

The Expressive Arts Therapy Family



Jack S. Weller

Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.

— Pablo Picasso

Welcome to the international expressive arts community! This is a momentous time for all of us; I am feeling fresh creative winds blowing over the whole global community of expressive arts practitioners. In coming together in this association we have a golden new opportunity, not just for ourselves as a professional organization, but for the greater whole. Our world, our planet, *needs* a rediscovery and flowering of the expressive arts.

In writing this I want to share with you, in a first summary form, my thoughts about who we are as an expressive arts family. In the future, with your help, I hope to flesh out this description. I believe that it is crucial that we carefully consider these issues of self-definition and identity as we mark this important time of the beginning of our professional membership organization.

Over the past 25 years I have been working as an administrator and teacher in the broad area of the expressive arts. In describing this field, and the graduate programs we have been developing to prospective students, faculty, colleagues and friends, I have been using the image of the expressive arts as *a large healthy tree with a vast visible root system*. The roots go deep into our past, our primal nature, as well as our more recent past... (For now I leave it to you to elaborate on the nature of this root system!) The strong trunk of a tree embodies the basics of the expressive arts: *doing* arts processes in all media; arts for healing, health and

wholeness; our universal claim to the "artist" in us all; the power of creative processes; the power of creative expression; the power of an inclusive multimodal approach... But then (say five feet up from the ground) the trunk begins to split, and there become two trunks, each growing strongly with many branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. Standing back looking at the whole tree we see that the branches and leaves of the two trunks touch and overlap. One trunk we call *Expressive Art Therapy*, the other trunk we call *Expressive Arts Consulting and Education*. The expressive arts *therapy* trunk combines the expressive arts with psychotherapy, counseling and clinical practice. The expressive arts *consulting and education* trunk combines the expressive arts with education at all levels and in all contexts, growth work, organizational consulting, health education, community arts... Both sides of the tree are nourished by the same roots and common trunk at the base, and ... somehow... each trunk is supported, balanced and encouraged by the other. The whole tree is stronger and healthier because it has two trunks.

To go a little further in defining the nature of the expressive arts tree, it is helpful to shift metaphors and see it as a family, and families have "family resemblances" (Wittgenstein), rather than a single "essence". What are the characteristics of the expressive arts family? For now I would like to draw our attention to seven family resemblances:

- I. Expressive arts practitioners tend to be multi-modal or multi-disciplinary, and believe in the particular power of this approach. In working with clients or students they introduce more than one art modality, perhaps moving from drawing to movement, to music and rhythm, to drama and sandplay, and then to journal writing or poetry.
- II. Expressive arts practitioners are strongly connected to the arts and artistic processes, but not necessarily with what we call "fine arts". They remind us that somewhere deep within *there is an artist in us all*, and this artist can express itself in a very wide range of activities. In order to be truly whole and healthy we need to be in touch with that artistic spirit, no matter what medium or form the expression takes. And getting in touch with the artist within may be a matter of life and death.
- III. A closely related family characteristic is a strong valuing of creativity, a belief that underlying all forms of the expressive arts is an understanding and honoring of creative processes. Many believe that the courage to create is the basis for the courage to live an authentic, fully actualized life. And what better facilitators of this process than the expressive, creative arts themselves.

There is no must in art because art is free.

— Wassily Kandinsky

IV. Expressive arts practitioners tend to stress the therapeutic value and dynamics of the *process* of art-making. They are less interested in interpretations of the art product and more interested in the healing aspects of the artistic *process*. Following from this, and distinguishing themselves from some of the related family of creative arts therapists, expressive arts practitioners tend to avoid using art to assess or diagnose.

V. A related resemblance found among the expressive arts family is a strong belief, trust and respect for the innate healing and whole-making power of each individual. Many expressive arts practitioners stress that they are facilitating the client or student in their *own* process of deep understanding, healing and growth.

VI. A characteristic that is important to me is that many members of the expressive arts family are open to exploring what may be called spiritual dimensions of life. Many see the interconnections between artistic and spiritual practices and processes. The vibrant life of the arts in spiritual and religious practices throughout the ages is reflected in contemporary interests in Shamanism, meditation and transpersonal approaches to therapy and education.

