

Healing Our Inner Violence

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Introduction of Carolyn W. Treadway

Carolyn Wilbur Treadway was born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania and, like many generations of her mother's family, is a birthright Quaker. She was raised in Des Moines, Iowa where her

parents moved to direct an AFSC relocation hostel for the Nisei during World War II. She was educated at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana; International Christian University in Tokyo, Japan; and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. With her husband Roy Treadway she shares the parenting of three young adult children: Nathan 19, Laura 16, and Anna 15. This year the Treadways have an additional family member: Ayumi Takahashi, an exchange student from Asahikawa, Japan, for whom they are host family. Carolyn and Roy are founding members of Bloomington-Normal Friends Meeting.

Carolyn is an accredited and certified pastoral counselor, family therapist, and social worker. Currently she is Coordinator of Counseling Services and Continuing Education for BroMenn Counseling Services in Bloomington, Illinois where she is therapist, supervisor, teacher, and administrator. Illinois Yearly Meeting provides denominational endorsement for Carolyn's pastoral counseling ministry. Activities that help her maintain some balance in a busy life are piano playing, biking, and swimming. Planetary concerns are important to Carolyn; an emerging new interest for her in this regard is leading "deep ecology" workshops.

Healing Our Inner Violence

I am very mindful that today is Hiroshima day. Forty-four years ago today, we Americans dropped the bomb that altered forever our perceptions of our world, our future, even our theology.¹ To me, Hiroshima is the ultimate image of violence unleashed, and it has been a formative event in my own life. I am impacted each day, in each cell of my very being, by the fact that Hiroshima has happened. I cannot speak to you on this day -- especially about violence and about Japan -- without remembrance of this anniversary.

Take a few minutes to look around you and be aware of how very precious it all is -- this lovely old place, these dear, dear people. Take it in deeply. Know that we too could be instantly vaporized, leaving only human shadows on stone as happened to some in Hiroshima on that fateful day. In silence, give profound thanks for how fortunate we are, for all we have, for all that is and endures despite great fragility and constant change. Offer your own prayers of commitment to tending your own and our world's violence so that there will be NO MORE HIROSHIMAS. Never! Not ever again ... Also open your minds and hearts to the realization that *we can be, we are*, agents of transformation for the healing and remaking of our world.

Last August I was privileged to represent Illinois Yearly Meeting at the Friends World Committee for Consultation Triennial in Tokyo, Japan. This wonderful conference and my long dreamed of return-to-Asia trip surrounding it were very precious opportunities for me. To express my deep appreciation to IYM for selecting me to go, I want to share some reflections from this special trip. I also want to use my geographic travels as a way of talking about my own ongoing spiritual journey. First, I shall tell you about the beginning of my trip, for to me those earliest days convey the essence of my whole trip, and of this talk -- the journey from violence to healing and transformation.

One year and four days ago, just at this time, I stood in a large, restless crowd at Chicago's O'Hare airport. I had planned each part of my month-long trip well in advance and with meticulous care. In Hong Kong, our first scheduled stop, prepaid hotel reservations and friends

to meet our plane were waiting. Thus imagine my dismay to learn that our airplane was malfunctioning and our flight was postponed until a different one could be flown in! Because of all the delays, we missed any possible connecting flights and on the spot had to give up the whole Hong Kong part of our trip.

In response to my distress about this, my travel companion and dear friend Dorothy Lenk said: "Let's make a decision right now. Are we going to press and fret our way through this trip, or are we going to be open to and learn from whatever may happen and just take it as it comes?" Instantly, "take it as it comes" became the motto for our trip, and an ongoing spiritual lesson as well. In fact, much spiritual teaching emphasizes the importance of living fully in each moment. But this wasn't -- and isn't -- always easy to do.

The twelve long hours I waited at O'Hare were our daughter Laura's last waking hours at home before leaving for a whole year as an exchange student in Hokkaido, Japan. Just the preceding afternoon, our son Nathan had left home for his first year in college via an Earlham pre-term in the Canadian wilderness. I had then packed Laura's bags and my own until 4 a.m., just three hours before leaving for Chicago. So I was exhausted, and also extremely sad. I had pressed so hard to get all of us ready that not until I left home did I finally to slow down enough to *feel* the impact of our close family of five scattering in all directions at once. This was hardest on Roy and Anna who remained at home, but as I waited in O'Hare, it was very hard for me to be setting off for Asia without my beloved family. How could we have made all those choices which led to my going without them? So I sat at O'Hare, waiting and waiting -- and crying. What a way to start a dream trip!!

