

Milton Trager, M.D.

1908-1997

The celebration of Dr. Milton Trager's life and passing was held on January 26, 1997, at 12:00 PM, at Harbor Lawn/Mount Olive Memorial Park in Costa Mesa, California. Rabbi Nathan Segal and Rabbi David Jessel presided. It was attended by Emily Trager, family, friends, and *Trager* Practitioners from around the world. Many participants came forward and shared their loving thoughts, memories, and wishes. After Dr. Trager's casket was brought from the chapel to the hearse, the community of *Trager* folk in attendance spontaneously gathered around the back of the open hearse and began singing:

*From you, I receive;
To you, I give;
Together we share;
From this we live.*

There were so many deep, touching moments during Milton's ceremony, but this one endless moment of singing, this small group of *Trager* people, representing all *Trager* people around the world, sharing our loving spirit with Milton's, was such a magical time out of time.

Heartfelt appreciation to all *Trager* people near and far who have shared so selflessly their loving thoughts and deeds with Emily and Milton Trager. A special thank you to José Bauson, Dr. Trager's primary caregiver the last few years, for his loving dedication to Dr. Trager.

Many thanks to Abbey Bat Kol for their coordination of the services; to the staff of Heritage Pointe (the Tragers' retirement community), especially staff member Bonnie Curkin who became like a daughter to Emily and Milton. Many thanks to the administrative staff of The Trager Institute who shared the information on Milton's passing so quickly and gracefully; to Emily's and Milton's caregivers headed by José Bauson, who announced at his deeply touching eulogy of Milton that he will continue on as Emily's primary caregiver; to Practitioner Nobuo Iseri for his videography; to the many *Trager* people who flew in from long distances to honor Milton; to the *Trager* Instructors who altered plans made a year before to attend this celebration; and to Tutor Carolyn Mason who has served with excellence Dr. Trager's trainings for many years, and who performed such loving service at the first memorial Practitioner training in Laguna.

DS

The TRAGER[®] Newsletter & Schedule

Spring 1997

Volume XVI, Number 1

A Note from the Instructors Committee

Bill Scholl, Jean Hopkins,
and Amrita Daigle

There were so many friends among us in Southern California for Milton Trager's memorial service. We had come there to acknowledge our teacher and to support Emily and each other. So many of us had begun the discovery of "being, not trying" together twenty or more years ago. How had time gone by so fast? Regardless of the number of years since we had seen each other, there was no need to work at reconnecting. We knew each other instantly, in our hearts. We recognized that we hold the same values of presence, kindness, compassion and connection.

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With Milton Trager's passing, the torch is passed to us. In the name and spirit of Dr. Trager and the gift of his work, may we rededicate ourselves to the highest possible standards of excellence in the practice and teaching of The *Trager Approach*. Just as Milton has given us the gift of his work, may we support his organization, The Trager Institute, in bringing this gift to all of humanity. May The Trager Institute, through the individual and collective efforts of all its Friends, Students, Practitioners, and Educational Staff, be an agent of peace and well-being throughout the world.

With this newsletter, we carry on Dr. Trager's work; he would have it no other way. I acknowledge and appreciate all of you for your support, and for the vital role you are playing in honoring the gift of Milton's life and work.

DS

From Emily Trager

Every day since I've met Milton Trager, I've been influenced by his thinking, actions, and feelings for people. His honesty, his regard for the feelings of those he touched, those with whom he spoke was different from anything I had experienced before I met him. I still find myself wanting to embrace him.

With his passing I envision The Trager Institute becoming even stronger as it fulfills the legacy Milton has given us all.

Change in Date of the 8th International Trager Conference

Anna Marie Bowers and
Dodie Becker

Anna Marie and Dodie are co-chairpersons of the International Conference Steering Committee.

In light of the recent extenuating circumstances the Eighth International Trager Conference

has been postponed to a later date.

Final approval for the conference site was received on January 15, 1997. This was followed by the loss of our beloved Milton and it felt appropriate to pause in reverence and respect for him and for Emily.

Also, we are looking for a large attendance at the next conference so we can regroup as an international Trager family. Therefore, the Steering Committee will meet on March 1, 1997, to view other larger facilities to accommodate pre- and post-conference classes, core groups, banquet and entertainment, and, most importantly, adequate rooms for the Trager attendees. We will evaluate the best we can get in space, cost, and ease of transportation between May and August of 1998.

We ask for your support and understanding in postponing the conference. And, also invite and need your willingness to help in conference preparation. To volunteer, please call Dodie Becker at 412-831-7228. Please *do* leave a message if Dodie is not at the phone.

This newsletter is dedicated to Dr. Milton Trager.

This same acknowledgment and recognition marked the beginning of our annual Instructors Committee meeting the next day in Mill Valley. Here we were, dear friends with so much history together, sitting in a circle and speaking of Milton, our sense of loss, and the bittersweet quality of the moment. We knew we had much work to do in our week together, and we felt, and feel, the weight of what is our part in carrying on Milton's work, our work, The *Trager Approach*.

Much of our week was spent coming to clarity. How did each of us see our role *now* as the instructors committee? Where does our responsibility lie? What can we do to foster better communication and clarity with the Board and administration, committees, Tutors and other educational staff, as well as Practitioners and Students?

We were briefed by the Institute attorney on legal issues concerning the California Board of Education and national accreditation, which created the context for us to meet jointly with the administration to air needs and concerns. We also heard a presentation from the European *Trager* community dealing with some of their issues.

Part of our acknowledgment of Milton's passing is accepting the responsibility of the legacy which the originator and master teacher of The *Trager Approach* has left to us. This is a fundamental shift. Defining the work was given by Milton to the Instructors as a group, upon the time he would no longer be available for clarification, expansion or refinement.

We are fortunate to have documents in place from Milton and from the Board that help to clarify our role. These documents follow this article.

We recognize that it is our responsibility to safeguard the integrity of the work while supporting further development in tablework and *Mentastics* as well as applications to special populations. What is the essence of *Trager* work? What are the elements which must always be present to honor the intention and feeling and genius of Milton Trager?

The IC represents a unique body within the Institute, having met regularly for twenty years. There are now seventeen members of the committee, residing in the United States, Canada

and Europe. Through our traveling and teaching we maintain a close contact with the international *Trager* community. For the past five years, we have built our skills by working with a consultant specializing in consensus, group process and conflict resolution. With her assistance, we have learned to communicate and work together more effectively.

We are expecting to play our role in conjunction with the Board of Directors, Administrative Staff, and other committees of The *Trager Institute*. Roger Tolle (USA) and Siegrit Salkowitz (Germany) will provide leadership and facilitation of our process as the Co-chairs of the IC for this year.

With great respect for Dr. Trager, for the work and for our leadership role within this organization, we accept the authority to define the work in recognition of the vital importance of presenting clearly its nature, intent and form to ourselves, the tutors and other educational staff, to students and to the public.

We will continue to attend to our responsibility to set the standards of practice for both the practice and teaching of *Trager* and *Mentastics*, developing and revising the core curriculum for the optimal preparation and continuing education of practitioners.

Trager Instructor Job Description

The foundation of the job of Trager Instructor is contained in the following statement by Dr. Milton Trager, M.D.

"I, Milton Trager, M.D., originator of *Trager* psychophysical integration and *Mentastics* movement education, and co-founder of The *Trager Institute* whose central offices are in Mill Valley, California, decree that, upon my passing, the authority to define *Trager* and *Mentastics*, and the authority to set the standards of practice for both the practice and teaching of *Trager* and *Mentastics*, including the work which is currently referred to as Reflex/Response, will reside with the group of individuals within the *Trager Institute* known as *Trager Instructors*, or the *Instructors*. The *Trager Instructors* group will be the final arbiter in any and all questions regarding the practice and teaching of *Trager* and *MENTASTICS*."

Dated and signed 6-10-91

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IC Authority Statement

Presented to, and approved by the Board of Directors May 19, 1991.

The Instructors Committee is comprised of all Institute-authorized Instructors and Instructors Trainees.

THIS COMMITTEE IS AUTHORIZED AND CHARGED
BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

1. To define and develop The *Trager* Approach.
2. To set the standards of practice for the practice and teaching of *Trager* psychophysical integration and *Mentastics* movement education.
3. To develop and teach the content of the core certification curriculum for the preparation and continuing education of Practitioners, and to supervise the personnel in those trainings.
4. To ensure that the design of the core certification curriculum supports the certification of Practitioners who manifest the highest possible standards of excellence.
5. To oversee the Tutor Program and other auxiliary core curriculum personnel.
6. To develop and implement the Instructor training program.
7. (a) To participate in the evaluation and recommendation of candidates for the Instructor training program, (b) and in ongoing Instructor performance evaluation, under the aegis of the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors.

Have You Ever Wondered...

What is a Board of Directors?

What Does a Board of Directors Do?

Who Is Our Board of Directors?

Sara Michael Davidson

Sara Michael is President of the Board of Directors.

What is a Board of Directors?

A Board of Directors is a decision and policy making body which oversees all functions of an organization.

What does a Board of Directors do?

The Board meets once a month and discusses, in great detail, the many issues which must be handled in running the Institute. The Board provides leadership, values, and sets the tone for the organization's operations.

