

A Light in the Mist

# Mapping the Journey Body and Soul



A  
Healing Environments  
Publication

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Kate Strasburg

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# WHEN

I was twenty-five, I discovered my first husband was having an affair with one of his nineteen year old adoring students. I began by sobbing, then screaming, then to avoid jumping off the nearest bridge, I stayed up all night making a thirteen foot long collage, mapping my distraught emotional state. My therapist was so impressed, he asked to keep it.

Unfortunately, I agreed. In the forty years since then I have never produced a more ambitious representation of my internal state – a map of my body and soul.

But the real inspiration for this issue came from an amazing book that Traci gave me a year ago entitled: *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination*. This remarkable book is a delightful compendium of every manner of map, from the strictly geographic to the whimsical, from the historic to the avant-garde. Like the work of Ed Tufte, the emeritus Yale professor who has received forty graphic design awards for his visual representation of information, the creator of *You Are Here* defines maps in their broadest sense as visual symbols of complex data.

So in our most ambitious project to date: *Mapping the Journey*, we too, have stretched the connotation of maps to include all manner of visual representation of the journey of body and soul through life. From Madame de Scutéry's seventeenth century map of love, to Mary Daniel Hobson's kodalith collages. From the body maps of African women with AIDS to our own humble forays into this process. We hope *Mapping the Journey: Body and Soul*, will fascinate you, stretch you, and above all, inspire you to create a map of your own life, choosing whatever media appeal most to you. For our time on this planet is precious. We need to reflect on it, document it, and learn from the process of mapping the journey, so that our time here will be conscious and appropriately treasured.

## IN 1996, I BEGAN

a new series called Mapping the Body. Over seven years, I made almost 100 intimate collages, each expressing the emotions and experiences layered within the body. The letters we read and write, the music we listen to, and the places we travel become part of us. These many layered experiences settle into sites throughout the body, becoming barometers of loss and pain as well as joy and exultation.

To achieve the layered effect in each collage, I print the image of the body on Kodalith, a positive transparency film. This technique renders clear whatever would have been white in a traditional black and white photograph. In this series, it allows one to literally peer through the surface of the skin to the complexity underneath.

I collage in layers using old maps, torn paper, sheet music, letters, insect wings, train tracks, needles and thread, and other artifacts of personal and historical significance. Each piece is completed upon framing as I consider the frame an element of the collage, adding both texture and protection to the piece inside.

Each piece has a story. For example, *In Memory* (pictured right) was created in 1996 to honor the passing of my grandmother. She and I knew each other primarily through letters as we were on opposite coasts. When she passed, it was the loss of the letters in the mail that was most poignant for me. So I began to use them in collages like this one. I photographed my own body in the shape



of an egg or seed and combined it with her handwriting and a cicada wing to express the sense that maybe death is just another chrysalis state – a birth into the unknown.



IN MEMORY

## *Pain and Creativity*

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*Mary Daniel Hobson*

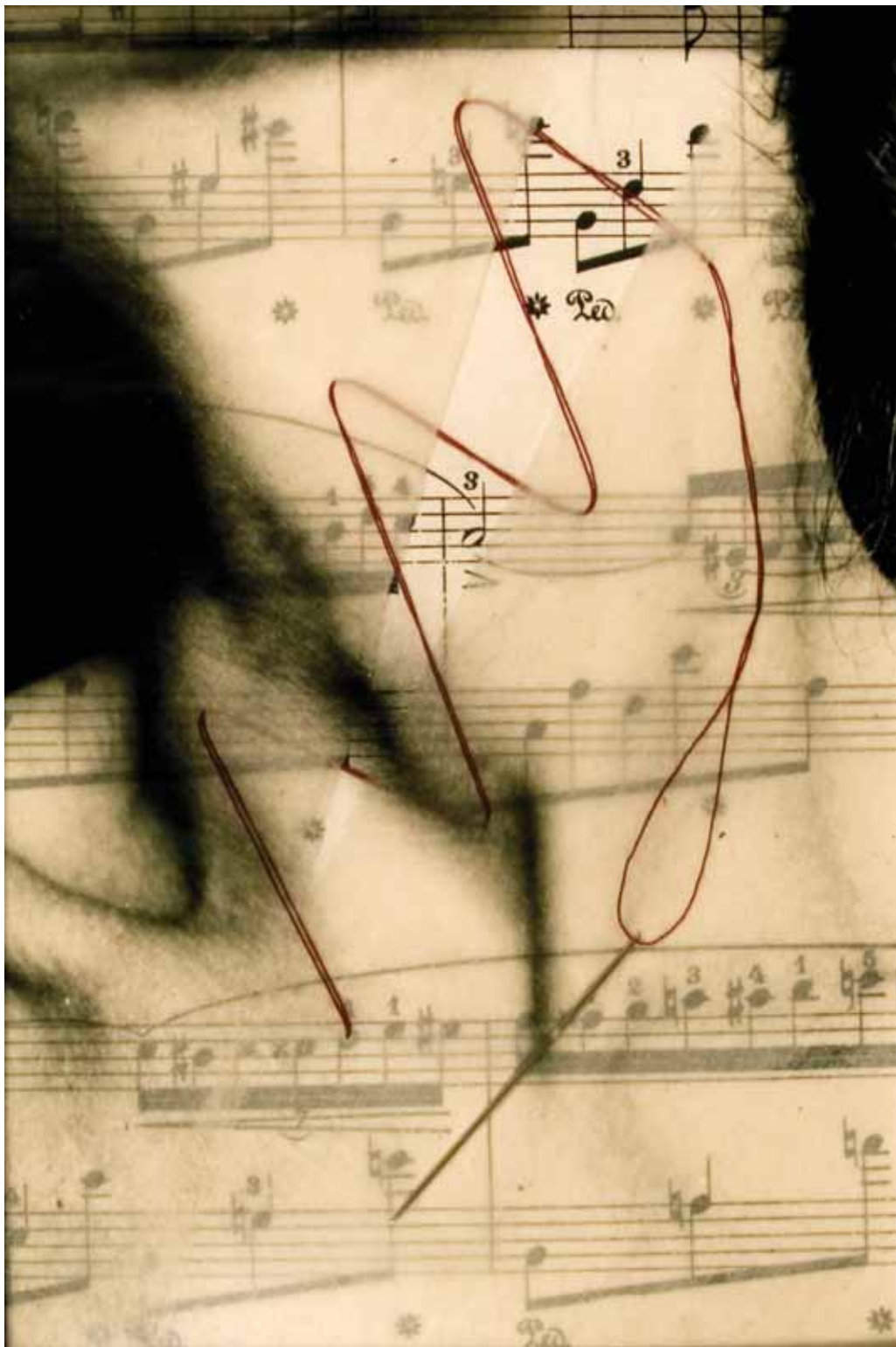
“Discomfort, even pain, often acts as a handmaiden to good fortune.”

This connection between pain and personal evolution often appears in Hobson’s work. She says she is exploring “that crack in one’s world that initially is unbearable, but often yields an unexpected gift.”

These are the unwelcome events that are foisted upon one, such as the time Hobson spent nearly one month bedridden by excruciating back pain. “It was months before I could walk more than a couple of blocks,” she said. “Pain can be very isolating. Ultimately, as a result of that experience, I became much more aware of my body as a signal. I had been a competitive runner and this forced me to slow down. I see it as a time of getting back on my path... it confirmed my passion in photography.”

In hindsight, Hobson sees a connection between the decisions she had made in her life that were leading her away from her art and her back “cracking.” After graduating from Vassar College with a degree in art history, she was working as a teaching assistant in an elementary school. It wasn’t fulfilling, but the fear of not finding a better job tempted her to commit to another year. Within a short time, she was flat on her back.

Physical mutiny during times when one’s head is leading one’s being away from the heart’s desire seems to be part of the Hobson family heritage. When Mary Daniel Hobson was 15, her father almost died from a blood disease. He had been working as a corporate lawyer in San Francisco, in opposition to his desire to be an



VOICE

artist. Once he recovered, he traded his high-powered life for the deliberate pace of a print maker. Hobson muses that "...if you don't do what you want, you get very ill."



FLIGHT

## *About Mary Daniel Hobson*

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At the age of 14 my camera taught me to pay attention. Suddenly, everything and anything – a crack in the sidewalk, ivy climbing the side of a building, even a garbage can on a street corner – became significant when framed by my camera. I deeply saw these things, and if I was lucky the act of photographing transformed them into something beautiful. I became hooked on photography and have been ever since.

For the first ten years of my photographic life, I was a traditional black and white photographer. Then, during my graduate studies of photo history at the University of New Mexico, a dramatic shift happened. Suddenly, the straight black and white photographs that had so enchanted me fell flat, and it was time for me to grow and stretch in new directions.

A profound influence on me at this time was the work of Surrealist photographers like Lee Miller, Man Ray, and especially Dora Maar. Most often known as the mate, model and muse of Picasso, Maar was a talented photographer in her own right, working primarily during the 1930s in Paris. She was also the topic of my MA thesis. For two years, I breathed in the world of Surrealist photography and meditated on her images. It was during this time that an important shift happened for me. I no longer wanted to use photography to describe the surface of things – instead I wanted to express what lay below the surface – the life of emotions.

To see more of my work please visit [www.marydanielhobson.com](http://www.marydanielhobson.com)

Sabrina Ward Harrison

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# JOSEPH CAMPBELL

the late mythologist said “The role of the artist I now understand as that of revealing through the world-surfaces the implicit forms of the soul... The function of the artist is the mythologization of the environment and the world. You must have a place where you can simply experience and bring forth what you are and what you might be.”

Two years ago I ended up in a field of grass hip high. This is where I began to make the body of work that has come to be called *The True Living Project*.

I am striving to create both a visual and emotional unfolding through the textural interchange of photography, sound, collage, film and found forgotten objects.

It is in their allowing of imaginative experience, that they pivot between dance and document, holding the space for both the heart longing and the heart unfolding of one’s own life. These living stages are moving books, documentary poem films... invitations home.

As you step inside, as you listen, may you rest into that place where this moment and, its memory, exist. May you come home to your true life.





this is the Treasure Map

These are the Isles

It's a calling out  
not so much  
with need  
put even  
more with

Now

Now — is that time

Now is the Time.



I am too alone in the world, and not alone enough

to make EVERY minute HOLY.

I am too Tiny in this WORLD, and NOT tiny enough  
to lie before you like A THING,

STREWD and SECRETIVE.

I WANT my own Will, and I want simply  
to be with my Will, as it goes towards action  
And in The silents, sometimes Hardly moving times  
When something is coming near,

I WANT to be with those who know secret things  
or else Alone.

I want to be a mirror For your whole body,  
I never want to be Blind, or to  
be too old to hold  
up your heavy and swaying picture.

I Want to unfold

I don't want to stay Folded anywhere,  
because where I am folded, there I am a lie.  
And I want my grasp of things to be  
True before you. I want to describe

like a painting that I looked at  
myself  
closely for A LONG TIME,

like a saying that it finally ~~understood~~  
understood,

like A PITCHER I use everyday,

like the face of my mother,

like A SHIP that took me safely  
through the wildest  
Storms of all.

-RAINER MARIA RILKE



PHOTO BY JENNI GREEN

## About Sabrina Ward Harrison

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Sabrina Ward Harrison was born in Montreal, Canada in 1975 and attended California College of the Arts and Crafts in Oakland. Sabrina's True Living Project is the result of her ending up in a field of grass hip high. The experience has led her to make the decision to live entirely on her own terms. For a year and a half she has "lived by her own rules, studying the day, the light ... contemplating surface and the deep below."

Her True Living Project in its entirety currently consists of 68 site – specific collaborative projects across the globe. Harrison describes her work as a "visual and emotional unfolding." Her work is a direct reflection of her own life experience and at its core there is an uncharted search for the living human spirit.

Expressive and layered, the works are rich textural interchanges of photography, collage and found objects. She has a unique lyrical visual style by which she communicates the constant attention and negotiation required to live a life with meaning in our time. Sabrina Ward Harrison is also the creator of four published books of her images and life in progress that form an inspiring collection of journals.

At the age of 23, while she was still in college, her first book *Spilling Open: The Art of Becoming Yourself* (Villard 1999) was published.

It was about this time that she formed a friendship with distracted proprietor and traveller Natalie Green who on seeing her, pen in hand, in a youth hostel common room simply asked her "what are you drawing?"

As kindred spirits are compelled to do, the new friends found a way to share a little of their lives through art, despite living on opposite sides of the globe.

*The True and the Questions: A Journal* (Chronicle Books, 2005) is Sabrina's most recent book. It is based on her creative workshops entitled *The Art of Becoming Yourself*, a course she created in 1996 bound by her belief that "we must create what we most need to find."

Her previous books include *Brave on the Rocks: If You Don't Go, You Don't See* (Villard 2004). She has recently returned to New York after two years spent along the Central California coast living in a historic one room school house taking many a bath outside.

To experience Sabrina's True Living Project online go to [www.sabrinawardharrison.com](http://www.sabrinawardharrison.com)

*I ( eye ) see*

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*Jane Sydney*

# I ( EYE ) SEE. ♦

I (eye) see images. I (eye) see the world through the lens of my camera.

I (eye) walk the desert sands. I (eye) travel the empty highways of my country. I (eye) see color in the flowers of my garden. I (eye) put my footprints on the paths I travel. I (eye) find my artist's space in the cities and deserts and forgotten byways. I (eye) merge the sand with the asphalt.

I (eye) have placed my eye ( I ) with the mosaic of eyes ( I ) in the subways of New York City. I have placed my eye ( I ) in the desert of Death Valley.

I have merged my I and my eye to become one when looking through the lens. My photographs are the result of that merger – the I (eye) who is me.

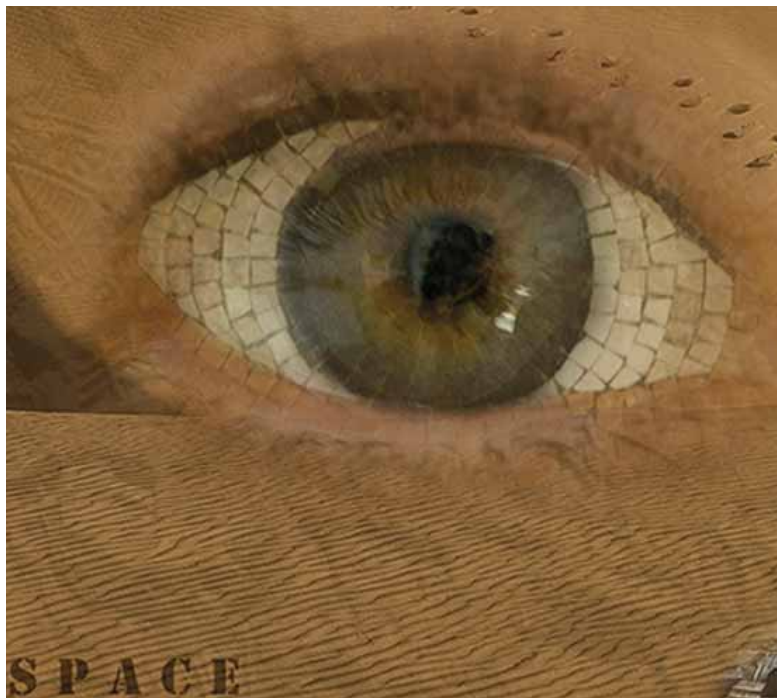


## *About Jane Sydney*

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Jane Sydney has been photographing the Mohave desert for the past seven years and finds the abstract nature of the landscape to have a haunting quality. Cities which are in decline from viable industrial hubs to current decay somehow have that same draw for her. Her work is shown in various galleries in New Hampshire and Massachusetts and she has been the recipient of the Seacoast Media Group's Spotlight Award for Best Photographer of 2006. Jane's work is also featured in several local hospitals in their palliative care centers and meditation spaces.

You can view her work at [www.janesydney.com](http://www.janesydney.com)





## “THE PREPOSTEROUS CARTE DE TENDRE”

is what a recent Paris guidebook writer called it. Yet probably she was only parroting its undeserved reputation and had never actually examined this delightful 17th century map of human relationships.

In 1653, Paris was under siege during a four year civil war known as the Fronde, the name for a street urchin’s slingshot. Despite the danger, a singular group of men and women made their way through the city’s streets to a small house on the edge of the Marais district, just north of the Louvre. There, an amiable middle-aged spinster named Madeleine de Scudéry presided over a weekly literary gathering that the habitués, not illogically, dubbed *les Samedis* (the Saturdays).

