

My Story: Chapter 1

For as long as I can remember I have sensed things. At first I sensed feelings and vibrations in my immediate surroundings. As I grew older I was able to perceive and sense real and identifiable vibrations from the people I encountered. By the time I was 9 years old I had discovered what I was going to do with my life. I did not know what it would be called, but I knew what I was going to do none the less. .

My Father was a big Toronto Maple Leaf fan and like all red blooded Canadians boys I wanted to be just like my dad. My dad wanted me to have the opportunity he missed. He wanted to play in the NHL.

We often went to the Leaf games. One Thursday night in March of 1958, Toronto and Boston were in the Stanley Cup semi finals. The series was tied 1-1 and the score of the game was 1-1 at the end of the 3rd period.

When the teams came on the ice for the 1st overtime period, I was immediately drawn to number 17 for the Leafs, Gary Eiman..... I knew he was going to score. It was so real to me, I jumped up and started cheering....in my mind the Leafs had won the game.

The biggest problem was the game hadn't started! I was yelling and cheering. Unbeknownst to me the building was silent but for my cheers.

My father put his hand on my shoulder and said "settle down".

It was then I realized, nobody, not even Garry Eiman knew he was going to score.

It was at that moment in time, I realized, other people think differently.

The referee dropped the puck. The first over time period began. A few minutes later number 17 hopped over the boards on to the ice, the puck was passed to him and all of Maple Leaf Gardens erupted with cheers for a winning team...Garry Eiman scored had winning goal.

I sat in awe and wonderment. My life had changed with the drop of a puck and 18,000 people were cheering and welcoming me to my life's calling.

My Father and I had a ritual after the Leafs games. We would jog from Maple Leaf Gardens, east along Carlton St, threw Allan Gardens to Sherbourne St., where my Dad parked the car.

We were jogging past Jarvis St, I noticed an ambulance and fire trucks outside a small apartment like building. A woman was being carried out on a stretcher.

The building was called the Prince Carleton Hotel.

Every Saturday afternoon my sister and I would go to the Fox Theatre on Queen St. E. For 25 cents, we saw, 2 cartoons, 1 full feature movie, an episode of a serial movie, a box of popcorn, a soft drink and a bag of candy; all for our 25 cent allowance.

The Saturday after my life's realization at Maple Leaf Gardens, my sister and I were waiting to get our money. As my Father was doling out my quarter, I said to him, "Boston is going to win tonight!"

He said the 1950's equivalent of "No Way"

I said "I bet you a quarter they do"

I didn't get to go to the show Saturday afternoon as I put all my money on the Boston Bruins but I doubled my allowance in the evening when they won the game.

As I entered my teen years I began sensing clearer images and ideas. I started to practice using my senses and abilities everyday. My awareness became broader. From that time until this, I have continuously strived to be the best I can be. To grow and develop into the man I am proud to be.

Expanding my psychic gift to the best it can be; to perform my talent, giving service to people kind, has been my life's calling. I've been a professional psychic for my entire work life. Performing psychic readings has been my life's work. There have been periods where I have worked at other jobs, but never longer than a few months.

I started doing readings as a career at the Cozy Tea Room in Toronto in the mid 1960s. It was there I was given the opportunity to do psychic readings for thousands of people from diverse backgrounds. Some days at the Tea Room I would complete up to 30 psychic readings. I knew the Cozy Tea Room was only the beginning of my career. I was bright enough to recognize the incredible learning opportunity the Cozy Tea Room presented. I soaked it up like a sponge.

I have the work ethics of a Highlander and an inherited Scottish tenacity also known as stubbornness. I practiced my craft and honed my raw psychic ability. I developed a discipline, focus and most importantly I had the chance to do 100's of psychic readings a week.

I became known as the Hippy Reader. I was the youngest reader in the city; not yet 20 years old, people came from all around to get a psychic reading from me. I was one of the Cozy Tea Rooms most popular readers (and biggest earners I might add) I was Mrs. Cox's biggest problem child too. There were many, good readers at The Cozy Tea, but few got out of the tea rooms.

The Cozy Tea Room's business was to sell "The Telling of Fortunes". However, there is a Witchcraft Act in the Canadian Criminal Code, Section 323 in its essence it states "Fortune Telling" for money is against the law!

Mrs. Cox, the owner, by passed the law by selling sandwiches; a couple of cookies, a pot of tea and the Fortune Telling was, as the sign on the wall said, "For Entertainment Only".

