



# Association for the Integration of the Whole Person

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Vol. 3, No. 2 July 1, 2004

## The Winds of Change at AIWP

Helen Keller said it so well: “To keep our faces toward change, and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate, is strength undefeatable.”

Billy Crystal summed it up in a different way: “Change is such hard work.”

We *absolutely* agree with them both, and want you to know that changes are indeed afoot at AIWP.

For some time now, the issue of retirement has been a subject much discussed and carefully considered by AIWP Founder and President, Mel Suhd. Kate Markham, who has served in various roles, including Vice President, and who officially left her full-time administrative work with us several months ago, has decided

to retire, but can still frequently be found in the office, working on special projects. Mel can be found there daily, despite his need for rest and rejuvenation. As Helen Keller suggests, both Mel and Kate would like to keep their faces toward change. After many months of reflection and assessment, Mel has made his decision to retire as president of AIWP and UIL by the end of this year, when he celebrates his eightieth year on this planet. He will give more attention to his extensive family, to social, political and educational writing, and to archiving personal papers. His writing won't escape comments concerning AIWP and UIL. Kate will be happily moving toward spending much more time with her family in Texas and in Denmark.

**An important addendum:** While profoundly desirous of spending time with family and pursuing other avenues and activities of life, both Mel and Kate remain dedicated and devoted to supporting the mission and vision of AIWP and UIL, and will continue to be active as board members and consultants to AIWP, as well as serving current and future learners of the University for Integrative Learning.

After a prolonged period of searching out the ideal candidates to assume responsibility for the administration of AIWP, two people emerged as the perfect choice. We are very much looking forward to passing the torch to the capable hands of these spiritual leaders, Jane and Phillip Mountrose, leaders of the congregation, Awakenings of AIWP ([www.gettingthru.org/awaken](http://www.gettingthru.org/awaken)), who have been featured in earlier newsletters (see AIWP Newsletter, review of website, Vol. 1, No., 2; “The Law of Octaves: A Key to Realizing Your Goals,” Vol. II, No. 3).

We promise to keep you posted on the changes in the future.

- Mel and Kate

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#### Staff Box

Marsha Calhoun, Editor  
Melvin Suhd, Founder and President  
Kate Markham, President

## ***The Creative Journal Project in Mission, Texas***

by Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D.

During the summer of 2003 a revolution began in the Mission Consolidated Independent School District, Mission, Texas. The district is situated in southern Texas, on the border of Mexico a short distance from Brownsville. Superintendent Jackie Dyer and his wife, Aurora Anaya-Dyer, launched an innovative program called the Creative Journal Project. Spanish is the first language for the vast majority of families served by the district and their socioeconomic level is ranked the third lowest in the U.S. Developing language and communication skills is a high priority in the district. By bringing the Creative Journal Method to the district, staff members were able to honor each student's emotional development and acknowledge the importance of feelings in the learning environment.

The Creative Journal Project was introduced to Mission by a team of educators trained by me, Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D., A.T.R., R.E.A.T. As the originator of the Creative Journal Method, I had trained a former principal and two former teachers to implement the program in elementary and middle school classrooms. This innovative approach to journaling for children had already been proven highly effective in schools in California and Florida, as documented in several of my popular books: *The Creative Journal for Children*, *The Creative Journal for Teens*, and *The Creative Journal for Parents*.

The program was first introduced in Texas during special "nurturing days" for staff in the Mission district. This included administrators, teachers, counselors, and paraprofessionals. These first orientation workshops were held at a local retreat center known for its uniquely esthetic architecture and natural setting. These in-service programs were led by a team of south Texas educators I had trained.

Next, I went from California to train staff and orient parents in four target schools. My team from south Texas and I offered one-day in-service workshops for the staff of two new elementary schools, one middle school, and the alternative school. When the 2003-2004 school year commenced in August, the students in these four schools were each given his or her own journal. Special journal time was set aside in the classroom each day, with guidance from teachers and paraprofessionals who had been trained.

Students were encouraged to decorate the plain covers of their journals, promoting a sense of ownership in the journal process. Teachers then invited the students to respond to the writing and drawing prompts that appear on the bottom of the blank pages inside these journals. The prompts cover a broad range of topics, encouraging students to write and draw their thoughts, experiences, and feelings. The combination of drawing and writing makes this journal method unique. It offers a means of expression for all children, those who cannot write as well as those who can. It integrates expressive arts into language development.

It has been scientifically  
proven by several  
researchers . . .  
that writing about difficult  
experiences releases  
stress and  
actually improves immune  
system function.

Although journaling has been done in many school districts for the past 20 years, what makes this method revolutionary is that the journals are held confidential. They are free of grades and criticism. Students are told that whatever is written or drawn inside the journal will be honored as private. No one else is allowed to look inside without the student's permission, not even the teacher. Privacy is safeguarded because journals are put away each day in a locked cabinet in the student's classroom.

Teachers reinforce the confidential nature of a journal, and explain that they will never look at the work or grade the journal entries. Any sharing on the student's part is strictly voluntary. The purpose for this is to allow students to relax and practice writing and drawing without the threat of judgment or criticism. In their journals, students are not to concern themselves with spelling, penmanship, grammar, or syntax. Instead, they are encouraged to practice getting their thoughts and feelings down on paper. They can write in any language they wish.

In my thirty years of research and application of this method, it has been demonstrated that expressing one's own life experiences, thoughts, and wishes motivates the journal keeper to read and write for the joy of it. My initial research occurred in 1981-82, under a federally funded Title II ESEA grant to the Garvey School District (an Asian/Hispanic district east of Los Angeles, California). I introduced my journal method as part of a Basic Skills Using the Arts curriculum. The results were dramatic. After one year, the two pilot elementary schools (K-6) broke all records in the district on standard statewide pre- and post-tests for basic skills. Reading and math scores increased as much as 20 percentile points in that year.

In addition to academic gains, teachers reported that classroom management problems decreased, student motivation increased, and children who had been verbally uncommunicative showed improved social skills. They also noted that traumatized students who had come to the United States from war-torn Asia and central America were able to express their feelings and experiences creatively. Their concentration increased and they were able to participate in classroom activities for the first time. Finally, the students themselves often commented that they loved their journals, that they couldn't get enough of drawing, writing, and reading their journal entries. One girl's comment was typical. "My journal is my best friend," she said, smiling. "I can tell it anything." Students who had lived in war zones before coming to the U.S. were especially inspired by the diary of Anne Frank.

The theory behind the Mission Creative Journal Project is that students need a safe place to vent their feelings with no judgment. It has been scientifically proven by several researchers, including Texas psychologist Dr. James Pennebaker, that writing about difficult experiences releases

stress and actually improves immune system function. As a registered art therapist, I have been able to show that when youngsters release pent-up emotions through drawing as well as writing, they also remove blocks that are interfering with their ability to learn.

So far, the feedback from the Mission School District has been very positive. Teachers report fewer behavioral problems in the classroom, more motivation to learn, increased concentration and focus on the part of student. Language and communication skills have improved and teachers in four more elementary schools in the district were recently trained to implement the method in their classrooms.

The program materials consist of a series of spiral-bound classroom journals written by me. There is an average of 60 activities in these journals. The series of journals for elementary schools are divided into three levels: Volume 1, kindergarten-2nd; Volume 2, grades three-four; Volume 3, grades five-six. The middle school students are given a blank journal accompanied by a copy of *Creative Journal for Teens* (Career Press), a collection of illustrated journal prompts for junior high and high school students.

In the elementary journals, topics are given at the bottom left-hand page. Students are encouraged to draw a picture of the given topic above the journal prompt. On the right side, a full blank page is provided for writing about the picture that was drawn. Each journal activity is titled. A sample journal prompt reads as follows:

### **I'm Scared**

I draw a picture of something that scares me.

I write about my picture.

