

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

NORM GOLDMAN WITH AUTHOR MAGGIE WRIGHT

Hello Norm! Thank you so much for inviting me to meet with you today.

*Norm: What inspired you to write **Bringing Back the Magic**?*

Maggie: My love and admiration for all of the animals inspired me. I've been on an incredible journey of learning to see them from a different perspective, and therefore, I wanted to help others to also see their animal companions and Nature's critters, anew.

Norm: Your book has a broader mission than simply entertaining or storytelling. Can you talk more about that mission and what you hope readers will take away in terms of their relationship to the earth and animals?

Maggie: My mission was to help readers open their eyes and hearts to what is around them. When we see the individuality of Nature... I mean, when we see the animals as individuals, instead of as a group... then we open up to them. They have thoughts and feelings... they have relationships and competitors... just like we do. They also love and suffer, just like we do. When we understand this, it is easier to have compassion for all that is around us. My book was intentionally written as a memoir to document my personal life's journey of learning to open up to see this perspective.

Norm: Did you learn anything from writing your book and what was it?

Maggie: The book made me analyze and evaluate my life-to-date, as a whole, and I realized that although it was incredibly painful and debilitating to lose a parent at such a young age, the trauma from that loss built up my reservoir of compassion and sensitivity to others around me. It was this sensitivity that allowed me to open my heart to Nature.

*Norm: How did you come up with the title, **Bringing Back the Magic**?*

Maggie: My world as a young child was very magical and then it died, right along with my mother. My life has been dedicated to bringing it back; therefore, I cannot imagine any other title. It started out as the *concept title* for creating the book, and then, it just stuck with me.

Norm: Can you tell us how you found representation for your book? Did you pitch it to an agent, or query publishers who would most likely publish this type of book? Any rejections? Did you self-publish?

Maggie: I read a lot of books and did lots of Google searches about the publishing industry and its alternatives. I also knew about the pressures and rejections of the publishing world. Although Barron's had approached me in 2000 to write the pet manual on African Greys, a friend and I had tried to get a comical book on dating published in the 80s (right after the Preppie Handbook), which resulted in LOTS of rejections; therefore, I was well aware of that process. So this time, I decided to self-publish because I'm also interested in building a small publishing house. ***Bringing Back the Magic*** would be its first success!

Norm: How have you used the Internet to boost your writing career and promoting your book?

Maggie: I'm just learning... got some pointers? I've used the Internet for most of my research on the book and to learn about the dos and don'ts of publishing. I've also used the Internet to request reviews. It is amazing how the publishing world has changed with the Internet!

Norm: Why, do you believe humans seem to be fascinated with parrots?

Maggie: Although I believe that all animals are intelligent, parrots, particularly African Grey parrots, are really intelligent... and I think that is one facet that fascinates people. Alex, the famous African Grey parrot who did research with Dr. Irene Pepperberg, was our PROOF of the intelligence of the Grey. Based on thirty years of research with Dr. Pepperberg, Alex could perform many of the same cognitive tasks as chimpanzees, dolphins, and five-year-old children. He could identify fifty different objects, recognize seven colors and five shapes, and he understood the concepts of "larger," "smaller," "same," and "different." He could count up to six and was learning the number, seven, when he died in September, 2007. Alex was wonderful!

Besides intelligence, many humans are fascinated with the fact that many parrots actually communicate by using human words. Some African Greys can actually communicate so appropriately that they seem like little humans with feathers. However, they are animals

(birds are animals, too) and they see things from the perspective of animals, but we “pet humans,” as we call ourselves, can sometimes forget that.

I also believe that the fascination with the “talking animal” comes from our collective primordial memory of a time when animals and humans did communicate. Some may call it the Garden of Eden... and others may call it the Land of Pan.

Not all parrots are good talkers, and some species of parrot can “talk” better than others; but ALL parrots are wonderful and fascinating. And best of all, they are so loving!

Norm: Are there other birds that are comparable in intelligence to the African Grey parrot? Could you give us some personal examples evidencing the cleverness of these birds?

Maggie: ALL birds are intelligent, as there are many different types of intelligence. I think it takes intelligence, just to survive in Nature. For example, counting and memory are important when storing food for the winter. Many Jays have been observed caching acorns, and other nuts and seeds, and later retrieving them in the winter.

Many scientists believe that the corvids (*corvidae*), such as crows, ravens, magpies, and jays, are highly intelligent, and there has been a lot of research on them. It has been documented where crows will drop seeds into really busy streets so that the seeds are cracked open by the traffic.

Norm: In your book, you state that all animals, including humans, are telepathic. Would you care to elaborate?

Maggie: Telepathy is the exchange of communication by thought, and I believe that that is one of the many forms of communication that is used by animals. An example would be the way in which geese communicate with each other and stay in form while flying. Wild African Greys in Africa are very flock oriented, and they tend to operate as a “one group mind” when flying in Africa. As a result, domestically bred pet Greys tend to be very telepathic in our homes. An example would be how they seem to “know” how we are feeling... or know what we are going to do, before we do it. A friend of mine has told me that every time she planned to take her dogs for a walk (different unscheduled times of the day), her Grey would say “Wanna go for a walk?” to the dogs, before she pulled the leashes out of the closet. There have just been so many anecdotal stories like that.

I believe that we humans also have telepathic abilities, but we call it intuition. How many times have you called a friend, who told you that they've been thinking about you? For some reason, the issue of "telepathy" seems to be very controversial. Many scientists do not believe that it exists, and many people tend to be afraid of it. I think that's because the Media tends to confuse telepathy with psychic abilities. My personal opinion is that they are different. Psychic abilities are when one can determine the future or past; but telepathy is the straight exchange of thought between beings. Psychic people probably have strong telepathic abilities, but people who can communicate telepathically are not necessarily psychic.

Norm: You also mention animal communicators. What do they do?

Maggie: Animal communicators are people who have developed their abilities to telepathically communicate with animals. Again, this does not mean they are "psychics," but they have that ability to telepathically communicate with the animals. These people help clients better understand what is going on with their pets and then help them create remedies for certain behavioral situations. Penelope Smith is the pioneer who started the idea of training people to become animal communicators. She has conducted many workshops and written many books on the subject.

*Norm: Where can our readers find out more about you and **Bringing Back the Magic**?*

Maggie: They can go to my book website: <http://www.BringingBackTheMagic.com>
They can also check out my "Mother site" that connects all of my different sites at <http://www.MaggieWright.net>

If they do not have computers, they can write to me, Maggie Wright, at Tewillager Publishing, 13835 N Tatum Boulevard, #9-609, Phoenix, AZ 85032.

Norm: Is there anything else you wish to add that we have not covered?

Maggie: I would like your readers to know that although my main animal connection in the book was with my African Grey parrots, this is not just a "bird book." I believe that dog people, cat people, rabbit people, just plain animal loving people, will get a lot out of it. We need to start coming together as one big family of animal lovers and communicating with each other. Perhaps my book will be a catalyst for that process.

I also want your readers to know that the book may also appeal to those who do not even have pets, but they may have a love for the backyard animals... or they may want to learn

more about them... or may they have suffered emotional pain in childhood. Again, my memoir is about the process of growing and transforming.

A very good friend once said to me, "When you feel that you do not fit in the herd... that means that you are meant to be different. You are meant to lead. So feel good about yourself." I wish I could hug and give that advice to all of the teens, and even adults, who feel that they just don't seem to fit in. God has a plan for us all.

Norm: Thanks once again and good luck with all of your future endeavors.

Maggie: And thank you Norm, for giving me the opportunity to respond to such intelligent and thoughtful questions!

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