VII. A final characteristic of the expressive arts family is that members tend to be *inclusive* rather than *exclusive*. Some family members are very emphatic in their not having one of the character-

istics above, but this does not exclude them from the family (as happens in real families' acceptance of unusual members). For example some expressive arts therapists emphasize only one creative arts modality (as dance, visual arts or drama) and are not at all drawn to a transpersonal theory or values, yet they so strongly believe in the other characteristics that they are drawn to join and participate in the expressive arts community.

There are further, more specific family characteristics on each side of the tree, the *therapy* side and the *consulting* and *education* side, but I believe we have enough here to begin a larger dialogue on this subject. Perhaps it does need to be said that the whole tree is rapidly growing, forming and finding itself. The expressive arts *therapy* side of the tree is more known as a separate field of endeavor, but there are still a wide range of practitioners. As the laws (or lack of laws) for psychotherapists and counselors vary widely in different states of the U.S., and even more widely in other countries, there are different expressive arts therapists who are clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, mental health counselors, marriage, family and child counselors, pastoral counselors, school counselors, adjunctive therapists., etc., etc. The field of expressive arts *consulting* and *education* is even broader and less defined. It includes the incorporation of the expressive arts into: organizational consulting, health education and hospital care, public health administration, human resource management, arts education, creativity development, educ-

ation in the areas of personal growth and human potential, community arts projects, elementary, secondary, undergraduate and graduate education, and in many other areas of human need. This field is even less articulated and defined than the therapy side, it is only now coming together and forming its identity.

I shall conclude with three questions:

- (1) What is the relevance of this discussion of our identity for training programs?
- (2) What is the relevance of this for credentialing (registration or certification)? Should we have two types of credentialing, one for each side of the tree?
- (3) After writing all of the above, I am beginning to question the name of our association. I believe a more accurate name is **International Expressive Arts Association**; then there would be two divisions, one for therapy and one for consulting and education.

I very much look forward to meeting, discussing and working with you, at the inaugural convention and in future years.

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exit through any other medium and will be lost.

— Martha Graham

Every blade of grass has its Angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, grow."

— The Talmud



From Chaos to Poiesis: Reflections on Expressive Arts Therapy

—Stephen K. Levine

For a long time, I have been trying to understand what art-making is. What is the power that motivates us to create, a power that is perhaps equal to the very urge to live itself? Perhaps one could change Socrates' famous remark to read that, "The uncreative life is not worth living." It seems as if we are moved to be creative in our very being.

And yet what obstacles there are to the creative act! The world often confronts us as something immovable, a solid mass of habit, tradition and routine. Institutions have a tendency to perpetuate themselves, to keep their structure in place and resist change. And there is something deep inside us that also fights the creative impulse. Perhaps it is because we know that change is difficult, that introducing something new means letting go of something old. Life feeds off death: it is only by allowing ourselves to dissolve old structures that we can hope for the new to emerge.

You will do foolish things, but do them with enthusiasm.

— Colette

More and more I have become aware of the role of chaos in bringing about creative action. "Things fall apart," Yeats said; and indeed they need to do so for new configurations to emerge. But entering into chaos means that I have to be willing to give up my ability to know and to control what is happening. This is a frightening situation: "falling apart," "being out of control," "being in the dark" — all these expressions point to a helplessness that brings with it a core experience of terror.

What then can come to our aid? What can help us to find new forms for our existence, new ways of making meaning? Heidegger, in thinking about the origin of art, quotes the poet Holderlin:

But where danger is, grows the saving power also.

Perhaps it is in the very chaos itself that new forms of life can emerge. Perhaps it is in darkness we can find the light. This is, I believe, the essence of expressive arts therapy — the discovery that art can heal our lives not by avoiding the danger but by encountering it directly. In the pain and the suffering, in everything that is dead and resists growth, in all this lies the seeds of new beginnings.

I use the word "poiesis", a Greek term for art-making, to refer to this ability to create order out of chaos. Poiesis is the act by means of which we enter into the maelstrom of existence and wrest from its turbulent depths a treasure hidden from our eyes. In poiesis, we bring forth what has been concealed and allow it to stand in the light. This shining is what we call beauty.

If these reflections have any value, there are some implications for our practice as expressive arts therapists and educators. In the first place, we have to respect the resistance to change. Creative action faces obstacles; I would be suspicious of any therapeutic or educational program that minimized these obstacles.

