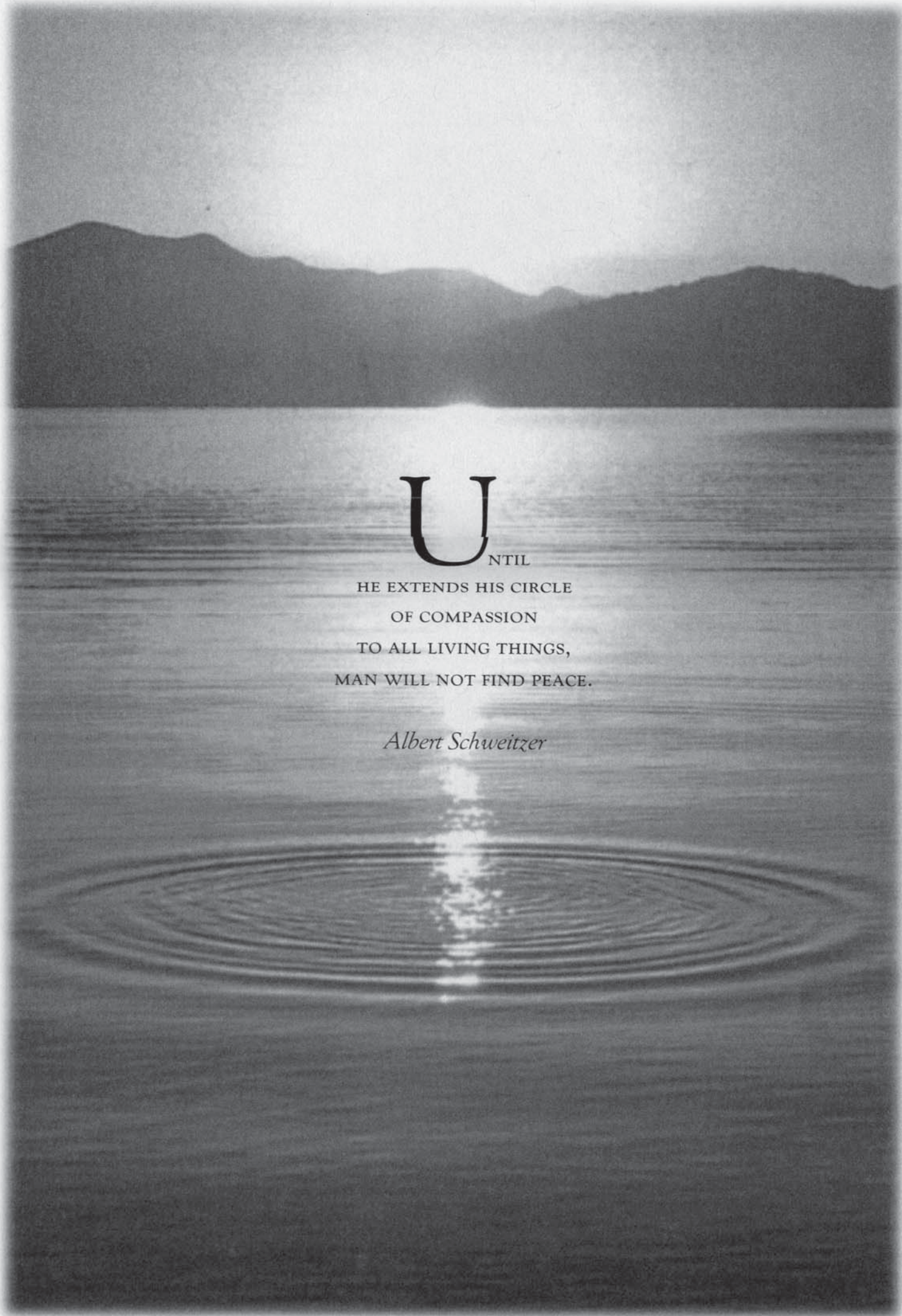


A LIGHT IN THE MIST

THE JOURNAL OF HOPE

A HEALING ENVIRONMENTS PUBLICATION
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U
NTIL
HE EXTENDS HIS CIRCLE
OF COMPASSION
TO ALL LIVING THINGS,
MAN WILL NOT FIND PEACE.

Albert Schweitzer

O SPIRIT OF LIGHT

WHO ART BOTH INFINITE AND ETERNAL

AS WE ENTER THE NEW MILLENNIUM

ILLUMINE OUR LIVES AND THE LIVES OF THOSE WE LOVE AND HAVE LOVED

WITH THE HEALING POWER OF THY DIVINE RADIANCE.