In order to "take this trip as it came" and to be open to receiving whatever it might bring, I had to get my hurting or "wounded" self out of the way. To do this, I first had to tend myself by deliberately taking time to grieve and to rest in order to free myself from the inner turmoil -- the violence -- which I had caused myself by pressing so hard for so long against the constraints of time. I also was able to receive nurture from my caring friend, which helped too.

One year ago today, we were touring magnificent Bangkok with my generous and hospitable Thai friends. I arrived in Thailand still in a state of depletion and still acutely missing my family. Yet something incredible happened for me in those first days in this beautiful country of beautiful people. Each amazing new sight, each event, each interaction with friends old and new fed me, nurtured me, held me. Loss gave way to abundance, pain changed to overflowing joy. As I traveled on and on, I felt myself relaxing, opening, deepening. Why grieve about leaving one so special place or person when each passing hour would bring another, and yet another? Around *each* bend was something else amazing, exquisite, and precious. It was unbelievable! No different from the potential for each of us every day, but in those glorious days I was *aware*, and I could feel my spirit open. This openness remained throughout and beyond the trip. Experientially I felt God saying to me: "*All* these wonders are of *my* creation. I set before you my bountiful table. Feast and be blessed." And I felt *so* blessed by the incredible beauty of *each* place, *each* person, *each* hour. I felt fed and filled by God's nurture in Thailand and later, at the Daibutsu of Nara, Japan, I literally felt myself being held in Buddha's great hand. These were spiritual experiences I shall *never* forget. They were so healing! They helped to open my heart.

Heart opening is an important goal of my spiritual journey, for as the Buddhists teach us, "the heart that breaks open can encompass the whole world."

The Tokyo Triennial was held on the campus of my beloved alma mater, International Christian University, where I had spent my junior year twenty-eight years before. It was so special to return to this place where for a year I had sought to follow Thoreau's words: "Rise free from care before the dawn and seek adventure." Almost as if entering a time warp, I got deeply in touch with my past youthful, adventurous self. At the close of the Triennial, I returned to my old Tokyo home, on the same day that my Japanese "sister's" husband, a high ranking Toshiba executive, returned from a business conference in Switzerland. He described economic agreements made at his conference which would affect the future of world trade, then asked me: "What did you do at your conference?" I could not answer his question, nor escape it. On my whole trip I met people from the other side of the world, I connected deeply with them, and I loved them. But so what!! Of what value is this? Just what *am* I doing with my trip, my resources, my time, and my life toward the healing of our world? I still ponder these questions...

My Triennial roommate was Jo Vallentine, our keynote speaker, Quaker peace activist, and powerful national senator from Australia. When I told her of my awe at all she is doing for her country and our world, Jo replied: "The therapeutic work you do, in helping people come to peace within themselves, is the most important work." This left me much to ponder, too. Just what *do* I do as a pastoral counselor and therapist to help others heal and find inner peace? What *is* needed for healing to take place? My talk today grows out of questions raised by friends from half a world away. Their questions have helped me deepen my understanding of the similarity between the therapeutic and the spiritual. In fact both are different dimensions of the *same* journey toward wholeness and transformation, which involves a change or loss of self, a giving up, and letting go so that old ways can be made new.

When last December's mail brought the invitation to give this Plummer lecture, I was stunned. I certainly do not think of myself as a spiritual teacher! I wrestled mightily with my ability and readiness to speak about my own spiritual journey because it is still so very much in process. For some, spiritual awakening and even mystical experiences come dramatically or easily. Not so for me. My longing to know the Spirit has always been inextricably related with my longing to feel at peace within my own heart. My personal journey toward the Spirit, toward healing, toward inner peace-full-ness has been a quest that never ends. All too often, I am restless, unrooted, uncentered deep within.

Yet, almost instantly after reading the letter of invitation, I *knew* that I had a topic -- "Healing Inner Violence" -- and that I *was* to speak to it. For some weeks I fought this imperative, but this topic simply WOULD NOT LET GO OF ME! Since then, I have been constantly aware of this topic, and have often despaired about trying to address it and to live it. I could move ahead only as I could painfully let go of what I thought *I* was trying to say and surrender to the realization that *I* have no spiritual message -- for only *God's* message unfolding through me and through each of us is the spiritual one. Increasingly I realized that preparing to speak to others provided an opening for me to address that which continuously needs healing within myself. Once again I am called to teach others what *I* need to learn! Whenever this happens, it is a profound and

humbling experience. So, dear IYM, I thank you for offering me another opportunity to grow, and to find community, for this talk was gestated through dialogue with others.

