



Association for the Integration of the Whole Person

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Our Cup Runneth Over

When we expanded to 16 pages, we thought we would have *plenty* of room to accommodate the articles and features we wanted to present next. So we opened ourselves up to two inevitable truths of physics and spirituality: 1. Nature abhors a vacuum, and 2. If you want to make God laugh, make plans. Suffice to say that this issue is bursting with goodies, so much so that we are holding back a few items we promised you last time. And lest we permit several important notes to slip away without appropriate fanfare, we are including them here.

First of all, we want to acknowledge Bobbie Liberton, an early founding member of AIWP. Founder Mel Suhd emphasizes, "From its roots to this day, Bobbi has been the continually active partner responsible for the growth of this exceptional spiritual/religious family that now numbers over a thousand ordained members in service and many thousands of participants in their congregations who are served in ways that help improve holistic health and the 'good life' for all those who would not do deliberate harm to self, others, or the environment. I have always seen Bobbi as a founding member and a co-author of most of the material that defines AIWP and makes it operational. I apologize for not having her visibility more prominent, as she so richly deserves."

Second, we want to remind all potential contributors to this publication of our policy regarding reproduction of articles. We encourage anyone who wishes to utilize any part of this newsletter to do so without requiring any further permission, on the condition that the person or agency doing the reproduction provides proper acknowledgement of authorship.

Third, after updating our mailing list, we suspect that many of you who receive this issue will have missed the first one or two, and if this is the case, you can let us know and we will send them to you.

Finally, we would like to put forth the notion that many of our ordained members in service have worthwhile and fund-worthy projects that would benefit from the services of a volunteer grant writer. We would be glad to serve as liaison for anyone who might be able to make this work—just send us your information and we'll include it in an upcoming issue.

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Staff Box

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Melvin Suhd, Founder and President
Bobbie Liberton, Founding Member
Kate Markham, President

Our Kind of People . . .

In each issue, we will spotlight a few of our members in service, describe their activities, and let you know how to reach them.

Ed Tick, Ph.D.

Ed Tick received a Ph.D. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and is a clinical member of the American Academy of Psychotherapists, as well as various other professional organizations. He was ordained as a pastoral psychotherapist by AIWP in 1994.

His private practice of psychotherapy includes extensive and innovative work with survivors of severe trauma, especially war, sexual and substance abuse, severe mental and emotional disorders, men's issues, and psycho-spiritual healing.

He has also published extensively in the clinical field on such topics as sexual abuse, obsessive, creative and terrified patients, humanistic and spiritual traditions in psychotherapy, and in journalism, literary, cultural criticism, travel, and poetry. He was editor of *Voices: the Art and Science of Psychotherapy, Journal of the American Academy of Psychotherapists*, from 1988-91, and of *The Frontiers of Psychotherapy* book series.

He is an expert in both the classical Greek and Native American traditions. He has studied their healing practices and their applications to modern clinical work. He has published extensively on these two traditions, led psycho-educational journeys to Greece, and studied with traditional Native healers as well.

Ed, with Kate Dahlstedt, M.A.C.P., and Dave Miller, also pastoral psychotherapists ordained by AIWP, bring several religious backgrounds to enrich their work at Inner Sanctuary, a not-for-profit, nondenominational congregation. In addition to monthly gatherings in nature to worship the universal sustainer and life force, they offer sacred rituals, such as marriages, adoptions and other "making of relatives," births, and deaths, as well as periodic and seasonal ceremonial gatherings. They create individualized rites of passage for adolescents and adults, and offer a low-cost psychotherapy service.

Ed can be reached via his website at www.mentorthesoul.com/vietnam.

Marcia Dale Lopez

"My work is to guide each person to peace and to love—so they may feel their truth and touch their essence. Then life is renewed from the inside out."

Marcia Dale Lopez describes herself as a spiritual intuitive counselor and healer, explaining that over 25 years her work has evolved from a focus on her psychic abilities to a focus on holding a conscious state of being. "Who I be cannot be separate from the work," she says, "as I function as a counselor, energy healer, and mentor. I bring people into their own hearts, their own souls, and God, in both the masculine and feminine sense of that word, for an integration of the personality and a clearing of the ego."

Her career has gone through considerable evolution over the years. She says, "When I first started my work and came together with a group, I was brought in because of my psychic gifts and channeling abilities. But I felt shy and was really scared. Spirit said to me, 'You can let yourself just get out of the way.' I have been relaxed and spontaneous as I do my work ever since."

Although she does not use the term "medical intuitive," it serves to give some idea of what she does. "When I sit in front of someone, I see directly into their body, both physically and emotionally. I can talk to them in their language about their reality; it's not a psychic reading, but a truth teaching. What's there in their field is very simple. There are essential energies to connect with within the self to come full circle into our wholeness. My ability is to go into the body with spiritual light and help individuals illuminate that being. Some of it is through touch; I work hands-on, it's like spiritual surgery. It's not anything I do to a person, although I am working on them; I'm really working with them, hand-in-hand with the soul and spirit. Also, my work includes nutrition; I will look into the body and see what is needed to support their life force. The next step is letting go of whatever is no longer useful so that they can achieve an increase in their energy vibration, in the quality of their life, and most of all in their love. I assist people to experience and express their love and their joy and the peace that is available to us when we are really at one."

Marcia works with individuals, couples, children, and groups, "mostly women, but some men. I explore awakening through movement and dance. It's free movement, coming from within the self. If we're not feeling alive in our physical body we can't move forward in our life. I use energy work, movement, and expression (sounding and breathing) together. We open the heart with movement and meditation, bring in light from the heavens and grounding from the earth. I often work with the energy that sparks when our eyes meet, so we can really look at each other—soul to soul. I help people open to the dance of life."

Marcia is a charter member of AIWP, and was ordained in 1980. She received her M.A. in marriage, family, and child counseling from Goddard College in 1976, and her Ph.D. in transpersonal psychology from International College in 1980. Her practice is based in upstate New York, and she also works by phone as a counselor and energy healer with people from all over the world. "My intuitive gifts are of great value in my work as a counselor and healer, since I am able to visualize the body from a distance, and be with that person as if they were sitting in front of me—even if they live on the other side of the planet. Spiritual connections between us have no boundaries."

Marcia has mentored and trained hundreds of people in her field. She founded the Gateway to Light in 1988 in Los Angeles and the Ascension World Service Center in 1994 in New York with a colleague. Both centers were dedicated to facilitating spiritual awareness and oneness with self, universe, and all life. Now she is continuing her life work in private practice from her 33-acre farm home by the Hudson River, which she shares with her husband Tom Lopez. This beautiful, 200-year-old house and grounds, complete with a dome for group gatherings, provides a nurturing retreat setting for her counseling sessions and workshops. Marcia can be reached at (518) 695-3960, or by e-mail at marciadale@zbs.org.

A Few Words from Our Friends . . .

I just received your newsletter. It's fantastic! I was so pleasantly surprised seeing Maurice Friedman's name in your newsletter. I have had the remarkable experience of studying in the religion department at Temple University during Dr. Friedman's chairmanship. Although my major was in psychology, I minored in religion and found out that the courses offered in Dr. Friedman's department were the best in the entire university. I also had the privilege of attending one of Dr. Friedman's lectures. I went on to eventually receive two degrees in psychology from Temple University and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from another university. But the courses and the experiences that I acquired with my 15 credits, as a minor, in religion at Temple University have had a profound effect on my life, my education, my spirituality and the way that I practice my particular brand of psychotherapy. I'm so glad that Dr. Friedman is part of the AIWP community of scholars and healers. Once again, thank you very much for printing that wonderful article about Maurice Friedman. — Yours truly, Paul J. Hannig, Ph.D.

