

On May 24, Alison Powers, aka Allie, wrote:

It is with enormous regret and deepest sadness that I must inform all of you that Dad passed this morning. We will let all of you know when a memorial will be scheduled.

Dear Alison, I am so sorry; this is a loss not only for your family but for all those who knew and loved Bill, and for those in the larger PCT community who appreciated and understood the importance of his contribution to the life sciences.

I have not yet cancelled my reservations for the conference (hotel, flight, etc.). If the memorial could be scheduled for the Friday or Saturday originally scheduled for the conference, perhaps those of us who arranged the conference could attend without having to change our arrangements. It would also give the conferees a chance to meet again and discuss where to go from here.

This is just a suggestion, please do whatever is most convenient for you and your family.

Sincerely, Bruce Abbott

Dear Alison, please send all my sympathies to you and your family.

Every contact I had with Bill was deeply kind, thoughtful and respectful.

He was a wonderful man. The world has lost one of its greatest thinkers and I have lost my wisest friend.

Kindest regards, Warren Mansell

That is so sad. He was not only a great man, but a kind and generous one as well.

My heart goes out to you and to all his friends and family. Let us hope that the saplings from the seeds planted by his genius soon will grow into a great tree bearing fruits of many kinds.

Martin Taylor

Please accept my sincerest condolences. Your father will be deeply and greatly missed by all who knew, respected and loved him.

Fred Nickols

Allie,

My deepest condolences to you and your family. Losing Bill is a great loss to us all. But we should all be grateful that he shared his key insight about the living world unselfishly with all those having minds open enough to learn from him.

Like Rick, I find it hard to imagine a world without Bill. The average intelligence of the living human race took a big hit today.

Fortunately, Bill's wisdom will live on in his revolutionary writings and his kind and gentle personality will live on in the memories of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

— Gary Cziko

Oh, Allie, I am so sorry to hear this. Bill was one of a kind.

Ted Cloak

I, too, can think of no more fitting tribute to our great and generous friend than to meet together as planned, thereby demonstrating vividly the continuance of the work that he has so abundantly initiated. However, dear Allie, we shouldn't presume on your organizational skills for this on top of all that you must now deal with. Are some of us positioned to help with conference arrangements? Are there things that I can do from this distant coast?

I canceled my flight on receiving the sad news this morning. I stand ready to reinstate it as soon as some definite resolution is reached. The 10th through the 17th and the last two weeks in August I have other commitments that I can't break, but otherwise the original schedule or any other time works.

/Bruce Nevin

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Very sad news! Bill showed me great kindness as a postgraduate student, after email communications about PCT, offering me somewhere to stay should I visit the US from the UK, without ever knowing who I was. True to his word I stayed with him and Mary when I visited for the Fort Lewis convention in 1997.

I hope that someday soon his outstanding contribution to science and the understanding of living systems will get the recognition it deserves. A contribution, in my opinion, as significant to the behavioural sciences as that of Charles Darwin's has been to biology!

Regards, Rupert Young

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Rick, thanks for sharing. I think we all knew this day would come to pass.

Friends and relatives often ask me if I miss those who once had a significant impact on my life. My typical response is: "No, because they are a part of me now." Bill Powers is no exception.

Chad Green

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Thank you, to all of you, so much for all of the wonderful, touching letters. Our family is in agreement that it would make sense to have the memorial held on the weekend of June 8 - 9. We may as well keep the same venue (Boulder Outlook Hotel) as planned. I have no problem, at this point, with continuing to plan out the structural aspects of the meeting - in fact, it may be the best thing for me to do, but I will find someone to help should it get to be too difficult. As far as any discussions you may wish to have while you are all gathered together in one place - I will have to leave organizing that up to one of you.

Rick - We are very touched that you would like to write out the obituary. If this is something that you think you could have ready by tomorrow before 2:00 (MST) we could have it posted in the Memorial Day issue of our local paper, the Boulder Daily Camera. Dad had written many letters to the editor which got published in that paper and so there are likely some people in town who will recognize him even though they never met him.

Allie Powers

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Bill Powers is and will always be the greatest man I have ever known—the greatest scientist and the greatest human being. He is the only person I know whose immortality is guaranteed.

His ideas will remain with us and change the world.

What a great adventure it was knowing this man. I'm traveling but will write more later.

Henry Yin

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Dear Allie et al.,

I have nothing to add to all these tributes beyond my own condolences. Bill was a great thinker, a great human being, and someone whom it has been a privilege to know. His ideas will live on!

