



Association for the Integration of the Whole Person

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Twenty-nine Years & Still Growing

Given the state of the world where oil, nuclear power, religion and the Genghis Khans have somehow assembled extraterrestrially for NO GOOD, I thought that this might be an apropos time to once again try to explain why I put so much of my energy into honoring those who were the essence of AIWP, "Opening Education," the U.S. Constitution and all the elements that most of us believe are the

keys to a loving world. There is not a single part of AIWP that came from me. I truly believe that. My efforts to assemble the parts that came from significant others, through me, have resulted in a package I claim as unique. But all the parts belong to others and are shared as a nebulous form of unity which I believe is the definition of a free and responsible world.

In the month of April 2003, AIWP entered its twenty-ninth year as a religious organization. There are 1044 ordained members in our database. We have lost the addresses of some and removed the names of those we know are no longer with us. AIWP is in six other countries with 12 ordained members in Canada and 41 in Ireland. Most of our members serve in the U.S. because most other countries limit the freedom of churches that are not the "official" churches of their nations. The U.S. is the only country in the world that has built into its constitution a wall that separates the church from the state in the performance of their respective missions, guaranteeing the freedom and equality of every religion while protecting the state from undue religious influence in establishing and maintaining civil law.

Most of the founders of the U.S. came to this continent to escape religious oppression. Freedom of religion and freedom from the oppression of a specifically favored religion has made this country a favored nation. The first amendment to the U.S. Constitution is unique in the known world. Freedom of religion and freedom of speech were assured, thus guaranteeing freedom of thought regarding religious and civil issues. The first amendment invites the establishment of diverse religions, providing the possibility of establishing almost as many religions in this country as there are people. The first amendment encourages religious harmony. It is the primary reason why this nation, throughout its more than 200-year history, has never engaged in a religious war. The U.S. has more

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Nothing Needs Fixing

by Ann Juaregui

When I was a young girl—long before I ever imagined becoming a psychotherapist or even knew what psychotherapy was—something odd and wonderful would sometimes happen to me out on the raft on Silver Bay, something I never told anybody about.

Silver Bay was our summer place on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The raft floated on four old 55-gallon metal drums, and rode high in the water, except for a plank right at water level that made it easy for a swimmer to slip in and out. I would row the boat out to the raft, tie up, and spread out in the sun with my book, glad to be by myself for a while. The raft would roll gently in the mid-summer breeze of Michigan's north woods. After a little while, I would put down my book and just listen to the water slapping against the metal drums and that low board, and to the boat nuzzling and bumping up against the raft, and to the soft groan of the boat's rope. I would breathe the smells that rose up from the weathered boards, from sun-warmed skin, from the woods along the near shore, fragrances marbling the air. I would lie there and wonder about things and watch myself wondering. Sometimes I would notice that a stretch of time had gone by, and I hadn't wondered about anything at all.

Then, occasionally and unpredictably, I would feel myself come undone. In the warmth of the sun, in the sparkle of the water and clear northern light, I would suddenly bloom up out of myself, past my skin, my thoughts, my sense of place, into an airy and ecstatic hugeness.

"I'm out!" were the words that came to me. "And everything is alive!" The trees were alive, of course, and the fish in the bay, and the Indian paintbrush on the far shore. Everything was beating to one great heart. But the round pebbles on the beach were beating too, and the galaxies, the interior spaces of all things, the human-made-ness of human-made things. It was so clear. "Everything is life!"

And as for me? I found that I could put questions to the experience. Was there anything in particular about me in this pulsing landscape? I wanted to know. What was my part?

"I want to know," were the words that came. They came in a whisper. "Show me." And it seemed to me that wanting to know, exactly that, was my part in this great amplitude of life—that creation delights in the recognition of itself.

After a short while or a long while, I would come back into my more familiar self. I would sort of dust myself off, gather up my towel and book, climb back into the boat, and row myself home to the cabin where my family was up to whatever they were up to, in and out, screen doors smacking.

"Epiphany" is a big word, a thunderclap of a word. It conjures up the landscapes of mystics and saints, of Moses at the burning bush, and the Buddha under the bodhi tree.

In upper case, "Epiphany" grew out of the Christian tradition of the late Middle Ages. In this capitalized form, it refers to the festival called Twelfth Night, which celebrates the night the Magi, following a star hanging low in the winter sky, came upon the baby Jesus in a manger.

In lower case, the word "epiphany" is much older. It first appears in the work of Herodotus, Greek historian of the fifth century BCE, and means "the coming to light" or "appearing of gods." Seals depicting revelations have been found on the island of Crete that are older still. The Greeks, it would seem, have been having epiphanies for a very long time and, I suspect, Neolithic folks before them.

In present day, "epiphany" refers to a sudden recognition or insight into the essential meaning of something. But my favorite part of the definition tells us that the revelation is usually brought on by some simple, homely, or commonplace experience. Something big is occasioned by something little, something easily missed. And it unfolds from there—sometimes as a flash, sometimes in exquisite slow motion—out of conventional time and space and language.

"Look at this!" you whisper as you see something about the universe that you have never seen before. "And look at this," you whisper, too, seeing yourself seeing it. The universe is bigger than it was a minute ago, and so are you. But back in the cabin overlooking Silver Bay, I didn't talk about my experiences on the raft. Not talking

"I'm out!" were the words that came to me. "And everything is alive!"

about them seems as important to me now as the experiences themselves, and I have thought long and hard about why I didn't. Why? It was not because my family would have been uninterested, or worried that I had gone round the bend. My mother was a loving person, and had a strong metaphysical turn of mind. She would have listened carefully to me, and she might have told me stories of her own. My father knew from his athletic prowess the thrill of being "in the zone," moving through time and space as if he were being moved by something bigger. We told stories about these things.

"Why didn't I?" I asked my brother recently, wondering out loud about why I didn't tell anybody back then. "It seems to me now that those experiences were so big and yet so . . . what?"

"Abstract," he suggested. "The other night I heard a jazz musician try to explain how hard it is to talk about music. Finally he said, 'It's abstract. Words just don't do it.'"

Abstract? Was that it? And then, as I was mulling all this, Shirlbut came to mind.

A little earlier in my childhood, before my days in the rowboat, I had an imaginary friend named Shirlbut. She had braids like I did, but her hair was a little redder, like my sister's, and she had freckles. We understood each other perfectly. Shirlbut was shy, a child of the woods, and she needed me to look after her and show her how the world works. But one day when I was four, during a time when my brother and I were staying with our grandparents, it was decided that I should go to kindergarten. I was distraught. I knew I couldn't take Shirlbut to school with me, because when you are old enough to go to kindergarten you are too old to have an imaginary friend.

We sat together in my grandmother's back garden. I tried to explain to her that I couldn't keep her anymore, but she didn't understand at all. I knew she wouldn't. We sobbed in the garden, high with August vegetables and hollyhocks, until I wrenched away from her and went to school.

When I got to the kindergarten room, I sat in front of a mean boy named Billy who snatched my blue hat away from me and pulled my braids. I'd had enough of kindergarten right then, and ran all the way back to the house. I told my grandparents with uncharacteristic emphasis that I was too young to go to kindergarten, and they relented. I rushed out to the garden for a grand reunion with Shirlbut. We were so relieved. And we were the only ones who ever knew how close we had come to losing each other.

Shirlbut was not abstract. She was a secret. She was vivid to me, and I could have talked about her if I had wanted to, but, except for the times she made me late or needed her own ice cream, we mostly hung out in a private world.

My transcendent experiences out on the raft were secret in a different way, I realize now. They were vivid, too, and seemed profoundly real to me, ultimately real, but they never made it into stories that I told myself. They were more nearly the absence of stories, as if the foreground had been removed from me, and I could see deeper into a living matrix that holds everything. Then, as I came back into my skin and rowed home, I turned again to what was going on in my everyday world. The quality of my attention changed, like a camera adjusting its focus onto what is at hand, and the wider view dissolved, not into abstraction exactly, but into something both invisible and implicit. I don't remember feeling either bereft or relieved when this would happen. But in retrospect, I think I felt subtly separated from myself, from something I knew, something I wanted—separated from my own hushed prayer, "Show me."