When this odd assortment of scholars, gentry, public officials, and poets reached Madeleine’s humble drawing room, they left behind a world dominated by dark savagery and cynicism and entered a highly artificial one, a sort of magical kingdom where goodness, beauty, and gentility were possible. It was a precious alternate universe of Madeleine’s making, the world of the *precieuse*. Besides a core of regular visitors now largely forgotten, the *Samedis* sometimes included such historical figures as Mme. de Sévigne, Mme. de Lafayette, the future Mme. de Maintenon, and, more rarely, playwrights Pierre Corneille and Molière, who later



defended Madeleine and the true *precieuse* in one of his plays. The Samedis, as one scholar notes, were almost like stepping into a modern videogame – “in which one actually enters into a fictional world, takes on a fictional personality, and acts out the appropriate part in a spontaneously invented game–narrative with others, who act out other roles in the same fantasy world”. Besides this secret intellectual world of the Samedis, Madeleine had another secret, known only to her most intimate friends. She was the bestselling novelist in 17th century Europe. Her enormously popular books had been translated into Italian, English, Spanish, German, and Arabic. However, her identity and reputation were protected by her formidable brother, the warrior-poet George de Scudéry. His name appeared in the title pages of her vast historical romances, and, because of their fame, he was elected to the illustrious Académie Française!

George, despite his own frequent romantic entanglements, had jealously guarded his sister. He was eager to keep Madeleine as his non-connubial consort (and meal ticket). Then, happily, George had backed the wrong revolutionary faction and was forced to flee for his life, prudently taking their nest egg with him. Madeline found herself alone and broke, but legally and spiritually free for the first time in her life – free to live as she wished and free to choose her friends.

Friendship was a frequent topic at the Samedis. Along with the nature of the emerging French language and definitions of concepts like honor, courage, and loyalty, the group could explore the changing nature of male-female roles. One new member of the group was particularly keen to know Madeleine’s views – a young man from the



LA MER

Terres

DANGEREUSE

Reconnaissance F.

Tendre sur R.

Constante amitié

Obeissance

Tendresse

Tendre

Sensibilité

Grands Services

Empressement

Affiduité

Méchanceté

Petits Soins

Médisance

Soumission

Perfidie

Complaisance

Indiscrétion

Orgueil

Nouvelle

MER

DANGEREUSE





LAC

D'INDIFFERENCE

Esime F.

Tendresse

Bonté

Respect

Exactitude

Generosité

Probité

Grand Cœur

Sincérité

Oubli

Billet doux

Légereté

Billet-galant

Tieueur

Iolis Vers

Inégalité

Grand esprit

Negligence

amitié

2	4	6	8	10
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provinces named Paul Pellison. He was brilliant, he was ambitious, and he had recently been terribly disfigured by a near-fatal bout of smallpox.

After much discussion, Madeleine proposed a diagram of how friendships can develop or founder. This became the Carte de Tendre. Her map presents a mythical land called Tendre or tender affection. Every relationship starts with a first meeting (the bottom-center of the map). From there, three basic itineraries to Affectionate Friendship are possible, two with dangerous detours.

The first, immediate total affinity, follows a non-stop route (the central river) to the city of Affection of Inclinations. A second, more complex path (the right side of the map) leads to Affection of Esteem resulting from respect and admiration. This route passes through landmarks like Sincerity and Generosity. However, the traveler can be sidetracked by Negligence and Inequality, ending in Indifference.

Alternately, the participant may actively pursue developing affection, may, in fact, engage in a courtship. This more labor-intensive course (the left side of the map) can end in Affection of Recognition, acknowledging that a bond has been created. However, Madeleine hypothesized, if this mutual effort becomes one-sided or does not progress, the result is never mere Indifference. Instead, qualities like Insincerity and Indiscretion will lead to active dislike or Enmity. Madeleine observed, as most of us have, that affection based on respect never ends in hatred, but affection evolving during the advance and retreat of courtship often does if the participants feel betrayed.



Whatever route brings people to the cities of Affectionate Friendship, they all then find themselves at the edge of the Dangerous Sea with the option of a further journey. Should they remain just friends? Or cross to Terre Inconnu, the Unknown Territory that beckons beyond? Despite the public soubriquet for Madeleine, la Pucelle de Marais ( the Virgin – or, more derisively, Old Maid of the Marais), Paul Pellison decided to risk the journey. He was twenty-nine. Madeline was forty-four.

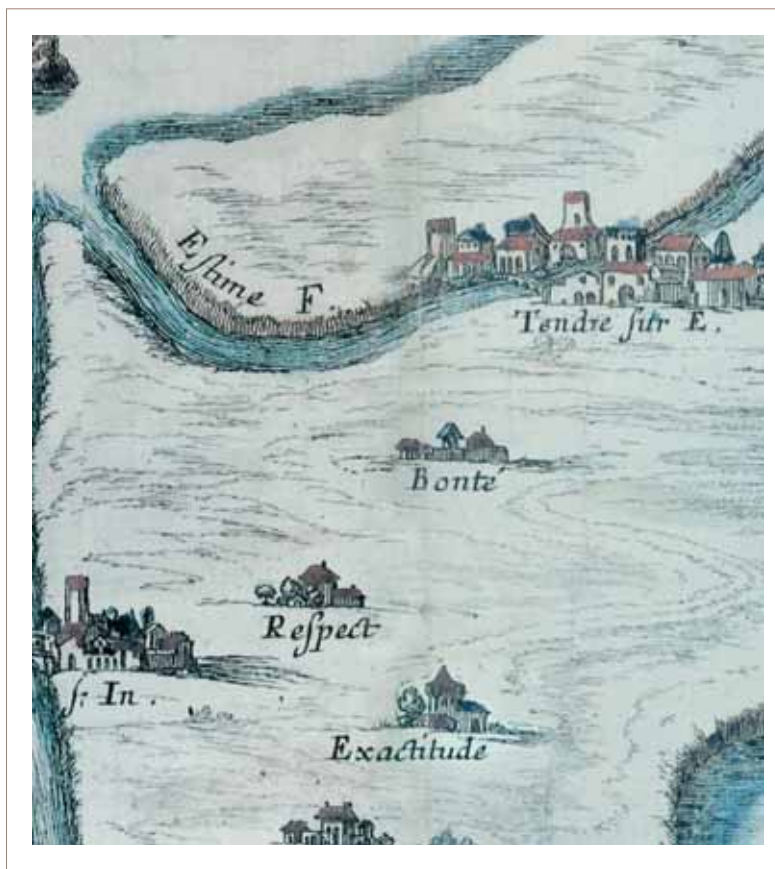
Copies of the Carte de Tendre began to be handed about and discussed throughout Paris. Madeleine was pressed by her friends to incorporate the Carte in her next book, *Clélie*. Soon after *Clélie's* publication in 1654, the thoughtful little map experienced a wild vogue far beyond its creator's wishes and, subsequently, the kind of derisive and undeserved backlash that invariably follows such notoriety. Today, its psychological accuracy is being re-evaluated: "[Madeleine de] Scudéry's decision to map the emotions, or at least the emotions related to love can be seen as the most decisive moment in the French reinvention of the human heart... In its wake, no French speaker would ever be able to conceive of feeling in the same way again."

As for Madeleine de Scudéry and Paul Pellison, they were inseparable for the next forty years, either together or writing each other daily. This included eight years when he was imprisoned under sentence of death for treason. In the pages of her novels, Madeleine wrote eloquently against the slavery of marriage and love, and yet her own life was one of the most profound, enduring, and unlikely love stories in history.

### *About Eleanor Knowles Dugan*

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Eleanor Knowles Dugan has written thirty books and several hundred articles on business, communications, quilting, and classic films. She is the author of *The Films of Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy*, named one of the 10 best film books of 2007 by Classic Images magazine. Currently, she is completing a biography of the fascinating seventeenth century writer Madeleine de Scudéry. A longtime New Yorker, she has lived “temporarily” in San Francisco for the past 35 years.



# THE TWO FOLLOWING

pieces are taken from *You Are Here*. This remarkable book is a delightful compendium of every manner of map, from the strictly geographic to the whimsical, from the historic to the avant-garde. Like the work of Ed Tufte, the emeritus Yale professor who has received fourteen graphic design awards for his visual representation of information, the creator of *You Are Here* defines maps in their broadest sense as visual symbols of complex data.



Alex Grey

# FROM

*The Sacred Mirrors*, a series of twenty-one images that examine in fine detail the human physical and metaphysical anatomy. Each depicts a life-size figure facing forward, enabling the viewer to stand before the “mirror” image and have a sense of seeing into oneself. The series is intended as a means of visualizing and focusing healing energy to particular parts of the body. *Psychic Energy System* weaves the psycho-spiritual energies into an x-ray view of the physical body. Grey used descriptions from clairvoyants and aura readers of the colors and shapes of the astral and etheric auras surrounding the body, the seven central chakras, and the golden white light of the acupuncture meridians and points. The entire body is immersed in a lattice-work of energy called the *prana*, or vital ether, one of the pervasive life-supplying sources recognized in both Eastern and Western occult spiritual traditions.

For more information please visit [www.sacredmirrors.com](http://www.sacredmirrors.com)





*Psychic Energy System*

# Body Map of My Life

BRIDGET BOOHER



1

**Location:** Top of right ear

**Cause:** Odd lump of tissue, referred to by second-grade classmates as the "Rice Krispie"

**Diagnosis:** Cartilaginous growth

**Treatment:** Removed by physician father's colleague

**Follow-up:** Small scar persists.

2

**Location:** Lower lip

**Cause:** Sudden burst of confidence during sole ice-skating attempt

**Diagnosis:** Face-first tumble results in front teeth puncturing lip.

**Treatment:** Father, saying stitches are unnecessary, applies antibiotic ointment and bandaging.

**Follow-up:** During dinner that night, sister asks if I can feel the Campbell's chicken noodle soup trickling through the hole. Today, tiny cross-shaped mark is barely visible.

3

**Location:** Top of left hand

**Cause:** Shattered glass from car wreck, sustained when a mother of two runs a red light and smashes into a pick-up truck, which smashes into me. At moment of impact, "My Sharona" by The Knack was on the radio, leaving a kind of psychological scar.

**Diagnosis:** Slice in hand; a bit shaken up

**Treatment:** Series of bandages

**Follow-up:** Replaced totaled VW Rabbit with another VW Rabbit. The psychological scar pulses whenever I hear "My Sharona."

4

**Location:** Left forearm midway between wrist and elbow

**Cause:** Angry Oscar fish (*Astronotus ocellatus*).

Acquired while reaching into aquarium of rock-guitarist boyfriend who was living in bachelor pad during mid-eighties Atlanta party scene.

**Diagnosis:** Gashed arm

**Treatment:** Series of bandages

**Follow-up:** Subtle scar remains. Oscar fish later committed piscine suicide by jumping out of tank onto floor of bachelor pad, where it died a slow, suffocating death. Boyfriend moved to New Orleans and got married.

5

**Location:** Equal parts head and heart

**Cause:** First crush in college (clean-cut preppy) suddenly stops calling and appears at parties with a shiny, diminutive Southern belle.

**Diagnosis:** Bruised ego

**Treatment:** Learned to play quarters with (not so clean-cut) members of Beta Phi Zeta fraternity.

**Follow-up:** Later learned that freshman flame became a dentist in Pittsburgh. No regrets.

6

**Location:** Left palm and short-term memory bank

**Cause:** As the Halloween party my sister and I are hosting kicks into gear, I hilariously demonstrate my *Psycho* knife technique on the deli roast chicken. Unfortunately, I am holding the bird in my hand, and the tender poultry body and flimsy foam holder are no match for the Henckel twelve-inch blade. Realizing that I have stabbed myself, I put the fowl on the counter and proceed to pass out on the kitchen floor.

**Diagnosis:** Margaritas + party-induced bravado = lapse in judgment.

**Treatment:** I regain consciousness and look up into the faces of Ernie from *Sesame Street*, the Oak Ridge Boys, and a bloody, pecked Tippiie Hedren from *The*



*Birds.* Realize I am not hallucinating, but in fact surrounded by concerned, costumed friends, who take charge.

**Follow-up:** The Henckel blade is duller.

7

**Location:** Front and side of left knee

**Cause:** Warm-up drills in preparation for first North Carolina women's team appearance at Ultimate Frisbee National Championships, West Palm Beach, Florida  
**Diagnosis:** Tournament clinic worker recommends leg massage. Later diagnosed by orthopedist as torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

**Treatment:** Knee reconstruction. First (and only) exposure to mmmorphine.

**Follow-up:** Active participant in spectator sports

8

**Location:** Part of brain marking the nexus of anger and disbelief

**Cause:** While on the way to do laundry, spot then-boyfriend (now referred to as "psycho chef") coming out of his comely coworker's apartment early on a Sunday morning. Claims he was merely dropping off Percocet to help relieve her of menstrual cramps.

**Diagnosis:** Need for heavy reality dose. OK, so he cooks amazing gourmet meals, but, really, the guy's an asshole.

**Treatment:** Wordless, late-night phone calls from chef reinforce diagnosis (above).

**Follow-up:** Chef begins to lose his hair and is later seen in advanced stage of balding. Incident also results in two rather amusing short stories.

9

**Location:** Right shoulder

**Cause:** Too much sun growing up in South Florida

**Diagnosis:** Undetermined growth, possible precancerous lesion

**Treatment:** Dermatologist removes growth and photographs entire body for CD archiving, which allows baseline comparison on quarterly basis.

**Follow-up:** Lots of sunscreen

10

**Location:** Lower abdomen

**Cause:** Surgery

**Diagnosis:** Breech baby

**Treatment:** Cesarean section

**Follow-up:** A pink, screaming, healthy little girl

11

**Location:** Top of left ear

**Cause:** Overstimulated preschool daughter whacks mother with plastic pail in Disney World swimming pool

**Diagnosis:** Broken cartilage

**Treatment:** New hairstyle

**Follow-up:** No more Disney World ever again

12

**Location:** Gums

**Cause:** Age, not enough flossing

**Diagnosis:** Early stages of gingivitis

**Treatment:** A bit more flossing

**Follow-up:** Actively dodging recommended procedure of gum tissue replacement surgery

13

**Location:** Right breast

**Cause:** Biopsy for possible cancerous growth

**Diagnosis:** Benign lump

**Treatment:** None needed

**Follow-up:** Schedule repeat mammograms every six months

14

**Location:** Worry center in depths of psyche

**Cause:** Marriage, motherhood, middle age

**Diagnosis:** Increased responsibility, less spontaneity

**Treatment:** New blonde hairpiece, spur-of-the-moment bike rides, and a toe ring

**Follow-up:** To be continued.

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*Bridget Booher is a freelance writer living in Hillsborough, North Carolina.*

## WOMEN WITH HIV

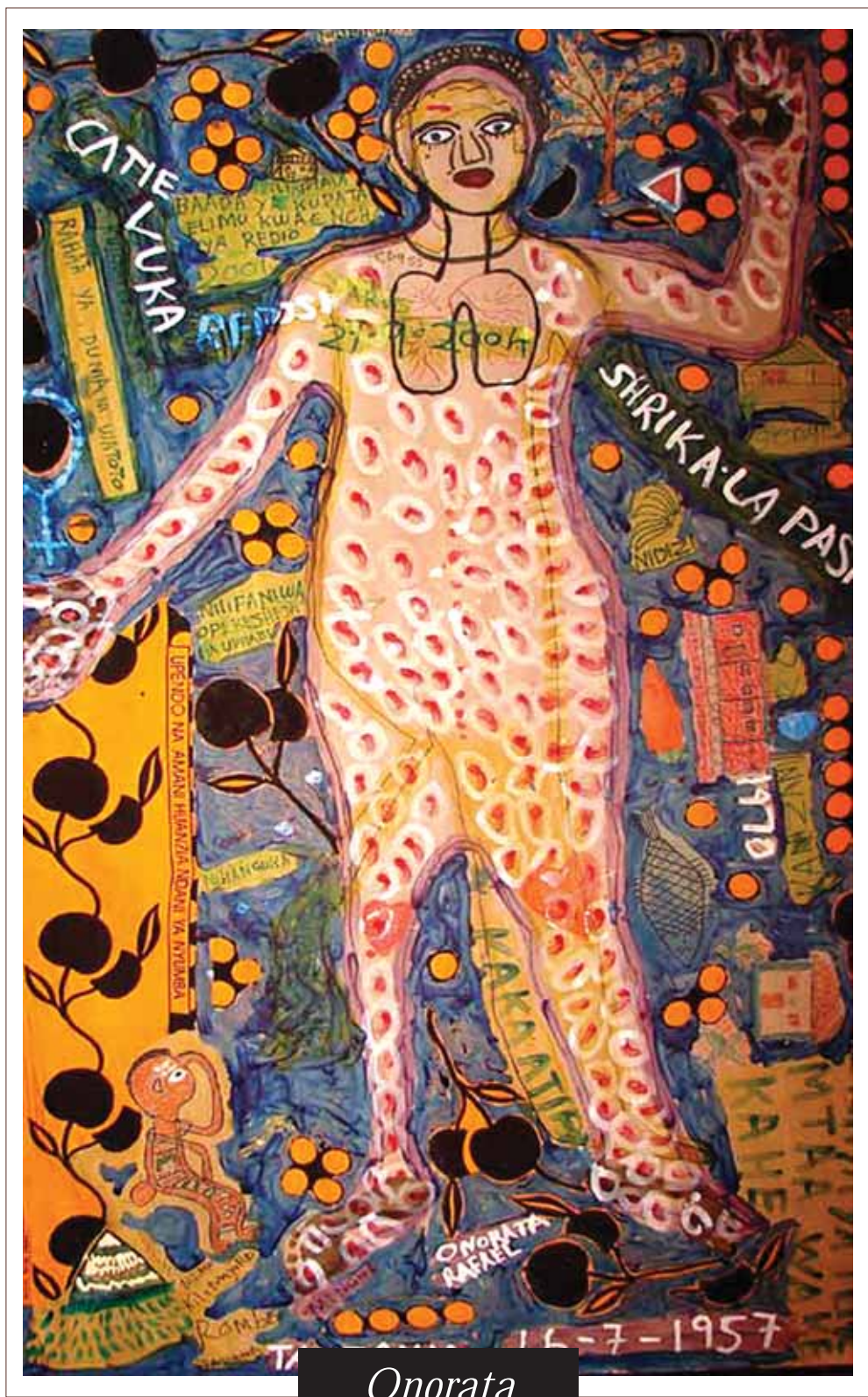
who are leaders in the AIDS movement in their communities in Tanzania, Zambia, and Canada are coming together in workshops organized by the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange and the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative to create startling and beautiful body maps. Participants are led by a trained artist through a series of imaginative exercises to trace around their bodies on huge pieces of stiff paper and add their faces, images of their internal organs, and external scars. Then they add words, symbols, and pictures relating to their health, their history, their points of personal power, and their life goals. In this way, each woman records and shares her unique story of living with HIV. The result is a series of compelling, larger-than-life-sized paintings illustrating the impact of HIV on each woman's body and soul.

