

Interview with Gregg Braden

by **Edie Weinstein**

New York Times best-selling author Gregg Braden is internationally renowned as a pioneer in bridging science, spirituality and the real world.

Following a successful career as a Computer Geologist for Phillips Petroleum during the 1970's energy crisis, he worked as a Senior Computer Systems Designer with Martin Marietta Defense Systems during the last years of the Cold War. In 1991 he became the first Technical Operations Manager for Cisco Systems.

For more than 27 years Gregg has searched high mountain villages, remote monasteries and forgotten texts to uncover their timeless secrets. His work is now featured as media specials on the History Channel, the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, ABC and NBC.

To date, Gregg's discoveries have led to such paradigm-shattering books as: *The God Code* (Hay House 2005), *The Divine Matrix* (Hay House 2007), *Fractal Time* (Hay House 2009) and his newest, *Deep Truth: Igniting the Origin of Our Origin, History, Destiny and Fate* (Hay House 2011).

The Divine Matrix was selected as the source for the made-for-television feature, *Entanglement* and is also the textbook for college level courses exploring new discoveries of science and our relationship to the world.

Today Gregg's work is published in 38 languages and 33 countries and shows us beyond any reasonable doubt that the key to our future lies in the wisdom of our past. With a bio like the one above, it would be easy to believe his to date life's work is cerebral and difficult to comprehend and yet Gregg has found a way to distill what may seem like lofty concepts into applicable ideas.

Edie: Your most recent book is called *Deep Truth: Igniting the Origin of Our Origin, History, Destiny and Fate*. That's quite a mouthful. Where does that title come from and what does that mean to you?

Gregg: I felt passionate about writing this book. It actually was written very quickly, but it took 30 years to do the research. Since our readers are reading this material, they know that this is no ordinary time, certainly in the history of our nation, our world and civilization and the best minds of our time are telling us we are living in the 'time of extremes'. It doesn't necessarily mean that there are bad things that are happening or even good things for that matter, but big things.

We are living in a time of big changes, big shifts and we are being told we have got to act quickly as these changes are on the horizon. When many people see the change, they call it a crisis and it leads them to think that something is wrong and something is broken. I am watching the greatest minds of our time struggle with multiple, simultaneous crises, whether we are talking about climate change or collapsing economies or energy crises, food crises, health crises. Many different facets of our experience are all lighting up simultaneously and we are being told we have got to act.

My question is: “How can we possibly make the choices we are being asked to make until we understand the deepest truths of our relationships to ourselves, to one another, to the Earth, to the past and to the way that we think and the way we solve our problems?”

What this book is all about is the 300 years of scientific thinking that has led us to embrace a story of ourselves, that is largely one of separation. We have told ourselves historically that we were formed as a random act of nature and that we are separate from our bodies, we are separate from one another and we are separate from the very Earth that sustains us and gives us life, that civilization is a one-time deal. It began on a primitive level and has evolved to the pinnacle of sophistication that we believe identifies us today and that nature was based upon this model that Darwin identified as struggle, scarcity and competition. It is with that world view that we have created this civilization that is now breaking down today.

If we look closely, the only things that are breaking are the ones that are no longer sustainable. As I began researching how we can possibly respond to the things we are being asked to respond to, how we can know what policies to enact, what choices to make in our everyday lives, what I began to find is that new discoveries have overturned that 300 years of scientific thinking.

New peer reviewed scientific discoveries are now telling us a story of our deepest relationships to ourselves, and our world around us, that is 180 degrees opposed to what we have been led to believe in the past. It is a story of connectivity, of unity. It tells us we are not here purely by accident and that there is a deep connection between us and our bodies and a deep interdependence between us and the world around us, that civilization in fact is cyclic and we are living in what is now known to be the third (and probably not the last) of these cyclic advanced civilizations that are now being dated back into the last Ice Age or 13,000 years ago.