Secondly, the obstacle itself is the opportunity. We have to be willing to deal with the difficulty. Nietzsche once remarked that we are only as strong as our opponents. How much more true when the opponent is ourselves! In the words of Pogo, "We have met the enemy and they is us."

Therefore we have to be willing to enter into chaos, the liminal space in which we have left home but have not yet arrived at our destination. Only if we can dwell in formlessness and wait for a new order to emerge will we be able to be truly creative in our work. Poiesis emerges out of chaos — this is the message that the practice of expressive arts therapy brings us.

At the beginning of our new Association, we have an opportunity to bring new forms of being-together into the light. I hope we will have the courage to grapple with the obstacles — internal as well as external — and the patience to wait for the moment to arrive. Let us leave room for formlessness, for the spontaneous and improvisatory, for chance and for play. Then perhaps together we can, as Nietzsche said, from our chaos give birth to a dancing star.

Since you are like no other being ever created since the beginning of time, you are incomparable.

—Brenda Ueland



ETNE Greets IEATA

The Expressive Therapists of New England (ETNE), a regional organization, has been in existence since 1989. We are extremely pleased to welcome IEATA into the world and look forward to a productive collaboration as we share the goals of furthering recognition of an integrated arts approach to healing.

ETNE has been involved in IEATA since its formal organization by four Co-Chairs — one of whom is Philip Speiser, an ETNE member. Philip has been instrumental in keeping our members informed of IEATA's progress. In February, 1994, our board sent IEATA a notice of our enthusiasm and support. In April 1994, we were pleased to send notice of IEATA's invitation for membership in a separate mailing to our constituents. At our annual meeting in October, all members present voted unanimously to move forward in starting to craft the precise shape of our affiliation, one that can be brought to IEATA in February, 1995, in order to jointly actualize our fruitful relationship.

This is one of the many reasons that we look forward to the inspiring conference in San Francisco. We celebrate the initiative and progress towards international community and wish IEATA a happy, healthy New Year.

Outreach Report



ETNE — Expressive Therapists of New England have voted unanimously, at their annual meeting in November, to proceed with negotiations with IEATA towards becoming an affiliate membership organization. We will continue to work closely with ETNE towards developing guidelines for affiliation. These guidelines will then be presented to the Interim Board for approval. It appears as if ETNE will be our first affiliate organization.

NCATA — National Coalition for Arts Therapy Associations, plus all of the National Arts Therapy Associations in the United States have been informed of our formation and goal for cooperation and inclusion into the broader community of associations. The response from our sister/brother organizations has been quite favorable and they are willing to work with us towards inclusion into NCATA. We will continue to keep them informed of our progress and work closely with them towards this goal.

Are there other associations or groups around the Globe who should know about IEATA? Please let us know and we will inform them of our existence.

—Phillip Speiser

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIA



EASTER SYMPOSIUM — The Eighth Annual Advanced Expressive Therapy Easter Symposium will be held this year from April 13 to 19, in Leuk, Switzerland (a medieval town in the valley of the Rhone). The theme of the Symposium is, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell: The Tension of Opposites in Therapy and the Arts". Trainers include, Daria Halprin-Kalighi (USA), Annette Brederode (Holland), Majken Jacoby (Denmark), Paolo Knill (Switzerland/USA), Stephen K. Levine (Canada/USA) and Yaacov Naor (Israel). For information, write to: ISIS, Friestrasse 24, CH8050, Zurich, Switzerland or fax Switzerland 011 411 301 2003.

HARVEST SYMPOSIUM — The inaugural Advanced Expressive Therapy Harvest Symposium will be held this year from October

5 to 9, in Bolton, Ontario (a rural area near Toronto). The theme of the Symposium is, "In the Woods: Finding Our Way Home in Therapy and the Arts". Trainers include, Annette Brederode (Holland), Paolo Knill (Switzerland/USA) and Stephen K. Levine (Canada/USA). For information, write to The Harvest Symposium, 118 Wells Street, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1P3, Canada or fax Canada 416-535-2932.

Both Symposia are sponsored by the International Network of Creative Arts Therapy Training Centers and are intended for therapists, educators and advanced students of expressive arts therapy. The Symposia are conceived in the classical spirit of coming together for both celebration and instruction. Warning: A good time may be had by all.

