

# **The Journey: Part 1 – 1986 to 2007**

*One Man's Story of Personal Transformation*

**Craig A. Farnsworth**  
with Susanne M. Alexander

I dedicate this book with love to:

My Wife and Partner, Susanne

and to My Children:

Michelle Farnsworth Tashakor

David Farnsworth

Leah Farnsworth

Jennifer DeMaria

And to Their Children, from Grampa

**Co-Author's Note:** Craig Farnsworth was born November 10, 1951. In 2007 he was diagnosed with brain cancer. In February of 2009, with some assistance from our hospice art therapist Barbara Trauger-Querry, who was also a friend, I began to collect Craig's poetry, artwork, music, journals, and more. With Craig's encouragement, approval, and input, I compiled the collection into a 2-part book he entitled "The Journey". Part 1 is the decades of transformation that happened before cancer. Part 2 is the short but intense period of transformation that occurred while responding to his diagnosis. These books brought him great joy in his final months, and he often had caregivers read him portions. He also shared the contents with family and friends.

~ Susanne M. Alexander, Craig's wife



## Inviting You Along on My Journey

Poetry and artwork by their very nature invite people to identify with the content, apply the filter of their own lives in interpreting them, and draw personal inspiration from the encounters. For this reason, having too much information about what was going on for the creator at the time of creation can sometimes be distracting and distancing. And yet, it is also natural to be curious about the circumstances occurring at the time of the expression. I'm choosing a blend of approaches.

This introduction will give you an overview of my journey and many of the applicable circumstances that prompted my creativity, and I have inserted brief notes throughout the book where I hope this clarity will enhance your understanding of the material. I'm a man of fewer words rather than many, so this minimalist approach of sharing my journey of personal transformation is also a reflection of my personality. (In fact, my health makes it impossible for me to be writing even these many words, so my word-loving wife Susanne is helping!)

In the mid-1980's a friend gave me a journal and encouraged me to begin expressing myself in it. I admit that I was never consistent with the practice, calling my book at times my "irregular journal"! Finding words to express my deepest thoughts and feelings has never come easy for me. However, when I needed to, I was often able to use journals to put words to feelings and thoughts that I was suppressing. At times, the words came out as poetry. In retrospect, these poems record the early stages of a significant transformation process for me as a man and as a human being.

Personal transformation is not a linear process; there are times of forward progress, times of rest, and times of regression and recommitment. I tended to write poetry at times of turmoil or major life changes and at times of joyful rebirth of my mind, heart, and soul. There were moments in my life of drama and I had to find the courage needed to forge new paths. I wrote poems of the pain and confusion I felt before and during two separations from my

now former wife. I agonized at times over parenting my troubled son to adulthood and then went through the challenge of establishing an adult relationship with him. I struggled through depression and unhappiness related to my jobs. I had insights and spiritual awakenings after visits to a monastery, participation in Native American sweat lodges, and through therapy sessions.

My friend Nik Tressler often helped me through discussions and ceremonies, and I've included in this book one of these powerful experiences with him. I participated in a Spiritual Survival Class, and conversations with fellow participants prompted poems. Experiences in nature also prompted joyful expressions.

Woven throughout all my life's experiences was music. I sang by myself, with partners, and in choirs; taught songs to others; played the guitar, many types of flute, and saxophone in college; and created some original music with others as well. The original music pieces are included in this book along with the experiences that inspired them. Even when I began to lose the ability to speak late in my life due to cancer, I could still sing.

Throughout all of these experiences, I did my best to be open to examining and re-examining my life. I was reaching for self-confidence, desperately wanting to understand who I was, and searching for my voice as a man and as a spiritual human being. I kept making the effort to find healthy, loving ways to interact with my three children, my other family members, my coworkers, and with friends.

In an Art as Prayer class in 1999-2000 taught by Barbara Trauger-Querry at Crimson Ark Bahá'í School in Cleveland, Ohio, I began to create artwork to match some of my poems. I created other pictures as well that reflected my journey of self-discovery, healing, and a new marriage that began in August 1999. Art gave me a new medium to express myself. I've always been an "in motion" person, eager to get into action. My nature and my style

in life, poetry, music, and art is “free form”. My pictures consistently reflect the dynamic flow of movement.

As I began to leave my first marriage, a long-time friendship with Susanne Alexander began to develop into a relationship. She and I struggled with timing and patience, as I wanted to both respect my wife at the time and my own need for clarity and transformation. I’ve included a couple of Susanne’s poems that shine light on my transformation during that time. We married in August 1999, a few months after my divorce was final. Our marriage has now been a continuing process of wonderful transformation for both of us. One activity that has enhanced and assisted our transformation both as individuals and as a couple has been participation in courses offered by Landmark Education. I’ve included some of the personal notes and insights I made during a few of those.

In December 1999, Susanne and I agreed to facilitate a marriage preparation class at a youth conference. This initial, brief activity grew over time and experience into enough materials to publish a book. In January 2003, we were excited to publish *Marriage Can Be Forever—Preparation Counts!* Over the year that followed, we did a second edition of the book, and Susanne began to devote more and more time to creating materials and helping others. We decided in March 2004 to create the Marriage Transformation Project, and we have continued to publish other books and conduct workshops. I’ve included descriptions of the qualities of “flexibility” and “service” from our book for married couples, *Pure Gold: Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage*. “Flexibility” is a quality I significantly contributed in my marriage with Susanne, and “service” is a quality that weaves throughout the very fabric of my being. Service became a way of life for me from my early days as a Bahá’í at Hiram College in 1974, and even during the depths of my most painful times, I still did my best to participate in making a difference for others.

Throughout our marriage, my wife and I have facilitated and participated in spiritual Study Circles using a book containing quotations from the Bahá’í Writings called *Reflections on the Life*

*of the Spirit*. Study Circles often contain opportunities for artwork as a means of connecting more deeply to the spiritual content. I’ve included some of the collages and drawings I did during these.

A key transforming event in May 2006 was a pilgrimage my wife and I made to the Bahá’í holy places in northern Israel, in and near Haifa and Akká. At the time, I was searching to feel a strong connection to God and faith. This connection strengthened during the experience, and I prayed urgently for assistance with this, but I left feeling uncertain of my success.

In March of 2007, my son David was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor. At the time, my relationship with him was still strained. The months that followed were among the most difficult of my life. In July of 2007, I was diagnosed with Glioblastoma Multiforme, a very aggressive form of primary brain cancer. Our shared experiences finally helped us achieve healing and connection with each other. My journey through surgeries and treatments also contained strong elements of spiritual and personal transformation. I finally felt totally connected to God and prayer. How challenging that it took such a drastic event to have me hold on tight to God, but how grateful I am for the spiritual experience. I was aided in the connection by drawing on and sharing a poster entitled “The Three Tools of Healing” created by Justice St Rain at Special Ideas. He has graciously allowed me to share an image of it with you (see next page). Due to physical limitations, my ability to journal throughout this experience was minimal, but I’ve shared some of my thoughts.

In March of 2009, the doctors indicated that I had exhausted all treatment options, and I began to receive in-home hospice services. Barbara Trauger-Querry became my hospice art therapist and visited our home to assist me with artistic expression. Together with her and Susanne, I engaged in the fluid process of connecting my poetry and artwork from 1986-2000, letting the various works influence each other. New poetry titles became apparent in the process, and the art took on new meanings. Snatches of quotations contained in the artwork

needed to be added along with the poems. These are from the Bahá'í sacred Writings and were provided as part of Barbara's class.

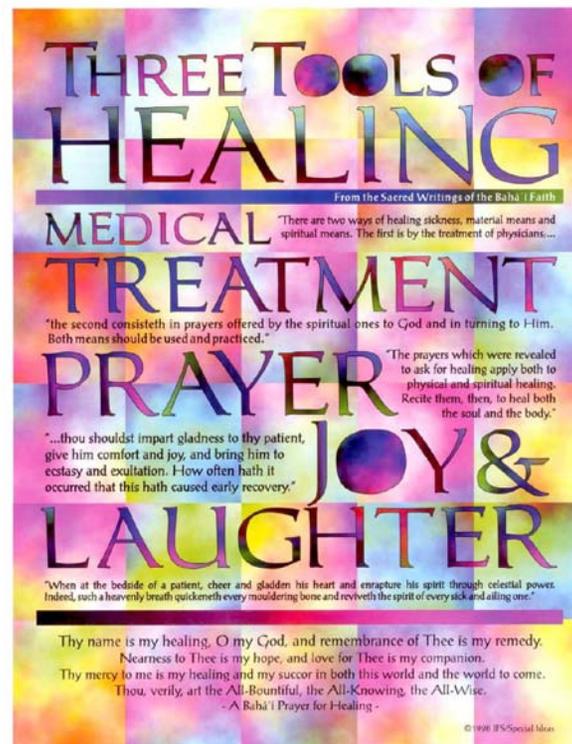
Of course, new art and poetry emerged from the hospice art therapy work. At this point, my brain tumor and seizures had rendered my right arm useless. I was now painting with my left hand and doing my poetry verbally as Barbara wrote the words down. It was astonishing to all of us to see the similarities in my painting style as we compared the older work to the current work. I was also grateful to have art as a means of expressing my feelings about dying and journeying to the next world, feelings I found difficult to express any other way. As my life on this plane of existence drew to its end, I began to lose the ability to speak, and

painting became my easiest, flowing means of expression. Ernie Horvath, an artist friend who visited during that time, commented that I was also "listening to the colors in a different way." I have also included two of Susanne's art therapy paintings from that time that reflect on our relationship.

I hope you enjoy these offerings of creativity from my journeying soul and life and find points of connection and inspiration for your own journey as well!

With love,

Craig A. Farnsworth



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## What Is Transformation?

Transformation is a deep and vital shift in something or someone, a change from one state to another. Sometimes transformation happens rapidly and unexpectedly. You may have experiences or significant realizations that cause a breakthrough in practicing a character quality effectively, and you are never the same again. Other times, transformation happens over a long period and requires commitment and perseverance. The process is often so slow-moving, that it is difficult at any particular time to see the progress that is taking place.

Transformation is a fascinating concept. It might help you to understand how it works in your lives if you compare it to nature. Plants, flowers, and trees start as tiny seeds. When you look at the seeds, you cannot imagine what will grow from them. However, the potential for transformation exists in every one. Consider this quote from Howard Colby Ives in his book *Portals to Freedom*:

What is that mystery underlying human life which gives to events and to persons the power of...transformation? If one had never before seen a seed, nor heard of its latent life, how difficult to believe that only the cold earth, the warm sun, the descending showers, and the gardener's care were needed to cause its miraculous transformation into the growing form, the budding beauty, the intoxicating fragrance of the rose! (p. 13)

While a seed cannot choose what type of soil to be planted in, you, instead, can make choices that help you with your transformation. You can plant yourselves in the soil of knowledge and reason and place yourself in positive or growth-encouraging environments. Yet even in good soil, if the soil is dark and dry, the seed will not grow. You need sunlight and water for your seed to grow—spiritual insights. Sometimes there are rocks and weeds in your soil—faults and issues that get in your way. If your seed is to transform into a rose bush, you need a Gardener to help cultivate you. The Gardener (God) provides spiritual guidance for your seed.