Surely an epiphany is the most ephemeral thing in this worldly world. "You can't touch its wings!" a child will say

of the butterfly on her sleeve. And you can't touch an epiphany either, not with words. As the jazzman said of his music, words just don't do it, not because an epiphany is abstract (is music abstract?), but because it is so delicate. A person will speak of "moon" or "raft" or even "abstract" and feel confident, more or less, that anyone who knows moon or raft or abstract will be able to see it too. But, short of the poet who can point at things without hurting them, how can anyone hope to speak of consciousness transcending the body and spreading out all over the north woods and beyond?

Early on, we know the bind: An epiphany is supported by almost nothing on the street. The transcendent experience that seems truer than anything has ever seemed before will not be believed by this world. We hedge. "If I speak of it," we say, "I will expose it to ridicule, or diagnosis, or—worst of all—the realm of the ordinary. If I don't speak of it, it will be hidden away, by me and from me."

And so the epiphany goes un-storied—more secret than a secret.

Yet without our stories, all of our stories, we are on shaky ground. The consummate storyteller Reynolds Price has done the research. In an essay about the origins of narrative, he writes that the need to tell and hear stories is essential to Homo sapiens, second in importance only after food, and before love and shelter. Storytelling is our urgent response to inner and outer events; something seen or known is "made visible in the telling." We ache to tell. Out of a primal longing for connection and confirmation, we

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Founder's Message, continued from page 1

religions and more houses of spiritual gatherings per capita than any nation on earth.

The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights made it possible for all religions to prosper spiritually and economically. So long as religion does not contradict civil law, every faith is free to practice its mission and to maintain the virtues of its credo. This country's judicial system has painstakingly exempted religion from civil laws that intrude upon the services of religion so long as the services of the church are not designed to do harm to self, others, or the environment. This country has subsidized religion economically, allowing it to become the most prosperous institution, spiritually and economically, in the nation. Individuals who donate taxable income to a church receive a larger tax deduction from the government than they would if they had donated to any other non-profit institution.

So long as the U.S. preserves the essence of the constitution—freedom of religion and speech and promoting the general welfare of ALL of our people—this nation can survive and prosper. The separation of church and state laws that the U.S. has enacted (sometimes imperfectly, needing future adjustment) form the cornerstone that justifies the title of "Honored Nation." It will continue to remind us that we are ALL children of a higher consciousness.

We, the beneficiaries of AIWP, must avail ourselves of the benefits and protections accorded us so that we can use those benefits to serve others of good will. We must continue to develop and learn: from our parents, our heritage, our communion with our higher consciousness, our own internal assimilation of our acts and thoughts, and our current mentors who help us to better deal with an increasingly complex universe. We must strive for greater perfection so long as we are here on this planet.

My life's journey and my faith have not blinded me to the perils of this most critical moment. My words are not meant to justify complacency. I will continue to use my vision and faith to dissent against the forces I believe will do harm to this Earth and who would pit one faith against another. I will offer my own learning as we come together to seek more perfect ways to resolve the issues that confront us. I will speak against the lingering terror and destruction generated from both sides of social and religious issues. I will join hands with Witnesses for Peace to form a shield for the preservation of life and to show that peace and love are far more profitable than war, far more economical and conserving—and far less haunting in our life-long memories. My preceding words are my faith and the messages I've received throughout my lifetime, that life will prevail if we assess our own complicity in causing the issues that confront us, treat others of good will as our equal, honor others' perfection, accept their imperfections as we accept our own, and are vigilant and encountering in helping to preserve the "good life."

- Mel Suhd

From Grief to Growth: An Enlightened Path to Healing

By Rev. Aliah K. MaJon

As the above title of my upcoming book conveys, this labor of love focuses on healing grief in an “enlightened” manner. It is a journey of both human feelings and—most importantly—what I believe to be the “divine responses” each of us is capable of during times of trauma.

In 1994 I had the powerfully transforming opportunity to accept what life had served me, and find an illumined way to move forward from my only child’s suicide. That journey of committed intention not only to survive such a blow, but also to gain, grow and “evolve” because of it, is what this project was designed to capture. I was guided during a series of meditations shortly after the historic event we now call 9/11 to document my experiences of healing in order to help others. Much more than I ever expected began to unfold through me as a result of the calling to create this book and project.

Some of the approaches in this book were “developed” by me, or at least may be described in that familiar way; however, all fresh ideas come from the supreme intelligence that each of us as a human being rightfully shares. In accordance with this truth, I also know that we can only be authors of our own unique version of what exists as an “eternal pot of ideas” for everyone. I will not be surprised, but pleased if others tap into these “new ways” and bring forth their own particular versions of these methods as well. It is a new time, and much is being refined and brought to higher expression. I want to say that I am grateful that my “healing discoveries” can serve humanity by bringing higher understanding. My heart tells me that the aim of my work, and the other “uncommon” methods being brought through, is simply God’s infinite grace.

This article presents the five fundamental principles upon which my book is based. *From Grief to . . . Growth: An Enlightened Path to Healing* is designed as a workbook of practical exercises and tools that will assist people to progress from the early stages of grief all the way to the time when we are ready to rebuild and rebirth ourselves after a serious loss. Each of the five categories is listed below, along with a brief explanation of its particular characteristics and the opportunities it provides the person who is healing.

Changed Self

As human beings, we express ourselves through the relationships we have with each other. Desiring to be connected to people we care about and to build ties to those with whom we have something in common is natural for us. Social experiences are not only a necessity for our well-being and survival, they are at the core of our make-up. Consequently, we thrive on being together with others, and it is appropriate and normal that we have experiences of “loss” when the people with whom we have

been in relationship are no longer in our lives. It could be said that relationships define the nature of our existence—so when the relationships in our lives change, *we* are changed. The question is, what do we do with these changes? Is it possible that we can grow and make positive changes even under the circumstances that challenge us the most? *Answering this can be the ultimate healing tool—a way to go far beyond merely adjusting.*

Changed Circumstances

The next element that defines each of us as a human being is the specific “environment” within which we each exist. Our own individual *environment* is comprised of both the places in which we live, work, and play, as well as the way we perceive reality or assign significance to our experiences. Upon close examination we will easily see that we are surrounded by constructs of every variety—certain places, ideas, and other things that are systematically organized to fulfill particular functions, concepts, and ways of being in the world. Each person really lives within his or her own personal universe. The circumstances of our lives are made up of the tangible things that revolve around us and, most especially, the *intangible things* that are ever-evolving from within us. The fact that every person is at the center of his or her own world lets us know that we have the power to give our life new meaning. Especially during a time

To expand upon the known stages of grief and the ensuing processes they are said to engender, we will look upon the grief experience as a “cause” that produces identifiable effects that impact, imprint, and alter a person’s life on a permanent basis. The intention of this inquiry is to empower those who are recently bereaved, as well as others who may be experiencing different types of loss, and guide them towards what may be an “inspired” new existence.

of loss, it is vital to understand that what we experience and how we live, will always depend on what we *choose*. Every choice will create our “reality.”

Changed Perceptions

If we were to ask ourselves what is the truest representation of what is *real* in our lives, we would have to say that what we call “real” is often based on our specific perceptions. Additionally, our experiences would tell us that how we perceive things comes about through awareness or—more to the point—the actual feelings about, and/or our specific assessment of things and situations during the activities and events of our lives. The value we place on experience, or how we feel about something, is what that particular thing becomes to us. Significance is not the result of inherent qualities; instead, significance springs forth out of a value assigned by us. *When we change, everything changes—our personal perceptions, what we value, and how we will live.* It is well documented that when people have experienced a loss, the void that is left will stimulate re-evaluation of their lives. During this important regeneration process we assign new meaning to many ideas, people, and situations.

