

# THE TRAGER® NEWSLETTER & SCHEDULE

SPRING 1995

VOLUME XIV, No. 1

## Combined Newsletter and Schedule

You, attentive reader, will already have noticed the change in title. To save on costs, the Board has decided to have the Newsletter and Schedule bound as a single unit. Marcia and I have decided to bind the Schedule in the middle, so that it can be removed easily by those who wish to do so.

## Interview with Beverly Shultz May

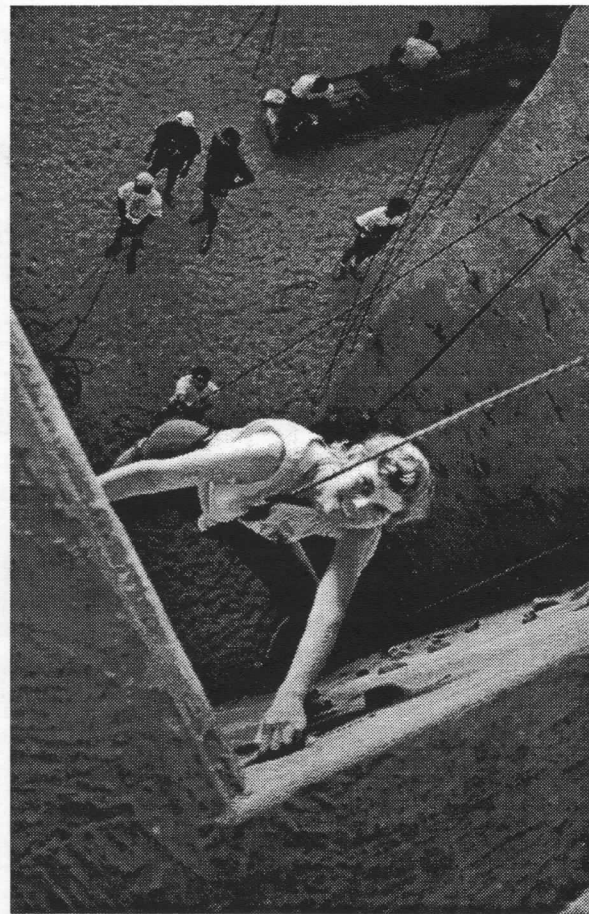
*Don Schwartz*

*Beverly Shultz May is a state and national leader in the somatics field. The following interview was edited from a dialog between Beverly and Don on America Online during December, 1994 and January 1995.*

Don Schwartz (DS): Beverly, you wear so many hats. To introduce you to a larger arena of skilled touch and movement practitioners, and to understand your perspectives on the worlds of massage, bodywork, somatics, etc., would you list all of the hats you wear?

Beverly Shultz May (BSM): As a practitioner, I am a massage therapist and a certified Aston® Patterner. I am also Director of Governmental Affairs for the California Massage Therapy Association (CMTA), and Co-Chair of the California Coalition on Somatic Practices (CCSP). I am also on the American Massage Therapy Association's (AMTA) National Governmental Relations Committee.

DS: If there is any *one* reason why I want to interview you it is because of the manifold experience you have in the field of  
[more on p. 2]



*Just Climbing. Photograph of Practitioner Martha Robrahn © 1994 by Peter Kushner, to appear in the book Mock Rock: A Guide to Indoor Climbing, slated for Spring 1995 release by the Paper Chase Press. This book contains a chapter on Mentastics as a warm-up for climbing. Two more photographs from this book appear later in this issue.*

### Contents

Interview: Beverly Shultz May .....	1-4
Conference Feedback .....	1,4-5,11-13
Committee Reports .....	5-6
This Time with Milton and "Media Watch" .....	6
We're in the Market and a "Farewell" .....	7
<i>The Dancing Cloud</i>	
Developing through <i>Trager</i> .....	8
<i>Trager</i> and Ch'i .....	8-9
New Endorsement and Talent Defined .....	9
Evolution of a Bodywork Dilettante .....	10
Rebirth of Community? and "Just Say 'Yes'" .....	11-13
Journal Notes .....	13-14
South African Experience .....	15
More Time with Milton .....	16

## Reflections on the Core of the 7th International Trager Conference

*Maxine Guenther, Stephani Murdoch, James Day and Monique Perrault*

*These Conference Steering Committee members compiled this selection of feedback from the Dancecards at the conference.*

Because the Core Curriculum (and, yes, the whole Seventh International Trager Conference!) was such a rich experience for so many, we wanted to share with you some of the feedback and, we hope, some of the essence of our time together. For those who attended the conference, may the words be a reminder of your experience. For those who could not attend, we hope you will feel some of the excitement and spirit of this international community of Trager professionals.

The Core was about being in community and exploring the essence of our work together through *Mentastics*, tablework, and discussion of practice issues. Throughout the three sessions, we traveled with a home group (10 to 12 people) with a Tutor acting as peer facilitator. For *Mentastics* and tablework, each home group joined larger groups. What follows are the reflections of practitioners in response to this Core process.

**On Mentastics:** ...loved that Core workshops were accredited ... good reminder to share my body experiences with client ... "asking" not fixing ... stillness and silence helped me expand ... owning and sharing personal power ... stay in the moment ... *Mentastics* create emotional bal-

[more on p. 4]

skilled touch and movement. Frankly, I'm amazed at all of the responsibilities you have. How do you handle having all of these positions, your private practice, and care for your family as well?!

**BSM:** My husband probably disagrees, but I try to alternate where my professional attention is focused, so that CMTA projects are minimized while the Coalition is so active, etc. I also have always had a commitment to myself not to get burned out; so when [I am] overwhelmed, I slow down to only essential functions, responding to urgent requests, and such. However, the CCSP has demanded tremendous amounts of time in the last 3 years, especially the last year, as we get close to the mailing of [23,000] surveys next week [to California somatics practitioners]. I guess what carries me now is my commitment to the project, and to the larger vision, and also that I tend to complete projects and commitments. With age, though, I'm getting better at reducing the stress and getting just as much done.

**DS:** Before I get to the Coalition, one more question about your many hats: How many private sessions do you give a week on average?

**BSM:** I spend 30-35 hours a week with clients, 90% being one-hour sessions. In the next month I will be changing that so that I have more space between clients and more longer sessions.

**DS:** What is the California Coalition on Somatic Practitioners? How did it come about?

**BSM:** The CCSP was organized by me on behalf of the CMTA in order to look at issues of regulatory policy at the state level in California. Originally I wanted to research options and survey CMTA members — and later involve the other groups, once we knew what CMTA members would support. However, it was recommended that all groups be involved from the start, especially in light of the turmoil over National Certification. That was not my idea. Ahmos Netanel, a former CMTA President, suggested it. It was a brilliant suggestion.

**DS:** So, for the sake of historical clarity, the initiative for creation of the

CCSP came from the CMTA?

**BSM:** Yes, I organized the first meeting on behalf of CMTA, the state chapter of the AMTA, with CMTA funding and resources.

**DS:** Did the formation of the Federation of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Organizations have any influence in the creation of the CCSP?

**BSM:** Actually not. I can't remember the sequence of which came first, but when I first learned of the Federation, I thought it was a great idea, but it may turn out to be viewed as another exclusive project. The writings of M. Scott Peck and his Foundation for Community Encouragement have been my greatest initial influence in the commitment to create and maintain an open community.

**DS:** So — what is your vision of the CCSP? Can it, does it, have influence beyond California?

**BSM:** I certainly hope so. I hope that we can become a model for other states in contemplating issues of regulation and identity. What I believe is the most outstanding feature which makes us unique is that we have not accepted massage as the umbrella, and agreed to respect others' practices under that. We have created a larger umbrella, currently called "somatics", [under] which we all fall as equal practices. We are still developing the identity of this umbrella. That is probably the major change in direction of the Coalition: From reactively looking at issues to proactively looking at identity, and presenting this in a survey form, so that the tools for decisions come from within the profession, not from an elite group of so-called leaders.

**DS:** Who is Michael M. Murphy, how did he get involved as your co-leader, what are his perspectives, and how is that co-leading relationship working?

**BSM:** Michael is a Rolfer®, and a member of the Joint Governmental Relations Committee for the Federation. He has been active in revising massage regulations at the local level, both with me and alone. He was very interested in the Coalition when I first spoke to him about it. Initially I thought that Ahmos Netanel and I would be

organizing and leading the initial stages of the Coalition, but Ahmos was overwhelmed, and I organized the first meeting alone, and led the morning. By afternoon, Michael came along with his excellent skills at keeping meetings moving and focused. We sort of naturally fell into joint chairing, consulting as the process and project developed.

Michael tends to be most active at the meetings, but certainly is vital to the process. We share responsibility well because we have tremendous respect for one another, and we are able to speak openly when we have problems. We never have competed for the floor or central role at meetings—a fortunate ability thus far to keep egos out of the process. Finally, we each like doing different parts of the work.

**DS:** What do you mean by different parts?

**BSM:** I love research, writing, and organizing information in useful forms, none of which I would call Michael's interests. He loves "schmoozing", returning calls, networking, leading meetings. I try to be involved in the actual logistics of facilitating meetings, mostly so that I am not lost if ever alone. But I tend to be quieter, and slower when things get distracted or difficult. But these are more of Michael's interests. I follow up on details of projects and writing, while he follows up on calls and contacts. But in meetings, we have gotten a lot of positive feedback about our combined style. In emotional moments, Michael tends to gracefully guide us on, whereas I am sometimes still wondering what's happened. Later I may think, "so and so was really rude to me", or such, but I tend to be "emotionally retarded", and don't react because I don't recognize the anger or negativity until later.