A rose bush transforms from a seed, in good soil, with sunlight and water, with the care of the Gardener. So will you transform, with knowledge and reason, with spiritual insights, and with guidance. This step-by-step view can help you to understand the consequences of your behavior and interactions. It will help you to be empowered to make better life choices.

~ Susanne Alexander with Craig A. Farnsworth and John S. Miller,  
*Pure Gold: Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage*, pp. 4-8



The Journey  
& Dates

## The Journey Begins

My outer self is a  
Confident, together person  
I don't feel this inside  
I sit with a mirror in front of me  
I see a stressed out, confused person  
Who manages to fake out most of the world  
Into believing that he is competent and confident  
And it takes a lot of energy  
To maintain the image

I know I do many things well  
And get praise  
But I somehow never really believe it  
I feel like my life is closing in around me  
I'm frustrated and anxious  
In my heart I feel a block  
Why is it there? What is the key?

I am holding back from fear  
I'm surrounded by people who love me  
They yearn to help  
If I would just open my soul and let go!  
What could be worse than my present state?  
Sleep walking through life  
Putting on a real good show  
Of being together and competent  
Maybe I really am those  
But I'm also a mess inside  
A tangled web of loose ends

I am me. I am an unknown. I am a shell.  
I hurt. I give hurt. Why do I do this?  
What makes me give and feel pain?  
I feel so insecure, so vulnerable.  
I put more energy into avoiding myself  
Than into finding myself  
Where am I with me?

~ January 1986 to February 1987



## My Search

The man is alone in his sorrow but senses a change.  
He looks up and feels the breeze that is blowing,  
    playing through the cobwebs in his mind.  
Cleaning out the long accumulated, never noticed  
    dust of a ***life lived unexamined.***  
He clings to the dust but does not know why.  
For these are merely leavings of long lost friends and dreams.

He cannot replace the dead dreams with life,  
    until the cobwebs are cleared out and blown to the wind.  
There is no past, only a future that holds what he makes it.

The choice is his...  
To cling to the hollow, pain-filled past or  
    embrace the new dawn with arms open wide and heart singing.  
The choice appears easy but somehow is not...  
The call of long forgotten dreams  
    Of hopes never acted on,  
    Of forms and dances,  
Is strong.

The future bears such promise,  
    Of fullness,  
    Of oneness,  
    Of loved ones around.

Sing man sing-  
    soar to the skies-  
        leave the past behind.

Embrace the new day with heart open wide,  
This is the answer to all of your pain.

~ January 20, 1986



## Alone in a Crowd

I sing to the trees, I pray to the wind.  
My struggle is now, my struggle is real.  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.

My life is alone, my life is forlorn.  
See the smiling children, see the laughing friends.  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.

We bring on our sorrows, we bring on our pain.  
Where is the answer? Where is the Key?  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.

How can I feel alone in a crowd?  
Touching not feeling, a sad way to be.  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.

My heart it is yearning to soar with the birds.  
To search for the answer to my heartfelt prayers.  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.  
I ask of Him only for peace in my heart.

~ January 20, 1986



## My Plea

How can I tell you that I love you?  
It's here inside but afraid to come out.  
I feel your warm embrace in the essence of my soul.  
I yearn to touch in the dew.

How can I show you that I love you?  
My heart yearns to soar with yours.  
I see my days slip by and wonder why.  
Why can I not open up in my heart?

Where is my soul? I can't seem to find it.  
Is it hiding deep inside?  
Oh God I need you with me now.  
I feel a prisoner deep inside myself.

How can I bring my heart to bear upon the fragrance of now?

~ May 25, 1986



## The Song

I sing a song of the open sky.  
I sing a song of the trees.  
I sing a song of the open fields.  
I sing a song of the waves.

We grow apart, we forget the way to the meaning of our lives.  
We have so much to be grateful for.  
Dear God, please help me recall.

I sing a song of the open sky.  
I sing a song of trees.  
I sing a song of the open fields.  
I sing a song of the waves

Why have the people built up such walls to keep each other away?  
Why do we fall back on empty games?  
And forget how to be just to be?

I sing a song of the open sky.  
I sing a song of the trees.  
I sing a song of the open fields.  
I sing a song of the waves.

~ June 1986



## Opening

O God....I'm here trying to be open to all that you have in me.  
I want out....I want out.....I want out!  
    Out into the beauty of the world.  
    Out to play with the birds and  
    The beautiful people who see more in me than I see in myself.

Why can they see and I cannot:  
I feel so alone...I'm drifting

What will help me reach out and touch the earth?  
    That's it....touch the earth.  
    The soul of the world.  
    The life giving staff.  
    The source.

O God you have endowed me with such capacity.  
I wish so to use it for Your Glory.  
But I keep blocking myself.  
    Reach, reach, reach  
    Touch, touch, touch  
    Open, open, open

I am single alone and lowly.

~ September 15, 1987

## Releasing the Anger

What am I releasing?  
My years and years of pent up stored up frustration  
Yes I am angry  
What shall I do with it?  
What am I angry at?  
My weakness  
My wife's ghosts  
My irresponsibility  
My lack of clarity  
My loneliness  
My feeling of emptiness  
My drifting  
My out of touchness

~ September 15, 1987

## Beginning to Find Me

My friend Nik and I gathered blankets and a tarp and walked down the road to the valley. There on the rocky bank of the river, we spread first the tarp, then a blanket on top of that. At that point, Nik went away and asked me to gather 9 special stones (asking their permission). I did, washed each in the stream, and placed them in a line across the end of the tarp. I removed my shoes and sat in meditation on the blanket.

When Nik returned, he placed the stones around the edge of the blanket and sat down facing me with his back turned to the water. He began by asking me what my deepest fear was. I said death. He asked in what form. I said locked in a closed room, suffocating. He told me to visualize that. I did...a closet with fire outside. As smoke entered under the door, I had a harder and harder time breathing. I kicked, screamed, yelled, rolled on the ground. As I was lying down, he wrapped the blanket around me and held my arms. I struggled so hard. Almost broke his hold. Panic, fear, screaming. Still he held on until I gave up, exhausted.

After a brief break, we resumed again, sitting face to face on the blanket. This time, he took me through a series of visualizations: Mom dying, Dad dying, my wife and kids slaughtered brutally in the house and dying. At each person, he had me tell them my most cherished memories and say goodbye. He then had me visualize a sheriff coming to my room and serving me a subpoena to prevent me from seeing my wife and the kids ever again. He then had me visualize my own death!! At the end of this, I had cried so much my tear ducts seemed to be empty.

After another break, Nik had me lie down with my head in his lap. He played father for me and comforted me and held me for a long time. I nearly fell asleep, but eventually sat up and talked about what had happened.

Before leaving, I piled the rocks into a pile, a funeral bier. We walked back. It had seemed like we'd been there all night, but actually it was only 3 hours.

The next morning, I returned alone. I sat in front of the funeral bier and prayed. I then removed my clothes and went for a swim. It felt like a true cleansing. After swimming, I got out, and still naked prayed and offered myself to God. I recited and carried out the Long Obligatory Prayer—at the top of my lungs.

After all this, I truly felt changed:

- Strong
- Serene
- Aware
- Alive
- Awake
- Energized

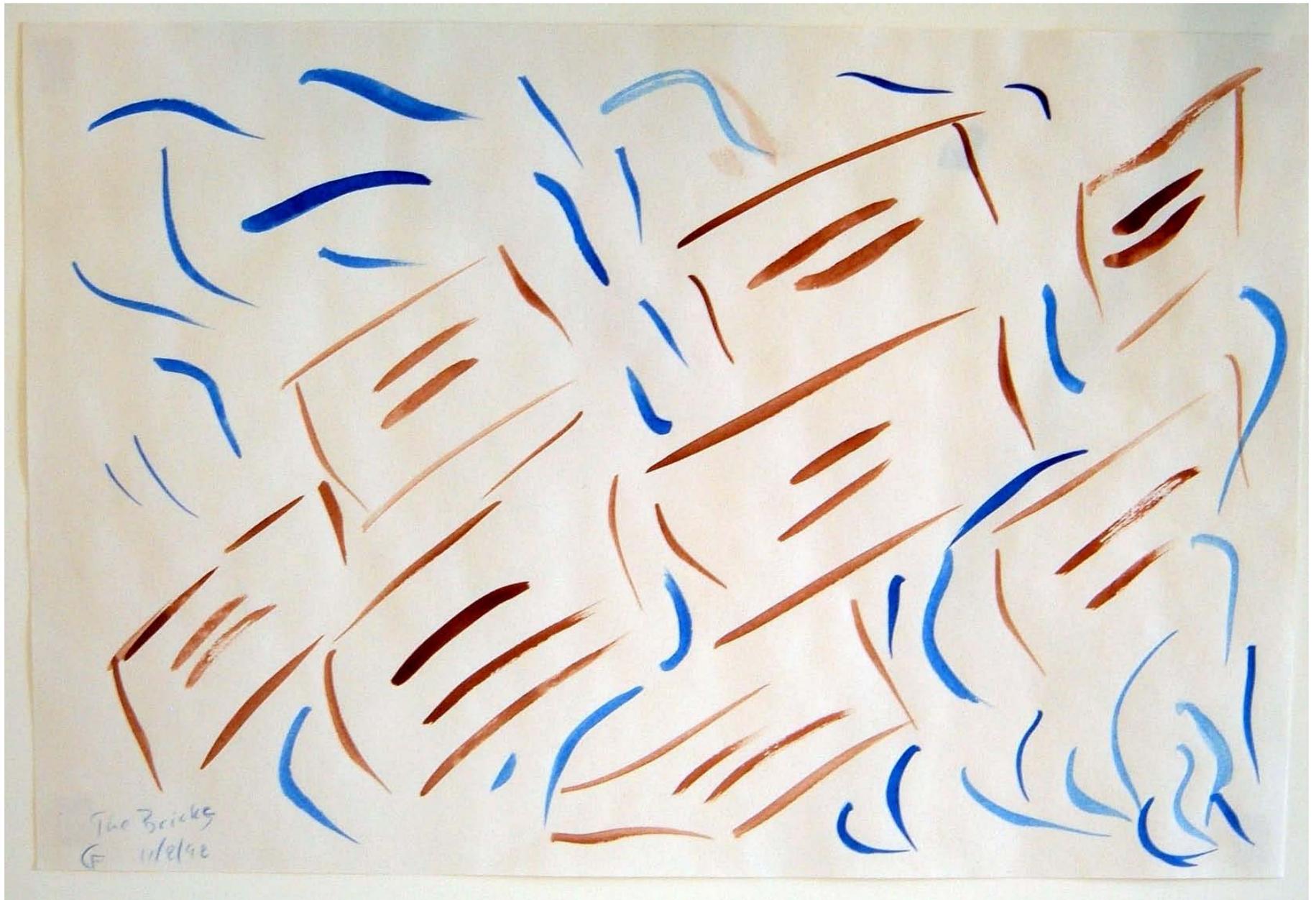
God, I feel real now for the first time.

~ September 16, 1987, 9:30 p.m.

## Friends

How to bring the inside out?  
I feel so frightened.  
But I know I'm not alone.  
My friends and family are cheering.  
Wishing me God speed.

