



Santa Fe, November 25, 2008



Charlotte Selver Oral History and Book Project

Dear Friend of Sensory Awareness,

I sit down to write you with Thanksgiving just days away and I am very grateful for the amazing year I have had, exploring the life of Charlotte Selver.

Thanks to the support of many of you I have been able to study a life unfolding in most unusual ways through fascinating and extremely challenging times. Along the way, I have conducted 48 interviews with people who knew Charlotte, to record their memories and reflections on lives profoundly touched by her and her unique “ability to question close to experience,” as Don H. Johnson put it so eloquently in my interview with him. (Read an excerpt of that interview in the new Sensory Awareness Foundation newsletter and on the project web site).

Awe-inspired at every step, I know that to delve into someone’s history, to discover the beauty of a human life in all its mysterious turns, I need to proceed just as in a Sensory Awareness experiment. With great respect for what presents itself, careful not to make premature assumptions, I uncover layers of stories and marvel at seemingly strange twists of life. I remember Charlotte’s question: “Do you have to pull the air in or can you wait for the next breath to come?” In finding the story that wants to be told I need to be open for what comes in just such a way, hearing from people, reading letters, studying Charlotte’s times – always accompanied by Charlotte’s voice through her many letters, interviews, and teachings.

I am now in the middle of the first phase of the project, namely to gather information through interviews, studying archival materials, and the history of the 20th century human potential movements. Thanks to modern technology I have the ability to let you take part in my journey and share some of the “harvest” with you as I go along. On the web site www.CharlotteSelverBiography.org you can find excerpts from interviews, reflections and a log of my activities. Members – people who actively support this project through donations – can access even more materials and receive an occasional e-newsletter.

It was through many small and a few very large donations that this project could be launched. Now, at the end of the first of a projected three years of work towards a biography of Charlotte Selver and an oral history of those who knew her, I ask for your support again. Reaching my fundraising goal of \$50,000 for 2009 is crucial for continued research and writing. Every single dollar is a step in that direction. Small and large donations are equally welcome and will be received with great appreciation.

Tax-deductible donations, earmarked for the ‘book project’ can be made to the Sensory Awareness Foundation, 23 Wallace Way, San Rafael, CA 94903. If you do not need the tax deduction or if you don’t reside in the US, send your donations directly to the address below (for more options visit the web site).

Thank you!

Sincerely,


Stefan Laeng-Gilliatt