



THE DICTIONARY - A TOOL OF LIFE

by *Jim Gordon,*
President of ILM

I recently found myself moving through something difficult in my life, so I decided to look at some of the "tools" I have that help me to move through situations and find resolution. These tools are methods that I have found work for me in getting through and past "stuckness" - the holding onto belief systems that work against me. I am sure if you look into your own life that you will see tools that you have found or developed that help you in much the same way. Your tools may be ones that your parents taught you as you were growing up, or tools that you learned in school. Or you might have developed them yourself as you found yourself in difficult situations in your life. You might have found these tools while reading self-help books, or attending self-development classes or workshops. And some of these tools of life may be innate, that is, you were "born with them" and they are natural to you. One thing that I have found very helpful is to consciously take note of my tools of life. Many times when I am going through some difficulty, I find myself wallowing in my "stuff" for many days, even weeks, until I realize, "I know how to get out of this" - I just stay stuck in my stuff rather than choose to use the tools that I know will work to help me get out of my funky space. So I have found it helpful as a reminder to myself, to have my tools written down where I can refer to them. I have also put up on my bathroom mirror a little note to myself which says, "Remember the tools of life, they help you toward your loving." This serves as a reminder to me to look and see if I am wallowing in self pity, stuckness, judgment, or whatever - and if so to choose a tool or tools that will help me move back into my loving and my inner peace.

One of the greatest tools, of course, is forgiveness - and I find that the person I am most often forgiving is myself. Another tool that I find very helpful is the dictionary. This tool may seem unusual, so let me share a bit about it.

For years I have referred to the dictionary as the "New Age Bible." To me it is a bible for it reveals much to me about myself. Here's how. Often when I find myself living a pattern or caught in a belief that stops me from living in my loving, I am living this out from a mental place without any clear sense of feeling about

what I am doing. In fact, I am living in a belief system that cuts me off from my true feelings. And because my awareness at the feeling level is not clear, that is where I am hurting. I am just "doing" out of mental habit. I am living out of an old definition of myself or a way of being that truly does not work for me anymore. It might be a belief that I was raised with or that I have accepted as mine even though this belief is now limiting me. When I become aware of what I am doing I will often sit down and write out the words that go along with the action or reaction that I am running that I would like to move out of my life. And I find that often there will be key words that help me see more clearly what is happening. If I then take a dictionary and look up these key words I begin to get a clearer picture of what is truly going on. And this mental clarity helps me to get more in touch with my feelings about the situation. Once I get in touch with my true feelings about an issue I usually find the solution is easy. I also find that I carry some miss-definitions of words that lead me to live out situations in a certain way that do not really work for me. By looking up these key words and getting a truer definition of them I begin to re-define my beliefs and let go of those that do not work for me.

Let me share a story to illustrate this process. When I was 15 years old I was filled with joyful anticipation for an activity that had been promised me which I very much wanted to do. For several weeks I awaited the appointed day when the event was to take place. However, the day came and went and nothing happened as I expected. The persons who had made the promise of doing the activity with me had forgotten all about it. I waited all day for them to come by to get me. When they did not arrive and I realized that my expectation was not going to be fulfilled, I went into great depression and hurt. Days went by and I continued to be in my hurt. I did not like how I was feeling and I was angry with the persons who had not kept their promise. No matter what I did I could not seem to move out of these hurt feelings. I sat down and began to look and see what it was that was keeping me from letting go of this hurt. I wanted to move back into my loving and joyful nature. I began to look at the words that seemed to keep coming up from inside the hurt. "Disappointed, expectation, separation" were the words that were coming forward. Well, I decided to look the words up in a dictionary to see if I could get

(Dictionary continues on page 4)



A TAIL OF DEVOTION

by *Steven McAfee*,
ILM Midwest Coordinator

For those of you who may not know this, I am a dog lover. I have a special fondness in my heart for them. I've had dogs all my life. I have one now, "Sundance," a wonderful black lab-mutt. She was a skinny, shivering, half-frozen stray who found our former home in Michigan on a snowy November day eleven years ago, and she's been with us ever since. Her favorite activities are family holidays (especially the food at the holidays), parties (especially the food at parties) children (especially the food they drop or hand to her) and, of course, affection (from almost anyone). But her very favorite thing is me. From that first moment we met, when I accepted her as my own, she has been completely devoted to me. When I leave home, she cries. When I return, she yips and dances and wags her tail (faster than the human eye can see). She makes me feel like I am the best thing that has ever happened to her.