GRANT US THE GRACE TO FORGIVE AND BE FORGIVEN.

TO BE GRATEFUL FOR ALL WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN.

MAKE US EVER MINDFUL OF THY PRESENCE.

INSPIRE US WITH OUR LIFE'S PURPOSE.

THAT WE MAY USE OUR TIME ON EARTH, HOWEVER BRIEF,

TO TRANSFORM NOT ONLY OURSELVES

BUT OUR PLANET INTO A PLACE

OF VISION AND COMPASSION,

CREATIVITY AND PEACE.

AMEN



We are always in
relationship,
always interconnected.
Expanding our
spiritual practice is
actually a process
of expanding our hearts,
of widening
our circle of insight
and compassion
to gradually
include the whole
of our life.

Jack Kornfield

HEALING ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

Criteria for Healing Environments

Two very attractive women walked into Hotel Monaco's Grande Cafe in San Francisco. Co-Directors of Patient Support Services for a major cancer clinic in Memphis, Tennessee, they had come to the West Coast to gather ideas for how they might make their new facility a healing environment.

Under the leadership of Brenda Wiseman and Sandy Patterson, West Clinic Wings offers patients and their families the loving support that not only relieves suffering, but also promotes healing. "How can we extend our services to include the most healing environment possible?" they asked. This is our attempt to answer their question.

What can be done to ease the suffering of patients faced with a life-threatening diagnosis? What is a healing environment? A healing environment is one which connects the patient to that which is transcendent, and which brings comfort through that connection.

A patient who has been given a life-threatening diagnosis has had her world turned upside down. Unfortunately,

clinical settings often reinforce this malaise with their sterility. How can architects and designers reverse this downward spiral?

First and foremost they must move beyond their formal training to a place of highest purpose and intention. They must realize it is within their power to alleviate suffering and this must be their primary goal. They may keep the following criteria in mind:

1) *Seek to ground the patient in the world at large.*

Use natural materials such as beautiful woods, stone, and slate, to connect the patient to the outside world.

Introduce nature itself in the form of living plants, running water, and beautiful orchids.

Incorporate natural lighting and provide access to fresh air through skylights, courtyards, and atriums.

Appeal to all five senses through light, color, texture, music, comfort foods, and natural light scent. (A hospital in Minnesota has a hundred-track sound system which replicates the sounds of a country river.)

Include items with age (antiques) and handcrafted artifacts to place patients in a larger context of time. Comfort patients with the essence of home: comfortable furniture, coffee, and access to kitchens.



Interiors by Healing Environments

2) *Offer the option of transcendence. (Especially important for the terminal patient and family.)*

Create special and easily accessible places for prayer and meditation.

Incorporate icons and symbols of transcendence. Avoid the denominational and seek the universal. (Better a chapel with a fountain and orchids than one with symbols of eight belief systems.)

Keep a sense of mystery, of that which we cannot know. There is comfort in the concept that man is not the measure of all things.

Attempt through symbols to transcend both time and space.

3) *Counteract the sense of disempowerment and loss of identity which often accompanies serious illness.*

Where possible offer choice (bed linens? bed surrounds? art from an art cart for bedroom walls?).

Encourage self expression by having art studios, sandtray rooms, and video rooms (for creating family heirlooms).

Incorporate in each patient's room a means of expressing and celebrating his individuality. (A locked display case? A glass frame on the door for a photograph and bio?)

Offer easily accessible patient libraries for medical information regarding treatment.

Replace the ubiquitous TV with a VCR and consider individual CD players with earphones.

4) *Attempt to place the patient's suffering in a context which may give it meaning, thereby reducing suffering.*

Where possible offer healing, as opposed to mere generic art. What is healing art? Healing art is art which relates to the depth of the patient's experience, rather than glossing over it.

Consider the healing power of literature. Incorporate inspiring quotes and poetry.

Avoid minimalism and replace it with a rich layering of detail. When facing death, what may be excellent design feels cold and impersonal. Avoid the color grey.

5) *Consider the well-being of the patient, the family and the medical staff to be inseparable. (They form a triumvirate and each affects the other.)*

Offer all three populations means of self-expression, avenues for grieving and inspiration for healing.