Man is not free to refuse to do the things which give him more pleasure than any other conceivable action.

— Stendhal



Announcements



TAMALPA INSTITUTE

The Tamalpa Institute will offer a Level I Training Program entitled *Self Portraits: Explorations of The Body Parts* from January 23 - March 31, 1995. This training will be taught by Daria Halprin-Khalighi with Ken Otter, G. Hoffman Soto and Assistant Teacher Jennifer Harrison. There will be a Level II Training from April 17 - June 2, 1995.
Call (415) 461-9479.



Palmerston
Press
(Toronto)

announces the forthcoming publication of two books in the field of expressive arts therapy:

Minstrels of Soul: Intermodal Expressive Therapy, by Paolo J. Knill, Helen Nienhaus Barba and Margo N. Fuchs.

Tending the Fire: Studies in Art, Therapy and Creativity, by Ellen Levine.

These books will join the already published, *Poiesis: The Language of Psychology and the Speech of the Soul*, by Stephen K. Levine, in what is now a series of publications in the field of expressive arts therapy. For information, write Palmerston Press, 822 Manning Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M6G 2W8, Canada, or fax 416-516-0282.

THE PERSON CENTERED EXPRESSIVE THERAPY INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 6518, Santa Rosa, C.A. 95406 USA (707) 526-4006

Announces its 1995 Program Schedule:

In California

Level I • July 7 - 13
Level II • July 17-27
Level III • January 9 - 20

In New York

Level I • July 24-28 (Omega Institute)
Level II • August 1-11 (Pathwork Center)

California Weekend Programs

Level I • October 7 & 8
November 4 & 5, December 2 & 3

Level II • March 3-5, April 1 & 2
May 6 & 7, June 2-4

Level III • September 15-17,
October 20-22, November 17&19,
December 15-17

Also Programs In England

Level I • July 10-16
Level II • July 21-31

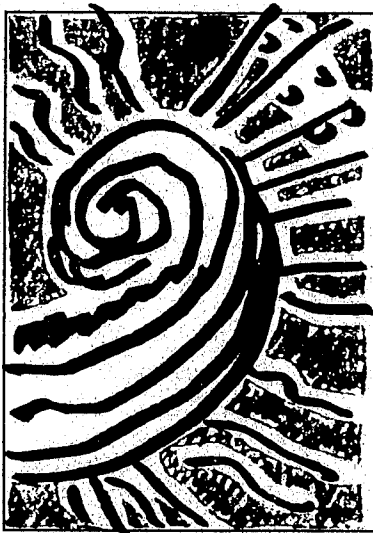
1995 SUMMER INTENSIVE IN EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY

Certificate Program for Professionals

The Expressive Arts Program of the California Institute of Integral Studies is offering their summer certificate program for professional therapists, counselors and advanced students from July 18 - August 1. This residential retreat will be held on the rural Northern Californian coast.

Call (415) 753-6100 ext. 250
for more information.

A training program for clinicians in expressive arts therapy is being offered by Wendy Miller, Ph.D., A.T.R. and Rebecca Milliken, M.A., A.D.T.R. in Bethesda, MD. The program includes introductory workshops, weekend intensives, and bi-weekly guiding skills sessions on experiential process as applied to clinical practice. Special emphasis is on multimodal and intermodal techniques. Call or write for information: Create Therapy Institute, 4905 DelRay Ave., Suite 301, Bethesda, MD. 20814, 301-652-7183.



Newsletter of the International Expressive Arts Therapy Association (IEATA)

Winter
1995

No. 1

P.O. Box 641246, San Francisco, CA., 94164 U.S.A.

Welcome to the first IEATA Newsletter! We hope to use the Newsletter to keep in touch with our members, providing information about IEATA, reports from the Co-Chairs and others, news of upcoming events, responses from readers, creative work (poems, stories, etc.) and whatever other material you send us that seems relevant to the Association. Like everything else about our organization, the success of the Newsletter depends on your active participation. Write on! (Send your material to the address on the masthead.)

This first issue of the Newsletter, in addition to a report on the up-coming conference and other news, contains statements to the members by each of the four Co-Chairs. What strikes me most strongly about these statements is their diversity. We are an Association of unique individuals! As we begin to form our organization, let us strive to honor our differences and to learn from each other. In diversity there is strength.