The five days of the body mapping process creates a safe space where each woman can speak openly about her journey with HIV. Women are also offered support from those who best understand their situation: other women living with HIV. CATIE's contribution is to weave HIV information into this artistic process by offering opportunities for the women to discuss their health in the context of the stories told in their body maps, and to learn about HIV and its treatment.

Small, personal health journals called tracing books are also created by each woman as part of this process. The tracing books contain pages with small outlines of the

For more information please visit [www.catie.ca](http://www.catie.ca)





Onorata

# MY NAME IS

Onorata Rafael Asenga.

I come from a village where I always see Mt. Kilimanjaro in the background so there is the mountain in my drawing. I left my home area and came to Dar es Salaam in 1970 to stay with my cousin, to help her with her baby. When I was still with my cousin, there was a man who came and promised to marry me. We started a relationship and began having sex. It was my first time and it didn't take long for me to become pregnant. I had some problems so he went back to my cousin and asked her if she could help. He told her that if she could support me, he would rent a room so he could save money to buy property for when the baby came. This is the only child I have. I was seventeen.

My fiancée was from Arusha and I am from Moshi. After the baby we decided to go home. We went to our own villages but made arrangements to meet so he could take me to his parents. On that day, I waited and waited but no one came. Even thieves stole my bus fare to go back home. The baby was 3 months old.

I waited for months to hear from him, but nothing so I decided to come back to Dar. When my fiancée went back to his village not married, he was given another woman. He stayed with this woman and abandoned me. He then got a transfer and took everything. I had to sleep on the floor with the child.

Around this time, I was doing business transporting maize and selling food to casual workers. I had a desire to be a strong woman. But once, when I went to Dodoma to collect money for maize, the people had run away without paying. I had no money to continue with my business so I had to look for ways of surviving. I then started a relationship with a married man for support and I was in that relationship for 15 years. With that man we were not able to have a child. But we were able to build a house together. After some time the relationship was not working and he chased me away. Now I am renting.

After the relationship had broken down some people came and told me that he moved away and went to have a relationship with a woman who is sick. I started developing some swelling and then decided to get tested. I found out I was positive. When I got the results, I didn't panic but rose up my hands to thank God for what He had given me. I will live with it, and I will take.

My power point is in my legs because most of my activities involve a lot of walking. I tested in 5 hospitals because it was difficult for me to believe I was HIV positive. My legs have given me energy. I work as a home care volunteer to help patients who are bedridden take their TB tablets. I use my legs to go and pass on the skills I have learned.

Over my left eye is a scar from where I had stitches from a beating from my husband. It is like part of my face now. I also had TB once. On my face you will see birth marks. You will also see my swollen glands. On my heart you will see a cross. This cross is for praying. The heart represents the power to save others, especially the TB patients that I work with.



*Elizabeth*

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## I LEFT MY VILLAGE

after my husband was given a transfer to work in Dar es Salaam. It was my first time on a bus and I had never seen so many cars in all my life. I finally joined my husband after 2 years apart. His name was Lucas Ponamali. His surname means, "Death is coming."

I lived with my husband for only a short time. He died in 1996. In 2000 I decided to have another relationship with another man. I thought having another man would help me to get more support. People were depending on me and I couldn't afford to take care of them all.

In 2002 I became pregnant. When my husband died I didn't know he had died of AIDS so when I got pregnant I got tested as it was the policy. I had decided to have another relationship not knowing that I was HIV positive. I went to the main hospital for counseling where they said I couldn't breast feed. I was shocked and afraid to share this information with anyone. I thought it meant death and that people would be afraid of me. I went into denial because I was still big enough and thought I was beautiful. I gave birth on May 2, 2003 to a baby girl and I was so happy. But after giving birth my health deteriorated so much.

After the birth I started the journey of difficulties and struggles in my life. I was running small businesses (making chapati) and I was selling a lot. But people could see changes in me and they stopped buying.



Elizabeth

So having money to get food was difficult. Because of that I started developing OIs (Opportunistic Infections) continuously. What about my children? I could die anytime and leave them as orphans. Their father was already dead and I would follow. At times I thought about suicide. But what was so painful in my heart was that I infected my child.

Supports: On my body map there is the main word, “utu” and it means a person’s dignity. All my support people do what they do because they know I am human and they value me as a person. I understand that all the people know that if I am HIV positive I am human and worth living. I am getting free ARVs (antiretrovirals) and my children are given school fees. I am valued.

If I was given a chance to print a kanga to send a message I would tell people, “Test now. Come back to the community. Live positively.”



## IN 1990, I CAME TO

Dar es Salaam with my sister who is an artist. I am a widow with one child.

In 1995, I got into a relationship but we were never married officially. The man was a driver traveling from Tanzania to Malawi and Zambia. In 1997, he left to visit his parents in Germany. Before he left, he bought all the things I needed in the house. We were renting a room and I continued my job as a tailor. My husband did not ever come back. There has been no communication and I have no idea if he is dead or alive.

In 2001, I decided to go to PASADA and get tested for HIV. I found out I was positive and that same year I developed herpes zoster. I had outbreaks three times and the virus attacked my eye. After that I moved to where my sister was staying.

I am doing my business of sewing and I have a loan from PASADA. Up until now I have been able to send my child to school through that loan.

My power point is my arms. I have drawn children on my arms. I love children. If I was able, I would like to care for children who are suffering and have no one. Some of the children who don't have caregivers are at risk. They can be raped or end up with infections.

My kanga says, "There is a day you will remember me." This is the message I give to my daughter. I worked hard to support her to where she is now. I believe that the support I have given her will mean that even if I die tomorrow she will





*Elumina*

My message to young people is, “Be patient. You don’t need to rush into relationships. You don’t know the man you are going out with. And by the time you do know him you are already sick. Wait and know the person well.”

I have drawn a picture which shows me holding flowers. I drew myself this way because I have discovered who I am as a HIV positive woman. I am accepting myself. That’s why I am holding flowers. I am a Catholic and I believe in praying. I go to church often to support myself spiritually. Since I have started taking ARVs (antiretrovirals) I feel strong. I am working hard and I have a dream of owning my own house.



*Frida*

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## MY NAME IS FRIDA MDOE.

I am from Hedaru village in Kilimanjaro. You can see that I have drawn Mt. Kilimanjaro. I have drawn the moon and stars as the light I have gotten from this workshop. I believe the knowledge I will get will help others who have not come here. Also, the knowledge will help to brighten my own life.

When I finished Form 4 in 1992, I was selected to join a secretarial college in Tabora. After finishing the course I was asked to join the National Service. That was the Tanzanian system policy. After the National Service I went back home to say goodbye to my parents so I could come and look for a job in Dar es Salaam.

I joined a company working in office machines and electrical equipment as a secretary. In 1998, I was married and in 1999 became pregnant and had a baby in October of that year by C-section. After the birth, I started falling sick and my husband advised me to stop working. In 2001, my husband took me to the Infection Disease Centre to have a chest test and I discovered I had TB. I took TB drugs and finished but my condition didn't change.

I was still sick. My husband said they should test me at Temeka Hospital. That was when I discovered I was HIV positive. Both of us were. After that we decided to go to PASADA to be members and up until now we are getting treatment there.

My power point is in my hands. In my hands I have drawn the Bible. I am strong up until now and it is all out of God's love for me.





Frida

My cloth says, "A wife is a gift. It is your responsibility to take care of her." I chose it because husbands who take care of their wives and give them good food and clothes are the ones who keep their wives. Other wives who do not look nice or keep the house nice will see the husband stray. They need to support each other in order to have unity.

On my body map I have drawn a scar on my head. I had terrible eye pain when I was 10 years old. I was taken to several hospitals and had several medicines but they didn't work. After failing to get medicine, I got a traditional type of healing. They heated metal in the fire and placed it on my face. After that the pain was gone but the treatment left a pain by my eye.

My message to the community would be, "Everything goes according to God's plan." My young sister would cry when she visited me after I told her I was HIV positive because she was afraid I was going to die and leave her. Last year my sister developed high blood pressure and in a short time she died. For me death comes from God's plan. Those who have HIV or those who do not will die. We are living here under the plan of God. I insist that those with HIV live positively.

## MY NAME IS OTTILIA CHARLES.

I left Iringa in 1993 to come to Dar es Salaam. We moved because my mother was sick and most of my mother's relatives lived in Dar es Salaam. I was so excited to come to Dar because I like the sea so much. After a short time, my mother became very sick and she died in 1994. After her death my sisters and brothers went with various relatives on both sides of our family. The auntie who took me also died, unfortunately. So, from there I was moved to stay with my mother's cousin. I stayed with this woman who I called my "auntie" and I had to tolerate all kinds of suffering in the family.

In 1999, I decided to run away and started looking for a job. In 2000, I found a job as a house maid for people from Senegal. I worked with the family until 2002 and in that same year I started a relationship with a man. This man gave me high hopes that he was interested in a good relationship and wanted to marry and take care of me. I believed his words and we started having sex out of those words. I didn't know he was positive but he did and he never told me. During that time, I discovered that I was pregnant and he took me to his home where we lived as husband and wife. Two months after the baby was born she started falling sick on and off. She was taken to hospital where we stayed for 4 months. Unfortunately, the baby died. During the time after the burial I stayed with the man but he started getting seriously sick. Then I started developing fevers on and off and since I didn't have close relatives, I wondered what would happen to me, especially financially. I decided to come back to Dar.





Otilia

Power point: I drew a symbol of a mirror believing that with one you can see both sides. I can see where I am coming from and where I am going.

You can see that I have a scar on my face. My auntie who I stayed with used to use electricity wires to beat me. That is one of the scars from that. My auntie was beating me and I couldn't stand the pain so I started to run away. I didn't see the door and knocked myself on the handle of the door. I was taken to hospital and had to get 12 stitches.

I put a scar on one of my buttocks. When I was in Ngorongoro they didn't have enough syringes. I was getting injections from shared, unclean needles. I developed boils and I had a very big one that got infected. There was also a time when I developed bad stress because of discrimination and stigma at home. Sometimes I couldn't eat. I developed an ulcer and it was hard on my heart. Now I eat the food that you see on my body map.

I have drawn a picture of the village where there are so many children without guardians (orphans). I have drawn that there are so many graves. It is typical of my village, which is hard hit with HIV. What I am learning here, I think I need to bring to my village. Here in Dar, there are lots of resources but not enough in my village. If I was given a chance to send a message to the community it would say, "Save the young generation so that they don't die of HIV/AIDS."

*Ruth*

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# I LEFT KIGOMA

in 1995 to come to Dar es Salaam to stay with my sister. I left Kigoma because of problems. I was already married and had undergone an operation. Before I recovered, my husband left to stay with another woman. When my sister heard I was suffering she sent for me so she could take care of me until I recovered. I went to a Muslim committee to ask for a divorce certificate because my family is Muslim and so was I. After getting the certificate, I felt very angry at the way my husband treated me and I also felt angry with the Islamic faith. I decided to change my faith and got another husband who was a Christian. He said he was married before but his wife had died. Even after a long discussion he insisted his wife's death was only due to TB.

Shortly after we began staying together, he fell sick and I started taking care of him. When we went to hospital I was told he had TB so I took care of him thinking it was TB. He recovered twice from TB but with the third attack he went on a trip with his boss and when he came back he was weak. The following day he sent me to ask his office mates to come and take him to Temeka Hospital. He was not even able to stand on his own and had a lot of sores over his mouth. My sister insisted that instead of taking him to Temeka we should take him to PASADA because they could help more. I respected my sister and we went. The results said he was positive. He then told me that he would not eat again until he died. He said, "Even if you force me to eat I won't because I know even if I do I will still die. It's better that I don't eat and that I die quickly." He died in 2003.





Ruth



Following his death, I started feeling sick and decided to go and test at PASADA. After the results, I became even worse and was admitted to hospital. After that I decided I should just depend on Jesus. I was left with one child and two others from a cousin who passed away. Sometimes we slept without food. My relatives would not help because I decided to become a Christian.

I have drawn flowers on my legs. I believe I have much strength in my legs. Without going out of the house to work, my children will not eat.

My kanga says, "Take courage. You will overcome." When I was downhearted and sick in the house and rejected by my relatives, the children were looking to me for food and I thought it was all impossible. I thought that we were all going to die. But after discovering PASADA and the other sisters who have been supporting me I gained courage. I came to tell myself that the journey behind me is longer than the one in front and if I managed to travel this far, I think I can make it for the remaining.

The bicycle symbol means ARVs (antiretrovirals). I was bed-ridden to the point where I was wearing diapers. I went to the hospital and they discovered my CD4 count was low. When I started ARVs, I became as strong as I am now. I can move around now. This is like the bicycle that can move around. Bicycles are strong.

## IT WAS AT A RECENT

Kara conference that Traci and I learned of the body maps that Kara, a bereavement center in Palo Alto, CA uses to help children express the overwhelming emotions of losing a parent, sibling or other loved one.

Children are given a body map outline and are instructed to color in the emotions they are experiencing. This color-coded “key” (i.e. red for anger, yellow for fear, black for sadness) is used for the children to illustrate how they might be feeling their grief within their body. Kara has found that the body maps are a valuable tool for helping children express both the complexity and depth of what they are going through, emotions that some children might not be able to describe verbally. When a child joins a peer support group at Kara, his/her body map is put up on a wall filled with body maps from the other children in the group expressing how they each feel grief in their own bodies.

And expression, over time, leads to healing.

