

Cancer and Healing

Innovative Theories and Practices of Psychosocial Support

(available on DVD)

We are grateful to members of our Advisory Board for developing this inspiring and practical program which is available on DVD. This extraordinary program focuses on how we as healthcare providers can minimize suffering and empower patients to use their own healing potential. While standard medical care can shrink tumors and relieve symptoms, it doesn't formally address the emotional and spiritual needs. This program fills that gap and also describes how we can help prevent burnout in healthcare practitioners, caregivers and patients.

There are three DVDs, each 2 hours long: 1) Introduction by Laura Esserman, MD (Director of Breast Care Center at UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center), and presentation by Rachel Naomi Remen, MD with Marion Weber, *The Power of Symbols: An Experience of Discovery, Connection and Healing*; 2) Martin L. Rossman, MD, Dipl. Ac., *Fighting Cancer from Within: Mobilizing Inner Resources with Guided Imagery*; 3) Jeff Kane, MD, *Toward Naturally Therapeutic Relationships*.

To order a single DVD (\$26.95) or the entire 3 DVD set (\$64.95): Call (530) 477-2274 / toll free (888) 484-6228 or www.tincatmedia.com.

"This conference presented by Healing Journeys was by far the most exciting and memorable of any I have ever attended! I am a very good oncology nurse but I left this conference feeling now I will be an even better nurse, a feeling I can't wait to share with my colleagues and patients!"

How did Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™ get to Greenville?

1. a woman from South Carolina listened to our Sounds True audiotape set
2. she called Jan to see what it would take to bring a conference to Greenville
3. she and her husband attended the 2003 Seattle conference
4. with Jan's support and guidance they formed a committee to secure funding and gain local support
5. they did it!

Thanks to Robin and Denby Davenport and the dedicated SC Committee for a job well done. Brochures for the Greenville program were mailed the beginning of March. If you did not receive one, or would like additional copies, please call us, or email jan@healingjourneys.org.

Northwest News

There's no question that Seattle's 2003 and 2004 Healing Journeys conferences seeded some powerful magic in the area. A steadfast group of women, survivors, and their friends continue to meet monthly at Cancer Lifeline. The group thrives on supportive discussion and sharing, with all forms of creative expression used to enliven and challenge. A trip to the popular film about quantum physics and spirituality, *What the Bleep Do We Know?*, spurred fascinating discussions including "how much is *really* in our control to change?" This led to a discovery of the concept of Kaizen, the Japanese technique of achieving lasting,

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Upcoming Events

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY CELEBRATION

Sat., June 4, 2005 - 9 to 11am

**UC Davis Cancer Center
Sacramento, California**

Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™

June 25 & 26, 2005

FREE two-day conference

Furman University, Greenville, SC

On campus housing available.

Presenters include: Rachel Naomi Remen, MD, Larry LeShan, PhD, Jeanne Wallace, PhD, CNC, Annan Paterson, Scott Burton, David Bailey, Terri Tate, Bukeka Newby-Shoals

2006 TENTATIVE CALENDAR

Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™

FREE two-day conference:

April 29 & 30, Fresno, CA

July 8 & 9, Seattle, WA

Sept 9 & 10, San Francisco

2007 TENTATIVE CALENDAR

Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™

Honolulu, Hawaii

Sacramento, CA

CANCER AS A TURNING POINT RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP

Presented by Lawrence LeShan, PhD, author of *Cancer as a Turning Point*, Ruth Bolletino, PhD and Mary Bobis, LCSW.
Dec. 8 to 14, 2005

Villa Maria del Mar, Santa Cruz, CA

www.cancersaturningpoint.org

Ruth Bolletino (212) 496-9136

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Mary Bobis (704) 332-8394

Email: somedee@aol.com

HINTS FOR HEALING YOURSELF

by Lloyd J. Thomas, Ph.D.

“The greatest force in the human body is the natural drive of the body to heal itself...” wrote Norman Cousins after he had recovered from a “terminal” illness. Certainly medicine, professional diagnosis and treatment are important, sometimes vital, aspects of becoming well. But medical science still remains ignorant as to precisely why some people heal and others succumb to disease. Indeed, the healing process itself remains a rather mysterious event.

We do know however, that the individual person has a lot more power and control over his or her own healing than was ever acknowledged before. Here are some “hints” which might help you realize your own power and ability to help you heal.

