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THE DIARY

by Jim Gordon, President of ILM

When I was nine years old I was faced with a challenge. What to get a girl friend, Bonnie, for her birthday? I did not have much money and I did not know what she would really like. After much thinking and worry I asked my mom what she thought would be a good gift. Mom said to call Bonnie's mom and ask her, so I did. She said to buy her a pretty diary. Bonnie loved to keep a diary. Well, that was a gift I would never have thought of – keeping a diary seemed like an unusual thing to do. But it was something I could afford and was easy to find. So, I got her one. A few days later at school she told me how much she liked the diary. I asked her why she kept one. She said she liked putting down her thoughts and feelings on paper and being able to go back and look at them later. She said it helped her to understand herself more and to see what she really thought about things and people. As I said, this was something I never considered doing, keeping a diary. But the thought of it perked my curiosity somehow – and when I got home and looked around my room I realized why: I was also keeping a kind of diary, just not in an organized manner. Throughout my bedroom were little pieces of paper with notes to myself. Notes with my thoughts and feeling, impressions and experiences, notes on which I had written down my dreams. What I was not doing was keeping them in an organized manner that I could refer to later. My thoughts, feelings and dreams were scattered throughout my bedroom and stuffed into the drawers of my little desk.

So, a few days later I bought myself a diary. I wrote in it daily and found that I liked the experience of having one place to put down my thoughts. Before long I needed more space to write, so I created a notebook which I kept as my diary. As time went on I created two sections in the diary. One for my experiences, feelings, thoughts and insights of the day - my "daily diary." And one as a place to write down and work on interpreting my dreams – my dream diary.

Keeping my diaries turned out to be one of the greatest favors I have ever done for myself. By writing down each day my thoughts, feelings, experiences and understandings, I was able to move them from

deep inside myself to a conscious level for viewing and reviewing. This helped me get in touch with myself and see what I believed and did not believe deep inside myself. What a revelation to see that my beliefs did not always match my parents', teachers' or friends'. And what a freedom when I could say inside myself that it was OK for me to have these beliefs, and also for others not to think or feel as I did.

Another thing I found helpful was referring to what I had written in my daily diary and my dream diary, and comparing them. Every two weeks or so I would read over what I had written in the two during that time. A couple of things occurred over and over. One was that after recording an insight in my daily diary, within two weeks afterward I would find a dream which would give greater clarity to or reinforce the insight. I also found that within two weeks prior to recording an event in my daily diary, I would find a dream that fortold the event. Usually the dream would be in symbols, and by comparing my dreams to their connecting insight or event, I was able to understand what the dream symbols meant.

I still keep my two dairies. My daily dairy still records my daily experiences, feelings and insights. And my dream diary has expanded into my dream-and-meditation diary, in which I record my inner experiences. I keep my diaries because, together, they help me integrate my inner and outer worlds. Everyone has an inner life – not everyone meditates, but everyone has dreams, whether or not they remember them. And, of course, everyone has outer experiences, feelings, thoughts and insights. But for many people, the inner and outer worlds are totally separate and unrelated. My diaries taught me that these two worlds were actually quite connected, and trying to support each other. How much more satisfying my outer experiences and insights are, when they are validated by my inner experience. Likewise, my inner experiences are much more real to me when they are brought up to a conscious level, written down, and then confirmed by outer experience. My diaries have helped me learn that my inner and outer experiences are actually two complementary parts of one whole ... my life. Keeping a diary could work the same magic for you. ■

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

photo

by Steven McAfee, ILM Midwest Coordinator

This past weekend I attended a wedding and a funeral. The wedding was that of a long-time friend who has supported my ministry for years. The funeral was that of a wonderful man I was just getting to know through my ministry. These events moved me through a sea of changing emotions, from celebration and hope, to sorrow and loss. And I began to reflect on life and relationships.

I thought of how the wedding couple was just beginning a life together, while the wife and sons of the deceased were just ending one. Yet, to me, neither was really a beginning nor an ending for the souls involved. What were starting and finishing were relationships in the world. However tender such relationships may be, one day they come to a close. So, I wondered, what does it all mean? What is the purpose behind the many relationships we have: husbands and wives, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends?