. . . Thank you so much for . . . the newsletters. It is with joy that I read the publications and the contributions by our extended family and the generous sharings of life experiences and honest communications. — Frank Dunne

I received my AIWP Newsletter yesterday and read it cover to cover. It is articulate, informative, and interesting. I much enjoyed the quality of writing

and level of intellect being expressed. Some of the quotes are pleasantly familiar; we (Mel, Kate and I) have been discussing and enjoying them for years. Nice to see "turnings" again; I had it connected with Clark Moustakas rather than Ben. You've done a great job! — Love, Bobbi Liberton

. . . I received the newsletter and it is *wonderful!* It contains so many valuable viewpoints and insights. If there is any way I can add to the newsletter, or to the university, please let me know! — Sincerely, Susan L. Swan

Thanks so much for the newsletter. I hope it will continue to grow over time. I am sending a small contribution in the mail. —Best regards, Rod Davis

I got the second edition of the AIWP Newsletter . . . I will be making a small donation to compensate for the cost of the newsletter and to keep it going. Nice job on it . . . — Bill Newell

Thanks for the newsletter. It is outstanding and inspirational. I was ordained in 1995 through AIWP and continue to do pastoral counseling, hypnotherapy, and educational work in San Luis Obispo County in central California. Would you send me your current web site address? I didn't see it in the newsletter, although I visited many of the others. — Thanks again, Jeo Laurita

I want to express appreciation for the

newsletter, both for content and for the work that goes into producing it. I'm really thrilled to see its materialization. It adds another dimension of stature to AIWP . . . — Sincerely, Joann Hansen

I was ordained as a transpersonal therapist through AIWP in early 2000. I have enjoyed the magazine very much, and hope that you are able to continue it. Please accept my enthusiastic donation . . . in support of the work of AIWP. — Sincerely, Lia O'Neil

Thanks so much for your newsletter. I really enjoy it. I have been an AIWP member for about 10 years, and I am very appreciative of your organization. I noticed that you published a list of authors and their books, so I am sending you a list of my books. Keep up the good work! — With love and blessings, Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

Thank you for the issues of the AIWP Newsletter, which I have received and enjoyed. I worked with Bobbi Liberton in obtaining a Ph.D. in transpersonal psychology from Summit University. Since that time, I have published three books . . . Looking forward to issues to come. — Sincerely, Lou Diekemper

Please turn to page 16 to see a list of Margaret's and Lou's books. Do we have any other AIWP authors out there?

Recent Graduates

We congratulate the following recent graduates of UIL, whose areas of specialization and major studies are listed below:

Diane Dalbey, Ph.D., BodyMindSpirit Therapy, *Body Journaling/Body Mapping Workbook and Teaching Guide*

Daniel East, M.A., Psychology, *Effective Treatment of Depression and Anxiety using Reality Therapy and Control Therapy*

Marilyn H. Hamlin, Ph.D., Psychoanalysis, *Tiger Talk--Say What You Mean--The Way of Self Advocacy*

Brooke Alex Lambie, Ph.D., Education: Therapeutic, Alternative, and Correctional, *Using Newly Developed Neurocognitive/Somatic Emotional Management Techniques in a Correctional School Curriculum Format to Increase the Effectiveness of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs for Highly At-risk and Adjudicated Adolescent Offenders*

Mavis June Lloyd, Ph.D., Counseling Psychology, *Becoming a More Experienced Counselor*

Carol Joan Waisman, Ph.D., Psychology, *Standing with Shyness: Revelations of a Shy Camper.*

Confronting the Dragon: Adolescents, Drugs and Parenting

Excerpt from an Unpublished Manuscript by Nita Gage, M.A.

Addiction Is a Disease, Not a Behavior Problem

Widespread drug and alcohol use among adolescents is not the tragedy, *untreated addiction* is the tragedy. Before we can treat it, we have to face that it is real, and that it is happening to our children. I would rather have stayed ignorant of the reality of my son's disease. I hope to help other parents get through the denial quicker than I did.

The attitude in our country towards the people with addictive disorders is still overwhelmingly archaic. The lowest rung on the social ladder is still occupied by the "drug addict." The stigma of addiction is shocking in the year 2000 when political correctness has swept our country.

Say "drug addict" to most people and you still conjure up the images portrayed in movies like *Panic in Needle Park* and *Reefer Madness*: low-life scums who are spineless and soulless. While politicians jockey for attention by extolling the virtues of their platforms to clean up the drug addicts, the drug dealers sit back and gloat! As long as we as a nation stay focused on addiction as a behavior problem, or social-legal dilemma, drug dealers stay in business. As long as attention is diverted from the real issue, *addiction is an untreated disease*, the money keeps circulating to the drug dealers.

When we refocus and put resources into prevention and treatment of addiction, and stop the demand for drugs, the dealers are finished. The refocusing will most efficiently occur one family at a time. Most of us go through the phase of blaming the drug dealers, the government for not stopping the flow of drugs, the schools for not controlling it on campus, and on and on. Blaming is a normal part of grieving. So is bargaining. Neither of these stages alters the reality of grief. Similarly, blaming and bargaining will not change the reality of your child's addiction.

Learning your child has a chronic illness of any kind is a life-shattering event. When that chronic illness also has a social stigma attached to it that implies you are a bad parent, the chances of you facing the disease in your child are poor. In the 1950s the popular belief about autism was that a "cold womb" caused it. In other words, you did a terrible job of carrying your child for the first nine months. Mental illness in the 1960s was believed by many to be caused by the parenting style, particularly of the mother; R.D. Laing popularized the theory of the "schizophrenic mother."

The prevailing thought today is still focused on drug addiction as a failure of parents. No wonder it is an epidemic, we are keeping it hidden, ashamed to bring it to light, and by the time we do, the disease has progressed to crisis proportions.

Addiction is a life-threatening, chronic, and at this time, incurable disease, which has reached epidemic levels and is not only untreated, it is undiagnosed in the vast majority of cases.

Real addiction among adolescents is lost in the sentimental attacks on the tobacco industry, alcohol advertisements, and illicit drug trafficking. As a nation we seem to be comforted by the soap opera-like drama surrounding the war on drugs that serves to shield us from the real horror, which is looking into the eyes of a 10-year-old addict, particularly when it is your own child.

We have, as a culture, abdicated responsibility for addressing this modern-day black plague. There has never in the history of the world been a disease, the symptoms of which, left untreated by a society, have so many secondary gains for shrewd business people. Untreated addiction fuels the economy. It is evident in the tobacco industry and the alcohol industry. Remember, we tried Prohibition. Shifting the same scenario to other substances, tobacco, heroin, or whatever, is largely a waste of time and money that could be used to research, treat, and prevent the tragedy of addiction.

Treatment of addictive disorders is far, far simpler and less costly than treating diabetes, another incurable but manageable disease. Yet we as a country stay confused and mystified about the treatment of addiction.

A Spiritual Solution to a Genetic Disease

The prevalence of alcoholism and addiction among people ages 9-22 is increasing, despite the slight decline in adolescent use of alcohol overall. The disease of alcoholism is a different concern than the generalized concern over dangerous and destructive use of alcohol and drugs by teens. Understandably, the majority of popular campaigns are geared toward reduced use and keeping kids off alcohol and drugs until they are 21.

Consider that young alcoholics in recovery are exposed to and, in the best outcomes, adopt a program of emotional recovery and spirituality that their non-alcoholic friends may not participate in until they are much older, if at all. Ironically, from this perspective it may be *that young alcoholics are fortunate in that the condition precipitates a spiritual and emotional crisis that leads them to a program of deeper meaning for their lives.*

"... getting sober and staying sober is because I found my spiritual self and community. I have found a way to speak about and understand my pain and suffering. More importantly, recovery has taught me how to stay in close contact with my feelings. In the simple experience of feeling my feelings is the key to true happiness. it doesn't matter where I am, or what I am doing, I carry the happiness inside of me, inside of my soul" (a 19-year-old-recovering addict).

Shaming and Degrading Appeals to Parents to Prevent Addiction

"Question: What one thing can parents do to keep their teens substance free? **Answer:** Create a nurturing family environment in which parental authority is respected, in which parents and teens have 'excellent' relationship, in which parents are involved in the lives of their teens" (1999 CASA Survey of Teenagers and Parents).

The above recommendation is from a report that surveyed thousands of teens and parents and looked carefully at the risk factors indicating potential substance abuse in young people. It could have been written in 1950, and it is not a surprising

finding. What it is for many parents is *discouraging*, and a harbinger of *hopelessness*. The reality for over 40% of parents is that they are raising teens in a single-parent household, where the parent is most often a mother, where there isn't enough money, and the parent's time is consumed with working. The most hopeful note of the report is that "a single mother can compensate for the absence of the father, in regard to substance abuse risk, by having an excellent relationship with the teen."

That relationship, however, is not as influential, it would seem, with young alcoholics. In a group setting, one young man stated the facts of life, which his peers quickly validated: "Until 13 your parents are everything, you rely on them for your sense of identity. After that, nothing they say influences you, it is a very frightening experience to suddenly know they can't help you any more, you are at the mercy of your friends, and your cravings."

