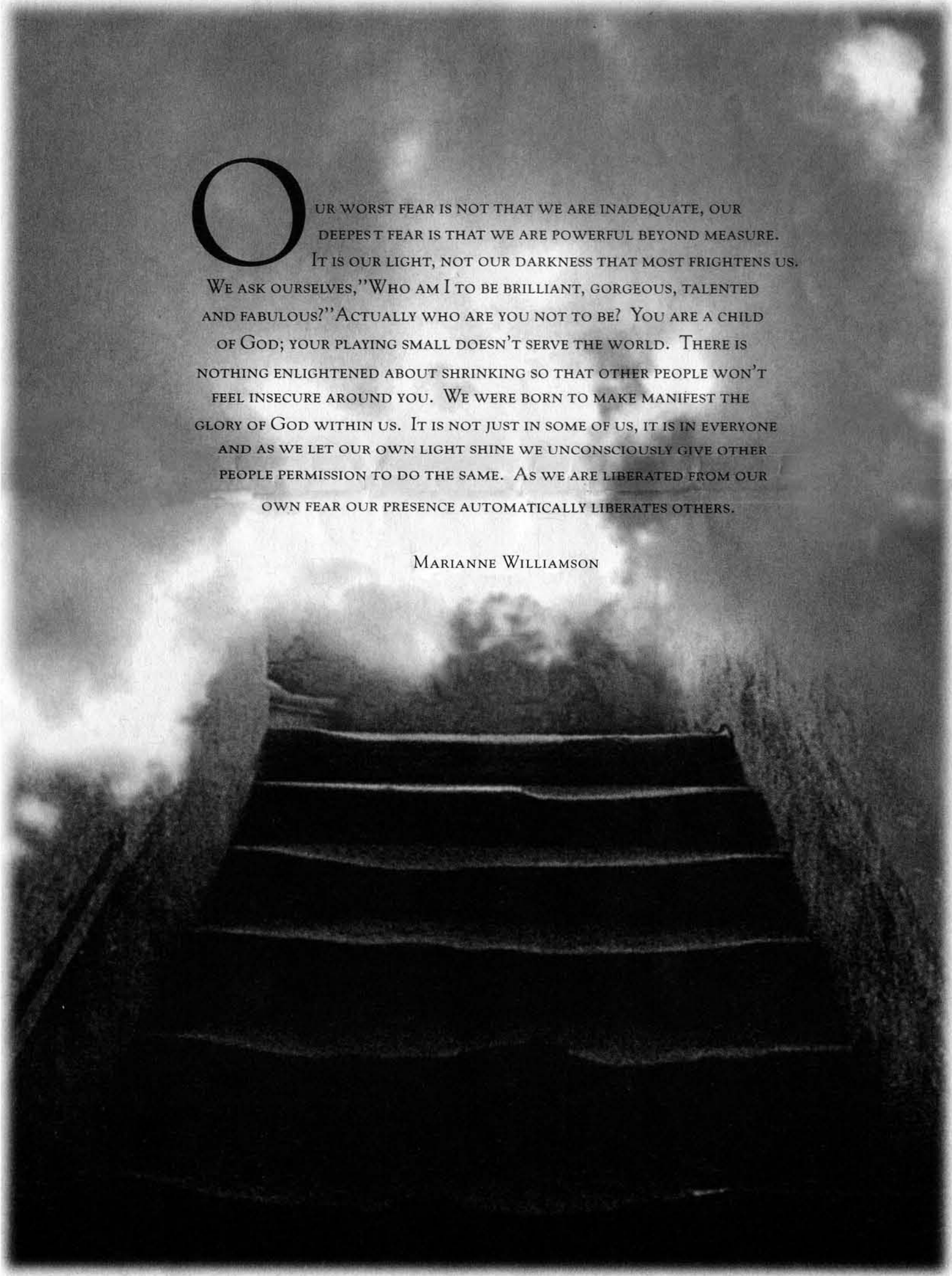


A LIGHT IN THE MIST

THE JOURNAL OF HOPE

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OUR WORST FEAR IS NOT THAT WE ARE INADEQUATE, OUR DEEPEST FEAR IS THAT WE ARE POWERFUL BEYOND MEASURE. IT IS OUR LIGHT, NOT OUR DARKNESS THAT MOST FRIGHTENS US. WE ASK OURSELVES, "WHO AM I TO BE BRILLIANT, GORGEOUS, TALENTED AND FABULOUS?" ACTUALLY WHO ARE YOU NOT TO BE? YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD; YOUR PLAYING SMALL DOESN'T SERVE THE WORLD. THERE IS NOTHING ENLIGHTENED ABOUT SHRINKING SO THAT OTHER PEOPLE WON'T FEEL INSECURE AROUND YOU. WE WERE BORN TO MAKE MANIFEST THE GLORY OF GOD WITHIN US. IT IS NOT JUST IN SOME OF US, IT IS IN EVERYONE AND AS WE LET OUR OWN LIGHT SHINE WE UNCONSCIOUSLY GIVE OTHER PEOPLE PERMISSION TO DO THE SAME. AS WE ARE LIBERATED FROM OUR OWN FEAR OUR PRESENCE AUTOMATICALLY LIBERATES OTHERS.

MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

"In beauty is salvation," and so began *Heron Dance*, Rod MacIver's "publication of hope, celebration of beauty, and recognition of courage." As with all beginnings, however, there are many sources of origin and several stories to be told. One of these originary tales is that of Rod MacIver himself who, in a phone call from his home in Vermont, shared his thoughts with me about life's purpose, the contradictory nature of truth and the gift of life.

I must admit that I didn't intend to transcribe the entire tape of the hour-long interview, but as I listened to the first few minutes of our conversation, Rod MacIver's honesty, humor, and unassuming wisdom seemed even more compelling than I remembered, and after several hours, I found myself having transcribed the tape word for word.

Some people might see in Rod MacIver a Renaissance figure of sorts, whose range of interests and talents have led him successfully into diverse realms. In the contours of his portrait, though, I see a more mythic outline. MacIver's narrative, as it moves across the wilderness landscapes of Northern Canada, Wall Street (more of a jungle, I suppose), and the isolated terrain of a life-threatening illness, brings to mind a classic quest story—complete with the hero's unmarked journey and triumphant return. True to the pragmatic character of a warrior, however, Rod's concern is less with such idealized formulations and more with reality as he has come to know it. Thus, when I asked him to talk about the question of one's mission, or purpose, in life, he began with the caveat that it is dangerous to think that one is in sole posses-

sion of truth since it is "very elusive, often contradictory, and revealed only in glimpses." Similarly, while acknowledging the life-enhancing nature of having a "life's purpose," his first thoughts were of its potential dark side and the rather negative interpretation it initially had for him:

I grew up with the conception that I had to do something of importance in the world, and that the value of a human life was related to doing some important work. And so I got this image of the world as a place where if one wasn't really careful and prepared, then the natural forces that exist could overwhelm you. The world was something to be protected against, not only from natural forces, of course, but even more significantly from human forces.... The way one lived one's life was to build a fortification; that is you pursue comfort and security as a protection against the world. And the ability of a human being to accumulate lots of protection and lots of security is a direct reflection of that person's value.

For Rod, this fortification took the form of "living to work": twelve to fifteen hour days that were rationalized by an ever-increasing cash flow. Although Rod's success story is anything but conventional, its early delineations involved a familiar ascent, whereby risk (starting a business on credit cards), perseverance (working one's way from selling encyclopedias to selling research on Wall Street), and immediate gratification (weekend trips to France) confirmed his success and, by extension, reaffirmed his personal importance.

But the descent is familiar, too.

The external measures of success were eventually shadowed by an internal sense of dissolution, and Rod found himself turning to alcohol and mirroring, more and more, the "nastiness" of the self-serving world around him. Not surprisingly, at this time, his health began to suffer. Initially, Rod's malaise took the form of an indeterminate liver problem that left him completely without energy. During this period, which Rod describes as "a kind of downward slide," he began thinking back to his roots and to an earlier dream he'd had of creating a life in the wilderness, where as a teenager he'd lived for several months among the Northern Canadian Indians, fighting forest fires and spending most of his days alone in a remote fire tower.

Wondering what his life would have been like if he'd held to his original dream, Rod decided to leave Wall Street and, using the interviewing skills that had served him so well there, to write a book based on interviews with people whose lives revolved around the wilderness. Setting out with this goal in mind and a tape recorder in hand, he traveled all over North America collecting people's stories. And it was after finishing one of these trips that he began the journey back to himself.