Changed Responses

The next level of consideration we will focus on is the notion that we act out of our perceptions, or that we breathe life into our personally held beliefs by our decisions and the specific *actions* we take. Upon close examination we will discover that what we do and how we behave is the result of the particular feelings we have about an experience, or our own personal viewpoint regarding what is before us in our lives.

“Response” is defined as what is said or done in *answer* to a situation.

If I were to formulate a “question” that could silently call to us during times of loss when we want to reach for growth, what might it be? In this body of work it sounds something like this: “What are your strongest feelings at this time, what is exacting the most powerful pull on your emotions and sense of meaning?” When one has gone through the loss of a loved one, that loss can re-organize what is *important*, as well as change HOW one responds and WHAT one responds to . . . if one can be open.

Changed Motivations

The demands of daily living can be a compelling experience, even when we are not dealing with all the exaggerated emotions related to loss. When we are seeking healing from grief’s overbearing nature we may feel we will never be the same . . . and we will not be. This is good, for now we are im-

pelled by whatever drives us to take the next steps, and/or by everything that requires us to define where we are going. Loss, above all things, can be a dynamic and defining experience that asks us to stop, take stock, and most importantly, determine how we will move forward. Although it is not common to think of loss in this way, it can serve as a fine reason to begin to wonder about our future. Is it possible that loss itself is a motivator? My experience says that it is. In fact, according to this new way of healing, loss can be seen as the greatest motivator of all—it has the ability to elicit a high level of commitment to move towards a new life or a particular outcome, which is a great blessing.

Rev. Aliah offers private sessions, workshops and group seminars. Her services are available by phone or in person, including "house calls" immediately following a loss. She lives in Los Angeles and can be reached at shamballa@adelphia.net or 310/289-8782.

“Required” Reading (and Listening!)

Here are some more books and music by AIWP members in service and their associates:

Meyers, Linda Joy

Becoming Whole: Writing Your Healing Story

San Diego, CA: Silver Threads, 2003

PN171P83M94 2002

Kaparo, Risa

Embrace

Oakland, CA: Scarlet Tanager Books, 2002

ISBN# 0-9670224-6-0

Lampe, Stewart

Up from the Basement:

A Psychospiritual Journey from Darkness into Light

Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press, 2002

ISBN# 0-595-24138-7

Spitzer, Robert

The Fifth Dimension of Consciousness

Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, 2002

Booklet and CD; music by Jupiter Moon, Steve Lobue

Kesselman, Lynne

Recover with Me: Our Recovery Companion

Fort Meyers, FL: The Recovery Press

Juaregui, Ann

Epiphanies: A Psychotherapist’s Tales of Spontaneous Emotional Healing

Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing, 2003

ISBN# 0-7615-6376-8

De Maio, Jim

Helping not Fixing:

A Manual for People Who Want to Let Go and Love

Colombia: Alberto de la Rosa Cortés, 1998

ISBN# 958-96668-0-9

Welcoming New Members in Service

Randall Alifano, Spiritual Clinical Psychologist

Annie Brook, Holistic Spiritual Minister

Shakira Davis-Larson, Spiritual Counselor/Healer

Cathie Floirat, Transpersonal Counselor

Trudy Goodman, Dharma Teacher and Psychotherapist

Bethany A. Gonyea, Divine Empowerment Integrative Minister

John G. Gutting, Pastoral Counselor/Pastoral Psychotherapist

Signey Hovem, Spiritual Counselor and Healer

Wioleta Kaminska, Story Teller Ministries

Susan Kisten, Priestess of Whole Person Healing

Lynn Kesselman, Psychotherapist, CCDC

Kari Knapstad, Holistic Minister

Kiumars Lalezarzadeh, Minister of Psychotherapy & Counseling

Jerrold Larson, Holistic Healer and Spiritual Mentor

Gurdon Lemmel, Spiritual Mentor

Mark Levine, Spiritual Counselor

Gary Matthews, Shamanic Transformational Counselor

Elizabeth J. Rankow, Minister of Interfaith Spirituality

Cynthia L. Reys, Spiritual Pastoral Counselor

Kendra Riley, Minister of Holistic Healing

Susan Scheskie, Minister of Body Mind Spirit Transformation

Susannah Tyrrell, Transpersonal Therapist

Tho Vong, Body-Centered Spiritual Counselor

How to Be Happy in Hell

Or, How to Turn Yuk into Yuk Yuk

By Cat Saunders, Ph.D.

The following is excerpted from an article published in Dr. Christiane Northrop's *Health Wisdom for Women* (January, 2003), written by Cat Saunders, one of our members in service. Dr. Northrup was reprinting this from an article originally published in the *The New Times* (June 2002), and reprinted with permission.

We reprint in here, with permission, including Dr. Northrup's comments:

[Dr. Northrup says] I have long admired the work of Dr. Cat Saunders, a psychologist, artist, writer, and healer who also runs a "rent-a monk" prayer service. I was first introduced to her work when she sent me a copy of her wonderful book, Dr. Cat's Helping Handbook—a treasure trove of practical wisdom designed to help you successfully navigate the times of grief, loss, and stress that are an inevitable part of life. Having just come through a very difficult and frightening health problem myself, I can vouch for the importance of having some well-honed skills available in times of stress. "How to Be Happy in Hell" is a wonderful and wise compilation of exactly the kinds of skills that work. It's a stellar example of Dr. Cat's work. I'm honored to share it with you in this issue (along with my commentary) as a way to help you begin 2003 with maximal access to your own healing power—regardless of your present circumstances. — Chris

***People who have not been in Narnia sometimes think
that a thing cannot be good and terrible at the same time. — C. S. Lewis***

Anyone can be happy in heaven. It takes skill to be happy in hell. While I'm no expert on the subject of being happy in hell, this isn't due to a lack of hardship. It's just that the stakes are always raised whenever I make progress, so I remain a beginner. It's like that mountain climbing allegory: Whenever you make it to the top of one mountain, you can see that an even higher peak awaits you.

Since I can't claim mastery of a "happy in hell" attitude, how come I'm writing about it? Well, if I wait until I master the subject, I might be waiting for a very long time. Also, people teach what they need to know. If I offer some tips about being happy in hell, I'm sure faithful readers will point out my errors or offer additional tips, both of which will help me grow.

In *Dr. Cat's Helping Handbook*, there's a chapter called "How to Love Your Shame," in which I suggest that shame feels so awful that most people act compulsively in the midst of it, instead of doing what's truly helpful. Shame is like quicksand: If you don't know in advance how to deal with it, you might dig yourself in deeper trying to flail your way out.

The same thing applies to being happy in hell. If you have some tricks up your sleeve for dealing with [stuff], you'll probably do better when it hits the proverbial fan. Also, since stress can dampen memory, it's good to have additional tricks to help you remember your tricks!

Acronyms are one of my favorite memory jogs. Apropos to the subject at hand, I'll use the acronym HAPPY IN HELL to outline a few techniques for parrying life's onslaughts with grace.

H stands for HONOR WHAT'S HAPPENING. In a 1989 *Sun* interview, I asked Ram Dass how he prays. He said, "When I pray, I never ask for anything, because I don't even know why things are the way they are. How could I ask for them to be different? The only thing I ask is, 'Help me understand better what's happening so my actions will come out of more wisdom.'"

CN There is no better attitude during difficult times, particularly those that involve our physical health. I had the chance to test this out directly during my recent bout with the infection in my left eye. When something this serious comes seemingly "out of the blue," you know that your soul is tapping you on the shoulder and that there's a message for you. The dilemma is that you won't know what the message is until fairly late in the process. Until then, you have to simply move forward on faith. The intellect always wants to know why, but true healing happens only in the heart.

A stands for ASK FOR HELP My favorite shaman, Michael Harrier, says that there is no self-help. I love that! His statement does a number to the control-addicted part of me that thinks I can—or should—do everything myself. The truth is, I can't even take a breath without the support of the entire universe.