I began to see that relationships serve the soul as vehicles for its expression. When I was a child, I had best friends, favorite toys, TV shows, and all sorts of things that were important to me. As I grew into an adolescent, none of those things were part of my life anymore. New things mattered to me, like the way I looked, the music I liked, and whether my friends thought I was "cool." Then came college, and again, my circle of friends, interests, and activities changed. I began to care more about the direction of my life and what I wanted to do with it. I got involved with "causes: " civil rights, the peace movement and spiritual studies. The point is, at each stage of my life, what I thought mattered most to me were the things, ideas and people I was involved with at that time. And as time passed, most of those things, ideas and people changed again and again. Looking back, I cannot even remember what some of them were. So what did it all mean, if none of it lasted anyway? Then I discovered something about all these changes that has lasting value for me. The awareness and feeling of affection in my life, the warm memory of the enthusiasm and challenge, the good feeling I have inside myself for having survived trials I had thought insurmountable at the time - these are the gifts I retain. These have enriched my soul, and helped me to awaken to a "me" that has always been present in

the midst of otherwise endless change and transformation. This "me" is the soul, and these "gifts" have allowed me to experience my soul ... as Love. Each relationship has presented me the opportunity to reach within and find that love, to focus on sharing it, and to devote my attention to its presence, rather than to the passing circumstances of my life.

It then occurred to me that in the midst of my relationships, I often lose sight of the very purpose which they serve, the discovery and expression of love. I get caught up in being right or in being upset

and judgmental when things don't go my way. Then I end up missing the love that was also fully available to me in those very same moments.

I often do the same thing to myself. I neglect my prayer and meditation, or postpone my study and service, to attend to pressing worldly needs, which are, in fact, seldom pressing and often nothing but habitual distractions. Instead of focusing upon that which keeps me connected to the Spirit of Love within me, I devote my energy to the troublesome business of the world: financial obligations, parenting concerns, and the continual scheduling of projects, people and activities. Then, pre-occupied

with self-created pressures and worries, I withhold my loving attention from those to whom I could give it, including myself.

Sooner or later, I end up realizing what I am doing: I am no longer devoting my attention to what I love. And so I remind myself that the quality and wonder of life does not come from the things we acquire or achieve. It comes from the love we give. Someone once said that when our time to leave this world has come, our biggest regret is the love that we have withheld. If that is true, then the love we have given must be our greatest joy.

Weddings and funerals, life and death, beginnings and endings surround us every day. They remind us of how precious our time is together and inspire us to use it well. Today, my reflections have brought me the gift of longing, the desire to focus my life not upon the things of the world, which pass away with time, but on the Spirit of Love which endures forever. ■



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PEACEMAKER

by Laura Kesten-Beaver
ILM Minister

On a weekend this past June, a small group of men and women gathered together at an ILM workshop called *PeaceMaker* to spend three days learning from an ancient Iroquois legend about a man named Deganawidah, known among the Iroquois people as the PeaceMaker. The workshop is based upon the remarkable book, *A Manual for PeaceMaker*, written by Jean Houston with the blessings and aid of today's Iroquois elders. In her book, Houston explains that several hundred years ago the tribes of North America's Northeastern woodlands lived in a state of continual violence and intertribal warfare. The PeaceMaker, Deganawidah, was sent by the Master of Life to bring a New Peace to this society. This New Peace was to be built upon individuals seeing the world, not through the eyes of hatred and revenge, but through radically different eyes, the eyes of forgiveness and love. Houston tells the legend in eight sections, each recounting a story in which Deganawidah overcomes a seemingly impossible obstacle in order to teach another person or persons to see the world in this radically different way. Following each section, Houston provides processes which provoke powerful experiences, based upon American Indian tradition, in seeing the world with these new eyes.

The workshop began with the participants reading the first section, which tells the story of Deganawidah's childhood, of his inspiration to tackle his seemingly impossible mission. Deganawidah learned of his mission through a vision which told him to build a canoe made of stone. When his grandmother first saw the stone canoe floating out onto Lake Ontario, she became alarmed and questioned its ability to stay afloat. Deganawidah assured her that indeed it *would* float and that all who would see this impossible action would thereby know that his words of Peace were true.