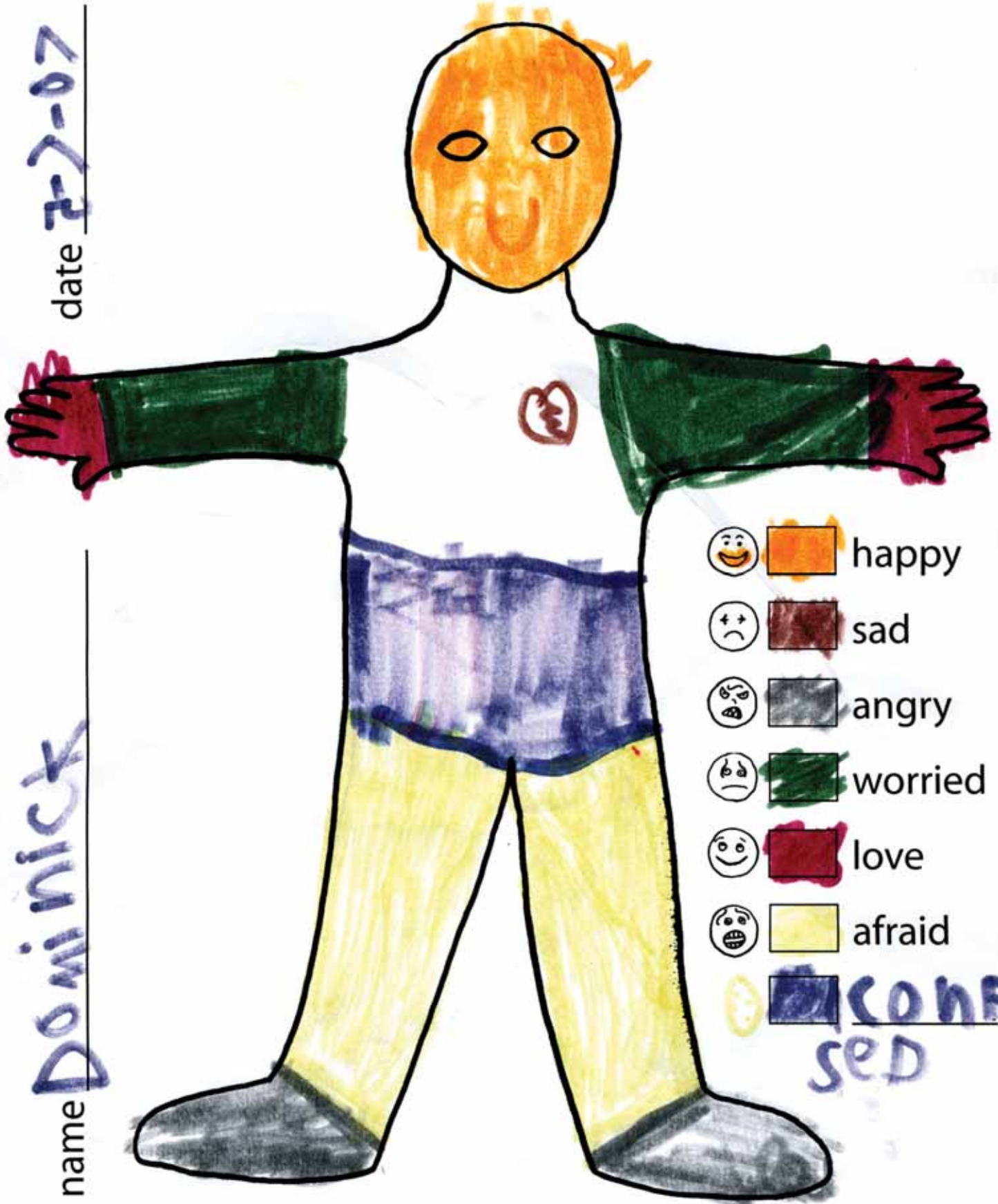
# body map of feelings

date

7-7-07

name

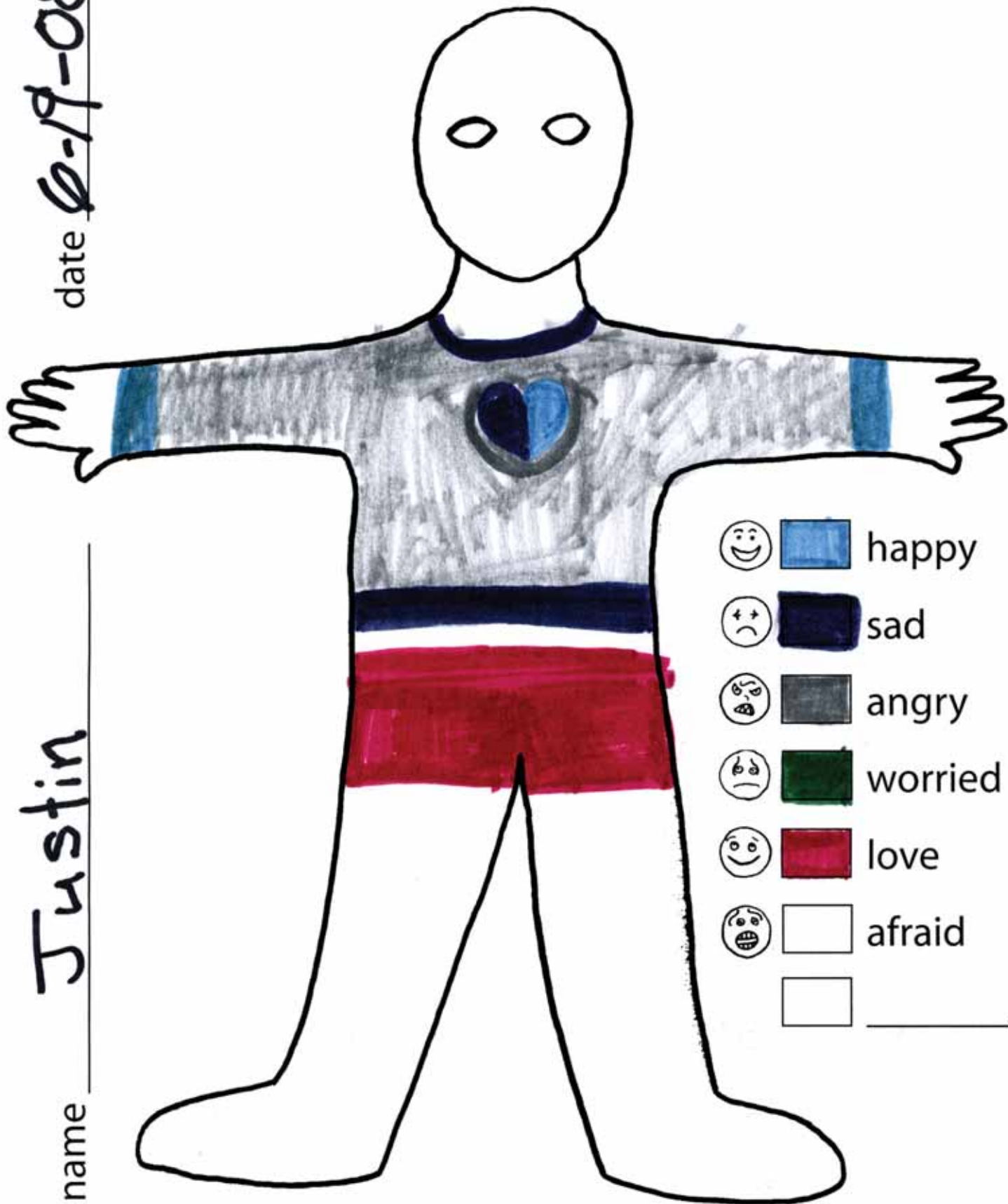
Dominick



# body map of feelings

date 6-17-08

name Justin

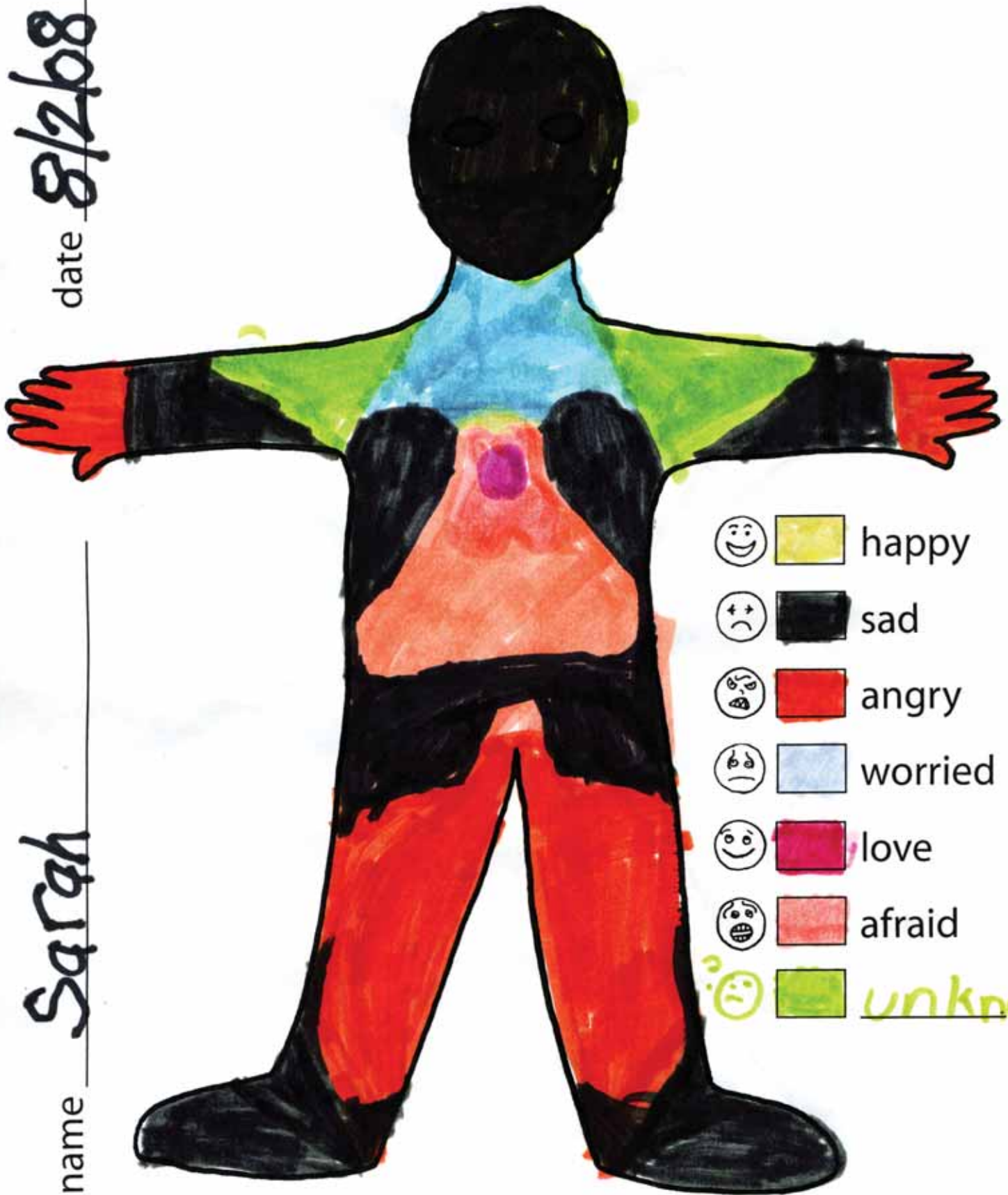




# body map of feelings

date 8/2/08

name Sarah



-   happy
-   sad
-   angry
-   worried
-   love
-   afraid
-   unknown

# CREATING

my own map proved to be far more challenging than I had anticipated. How to get sixty-six years of highs and lows, trauma and epiphanies, represented on one piece of paper? I started with a theme: the contrast between my bodily movement and the trajectory of my soul. At the time I was dealing with my fifth migration across the continental US. It occurred to me that my relentless wanderings bore little relationship to my spiritual development. Suddenly the map seemed manageable. I would document both my ping-ponging across the United States and my own personal ascent to truth, side by side for contrast. The result was Map #1. But then second thoughts arose, “What about all my overseas travel?” Had I oversimplified my life to the point of trivializing it? Was my first attempt too facile, too two-dimensional? Back to the drawing board.

This time I included maps of all my overseas travel, once again contrasting my extensive movement with my internal journey. The result was Map #2. But had I touched enough on my inner struggles? I was on the point of throwing in the towel and vowing to stay out of this issue, when I opened the latest copy of *Aperture*, the esteemed photographic journal which Sam had given me as a gift. In it I found profoundly evocative photographs which spoke eloquently to the complexity of my life’s journey.

After selecting a series of surreal photographs which spoke to me deeply, I placed them in chronological order and wrote a paragraph articulating the significance of each as symbolic of my life's story. I added a thematic card from a deck of "angel" cards to each and I was finished. It was certainly more realistic to spend thirteen pages summarizing my life.

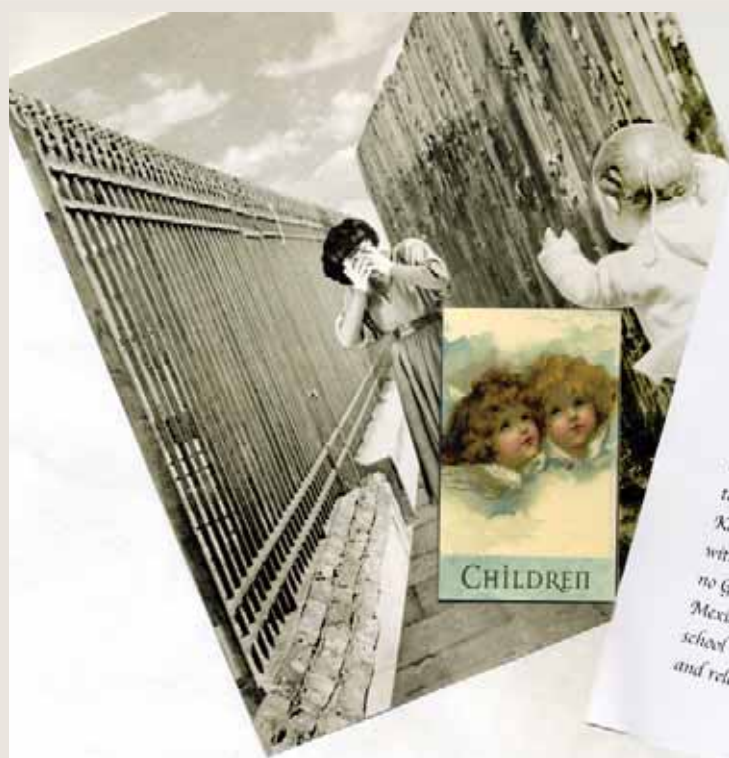
I am indebted to those photographers for having produced such evocative images (not unlike the psychologists' TAT test – thematic apperception test). And of course, how can one compress a full life into a single visual representation? I urge you to silence your inner critic and give it a try.