Who sits on the Board of Directors of The Trager Institute?

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the highly qualified and gifted members of your new Board of Directors. Each comes to the Board with a different professional background and life perspective, yet each is committed to serving our Students and Practitioners, and providing leadership during this, a most profound and exciting transitional period.

As you will note, we are blessed with a variety of professional experiences which contribute to a strong foundation for well-balanced decision making. On February 1, 1997, the Board met with the Instructors Committee for a "getting-to-know-you" experience. Not only do we now have a new Board, we have new Instructors as well. It was a great opportunity to affix the names to faces and both groups will be working closely together to ensure a strong and unified base from which to continue Milton's work. In the months and years to come we look forward to providing fresh leadership and vision as we fulfill Milton Trager's legacy.

Eve Bach: Eve brings to her new role on the Board of Directors broad experience in the non-profit sector. Currently she is employed as the Staff Economist/Planner for Arc Ecology, a San Francisco public interest organization working on issues of military base conversion. She has been on the governing boards of groups including the Planners' Network (a national organization of progressive planners), the Berkeley Community YWCA (where she helped to establish an independent refuge for battered women), Community Economics (a low income housing organization), and her local teachers' union.

(continued on page 22)

Public Education

We're in the Market

Megan Eoyang

Megan, a practitioner from Santa Rosa, and Berkeley, California, is the chairperson of the Board Marketing Group.

This will be a short column, perhaps my last. If you want to share your marketing ideas, solutions, or philosophy, please send them to me at one of the addresses below and I'll be happy to share them with the rest of our *Trager* community; however, I have now shared the bulk of my marketing experience with you over the past 2½ years.

Since writing in the last Newsletter about the place of prayer in marketing, I have been even more consistent in including my work needs in prayer with interesting results. Not only has my practice been near full (except when I got sick for a week), but referrals have been coming in from unexpected people and places.

For instance, I received a call from Los Angeles (400 miles away), a woman who wanted to buy a gift certificate for her girl friend who is in the area tending her dying parents. When I asked (as I always do) where she had gotten my name, she said she had found it on the Internet. There is a group with whom I advertised called *The Women's Business Directory*, and when they decided to go on-line, I checked the box to be included in their listing. Even though I have not advertised with them for 1½ years, this woman was still able to find my name through her computer. Don Schwartz at The *Trager* Institute has been a staunch advocate of bringing the Institute on-line, which will include our directory. With cross-referencing, people who wouldn't pick up a telephone, but sit for hours at a computer will have access to your name and number. And we all know that sitting for hours at a computer makes the body quite ready for the relief of a good *Trager* session! If you have a computer-listing option with any of the places you advertise or are listed, be sure to take advantage of it, or perhaps suggesting it would bring the service about.

I have also received inquiries based on a small marketing tool I created, which will soon, I hope, be available to practitioners and students through the Institute office. I went to one of the transient booths at the shopping mall and had a license plate cover made for my car. On top it says, "Feel like a Dancing Cloud." On the bottom in larger letters it says, "GET A TRAGER SESSION." Twice already people have stopped me, once in a parking lot and once on the street, to ask me about *Trager* work. One asked whether it would help his arthritic mother.

These encounters made me think it might be a good idea to keep an envelope with a few *Trager* brochures in the car so I can offer them to people who are curious about the license plate cover. Tapping into people's curiosity can only help us bring the work to people who would truly benefit by it. The cost for the license plate cover is tax deductible as a marketing expense.

I know many of you have great ideas that have been helping you get the *Trager* word out. Please take a moment to describe them to me,

either via e-mail at "meganwind@juno.com", or at 2704 Westberry Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

I'm wishing you well!

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When Approaching Television

Megan Eoyang

Here are some suggestions from Clifford Shulman, a Practitioner from New York, who has successfully created a professionally edited and produced *Trager* demo videotape. He has several ideas about what made the television program on which the videotape is based work. Here are several factors, all of which he believes were essential and without which the resultant videotape would have been "flat."

1. The moderator was excellent. Not only was she very engaging, but she had really done her homework: she had read the materials I sent in beforehand and had come up with additional questions of her own when I arrived.
2. I personally am very COMFORTABLE appearing before an audience, speaking and presenting work, because of my twenty years' experience leading lecture-demonstrations, performances and workshops as a dancer. Also, having some experience with videotape, I was able to anticipate possible problems with camera angles and tactfully ask "leading" questions of the cameramen just before the show, in order to try to insure that the tablework was shot in an advantageous way. Also, I too did my homework: I spent considerable time beforehand assessing that the most important points were to articulate-and demonstrate-in an extremely limited time frame, as well as possible questions I might have to field, and what would be the simplest and most succinct way of communicating this

to a lay audience. I also watched a bit of the program beforehand in order to get a sense of the show and the moderator.

3. I selected my *Trager* model (a client) based on what I knew beforehand was the ability for his body to show free-flowing movement that was large enough to have a clear visual impact. I also knew that he had an interesting story to tell about his own experience, if he should be asked. And, most importantly, I knew that he would feel comfortable appearing and speaking to an impromptu situation because he's an actor AND could do it well.

4. When I edited the tape, I chose to include the opening graphics of the show because they're exciting and upscale and would be a nice frame for the interview. I also chose to include the opening introduction with the moderator and the shorts of the audience because I thought it might be very supportive for the viewer to see other people like themselves watching.

Clifford is currently developing a *Trager* elective class on how to work with television media, and can be reached as 41 West 70th Street, #3F, New York, NY 10023, USA 212-724-9755.

Media Watch

Compiled by Don Schwartz

Notice of Dr. Trager's passing was sent to the major wire services and a few selected metropolitan newspapers. It was also sent to virtually every natural health related periodical in the United States and all other nations for which we have records. As of this date I do not know the extent of the coverage, but I am heartened by my contact with writers and editors who have all been authentically supportive. Thanks to Robert Flammia, editor of *The Rub* (P.O. Box 459, Berkeley, CA 94701), for his warm and sweet coverage on the front page of his newsletter. Thanks to the Association for Humanistic Psychology for their announcement on page 12 of their March/April issue of *ahp PERSPECTIVE*.

MASSAGE Magazine will include a tribute to Dr. Trager, a feature on The *Trager Approach* by yours truly, and a republication of Tutor Susan Holper's "At the *Trager Table*" (originally published in our Summer, 1996 newsletter) in their May/June issue. A great, big thanks to everyone at MASSAGE for their strong and consistent support! You may contact MASSAGE at: 1315 West Mallon Avenue, Spokane, WA 99201-2038, 800-872-1282.

Town and County, a mainstream monthly, published a feature article entitled "Special Report: Alternative Medicine's Healing Power" in their January, 1997 issue. *Trager* was mentioned in this article.

The *Trager Newsletter*

Hearty thanks to Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals (ABMP) for their generous inclusion of The *Trager Approach* in their just published *Touch Training Directory*. For more information contact ABMP at: 28677 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen, CO 80439-7347, U.S.A., 303-674-8478.

Thanks to Practitioner Tony Giordano of Bellport, New York, *Trager* is mentioned in an article entitled "Lahey Clinic Support Group Sponsors Holistic Symposium" in Volume 20, Number 1, January, 1997 issue of *Dystonia Dialogue: Magazine of the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation*.

Trager at the Forum on "Health through Complementary Medicine" Solothurn, Switzerland, October 1996

Elizabeth Ormyron

Elizabeth is a Tutor from Geneva, Switzerland. She is also liaison for the European Trager Representatives.

This major two-day forum was organized by the largest Swiss health insurance company to allow the general public to obtain information, hear lectures and have consultations with professionals offering health promotion (and healing of disease) other than that offered by classical Western medicine.

Several medical associations-The Association of Homeopathic Medicine, the Association of Ayurvedic Medicine, the Association for Empiric Medicine, and the Association of Natural Medicine-had stands there, staffed by physicians who gave lectures on such subjects as: homeopathic treatment of hay fever; phytotherapy in pediatrics; allergy, the disease of the future; breast feeding for better health, and so on. The Pharmacists Association was there too, as were a number of health professionals from the fields of psychotherapy, dietetics, reflexology and breathing therapy. Four bodywork associations were present: *Trager*, Shiatzu, Polarity and Therapeutic Massage.

The *Trager* stand was easily the most attractive in the hall. This is not from personal arrogance, but general observation and also the judgment of the Forum organizers. Most stands were crowded with wall charts, tables and chairs for consultations, pamphlets and documents for distribution, and were generally "busy."

For our stand, Renata Vogelsang and Erika Von Gunten had

kept it simple. The plain white walls had four color photographs of *Trager* "moves" and a large blue and white framed poster headed "*Trager* IST..." An ikebana flower arrangement graced one corner and a shelf on one side had Milton Trager's and Deane Juhan's books in German, the *Trager* brochure, an article on *Trager* and the list of Swiss practitioners. Diagonally across the stand was a blue covered massage table, and just to the side of the stand a continuously running video of Milton giving a demonstration. The five *Trager* practitioners present wore "Dancing Cloud" t-shirts, and the whole atmosphere had a slightly oriental flavor. As Tai Chi is well known in Switzerland and Ai Huang gives courses here, the story of our logo happily integrated East with West. Milton was also constantly with us on video.

