Analysis*, to Dr. Lowen, at the IIBA conference in New York. Later in 1984, he became a member of the IIBA faculty. Over the years, teaching and practicing bioenergetic analysis in Massachusetts, Norway and Israel were highlights for Phil, marked by intense professional interest and happiness.

In 1998, he published *Sex and Self-Respect: The Quest for Personal Fulfillment*. In February 2022, he and Vellie published *Riding Dragons: Our Journey Through Trauma to Love, Intimacy, and the Deep Self*. He also published an earlier book in 1973, *The Psychology of Religious Doubt*, based on his dissertation for his PhD received in Clinical Psychology from Harvard University. The development of his personal website, www.helfaerbooks.com, was another important highlight in Phil's career.

Phil's writings and work focused on his lifelong need to understand his reality and to know his truth. He wrote, "I believe that unless perception of the other is based in and informed by love we cannot see the other clearly as the person they are. The capacity for love was an emergent capacity of the self, of *my* self."

In the last four months of his life, he wrote essays yet to be published that portray more about his deepening understanding of his work as a psychologist and of his personal development. In these essays, he writes about his life's journey; the lack of distinction in the development of his personal self and the development of his professional self.

Phil's commitment and dedication to the bioenergetic focus on the body was exemplified by his daily exercise regime, his continued exploration of his inner life and its impact on his close relationships, and, above all, on its impact on his relationship with Vellie. He has shown many that through the deep work of bioenergetics analysis we have a chance to develop a freer, more connected and more honest relationship with ourselves and our intimate others.

Phil had many interests outside his professional career. He and Vellie retired to North Carolina and built a solar home there that became one of the first "Emerald Green" certified homes. They planted native trees and many other native plants. They built a natural rainwater rock garden to support the local ecosystem. In addition, they enjoyed their electric car. Phil and Vellie lived in this new setting in peace, delightful pleasure, and in their love for each other.

Phil was buried at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts USA. Vellie will be moving back to the Cambridge area to be closer to her friends and where she feels most at home.