**DS:** By the time our readers read this, the CCSP will have mailed its professional regulation information/survey document out to more than 23,000 touch and movement practitioners in the State of California. The results will be in. Nobody knows what the body politic will express. Whatever the results, what do you foresee in the Coalition's development when the re-

sults are in?

**BSM:** Probably further surveys to refine the responses. Initially, the survey was focused on regulation. But Jerry Green suggested that we needed to know who we are before we determine regulatory policy. We made a rough, basic definition, using the term "Somatic practices", and were going to ask respondents for their comments. But at every meeting, the issue of scope of practice came up. Finally, Jerry suggested that we include questions which would give us the tools to define scope of practice, based on how practitioners see themselves working, breaking it into the elements of a scope of practice, which are usually intention (purpose), skills, and tools (modalities). This has been the most dramatic shift in our direction, and is probably the most important information we can receive from the responses. Are we one profession, is touch core to our work, etc? So we may come up with some tentative definition or definitions to be presented for review and input.

As for the regulatory alternative choices, we may find one or more clear directions, but quite likely there will be a narrowing of the roughly defined options as presented in the packets. Probably whatever results obtained from the survey will need to be developed further into a meaningful vision of what [the choices] will look like. We need to see that any plan is possible so that we can support it, and it stands a chance of succeeding in the world.

**DS:** What is your current view/opinion/perspective of the National Certification Program?

**BSM:** I supported the concept of a National Certification exam from the beginning. Working with cities in trying to revise regulations affecting massage practitioners and thus defined as such, I saw the need for a uniform standard and exam. Numerous cities had their own exams, often irrelevant, or else agreed to exempt those who might be able to prove that they had achieved some recognized standard of knowledge. I also knew that if ever we are to get a state license, we would need to demonstrate that we had gone through much of the same process as

the certification council went through, doing a job analysis, etc. I think that the current National Certification Board is a reasonable first attempt at an entry-level standard. I know the Board is researching the possibility of having advanced specialized certifications. I think this is good, but I also wonder about having the specialties recognized at the basic level itself, so that *Trager* Practitioners, etc. could take an exam more specific to their own work.

**DS:** What do you have to say to the many *Trager* Practitioners who have a *Trager* certificate, and no other credentials. What can they do to protect their right to practice *Trager*? - In states with licensing? — In states without licensing? — In states with licensing bills pending?

**BSM:** I see. Now we get to the easy questions! I think that the most important thing now is monitoring the massage profession and associations, to see what legislative plans they have, especially in the unlicensed states, so as to be sure they are part of the process. The right to practice exists both in the market and in the legal arena. To the extent that the public is aware of *Trager* work, understands what is and requests it, practitioners will have professional recognition. I believe that most important thing in protecting the right to practice legally is to develop a very clear identity, so that practitioners, the public, legislators, as well as other professions, know who you are. One problem I see with massage — especially those [people] promoting their work as "therapy" — is that many clients, and even many practitioners, think that they are the same as physical therapists, but with a massage specialty. If nothing else, this can lead to physical therapists and other health profession seeing us as a threat, and trying to regulate us on their terms. On the other side, of course, is the desire to differentiate from massage "parlors".

**DS:** In any case, then, there's no avoiding being involved with governmental regulations?

**BSM:** In some cases, yes. If you live in an area with no local massage regulations, or you are able to work under a title, such as *Trager*, which city offi-

cial don't pursue as massage, then you are only subject to local business laws. In most cases in California this is not the case. We end up being subjected to very inappropriate regulations. Of course, even if not regulated by a city or county, we may be affected by the legal scopes of practice of other professions. One potential strategy for a profession is [for practitioners] to develop themselves, and wait for the government to take notice of them. With proactive thinking, the profession may be so well prepared at that time that it can address the concerns of the government on its own terms.

**DS:** I'm a hypothetical *Trager* Practitioner in a hypothetical mid-Western state. The members of the state's massage association chapter are pursuing licensure of all touch and movement as a health profession. It will be nearly impossible for me to have *Trager* excluded. However, I don't want to be included in this law. I want my *Trager* certificate to be all that I need to practice. This is a real question I am getting more frequently these days. What do I tell them?

**BSM:** It seems to me that there is change occurring in the manner in which somatic practitioners in other states are initiating regulatory change — slight but noticeable. More states are beginning with Coalitions. The current problem I see is that many massage groups still have a somewhat paternalistic approach. They are so sure that their way is right, and will benefit everyone, who, of course, they feel fall under the umbrella of massage. They perhaps will work in Coalitions, but the assumption is that licensure is the undisputed goal. Other groups may be invited to participate, but on these preconceived — licensure is best — terms.

But every variation from this scenario can be built on. So the Massachusetts Coalition, which fell apart, has come back together with a proposed law which recognizes "somatic" practices as independent and autonomous. We can all learn not only from their process, but from whatever results they achieve. In California, the CCSP can be a model for a totally

different way of inclusiveness. From the feedback received while preparing our just-released survey, I have learned that it is truly revolutionary to try to survey an entire profession. Also, from the start we were willing to completely redefine the very foundations of who we are; and we have been committed to hearing all voices. Not only are we surveying to try to determine possible regulatory policy, but also to find out possible definitions of who we are, whether we are one profession. So I would say follow other states, share that information with the massage groups. Remind them that solutions are possible that will meet the needs of all.

DS: So, whoever you are, whatever your interests — be they to be in or out of professional regulation — you must get involved by communicating and promoting your interests to your peers and your bureaucracies.

BSM: Yes, I believe so. I also believe that we need to consider the public's interests even before our own. Too often professions make decisions based on their own financial interests and not on the general public's interest. This is what David Palmer has tried to address by promoting on-site massage. It meets the needs of a huge segment of the public by offering safe, inexpensive, convenient touch. By looking only from our perspective, it may never have been developed, since it's probably easier for us to just provide full sessions in our own locations. Obviously, we see a lot of this in politics as well, cutting waste, but not if it means losing jobs in my district. I grew up in the 60's with Dylan's "The times they are a'changing." Let's see that they change in positive ways.

DS: Thanks for this opportunity. I could go on with many more questions. I hope we *Trager* members will get to hear from you from time to time over the years ahead. In any case, I'll bet you'll be hearing from us in the months ahead!

BSM: Thank you. I have appreciated this opportunity to speak with you, and hopefully inspire others in some way.

### Conference Feedback

[continued from p. 1]

ance for me ... validating — A lot of people commented on Gail's asking them to separate responsibility from caring; it made them aware of something new. ... *Mentastics* for me, just for me. What a concept! ... I felt the most grounded, connected, fearless, peaceful — nothing. ... leading *Mentastics* from within ... I want model *Mentastics* ... very valuable in its simplicity ... allowing the potential, no agenda in teaching *Mentastics* ... too big ... great pleasure to feel resonance of *Mentastics* more acutely ... I found a new source of power and energy ... deepened my understanding and heightened my "in body" feeling ... I expected to be shown certain *Mentastic* movements. Instead I was told to feel. I didn't like that at first, but it caused me to reach and grow. It was what I needed even if it wasn't what I thought I wanted! ... use of gymnastic balls was great ... learned to be more comfortable giving feedback... difficult, too much intimacy ... great day for me as a Tutor. More confidence in my tutoring *Mentastics*. Got to see my abilities! ... playing with elongation, width and jiggle was great. Got a real sense of internal bounce following use of ball ... time to notice my own body was nice ... immersion in feeling ... laughter is so important for me! I laughed the whole session ... would have preferred more *Mentastics* and less talk ... fun, learned a lot ... expansive — I'm in love with *Mentastics* again ... wish this one had been recorded ... awesome group *Mentastics* ... deepened my awareness of control and power ... format (red group) was too nebulous for my taste ... their (Amrita and Bill) ability to play and trust allowed me to experience a space inside I have never been able to reach before. A profound experience ... fun time. Great new concepts for empowering the client ... so helpful — gave me a way of doing *Mentastics* that is not doing ... facilitating empowerment. For me it isn't the tools that are powerful, it's the being present with someone so that they can find themselves what they need to [have] come forth.

*On Tablework*: ...rushed (yellow group) ... positive, loving feedback ... good reminder of moves ... loved playing with quality of touch ... every session is a gift in giving and receiving ... felt squeezed by feedback from two Tutors ... a main theme here is that more time was needed for tablework ... being in the "I don't know" ... I have the moves, now just explore ... many realized how important it is to come from a grounded place in their body with the tablework ... gained confidence ... recall ... a global sense ... a great learning ... wait and feel ... rambled, needed more focus (yellow) ... too much in too short a time, yet small group concept worked well ... felt confident and playful and at home ... slow down and really feel ... not enough Tutor [or] Instructor assistance (blue group) ... too large a group ... fun supportive and soft ... first experience of functional feedback (thanks to Elna and Martin) ... gained feeling of connectedness between back and feet ... good, but Instructor wasn't quite in touch (red group) ... I don't have to fix my clients, just feel and be there with them again and again.

