

**Q and A**  
with  
**John Gelb, Founder and CEO**  
**AT PEACE® MEDIA**

***What is At Peace® Media?***

At Peace Media (APM) began as a company that produced and distributed massage therapy instructional video programming. Our first program, **Esalen® Massage**, was created under a license from the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California and we released it in May of 1997.

The mission of At Peace is to create products that help people. No matter what the product is, we want people who use our products to really derive tangible benefits from each and every product that they buy from us –we are a service, not a lifestyle company.

We know we're helping people because we constantly receive letters and calls from people telling us that our videos, our music and our bodycare products are improving their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

***Why did you chose Esalen massage for your first instructional video?***

The main reason we made the Esalen massage video was that we had experienced the massage work done at Esalen, and we thought – This is the greatest massage in the world. And it's not surprising, really. For over 35 years it likely that no other place in the entire USA has offered so much massage, so many massage therapists, 365 days a year. Since the mid-60s, virtually every major pioneer in the field of massage and bodywork has led workshops and taught at the Esalen Institute. People like Ida Rolf, Milton Trager, Moshe Feldenkrais, John Upledger, and many more, have all led workshops at Esalen. And since so many of the bodyworkers at Esalen have been there for long periods of time, they have had the opportunity to experience many different forms of bodywork, and incorporate many different modalities into their personal interpretation of Esalen massage.

Another special attribute of Esalen is that for over 35 years up to 12 massage therapists at a time have worked together on the same deck overlooking the ocean. Because of their close proximity, they have always been able to see the work of their colleagues to their right and to their left, making for a collaborative working environment where everyone is learning from everyone else – truly a wonderful spirit of cooperation and mutual exchange.

***Describe Esalen Massage . . .***

Esalen massage is not so much a technique as it is a philosophy of integrating oneself with all the massage modalities available to create just the right bodywork for each individual client. This practice is a nurturing combination of long strokes, gentle rocking and stretching, sculpting of deep musculature and the precision of Chinese point work.

### ***So who is the Esalen Massage Video intended for?***

It's intended for anyone who wants to learn the real basics of how to give a full-body massage. Massage therapists and massage school owners come up to us all the time when we are at industry trade shows and conferences. They tell us how great the Esalen Massage Video is as a teaching tool and that they use it in their classes to show students many different modalities. Rather than a particular technique, the Esalen Video shows how you can tailor your own individual massage style, no matter where you might have studied or learned massage therapy.

### ***How did you select the music soundtrack for the Esalen Video?***

We always knew that we wanted the perfect music soundtrack to accompany the visual images in the program, but we didn't know who should compose the music. We met Michael Benghiat and explained what we were looking for in this piece of music, but we also thought that Michael needed to actually experience Esalen massage. We sent him on an expedition to soak in the natural hot springs at the Esalen Institute and receive a number of massages from the members of the Esalen Massage crew. We felt that Michael would have a better sense for the philosophy of massage that is done at Esalen if he visited.

We also told Michael that the music had to have a slow tempo; it had to be almost ephemeral – there, but not there, never crowding into the consciousness, as we knew from our own experiences that music with too much beat, too much melody or distracting lyrics would interrupt the peacefulness of the massage. It must have worked! Michael wrote the compositions and we contributed what we could by selecting several of the woodwind instruments that we particularly liked, and then he went into the recording studio with the various players – and what came out was pure magic.

### ***How did At Peace Media get into the music business?***

Our first music album release, ***Music from Big Sur***, was the music soundtrack to the Esalen Massage Video. We created it because almost immediately after the release of the Esalen Massage Video, we began to receive feedback from massage therapists who loved the music and told us they wanted to be able to purchase it on a CD. So we contacted Michael and he arranged for some studio time to re-engineer the music onto a CD master. We released "Music from Big Sur" in January of 1998 – the first CD release on the At Peace record label.

As time went by, we realized how much our customers loved this music, so we talked to Michael about creating new albums specifically composed for our growing market of massage therapists, healthcare practitioners and other healers. We released three additional albums from Michael Benghiat in 1999, four albums in 2000 and three more albums in early 2002. We also introduced a new collection of music in 2002 called the At Peace Healing Music Collection. This group of CDs includes additional recordings by Michael Benghiat as well as five other musicians including Emmy-award winning musician composer Stephen Cohn, harpists Stephanie Bennett and Diana Stork, sound healer Ruth Cunningham and pianist James Mikael.

Our goal has always been to create music that has emotional resonance and spiritual depth or music that, as one of our customers described it, "***helps people to relax and open to the benefits of our compassionate touch program***". The pace of our lives, the over-stimulation and the stress that we all experience dulls our senses. After a while, we tend to shut down certain responses and reactions as a coping mechanism. Massage and bodywork helps to

reawaken, refresh and reenergize our senses in a healthy way. We want our music to enhance this experience.