Four years ago, I spoke to you of inward and outward empowerment in my IYM keynote speech, "Awakening Our Power."² Today I want to reflect more deeply upon the inner part of the story. As a pastoral counselor and supervisor who hears many persons' inner stories (as well as knowing my own), I am constantly aware of the complex and myriad ways we persons feel disharmony within ourselves, in our relationships, and in our connection with God. To me, as we can heal the disharmony and alienation we experience, our hearts can open enough to allow the Spirit to become central. I believe the Spirit is already within us, awaiting our awareness, openness, and surrender, able to reach out to us even as we are trying to grow. Yet we can be so very far from this Spirit! What, inside us, blocks us from oneness with the Spirit, from the Spirit being present to us and through us each day in all ways?

To me, it is the violence *within ourselves* which thwarts our inner peace and blocks us from healing our relationships with our own selves, others, and God. We Quakers have recently become more aware of our own family violence, which is an outward manifestation of our inner violence. But I think we need to be much more mindful of the many kinds of violence we carry within ourselves and the violence we constantly commit *toward ourselves*, and, consequently, toward others. We need to find ways to heal this inner violence, and to transform it into the capacity for and expression of love. For it is *love* that heals. It is love that connects us with and reflects the Spirit.

We do not like to admit there *is* violence within each one of us, and all too quickly we emphasize how greatly violence differs in type and degree. The Quaker emphasis on the Inner Light has left me ill prepared to deal with the inner dark in myself or in others, yet sometimes that darkness abounds. We need to acknowledge and grapple with this, for we cannot heal what we cannot see and what we refuse to name or to encounter.

As I think about violence and healing, it is especially my clients who become my teachers. It is they who hold up to me mirrors in which I learn to see myself, and they who teach me of the reciprocity of healing, for as I heal them, they heal me. In the past few years, I have done intensive work with incest survivors and with a few persons who have multiple personalities, and/or post-traumatic stress, and/or are victims of satanic cults. These dear and troubled people have taught me simultaneously about the power of darkness and the power of light. The terror, violation, and brutality which these people I care about have lived through are horrible beyond belief. Yet I do believe them, for I have been with them as they relived some of their annihilative experiences through memories and flashbacks. Why some of these persons are still alive I cannot comprehend, and how they can be loving humans instead of inhumane like those who raised them is to me a deeply powerful testament to the incredible resilience of the human spirit, and living proof that inner violence can be changed and healed.

How *can* this healing occur? I believe that healing can be accomplished only through the love of individual persons, through the individual healer allowing her own soul to become the battleground between good and evil, as she encounters another person in depth.³ An incident occurred in my incest survivor therapy group which helped me understand this battleground and

the connection between my own inner violence or peace and that of my clients. One evening the group discussed the parallels between their childhood abuse and living through war. One woman became so enraged that she decided to go kill her perpetrator, *now*. As she and the group became increasingly upset, I grew calmer and quieter, and I could say with authority as well as compassion and love: "No, you will *not* leave my office until you are calm, but you can be as angry as you want *here*." And angry she was, indeed. I listened, validated her rage, and helped her express it safely.

For two years my own spiritual quest has taken me into holotropic therapy, or breathwork. In the carefully structured and protected environment of these workshops, evocative rhythmic breathing and music designed to activate the chakras (energy centers of the body) enable participants to reach altered states of consciousness in which deep level emotional, psychic, and spiritual healing can occur. A few days after the incest group incident I just described, I was at a breathwork workshop surrounded by several loudly distressed incest survivors. In my state of semi-altered consciousness, a message came to me clearly: "In the cacophony of incest, your task is to become the white rose." I am still seeking to understand just what this metaphoric message means for me.

Soon thereafter, I began to understand experientially, though not cognitively, T. S. Eliot's statement: "The rose and the fire are one."⁴ Again it was a precious client who was my teacher. She let me know that in certain of our interactions, *I* had caused her much distress. Once again I painfully realized that even in the very acts of loving and caring for persons I seek to help, I may unwittingly hurt them and/or block their healing and growth. As I do, the rose and the fire run together, melting the boundaries between us. *Both* of us are affected by the pain and blockages. *Both* of us are potential healers in this situation. We are not different here; we are alike.

How easy it is for *any* of us to hurt another or ourselves -- or to be violent toward others or ourselves in myriad ways even when we have no intention of doing so! Others and self cannot be separated; in looking at you, I have to see me, and in looking at myself, I have to see you. Yet the clarity with which I can see both you and me is important. As I can become more clear and more mindful, my ability to become a source of healing, love, and light can increase. As I can heal myself, I can free my energy for healing "you" and healing our world.