The one area of discovery that probably holds the greatest potential for positive impact for giving us a reason to think differently about ourselves and the way we solve our problems, are the discoveries in the life sciences that tell us in scientific terms that nature is based upon a model that is called ‘Cooperation in Mutual Aid’, rather than the competition and conflict that we have been led to think about ourselves and one another.

People say: “Gregg, Charles Darwin wrote a book in 1859, over 150 years ago and maybe he didn’t get it right, but so what? What difference could it possibly make in this modern high tech, digital world that we live in today?” It’s a really good question and the answer to the question is that, yes, Darwin introduced the ideas of nature and survival of the strongest, which is the language that he used that was later interpreted as ‘survival of the fittest.’ Darwin actually said: “survival of the strongest.”

It was in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s when the foundation of the modern world was being put into place - civilization as we know it, the economic system as we know it today, the systems of corporations the way we know them today, the way that nations deal ultimately with disagreements between themselves. All of those principles that are very much a part of our lives were put into place when the world embraced the false assumptions of separation and competition and conflict that were believed to be true at that time.

That’s why I think with this book, *Deep Truth*, that it is vital to share this. There is a reluctance and flat out resistance in the main stream to share these discoveries (in main stream media, documentaries, news programs, classrooms, text books) for a number of different reasons ranging

from economics to ego. They are being asked to solve the problems with the same thinking that led to the problems.

Edie: A couple of things jumped out at me from what you have just shared. Even Darwin's ideas of evolution are evolving of necessity. The other thing is that I work in the mental health field and do drug and alcohol counseling and a lot of what you are talking about impacts on my client population. Many don't deal with change very well and I am guessing that most people don't. Much of what you are talking about is heady stuff, cerebral stuff....

Gregg: Absolutely not. It's very simple. Nature is simple. If it sounds complex, it is because of the language we use to describe it. I want to be clear; if we want to reach beyond the choir to share this information, beyond the people in the New Thought community, if we want to have an impact in the main stream, we must find a language that is trusted and respected. In the world today, that is the language of science.

I am using scientific principles. It doesn't mean it has to be technical. There are very simple principles in place here. I want to respond to the comment you made that for most people change is difficult. I have found that to be true at times and here's the reason. If people are being asked to change without being given a reason or why the change is being made, there is a reluctance to putting the energy into doing something different. However, I have found in my experience all over the world, not just in Western culture or society, that when the facts are clear, choices become obvious. If there is a need for change, people will generally embrace it without being talked into it.

For example, what we are now witnessing is an era where the use of war is outgrown in the way it was used in the past. We're no longer fighting wars against clearly defined enemies, defined borders between nations. It is a different kind of conflict that is happening now. To support old ideas of war and wartime technology doesn't make sense anymore. A lot of people are struggling with that. When they see that we are actually beings of nature and nature's fundamental model is one of cooperation, it makes perfect sense. The wars we have fought in the past flies in the face of the most basic models of nature. We know that conflict exists in nature; we are not going to deny that. It is under specific conditions.

What scientists have found, what the studies have shown is that people will actually betray their truest nature of mutual aid and cooperation if one or a combination of three situations are present.

1. When we feel that our families are threatened.
2. When we feel that our way of life is threatened.
3. When we feel personally threatened.

If we look at the hotspots in the world today as we are having this conversation... the riots in Tahrir Square in Cairo are gaining momentum day by day, what is happening in the Middle East, with Israel and its neighbors, or Africa or in very specific places in the United States, people feel that they aren't safe, their families aren't safe and their way of life isn't safe. If we are really serious about getting to the bottom of solving our social problems today and bringing people together in a meaningful way, at some point we have got to address these issues.

Edie: Is that something you speak of more specifically in the book?

Gregg: In the book, what I identify is called 'The Pyramid of Thinking'. It boils down to a very fundamental question that we have all asked ourselves at some point in our lives and every

civilization must come to terms with to be successful: “*Who am I as an individual?*” There are many of us, so the question becomes: “*Who are we?*” The way we answer that question in the modern world has largely been defined for 300 years in the language of science. If you ask people: “*Who are you?*” they will talk about where science tells them they come from and how science tells them things work in the world. Where that becomes a problem is that we are now living 300 years of false assumptions of science that led us to embrace a story of separation.

