

# Body, Mind & Spirit

## Organization for Spirituality in the Workplace



Doug Verigin, founder of OSW, and his wife, Kate Verigin, a nondenominational minister, are currently researching material to be included in a book on spirituality in the workplace to be published in Fall 1999.

BY DOUG VERIGIN

Organization for Spirituality in the Workplace - OSW for short - is dedicated to helping us all learn how to bring our souls to work. The average person spends 100,000 hours at work in their lifetime. We exist as mind, body and spirit, and many would argue that our spiritual nature is our highest calling. Can we truly live a full life if spirit is missing from one of our primary activities - work? And what benefits will our society enjoy if more of us live and work in a spiritually conscious manner?

OSW's chief objective is to promote the integration of

spiritual consciousness in the workplace. The organization is open to all; we do not promote any particular religious doctrine. Respect for people of all religions or spiritual paths is maintained.

The organization is two years old and currently sponsors two monthly events - morning and lunch meetings. We intend to start a third evening meeting. Each gathering features a presentation, a panel discussion, or other appropriate activity. We share friendship, ideas and faith that Spirit works through us - especially at work.

For more information, call Doug Verigin at (503) 977-6764.

## Appreciative Inquiry: Connecting with "Life-Giving Forces" to Create Positive Futures

BY JANA GREENBERGER, M.S.O.D.

Appreciative Inquiry is an approach which has great value as a complement to problem-solving. It inspires approaches to change which open both the mind and the heart to new insights, new "attractors", new synergies, and new actions. It has the potential to bring out the vitality, purpose, and inherent beauty of individuals, organizations, and communities.

What if...we focused more energy on creating positive futures and scaled back our fixation with problems and problem-solving? This kind of shift away from problem-solving as the dominant mode of action in our culture underlies Appreciative Inquiry, a change management theory and process developed by Dr. David Cooperrider and colleagues at Case Western Reserve University.

Appreciative Inquiry focuses on uncovering and valuing the "Best of What Is" to envision "What Might Be." Appreciative Inquiry has been applied in hundreds of corporate and global social change settings. It is particularly useful for discovering and innovating in areas of vision, values, strategy, team building, and organizational renewal.

Cooperrider's theory of Appreciative Inquiry emerged from his comprehensive review of the energy-draining effects of problem-solving versus the enlivening effects of positive images on positive action. Studies conducted in the early '70's by Dr. Ronald Lippitt at the University of Michigan showed that problem-solving drained energy, increased frustration, and tended to lead to short-term fixes rather than long-term solutions. This idea was reinforced by Cooperrider's artist wife Nancy, who brought the idea of "the appreciative eye" to his work. As she pointed out, "An artist doesn't sit down in front of the ocean and say, 'Hey, what's wrong with this ocean?' 'Appreciative, in this context then, means becoming fully aware of, seeing with heightened perception, recognizing aesthetic values and beauty, and valuing "what gives life to" a person, group, organization or community. Inquiry is seen as an active vehicle for change - asking affirmative questions begins positive change.

Key assumptions of Appreciative Inquiry include: 1) Organizations (and societies) are made and imagined by their members; therefore, virtually any pattern of action can be re-configured; 2) Images drive the future, and we move toward Images of Potential if given the chance; 3) In almost every society, organization, or group, something "works" and gives life to collective effort; building on these "life-giving forces" to create the future generates confidence, comfort, and momentum for positive change; and,

4) Affirmative inquiry is the beginning of positive change - asking carefully created positive questions acts as a frame and filter for future reality. A standard team building effort might start with the query "List all the problems in your team and organization problems affecting your team." An appreciative effort might ask "Think about a great team experience you've had in the past 3 years..." and then probe how to apply the positive insights to the current team.

The process of Appreciative Inquiry usually involves five phases, beginning with topic definition and question writing, moving on to data collection (usually through pair interviews), then the writing of "provocative propositions," (statements written in present tense which describe a future ideal), and then dialoguing, and action planning.

Jana Greenberger, M.S.O.D., is a change management consultant who learned the art and science of leadership at Procter & Gamble and NIKE. Her mission is to catalyze individuals, organizations, and communities to create "enlivening" futures by tapping into "life-giving forces." She can be reached at 226-6054 or Vrdian@aol.com.

## Thai Massage: The Practical Expression Of Loving Kindness

BY DAVID AND JANICE WEITZER

The surging traffic of Bangkok seemed like a rushing river teeming with crocodile trucks, cars and motorcycles ready to swallow pedestrians like minnows. On the skyline ahead of me, I could see the Gold covered spires, turrets, and rooftops of the Grand Palace and Wat Po Temple beckoning through the smog.

As the traffic began to slow down, I stepped off the curb into the maze and began to weave through the lanes, amazed at how easy it was to get through the six lanes. It was as if the pedestrian does not exist on the curb and only becomes a real part of the traffic when the foot touches the pavement.