The Creative Journal has been used in several schools in California and Florida. Thousands of individual teachers, parents, and counselors have used my published books (mentioned above) with excellent results. The commercially published handbooks, *The Creative Journal for Teachers* (a required text for all educators using the method) and *The Creative Journal for Teens* are available at any bookstore, but can be purchased at discount for quantity orders from [www.NowGetCreative.com](http://www.NowGetCreative.com). For more information about this educational method, please contact me, Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D., at [luciacapa@aol.com](mailto:luciacapa@aol.com).

## **Strength**

by Andrea E. Mincsak

Strength, as defined by the *Encarta Dictionary*, is 1) physical or mental power; 2) resistance; 3) defensive ability; 4) degree of intensity; 5) force of feeling; 6) persuasive power; 7) intensity of expression; 8) potency; 9) number of people needed for something; 10) asset or quality.

The type of strength that I would like to discuss involves all of these, as none would exist without the inner strength that comes from trust in a higher power, the Universe, or God. When we focus on something greater than ourselves, whether or not we believe that God is within us or outside of ourselves, we find strength. When we trust in the Divine, and listen to the guidance that comes forth, whether through human sources or through our own intuition, we are brought to a higher ground. This may be considered "inner strength," a knowing of what to do, when and how to do it.

What do you think would happen if every morning you took five to ten minutes to relax and focus on your breath, and then be open and listen?

A contemporary example of inner strength is "the Force" in *Star Wars* that guided and protected. "May the Force be with you" was often heard throughout this classic film. Yes, the force is what I believe to be the Divine, the being, male/female entity, that created all that is. This "force" is a wonderful source of strength for all, particularly humans, if we only take time to tap into it.

What do you think would happen if every morning you took five to ten minutes to relax and focus on your breath, and then be open and listen? Perhaps you could begin with a prayer of gratitude, thanking the Universe for your life and all that has happened in your life, regardless of whether you may have perceived these events as positive or negative. Be unconditionally grateful. You might continue this process by being grateful to all those with whom you have shared your life to this point (it's great to include our animal friends, too!). Then just take the last few minutes to listen and learn. You might be pleasantly surprised how easy it is to get out of your personality for only a minute or two and surrender to the Universe or your Higher Power: "Letting Go and Letting God," a phrase I first heard from one of my spiritual teachers.

Listen to what you hear, see, or feel during this time; then act on that new awareness. You may find that you experience enhanced inner strength through the process. You may also notice your experiences throughout the day are brighter, more crystal clear, in terms of the learning you may experience. You may also find that you are better able to deal with all that comes your way! Experimenting in this way may result in many benefits and positive outcomes you did not at first imagine or expect.

*Andrea E. Mincsak, M.B.A., Reiki Master/Teacher, Transpersonal Counselor, Option Method Practitioner, is the director and founder of the Capital Region Wellness Center, LLC, in Albany, New York. She can be reached via phone at 518/446-0200 or via email: [andrea@capitalregionwellnesscenter.com](mailto:andrea@capitalregionwellnesscenter.com).*

# A Culture of Peace Requires a Language of Peace

By Linda Redford

Hi, I'm Linda Redford, founder and president of Honor Kids International, a non-profit organization whose vision is to prevent child abuse by creating a language of peace. My hope is that my passion is contagious and that it inspires you to see differently. After years of private practice as a counselor, I realized people suffer primarily from what indigenous people call a spiritual malady: a disconnection from their inherent wisdom or the vital essence of life. When one is disconnected from this spontaneous and life-giving source, the separation is experienced psychologically as death. A spiritual malady is a progressive dis-ease that often manifests in the forms of aggressive and compulsive behavior. Aggression, as in violence, or compulsion, as in addiction, both serve as substitute forms of connection. Although these substitute forms of connection de-power rather than empower a person, human beings are social animals and our need for connection is vital.

## How Does a Spiritual Malady Develop?

My daughter, Anne Vorburger, M.A., I.M.F.T., coined the term *infected belief systems* (IBS) to describe what I have found to be the origin of spiritual maladies. Infected belief systems are complex and personal reactions to overwhelming experiences that impair the mental, emotional, and physical functioning of a person. The mind experiences IBS as persistent harmful or threatening patterns of thought. The emotional experience is an internal state of anxiety fueled by unconscious fear and shame. And the physical experience is involuntary and recurring sensations in the body, the residue of unresolved trauma. If infected belief systems are left untreated, this attack on the self leaves one feeling powerless and disconnected. Any system of belief that objectifies human value teaches patterns of separation and therefore imprints fear and shame. For instance, racism and sexism are IBS and wherever you find these infected beliefs, you will witness varying levels of aggression and compulsion.

IBS are passed down intergenerationally and are shaped by family and cultural practices that are rooted in fear and shame. Some are passed down consciously and with intent, but

often IBS are the result of unconscious internalization.

IBS are the antecedent conditions that give rise to the many forms of illness and destructive behavior existing in our society today. I am convinced that in order to stop child abuse, prevent violence, and heal addictions, we must *believe* on an entirely different basis. We must become willing to see with different eyes . . . I hold this vision out for you to consider.

## Linda's Death, and the Rebirth of Honor

### December 15, 1982, 11:00 p.m.

The phone rang. My dear friend Bob thought he had AIDS and desperately wanted to see a specific doctor at UCLA who was an expert on this disease. The problem was that he had no insurance. After we talked and said goodbye, the thought came to me that I knew a colleague of this AIDS expert. With my newfound spiritual awareness, I got on my knees to pray: "Mother/Father Creator, I am willing for you to use me to help Bob get to UCLA so he can talk with this doctor. Thank you." At this time I wasn't familiar with the phrase, "Be careful what you pray for because you might get it."

Just then I stood up and my jaw began to ache. I had had recurring pain in my temporomandibular (jaw) joint for years, the result of a childhood abuse. It was now 11:30 p.m. I walked into the kitchen to take a Zomax pill. The doctor had given me samples in case I needed them for pain. He said they were non-addictive, non-narcotic, and a little stronger than an aspirin.

I put the pill in my mouth and took a sip of water. Before the pill could pass the back of my throat, I began to gasp for air. I couldn't breathe. My face was turning purple and my body was swelling up. My heart was racing to keep up with my thoughts. I was losing consciousness. From a distance I could see a faint light encircled by blackness. At that moment I knew I was surrendering to death.

As I stumbled toward my daughters' bedrooms the light was fading, as was my strength to stand. The last words that were uttered from my mouth, or perhaps it was my heart, were "Mother/Father Creator, if it is your will for me to die, I

am willing. Please take care of my Ladies" (this was an affectionate term for my daughters). Then, as my entire body exploded into a blinding crystalline light, so did the limitations of the physical world. I fell to the ground . . .

### December 16, 1982, 12:00 midnight

My moments of death took me on a painless journey toward the spiritual realm. It felt like I was flying through the universe without a body, yet I could hear and see and feel. I heard a question from a voice unfamiliar to me: "Are you willing to help create a way to return honor to Mother Earth and the human race?" Not having much experience in the spiritual world, and having no idea what I was getting into, I dutifully replied in the tiniest of voices: "Yes." I didn't know if I actually spoke with my mouth or felt the words with my heart. "Good," said the voice, "for unless this is accomplished the human race will not survive."

At that moment I was rapidly shown images of my life from a different perspective. It was uncomfortable. No matter how much I struggled, I could not escape this way of seeing. The truth was very loud: I was responsible for every decision and every action, negative or positive. When I had harmed another I had wounded my own soul. I felt as if my brain were a computer and the Creator were downloading vital information that I would be responsible to pass on.

Then, suddenly, the images changed from my life to a vision of a world at peace. It was breathtaking. An overwhelming feeling of love engulfed my being. Here each soul was honored, for it was known each was a manifestation of the Mother/Father Creator's imagination. I was in awe of the magnitude of what I was experiencing.

The brilliance of the Great Mystery was unthinkable. I could only experience this brilliance. As a matter of fact, I felt I had no body, no head, and therefore, no brain. The only thing necessary to *see* was the ability to *feel the connection to everything and everyone*.

When I was shown this world, I thought, "Great, I wanna go there!" What I didn't realize was that I was being asked to be a mentor of the way this world could be. Now, you may be entertaining the same question I had been asking for the

past twenty plus years: How? “You will be shown,” I was told by that same voice, which now felt familiar, safe, and nurturing. “One breath at a time.”