~ April 27, 1993



## The Bricks

You choke back a tear... seems harmless enough.  
The fathers all show it... the way to be tough.  
You ask what becomes of the sorrows unfelt.  
They become tiny bricks stacked up one upon one.

These bricks are the foundation...the rock of our being.  
We have to hold on or the walls lack all meaning.  
The fearsome now thought of coming out from behind.  
Is a terror unspoken of falling down, down.

But the reason for being. The thought to survive.  
Is now found within this....the city of walls.  
The city of walls is a place paralyzed.  
The thought of a maze with a river running through.

The river is tears from years unexpressed.  
But they now offer us a path to real change.  
The tears are an agent to soften the bricks.  
To move them about and to lead the way out.

Oh the tears, the tears, the tears that we shed.  
Tears of sorrow and joy are a key to the soul.

Where's the key, where's the key to unlock the floodgates?  
We want to be whole. We want to be real.  
O God how I yearn to find peace....to find space.  
For my soul to be free to reach out and to feel.

My time is sleepwalking with no real connection.  
Shadow existence in time...Just caught in the motions.  
With the walls still in place I can feel no real joy.  
My prayers seem unanswered.....My insides are cold.

I feel a caged bird seeking round for the door.  
To unloose these bonds that are bound to the bricks.

~ May 14, 1993; Inspired by a conversation with Ruth Twaddell  
in the Spiritual Survival Class

# Healing Prayer

Words by Baha'u'llah

Music by Craig Farnsworth

Chant freely, prayerfully



Thy — name is my heal - ing, oh — my God, — and re - mem - brance of



Thee is my re - me - dy. — Near-ness to Thee — is my hope, —



and love — for Thee is — my com - pan - ion.



Thy — mer - cy to me — is my heal - ing and my suc - cor



in both this world and the world to come. — Thou, ver i ly, art — the All Bount - i -



ful, — the All Know - ing, — the — All Wise.

# Healing Prayer

Words by Bahá'u'lláh

Craig Farnsworth

Handwritten musical score for 'Healing Prayer' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of six staves of music with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 'Thy - name is my heal - ing Oh - my God - - and re - mem - brance of thee is my rem - e - dy Near - ness to thee - - is my hope - - and love - for thee is my com - pan - ion Thy - mer - cy to me - - is my heal - ing and my suc - cor in both this world and the world to come - - thou ver - i - ly art - - the boun - ti - ful - - Thee all know - ing - - Thee - all wise.' The music is written in a simple, accessible style with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Thy - name is my heal - ing Oh - my God - - and re - mem - brance of thee  
is my rem - e - dy Near - ness to thee - - is my hope - - and love - for thee  
is my com - pan - ion Thy - mer - cy to me - - is my heal - ing  
and my suc - cor in both this world and the world to come - - thou ver - i - ly art - -  
the boun - ti - ful - - Thee all know - ing - - Thee - all wise.

## Saying Goodbye

In 1994, my friend, fellow Bahá'í, and co-worker Kevin Clavin began dying from cancer. As I struggled to accept that he was close to his soul passing to the next world, I took a healing prayer written by Baha'u'llah and put it to music. I then sang it at countless occasions in the years that followed. During my own journey with cancer, I sang it almost daily. In early 2009 at my request, Barbara Baumgardner, my friend and former choir director, transcribed a recording of my singing this prayer-song into the music you see on the previous page. The page before that is the same song transcribed into sheet music by Virginia (Ginny) Kallay, my music therapist with the Hospice of the Western Reserve.

Below is an excerpt of the eulogy that I wrote for Kevin and shared at his funeral.

I remember Kevin and I and our then 11 and 12 year old sons taking sledge hammers and crowbars to the wall of a house I was working on...Tim Allen [TV's "Home Improvement" star] would have been proud.

I remember Kevin and I being together in Atlanta on a business trip. We had a few free hours and traveled together to the Martin Luther King Memorial for a brief period of meditation and contemplation.

I remember Kevin's openness and appreciation for peoples' diversity...and his love of discussing the current world situation...

I remember Kevin's love of gardening and his green thumb. He loved his fresh tomatoes and so did his lunchmates.

I remember Kevin's gentle humor and sense of good fun...our co-workers will recall that he won the ugly tie contest two years running.

I remember how Kevin loved children and they loved him. Kevin brought a special touch to the children's classes he taught...

I remember Kevin...he'll be missed.

~ December 1, 1994

In 2009, as I began to prepare for my own soul's passing, I looked forward to seeing Kevin again and having him help me with learning my way around a new and wonderful place. I joked about hoping Kevin could help me find the bathroom and the gas station!

## Mired in the Muck

I'm currently deeply mired in a combination of deep unhappiness/discontent with work/home/self...the whole ball of wax, so to speak. My job and my marriage are externals crushing me. I am largely out of touch with my emotions, overly self-conscious, and although outwardly very successful inwardly a mess. This is a time in my life that where I feel totally in breakdown.

Work has become an extremely uncomfortable place for me with a combination of our company being bought by another company and my own feelings of inadequacy. Home continues to be a struggle of wanting to have a good relationship with Lynn and the kids but feeling stuck. Self is kind of a hodge-podge of needing to

get out of the trap of continually pleasing people and determining what it is I really want out of life.

One learning I have found is that it is most beneficial, as awkward as it is, to NOT put energy into looking like I'm OK when I'm not. When people that I know really care ask me how I'm doing, I'm liable to tell them "shitty". With people that I know don't really care but are just asking, I'll basically ignore them.

~ August 19, 1996

## Fighting the Current

I WANT CONTROL OF MY LIFE

I have been controlled by others

All of my life!!

Real or imagined...

There's a block between my heart and my head

I can't put my heart into words

Anger turned inward is depression

The essence of life is having control...

Control to follow God's will, not the will of others

Control to state your own thoughts, not the thoughts of others

Control to walk the path of your own inner promptings

Control to feel safe...

~ September 18, 1996



## Progress of the Heart

Loud speaks the mind  
Soft speaks the heart

When mind overpowers  
The still voice from within  
The existence is hollow  
Where's the center? Where's the core?

The heart brings a guidance  
That will seek for a balance  
To bring one to contentment  
A more vital being.

Of what speaks the heart?  
The heart speaks of essence  
Of reaching and growing  
Of becoming one person.

The mind draws distinction  
Sees one separate not connected  
It draws more on externals  
And keeps life more shallow

The world of the heart  
Is a gentle yet stronger  
Force from within  
That will carry one home.

~ September 22, 1996

## Moving the Heart and Mind

Some movement in the heart  
My heart feels overwhelmed with life  
I pray and pray and pray  
Got to take the next step of decision and action  
How to get control of my life?  
What's in the way?  
My fear of being alone  
My lack of confidence  
My thinking is stopping me  
No one can shift my thinking but me  
My thinking is of scarcity, fear  
Scarcity is a myth  
The problem is the problem  
I am not the problem  
The problem is my thinking  
Thoughts create reality  
I'm not powerless over my old conscious thinking  
Notice when I'm checking out

~ September 22-November 8, 1996 (Following a Sweat Lodge and therapy sessions)

## In This Exact Moment

In this exact moment I am not paralyzed  
In this exact moment I am not stuck  
In this exact moment, I am in the inquiry  
In this exact moment, I have everything that I need  
In this exact moment, I am guided and protected  
In this exact moment, all is well  
My past does not create my future  
I create a future that I live into in the present  
Inside out →

~ September 23, 1996 (Help through therapy sessions begins)

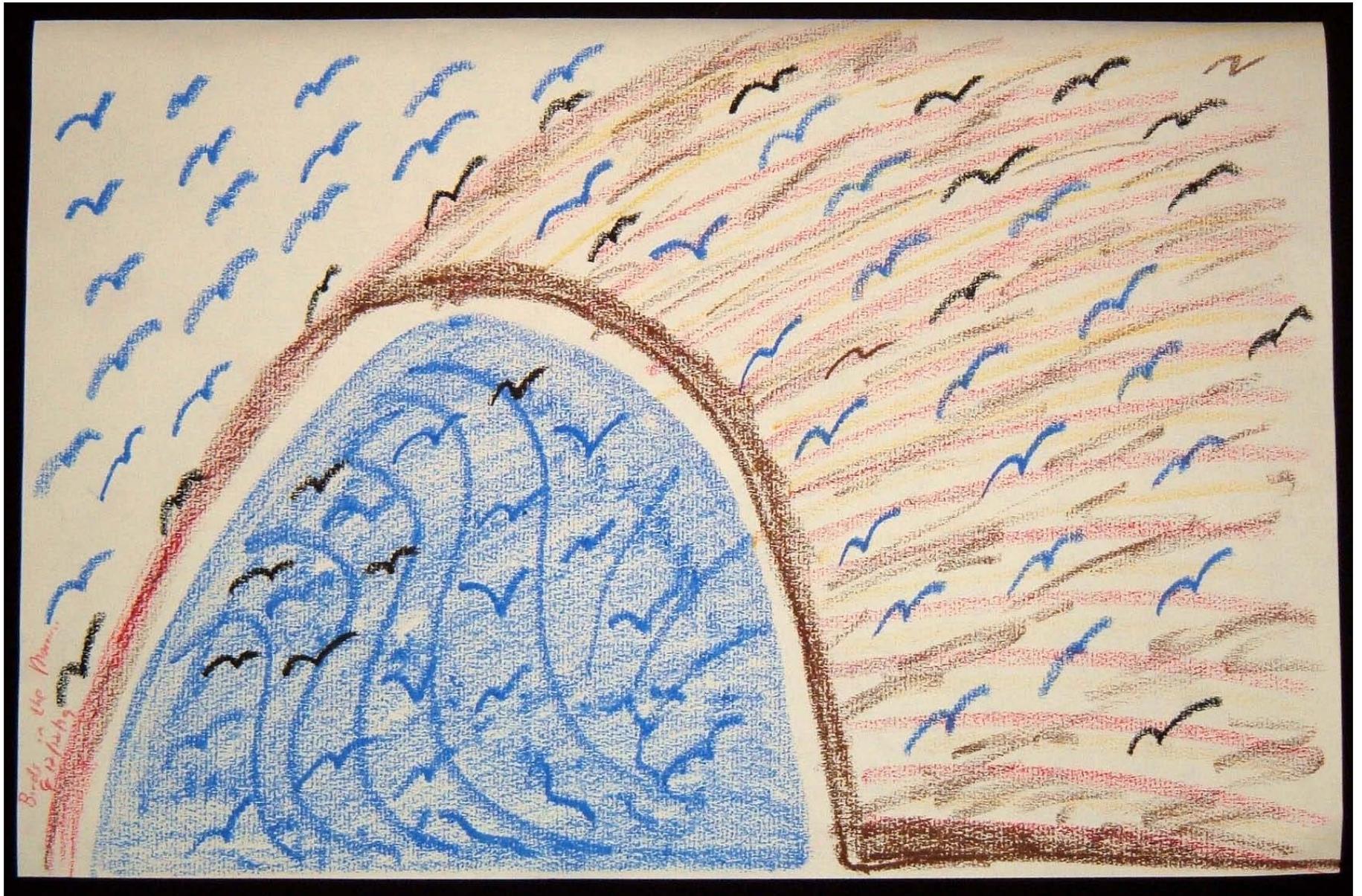
## The Blossom

A blossom begins to unfold.  
The rain thrashes down.  
He has to retreat  
For a momentary pause.