It is reassuring to see that the impact of modern lifestyles has not eclipsed the basic compassionate attitudes that the Thai people are renowned for.

It seems that in every direction, there are temples reaching upward toward the skies and almost every house has an ornate little "Spirit Dwelling" in front with offerings in it.

At the gates of Wat Po, the awareness of the depth of the ancient traditions of Thailand begins to sink in. The message school is inside this enormous compound and the walls are over six feet thick.

The Buddhist Monks of Thailand have protected the temples and the teachings for over 2500 years.

The massage clinic is a large room with low platforms and the people lying on the mats on the platforms in loose clothing are both native Thai and foreigners. The atmosphere is quiet and meditative with the sound of an occasional sigh of relaxation as a patient is slowly and gently moved through an assisted Yoga Posture. I am reminded of the statues in the courtyard which show people in Yoga postures and Thai Massage positions, an affirmation of the connectedness to Yoga and Ayurvedic Medicine.

Thai Massage is unique in several ways; the system is over 2500 years



Thai Massage blends Yogic postures as part of the healing practice.

old, the client remains fully clothed, the work is gentle yet reaches incredibly deep. The Assisted Yoga stretches open the joints and increase the range of motion, the intentionality of the spiritual foundation honors the person and the process, the abdominal work respectfully honors an important area of the body that most other forms of bodywork ignore, and the treatments can be from one hour to three hours or more in length.

The practitioner takes no direct credit for the beneficial or specific results of the treatment because the intentionality created through the PUJA and the support and guidance provided through the healing assistance. We say "Healing Assistance" in order to recognize that the patient heals themselves with the movement of the Healing Energy within their own body and we simply provide our assistance as a catalyst for that process.

As I get up after the massage, I can hear the monks chanting their evening prayers. My practitioner smiles wordlessly as we bow to the divinity each

other and I return to ever busy and bustling streets outside the temple walls. The harmony of the ancient and the modern seems so natural here in Thailand that I find myself thanking the countless souls who worked to preserve this healing over eons against staggering odds.

Here in the western world we find that there are many medical benefits from Thai Massage that fit into our analytical and anatomical reference system. Clients with specific disorders such as chronic back pain, Osteoporosis, Fibro-myalgia, Chronic Fatigue, Cancer and AIDS have all proposed and moved closer to well being from experiencing Thai Massage.

This sense of well being has been the closest to an enlightened state that I have ever been in.

The goals of Thai Massage are to

remove obstacles along the path to reaching a state called "Promwihansii", the four states of mind most conducive to wholeness of being: Loving Kindness, Compassion, Vicarious Joy and Equanimity.

Classes in Thai Massage are open to the public at the Oregon School of Massage. Call 244-3420. David Wietzer, LMT has been a student and practitioner of massage since 1976 with training in Jin Shin Do, Cranial Sacral Therapy, Sports Massage and is a certified yoga instructor. David has focused in on Traditional Thai Massage since 1990 and became a certified instructor in 1996. David Weitzer is available for appointments at (503) 590-3549 at NW Portland and Beaverton locations.

### Inspiring Radio Talk Show

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July 26th. Erie David  
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August 9th. Dr. Mike on how to make your child a genius  
August 16th. Jay Irwid on how to get all the money and love, etc.  
August 23rd. TBA  
August 30th. Nancy Snodgrass on Angels and Wholeness

## AM 1010 Inspiring Radio Talk Show

The following is an excerpt from a previous talk show interview. Brad Smith is an Executive Coach teaching spiritual principles and concepts as practical value to businesses.

Q: Why has spirituality been repressed in the workplace?

Brad Smith: It's safer and mechanistic to only be a physical personality.

Competition will eventually force spirituality in the workplace as a standard. The reason is that in order to be there, the reactionary-emotional stuff that gets in the way of being productive will have to be eliminated in order to have Soul present. Soul is the source of creative, inventive ideas. That's the source of all the opportunities for expanded efficiency, productivity and creation. It's coming from the inner levels. There's a link between Spirit and economics and practicality from a production standpoint.

Q: What is the underlying meaning of Downsizing?

Brad Smith: The world is going through a transition where there's not a parent company taking care of our needs and keeping our security for us the rest of our lives. People are being asked to be independent and thoughtful for themselves and to take care of themselves. Downsizing is a wake-up call.

Q: What other things are you helping business people to realize?

Brad Smith: Issues that come out at work are a result of a co-creation between the boss and the individual (employee) who needs to learn that they are the authority

in their life.

If they can come to a situation where they're willing to co-create equally and share the responsibility for each experience and learn from everything that's there, then they can learn and both teach.

That's a more enlightened approach. They can then recognize the dignity and independence in the individual so they can co-create the work that needs to be done.



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