*On Practice Issues*: ...excellent, good bonding with group ... I realized many of us have similar practice issues ... covered important issues ... truly wonderful session that went deep for all of us ... profoundly safe, practical ... I am getting clearer on some of my boundaries ... wonderful to see how the leaders brought compassion, communication, understanding and love ... too short. You must teach more of this in our trainings. These tools are as important as *Mentastics* and tablework ... really helpful. It brought clarity to some cloudy issues for me ... answered my needs more and more ... on Core facilitation— I loved doing this! ... very useful down to earth issues. Tutor had tremendous warmth and ability to relate to us ... developed confidence in my ability to describe the *Trager* Approach ... wonderful experience. Good Tutor feedback ... focused on boundaries which makes me question and reassess my attitude to my own boundaries ... great group. Great session ... affirmation of what I'm already doing

**Personnel Committee report***Shelly Siskind*

The Personnel Committee is continuing its work on the appeals process and is drafting a second proposal to the Board with recommendations. A Task Force has been struck by the Board to work with the PC and dialogue is continuing with all parties concerned. We continue to invite your input about values related to personnel. These can be sent to Shelly Siskind (Ontario, Canada) and Anna-Marie Bowers (Ohio, USA). We welcome Elizabeth Ormyron as the newest member of the PC. She is replacing Fabienne Hirsch. We thank Fabienne for her long-standing contributions and service. We also thank Anne Wormood for her work as Board representative.

**Tutor Committee Report***Maryann Zimmermann, Chairperson*

The new Tutor Committee was voted in by consensus at the 1994 International *Trager* and Tutor Conferences held in the Poconos. This is a 2-year voluntary commitment. The members are: Jan Fogel (Sweden), Bayla Goldstein (Toronto, Canada), Rita Lustgarten (Mill Valley, CA), Ken Wieder (MA), and Maryann Zimmermann (San Diego, CA).

Rita Lustgarten has offered to remain as the Tutor Representative to the Board of Directors. She would be happy to step aside if there is someone who has a burning desire to serve in this capacity. Presently, the Board cannot handle another "long distance" member so the candidate must be available (as well as eager) to attend the Board meetings in person. The Board meets every six weeks. The Tutor Committee meets every six weeks in a conference call. If you are interested in this position, please contact Bayla Goldstein, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, at (416) 489-8090.

A Continuing Education

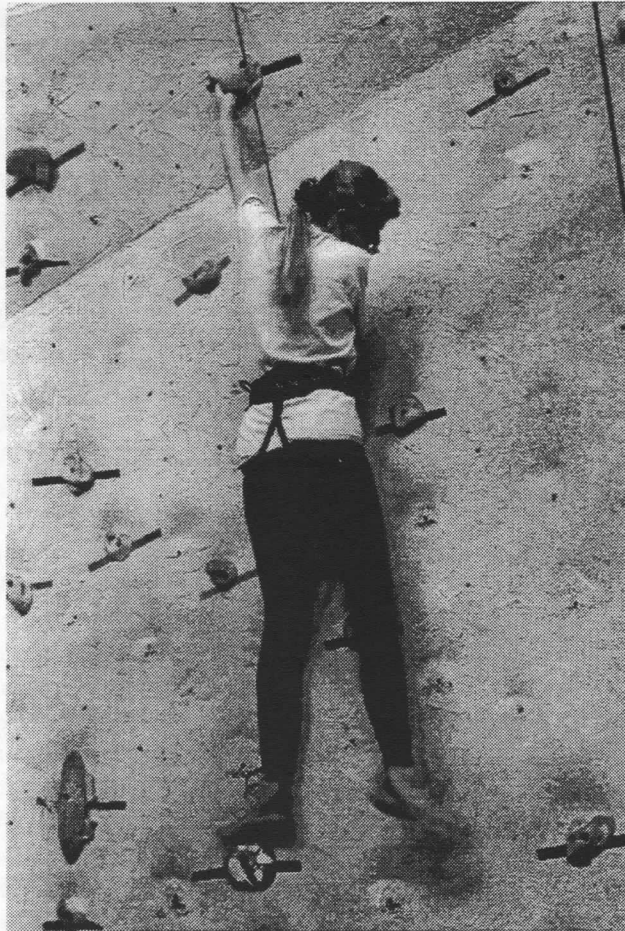
[continued on p. 6]  
NEWSLETTER PAGE 5

... awareness of not being so attached to results ... good blend, large groups and small groups ... the best part, the pause, the sharing ... sense of community ... Tutor not sure of role ... marketing is a state of mind ... professionalism on issue of sexual ethics ... very good discussions ... listening to the client is healing for them ... great support from tutors and group ... growth issues are work issues, work issues are growth issues.

**General Comments:** ... The opening was a wonderful welcome to all! Moved by honest feelings, inspiring! Supported each and every one of us. Deep immersion into the *Trager* spirit! ... the conference gave space for everyone to move through their difficulties, feel their edges and work through in softness ... loved the Core! ... tutors were great ... taking home a deeper, softer, fuller feeling of what *Trager* is ... felt happy leaving and taking a piece of everyone with me ... personally challenged as a conference committee member ... what a gift the Town Meeting was, to feel welcome to speak and be heard ... I appreciated hearing Roger and others acknowledge that the process of consensus is difficult, but we grow and it works. What a model this committee provided us ... learned, had fun, and benefited from all ... first time I really felt I had a place in the *Trager* community, not just someone on the fringes because I was a part-tome practitioner ... Core workshops were very wonderful and need even more space next time ... Core format was very rich, expanding as a sure way of facilitating community ... I no longer have the feeling of frustration and isolation that I did ... abundant contact of many kinds at many levels with many people ... a-ha, a fabulous conference like this actually exists and I was present ... Biggest lesson for me during conference was to take time for myself in a non-judgmental way, to feel, observe, be with body/

mind/spirit in a supportive way ... I was seen for who I am, defined, explored all that I have developed within myself ... this was my first conference. Each day was so filled with wonderful experiences that I could have gone home at any time feeling fulfilled! ... personal growth was tremendous ... basic point I got is that less is more. Love it! ... the quality of *Trager* work is a concern of mine. Some practitioners have passed through many Tutors and still do not seem to be Practitioner level ... expansive and centering ... well organized and planned. Thorough. Good balance of left and right brain. Definitely conducive to community building ... what a celebration! ... I left the conference with more of a sense of community worldwide!

[*Further Conference Comments on pages 11 and ff.*]



*"Shimmering the Leg" © 1994 Peter Kushner*

[continued from p. 5]

Amendment proposal was made by Jan Fogel, Tutor Committee member from Sweden and representative for the European Tutors. The following suggested proposal, which *will be voted on*, was formed in the context of the European Conference in October of 1994. There was a consensus agreement by the Tutor Committee:

"Triads done in the context of a 2 to 2-1/2 day Tutor Conference which [Conference] translates to 18 hours: Each person of the triad does 2 hours, 3 times. This is to count as the required continuing education without a supervisor or instructor, for those that formerly required a supervisor."

A Task Force was also formed at the Conference. The members of this Task Force worked on a proposal to be incorporated into the *Trager* Training Track. It has been reviewed by the present Tutor Committee and was sent to the Education Committee. The Task Force is as follows: Dodie Becker (Pennsylvania), Steve Buchbinder (New York), Carolea Burgess (Connecticut), and Regina Kujawski (Florida).

Dodie Becker also graciously volunteered to be on the Sub-Committee for Tutor Renewals. Ken Wieder and Bayla Goldstein were back-ups.

Sandra Berger is the administrative liaison at the Institute office.

Our intention is to serve the whole Tutor Body as we move on in growth and Hook-Up.

---

## Strengthening the *Trager* Institute

*Don Schwartz*

Tutor Lynette Brannon of Austin, Texas, U.S.A., has placed The *Trager* Institute in her will. This generous decision will allow the organization to become more effective in its service to members and the public. Thank you, Lynette, for this significant contribution. I encourage all members to consider this form of support in carrying forward Dr. Trager's work. If you have any questions, just give me a call at the Mill Valley office.

---

## This Time with Milton

*Carol Campbell*

For me as an Instructor, "this time with Milton" was a Practitioner Review class in November. A group consisting of both seasoned and more recent Practitioners came together with open-hearted attention and intention. In Milton's presence, and often with his guidance, we shared, explored, created, and deepened our work. Here's what some of the participants had to say:

"I felt privileged to be with Milton. Feeling his presence made me realize how life has so many stages and colors. There was so much love." "I appreciate Dr. Trager's ability, still, to observe and identify a core problem and to promote integration." "It was a gift to feel Milton's hands, to see him touch others, to watch him even in his current struggle. As always, my learning took directions I never would have predicted and I'm grateful." "This class was such a rich, fun, and juicy experience. I certainly got what I wanted. I sensed as never before Milton's confidence in those of us who will carry on his work."

As Milton told the group, "I just feel there is more for you to have."

### A Note from Emily Trager

"I, too, attended this class. And I want to thank Carol Campbell for doing such a wonderful job of leading the class, and of being with Milton, and supporting him in being so present with the students."

---

## Media Watch

*Compiled by Don Schwartz*

Practitioner Andrea Wibbels of Munich, Germany, reports that a book entitled "Weiche Techniken [Soft Techniques] in Manual Medicine" has been published by Hippokrates Verlag in Germany. Andrea says that this "is the first book in Germany which deals extensively with the concept of TRAGER.... It was published by a reputable publisher in the medical field, and addresses, therefore, mainly medical doctors, psychologists, and so on.

Three of the co-authors of the book are medical doctors.... We are happy to finally also have a worthwhile book available in the German-speaking area concerning this wonderful work."

*Trager* has been featured in a major article entitled "Peace, heavenly peace: welcome to the bliss of bodywork" by Liz Brody, published in the December, 1994 issue of *Shape* magazine, a mainstream publication. Our appreciation goes out to Ms. Brody and the publishers of *Shape* for presenting *Trager* in such a favorable light. The Institute's name, address, and phone are listed at the end of the article in a short list of only six organizations. *Shape* magazine's contact information is: 451 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016; 212-251-0640, Fax: 212-251-0641.