Thinking back on it now, I laugh. Imagine the Cozy Tea Room being busted by the Vice Squad--taking us all out in hand cuffs for reading tea leaves. I can, in my minds eye, see Mrs. Cox, Pearl the waitress, and all the psychic readers in handcuffs along with the little old ladies who dropped by to get their "fortunes told" being charged with "found in a... ". What would they have taken as evidence I wonder? The used tea leaves?

When a customer placed their order for tea, they also picked their reader. Many a day, I came to work, there was a line up of 10 or 12 people waiting to get a reading from the shoeless long haired "Hippy Reader" also known as Bob Milne.

The cost for this service was \$2.50.

It drove me crazy knowing the tea room received \$1.50 and the psychic readers received only \$1.00. I was outraged the tea room made more money with my talent then I and my fellow psychics received. I used to tell my contemporaries "If it wasn't for us, the tea room would be empty!"

After a few years at the Tea Room I decided to start a union for psychics. Soon after I was fired. I'm not sure if it was my 5th or 6th firering; it was the last.

I was living in a room, at an old, flea bag hotel called Larry's Hideaway Hotel at Carlton and Jarvis in Toronto, just a stones throw from Maple Leaf Gardens. It was once described as un pre- possessing by a theatre critic from the Toronto Star. It had seen much better days when it was The Prince Carleton Hotel.

I immediately gave myself a raise from \$1 to \$5 a reading. I put out a shingle so to speak and promptly fell behind on my rent. As the weeks wore on my clothes grew loser; I was about to be evicted when a night desk clerk job became available. I negotiated an arraignment with the owner of Larry's to work 4 nights a week in exchange for room and board.

This was a perfect arrangement for an illiterate young man with Attention Deficit Disorder, as it gave me the chance to have my base needs fulfilled. It was the first time in several years I felt secure. I now had time, interest and a safe harbor to teach myself to read and write.

In long hours of the night at Larry's Hideaway Hotel; the bar was closed; when the ladies of the evening finished plying their trade; after the John's left the building; when the last drunk was shooed out the door and the full time residents were in bed asleep; the lobby at Larry's was as quiet as a library.

It was then I started to read.

I met many interesting people during my tenure at Larry's. They all added to my education. One special person stands out.

He was brilliant, with a silver toned voice, a hard nosed, two-fisted drinking Irishman and a great Canadian actor. Ed had a heart of gold. He was down on his luck. The best way I can best describe this wonderful man would be a cross between Mr. Bo jangles and Peter O'Toole.

Ed McNamara was interested in my desire to learn to read and write from early in our friendship. Many nights he talked with me at the front desk.

I'm sure the middle of the night blues, a full day's drinking couldn't dull haunted him and caused his sleeplessness. It was at those times his stories of his life gushed from his wounded soul.

Some nights Ed was coherent; some nights he was not.

Late one Saturday night Ed came home, while not falling down drunk, he was a long way from sober. He noticed my new book The Complete Works of William Shakespeare and saw me struggling to read it. Ed leafed through the pages until he came found a certain passage. He began to recite Shakespeare's words. His eyes cleared and his mind grew sharp, no longer was his speech slightly slurred. His deep cultured voice resonated through grungy lobby and down the grimy halls at Larry's Hideaway Hotel.

Ed McNamara was Acting!

I had never heard such beautiful sounds being spoken. It began one of the most wonderful learning experiences of my life.

We started at the beginning and almost every night for a year he and I read the book from cover to cover.

Ed would translate Shakespeare's Elizabethan English into modern day English and recite it back to me again. He taught me timing and phrasing.

I will never forget him. Ed touched my soul.

During that year Ed found sobriety.

The last acting job he had before he died was in a CBC TV movie called Tramp at the Door. He was in almost every way, the tramp at the door. Every time I see it, I get tears in my eyes. Ed McNamara gave me his Oxford English Dictionary in 1975, as a token of our friendship. I still have it.

It was a wild time in the early 70's and there was always something going on at Larry's, weather it be a party, an argument, coming to the aid of one of the "professional ladies",

the police coming to arrest one of our guests or to break up a fight in the bar, and above all.....reading Shakespeare with Ed McNamara at 4:00 am, life was never dull.

Just as the Cozy Tea Room was a stepping stone. I knew in my heart I would leave Larry's Hideaway Hotel. I knew I would take the lessons and experience at Larry's and use it for the rest of my life. I knew doing psychic readings for prostitutes, drug dealers and rounders at \$5 a session and living a room at a flea bag hotel was not my destiny

I had more things to do. More people to help. More lessons to learn.

I lived and worked at Larry's Hideaway Hotel for 5 years.

Today I continue to practice my craft in ways that continue to affect people in positive and constructive ways not only in person, but also over the telephone, and on the radio.