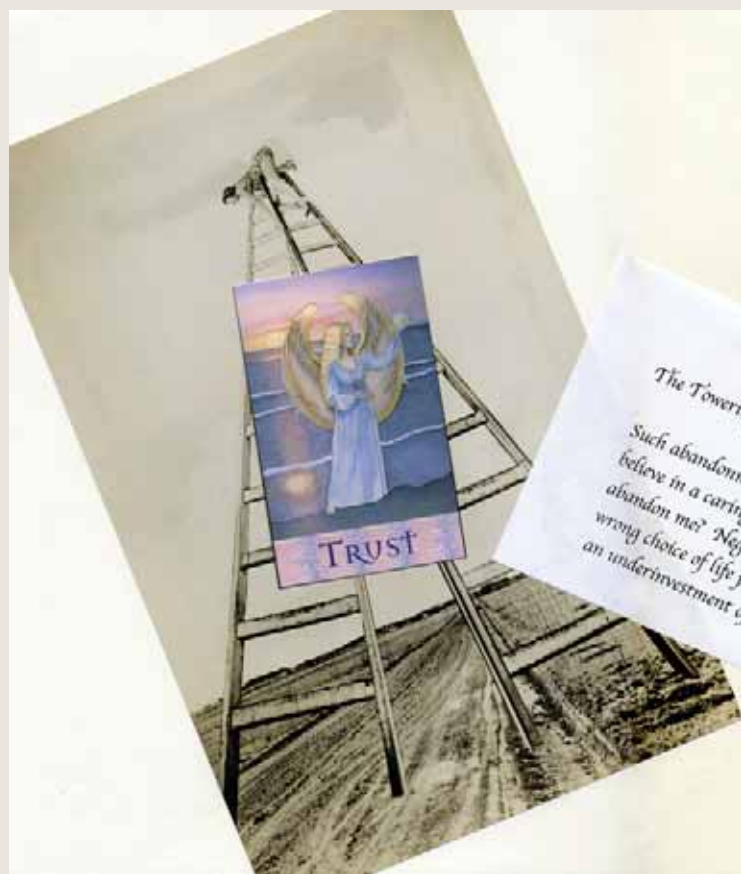






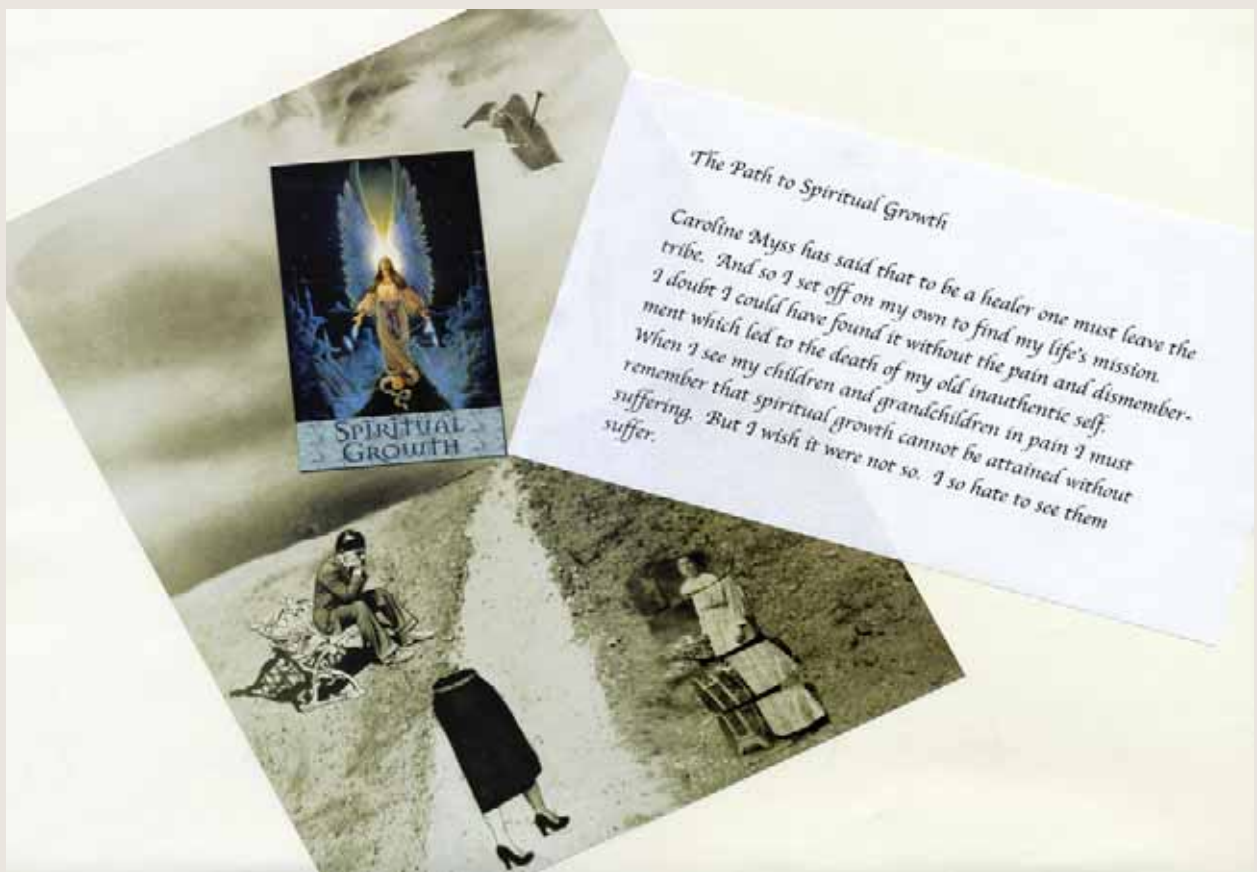
### *The Abyss of Abandonment*

Born July 15th, 1941---six months into life I encountered encephalitis and my path was set. For six months I was not allowed to cry for fear I would choke on my tongue. At age four my mother felt this intense symbiotic relationship had spoiled me and so she began an intense program to undo the damage. Sent away to camp at four, five, six, seven, eight and nine for two months at a time. "Dear Mommy, I cried all night for you. Can I please come home?" Then at eleven sent to California with my big sister alone on the train during the Korean war. And at thirteen sent to live in Germany alone with a German family attending a German school speaking no German. And at fourteen sent to the jungle of Chiapas, Mexico with my sister to newly excavated ruins and summer school in Guadalajara. The path of abandonment was long and relentless.



### *The Towering Trust Issues*

Such abandonment led to towering trust issues. How could I believe in a caring universe if my parents were so ready to abandon me? Neglect causes low self esteem, which led to the wrong choice of life partners. An undervaluing of self led to an underinvestment of self.



### *The Path to Spiritual Growth*

*Caroline Myss has said that to be a healer one must leave the tribe. And so I set off on my own to find my life's mission. I doubt I could have found it without the pain and dismemberment which led to the death of my old inauthentic self. When I see my children and grandchildren in pain I must remember that spiritual growth cannot be attained without suffering. But I wish it were not so. I so hate to see them suffer.*



### *The Flight of Freedom*

*Valuing myself for the first time led to a refusal to be devalued and set me on a flight for freedom. I will always regret the collateral damage it caused to my children, but it gave birth to*

*MY AUTHENTIC SELF.*



*The Release of Self-Acceptance*  
 Finding self-acceptance through a mentor who valued my  
 intelligence and intuition set me on a path of mission and  
 accomplishment.



*The Creative Covey of Friendship*  
 In my pain I met Traci who brought comfort to my family  
 and later along with Sam brought creativity into my life.  
 Out of this trio was born my life's work which would make all  
 the suffering worthwhile.



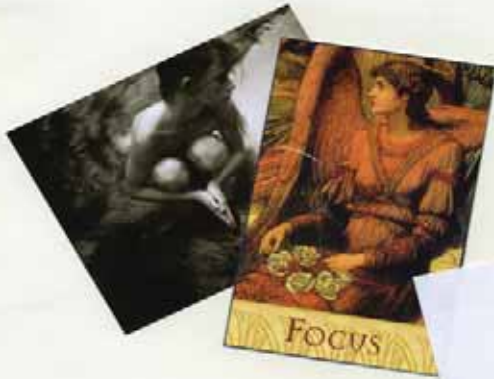


*The Halls of Healing Environments  
 Out of death and suffering was born the redemptive work of  
 Healing Environments. All of the abandonment was reborn  
 in connection to others. All of the loss was revrought in the  
 healing of others' pain.*



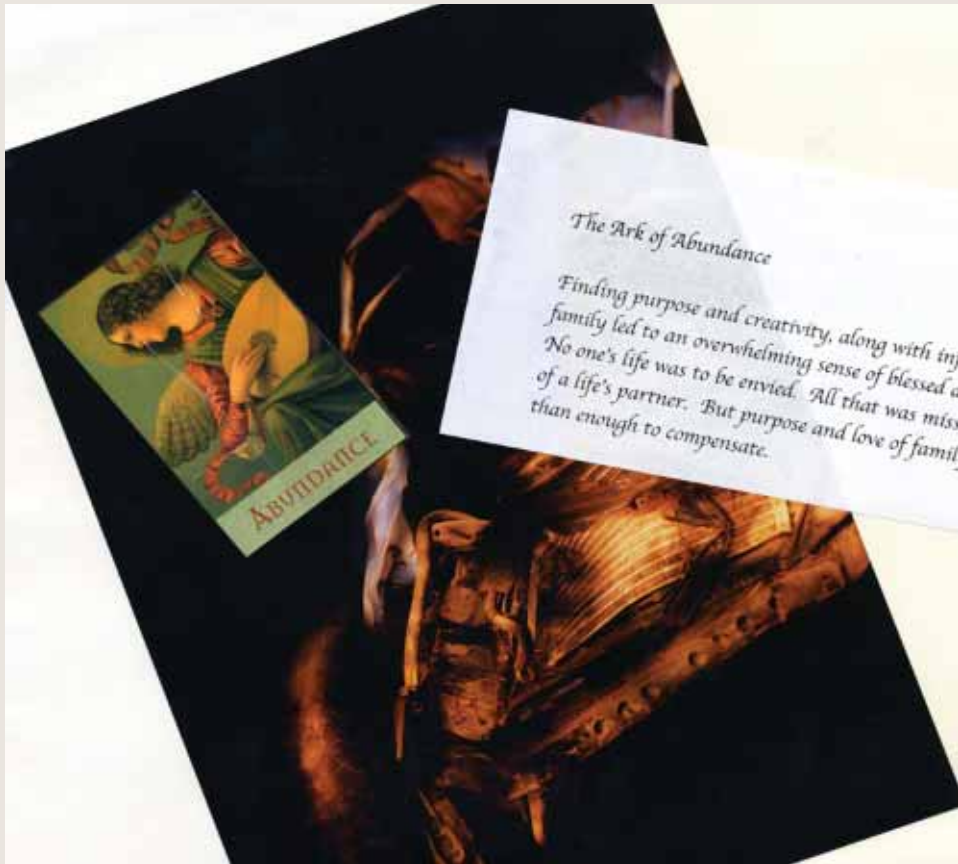
*The Light of Ideas and Inspiration  
 My soul's nourishment became ideas and inspiration designed  
 to heal and nourish others. Giving became receiving. Healing  
 became being healed.*





### *The Foundry of Focus*

*Life became concentrated between two intense foci---family and work. Decisions were clear when dealing with life and death imperatives. Heal the family. Heal the world.*



### *The Ark of Abundance*

*Finding purpose and creativity, along with infinite love of family led to an overwhelming sense of blessed abundance. No one's life was to be envied. All that was missing was love of a life's partner. But purpose and love of family were more than enough to compensate.*



### *The Sea of Serenity*

*And so I find myself in a sea of serenity and contentment.  
I lack for nothing. I am richly blessed beyond measure.  
I have been gifted with a love of children and grandchildren  
and with a life's purpose which leaves no room for discontent.*

*"Oh, Mon Dieu, qui est Tout Amour, je vous remercie de nous  
avoir donné tant de grâces intérieures et extérieures. Faites que  
nous soyons fidèles à la prière, afin d'attirer de plus en plus  
vos bénédictions et vos faveurs. Je prends la résolution d'aimer  
Dieu au-dessous de toutes choses, et mon prochain comme moi-  
même. Et en témoignage de cet amour, je ferai un peu de  
méditation tous les jours."*

## About Kate Strasburg

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Kate Strasburg was a late bloomer. She found her mission in life after fifty, when she and her good friend Traci co-founded Healing Environments. In it, Kate found the perfect expression for her love of writing and design.

Kate had lost a large number of loved ones to cancer (including her parents and three of her best friends). She wanted to do something to ease the profound emotional suffering which accompanies life-threatening illness. She and Traci wanted to use their love of design for a higher purpose. And so, over coffee one morning, Healing Environments was born. A year later Kate and Traci met Sam, who gave form to their vision with the creation of *A Light in the Mist*.

Next to her beloved children and adored grandchildren, it has been the passion and great consolation of her life. When her personal life proves rocky, sending free publications out across the country and overseas brings solace. When things beyond her control create anguish, creating beautiful spaces which comfort others who are facing the end of life or the loss of a loved one helps put things in perspective. Kate feels truly blessed to have found her life's work.

*Traci Teraoka*

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## I AM A WOMAN OF MIXED RACE.

While growing up I didn't understand the judgments and prejudices that would be spoken towards me. Inside I felt very American – with the knowledge that I have strong roots, both European and Japanese. America's "melting pot" had washed away traditions associated with these cultures. Geographically, there are many influences that create this "American life." I grew up moving often. I lived in Oahu, Hawaii, Nashville, Tennessee, Mount Prospect, Illinois, and Arlington, Texas. I finished college in California at UC Santa Cruz. Currently I live in San Francisco with my son, Alexander. Over the years, I made good friends with many people. It always stunned me to suddenly have a racist remark directed at me.

After many years of struggling with identity I have found acceptance of myself and love for every detail that makes me and my family unique. The writing and the soul map that follow are my attempts to work these parts of myself out creatively on paper. I have to admit – I love the concept of this project and yet found it surprisingly difficult to get completed. I realized that some of the bumps and bruises from growing up were still there if I scratched deeply enough. I also realized how much I have healed and grown into my own.



*Two Checks*

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*Traci Teraoka*

# GROWING UP

I loved having lunch in local restaurants with my mom. It surprised me when the server would ask my mom, “One check or two?” I was twelve. I guess I looked self-sufficient? No, I guess I just didn’t look like I belonged to her.

## FEELING MY SKIN

I became an expert on what made me seem different from those around me. My separateness became a point of pride. Often I would ask friends how they perceived me. Of course they always, always thought this to be a funny question. “You look like Traci.” They would say. “But what do I look like?” I would ask. “Do I look more this or more that? Asian, Caucasian, Eurasian, Pacific Islander, Greek – tell me what I look like to you?” And always, always they responded with love and understanding, “Traci, you look... like Traci.”

## GROWING UP

The positive attributes and emerging parts of my personality willingly hid behind my desire to fit in. My physical appearance, the way my mind works, my size – nothing about me fit neatly into the templates for popularity and young adolescent acceptance. I spent a lot of time criticizing my body and trying to alter myself. I remember a time when I couldn’t look in the mirror and see beyond the shape of my eyes, my nose, how my knees looked in shorts.

Sometimes you have to give something up before you realize how valuable it is. I have made many mistakes in my life and I have also made some great life-altering decisions. Sometimes I thought I was being helpful and I didn't realize how much of my "self" I had given away. All in eager attempts to secure my environment. Sometimes I thought my choices would provide the self-confidence that I myself didn't have. You give an inch, they take a mile. Sometimes it is those closest to you. But hey, girlfriend, as Dr. Phil once said, "You teach people how to treat you." I have reclaimed those parts of myself that I didn't appreciate. Now I celebrate them.

#### MY LIFE TRANSFORMED

Acceptance, love and gratitude are real values in my relationships. The positive choices, purposeful steps large and small have led me on a path that feels solid around me. I cherish this life. I hope I am fortunate enough to be here on this planet for decades to come. I have had the honor of helping people die with dignity. I have had the honor of raising my son. I have had the honor of falling in love. Although I cannot see what lies ahead of me I am not afraid.



## About Traci Teraoka

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I am co-founder and co-director of Healing Environments. The past 14 years have been largely based around the central question of “What is a Healing Environment?” for those facing life threatening illness. The question, the process and the opportunities have led to an education of my mind and heart.

We have contributed to this question over and over again by pouring our intention into our design projects and in finding the content for *A Light in the Mist – The Journal of Hope*. For 10 years I served on the board of directors of Maitri – a San Francisco based hospice and 24 hour care home for people living with AIDS. When I first became involved in all of this work it seemed as if there was a large lake before me and I had yet to stick my toe in the water. Now – looking back and looking to where I stand today I can see clearly where participation – literally diving into projects and learning the art of presence has made me a strong swimmer. I am not afraid of the distance. The experiences – the stories – have become part of who I am and how I see the world around me.

When I have felt challenged and overwhelmed by my personal life I stop and look around me and realize that while I can know pain and suffering, we are all faced with reconciling the discrepancies in our trust, faith, values and goals. I feel very fortunate to have this body of work around me – as I continue to learn from it every day. When I was going through my divorce in early 2002 I remember the emotional leveling of my dreams and feeling the sadness with every step that I took.



During that time I figured my process needed those moments and I could also pay attention to my work and volunteer work. I called it my hope hook. And indeed it was. It reminded me of my strength and who I was as a person – that I could give and receive openly without being hurt. I am a student of life. The people to whom we dedicate our mission are my teachers.

I continue to be fascinated with this question, “What is a Healing Environment?” I realize that just as with life – the question is not so much about the answer as it is about acknowledging the “aliveness” that goes into our lives and the importance of recognizing that we matter. I live in San Francisco and Austin with my family.

*Sam Smidt*

# EVER SINCE



Kate and Traci asked me to participate in this unique mapping project, I have become obsessed with the quest of who I am and how I got here. As an artist it's essential to find out what symbols I respond to, and to what degree, and if possible how the response originated. Artists need to know this information, so they can proceed to use the meaningful personal symbols in their work. Once I designed a poster for a lecture on imagination (see left), in which I used a photo of a light bulb and some other objects. I needed to “dig into” the root of

its symbolism. Should the bulb be clear or frosted? Was it the filament because of its wiry utilitarian purpose, was it the twists and turns that the wire made that produced strong connection within me? Was it the magic that actually produced light that intrigued me? I thought about it at great length.

In my studio I have a “sand tray” that is a designated area on a wall where I pin up images that provoke these responses. I look at this wall as I work and it helps me gather concepts. Once I decide on an idea I can go on with the process of giving it form.

I am reminded of the personal exercise I gave myself of thumbing through the yellow pages and designating 1-star, 2-star or 3-star symbols. After a lot of exploration I came up with my own 1-star, 2-star and 3-star list which became a tool that has guided me through the years. My feeling is that the more a person knows himself the greater the truth in his work. I use these lists even today in my thinking.