The space in front of our stand was often crowded, but we did some personal *Mentastics* with visitors, and the continuous "5-minute tastes" allowed us to explain to spectators some of the principles and effects of the tablework. Those getting off the table gave the *Trager* message to others - "Oh, I feel so different...", "Oh, I feel the floor so clearly...", "Oh, that pain has gone..." or just "Oh,..." There was a lot of interest, and staff from other stands came for "tastes" as well as the public. So many questions were asked. "Yes, we also work with physicians and in clinics", "Yes, insurance companies are starting to reimburse *Trager* work", "Yes, there are *Mentastics* classes in several towns", "Yes, you can train in Switzerland now", and on and on.

As a team, we had fun. It was tiring standing a good part of the day. Lucky we have *Mentastics*. And we were carried along by the very particular atmosphere around our stand. Nothing was on sale at this Forum, but visitors wanted to buy Milton's and Deane's books, the t-shirts, and to pay for their mini-sessions. Many checked the list for practitioners in their area.

The public at this Forum was already interested in complementary medicine. Many were specifically looking for treatment alternatives or ways to maintain or improve health. We are convinced that among the visitors and exhibitors there were a number of future clients and trainees for The *Trager* Approach. As a matter of fact, I understand that requests are already coming in!

On the journey home, still vibrating from the stimulating experience, I felt like saying to Milton: "My beloved teacher, you used to talk to us about 'the measles' and I always knew you wanted your work to reach the medical profession. The incubation period has been long, but slowly, surely, they are catching it." I think he would know what I mean.

Postscript: The next major event on the Swiss marketing calendar is the 1996/1997 ten-day "Natura" fair in Basel, a much bigger, better and less "academic" show, where we are widening our marketing base to the general public interested in natural health and ecologically-oriented subjects. There may be another "marketing" story after that.

Exciting News from the Physical Therapy Front

Adrienne Stone

Adrienne is a physical therapist, Tutor, and Reflex/Response instructor from South Pasadena, California. She recently had her chapter on Trager included in a major publication which she describes below.

Following many months of collecting information, sorting, writing, editing, etc. I am proud to announce that another publication has been completed. I have recently received my first published copy of *COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES IN REHABILITATION, HOLISTIC APPROACHES FOR PREVENT AND WELLNESS*. This text was written by physical therapists about their areas of specialization in the alternative realm. There are sixteen chapters edited by Carol M. Davis, and published by Slack Incorporated. Chapter 11, "The *Trager* Approach" is my chapter. I am very excited about the opportunity that I have had in contributing to this book. It has been an interesting and challenging project for me.

I wish to thank all the *Trager* P.T.'s and other *Trager* Practitioners who supported me by sending me their ideas and sharing their experiences in response to my quest for information. It helped me so much, especially in getting started.



*Adrienne Stone working on Practitioner Lynn Oyama.
Photo by Ninfa Bramble.*

Other chapters in the book include Psychoneuroimmunology, Myofascial Release, Rosen Method Bodywork, Rolfing, Hellerwork, Therapeutic Touch, Biofeedback, Yoga, T'ai Chi, Alexander, Feldenkrais and several other topics. John Barnes, Osa Jackson-Wyatt and Judith Lasater are among the other contributors.

It is my hope that this publication will continue to expand the exposure and awareness of our work. It is great to be a part of this exciting journey. I am very grateful. Thank you. Milton.

Copies of the book may be purchased from the publisher, Slack, Inc. at 800-257-8290, 609-848-1000, or email: orders@slackinc.com.

2nd Annual Congress for Alternative Complementary Medicine

Michael T. Lear

Michael is a Practitioner from Easton, Pennsylvania.

The time has come once again for the *Trager* Task Force for Public Education to consider participating in the "Second Annual International Congress for Alternative Complementary Medicine".

We feel that our participation for a second time will maintain our visibility as a legitimate modality among this international group. In addition, as this is an international conference, our participation will benefit the entire *Trager* body not just local concerns. The cost of participation is \$1200.

In order to defray some of the expenses, we would welcome donations of any amount. Please make the donations payable to the *Trager* Task Force and mail it to my attention at 827 Wilbur St., Easton, PA 18042.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at either 610-253-3565 during the day or 610-253-6252 in the evening, or you may E-Mail me at mlear@PROLOG.NET

Thanks in advance for your consideration and as always sincere regards to all.

Trager for Individuals with Parkinsonism

Martha Partridge

Martha is a Practitioner from Brooklyn, New York. This article introduces her work with individuals with Parkinsonism. As you will read, this article is the first of many exciting reports to come.

I have been working for about two years with individuals with Parkinsonism. Though each person has a different combination of symptoms, there seem to be two distinct and specific ways that *Trager* consistently helps people with this degenerative disease: 1) The side effects of L-Dopa and some of the other drugs that these individuals take is dyskinesia. (Dyskinesia is spasm and release of certain muscles every five seconds or so.) By working directly on the affected areas, for long periods of time (20 minutes to 30 minutes) the dyskinesia substantially subsides; 2) by increasing movement sensation and what is possible in increased range and particularly fluid movement, clients are able to help themselves when symptoms set in. This is a result of experiencing a wide range of *Mentastics* and tablework. They make the choice to move rather than be still when they experience stiffness and paralysis. It is empowering for the patient.

Two of my clients have been seeing me once a week during this time and have recently become patients of the doctors in the department of movement disorders at Mt. Sinai Hospital and Medical School in Manhattan. The research team there conducts trials involving drug therapy and new surgical techniques for qualifying candidates.

On February 12th I presented an hour lecture demonstration with these two clients for the research team. This included the three head neurologists, medical residents, O.T.s, nurses and the administrative staff. I presented them with two case studies, medical material on *Trager* and demonstrating table work and *Mentastics* with these patients. This was followed by a question and answer discussion with the team, the patients and myself at the conclusion of the demonstration. I suggested several research projects that I hope to set up with *Trager* and Parkinsonism based on dosage trials. A particular physician, Dr. Brin, who is in charge of research projects, suggested that we use patients from Mt. Sinai for a research project that would be funded by Long Island University.

I also have been collecting letters from M.D.s and others in the medical profession recommending *Trager* to their patients. This is in preparation for a packet to Oxford Health Plan's alternative therapies program. The letters are mainly geared towards Parkinsonism but for other diagnoses as well.

My future plans include a presentation to Beth Israel Hospital, and any other medical center that is interested in this lecture/demonstration. As of this writing, I will be present-

ing on March 27th a lecture/demonstration to physical therapy students at Long Island University Physical Therapy Department. I need experienced Practitioners from the East Coast, or anywhere, who would be willing to participate in a possible research project with people with Parkinsonism. Experience with Parkinsonism is preferred.

Desperately Seeking an Alternative Medicine Practitioner?

Dr. Andrew Weil has been a consistent supporter of The Trager Approach. This article originally appeared on the Web on January 30, 1997. It is reprinted with permission of HotWired, the online service associated with WIRED magazine. Dr. Weil's inclusion of Trager in his list of disciplines is yet another reflection of his ongoing support.

Beginning February 3rd, thanks to The HotWired Network's "Ask Dr. Weil" (www.drweil.com), Webheads seeking alternative medicine practitioners will finally have an online resource.

According to Steven Petrow, producer of the top-rated online program hosted by Dr. Andrew Weil, the program "receives hundreds of daily email requests asking for Dr. Weil clones: acupuncturists, herbalists, homeopaths along with a host of other specialists."

"We felt we had a mandate to help our audience find the practitioners they need," said Petrow. The database includes a comprehensive yet easy-to-use referral list covering 13 disciplines of natural medicine including: Acupuncture, Ayurvedic Medicine, Biofeedback, Feldenkrais® Work, Guided Imagery Therapy, Holistic-Herbal Medicine, Homeopathic Medicine, Hyponotherapy, Naturopathic Medicine, Osteopathic Manipulation, Cranial Therapy, Rolfing®, Trager Work.

For example, if a reader is unsure if Feldenkrais or Rolfing® is the better way to relieve chronic pain, he/she can read about each practice in the referral pages, jot down the address and number of the institute or association and then click on the link to go directly to that organization's home page.

For more information about alternative medicine and other health matters, tune in to "Ask Dr. Weil" at www.drweil.com.

Trager at Dystonia Symposium

Tony Giordano

Tony Giordano is a Practitioner in Bellport, New York. He has been actively involved in supporting and working with persons with dystonia for the past year and a half and has generated interest in Trager by doing presentations at Dystonia Symposiums. For further information on dystonia you may contact Tony or the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation at 312-755-0198 or Email: dystfndt@aol.com.

On October 27, 1996, Martin R. Anderson and I presented two 90 minute introductions to Trager at the Mind-Body Holistic Symposium for the Northeast Dystonia Support Group at the Lahey Clinic in Burlington, Massachusetts. The Trager workshops were attended by 47 persons with Dystonia.