Steve Levine

Conference Update



Nina Utigaard Simon

February 10th, 1995 is quickly approaching, and the momentum and enthusiasm are building for IEATA's inaugural conference. A team of committed San Francisco Bay Area members have been meeting **weekly** to facilitate the complex coordination of this event. The team consists of: Conference Co-Chairs: Nina Utigaard Simon and Lori Goldrich, along with Deborah Medvick, Promotion and Publications Coordinator (responsible for the wonderful conference brochure); Miriam Smolover, Registration Coordinator; Sandra Koenig, Volunteer Coordinator; Gretchen Delaney, Nina Aoni, Ellen Ruiz, Zena Tucker, and our beloved Co-Chair, Jack Weller. The Conference Committee has put many hours into creating the conference and their commitment is greatly appreciated by all.

Those of you who do not live in the Bay Area, who have volunteered to help out with the conference, will receive information in the mail as to how you might help out during the event. Additionally, if you would like to volunteer some hours at the conference in exchange for a discount in fees, please contact

Sandra Koenig, the Volunteer Coordinator, by leaving her a message on IEATA's voice mail: 415/522-8959.

We want to also remind people that if they want to room with a particular person at the hotel, they need to be sure to send their registration in together, or make note of it somewhere on their registration packet so we can coordinate that with the hotel. Also make sure that you state that you are with the International Expressive Arts Therapy Association group so that you receive your discount price. Of course, we want to encourage people to make their travel and hotel arrangements as soon as possible.

There is an impressive line-up of presenters for this conference. With 40-plus presenters from diverse backgrounds offering to share their insights, style and unique ways of integrating the arts in their work, we believe attendees will leave this 1st conference with a rich sense of what this profession is about, and just how much of an impact expressive arts can have on our various communities.

*It always
comes back to
the same
necessity; go
deep enough
and there is a
bedrock of
truth, however
hard.*

— May Sarton



One does not discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time.

— André Gide

Another main focus for this first conference will be the designing of IEATA. During the conference, a great deal of attention will be given to exploring who we are, what we want from this organization as members, and what steps we will take collectively to make sure these needs are met. The strength and vitality of this organization is totally dependent upon its members; and your hopes and concerns matter. Write the Co-Chairs or various committees so that these can be addressed at the conference.

As Co-Chairs, we want to acknowledge that for some of you it may be financially difficult to attend this conference. If you really want to come, but are having difficulty with the expense, please do contact the Conference Committee at 415/522-8959 and ask for Sandra Koenig, to see what you might be able to do in exchange for a discount in fees. We also want to state that while it would have been nice to pay presenters or

offer them discounts, we must all keep in mind that we are, in fact, an infant just beginning to walk. We are a grass roots movement that needs everyone's support, monetarily and energetically, in order for IEATA to begin building the foundation to thrive and grow. Tasks like applying for non-profit status; acquiring legal consultation and security, creating and publishing a journal or newsletter for members, all require a substantial amount of money. If we as a collective want IEATA to become established, then we must each do our part to see that happen. We have felt an overwhelming support from each of you and it is this support that has enabled us as Co-Chairs to move ahead with the initial vision. Let's all keep up the good work!

Again, as attendees or presenters, if you have questions in regards to the conference, please feel free to call us at 415/522-8959. We look forward to seeing you all at the conference!

confronted with this 'not quite' professional feeling at home. I began meeting and networking with other expressive arts therapists who shared a similar feeling. The need for a democratic, non-profit, membership-led professional association was 'quite right'. It has taken close to two years to organize, with lots of active patience, dedication and integrity on everyone's part and I am very proud to be a part of this professional 'creation story'. The work ahead of us is enormous. I am slowly beginning to feel that this work is 'quite right' and that my coming home is very much concerned with a shared experience of creating a professional home with other committed expressive arts therapists.

What might our contribution to the field be? We are the youngest branch on the creative arts therapy professional association tree, yet we have over 20 years of experience in an integrated arts approach. For me, integration begins with the greatest and utmost respect for each individual using any individual art form. We are also experts on inclusion because that is what we do. We include different forms of expression towards finding/creating meaning in relationship. It is my hope that we, as an association, will be able to define these simple principles into a broader definition which includes research, collaboration and cooperation between all of the separate branches that comprise our whole. If we take these challenges seriously, I think we could make a significant contribution to the growth and development of our larger Creative Arts Therapy Field.