Make waiting rooms and examining rooms as healing as individual patient rooms. **KS TTP**

FOR THOSE OF
YOU WHO WILL
LEAVE US SOON

Our hearts go out to those of you who will not live long into the new millennium. I remember my dying mother could barely look at the photograph of the man her daughter would marry soon after her death. How can we help you have a sense of sharing in the future? Of being present for loved ones it is so difficult to leave? We recently read of a woman who made careful plans to be part of her young daughter's future. After making videos to share her thoughts on life's important moments, she lovingly selected gifts for each birthday and major life event. Think of it as creating a time capsule, capturing your love and ensuring its presence in the future. Whether or not you are able to do so, we send you our love and blessing and assurance that you will live on in the hearts of those you leave behind.

An interview with Brian Eder

Just after the JFK Jr. tragedy, I was surprised to see the outpouring of sentiment over the internet.

As we approach the 21st century, many of us have found a new mode of expression that was unavailable when JFK was assassinated in 1962. I remember it well; the world population watched and listened to the news story as it unfolded over television, radio and print.

The communication from the media was a one-way street and left little room for us to participate in some way. We all "wanted to do something," but didn't know what to do. Some sent letters and flowers to the family but it didn't really satisfy.

Now, through this new communication tool, many of us have found a way to share our feelings with our unknown fellow beings.

Recently, a friend was going through one of life's difficult experiences. She decided to share her concerns with other people facing similar problems in a chat room situation over the web.

Many of you have seen our website that contains the electronic version of *A Light in the Mist*. It is produced by Brian Eder, a kindred spirit and close friend, an electronic whiz-kid who uses the medium for his individual creative work. I asked Brian if he would consent to an interview, so here goes.

Has building websites such as the one for healingenvironments.org helped you grow spiritually? If so, in what way(s)?

The act of building a website in itself is not a spiritual experience. Our spirituality grows as our ability to see beauty in all that surrounds us increases. Healing Environments encourages my spirit to extend itself. "Let the beauty you love be what you do. There are a thousand ways to kneel and kiss the earth." — Rumi

Has the experience of building spiritual sites sparked new ideas for your work in the future?

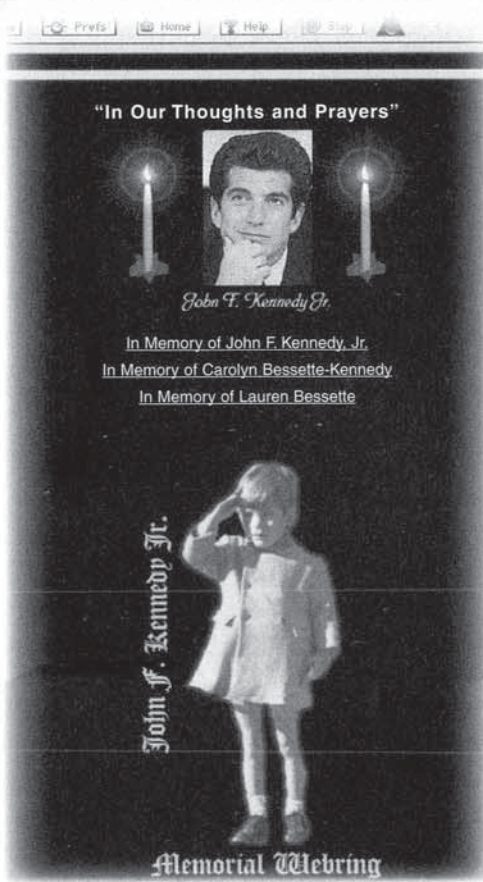
It definitely has. I can't tell you how often I hear someone speaking of the internet as a cold, dehumanizing experience...I couldn't disagree more. The internet is merely another reflection of the greater human experience—we find what we are searching for.

One idea that I cannot escape is the desire to create a feature that allows someone to come in to the site and write a prayer, a blessing, a wish, a dream, a poem, a song of surrender... and send it out into the virtual universe. The concept being that this "thought" would travel from server to server across the globe never crossing the same path until it finally returned to

its place of origin, its vibration left behind in the endless array of twisting cables. We need this energy online as desperately as we need it about us.

Do you feel that more people are turning to the internet as a means of spiritual expression?

Yes, I do. Especially as a tool for exploration. There is an undeniable movement towards an integral spirituality, a united culture. One mindedness. The web allows us to challenge current belief structures on a very personal level by making alternative insights regarding human nature more widely accessible. I believe that coming into contact with such information is enough to awaken even the most dormant spiritual nature.



In what way(s) can people relate to their computer as a means of spirituality or as a spiritual outlet?