Dystonia is both a symptom and a name for a group of neurological movement disorders. The physical manifestations consist of sustained, involuntary contractions of the muscles in one or more parts of the body. Types of dystonias are: PRIMARY-idiopathic tension dystonia affecting many parts of the body; INHERITED-typically starts in childhood or young adult life and is often accompanied by mild rigidity and awkwardness suggestive of Parkinson's disease; FOCAL-affecting one specific part of the body involving the muscles of the eyes, larynx, lower face, jaw, neck, shoulders, hand or forearm; SECONDARY-resulting from injury or brain illnesses. Medical researchers are still uncertain about the exact cause of dystonia. It is frequently misunderstood and often misdiagnosed.

Martin's client, Jane, agreed to be the subject for the table demonstration at the workshops and speak about benefits of Trager for her dystonia symptoms.

Jane's symptoms began in March of 1991, and she was diagnosed as having spasmodic torticollis that May. Her head was stuck in a right lateral posture near her right shoulder with her chin pulled toward the left. Surgery was strongly suggested by one neurologist which Jane did not follow up on. For the next two years, she was treated by several neurologists and underwent various pharmacology treatments. She also received physical therapy, acupuncture and chiropractic treatments.

Occasionally, she had fleeting periods of respite from her symptoms but nothing on a long lasting basis. In the beginning of 1992, she began regular Trager sessions with Carolea Burgess in Connecticut, and continued with Martin R. Anderson in Boston when she moved there in the spring of 1994. Although the change was imperceptibly slow and subtle to both Jane and Martin, by September of 1994, her mother recalls, "I couldn't believe my eyes. Her head was straight! I sat directly opposite her and couldn't stop looking at her. I couldn't get over it. We had not seen her since late Spring, but two of her siblings had said, 'Wait till you see Jane.' They were right". Jane continues to see a neurologist, receives drug therapy and

continues her weekly *Trager* sessions which she credits with playing a large role in the continued relief she has from most of her dystonia symptoms.

The symposium, and *Trager* workshops generated much interest in the Dystonia community. Tom Garson, a new member of the Board of Directors for the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation reports that the next International Dystonia Symposium will include complementary therapy workshops for the treatment of dystonia.

Remembering Milton

Remembering Milton

Mary Kelly

Mary is a Tutor from Mill Valley, California. She has had a close relationship with Emily and Milton, and is inaugurating a new column of memories of our time with Dr. Trager. We also wish to begin collecting stories of our experiences of Milton for an inevitable book. Please submit your stories to our Mill Valley office in the care of Don Schwartz. All submissions should be typed, double spaced. Email would be fine.

As concerns this newsletter issue, we have received many wonderful submissions about Milton, and I'm saving all of them for future newsletter and other uses. Three more submissions--on Dr. Trager's passing--follows Mary's article.

One morning in the Fall of 1984, I was driving Milton and Emily, along with Sigrid, another Practitioner, to Sausalito from Tiburon--two cities in the county of Marin in northern California. We were to do some chores before having lunch. This was the day after a class had just ended in Mill Valley. Emily and Sigrid chatted as they sat in the back seat of my car as did Milton and I in the front. He said, "Mary, I did *Mentastics* better today because of something that happened yesterday." Emily and I both asked what had happened. I looked over at him as he sat comfortably and was looking thoughtful. "In class yesterday," he said, "while leading the group in *Mentastics* there was a happening, and the students said in the closing circle how wonderful they felt after doing the *Mentastics*; they *felt* each step they took." When he was leading them, he said, "they just did it - I didn't have to tell them, I didn't have to show them how to shake their legs - it just happened, and it was right!" Milton seemed so pleased, so happy.

I had assisted that class, had stepped outside, gone downstairs and waited in the patio for the class to finish. Then the door from the class room opened. It sort of whooshed open and a beautiful sight appeared before me. As I told Milton, "I saw

the students leave that *Mentastics* session, and they sort of danced out the door and there were ten or eleven of them "tumbling" down the steps with a vibrant energy, light and quick. They looked like a group of young animals!"

He looked at me and snapped his fingers and said, "Yes! Exactly!"

He seemed so pleased! I told him I was happy about it, too. He replied that while doing *Mentastics* this morning, that they were the lightest ever. We chatted a bit more, and as our conversation was nearing its ending, Milton said to me, "Mary, I'm glad you were with us today, so I could talk with you about this."

I was glad, also. I hadn't had a chance to tell anyone about the lovely lightness I'd witnessed as the students danced down the steps the day before.

There's so much I remember about Milton. I remember well, because I knew from the first moment I had met him, in 1979, that this man's truth was important for me to receive and remember. The best memories are like what I've written here, about his pleasure in sharing his gracefulness with others, his pleasure when we received it and used it for our own benefit.



For Milton - Thank You

Sitting on the beach
listening to the sounds of the surf,
watching the waves gently roll one into another,
continuously.
Hearing the loud crash,
then the soft whispers of bubbles and foam
flowing back to the sea.

Gazing at the setting sun,
tears begin to flow.

Looking again at the waves,
following the endless undulation
into the vastness of the ocean -
There was no beginning
and there is no end.
The wave follows a continuous path,
each wave but a part of a much larger whole.

Yes, I mourn his passing.
Yet I feel the expansion
his work has brought to my life -
to the lives I have then touched around the world.
Each life but a part of a much greater whole.

Sitting on the hillside
staring into the clear dark water of the lake.
Tossing a pebble,
listening to the soft splash,
watching the ripple expand -
wider and wider until it encompasses the lake.

I sit in wonder,
How does one pebble have such an effect?
I am awed.
How does one man gently touch a life
and create ripples that encircle the world?
I remember his perpetual question:
"Well...how *could* it be..?"
A small pebble tossed into the lake
creating ripples of wonder and questioning
around the world.

Sitting on the porch
breathing deeply the fresh, wet air.
Watching as the rain subsides
and the sun pushes the clouds aside.

the puddle on the sidewalk
reflects the billowing clouds in the sky.
Watching the breeze gently tease
the surface of the puddle,
creating a small wave,
altering for a moment
the reflection of the sky.

This teacher created a stir
that altered for a moment
my perception of life.
That one moment was enough
to change the reflection forever.

Sitting on the cliff
hearing the deafening roar
as the mountain river rages through the canyon.
Sprays of water shooting like rockets
as the water cascades over giant boulders.
Watching the torrent
snaking down the hillside,
flowing over rough stone,
soaking deep into the earth,
changing direction to accommodate the hills,
yet steadily flowing.
The awesome power of the river
molding, softening, changing
the objects in its path.

Honoring the full power of this work,
I am humbled.
Tears flow at his passing.
Bodies have been molded by his touch.
Hearts have been softened by his humanity.
Lives will continue to be changed
by the ripples of his spirit.

Anna Marie Bowers 2-8-97

Shmah

Bonnie Curkin

Bonnie is an administrative staff member at Heritage Pointe, the retirement community to which Emily and Milton moved seven years ago. Bonnie met them at that time, and became like a daughter to them. The following is edited from Bonnie's eulogy to Milton Trager.

After a few days of sleeping in the hospital by Milton's side, and having the privilege of holding him after his death, I needed to be with my children. I needed to feel life. So, I flew back home to New York for 2 days. But still I could not rest, for I needed to express what Milton had been, but the words were locked inside. At about 4:00 AM I took out my daughter's *siddur* [a prayer book] and asked Milton to help me find what I was looking for. I opened the book, and gazed upon *Pirkei Avos*-Chapter One: Make your *Torah* steady

Say little

And do much

And receive everyone with a cheerful face.

Thank you, Milton, once again you have guided me. You pointed to the words that describe you, and [which] will teach us: *Say little, and do much.*

By saying so little you let us figure it out for ourselves, and by doing so much, for so many, you led the way.

The two words that keep coming to mind are: **Thank You.** From all of us in this room, [and in this world], thank you...

For being a leader ahead of your time;

For changing the direction of the lives of most people here, as well as thousands of others;

For the people whom you have healed physically and spiritually;

For taking the word, "TRY," out of our vocabulary;

For giving a beautiful profession to thousands of students;

For showing true humility;

For teaching us silence;

For giving every one of us, as well as countless others, a beautiful memory;

For never judging others;

For your acceptance;

For your caring;

For the legacy you leave behind;

And thank you, Milton, for *always* thanking us!

I met you and Emily over 7 years ago, when you were one of a handful of people to move into Heritage Pointe. I remember having dinner with you that first night, and asking if you were *the Milton Trager*. "No," you answered, "I'm just Milton Trager." Over these past 7 years we have been together almost every day, whether it was for a few minutes or for hours.

Thank you for the privilege of that time, and thank you for all the treatments you gave me--up until a little over a month ago when you became ill. When you saw I didn't feel well, you had me up on your table.