### ***How would you summarize the mission and goals of At Peace Media?***

The mission of At Peace Media is to make a positive contribution to the world through business enterprises that enable us to create healthy products for people to use in their daily lives and to assist professionals in their quest to provide compassionate, qualified care and nurture.

### ***What do you see in the future for At Peace Media?***

We have learned a lot from the massage and bodywork community and we will continue to provide massage therapists with new, useful and exciting products. We're working with a variety of musicians, all of whom really know how to elevate the "relaxation music" genre to a higher level of emotional and spiritual resonance. So we'll continue to seek out, produce and market music that can be used for massage and bodywork, relaxation, stress-relief, meditation, yoga and to promote healing.

We also have two new instructional videos in our Massage Master Class Series™ -- *Reflexology, Volume 2, Hands & Ears* with Rhonda Funes and *Head, Neck & Shoulder Massage* with Sherry Galloway. **Our award-winning Esalen® Massage Video is now available in DVD format in a choice of three languages – English, Spanish and German.**

### ***So At Peace Media will continue to work closely with the massage and bodywork community?***

We believe the leaders and innovators in the massage and bodywork community are in the forefront of providing alternative therapies to the increasing array of experience blocking drugs available in the world. **Massage helps to sustain health and wellness and encourages healing and emotional balance. Massage and bodywork increase our capacity to respond to and cope with our experiences with emotional freshness. Through massage, people learn to respond more fully and with greater sensitivity to their own bodies.** I'm not trying to globalize or anything, but by increasing your sensitivity rather than dulling it, you become more aware of the impact your own actions have on others and on the world at large.

This is one reason why APM has become more proactive in the last year to team up with non-profit and charitable organizations that are pioneers or who are working hard to promote health, healing and peace – including Amnesty International, the American Massage Therapy Association Foundation, the New York University Child Study Center and Bastyr University, in addition to the Esalen Institute. These organizations are all involved in giving seed money, grants or support to people engaged in pioneering research, promoting human rights and advancing knowledge in the natural health sciences. We directly support them by giving them a portion of the proceeds of the sale of various music CDs or videos. **You can't just sit back and expect the world to change – you have to seek out ways to participate meaningfully to help increase knowledge, awareness and understanding.**

### ***What else is new at At Peace® Media?***

One of our newest products is truly unique – **the Power Nap Kit™**. I read an article in my local newspaper about an English teacher, Anton Anderson, who had created a **Power Nap Club** (PNC) to provide overscheduled, sleep-deprived teenagers with a method for coping with chronic

fatigue and stress. We donated some At Peace Music CDs to the Power Nap Club and thought that would be the end of it. Shortly thereafter, I received a call from Anderson, telling me how much his students enjoyed our music as background for his guided Power Nap sessions – and even more importantly, how it enhanced their ability to power nap.

Although Anderson never sought out public recognition for the PNC, his concern over his daily experience of facing weary, overscheduled teens, struggling to stay awake in class dovetailed with a growing public recognition that American teenagers are pressured and obsessed with an unattainable vision of perfection – the best schools and most competitive colleges, the hippest clothes, a perfect body, the coolest friends . . . National and international media picked up on the story of these kids napping at school and soon articles appeared on the AP newswire, on National Public Radio's Weekend Edition, CBS News, and lots of other consumer media. Anton also started hearing from teachers, parents and students who wanted to know how they could duplicate his Power Nap Club and experience.

### ***So what's included in the Power Nap Kit™?***

Once Anton called me and asked if there was some way we could work together to record his voice narrations along with our music and make it available to all the people who were calling him – we realized that we had to get moving. My wife Janice assembled a great team of writers and creative people who worked closely with Anton for over 10 months to create the Power Nap Kit™ which includes two CDs, a 44 page booklet entitled ***Teen Stress: The Inside View***, and a two-sided poster with the Power Nap Club logo and motto on one side and nature images for contemplation on the other. We even made the Power Nap CD available to a Scarsdale H.S. health care administrator who had 90 of her students listen to the CD and share their review comments on a questionnaire. They loved it and we've put their review comments up on our website [www.powernapkit.com](http://www.powernapkit.com). We created this product for teens, but we're also getting a lot of interest from stressed-out people in general who have heard about the power nap concept or who feel it's just the kind of coping strategy they'd like to learn about.

As I mentioned earlier, our mission and philosophy at At Peace Media has been the same since 1997 when we released our first product -- to create products that help people. We want people who use our products to really derive tangible benefits from each and every product that they buy from us -- **we are a service, not a lifestyle company.**

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