A few lumps that were first dismissed as benign became, under the eye of a more vigilant oncologist, the symptoms that eventually led to the diagnosis of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Rod was told his disease—then at stage four

—was incurable, but that its progress could be slowed with chemotherapy. Determined, at first, to fight the disease on his own terms, Rod chose to forego chemotherapy in favor of an alternative, more holistic approach that was organized around a macrobiotic diet, exercise and meditation. But within a year and a half, the disease had progressed to the extent that a more aggressive, allopathic treatment seemed imperative. Existing chemotherapies, however, didn't offer any real hope either, and Rod found himself in a different kind of wilderness, investigating ambiguous medical options and searching for an emerging treatment that would prove more effective than the standard protocols. After several false leads, including the postponement of a bone marrow transplant which was to have been a "last ditch effort," through his sheer resourcefulness, tenacity, and daring, he found a drug that brought about a complete remission, and to such an extent that although the doctors suspected he still had lymphoma, they were not able to detect it.

Understandably, this "gift of life," as Rod so beautifully refers to his remission, impassioned his desire to understand the meaning of his journey on this earth and his purpose here. Rod's earlier, inherited sense of mission—predicated on fear and obligation—was reframed in terms of gratitude rather than servitude, joyful dedication rather than selfish determination. "Now that I had been given the gift of life, what was I going to do with it?" he asked.

At this juncture, Rod recalls how the wisdom of Sara Harrison—a woman he'd once interviewed who'd been living in a tiny Mexican village on the Rio Grande, working for Minnesota Outward Bound—returned to inspire his sense of direction. The morning I interviewed Rod so many years later he still had her quotation at his fingertips:

I think it is incumbent upon us who have been given the gift of life to give something back, something that costs us, something that involves sacrifice. It is in sacrifice that we lose ourselves, our pain, our problems. It is in the sacrifice of self for something bigger that life gains meaning.

These words, which Rod had heard before he'd been diagnosed with lymphoma, he now truly understood.

His desire to be a positive force in the world ultimately led Rod back to his own intuitive feeling that "in a reverence for beauty is a way of living our lives that is gentle on other people and gentle on the natural world. When we show a kindness to somebody—something, some animal—or we live a life of love, or we create something of beauty, this magical gift we've been given of human consciousness—somehow this has value. It's not measurable in time, and it's not measurable in any kind of material reality—but it has value." And out of this intuition came *Heron Dance*.

Heron illustration by Rod MacIver who learned to paint while on chemotherapy.

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Rod MacIver

Although Rod has honed its focus in the past three years, *Heron Dance* has always been, he says, “about interviews with people who are deeply involved in trying to find a life of meaning or to live a life of meaning with all the challenges and loneliness and uncertainties—and also richness.”

When I asked Rod what advice he might have for those of us who feel stuck, who have doubts about trusting our own sense of what is of value and who are locked into a false consciousness of safety, his words reminded me that while there are no simple answers, there is redemption in the mystery of the journey.

That is what life is all about, this struggle. We're supposed to learn from it, this struggle between our fears and our insecurities, our weaknesses and our selfishness and our separateness. Our desire to love and to be loved, to reach out and to do kind things and to create something of beauty and to live a life of beauty. Life is this struggle—in some ways it's the significance of life. **DA**

Heron Dance is a journal of the search for meaning. It is a work of love about work of love.

To order an annual subscription (6 issues), send \$28 to Heron Dance, P.O. Box 727, Burlington, VT 05402
Toll free number (888) 304-3766
Email: heron@together.net

TRACI

Writing a mission statement has not seemed difficult for about the last five years. As I have sat time and time again to write my current mission statement, however, I feel at a loss. It feels like my personal chemistry is changing. My perceptions and how I interlink them are altering. It is an uncomfortable position. Perhaps one of the hardest steps in this process is moving from defeat to action.

What is most important to me?
Honoring my greatest strengths.
Dedication to service and to helping make the world a better place to live in.

I believe this is most achievable through teaching and gathering like-minded souls together. I believe that what has been created before me are examples that can inspire others. I see this connection expressed through furniture and design. There is a link intrinsic to the creative process, that which has been imagined or created and the people who are touched by it.

I studied art history for this reason. I have worked in wonderful antiques shops and, of most importance to me, helped create a nonprofit dedicated to the relief of suffering through the infusion of beauty and meaning. I am drawn over and over again to the amazing potential of art and how we fill our lives with meaning.

I believe it is important to remember that one's principles are the greatest constant in one's life. The variables change to whatever degree, but there

are values within you that are your personal navigation system. When times are really tough, please allow yourself space to talk or write them down. The clarity of knowing what is important to you will guide you. **TTP**

A SENSE OF MISSION

“Delusions of grandeur,” said the therapist. “There’s no way you could possibly affect the medical system in this country!” I was twenty-seven. Manic, I had spent the previous night awake, cataloguing all the ways in which hospitals might be sensitized to patients’ emotional needs. A close friend had just suffered a nervous breakdown. Brought on, I felt, in part by the system’s insensitivity. In one week she had gone from hoping she was pregnant with a long-awaited child, to being told it was a tumor that required a radical hysterectomy. Placed on the maternity ward opposite the newborn nursery, she was instructed to walk back and forth in front of the babies she would never have. A sensitive nurse told me, “Get your friend out of here. She’s sinking into a dangerous depression.”