I know some of you may be wondering why I am writing about a dog. After all, she is just a dog. Well, that's true. But she is also my friend. She was with me years ago when I injured my back and was in severe pain for several months. At night, I would have to sleep in a semi-reclining position in a chair. Every night, she slept at my side. After I had recovered, when my young sons and I would go exploring in the woods nearby, she would lead the way. And, years after that, as I went through a divorce, she listened to my cries at night that no one else ever heard. When I was lonely, she would cuddle me. When I was happy, she would play with me. Whether I was patient and kind, or grumpy and angry with her, she just went right on loving me.

She is no longer young (or skinny), and she can no longer walk so well. But if I move from one room to another, she follows me. When I go outside to work in the yard, she leaves our air-conditioned home to be with me, even though the heat is now hard on her. She can no longer romp and play with me like she used to, but she seems quite content just to be with me (in fact, that's about all she attempts to do anymore). Her body is failing her, but her spirit is not, and her devotion to me is unailing.

And now that her time with me in the world is drawing to a close, I find myself reluctant to say good-bye, and I am discovering what she has meant

to me all these years. And, I think, I am learning something important from her about the power of devotion. It is her devotion that has created the deep bond between us, her devotion that has kept her spirit young and playful within an aging and infirm body, and her devotion that has given her a life of love and contentment.

So, what is the secret to her devotion? Her attention is always fixed upon her master. Whoever else is in the room, whatever else is going on, her attention remains fixed on me. When I sit, she sits and is content to wait quietly at my feet. When I arise, she immediately follows, even though her body is weary and sore. When I call, she comes. When she wants affection, she comes to me and is quite direct about asking for it. When she has done something she knows she isn't supposed to do, she approaches me slowly and sheepishly, looking most pitiable, but she approaches me nevertheless, confident in my love for her, even when her behavior has displeased me.

**In each moment of my life,
whatever is occurring,
whoever is present, I can
fix my gaze upon Him.**

And I suddenly realize that I have the opportunity to practice this kind of devotion to my Lord and master. I can begin right now. How? In each moment of my life, whatever is occurring, whoever is present, I can fix my gaze upon Him. When I am unsure of His will and leading, I can wait and watch in quiet contentment. When He calls, I can respond and follow, even if I am weary. When I am longing, I can openly display my need for His affection. And when I have done that which I fear has displeased Him, I can approach Him, sheepish and pitiful perhaps, but still confident of His Love for me. I believe that, if I would only commit to living this way, I would know the joy Sundance has found in giving herself so wholeheartedly to me. I know that when she passes from this world, even long after she is gone, I will remember her acts of devotion and the depths of her love for me. When I pass from this world, I hope to have lived in such a way that the Lord will have seen that same depth of devotion in me. ■

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

CLASSES & PROGRAMS: SEPT. - DEC. 1997

Presented by JIM GORDON: For additional information, call Laura Kesten-Beaver at 512-894-0992.

Weekly Classes: Tuesdays 7:00-9:00 PM, Franklin Sq. Bldg., Ste. #100, 3724 Jefferson, Austin, TX. Each class includes spiritual teaching, practical exercises, group discussion, and meditation. Jim helps participants to become more deeply in touch with the Spirit within. Following the summer break, Jim's classes will begin again in September. Information will be sent out in advance to the Austin community.

Presented by LAURA KESTEN-BEAVER: For additional information, call Laura at 512-894-0992.

"A Circle of Women": These evenings are specially dedicated in the celebration of ancient woman spirit, where women join together to experience the support of an uplifting, nurturing, and self-empowering circle.

Fri	September 12	7:00-10:00 PM	Austin, TX	No charge
Fri	October 17	7:00-10:00 PM	Austin, TX	No charge
Fri	November 28	7:00-10:00 PM	Austin, TX	No charge
Fri	December 19	7:00-10:00 PM	Austin, TX	No charge

"A Circle of Maidens" (open to girls 7-12): Maidens in this circle share a place of belonging within a group as they learn how to honor and support themselves, each other, and all of life. Emphasis is placed on gratitude, respect, co-operative and communicative skills, and personal wisdom.

Sat	September 20	10:00 AM-4:00 PM	Austin, TX	\$15
Sat	December 20	10:00 AM-4:00 PM	Austin, TX	\$15

"The Writer Within": This workshop uses specific writing processes to send us on a self-exploratory journey through the realms of our minds and hearts, thereby teaching us more of who we are and of how we think and feel about the collage of our lives - from the ants in our sugar bowl to the desire to live in the Spirit of God.