Deganawidah's grandmother had a belief system that a canoe made out of stone could not float, but when she saw her grandson push off into the waters of the great lake, her belief system was altered, and she then knew that his mission of a New Peace was possible. Likewise, the Northeastern woodland tribes people believed that violence and hunger were the only way in which they had to live, until Deganawidah, through achieving his impossible task – paddling a stone canoe – proved to the people that the seemingly impossible *was* possible. This particular task was the

first of many tasks that Deganawidah achieved throughout his great story, each time inviting the tribes people to look at their current way of life and to begin viewing it in a new way – a way of harmony and peace.

Just as Deganawidah had sought to do the impossible, canoeing from shore to shore in a stone canoe, teaching the New Peace, the participants in the *PeaceMaker* workshop looked at their own lives – their own belief systems – and with new awarenesses gained during the weekend, they learned of the resources they have within and around themselves to *do* that which seems impossible in their lives.

Another section of Houston's book tells of the transformation to the way of the New Peace of one of Deganawidah's allies. This person had seen his daughters murdered, one by one, by a powerful evil foe, and had become so immersed with hatred for this foe and with self-hatred for being unable to protect his family, that he had become a cannibal. Through a miraculous healing process induced by Deganawidah, this person was able to transform his life and seek forgiveness. After reading this fantastic story the workshop participants engaged in another process, one of opening a space within their own hearts for compassion and forgiveness. Through this wonderful process, they were able to share their own life stories, finding forgiveness for themselves and others, thus experiencing the transformation of the New Peace.

This workshop, *PeaceMaker*, is rich in story and experience, offering a journey beyond the boundaries of the impossible, empowering us and reconnecting us with a New Peace, based upon forgiveness and love. In our current world, where peace again seems impossible, I am reminded that peace begins with one human being believing that the seemingly impossible – this New Peace – is possible. It is stated that Deganawidah and his allies spread the word of the New Peace from person to person, and from tribe to tribe, transforming an old belief system – of fear, hatred and violence – into the living of a new belief system – one of peace and harmony. Deganawidah's mission brought peace to the tribes of the Northeastern woodlands for hundreds of years. The same is possible today – and today, as in the time of the *PeaceMaker*, the New Peace begins *within each of us*.

“Within and around the earth,
within and around the hills,
within and around the mountain,
your authority returns to you.”

– an Ancient Tewa prayer
from *A Manual for PeaceMaker*,
by Jean Houston ■

ABOUT ILM

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES (ILM) is a nonprofit outreach organization founded in the fundamental principles of ancient and esoteric Christianity. It is dedicated to the development and balancing of the fourfold nature of the individual. Towards this goal, it provides education and services concerned with the integration of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the self, and also provides publications and materials that aid in this process.

Among its fundamental tenets is that we really are "temples of the Holy Spirit." As we seek and express this presence within, we find the peace, love, power, and wisdom we all so earnestly desire. The many services of ILM are geared towards this path of individual unfoldment – such as meditation, study, and prayer on an individual and group basis.

Service to humanity and the planet is ILM's second major emphasis, and ILM encourages individual service, in any of a wide variety of possible forms, as a vital aspect of our daily experience. Please write or phone for more information.

ILM BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE

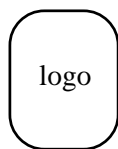
Love and Loving
The Knowing of God
The Staff of the Shepherd

These three books by Jim Gordon are available at \$6 each. To order, call Tom Beaver at 512: 894-4805.

A QUOTE

*So, let's begin to believe in Love.
Let's believe we are ready for and
worthy of Love – not the buckets of
love that the world may offer but the
endless Loving of God's Spirit in us.
If and when we let go of all that keeps
us from Loving, it truly will be ours.*

– from **Love and Loving**



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THE INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

CALENDAR

For details and reservations for Jim's or Laura's programs, contact Laura at 512-894-0992, and for details and reservations for Steven's programs, contact Steven at 219-485-2167

AUSTIN AREA

LOCAL CLASSES WITH JIM GORDON: A flier containing details will be sent out to the Austin area.