This same report also found that teens who attend religious services once a week or more have a risk score 24% lower than the average for all teens. The implication that the structured religious environment impacts substance abuse is noteworthy, because it relates directly to the importance of elucidating the impact of "going to meetings" vs. engagement in a program, whether that program is AA or a more traditional religious setting.

Turning to the Legal System to Manage Addiction

The juvenile court system often assumes the parental authority and thus the responsibility for recovery remains externalized. The attitude is often that when parenting "fails" the court system takes over. It stills begs the issue of alcoholism as a disease for which a robust spiritual core may be the strongest treatment, and even inoculation. The project then becomes discovering what spirituality actually means to young people, and supporting their version of spirituality rather than imposing an external support structure as the only means of recovery.

The statistics alone, on relapse within 30 days of leaving treatment or correctional facilities, are noteworthy. The prevailing thought is that outside of the protective environment of fellowship and support, without internalized self-worth, desire for sobriety is lost to the desire for belongingness.

The 1997 Survey of Correctional Facilities that reported on over 7000 adult and juvenile facilities identified that approximately 23,000 juveniles who are inmates are receiving substance abuse treatment. Only about 40% of these facilities nationwide have substance abuse programs. The number then represents only the youth in the facilities where programs exist. The percentage of young people in jail for crimes directly or indirectly related to alcoholism has been estimated at over 85%. The cost of treatment for all incarcerated youth may be prohibitive, and the only other source of recovery support comes through the 12-step programs or other spiritual/religious-based efforts.

Understanding Spirituality: The Voices of Young Recovering Addicts

Addiction remains a primary indicator of risk for debilitating and costly illnesses. Supporting young people to choose healthy behavior and lifestyles profoundly impacts prevention of illness, based on the model of mindbodyspirit.

The ongoing recovery process seems to call for stepping outside of oneself and focusing on others. Is it possible that in order to accomplish this move to altruism, one must have a solid Self to step out of; is that perhaps the nature of spirituality? That is the move from Western illusory independence of the individual ego to recognition that one is an important part of a large body of consciousness. Is the call to compassion for others not simply a "nice thing to do," but rather an act of survival? This seems to be one of the principles that recovering alcoholics address, and no group is more passionate about the call to an almost tribal level of interconnectedness than young people.

A former rabbi and clinician working extensively in the substance abuse field, Adam Tuerski (1997) has identified that spirituality is a tangible component of recovery and may, as AA would suggest, be the actual foundation of ongoing recovery. He characterizes spirituality as a set of values that bring the person to a focus on the "other" rather than the "self."

Ironically, recovery requires a rigorous disengagement initially from what anyone else thinks or says in order to access the deep inner core of safety and strength.

"Sobriety is ultimately an alone experience. I had to learn to love me, and be willing to be alone, before I truly was engaged in a path of sobriety and recovery. The only thing that made this decision possible was the grace that came from surrender to something bigger than myself" (22-year-old recovering addict).

Yet the next part of recovery seems to imply personal expansion. "When recovering alcoholics are awakened on a frigid night because some drunk wants help, they crawl out of bed, knowing full well that by the time they arrive the person may have had a marked change of heart and may be belligerent and hostile toward anyone who attempts to preach abstinence or may even throw the helper down the stairs" (Tuerski, 1997).

Nowhere have I seen the power of this dedication more exemplified than among young people in recovery. At a recent birthday party for a young woman turning 18, I observed the phenomenon of altruism in action: The party was high spirited, attended by about 30 young people; all, including the guest of honor, were recovering alcoholics active in AA. There was much excitement and joy in the party environment and the young woman celebrating her birthday was clearly enjoying and absorbed in being center of attention. At one point, one of the young men received a call on his cell phone; he looked intent and serious during the conversation. After he completed his call, he approached the celebrating young woman and spoke quietly to her. Without hesitation or drawing further attention to herself, she disappeared inside for about 30 minutes.

It seemed that this was a "program call"; someone drunk and in despair needed to talk to a female, and despite the circumstances the birthday girl dropped everything to attend to the call. Compassion and concern were certainly present for this young woman and the others at the party, who were in full support of whatever needed to be done to attend to the desperate

Inner City Youth Tap Their "Inner Power"

by Aliah K. MaJon

My walk through life has brought the realization that the symbolism of words, or the whisperings that particular words convey, are significant things to pay attention to. I speak now not of the common use of language per se, but of the hidden messages and meaning that language sometimes delivers us.

Let me start with a question: How many times have we heard the phrase "inner city" and thought not only of the geography of a city, but also of the typical less-than-positive connotations of that well-known phrase? My own answer—many. Another question: How many times have we associated that same phrase with any of the other positive or more life-supporting ways that "inner" is seen? My own answer, at least until a recent revelation—never. The familiar phrase *inner city* is a commonly used description that has almost always meant a place of "blight." The common usage of the term paints the people who live there as downtrodden and existing in the shadows.

But in this article, the inner city I will speak about is about "light," and very much connected to the positive way that the word "inner" is used. "Inner City Youth Tap Their Inner Power" is an invitation for us to begin to shift the paradigm from the withering hopes and negative experiences of today's youth to the creation of a fresh, hope-filled and brightly blooming new reality!

Seven years ago I lost my only child to suicide. My son was 24 at the time and he—like millions of youth all across this nation—not only lived in the inner city, he was very much a part of everything we have all experienced and/or heard about that particular way of life. It goes without saying that my heart was deeply affected, and also that this occurrence served up one of my life's greatest trials. As you might imagine, after this "initiation," I will never be the same. As might be expected by all of us who walk the path of being awake, after a "calling" such as this, I will continue to unravel the mission of this profoundly transformative experience for the rest of my days. My son's passing prompted me to seek my own renewal and to understand what was to be reborn in me and my own heart, as well as the world. Many of us have learned that seeming tragedies in life are another way for God to hand us undiscovered gifts . . . for the Universe to work in magnificent and mysterious ways. We are coming to know that nothing is beyond being touched in a sacred manner, and that anything can be used to activate and evolve our Souls. I am grateful to be able to share that I allowed myself to embrace this opportunity and, most importantly, that this tragedy became a precious golden hallway with an infinite number of doors that are beckoning me to enter. Where do the doors lead? Here is one of the many stories that I can tell.

I often say that I was given an assignment—one that is part of my dharma—which is to awaken youth to the "callings" of their life's purpose, to help to guide them towards self-realization and enlightenment. In practical terms, my task is to provide professional tools that support the development of each individual young person's greatest potential. In other terms, my task is to coach them to reach into the expanded reality that serves God and the divinity of evolution; I am to assist the participants that I work with to allow the soul-inspired contributions in their journeys through life to come alive! What follows is one sample of how my service to humanity—my dharma—is to unfold.

I have learned that youth whose lives are too often characterized by disparities and negative outcomes must be supported to discover what success really means to them, what their personal untapped potential might be, and how they will fit into emerging possibilities that reflect their own dreams. Attaining success in the inner city is a journey of finding one's self and having the courage to take the steps to begin to witness one's own Soul, in addition to utilizing resources or developing skills.

I would like to introduce you to the V.I.S.I.O.N.S. Project, a collaborative mentor-based after-school program designed to catalyze in each participant the power of his or her own human spirit! The SHAMBALLA Foundation developed this groundbreaking educational project as an offering of its community-service arm iMAGINE... LOS ANGELES!™ to demonstrate a model that includes Spirit as a part of learning. The intention is to provide inner city youth with enlightened educational opportunities that will tap their own inner power and help them believe in themselves as they become equipped to truly excel. The workshops also prepare youth to participate in the design and update of program curricula, and teach them to serve as trainers themselves. The V.I.S.I.O.N.S. program began in September in South Central Los Angeles, at Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., a site that serves over 2000 local youth. V.I.S.I.O.N.S. utilizes a unique setting known as the INTEL Computer Clubhouse Network (www.computerclubhouse.org), a global youth development initiative the INTEL Corporation created, in cooperation with the Boston Museum of Science and the MIT MEDIA Laboratory, to bridge the "digital divide." Their goal is to help young people to achieve technological literacy. Our goal is to assist youth to go beyond mere technology to achieve the greatest literacy of all for human beings—the gifts and true purpose of the Soul!

The V.I.S.I.O.N.S. workshop topics include the following:

Visionary Leadership . . . A Model for Living: An interactive model that demonstrates that "leadership" is an inside job and not just for the benefit of our communities alone.

"Conscious Conflict" - Mediation Is More than Mechanics: An introduction to transformative mediation techniques in an environment where conflict is seen as a dynamic signal for needed change.