#### December 16, 1982, 12:30 a.m.

My spirit entered my body with the same lightning speed with which it had left. I felt that this had happened before, a different birth time, perhaps. This time I was sitting on the toilet, nude, my head resting against the wall, body fluids leaving me. I was shaking uncontrollably, in great physical pain. I had no idea how I had got into this position. I whispered my oldest daughter’s name, or did I feel it? She appeared at the bathroom door. Not knowing what to do, I asked her to call an ambulance and then my friend Bob. He arrived at UCLA shortly after I did.

The doctors were able to explain and address my physical emergency; they said I had had an abnormal allergic reaction to Zomax and had gone into anaphylactic shock. But they couldn’t comprehend what I had experienced as I shared my journey to a place beyond the physical world. I had taken Zomax many times before. Why such a dramatic reaction this time? Was it a coincidence? Did the prayer influence my experience?

#### A Rite of Passage Yields a Program for Today

What started out to be a simple prayer for a dear friend ended up being a rite of passage for me: a transformative journey, a vision quest into a new consciousness that gave birth to a vision, and a previously unacknowledged truth. *Adawee* is a Cherokee word meaning Guardian of Wisdom, Realm of Beauty. I discovered that we are all Adawees of our inherent birth wisdom and we each need the freedom to express our sacred purpose. My vision, and what has come to be my sacred purpose, is being expressed through the creation of the Honor Series of Edutainment Tools described below.

As for Bob . . . well, that night he was walking down the hospital corridor and happened to run into the AIDS specialist he had wanted to see. Was it a coincidence that at 2:00 a.m. this specific doctor was walking down the same hall at the same moment as my friend Bob? Or, is it confirmation that words have great power and that we human beings are guardian angels in human form for one

another?

Oh, by the way, that recurring TMJ pain . . . hasn’t bothered me since.

#### The Honor Series of Edutainment Tools

The intention of this series is simple and practical and invites all religious communities, business and political worlds, educational systems, the entertainment industry, and families of all walks of life to unite under one common purpose – to establish a value system that watches over everyone, a value system that makes possible spiritual humility, which in turn allows others their freedom to manifest their sacred purpose and their dreams, without feeling threatened or

“You will be shown,” I was told, “One breath at a time.”

judged. A common purpose creates a powerful collective consciousness that can, if the purpose is positive, transform humankind. The Honor Series of Edutainment Tools has this potential.

Roberto Assagioli said, “Images, mental pictures, and ideas tend to create the physical conditions and the external acts which correspond to them” (*Act of Will*, Viking Press, 1973, p. 51).

Entertainment is the most powerful tool to educate. We need to begin to use the power of entertainment with greater responsibility and creativity. Instead of feeding and promoting our shortcomings, and passing on infected belief systems that support a culture of violence, we need to enrich and nourish the higher aspects of human nature and create a culture of peace. Our children are in great need of edutainment that will support healthy and whole development. The Honor Series of Edutainment Tools include the *Imagine and Create Your Own World Book* series.

I developed these stories because there is a void in children’s entertainment: a lack of myth and tradition that can heal and unite our children. The *Imagine and Create Your Own World Book* series fills this void. These storybooks take place in diverse lands and honor various cultures and their traditions. In each book the central character is faced with an emotional challenge and undergoes a unique transformation. As characters meet each other in successive stories, a common goal is developed that promotes social harmony as well as supports each character’s personal lessons.

These unique storybooks invite

readers ages 9 to 99 to embrace their own creativity and illustrate their versions of the stories. By inviting readers to imagine and create what is in their minds’ eyes, valuable metaphors and lessons are explored. In the classroom or in the home, the *Imagine and Create Your Own World* books are a rewarding, interactive educational experience that nurtures emotional intelligence and prosocial values.

In November of 2003, I was honored with an invitation to go to Rome, Italy to attend the Fourth World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates. During the summit I had a few moments with the Dalai Lama. I shared with him about Honor Kids

International and the peace programs I am developing for school, work, and play.

Mahatma Gandhi taught: “It is worthless to study the scriptures if we cannot use them in our daily living.” One of my goals is to submit the International Honor Pledge and Honor Code as a beginning common goal for all nations to adopt ([www.honorkids.org/com](http://www.honorkids.org/com)).

Currently I’m preparing to go back to the Fifth World Peace Summit to move the Language of Peace further across our globe. Donations are welcome and appreciated to help support this vision. Please send your tax-deductible donation to Honor Kids International (a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization) at 11672 Rochester Avenue, #302, Los Angeles, CA 90025. A portion of the profit from the sale of the *Imagine and Create Your Own World Book* series goes to Honor Kids International. These books can be purchased through [www.honorkids.org](http://www.honorkids.org) beginning in April/May 2004. *My Right of Passage Journal* is the text for the school pilot program described on our website. It is now being created on the website so schools, families, prisons, and businesses can subscribe for the entire year.

Therapists have shared with me that they use the journal for both individual and group therapy. There are many ways to participate in our Language of Peace movement. Please join us—a collective consciousness is a powerful force.

I send you bundles of courage on your journey to connect with your inherent wisdom.

*Linda Redford, a mixed-blood Cherokee, was ordained by AIWP in 1990 as a psychospiritual family counselor and minister specializing in healing spiritual maladies (addictions).*

***The First  
Annual AIWP Gathering  
November 6-7, 2004  
11:00 a.m.***

**AIWP is Coming of Age**

*Mel is approaching retirement as president and  
chairperson of the board.*

It is time for us, the members and ministers of AIWP, to celebrate what he's created and come together as a community to envision our future.

*An invitation to gather so that we may:*

CELEBRATE MEL

INSPIRE ONE ANOTHER THROUGH PRESENTATIONS

GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER AS A COMMUNITY

FIND SUPPORT AND SHARED VISIONS THROUGH INTEREST GROUPS

TELL ONE ANOTHER ABOUT OUR OWN MINISTERIAL WORK (OPEN MIKE)

DISCUSS THEMES SUCH AS:

WHAT DISTINGUISHES PASTORAL/SPIRITUAL COUNSELING FROM PSYCHOTHERAPY?

WHAT MAKES AN AIWP MINISTER DISTINCT FROM OTHER MINISTERS?

MAKE MUSIC AND DANCE

*Let us know:*

Are you interested in attending a weekend gathering in the San Francisco Bay Area **November 6-7, 2004**? When you respond, tell us briefly about your ministry and include your e-mail address.

Respond on-line at [aiwpgathering@comcast-net](mailto:aiwpgathering@comcast-net) or to:

AIWP Gathering, 1760 Solano Ave. #200, Berkeley, CA. 94707

Looking forward to meeting you, Randall Alifano and Kim Chernin

## Thanks for Your Generosity

We extend our apologies and our gratitude to Mary Alice Stuart, whose recent donation was inadvertently not acknowledged in our last newsletter.

We are particularly aware of and thankful to those donors who make regular contributions to our efforts. Their encouragement goes beyond their financial generosity, and does much to inspire the work we do.