Saint Francis once stood before a leafless tree and said, "Speak to me of God!" The tree bloomed before his eyes. We need to approach what appears to be the mundane, lifeless aspects of our lives with these words echoing within us like a mantra—it is then that understanding and purpose may flourish.

The computer itself is just a tool. No more or less spiritual than a pen or a paintbrush or a leafless tree. It is an empty canvas waiting for us to reveal the beauty that hides beneath the surface.

What spiritual benefits do you see in using the internet?

I believe the thing that holds some of us down in life is often the same thing that keeps some of us moving forward—the people we surround ourselves with. Our peers, friends, colleagues, and family members are the ones supporting or denying our quest for new information and the desire for spiritual growth. The internet is not only the greatest source

for seeking knowledge, it also houses multitudes of communities of like-minded individuals...virtual families that can help guide us on our journey.

What suggestions can you offer to someone who may be interested in building his or her own spiritual site?

Spend some time online searching for other sites that are covering similar subject matter. Look at your interests through someone else's eyes.

What books or sites can you recommend to those who are interested in building a site for the first time?

• *Designing Web Graphics: How to Prepare Images and Media for the Web* by Lynda Weinman

—www.mcp.com/newriders

• *Creating Killer Web Sites: The Art of Third-Generation Site Design* by David Siegel

—www.killersites.com

• *Webmonkey: The Web Developer's Resource*

—<http://www.hotwired.com/webmonkey/>

Do you visit any sites for spiritual wellness? If so, can you share them?

My personal "Spiritual Wellness" does not stem from visiting sites which cover the topic itself. In fact, it rises mostly from my indulgence in art and literature, to me... the saving grace of the world. The internet allows me to drop into another's place of creativity at a moment's notice. The door is never locked. It is like having access to the world on a twenty-four hour basis. This in fact lifts my Spirit on a regular basis.

In what ways do you think technology can help to spread spirituality to others?

Speaking specifically of the communications aspect of the internet, there is a leveling factor here like never before. Many take for granted (especially in the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley) what is truly going on in our own backyard. Imagine what it took for the early prophets to reach even a thousand people with their teachings...the internet makes the connected world available in a matter of seconds.

Does your process in building a site, also involve a spiritual process? If so, what steps are involved?

I realize this answer is somewhat cryptic. However, it is the truest response I can give of the involvement of spirituality in my work process. Several months ago a voice fell upon me as I lay in the final moments of sleep. I can only describe it as an infinite whisper. It filled me with an ocean of bliss. The words have never left me. "All Creation in Its simplest form Am I," it spoke to me. To describe the knowing that comes at a moment like that is impossible. Every thing I do and see has changed as a result. **SS**



INTO THE WELL:
KEEPING A JOURNAL
WITH
IRA PROGOFF

*We are engaged in entering
the well of our life and in reaching
as deeply into its sources as we can.*

Ira Progoff

I suspect that, like me, many of you have lingered over the "blank book" section of your favorite art or stationery store, contemplating the perfect journal—the one, bound simply in rice paper, perhaps, that will finally inspire your personal practice of writing. Although journaling has had a renaissance of sorts in the past few years, keeping a diary is one of the oldest methods of self-exploration, and while we may all have different notions of what constitutes a diary or journal, most of us have sought the silent, spacious counsel of its pages at one time or another.

Before you buy that new blank book, though, I would urge you to consider a different approach to keeping a journal; one that combines what we typically think of as keeping a diary with an innovative, more structured format known as the *Intensive Journal Process*. Drawing on both Jungian principles and depth psychology, it is a method developed by the psychologist Ira Progoff and considered by Joseph Campbell "one of the great inventions of our time."

I first became aware of the *Intensive Journal Process* from an invitation I received to attend one of the many workshops that are offered throughout the country. Included in the literature about the program was an interview with Dr. Progoff that immediately intrigued me, especially by what he had to say about the benefits of working with the process and the ways it differed from a traditional approach to keeping a journal:

It helps us to see the movement of our life history as a whole, from the vantage point of the present moment. It also helps us to position ourselves between the past and the future so we can support the unfoldment of new potentials in our life.... When journal keeping is not related to the larger development of one's life as a whole, it lacks a sustaining principle. Often it is resorted to

when a person has a particular goal in mind, such as finding a new career path or establishing a specific love relationship, but when the goal is achieved the journal falls into disuse and the continuity of the life context as a whole is lost. No overall integration or self-exploration results.... Working with the process enriches our inner life immeasurably, helping us to stay in touch with that underlying reality which is our personal source of meaning and strength.