The good news is that with new discoveries, we have asked science to tell us the deepest truths of who we are. Science has done that and now there is a reluctance to embrace what science has told us. Human DNA did not happen spontaneously under a natural condition. The best geneticists of our time are telling us that something else came into place to create DNA the way it is. They can't say what it is. They give the reasons why.

The reality is that modern human appeared on the Earth 200,000 years ago in the bodies that we know have; if we compare our skeletons to theirs, you can't tell us apart. We haven't changed. The cranial capacity is the same, brain capacity is the same and the physical proportions are the same. We don't know what did happen, but because the schools are preventing the full spectrum of evidence from being shared with our young people, they are prevented from seeing a story that is no longer being supported by the evidence. To honor our young people, I'm not saying to replace Darwin's ideas of evolution.

I was trained as a geologist; evolution is a fact I've seen in the fossil record for some forms of life. We don't see it for humans. For over 150 years since Darwin released his book, we have been trying to force the evidence to fit into these pre-conceived ideas of evolution and the data simply doesn't support it. Now the DNA evidence really doesn't support it.

Quantum physics is redefining our relationships to ourselves, one another and the Earth. We know that our thoughts, feelings and beliefs are deeply impactful upon the physical healing of our bodies and our longevity. Quantum physics is now telling us that the effects extend beyond our bodies to the world around us. It is not about control or imposing our will upon others, but it says that we are so deeply connected that what happens with one family member in a household under one roof has a direct influence on what happens to other people around them. We can't think of ourselves separately that way any longer.

The archeology is showing us that advanced civilization is cyclic. We have been led to believe that civilization is only 5,000 years old. Gobekli Tepe in Turkey is now being dated in just over 13,000 before present and that's in the last Ice Age. The Gulf of Khambat in India, a city five miles long and three miles wide, is now being dated at 9,500 years old in a place where we are being told nothing like that should be happening.

When you start to put these all together, they are interesting individually; they tell a story of us and a lineage of wisdom. How did the Mayans know about cycles of time? Now we know that it was transmitted from an earlier civilization that had these understandings. We know the false assumption of a linear civilization is no longer true.

When we get to Darwin's ideas about the way we solve our problems, I want to say a couple of words. I have a lot of respect for Charles Darwin; he was a good scientist and he attempted to do something in 1859 that had never been done before and that was to take the understanding of how we answer the question: “*Who are we?*” He was trying to take it out of the realm of the church and

the religious institutions and bring it into the realm of science. No one had ever done it before. Darwin himself said: "This is only the first step. I fully expect that my theories will fall because new discoveries will pick up where they left off."

Darwin was willing to allow his theories to fall. It is the pop science of today that is reluctant to let go of that story. They tell us that humans are the product of a random act of evolution. There are so many implications from them. In Darwin's way of thinking, we live in a world of scarcity and struggle in a dog-eat-dog world where we've got to fight tooth and nail for our little slice of the pie. The problem with that is that in the late 1990's and early 2000's, there were 400 peer reviewed studies that asked: "What was the optimum amount of violent competition in any situation, in the classroom, in the playing field, in the workplace?" All 400 studies came back with the same answer: "Zero." Always, always, always, violent competition is detrimental to the individual, it's detrimental to the family and it's detrimental to the species.

Cooperation is the model that nature is based upon. If we have any doubts about how deep this goes, we need look no further than our own bodies. We are single bodies made up of about 50 trillion individual cells that must cooperate so that we can have the healthy and vital lives that we do. When their cooperation breaks down, we call it disease and when it breaks down far enough, we call it death. Every day, through our own existence, we are being reminded of the fundamental model of nature.

All of this is interesting and where it becomes relevant, is when you look at the world of crises and how they affect our lives. All of our lives are changing - the way we think of jobs, of money, careers, the ways we support our families, where we find our joy, how we combine the things that we love with things that bring us sustenance in life. All of the way we address those questions are based on how we answer: "*Who am I?*" We answered it in the past through the false assumptions of science. New discoveries give us new reasons to think differently and live our lives differently.