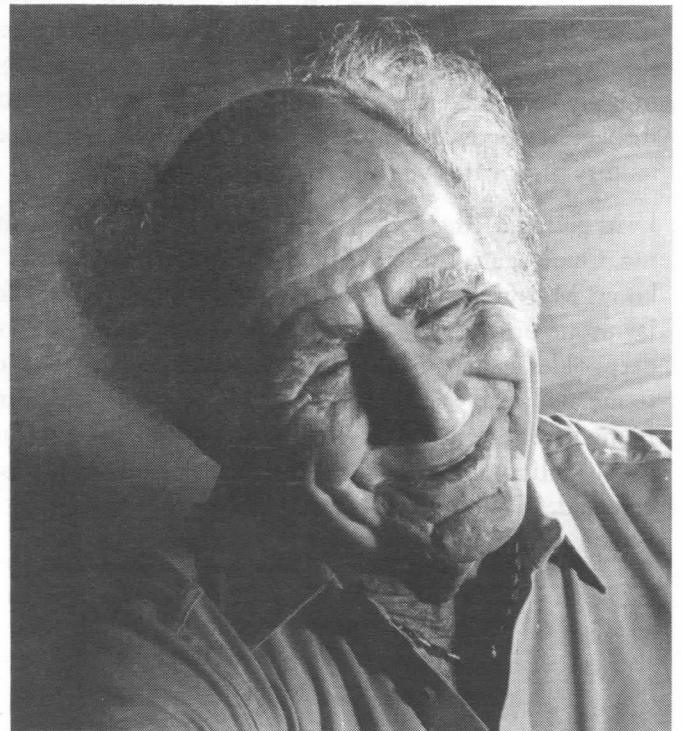
Thank you, Milton, for the time you put my head in your lap, and gently stroked my face and hair; for staring into my eyes the way you did, and smiling at me; for telling me every single day that I was beautiful to you. Because of the confidence you brought out in me I can stand before anyone, and know my strength and capabilities. Thank you for telling me you loved me--daily; for telling me I was the daughter you didn't have; for giving me Don and Rabbi Nathan [Segal].

But most of all: Thank you for loving Emily.

The *mishnah* [the *Torah*] says, "the nicest thing a man can do for his children is to love and respect their mother." Well, Milton, each of us here, in one way or another, was a child to you. So, by loving Emily as you did, by showing her respect, affection and caring you did something nice for each of us.

I promised you in life, and I promise you after your death, that we will watch over Emily for you. Fragile, yet strong. Elegant yet modest. Childlike, yet mature. Emily will need all of us--and we will need Emily. For she now has the difficult job of carrying forth Milton's work.

The prayer, *Shamh Yisroel*, the holiest, is appropriate to be said for this holy man. The word, "*shmah*," means "to hear." As we all say the *shmah* let us pray that Milton will hear us, be a "*gootch betta*" (an angel) for us, and continue to keep us in his care.



Letter to Don

Ronan M. Kisch, Ph.D.

Ronan is a Practitioner and Clinical Psychologist from Dayton, Ohio.

Dear Don:

This is a piece of writing that I thought might be helpful for the Newsletter. I believe that I cannot be the only one having these feelings and perhaps it would be of comfort for the grieving process of the community for me to share them.

As I have worked with my clients this week following Milton's death, from time to time the thought spontaneously popped into my awareness to say to my clients, "You know, Milton Trager passed away this week." Of course I thought, don't interrupt a session to say that. However, after not expressing the thought, I found myself welling up in my throat and chest with grief and sadness.

In a matter of seconds, multitudes of thoughts illuminated my awareness. I was struck by the fact, "The man who developed this beautiful, healing technique that I am in the process of providing recently died." Then I was flooded with thoughts of the many riches that have come into my life because of Milton's influence. "The very procedure I am carrying out is his." "The bodywork community that I belong to and the many wonderful and nurturing friends that have entered my life in the past decade from this community are a result of this presence." "The support and healing that I help to bring to many people's lives has been significantly influenced by his creativity and wisdom." "Much of my own personal and professional growth has been brought about by this man's work." Then through my grief and sadness, I was overwhelmed with a sense of appreciation and respect for all of these gifts. I was aware, "I am living and his teachings are literally embodied in me." Then I thought, "He has died, yet through my body and hands and those of my bodywork community his spirit is very much alive--he lives on."

I was giving a *Trager* session to a friend this Saturday morning. Once again the same thought came to me to say, "You know, Milton Trager passed away this week." As my friend lay prone on the table, and I was paddling the canoe, some deep, older, gentle, non-judgmental, otherly awareness came to me and said, "The right leg." I forgot to do the right leg! Immediately, before bringing my awareness back to my intentionality and hook-up with my friend, the thought emerged, "Thank you, Milton."

Feature Articles

Doing Nothing

Jon Levy

Jon is a Practitioner from Bethesda, Maryland.

Doing Nothing: A few days into my Beginning Training the Instructor, Bill Scholl, posed this question to us (roughly): if you sat with a client and did nothing, and the client was helped, the 'work' was effective, would that be OK? He didn't expect an answer, it was just something to think about. Which was just as well for me, because in truth the question made no sense to me. How could you do nothing and expect anything to happen? The image I had when Bill asked his question was of sitting in a chair, maybe reading a book, while the client lay on the table--to me a ridiculous situation. So I let it go, put it out of my mind and occasionally wondered what Bill could have been talking about.

More than a year later I was doing a session with Casey Kiernan, a practitioner who had been in Bill's training with me, and who since had become a good friend. Because of the good feelings and trust between us, on this particular day I was able to really be at ease with Casey, to not try but just listen and respond. Toward the end of the session she said "It feels like you're doing nothing, and I love it. And I love that you trust me enough to do it." It felt like that to me too, and very nice.

Several weeks later I was lucky enough to be in Cathy Hammond's Reflex/Response class, an incredible experience that I feel has deepened my work by an order of magnitude. I was being worked on by a fellow student, and I became aware that though she was rocking my leg there seems to be absolutely no effort involved. It was like she was there, my leg was there, my leg was moving and there was some sort of connection between that and her being there, but the connection was unclear. Surely it couldn't be her causing me to move, because her touch was so light I could hardly feel it, but what else could it be? It was as if just her presence encouraged my leg to move in the most effortless, glorious way. It felt so good, so respectful and caring, that it brought tears to my eyes. And I started thinking about Bill's question again, and it began to make sense.

Fun and Trager: Something I have heard many, many times in my *Trager* training, starting with the first demo I attended, is how playful *Trager* can be, that it should be light and fun to both give and receive, and it is something I have always had difficulty with. My Tutors have often written things like "...your work is coming along nicely, but do try to have more

fun with it." Not that I'm deadly serious, or don't enjoy giving a session because I almost always do--but fun? It didn't seem to fit. I knew it could be done. For me, just being around Roger Tolle is fun, and his sessions an incredible delight. I've received sessions from a local Tutor, Kate Rose, where I burst out laughing; and once Mary Kent Norton gave me a session that left me feeling like my insides were dancing--definitely fun. They are all vastly more experienced than I am, but it didn't seem to me to be a question of experience as much as of personality. Although I really enjoy kidding around, being silly, letting go, it doesn't come easily to me, it never felt like a natural part of me, and when I am playful it usually catches me by surprise.

I had pretty much accepted the idea that I'd do *Trager* as well as I could, and feel very good about it, but wouldn't expect to have fun while doing it. And then, the other night, I was giving a session to my wife, Vicki, a quiet, very relaxed and light session, and I realized that I was having fun, having a ball, tickled pink! An outside observer probably wouldn't have noticed anything, there wasn't much to see, but I knew it without a doubt. I had discovered that that's one way, and probably the predominant way, that I have fun. Mostly quietly. It was a nice feeling, a good awakening, and added to my appreciation of this work.

Trager on the Philadelphia to DC AIDS Bike Ride: Being a member of a massage crew working nearly nonstop, except for food and bathroom breaks, for 8 to 10 hours a day for 3 days, in addition to loading and unloading massage tables, chairs, and other supplies, traveling a couple of hours a day by bus from one night's campsite to the next, doing everything as part of one group or another, and waiting for everything, may not sound like an opportunity you want to jump at, but for me and everyone else I talked to in the crew, it was incredible.

I've never felt so much a part of something so valuable and all involving, never felt so appreciated and full of appreciation for others sharing the experience, never felt such a feeling of belonging in a group as I did for those three days. I think it had to do with being an active, contributing participant in the creation of something as worthwhile as raising funds for services to people living with AIDS.

It was surprising for me how well *Trager* worked in an event usually reserved for sports massage work. It was great for me as a practitioner because I can't imagine how I would have survived the experience doing the more muscular and exhausting work I learned in massage school. *Trager* offered me an approach and attitude which made my work much richer than it would have been otherwise. It was an approach in which I found myself responding not just to a tight muscle, aching shoulder, numb fingers, or even the way a rider used his or her body as they rode--although I certainly addressed these. But I also discovered myself responding to larger questions about the ride itself, such as how to make it easier, use less effort

and have more fun. I suggested keeping the hands loose by imagining playing a guitar or piano or just wagging them around lightly, keeping the jaw loose by making faces, sticking out the tongue and wagging it and the jaw around, and generally paying attention to how one's body was responding.

Anyone interested in participating in any of the Rides planned for this year can get more information by calling 800-825-1000. Five Rides are scheduled: the Twin Cities to Chicago (6 days); San Francisco to Los Angeles (7 days); Boston to New York (4 days); North Carolina to D.C. (4 days--replaces the Philadelphia to D.C. Ride), and Orlando to Miami (3 days).

