

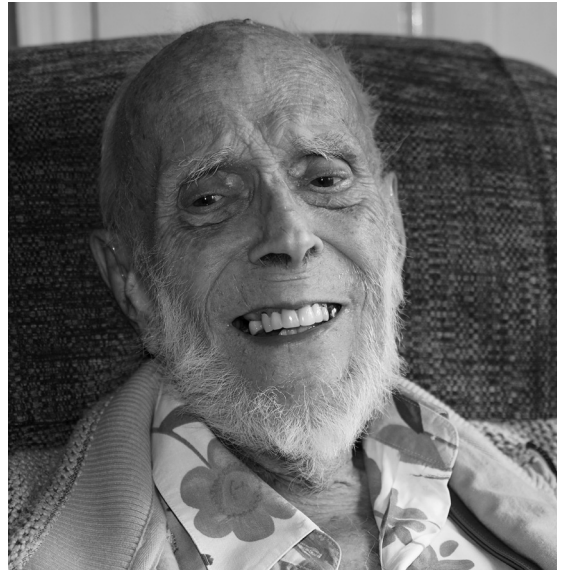
Remembering John Rowan, 1925–2018

As many if not most readers will know by now, AHP Honorary Life President John Rowan died peacefully on Saturday 26 May 2018, at the magnificent age of 93.

In this remembrance symposium for John, those of us who spoke at John's funeral at GreenAcres, The Woodland Hall, Epping on Friday 22 June 2018 have sent written versions of the addresses given at the gathering. We hope these reminiscences and appreciations do justice to the great man, and to a great life in and for Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology.

Rest In Peace, dear friend and colleague.

Richard House
July 2018



Eulogy for John Rowan

Andrew Samuels

Over the years, I have been invited to speak about John Rowan many times. At his 70th birthday party. At the gathering where he was presented with a *Festschrift* on his 90th birthday. At the party held just a few weeks before he left us.

At his 70th I said, 'I like John a lot', and italicized 'a lot'.

I concluded: 'John, I salute what you have achieved. Don't stop.'

And I also wrote, presciently given what will happen later today: 'It is transparently clear that, wherever John journeys on his shaman-like quests,

he comes back to us, ever-ready with help, advice, information and criticism.'

[Note: John's actual burial was conducted by the contemporary shaman and therapy practitioner, Leo Rutherford.]

But nothing is quite like a eulogy. I feel, rightly or wrongly, that I have something new to say.

John was perhaps the most *intelligent* man I have known.

What does 'intelligence' mean when used like this? Well, it means more than intellect or academic knowledge. Nor is it split off from the body, nor – and this is important when considering John – split off from the cosmos and the realms of transpersonal experience and being.

The word 'intelligence' comes from Latin, when

it meant characteristics such as understanding, power of discernment, art, skill, taste. The implication is also of being appreciative, in the sense of appreciating what lies outside the individual personality or self. Intelligence can also mean gathering things together and even just to speak.

Those of you who knew John well will see what I am getting at.

I knew John for 30 years and he was a dear friend and stern critic. I owe him the wheeze of always including experiential elements in my lectures and books because, as he said, people needed that.

We met regularly for dinner, cocktails and a lot of wine, and we were sorely disappointed when our favourite haunt – Balls Brothers wine vaults in Bishopsgate – was closed. Did we miss the name as much as its cellar-like private dining rooms? Maybe so.

Like others, I suspect, I miss John's hearty chuckle when meeting him, and I don't think enough has ever been said about his physical presence. He had a rare and rounded beauty, a puckish demeanour, and a capacity to remain in silent repose, no doubt conditioned by years of meditation. He had a very British kind of glamour.

My loss of him is quite visceral. I mean it when I say that John was beautiful.

This loss is undoubtedly shared by his family and, of course, by Sue. Their partnership was a joy to behold. He cared for her so deeply, and, in the last days, expressed such gratitude. For love, he stayed alive. He once told me he was not worried about dying but didn't want to upset Sue by doing it.