Melissa Allen	Patricia LaPolt
Halimah Ashley	Roe Leer
Carolyn Beard	Joanne Leggio
Theresa Beldon	Allan Leitman
Michael Bermak	Alice Maltbie
Amy Blair	Julie Marchand
Yvonne Bowman	William McCreary
Kerry Brady	Jane & Phillip Mountrose
Suzanne Brodeur	Sandra Nagle-Germain
Dianne Burns	Kristin Nemzer
Lucia Capacchione	Edward Oberste
William Collins	Linda Orcutt
Diane Dalbey	Craig Pierce
Joe Davis	Karen Polek
Connie Dello Buono	Kinda Redford
James DeMaio	Catherine Ricchetti
Denise DiGiovanni	Marsha Sands
Llone Doubet	Brian Schultes
Diana Douglas	Ruth Schwartz
Janne Eliasson	Barbara Sinor
Laurel Epps	Cynthia Smith
Camille Fie	Karen Stewart
Judith Freyer	Dennis Swenson
Anita Furdek	Tho Vong
Louisa Gluck	Kathleen Weeks
Suzanne Green	Mary White
Kathryn Hall	Kathleen Woeber
Bud Inzer	Deborah Yandow
Monica Koch	Joan Zerrien

## New Ordinations

We welcome the following new members in service who have recently been ordained as congregations of AIWP:

Maryke Barclay, Minister and Transpersonal Therapist  
 Becky Coleman, Spiritual Embodiment Mentor  
 Maureen Johnson, Spiritual Counselor  
 Tina Levitan, Integrative Shamanic Counselor  
 William Metzger, Power Therapist and Energy Healer  
 Arturo Mesquite, Intuitive Counselor Integrating Body Mind Healing  
 Richard Paris, Minister of Grace  
 Anna Pittman, Minister of Integrative and Spiritual Awareness  
 Gary Sall, Spiritual Analyst and Advisor

## A Better Pledge

Given the continuing discussion concerning the phrase “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance, and that AIWP is made up of many members, all of whom are religious, but some of whom use other terms than “God” to express their higher consciousness or belief in a supreme being, I believe that this slightly revised version of Paul Priest’s contribution to the May 17, 2004 issue of *The Nation* is a pledge that is more appropriate for our ordained members and those they serve.

- Mel

“I pledge allegiance to the flag, the symbol of these United States, and to the founding principle its pattern celebrates: that as the stripes and stars combine in unity more grand, so my allegiance has to grow beyond my native land. And as a tree grows ring on ring, in ever-widening girth, I love my family, town and state, my country and my earth. And soaring on beyond the sun, beyond the galaxy, I find my home in the endless love that has its home in me.”

## If You’ve Been Taking Life Too Seriously . . .

1. Save the whales. Collect the whole set.
2. A day without sunshine is like, night.
3. On the other hand, you have different fingers.
4. I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.
5. 42.7 percent of all statistics are made up on the spot.
6. 6.99 of lawyers give the rest a bad name.
7. I fell like I’m diagonally parked in a parallel universe.
8. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say will be misquoted and then used against you.
9. I wonder how much deeper the ocean would be without sponges.
10. Honk if you love peace and quiet.
11. Remember, half the people you know are below average.
12. Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how popular it remains?
13. Nothing is foolproof to a talented fool.
14. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
15. He who laughs last thinks slowest.
16. Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.
17. Eagles may soar, but weasels don’t get sucked into jet engines.
18. The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
19. I drive way too fast to worry about cholesterol.
20. I intend to live forever—so far, so good.
21. Borrow money from a pessimist; they don’t expect it back.
22. If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?
23. My mind is like a steel trap—rusty and illegal in 37 states.
24. Quantum mechanics: The dreams that stuff is made of.
25. The only substitute for good manners is fast reflexes.
26. Support bacteria: They’re the only culture some people have.
27. When everything’s coming your way, you’re in the wrong lane, going the wrong direction.
28. If at first you don’t succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.
29. A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.
30. Experience is something you don’t get until just after you need it.
31. For every action, there is an equal and opposite criticism.

## **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 35 years old even though its name is new. UIL headquarters is in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and the administrative offices of AIWP are in Rohnert Park, CA. UIL interfaces with AIWP, a religious organization, and follows its philosophy and values while maintaining a completely non-sectarian 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 Association for the Integration of the Whole Person (AIWP) is recognized by the federal government as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit 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. While AIWP sponsors UIL, there are no religious or spiritual requirements placed on a learner other than those of the learner's choice.

The headquarters for UIL is in Wyoming, registered under the name AIWP with the Secretary of State. The administrative office of UIL is a part of AIWP headquarters in California, at the address below. 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 as an organization in state or federal politics. Contact: **AIWP-UIL Main Office: 6182 Country Club Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928; Phone: 707/586-9484; Fax: 707/586-9014; UIL e-mail: U4lifelearninghq@aol.com**

### **Recent Graduates**

We proudly announce our most recent graduates, their majors, their areas of specialization, and their major studies:

Patricia Anderson, Ph.D., Social Psychology, specialization in Psycho-social Voids and Their Alternative: A Conscious Collective, *Conscious Collective: How the Next Step in Human Evolution Is Determined by Whether We Can Become Collectively Conscious*.

Barbara Flood, Ph.D., Transpersonal Psychology, with a specialization in Marriage, Child, Family, *Transpersonal Psychology: Emphasis on Children and Family*.

Kerry Young, B.A., Applied Technology.

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## **A Learner Evaluation: What She Really Thinks**

By Patricia Anderson

The process that I underwent to create and complete my Ph.D. study is extremely difficult to put into words. My experience seems to have gone beyond the boundaries of my available language for intellectual experience. In short, I had no idea that learning was going to affect me so much.

Before beginning my graduate programs, I really wanted to find people who could understand that I was very intelligent but I wasn't going to put up with social hierarchies that were obviously not in my best interest. I do, absolutely, think that I have found that experience with UIL. However I had absolutely no concept of what that quest would bring me.

This experience has been life transforming because it changed the way I learn, create goals, and evolve my life process. There were times when I was in my own void, my own blank, unexpected place where I had no easy answers about how to even go about the process of learning. I had to understand that intellectual evolution was going to take place on many unexpected levels. Maybe, if I were to make any constructive criticism, there could possibly be a little communication about what the process might be like for people who are coming out of public school, post-secondary academia, etc. I know you tell people your expectations but it was shocking emotionally to follow my

own ideas so completely and I was unprepared for the doubts, fears, and deep processing that was necessary. But that is exactly what I wanted, a real opportunity to be myself. I just have never had a structured system, as small a structure even as UIL has, that really wanted me to express my true ideas.

And I realized that I didn't know all of my ideas up front. I didn't even know part of them. I just had a yearning to know and I followed that feeling to its completion. Hardly what I have been taught to do in the past. It was really a work of art to do this study and it was very helpful to me to read books by authors and artists who talked about "facing the blank page." The psychology of self-evolution is quite stunning. Once I realized I needed some psychological support I asked my provost David Schwartz about how to handle these feelings. He was very helpful. Really, it was my problem because I didn't know how to ask for something that was an abstraction to me, the abstraction being the process of freedom to teach myself as I create my own journey of study.

I think that the reason we have so many arcane and ridiculous hierarchies is because we fear ourselves. I had to face this in doing my work. I didn't realize the many masks fear could wear. I learned to journey with doubt instead of hide from it like

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it was a form of weakness. I embraced small ideas and walked with them like a friend until we got to know one another and decided to part company or evolve a deeper relationship. I created my learning experiences through my film work, seminars, and private counseling practice. I basically experimented with my students, trying to help them evolve a greater level of their own individual and collective well being. It was hard, sometimes, to validate myself for creating learning in my life because we are all taught that learning happens only while sitting in a chair in a classroom, library, or at home reading a book. I was evolving my theories and ideas while in motion. Very important! Finally I had to finish and that was the hardest part. It was almost a grieving process to complete my dissertation. Now that I finally had my permission to explore I realized that I had projected an ideal that I would have resolved some major world dilemma by the finish line. I have much greater respect for philosophers, social activists, and artists than I ever had before because they have all tried, and that is the one trait that really matters in an evolving and satisfying life. As a filmmaker I was often overwhelmed by feelings of the production process being far too big and complex. Then I read a quote from Woody Allen that "90% of success in filmmaking is showing up." I think that is true for most of life and certainly was as I went about evolving this Ph.D. work. I released the idea that I have to know everything about a given topic or slice of life before beginning. I can learn as I go, which is the only way life can really happen anyway. There is nothing wrong with preparation but most of learning and accomplishment comes in the process. This Ph.D. journey taught me how to have an evolutionary pilgrimage that validated my soul's longing to tell the world what I see, and to try to make a real difference by creating my own wave.