Opening to a Client's Truth Part I: Barriers to Giving Feedback

Julie Greene

Julie has been practicing The Trager Approach for 18 years, is a Tutor Seminar Leader, and is the author of GETTING MENTASTICS ACROSS TO CLIENTS. She was a member of the Ethics Committee for 10 years, is the author of PUTTING ETHICAL THINKING INTO PRACTICE, and is one of the 4 coauthors of the CODE OF ETHICS and GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Julie has a masters degree in counseling psychology, and has been working with communication arts for 15 years as part of her personal growth path.

This is the first segment of a 3-part piece and it discusses the importance of giving feedback, feedback agreements, and barriers to giving feedback. Part II will be about giving feedback, Part III will be about receiving it.

A Client's Truth: The *Trager* Approach could be called a "client-centered" method because a client's experience ("the truth" from a client's perspective) is the center of our work. As practitioners, our job is to be open to the truth of a client's experience and to remain open as that experience changes.

This attitude of openness and receptivity, evoked by Dr. Trager's "Well....?" is our attitude in all our interactions with clients. We are familiar with this in relation to the table-work. We ask, we "listen" for feedback from the tissue, and we take our cues from that as we go. If we are not in the present moment we'll overlook the subtle changes in the tissue, and be just "doing moves." Instead of trying to make the tissue be a certain way, the *Trager* discipline is to remain curious about how it actually is as it changes. This approach is equally challenging and important in our verbal interactions with clients. And it is why, as *Trager* people receiving the work, it is important that we give our honest feedback to those working on us.

Feedback Agreements with Clients: What is this “feedback” we are wanting to be open to? Here, feedback refers to anything that is going on with a client in response to a session. In The *Trager* Approach we have both explicit and implicit feedback agreements with our clients.

Explicit feedback agreements include general and specific feedback we ask from a client:

I'd like you to tell me if anything hurts you at any time. Will you do that?

Let me know any time you're wanting or needing something different from what's happening.

And variations on — how is this feeling to you? *E.g.*, Is your neck comfortable lying in this position? Is this too much at all? Does it feel okay to you when I do this? Which feels better to you, this or this?

The implicit feedback agreement is that **WHATEVER A CLIENT'S EXPERIENCE IS**, is okay with us. Our Code of Ethics says: “Practitioners respect the client's authority about his or her own experience” (this includes fellow students we are practicing on!). Our implicitly held desire to be present with and open to a client's experience no matter what, creates an atmosphere of possibility that is very powerful.

Difficult Feedback: We respect a client's choice of how much of their experience to share. It takes both willingness and skill for a client to give a practitioner difficult feedback (“difficult” is whatever is hard for a client to say, or whatever is hard for a practitioner to hear). For clients this can include:

Feedback which may be emotionally “charged.”

Feedback which they assume they are not “supposed” to experience or not “supposed” to say.

Feedback which they imagine could make the practitioner look less than wonderful.

Or feedback which they worry might elicit an unwelcome reaction.

Having requested a client to let us know if something is uncomfortable, and having asked occasional questions, we accept whatever is offered. However, as *Trager* Students and Practitioners, we hold **OURSELVES** to a greater level of responsibility when **WE** are in the client role — to tell whomever is working on us how the work is affecting us. This is true whether we are being “practiced on,” by a student, doing a trade with a peer, a Tutor being worked on by a tutee, or paying for a session from a practitioner.

Barriers to Giving a Fellow *Trager* Person Difficult Feedback: Giving difficult feedback can be just as challenging for us as for any other client. Below are some reasons I have heard *Trager* folk give for withholding feedback from a practitioner (here the term ‘practitioner’ refers to the person working, whether student or practitioner):

1. We think that it might disrupt hook-up:
 - My feedback would interrupt the flow.
 - I, as a client, would have to come up out of my deeply non-verbal place in order to find words to say this, and I don't want to.
2. We assume that it probably is not wanted:
 - They did not specifically ASK for feedback; it would be presumptuous to give it.
 - I don't want to take up THEIR practice time with MY stuff.
 - The person working on me needs their confidence boosted, I don't want to say anything to undermine it.
 - The student working on me needs a chance to practice without feeling they have to perform.
3. We figure that it probably is not worthwhile to say:
 - I guess what I'm feeling is what I'm supposed to be feeling (so I'll grin and bear it).
 - All I can think of are harsh, judgmental words. I don't want to be difficult, unfair or hurtful.
 - The person working on me is more experienced than I am.
4. We are worried that giving it might be just too risky:
 - My feedback might make this session worse than it already is (because it might rattle the person, spoil hook-up, etc.).
 - If I'm hard on her now, she might be hard on me later when we trade roles.
 - The intensity of the feelings coming up for me right now is “too much” to show.
 - It might harm the relationship — the practitioner might not want to trade with me again, might be angry, might have hurt feelings, might not like me anymore, might not speak well of me to others.
 - If my feedback displeases this Tutor or Instructor, there might be repercussions to my standing or status in the Institute.

If these or similar concerns have stopped you from giving feedback, you are not alone. As compelling as some of these are, we **CAN** find our way past them:

By remembering that our feedback (as any client's) is central to our client-centered approach.

By learning ways of saying it that are most likely to be well received (more on this in Part II), and

By learning to say our truth even when it's hard to say, or when we may not be expressing it in the “best” way.

Many of us are conditioned from an early age to avoid confrontation and unpleasant encounters. Thus it may be deeply

ingrained in us to “edit out” difficult feedback. In our daily lives, when we don’t tell the people with whom we are in relationship, things they expect we will tell them, this is a kind of lying, and it compromises the relationship. In a *Trager* context, it compromises the work.

While we prefer to give our feedback in skillful ways, let’s not be stopped by fears that the person working on us can’t handle it; feedback, even if “unexpertly” given, is something a practitioner can work with and is therefore more helpful than feedback withheld. It is the practitioner’s job to respond to a client professionally and with neutrality, and we can leave that part to them (the art of receiving difficult feedback gracefully will be discussed in depth in Part III). As clients, our job is to attend to our own experience. As we take risks in saying what is hard to say, we can take a cue from the work itself, dance lightly with the process, and open to the learning that comes.

Conclusion: As *Trager* folk receiving the work, our honest feedback about our experience is the most valuable gift we have for each other. When a practitioner understands a client’s experience, no matter what it is, this understanding can only deepen hook-up, because hook-up that doesn’t include the client’s experience is a false hook-up anyway.

It is a fundamental principle of our work that the positive changes we want for the client come not from anything a practitioner does but from what happens inside the client. When clients EXPERIENCE themselves differently, they ARE different. This is more than just relief, it is a process of transformation.

A practitioner’s receptivity to and focus on a client’s truth makes the *Trager Approach* one of the most powerful body-work forms in the world today. Knowing we have the support of the *Trager* community behind us, let’s help each other in applying this standard which is central to the efficacy of our work.

* * * * *

Part II of this series (GIVING FEEDBACK) will discuss in depth how we can give feedback in ways that are constructive, compassionate and easier to receive. Part III (RECEIVING FEEDBACK) will discuss the art of receiving difficult feedback gracefully and professionally. Below is a preview of topics that will be covered:

Giving Feedback: As you read the statements below please remember that each point will be expanded upon in Part II in terms of its meaning, how to apply it in the context of a session, and examples from actual situations:

1. Feedback is about me (the client), and my experience. It is not about the practitioner. Four distinct aspects of my experience that I can identify and communicate are:
 - a. What I concretely observe (sensory perceptions of some

thing happening).

- b. What my feelings are.
- c. What my thoughts, values and preferences are.
- d. My requests, in positive action language.

2. PREFERENCES are part of my experience and are different from JUDGMENTS. It’s important and helpful to identify and state my preferences, which include what I LIKE and DON’T LIKE, WANT and DON’T WANT.

3. Judgments are labels of GOOD/BAD, RIGHT/WRONG. When, instead of speaking directly about my own experience, I speak indirectly by using these labels, whatever I say will be more difficult for a practitioner to receive.

4. When negative feedback is preceded by positive feedback as a technique to “soften the blow,” it is usually more rather than less difficult to hear. What helps make negative feedback easier to receive is to give it directly in terms of my experience (observations, feelings, thoughts/values/preferences, and requests.)

5. It’s important to distinguish feelings from thoughts.

6. A request is not a demand, but is INFORMATION about me (that there is a specific action you could do that I would like).

7. A distinction needs to be made between giving feedback and giving instruction. Feedback, as it is being discussed here, includes my observations, feelings, thoughts/values/preferences, and requests.

8. “I-statements” are helpful tools if used correctly (if really about me).

9. To complete the communication loop, it’s important to acknowledge successful communication when it occurs, and admit when it hasn’t.