Sue, I know he could from time to time be a waspish rat as well, but he really and truly loved you with every fibre of being – and he talked to me a lot about how he loved you.

One cannot deliver a eulogy for John Rowan without mentioning the books. And the book reviews, of which there were hundreds, mostly generous and tolerant but occasionally really horrible and unfeeling.

As for the books, well, John pioneered in the writings on humanistic psychotherapy, research methodologies, men, the feminine, subpersonalities,

pluralism, the transpersonal – and that is just a short list; others will want to mention their own favourites, perhaps. The title of 'Father of Humanistic Psychotherapy in Britain' is well deserved.

Despite those book reviews, John was not a horrible man. Sometimes, his economy of expression and preference for the laconic gave the impression that he was not connected to the other on an empathic or emotional level. Nothing could be further from the truth. John stayed close to interpersonal detail right to the end of his life. He could be exceptionally kind, provided not too many words were required in which to express it.

In poetry, John found official cultural sanction for his brevity, and I have quite a number of poems sent over the years. In the poems, one recurrent theme was love – love of the woman, the child, the world – and love, in a totally un-narcissistic way, of himself.

People sometimes didn't completely understand how John's inner workings translated into speech. But what he said was always, for him, his Truth. I remember at a joint Jungian/Humanistic conference, he said that self-actualization (the humanistic goal) was a much better idea than individuation (beloved by the Jungians). Then, quickly and quietly, he said 'And I am self-actualized'. Ho Ho Ho. In such a way he farted at both the humanistics and the Jungians!

I turn now to John's courage, because, for me, it is vital that it be recognized. For decades, he not only propounded humanistic and transpersonal viewpoints, but also defended them. He did this notably in the context of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy as it struggled into being. In public meetings, he had to deal with psychoanalytic verbiage, psychiatric clichés, and a general valorizing of the statistical kinds of research. He handled these resistant dinosaurs with wit, grace and a capacity to let matters go when things were becoming unhelpfully locked. It is a little remarked aspect of courage to back down; usually, the ideal is to go down fighting. That was not John's way, which was far deeper.

When reflecting on John's courage, these words from Dr Martin Luther King Jr came to mind: 'The

ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.'

And these from Maya Angelou: 'Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practise any other virtue consistently. You can practise any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.'

I think that, if he were here, John would be astonished, disappointed and pleased with himself. But I do not think he would make a judgement about his life. He would know for sure that he was born, existed, and, whatever it really means, that he died. John knew that the world was cruel, but also gorgeous and lovely. He liked simple pleasures such as tourism, as well as complicated integral ideas. Sitting with him over the months as life gradually ebbed away – though not without medicine-defying remissions – I saw him turning into his own being, becoming introduced to his self.

I think that, generally speaking, John and his self got on rather well.

I will conclude with an anecdote provided by Sue Rowan. A few days before the funeral at which this eulogy was given, she took a short walk up towards a wood near their house. Sitting on a bench, she saw a large brown animal rump sticking out of the bushes. At first, she thought this was a cow that had strayed. But then the beast turned around and she saw a huge set of antlers. It was a stag come to see her, the widow of a man who wrote a book called 'The Horned God', just before he was to be buried. ☉

Remembrances from Mick Cooper

It is hard enough to become a leading international figure in any one field. John, quite uniquely, was a leading figure in many. He was known as the 'Father of British Humanistic Psychology', and wrote a number of seminal texts that helped to establish the field in the UK. This includes *Ordinary*

Ecstasy (1976, 3rd edition 2001), which reviewed the applications and development of the field; and *The Reality Game* (1983, 3rd edition 2016), which introduced humanistic psychotherapy practice. This, then, led on to his work in the transpersonal field, with books such as *The Transpersonal: Spirituality in Psychotherapy and Counselling* (1993), which brought the ideas of transpersonal psychologists, such as Ken Wilber, to the UK. There were his writings on men and masculinity, with *The Horned God* (1987) and *Healing the Male Psyche* (1997); his work on new research methods in *Human Inquiry* (1981); and his books on self-pluralism, with texts such as *Subpersonalities: The People Inside Us* (1989), later revised as *Personification* (2009). In all these fields, John not only wrote, but he actively led and engaged: setting up, for instance, the Association for Humanistic Psychology Practitioners in Britain in 1990, and his own transpersonal therapy institute with Jocelyn Chaplin (the Serpent Institute, 1988).

