

## Johnny's Last Song

As a singer songwriter, Johnny Cash could bare his soul. His very last song portrayed taking a deep breath – perhaps a deeper allegorical tune than the song itself portrays – Asthma Like the 309. I was privileged to be with Johnny when this song came to life, and in fact, it was part of our plan to improve his brain, body and mind. I was helping Johnny walk again, play his guitar, use his fingers to express, his eyes to see and bring out his incredible creativity that had been buried deep inside.

After ridding him of previously prescribed leg braces and wheel chair, he began drawing with squiggly random motions with a thick black marker on a very large white pad. Although difficult for him to see at first, improving vision lead to smaller black markers and pads, eventually he read well enough to write. To further help him, we'd walk outside barefoot for some healing sunlight and the light breezes on his skin made him sigh with relief. Combined with other activities, in time he could hold the guitar and strum chords again. On that day I could sense creativity blooming.

One morning I walked in and he was so excited. He said, “Dr. Phil, listen to this...” and he played and sang a verse to what would be his first new song in some time. Sadly, it would be his last.

Sitting in his cabin studio a few weeks later I watched and listened as he recorded vocals for the now completed song (and just out on the newly released American V: A Hundred Highways). Not long afterwards, the day Johnny Cash died, we were sitting in his office when suddenly but casually he turned to me and just said, “it's time.”

His song still breathes deep in my soul.

– *Dr. Phil Maffetone*

Read the Vanity Fair article about Johnny Cash, Rick Rubin and comments about Dr. Phil:

[davidkamp.com/2006/09/american\\_communion.php](http://davidkamp.com/2006/09/american_communion.php)