Sometimes I'm willing to ask for help, but don't know what I need. In that case, I ask someone I trust—a friend, mentor, or consultant—to help me figure out what I need. Then, if what I need requires additional support, I ask the relevant person.

This brings up the fear of rejection. When someone says *no* when I ask for help, I try to remember that it's my request—not me—that's being rejected. It's never any particular person's job to help me. Rather, it's my job to ask other people until I get the help I need.

CN. During my eye problem, I had to call the emergency doctor on call at Mass Eye and Ear very early one morning. As a physician, particularly a very healthy physician, I'm not at all used to being in this kind of vulnerable position. But I knew that my recovery depended on taking the risk of asking for help. I was surprised and humbled by the truly gracious and skillful help that was offered to me.

P stands for POLISH YOUR PERCEPTIONS. For years, I used mood-altering substances—primarily marijuana and caffeine—to deal with emotional pain, anxiety and fear, shame, fatigue, boredom—even excitement. My “allies” helped me survive. However, they also hurt me, because drugs enhance certain perceptions while clouding others, and they enhance certain moods while denying others. The result is decreased clarity and destabilized emotions.

I don’t know about you, but in hellish situations, I like to have all my wits about me: I want my perceptions polished and my emotions stable, so my actions—and my internal experience—arise from a centered place in me. Drugs were a valuable crutch when I didn’t know how to walk, but walking with crutches is nothing like walking *free*.

CN: We live in a culture in which addictions run rampant. The purpose of an addiction, whether to substances such as alcohol or marijuana, or uncontrolled eating, or obsessive cleaning, is to numb us so that we are out of touch with what we know and what we feel. There are times, as Dr. Cat notes, when addictive substances can act as crutches that help us move forward when we can’t yet walk on our own. But continued use of them as a habitual way to deal with life’s stresses is self-defeating. As Dr. Cat says, you can’t really respond fully and healthfully to a difficult situation and with full access to your own inner guidance if you habitually use substances or processes to numb your perceptions. Note: If you feel the need to lie about or minimize your use of a substance or a process (such as cleaning or overwork), then you can be sure that your use of it is an addiction.

P stands for PRACTICE CRAZY WISDOM. For me, *crazy wisdom* means imagining the wildest or weirdest thing possible, and then doing it—or some symbolic representation of it. For example, I was raised to be extremely polite. Sometimes I lament this training when I encounter intractable people who treat good manners as an invitation to attack.

One of my *crazy wisdom* techniques for dealing with these people is to imagine myself as a Tyrannosaurus Rex, an Arnold Schwarzenegger, or an Andrew Vachss. Then I say whatever I need to say in my own style, but with the extra “kick butt” support of my alter ego’s persona.

CN: My own crazy wisdom usually takes the form of doing something silly with my mind (or with a good friend) during a difficult time. For example, on one of my multiple visits to Mass Eye and Ear Infirmary, I was trying to read the eye chart and failing miserably. When the eye technician asked me what kind of doctor I was, my friend and colleague Dr. Mona Lisa Schulz piped up with “plastic surgeon.” We both burst out laughing.

Y stands for YIELD THE RIGHT OF WAY. When things don’t go my way—whether for moments or years—I can either persist in my arrogant assumption that things should go my way, or I can yield the right of way. Yielding changes my perspective on a situation, which—according to quantum physics—inevitably changes the situation itself. As a bonus, yielding the right of way helps me focus on changing what I can change, namely, myself and my own expectations. This is obviously more effective than trying to change the world.

CN: I couldn’t agree more.

I stands for INHALE AND EXHALE. In 1974, I fell in love with a tantra teacher who was deep into breath work (we called it rebirthing back then). Years of training with him and many others taught me how “circular” (continuous) breathing can rejuvenate the body, stimulate brain function, balance emotions, increase creativity, heighten spiritual awareness, and improve sex.

Since hellish situations tend to put a damper on everything I just mentioned, the single most important thing to do during stress—or anytime—is to *keep breathing*. Inhale and exhale!

CN: As you probably know, I’m a big fan of the power of breathing. Breathing (and singing) are part of our emotional digestive system. Breathing fully (especially in through the nose and out through the nose) activates your parasympathetic system, which restores balance to the “fight or flight” sympathetic nervous system, which, when overactive, inevitably wears us down physically and emotionally. One of my favorite books about breathing is Body Mind and Sport by John Douillard. Another is the book and video called The Art of Breathing by Nancy Zi.

N stands for NURTURE YOURSELF. During a long period of adversity, I rented space from a much loved, but very boisterous and boundary-less group of friends. Imagine a solitary, privacy-loving cat trapped in a pack of barking, bantering, bickering dogs, and you’ll have some idea of my daily (and nightly) experience at what I came to call “Grand Central Circus.”

Sleep—the mother of all nurturing activities—was virtually impossible at Grand Central Circus, and other unmentionable qualities made that place a nightmare for me. Yet its lack of *external* support—and the general adversity of the time—caused considerable *internal* growth. That period provided harsh lessons in the temptation—and futility—of revenge, the challenge of remaining civil in the face of torment (I didn’t always succeed), and the absolute *necessity* of nurturing myself (especially with daily dancing). It was, as C. S. Lewis would say, terrible and good at the same time.

CN: During my eye dilemma, I had to cancel some speaking engagements that had been planned for over a year. I also had to curtail all my writing for several weeks. (This issue is the first thing I’ve worked on in weeks.) I took naps, slept long hours, and made a career out of taking supplements and putting in eye drops. In the process, I learned that nothing I did was more important than self-nurturing. The alternative had come dangerously close to leaving me blind in one eye. Though I thought I had been nurturing myself enough, my illness left me with a new perspective on what self-nurture really was all about.

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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 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

Religion and spirituality are synonymous and can be found listed together in every current dictionary:

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

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

The Association for the Integration of the Whole Person (AIWP) is recognized by the federal government as a 501(3)(c) 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. AIWP's 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. Thus, it does not make a distinction between religious, spiritual, and academic learning. It all reaches a higher consciousness. AIWP/UIL is open to all who would not deliberately do harm to self, others, or the environment.

For illustrative examples of two learner's final evaluations of their recently completed UIL doctoral programs, please see below and page 9.

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 recent graduates, their areas of specialization and major studies:

U Ko Thein, Ph.D., History, *History of Foreign Relations and Foreign Trade of Union of Burma (Myanmar) 1948-1957*

W. Winston Ferris, Ph.D., Education, *The Design of a Resource Syllabus for a Graduate Course in Religious Education*

L Kae Graniel, B.A., Communication

Robin Day, B.A., Psychology; M.Div., Religious Studies

Learner's Final Evaluation of Program

By John R. Lawrence, Ph.D.

My life has been filled with learning opportunities, some of them probably extraordinary; by this I mean I have been blessed with many opportunities that I have engaged with and that have led me down unusual and exciting learning/living pathways. I have tried to reflect on this rich personal history, looking for a common denominator or central thread of meaning or purpose. I have been fortunate to also have spent quality time reflecting regularly and deeply as in formal meditative practices as well as in nonstructured personal silent times: alone in wilderness, or ocean voyaging out of sight of land for weeks at a time on my own small sailboat. . . . I believe the UIL experience allowed me to learn even more from what I had previously learned and experienced, and to build on that learning to reach higher levels of understanding.

Few if any of the studies that are reflected in my work with UIL were begun or done in and of themselves with UIL and a degree in mind when I began them. And yet my work with my provost, Melvin Suhd, has proven to be a very important learning experience. I believe the self-study and reflection I have undertaken in order to write and complete my dissertation has been vitally important to me in several ways. First, I learned that I could undertake and carry to completion something that has undoubtedly been one of the most intellectually challenging projects in my life, requiring my utmost in fortitude, perseverance, and creativity, that is to say, my Ph.D. project.