The pause lasts too long  
And the blossom forgets  
Where it was he was going  
So stays folded up instead

The folds become creases  
The creases become stiff  
And the blossom remains  
As a “someday” thing of beauty.

~ September 25, 1996



## The Bird

The caged bird looks 'round for the door  
He's been told that there is one  
But he's not really sure.

The cage it feels safe.  
A familiar surrounding.  
It's scary out there  
In the world without walls.

But to really spread his wings  
He must move out of the cage.  
Without movement he's cramped  
And will atrophy and die.

To soar in the clouds  
Is a dream buried deep  
Not to hope for too much  
Lest the hopes all be shattered.

~ September 29, 1996



## The Pool of Life and Tears

The tears won't come out  
What's the block?  
What's the matter?

My heart yearns for tears.  
But my mind still gets in the way.

The tears are the clue to release the stuck feeling.  
My heart is assured.  
My mind it says NO.

Until I can get around this  
I will be stuck in the mire  
And continue to suffer and feel deep deep dark cold.

The tears I would shed  
For my life  
For my past  
For to make of the present a true start of the future

Where's the handle?  
Where's the switch?  
To allow the tears to come forth.

They keep getting started  
Then stop in midstream....

~ September 29, 1996



## To Be Conscious

To be conscious  
Is to feel  
Is to see  
Is to be present in the moment

To be conscious  
Is true life  
Not sleepwalking  
Through the hallways

To be conscious  
Is to hear  
Is to speak  
From the depths of my soul

To be conscious  
Is the key  
To unlock the floodgates  
    To enter into true life.

To be conscious  
    Is to be present  
    And honor the presence  
    In each soul all about.

To be conscious  
    Will give strength  
    To build the future  
    Out of this moment.

To be conscious  
    Is my goal  
    Is my hope  
    Is my desire.

For without this I am trapped as a prisoner of my thoughts.

~ October 4, 1996

## The Wannabe

The wannabe looks and sees what he is not  
Instead of what he has inside.

The wannabe reaches outside to attain  
The truth that he has within.

The wannabe is hollow  
Because the reaching is avoiding  
Avoiding the grappling with self.

It is easier to look outside  
And ignore the pain within

It is safer to look elsewhere  
And see the goal as out there  
Not within where it is truly real.

~ October 18, 1996



## The Circle Unfolds

The twisted confused knots  
Of a life lived unexamined  
Lie on the floor in a heap.

The process of finding the center  
Is a matter of patience and  
Finally seeing it through to the end.

The earlier futile attempts at untying the knots  
Were never completed  
Were left in the dust.

Where's the start?  
Where's the beginning?  
As the March Hare said, "You begin at the beginning."

To see the end in the beginning  
I must first see the beginning

To move from inertia to movement  
I must first take the initiative

~ October 20-21, 1996



## The Names of God

The God self is pure and connected.  
He sees the clear path to the essence of life.

The God self is not fooled by the agendas of others  
He knows of the justice of “seeing with thine own eyes”.

Listen, listen to the God self within  
He will counsel you right in the journey of life.

The distractions of life can lead to forgetting  
Being conscious is the key to remembering.

~ October 27, 1996



## Whales Swimming in the Ocean of Life

### God the All-Protecting and the All-Empowering

O Lord! Should the breath of the Holy Spirit confirm the weakest of creatures, he would attain all to which he aspireth and would possess anything he desireth. Indeed, Thou hast assisted Thy servants in the past and, though they were the weakest of Thy creatures, the lowliest of Thy servants and the most insignificant of those who lived upon the earth, through Thy sanction and potency they took precedence over the most glorious of Thy people and the most noble of mankind. Whereas formerly they were as moths, they became as royal falcons, and whereas before they were as brooks, they became as seas, through Thy bestowal and Thy mercy. They became, through Thy most great favor, stars shining on the horizon of guidance, birds singing in the rose gardens of immortality, lions roaring in the forests of knowledge and wisdom, and whales swimming in the oceans of life.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Most Merciful of the merciful.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Prayers* (2002), pp. 208-209

### The Protector

The Protector is alone  
He is caught in helping others  
The meaning of life is found on the outside  
Because the inside is too elusive.

The protecting is a cover  
It's a way of pleasing others  
To be needed and relied on  
Is a way of having meaning

~ November 1, 1996

## I Choose My Now

I choose my now.  
Not the past which is over  
Nor the future which is yet to come.

For my future to have real promise  
I must mold it of today  
For the mire of the past can cast the future  
But only if I let it.

The strength of this moment is in knowing I can choose:  
Choose to be driven by the past or  
Drive on into the future.

The choice is in my hands.

~ November 21, 1996





## Today's Journey

From the mountain to the sea  
I journey in my embrace  
In the deep woods I exalt  
And see the majesty of God's creation.

The time and space to just pause  
And stop rushing all about  
Is a gift that is crucial  
To be whole...to be real.

I can see with new clarity  
That my life is at a crossroad  
I must be open to God's prompting  
And not fall prey to idle fancy.

I am emerging from my hiding  
To come out and face the world  
To be present and effective  
I will move beyond old habits.

In the present conscious moment  
Is the path to find real meaning  
Not entrapped by old tired patterns  
But moving out to grasp today.

Out of being with today  
In the fullness of the moment  
Comes a launching to the future  
With possibilities unbounded.

~ May 9, 1997



**“Dominion is God's, the Lord of the seen and  
the unseen, the Lord of creation.”**

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 23)

## **The Cave**

In the cave I find a closeness  
That is familiar safe and warm.

I find shelter from the weather  
But I find so little growth.

I must learn to venture out  
And face the world as one with strength.

The true growth comes from the risking  
Of the future not stuck in the past.

There is safety in the open woods,  
The meadows and the streams.

I will share with those around me  
Of the truths I hold inside.

~ October 24, 1997



## The Door Opens to Respect

The respect that is shown to others  
Is a reflection of the esteem within.

With respect from the heart  
Comes a fullness of self  
That is pure and straight and good.

When the insides are not clear  
Then the outside will be prickly  
Leaving others to be mistreated.

The pattern that is learned from the young years  
Can be changed by a lifelong awareness  
That the shadow victim of the abuse is the abuser.

To be conscious of each time that the pattern  
Wants to rear its ugly head  
Is the path to a life of true fulfillment  
Being fair both within and without.

~ November 11, 1997



## The Path of Courage

The courage to put my true meaning into words  
Is a test of real proportion.

It is so easy to acquiesce  
And take the path of least resistance.

The end result is not honest  
And only leads to disappointment.

Why do I do this?  
I can see a lifelong pattern.

I have courage in many things  
But in this I will often cower

I will be conscious in the future  
And remain true to my self

~ November 22, 1997



## Labyrinthine Path

The choice of the path  
Is in my control...

I can be true to myself and proceed as I must

Or again swallow my resolve and remain still enslaved

Enslaved to the webs and the thickets neverending.

Neither of us can grow in the current condition.

Where is my hesitation? Why do I stop short?

I have a clarity of the vision that has me on a new path. What stops me from saying "It's over ...goodbye".

From the depths of my soul I can see no other way...Why can't I say it and get on with it now?

I am unable to be honest. Though I want to be so...

~ January 15, 1998

## **Affirmations of the Year of Waiting (Year of Separation from Spouse)**

1. I will not fill this time with activity to avoid being alone
2. I will be honest with myself
3. I will be honest with those around me
4. I will not go back into the marriage without real change
5. I will find my own path and embrace the challenges of a new life
6. I will be patient with my desires to have a new loving relationship.....Must first get clear myself
7. I will pray and read the Writings
8. I will ask for help and seek assistance
9. I will not just "tough it out"
10. I will remain conscious of what I am doing and seek out positive activities
11. I will respect the confidentiality of those who share of themselves with me

~ March 31, 1998

## BOXED

I once had a friend  
I put in a Box  
Labeled him carefully  
Plain ordinary socks

Then out of the blue  
He opened the lid  
And hopped out on one foot  
Saying I'm free of this place!

No sooner I'd said  
Well, okay if you must  
Then I set up a new Box  
And designed a new label

He didn't like the new label  
So he made his own Box  
And said out loud clearly  
Here's where I live now instead

Now surrounded by splinters  
And nails all scattered and bent  
I'm tempted to start building anew  
But gee, the man said  
He wanted to chuck all my labels  
And start designing his own  
Or maybe creatively  
In joint discussion  
We can design one together  
And start over again

~ Susanne Mariella Alexander, April 7-15, 1998



Here  
Comes  
The Sun  
F 2/20/00

## Here Comes the Sun

Coming full circle  
Is a way to begin.

With the journey now started  
The path is now cleared.

I can feel in my heart  
A sense of new power.

Reclaiming myself  
Moving on from the past.

I must now be patient  
For the process to complete.

The newness and freshness  
Takes time in the birthing.

~ April 24, 1998

# HERE COMES THE SUN

Music V. Kallay, MT-BC 4.2009

Craig Farnsworth 4.24.1998

Voice

G C2 D sus2 D G C2 D sus2  
Com-ing full cir-cle is a way to be-gin

D G C2 D sus2 D C am D  
With the jour-ney now star-ted the path now is cleared

D sus2 D C2 b m b m/A b m/G em D D sus2  
I can feel in my heart a sense of new po-wer

D C b m b m/A b m am D D sus2 D  
Re-claim-ing my-self mov-ing on from the past

G C D G C D  
I must now be pat-ient for the pro-cess to com-plete the

G C2 D G C2 D  
new-ness and fresh-ness takes time in the birth-ing

G C2 D C D G  
co-ming full cir-cle is a way to be-gin

C D G  
way to be-gin fine

## The Boy/Man

The boy becoming a man  
Finds himself stuck between the worlds.

The mind says "I'm grown"  
The body says "Let's play"

The decisions are confused  
And he is drawn down to the pit.

The pit contains the tests  
That will bring him to his path

He is ensnared by the brambles  
And drawn down because his friends are.