"Rep-presentin" . . . Who Am I?: An experiential workshop that explores "identity" and how we each see ourselves, including exercises that promote personal growth, self-reflection, and increased self-esteem.

Public Speaking . . . When "Meaning" Is the Message: A comprehensive treatment of public speaking skills, which focuses on the role our inner self plays in charisma, and includes how to cultivate rapport and touch hearts.

Turnings . . .

In preparation for the Selma, Alabama civil rights march, I was in awe of the young leaders who trained us to behave as nonviolent dissenters no matter what provocations confronted us. The awe turned to the deepest admiration during the days leading up to the capitol grounds where over 100,000 people assembled to declare the end of segregation. We were guided there by hundreds of young men and women who placed their bodies on the outer rims of our columns as shields to protect us as we made this important statement without a single incident of violence committed by any of our participants. To be in the presence of so many notable people who put themselves at risk to make this country “a more perfect union” was a humbling experience. One of those present was James Baldwin, whose writings have had a profound influence on my spiritual and educational development. He gave a talk, later published, on education. I've abstracted two paragraphs from his speech that gave me much to ponder. After Baldwin, I quote two statements that are universal in the general perception of young adults.

- *Mel Suhd, Founder, Association for the Integration of the Whole Person*

The Purpose of Education

“The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for herself/himself, to make her/his own decisions, to say to herself/himself, this is black or this is white, to decide for herself/himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity. But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If a society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it—at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change.

“Children, not yet aware that it is dangerous to look too deeply at anything, look at everything, look at each other, and draw their own conclusions. They don't have the vocabulary to express what they see, and we, their elders, know how to intimidate them very easily and very soon.”

From an article in the *Saturday Review*, December 21, 1963, quoting an extemporaneous speech presented to 200 New York teachers by James Baldwin entitled, “The Negro Child: His Self Image.”

Modern Thought

In regard to the accusation that education is becoming too easy and that today children are getting away with murder, it's wise to take into account certain aspects of human nature. Here is a paragraph from an editorial in a New York paper:

“When we were young, children had to do a little work in school. They were not coaxed; they were hammered. Spelling, writing and arithmetic were not electives; and you had to learn. In these more fortunate times, elementary education has become in many places a sort of circus. The child must be kept amused and learns what he pleases.”

Here is another example: “The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect for elders, and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the apprentices of their households, they no longer honor their parents or elders. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble at the table, slouch, and tyrannize their teachers.”

The first paragraph was printed in the *New York Sun* in October, 1902. The second is a complaint made by Socrates in 400 B.C.

IN MEMORY: Charles Kuell

We met in the baths at Esalen, late in the evening in early 1972. Chuck had resigned as the vice-president of Thom McCann Shoes and had left Chicago to settle in California. He was in transition, wanting to change careers, leaving the corporate world where success was tied to adopting the image of “Jack Armstrong, the all-American boy,” closeting your real self behind the closed doors of your swank apartment. He wanted to live the “good life” in this country, in an area that didn't leave the pledge and preamble to preachments, but where the words “liberty and justice for all,” “secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity” were in the hearts and actions of most people. He knew that “to form a more perfect union” was a life-long endeavor that called upon us to be knowledgeable, to discern and to dissent nonviolently when the cause would lead to a more perfect place. Chuck was pondering the future. I mentioned Goddard and UWW as possible educational paths he might explore. Within a relatively short period of time, Chuck had tied ribbons around a bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D.

Dr. Charles L. Kuell was brilliant. His wisdom wasn't achieved by following the traditional path of an academic scholar, but by using his birth-given gifts in a remarkably congruent way. His thirst for knowledge was tied to his zest to experience life to its fullest and to use his sensitive and loving nature as rationally as possible in his relationships with intimates, friends, and the environment.

Chuck became my brother. We had been raised in different faiths—Chuck, Catholic; me, Hebrew. In our years as brothers, we found that our religious/spiritual beliefs were inseparable. We had both taken the best of our faiths in determining our own life journeys and found we were bound together by the same higher power.

Chuck was a special mentor who influenced my life in significant ways. He was my therapist for many issues needing his empathic presence. I loved him as a close member of my family. I will miss him until we are joined in another world.

- *Mel*

University for Integrative Learning: An AIWP Educational Program

From its beginning, AIWP has fostered innovative educational programs that promote its philosophy and values. The University for Integrative Learning (UIL) is the latest generation of a pioneering effort in alternative higher education that began in 1968, so we consider UIL to be 32 years old even though its name is new. UIL headquarters is in Cheyenne, Wyoming, with administrative offices in Rohnert Park, CA. UIL interfaces with AIWP, a religious organization, and follows its philosophy and values while maintaining a completely nonsectarian perspective.

The Birth of UIL in Alternative Education

A contemporary foundation for the University for Integrative Learning was laid in 1964, when the elementary and secondary departments in Harvard's School of Education and the Union for Research and Experimentation in Higher Education began to develop innovative and alternative programs. As these programs expanded along diverse paths, the umbrella organization for UIL—the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person—joined forces with the movement for alternative education when AIWP was founded in 1975.

UIL Mission Statement

The University for Integrative Learning serves a spiritual learning community in ways consistent with humanistic educational philosophy and psychology. UIL places individuals at the center of their own learning processes in relation to all aspects of life.

The Connection Between AIWP and UIL

The Association for the Integration of the Whole Person (AIWP) is recognized by the federal government as a 501(3)(c) non-profit religious entity. The University for Integrative Learning of AIWP is a nonsectarian spiritual university that values human diversity and maintains that all learning and degrees are religious in nature.

Religious: “a cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith.”

Spiritual: “of religion, sacred, devotional, or ecclesiastical; not lay or temporal.”

Contact: **AIWP-UIL Main Office: 6182 Country Club Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928; Phone: 707-586-9484; Fax: 707-586-9014; E-mail: U4lifelearninghq@aol.com**

The headquarters for UIL is in Wyoming, registered under the name AIWP with the Secretary of State. The headquarters for AIWP, *and* the administrative office for UIL, is in California at the above address. The State of Wyoming has laws that recognize the U.S. Constitution's separation of church and state, exempting legitimate religious institutions from state and federal laws other than those against performing criminal acts, practicing medicine or engaging in state or federal politics as a political party or for a particular party or government person. Their laws exempt religious organizations that have schools that teach and offer degrees in the areas that embody their religion. AIWP was established in 1975 as a nonsectarian religious organization to ordain qualified persons who wish to serve others in areas for which they have been trained. Its credo and written texts state as a major reason for its existence the belief that all learning is a spiritual mission and lifelong learning is the path to higher consciousness. AIWP/UIL is open to all who would not deliberately do harm to self, others, or the environment.

Request for Proposal: A Message from Mel Suhd

The University for Integrative Learning of AIWP is gradually expanding. With stability of the university as one of our primary goals, we have purposely emphasized slow growth. Moving forward in a considered, steady, purposeful manner, AIWP/UIL has indeed built a strong and stable foundation. It is our intention that the university will continue to operate with this foundation for many years, serving our present and future community of learners. It is clear, however, that UIL is now in a position to expand significantly, and to blossom into a larger entity with an expanded model. At the age of 76, I would like to begin my retirement—a few steps at a time. I do not wish to direct the university in an expansion beyond the model we now have. As president of AIWP, I am leading an effort to find responsible and experienced leadership for further development of a broader university model.

I have come to the conclusion that, if the leaders of AIWP and I put our energy into turning over the responsibility and direction of the future university to a new team, our AIWP/UIL community will be served as well. The present model is limited to a specific construct that others may wish to alter, as AIWP's philosophy and mission would support. This present model, AIWP/UIL, will remain unchanged, continuing to operate under our current local leadership, while the new university will be sponsored, to expand and grow in its own way, under its own name and other directors.

We are presently communicating with interested parties, and open to proposals from others. This opportunity is for the leadership of a more expanded international university, separate and distinct from UIL of AIWP. Please contact Mel Suhd or Kate Markham at AIWP. Telephone: (707) 586-9484, email: aiwp@aol.com, fax: (707) 586-9014.

A Brief Sample of Our Learners' Work

Below are samples of major study abstracts written by graduates of UIL. They represent the range and variety of our learners' passions, as well as the freedom and scholarly discipline that characterize their work.