An introductory article on *Trager* by Deane Juhan has been published by *The Optimist* a regional publication serving the Champaign/Urbana area of the State of Illinois, site of the massive University of Illinois. Our thanks to publisher Paul Young for placing *Trager* in the Volume One, Number One, December/January issue. For more information contact: *The Optimist*, P.O. Box 344, Champaign, IL 61824, 217-398-1923, Fax: 217-352-5497, Internet: [optimist@prairienet.org](mailto:optimist@prairienet.org).

The *Trager* Institute and yours truly have each been acknowledged in the California Coalition on Somatic Practice's information/survey document mailed to more than 23,000 touch and movement practitioners in California.

Thanks to Robert L. Spencer for his favorable mention of Dr. Trager and *Trager* work in his book, *The Craft of the Warrior*, published in 1993, by North Atlantic Books/Frog, Ltd. of Berkeley, California. Mr. Spencer also included the Institute's name, address, and phone number.

On page B1 of *The Wall Street Journal* for 30 January 1995 an article by Barbara Cartonon alternative-care health insurers includes *Trager* among "The New Healers".

---

## We're in the Market

Megan Eoyang

Our work is showing up more and more often in mainstream magazines and professional journals (twice as many this year as last), so that the feeling of being the "Lone Ranger" when marketing *Trager* work may dissipate soon. This will make it easier to tell people about *Trager* work, but even if it were a household word, we would still have the task of presenting ourselves as professionals.

I was raised with the idea that no one can know everything, and with computers speeding up information availability, that is even more true today. But what we *can* know is how to find out what we need to know. What are our resources? In addition to making an extensive collection of articles about or mentioning *Trager* work available to you at cost, the Institute office also has videotapes and several books, two of which are excellent resources on marketing.

The first is *Business Mastery* by Cherie Sohnen-Moe. This is a business planning guide for healing arts professionals, a workbook. Her chapters include: Initial Considerations, Planning, Building a Strong Foundation, Practice Management, Marketing, The Business Plan, Self Management, and an Index with lots of useful forms, worksheets, and ledger sheets. Even if you are already pleased with the size and pace of your practice, you'll find several good ideas in this book (8 1/2 x 11, 256 pages, US \$17, a \$2.95 discount through the office).

The second is *The Bodywork Entrepreneur* by David Palmer. This is a collection of essays, interviews, and practical advice for bodywork professionals from Palmer's newsletter of the same name. His introduction to each chapter is clear, the articles are short, and I often found myself drawn from article to article as if I were sitting after dinner with a group of friends discussing bodywork issues. His chapters are: The Idea of Business, Creating Your Business Idea, The Structure of Business, Working the Numbers, Market-

ing Stories (doesn't that title pique your interest?), Clinical Massage, Massage in the Workplace, Industry Standards, Ethics and Intentions, and Inventing the Future of Massage (8 1/2 x 11, 199 pages, US \$20 (a \$4 discount through the office)).

The Board and the Institute office staff are committed to supporting practitioners to market their work. Here are two fine resources we offer for your support (at a discount!).

For next time, I would love to hear stories of how you have successfully approached the media (newspapers, TV, radio) in your area to increase *Trager* exposure. You send; I share. (Send your stories to Megan Eoyang, c/o The Trager Institute, 33 Millwood, Mill Valley, CA 94941, USA.) *Wishing you well!*

---

### —Scheiden tut weh—

Antonia Föh

Liebe *Trager* Studenten, liebe *Trager* Praktiker!!

Das zweite Jahr meines Urlaubes als *Trager* Lehrerin geht zu Ende. Wieder habe ich eine grosse Entscheidung getroffen:

Da meine Ausbildung in Naturheilkunde mich tiefgreifender und länger beansprucht wird, als ich erwartet habe, habe ich mich entschieden, das *Trager* Institut zu verlassen. Mein innerer Ruf führt mich auf neue Wege und ich will ihm folgen!!

Obwohl ich Wünsche, weitere Pläne und Vorstellungen habe, fühlt sich diese Entscheidung wieder wie ein Schritt ins Ungewisse an. Ja-so ist es wohl mit den Entscheidungen. Wir wählen eine Richtung, doch was dann auf uns zukommt, enthüllt sich uns wieder nur Schritt für Schritt.

So empfinde ich nebst dem mulmigen Gefühl vor dem Neuen, Unbekannten, wieder viel Lebendigkeit, Freude, Fülle und Leere zugleich. Ja, wenn wir unseren Klienten lange genug das Loslassen und die Hingabe beigebracht haben, dann können wir es auf einmal selbst, hm?

So wird es nun Zeit, Euch adieu zu sagen, vielen von Euch, mit denen ich

unvergessliche und kostbare Stunden verbracht habe in oder ausserhalb von *Trager* Kursen! Gesichter - Stimmen - Körper und Hände ziehen an mir vorbei - und ich weiss, dass all das, was wir zusammen erlebt haben, unauslöschlich in uns weiterlebt, uns verbindet - uns nähren wird, wann immer wir uns mit diesen Erinnerungen verbinden!

Ich danke Euch für die schönen Stunden des Zusammenseins, für Euer Lachen und Eure Tränen — für Euer Einfach-So-Sein!!

In Liebe, Dankbarkeit und Verbundenheit

Antonia

### Farewell

Dear *Trager* Students and *Trager* Practitioners!

The second year of my leave of absence as an Instructor is coming to an end and I have made another big decision. As my studies in natural healing have taken far longer and engaged me much more intensively than I thought, I have decided to leave the *Trager* Institute. My inner call is taking me in new directions and I will follow it. Although I have plans and visions, this decision again feels like a step into the unknown or like a first step on a lifelong path to follow. And like two years ago when I decided to take a leave of absence and start my studies this second step gives me a feeling of aliveness, joy, fullness and emptiness at the same time. I guess if we teach our clients long enough about letting go and giving in to what wants to happen we get the lesson ourselves!

So it is time to say good bye to many of you with whom I spend dear and precious moments in and outside of trainings. Faces — voices — bodies — and hands are passing by me and I know that what we have shared will always stay with us, will be part of us wherever we are. I thank you for being with me and sharing your way of being, touching, laughing and crying!

Love and peace to all of you!!

Good bye — adieu — ciao — auf Wiedersehen.

Antonia

## Developing through *Trager*

Michael Madrone (Vancouver, BC)

I began my *Trager* practice under the assumption that it was necessary to pursue the development of a full-time practice. I aggressively followed that path both in a marketing sense and in a professional development sense. Eventually I became good enough to be invited to work in a prestigious clinic. It was good in the sense that I received professional respect both for myself and for the work, and I got to work on a great many clients, many of whom presented difficult and challenging conditions.

The downside, though, was that I was working full-time doing sessions, that is, 4 or 5 per day, every day. Eventually it became an overbearing job. The joy began to disappear, and I was forced to re-examine my assumption that to be successful meant to be doing sessions all day, every day, day in and day out, day after day. I realized that the full-time practice assumption was simply one which I had picked up along the way somewhere in my unconscious set of beliefs, one of the many "shoulds" that I had incorporated into my belief system without much thought or examination. In addition my body began giving me signals that it wasn't happy with such an arrangement.

I was also at that time doing research for my course "Developing and Promoting Your *Trager* Practice". One of the tools I was looking at was the technique of asking empowering questions. What I began to realize was this: Many people have not been taught the skill of asking empowering questions. We often ask questions which leave us weak. For example, people would often ask me if I had a full-time practice. Over time I had taken that in and, without realizing it, had made it a part of my belief system, that in order to be a "real" *Trager* Practitioner, I had to have a full-time practice (as defined by somebody else, of course). But when I attained that goal, I wasn't happy. As I said, the joy had gone out of the work for me.

A more empowering question for me to ask would have been, "Do I have

a successful *Trager* practice?" And then of course to follow up with a series of questions around what success is for me, and what does it look like and how can I attain it and so on. This was quite an insight for me. The more I looked into it, the more I discovered that many other *Trager* people were operating under a similar kind of delusion.

The good news was that this then became a part of my elective course, how to clarify goals so that they serve the practitioner as a whole person. So the key point then becomes not whether one has a full-time practice, but whether one has a successful practice that serves both the person in all of her or his aspects and the greater good of the whole.

In my course I invite practitioners to free themselves from the numbers game of how many sessions per week or year or whatever, and to move into the much freer realms of success, creativity, the ecology of the organism, and joy. This, I believe, is one of the great breakthroughs which I offer in my course.

If a practitioner doesn't operate from the type of model that I'm describing, but instead gets trapped in the numbers delusion, what inevitably happens is that some part of her or his unconscious wisdom will intervene and prevent the damage that this delusion might cause. We often refer to this as sabotage, but in fact this is an exquisitely refined survival mechanism which the human creature has undoubtedly evolved to bring us to this point in our collective development. I say that, in true *Trager* style, we should honor this resistance by backing off, and asking an empowering question such as, "What could be easier here?" This serves us much better than endless "shoulds" and guilt trips, or counterproductive sabotage such as getting sick, or being unsuccessful and failing.

Now that I have this knowledge, I do fewer sessions (thank goodness!) but I am much, much more successful. I am happier, healthier, freer, less frustrated, and have many more outlets for my creative energies. There is no such thing as a typical week or even a typical year, and I am much more flexible in

dealing with curves in the road of life, bumps and potholes on the spiritual path, and government-induced economic recessions. In short, I now totally get the difference between being full-time and being successful.

Not only that, if I want my practice to increase or decrease, I can do it with ease, in *Trager* fashion, not in struggle, as was my former style. I feel empowered and proactive. The numbers don't mean that much to me; and now, being successful has a whole new meaning to me.