1. Practice acceptance of your illness. Acceptance of your illness is not the same as resigning yourself to it. Resignation can lead to depression and depression is not a very healing attitude. When you are ill, acceptance of disease as a part of you at the moment, will allow you to create in yourself the atmosphere of caring, tenderness, and love, in which your illness is more likely to heal. It also allows energy to be freed for other activities, other interests, and other thoughts to remain a part of your life, even while “being sick.”

2. View illness not as a loss, but as an opportunity for new growth and development. If a starfish loses one of its “arms,” it merely goes about growing another. If a salamander loses its tail, its primitive nervous system begins regenerating another immediately. Certainly our human nervous systems are more sophisticated than those of a starfish or salamander. When we heal, we grow new tissue, new nerves, and new cells. Why not grow new ideas, new attitudes, new ways of viewing ourselves and the world, and new loves, while you are also healing physically? If you begin to grow psychologically in response to your losses, you may just not need to have a physical illness in order to evolve or grow.

3. See your illness as your body’s attempt to redirect your life in a positive direction. Avoid harshly judging your illness and

resenting your body for having it. Avoid judging yourself altogether! Your body is always valiantly trying to be well. It has powerful tools in its biochemical, cellular, and nervous repertoire to regain its healthful balance. If you are positive and peaceful about your own ability to be well, then illness just becomes a “redirection” of your life. Someone once said, “Illness is God’s way of getting your attention!” Pay attention to that message and allow it to redirect your life.

4. Realize that death is not a disease, and it is not a failure. The death rate for all living beings is still one hundred per cent. If staying alive is your only goal, you will most certainly fail at attaining it. Once you begin to accept the inevitability of your own death and realize you only have a limited amount of time to experience being alive, you begin to become aware you might as well enjoy (as best as you possibly can) the moment-to-moment experience of aliveness, including your illness or pain.

5. Avoid making physical wholeness your goal. Nobody exists with a perfect physical body. Our functioning varies from moment to moment and certainly from day to day. A lot of people heal into peace of mind and self-love without ever becoming physically well. Perhaps making your goals your own inner peace, your own ability to forgive and love yourself just might promote your healing a lot faster than self-hate, self-criticism, and resentment toward your illness. Use your illness as a situation to learn about hope, love, acceptance, forgiveness, peace of mind, openness to living, and mindfulness to the moment. In doing so, you just may make the disease remit in the process.

6. Our bodies respond to self-love and the love sent to us by others. If you send your own body loving messages, and if you are open to receive the love of others, your body’s immune system responds with something like “Hey, this person likes being alive, lets get to work and fight for his or her life with all the power and energy we can muster.” Negative thoughts produce certain chemicals in our bodies... positive thoughts produce another kind of chemicals. The latter strengthens the immune system. The former weakens it.

Healing Journeys

Mission Statement

Our mission is to support healing by assisting people with cancer or other life-altering illnesses to access their own healing potential and their ability to thrive.

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7. Finally, use your body, use the life in your body to love. Loving is the only path to immortality. Your love lives on long after you physically die. If you spend most of your life hating, you spend most of it dying. If you spend it loving, you leave a legacy of peace and development to all those persons you touch with your love. A legacy of love. What a gift to offer future generations! Spend most of your life loving and you will only spend a few brief moments dying.

Lloyd J. Thomas, Ph.D. is a Certified Life Coach and Licensed Psychologist. E-mail: DrLloyd@CreatingLeaders.com

Director's Reflections:

by Jan Adrian

I'm amazed and thrilled that we celebrated our 10th anniversary last year; we also offered our 18th conference with our largest attendance ever – 1400 in Sacramento. It was a financially challenging year as well, and I asked for your support. I am grateful for those of you who let us know how meaningful and important the conference is to you, and contributed what you could. To strengthen *Healing Journeys'* foundation, we are reducing our on-going expenses; we relocated the HJ office into my home and let our full-time Administrative Assistant go.

We are busy in various stages of planning 3 conferences for 2006 – Fresno, Seattle (Northwest), and San Francisco. It takes a year to plan a conference; we are writing grants, identifying and soliciting prospective sponsors, and developing the programs. I've enjoyed finding new speakers for 2006 and am introducing two potential speakers to you in this newsletter – Mark Nepo and Lloyd J. Thomas. I hope you enjoy their words as much as I have.