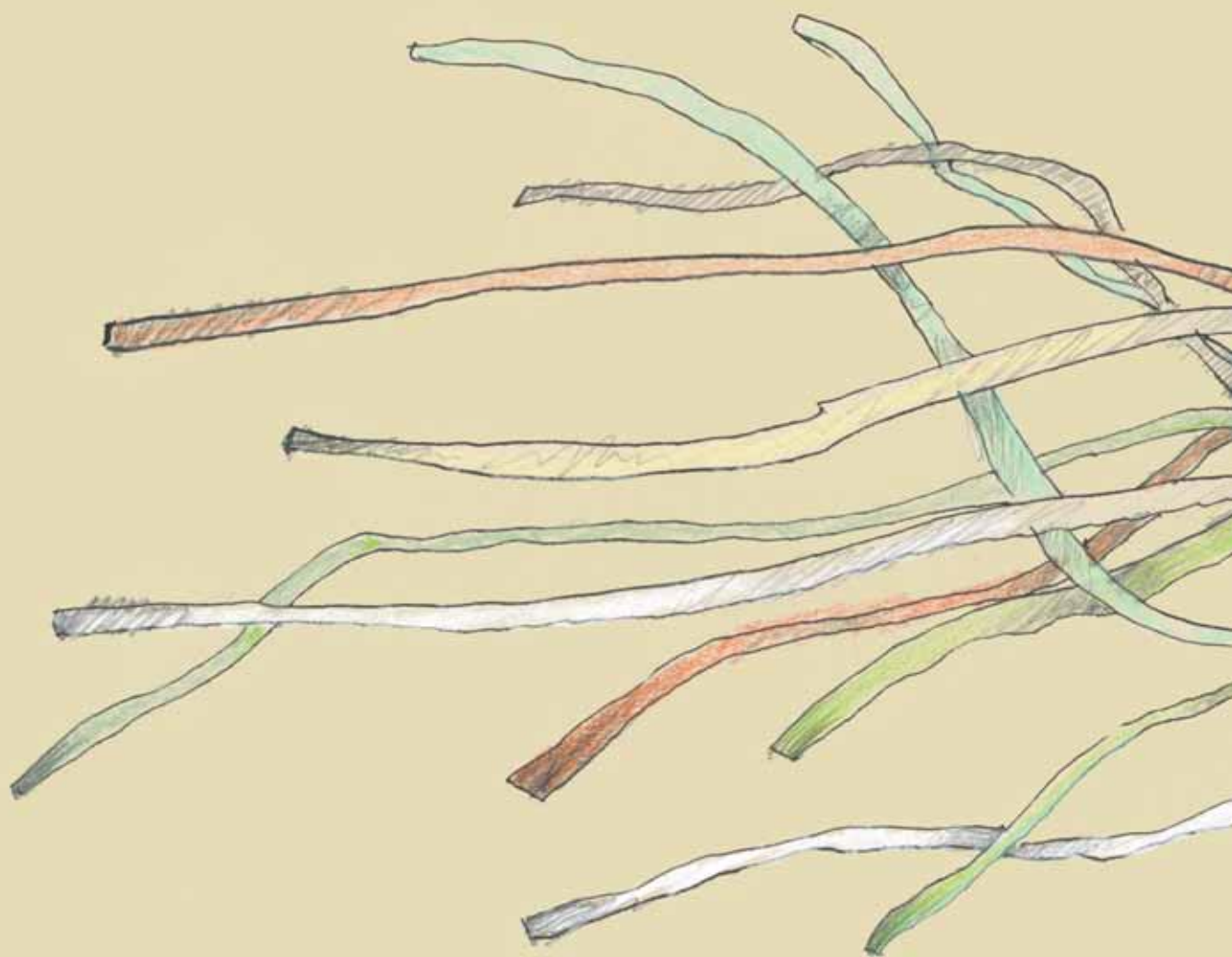
### THREE POSSIBILITIES FOR THE MAPPING PROJECT

1. This project has given me the opportunity to refine my lifelong search for what is true about me. My first idea was to associate myself with photographs that were taken around the time of my birth or the time when I was growing up. These historical photographs portraying the strife of life in the 30's and 40's developed into a historical collage. My thinking here was that these events, the Great Depression for example, affected me throughout my life, and in fact, worked their way into some of my art and designs. For example, the use of black and white photography.

2. My second take I call my Personal Lifeline. This is an organized spatial design of primary events throughout my entire life. As a graphic designer I am involved with the process of organization in my work. The grey background with obscure imagery relates to my growing up in San Francisco in a foggy neighborhood with the mist in the air. There is a certain beauty to this obscurity. It is also found in vellum paper and by controlling the opacity of the images on computer programs.











Strands 19





3. Still not completely satisfied with the solutions above, I realized after talking to Kate and Traci that my most basic love is, in fact, drawing. The direct sensation of the pencil touching the paper is one of my life's most precious experiences. I always carry a small notebook to make drawings. On my way to work, for example, I stop for coffee and do a drawing or two. Kate properly identified this process as what I was really all about. The reality is I love to draw.

Throughout my life I have turned to drawing, music, and photography as tools that helped me through tough times. I have used these tools during my present period of grieving for my wife and lifelong partner Marlene, who passed recently. I feel that I have been blessed with these gifts of creation that help me through this major present transition. These are tools that are aiding me through my lonely hours. It is there that I am able to find comfort. There is little that is of more importance than leading a truthful life and this project has given me the opportunity to rediscover my origins.

1931

1940

Beginning of The Great Depression  
 Roosevelt, President of USA  
 Stalin  
 Hitler  
 Lived in an foggy, San Francisco neighborhood  
 Born in Peabody, Massachusetts on May 1 1931

1941

1950

Winston Churchill  
 Pearl Harbor  
 Artwork displayed in Elementary School  
 Stationed in Korea with US Marines  
 Joined US Navy  
 Football Team  
 George Washington High School

1951

1960

Met Marlene Roth  
 Became Pen Pals with Marlene Roth  
 Designed Noon Forum posters for SRI  
 Became friends with designer G.D. Smith and  
 Met Louis Danzinger, Graphic

1961

1970

Married Marlene 9.3.55  
 Nathan Smidt born in 1962  
 Becca Smidt born in 1965  
 Began teaching at San Jose State University  
 Attended Aspen Design Conference with Harry  
 Opened studio in Palo Alto with new clients including  
 Was exposed to film making and other art forms

1971

1980

Moved into high rise office in Palo Alto  
 Recieved Art Director Best in Show Award for SFMOMA Catalogs  
 Worked on SJSU Gallery Announcements  
 Sold Sam Smidt Associates to employees and moved into one person

1981

1990

Began to work for Retail Clients  
 Tried a computer for first time at Adobe System  
 Many pieces accepted into SFMOMA Permanent Collection  
 The Minimal Space, The Audible Difference, 1x1:2 Projects, Cactus

1991

2000

Began projects for Healing Environments  
 Retired from teaching  
 Had a Retrospective in SJSU Gallery  
 Began projects for Fi Magazine

2001

Small Books designed for Healing Environments  
 Walking ritual and photographing 'Gifts of the Street'  
 Continued drawing  
 Experiments with Videos  
 Typeshow typographic compositions  
 Ebay Murals  
 Marlene passed away

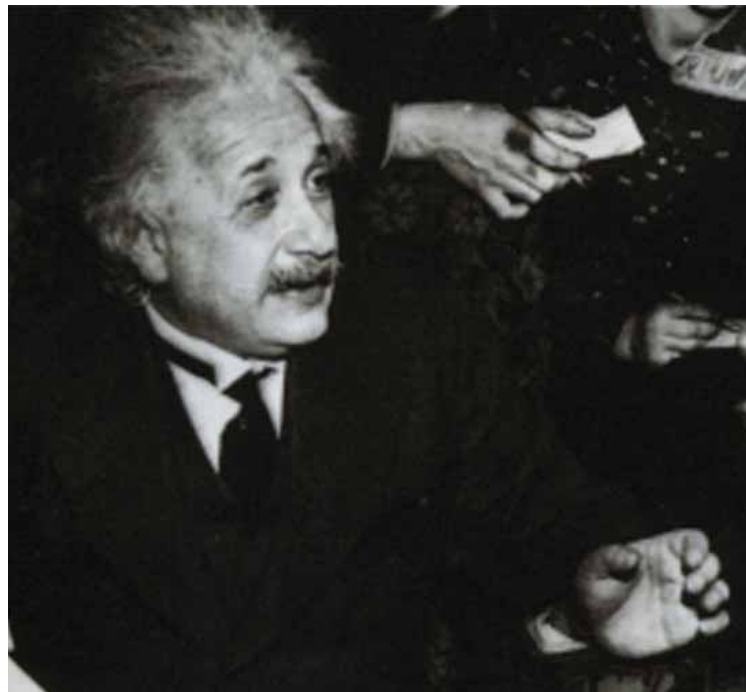
## *About Sam Smidt*

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Sam is a leading West Coast artist and designer, and is art director of Healing Environments' *A Light in the Mist* publications. He has worked with Kate and Traci for the last fourteen years.

A number of Sam's works are in the permanent design collection at SFMOMA, and were recently featured in *Graphis* magazine. His work also has been included in the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress. Sam is a professor emeritus at San Jose State University. Sam's studio is located in Palo Alto, California. His son Nathan and daughter Becca, who is also a graphic designer, are helping each other through their present transition.

To see more of Sam's work please visit [www.samsmidt.com](http://www.samsmidt.com)



## EVERYDAY OBJECTS

often turn into something deeply meaningful after the loss of something or someone close to us. Knowing that you can never capture a particular moment again. It is my fascination with the past, which has led me to this point, realizing an object or place may not always be there, seeing buildings vanish and moments passing by.

This catalog came together naturally because unknowingly, I have been working on this book my entire life. This collection of objects and places was originally meant to be documented as a means of historical preservation. Design documentation captures these places and objects at a particular place and time, designed from that era.

Driven by my fear of my history disappearing, wondering if my child would be able to enjoy the same things... if you don't know where you've come from, how do you know how you got to where you are now? Since design will always be subjective, there will always be a critic, someone who says it is not historical or worthy. A good design is about problem solving, not about personal preference or unsupported opinion. It's not good because it's old, it's old because it's still good.

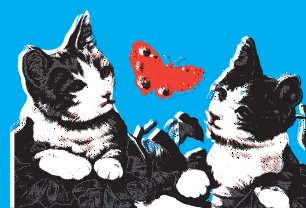
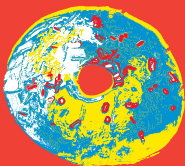
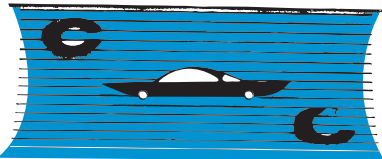
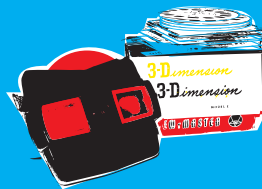
Since the recent passing of my mom, the things I had saved became more than historical preservation but it was my personal history as well, a sort of timeline of my life. History doesn't look like history when you are living through it. This is a catalog of my life through design appreciation.



This is more than just a photo. It represents memories of our times together and the story behind each photo or object is what makes this a map of my life. My life must be lived moving forward, but I can only understand it by looking backward. Time goes so quickly, things change so fast, a memory from a photo or object on the shelf is sometimes all we have left to remind us of who we are and where we came from. Memories to me are a way of holding on to the things I love, the things I am, the things I never want to lose. Dreams take me to where I want to go.

#### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Why did I chose to illustrate the objects and signage? Often I see the world as an over-simplified graphics. Following in my father Sam Smidt's footsteps as a graphic designer, I have made several connections between life and design. As a designer you learn to break a problem down to its simplest form and meaning. Keeping only the information necessary, "keep it simple" is a motto often used by designers. Sam has provided me with a great life filled with visual stimulation and appreciation for great works of art and design. Whether it is architecture, graphic design or industrial design the best design and longest lasting design is always the one where it is a combination of form and function. These graphics represent a catalog, a journey through my memory, a visual outline of my life.







# Cottoncandy

candy, plus



kitchen clock



## *About Becca Smidt*

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I am a graphic designer based in San Francisco, California. Specializing in Corporate Identity for print and online design, a visual problem solver. Daughter of well-known graphic designer Sam Smidt, I have been committed to graphic design since childhood. Sam and I have always worked together on design and continue to do so, such as the design and development of Healing Environments' website: [healingenvironments.org](http://healingenvironments.org). Sam was also one of my teachers at San Jose State where I received my BS in Graphic Design. I have worked on a variety of exciting projects with top professionals and worldwide companies. My work has appeared in publications such as The Big Book of Logos, Bullet Proof Logos, FI Magazine, Graphis Shopping Bags, Newest Logos of California, and an article in Step-by-Step Magazine.

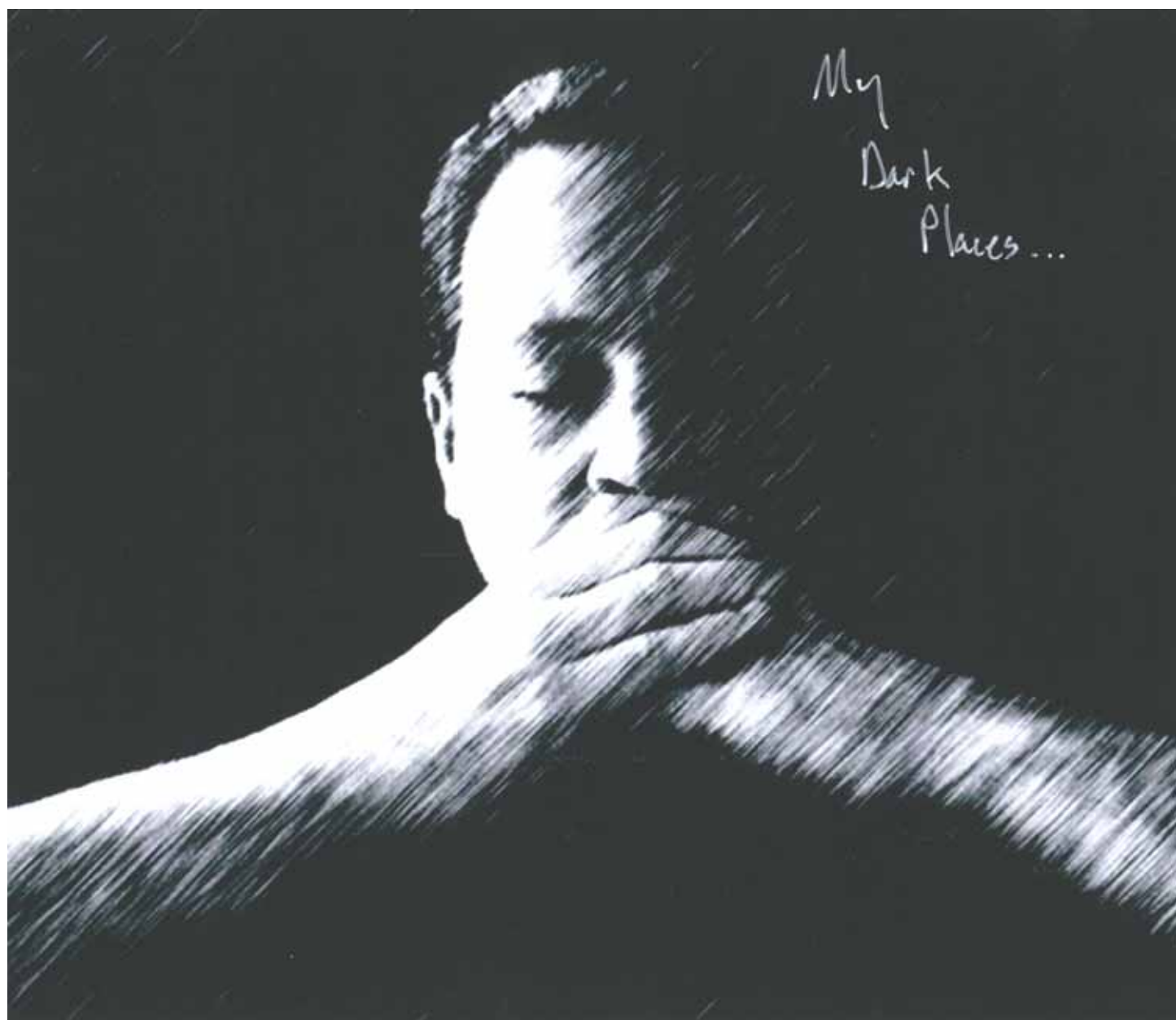
I work from my studio in the Mission district, on freelance graphic design projects and illustrations. A great source of inspiration is the excitement and playfulness of my 8 year old daughter Sarah, a budding artist.

See more of my work at [beccasmidt.com](http://beccasmidt.com).

# THE SLIDE

Have you ever had to tell your dad you thought you were going crazy? I am not talking about crazy as in a figure of speech. I am talking about padded walls and straight jacket, losing it mentally kind of crazy. Not exactly the conversation you dream about having with your father when you are playing catch in the backyard when you are a kid. But there I was, 20 years old, on the phone struggling to find the words to describe the situation that I found myself in. How do you tell your dad that you feel like you are going to die at any moment, yet have no rational reason to explain the thoughts. It isn't easy. I had avoided making this call for several weeks, but I finally found myself so beat down and exhausted mentally that there really was no other option. I couldn't "tough it out" or "walk it off" or even "rub some dirt on it." None of the feel good catch-phrases of my suburban upbringing were going to save me now. After trying several different angles to attack the conversation, I was past the point of being able to sugar-coat my thoughts. I simply sat at my desk, hunched over with my head in my hand, and said, "Dad, I think I am losing my mind." Probably the single most difficult phrase I have ever had to utter in my life.

It didn't happen overnight, but it was a gradual process of my pulling back from most of the things that I seemed to enjoy in life. It was not a conscious decision, but a course of action that I was compelled to take seemingly out of necessity. What could cause all of this to change? Ways to cope



with the feelings and live my life as student / twenty-something / life of the party. It was essentially the most uncomfortable feeling that you could ever have. I didn't want to live in my own skin because I couldn't. That isn't really an option because your skin is the only one you've got and you can't trade it in for a different one.