Sometimes people try to impress by reeling off numbers of clients per week. I remember being at an International Conference and hearing a practitioner talk about doing 10 or 11 sessions a day because he liked Mercedes-Benzes and wanted one. I notice that he is no longer a practitioner. I hope he got his car.

Milton has successfully done this work into his eighties. If I live that long I want to be in a condition where I can too. I've worked a lot with elderly people. I've seen up close what a lifetime of misuse of your body can do. That's why I prefer to focus on the successful empowering questions.

---

## *Trager* and Ch'i: The Connection

David Cronkite (Ottawa, ON)

I have been reading a fascinating book on Ch'i Gung (also called Qi Gong) entitled *Opening the Energy Gates of your Body* by B. Kumar Frantzis. Translated as "energy work", Ch'i Gung is a system of exercises that directs the inner flow of life force using only the mind.

Milton Trager, the originator of *Trager* bodywork and *Mentastics*, has a name for connecting with this life force: "Hook-up". Hook-up is central to the practice of *Trager* and *Mentastics* (the *Trager* you do yourself at home). Without Hook-up, the movements of a *Trager* or a *Mentastics* session have no therapeutic benefit. Through movement and Hook-up the *Trager* Practitioner reduces pain, balances the ner-

[continued on p. 9, after the Schedule]

THE TRAGER NEWSLETTER



vous system, and increases the range and ease of motion in your body.

Opening the physical body to receive the ch'i is of vital importance according to Kumar. He compares the body to a circuit that requires solid wiring and insulation in order to handle the flow of ch'i without burning out. What I see *Trager* work doing is simultaneously using movement to open the body and using Hook-up to bring in the life giving force.

A number of the Ch'i Gung exercises are strikingly similar to *Mentastics* movements. In both systems we find side to side arm swings and sideways shifting exercises, as well as an emphasis on easy, slow paced movements. Feeling and sensing form the cornerstone of the two approaches.

Frantzis and Trager share common ground when it comes to emotional issues. Frantzis states that the cathartic approach used by many Eastern Kundalini and Western group therapies usually only serve to entrench emotional behavior. His approach is to dissolve the emotion into the flow of ch'i. I experienced this unique approach during a *Trager* session when a surge of emotion shook my body. In previous, non-*Trager*, bodywork sessions I would always release strongly, yelling, shaking, and crying. However, during the *Trager* session, my practitioner encouraged me to soften the energy flow. "Bumps" in my energy flow were causing the shaking. These bumps were energy blocks, much like speed bumps. Drive too fast over a speed bump and you'll wreck your car. Initially I was confused. It never occurred to me to try the soft approach. Well, I tried it and it worked. The energy shifted to something quite angelic and I was lifted off the table in a very blissful reverie.

A word of caution. One can become addicted to the strong sensations that catharsis may bring. Looking back I think the reverie could have been another block even though the feeling was positive. Sensations, positive or negative, have the potential to become addictive. Frantzis advises that pure, clean energy feels comfortable, centered and empty. This emptiness

### The Dancing Cloud

sounds similar to Milton's assertion that Hook-up is a feeling of nothingness.

Describing the benefits of Ch'i Gung to the muscles, Frantzis says, "Ch'i Gung also causes the muscles to elongate...the muscles eventually attain a state akin to that of a springy rubber band." *Mentastics* has the same goal. Not to harden muscles, but to soften them in order to find real strength. Frantzis has the following to say about the heart: "...the object of Ch'i Gung is not to make the heart pump more strongly, but to increase the elasticity of the vascular system". Compare that statement with the *Trager* training that encourages us to feel the elasticity.

It is significant that Milton is using far less movement in his *Trager* sessions than ever before. I don't think that is just a function of old age. Deane Juhan wisely pointed out that Milton is in a Tibetan Buddhist state of being. What I think Deane means is that Milton is so connected to the life force, is in such an advanced state of Hook-up, that he only has to pass his hands over your body for tremendous healing to take place. In the September-October 1994 issue of *Massage Magazine*, a piece on Milton Trager describes his amazing ability to understand what is happening with one of his students while they are on the other side of the room. Milton is working on a client and can still connect with another person halfway across the room.

What is the proportion between *Trager* movement and *Trager* Hook-up? Is it 50-50? Is it a little bit of movement and a lot of Hook-up? Is it some other ratio? Milton's moves are becoming smaller which is significant. In all probability *Trager* work has a strong energy component even though Milton may never have used the terminology. If so, the *Trager* approach merits a serious study of ch'i. Ch'i Gung provides an excellent study of ch'i because it offers both an intellectual and a kinesthetic understanding.

### Deepak Chopra Endorses Milton Trager's Work

Thanks to efforts by Emily Trager and George Quasha of Station Hill Press, Deepak Chopra, M.D., internationally renowned leader in the natural health and healing movements, has made a statement of endorsement of Dr. Trager's work. This is:

"Milton Trager's work will benefit anyone wishing to live a healthier and more dynamic life."

Deepak Chopra, M.D.

Author

*Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*

The statement will be used to promote the revised and enhanced edition of the book that was *Trager Mentastics: Movement as a Way to Agelessness*, which is now at press under the title *Movement as a Way to Agelessness: A Guide to Trager Mentastics*, replete with new photographs and a little additional text (paperback only, US\$15.95, available in March). Dr. Chopra's comment, written for the front cover of this book, is also available to be used by The Trager Institute. (Please see your products ordering form in this newsletter/schedule package for information on ordering the new book.)

Our heart-felt thanks to Dr. Chopra for his kind support of Dr. Trager's work.

---

### Talent defined

from Betty Fuller

Milton has often dismissed compliments from others, saying, "All I have is just a talent. Nothing special."

Recently, Emily and Betty found this definition: *Talent*. 1. To lift up; a characteristic feature, aptitude, or disposition of a person or animal; a special, often creative or artistic aptitude; general intelligence and mental power; profound inevitability. Yup, Milton, you surely do have a talent.

---

## Evolution of a Bodywork Dilettante

Alan Hundley

*Alan Hundley lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he has a private practice as a Trager Practitioner. He is an instructor at Self-Health School of Massage Therapy and is currently interested in becoming an Introductory Workshop Leader with the Trager Institute.*

In the spring of 1983 I attended a lecture-demonstration in Yellow Springs, Ohio, given by Milton Trager. At that time I was a bodywork "veteran" of some 8 or 9 years. I was enjoying great success in this loosely defined field and felt myself to be something of a pioneer in the conservative midwestern town of Louisville, Kentucky. I had already attended an introductory workshop on the *Trager Approach* and was convinced I wanted to examine this method further as another technique to add to my growing "bag of tricks". I looked at Dr. Trager and his work as yet another source to answer my questions. Questions like, "What do you do for this?" ... and "How is it best to treat that?" ... and "How many sessions does it take to achieve whatever?" I was looking at Milton as some kind of answer man for bodyworkers. What I came to realize was that I had found the question man. "Hmmm? We...llll?" Milton was impressive to watch for sure. It wasn't so much what he said as what he didn't say. I didn't hear a lot of static, but just the hum of his even demeanor and depth of feeling. I wanted to catch that from him but I also wanted some questions answered.

It was about 5 years later that I had a client whose neck seemed loose to the movements but after a session he complained that his neck felt worse. This had never happened before so in my concern for the client and for my own edification I called the *Trager Institute* to see if anyone else had encountered a similar problem. Someone suggested I just call Milton. "What a novel idea," I thought, "go right to the source." I called and Milton answered on the first ring. I introduced myself and told him my dilemma, to which he re-

sponded, "When did you work with me?" When I told him I hadn't had that pleasure as yet, he said, "That is your problem" and that was about all he said. I hung up the phone feeling a little unsatisfied and partly annoyed, but soon made plans to go to California and do a Practitioner II training with the source.

At the training when I introduced myself in the group as being from Kentucky, Milton said, "I knew a man from Kentucky once. He looked a lot like you, used to run a still back up in the hills during Prohibition." I tried to look amused, but old redneck, hill-billy, barefoot and ignorant tapes kept popping up in my cellular memory. I was trying real hard to put those associations behind me and here I've traveled 2000 miles to have it thrown in my face by the man whose measles I want to catch. At another period early in the training while Milton was working on someone he looked around at me, smiled a little and shook his head, "There's always one in every training." "What?" I thought. "Who? What does he mean?" "There's always someone I have to convince." Part of me wanted to get down on my knees and say, "No, no, it isn't me. Really, I'm a true believer," but I knew what he saw. I knew my posture, my face, my eyes revealed an inner attitude of resistance, an attitude that said, "O.K., you think you're so hot, prove it." I remember feeling confronted and a little flushed by his remark, like I had been slapped in the face with my own shoe. In retrospect I don't think it was wrong of me to be skeptical; it's just interesting to note Milton's perceptiveness and my inner reactions.

A few weeks ago I ran across the word "dilettante". I wasn't sure of the correct definition, so I looked in a dictionary. "Dilettante—a dabbler in an art or a field of knowledge. A lover of fine arts. A connoisseur." Then it also said "superficial" and "amateurish". A light came on that spanned about 20 years of bodywork experience. At my best I had been the intrepid somatic explorer but at my worst I had been a mere dilettante. I hadn't been totally convinced that this guy's

idea of hook-up could make that much difference, and it was therefore safer to retain an edge of doubt rather than be fully committed and possibly disappointed.