Sat	September 27	8:00 AM-5:00 PM	Austin, TX	\$15
Sat	December 6	8:00 AM-5:00 PM	Austin, TX	\$15

"The Unfolding Creative Spirit": This is an uplifting, experiential workshop designed to embrace the inner and outer creative self, offering a variety of experiences as a means to enhance the process of unfolding the spirit of creativity.

Sat	October 25	9:00 AM-5:00 PM	Austin, TX	\$35
Sat	January 3	9:00 AM-5:00 PM	Kalamazoo, MI	\$35

"Families": Laura and Steven offer a playful workshop on creating family traditions. Friday night is for parents only; Saturday is for parents and for children ages 5+.

Fri-Sat	November 14-15		Austin, TX	\$35
---------	----------------	--	------------	------

"PeaceMaker": This workshop offers an opportunity to journey through the rich Iroquois story of the PeaceMaker, reliving its teachings and participating in transformational processes, thus bringing us closer to the heart of our own PeaceMaker within.

Fri-Sun	November 21-23		Austin, TX	\$50
---------	----------------	--	------------	------

ILM Classes & Programs presented by Steven McAfee continue on next page.

Presented by STEVEN R. MCAFEE: For additional information, call Steven at 219-485-2167.

Tuesday Classes: 7:30-9:00 PM, Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN. Classes include spiritual teaching, group sharing, and meditation. Love offering. All are welcome.

Friday Meditations: 7:00-8:00 PM, Ft. Wayne, IN (except on ILM retreat weekends). Our focus is on sharing the Love of God together in silent devotion. There is no teaching and no fellowship afterward.

Sunday Services: 10:45 AM-12:30 PM, YWCA Villa, Ft. Wayne, IN. Brigade of Light worship services: on Sept. 28th, Oct. 19th, Nov. 9th, and Dec. 7th. The service on Dec. 7th will be followed by a potluck lunch and afternoon seminar till approximately 4:30 PM.

Sunday Study Series: 9:00-10:00 AM, Ft. Wayne, IN, Unity Church, Fellowship Hall, each Sunday in September. We will be exploring the mysticism in the book of Isaiah and his prophetic vision of the messiah.

Community Nights: Ft. Wayne, IN. Time and location varies. Once every 4-6 weeks, the Ft. Wayne ILM community joins together for play and fellowship. Activities may include an inspirational movie and discussion; a community potluck, sharing and singing night; a family picnic in the park; or volunteering in a local service project.

Holiday Events: Christmas caroling party (adults and children), Tues., Dec. 23, 6:30-8:30 PM.

ILM WEEKEND WORKSHOP

with Jim Gordon, Steven McAfee and Laura Kesten-Beaver

OCTOBER, 10, 11 AND 12, 1997

IN THE BLUE ROOM AT THE FORT WAYNE, INDIANA COLISEUM

A separate flyer with complete details and registration form will be sent out.

TO REGISTER CALL STEVEN MCAFEE AT 219-485-2167

DICTIONARY (continued from page 1)

a better understanding of what was happening inside me. I wrote down these meanings so I could better look at them. Disappointed: made unhappy by the failure of one's expectations. Expectation: a looking forward to as due, proper or necessary. Separation: to set apart into parts, divide, sever. As I began to read over the definitions I began to see how I had given away my power to another, by expecting another to bring me or give me something to make me fulfilled, and how this separated me from my true self of loving and caring. As I looked over these words again and again felt myself come alive once again as I began to realign myself to my true nature of loving. As I got my thoughts and my emotions realigned, I began to feel whole. Then I moved into forgiving myself for giving my power away to another, and for judging myself as not worthy, as "less than," because I had been forgotten by another. I forgave myself for judging myself for expecting someone else to make me happy. I then

forgave the people who had forgotten about me and the promise they had made. It was through this action that I began to see how the dictionary is a great tool for me.

I have also found out over time that using the dictionary technique once is not always enough to get me out of a limiting pattern. I find that there are times where I get clear in my understanding and definitions, but the next day, next week or next month I am back to running the old definitions and my old patterns again. So, I go through this process again. Eventually, I find that I live from the new definitions and let go of the old ones because I have chosen to.

This using of the dictionary is one of many tools that I have found for myself. I invite you to look at your tools of life to consciously use those that work and let go of those that do not. Making this conscious choice will move you toward living your life with more and more loving, forgiveness, understanding, acceptance, and caring. ■



INNOCENCE OF FAITH

by *Laura Kesten-Beaver,*
ILM Minister

Ever since my 10-year-old daughter, Cally, first learned that people actually owned horses, she has set out to do just that. My husband, Tom, and I, coming from non-horse backgrounds, were not so eager. We did, however, arrange for Cally to take riding lessons. After a year of lessons, Cally's intention of owning her own horse never lessened, so last October we agreed to find out what was involved with buying and maintaining a horse. Many "horse people" we had come to know told us that it could take a year or more to find a pony with all the right requirements for a young rider. Silently I thought to myself, "That's not how I've seen Spirit work." I knew that when we "put it out there" - ask for what we want - that the universe usually begins to respond - to lead us to our answer - pretty quickly. It's just up to us to pay close enough attention to follow the trail.