After dealing with the initial physical symptoms I was beset with an onslaught of mental ones that would accompany them. I was constantly darting my eyes around, scanning for some unknown danger that would not reveal itself. I would imagine the worst case scenario for any activity I was undertaking. It was as if I thought in my heart of hearts that something terrible was going to happen, yet I did not know what or why. All I knew was that it was going to happen and there was nothing I could do about it. I was like the kid in the comic books walking around with a rain cloud over only him, while everyone else enjoyed the sun and fun.

This feeling was bad enough when I was by myself, but if people or an unfamiliar environment were added, then that spelled disaster. I was certain that I would do something dumb or embarrass myself if I was out with my friends. If I was at a place that was not within 100 feet of my house I would start to experience my physical symptoms and then my thoughts would come crashing down on me like an avalanche.

And when I wasn't experiencing any mental or physical symptoms I was busy thinking about them. I was sure that they would return at any moment. I had to be on my guard against them at all times. I was playing a mental game of chess with an unnamed grand master, and I was losing big time.



I could somewhat handle these attacks if I were alone in my room. I would put the covers over my head and hope that they passed. At night I would walk for hours around the boardwalk that surrounded my neighborhood trying to make them stop so I could find some peace and respite in sleep. This led to me going out socially less and less.

My friends would say, "Hey, you wanna go grab a drink?" or "Let's go over to Bruce's house in PB." Couldn't do it. I would think of all manner of excuses not to go. I was tired, or I was watching something on TV, or I needed to lather, rinse and repeat. Pretty much anything that would lead to me not having to leave my safe zone.

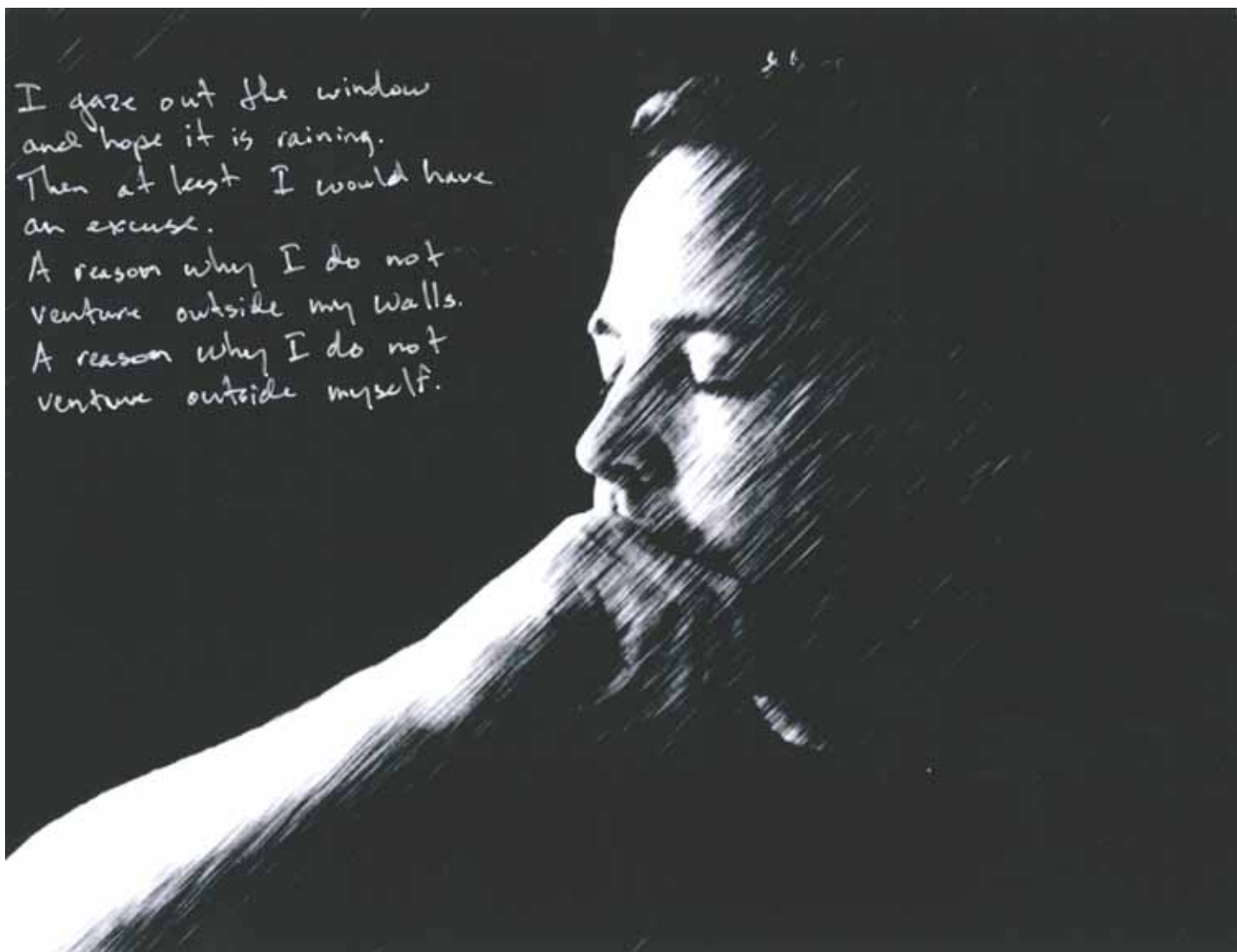
Even on the rare occasion I did make it to one of these trips or events there was always a backup plan in case I had to leave early. Before we even embarked I would say that my stomach hurt or that I was kind of tired, so that when I ultimately would bail on the situation it wouldn't come as a total surprise to my friends. I wouldn't just disappear and then have to go through the uncomfortable conversation of explaining why I left. You can't really tell the friends that you freaked out and had to go home because you thought you were going to die.

That's actually the next step in the evolution of my slide into illness. I thought... no, I was certain that I was going to die. I didn't have visions of an apocalyptic end, or even a runaway taxicab, but it was coming. I didn't know from what or why, I just knew that my demise was imminent.

I retreated more and more into the domain of my room with my door closed. I was shutting out my friends

I gaze out the window  
and hope it is raining.  
Then at least I would have  
an excuse.

A reason why I do not  
venture outside my walls.  
A reason why I do not  
venture outside myself.



and shutting in my thoughts. My mind was constantly kept occupied with thoughts of the all too certain fate that I was facing. Sleep was the only time I was OK because my overactive conscious mind was turned off. I would try to sleep as much as possible. 10 hours, 12 hours, whatever. As long as I was asleep it would shorten the day, thus shortening the time I had to deal with the thoughts that were making a coup attempt on my sanity.

My friends stopped even asking me to go out after awhile. I guess you can only hear “no” so many times before you finally just stop going through the motions of passing along the courtesy invite. Everything became distant to me. I was floating through a life that was not my own. I did not choose this, I did not ask for this. Or did I? Had I done something wrong that brought this on myself? Was this somehow my fault? Those are the thoughts that I was left with towards the end. I was grasping at straws, straining for the few moments of clarity where I could make sense of what was happening to me.

Whatever it was I was powerless to stop it, and powerless to reach out for help. I didn’t know where I would turn should I even seek out help. I was a prisoner of my own mind and this was turning into life without parole.

I was having a particularly tough time of it when I was trying to trudge through my thoughts and emotions to take one of my final exams. I drove up to class only to be consumed by feelings of dread. I had barely made it up the steep hill to my college campus when I felt the overwhelming need to turn around and go home. I felt as if I would pass out at any moment if I did not

get back to my room. I didn't think I was going to make it, but somehow I did. I crawled into my bed and threw on a hooded sweatshirt, pulled the hood over my head, and then the covers over that and by the grace of God was able to fall asleep.


I awoke with a tightness in my chest that I hadn't felt before. It was a strong pain that made me sure that this was it. I was finally having the heart attack that was going to kill me. After countless times of thinking about heading to the hospital and feeling ridiculous about it, I felt as though I really had no choice this time. I either had to get to a hospital or die.

I drove myself to a small hospital in Hillcrest, a section of San Diego. My mind was racing as I thought of what I was going to say to the doctor or nurse that would most certainly smile and ask, "Now what seems to be the problem?" "Well, I am having a heart attack and I am losing my fucking mind. Got a prescription for that?"

Time passed very slowly as I struggled to fill out the intake form with my shaking hand and occupy my mind by listening to XTRA 690, the local sports station. Then it was more waiting for someone to take me into see the doctor. Then more waiting once I was back in one of the beds. I hate hospitals. I hate their smell, the squeak of your shoes on the floor, the sanitary white walls, everything.

You know what is good about waiting in a hospital when you are having a heart attack/nervous breakdown? Nothing. Here I was, positive that I would collapse at any moment and I had the pleasure of hearing the prison inmate that had recently been brought in and chained to the bed next to mine talk about how he had had rectal





My thoughts are not my own.  
They are rooted in nothing,  
but that nothing knows  
no bounds.

The story plays over in  
my head,  
but it is not my own.

surgery. I think I was even able to laugh, but I am not sure.

Finally it was my turn to see the doctor. I was now going to get the relief that I had been searching for. I had gone over what I was going to say in my head countless times as I stared at the cliché of a wall clock in the waiting room. Surely he would know what was going on. Surely he would save me from this dementia I was going through. I was going to be fine. That was the first time in 4 months that I can remember having some actual real thoughts of hope, that somehow things were going to be ok. It went less than ideally.

Him: "What seems to be the problem?"

Me: "My chest is really tight and I think something bad is going to happen."

Him: "Have you done anything strenuous that would cause you chest pain?"

Me: "I don't think so."

Then he gave me a few cursory glances, checked my breathing and blood pressure before he prescribed me some Ibuprofen. Fucking Advil, you have got to be kidding me. My slide had taken me from the ridiculous to the sublime. Thanks for the Advil doc, maybe my backache will go away, I am going to go home and die now.

From here I turned to one of my last bastions of alternative medicine for someone in my situation...grilled cheese and tomato soup. That had always made me feel better when I was a kid, and I longed for the innocence of those days. I wanted to not know what a heart attack was. I wanted to not feel the way I felt. I wanted it to all end. And the answer I came up with was grilled cheese and tomato soup.

I went home and ate, and it did make me feel a bit better. My mind was still swimming with thoughts

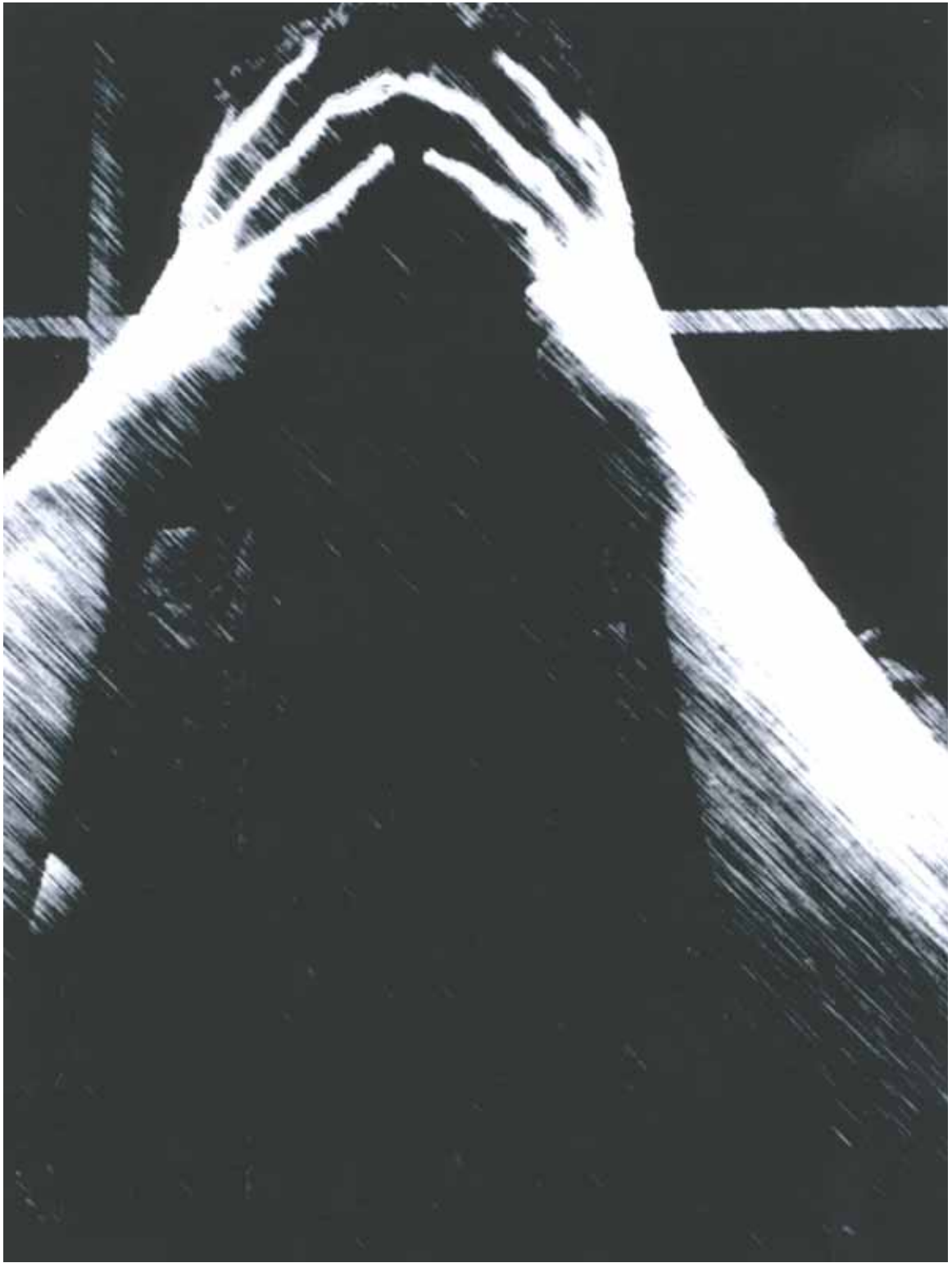
of what was happening to me. I had no answers. I had nowhere to turn. For the last 4 or 5 months I had been dealing with this entire process on my own. My thoughts and fears known only to me. I didn't dare tell a soul, because there was no logical explanation why this was happening to me. Besides, what could anyone do?

I was at my wit's end. I had nothing. I was broken down mentally and physically. I had isolated myself from my friends and everything that I enjoyed in life. I had nothing. I had hit rock bottom with a thud and man did it suck.

This was it, there was nothing left to do. I had to reach out to someone. There had to be someone out there who could save me from this nothing that I was living.

Sobbing to myself as I picked up my cell phone to call...

"Hello, Dad. It's your son. Something is very wrong with me. I think I am going crazy. I think I am losing my mind."





### *About Hadleigh Reid*

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Hadleigh Reid's name will be familiar to our readers as author of our last publication, *For Mom*, his touching tribute to his long departed mother.

While in college, Hadleigh suffered a series of crippling panic attacks, which led him to question his sanity.

Now thirty, Hadleigh works for Healing Environments, in charge of our archived publications, and contributes his significant writing skills to our publications, as well as helping us formulate our future.



*Muffin Hyche*

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## NO PATIENCE FOR A RUNNING WORLD

I'm sitting on the edge of life as I know it. Eyes closed tightly even the darkest night couldn't seep in.

Legs dangling in the freefall of the moment. Not one whimper in my throat.

Hair blowing sharp in the breeze like razor blades slicing my face.

I grit my teeth in anguish as the muscles in my throat grow with tension.

My nostrils flair, my stomach quivers.

Am I going to do it again?

My muscles contract as the blood pulsates through my brain.

Am I going to do it again?

My toes curl as my feet cramp and somewhere my voice emerges from an unknown place whispering yes...

My breath releases the power of my world and I'm gone.

Gone in hope to come back as I once was.



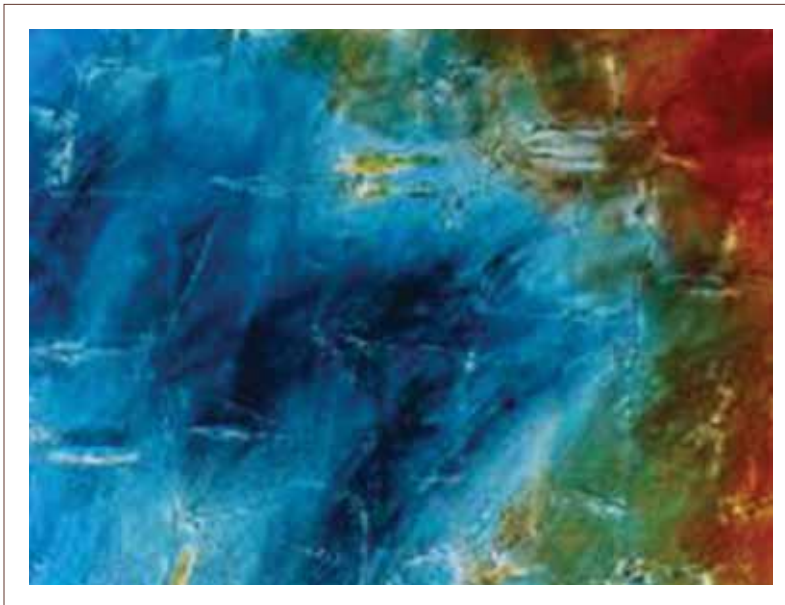
## *About Muffin Hyche*

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I asked my friend Muffin Hyche to do a painting based on the story “The Slide.” She is a dear friend and an amazing artist. Muffin’s unique style of combining abstract expressionism with minimalist qualities creates an explosion of acrylic colors and heavy textures.