I look forward to a long and fruitful journey together with you.



A Letter to Our Members

Philip Speiser

The founding of IEATA is a very meaningful event for me. For the past 20 years I have been involved with the creative arts therapies. I began my integrative journey in the late 1970's, after having completed my psychodrama training at the Moreno Institute and my Master's degree training in Expressive Arts Therapy at Lesley College. In 1978 I went to live in Sweden. There were very few individuals working with an integrated approach and I felt very isolated. I supported the psychodrama, art, dance and music therapy associations but often felt 'not quite at home'. In

order to remedy this 'not quite at home feeling', I spent 12 wonderful years working as an expressive arts therapist, developing my professional identity and contributing towards the professional development of our field. My work took me through Scandinavia, and slowly my colleagues and I were able to network, organize and grow. This growth was steady, with annual conferences, training programs and seminars contributing toward community building, but it took lots of 'active' patience. When I returned to live in America, my native country, in 1990, once again I was

This Is Not A Myth

Nina Utigaard Simon

Once upon a time, there were certain unique individuals throughout the land who wove together art, poetry, drama and music to facilitate the growth and empowerment of others. They loved and believed in their task in life, but often felt very alone. For even though there were many throughout the world, communication about and between these great people was nearly invisible. The few that had found others who did this magic were indeed pleased and desperately clung to one another for support and inspiration.

There were many theories as to why there was not much written in the "sanctified papers" about their work. A few felt that it was too threatening to the doctors, who had a great deal of power in the land. Others felt that it was because it was a language of the heart and spirit, not of science and research, and science was the language of those who held the authority. Still others believed that it was due to those who had the power and did not want to lose it, knowing that the arts truly empowered individuals.

One day, one of these art healers realized that in order to have a voice in the world they needed to band together, and she began pulling together individuals who worked in a similar way. The circle grew and grew until word came that there were other circles in other communities that had also started meeting. Each circle shared their stories. Each circle came together to inspire and strengthen one another. They

realized that they needed a name for their way of working and decided to call it expressive arts therapy. This felt right, for it was about expressing oneself from within through the arts, and it was powerfully therapeutic.

A buzz began to grow across the land. A sound of excitement about the return of an old language that had been lost through the centuries. A language that combined song, and dance and art to strengthen those who were weak. A language that was beginning to build communities; giving them joy and compassion for one another and a new understanding for strangers.

The stories of this new way of being grew and grew until finally, one day, a messenger came to announce that many of the expressive arts groups were wanting to gather to share their work and their techniques; to find out how others worked. They wanted to collectively claim and honor the value of their work as a community and profession. They were beginning to realize just how powerful it would be to come together in one large circle; and that their power would be once and for all really seen. No longer were they willing to be hidden and unacknowledged by their communities. No longer were they willing to not have a voice in the world.

Groups and individuals began to gather. Expressive arts healers from every corner of the globe began to come together. An uplifting energy began to fill the air

and the buzz became louder and louder. People began asking, "What's going on?" "Who are these people and what magic do they hold?" Some even asked, "How do I join?"

The big day came when all the expressive arts therapists and healers were finally in one gigantic circle. They moved, sang and played music together; they celebrated their creative power by painting together. They got into deep long discussions about what their work was about, and why it was so essential at this time in history.

All of this happened many days. From dawn until night the magic continued. One day, one of the healers announced, "We need to get back to our communities. They need us." So realizing that it was time to return to their homelands to continue their work, the great circle moved outward. Now, however, they took with them the knowledge that they were not alone. They returned with great strength and honor, knowing that there were others in the world who believed in them and what they were doing, and knowing that the value of their work would finally be validated and accepted. No longer would it be exasperating to explain over and over again to puzzled faces, what this work was about and why it was so powerful and necessary. Each returned home knowing that a new language had been born and that its magic would grow and grow; that its transforming energy would create a healthier world to live in. Some even imagined PEACE possible. One thing was for sure: a new dawn had arrived.



Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.

—Anais Nin