I recently attended the Seventh International *Trager Conference* in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. In going to the Conference I had one question only to be answered. Do I wish to remain a member of the *Trager Institute* and continue to keep current with the continuing education requirements for membership? One of the first of my many inspirational experiences was to watch while 20 tutors gave sessions to 20 participants. What I saw was Milton to the 10th power. I saw in those sessions his big full hands extending like tentacles and his open heart expanding to the corners of the room. It was one of the most convincing exhibitions during my *Trager* career of the power and depth of Hook-up. When the student is ready the teacher is there, and I felt a shift in my perceptions of the way I've been practicing this work.

For some of us it just takes a little longer. Thank you, Milton, and thanks to all of his wonderful tentacles-you know who you are.

P.S. After my first full week of work since the Conference my level of participation in sessions is up 20%-30%. Hook-up has taken on a new meaning and I'm looking forward to my next 20 years as a *Trager Practitioner*.

---

### From a Letter to the Editor

Betty Fuller

This year we have lots of Anniversaries: It's been **20 years** since I first met Milton and this work started spreading further into the world, and it's been **70 years** since this work first came to Milton. I would like to see all regions celebrate these anniversaries, at least informally, and send in lots of pictures for the Newsletter. I would also like to have all those who have dropped out for whatever reason re-join the Institute at least for this year.

April includes my and Milton's birthdays and May Emily's birthday and Milton's and Emily's anniversary.

## A *Trager* Rebirth of Community? — Hullabaloo at the 7th International *Trager* Conference

*Dhyani J. Berger*

*Dhyani is a Practitioner from Nairobi, Kenya.*

All *Trager* Conferences that I have attended have been peak experiences: Santa Rosa, Indianapolis, San Diego and Tamiment. These full, joyous landmarks of my growth as a *Trager* Practitioner have perhaps mirrored a parallel evolution of the whole *Trager* "Body".

The *Trager* Conference at Tamiment was, however, special. I felt different. I behaved differently. I was clearer about what I wanted: more with myself than ever before, and yet more there for you all as the *Trager* community. This came with an effortlessness which surprised me, an unanticipated offering of myself. As events unfolded, my "yes" grew. So did my "no" on certain issues. A sense of urgency and excitement overtook me and swept me into action. What happened blew my mind, broke open my heart and challenged my resolve.

What made this Conference different from others? The *Tragers* were not able to be with us. The Master is gently leaving us to carry on unfolding his discovery without his physical presence. The ball is in our court. Underneath the joyous face of reunion and anticipation of rich learning experience, we were also facing a crisis in the evolution of our organization. I, like many people, arrived at the Conference blissfully unaware that there was a seething bone of contention within the *Trager* "Body". It concerned selection of new *Trager* Instructors. The Board of Directors and the Institute Administration had set in motion a controversial selection process for new *Trager* Instructors which was being challenged.

What happened at the Conference in response to this crisis is worth reflecting on. The situation became an opportunity for growth and empowerment which I am yet to "grok" entirely. In sharing my own individual

experience of the process of Appeal initiated by instructor applicants who were turned down, I hope that others will remember their experience and sentiments during this time and that this will strengthen their determination to stay awake as active members of the *Trager* Institute.

I live in Africa, so I speak as a relative "outsider", someone who has slipped in and out of close contact with the *Trager* family since 1982. My interaction with *Trager* people has been most often at trainings which have universally been an inspiration and joy, convincing me that *Trager* people were teaching a new approach to learning and life. The depth and yet lightness and ease of these occasional gatherings of fellow souls has filled me with appreciation for Milton *Trager* and the organization that was growing around him. My positive experience as a member of the *Trager* Institute was also shaped in 1988-89 when we formed the *Trager* Outreach Project in Berkeley, California: a group of *Trager* friends who met regularly for mutual support and professional growth. From time to time, I have heard rumblings of discontent, normal for any organization, but my attention has been on learning *Trager* rather than the personalities and politics of the organization. Having shared beautiful occasions with many of the leading lights in the *Trager* World, I have an appreciation and affection for those who have nurtured the Institute.

I am a member of the *Trager* Institute for two main reasons. First, because of the work...it has become a significant part of my life, of my growth and development. Second, because it makes so much sense to work as a community. The Institute is an organizational vehicle for us to share this gift with the world. For these reasons, I am now deeply interested in how the Institute, our *Trager* "Body", functions and how I can participate as a member. That is why what happened around the issue of expanding the number of *Trager* Instructors grabbed my attention.

The controversy that surfaced at the Conference raged over the decision to

limit the number of new instructors to six. Some of the applicants, not only those who had been turned down, also objected to the manner in which the applicants were evaluated and informed of the outcome. The implementation of the process was reportedly insulting, unfair, improperly administered and biased by personal interests. Some people including a few who applied to be instructors, questioned the process before it was set in motion, but their efforts were frustrated. They participated in the selection, but reluctantly. Thirteen people applied. Six were selected. Those who were not selected received letters from the Selection Committee explaining why they were not selected. The contents of these letters sparked the recent outburst of protest.

While recognizing my own bias and lack of background on the selection process, I knew enough about some of the aggrieved candidates to "smell a rat". Something felt wrong and I wanted to know more. I discovered ambivalence among other Conference participants, who like me, had come to enjoy and to learn. The prospect of becoming embroiled in organizational politics was not enticing. The Conference organizing team, quite naturally, must have feared an opening of a Pandora's box of old grievances that had been long simmering within the membership. They had responsibilities to orchestrate and amazingly complex program into which they had put immense work and dedication over the previous eighteen months. Their responsibility was to all participants, many of whose priorities might not be the political evolution of the organization.

There was a strong possibility that we might drop into a state of denial and sweep the matter under the table, labeling it as the grievance of a few disenchanting individuals. Indeed the way the successful instructor candidates were announced during the opening session of the Conference suggested that the selection process or results would not be on the agenda, thus giving a sour victory to those who

[Continued on p. 12]  
NEWSLETTER PAGE 11

[continued from p. 11]

had been chosen. The challenge facing us was to open up the conflict in a creative and constructive way. We had to take the risk and trust the depth of our maturity as a community from *Trager*.

What occurred over the next three days was an inspiring series of meetings which gave voice to many and engaged us in a process of conflict resolution and community building which I feel privileged to have witnessed. We confirmed that we have grown beyond the grip of old hierarchical organizational paradigms.

The first meeting "blew me away" with its intensity and the eloquence of participants. To witness such vulnerability and outpouring of head and heart is a rare gift. There were a handful of listeners...one or two successful candidates, a member of the Instructors' Committee, and some others. The "unchosen few" heard each other's stories. They shared their views and feelings...from indignation to rage, from disappointment to frustration and despair. Some had hit bottom, ready to pull out and already grieving the agony of loss of friends and a community which had been their centre for so long. There was a growing sense of unity and outrage at what appeared to be an illegitimate and unfair process. There was also an awareness that the Conference was a rare opportunity for involving many members in asking questions fundamental to the growth of our organization. Besides the need to consider the rights and role of certain individuals, questions were at stake which would shape the future of *Trager* work. This was an opportunity to raise issues important to us all.

Questions concerned our vision for how and who should lead the growth of *Trager*. We were now facing an issue of power and control. A fundamental issue to be considered concerned our perception of the potential *Trager* market. Were we planning ahead with an expectation of abundance or scarcity? Should we qualify *Trager* teachers by first setting criteria and then let anyone who qualifies become an instructor? Do we limit the number of

new instructors geographically and over time? Perhaps because I have lived far from the *Trager* membership, I do not remember these questions being debated in our organization.

My own reflections included an awareness for the need to sort out what is anger arising from ego needs and wounded pride and what is legitimate outrage at a life's work and commitment discounted and trampled upon. Most of the aggrieved were known to me. I had worked and played with them for too long to let the matter drop.

A second meeting provided an opportunity for the applicants to present their views to a representative of the Selection Committee (was this Gail? Did she come as an individual? Who was she representing? Was she chosen as a "wise woman" or an official of the selection structure?) Word had gone out and community participation was growing. Many more people came to listen. The candidates sat in a circle guided by Shelly Siskind (should I mention names?), a skilled facilitator who used a "talking stone", giving the right to speak when held.

A third meeting was organized to hear the views of other members of the *Trager* Community. The room was packed, perhaps 100 (or more?) people. Anyone could speak if they picked up the "talking stone". Many had something to say so we had to limit the time on the floor. There was often a scramble for the stone...laughter as well as tears as we grew in confidence and power...and people respected the stone, giving opportunity for others to speak. Once again, the meeting was gently guided by a loving facilitator. I felt an upwelling of pride at the depth of sentiment expressed and the commitment to building a radically new type of organization. People came from all corners of the membership. Even those whose decisions were being challenged spoke. No doubt it was uncomfortable, but they hung in there. It appeared that some people responsible for the selection process were in shock at what they had unleashed. They appeared to have carried out their work with genuine commitment but were

now as devastated as those who had been refused candidature. There was a feeling of relief that here was a safe place to speak. Things were said that had remained unsaid for a long time. It was OK to admit our mistakes and to embrace our darker side, the insecurity, rebellion and confusion, and to admit to the growing pains that were so eloquently referred to in the opening speech of the Conference. After all, we were taking heed of Deane Juhan's words in that speech: "There is no truth that doesn't include every truth (spoken) in the room and however long that takes is what it takes to get at the truth." Yes, we had gone beyond democracy towards consensus.

Our organization has reached a place in its development where we need to question. To what extent are we set up to "walk our talk"? How do we translate the essence of Milton's message individually and as a group? How can we be true to Milton's discovery as well as draw from talents and diversity among our membership? How must we balance structure and regulation with flexibility and freedom?