*Thank you..*

## **Beyond Polarization** ***Unbiased post-abortion healing support***

by Terra Wise

Throughout the last two decades of my work with women, I have rarely seen a client or student who has not had an abortion. Even though my practice involves many forms of expression, and women from all backgrounds and experiences, it was impossible not to notice that only a very small minority had never had an abortion. And of those who had, most struggled with a complex set of feelings afterward. At the same time these women also felt great relief in knowing that they had the option to choose a medically clean and safe procedure and the legal right to do so. Their unique life stories did not fit any external rigid structure or set of rules of how they ought to respond. The culturally polarized camps of an either/or mindset are simply too restrictive a framework and cannot possibly include all women and their many diverse life experiences.

As a result of this awareness, an important development in my work with individuals and groups has emerged. I find myself illuminating what has been neglected and hidden in the dark for far too long. I have been guiding the repressed and disowned secret—the abortion secret—up from the isolating underworld and out into the open so that it may be afforded the same compassionate healing integration as any other emotional difficulty in society. Within a safe and unbiased environment that supports unconditionally, women can comfortably address their pre- and post-abortion concerns without fear or hesitation. An abortion is an initiation of great magnitude, and every woman deserves to have a respectful acknowledgment of such an experience, and the opportunity to receive compassionate healing integration if desired.

I recognize from my experiences over the years with many different women that an abortion is indeed a significant part of the women's blood mysteries, although often overlooked and even negated (perhaps due to societal pressures, cultural stigma and discomfort). An abortion is clearly a profound life-threshold, a powerful aspect of a woman's somatic and psycho-spiritual experience. Life transitions and women's mysteries are not only about puberty, sexual relating, marriage, childbirth, hysterectomies, divorce, and menopause, but also must include

abortion(s) as well.

My work is not about polarized sides of a heated debate, not political or religious beliefs, nor is it about judgment, guilt, or shame. This work is about initiation, inner growth and transformation. It is about crossing a threshold, moving from distress and confusion into a state of inner peace, balance, and self-trust. This is true whether it has been days or decades since an abortion experience. No matter the details of the choice (the how, when, or why of it all), each woman is treated with acceptance and respectful care.

This work also speaks to the collective mind, to both the personal and transpersonal need in society for such a recognition. Men and women are responding with heartfelt understanding, relief, and an acknowledgment of the importance of candidly addressing this issue, and doing so with an open mind and heart. The letters, comments, and calls I've received confirm (for me) that this work has struck a healing chord with many sensitive people, filling a void in a difficult and overlooked area of personal crisis, growth, and self-reflection.

Through workshops, introductory dialogues, and private sessions, women are given the opportunity to share their long-held secrets within a gentle and supportive atmosphere. Abortion-related concerns are acknowledged through a respectful meeting of the hearts, cross-cultural approaches, rituals, altars, special meditations, expressive arts, embodied practices, story-telling, writing exercises, as well as dialogue exploring the ancestral, mythic, and archetypal aspect of an abortion experience.

*Terra Wise, midwife for the soul, was ordained by AIWP in Bodymind Integration in 1993, and can be reached at [www.terrawise.net](http://www.terrawise.net), 415-987-3920.*

*The AIWP Newsletter welcomes any other contributions on this or related sensitive and important issues, following this article's approach of honoring the experience of the individual.*

## Our Kind of People: John Gray, Planetary Peacemaker

“Our spiritual purpose is to love,” says John Gray, a member in service who certainly takes that purpose seriously. Over the past dozen years, he has explored the particular challenges facing those of us who love fellow humans of the sex opposite our own, in spite of the fact that they so often seem puzzling, exasperating, or downright ornery.

The author of the famous *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* and its many sequels (13 at last count, plus the previously published *What You Feel You Can Heal*) believes that the particular spiritual challenges that face men and women in loving relationship are different, and these differences are rooted in basic physiology.

“Without education on the real differences between men and women, women assume you can change things about men because you can change those things about women. Women’s spiritual challenge is to forgive, trust, accept things as they are, and give up trying to change what can’t be changed,” he states. Women benefit by recognizing that the men in their lives are doing their best although they are not perfect, and women are more likely to get what they want and need if they learn how to ask and provide appreciation when they receive.

“The spiritual challenges facing men involve being accountable for their parts of any problem, and for self-correction, so that they can continue to be of service and therefore continue to care,” Gray continues. “In addition, men have another challenge—to respect, in particular to have unconditional respect for other people’s rights and needs even when they don’t understand those needs because they don’t share them.” Loving unconditionally is good for men, as is making sacrifices in the name of serving others or for some high purpose—such behavior provides innate rewards.

“An understanding of physiology and basic genetic imprints gives you a great advantage in practicing nonjudgmentalness, forgiveness, and respect.”

Such understanding involves an appreciation of who we are physically, in particular of the hormones that in many ways define who we are. For example, under stress, the two

sexes react differently: Men’s dopamine levels go down, while women’s skyrocket, leading to very different responses. Dopamine is the motivating hormone; when you don’t have much of it, you aren’t motivated to do something unless it’s crucially important (put out the fire). When there’s a surplus, you take it all too seriously (company’s coming—quick, polish the back wall of the oven!). So men under stress will do only what absolutely has to be done, while women will do more than is necessary, and feel overwhelmed in the process.

No surprise, then, that when the boss is coming over for dinner, Mars figures he’s doing enough by showing up, and Venus is furious that he hasn’t noticed that the fingertip towels need ironing.

Happily, it’s possible for these two to function in a complementary rather than oppositional way, but it takes a little doing.

“Knowledge is power. Insight helps us reconnect with our spiritual purpose to be compassionate and kind. But we disconnect from our spiritual selves when stress and hormones go out of balance. Stress is a major spiritual challenge to our willingness to love and be loved,” according to Gray.

“I like the story of the three men who worked in the brick yard. When asked what he was doing, the first one said, ‘I’m making bricks out of clay.’ The second said, ‘I’m working to feed my family.’ The third said, ‘I’m building a church to inspire our whole community.’ Each told the truth, but the third (who incidentally had high levels of dopamine) was motivated by his understanding that he was doing something big and important with his life. Of course, we can stimulate dopamine by contextualizing any project as big and important—that’s how we can justify violence, by saying how bad the other guy is and emphasizing how immediately important it is to save ourselves. We are responsible for choosing which efforts we will undertake, and our choices need to reflect a sound knowledge of the biochemistry that motivates us.”

Understanding our respective hormonal responses to stress allows us to understand one another’s behavior, and to let go of the misapprehensions that get in the way of loving. Too often, we think that “he/she should be, do, etc.” because “in the same circumstance, I would be, do, etc.,” a mistake that leads to grievous consequences. By nature, our “circumstances” are different, and appreciation of the differences is key to coping with this diversity. This involves learning about body chemistry, in particular the hormones that affect our moods, which in turn affect our actions and reactions to others. (Wouldn’t it be nice to have learned this in high school chem?)

Briefly, dopamine, testosterone, oxytocin, and serotonin are four brain chemicals whose acquaintance is worth making when we want to understand ourselves and each other.

**Dopamine** is the motivator hormone. Under stress, men’s levels go low, while women’s go high. Men with dysfunctionally low levels may abuse cocaine, drink too much, or work too much, behaviors that boost testosterone and make them feel better. Or they may turn to excess violence for excitement to stimulate dopamine. Low levels of dopamine make men want to solve things impulsively—right now, to be decisive, and to look at things in an all-or-nothing framework—this gives them a testosterone boost and makes them feel better.

**Testosterone** rules a man’s moods. Stress lowers men’s testosterone, and since testosterone is stimulated by solving problems, such behavior (being of service and working towards an achievable goal) makes men feel better. Low levels of testosterone are associated with being inflexible, grumpy, and irritable, which in men lead to feelings of righteousness, which in turn bring up the level of testosterone and make them feel better.

**Serotonin** is responsible for feelings of optimism, contentment, and comfort. Men make twice as much as women, and store twice as much, while women use it up eight times faster than men because their limbic systems (where emotion is located in the brain) are twice as big as men’s, and the limbic system is the major user of this chemical. Under stress, when a woman’s

Briefly, dopamine, testosterone, oxytocin, and serotonin are four brain chemicals whose acquaintance is worth making when we want to understand ourselves and each other.