Although John wrote less prolifically in the existential field, he was a regular attendee at the Society for Existential Analysis conference, and was actively interested and engaged in our field. John ardently believed that the existential and humanistic approaches were closely aligned, and that it was better to talk about an 'existential-humanistic' tendency within psychotherapy: 'We are all tarred with the same brush' (Rowan, 1999, p. 61). He also wrote that 'existentialists do not have to be miserable' (p. 59), and 'It is possible to be a happy existentialist' (p. 61).

I first knew of John's work when I studied Humanistic Psychology at university in the 1980s. Then his name popped up again when I wrote my dissertation on the men's movement, and again when I started to become interested in self-plurality. Then, around 1990, I turned up at a meeting of the editorial collective of the radical men's magazine, *Achilles Heel*, and John Rowan was there. John had written an article, from his book *The Horned God*, about the 'good penis', 'the bad penis', and the 'nicey-nicey penis'. I remember being slightly bemused by the piece, but I just came away from

the meeting overawed. I had met *the* John Rowan.

As always, however, John was down-to-earth, warm and approachable; he held no pretensions. That was one of the lovely things about John. He was also incredibly generous. Years later, when I had an awful time after my first Ph.D. viva, John read through my whole thesis, and gave me detailed and supportive feedback, making a number of suggestions that helped me get back on track. Even in his late 80s, he still welcomed students who would come to talk to him about their work.

At the same time, John could be very direct and blunt. He wrote numerous book reviews, and if he did not like a book, he pulled no punches. Despite being close colleagues, for instance, he savaged a book that I had co-authored on the therapeutic relationship. He wrote, 'It seems clear that this book is not about the therapeutic relationship at all, and has in fact been put together in a rather clumsy fashion'. On another occasion, when I had posted information on Facebook about a talk I was giving on goals in therapy, John simply put the response, 'I shit on goals'.

One of the most abiding images I have of John is him sitting in the front row at conferences, staring intently at the presenter. Ready, it felt, to 'pounce'. John certainly had a reputation for being a bit of a terror in this regard. The last time I saw him at a Society for Existential Analysis conference, he was telling Manu Bazzano over coffee (who had, I thought, just delivered a very eloquent and informed presentation) that his talk was rubbish. Manu smiled. John smiled. There was for me something about both the warmth and the directness of the interaction that really characterized John.

But that was John, absolutely committed to being authentic. One time, John came to talk to our counselling students at Brighton University. Apparently, they had asked him if he was fully self-actualized and he had responded that, yes, in fact, he was. The students really did not know what to make of this, and talked about it for many weeks to come.

John's knowledge wasn't just academic; indeed, he always stayed outside of traditional

academia. Perhaps that is what made his writings so accessible. He could teach you about wines as much as he could teach you about transpersonal psychology, or self-plurality, or nicey-nicey penises. Once, when I was concerned about the quality of some of the chapters for a book we were working on together, John shared with me some wisdom from his days in marketing. He said that they had tried taking out the chocolates from a variety box that people tended to dislike – like the coffee creams – and actually people liked the chocolates less. So you had to have some things that people did not like so much to make the whole thing work.

Maybe the thing I loved about John most was that he was always developing and learning. For instance, I was amazed that, in his 80s, he completely re-oriented one of his most treasured books, *Subpersonalities*, because of new research and developments in the field. Apparently, he signed his last book contract on the day of his death.