On a practical level, we are looking at what links us members and how we function as a whole — how we communicate, participate, share, and make decisions. Our membership has grown way beyond the little family of friends who first gathered around Milton and Emily, and who have ably shepherded *Trager* to become a recognized educational and therapeutic modality. Now that the *Tragers* can no longer be as directly involved, we are faced with the inevitable question: "After the Master, what?"

It is heartening to remember that Milton *Trager* has always been on a voyage of discovery, exploration, experiment, and refinement, and yet he has a consistent message: "Hook-up". If we keep this as the essence of our organization, our learning and teaching, we can embrace the diversity within our *Trager* "Body". The different approaches, skills, professions, experiences and talents that have been attracted to the work and are enabling us to take *Trager* into a multitude of fields. How much diversity can we

contain? My inclination is that "variety is the spice of life". Others are more purist than I. Can we live together in the same community?

It will depend on how far we have come in our own and community development. That is why the hullabaloo at this Conference was important to us all. It was an opportunity for growth in both our personnel and our group consciousness. It was one step towards Don Schwartz's dream for us to become a global "force" to lightly, gently *Trager* the World. Remember what Deane said of Milton Trager and our task: "He's given us his life's work. We can give him immortality. He's given us a moment in the sun. We can give him a place in history."

## Just Say "Yes"

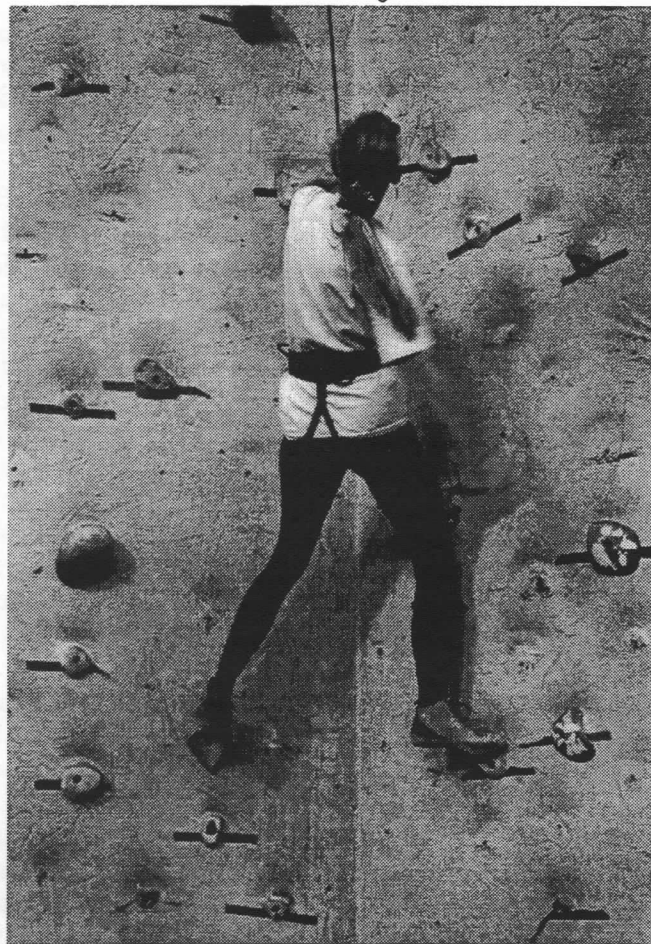
Sally Van Dusen

*Sally is a Tutor from Leavenworth, Washington.*

I think the best reaction I heard concerning the non-appointment of the seven as instructor trainees (I.T.) was from my husband, a flight attendant for American Airlines. He laughed and said, "I talk to hundreds of people and nobody's even heard of *Trager*. Why are they worried about letting in a few more instructors?"

At the International Congress when I first looked at the faces of the seven who had been denied I.T. status, I was stunned. They were all people whom I've known over the course of eight years and who have been influential in my development as a member of the *Trager* Institute. These are all folks who have paid dues, attended trainings, assisted, volunteered, traveled, promoted and donated time above and beyond the call of duty for years for the furtherance of the work itself.

They are not "Wannabees", but people who have demonstrated their commitment to the work and have functioned with integrity through the



"Shimmering the Arm" © 1994 Peter Kushner

years by complying and practicing within the guidelines set by the Institute. They are "Workerbees" who have truly supported *Trager*, modeled it, and furthered its growth through dedication and devotion to the underlying principles of the work itself. These people have been the bricklayers of what defines *Trager* today. When they ask to be I.T.s, they know they are not signing up for a cakewalk of power and money. They realize they are moving towards more hard work. They deserve to get on to the next step in their work. If they say they are ready for this, I believe them.

To deny them a few initials after their names doesn't honor the essentials of readiness and willingness. How can you turn away people so obviously qualified and experienced? Declaring them I.T.s allows them to begin the process of becoming Instructors—that will not occur overnight. This is not a matter of fairness—it's bigger than that. It's about abundance and support and

getting to the next step. It's about TRUST. Not to utilize the talents and future contributions of these stellar people, I feel, would represent a real loss to our organization.

This topic extends far beyond the appointment of seven additional I.T.s. There's the issue of advancement possibilities for all our practitioners. Why should we pay dues, take trainings, assist, etc., if there's no place for future advancement in status? And then there is the bigger issue that involves the revision of the Institute's structure, training track, and status procedures. I don't think resolving these issues will be harmed by the appointment of seven additional I.T.s. I hear instructors, committee members, and board members speak of getting burned out. It could be a good time to let in fresh blood.

Just say yes. Rules have exceptions. If there's a will there's a way. The benefits of having more highly qualified people getting this work out into the world can only brighten our future.

## THE EXTENDED FAMILY

### Journal Notes

Rita Howe

*Introduction by Maryann Zimmerman: Rita Howe has come in for two Trager sessions. The following came from her journaling after her first session. She told me she journaled her experience. Without knowing what she had written, I asked if I could submit whatever she had written for this newsletter. When the text arrived, I was deeply touched by her beautifully simple and profound expression. It was so congruent with my feeling experience of her. She caught the wave, got the essence, lives the principle — so effortlessly.*

Journal Notes—March 25, 1994

As the spirits guide me upon this life walk, I continue to explore the wonders that are made available to me. If I can but leave myself open to the expe-

[continued on p. 14]  
NEWSLETTER PAGE 13

[continued from p. 14]

rience and not judge it with this physical world's eyes, I discover that there is no such thing as a negative experience, only learning and expanding experiences.

As a person who tries to walk in balance with "All My Relations" I am ever attempting to see new opportunities for growth, but there are times when I see only through these earthly eyes. At those times, this physical embodiment will react in a way which stops my movement. Such has been the case of late. I am usually able to use the tools I know, the medicine wheel, sweat lodge, etc., to explore the area of my life with which I need to grow into a finer balance. Recently, I have begun to have a problem with my right knee and hip that has gradually grown worse. When I had finally reached a point of barely being able to walk, a trusted friend recommended that I contact Maryann Zimmermann who does something like massage, but not exactly massage, that is called *Trager*. Having always been a person who touches others but lets few touch me, the thought of someone I didn't know touching my body was not a comforting thought. I put my friend off until I spent a weekend in bed unable to put weight on the right side of my body. Finally I called and made an appointment. After making the appointment with Maryann, I knew I was committed to a new experience. I spent the time before preparing myself. Asking that I would be able to be open to the experience. That I would have no expectations. That I would be given the necessary help to surrender myself to the help of another. Most of all I asked that I would be able to move my "self" out of the way so that the Spirits would be able to teach me what I needed to know.

Today, the day of the appointment, I awoke early. I greeted the day with a prayer of Thanksgiving for what it would bring. I spent my time in meditation trying to balance and center myself. I saged myself and left for my appointment knowing that I was to learn something new, that I was going to experience a new awareness and an

expansion of knowing my earthly task. This knowledge resulted in a calming of my physical self.

I arrived for my appointment not knowing what to expect. Never having heard of this *Trager* thing, and never even having had a massage, I was able to move forward without expectations. The elevator doors opened and Maryann stood waiting. I felt the warmth of her spirit and knew that our spirits would meet in oneness. I knew this was a person who would put her ego aside and free her spirit to connect with that of another. I knew I would be in a safe place. I would be able to go to that place within and set my physical body free. I knew instinctively that she would care for my body while I was away.

As we began the session, I let myself be open to go wherever the experience took me. At first, I could feel the touch of her hands and I could hear the lovingness of her voice, and slowly I began to feel the blending into oneness of Maryann and myself. As the feeling of oneness overtook me I began to feel myself suspended under water. Floating in the current, stationary, but at the same time free. I could feel the caressing of the current as it gently pulled upon my weightlessness, wrapped itself around me, changed directions, focused on specific areas while embracing the wholeness of me. I was riding the current, becoming a part of it, moving freely without resistance. I could feel both the strength and the gentleness of the power that held me, that nourished me. There was a sense of quiet power in being in balance with the physical and the spiritual, the awareness washing over me of the necessity of oneness. The blending of myself with my "self". As I lay suspended in the gentle rocking of the current of life, I was able to be at one with all around me. In this place I could hear the voice of silence, see the things I longed to see and know the peacefulness I sought. I was at the center of Mother Earth in the river whose waters are life giving.

As I again became aware of Maryann, I realized that it was she who had become the current. That we had gone

together to this place. I knew the power of two spirits blending into oneness. I knew I would be able to give myself over to another now and receive what was offered as a gift and that to let myself be attended to by others is also a gift. I had learned much about myself and I felt the light that is life not only shine upon me, but through me, reaching out into a new awareness. My heart was full from all I had experienced and learned. This was a wonderful and sacred time and I considered the session a success well beyond my expectations.