The parents stand and pray  
For the strength to do the right things

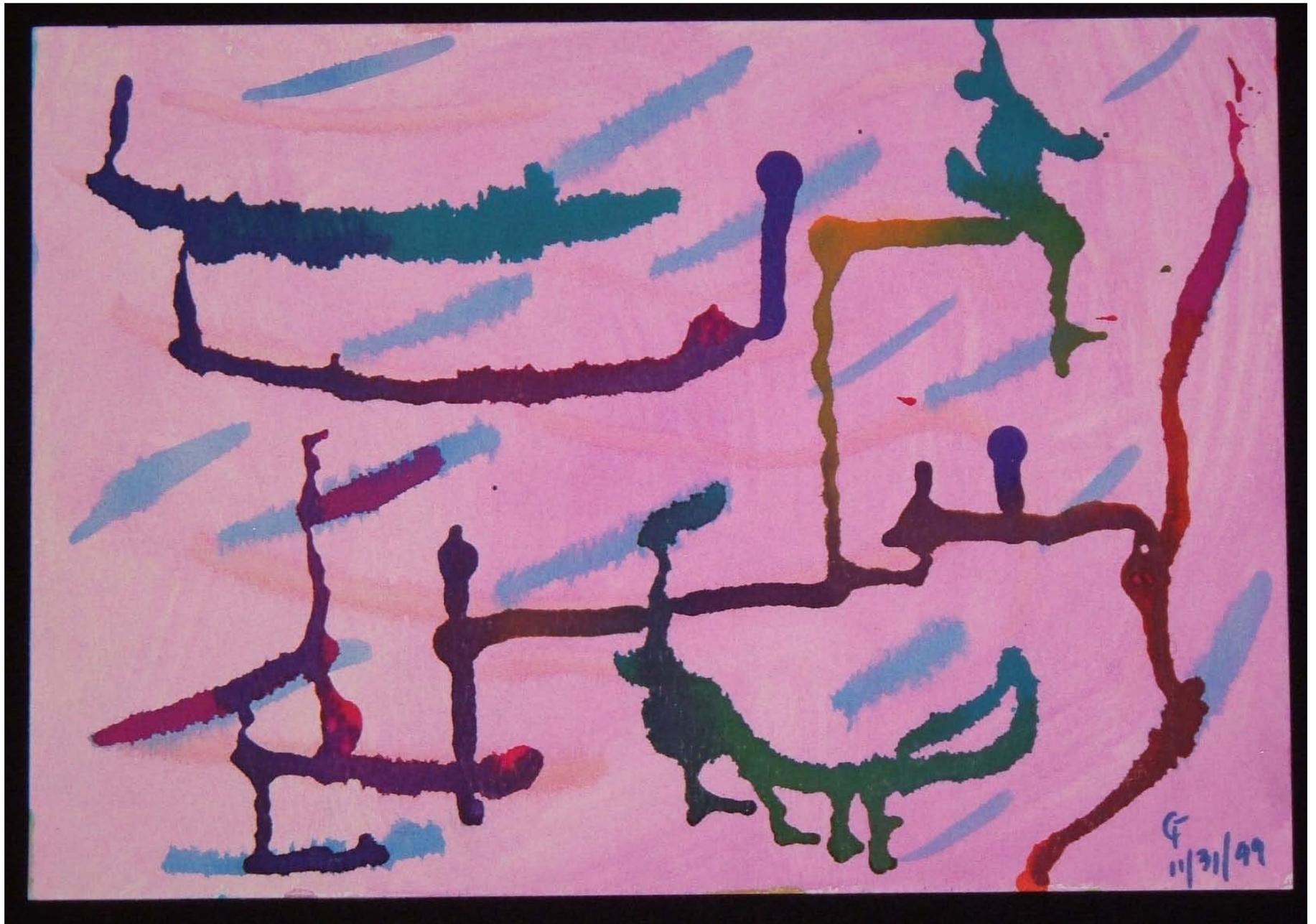
They are torn between protecting him  
And letting him face the tests.

It is painful on the sidelines  
With no way to "Make it better"

The need for now is to be constant  
And have strength to remain as backstop

He must do what he must do  
In the end he will be stronger.

~ May 27, 1998, for my son David



## Back and Forth

Back and forth  
Back and forth

Want to be alone  
Afraid to be alone

Where am I in all this stuff  
I feel adrift almost floating in the stream

My need to touch myself  
Is a very powerful draw

I must keep my courage  
To do what I must do.

I feel like a struggling bud  
About to burst forth from the branch

I would be free to follow the path  
That will lead me to a new place.

~ June 4, 1998



# Reaching

Reach up, reach in, and reach out

Reach up in prayer and dedication  
To the Higher Power that is constant

Reach in to the essence of your being  
That is the true you not some image to the world

Reach out with a hand to those near  
Who will be there to assist

Reach up, reach in, and reach out

In reaching up we tap a power  
That can come from nowhere else

In reaching in we connect the power to our selves  
To be a source of true sustaining

In reaching out we have completion  
Making a circuit for the flow

Reach up, reach in, and reach out

Without reaching up  
We will run the gas tank dry

Without reaching in  
We will be continuing to live a lie

Without reaching out  
We will be stagnant in our growth

Reach up, reach in, and reach out

~ June 6, 1998



## Where It's At

To speak openly not choking back  
To be present in the moment,  
To listen fully from my heart,  
To say NO when that's the best thing,  
To say YES to the boundless possibilities,  
To be gentle with myself,  
To accept me for who I am,  
To look at others from a loving place,  
To be honest in all things,  
To be conscious of my motives,  
To be open to hear the still voice,  
To own my own issues and leave be that which is not mine.

These are my places to make it different,  
To find a new life for myself,  
To embrace the future and make it mine.

~ July 28, 1998



## Reclaiming Myself

When did I lose it? The key to myself.  
It's been gone for so long I'm not sure that I'd know.

It got lost in the shuffle of being afraid to be alone.  
Compromised, forgotten, told to go hide.

It is now ready to come out. It feels a new strength.  
The way is prepared. The path is getting clear.

I can feel it awakening and stiffly stretching its limbs.  
It's been cramped for so long it will be awkward at first.

As it limbers and stretches it will achieve a true balance.  
No longer hiding but being conscience of its power.

It will learn and mature but will make mistakes along the way.  
The future is awesome with possibilities unbounded.

~ August 23, 1998



The Wind  
2/14/09

## The Wind

The wind is clear  
The wind is clean  
The wind is blowing, clearing the cobwebs.

The moon is bright  
The moon is light  
The moon is shining like as a beacon.

The stars are glistening  
The stars are listening  
The stars are leading me to open.

Running, running, running  
Singing, singing, singing  
The wind, the moon, the stars.

The path has a freshness.  
The dust has been removed.  
The way has become clearer.

The wind is carrying a song  
The moon is lighting the way  
The stars are piercing the sky.

~ November 11, 1998

# The Wind

music by V. Kallay, MT-BC and C. Farnsworth  
May 2009

Craig Farnsworth  
November 11, 1998

am bm F G am C D

Voice

The wind is clear - the wind is clean the wind is blow - ing clear - ing the

E am bm F G am C D E

cob - webs. the moon is bright the moon is light the moon is shin - ing like as a bea - con. The stars are

bm am D

glis - ten - ing the stars are lis - ten - ing the stars are lead - ing me - to o - pen.

em bm am C dm E

Run - ning Run - ning Run - ning, Sing - ing sing - ing sing - ing - - - the

F dm em dm G em

wind the moon the stars the path has a fresh - ness the dust has been re - moved the

G A am bm G am

way has be - come - clear - er - the wind is carry - ing a song the moon is light - ing the way The

C dm A

stars are pierc - ing the sky.

# Fathers and Sons

## My Intentions

I'm taking ownership of my life. I have been very strong in people-pleasing for many, many years. It is very challenging to look at setting that aside. I intend to fully engage in an extraordinary/transforming relationship with Susanne. I intend to create an emotional/supportive connection with both my father and my son.

~ July 23, 1999 (Landmark Effectiveness Seminar)

### What I appreciate about my Dad:

- Devoted to family
- Sacrificial
- Hardworking
- Caring
- Gregarious
- Generous

~ July 26, 1999

### What I appreciate about my son David:

- Empathetic
- Sensitive
- Funny
- Creative
- Intelligent
- Insightful
- Friendly
- Caring
- Generous
- Adventurous

How will I know when there has been a breakthrough in my relationship with David?  
When David seeks me out voluntarily.

~ July 26, 1999

## My Daughter Leah

Dad:

I'm so happy for your effort to be the father that you haven't really been. I want to thank you so much for your perseverance. It will take time before I am completely comfortable with it, because it's a lot different than the past 17 years...so just keep in mind that I love you very much and it will take time for me to really be able to fully appreciate a born-again father...

~ Leah Farnsworth, February 19, 1999

### What I appreciate about my daughter, Leah:

- Humorous
- Loving
- Mischievous
- Thoughtful
- Energetic

~ July 26, 1999

Dad,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for instilling Faith in God into me. You have along with my mother taught me to live and let live, or phrased differently "trusting God, but tie your camel." You were and are always triumphantly involved in the Bahá'í activities in the community. Even when times were hard you were adamantly active in what you loved and believed in. Whether it was teaching a class at Crimson Ark, leading Feast/Mid-winter/children's classes/or meetings in song you were strong and constant. Along with my mother you caused us children to think for ourselves, be independent, encourage, love, and support those people around us. If you can be proud of only one thing in your life make it that you raised your kids with a sense of self and a motivation to search for truth.

Thank you...I love you

LEAH

~ June 2000?

# My Daughter Michelle

**What I appreciate about my daughter, Michelle:**

- Loving
- Caring
- Insightful
- Strong

~ July 26, 1999



## Light at the End of the Tunnel

It's been a long, long journey  
With many ups and downs and turns

I can see a new life coming  
As our union now is blessed

~ July 26, 1999

## Together

We've journeyed many miles  
in friendship held so dear  
We've taught each other  
how to share, with trust  
what's in our hearts and souls

We've tripped and wandered  
watched and waited  
wondering what our  
future held in  
gentle, loving Hands

Now it's time our  
lives and love are joined  
entwined and whole  
for all eternity as we  
enter now within  
the Fortress for Wellbeing  
Married and united  
joined before God  
and blessed community  
with love beneath our wings

~ Susanne Mariella Alexander, July 30, 1999

## Honoring Their Union: Susanne and Craig

***United in mind, heart, and soul, we affirm that the intent of our relationship is to create an extraordinary family. Our commitment is to:***

- ❖ Treat each other with love, honor, respect, courtesy, and integrity.
- ❖ Support and encourage each other's personal growth and transformation and the transformation of others.
- ❖ Honor and respect our own and each other's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs and assist each other in meeting those needs wherever possible.
- ❖ Fully express and share all aspects of our selves and our lives.
- ❖ Deal with issues that arise as soon as possible.
- ❖ Be fully conscious, fully present.
- ❖ Maintain some time alone.
- ❖ Cherish, honor, and respect our children by nurturing bonds of communication and love.
- ❖ Build and maintain loving and open relationships with all family members.
- ❖ Enrich our lives with separate and mutual friendships.
- ❖ Pray separately and together daily.
- ❖ Read and deepen on the Bahá'í Writings together daily.
- ❖ Be examples of service to ourselves, each other, our families, friends, and communities.
- ❖ Be playful, have fun, and incorporate humor into daily life.
- ❖ Act with integrity in all things, particularly in our finances, our work, and our service commitments.
- ❖ Enrich our lives with the arts.
- ❖ Be patient, accepting, and nurturing, maintaining the constancy of our relationship through times of adversity and when we are not being our best selves.

~ Wedding Day, Hower House, Akron, Ohio, August 28, 1999



## Reaching\*

Reach up, reach in, and reach out  
Reaching each and every day  
Up to God in prayer  
In to my true essence  
Out to those nearby

Reach up, reach in, and reach out  
Reaching up I tap a Power  
That comes from nowhere else  
Reaching in that Power connects  
so strongly to myself  
Reaching out the circle closes  
and love begins to flow

Reach up, reach in, and reach out  
Without reaching up  
The well runs dry  
Without reaching in  
I live a lie  
Without reaching out  
I stop my growth

Reach up, reach in, and reach out  
The reaching must be part of life  
Over and over every day  
Reach up, reach in, and reach out

~ Craig Farnsworth and Susanne Alexander; for their  
August 28, 1999, Wedding Ceremony

\*Re-created from the poem that is included earlier in the book

## The Song of Life

From my young and tender years  
Through my hopes and all my fears,  
I've been nurtured by a wondrous loving song.