Geography of the Soul: Mapping the Healing Terrain of Nature, Narrative, and Landscape

by Rosemary Ward

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars. - Walt Whitman

Several years ago, I sat with an old Maori shaman, overlooking the glacial green waters that separate the North and South islands of New Zealand. She took my hands into hers and looked deeply into my eyes. "Go home and write," she said, "and when you write, remember that if you create a big enough map, everything will fit. In a big enough map, we all fit."

Her words, along with the words of the ancient shamanistic voice within me, have prodded and directed me to create this map. It is a map that includes my interest and fascination with the research and writings surrounding the healing nature of Nature, the power of narrative storytelling, and the soul-soothing effects of landscape. It is also a map that includes my own stories, my own journeys, and my own journal writings that seem to "fit."

This dissertation is a map that includes the geography of personal terrain, as well as the charting of the emerging therapeutic territory of eco-psychology, horticultural therapy, and narrative therapy.

This map is the charting of the personal and the professional, the internal and external landscapes. It is a journey through the terrain that I have inhabited, and which now inhabits me.

Emerson once wrote: "Make your own Bible. Select all the words and sentences that in all your reading have been to you like the blast of triumph." This is what I have done. I have collected the words of others, as well as my own journal and essay writings that describe a "lay of the land" . . . which is really the terrain of the heart. Just as plants long for the sun, and the sea craves the moon, so too do we as humans crave the healing nurturance that is found in Nature and connects us to our Soul.

John Muir once said, "Whenever you tug at Nature, you find it attached to the rest of the Universe."

It is the intent of this dissertation, this "map," to explore the gentle tuggings and healing qualities of Nature, Landscape, and Narrative Storytelling . . . and their attachment to the larger universe of Soul.

Standing with Shyness: Revelations of a Shy Camper

by Carol J. Waisman

Being shy in Western society can be immensely violating to the shy individual. Prejudice, both overt and hidden, exists toward the shy. Literature of Western culture overwhelmingly portrays shyness as a trait expected to be dealt with, removed, or changed. Earlier eras looked inward. Medieval mysticism, the Romantic era, and earlier feminine, matriarchal periods affirmed inwardness. Reality constellated around signs, symbols, and dreams, and these gave meaning to their existence. In modern times, a great emphasis on rationalism, achievement, competition, and looking outward unfolded as an outgrowth of the Renaissance, Enlightenment, and Industrial ages. Western culture decided to objectify and conquer itself through scientific study of the outer world. Over time, these cultural developments have made Western people more demanding about social contacts and more goal-oriented in their purpose.

In this eight-chapter work, every chapter is introduced by a vignette from the author's experience as a shy camper. Each chapter looks at a different aspect of shyness: context, theoretical interpretations, societal expectations, cross-cultural comparisons, temperamental and constitutional differences, the role of the feminine and masculine, and the relationship of shyness to the mystical and the sacred.

This paper also looks at the intersection of shyness with social anxiety, sensitivity, inhibition, and introversion, and reviews myths and theories about shyness, countering them through understanding the historical, cultural, sociological, and spiritual contexts in which they occur. As a result, new ideas and perceptions about shyness as a valid and valuable trait are put forth.

Examining our own individual values as well as our cultural priorities is encouraged, instead of reacting to the shy with knee-jerk, fear-driven conformity. This process will require openness to a different cultural mindset about shyness based on exposure to new information and a willingness to receive and translate it into action.

This study has left its mark on me by subtly enhancing my self-compassion and sense of wholeness. My intent is to inspire dialogue and to stimulate interest for further study of shyness.

"I am one of the searchers. There are, I believe, millions of us.

We are not unhappy, but neither are we really content.

We continue to explore life, hoping to uncover its ultimate secret. We continue to explore ourselves, hoping to understand.

We like to walk along the beach, we are drawn by the ocean, taken by its power, its unceasing motion, its mystery and unspeakable beauty. We like forests and mountains, deserts and hidden rivers, and the lonely cities as well.

Our sadness is as much a part of our lives as is our laughter.

To share our sadness with one we love is perhaps as great a joy as we can know—unless it be to share our laughter."

By James Kavanaugh, There Are Men Too Gentle to Live Among Wolves (1970, Nash Publishing, Los Angeles)

*The Dancer –
stooping, reaching
rising and turning*

Nearly a specter, dancing at dawn,
moving toward day, dust-devils whirling,
cycles of life, the rhythms of living.

In shimmering heat,
singing the earth songs, sung before time,
turning the soil, planting the seed,
reaping the harvest, of sun, wind and rain.

Strawberries waiting, row after row,
dust on green leaves, it hangs in the air,
here to horizon, soft dirt underfoot.

I tread the earth lightly, it's under my nails,
caught in my throat, it grinds away slowly,
as I move down the rows, that measure my life.

We're picking by hand, for pennies a pound,
half a ton daily, sends money home,
it makes for a life, but not for a dream.

Sown in the dirt, raised in the fields,
the berries and me, linked by our roots,
one for the other, and when I am done,
the dance will go on.

*Stooping, reaching
rising and turning . . .
the dancer*

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Spirit of Life Institute

New Members in Service

We are pleased to announce the following recent ordinations of AIWP:

Renita Ade, Transpersonal Counselor and Spiritual Minister; Russell Burns, Minister of BodyMind Healing; Annie Buttmer, Transpersonal Counselor; Diane Dalbey, Body, Mind, Spirit Therapy; James DeMaio, Relationship Counselor; Irene Glennon, Transpersonal Counselor and Minister; Christina Alaya Hammond, Spiritual and Ceremonial Counseling; Michael Hanrahan, Transpersonal Therapist; Anne Victoria Hilliard, Transpersonal Counselor; Jo-Ann Kearns, Transpersonal Therapist; Brian McCullen, Transpersonal Counselor and Spiritual Minister; Judith Mirczak, Minister of BodyMind Healing; Madison Omholt, Consciousness-Centered Therapist; Catherine Ricchetti, Minister of Spiritual Clinical Social Work; Marsha Sands, Minister, Transpersonal Counselor; Greta Thorensen, Minister of BodyMind Healing; Rosaleen Tobin, Transpersonal Counselor and Healer; Vilja Torvik, Reverend.

Relationship Is All There Is!

By George Moscona

Life has designed us so that Life can unfold. The profound mystery is that it unfolds in the most beautiful, natural, and balanced way. All of its elements interrelate, interact, and are interdependent. All there is is relationship.

How we relate to Life Unfolding is the story we tell ourselves as a community and as individuals. We each develop a story to get our needs met, to get the love and attention we need, to have people recognize our respective personalities. Our stories help us survive and forge an identity. They also give our lives meaning. We then find new and clever ways of creating and recreating evidence for them. This involves understanding our experiences through the filter of our stories.

While we develop and maintain a story because it works, it can also seem fixed from any early age. In our efforts to develop a personality, we identify so completely with the story that we often miss out on the richness of Life Unfolding. We are so busy protecting the story's validity that we screen out much of what occurs.

Fortunately, we are not stuck in the story. We can transform our relationship with it without making it wrong, or even trying to change it. Once we see the story as separate from who we are, we can appreciate it, use it, and celebrate it. We also recognize others' stories as an aspect of them, not who they are. Rather than being bound by an identity, we see ourselves and others as open to Life, all of its mystery and complexity, and its unfolding.

The goal of our work at Spirit of Life Institute is to enhance our ability to have others show up as themselves—one-of-a-kind doors to the divine—and not just players in our stories. It's exciting to explore and celebrate the mystery of another's world. How does this person experience Life—from what frame of reference, what distinct point of view? If we get beyond our fear, we see the awesome revelation of another . . . and love embraces his or her uniqueness, and then our own. This work allows us to take a deep sense of mystery into our everyday lives, jobs, and families. It also lets us create a world that more and more powerfully reflects the benevolence and generosity of Life Unfolding.

Our Spirit of Life seminary trains facilitators to deepen and guide others through this discovery process, using spiritual counseling, sacred ritual, and celebrations. That we each hold a spark of the divine, of Life, means that our job is to make that spark available to the world around us. As we recognize and help build a global village, we become increasingly aware of how everything affects everything else. This supports the idea of sharing our respective gifts or medicine for the planet.

Through the institute's educational programs, we also explore these mysteries with the public at large—anyone who wanders into our world. Through word of mouth alone, thousands have walked in and blessed us with their participation. They share their matchless medicine with us, and we with them, in another instance of Life Unfolding. So be it!