Stress is a major spiritual challenge to our willingness to love and be loved.

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serotonin level drops, she feels vulnerable and therefore less willing to trust, to expose herself.

**Oxytocin** is women's stress-reducing hormone, and it also stimulates bonding. Thus, when a woman is under stress and her serotonin level drops, she bonds, which has the effect of boosting oxytocin and making her feel better by reducing the feeling of stress. This presents a problem when stress lowers serotonin, and therefore reduces a woman's ability to trust, but stimulates her stress-reducing hormone, and with it her tendency to bond—her immediate response to a problem with a man may be to bond with him although she is not inclined to trust him, and thus promote an unrewarding relationship cycle that doesn't work for anyone.

"Sometimes our instinctive, base tendencies, take us in the wrong direction," says Gray in describing this phenomenon. Rather than thoughtlessly bonding, that is, committing without expectation of reward (thus reducing stress by stimulating oxytocin but causing mischief in her life if she bonds with someone she doesn't trust), a woman could find other ways to create oxytocin that could better serve a healthy relationship. For example, when in the throes of "loving [him] too much"—not forgiving, trusting, or accepting, but overly caring—she could find ways to care for herself.

So our hormones influence our actions, which in turn influence our hormones, as well as affecting others. Spiritually speaking, then, we would do well to learn to work together, which requires awareness of our challenges, which are different. Our religions teach that we need to care for others, to give love unconditionally—and while this is generally good for men because it stimulates dopamine and testosterone, it can backfire for women when practiced within a relationship that needs her to become clearer about her own needs rather than to be more self-sacrificing. For her, spiritual service in such a relationship would involve providing opportunities for a man to see that his efforts are appreciated, and choosing to forgive mistakes for the sake of supporting his capacity to care, which is related to his sense of being able to contribute.

The biochemical information that supports these understandings has been uncovered over the past 10 years, Gray says, and he is continuing his ministry with the publication of *The Mars and Venus Diet and Exercise Solution*, which he is planning to retitile *Mars, Venus and Beyond: Creating the Brain Chemistry of Health, Happiness and Romance*. "When we accept the challenge of doing this, we honor our highest spiritual nature—to love our bodies and our lives, and to be of service to others and to ourselves, in all our relationships, including those with ourselves and with our Higher Power."

## WHAT IS MEANT BY RELIGIOUS RIGHTS?

A minister must be free to define the mission she believes she has received from her Higher Consciousness. Likewise, individual religious believers must be free to practice their faiths in whatever manner they believe necessary, as long as it does not violate AIWP's credo. In addition, we affirm the understanding of religious/spiritual freedom embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and other international covenants. While some actions taken in the name of religious rights may be ambiguous and will have to be addressed on a case-by-case basis, we believe that religious/spiritual rights include at least the following:

1. Every person has the right to determine his own faith and creed according to conscience.
2. Every person has the right to the privacy of her belief, to express her religious beliefs in worship, teaching, and practice, and to proclaim the implications of her beliefs for relationships in a social or political community.
3. Every person has the right to associate with others and to organize with them for religious purposes.
4. Every religious person has the right to determine his own policies and practices for the accomplishment of his chosen purposes, which implies the right:

to assemble for unhindered private or public worship,  
to formulate her own creed,  
to have an adequate ministry,  
to determine his conditions of membership,  
to give religious instruction to youth, including preparation for ministry,  
to preach her message publicly,  
to receive into his membership those who desire to join it,  
to carry on social services and to engage in missionary activity both at home and abroad,  
to publish and circulate religious literature,  
to control the means necessary to her mission and to secure support for her work at home and abroad,  
to cooperate and to unite with other believers at home and abroad,  
to use the language of the people in worship and in religious instruction,  
to determine freely the qualifications for professional leadership of religious communities, freely naming their religious leaders at all levels and designating their work assignments.

*Adapted from an article in Church & State, March 1979*

## Women's Friendships

by Diane Dalbey, Ph.D.

Women's friendships are as complex as an income tax return and as endearing as a Hallmark card. And since they are highly subjective, perhaps a good way to explore them is through personal observation and experience.

Friendship is a learned skill. We aren't born with this knowledge. Before we venture out into the world, good parents teach the rudiments of friendship; sharing with them and with siblings, even with pets, helping, giving, receiving, laughing, crying, holding, caring, and accepting our various moods and states. Then it's off to school at age four or five, where we start learning how to pick friends and become one.

Here, little girls fashion bonds through cooperation and playing nurturing roles. This process is perfected throughout life.

Though we live in a meritocracy, abiding friendship supersedes those labels and connects us in spite of our great failures, losses, and achievements. Friendship can be unlikely, unfathomable, cyclical yet enduring, inconsistent, mysterious, logical, baffling, and understandable, but always with a strong measure of balance.

For instance, if one stays in the teacher role, or positions herself as better than the other, the friendship is top heavy and eventually keels over. Likewise, if one plays the student role, or acts less than, the relationship will eventually go sideways into oblivion. If one does the lion's share of holding the connection, it will be as binding as wet Kleenex. At best, strengths, weaknesses, and differences are clearly visible and accepted on both sides. Facades fall away. Hilarity often ensues at these moments.

Women's friendships usually involve a lot of yakking. My father, along with many other men, was pleasantly dumbfounded by my mother's ability to talk at length with her friends. He was amused and proud of that, although he never aspired to it himself. It was enough for him to simply admire that aspect of women's friendships.

"Tend and befriend" is a term that Laura Cousin Klein, Ph.D., and her colleagues recently coined as a result of their study of stress in women. In times of stress, women have the unisex choices of fight, flight, or freeze. We also react to stress by gathering with our children and each other for mutual care and support.

It would only seem natural that our friends would like each other. That's not always the case, but a true friend makes space for the other to have additional friends, even though she may not have a clue as to what her friend sees in them.

The acid test for friendship is a crisis. Recently, a friend was diagnosed with cancer. While she and her husband refocused their lives to fight the disease with chemotherapy, diet, and integrative medicine, she contacted her friends to share the news. "I'm building my team," she explained. She determined to fight back and seemed to know by instinct that friends were essential to win the battle. She was right.

Her doctors were impressed with her rapid recovery. Today she has a clean bill of health. However, no one could have predicted how her illness blessed me and her other friends.

Women forgive and are forgiven for a multitude of little irritations: an odd wardrobe, weird hair . . .

Whenever I visited with her to lend my support and optimism, she often reciprocated in a seamless, effortless way, sharing spiritual and emotional truths that came to her as she redirected her life. I especially recall our talks about grace. Midway through her six months of chemo, she said, "I know I'm in a state of grace." Come to think of it, aren't we all, no matter what our state of health? But she knew it, she owned it, while the rest of us pay little notice.

Now over a year later, one of my life coaching clients is working on a goal of taking her head knowledge of grace and learning to experience grace in the "meat and potatoes" of daily life. My friend's illness and her inspiring journey to reach safety on the other side refined my own inner growth. Without that shared experience, I strongly doubt whether I would have been equipped to coach anyone's quest for living in grace. That's the serendipity of friendship—balance and building. Giving and receiving. All occurring at once. No one's in charge and everyone is enriched.

Unfortunately, a crisis may reveal one's true nature and bring great disappointment. Another friend who had been feeling under par for some time told me she had finally gotten a diagnosis, but she wouldn't tell me. After quizzing me about my experience with neurological disorders, she finally revealed that she had multiple sclerosis.

"Why were you so hesitant to tell me?" I asked.

She sadly replied that she had lost two or three good, old friends when they learned her diagnosis. "Even though MS is not contagious, they don't want to be around me any more. I have a disease."

This happened nearly ten years ago and she is doing very well. In fact, she earned her master's degree, expanded her business, and became engaged to be married. Her abandoning friends probably did her a favor, by removing their pessimism, judgment, and fear from her life at a time when those traits would work against her. She forgave them—and moved on.

Conflicts will inevitably arise. Because women often invest a lot of emotion in their relationships, we tend to hold on too long to hurts and slights. Men, with so much of their development centered around healthy competition, seem to weather these storms more easily and get back into the game of relating, which coincidentally often revolves around games and sports.