Friends, we need to perceive much more clearly our violence toward ourselves in our everyday lives. Often we are not aware of our ordinary actions and states of being as "violence." Precisely because this is so, I think it is important to name them as such. We may get much positive acclaim for doing or being that which wreaks violence upon ourselves. For example, in my life "doing good work very well" has been a family motto which has brought rich rewards -- even with this talk today. Yet the greatest single violence I commit toward myself is to have my life so continuously filled with all manner of responsibilities in those good works that I rarely, if ever, have free, relaxed, open time to do with whatever I may choose or whatever my soul may need for its healing, its opening, and its deepening.

Even as I am growing in my ability to relax, hang loose, play, and be joyful, I *still* worked too hard and too long in the preparing of this talk (and so much more). My very pressure to create this talk distanced me from my spirit, which could only come through as I could go into the

darkness and silence and *wait* for something to unfold. I still need to release much more so that my daily life and my spiritual life can be one and the same! I *still* need to be able to yield and surrender -- and I've been wrestling with doing so for more than two decades. In fact, that's the very problem. I need to *stop* wrestling and give up the fight, to relax, to allow, and to *trust God*. But for me (ever since my earliest days as a preemie when being a fighter literally meant survival) it's not easy to "let go and let God." I think many other Quakers join me in this dilemma. We are so conditioned in the imperative to do good (social justice) works that we keep trying to accomplish ourselves those things for which we need the help of God!

As I come to know myself ever more deeply, and as I work with many people, I see familiar patterns in the ways so many of us are harmful and violent toward ourselves, even though often unaware of this. We push ourselves too hard to do too much. We are frenetic and workaholic. We expect too much of ourselves and are harsh and impatient with ourselves. We don't trust, believe in, or value ourselves; we have poor self-esteem and allow others to treat us poorly. We hide, afraid to reveal ourselves as we really are. We perform to be accepted and to gain love. We rely too much on, or adapt too much to others. Or, we disconnect from others. We are afraid to ask for help and care. We are violent toward ourselves physically by unbalanced eating, sleeping, and exercise. We place low priority on meeting our basic physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs. We fail to nurture ourselves and our spirits. Through all these, we stifle our creativity and dampen our joy. And on and on!

Why do we treat ourselves in these ways? What locks us into such self-violent attitudes and behaviors? How can we move toward inner healing and peace? Addressing these questions, in my experience, requires that we face our shame, understand our compulsions, nurture the hidden, wounded child within each of us, move from codependency to community, and open our hearts to the Spirit. I shall speak about each of these in turn.

Since the Garden of Eden, we humans have been in hiding. God has called to us in the cool of the morning, and we have wrapped ourselves more tightly in our fig leaves and fled, fearing to stand revealed lest we be known *just as we are* because, somehow, we are ashamed of *who we are*. Shame has kept us in hiding, from generation unto generation. Shame is the invisible dragon that binds so many of us, affecting the core of our being and everything else about us. Like tar, everything "sticks to" our inner sense of shame. It is the root cause and driving force of our inner violence, and it blocks our loving openness toward ourselves, others, and God.

Healthy shame is a normal and necessary human emotion which enables us to know our limits, remain humble, and learn from our mistakes. It keeps us in line with our values, and helps us to know when we have overstepped them. Toxic shame is another matter entirely. It is the difference between doing and being. Toxic shame says not that I have *done* bad but that I *AM bad*: I judge myself and find that I am fundamentally inadequate, defective, unworthy, and invalid as a human being.⁵ Toxic shame is unbearable and always necessitates a cover up. So a false self is formed to hide the true self which is defective and flawed. We can be so very adept in becoming this false self that others would never know it is *false*. However, once one becomes a false self, one's true self ceases to exist psychologically. This is a progressive process of non-being, or "soul murder."⁶ Toxic shame destroys the essence of who we are. It destroys our humanness and our spiritual connection. Friends, I believe that nearly all of us -- to some degree

or another -- are bound by toxic shame. It is time we recognized this, named it, and with mindful and diligent persistence freed ourselves from its clutches.

How do we develop this sense of inner shame? I do not presume to have an adequate answer to this question. A partial answer is that shame develops as a result of the way we experience ourselves and our relationships in our families of origin and with others significant to our development as persons. Shame comes down our family tree, with shame begetting shame generation unto generation until the cycle is stopped. Shame-based families are rigidly loyal to a set of rules demanding control, perfectionism, blame, and denial. This pattern inhibits or defeats the development of authentic intimate relationships, promotes secrets and vague personal boundaries, unconsciously instills shame in the family members and chaos in their lives, and binds them to perpetuate the shame. This occurs despite the good intentions, wishes, and love which may also be part of the family system.⁸

More and more I realize that *all* of us are what I call ACDF -- "adult children of dysfunctional families." Of course, the type of dysfunction may vary greatly from serious abuse or chemical dependency to milder over-religiosity or workaholism. So very many of us live under the cardinal rules of the dysfunctional family system: "don't talk, don't trust, and don't feel." We live out these rules in myriad ways. Dysfunction leads to shame; shame leads back to dysfunction. We try to escape the pressure of shame through *all* manner of compulsions and addictions. Who among us is not addicted to *something*? Yet shame is at the core of these addictions, and a vicious cycle of control and release is formed. To break the cycle, the core shame must be released and healed. This brings us to the need to free the true self hidden under our false self -- to heal the wounded child which each of us carries within ourself (to one degree or another).