There is a question we all ask ourselves every day (and we have, all of our lives) when it comes to every relationship we have ever had, whether it comes to a personal relationship, an intimate relationship, co-workers, friends, family, ourselves or God. Consciously or subconsciously we have asked: "*What's in this for me?*" The way it usually comes about is that we say: "*What can I get from the world that exists if I do these things?*" That's based on the false assumption of science and who we think we are. The new discoveries give us a new question "*What can I give to the world that's emerging? What I can I share? What can I offer? How can I contribute?*" The way we answer that simple little question makes all the difference in the world.

My wife and I live in rural northern New Mexico. A neighbor of ours is a very big builder of ecologically sound homes and he had a crew of 25 or 30 people and he was responsible for their livelihood. In 2008, the housing market collapsed and his business collapsed. He said: "I'm a builder. I'm good with my hands. How am I going to support my workers? How am I going to support my family?" He asked himself this question: "What does the world need right now? Right now, the world doesn't need new homes. The world needs to learn how to feed themselves."

He took his skills and built modular, sustainable 12-month-out-of-the-year raised bed greenhouses so that people could have food, without having to go to the store and pay for the rising costs and the pesticides and GMO's. He built some that can go on a counter top in New York city. Some are 4 x 8 feet and some could be strung together in a series outdoors and everything in between.

His name is Ken Kuhne and Ken is having such a good time doing it. He knew that if he could support the emerging world, that he would be taken care of. I doubt that Ken will ever build another home because he is having so much fun. He told me that when he goes to bed at night, he knows he has helped people do something that are really good for them. It's the old adage that you give people a fish, or a rod and teach them to fish... he's teaching people to grow food.

Edie: A friend of mine calls it being a 'go-giver' rather than a 'go-getter'.

Gregg: I like that.

Edie: I agree with everything you have said. I wonder if it is denial or what I refer to as 'spiritual amnesia' that keeps people from recognizing that we are at a crossroads, that we are at a crisis point.

Gregg: I just spoke about this on a stage in front of 3,000 people in Toronto, Canada, in a beautiful theater in the downtown area. People simply aren't aware. The media is reluctant to share the fact that we are living in the time of extremes, a time of multiple serious crises. What the media tries to do is show that there are independent problems. If you could just fix the economy, everything is okay. If you can just change the light bulbs in your house and bicycle to work, then climate change is going to be okay. If we can find better ways to process oil and we have 200 years of oil, then everything is going to be okay. The reality is that these are all connected and are part of a bigger picture that is linked to cycles and our cultural is reluctant to relate to cycles. There is a fear and people say: "Just tell me what to do to make things better."

When I can share geologically in the ice cores of Antarctica that go back 400 and 20,000 years, you can see the cycles of climate shifting and you see where we are now. You can see that we are supposed to be at a time when the climate changes. People say: "That means the Earth isn't broken." I say: "That's right, it's not broken. I would be concerned if we were not in a warming trend right now."

You look at the last 2,000 years and climate data and you see that the Earth has been three times as warm as it is right now. There was no CO2 creating the warming. The question is: "If the CO2 didn't create the warming, what did?" These are the kinds of questions that we have to answer if we are seriously going to talk about the cycles of change that we are in right now.

The question for me is: "How can we solve the issues if we're not honest with ourselves about them?" There is a lot of 'spin' on a lot of the issues. No one told us this was coming and we were led to believe that if we make a few changes we can go back to the way things were in the 80's and 90's, rather than having people adapt to the new normal that's emerging through resilience in the way they think and the way they live. Part of that resilience is from hearing the facts to give meaning and make sense to what is happening in our lives today.

Edie: It reminded me of a Talking Heads' song, *Nothing But Flowers*: "There was a Pizza Hut, now it's all covered with daisies." And "We used to microwave, not we just eat nuts and berries."