Succumbing to my therapist’s skepticism, it would be twenty years before I returned to my sense of mission. After losing both my parents to cancer, I was struck by the contrast: my mother’s agonizing and isolated death in the hospital; my father’s healing death at home. Then in my late forties three of my closest friends fell prey to cancer. It was a wake-up call. All of this pain had given me a gift. Like the grain of sand that becomes a pearl, life had been preparing me for the work I was to do. And as if this weren’t enough, I would be unwillingly “signed up” for refresher courses: my beloved mother-in-law would spend three months in the hospital before dying of cancer; my dear brother would be left a cancer survivor with new and unexpected emotional issues to address.

Searching for a way to make a difference, I listened to Al Tarlov, then head of the Kaiser Family Foundation. “The world is so filled with need,” he said. “Follow the path that speaks to you. If you want to change the world, create a beautiful model.” A few years later, Healing Environments was born.

A Catholic priest once said to me, “Each of us is a unique reflection of the godhead. Each of us has been given special gifts. And our task is to cultivate them and give them expression.” My therapist was wrong. What was required was not to think less grandly, rather more so. It wasn’t a question of ego or ambition. On the contrary. What was required was to set ego aside, with its baggage of fear and pride; to step aside and with the purest intention align myself with the greatest good. Or rather, with my little piece of it.

Raised in a family with high standards, it took me years to silence my inner critic. I wrote my first “book” at

the age of six, but was told by my parents not to consider writing as a career unless I could win the Pulitzer Prize. Now when people congratulate me on an article, I realize they don’t understand. Because I do my best writing when I surrender and trust in a truth that flows through me—when I seek simply to be of service, not to perform.

Trust. If I were to give one word of advice it would be trust. Trust in yourself. Trust in process. Trust in the universe. Live your questions into the answers.

From the day I met Traci Teraoka Patel, Healing Environments’ Co-Founder and Co-Director, I have been engaged in an expansive process, an opening to possibility and promise. That is the ground out of which Healing Environments has grown organically. Rooted in intention—the intention to comfort the suffering; watered with trust—trust in the universe to support good work; pruned with consciousness and attention—Healing Environments is growing into something more wonderful than any business plan could ever have imagined.

In addition to whatever comfort we have been blessed to be able to give, I hope that we may also give inspiration. Inspiration to honor your unique vision, to find your authentic voice, to speak your truth—knowing that in doing so you will be helping others as well as enriching your life with fulfillment beyond measure. **KS**

DESIGNER'S SUCCESS STORY

As I scan through my career in graphic design, certain realizations become apparent.

In the formative years, when everything was fresh and new, I was enamored with the challenges of new creative opportunities and the development of my craft, I was satisfied with simply doing the work I love, and the nature of the business was secondary.

As my experience and my abilities grew, I received many interesting projects from a variety of clients. They were, to be sure, excellent creative opportunities, but something seemed to be lacking. The “sizzle” just wasn’t there.

I pondered my dilemma, discussed it with my family and friends, but there was no logical reason for this feeling of emptiness.

I’ve always considered myself a spiritual person; one who believes in fate and intuition. When my association with Healing Environments began in March of 1996, I felt a resurgence of my original spirit. I hoped it would become more than the short-lived exhilaration that comes with any new project and then gradually fades away.

Today, I’ve settled into a place where the quality of my work is progressively improving because it is driven by the energy that comes from the socially beneficial work that Healing Environments is doing. Together, we are improving the lives of our fellow beings. **SS**



in order to attain unforeseen heights, one must be open to inspiration and serendipity. Had we slavishly attempted to structure our growth, we never could have anticipated the delightful and awesome turns Healing Environments would take.

Who could have predicted that in our first year we would be visited by fourteen Japanese healthcare designers?

Michael Lerner, head of Commonwealth and my former mentor, once said: "Offer your gifts to the universe. Do not waste your energy beating down doors. Those in need of your services will find you." Commonwealth never has advertised its cancer retreats, yet each one has been completely booked.

Healing Environments has had a steady stream of visitors without any advertising and has experienced

phenomenal growth in the circulation of its newsletter.

10) *Turn obstacles into launching pads.*

Over the years one of the lessons we have learned is to trust in and listen to the process. If something is being particularly troublesome, what lesson is to be learned? What change in direction is called for?