Women forgive and are forgiven for a multitude of little irritations: an odd wardrobe, weird hair, punctuating every sentence with "you know," being late, and nostril-stabbing perfume, but it's much more difficult to tolerate cruel acts and words that demean and belittle. A rift of years or a lifetime can result. Even though we learned in elementary school that it's the bigger person who can honestly say, "I miss you, old friend, let's repair our differences and be friends again," it may take a very long time before one makes the first move to reconcile.

Some friendships have a limited shelf life based on mutual ties such as office, children, husband's interests, and relatives. When that "glue" no longer exists, the friendship gradually fades to a natural death and another sprouts in its place. I asked a friend of mine if she would choose her sisters for friends if they

weren't related. Not all of them made the cut, but she chooses to love them *in situ*, enjoying them for who they are. Her faculty for giving and accepting people she didn't choose is the incubator for birthing friendships of choice outside the family.

In all its forms, women's friendships are less about relationship and more about relating. The good ones celebrate—without contesting—what's unique and valid in one another. A great friendship picks up right where it left off, with years of absence in between. It celebrates victories, overlooks foibles. It's big enough to withstand conflict, flexible enough to bend with fluctuating circumstance. It grieves and laughs with our fragile humanness, has radar to stay in sync. A great friendship sees beyond the persona and embraces authenticity, speaks truth gently and listens with a welcoming heart.

*Diane Dalbey, Ph.D., is a somatic psychotherapist and educator in the Los Angeles area. In her private practice she specializes in pain reduction and trauma recovery using a combination of Somatic Experiencing®, advanced CST, and other approaches to resource healing. Her e-mail is Lyghtnup@aol.com, and her website is www.dr.dianedalbey.com.*

## Becoming a Minister

Many of our members in service became interested in AIWP as a result of studying with or attending the programs of other ministers who had been ordained by AIWP. However, we would like to remind everyone that completion of any training program or series conducted by one of our ministers is not in itself sufficient to qualify one to be ordained by AIWP. Ordination with AIWP is achieved by requesting an ordination packet, providing the information requested, studying all aspects of becoming a minister as though one were attending a seminary, and being evaluated on all aspects of one's life having to do with being a minister.

We ask our members in service who sponsor or conduct specific training programs not to distribute AIWP ordination packets as part of those programs, but refer those participants who are interested in ordination directly to AIWP. We will then provide the packets, obtain the necessary information, evaluate each application, and explain to those who become ordained that they are entitled to perform all of the duties and receive all of the privileges that all ministers have in this country.

**Erratum:** The article *An Everyday Miracle* published in the last issue of the AIWP Newsletter was wrongly attributed to Steve Blumenthal. The correct author of that delightful and thought-provoking story is Naomi Colb, to whom we extend our apologies.

## In Remembrance of Shane Harper 1964–2004

Read by Mary Alice Stuart,  
AIWP Minister and Transpersonal Counselor  
Riverton Methodist Church  
February 14, 2004

I traveled with Shane many times, usually with a crowd of women. (In our small circle, his friends were mostly women.) He was a beautiful, loving and warm man. He made us laugh all the time; he rarely had a mean thing to say. We always ran into people that he knew, no matter what country we were in. England, Ireland, Belgium, France, he always knew someone. Working for American Airlines allowed him to travel a lot. I also remember him saying often that “working at AA he always carried everyone else's baggage.” I'm sure you catch what he meant by that.

Whether it was hiking in Arizona or sipping coffee at a sidewalk cafe in Belgium, Shane would always enjoy life. He would often just ask everyone to sit and *be*. He would say, “Can't we just BE?”—his way of getting everyone to relax and unwind. He loved golf and played that game in Ireland and all over the world. I can't tell you how many times we had to stop hiking or sightseeing to take Shane to a golf course, then pick him up afterward. We didn't mind because we loved him.

He always had a tale to tell us or a country saying “learned from his Mom,” he would say. He made you laugh all the time and was about the easiest-going person I've ever met. His ministry was the people he helped and there were many. He helped them through difficult times in their lives, whether it was domestic abuse, divorce, or just stuff people get into and need guidance to get out of. Shane was very spiritual. He

studied to become a non-denominational minister and counselor not for the certificate, but to understand himself and human nature. He had a thirst for knowledge in self-growth and learning proper nutrition and taking natural supplements to improve his body.

Shane *loved* his cat. His name is Thief, and he is a very sweet black kitty. Shane's family has allowed me to adopt him. I know Shane is happy about that. Just last week when I spoke to Shane he was enjoying having his kitty on his lap, as he did often. That cat meant the world to him, his true unconditional companion.

Shane did not die the way he lived and I hope everyone can remember that. He would not want us to sit and be sad but would want us to laugh with all of our memories of him. He loved people and loved life!!!! The legacy he leaves will be all the people he encouraged and shared his bright light with. To Shane everyone was his best friend!!!!!!!

I'd like to say to Shane's parents, “Thank you for raising such a beautiful son.” I hope the presence of the people here today proves to you that many people loved your Shane. He made a difference. He touched our hearts. Our prayer is that your grief might move through you gently and know that Shane's spirit will be in your heart always.

*Jeffrey Shane Harper was ordained by AIWP as a transpersonal counselor/minister in 2000.*

## ***What We've Been Writing: Brief Reviews of Our Members' Books***

Many of us have known special ways of being, that is, peak experiences that last for a moment or for much longer, but most of us view these experiences as arising from some unpredictable source, ours to be enjoyed and valued at the whim of fate. Some choose to pursue them through various disciplines, and devote years or lifetimes to that end. In ***Peak States of Consciousness: Theory and Applications, Volume I: Breakthrough Techniques for Exceptional Quality of Life***, Grant McFetridge with Jacquelyn Aldana, James Hardt, and Zivorad Slavinski approach the phenomena with open minds and a determination to identify various peak states, with an eye toward discovering how these states can be achieved deliberately.

McFetridge observes that many disciplines that lead to the achievement of peak experiences or peak states tend to identify that particular state as the be-all and end-all of human achievement, discounting others that don't fit into their particular paradigm. This book seeks to avoid the systematic discounting of any peak state, and offers its own paradigm for understanding and achieving such experiences:

1. Peak experiences can be lived continuously. These long-duration peak experiences are called peak states.

2. There are many different peak states. Each creates radically different inner experiences and abilities. The characteristics of any given state are the same for everyone.

3. Most of the peak states can be had simultaneously, as if they were beautiful marbles that we can put in our pocket. This is in contrast to the current hierarchal paradigm of "enlightenment."

4. Having all of the different peak states is our natural condition and birthright. We're designed to have them. They are blocked by trauma, or blocked indirectly by trauma-related mechanisms.

5. Some people have one or more peak states from birth. They just consider this very different way of being as "normal."

6. The fetus has most if not all of the peak states *in utero*. They are lost for most people at birth when their earlier traumas become activated.

7. Peak states for most people are blocked by trauma that occurs at key developmental events *in utero* or earlier. These key events are the same for everyone.

8. For most people, permanent peak states can be acquired by healing these key *in utero* trauma events. Any number of other ways to get peak states also exist.

The book is the first of four, and is itself divided into four parts: the first covers this newly forming peak states of consciousness paradigm, along with the typical conflicts people have with it. The next is a summary of all the techniques for acquiring peak states that the authors know of. This is followed by several chapters on their discoveries about the biology behind peak states of consciousness, and what blocks them in most people. Finally, three of the top peak state process creators in the world write chapters on their methods and models for the book.

The complex nature of the subject matter is enlivened with personal stories, and the authors "share the excitement of being involved with this small, cutting-edge field at its birthing, with

its camaraderie, controversy, and new discoveries among the people doing this work."

Grant McFetridge was ordained in 1997 as a minister of transpersonal therapy. His book (ISBN 0-9734680-0-9), the first of three and an accompanying manual, was published in 2004 by the Institute for the Study of Peak States and is available at [www.peakstates.com](http://www.peakstates.com).