After getting dressed, I went out to talk to Maryann about the experience. We sat for a while while I briefly discussed my journey when finally she asked me how I felt physically. My excitement was focused on what I had learned and I hadn't thought about my hip and knee. She asked if I realized that I had walked from the treatment room to her desk with a straight body and a sure stride. I thought about it and realized it was true. How could it be that I had barely hobbled in and had walked painlessly out and not have been aware of the change? Then I realized that the physical healing was a bonus. The true healing had come in the letting go and blending with the process. The freeing of the spirits, energies, or whatever name you chose to put upon it, to work through the two people involved and become one.

I spent the rest of today thinking about the process and realized that I still don't know what this *Trager* thing is, nor do I have a clue as to what Maryann did. Perhaps it's not important for me to be aware of what she did, but merely to experience the experience. I do know that I will go back no matter my physical condition. The blending of two spirits is a memory I wish to carry with me and expand and extend out into the universe. It is exciting to think of the ways this can be achieved and I shall attempt to carry this knowledge with me as I continue my journey. Surely this adds not only to our physical well being, but the universal well being of "All".

## South African Experience - December 1994

*Merwyn Oshry*

*Merwyn is a Trager Student from Doncaster (near Melbourne), Victoria, Australia. This is excerpted from an article three times as long.*

I completed the *Trager* Beginners Course in September, 1994. This course was sponsored by Layo Nathan and conducted by Betty Fuller. I was impressed with the content and style of the course and enjoyed meeting two such special people as Betty and Layo.

In December, 1994, I learned that my mother in South Africa, who had had hip replacement surgery in September, 1994, had suffered another heart attack and was not responding to Western medicine's attempts to get her out of bed. She had been bedridden for the past 5 months.

I decided to catch the first available flight to Johannesburg, and on the morning of 20 December I arrived in Johannesburg for the first time in four years.

I found my 86-year old mother sitting up in bed. She was pale, tearful and short of breath. A far cry from the 88 kg robust farm lady I had last seen. Her strong spirit was wavering and she was talking of moving on to the next world.

She complained that the doctors should never have shocked her heart back into beating when it had stopped. I suggested to her that no doctor could have saved her if her spirit had not said, "Hang on. I have a few things still to finish!" I convinced her to delay her "departure" for at least a few days until I had a chance to talk to and *Trager* her.

Within 30 minutes of arriving at her house I commence *Tragering* her legs, which were extremely swollen with fluid and sensitive to touch. The initial experience of working on my own mother and with someone with a hip replacement was daunting. Then I remembered my training and Milton's word from the video, "Mmm?? What could be lighter than that?", and I went into "Hook-up". The effect was amazing and my mother went into what I called "Alpha state".

## The Dancing Cloud

That night my mother got out of bed and came downstairs for dinner, for the first time in 5 months. She wheezed and complained and it took the night nurse and myself a lot of effort, with the aid of a walker, to get her down the 8 steps. *But the drought was broken.* She now realised that she had a choice.

My mother lives with my sister and her family, and that night my sister was absolutely delighted. She could not believe that within 12 hours of my arrival the "*Trager* Method" has achieved this result. Over the next 14 days she told everyone of the benefits of *Trager* and I was inundated with requests to give free treatments; in addition, I received a high level of interest in promoting a *Trager* beginners' course in Johannesburg. (More of that in the next letter.)

Over the next 14 days, with the aid of a wheelchair, I took my mother out shopping every day, dinner most nights, and generally gave her more excitement/angst than she had experienced in the past 12 months.

I experimented with different ways to induce this "Alpha state" and was amazed how easy it was to achieve. I taught the night and day nurses how to "Shochhhel" my mother's ankles, knees and belly. I used this word to describe the light shimmering touch to release tightened muscles.

After 4 days I realised that I was guilty of "excessive" *Tragering*. She was sleepy all the time and was having difficulty sleeping at night. I worked out that I was giving her more treatments than I would have given a healthy younger person. I then drew up a timetable and limited the treatments to different parts of the body on different days and she settled down into a better sleeping pattern within 24 hours.

My mother needed to visit the dentist but was extremely anxious about lying flat in the dentist's chair. I took her protesting to the dentist and put her in the chair. Whilst the hydraulics on the chair dropped the back of the chair to horizontal, I "Shochhhel" her belly and she went into "Alpha state". The dentist then worked on her in this flat position for the next 20

minutes whilst I continued the "Shochhhel".

At the end of 14 days of *Trager* treatments, with a few *Mentastics* and breathing exercises thrown in for good measure, the change in my mother's movements and attitude was a fitting tribute to the teachings of Milton *Trager*. *It really does work!!!*

The frail 86-year-old was replaced by a positive smiling person. Her legs were far less swollen, her breathing was deep and normal and her cheeks were full of colour. She was walking with the aid of her walker and audibly saying, "What can be softer and lighter than that", so as to lean less and less on her walker with the idea of eventually discarding this crutch.

---

---

### What's Bugging You?

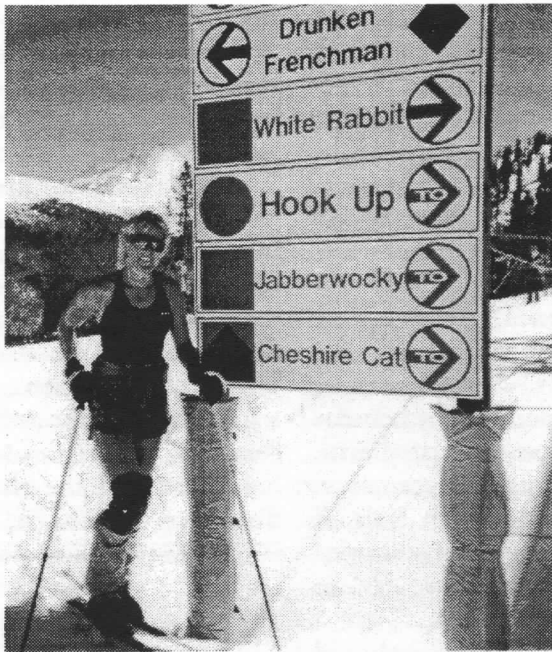
Michael is interested in hearing your thoughts and what you'd like to see changed.

To: Michael Stulberg, President, Board of Directors, c/o The Trager Institute, 33 Millwood, Mill Valley, CA 94941-2091, Fax: 415-388-2710

I have concerns about: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that you will relay it to the appropriate committee.

Name, Address and Phone (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_



*Practitioner Nancy Wharton on April 16, 1994. Skiing at the Mary Jane/Winter Park Complex, Colorado. Note that the "Hook Up" run is a "green dot", easy ski run.*

## More Time with Milton

from Betty Fuller

Following the annual business meetings and training workshops in Mill Valley, the members of the Instructors' Committee flew to El Toro to be with Milton and Emily. He worked with all the instructors and supervised their work with each other as part of their continuing education. Betty made some notes:

(All seated working on hands; Milton doing each in turn.) Milton: "People...there simply is no limit to how far this work can take you...no special way or place to get started...I have to find myself...I keep finding 'stuff' to do that I didn't have before ... It is never ending ... feeling ... FEEELING ... when you've got that, you've got what I want. Let it happen." (With someone) "Quit being ready...you're getting 'ready'! No! ... Just let it be ..." "You'll never get it until you give up and let go of everything you've got" ... "Just feel feeling!" (Later in session) "A big yes!...That 'yes' is that I arrived at a

NEWSLETTER PAGE 16

point... At the point where you really 'connect'. (Pause) I'm sorry, people, but this is how it is. If you want something else, you'll have to go somewhere else." (Still later) "Just a thought ... nothing special ... Not trying to do anything or be anything ... Just a feeling." (Pause) "Re-call {that Milt was working on my hands and}...It felt like...? Oh, yeah..."

Milton (to everyone): "It isn't what my hands are *doing*. It's a combination... of what you feel from me and what you feel for me. That's what I want you to know before you do anything. Your ability to re-call without trying. That's all there is."

Before Betty left, she thanked Milton for being here and staying alive for us. She said: "I don't think it's easy and I'm grateful." Milton said: "It's easy ... unless *you don't let it* be easy - that comes from you. ... {with a big grin and a twinkle} It's easy!"

THE TRAGER INSTITUTE  
33 Millwood  
Mill Valley, CA 94941-2091  
U.S.A.  
415-388-2688  
FAX: 415-388-2710  
©1995 The Trager Institute  
All Rights Reserved  
Printed on recycled paper.

"The TRAGER Newsletter" is a periodic publication of The Trager Institute for TRAGER Psychophysical Integration and MENTASTICS, a California, non-profit, public benefit, educational corporation which represents and supports TRAGER Psychophysical Integration and MENTASTICS movement education, the innovative approaches to movement education developed by Milton Trager, M.D.

"TRAGER", "MENTASTICS" and the Dancing Cloud logo are all registered service marks of The Trager Institute. Registration of these marks in those nations which accept such registration is either complete or pending. All other trademarks and service marks are registered by their respective holders and no infringement of any kind is intended.

Contributions to this newsletter from members of The Trager Institute are welcome. All submissions are subject to editing for length, clarity, and appropriateness. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of The Trager Institute, its Board of Directors, or its Education and Administrative Staffs.

### Credits

Editor/Desktop Publishing Jeffrey Joel  
Assistance .....Don Schwartz  
.....Sandra Berger  
.....The Membership!

### Future Newsletter Deadlines

May 15, 1995

September 15, 1995

January 15, 1996

THE TRAGER NEWSLETTER