John was very fortunate to be surrounded by loving family and friends. John's second wife, Sue, was an amazing partner and companion to him; and they were together for over 40 years.

Warm, authentic, relational... John was the very embodiment of the humanistic and existential values that he so passionately believed in. He was a one-off and will be very sadly missed. 5

Reference

Rowan, J. (1999). Existential analysis and humanistic psychotherapy. *Journal of the Society for Existential Analysis*, 10 (1), 44–64.

Remembrances from Jocelyn Chaplin

I first met John in 1969 at the B Now, an encounter group at his home in Finchley. It was an ordinary middle-class house with a pine kitchen, several children and a garden. But upstairs in the attic was another world altogether. There appeared this

magician figure called John who encouraged us all in rather noisy self-expression. Apparently, the kids did indeed wonder what on earth was going on.

We remained friends and I was deeply influenced by his book *Ordinary Ecstasy* written long before the pill called ecstasy fuelled the rave generation. The title sums up John rather neatly. He had a very ordinary side, generally living in the suburbs, writing in simple language and being down to earth. But he also meditated every day and often experienced altered states of consciousness (without the drugs). John even claimed that he was actualized and/or enlightened!

In 1988 we co-founded the Serpent Institute to train psychotherapists and counsellors in both humanistic and psychodynamic approaches within a framework of natural spirituality and progressive politics. Again, the title itself represents different sides of John. He was involved in many institutions on committees and as chair, and liked order and even hierarchy in a way, as shown by his love of making lists and categories. But he was also spiritually open to the other dimensions and to their serpentine forms. We often talked of therapy as an initiation where we shed our skins like snakes do every year.

The serpent also represents the flow of energy between opposites, so different from arranging them hierarchically. In the 1980s John was interested in Paganism and especially goddess spirituality of the past and present. The serpent is a powerful symbol of these more earth-based approaches. It can be both over ground and underground, healing and poisonous, dancing through the heavens in visions, and sensitive to earthquakes on land.

Sadly, after three years John left and I couldn't find anyone to replace him. So we stopped being a training organization. However, I have kept it going ever since in various forms, running courses and events on goddess spirituality and therapy. John attended the last event I organized, called the 'Rebirth of Equalia' in 2016, and he remained supportive to the end. I like to think of the Serpent Institute more as a current of thought coming from

Taoism through Blake and others, rather than as a specific place or therapy model. 📍

Web site: www.serpentinstitute.com

Remembrances from Richard House

I discovered therapy, encounter groups and Humanistic Psychology around 1986 – and not long after that I subscribed to this journal (then more of a magazine). And I very soon discovered that dear John was everywhere – and I mean, *everywhere!* If there's a record for the number of psychology books reviewed by one person, John must not only hold it, but the record will surely never, ever be beaten.

John's books and revolutionary ideas were also everywhere. Humanistic Psychology and the humanistic therapies wouldn't be what they are today in Britain without the Father of Humanistic Psychology, dear John Rowan.

With former S&S co-editor David Kalisch, I had the pleasure of compiling the special *Self and Society Festschrift* for John for his 90th birthday, with which we non-violently ambushed him at his birthday bash at the Open Centre in London. The list of contributors to that *Festschrift* reads like a roll-call of the most eminent names in our field – John himself (of course), Andrew Samuels, Jocelyn Chaplin, Mick Cooper, Colin Feltham, Dina Glouberman, Martin Haddon, John Lussier, David Murphy, Peter Reason, Ernesto Spinelli, James Traeger and William West – and every one responded with enthusiasm to our invitation to contribute to this memorable work.

In the *Festschrift* we re-published three of John's classic papers – viz. 'Humanistic Psychology and the revolution' (from 1973); 'Patriarchy: what it is, and why some men question it' (from 1980); and 'Don't you *dare* ignore the transpersonal!' (from 2007). I can hear John saying these words about the transpersonal as I speak, and of course he was right – and of course none of us are ignoring it here today,

dear John.