As I've learned to deal with life  
Through my joy and through my strife,  
I realized I've heard it singing all along.

And I've learned that all the times  
I've ever yearned were the times  
When I've been taught of right and wrong.

I've found that the longing of my heart  
Has been for you right from the start.  
The song is life.  
The song is love.  
You are the song.

Some songs are sung only by the very young,  
When life was still unfettered new and free.

And when the truth is told  
Some are sung when very old,  
And there are some that must be sung in harmony.

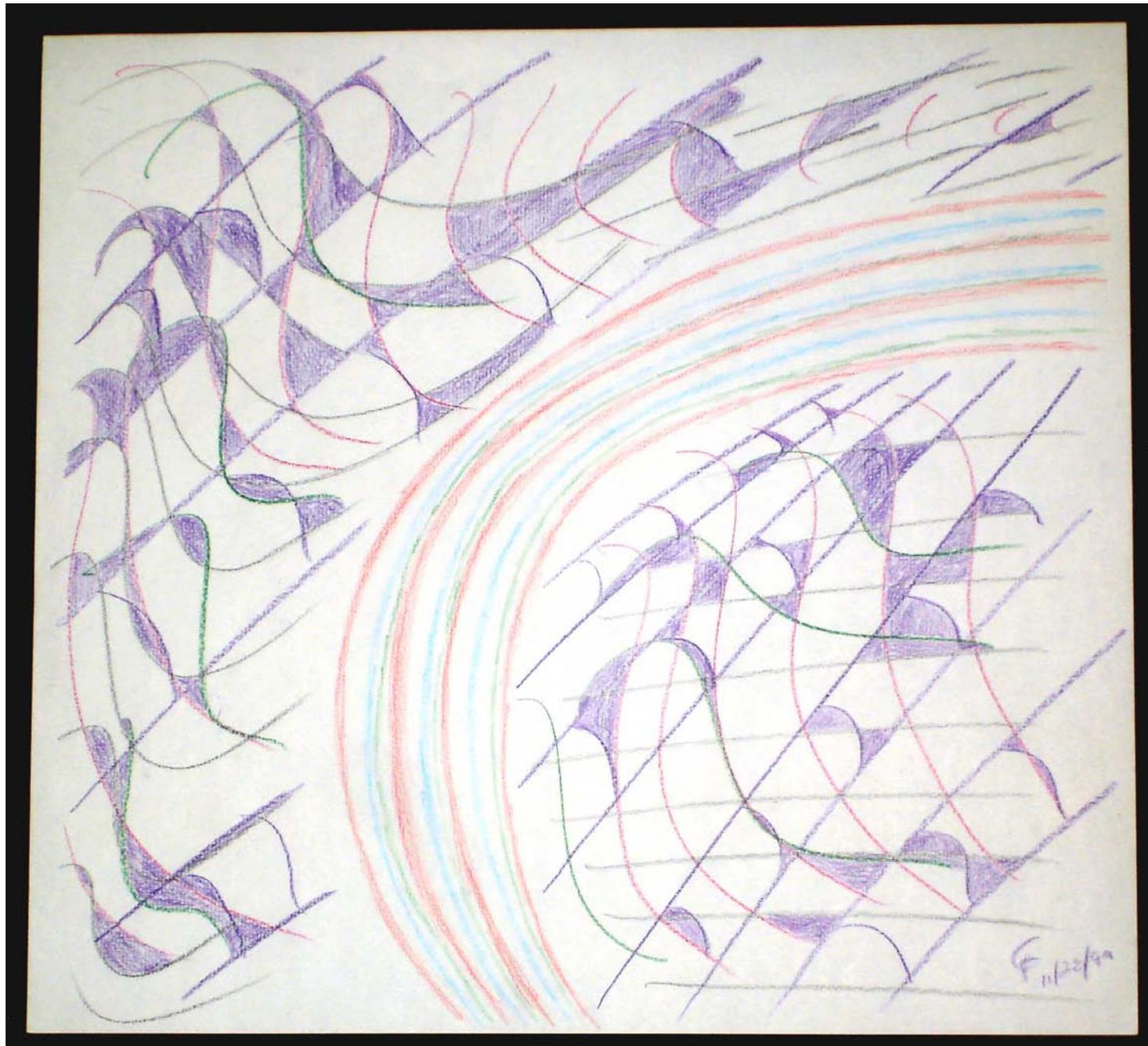
The song of life sung by a husband and a wife  
Is a song of union blessed by God above.

Come, sing with me and we will be a family  
That sings of life,  
And sings of joy,  
and sings God's love.

And We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God.  
And We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God.  
And We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God.

~ John Taylor

~ Sung by Susanne Alexander and Craig Farnsworth  
on their wedding day, August 28, 1999



## Home?

My things in scattered disarray  
befuddle me in searching  
for the one thing that I knew  
I'd packed so carefully

And boxes filled and piled  
daunting in their cardboard  
holding treasures and  
the junk that time too short  
prevented leaving well behind

I'm lost a bit-what place  
is this? His or mine or ours?  
Is the challenge integrating  
or is it really now creating  
something very new?

It's not quite home as yet—  
a place where heart feels  
peaceful and serene  
although it's getting close  
when his waiting arms  
enfold me.

~ Susanne Mariella Alexander, October 4, 1999

# Legacy

What I want people to say about me:

- He cared
- He served
- He kept his word
- He got things done
- He opened possibilities
- He led
- He loved
- He inspired
- He was a good father

~ February 24, 2000 (Landmark Advanced Course)

# Perfect Relationship

My definition of a perfect relationship:

- Open/honest communication
- Deep consultation
- Mutually passionate
- Welcoming home
- Model transformation
- Long-time friend
- Common goals and interests; support each other's goals

~ February 24, 2000 (Landmark Advanced Course)



## What Is In the Way and a Breakthrough

### Eliminating the Endless Story in the Head of Being an Inauthentic Frightened Fake

My inauthenticity goes way back to grade school when I was not included on the playground and was different. I have never felt truly genuine although I have loved and do love. I am continually afraid of this being found out so that everyone will know I'm a fake. I feel that it stands in the way of my being able to truly "engage" with people and that many people know this to be true.

The energy of keeping the inauthenticity hidden is so large and long-standing that I do not even know any other way to be. The fact that I've been able to survive and grow/prosper as I have is totally amazing.

Not being able to get rid of this has sapped my vitality.

This issue is the central barrier of my entire life. I'm tired, tired, tired, tired, OF IT!!

It makes me feel like I'm viewing life/people down a long tunnel instead of embracing close up.

I'm cramped and stifled and have to get rid of this!!!!

I would be much less tired and could more totally engage in prayer/meditation.

I have even more reason now (new marriage) to get this behind than I did years ago.

It was actually part of my armor in the marriage with Lynn although it was also part of the reason we eventually broke up.

I will be totally transformed when this is gone. Soaring with birds...fully engaging in life... In touch with ME for the first time.... It would be a GIFT to me of awesome proportions and a gift to my friends and family.

I am supremely tired because of this issue!!!

I'm afraid to let it go because it is so central...what will be left...scary...scary because I won't recognize me...That's cool....

It is a wall of fuzz and mire that oozes throughout my life.... Its front line of defense is pleasing people to lure them away from full scrutiny. If I can please people they won't look too closely...

~ February 25, 2000 (Landmark Advanced Course)

### Having a Breakthrough, Forging a New Path, and Creating a New Future

Who I am is the possibility of self-expression, love, and passion. What I commit to give up is inauthenticity and self-doubt. This is who I am.

~ February 27, 2000 (Landmark Advanced Course)

## Powerful Intentions

What I want to accomplish is openness and immediacy in communication with my wife; the ability to find my full voice from powerful listening in all aspects of my life (work, family, Bahá'í community, civic positions); joy out of all areas of my life.

~ February 12, 2001 (Landmark Communication: Performance and Power)

## My Commitment

Relationship and Community are founded on:

- **Closeness**, which is a spiritual being as one
- **Intimacy**, which is an intellectual sharing of the details of life
- **Connection**, which is emotional bonding
- **Service**, which is a physical providing of self

~ June 7, 2003 (Camping trip with Nik Tressler)

## The Charter for My Life

The purpose my life is for is to: Create vibrant, alive, and unified community full of love, joy, and service.

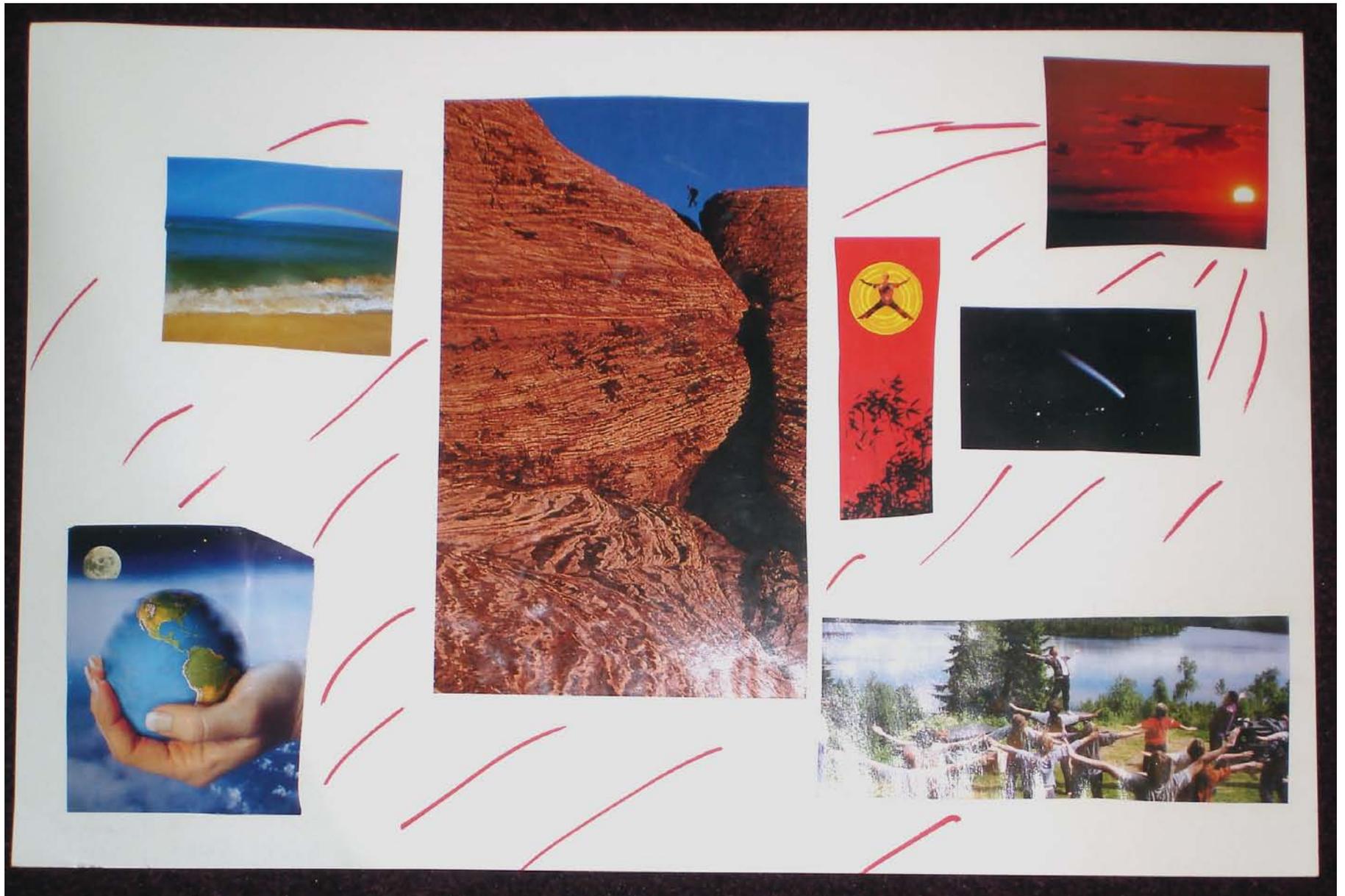
The values that are at the heart of who I am are:

- Deeply and compassionately listening to others.
- Creating welcoming places of connection.
- Generosity and loyalty
- Finding the spark of God in all people

What I can be counted on for is:

- I will be my word
- Always ready to serve others
- A unifying voice

~ April 19, 2004 (Landmark Course, Name Unknown)



**The Journey of the Soul (“Reflections on the Life of the Spirit” Course)**

## Letters to God

Dear God:

I feel I am serving, but I don't really feel fulfilled  
I feel loved, but I don't know that I am being fully loving  
I feel content, but I don't know if this is not just fear of wanting more

Dear Craig:

You are a wonderful servant  
You are clear and gentle and caring  
You keep holding yourself back from lack of confidence  
Go for it!!