First, we must become aware that there *is* a true self, a part of ourself that we learned early in childhood to hide from others in order to protect ourself from shame and vulnerability. The more deeply we were wounded, the more hidden and cut off from our true, whole self we became. Triggers for our awareness that there *is* a "child within" us -- a part of ourself which we have been hiding since childhood -- can be quite varied.

For many of us, discovering our "child within" means that we must begin to feel -- to *experience* feelings -- again. As this occurs, the *silence* (in which we have been hidden and bound) *must be broken*. It is in speaking that our healing can come and we can be freed! I have experienced this personally as well as professionally. I can work with shame-based, violent people and love them because others have heard my rage and shame, and through this I have learned to embrace my own "child within" and comfort her instead of acting out. I am learning that my ability to *say*: "I am angry with you or am hurt by you, and I need your help to deal with my feelings about you" can be a great antidote to inner and outer violence.

Shame grows through our not being validated. If we try to share and are not heard, we feel isolated, abandoned, and ashamed. (This happens in our Meetings, Friends.) Conversely, by sharing at the level of truth and being heard and validated, shame is healed. (This, too, happens in our Meetings, Friends.) Recently I had an amazing experience in which revealing my shame opened the door to my healing. A month ago, I co-led a workshop on "Wholeness and Balance" at the Friends General Conference Gathering. At the beginning of the workshop, I was depleted,

exhausted, depressed, and in physical pain -- anything but whole. I introduced myself to our thirty-six participants by revealing my decrepitude, and my feelings of shame about the state I had allowed myself to reach. It was a big risk to reveal myself so deeply to strangers. I told the group that if I was too "wiped out" to lead, I could at least model sharing and vulnerability -- and I asked for their energies and care, which I received in abundance. Because of this, my own energy and spirit began to return within the day.

To heal our "child within" or our wounded inner self, we can reveal who we truly are and what we truly feel to safe and supportive people. With them, we can practice naming our needs and getting these needs *met*, receiving at long last the nurture we have always needed and craved. With trusted others, we can identify, reexperience, and grieve the pain of our unresolved losses and traumas. We can identify and work through all kinds of core issues, such as control, trust, over-responsibility, neglecting ourselves, all-or-none thinking, high tolerance for inappropriate behavior, low self-esteem, fear of abandonment, and difficulty resolving conflict, giving and receiving love, and being real.⁹ We can nurture our own "child within" in many gentle ways. We can "let our child out to play!" We can be mindfully aware of ourselves without harsh judgment - - noticing how we act, identifying our underlying feelings, and choosing what to keep and what to let go of or change. I invite each and every one of you to speak with someone you can trust about whatever it is within you which needs healing. Ask them just to listen and be present for you (which is itself a profound gift). Do it soon! If you can trust no one, then go to a competent, caring therapist and work on yourself until you can trust yourself and others. Your life and our world will be the better for it.

Closely tied to the issues of shame and of inner woundedness are the issues of codependency, which is endemic in our society. Friends, *all* of us are codependent to one degree or another, even if we don't like to think so! Again we need to become aware of and name what binds us so that we can heal from it. Codependency can be described as my being addicted to sacrificing myself so as to tend you.¹⁰ Whatever *you* say, think, feel, or want goes. If I have created a "competent" false self to hide from you the fact that my true "child within" self is so worthless, then your opinion of me is all important. At any cost to myself I will adapt to your wishes to please you, to do the right thing, and so forth in order to get the appreciation, love, and security I so desperately need because I cannot truly value my own self from the inside. Hallmarks of codependency include self-delusion or distorted reality, emotional repression, and compulsive behaviors. We codependents tend to be perfectionistic, unable to feel our own feelings or to be vulnerable. We tend to have difficulty with intimate relationships and with making decisions. We also often have an overdeveloped sense of being responsible for others, or of being needed by or helpful to them. This partial profile fits so many of us who are good caretakers -- therapists and Quakers alike.

Codependency can be transformed into community, just as persons -- on the journey from inner violence toward healing -- can be transformed from adaptive false selves into authentic true selves. Individually and collectively, these transformations are spiritual processes, which I want to consider in more depth.