Talking of the transpersonal, in late 2012 I had the pleasure of recording a live interview with the great man on Transpersonal Psychology for Tracy Jarvis' then new Psychotherapy Excellence – to date viewed by well over 13,000 people on Youtube (see goo.gl/yoV9j4). And what a delight it was: in true humanistic fashion, it was spontaneous and unscripted in one take, with John being his brilliant, engaging, wide-ranging, erudite and sometimes mischievous (not to mention 'realized!') self. And as always with John, I learnt a great deal.

I also just want to mention last year's AHP annual conference, at which John agreed to facilitate the closing plenary session. By then John was already quite frail, and it wasn't at all clear that he'd be able to make it to the event. But in the middle of the afternoon, the door opened and in came John with his wife Sue – and the assembled gathering of 80 or so gave him a spontaneous and heart-felt ovation as he came into the conference room; a very moving experience for us all.

Then, John duly joined the closing plenary panel; and when someone raised the issue of research – one of my own particular hobby-horses – I was about to 'launch forth' when John got there first, and proceeded to give the most lucid and succinct demolition of positivistic research that one could ever wish to hear! I was suitably silenced, as John had said very much what I was going to say – and quite probably much more effectively – and that at the age of 92. I am still in awe of John and his contribution as I recount this memorable event.

I must stop – as John finally has, and as we all must do one day. One final thought. I love the photo of John on the back of our 2014 *Festschrift* – dressed all in white in what looks like the late 60s or early 70s. One of the most spiritual people I know, (Mahavishnu) John McLaughlin, also always wore all white in the early 1970s with his legendary Mahavishnu Orchestra. So I'm wearing all white for John today as we say goodbye to him. Thank you, John, for a brilliant, brilliant life. We'll all always remember you, and what you gave us. ⑤

Remembrances from Dina Glouberman

Dear John,

As I got up to speak at your funeral, I did not have a written talk as I normally would. It was as if in the presence of the mystery of death, I was unable to write a conventional speech. I could feel you in the room, as if you were there with us that day. I wanted to say something to you very personally about the tapestry of our relationship and our shared world rather than about your many great accomplishments, about which much has been said and will continue to be said.

You were in my life from the late 60s/early 70s, and our relationship was made up of a series of meetings – some chance, some planned, some personal and some professional – as well of this deep awareness that we shared a world.

I don't quite know how to name that world, except that it had something to do with Humanistic Psychology and the transpersonal, and something to do with London and Londoners. Its roots were in those years of passionate living as lecturers and students, therapists and seekers, when the material life was hard, what with lack of money, fridges and central heating, but when our creative lives were so powerful, and the world seemed to be welcoming the possibility of deep authentic change.

We met in a workshop facilitated by Will Schutz, author of the book *Joy*, in which memorably we all undressed. I can't quite remember the rationale for it! I visited you in your flat in North London and you were working on what I believe was your very first book. You based it on your lectures, and quickly, systematically and effectively wrote chapter after chapter until it was done. It was so unlike my own sprawling intuitive and often inefficient way of writing that I never forgot it.

And then over the years we met in various, mainly professional and sometimes personal, places. You invited me to give talks/workshops in the early days; I invited you to Skyros; we worked together, as at the Institute of Psychotherapy and

Social Studies; we dialogued/disagreed about self-actualization on the stage of Alternatives; once or twice we met at your home or mine, your parties or mine.

And there is also this memory from many years ago in which you figured which is both highly personal and yet also somehow transpersonal. In the early 70s, when for the first and only time in my life I was briefly psychotic, I took a mysterious walk up Finchley Road in North London. I was desperately trying to figure out which century I was in, which was especially difficult because some women were wearing mini skirts and others long flowing dresses. I stopped in a bakery and didn't know if I had the right money but they took it, and gave me a bun in exchange.