This degree program had many outcomes and insights that I had not anticipated. One example: I spent scheduled time on a regular weekly basis over a three-year period, 2000 through 2002, collecting, sorting, and finally mounting in archival sleeves an estimated 10,000 photographs, the vast majority of which I personally took, and which now form a chronological working document of my life and of much of my life's works. In fact, I sincerely believe this work could have been my major study for

my degree. This project was conceived of and begun as another attempt to find a way to break through what were to me at the time insurmountable barriers to tackling the writing of my dissertation after I had repeatedly come to a standstill. I had hoped the photographic project would help me see my life more objectively and in a more linear chronological way, thus perhaps facilitating my writing. As it has turned out, this undertaking was not as directly helpful as I had hoped or planned. Yet its process did get or keep me moving. And it is ongoing, as I still am doing a lot of photography and more recently have taken up digital photography, both still and video. . . . This photograph collection now occupies over eight linear feet of shelf space composed of 3-ring 8 1/2" by 11" binders, which have now become a legacy to my children and family, and it is becoming an ongoing project being contributed to by my daughter, son, and their mother, who are annotating sections and parts where they were involved. It is becoming a Lawrence family pictorial archive. Eventually I will have ships' logs and other journal entries included to create a richer historical perspective.

A second very important outcome of my work with UIL has been the necessity to write and write and rewrite. This brought me into very close and uncomfortable contact with my early school experiences, which I learned through my writing needed to be lived with, acknowledged for what they were, and moved beyond. I thank Mel Suhd for this gift. I also wish to thank several gifted psychotherapists who have helped me to work through PTSD periods that plagued me when I was writing about the time when I was with my wife and children in Sri Lanka during the civil war there and our lives were in immediate danger, and several other highly charged, dangerous, painful, and reactive periods of my life. Working through an extended period of severe clinical depression during recent years in which medical interventions had no positive effect was a severe challenge to this work also. This burden lengthened, complicated, and also deepened my self-exploration and discovery during this writing process.

I am sure Mel will be pleased to hear me say that I do now feel, appreciate, and acknowledge the great value of my own learning. In fact, one of the most important things I learned in all this degree writing process was that I had really created my own individual and very personal curriculum, beginning at a very early age when I was not thriving, succeeding, or really learning in my formal school environment. I truthfully can say I hated school then, but I was well socialized not to reveal this. My personal laboratory, darkroom, studio, woods, and library were where I thrived and learned, and for the most part was left alone to "do my thing."

Another very important learning from my Ph.D. program has been to ask for help when I really need it. I have come to fully acknowledge and appreciate areas of "me" that do not function in a linear, logical, analytical way. I have had great help from a number of good friends and resource faculty in discussing, proofing, and final editing. This in itself has been a rich and rewarding unexpected benefit of this learner's endeavor.

I also recognize Mel Suhd not only as my provost but as the founder and caring parent of a series of valiant efforts to create and keep alive love of lifelong learning in our world's spiritually bleak learning environment. My sincere thanks to him for personally keeping me moving forward in the university's program. Thank you for making it possible for me to earn my degree of doctor of philosophy.

Learner's Final Evaluation

By W. Winston Ferris, Ph.D.

The degree studies, dissertation research, and preparation for this degree with UIL have probably been the most satisfying I have experienced in decades of professional education as a compulsive student and teacher. It is hard to express the inner reinforcement that comes from a systematic review and summarizing of a lifetime of helping others experience the joy of learning. As we move through each day and project, involved in the hurly-burly of classroom teaching and school administration, it is easy to lose the sense of present accomplishment in the pressure of moving to the next pressing demand. This doctoral degree process has been a fulfilling opportunity to intensively review "what has been done" in order to consolidate energies for "what is yet to be done." I suspect this is one of the key dynamics at work in the UIL philosophy of graduate work and degree achievement.

This candidate's love affair with "knowing" began at birth. Schooling and learning have always been a joy, and only partially linked to formal education. When it became evident that my life was to be spent in helping others explore the adventures of education, I entered it with the express vision of discovering and developing the unique potential of every student placed under my care. This dedication produced some conflict with both the parochial and public education systems in which I labored. There I found systems dedicated to editing and restricting learning growth to those areas that would prepare

students to fit the stable molds required by "good" citizens of society and church. This tension finally resulted in leaving institutional education and becoming an educational consultant where I could share my vision effectively.

As Mary Stewart says in her book, *The Crystal Cave*, "When you are looking for what I am looking for, you have to look in strange places. Men can never look at the sun except downwards at his reflection in this earth. If he is reflected in a dirty puddle, he is still the sun. There is nowhere I will not look to find Him." This other-dimensional "looking," whatever else you call it, is the "spiritual" dimension that constitutes probably the greater proportion of human potential.

This search for the inner dynamics of learning and for the teaching tools and strategies to apply them to human potential has been a constant search. The pathway has led through terrain outside the traditional precincts of formal education. UIL's open policy has allowed me to bring together in teachable and finished form these dynamics. The search is not ended, but the present form is by far the most complete I have yet attained. I am grateful.

In the year 2003, I will celebrate my fiftieth anniversary as a professional educator. During this still-ongoing career, I have never diminished in my commitment to the development of human potential, either my own or the learner's. I am still exploring the continuing adventure of learning. Physical aging does not have to be paralleled by mental decline. In fact, the inquiring mind still joyously exploring its multi-level, multi-

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Ferris, continued from p. 9

dimensional potential is one way the body stays young and thriving. The search goes on.

One cannot share that which one does not possess. Learning joy is a crucial aspect of my life. The degree work offered by UIL is part of that joy. To be given, not only permission, but also encouragement to explore the past and present resources and methods of producing continued learning and development of personal potential for oneself and for others, plus the opportunity to qualify for an advanced degree that will give opportunity for helping others to explore the same pathway, is and has been a welcome and appreciated experience.

Man is a learning creature. Though members of the animal kingdom can be said to “learn,” this lower-order learning constitutes variations of instinctive behavior. Dogs can bay at the full moon, understanding that its brightness is something unusual in the night. Only man can build a conceptual relationship with the universe, combine it with a ceaseless hunger to know, build space vehicles, travel to the moon and walk on it—with millions of his fellow humans hanging breathless watching the deed and feeling racial accomplishment.

When the “Iron Curtain” lowered and American scientists could freely converse with Russian scientists, one of the key areas in which they compared notes was the field of “human brain function.” At that time it was discovered that, in spite of the rapid progress of brain function study in Europe and the U.S., the world’s leading authority in the field was Dr. Pytor Anokin of the University of Moscow. At the time the rest of the world had concluded that the human brain neurons possessed the digital thought combination capacity represented by the numeral 1 with 800 zeroes after it. Dr. Anokin had delved deeper. Just before his death, Dr. Anokin documented accepted research that demonstrated the human brain and its neurons have the capacity for digital thought interaction that can only be counted with the numeral 1 with 50,000 kilometers of zeroes following it.

These incomprehensible numbers drive to an inescapable conclusion: the human brain and mind is capable of unlimited learning and creativity. When combined with the innate curiosity that characterizes humans, this capacity to think and learn constitutes the greatest power on earth, a power that can be turned either to benefit or to destroy humanity.

But human leaning abilities are not limited to the space-time continuum, or to the world of seeing, weighing, mechanical cause-effect processes that science presents as total reality. Evidence is clear that man functions as a multi-dimensional being. We are able to function in areas of reality that science cannot weigh or measure, and therefore tends to deny. Whether you label it “psychic,” “ESP,” “mysticism,” “universal intelligence,” or “God,” mankind has demonstrated the capacity to tap knowledge, power, and experiences that cannot be categorized by the language of materialism or its science.

It is the contention of my life’s educational philosophy that we must involve ourselves with non-stop looking in all directions and at all levels, including or even especially, the spiritual—for that level provides a matrix from which all other learning takes its true perspective.

Unfortunately, this boundless learning potential can be limited and suppressed. Political tyranny, social and cultural mores, economic deprivation—all these and more can be and

have repeatedly been used as instruments to limit and control learning, fitting it into directional molds that offer power-advantages to ruling hierarchies, and harnessing it for minority advantage.