George Moscona is one of the founders of Spirit of Life Institute. He resides in New Mexico and California, where he leads retreats and educational programs. He is also a spiritual counselor and guide. He can be reached at gmoscona@earthlink.net or at (415) 282-7179 or (505) 861-1115. He was ordained by AIWP in 1976.

Thank You

We gratefully acknowledge the following for their generous donations in support of this newsletter:

Bill Newell, Suzanne and Frank Dunne, Rod Davis, Lia O'Neil, and Lou Dunn Diekemper.

Inner City, continued from page 6

“Chillin” . . . Managing Stress: A stress-management course specifically geared towards youth, that includes an introduction to meditation and other effective methods that promote balance and well being.

Self-esteem—“Polishing My Diamond”: A game-like self-empowerment series that engages youth in the pursuit of their own personal power through exercises that are both challenging and fun.

Me, Myself and the “I” in Vision: An examination of the role “vision” plays in our ability to succeed, which focuses on our own ideas, personal creativity, and the unique gifts that our deepest selves, or Soul, can deliver.

The specialized V.I.S.I.O.N.S. workshops and trainings were designed by a team of professionals who have adapted their extensive experience in the fields of personal development and optimal human performance to the specific culture, spirit, and vitality of youth. The self-empowerment modules of the program provide educational training that builds upon human elements such as personal identity, self-expression, self-determination, respect, courage, creativity, responsibility, and imagination.

In a south central Los Angeles community characterized by pervasive poverty and low educational attainment, the V.I.S.I.O.N.S. program will support youth to become self-reliant and self-assured, and begin to attain self-mastery so that they not only succeed in life, but also discover their destinies! We intend to take “learning” a step further as we engage youth around their own dreams, and focus on visionary approaches and the development of the Soul’s power. Yes, the program’s intention is leadership development, technological literacy, and helping young people to achieve, BUT we also understand that powerful human elements such as self-love, courage, responsibility, imagination, and character are the ultimate keys! Our approach sees every player as a wise contributor who has much to give. In fact, mentoring is a key theme, with mentoring happening between program facilitators and Computer Clubhouse participants, senior youth leaders and other enrollees, as well as the guest presenters and all the people involved with the program in any capacity. Aside from mastering the benefits of technology, young people will also learn about “self-actualization” and develop both an attitude and an aptitude for growth. In an experiential learning environment, this cutting-edge program will focus on the power of connection and *internal preparation*, as well as external skills. In closing, I want to share what V.I.S.I.O.N.S. stands for:

V = Vision... I = Initiative... S = Strength... I = Insight... O = Opportunity... N = New Ideas... S = Success...

Aliah MaJon was ordained by AIWP in 1998. To contact her or the SHAMBALLA Foundation (a congregation of AIWP), call (310) 289-8782 or visit shamballa11@earthlink.net.

Confronting the Dragon, continued from page 5

woman on the other end of the phone. The phenomenon seemed to illuminate the replacement of the intensity of emotions sought after in alcohol use by teens with the intensity of “spiritual” service. One question my research is posing may help to determine if 1) spirituality is a factor made up of compassion, concern, and seeking of the transcendent (intense) experience, 2) spirituality is embodied as a set of values, ideals and ethics, and 3) spirituality is a critical factor in recovery.

Stress and Addiction

A recent study by Medstat and the Health Enhancement Resource Organization (HERO) has shown that the most prevalent health problems today are depression, stress, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, and excessive alcohol use. And at the top of the list are psychosocial factors, depression and stress, which are considered the plagues of today (Celente, 1998). The six-year follow-up study of 46,000 people compared health risk assessments with actual medical bills, and found that excessive alcohol use, smoking, high blood pressure, and lack of exercise do add 20% to the annual medical costs of individuals and the nation. What surprised everyone was that depression raises medical costs by 70% and stress alone increases costs by 49% (Medstat & HERO, 1998). With the realization that depression and stress are two and three times more potent than even high blood pressure as risk factors, the business of prevention of illness is being reinvented.

Separate studies have shown that high levels of stress increase the use of dangerous substances significantly, as is indicated by the stress level of patients in treatment for addiction (Burns & Geist, 1984).

Addressing stress in adolescents is one of the most significant keys we have to reducing lifelong dependence on substances. The recognition that addiction is a disease of the mind, body, and spirit, and that there are solutions, brings hope to the tragic situation of rampant soul loss through substance abuse that we are facing as a culture.

A multidimensional program that compassionately addresses adolescent stress and parental denial, through a psychospiritual approach, can transform the “problem” of substance abuse into a path of spirituality for the parent as well as the adolescent.

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This article is part of a work in progress; other references cited may be obtained by contacting Nita at Nitagage@aol.com. Nita was ordained by AIWP in 1999.

Viet Nam Journal

By Ed Tick

Edward Tick was ordained as a pastoral psychotherapist by the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person in 1994. He has made two healing journeys to Viet Nam, and chronicled them in his journal. The following are excerpts from this journal, which is well worth reading and can be seen in full at www.mentorthesoul.com/vietnam.

STREET SCENE: HO CHI MINH CITY

His face is oval. His hair is a smooth, silky black. He smiles as you pass by. Then his eyes are like dark stars shining out of their depths of need.

He moves quickly. His arms and thighs flash. His face turns every way, watching for signs of recognition or compassion in each passerby. He hops down the street with a zest made of both youth and desperation.

The bag he holds is woven in intricate zigzag designs of red, yellow, and white. He holds one handle in his mouth and the other on his one long, handless stump of an arm.

Most people pass him by without looking. But when I catch the glint in his eye, when I see the bright smile, and the life that wants to live, when I admire the energy with which he hops after me, after everyone, on his one good leg—the other ending in a rounded stump at mid thigh—I cannot look away. I feel the zest, the will, and the want. I stop. We exchange a few words and a look.

He pulls open his bag between his teeth and his stump. I drop my American dollar bill in. I want to say—what? I'm sorry we sprayed your country with the Agent Orange that caused you these birth defects. I'm sorry your life is so poor, so hard, so lonely and desperate. I see your spirit coming through your wracked body. I don't know how to say these things in his language. I can only give him a little money to help him scratch out a survival and try to tell him with my eyes. Then he hops off to seek his next "customer."

What are these things he is selling? What goods did I purchase for my dollar? Awareness that Agent Orange poisoning goes on and on. That for him the war will never be over. That in the midst of poverty and disability, spirit will sometimes shine through. That even the poor in spirit, blessed as they might be, must eat.

But then the next impoverished young mother with her baby, or child with no legs, or old woman on crutches comes up to me. They see one—he stopped; he gives. Soon I am surrounded by a throng of beggars and I must force my way through them. So I bought this with my dollar too—the awareness that there are so many of them, that no matter how wide I open my heart or my wallet, that even if I gave every cent and every breath I have, I can never do enough or save them all.

Don't forget Agent Orange just because we aren't spraying it any more. And for the rest, God bless us every one.

TAY NINH PROVINCE

At Cu Chi we saw a different section of the tunnels this trip. We came upon a burned-out American tank lying in the jungle where it was hit. I lingered behind because I could feel the utter agony of the boys burning to death. Group members were trying to talk themselves into believing the boys had escaped. It was not possible. The tank was riddled with shell and bullet holes.

Later, at the Cao Dai complex, I waited off the bus for the grunt as everyone went into the temple. He was last, ran right up to me and hugged me tight enough to crush. From the moment we spotted Black Lady Mountain wrapped in the cloudy distance, he began seeing the spirits of the dead sloshing through the rice paddies. He saw women, children, VC, GIs. He saw a few, then more and more until the entire valley was filled with them. He held me so tight.

Later, on top of Black Lady Mountain, I talked to him and the nurse and the Australian activist praying for her vets down under. I told them all about praying for the souls of the dead. I instructed the grunt in the ways of the spiritual warrior, telling him that when we kill, we become responsible for the soul of the enemy, but that then that soul can become our ally, helper, guide. And told him to pray for the 14-year-old boy he killed in that way so that he and the boy might become one and walk together in peace and acceptance forever.

He did pray and then smiled and lightened and laughed. Something new entered his life. He could not remember feeling this way ever in his life.

VILLAGE ELDER

In the floating market of Cai Be, we are invited into the riverside home of an 80-year-old man. We view his three family altars—one for his in-laws because they had no son of their own, a second for his wife, and a third for two of his four sons.

These two sons both died fighting with the guerillas in 1969, seven months apart.