Kent McClelland

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For Allie and all PCT'ers:

I am so sorry to hear this. May this great man rest in peace. May you Allie and all his family and friends all rejoice in his life for it will survive his death.

Few men have affected my life as much as Bill Powers. I have the fondest memories of acting as CSG President during our visit to China and seeing him respected there by the brightest of the bright Chinese scholars.

Perhaps more touching and unforgettable was a private meeting with Bill we shared in Colorado Springs. I too am facing death without a liver transplant. These are tough perceptions but I sense that PCT helped Bill get through them as it is also doing for me.

I think that if everyone thought about behavior like Bill did and applied it to our daily actions, we would have a much safer and more sane world where getting along means as much as getting the upper hand.

Kenny Kitzke

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That's is a very sad news. A man way ahead of his time.

- Francisco Arocha

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It is hard to believe. I will miss him greatly. I will treasure the many conversations we had together. I will continue to use PCT and MOL in my clinical work. In this way Bill continues to help me help the people I see in therapy.

David Goldstein

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Bill, Rest in peace after a long accomplished life.

...from Lloyd:

While I mourn the loss of Bill, I will ever cherish and celebrate knowledge and memories of the man, his work and the community of scholars he attracted. Bill and his work have made a profound difference in my own life and my shared life with Bobbie.

Lloyd Klinedinst

...from Bobbie:

The rush of rich memories associated with conferences around the world, the amazing friends and acquaintances I so looked forward to seeing year after year and, most of all, the impact Bill's work has had on the way I think about everything. My sincerest sympathy to Bill's family and to all of his extended family in CSG.

Bobbie Bollmann

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Hi Allie and all

I don't think I could write an obituary that would be up to either my feelings about Bill or to the eloquent tributes that have been coming in. I was thinking more of writing the professional obituary for a journal (written with some care after a period of recovery from the shock). But I will try to write up a little obit for the paper and send it to you if you like so that you can add personal details (if you want) that I don't know.

This is really quite overwhelming for me. I knew it was coming but I guess I just never believe it can really happen to people who are as important to me as Bill was.

Love, Rick Marken

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Please accept my commiserations with regard to your Dad's death Allie and family.

I have never met another academic with such fierce, brilliant intelligence coupled with graceful humility; it's a rare and wonderful combination. We corresponded privately and I treasure Bill's astute, insightful comments on my stuttering, spluttering text.

Ours now the torch; to sustain the flame and enlighten the way.

With kind regards to one and all,

John Kirkland

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My deepest condolences to you and all the family. Like others have said, I'm trying to imagine how to navigate the huge hole created in the world without Bill. I am so very grateful to have known him and been able to share in some of the most wonderful things he made happen.

Sara Tai

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I just spoke with Fred and Perry Good who have been trying desperately to send their condolences to you but have been having problems with email. The Goods, like all of us, are experiencing a tremendous loss themselves and want you to know that Bill's family is also very much in their thoughts. Hopefully they will be able to get their more articulate thoughts to you soon. But until then I extend sincerest condolences to you and your family on their behalf.

Love, Rick Marken

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After writing Allie a while ago I was reminded of these lines from Adonais, written by Shelley after the death of Keats. Now a greater man just passed away but unlike Shelley I have no poetic talent.

For such as he can lend,-they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Henry Yin

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Dear friends,

Thanks to Allie, I was blessed to be with Bill for his last few days on this earth. After reading these beautiful letters from you, I'm moved to remind you how much you all meant to him. He so loved and respected you; was so mindful of the risks many of you took in the early days advocating for PCT in often hostile territory. He was so in awe of the contributions you made to the work over the years and so grateful to know that PCT will live on through you.

I thought you might appreciate this glimpse of Bill at his best. Just a few days ago, he woke up excited by some ideas he'd dreamed the night before. I stood by his bedside and took notes. By the time I transcribed them, he had more notes. They relate to the book with the working title *PCT at 60*, to be written by his invited working group. That morning, I made a promise to Bill that I would make it my first priority to get that book written and published. I will keep that promise.

I hope to see you at the meeting in Boulder in June.

Love and thanks to everyone...especially Allie and Sarah

Alice Powers McElhone

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Through Dag Forssell the news of your father's passing came to me. Please, accept my sincere condolences. As I wrote earlier, Bill's work in the 20th century will prove to be as important for the life sciences as Charles Darwin's work in the 19th century. A great man has gone, but his ideas are immortal and will live on. I wish you all the strength in the time to come.