Nor is this manipulation of human learning ability only the province of dictatorships and tyrants. The “free” societies believing in universal education have traditionally, and perhaps “unconsciously,” systematically limited the learning capacity of successive generations. (These comments are assessments, not criticisms.) Repeatedly, the United States educators have stated that “the purpose of public education is to produce stable, productive citizens that will support and contribute to the national good.” This produces a learning system that ignores any knowledge, skills, attitudes or values other than those leading to “good” citizenship, which is too often translated into “not rocking the boat.” It also ignores an educational goal that aims at developing the full potential of each individual.

The spiritual tools in human potential can also be suppressed. They can be, and are, actively suppressed by denial that other dimensions of human experience exist. They can be passively suppressed by simply ignoring the reality of sensitivities in human nature, as a nation of the blind would ignore the existence of color and visual

texture. If your language contains no referents to the spiritual, children early learn to disregard their innate sensitivities to it and gradually lose their ability. Though sighted, they become functionally blind, like the society in which they live.

Nor is religious education free from this subtle suppression. Most institutional religious education is designed to produce stable church members who conform and contribute to their own particular denominational beliefs and goals. Since most religious organizations tend to be more conservative than the societies of which they are a part, their education of “safe” members tends to restrict achievement of individual human potential even more. Though this would be denied by many religious educators, it can be demonstrated.

These observations are not designed as a diatribe against modern education. The research in the dissertation project shows that each generation of religious educators is captive to the historical forces of social and cultural change taking place. Being embroiled in the change, they have largely been unaware of the interacting forces at work in their generations.

Yet the contemporary, basic educational reality is this: If you intend to help either adults or youth to develop their full potential as individuals, you cannot rely on contemporary public or private education to accomplish it. You either find a way to alter the general educational systems, or you find a way to operate an education process which is designed to explore the objective of “unlimited learning.”

The philosophy of UIL is not merely theory but, to be effective, must be turned into practice. My mentor and provost, Dr. Bobbi Liberton, has been unfailingly patient and helpful as I have moved through this extended work toward my doctorate. Though I have given her many opportunities to become impatient with my slowness, she has consistently avoided them and given me both encouragement and clear directions along the pathway. Her prompt responses to my queries, and her affirmation and cogent guidance during development of the dissertation content and structure, have been of more than significant help.

Love is the solution.

- Nasser

Our Kind of People . . .

In each issue, we spotlight one or more members in service and describe their activities. This time, **Robert Spitzer** shares a few of his eclectic experiences, with an introduction by Mel Suhd.

In the 1930s through the late 1940s, there was a wildly popular radio program called “The Shadow” with a famous line, “only the Shadow knows.” The hero (the Shadow) employed sleight-of-hand tactics to solve crime mysteries and, remaining unseen, to do good deeds that made significant, positive contributions to the lives of those he encountered. Bob is like the Shadow, in that he too has spent his life solving mysteries and has made many contributions to the lives of others, in a similar, incognito manner. Bob has been an ordained minister of AIWP for many years and has chosen to “come into the light” in this newsletter. Regarding what he tells us below, there are two more comments that I would like to make about this amazing brother: First, I don’t believe that Bob established the publishing house to make money, but to give voice to new modes, to discover new voices, to promote individuals he saw as special, to make sure that opposing social and political views had a written stage, and to give voice to his forty-year mission that “Peace is Profitable,” and to show faith in people of good will. Second, the video Bob mentions at the top of his list provided the evidence that led to the court finding against the Navy, in favor of renowned peace activist Brian Willson, and awarding damages to him.

And in Bob’s own words:

I was called a Jack of all trades in the high school newspaper gossip column. Now at age 76, I see that was probably right. My fear was that I would be a master of none. Now I see my life as having been played on the strange stage where fictitious entities are becoming the main actors. Mel asked me to bullet my most proud endeavors:

- At the top of the list is to have been a friend to Brian Willson and to have filmed the moment when the Navy train ran over his legs in 1987.
- My childhood dream of becoming a baseball star was partially fulfilled by sponsoring a baseball tour to Nicaragua during the Sandinista Revolution. At sixty, my legs kept me from getting the headlines.
- Virginia Satir turned me completely around, as she did so many of us.
- *The View From Space* is an outgrowth of her ideas. Virginia once called me a messenger, and that is partly how I feel. The ideas in the *View From Space*, *Fifth Dimension*, and the *Triad* are much too good for me to have thought of alone. In *The View From Space*, I no more thought of these ideas myself than I decided to acquire the language of my family as a baby.
- My publishing house, Science & Behavior Books, is celebrating its fortieth year. It has given me the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people: Fritz Perls, Sheldon Kopp, Richard Bandler, John Grinder, Sharon Wegschieider Cruse, Vince D’Andrea, Peter Salovey, Natalie Rogers, Mona Wasow, John Vasconcellos and Mel Suhd.
- As a psychiatric consultant at juvenile hall, I hired Hank Giarretto to run the incest project from which Parents United emerged.
- *Tidings of Comfort and Joy*, a book I wrote and published in 1975.
- Vietnam protest—I am very proud to have spent 10 days in jail.
- Raven Lang—I was privileged to help Raven in the Home Birth Movement in the seventies.
- My expensive education. For a while, I thought I was a professional student. Yale, Harvard Law, Washington University Medical School. Yes, ribbons around being a lawyer, medical doctor, and psychiatrist.
- I have known so many wonderful people. In high school I wrote a poem asking whether you, the reader, were just like me. The ideas in *The View From Space* and *Fifth Dimension* led to Triad Events, which will allow us to research whether our mental functioning is the same, including our experience of consciousness.
- I outgrew the nickname, “Rabbit,” which I earned after my first sexual encounter. In fact, I found the love of my life, my wife, who could not be a lovelier life mate. I am blessed to have three children and three grandchildren. Of course I am biased, like you.

Thanks for Your Generosity

AIWP is grateful for the generosity of those who have contributed recently to the fund that keeps this newsletter alive:

***William Bishin
Bonnie Borchert
Catherine Foster***

***William E. McCreary
Grant McFetridge
Virginia Romero***

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.

To the Benefit of All

By Mel Suhd

The article “Twenty-nine Years and Still Growing” was written to remind all readers, including our ordained members, that even in times of strife, so long as we maintain and strengthen the first amendment of our constitution, those of us who live in this country are blessed. The U.S. supports religion without discrimination and has made it possible for all religions and their parishioners to prosper religiously and economically. For over 200 years, it has been shown that people of good will, who practice good will, help to promote the general welfare. The founders did not accidentally stumble upon the idea that faith and prosperity embrace one another. They built it into our laws by giving preferential treatment to organized faith over individualized faith, by exempting organized religions from state control. No matter what you and I may think about that bias, it was deliberate, and has become known as the *wall of separation between church and state*. It exists so that the state cannot control religion, so that religion cannot control the state, and so that no single religion can have a favored status with the state. It was also a way to show that contracted harmony was more profitable than uncommitted harmony. The flaws and imperfections you and I may perceive or experience do not weaken my belief that the founders had a strong need to ensure the equality between secular and spiritual values and laws.

Ordained ministers’ training and duties prepare them to serve parishioners in dealing with the mind and the spirit. In many religions, the Ten Commandments or their equivalent deal with both. The first five cover the spiritual—monotheism and heritage. The second five are the civil values. While civil laws are generally drafted by a governing body separate from the church, a minister must advise parishioners concerning the interfacing of the two, both civil and spiritual law.

Many members of AIWP have made significant contributions to the well-being of their communities, **but many are not availing themselves of the benefits and privileges afforded them by the first amendment to the extent to which they and their parishioners are entitled. If you are charging a set fee for the religious services you provide, your congregation cannot benefit from these privileges. If you do not charge a set fee, the privileges and benefits do apply.** A parsonage allowance will pay your living expenses, tax free. The services you provide your congregation members (everyone you serve is a congregation member) can, through donations, result in as much as a 50% of gross income tax credit. The IRS encourages churches to use a separate bank account for church business.