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### **Another Friend of AIWP, and Another Valiant Warrior**

By Mel Suhd

I joined Bob Blume and his wife Delorys, Scott and Mickey Street, Minnie Borson, and other specially selected teachers in the Paul L. Best Elementary School in 1957. The Ferndale, Michigan, school district, with Superintendent Roy Robisun, was known as one of the most progressive school districts in the U.S., a sister district to Pasadena, CA.

Paul Best School was the only educational institution with which I have been involved where the entire staff and our principal, Scott Street, worked and lived as a close-knit family. Many of us are still in touch today, honoring that intensive period for contributing so much to our lifelong pursuits. Bob's relationship was especially important to me because of his passion and commitment to the spiritual values that became the cornerstone for establishing AIWP and its sponsored universities.

After receiving his Ph.D. in education at Wayne State University in education, Bob became a supervising teacher at the University of Michigan Laboratory School. From there, Bob received an appointment as professor at the university, joining Arthur Combs, one of the five elders of humanistic psychology, and coauthoring *Humanistic Teacher Education: An Experiment in Systematic Curriculum Innovation* with Combs, Hannelore Wass, and William Hedges.

Blume and Combs's most recent publication, ***The Continuing American Revolution: A Psychological Perspective*** (iUniverse, Inc., 2004, ISBN: 0-595-30704-3), is a powerful message concerning this country and the rest of the world at this frightening time in history.

The work addresses the "people problems" that the authors see as the most serious problems of this century, replacing the physical problems that we solved in the two centuries before. The book includes five parts: "Where Are We Now?" "Perceptual-Experiential-Field Psychology," "Individual Applications of Perceptual-Experiential-Field Psychology," "Institutions in Person-Centered Perspective," and "Person-Centered Professions."

"Our culture is changing to the point of failure, and we must lose no time in reversing that process if we value the original ideals of American democracy," say the authors. This book offers humane and person-centered ways to make the changes we need to make if we are to live up to our national and personal commitments.

## In Their Own Words: “What the Credo Means to Me”

We ask that prospective members of AIWP complete a personal assessment in which they answer the questions, “What is your own mission, and how does it fit with AIWP’s mission statement?” and “What does the Credo mean to you?”

Below are two particularly insightful examples of how our members have responded to these questions.

“To me, the Credo represents a clearly expressed framework for walking my path as a spiritual guidance counselor in accord with my own values and philosophies. Functioning from that place of focused intention and compassion with an open heart and an open mind. Mindful of operating from a place of integrity in all my endeavors while being of service to others and myself, with the understanding and knowledge that I have the full support of the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person behind me in my ministry, so long as I do not stray from these tenets by practicing medicine without a license, becoming involved in criminal acts, nor trespassing on the rights of others.

“My mission and purpose in this life is to be of service to others. To be the best ‘Hollow Bone’ that I can be, channeling the healing energies, profound wisdom and unconditional love that exists in the Universe, allowing those that I serve to become whole and healthy beings, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. An imbalance of these life forces creates unease and stress in the body, which opens the door for disease and psychic trauma. My role is to facilitate the healing process that others may become centered and made whole. Not only do I see the AIWP’s mission statement to allow those of us prepared to serve our communities psychologically and educationally, but also free from government interference, afforded the same protections and sanctity as any other religious institution.

“Without dissent we are but mindless sheep, of service to no one, least of all, ourselves and those that we serve. Consider Martin Luther and his debate with the Papacy in Rome against the abuse of Indulgences. During the second hearing of the Diet of Worms, Luther said, ‘Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not

recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me.’ Without those willing to express dissent and stand up to those who would deny us the right to religious freedom, good health and total well being, I would not have been able to study under the many great teachers that I have known, nor experienced the many personal healings that have brought me to my ministry.

“A minister is one who lives in a place of being of service to others, tending to the needs of their community while working within the ethical constructs of their ministry, creating a big and safe container for these beautiful souls to process in and experience the fires of transformation, free from government interference. I understand that as an ordained minister I am free to practice the ‘laying on of

In my mind, spiritual service  
does not mean abiding  
unquestioningly by policies  
and procedures.

hands,’ which is a huge part of my ministry, exempt from licensing requirements. As a part of the AIWP congregation, my ministry, the Itzamna Healing Center, will hold tax-exempt status because it will be organized and operated, exclusively, for religious and charitable purposes. I will be conferring with my accountant as to the specifics of Oregon tax law.”

*Jane Anne Lambie Leach was ordained in 2003 as a Healing Energy Facilitator and Shamanic Pastoral Counselor.*

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“As an ordained member I understand that I would be able to serve anywhere in the world using the local congregation name Ocean Institute for Embodiment Education of AIWP.

“With gratitude I will voluntarily contribute annually to support the good work of the parent organization in advising, organizing, supporting, and communicating with its members.

“Reading ‘We Are All Outlaws’ by Claude Steiner enlightened me about the history, economics, and politics of helping people. . . . I am aligned with and willing to contribute my voice and energy to or-

ganizations that seek to make the safe practices of healing available to all those who are qualified and trained to do so. In my mind, spiritual service does not mean abiding unquestioningly by policies and procedures. On the contrary, deep inquiry into appearances and confounding life experiences is at the heart of most spiritual disciplines. Such dissent as expressed in these articles represents thoughtful questioning and a willingness to think, speak, and act with courage and authenticity in service of healing and life.

“The primary duty and responsibility of ministers is to live according to their spiritual values in order to be living examples for their congregations. This does not mean living perfectly by some rigid set of standards. Rather it means to live a very human life deeply informed and guided by carefully chosen values and beliefs including:

- the inherent goodness and sacred nature of life,
- the healthy need for limits and standards that further the growth of what is life affirming, and
- a deepening respect for, connection with, and right action on behalf of the many faces of the web of life.

“Raised as the daughter of a loving but deeply wounded Presbyterian minister, I embody a visceral knowing of the damage and confusion caused by hypocrisy in spiritual figureheads. As a result, it has long been a part of my mission to model with honesty and humor the challenging practice of living in congruence with spiritual values. All areas of life are included in this modeling, including the practical and mundane.

“With regard to the minister’s relationship with institutions, such as the IRS, the modeling and practice are the same. Careful intellectual understanding of the nature of the relationship and the roles and responsibilities of each party needs to be held with attention to one’s spiritual values for acting in such relationships with clarity, respect, honesty, and right action. Acknowledging the life-affirming guidelines and limits of institutions and questioning those that do not support the greater good of the organization or society are equally important and balancing actions in support of these relationships.”

*Becky Coleman, Ph.D., was ordained in 2004 as a Spiritual Freedom Embodiment Mentor.*



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### ***A CALL FOR YOUR INPUT***

Phillip and Jane Mountrose are preparing to write an e-book about becoming a minister with AIWP. The purpose of the book is to help potential ministers to understand the wonderful opportunity the organization offers and to connect them with resources.

In this e-book, the Mountroses would like to include articles from ordained members describing:

- The nature of your mission
- What AIWP means to you
- Thoughts for people who are considering ordination
- Resources for ministerial functions like conducting ceremonies, understanding tax laws, etc.

Your input would be most appreciated and, if included in the e-book, your contribution will be acknowledged by providing contact information and web address, if you have one. Please submit articles to the Mountroses at: [joy@gettingthru.org](mailto:joy@gettingthru.org), P.O. Box 279, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

## **Credo**

### **of the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person**

Love of life and people is achieved through an integrated awakening of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional processes. Life itself is a religious experience as realized in the temple of my being. I am performing a religious service when my thoughts and deeds involve an affirmation of life. My congregation is both myself and those who seek my support in striving towards an integration of the whole person. To serve others, for fee or gratuity, who seek my assistance in the pursuit of this religious experience is both my commitment and my right, free from any persecution. My service is supported by the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person in agreement with the Constitution of the United States. Membership in the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person will be denied or revoked if I interfere with or injure the rights of others, perform criminal acts, or practice medicine without a license. My service, whether for fee or gratuity, is limited to the areas for which I have been qualified.