For example, in this issue of the newsletter we had planned for months to have a map of the country with letters from readers surrounding it. Week after week I had trouble selecting the letters. Suddenly it dawned on me: This doublespread would serve a far greater purpose by helping others learn from our journey.

11) *Break out of the mold.*

Have you ever seen a truly original movie and realized suddenly the degree to which Hollywood films follow predictable formulas? Each of us has a unique vision, a unique gift to offer to the universe. The degree to which you can find your own voice and express its message will determine the extent to which you can transform the world.

12) *Be true to yourself.*

When I had just graduated from college and told a close friend I wanted to go to India to start a Mother Teresa-like mission her response was: "That is a beautiful dream and a most worthwhile cause, but is it YOUR mission?" At Healing Environments we are often given opportunities to team up with others to accomplish good, but we must consistently ask ourselves: "That is a worthwhile cause, but is it OUR mission?"

13) *Trust your intuition.*

One of the greatest gifts Michael Lerner gave to me was to trust my intuition. I grew up in an extremely rational and intellectual home. The fact that Michael, with his Harvard and Yale degrees, found value in my intuition astounded me.

Let me share a humorous anecdote which vividly describes the magic which can happen when one takes this risk. It was the eve of our first fundraiser. As Traci and I rushed around town running errands, my eye was caught by an attractive man in bermuda shorts and topsiders.

"Oh, look at that intriguing man, Traci! If I had an invitation I'd invite him to our fundraiser." "Here's one," she replied. "I'll just tear off the address label. Drop me off and circle around the block." A few minutes later I picked her up, laughing. "Well, Peter would have loved to come, but he has a sailing date for the weekend. He might fund us, however. He's Executive Director of the Santa Clara County Community Foundation!"

14) *Honor the mystery.*

One of the limitations of the modern scientific method is that it leaves no room for mystery. One of the most fascinating talks I ever heard was given by Willis Harman, formerly with the Stanford Research Institute and, at the time, director of the Institute for Noetic Sciences.

Harman reminded us that prior to Descartes, science believed in the unity of all matter. Doctor Harman pointed out that all of the parapsychological phenomena, that are scoffed at by the scientific community, such as prescience (foreknowledge) and extra sensory perception, can be explained by that ancient concept of interconnectedness. Modern theoretical physics proposes several mathematical formulas which explain them as well.

Would you rather live in a world limited by the borders of our understanding or explore the mysteries beyond our horizons? Would you rather accept a narrow slot in society's preconceived organizational structure or break the mold, express your unique gifts and be all that you can be?

15) *Give thanks for the joy you are to receive in serving.* **KS**

or dream you can, begin it.
power and magic in it.

Goethe

HOW TO FIND YOUR LIFE'S MISSION

1) *Ask the universe to guide you.*

2) *Review your life.*

What is your greatest passion?
What gives you the most joy?
Is there any way in which this gift might
be used to serve others?

We often overlook our own gifts. To
us they seem so commonplace. A
woman in New York who had a gifted
green thumb became a plant doctor,
making housecalls to tend ailing plants.

Which of the world's many needs
speaks directly to you? How might you
find (in the words of Aristotle)
the intersection of your passion with
the world's need?

That is your mission.

Has life perhaps offered you a gift in
the form of extraordinary pain? Pain
which has opened your eyes and your
heart to one small corner of the world's
needs?

Can this pain be the grain of sand
which becomes a pearl?

Can you transform tragedy into
epiphany?

We recently met a woman who had
not one, but two children seriously
brain injured in separate accidents.
Unable to find the nurturing care which
she wished for her son, she is in the
process of spending her life's savings to
create a haven for six similar souls.

3) *Tell your story.*

Could others benefit from hearing
your story?

Could they learn from your experi-
ence?

Could it help them gather strength
for the journey?

A woman whom we just met suffered
a debilitating depression. Ten years
later she wrote a book about her strug-
gle and, together with her photographer
son, mounted an exhibition of her poet-
ry and his photographs, sharing her
experience on a national tour.

4) *Practice limitless thinking.*

Do you find yourself saying, "If only
I had more time, more money, more tal-
ent, more education?" Believe me, if
you are motivated by the desire to do
good, the universe will give you what
you need.

You do not need ten years, or a mil-
lion dollars, or the gift of genius, or six
initials after your name to leave the
world a better place than you found it.

Although Traci and I are gifted visu-
ally, neither of us has a design degree.
Yet patients are deeply touched, and
design professionals have been struck,
by the freshness of our approach. We
design from the heart as well as the eye.