Gregg: If you tell a story often enough, people believe that it's true. One of those stories is that there is a scientific consensus on climate change. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is a petition with over 31,000 global high ranking scientists that say they can not support the public

story about climate change in the media. It's very delicate, because we are obviously in climate change. We know that. It's how we respond to the change.

From my perspective, and there's a lot we don't know, we are in a cycle where we can expect a new norm and the honoring thing to do is help people understand so they can adapt and think resiliently - not to make people angry about policies and what we did in the past; it's not about that. It's about recognizing where we are right now, how can we help one another adapt to the norm of the changing world? No one has really come out and informed us in a big way. I'll be talking about that in Calgary.

Edie: You talked about why we are the tipping point of our existence. Is that tied in with climate change and cooperation vs. competition?

Gregg: It's tied in with everything. People say: "You can't see the forest for the trees sometimes." What we are doing is looking at climate change as THE big problem and what scientists are telling us is that there are actually seven boundaries in the biosphere that must be present to maintain life as we know it on Earth. This is in the prestigious journal *Nature*. Climate change is only one, so it's not about the temperatures on the Earth, so much. It's about maintaining all of these relationships between us and the world around us. We're not hearing about the other boundaries.

What the data clearly shows is that the temperature changes are directly linked to Earth's relationship to the sun and we're not going to change that relationship. We are best served by honoring the other relationships that we can maintain. Of all the relationships that are being affected by how we live, the CO2 level is the least of what is being affected. It's important; we need to deal with it. We need to find clean, green, sustainable ways of living. We need to find alternative fossil fuels.

I think it's important that we honor ourselves by being real about what's happening in the world and adapting to the change, so we're not caught off guard when we get the big storms, when we find ourselves in times when the rain doesn't fall or the snow falls much longer than it is supposed to. Those are all symptoms of the cyclic change that we have seen in the past. The geologic data shows that the changes are intensive, but they're brief. They don't last very long, maybe a period of decades, but they don't last for centuries.

It's what comes next after the warming; the cooling is often more of a problem than the warming itself. It's all of these very complex relationships that are coming to the forefront now, so we can answer the questions: "*Who am I? Where are we in terms of our relationship to the Earth?*" By understanding the past, it helps us to know where we are right now and the kind of decisions we can make and the policies we can enact.

It's very complex. Every one of these can be hijacked for gain, based on ego or finances or politics. It's a very delicate tightrope to walk.

Edie: How do we learn resilience and not fall into that pit?

Gregg: The thing about resilience... traditional resilience has been defined as something we do after the fact. It is our ability to rebound, to recover from some kind of a trauma in our lives, whether it's a physical or emotional trauma, the trauma of a storm wiping out a town or a terrorist attack or a death in the family or loss of a relationship. We are looking to expand the definition. Is

there a way to live or think so that when these things happen, it's a hallmark of where we are in cycles of time? If we adapt our lives to expect disruption of services and extremes of climate, there are going to be times when things don't work the way we have been accustomed to. How can we embrace that kind of resilience in our lives?

What the science is showing is that it starts with us, with our hearts. There is a relationship between our heart and our brain. The heart sends a signal to the brain and the brain releases chemistry into the body, based on the quality of that signal. The signal is determined by our emotions. When we feel feelings of well-being, appreciation, gratitude, compassion (what we would call positive emotions) it sends a very smooth signal to the brain and the brain releases life affirming, anti-aging chemistry, high immune response chemistry.

When our hearts feel stressed, when we feel we're not safe, when we feel anger, hate, jealousy, rage, unresolved frustration, that sends a different signal to the brain. It's very irregular, very chaotic and the brain senses this signal and it begins to release stress chemistry into the body. It can be good for a short period of time. We don't want to live our lives chronically in stress. Many people do in the world right now.

The relationship between the heart and brain is called coherence. When we can find optimum coherence between the heart and the brain, we also create greater resilience in our heart and emotions, to deal with the problems of the world. It is actually measureable and is called *HRV-Heart Rate Variability*. When we are very young children, the time varies between one heart beat to the next. It's not a completely regular beat, like clockwork and because it varies, it gives us resilience in our hearts to new experiences and changes in the world.