Cally spotted several signposts on the trail leading to her horse. The first came a month later, in November, on our family's trip to the Taos (New Mexico) Pueblo. There Cally became entranced with a small drum which had the head of a white horse painted on it. As an early Christmas present, we bought her the drum.

Then one morning a few months later, in early spring, Cally told us that she had a dream about a horse - but she could only see his white face. She then decided that she wanted a white horse. Temporarily forgetting about how Spirit works, I thought it was my duty as a mother to inform her that the chance of finding a "white" horse with all the right requirements might be slim.

About two weeks after her dream, as we were driving, Cally said dreamily, "I've been thinking, mom. It doesn't really matter what color my horse is." "Phew!" I thought to myself. "Only," she paused, and then continued emphatically, "his name has to be 'Flash.'" The first thing I thought was, "Oh, NO!" Again forgetting the greatness of Spirit, my mind became plagued as I could not even begin to imagine how I was going to pull this one off.

Although Spirit was not in my consciousness, it was definitely in Cally's. She reminded me of the time when she wanted a blue 1960's-era dress for Halloween. Before entering the vintage shoppe, I tried to protect her from disappointment, and told her

that the chances of finding such a blue dress were probably one in a million. Much to my surprise, there were six nice dresses waiting inside - and one of them was blue. Upon hearing her retell this story, I acknowledged that indeed, "stranger things have happened."

A few weeks later, a "stranger thing" did happen. We had a spell of very hot weather in May, making it almost unbearable to be outside. Cally begged to cancel her riding lesson. I gently reminded her of the responsibility and commitment to both her trainer and to a horse that she planned on getting someday. I reminded her that horses take a great deal of care and

need to be ridden even when it is hot. She thought intently, and then changed her mind - she decided to take her lesson. I believe that it was at this very moment, the moment of her choosing to be committed and responsible, that what she had asked for rapidly began to manifest.

The next day, Cally's trainer learned of a woman who had a



pony for sale. We sought out the woman and inquired. The animal met all our requirements: pony-sized, fairly well-trained, a jumper, and good with children. Then we checked out Cally's requirements: What color was the pony? White. And then the final question: "What was his name?"

How often do we question Spirit and put our faith solely in "the odds?" We say "we believe," we do our meditation or prayer, we read stories about people who live their faith and have remarkable things happen in their lives. Cally never questioned Spirit, she instead opened herself to its possibility. I believe that Spirit had been giving Cally information about this horse because in her innocence with faith, she believed, without a doubt, that if she wanted something, asked for it, and was willing to take responsibility for it, that indeed the universe would provide.

"His name is Flash," the woman told us. Our jaws dropped open - except for Cally's. She just turned to us and beamed. We told the woman about the drum, Cally's dream and of her foretelling her horse's name. The woman smiled broadly and told us that there was no doubt in her mind that she had found Flash's new owner.

The innocence of faith in Spirit, in God, is so much more rewarding than faith in the odds. ■

ABOUT ILM

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES (ILM) is a nonprofit outreach organization founded in the fundamental principles of ancient 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.

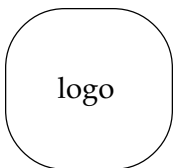
Service to humanity and the planet is ILM’s second major emphasis, and ILM encourages individual service, in any of a wide variety of possible forms, as a vital aspect of our daily experience. Please write or phone for more information.

A Quote:

“Go with the flow, and go with a glow.”

This is a quote from a counseling session with Jim Gordon. If you have a phrase or excerpt from a counseling session with Jim that has been an inspiration to you and you would like to share it with others, write it down and send it to: ILM Newsletter, 203 Buckeye Trail, Austin, TX 78746.

ILM Executive Office: Jim Gordon, 203 Buckeye Trail, Austin, TX 78746; Business Office: Tom Beaver, P.O. Box 1086, Dripping Springs, TX 78620; Midwest Office: Steven McAfee, 6228 Lombard Place, Fort Wayne, IN 46815



INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

Editorial and Publishing Office

P.O. Box 164332

Austin, Texas 78716-4332

Phone: (512) 894-0992

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Santa Monica, CA
Permit #457

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