Progoff's method asks us to look particularly at four dimensions of our experience: Life/Time, Dialogue, Depth and Meaning, and within these categories helps us to find the thread of continuity that's moving throughout our life. It reminds us of our life's steppingstones, our dreams and mentors, and of those intersections where roads taken and not taken may be reassessed and revisited. And whether you attend a workshop, as I did, where someone leads you through the various exercises or you use Dr. Progoff's book, *At a Journal Workshop*, as a guide, you will be given a gentle framework for evoking new ideas and opening contexts of understanding. For in the reciprocal movement between past and present is the gift of perspective—something we all need at our century's turn.

At the heart of the Journal Workshops is the metaphor of the well connected to an underground stream. The invitation Progoff extends to us is to reach as deeply into the sources of our well as we can, so that in the depths we may someday take flight. **DA**

For more information about the *Journal Workshops*, please contact Dialogue House Associates at 800.221.5844.

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

As we begin the new millennium we urge our readers to honor the momentous occasion by conducting a life review and vowing to live consciously and purposefully in the new century.

We also ask you to honor the mystery of human existence and human potential by conducting an experiment.

The National Institute of Health considers creative visualization a technique of alternative medicine worthy of exploration.

Michael Murphy and George Leonard have had remarkable results with their Integral Transformative Practice which incorporates the technique.

Make this New Year's Eve the beginning of a seriously transformative process. Asking for guidance from the universe, make a commitment to contact your higher self and discover your life's purpose. Do not be

discouraged by limitations of time or disheartened by limitations of time or materials.

Consider reading Shakti Gawain's book *Creative Visualization* and doing the exercises in the accompanying workbook. That is my new millennium resolution. Write us and share your results. Together we can transform the planet! **KS**

MILLENNIUM CALENDAR

Years ago we dreamed of creating healing products which would expand our mission and also serve as a source of funding for our work. In the hopes of so doing we registered the trademark NIGHTWOOD. Now we are delighted to share with you the first fruit of that dream: our year of the millennium calendar.

Sam Smidt, our graphic designer, found himself captivated by the haunting photographs of Fulbright Scholar Lyle Gomes. Highly evocative and even transcendent, they beautifully illustrate our concept of healing art. When placed in tandem with key words from past newsletters, they become rich with meaning.

Lyle was kind enough to permit us to reprint twelve images from his extensive collection. The accompanying words chronicle an upward evolution of consciousness: a soul's journey.

Lyle Gomes was named a Fulbright Scholar for his photographic project: *Hand-made Landscape: Photographs of the English Countryside*. Half of the photographs in the calendar were produced as part of that project; the other half are part of his long-term landscape project which he began in 1989. The photographs from Britain are pastoral, the others are powerful primal images of nature untamed.

"I am intellectually and visually attracted to what I describe as hand-made landscape—a relationship between ourselves and our environment. As a photographer, it is my intention to visually capture a relationship with our environment that demonstrates a reverence for nature." It is our hope that our readers will be healed by the soothing words and images and that the calendar will prove an inspired gift for loved ones.

Calendars will be shipped priority mail upon receipt of a \$25 check at our Palo Alto office. All proceeds will benefit Healing Environments. Should you wish to send one as a gift we will enclose a gift card with your name and ship to the address you choose. (In addition to complementary shipping, we will take care of applicable state taxes.) Please order soon to ensure prompt delivery. Those enamored of Lyle Gomes' images may wish to purchase original prints from Amy Saret of The Photographer's Gallery (650-328-0662). **KS**

PEACE, LOVE AND JOY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM
 ALEXANDER MARC PATEL BORN JULY 23RD, 1999 TO TRACI AND RICK PATEL
 OPENING TO TRUST OPENING TO WONDER
 BIRTH IS OPENING TO LOVE
 WE WISH FOR ALL OF YOU

TOGETHER
 WE
 WILL
 COMFORT
 THE
 SUFFERING

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to aid the current movement toward holistic medicine—toward treating the whole patient (mind, body, spirit) and encouraging hospitals, hospices and individuals to nourish patients, families and caregivers with healing environments. What is a healing environment? We believe a healing environment is one that offers sustenance to the soul and gives meaning to experience. It is one that enables those who are suffering to transcend their pain by connecting to the universal through the transformative power of beauty and art, and that gives comfort through this connection.

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