On the barren walls decorated with only a few advertising posters, two certificates are framed in simple, raw wood, thanking the family for their martyrs: "The Fatherland Acknowledges Your Contribution." The same phrase found all over the country on every military cemetery.

As we left his home, I told the old man we grieved for his sons along with him. He thanked us very much and said he believed that they had fulfilled their proper destinies.

Incense, candles, fruit -
his two sons in black and white
fading

MY SON

My Son means beautiful mountain. It lies not far inland from the south China Sea, south of Da Nang and north of My Lai. It is buried in a brilliant green valley in the eastern mountains sloping out of the Central Highlands.

The ground beneath your feet is red clay. Stones are scattered everywhere, and bricks and brick fragments. The hills are covered in low green growth, or speckled with young palm trees. The approach is carpeted with rice paddies and tiny thatched peasant homes. Trickling streams run through the area. Children chase fish with their hands or plastic bags. School is over for the summer, so lots of children frolic in these streams.

The streams that trickle clear now were once covered with the white powder we called Agent Orange. These verdant hills were a wasted moonscape only 30 years ago. Imagine the triple canopy jungle, tallest trees soaring 120 feet in the air, that blanketed this land only four decades ago, before we sprayed and bombed.

My Son was the center of Cham civilization for 1,400 years. The Cham were indigenous here, and at war with the Viets for centuries. There are not many Cham people left, about 70,000, living like our Native Americans in poor and rural areas in traditional ways. My Son was their sacred center, a huge temple complex of about 100 prayer towers. The French destroyed half of them in their war, and we blasted all but 20 to ruins and dust in our war. There was no battle there. We blew them up for kicks and target practice. Recently the Afghanistan destruction of ancient Buddhist statues was considered an atrocity. No less our destruction of a millenium and a half of Cham sacred grounds. We committed atrocities against sacred sites every bit as much as we did against people.

There are three Amerasians in our group. Two are children of American GIs and Vietnamese mothers. The third woman has a Cham mother, GI father and stepfather. Her grandparents were Cham and French. She is three generations of war marriages and war wounds. We step into a Cham tower, tall brick rectangle without windows, narrowing to a point in the sky. We gather in a circle. I hand her incense, the traditional blessing for the dead here. She lights it for her Cham ancestors, then prays to their spirits, and pledges her devotion to carry on their legacy and teach the world who they were and are. She cries.

As we leave the prayer tower, our Vietnamese guide lags behind. He was in the southern army during the war, and then two years in "reeducation" camps. He speaks softly to her, apologizing for the pain the Viets have inflicted on the Cham, and praying for the peace and reconciliation between their people. They embrace.

We travel by bus north from the Highlands edge back toward Hoi An. One of the vets I used to work with was here too, just a few clicks inland. He was with the engineers. His job was backhoeing the bodies of the dead into mass graves. He has suffered ever since from the feeling that he profaned the spirits of those who had died honorably. I tell his story too and pray that the fumes from the incense we lit bring those dead peace, and bring his tortured soul peace as well. He and they are not forgotten.

Finally back in Hoi An, we disembark our bus. Again our guide lags behind. This time the grunt vet in our group and our ARVN vet guide find each other. The ARVN says, "We both were on the wrong side in the war but did not know it. We both were young and idealistic. And we both have suffered the same pain. Our pain and suffering, and our wish to heal makes us brothers more than war ever could."

Finally, we receive a message from Mr. Tam, 70-year-old head of the Viet Cong Veterans Association here. He entered the army at age 15, in 1946, to fight the French, and fought nonstop for 30 years until we Americans were expelled. He is blind in one eye with a bullet scar in the side of his head.

We had requested a meeting but he cannot see us because he must attend a wedding. But he tells us that he is glad we are here, welcomes us all, and blesses us for our efforts to help our countries reconcile and achieve friendship.

South and North Vietnamese, guerillas and grunts, Cham, and American. All suffering witnessed. All nationalities represented. All survivors embraced. All factions transcended. All blessed and welcomed with love.

The spirit of My Son, Beautiful Mountain, continues to heal.

DUST AND GEMS

There are literally millions of homeless, disabled, orphaned, and maimed children, teens, and adults on the streets of Viet Nam's cities. You see men and women of all ages missing arms and legs, widowed women carrying children, people on makeshift wooden crutches, people with wooden or steel rods where arms and legs should be. You see children of all ages from teens to toddlers—twisted into unimaginably distorted shapes from the genetic deformities caused by Agent Orange. A child whose legs bend backwards and are carried on his shoulders wheels up to you to beg for a few duong, only worth pennies to us. Most people rush by, unable to look. But you remember there is a soul in this twisted body. You struggle against all your conditioned disgust to bend down and say hello, give the pennies, ask his name. If he can talk, you'll get a name and a smile. If he is deaf-mute, you will still get a smile.

The Vietnamese call all these disabled people lost and living on the streets, struggling through peddling or begging to scratch out a living, "the dust of life." It is not an insult. They are not worthless dust to the Vietnamese. It is descriptive, saying that these poor souls blow along like dust, shaken to the streets by life's sometimes merciless and always inexorable movement forward.

But there is another name these children are sometimes given. In the Rosy Jade Humanity Center, and others like it around Vietnam, they are called jewels and gems. Rosy Jade is a school, sheltered workshop, and communal living center for such disabled children about 40 km east of Ha Noi. There was no bombing or Agent Orange spraying this far north. Rather, the 185 children at the center are all children of Vietnamese men and women from the north who went south to fight and were sprayed

The Imagination Project: An Inner and Outer Journey to Find Answers to the Question "What Is the Imagination?"

By Diana Douglas, Ph.D.

Here is my Truth: I long to know God. To experience the sacred in my bones and blood. To dance with the Divine. To merge into the Oneness. To wake up to what all mystical traditions teach as Truth — that we have never been separated from God, God is inside us and around us and we are God and there is no God. I want to know *how* I am able to know God.

This longing has found expression in several ways. Most recently, it opened me to deeply investigate the imagination and what role it plays in the soul's awakening to its divine nature. What follows is a brief telling of my inner and outer journey in exploring the question, "What is the imagination?"

Looking back on my life, I have always loved my imagination. This has been a life-long love affair — although not always a conscious one. My own imagination has expressed itself in a variety of forms. I have always made things — cut-and-paste as a child, quilted wall hangings as a young adult, and now intuitive paintings. For years I have explored and played in different realms of consciousness, called by some the transpersonal realms. I have followed an eclectic spiritual path, studying Buddhist meditation, Goddess rituals, shamanic inner world travels, and non-dual teachings. What really interested me was the *process* underlying all of these forms of expression.

In 1998 I made a deep commitment to my creative-spiritual life. With that commitment, I crossed into a new life. The first step was to leave my work as managing editor of a publishing house to co-author and publish a book (*Always Becoming – Forever! A Journal of Conscious Living/Conscious Dying*, 1999). I soon found myself wanting to bridge my years of exploring the inner realms with the outer world, to bring the gifts of this journey back to others. In other words, I wanted to learn the process of manifesting. I joined a class on mindpower, lessons in how to use our minds to manifest what we want in our lives. I mistakenly imagined that we would be taught *how our minds worked* in order to manifest, not just *how to do* the process. For example, each week we were given homework exercises, all of which involved using the imagination. However, there were no instructions on what the imagination was. Ah-ha, I said, a big missing piece! What is this, that we call imagination? We seem to assume we know what it is. We use it all the time, but what is it? How does it work? And thus began my conscious contemplation of the imagination.

This idea, to research the imagination, was compelling. I quickly came to call it the "Imagination Project." I felt that this was my life's work, almost as if it were my reason for being here. Actually, to me, it made sense of my whole life and my soul's journey.

I decided that if I were doing this much research — I knew that it would be a big project — I might as well do it within a Ph.D. program. I looked into the programs at the local universities, and my heart and soul said, No, I want a program that stirs my own imagination. I was fortunate in finding Summit/UIL with its program based on self-directed, lifelong learning. And the final project or dissertation needed to be available for the general public. I had found a match!

I began my research in the winter of 1999 and completed my dissertation in January, 2001. My research included an inner journey — investigating my own imagination deeply, and an outer journey through interviews and workshops. The research itself became an imaginative process.

1. Imagination Journal

From the beginning of the project, I wanted to use my own imagination as one of the primary sources for investigation. Since 1981, I have kept a journal, especially of my dreams. Now, I also began to keep an imagination journal. I started to witness how and when I was using it. I found that early in the morning, before getting out of bed, was my best time to wander in my own imagination. Here I would get new ideas, or come up with questions that needed to be looked into, or remember something from the past where I had been imaginative.