September 21st: *CIRCLE OF MAIDENS* with Laura Kesten-Beaver. A nature-based workshop for girls ages 6 - 11.

October 12th: *CIRCLE OF WOMEN: THE ARTFUL YOU* with Laura Kesten-Beaver. A workshop on inner and outer creativity.

November 8th-9th: *FAMILIES* workshop with Steven McAfee and Laura Kesten-Beaver. ILM's first family program, focused on playfully sharing traditions and ideas for strengthening the family. Friday night is for parents only; Saturday is for families with children ages 5 and up.

December 14th: *CIRCLE OF MAIDENS* workshop with Laura Kesten-Beaver.

January 17th-19th: *PEACEMAKER* workshop with Laura Kesten-Beaver.

MIDWEST AREA

WEEKLY TUESDAY EVENING CLASSES WITH STEVEN MCAFEE: Classes include spiritual teachings, guided meditation, and group sharing. Starts **Tuesday August 27th, 7:30-9:00 PM**, at Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN.

September: **SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES:** *THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: A MYSTICAL VIEW OF CHRIST* (a four-part series) with Steven McAfee: **9:00 AM, every Sunday this month**, at Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN. (Steven is also a frequent speaker for other local groups. Call for current schedule.)

September 27th-28th: *FAMILIES* workshop with Steven McAfee and Laura Kesten-Beaver. At Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN.

October 25th-27th: *LOVE AND LOVING*, a retreat with Jim Gordon, Steven McAfee, and Laura Kesten-Beaver. Based on Jim Gordon's book, *Love and Loving*. At the Potawatomi Inn, Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN.

November 22nd-24th: *PEACEMAKER* with Laura Kesten-Beaver in Kalamazoo, MI.

December 7th: *FAMILY CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS*, with Steven McAfee. A workshop for sharing, honoring, and creating sacred family rituals for the holiday season. At the Hilton Hotel, Samuel Foster Room, Ft. Wayne, IN.

December 22nd: *CAROLING PARTY*, with Steven McAfee, for adults and children, 6:30-8:30 PM at Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN.

December 28th: *CIRCLE OF WOMEN: THE ARTFUL YOU* workshop with Laura Kesten-Beaver, in Ft. Wayne, IN.

January 10th-12th: *CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT*, with Steven McAfee. A quiet time for reflection, study, prayer, meditation, silence and support. At the Becker Lodge, Camp Mack, Milford, IN.

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

presents:

LOVE AND LOVING

A practical and mystical retreat about the most important aspect of our lives with Jim Gordon, Laura Kesten-Beaver and Steven McAfee.

- How can I experience more love in my life?
- How can I improve the quality of my relationships?
- Why do I keep having the same problems in different relationships?
- What is "unconditional love?"

Join the ILM ministerial staff in applying ideas and techniques from Jim Gordon's book, *Love and Loving*, to explore: the nature of divine love, karma and how it affects our relationships, how to overcome patterns that block us from experiencing love, and three spiritual laws essential for our inner peace.

DATE: Friday, October 25th - Sunday, October 27th, 1996.

TIME: Registration 5:00-7:00 PM Friday
Program 7:30 PM Friday - 2:00 PM Sunday.

LOCATION: Potawatomi Inn at Pokagon State Park, Angola, Indiana.

REGISTRATION: \$150 per person; please make checks payable to ILM.

**Please send your name, address, phone number, and check to:
Steven McAfee, 6228 Lombard Place, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.**

If you wish to room with someone who will be registering separately, please send us their name so we can make appropriate arrangements.

The cost of the retreat includes your room and meals, workshop supplies, and a copy of Jim's book, *Love and Loving*. The retreat location is a beautiful, new conference facility at Potawatomi Inn in Pokagon State Park on Lake James, near Angola, Indiana. Each room has its own private bath and will be booked for double-occupancy. Upon receipt of your registration, we will mail you a confirmation letter with map, directions, and complete details.

For further information, contact Steven at (219) 485-2167.