~ November 2, 2004

Dear God:

What are the deeds that You wish me to do?

Dear Craig:

You are doing many of them already.  
You are nurturing your family.  
You are maintaining your marriage.  
You are a thoughtful member of society.  
You are serving My Cause.

You do need to take time to center yourself each day. You are continuing to "get by".

~ November 3, 2004

Dear God:

What wisdom can you offer me about service? How can I be better than I am now?

Dear Craig:

Service is quiet.

Service is subtle.

Service is the essence of life.

Be less brash about it.

Be humble and serve.

Be scrupulously honest and always in integrity with your commitments.

You are on the right path, just keep going.

~ November 6, 2004

Dear God:

What brings me joy?

Dear Craig:

Community, service, and music

~ November 20, 2004

Dear God:

I've committed to give myself the freedom to be me. What does that mean?

Dear Craig:

What that means is that you are consciously present at all times. You are creating each moment as a precious gift to yourself. You are not just people-pleasing when you do something. You are honest with yourself and those around you. You are giving yourself space amidst the collection of things you *should* be doing. You are not berating yourself over what you are not. You are not a fluidly verbal person. You express yourself in other ways.

~ December 4, 2004



**The Truth About Me (“Reflections on the Life of the Spirit” Course)**

## Who Am I?

I am a loving husband  
I am a loving father/grandfather  
I am a caring friend  
I am a respected man  
I am an active contributor at work  
I am a voice of unity  
I am a suppressed white male!  
I am afraid to really face myself and be open!  
I am continually holding myself back from fully engaging in life!  
I am not happy about these last 3!!  
How do I change?  
I just DO IT!  
What am I afraid of?

~ November 7, 2004

## Slow Down

Still not conscious all the time  
Going too fast  
Slow down  
See it in the little things  
Don't rush  
How is my energy different than rushing?  
Energy is purpose, grace, and ease  
Rushing is frantic, hectic, and tense

~December 21, 2004

Who I am is the possibility of self expression, love, passion, and leadership.  
~ June 6, 2005 (Landmark Self-Expression and Leadership)

Ways of being I have that displace possibility:

- Being shy
- Being fearful
- Being impulsive
- Being in my head
- Being on egg shells
- Being overwhelmed

Ways of being I create that generate possibility:

- Being enthusiastic
- Being active listener
- Being generous
- Being hospitable
- Being my word
- Being responsible
- Being enrolling
- Being coachable
- Being free and flowing

~February 21, 2005 (Landmark Breakthroughs: Living Outside the Box)

## From *Pure Gold: Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage*

### ✧ *Flexibility* ✧

If it be Thy pleasure, make me to grow as a tender herb in the meadows of Thy grace, that the gentle winds of Thy will may stir me up and bend me into conformity with Thy pleasure, in such wise that my movement and my stillness may be wholly directed by Thee.

~ Bahá'í Faith: *Prayers and Meditations by Babá'u'lláh*, p. 240



**Flexibility is** adjusting to life as it happens and embracing changes as needed, while remaining true to one's core values, beliefs, and appropriate priorities.



Flexibility helps us in changing plans or outcomes as needed, while remaining true to our values and beliefs. We appreciate the joys and benefits of unplanned or unexpected activities in our marriage, welcoming and celebrating the opportunity to be spontaneous. We do not get upset with the good intentions of others, even when they take us by surprise. We bend gently and choose to flow without resistance, fear, or anger with what happens in our lives. We are open to change and to one another's opinions, ideas, choices, and feelings. We are able to be open to and appreciate new ideas, different creative options, innovative approaches, and alternative perspectives. We consider spiritual teachings, which can give us standards and guidance for being flexible about choices or firm about principles. Flexibility helps us to learn from challenges, adapt to new circumstances, change our minds, eliminate bad habits, and try new behaviors that support our marriage. It helps us to grow, change, and develop together.



Once you make a decision, you are committed to it. Yet, be flexible. Monitor progress, make adjustments along the way when necessary to achieve your goal.

~ Khalil A. Khavari, Ph.D., *Spiritual Intelligence*, p. 237

### ✧ *Service* ✧

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. ... Love your neighbor as yourself.

~ Christianity: *The Bible* (New International Version), Galatians, 5:13-14



**Service is** acting selflessly or sacrificially to improve or enhance the welfare and quality of life of others and their situations and experiences.



In our marriage, we willingly put the other's needs and comforts before our own. We offer our time, talents, skills, and attention proactively to one another and others. We handle tasks quietly, without any expectation of notice, reward, or appreciation. The more we do acts of service for one another in our marriage and our home, the deeper the bond between us grows. We look for opportunities to do the everyday actions that make life easier for the other, no matter how small. Our attitude of service is inspired by and strengthened through our spiritual faith, which encourages us to put others before ourselves. This attitude of service assists us to use our time, resources, and energy to address the social issues in our community. We reach out to make a difference for others who may be less fortunate in some ways than we are. Through generously spending time doing service for others, we increase love, health, happiness, and well-being in their lives and ours. Service that is sincere, joyful, and compassionate, with our hearts full of love, makes our marriage happier, healthier, and stronger.



Be consistently aware of the need to serve God and to serve others in any and all of your actions. That is the way of the miracle worker.

~ Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, *Everyday Wisdom*, p. 129



## Pilgrimage to Bahá'í Holy Places in Israel

### My focus for the journey of Pilgrimage:

1. To make real for myself a point of adoration for my prayers.
2. To seek clarity around my works and the Marriage Transformation Project commitment.
3. To strengthen my qualities of steadfastness and enthusiasm.
4. To be a sponge and soak up the experience.

~ May 22, 2006

### Sojourn at Bahjí\*

What do I feel?

Peaceful

Contented

Focused

Present

Ready to continue serving

~ May 30, 2006

\* Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh

## Unveiling the Secrets to a Happy Marriage

It's not a sexist comment to say that women and men are wired differently and that's part of why it can be a challenge to have a happy marriage. There's all kinds of research that supports this...that I'm thankfully not going to get into citing. I like to sometimes look at very simplistically that much of this can be traced back to the hunter/gatherer culture of prehistory.

- The **men** went out and hunted...this called for focused silent stalking of the prey and then a very purposeful rush to the goal sometimes alone and sometimes in cooperation with their fellow hunters
- The **women** gathered food working together with other women, creating a safe space and nurturing the children. This called for continual interactions with other people, understanding, sharing, communicating, etc.

Do you see how these are different? I encourage you to see how many of the male/female differences that you may struggle with in your daily life can be traced back to this hunter/gatherer life.

Let's do a bit of unveiling. We like to look at it as creating "Marriage of Equal Partners."

One of the things I'm working on developing in our work together is my male voice... distinct from and complementary to Susanne's female voice. A tool I've come across for doing this is this book...The Secrets of Happily Married Men. It's written by a psychiatrist that focuses on marriage counseling for individuals and couples. He spent many years gathering thoughts from men as to what the keys were to making marriage work and he's distilled it down to these 8 secrets. He's currently working on a Secrets of Happily Married Women book. You can go to his website and help if you'd like.

The first 7 secrets can be summarized as "Getting what you want in your marriage depends upon FIRST showing your wife she can trust you and depend upon you....100%!"

1. **Make your marriage your job:** The focus is on the benefits of marriage not the day to day frustrations. Face it, a job can be frustrating. In many jobs a person will plan, implement, prioritize, and overcomes obstacles. Why not translate some of those skills over to your marriage?
2. **Know your wife:** Look at her as if you just met her today and try to discover who she really is. Don't take her for granted. Find and remind yourself daily of what's special to you about her.
3. **Be home now:** Ask yourself why you're not spending more time at home. It's easy to get caught up in all the things you could be doing away from home...out hunting, etc.
4. **Expect conflict and deal with it:** in a way that does not make matters worse. Leading areas of conflict are sex, money, in-laws, housework, new baby. What makes matters worse?
  - a. Feeding the fire by escalating the level....hunters don't back down, right?
  - b. Withdrawing and avoiding
  - c. Negative interpretation...assume the worst motivation.
  - d. Finger pointing with criticism and blame.
5. **Learn to listen:** Use the three levels of listening (content, emotions, wants/needs).
6. **Aim to please:** Make your wife feel special by using her love language.
7. **Understand the truth about sex:** Rethink your definition of sex and enjoy all the sensual levels of intimacy.
8. **Introduce yourself:** Clean up your act and evaluate your core values so that you have a better idea of what's most important to you and of what your wife can do to help you attain these values.

My wish for each of you, whether married or not is that you someday enjoy the benefits of Marriage of equal partners through understanding these secrets.

~ December 16, 2006 (Speech at Positively Speaking Toastmasters Club, Beachwood, Ohio)

## It Took Courage!

It really did....it took courage to sail the open seas particularly before the days of steam engines, which has only been in the last 200 years or so and certainly well before the Global Positioning Sensor GPS technology we take for granted these days. Think of it, we take for granted that we can punch a button on many cell phones and know where we are within a couple of feet distance anywhere on the globe.

Let's consider this romantic notion of sailing the high seas...peacefully running down the swells with the wind at your back...rounding the Horn...lunging up the coast. Doesn't that sound just great? Wonderfully romantic and peaceful.