5) *Brainstorm without bounds.*

In our bi-weekly newsletter meetings
we take off the lid and soar. We allow



ourselves to dream, to reach for the
stars. We never criticize or limit one
another with negative thinking. The
results are magical. The outcome is far
greater than the sum of the four of us.
We truly feel we are lifted to heights
beyond our comprehension.

6) *Manifest through visualization.*

I recall clearly the day two years ago
that Traci said, "The newsletter is won-
derful, but what I want and need is to
make a difference in a patient's sur-
roundings. To create an actual healing
environment." Last week Traci com-
pleted her second *pro bono* design instal-
lation of a residential care facility for
people living with AIDS in San
Francisco.

The clarity and passion with which
she envisioned her dream made it hap-
pen.

7) *Start small.*

One of our favorite success stories is
that of *Project Open Hand* in San
Francisco. Years ago its founder started
making homecooked meals in her
kitchen and delivering them to people
suffering from AIDS. Today *Project
Open Hand* serves 1,000 meals a day to
AIDS patients throughout the city.

8) *Create a model.*

Al Tarlov, former head of the Kaiser
Family Foundation, once told me: "If
you want to change the world, create a
beautiful model."

Angela Thieriot, wife of the owner
of *The San Francisco Chronicle*, lay on a
gurney in a hospital hallway and swore
that if she survived she would make
hospitals more homelike, caring places.
The result was *Planetree*, an experiment
which has been successfully replicated
across the country.

Our own showcase of ideas in Palo
Alto is based on this concept.
A model is worth a thousand words.

9) *Grow organically.*

Business plans have their place, but

Whatever you can do,
Boldness has genius,

WHAT WE DO

Because we are a unique organization, people often struggle to understand exactly what we do. Four years ago, Traci and I (Kate) founded Healing Environments, a nonprofit dedicated to the relief of suffering of the seriously ill.

We started with a model, a twelve-room showcase of our ideas for ways to relieve suffering, located in Palo Alto, California. A year later we were joined by our graphic designer, Sam, and our editor, Doree, and decided that we might help many more people by publishing a newsletter which could carry our ideas across the country.

Following that, we felt that we needed to “walk our talk,” and be more than an ivory tower think tank. In the past year, we have completed the *pro bono* interior design installation for two residential facilities for people living with AIDS in San Francisco: Maitri (formerly a Zen hospice) and Rafiki (a project of the Black Coalition on AIDS).

What does the future hold for us? We do not know. What we do know is that by being clear in our intention to do good, and by trusting in the universe, we hope that our talents will be used to help as many people as possible to be comforted in their suffering. **KS**



RAFIKI HOUSE

A project of the San Francisco Black Coalition on AIDS. We are winding up our second furniture installation in San Francisco. We worked with the San Francisco Black Coalition on AIDS (BCA) and their offspring — Rafiki House — to create an eleven bedroom facility for minorities living with AIDS. This project has been years in the making, with the current facility having served for eight years in the Bayview district. The remodeled new address is in a different neighborhood, closer to the BCA, and will provide housing for those that are self-sufficient, but living in compromised health.

Our commitment to the project is to facilitate the gathering and installation of the furniture for all of the bedrooms and common areas. At Healing Environments, a trademark has become the desire to make home-like spaces as unique as those who will inhabit them. Each bedroom is treated as a retreat—a sacred space for that person—regardless of how much or how little they are coming from.

During one of my last visits to Rafiki house, I ran into Duane Poe, the executive director of BCA. We sat down in a living room which has two bright blue walls and a multitude of colorful art. Duane and I talked that day about what we wished for the clients of this project. The conversation became a blessing—a heartfelt declaration of what it means to create a home for a population that otherwise may be left on the streets or pushed out of the system. We talked about dignity for each individual and of feeling secure when one goes to bed at night; these are the priorities and rights of everyone. We talked about caring for those in need and the importance of making a positive contribution to the world by hopefully giving the people who find their way to Rafiki a safe place in the world. **TTP**

WWW.HEALINGENVIRONMENTS.ORG

Our new website is now up and running. You will find the issue you are now reading as well as past issues of *A Light in the Mist* in our archives.

Our site has a number of features that will be of interest such as a five minute meditation and other sources of inspiration. For easy ordering of books and music reviewed in this and previous issues of *A Light in the Mist*, we have links to amazon.com.

You will find our website to have the same “voice” as this newsletter.

Our hope is that it will provide those of you who support Healing Environments and its mission of comforting the suffering a refreshing respite in an often noisy and commercial electronic world.