With warm regards, Frans Plooj

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Dear Allie and all the other PCTers,

I have been trying to come to grips with Bill's passing for two days now and reading all the beautiful sentiments everyone has written has made it even harder. I echo all of the wonderful praises for both Bill's towering intellect and his incredible humanity.

I would, however, like to add just one personal note. I met Bill at Northwestern University when I was a brand new assistant professor of philosophy and he was working on BCP in manuscript form. We interacted at luncheon meetings there organized by Don Campbell. Fortunately, I had enough sense to dimly appreciate even then that Bill's work was revolutionary. He graciously consented to present his work throughout a graduate seminar in philosophy that I organized and Bill conducted.

As a result of those interactions I was honored to have been one of the two folks (Don Campbell was the other) to whom BCP was dedicated. It is only now, after these many years that I am coming to appreciate what an incredible honor it was.

Bill Powers and Don Campbell were the two greatest influences on the rest of my professional life, and although for a variety of reasons, I was never able to devote myself single-mindedly to PCT, it informed all that I have ever done.

Because of my own degenerative muscle disease, I will be unable to attend the memorial, but please know, there is no one I remember more fondly nor revere more than Bill Powers.

Hugh G Petrie

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The news of Bill's passing, even though expected, was overwhelming.
 To the many eloquent tributes I want to add that for me,
 knowing Bill and learning PCT from him has been a privilege.
 Working to share PCT with the world provides a powerful sense of purpose.
 I look forward to our conference June 7-9.
 My original travel and hotel reservations remain.
 I think it appropriate to add/share the 1999 tribute to Bill from Brother Phil.
 Dag Forssell

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 Thanks to everyone for working with Dad and supporting his cause with such energy.
 You have said some very touching things about my Dad, and I appreciate it very much.
 Denny Powers

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 Thank you, Dag. It is more than good to have Phil's voice among us now.
 /Bruce Nevin

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 This is a very sad news. As I said before, I believe that Bill was a pioneer, herald of new age.
 And I don't doubt that one day his ideas will be part of life of all human kind. He'll live for ever.
 My deepest condolence to family.. Boris Hartman

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 I am very saddened to hear about Bill's death. He was a invaluable resource of knowledge,
 kindness and support in the PCT community and for me personally. I will always be proud of
 having known Bill.
 Adam Matic

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 Dag and Rick: [ref Runkel's 1999 tribute, posted separately at IAPCT.org]
 Thanks to you both for this wonderful remembrance. As you all probably know, Bill made the trek
 to Phil's house in Oregon for one last discussion. He was so happy that he was able to do that.
 Love to all, Alice Powers McElhone

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 I am familiar with Runkel's letter. Was moved the first time I read it and rereading it now I find
 that it captures very well how I feel. He said everything I would like to say. But I hope you
 (Bill's friend and collaborator for so long) will be able to write something just as eloquent.
 Not since Mendel has there been a great man so neglected. But the power of dogma comes from
 highly efficient control systems, and we know how much resistance they can produce. The few
 of us who understand control should show future generations that there has indeed been some
 human progress since Mendel, by fully expressing our appreciation of Bill's work.
 Henry Yin

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Hello everyone,

It's been so comforting, reading all of your messages about Dad. Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts and experiences. I continue to be amazed at the scope of his impact, in so many ways...

... Bill's sister, Alice, would like to discuss the book that Dad had hoped to complete, but had so far just written the forward. There will be a conference room available for this purpose.

We appreciate your continued patience as we get through all of this....

Thank you again, and many times over...

Barbara Powers

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I am in northern Wisconsin and just opened my email. I am very saddened by the news of Bill's passing. He was for me much like a second father. I will miss him and the ability to ask him even the simplest of questions and be treated with great respect. I have and will continue to view him as one of my greatest teachers I have ever had the experience to learn from. His work and ideas have brought a new perspective on life to thousands around the world. I hope to continue to pass along what he has taught me and share his message of PCT.

Shelley A.W. Roy

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Dag, Thank you so much for including me in the notice about Bill. While I am saddened by his passing, there is no doubt he and his influence will live on in all of those whose lives he touched and in his insights and work. I will be out of the country during the June memorial otherwise I would have liked to attend.

Regards—Joel Judd

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What a shock to have it made official, even though I knew this news was forthcoming at any time. With tears in my eyes I say Vale, Bill Powers - to the person who has had the most powerful and gratifying affect on my life.