I sat down on a bench not knowing what to do, and then it started to rain and I went home. But as I sat on that bench, you walked by. At that moment you were part of both my real and my fantastic world; and although we didn't speak, it makes me feel deeply connected to you. Later, you confirmed that you had seen me but you were rushing and couldn't stop – so I know I didn't make you up!

Were we friends? Maybe not quite that level of intimacy. But we certainly were loyal colleagues and good companions in the strange and wonderful life projects we were both involved in, though in very different ways.

Some of what I knew and admired about you that I gleaned from our meetings: Whenever you were fascinated by someone's work, even when you were very young, and they were very famous, you would write to them, and strike up a correspondence.

Whatever you were interested in, you pursued with a passion and then wrote a book about it and inspired others. You worked your way through every cycle of the humanistic and the transpersonal world, and made it your own.

You never seem to get flustered, fidgety or fussed, and yet you felt things deeply.

You lived a life that could be highly structured – you once described to me a typical morning minute by minute – and this must be one of the secrets of your high level of commitment and creative

achievement. Yet you also left room for spontaneity and play and holidays and pleasure.

And the thing I knew that illuminated all the rest was that your relationship with your wonderful wife Sue was so mutually loving and devoted that it gave me an insight into what a loving man you were.

Indeed, when I think of you I want to say: You were a lover. You loved Sue above all things, but also you loved life and the human psyche and poetry and communication and philosophy. And yet you were so laid back, it wasn't so obvious to me; you didn't wear your heart on your sleeve. It was on another level, not emotional, but perhaps something to do with the soul.

I know from Sue that you really loved and valued me, as I loved and valued you, and yet I never quite knew that. It was only when I visited you near the end and you were so vulnerable that I could feel your appreciation and enthusiasm directly.

And the lovely thing is that you had a birthday party shortly before you died, in which we got a chance to say some of the things we wanted you to know. I've often thought of holding a funeral workshop, not to plan our funerals, but to have a living funeral drama in which each participant gets to hear what people might say at their funeral. In some way you had that, thanks to Sue creating that party to which so many of your old friends came. I'm so happy about that.

Thank you John for being in all of our lives and giving us all so much in the myriad ways in which you shone.

Much love, Dina ⑤

A Eulogy for John Rowan

Sue Rowan

There are so many things I could say about John, it's hard to know where to start. So, as many of you knew 'John the professional', I thought that I would share with you some things about 'John the person'.

First, let me say that I only met John when he

was 51 – so he had already lived more than half his life. From what I've heard from his sister-in-law and people who knew him when he was much younger, John had changed a lot in the preceding 15 years or so before we met.

Not surprising as it was in the early 60s, John's curiosity led him to discover and participate in all kinds of artistic activities; experimental street theatre, alternative poetry (with his good friend, the late Bob Cobbing) and from there into personal growth and development via encounter groups and growth centres. It was at this point (I know because he told me) that John started to really get in touch with his feelings. After his first go at being angry in an encounter group, he felt liberated. A few days later he tried to get an appointment to have his ears syringed and the nurse at his GP practice had no appointments left. Instead of leaving meekly as he would have done before, he decided he now had permission to get angry, which he did – spectacularly, by the sound of it. Needless to say, that didn't end well, and he was asked to leave the Practice and find another GP with immediate effect!

Despite the botched attempt at anger John continued to work on himself and the issues that had caused him to lose touch with deep feelings, with a great degree of success.

So the John I am talking about here had already developed a good deal, emotionally, by the time we met. These are some of the many things I loved about John.

Generosity

John was hugely generous and didn't approve of miserly behaviour in others. He never stinted himself and would never do so to others either. He'd buy the drinks, provide the tickets, lend the money, whatever was wanted. John always said he wanted to be financially well-off but he enjoyed life far too much to hold back. John was someone who lived for the day, and didn't concern himself overly much with the future, although he did make regular savings and never got into debt of any kind. I was amazed to find out just how many charities he made regular donations to and cared about. I know he

almost always responded to disaster appeals, and he always felt very saddened when those disasters happened.