In reviewing this journal, I found that I used my imagination in the following ways: active imagination processes; inner dialogues; setting intentions; future possibilities to manifest, usually work related; questions; ideas; conversations with others about the imagination; information that came to me through letters, e-mails, newspapers, etc. I also recorded all my ideas about the imagination project, what it might be, and how I would bring it into form. Thus, my journal is one of the ways that I exercise my imagination, using several kinds of imagination.

2. New Creative Expression

Another way to witness how I used my own imagination was by learning a new creative process. I began to do intuitive painting, a new method of painting for me. It involves putting paint on paper with no thought, and then allowing the images to emerge from the paint.

At first I was not able to articulate how I was using my imagination during painting. When I asked internally, I heard that when I was painting I was *living in my imagination*. It is my imagination. It is a way to see into my unconscious easily, directly, and joyously. My soul sings when I paint. I have been told, "Your own imagination comes through best in your paintings."

3. Questionnaire and Interviews

I began the outer journey by inviting anyone I met to answer a simple questionnaire on the imagination. I asked what people thought the imagination was, how they defined it, whether they understood it to be the same or different from creativity,

how they perceived themselves in relation to their own imaginations, and in what different ways they used their imaginations. One hundred people answered the questionnaires. One of the many things I learned from these interviews was that for most participants, being aware of their imaginations was a new experience. They might love their imaginations and use them often or all the time, but it was by being interviewed that they became conscious of them.

I wanted to understand more deeply how people used their imaginations in various walks of life, and so I interviewed in depth an artist, inventor, doctor, scientist, and others. Then I heard Andrew Harvey, mystic and author, mention the words "sacred imagination." I began specifically to interview people who see what they do as part of the sacred imagination.

My understanding of the imagination, what it is and how we use it, was greatly expanded by the participants' answers.

4. Literature Search

When I first began this project, I realized that I had never read a book that was *on the imagination*. How amazing, I thought! I then assumed that there weren't many books on the topic. I looked for books on the imagination in bookstores, in libraries (university and public), and on the internet. What I discovered was that there are hundreds of books that use the word *imagination* in their titles, but few of these are about the imagination. And, although the imagination has been written about since the time of Plato, there are very few books for the general public available at this time.

As an example of this research, I looked into what imagination's history had been. I read a lot and found many of the books dry, philosophical, and academic. In response, fortunately, my own imagination came into play. Thus, instead of reviewing what philosophers have said throughout history, I came up with the list of questions that have been asked since Plato. I can now use this list to see which of these questions are still being asked or need to be asked again.

5. Imagining the Imagination

I have conceptualized the culmination of my inner and outer journey in the Imagination Wheel.TM What I discovered is that there isn't just one kind of imagination, but many. I have named these: practical, emotional, mental or problem-solving, heart, creative/inventive, healing, intuitive, inspirational, dreaming, protective, and shamanic/travelling. Others are waiting to be named. I diagram these on a wheel divided in rainbow-coloured segments, with the whole wheel surrounded and infused with the Sacred Imagination.

My research has allowed me to experience what I have known: the imagination is vast, perhaps limitless. I feel we do need to see the imagination in new ways; bring it out of the unconscious where it has been banished for most of the twentieth century, and allow it to lead us into the future, honored as the powerful and sacred gift it is.

So, after all this research, what is the imagination? The most concise answer is one that came to me early in my research: *the imagination is to the soul what breath is to the physical body.*

Diana Claire Douglas graduated from UIL this year with a Ph.D. in sacred studies. She is honored to be a provost for UIL. She is looking for funding to continue her research on the imagination. Her new business is called InSpiritWorks, Creativity and Publishing Coaching. She offers services for individuals and organizations, including workshops (in your community?) such as "Riding the Imagination WheelTM," "How Do We Dance with the Divine? The Role of the Imagination in our Spiritual Journeys," "Creating Your Spiritual Autobiography" and "Making Your Spiritual Toolkit." She can be reached in Vancouver, BC at 604-873-0094 or dianaclaire@inspiritworks.com.

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with Agent Orange during their tenure in the war zone. Sixty percent of these Rosy Jade children are deaf mutes. Most have deformities of the lower limbs, misshapen legs, pencil thin bones, limbs that grow bones but no muscles or nerves. Some are midgets. Very many come from families in which several or even all the children have such deformities.

Rosy Jade was founded by a soldier returning from the war. He did not have children, but wanted to help the disabled or orphaned children of his comrades. He called these children his gems and jewels. He raised a little money. He taught them to walk and sign, and then to carve and embroider. He began with 40 children. Now Rosy Jade hosts 185 children, and two related centers bring their total to over 500. These children love each other very much. They are good friends, living together in tight and tiny communal rooms, hugging and playing with each other and their teachers, stretching their pretzel-shaped limbs daily to keep them from atrophying and trying to get a little more use from them. And slowly and painfully using multicolored silken threads, these children make the most beautiful embroideries I have ever seen. Sunsets over the Perfume River. Fruit- and flower-laden branches hanging over streams. Rice harvesting. Sampans in dawns and midnights. Happy children in peaceful villages. Water buffaloes. Utmost beauty and gratitude flow from the fingers of these gems. And utmost love and kindness flow from their hearts and eyes.

All their disabilities come from the American spraying of Agent Orange on their country from 1961-1971. There are 35,000 children like these born every year in Viet Nam even today. There are three million such children scattered throughout the cities and villages of Viet Nam. How do they feel about Americans? "You were victims, just like us. You did not want to do this to us. You did not mean to. Your veterans are suffering and dying from poisons, just like us. Our suffering makes us one." Ask them how they got their disability and they will usually not even mention Agent Orange. And they never, never blame us. The Vietnamese know that, forgotten and unaided, left alone with our suffering on the streets, we can each and all become the dust of life. But given love and support, and invited to give the riches every one of us carries within, we are each and all gems.

Tax-deductible donations to the Rosy Jade Humanity Center can be made by sending checks or money orders to AIWP, 6182 Country Club Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928, with the specification that Rosy Jade is the organization to which you are donating.



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INTRODUCING . . . [aiwpETC.homestead.com](http://www.aiwpETC.homestead.com)

The AIWP newsletter has generated such interest that we are often unable to include all that we would like to see in print. This new website has been created to accommodate these and several other important writings, such as position papers and opinions of founder Mel Suhd, including his “Fragments” articles, containing both interesting writings of others and autobiographical bits from Mel’s life, articles, news flashes and other items that come our way. Your responses and contributions are enthusiastically requested and encouraged. For more information, just go to the website and check it out at <http://www.aiwpETC.homestead.net>

“Required” Reading: We Recommend . . .

Here are books by two AIWP members in service and their associates—if you haven’t already, you might want to investigate them:

Paul, Margaret and Jordan
*Do I Have to Give Up Me To Be
Loved By You?*
Center City, MN: Hazelden, 1994
ISBN #: 1-56838-068-2

Paul, Margaret and Jordan
*Do I Have to Give Up Me To Be
Loved By My Kids?*
Los Angeles: Evolving Publications,
1999
ISBN #: 0-425-15059-3

Paul, Margaret and Jordan
Do I Have to Give Up Me To Be

Loved By You? The Workbook
Center City, MN: Hazelden, 1994
ISBN #: 1-56838-051-8

Chopich, Erika, and Paul, Margaret
Healing Your Aloneness
San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1990
ISBN #: 0-06-250149-6

Paul, Margaret
Inner Bonding
San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1992
ISBN #: 0-06-250710-9

Chopich, Erika, and Paul, Margaret
Healing Your Aloneness Workbook

Los Angeles: Evolving Publications,
1996
ISBN #: 0-912389-04-4

Paul, Margaret
*Do I Have to Give Up Me To Be
Loved By God?*
Deerfield Beach, FL: Health
Communications, Inc., 1999
ISBN #: 1-55874-697-8

Diekemper, Lou
*Women Who Take Care: Choosing to
Live with Wisdom, Grace and Power
after Fifty-five!*

Blue Dolphin Publishing
ISBN 1-57733-003-x

Diekemper, Lou
*Men Who Take Care: Walking the
Road of Life as Elders*
Blue Dolphin Publishing
ISBN 1-57733-048-x

Diekemper, Lou
*Couples Who Take Care: Elders
Weathering the Years with Strength
and Love*
Blue Dolphin Publishing
ISBN 1-57733-060-9