Twelve-step groups are very effective in recovery from codependency, just as they are in recovery from other addictions. Their effectiveness derives from the group nature of the support

and accountability, and from the fact that the twelve steps comprise a spiritual journey. Many groups -- twelve-step, our Meetings, and many other kinds -- have the potential to become communities, even healing communities. Scott Peck names the stages of a group's development into true community as pseudo community, chaos, emptiness, and transcendence into community.¹¹ First comes the "pretend level" meeting of superficial selves, next the uproar when true differences between persons begin to emerge. Then if the group can stay with the process deeply enough to enter the silence or void created by letting go of the familiar preconceived ideas and allowing the new to emerge, deep authentic connections between true selves can form, bringing community filled with vibrant energy and joy!

Community forms when we are willing to encounter and *stay with* one another at the level of truth. When this happens, we can stand truly revealed and still be supported, nurtured, and loved. To me, such community quickly becomes sacred space -- space where the sacredness of persons and of connection is deeply experienced and the presence of the Spirit is revealed. Such community can occur in any relationship -- with family or friends, in therapy, in our Quaker meetings. But all too often it does not. We need to find ways to touch and empower each other (and our meetings) at the level of true community. Each of us *can* help to create space safe enough for another to stand revealed, so that the Spirit can come through. Being together in silence, listening deeply, is familiar to us as Quakers, and to me as a therapist as well.

I think of therapy as midwifery in the process of birthing deepened souls and new lives made more whole. I think of it as relationship in depth which enables new meaning to be made out of old chaos and pain. One of my clients described therapy as a channeling of God's love and blessing, through our therapeutic relationship. As a pastoral counselor I certainly seek to be a channel for the healing which can only come from God, and to realize the very finite limits to my personal self and ability. Yet for those who have spent a lifetime being "invisible," tremendous healing can occur through human relationship, by realizing that another human being *is* (at last) truly impacted and affected by the damage they have experienced and the pain they bear.

What, then, do I do as a therapist to create safe space where community can form, and to help someone through the process of inner healing? The very same things you do as a loving F(f)riend! First and foremost, I can *be there*, and *stay there* with them and for them. It takes tremendous courage to face ourselves, feel our pain, and open ourselves toward healing. I can respect this courage, and I can be patient with the process. I can listen, hear, validate and believe in the person as her story unfolds. I do this hour after hour. Sometimes the listening goes beyond words. I'll never forget spending two years of weekly sessions in almost total silence with a client before she finally started to talk at all! Sometimes I "hear someone into speech," with my listening evoking words and stories never before felt or spoken.¹²

What a gift it is when someone deeply, truly listens to us! Joanna Macy believes those who listen are our world's very best peacemakers.¹³ Such listening happens all too infrequently in our harried lives. I remember I used to cry when someone would ask me after my cancer: "How are you, really?" and care about the answer! Rarely was I asked this, and when I was, it meant so very much. Every one of us *is* able to be a healer, through listening.

Above all, you and I can *care*. I care for persons deeply and consistently. Over time, I love persons who trash themselves, in hopes that they may someday learn to love themselves. Sometimes I feel that I love damaged persons "back into the world of the living." I offer nurture; I offer the rocking chair in my office. I create homes for people. Joanna Macy reminds us that within our greatest weakness lies our greatest strength. Because of my *own* loneliness, isolation, and longing for community, I consistently want to offer nurturant community to others.

After thirty-one years of practice as a therapist and after having been born into a family where I assumed a caretaking role very early on, it is easy for me to be present for someone else (and to be codependent). It is much harder for me to tend to my *own* healing. It is not necessary for me to tell you all the ways in which I have experienced loss, inner violence, and shame -- and need to be healed. Suffice it to say that I indeed know the pain of being hidden, ashamed of standing revealed. I indeed know the powerful healing that occurs when I can accept/embrace/forgive myself and when someone who truly knows me hears me, stands beside me, believes in me *anyway*, and loves me *as I am*.

Healing has everything to do with learning to accept and love ourselves and each other. To love *myself* is to follow the great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Being attentive to myself must become a top priority, for my ability to love myself is the basis of my ability to love another, and my pain about myself enables me to understand and be present with another in her pain about herself. Healing is an ever evolving process which takes much time and patience and diligent attention and care as well. To remind myself of all that I request of my clients when I ask them to keep trying, I remember how hard it has been for me to keep trying to play a certain organ toccata that I've been working on -- only sometimes with diligent persistence -- for more than thirty years!