I know I'm getting my thoughts in late in the stream of testimonials. I have been somewhat sick myself for a few weeks. Bill's death only punctuates alertness to the end, modest as it has been, of participating in what I am confident will prove to be one of the most earth-moving, and exciting, developments in western science and society. I have quietly shared a small taste of Bill's frustration at the opposition of so many people who could only benefit, if they had taken the trouble to understand what he was telling and showing them/us.

Sharing your grief, Dick Robertson

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It is with considerable regret that I tell you that I will not be able to attend Bill's Memorial in person. I say in person because I hope it might be possible—if you think it appropriate—for me to participate via Skype? I have been in some internal conflict about this because I want very much to attend the Memorial but I am also reluctant to leave home for more than a few hours because Linda had an operation on her foot (completely successful) and really can't get around very well, and we have no one here who I feel comfortable prevailing upon to look after her for a couple days. She will be in a cast and unable to walk for another couple months so it's unlikely that she will be mobile by the time of the Memorial. So I have decided to stay with her and hope that I can look in on (and perhaps say a few words at) the 3:00 Saturday Memorial and, perhaps, also participate in Alice's Sunday discussion of Bill's last book idea via the internet, again if you feel that would be appropriate.

I will say that I plan to work in two ways to ensure Bill's legacy and make sure the world recognizes the enormous contribution made by this great and kind man to our understanding of the nature of living systems. First, I will continue to do what I think I do best—which is doing research and publishing papers on PCT. I think it's important to put as much quality PCT based research into the scientific literature as possible to give it legitimacy and visibility. I plan to inundate the journals with papers based on PCT; it's hard to get them into print but I have a pretty good track record and I think it's worth the effort. Second, I will try to publish papers in the relevant scientific literature describing Bill's accomplishments. I'm starting with trying to get a professional obituary published in *American Psychologist*, which, I believe, is the first psychological journal in which Bill is published (pre-dating the major 1960 piece in *Perceptual and Motor Skills* by three years: Powers, W. T., McFarland, R. L., & Clark, R. K. (1957). A general feedback theory of human behavior: A prospectus. *American Psychologist*, 12, 462.). If that doesn't go I'll look for other relevant venues for such an obituary.

Finally, I completely agree with Henry Yin that " Not since Mendel has there been a great man so neglected." It was Bill's genius—and Bill's alone—that produced the insights that are included in what we now call PCT and he, like Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Mendel and other scientific giants, should be recognized and celebrated for his contributions. And it is a tragedy that this recognition and celebration is currently occurring among a relatively small (but not all that small) group of people. We must work to give William T. Powers the place in scientific history that he deserves. And the main way I will try to do this is the way I would encourage all of us who recognize the enormity of Bill's contribution to the life sciences to do it: by continuing, in whatever way we can—through research, application, publication—to build on the extraordinary foundation that Bill provided and described with such incredible lucidity.

Best regards, Rick Marken

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Dag, I was very sorry to get the news. Thanks for sending it.

I have a huge respect for W. Powers.

Peace, Ray Sund

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Dear Rick - I have been trying to keep up with all of the responses, but find my reserves are starting to dwindle - and so I hope that everyone can forgive my not being able to respond immediately.

However, I do want to let you know that I fully understand your situation - as well as that of others who have written and so graciously shared with me reasons for why they cannot attend. There need not be a reason either - since traveling on short notice and to high altitude can be reason enough. I will certainly be looking into setting up Skype access for those of you who might wish to listen in and add some comments of your own.

We will be burying Dad's ashes in Durango, CO by Mary's side shortly after on June 11th, I believe. There is a black granite grave marker there at the Greenmount Cemetery upon the hill that overlooks the town that they loved so much - a beautiful place for them to lay to rest together. On the stone are a female deer and a buck on either side, standing under the pines facing one another.

I have two things to ask of you, Rick.

One - do you have a CSG research fund where we may ask people to contribute money in lieu of sending flowers?

And two - we intend on storing Dad's archives in a climate controlled storage facility around the corner from where he lived. We cannot remember who was going to work on going through these old papers, experiments, etc. but will have it set up so that it will be able to be accessed and easily opened with a table a chair which can be folded out. We will pay for the initial month and we can discuss if we will need to cover any subsequent months or the details of when and where these records will be stored more permanently. I suppose what I am asking of you here is to perhaps form a group of people who would like to participate in this project. We can talk about that more later since these archives will be in a safe place for the time being.

Thank you, Rick - we appreciate your desire to continue to forge ahead on Dad's behalf - and in many ways on everyone's behalf, since spreading the concepts of PCT truly can help make the world a better place.