Her bold creations are a clear, vivid view of the emotions of Muffin herself. Each piece she creates tells a unique story – a snapshot of emotion captured on canvas, then eloquently conveyed by words in a poem that is attached to each piece. These creative poems reflect Muffin’s innermost thoughts of life, love, destiny and the freedom to live life on one’s own terms.

You can see more of her work at [www.muffinart.com](http://www.muffinart.com)



Bérnard

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# LAST AUGUST,

Traci and I had lunch with Bérnard who works in hospice, at Garibaldi's restaurant in San Francisco. We shared with Bérnard the subject of our forthcoming publication, *Mapping the Journey: Body and Soul*. Bérnard in turn shared with us that he had over the years, used the art of tattoo to chronicle his life's journey. We asked eagerly if there was any chance Bérnard might share his "Body Map" with our readers. He courageously agreed.











I have a number of tattoos which I started to earn after my last parent was dying. I believe it was my way of chronicling my spiritual journey, familial identity, cultural heritage, my sense of being and belonging.

I have two tattoos remembering my parents, a Welsh dragon

on my left leg for my mum, and a Scottish lion and St. Andrew's cross on my left forearm for my dad. I have 3 bears (mind, body, and soul) on my right lower abdomen for my given name Bérnard which means bear heart.



I have a hawk on my left shoulder blade. In Celtic mythology the hawk was the bird of transitions in life journeys and journeys from this life to the next. It was inspired on my last day in the monastery. During my morning meditation I saw a hawk ...thus the hawk is death and life looking over my shoulder reminding me to live. In one talon (the right) a crown of thorns, a symbol not so much of my birth religion as much as it is a reminder of mortification of false self. In the left talon a serpent ...the serpent of sensuality and sexuality, not dead or dying; an important energy, gripped, harnessed in the inevitability of mortality.







The Koi is swimming; negotiating the turbulent waters and rocks is a symbol of courage, the ability to attain high goals and overcome life's difficulties.

The Lotus is the symbol of the Buddhas nature, pure and ascendant: a recognition of my practice in Buddhism. The Peony is a sign of wealth, good fortune and prosperity.

The Willow is a moon tree and I am a cancer: it is also the tree of the mystic, and of wisdom.

The Triquetra is the symbol of unity of three which is pervasive in human reality (mind, body, spirit/earth, water, air/triune brain).

The Om (a symbol of the resounding unending sound) on my neck at the top of the spine: where body and mind interweave, and one on my left thumb.



The hawk flies amidst waters, rocks, flowers on my back, so too there the Koi fish swim and an ancient willow weaves its way into the images. Over my left chest plate a Triquetra in a circular Celtic knot. My right arm a sleeve of water, lotus, peony, rocks, a dragonfly and a Celtic circle of life. On my right shoulder Chinese characters for the year of the dog, a 69 for cancer, and the bear claw imprint for my name.















## *About Bernard*

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Bernard's career in social services began as a volunteer at the Dolywern Cheshire home in Northern Wales in the early 1970's. Bernard moved to the US in 1976. Since graduating from college he has worked with at risk youth, and learning challenged kids. When he moved to New York City, he was invited to a year long residency in Clinical Pastoral Care as a chaplain resident. While in residence, he pioneered Pastoral Care at the Planetree unit and the Out Patient Dialysis clinic, becoming instrumental in aiding interventions to increase patient compliance to the plan of care. He was the lead provider for Pastoral Care for the AIDS and Oncology units.

After spending close to a year in a Benedictine monastery in upstate New York, Bernard returned to NYC to become the Intake Coordinator for an East Side agency serving dual and triple diagnosed homeless adults. He received an award of recognition for service from The Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, and a number of awards from New York City's Police Department for his service as an Auxiliary Police Officer in the 10th Precinct.

In 1998 he moved to the Bay Area. He worked for a Peninsula agency serving homeless families and children. In 2001 Bernard was recruited to hospice in San Francisco. In his current position in addition to direct care and services he has won awards, state recognition for best practice, published, spoken at national conferences, symposiums and workshops locally and abroad in Asia.

He is passionate about his work and about life. He says,  
“Hospice is about life, it is about living; and dying occurs in  
the midst of it all, it is an integral expression of our being.”



## MY PARENTS HAD

a fun New Year's Eve, and, as a result I was called from the deep mystery on October 2, 1949. "Wow, interesting journey, Mom and Pop!"

I notice myself saying that a lot these days. "Interesting." If I've learned anything, it's that life holds a great deal of loss. I try to figure out what I can learn about it all, to be as kind as I can be, and not to be so hard on myself when I don't handle things as well as I might.

Here were some of the major road signs. In 1976 I was raped and almost killed by a knife (the rapist came back 6 weeks later and chopped my back door down with an ax – lucky for me that I was next door, afraid to sleep in my house). Two years later, another exit sign: a knife held by my girlfriend at the time, almost killed again (a cycle of violence, since she had been horribly abused as a child). In 1996 Mom died on New Year's Day and Pop on June 20. And five years ago, yet another knife: the surgeon slit open my gut and gave me life by cutting out cancer.

Which leads me to the other major road signs of my life: love, connection, gratitude, laughter, support. Today is a gift, find your own way, we all need support, be present in the moment, show up for your life. Remember that the Buddha said, "You can search the whole universe and not find a single being more worthy of loving kindness than oneself." We need to listen deeply to ourselves and to others, slow down, and allow ourselves to appreciate the





## A Recipe for Grief

If you choose to follow this recipe  
you can trace your whole life's arc—  
open every cupboard wide, and  
measure your ingredients  
with compassion.  
Just this once,  
leave judgment on its shelf

Now  
take a loss,  
any loss,  
any loss will do  
and place it on the altar of your heart

Don't leave anything out—  
Into the bowl of your empty hands  
sift memories—sweet, sour, bitter, salt  
crack open all your regrets  
and every if only

Add tears, as many as you need—  
and more, the bowl will hold them.  
Then rest, there is nothing  
more to do

When you are ready  
hold tight to patience and courage  
and plunge deep  
pattering whatever is left

Then taste,  
taste your grief  
season it well with your longing

Turn your pain over and over  
in your loneliness  
Until  
the bitter sweetness fills your senses  
and the love consumes your heart

By Penelope Wisner  
with Carol Schlessinger

Photo by Carol Schlessinger  
Fort Funston





world and all this planet contains. I believe each one of us has the capacity to learn and grow, to love and be kind. It takes work and patience, not always an easy combination.

On April 14, 2008, another road sign: someone I loved was killed by a falling redwood branch in Stern Grove, San Francisco, California. If a tree falls in the forest and no one hears, was there really sound? If a tree falls in the forest and you are under it, are you really dead?

Everything on this earth is changing and living beings are dying all the time. How do we live our lives and laugh and love and grieve? One day, one second at a time. It is possible, yes, we can bear it, that way.

For me the process of dealing with loss begins with taking it in, and that takes time. It takes mulling it around, even in dreams, listening to music, and then getting it out. A key part of my process is taking pictures: some I leave as they are; others I play with and change.

Everyone deals with loss in their own way, and each loss is different. I do think it's important to express our grief and let it out in some way. People walk, run, talk, write, sing, scream, cry, rage, dance, draw, paint, play, be in nature, be with animals. Slowly, slowly, we integrate the loss into our lives.

Love yourself, love others, love life with all it holds – sorrows and joys. That's what we know. And I figure the mystery at the end of this life will take care of itself, and I bow.

## *Photographs*

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1. A Recipe for Grief: a poem written by my best friend (who writes cookbooks for well-known chefs) and me after my 35-year-old cousin committed suicide in 2002. We all have our own recipes.

### CLOCKWISE FROM NORTHWEST CORNER

2. Sophie the cat – on her bed in San Francisco, CA.
3. Baby dolphin lying on rock at Fort Funston beach – San Francisco, CA.
4. One little section of the Remembrance Wall in Steve Huneck's Dog Chapel, Vt.
5. The neighbor's art piece transformed–Miraloma Park, San Francisco, CA.
6. Four crabs on a counter–San Rafael, CA.
7. A sea turtle–Kona, Hawaii.
8. Crying is okay here—from my San Francisco Streets series, just a stencil on pavement.
9. The bench under the Point Pinos lighthouse tree – Pacific Grove, CA.
10. On the road – northwest Arizona.
11. Golden Gate Bridge – from Marin county, CA.
12. Sea Horse – Monterey Bay Aquarium, Monterey, CA.
13. My sea sculpture – Pebble Beach, CA.

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## *About Carol Schlessinger*

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I live in San Francisco with my partner of 29 years, two dogs, a cat, and two brine shrimp, and I am blessed with wonderful friends. I walk at the beach at Fort Funston with my dogs as much as I can, and I love to garden.

A licensed clinical social worker, I've worked with the amazing people at Hospice By The Bay for nine years as Bereavement Coordinator, and have a small psychotherapy practice. Earlier I worked for six years as a psychiatric social worker on the Substance Abuse Inpatient Unit at the San Francisco VA Medical Center. And before that I've done everything from driving a school bus on Long Island to being a waitress at a Chinese restaurant in Cincinnati to being the manager of credit and collections for an international leasing company in downtown San Francisco. I remain grateful.





## THROUGH MY WORK

with Carpe Diem of the Mid-South, Wings Cancer Foundation, & HopeCircle, I have had the incredible privilege of being a companion to many people going through the cancer experience. Over 20 years, these families have shared their journeys with me, and I am in awe of their wisdom and grateful for all they have taught me about life and death.

Each of their lives and the lives of all who loved them were forever changed with the diagnosis that divided their lives into before and after cancer (b.c. and a.c.). Their diagnosis initially shattered their lives into many fragments which included brokenness, fear and at times suffering.

The dark side of my painting depicts this chaotic and uncertain time. Along with the dark times also came a time of enlightenment. Shrouded in light and a deep inner resilience of the human spirit, shattered fragments of life were transformed into a beautiful mosaic that symbolized wholeness and connection to a much greater mystery. Bearing witness to their “light” has given me hope and courage when I have confronted dark times in my own life. It has also taught me to live hope every day. The words on each of the fragments represent the bits and pieces of one of the most beautiful mosaics of hope, healing and humanity I’ve ever experienced. The HopeCircle bracelet represents a circle far greater than anything we could have created. It is symbolic of the community and communion shared within this sacred circle of life. This shared experience has connected us to our

circle of life. This shared experience has connected us to ourselves, to each other, to our community, and to our Higher Power. I have been a privileged and grateful companion.

### *Lilly Oncology on Canvas*

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Brenda created this work for Lilly Oncology on Canvas. The second biennial competition in 2006 saw more than 2,000 pieces of art from 43 countries submitted by people diagnosed with cancer, their friends, family, and health care providers. This rich and enduring collection of artwork traveled the world in 2007 and continues to touch the hearts and minds of people worldwide.

In recognition of the many voices that give this program resonance and meaning, Lilly Oncology presents the 2008 Lilly Oncology on Canvas International Art Competition and Exhibition in partnership with the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship.

To learn more please visit [www.lillyoncologyoncanvas.com](http://www.lillyoncologyoncanvas.com)

## *About Brenda Wiseman*

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When I began painting, I found that “joie de vivre” (Joy of Life) came not in seeking new vistas, but in having new eyes. New dimensions of life infused my world through color and light. The boundary between art and the art of living began to blur.

My profession as a psychiatric nurse, working with families experiencing cancer, inspires the psycho-spiritual nature of my work. My paintings unveil another dimension of the beauty and struggle of being human. When painting, I find that I completely lose myself and come home to myself in the same stroke. I hope that my art will be a portal for the viewer to explore both the human and spiritual dimensions of light, dark, beauty, mystery, transformation, and color in their own life.

In creating the painting, “Circle of Light” for Lily Oncology on Canvas it was my hope that I could express and honor the families who had given me the sacred privilege of being their companion as they lived and sometimes died with cancer. I hoped it would represent our shared story of the journey of hope, transformation, and triumph of the human spirit. When the National Coalition of Cancer Survivors chose this image among 2,000 paintings for their holiday Christmas card, it was the highest honor that I could have received as an artist. I hoped that my painting would honor their lives and pay homage to their stories.

## IN OUR FOURTEEN YEARS

of publications, Traci, Sam and I have frequently had the feeling that forces beyond ourselves played a part in their creation. We have half-jokingly referred to these forces as our editorial committee in the sky.

But only half-jokingly. Time and time again, production has been delayed, or accelerated, by the introduction of an unplanned element – a serendipitous submission if you will. Just such a phenomenon occurred recently when I received a sad and unexpected phone call from New Hampshire, where I spent seven years.

The husband of a very dear friend of mine, an oncology nurse named Diane Zaidlicz, had passed away tragically from a massive heart attack. When I read her son-in-law, Amos', touching obituary, I knew it was meant to conclude and bless this volume with its presence.



*Ronald S. Zaidlicz, D.V.M.*

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## RONALD S. ZAIDLICZ,

61, died of a heart attack in his home in Lee on Friday.

The following is a description of his tattoos.

RIGHT BICEP — PEACE SIGN AND HORSE SHOE.

Above all – Ron was a peaceful man. Known for his compassion, benevolence, and tenderheartedness – he was a fierce advocate for the needy and disenfranchised. Especially animals. His life work was the betterment and humane treatment of all walks of life. He was awarded a Doctor of Veterinarian Medicine from the University of Illinois – or as he called it – the big campus. He used his expertise to open his own veterinary practice, cofounded the National Organization for Wild American Horses and started the Wild Horse – Inmate Program in Colorado, where inmates learned to train and care for horses. Today, the USDA sorely misses Ron where he was supervising veterinary officer.

RIGHT FOREARM — EAGLE AND NATIVE AMERICAN  
DREAMCATCHER

Decide what you want. Believe it will happen. And you shall have it. Ron firmly believed this. He refused to put his destiny in anyone's hands but his own. And while he believed anything was possible, he also lived by a code. He had a tremendous sense of integrity, ethics and responsibility – and he lived to the letter of the

law. Freedom and pride were also paramount themes of Ron's life. He served in the US Army as a young man and had great respect and admiration for all who served.

#### LEFT FOREARM — THE ROAD

No part of this country is a stranger to Ron. He was born in Chicago on March 9th, 1947 to Alice and Richard Zaidlicz and was joined by his younger sister Cathy. Although Ron's journeys took him far from the windy city, his love for Chicago beef, smoking on the porch and Vienna Hot Dogs never left him. But above all, this is where he found the love of his life, Diane. Together, the young couple started a new life and a new family. First came Jennifer, Ron's true pride and joy – then Stephanie, forever his baby. The inseparable foursome bounced from the mountains of Colorado to Tennessee and finally settled in New Hampshire. The fact the slogan "live free or die" never suited anyone better than Ron, is entirely coincidence. In Lee, he found a brotherhood as a volunteer at the fire department – where he served as a fireman for 16 years. Ron truly had an impact wherever the road took him and given the choice, he traveled it on his Harley, with Diane holding on tight.

#### LEFT BICEP — "GOOD LUCK. GOOD JOURNEY."

This is his farewell to all of us – as a cherished husband, father, son, brother, uncle, cousin, colleague, friend and citizen. But especially to his new grandson and spitting image Oscar, whose journey is just beginning. Born just 5 weeks ago, little Oscar may never understand the depths of his grandfather's impact on his life. But somehow we think he's going to love Vienna Hot Dogs.

# IN MEMORIAM

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RON ZAIDLICH 1947-2008

## *Mapping Your Own Journey*

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We hope we have inspired you to map your own journey. When doing so, consider the following:

- 1) Consider mapping a pivotal issue or rainshed event, such as an illness or loss. Don't necessarily attempt to map your entire life.
- 2) Make as many maps as you feel moved to. Don't limit yourself to one map.
- 3) Choose your most comfortable medium (or a combination of): collage, photography, drawing or simply words.
- 4) Work intuitively rather than critically. Turn off your inner critic.
- 5) This map is for you and you alone. Don't let others critique it. It expresses your truth. The process itself is healing.
- 6) Reflect on your map. How did you come to be here? Is it where you want to be? Where do you want to go from here?