Healing is an inner journey *and* a journey in community as well. The inner and outer dimensions are constantly intertwined. Growth for me comes through dialogue with others; human relationships open my spirit. There is reciprocity between the healer and the healed. As Bernie Siegel notes in his work with exceptional cancer patients, care occurs between *equals*.¹⁴ The physician receives care from the cancer patient, and vice versa. IN GIVING LOVE, *WE* OURSELVES ARE HEALED. IT IS LOVE THAT HEALS, and the healing occurs whether we are the giver or the receiver.

To heal and to be healed, we need to open our hearts. Healing begins **WITHIN OUR OWN HEARTS**. It starts with each one of us -- and changes the world. Each of us can do some very practical things to help ourselves heal and stay well and whole. We can do things that bring a sense of fulfillment, joy and purpose. We can tune in to our own needs, release our negative emotions, and focus on positive images. We can create fun, honest, loving relationships and keep a sense of humor. We can accept everything in life as an opportunity for growth and take life just as it comes. We can love ourselves and everyone else too!

On the journey of our inner healing, we can tenderly examine ourselves and our lives with consistent, mindful awareness. We can release, allow, unfold, let go, surrender, give up our egos. We can be devoutly and humbly thankful each day for the gift of life. Cancer has taught me much about this! We can take time to appreciate and to reverence God's beautiful world. We can

practice visualization and affirmations. We can center down through any of the spiritual disciplines which have been taught to us over the ages -- for example, meditation, prayer, or individual and corporate worship. We can develop the eyes to see God's Grace all around us all the time. We can give ourselves over to the Spirit, and practice the Presence each day in all ways. Following Thomas Kelly, we can be wholly obedient to the will of God.¹⁵

We do have the capacity to *create* our own reality. We can change our lives by changing (or opening) our minds and our hearts. As Bernie Siegel says, if you start loving, it *will* change your life. The way we perceive ourselves and our world creates our happiness (or unhappiness) and the joy, pleasure, love, and reverence (or the anger, fear, jealousy, resentment, and anxiety) we experience. Our attitudes enable us to love and accept (or criticize and reject) ourselves and others unconditionally. Jerry Jampolsky describes the transformation of fear and hate into unconditional love through attitudinal healing.¹⁶ Because these can be so important to our healing of ourselves, I want to list for you Jampolsky's seven principles of attitudinal healing:

Health is inner peace; our single goal is peace of mind.

The essence of our being is love.

Giving is receiving.

All minds are joined; all healing is self healing.

Now is the only time there is.

Decisions are made by learning to prefer peace within us.

Forgiveness is the way to true health and happiness.

If we could but follow these principles, our hearts would open and our world would change.

The Buddhists teach us of the Bodhisattva path -- the path of compassion, helping others to enlightenment, healing this world. Our world today cries out for us to become Bodhisattvas with open hearts. We *can* become those who transform inner violence into unconditional love. We *can* become conduits of love, light, and higher consciousness. In fact, we who have some spiritual awareness have the *response-ability* to do so. Our world needs our loving energy. Transformation does not occur from changes in the world outside us; *we* create the miracle ... from within. Healing and transformation are up to us -- within ourselves and in relationship with each other and with God.

Let me close by sharing with you a bit more about Asia. Traveling there last August, I experienced anew what I had felt so deeply after having cancer: each moment, each place, each person is so *incredibly* precious and so sacred. Once again I was able to live life as I *want* to live -- open, giving, receiving, loving. It was profound. These experiences changed me, and helped me learn what life open to the Spirit *could* be like. Connections with friends old and new were truly extraordinary. In Tokyo, in Kyoto and Nara, in Nikko, in Adogawa, in Asahikawa, and in other special places, we shared profoundly of our lives and of our souls. The Spirit was very present, and we all felt it together. The energy and "communities of healing" thus created were incredible. I wondered why friends I had not seen for decades would open their homes and their hearts to us so very deeply. Dorothy replied: "The way you make and keep friends is amazing. You *love* your friends, and you have for all these years. They know it, they feel it, and that's why they have opened to us like this." It's true, I do love my Japanese sisters and I always will.

Nonetheless, I simply could not believe the way my old and new friends, including the Japanese Quakers who hosted the Tokyo Triennial, took complete care of us, attentive to our every possible need and wish. It was so nurturant, and it taught me a great deal about hospitality given with the open heart.

The theme of the Triennial was worship. Worship-sharing groups were formed of Quakers from divergent backgrounds from all over the world. Despite barriers of language and culture, we strangers soon became soul friends. As a Korean Friend in my group put it: "Because we have worshiped together, you mean so very much to me." We accepted each other fully (despite our many differences), and we loved each other as unconditionally as we could. Through opening our hearts together, we healed and held each other and created blessed community.