Allie Powers

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Regarding your two questions of me:

Re #1: Yes, there is a CSG Research fund to which people can make (and have made) tax deductible contributions. The CSG is a _legitimate_ 501(c) organization and therefore I can give a receipt that will allow people to deduct the amount of their contribution from their taxes. Just send the contributions to me at:

Rick Marken
10459 Holman Ave
LA, CA 90024

And make the checks out to the Control Systems Group.

Re #2: I would be honored to set up a group to go through your Dad's stored works. Of course this will be in the future - the fairly near future I hope—but of course I will help in any way I can.

Warm Regards, Rick Marken

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May I add my condolences. I knew, and of course Bill knew, that this moment would come, and could come at any time, but it is still a great sadness when it does. My hope is that his work will live on, and flourish.

— Richard Kennaway

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I belong to several lists on LinkedIn and elsewhere where people have an interest in human behavior and performance. Few, however, know of or are interested in PCT. I plan to post the following to those lists tomorrow. If anyone cares to comment regarding my post please do so today.

Fred Nickols [final text posted on home page at www.IAPCT.org]

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I will miss Bill. I am so sad to hear this. I talk about PCT and mention his name several times a month. I am proud to tell people that PCT will someday become mainstream, and that I have had (and witnessed) many stimulating discussions with the man who formulated it. RIP. We will miss you.

Shannon Williams

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Dag, Thanks for letting me know of Bill's passing. It saddens me that he was not able to receive the recognition that he so greatly deserved. It is difficult for me to believe that he will not be "rediscovered." I only hope it will be sooner rather than later.

A thought in passing. Control has some negative implications. It might be helpful to frame Bill's thinking in terms of intentional systems. Control is the way that these systems realize their intentions. Perhaps this approach has already been explored.

Best wishes for PCT at 60.

Bruce Gregory

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Dear Alison,

Like others, I would like to express my heartfelt condolence to you and your family for your loss, felt by all of us as our loss too. Bill was a great gentleman of intelligence, creativity, and helpfulness to those of us over the years who have been in the process of learning about and working with the concepts that he has so eloquently and patiently expressed. His great mind and pleasant personality will be sorely missed.

He was the Hari Seldon of our time.

Sincerely, Richard Pfau

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Perry and I are so sad to hear of Bill's death. He was such a good and loyal friend to us and to so many others. His enormous contribution to science and humanity will continue to grow with time. He was an inspiration to a great diversity of people around the world. We are thinking of you and send you and your family our deepest sympathies.

Fred and Perry Good

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A tribute to Bill:

Bill did not know me, but I knew him (and Mary) from keeping up with the posts over the years since my 1990 participation in the PCT course that was taught at NEIU by Dick Robertson. I actually did get to see Bill once when he visited the class briefly.

His contributions to the field of Psychology have been life changing for me. And, likely for many others who applied the lessons that PCT taught to their daily living habits. The theory led me to develop a process of behavior that worked well. The science of PCT seemed to be Bill's love and Mary seemed to apply the sense of it to real life. When she passed, it surely had to be a big loss to PCT as well as Bill and family.

It is gratifying to hear CSG net members wanting to keep Bill's work going forward - getting the recognition and application it deserves. Posts to the net will continue to be read.

My condolences to family and all.

Carol Kiran

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Dear Allie,

I miss Bill. He was a focal point, the one I always kept in mind as I work on behalf of PCT. I wanted to make him proud and to see that his work is propagating. Facebook just reminded me of Bill's birthday, so I took the liberty of expressing myself just a little, as if he was still there. If I had had the chance at the memorial, I would have talked about the huge, lasting gift Bill gave us all. Bill tried in every way he could think of to give this gift to the world. I think he took comfort in the fact that several of us got it and will carry on. Bill gave my life meaning. What greater gift can there be?

Bill's work will endure for a thousand years and more since it lays a foundation for psychology to become a natural science, much the same as Copernicus and Galileo laid a foundation for astronomy to become a natural science. Bill's followers will not stop working to share PCT with the world. Once you think you understand PCT, it won't let you stop. PCT is too important. I am happy to be in touch with several. We all work together

Dag

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Dear Bill Powers:

I am so sorry to hear about your sad news. We still have a group studying your theory of PCT, and as the based work of classic of systems science to introduce to our students.

Best Regards

Sincerely yours

Zhang Huaxia

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Up to date as of September 9, 2013,

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