Please feel free to contact us with any comments you may have. **SS**

RAY

HASTEN SLOWLY

The Life of Sir Laurens van der Post
(reprinted from issue 17 of *Heron Dance*)

Sir Laurens van der Post died a year ago at the age of ninety. His incredible life included internment in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp and close associations with both the Kalahari bushmen and Prince Charles (as godfather to William, heir to the British throne). He wrote twenty-five books, among them *The Lost World of the Kalahari* and an acclaimed biography of his close friend, Carl Jung, entitled *Jung and the Story of Our Time*.

His life was remarkable on many levels. He was a seeker who experienced life at its extremes, including the capacity of humans for both good and evil. He believed that civilization has dehumanized us—robbed us of our individuality. He saw the large-scale brutality of modern war as being attributable to the loss in people's lives of “a center of meaning,” and of a story that unites us with nature, that inspires in us a “humbleness before the mystery.”

With the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the British armed forces and fought in North Africa and Indonesia. After the surrender of the British at Java, Sir Laurens commanded the guerrilla resistance in the mountains and was ambushed by the Japanese. As they were about to kill him, he asked, in Japanese, “Would you be kind enough to wait an honorable moment?” His life was spared.

In prison camp, Sir Laurens started a makeshift university that offered as many as a hundred forty-four courses a week—incredible considering that the inmates were suffering from dysentery, malaria and starvation. In the film about his life, *Hasten Slowly, the Journey of Sir Laurens van der Post*, he talks of the inspiration behind the university:

There is only one thing that makes human beings deeply and profoundly bitter, and that is to have thrust on them a life without meaning....The most awful form of corruption is the corruption of the human spirit, which hides behind its suffering and makes it an excuse for all forms of indulgence and violence and mere blind reaction. I wrote a message to the camp which we pinned on all the trees: ‘Don’t think that the continuity of what you are and what your life is, and what you should be, has been broken because you have been put into prison walls. The continuity is there. You have just to rediscover it in a new way.’ Together, we can live our lives in a way,

S O F L I G H T

perhaps, that we should have long since lived them before.

Prisoners wrote textbooks on toilet paper and, after two and a half years, received a toilet-paper diploma. Sir Laurens taught one of the forty different subjects offered: Japanese. He believed it would help the prisoners see their captors differently, and would thus help the Japanese see the prisoners differently. The fact that Sir Laurens loved the Japanese culture all his life was indicative of his philosophy and his open heart. His own experience in South Africa, and in war, had made

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MEANING
TRANSFIGURES ALL.

Sir Laurens van der Post

him see that no people have a monopoly on brutality. The film and his books contain wisdom accumulated through exposure to the dark side of human nature:

In every human situation, every conflict, there is always this great responsibility, laid on us by life, that the person who is most aware, who is most highly, most widely, most completely conscious, must accept responsibility for the person who is less conscious. (*Hasten Slowly*)

Rod Maclver

Many of the quotes that appear above are from the video *Hasten Slowly, The Journey of Sir Laurens van der Post* by Mickey Lemle. The film also contains very moving interviews of former soldiers, now in their seventies and eighties, who were interned with Sir Laurens. The film is available for \$30 from Lemle Pictures, 132 West 31st Street, New York, New York 10001. (212) 736-9606.

HOW TO FIND THE WORK YOU LOVE

by Laurence Boldt

“**W**here your talents and the needs of the world cross, there lies your vocation.”

Aristotle’s simple formula as an example of vocational theory is as compelling today as when he first spoke these words, over two millennia ago. This pithy formulation sets the tone for Laurence Boldt’s *How to Find the Work You Love* which he dedicates “to that unnameable something which calls us all to be what we truly are.”

Full of wisdom, insights, practical exercises, and inspiring quotations, it is easily read in a couple of sittings. Boldt begins with a brief review of the history of work. For the better part of the world’s history, people were destined to do the work they were born into, or were conditioned to view work merely as a means to an end; simply a way to make a living. Despite the present socio-economic condition which allows a remarkable degree of mobility, with modern economies currency-based and digitized, we too, in the tradition of our forebears, inevitably trade units of time for money. Correspondingly, we keep pace ever so diligently to the mantra: “Time is money.” Understandably smitten, the allure of “more think” compels us; “if only I had more time, money, resources, personnel....” To what logical end, then, do we multi-task, network, and leverage? he seems to ask. Have we become this way merely to survive, or does the desire to court tremendous sums of money have perhaps more to do with notions of image accomplishment and success?

At what cost?