Receiving Feedback: Again, as you read the statements below, please remember that each idea will be discussed in much more depth in Part III:

1. My job as practitioner is to be mindful of and let my work follow the client’s unfolding experience, and therefore I WANT their feedback, whatever it is.
2. In order to do this, I can:
 - a. Endeavor to keep my attention on the client and keep my heart and mind open to them, letting go of my automatic reactions and judgments as they occur,
 - b. Do my best to let go of my attachment to outcome,
 - c. Know that a client’s feedback is about the client’s experience. Knowing this, even if a client’s feedback seems judgmental, I can “hear” (and perhaps ask about) the concrete observations, feelings, thoughts/values/preferences, and requests, which are there underneath,
 - d. Ask for clarifications,

- e. Complete communication loops by eliciting acknowledgment from a client when THEY feel I've understood their feedback,
 - f. Elicit their continuing feedback, and
 - g. Return again and again to hook up and to my job as a *Trager Practitioner* -- to feel, to weigh, to ask, to play...
3. It's important to maintain professional conduct with clients even when I don't feel like it.
 4. Even though I maintain professional conduct, if I am unable to let go of judging a client, feeling judged by them, or judging myself, one thing I can do outside of a session is get some empathy for my feelings (not collusion in my judgments) from a colleague or Tutor. This can be a way to help let them go while having compassion for myself.
 5. When I find it too challenging to be receptive to a specific client in response to whom I am less successful in applying these principles, I can refer that client to another Practitioner.
 6. It's important that I celebrate my endeavors and acknowledge my progress in applying these principles, recognizing that they are not easy.

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Ethical Trager Practice - What are "Boundaries?"

Julie Greene

Julie is one of the 4 coauthors of the Trager CODE OF ETHICS and the Trager GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE, and is a Tutor Seminar Leader. She has a masters degree in counseling psychology.

One of the essential ingredients to professional ethics and clear communications with clients is the ability to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. What are we referring to when we use the term boundaries in relation to the practice of The *Trager Approach*?

Ethically "boundaried" behavior on the part of a *Trager Practitioner* comes out of an underlying set of understandings and abilities that tend to naturally bring about an environment of respect and clarity. These understandings and abilities could be described as:

- *Being able to know and differentiate between the Practitioner's role and the client's role,
- *Knowing one's own thoughts, feelings and needs, and being able to distinguish them from those of a client, and
- *Understanding what one's own power is, and what that of a client is.

Through these understandings and abilities comes knowing and respecting the appropriate limits of the approach and interaction in order to prevent intrusion, misuse of power and flagrant or subtle abuse. A *Trager Practitioner* who has incorporated these understandings and abilities into his or her practice is much less likely to act unethically in relationship to a client. To the degree that they are less integrated into one's practice, a need is indicated for self-development in those areas.

These understandings and abilities can also help prevent a Practitioner from missing or misreading a client's non verbal cues (the sensitive following of which is essential in our work). Their lack can lead to overriding even a client's direct requests and statements. It can lead to shaming or blaming. It can lead to hurtful, manipulative or controlling behaviors.

Some common examples of such behaviors might include: hugging a client without regard to whether a hug would be appropriate for that client; telling a client how she is feeling or how she should be feeling; seductive behavior; overworking a client; pushing one's ideas on a client; telling a client what is wrong with them; chastising a client or belittling them; focussing too much attention on oneself during a session; or (consciously or unconsciously) trying to get one's own needs met through interactions with clients.

These understandings and abilities can not only help prevent inappropriate behaviors towards a client but also help a Practitioner recognize and understand such behaviors when clients display them, allowing a professional response. One example is a client who may not be able to tell when the work is hurting her. When clients are not aware of their own thoughts, feelings, needs, role, or power separately from those of others, many kinds of difficulties can arise. As practitioners, when we have a good sense of our own boundaries, we'll be better equipped to respond appropriately when a client's difficulties with boundaries effects our work with them.

Calling All Tutors!

Tutor Committee Chairperson Stephani Murdoch reminds us that since the International Conference has been postponed until the Spring of 1998, Tutors can meet and greet and learn together at Gail Stewart's Advanced Tutor Seminar in Camp Verde, Arizona. Just consult your schedule inside this newsletter for more details.

Regional and Practitioner News

News from the Northwest

Wimsey Cherrington

Wimsey is a Practitioner from Seattle, Washington.

Trager history was made in October, 1996, when we attended the first Reflex/Response Basic Course ever held in Seattle. Instructor Martha Moran led us through three days of exploration, with lots of inspired *Mentastics*, awesome demonstrations and plenty of table time to play with the new ideas. Class enthusiasm, with much laughing and "Ah HA!-ing (and a few "oops!")" was very high.

Martha generously shared her knowledge gained from 12 years of practice and daily use of Reflex/Response, and even provided us with a 28-page book of very practical material to take home. (Thanks to Donna Keyser and George Gottlieb for the design and printing of that gorgeous book!)

Using *Mentastics*, Martha taught us the fine points of how to feel the tissue for a reflex. Martha then taught us many different ways of accessing a reflex, from "nothing," to reaching the inner mind, to accessing a response, to strengthening. Reaching the unconscious mind, as with all of *Trager* was key.

Every day since the training I've seen clients who have benefitted from my new knowledge. They report longer lasting--even permanent--relief from sessions received since the workshop. And the learning continues. Martha's voice often speaks up inside my head while I'm working with clients, and I recall her making a suggestion in class which is perfect for the tissue under my hands at that moment. While musing on a concept from class, it suddenly takes on new meaning, deepens. I have more questions to ask when playing with a client, when thinking about my work, and more resources to answer them, leading to more questions!

At the end of the third day, satiated and happy, we circled and shared how we were feeling. Mercedes Gonzalez appreciated Martha because she "really supports us for what we want and need." Bud Bedell liked "how well and freely she shared her knowledge." Sara Strasburger offered that she "valued Martha's depth, talking in so many levels all right there without walls between the different levels of knowing."

Martha related that before the class she told herself, "Whatever is to happen, let it happen. I've been doing it so long,

and have all this information to share. I don't want to play a role, I just want to be me, to just be there, accessing what the students want."

Martha obviously accomplished that and a lot more. It was certainly a weekend well spent! Thank you, Martha. And thanks, Trager Institute, for making the Reflex/Response training available and accessible!

Mid-Atlantic Trager Association Meets!

Betty Post

Betty is a Practitioner from Lawrenceville, New Jersey.

We are excited! We just had our 4th M.A.T.A. (Mid-Atlantic Trager Association) meeting. At each meeting, a different constellation of *Trager* folks, Students, and Practitioners gather to share energy, support, good food and some hands on trades. We rotate the location of the meetings. Each has been hosted by a different member within the New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania region. As a result of the last four meetings we have: opened a bank account, written by-laws, agreed to make decisions by consensus, and we are working on our mission statement. We have elected an executive committee with Maxine Guenther and Meredith Curtin as co-facilitators, David Haines as Treasurer, Maria Moyles secretary, Katrina Gleason newsletter editor, and James Day as Regional Coordinator. A bimonthly newsletter is being published and mailed to all members of M.A.T.A.

Our intentions are: -to lend support to local *Trager* Practitioners in promoting a successful practice -to mentor each other as well as Students pursuing the *Trager* certification program -to expand awareness of the *Trager* principles to the general public through promotion, marketing and education -to inspire and cultivate Milton Trager's dream of hook-up and living from the heart.

Membership is open to members of The Trager Institute who may, if interested, attend one meeting without obligation. Practitioner members pay annual dues of \$20.00. Student members pay annual dues of \$10.00. If you would like to join, please send a check payable to Mid-Atlantic Trager Association to David Haines, Treasurer, 511 Laurel Street, Lancaster, PA 17603, phone 717-397-9007.

Our next meetings are scheduled for March 8th and May 4th. For information regarding place and time please call Maxine Guenther at 908-741-5447 or Meredith Curtin at 607-272-3027.

Trager Comes to Kripalu

Nancy (Ramani) Costerisan

I am very excited to share the news with you about the synthesis of my two favorite support systems, *Trager* and Kripalu Yoga. Many of you have already heard about Kripalu center in Lenox, MA. It is a holistic health center specializing in yoga, meditation and personal awareness. Kripalu began as an ashram with a guru, Amrit Desai, in 1970. It has evolved into a leading health center with a mission to create a safe environment in which guests can rediscover and nourish their spirit. In 1994, Yogi Desai was asked to resign as spiritual director, and Kripalu Center has redesigned its programs, and opened up to housing other programs as well.

In October, we had a beginning *Trager* training at Kripalu, and it was a phenomenal success. The environment felt safe and nurturing, the buffet style vegetarian food was excellent and plentiful, there were morning Yoga classes and evening programs to attend. There are also giant sized hot tubs and saunas! When we stepped out into the halls from the classroom, it felt like everyone else we encountered was also in hook-up.

There will be more *Trager* programs at Kripalu. This is just too good an opportunity to pass by.

Bill Scholl is coming to teach an Intermediate training on March 1-5, 1997. Bill is a very fun and creative teacher from Texas. Bill has a big heart and brings a depth of life experience with him. (I only write this because I realize that if you are fairly new to *Trager* you may not know all the Instructors.)