I am three years cancer free this month, and I think it's not a coincidence that three years ago is when I decided to follow my passion and make Healing Journeys my full-time job. I could no longer put "security" before passion. I often reflect on the words of Mary Oliver who said, "What will you do with your one wild and precious life?" I am grateful for all of the incredible people I have met through these conferences and am delighted to be part of this "wild and precious" community. Thank you for your participation and support!

Sista Monica and Terri Tate performing at National Cancer Survivors Day

Healing Journeys, UC Davis Cancer Center, and other local cancer service organizations are working together to produce Sacramento's version of this FREE national program on Saturday, June 4, 2005, 9 - 11 am, UC Davis Cancer Center. For information please call (916) 734-9023.

Other cities around the nation will be hosting similar events. In the SF Bay Area, Mills-Peninsula Health Services Dorothy E. Schneider Cancer Center is hosting a picnic in the park 12 - 4 pm, (650) 696-5304.

Watch for Sista Monica's new CD in our web store.

Northwest News

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successful change using small, steady steps. The premise is that if you improve a little each day, eventually big things occur.

With this in mind, on two Saturdays, June 4 & 11, 10:30-2:00, guest presenter, Melissa West will conduct a workshop called *Small Steps, Big Changes*. For information contact Healing Circle Facilitator, Basha Brownstein, (206) 297-2100 ext 120 or bbrownstein@cancerlifeline.org.

A dedicated team is now meeting to plan for the 2006 Northwest Conference in Seattle. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Lynne Singer, Northwest Coordinator, (425) 868-6049 or jl singer@comcast.net

Things No One Asks About

by Mark Nepo

*I have been called heroic
for merely surviving.
It's like championing an eagle
for flying to its nest*

*and I have been condemned as
selfish
for following the call of truth
which is like blaming a turtle
for finding the deep*

*and I have escaped death more than
once
but not the dying.*

*

*I have been worn slowly by
experience
and torn apart instantly by crisis and
revelation
and all I can say is Life is Food:
to love is to chew; to forgive,
to swallow.*

*I cough up these bits:
that the heart like a wing
is of no use tucked
and distrust in the world
like an eye swollen shut
stops the work of love.*

*

*Like a worried glassblower
trying to refigure his clear
and shattered heart,
I have cut myself on all that I was,
surprised that wisdom hides
in the brilliant edges.*

From *Suite for the Living* by Mark Nepo. *The Exquisite Risk* is his newest book. Books available from www.breadforthejourney.org.

This newsletter is made possible with the support of Jill Lacefield and ALIVE! Foundation. Check out Jill's book *A Little Cancer on the Side: A Survivors Book of Laughter & Inspiration* (2003) available at amazon.com.



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Your support is important to us!

All of our programs require funding. We are continually seeking support through grants and fundraising. If you are in the process of planning your estate, please consider including *Healing Journeys*. For a confidential, no-obligation discussion of planned giving options, you can call us at (800) 423-9882.

Comments from Conference Participants

- *Thank you! The conference helped me see that I am part of a larger family that is bravely facing and surviving and thriving. I do not feel so afraid and alone anymore.*
- *Such a cleansing and liberating experience. Spent much of the time in tears; tears of gratefulness, tears of remembrance, tears of laughter, tears of joy. Thank you for the inspiration and the realizations you have provided. Thank you for a place of peace in the midst of strife. I now fear cancer diagnosis less, can see it as a gift even, and most assuredly view it as an empowerment, thanks to this conference.*
- *Bringing art, poetry and music to the stage helps us notice that there is more to this healing journey than putting one foot in front of another. There is a lovely mixture of joy, music, words of hope and healing, and new thoughts.*
- *Even though I've attended support groups and had a personal therapist, and have lots of community support, it took this conference for me to access my emotions and experience about cancer, and to move toward acceptance. I'm so grateful to you for this breakthrough. I was feeling very stuck. This conference made me realize how much the support of others and supporting others can help heal the soul.*
- *I lost my husband to cancer just a month ago. I am in pain emotionally. This conference healed me so much. I laughed, I cried, became emotional and tears flowed so freely. This week-end did more for me than a year of therapy could do, I'm sure. I was re-energized, have such peace, met several new people with a like mind. I felt so much love, compassion and healing. Give me more!!*