Sometimes into our lives come experiences and relationships which are "heart openings." I think of these as opening the heart chakra (which unites the physical with the spiritual) or our "third (spiritual) eye." Through such relationships -- which come unexpectedly and grace our lives -- we can "see" what healing relationships can truly be like. Heart opening relationships are those which call forth the very best, most gentle, most loving parts of ourselves and help us grow in depth and infinite tenderness. They are heart opening relationships because they *do* open our hearts, allowing the Spirit to *come through us*.

Friends, we *can* open our hearts to encompass, and to hold, the world. Nothing is more important on our small blue marble planet today than our care for ourselves, each other, and our entire world. It is important that we realize our interconnection with and our belonging to the whole world, and to give up any vestiges of "dominion over it." We are but one species in the web of life known as Gaia.

"In my end is my beginning ... and the end of all our explorations will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."¹⁷ My eight months of preparation for this Plummer lecture have taught me that to continue my spiritual development, I must *give up* the very quest for the spiritual -- the numinous -- which I have so much sought after and so hoped for. It is not easy to let that go.... But the challenge and the opportunity are to live *here* and *now* as compassionately as I can, taking *this* life here and now *as it comes*, and finding my answers in *this* world -- instead of longing after the numinous. As I can do so, I will find inner peace, and I will be living spiritually. I am trying to do this, and I am feeling more sense of release....

In the words of Teilhard de Chardin: "Someday, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire."¹⁸ And the fire and the rose are one....

Each of us can be part of this discovery. For love and peace begin WITHIN ME, with the healing and the opening of my own heart. The deeper we live and find community with each other, the more we are bonded, centered, one. Our world will not have peace until we have a critical mass of people at peace within themselves. We must not give up on people, including ourselves. Our goal is to accept and love ourselves, for out of this we can accept and love others, our precious earth, and connect with God.

Friends, all the healing and all the loving starts with you and me. You are sacred, I am sacred, and our connection with each other is sacred. Be mindful of this, and be full of care for yourself and for others. Gentle yourself, slow down, go deeper. Tend yourself, heal yourself, open your heart, practice love in all ways. "Live up to the light thou hast and more will be granted thee."¹⁹ Live up to the light thou hast and more *will* be granted thee. In abundance. And in joy! Praise be to God!! Amen.

Footnotes

1. See Jim Garrison's *The Darkness of God: Theology After Hiroshima*, William B. Erdman Publishers, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982.
2. See Carolyn W. Treadway, "Awakening Our Power," Keynote Address to Illinois Yearly Meeting, July 31, 1985; printed by IYM, and also published in *Friends Journal*, February 1, 1987, p. 4-7.
3. See Scott Peck, *People of The Lie: The Hope For Healing Human Evil*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1983.
4. T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*.
5. See Merle Fossum and Marilyn Mason, *Facing Shame*, W W Norton, New York, 1986, and also John Bradshaw, *Healing The Shame That Binds You*, Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL, 1988, and *Bradshaw On: The Family*, Health Communications, Deerfield Beach, FL, 1988.
6. See Alice Miller, *Prisoners of Childhood*, Basic Books, New York, 1981.
7. For a detailed description of this, see Gershen Kaufman, *Shame: The Power of Caring*, Schenkman Publishing Co., Cambridge, MA, 1980.
8. See Fossum and Mason, *op. cit.*
9. See Charles Whitfield, *Healing The Child Within*, Health Communications, Inc., Pompano Beach, FL, 1987.
10. See Robert Subby, *Lost In The Shuffle: The Co-dependent Reality*, Health Communications, Inc., Pompano Beach, FL, 1987; Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More*, Hazelden Foundation and Harper and Row, New York, 1987, and *Beyond Codependency*, Hazelden/Harper and Row, New York, 1989; and Pia Melody, *Facing Codependence*, Harper and Row, New York, 1989..
11. See Scott Peck, *The Different Drum: Community-Making and Peace*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1987.
12. See Nelle Morton, *The Journey is Home*, Beacon Press, Boston. MA, pp. 204-206.

13. See Joanna Macy, *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age*, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, 1983.

14. See Bernie Siegel, *Love, Medicine and Miracles*, Harper & Row, New York, 1986, and *Peace, Love, and Healing*, Harper & Row, 1989.

15. See Thomas Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, Harper Brothers Publishers, 1941.

16. See Gerald Jampolsky, *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, Celestial Arts Publishers, Berkeley, CA, 1979 and *Teach Only Love*, Bantam Books, New York, 1983.

17. T.S Eliot, *op. cit.*

18. Bernie Siegel quoted Teilhard de Chardin in his videotape, *Fight For Your Life*.

19. From *Live Up to the Light*, a song by Susan Stark.