For those ministers who devote much of their ministerial activity to pastoral counseling: So long as you are very clear that you are a religious counselor, that donations for your services are made to the church, and there is no set pastoral counseling fee, your clients are entitled to a receipt for the contribution, which can be used as a tax deduction. At their option, the donor and his or her accountant may determine that part of the donation had a taxable dollar value for services rendered, and choose to reduce the amount declared as a donation for tax purposes. Remember that donations must be receipted, and that the receipt must include **AIWP EIN 95-3455451**.

For all ministers/congregations that offer spiritual counseling, we suggest that ministers provide a card or flyer with a statement such as:

“As part of its congregational services, the church offers spiritual counseling. That is why I chose to be a minister of AIWP. This work is my spiritual calling. As with other services, there is no fee; however, we try to let our parishioners know that an average donation of at least \$ ____ [*minimum amount to be determined by the local congregation*] is needed to maintain the ministry. Your donations are tax deductible.”

One Church – AIWP: You and the IRS

By Mel Suhd

AIWP is seen by the IRS as one church. AIWP headquarters is responsible for all communication with the IRS regarding church-related income and expenses (exception: 1099s, see paragraph three). Local congregations do not communicate directly with the IRS regarding any church-related income or expenses. No church-related income/expenses (other than contracted fees shown on 1099) are reported separately to the IRS by any local congregation. It is therefore **essential** that all congregations report church-related financial business to AIWP headquarters on a quarterly basis. A quarterly report is **required** if church-related income is received and/or expenses are incurred by the congregation.

All congregational leaders and ministers must use the AIWP headquarters’ non-profit religious Employer Identification Number (EIN 95-3455451) for all church-related financial activity, such as congregational banking and receipts for donations. **Any activities not related to AIWP congregational service, but requiring a tax number, must use a Social Security Number or an EIN unrelated to AIWP.**

The religious services provided by the church are administered by persons who are volunteers, self-employed, or independent contractors. AIWP does not employ staff or ministers; the church uses the services of independent contractors. Monies paid to contracted persons are reported to the IRS by the local congregation’s fiscal officer, using AIWP EIN 95-3455451 on IRS Form 1099*. Copies must be sent to the administrative headquarters office of AIWP. Parsonage allowances given to ordained persons are not taxable, and are not reported on 1099s. They are reported on the AIWP quarterly congregational statements of income and expense that are sent to the AIWP administrative headquarters office.

Due to our true nonprofit operation and the burden of expanded administrative responsibility and the cost of implementing and maintaining this reporting procedure, headquarters must request a small supporting donation based on 1% of the gross income of the local congregation. There will be a required **annual** minimum donation of \$100, with an annual maximum of \$500 per year for those congregations who feel it necessary to limit their support. For example, if a congregation has a gross income of \$2000 in a quarter, the supporting donation would be

\$20 for the quarter. All congregations reporting an annual gross income of \$10,000 or less would donate \$100 for the year. A congregation reporting a gross income of \$15,000 in a quarter would donate \$150 for that quarter. A congregation with an income of \$50,000 or more during a given year would make a \$500 total donation for that year. Meeting AIWP's annual expenses has always been a challenge, and donations and subsidies have always been a necessary part of our budgeting.

Any additional donations to assist headquarters in meeting its annual expenses are deeply appreciated.

**Local congregations and ministers who applied for and received an AIWP-related EIN in accordance with AIWP's past policy should return it to the IRS with a notice that it is no longer in use. A copy of the EIN and notice to the IRS should be sent to AIWP headquarters by the congregation/minister.*

THE LAW OF OCTAVES: A KEY TO REALIZING YOUR GOALS

By Phillip and Jane Mountrose

This article was excerpted from the August, 2002 issue of the Getting Thru to Your Soul Newsletter.

This month, we introduce one of the "Obstacles and Opportunities" from our just-released *Awakening to Your True Purpose* five-tape audio program. In this audio program, we present a number of obstacles and opportunities, which identify common pitfalls to self-awareness and spiritual development, along with the opportunities inherent in overcoming them.

The Armenian philosopher George Gurdjieff presented the "Law of Octaves" as a universal law. According to this law, every process we undertake is on either an ascending octave, which is helping us to progress, or a descending octave, which is causing us to regress. And within the flow of each octave, there are periods of movement followed by periods of rest, which are called "intervals."

As such, the concepts of "octaves" and "intervals" identify opportunities and obstacles that are built into any process. With awareness, they can help us to deal effectively with periods of success and failure in our lives, and to progress steadily toward our goals. This is particularly relevant to living your true purpose, because it explains why people often fall short of realizing their dreams.

The Law of Octaves is illustrated in the seven-tone musical scale. Each step, or musical note, can be understood as a vibration. The first three notes—do, re, and mi—proceed without resistance, representing a period of easy progress on an ascending octave like reaching toward a goal you have set for yourself. This corresponds to the time when you enthusiastically start a project. Between mi and fa, you encounter the first interval, which is a natural time of rest. This is when something interrupts the flow, and attaining the goal becomes a challenge.

When this interval happens, many of us shift our focus to something else, in part to avoid the difficulties. There is nothing wrong with a change of pace; in fact, we may also make the mistake of trying to force our way through resistance when it would be better to wait a bit for it to subside, which it inevitably does. Intervals can be a natural resting place amid the bustle of life. In a period of activity, they may be inviting us to turn our attention inward, to digest more of what we have learned, so we can then go out and expand again.

The key with intervals is, of course, to return to your goal when the time is right to make further progress. Unfortunately, after becoming distracted, many people lose sight of the goal, fail to bridge the mi-fa interval, and never make much progress toward their goals.

Returning to the theme of obstacles and opportunities, the obstacle here is that it is easy to forget the goal when we hit an interval. The opportunity is to take a break, while remembering the goal, and return to the octave when the interval has ended. This is where the need for conscious participation comes in. Bridging the gap and staying on course requires awareness.

As mentioned, the first interval in an octave is called the mi-fa interval. Once you pass through it, you have clear sailing for awhile again. The initial excitement of embarking on a new project is generally a thing of the past now, as you move productively forward toward your goal. This takes you through fa and si until you are almost completed with the octave, at the si-do interval. Now you have almost completed the process and just need to wrap up the final details.

In the law of octaves, this is a critical time, when many who have successfully bridged the mi-fa interval become distracted and fail to complete the octave. It explains why so many projects are completed poorly. Awareness is again required to complete the octave. But finishing completely is important, because the completion of one ascending octave leads to the next ascending octave, while failure to complete the octave sets us back. And, as with the mi-fa interval, the key is to recognize the interval, take a break, and return to the finishing touches.

DESCENDING OCTAVES

So far, we have just focused on ascending octaves, with positive energy flows. It is equally important to recognize descending octaves, with negative energy flows. At times, we all find ourselves in these descending patterns, when nothing seems to be going right and it seems like they will last forever. Here, the law of octaves tells us that there will be a break in the downward flow at the mi-fa and si-do intervals. When the interval arrives, we can change direction and start a new ascending octave rather than allowing the octave to carry us down further. As with ascending octaves, the key is awareness.

LARGE AND SMALL OCTAVES

We are all involved in a number of different octaves at any time. An octave may just last for part of a day, as with preparing a meal or cleaning the house, or many years, as with attaining a college degree or having a career. And, of course, within the octave

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H stands for HANDLE YOUR HANG-UPS. Whenever I find myself in hell, I notice that the local demons always look mighty familiar. The local demons, of course, are my own peculiar set of emotional hang-ups—that strange and mysterious collection of karmic myths, cultural conditioning, and family patterns that contribute to, and detract from, my innate personality.

This eclectic mix of gold and garbage sometimes triggers an unfortunate array of automatic behavior during stressful situations. Needless to say, automatic behavior—the garbage part of that eclectic mix—increases the likelihood that difficult situations will become downright hellish. Thus, I’m a big advocate of *handling hang-ups* through various means: personal observation and reflection, ongoing behavioral modification, and the help of watchdog friends and consultants.