Every year John would organize a treasure hunt for my birthday, hiding my presents all over the house. I would come downstairs to find a small piece of paper with a clue, alerting me to where I should look for a gift. Once I had got the first clue and gift, there would be another piece of paper, and off I'd go again. Sometimes the clues were quite fiendish and he would watch me, grinning like a Cheshire cat, whilst I tried to puzzle it out. I enjoyed these treasure hunts so much – he put so much work in to make them fun for me, and he enjoyed the whole spectacle just as much as I did (and the gifts were always good as well!).

Fun (or doing something other than work)

When I first met him, John was very good at having fun at conferences but didn't really understand about having fun, as a way of relaxing. To start with, John was very nervous about the idea of a 'holiday'. Going to a conference was fine, but holidays scared him. What on earth was there to do on holiday?? The first holiday I persuaded him to take was one week in Rhodes, and I booked so many sightseeing tours during the week to keep him occupied we both came home exhausted.

However, once John had a taste of what a holiday actually was he developed a real passion for them. We travelled extensively and I have so many treasured memories of places we visited. Spirituality was very important to John and it is not surprising that his two top favourite places were both very spiritual. The first one was Bali; John was totally smitten by the very relaxed attitude to different forms of religion on the Island. Although the predominant religion on Bali is Hindu, it is a multi-religious island which has large Christian, Muslim and Buddhist communities, as well as a Balinese Hinduism called Agama Hindu Dharma.

Given that Bali is something of a religious melting pot, it isn't surprising, then, that the basic belief here is that it is OK to worship Gods and Goddesses of

your choice, because ultimately they all amount to much the same (good) thing. People leave numerous small offerings to all the deities, consisting of food wrapped in large leaves, in the streets and outside shops. It is also the custom for most homes to have their own place of worship either in their home or in a separate building in their garden. The serenity, tolerance, kindness and accepting nature of Balinese people left a huge impression on John, and we often talked of returning, but sadly we never did.

The other place that really touched John's heart was Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau. On the 'big' Island of Hawaii, this historical park preserves the site where, up until the early 19th century, Hawaiians who broke a kapu (one of the ancient laws) could avoid certain death by fleeing to this place of refuge or pu'uhonua. The offender would be absolved by a priest and freed to leave. Defeated warriors and non-combatants could also find refuge here during times of battle. The grounds just outside the Great Wall that encloses the pu'uhonua were home to several generations of powerful chiefs. John fell in love with this place; the sense of peace and forgiveness made such a huge impact on him, he talked about it for years afterwards. We visited all the islands in Hawaii and came across so many beautiful places, but this one really moved him profoundly.

John and I shared a passion for indulgence! We both loved going to the theatre and cinema, enjoying good food and wine, and going to art galleries and concerts. John would always scour the review sections of the daily and weekend papers (reading the paper was another thing he looked forward to every day, and he would complete as many crosswords as he could get his hands on!), looking for any new shows or openings that we could visit. He would buy tickets as soon as booking opened for anything by an artist, composer or actor that we loved without waiting for the reviews. We were so fortunate to get to so many 'hot ticket' performances because he took the trouble to research what was happening and get in quickly.

John loved good wine and applied the same research methods to seeking out wines at reasonable prices. We still have an enormous wine

rack which he always kept well-stocked with a very good variety of wines (he would be appalled to see that the stock hasn't been replenished since he left us), bought from the Wine Society, or Waitrose, or wherever he spotted a good bargain.

John loved shopping! How could I *not* love this man?? He was very happy pottering around, and would often find the smallest pretence to visit Selfridges (one of his favourites) or Borough Market. Usually it was because he felt we needed to replace an extortionately expensive bottle of olive oil which could only be bought at Selfridges, or we needed something obscure which they were sure to have at Borough Market. We would manage to spend an entire afternoon wandering round these and similar places, and we didn't even always buy what we went for – we just enjoyed the experience.