There seems to be a growing sense today that our lives are not our own, that we have few choices and little power to control our destinies. Boldt gives sufficient cause and pause to reconsider the prevalent and popular notions of success and he questions the wisdom of defining success derived from, or formulated in, purely economic terms. For work to be an unhappy, less than fulfilling experience can have profound psychological and social costs. Along with this realization, there is also a growing number of people who expect work to be a place of creative expression, meaning, fulfillment, and unfolding; a place where the heart and soul are tapped—not just the body and mind. Boldt also reminds us that “the world’s great spiritual and philosophical traditions have long recognized the central role that vocational choice plays in the

total health and happiness of the individual and in the vitality and character of a culture.”

He suggests that meaningful vocation might organize itself around a simple formula indicated by an acronym— I.S.E.E.: Integrity, Service, Enjoyment, and Excellence. Central to the role of vocational choice as it pertains to a state of well-being is the element of service, as Boldt cites Albert Schweitzer convincingly, “The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.” Also notably, regarding the element of enjoyment, Boldt, like physiologist Hans Selye, seems to be drawn to the idea of work as play, “If you do what you like you never really work. Your work is your play.”

Finally, many sacred and philosophical traditions share in common the tenet that each of us is called to do a unique life’s work. Boldt generously offers this book as “hope that it may, in some way, help [us] to hear that call.”

Blessed is he who has found his work.
Let him ask no other blessing.

Thomas Carlyle

... was first developed for *How to Find the Work You Love* seminars which Boldt began conducting across the United States in the early 1990s.

For more information on Laurence Boldt’s seminars: *How to Find the Work You Love*, call 1 (800) 770.CREATE / 770.2732.

Recommended reading also by Laurence Boldt—*Zen and the Art of Making a Living*, 1991.

David Campbell

David Campbell joined us a year ago. He came to Healing Environments on a tour. I knew he was meant to work with us when he brought us a thank you gift of a tiny clay pot of sand he had collected from the beaches of India. He knows how to “honor the mystery.”

THE FUTURE
BELONGS
TO THOSE WHO
BELIEVE
IN THE BEAUTY
OF THEIR
DREAMS.

Eleanor Roosevelt

DEAR FRIENDS,

PLEASE FORGIVE OUR DELAY IN SENDING OUT THIS ISSUE. THIS HAS BEEN A VERY DIFFICULT YEAR FOR US. THREE OUT OF FOUR OF US HAVE EXPERIENCED MAJOR LIFE CRISES. TWO OF US ARE STILL STRUGGLING IN THE MIDST OF THEM.

BUT, AS WE SAID IN "FINDING YOUR LIFE'S MISSION," PAIN IS THE FOUNDRY IN WHICH WE FORGE COMPASSION. THE PAIN WHICH WE HAVE EXPERIENCED AND STRUGGLED TO OVERCOME IS THE PAIN WHICH TEACHES US AND ENABLES US TO REACH OUT TO YOU.

SO, WHEN WE SPEAK OF THE POWER OF MISSION TO HELP US TRANSCEND OUR PAIN, WE ARE SPEAKING DIRECTLY FROM THE HEART, NOT FROM OUR HEADS. AND WE SEND YOU OUR MOST FERVENT WISH THAT YOU MAY FIND THE COURAGE TO MAKE THE JOURNEY AND HELP OTHERS ON THEIR WAY.

KATE, TRACI, DOREE AND SAM

THE OLD MAN AND NELSON EDDY

Just a reminder. Your mission need not be to save the world. You may choose to simply warm one small corner of it. I just hung up the phone from talking with my cousin Eleanor. Among other things, Eleanor is one of the

world's experts on the films and music of Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald. As a new year's gift she shared with me this heart-warming story.

Eleanor has a website dedicated to the world-wide fans of Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald. She receives email from Finland and Australia, and requests for information from France and South Africa. One such request came from a nurse in a nursing home in Massachusetts. It seems that this nursing home had a resident who was an elderly and well-educated gentleman with absolutely no living relatives. This gentleman had one consuming interest: Nelson Eddy. Not only did Eleanor help track down a Nelson Eddy concert program that the nurse requested for her client, but she also dispatched a world-wide alert for Nelson Eddy fans to send mail to this kindred spirit. From Italy to New Zealand, cards and letters arrived weekly with beautiful and exotic stamps (as requested by Eleanor), sharing memories and memorabilia of Nelson. No longer was he alone without mail.

Eleanor just received a call from the nurse saying the gentleman was in his final hours. A friend of Eleanor's sent a tape of Nelson's spiritual songs to be played at his memorial service. The old man did not die alone. **KS**

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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