Roger Tolle is scheduled to lead a *Mentastics* retreat on April 11-13, 1997. Most of you know that Roger was a professional dancer with his own company for many years. His grasp of movement and ability to articulate that understanding are very inspiring. The cost for the *Mentastics* retreat is \$150. The retreat is designed as two supervised practice days, so they may count for ceu's if you are a practitioner. (See the sched-

Attention to the *Trager* Community

From Cynthia Cristy, Tutor, Orlando, Florida

Willetti Gagnon, a Florida *Trager* Practitioner, has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer that has spread to her lungs. She needs our prayers and support as she is fighting for her life in every way. Please include her in your prayers, seeing her happy, healthy, and secure. If you would like to leave your message on her voice mail, call 407-677-8372. If you would like to mail her anything to support her wellness, write to P.O. Box 1138, Goldenrod, FL 32733.

ule under supervised practice days.) It is scheduled to coincide with the traditional Kripalu program schedule, so you can participate in noontime Kripalu danskinectics, a combination of yoga and dance (with live drums on Saturday) and yoga at 4:15 p.m. The retreat begins at 7 p.m. on Friday, and ends at noon on Sunday. It will be a wonderful blending of Kripalu Yoga and Roger's rich *Trager* approach to movement.

The cost to stay at Kripalu for one of these events, is \$55/night for a dorm room, \$65/night for a double room. This includes room and board. If you would like to register for any of these programs, or need more information, please call Nancy (Ramani) at 413-232-7178.

Looking for European Hosts

Nancy Costerisan

My name is Ramani, and I am a Tutor from Massachusetts. My eighteen year old daughter, Phoebe, is planning a trip with three other friends to France and Italy this spring. All four teenagers were good students and one speaks some French and Phoebe speaks Spanish and a few words of Italian. They have all been working to earn their own money for this trip, and need to travel as inexpensively as possible.

Would you be willing to host them for two or three nights in your home? Floor space for sleeping would be fine. I know that the travelers will be very grateful to you, and I as a mom will be very grateful also. Please write to us and we will call you on the phone to work out further arrangements. Thank you! Ramani Costerisan, 17 Cone Hill Rd., West Stockbridge, MA 01266.

Roster Correction

Please add to your roster the name and address of Practitioner:

Mary Able
1020 Urban Street
Golden, CO 80401.

Congratulations to the Glidden-Tracey Family

Born to Practitioner Cindi Glidden-Tracey and Terry Tracey of Urbana, Illinois, a son, Trevor Glidden Tracey on May 4, 1996, 5 lbs. 13 oz., 19.5 inches. Happy birthday, Trevor!

From Doreen Oakes

Doreen, a Practitioner from Vancouver, B.C., Canada, is taking a year's leave of absence to care for her daughter, Camille Thomas, age 6, who has leukemia. She welcomes all well-wishers for Camille on her journey of healing.

Letter to the Editor

Michael C. Morrison

Michael is a Practitioner from Falmouth, Maine.

In light of the recent resignations of John Blaisdell and Jo Hayward-Haines and the further delay in implementation of the new training program, I am moved to write again expressing my opinion on the *Trager* training program and the future of *Trager* bodywork and The *Trager* Institute.

As I wrote in my letter of May 14, 1996, I often find myself feeling very excited about *Trager* as a component of health care and that the suitability and potential of *Trager* becomes clearer and clearer. I also find myself feeling frustrated by a lack of training and experience that I feel I need to confidently sell myself and *Trager* and to delivery it's full potential. Further, I don't feel that the reputation of *Trager* in society reflects anywhere near its full potential because many practitioners, like me, are unable to express and deliver *Trager's* full potential for lack of training and experience.

I have noticed in myself and in my fellow practitioners a pattern of enthusiasm followed by disillusionment that I feel reflects an initial excitement about the potential of *Trager*, and then disappointment as a lack of preparation and adequate reputation in society precludes the realization of the potential of *Trager*, and to make a living in its practice. From my perspective, this is a critical shortcoming and the central issue for the Institute and the future of *Trager*. I believe this is an important factor in the annual loss of 300 to 500 members from the Institute.

I am personally frustrated because I feel that *Trager* has the potential to fill an important need in the world of bodywork, one to which I am drawn, and find my options for developing this potential severely limited. By comparison, if I choose to become a hairdresser, a run-of-the-mill training offered here in Portland, consists of 1500 hours of instruction and supervised clinic, takes 9 months, and costs \$4000. If I want to become a CPA, a lawyer, or auto mechanic, trainings are equally or more extensive. If I want to become a *Trager* practitioner, I can't find a program that offers more than about 150 hours of training. It simply doesn't exist. Yes, it is possible to take additional trainings, and I do this. But this approach lacks the coherence, continuity, and depth I feel is essential to a fully developed training.

I further feel that the proposed, and now delayed, training program does little to address these problems, and perhaps makes them worse by creating the illusion that we have dealt with the problem when in fact we haven't.

I suggest we begin immediately to develop and implement a multitiered training program. The fist tier would be similar to the current program or the proposed new program, and would be offered in the same way it is offered now at various

sites around the country and the world. I feel this training program fills an important niche and should be continued. Further tiers would include a 600 hour program (that is, 600 hours of Instructor-Student contact), a 1200 hour program, and a 2400 hour program. These would be residential programs, with the 600 hour program being the first to be developed and implemented, the 1200 hour the next, and so on.

I feel that we must come to think of the *Trager* training in a new way, that we must take it more seriously by providing extensive training options, and that in doing so we will leave many of the difficulties that now plague us behind, included the loss of 300 to 500 members per year, endless hand-wringing about marketing, and the unquantifiable damage to the confidence of new practitioners who feel that something is wrong with them because, having fulfilled the training program requirements, they feel unable to deliver the promise of *Trager*. In addition I feel we will turn our energies to understanding the structure and function of the human body and begin to offer to society the insight, illumination, and enhanced health that comes uniquely from *Trager* and movement-based bodywork.

I feel that failure to make this change in our thinking will result in the disappearance of *Trager* as a major player in the field of bodywork. I do not suppose this is an easy course to undertake. I do feel it is an essential one if the Institute and *Trager* bodywork are to survive and blossom.

For more than a decade, Eve worked in municipal government, where responsibilities ranged from directing the City of Berkeley's Planning and Community Development Department to negotiating labor contracts with the Police and Fire Unions. She has volunteered as a housing and economic development consultant in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Her experience also includes teaching - Community Planning at the community college level, and remedial education in Guyana.

Eve's interest in the Institute grows out of more than a decade of pleasure as a *Trager* client. When not on the table, she is likely to be gardening or cooking.

Betty Fuller was Dr. Milton Trager's first student, first practitioner, and the first to be authorized as an instructor. She co-founded The Trager Institute with Dr. Trager in 1980, and is a lifetime, founding member of the Board of Directors. Betty's background is in education, theater, and the performing arts. She was a residential staff member at Esalen Institute for many years, and is a pioneer in the human potentials movement.

Rickey Hendricks received her doctorate in history, with a specialization in health care. She is an author with a focus on health care and alternative medicine, and her books include *A Model for National Health Care* and *For a Child's Sake: The Children's Hospital of Denver*. Rickey is a member of the Marin County Environmental Forum and Citizen's Advisory Board for Alcohol and Other Drug Problems for Marin County. She has been a Board member for 8 months.

Gloria Namkung is a Marriage, Family and Child Counselor Registered Intern, and a teaching assistant at JFK University Graduate School of Professional Psychology. She holds a Master's degree in clinical psychology with a specialization in cross-cultural counseling, and is currently providing supervised psychotherapy to HIV-diagnosed clients at the UCSF AIDS Health Project in a post-Master's internship. Additionally, Gloria has provided therapy services at the JFK University counseling center as well as working with adolescent boys in group home settings. She volunteers at the Crisis Support Services, a suicide prevention hotline and has also served on the Board of various community organizations.

Don Schwartz received his doctorate in Integral Counseling and Psychotherapy from the California Institute of Integral Studies in 1978, the same year he became a *Trager* Practitioner. He assisted in the founding of The Trager Institute, and has been its administrator since 1980. In 1996, Don was named as Executive Director. In addition to his work for the Institute, Don has provided leadership at the state level through his participation in the California Coalition on Somatic Practices, and at the national level through his cofounding of The Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork, and Somatic Practices Organizations--this is the organizational entity responsible for the Institute's professional liability insurance policy for Students and Practitioners.

Sara Michael Davidson: I have been a licensee of The Trager Institute since 1979, and have served in the roles of sponsor, practitioner and Board member during this time. After serving one year on the Board, I was voted Board President in December, 1996, effective January, 1997. I bring both the love and "hands-on" knowledge of The *Trager* Approach and my corporate organizational expertise to the Board. Additionally, I introduce The *Trager* Approach to Corporate America as well as alternative health care professionals through lectures and demonstrations at hospitals, clinics, and conventions.

Photographs

The front cover photograph was discovered at the Trager household in Mission Viejo, by Tutor Fawn Christianson. The back cover collage is by graphic designer Jennifer Cherk.

Thank You, Donors!

The Trager Institute has been receiving many donations of late--most in Dr. Trager's name. On behalf of the Board, Educational, and Administrative staffs, I thank you for your valuable contributions in honor of Milton Trager's name, life and work. If your name has been inadvertently omitted from--or misspelled in--this list, please do let us know so that we may correct the error. [DS]

The London (Ontario, Canada) Group

The Trager Family of Michigan

The Western Pennsylvania

and West Virginia Group

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Ginger Carney

Leanne Chattey

Kathy Cormany

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The Trager Institute is approved by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) as a continuing education provider.

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