John and I also both enjoyed what we called our 'gang' lunches – a group of friends (all of whom are here today) who met through the AHP. We get together every three months or so for lunch at one another's houses. John loved these lunches so much because they were not about work, and therapy was not the main topic of discussion (although he often contributed lengthy descriptions of whatever he was currently working on!), and the food was always excellent.

During the last few months of his life, when he was quite poorly with one thing and another, John was unable to travel, so our friends decided they would bring the lunch to us! They arrived with a complete three-course lunch, together with nibbles and chocolates to go with coffee. Not only did they prepare and cook it all, they washed it all up afterwards! John was moved almost to tears the first time I told him this was happening – he absolutely couldn't believe anyone would do that for him.

He was constantly surprised and touched when our friends came to visit him (particularly Marolyn and her John, who would bring delicious smoothies for him, which he absolutely adored). John often told me how blessed he felt that he had such good friends; I don't think he'd quite realized before how important good friends can be when you aren't at full strength.

Curiosity

John was intensely curious. He often said all you need is curiosity to set you off on any path you choose. John's curiosity was at the heart of so much that he did. The things I've already mentioned, self-development, artistic endeavour, interest in philosophy and religion, having fun, travelling – all came about because he was curious. Even though he thought he might not enjoy something he would take a risk and try it, just to see.

I am hugely grateful to John for so many things – far too many to list here, but particularly for inspiring me to be more curious, more adventurous and take more risks. These are all things I will continue exploring, as he would want me to.

Authenticity

Last but probably the most obvious thing about John and, in my view, the most important, was authenticity. John strove to be authentic in all he said and did. Some of you have already alluded to the fact that he could be somewhat provocative and brusque. John didn't believe in using language in anything other than an open and honest way. This could be rather alarming, especially if he was talking to someone who wasn't involved in the world of psychotherapy and wasn't used to such a direct approach. Sometimes he was particularly provocative if he felt the person or the situation was stuck, and needed a prod to move it forward. Mainly, though, he believed that his genuineness was something precious to offer, and he was willing to take the criticism if it was not appreciated. John didn't say things to flatter – you always knew where you stood with him.

John had a huge impact on my life. He introduced me to Humanistic Psychology, which in turn introduced me to experiential work, which was an absolute turning point in my life. We worked together, running groups, many times, which I enjoyed immensely; and it is to my eternal sorrow that I didn't continue this work with him. John had a much better idea of what I am capable of than I will ever have. He encouraged me in so many ways, and I know I won't ever lose that encouragement.

My life has been so much more interesting and colourful than I ever dreamt it could be – and John's knowledge, enthusiasm, encouragement and support played such a huge part in that. I also have John to thank for another precious gift – the gift of meeting and knowing his family (most of whom are here today), and who have been so supportive and kind to me, and have welcomed me into their family. That means so much to me.

John was unique – I can't think of another word to do him justice (apart from genius, which he would of course have loved, and laughed at, simultaneously!).

John's legacy will never be forgotten and my love for him will never cease.

I'd like to finish by reading a poem I found in one of John's notebooks, written somewhere in the Caribbean on our last holiday there. ⑤

The I's by John Rowan

There is the I that gets impatient, tetchy
 There is the I that gets tired, worn out
 There is the I that knows itself to be true and real
 There is the I that soars above
 There is the I that sees images everywhere – we call it the soul
 There is the I that is infinite, that goes on forever, and has no limits
 There is the I that is not an I, that never was an I, that never will be an I, but is still inescapable
 There is the I that will never understand all this, but will just give up, and give up, and endlessly, beautifully, effortlessly give up

Note

A detailed obituary can be found on the AHP website, here: goo.gl/rYKmgK

A shorter *Guardian* obituary can be found online here: goo.gl/kNT5FL