First of all, whenever the captain decided that the sails needed to be adjusted....a continual exercise...did he push a button or pull a lever to make this happen? No, the crew had to crawl up the rope ladders or ratlines and then shinny out whichever yardarm they were assigned to. Of course being careful not to fall 80 ft to the deck of the ship or into the water. Then once they were out there, they had to hold on some how or other and work with their mates to wrestle the sail as instructed. Keep in mind that this sail could be soaking wet. This could happen at any time of the day or night in any weather. Imagine driving rain with a gale force window!  
Wow

How about the rounding the Horn...well it was definitely not an easy matter. Because of it's location and the fact that there is no other land mass between it and itself clear around the globe, Cape Horn experiences probably the wickedness weather conditions of anywhere on the seas. Nothing to block the wind or swells. I learned an expression from friends who spent several years down here in the Falkland Island...they spoke of a lazy wind....too lazy to go around you so it goes through you. That's very common down there.

Not only that but, before the invention of reliable portable clocks, which was not until the mid 1700s (250 years ago), how did they

even know where on earth they were? Consider that the early sailors would hug the coastline or run across relatively narrow stretches of open water. Navigation was pretty much a matter of knowing the landmarks to identify where they were located. Log books would be full of sketches and descriptions. When sailors began to venture out on the open seas there was a real problem...no landmarks for miles and miles.

Once it was understood that the earth was round, they had figured out that if they could measure the height of the North Star or the noonday sun above the horizon they could at least know their latitude (distance above or below the equator). In the southern hemisphere there is no fixed reference star so it gets a bit more complicated. Of course, this only worked when the clouds cooperated.

Let's say you're out here in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and trying to get to this little dot of Hawaii. If you're lucky you can tell how far north or south of the equator you are but what about the other coordinate? One method they had was called dead reckoning, which I liken to a semi-educated guess. Basically they would try to measure how fast they were moving and over the course of a day estimate how far they'd gone. Keep in mind that the water was also in motion and might or might not be in the same direction they were trying to go. It really took courage!

Once clocks were reliable they could then combine the noon day sighting of the elevation of the sun with knowing how many hours difference there was between the local noon and noon at the reference point agreed to by the European mariners in Greenwich, England (GMT). Every hour difference was 15 degrees of longitude.

Let's think of Ferdinand Magellan and his crew that were the first Europeans to circumnavigate the globe in 1520. About 270 of them set out from Spain in 5 ships that were about 60' long and 18' across. 34 of them survived and made it back in 1 of the ships.

They were in quest of a westward route to the Spice Islands across the sea that Vasco Balboa had first seen by crossing Panama. They searched down the coast of South America for a way through, found the passageway that is now called the Straits of Magellan and arrived in the Pacific Ocean. They thought that at that point they were so close to the Spice Islands that it was not necessary to stop and reprovisen. They spent 3 1/2 months

working their way across the Pacific...nearly starving in the process.

When I ponder on what it actually took I'm just astounded that anyone had the courage to travel as they did. I'd like to think that I would have. How about you?

~ November 29, 2006 (Speech at Positively Speaking Toastmasters Club)

## The Purpose of My Life

The purpose of my life is to be a loving servant-leader.

This is my calling. This is my life.

The values at the heart of who I am are: service, generosity, inspiration,  
dependability, compassion,  
community-building, hospitality, and steadfastness.

What I can be counted on for is: listening with compassion, speaking  
encouragement, and acting with integrity and service.

~ January 2007 (Landmark Living Passionately Seminar)

This is the end of *The Journey – Part 1*. *The Journey – Part 2* is about Craig Farnsworth's experience of and creative response to a diagnosis of cancer.

## The Life of Craig Allan Farnsworth

Craig Allan Farnsworth was born in New Brighton, Pennsylvania, to Robert (Bob) and Lucille (Lu) Farnsworth on November 10, 1951. He was their first child, but his sister, Nancy, joined him 18 months later.

Craig attended high school in Chagrin Falls and then graduated from high school in Philadelphia in 1970. He attended Hiram College, graduating with bachelor's degrees in Elementary Education and Applied Physics. While there, he played saxophone in the Jazz Band and managed a coffee shop as a volunteer. Craig later took coursework through Landmark Education in personal and community transformation, as well as training to be a marriage educator/coach.

Craig first encountered the Bahá'í Faith at his early church home, Federated Church in Chagrin Falls, where Bahá'ís Pleasant Montgomery and Arlene Nedd (now Green) visited his Sunday School class. He became a Bahá'í during his time at Hiram through interactions with Mary Jane Barbee (now Volkmann) and Marj McCabe.

Craig married Lynn McClive in 1975 at Green Acre Bahá'í School, in Eliot, Maine, where they were both working. They later moved to Northeast Ohio. They had three children, Michelle (1976), David (1978), and Leah (1981). Michelle married Hooman Tashakor and later had Craig's first grandchild, Karida, who is now four years old. David married Christina Faught, and they have a two-year old son, Aidan.

Craig married Susanne Alexander in 1999 in Akron, Ohio. He then gained stepdaughter Jennifer (Coates) DeMaria, who is married to Frank DeMaria. Susanne and Craig committed to do their best to create a strong, happy family and to make an adventure out of most anything. They agreed to coach one

another through personal healing and growth, with a great deal of success. One of Craig's children referred to him as a "born-again father".

After four years as an elementary school teacher, Craig gained long-term employment with AGA Research as a research engineer, project manager, and program manager. He developed new appliances and achieved six patents during that time. He then went into technical sales, first with Tridelta Industries and later with Radix Wire Company in 2000. Throughout Craig's employment, he maintained a high level of commitment to customer service and satisfaction, to excellence, and to keeping his managers informed. Together with Susanne, he founded Marriage Transformation LLC, a company that offers relationship and marriage coaching and materials. He primarily served as the company's business and distribution manager. He co-presented workshops in the United States, Canada, and China with Susanne.

Music was a significant passion for Craig. He played the guitar for children, youth, and adults at many Bahá'í gatherings. He collected flutes and often played them for others. He raised his voice in song at choir concerts, prayer meetings, events, funerals, and gatherings of all types. A highlight was being able to sing with the 400+ member Voices of Bahá choir on the stage at Carnegie Hall in 2002. [Note: A commemorative CD is available of Craig singing and playing music alone and with friends.]

Craig's commitment was to make a difference for others—"He lived to serve". Below is a list of many of the ways he participated in service. Building community and bringing diverse people together in unity was Craig's passion.

## Craig Farnsworth - A Lifetime of Service

Dates	Service
1963	Participant in the Children's International Summer Villages program with international students, where Craig gained a foundation in building relationships with diverse people and gained an international outlook (Germany)
1971-1974	Volunteer manager for "The Cell", a coffee house/gathering place, with music, at Hiram College
1971-1974	Saxophone player in the Hiram Jazz Band and singer/guitar player in the Bahá'í music group called Hiram Road Show at Hiram College
1974	Teacher of children's classes and provider of music for devotions at Green Acre Bahá'í School (Maine)
1970's-2000's	Adult mentor to many youth and young adults
1970's-2000's	Volunteer Blood Donor, American Red Cross - VIP Hero
1980's	Maintenance Volunteer, Louhelen Bahá'í School (Michigan)
1980's-2007	Member Bahá'í District Teaching Committee; Member/chair Unit Convention Planning Team; Institute Coordinator
1980's-2008	Helper to others through loaning vehicles, moving furniture, and providing computer support
1988-2007	Member of the steering committee of the International Appliance Technical Conference, and Conference Chair of it in 1994
1990	Participant in a Bahá'í teaching trip to Poland
~1993	Charter member of the Unity and Diversity Council of the Chagrin Valley
1993-2002	Member of Voices of Bahá international choir; participated in Heartland tour in 1995; sang in Carnegie Hall in 2002
1993-2001	Facilitator of Honest Conversations Diversity Training in Chagrin Valley and Euclid; member of planning team for Race Unity Multicultural festivities in Chagrin Falls
9-21-03	Member of Planning Team for United Nations International Day of Peace, Euclid

1991-2004	Member of Planning Team for Midwinter Bahá'í Youth Conference; teacher; morning rouser; broom pusher; coordinator of youth service projects, sayer of "Goodnight you wonderful young people", and doer of anything else that needed to be done
1984-2006	Member of School Board for Crimson Ark Bahá'í School; children's class teacher; singer for devotions/sing-a-longs
1991-2000	Member of Bahá'í Choir of Northeast Ohio; sang and played duets with Judy Parsley, including for the Celebrate the Covenant conference in 1998 in Sarnia, Ontario
1995-1999	Member of planning team for race unity activities, Chagrin Park, Chagrin Falls
1999	Moved to Euclid to strengthen its Bahá'í community
1999-2006	Workshop assistant; Coach for Self-Expression and Leadership course for Landmark Education
1999-2009	Chairman, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Euclid and Bahá'í Group of Euclid
2000-2003	Member of planning teams for Race Unity Day in Euclid, including honoring Mayor Oyaski in 2000
2000-2004	Member of Executive Council of the Interfaith Suburban Action Coalition
2000-2004	Member and Secretary of Board of Trustees of Euclid Community Concerns, a civic organization addressing fair housing and community relations issues and working with neighborhood associations
2001-2002	Participant in the Leadership Euclid Program through the Euclid Chamber of Commerce
2001-2009	Tutor/Facilitator of Study Circles for Bahá'í Faith courses open to interfaith participants
2003-2008	Data Manager for Bahá'í Faith, Cuyahoga County
2003-2008	Relationship/Marriage coach, co-leader of relationship and marriage workshops in USA, Canada, and China
2005-2006	President, Board of Directors, Better Together (formerly Cleveland Marriage Coalition)
2006-2007	Participant in Interfaith Thanksgiving Services in Euclid
2007-2008	Member, BRIDGES (Building Racial Interaction—Dialogue, Growth, Education, Solutions) steering committee and diversity committee in Euclid

2007-2008	VP of Membership, Positively Speaking Toastmasters Group in Beachwood
2007-2008	Participant in genetic brain tumor studies
2008-2009	Secretary, East Beverly Hills Neighborhood Association in Euclid

Craig was diagnosed with a Glioblastoma Multiforme brain tumor in the summer of 2007. He went through cancer treatments, diet changes, surgeries, and hospitalizations. He declared that he was going to be an exceptional cancer patient ([www.ecap-online.org](http://www.ecap-online.org)). Throughout the experience, Craig's loving spirit and positive attitude inspired and touched the hearts and lives of everyone. He said that the journey through responding to the diagnosis caused him to deepen his appreciation for and connection to God. Craig's soul passed to the next stage of his eternal journey on July 1, 2009.

This book is a publication of the Marriage Transformation Social Action Project, founded by Craig A. Farnsworth and Susanne M. Alexander. Contact information for the project is: [susanne@marriagetransformation.com](mailto:susanne@marriagetransformation.com); [www.marriagetransformation.com](http://www.marriagetransformation.com); [www.bahaimarriage.net](http://www.bahaimarriage.net). Kindly check with us before using this book for any purpose other than personal reading.

Note: Barbara Trauger-Querry has the right to use all contents of *The Journey*, Books 1 & 2 for her work as an art therapist and with hospice services.

Susanne M. Alexander, Relationship & Marriage Coach  
President, Marriage Transformation LLC

## PLEASE CONTACT US

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### Speaking:

Susanne M. Alexander, professional speaker and author, can also be scheduled to speak at events or to present workshops for individuals, couples, professionals, patients, and caregivers.

Susanne's dynamic speaking presentations and interactive workshops include stories of real experiences and strategies shared with compassion, inspiration, and humor. Please contact Susanne today to discuss your needs and to schedule a presentation or workshop.

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