We need that when we're young. We need to know when the burner on the kitchen stove is hot. We need to know that every dog in the world isn't as friendly as the one in our living room. As we get older and our ideas and beliefs become more rigid, we lose that Heart Rate Variability and it makes it more difficult to respond to the changes in the world. The good news is that we can regain that Heart Rate Variability; we can regain that resilience by creating those positive emotions intentionally in our hearts.

Edie: I do an exercise with my clients sometimes where I have them stand and think about something mildly disturbing, not something horrendous or traumatic, and ask them to close their eyes. I tap them on their shoulder and they start to fall back. I catch them and don't let them fall. I then ask them to clear it out and think about someone they really love and it just lights them up when they visualize this person. Their face softens and then I tap them on the shoulder again and they don't budge. So I say that when you're caught up in anger and fear and pain, you're a pushover and when you are in that space of love, you're grounded. Try that in one of your workshops.

Gregg: The reason you have to describe that connection is because they are a product of their culture and families that separates our emotions and beliefs from our physical bodies. That's part of what's changing now. In the book *Deep Truths* there is an inverted pyramid where the point is pointing down and is called 'The Pyramid of Thinking'. On the left are the false assumptions of science, on the right are the new discoveries and in the center are the basic questions: "*Where does life come from? What is our relationship to our bodies? What is our relationship to our past? How do we solve our problems?*"

You can compare the false assumptions to the new discoveries. You can see that it shows up everywhere in our lives. We try to solve the problems in the Middle East through the false assumptions of survival of the strongest and it's not working. The reason it's not working is because nature is not based on that model. We're trying to solve the economic problems through survival of the strongest and that's not working for the same reason.

It's important to share these new discoveries and not chastise the old ones. I don't think that's useful. I think we did the best we could do with what we had in the world of the past. It worked so well because it got us to where we are. We're here, so we have to say it worked. We can now embrace what our science is telling us. These are not my ideas, not my opinion - these are facts, based on peer reviewed scientific fact.

Edie: People are beginning to accept the definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results. Some of those old behaviors have gotten us to where we are now, that we would rather not be. It ties in with the idea that we have survived everything that has ever happened to us, because we are here to talk about it. It has only worked this way for so long and our thoughts need to evolve as well.

Gregg: We are now witnessing situations where our attempt to apply the old ideas is failing so miserably now and our very existence is being threatened and that is what will drive the willingness to embrace the new ideas. What is happening in Syria is now evolving into a world affair, as other countries are drawn into energy interests, economic interests and religious interests. All those are coming together. If we try to apply the old thinking to solve this problem, we know where that's going to lead.

These ideas are basic and we see them playing out on a global level as well as our own back yards. In our work place, people are losing jobs. Right now, entire industries are disappearing, because they are based on unsustainable principles that no longer work in the world. If people try to recreate their job that they had done in the past, many are finding struggle and frustration. However, if they can let those old ideas go and ask these questions: "*What can I share? What can I contribute to the world that is emerging?*" what they are finding is that they are thriving in more secure jobs and careers than they ever imagined in the past. It is the willingness to embrace the fact that 'now' is different.

Edie: What will you be speaking about in Calgary?

Gregg: It is a multi-media, very visual experiential event where I will share the new discoveries that will tell us where the thinking of the past no longer works, specifically what it means in our everyday lives and what we can do to make our lives better as we embrace the new world that is emerging and where that world has the potential to lead us. We already have the solutions to the big problems of the world. All that stands between us and the world where those solutions exist is our willingness to embrace the possibilities.

For more on Gregg Braden go to: www.greggbraden.com

Edie Weinstein is a colorfully creative journalist, dynamic transformational speaker, interfaith minister, licensed social worker, BLISS coach radio host (It's All About Relationships www.vividlife.me) and the author of The Bliss Mistress Guide To Transforming The Ordinary Into The Extraordinary. www.liveinjoy.org