Ram Dass said that after decades of work on himself, “I haven’t gotten rid of one neurosis. Not one. The only thing that has changed is that while before these neuroses were huge monsters that possessed me, now they’re like little shmoos that I invite over for tea. I say, ‘Oh, sexual perversion! Haven’t seen you in weeks!’ They’re sort of my style now. When your neuroses become your style, then you’ve got it made.”

CN: One of the things I learned recently was how conditioned I’d become over the years to sacrificing myself for the good of others who didn’t really respect or honor me fully. This pattern started in childhood. It was the way I “earned” love. And now I “see” this fully. Remnants of this pattern will no doubt be with me for the remainder of my life. I have decided to fully accept and love this aspect of my personality. By befriending it I find that I’m far less likely to act from it.

E stands for EXPAND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. To me, personal responsibility is the number one issue in life. If all the people on the planet suddenly took 100% responsibility for themselves and their actions, heaven on earth would manifest itself overnight.

I’m not holding my breath waiting for that to happen. Besides, taking 100% responsibility has nothing to do with anyone else and everything to do with me. All I can do is work on myself and my own behavior. Considering the magnitude of this project, it should keep me busy for, say, the rest of my life.

*CN: Taking responsibility for the events of your life and for your health is the most powerful method I know of to access the enormous power we all have within us. I completely agree with Dr. Cat that taking responsibility is, indeed, **the number one issue in life**. It holds the key to everything—including health, happiness, and serenity.*

L stands for LAUGH. When I distill the essence of my soul into one image, it’s always the same: a cosmic grin. During ghastly experiences of pain, loss, hardship, or fear, something will suddenly strike me as funny, and I’ll crack up laughing. Humor in the midst of hell—and perhaps even because of it—is my saving grace.

Some people think this makes me a masochist or a bona fide nut case, but I cultivate this quality in myself. For one thing, it makes me feel good—laughter stimulates endorphins, after all. Also, humor helps me remember the big picture, namely, that the trials and tribulations of material existence are merely different aspects of the same cosmic dance of *lila* (Sanskrit for “God’s play”).

CN: In his classic, Anatomy of an Illness as Perceived by the Patient, Norman Cousins first documented the healing effects of humor on the immune system. I’m a huge fan of the healing nature of humor. It’s one of the qualities that I share with Dr. Cat. One of my favorite sayings is, “Anything worth taking seriously is worth making fun of.” I personally love the way the writers of the NBC sitcom “Scrubs” make fun of medical training—with great accuracy, I might add. Quite frankly, I think that comedians like Robin Williams and Barry Humphries (who plays the character Dame Edna) are great healers of our times.

L stands for LET GO. When all else fails—and in general—I remind myself to *let go*. Let go of grudges against self or others. Let go of the illusion of control. Let go of needing to be seen or heard, wanted, or appreciated. Let go of needing to be important at all.

Let go of pride, perfectionism, and preconceived definitions of happiness. Let go of entitlement-based notions about deserving to be happy. Let go of shame-based fears about *not deserving* to be happy. Let go of needing to *feel* happy in order to be happy. Let go of needing to be happy at all! In short, let go of anything and everything that stands in the way of experiencing heaven on earth, even when it’s hell.

CN: During the course of my recent illness, I realized that there was a portion of my business that I needed to let go of completely—despite trying to make it work for over seven years. Though I never would have dreamed I’d end up withdrawing completely from this aspect of my business, I realized that letting go was the only choice if I were to maintain and regain my health. On the day I made my decision, I went to see the latest Harry Potter movie. At one point, the character Dumbledore says to Harry, “Your talent is not what’s important in life. It is the choices that you make.” I felt those words were meant directly for me. As you begin this new year, may all your choices serve your highest possible purpose on all levels.

Dr. Cat’s Helping Handbook is available at bookstores, Amazon.com, or discounted at \$13.95 directly from the publisher at www.dr.cat.org. To read Cat’s complete Ram Dass interview excerpted in this article, to learn more about Cat’s work, or to contact Cat directly, please visit www.dr.cat.org.

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Nothing Needs Fixing.*continued from page 3*

say, “Look at this! Look with me!” And when we can’t, we are diminished. And so is the world.

It is this sense of diminishment, I believe, that brings a client to psychotherapy. Other times, other cultures have been more hospitable to epiphanies. For eons, dreams and stories have been exchanged in the morning at the village well, or in song, or in the shaman’s fire circle. The choice of a therapy setting, with its implication of “I need fixing,” would happen only in a secular culture like our own. To this therapy place, a client brings many untold stories, but the epiphanies are the farthest back, the most in need of rescue. This is not because epiphanies are inherently more worthy, it seems to me, but because they are the most endangered—these very moments when we feel most intensely alive and aware that nothing needs fixing.

One morning, a client of mine had been talking rapid-fire about almost unimaginably hard times in her family. Then—it was a mystery to me why this happened—she paused. Her pause deepened into a silence, lengthened. Suffering had filled the room before, but now her head tilted a little, and her face took on an inquiring look as

if she were looking through something to something else. Then a slow grin broke across her face.

“It’s a miracle,” she said quietly. “I’m perfectly all right.”

What has just happened? Reynolds Price quotes the Eskimo hunter Orpingalik: “It will happen that the words we need will come of themselves. When the words we want to use shoot up of themselves—we get a new song.” It was like that, like a new song coming.

The trembling moment hangs in the air. We can wonder where this “I’m perfectly all right” has come from when there is nothing in the story of her life—or in the story most of us tell about where we come from—that would have predicted it. But that will come later. For now, it is enough to thank everything that is holy that her all-right-ness has found expression in an ecstatic story, however spare, that becomes a new and crucial part of her self-description. And that she has found, for insurance, a witness.

My client’s experience is important to those of us in the helping professions who do our work in the hope that the people we work with will feel better. But it is much more than that. It raises the question, “If this moment is a non sequitur to what we thought we knew about a person—

and about this universe we live in—what is the deeper truth? And how shall we make room for the new songs when they rise up from this truth?”

Shyly we venture out with our epiphanies into a world still in the thrall of a reluctant science and its cousin, a reluctant psychotherapy. Yet even now, as we will see, science is encountering astonishing non sequiturs of its own, surprises that beg us to reinstate all our stories and include them in our explorations. Above all, we should know these are sacred tales. And they are profoundly healing as they remind us of—and restore us to—our innate all-right-ness.

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of having a career, there are many smaller octaves. This Law of Octaves is harder to perceive in seemingly more abstract and large-scale processes like fulfilling your true purpose. Yet it helps to recognize that long octaves tend to have large intervals and bridging them successfully provides tremendous rewards in living our true divine purpose.

We noticed the law of octaves in our own lives last year, just before 9/11. We felt that we were losing our sense of direction. Everything was fine externally, but something seemed to be missing and we couldn’t tell what it was. This interval in living our soul’s purpose was really a natural period of rest. It was one part, or phase, of the ongoing series of octaves related to fulfilling our true purpose. Once we realized that we were in an interval, our perspective changed. We took some time off, did some processing and meditating, had some fun, and renewed our commitment at a deeper level, so the octave could continue on course without deviation when the time was right.

When 9/11 arrived, our direction again became clear. Understanding of the Law of Octaves and connecting with the synchronicity of life saved us a lot of aggravation and allowed us to feel renewed in our commitment when our energy was again required following 9/11.

The Law of Octaves is very practical. It clearly shows how things can turn into their opposite as each interval can lead to another deviation and on and on. If we are losing sight of our goals at the intervals, we may be putting a lot of effort into going nowhere. On the other hand, taking breaks at the appropriate times and completing octaves connects us with the synchronicity of life, and we can reach our dreams with relative ease.

Being aware of this cosmic law of octaves provides an opportunity to view your life more soulfully and to progress positively on life’s mysterious journey.

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