



CAPACITAR's
Vision is
Healing
Ourselves
Healing
Our World.

CAPACITAR
means to
empower, to
encourage, to
bring each other
to life. We are
an international
network of
empowerment
and solidarity.

Capacitar teaches
simple practices of
healing, team-
building and self-
development to
awaken people to
their own source
of strength and
wisdom so they
can reach out to
heal injustice,
work for peace
and transform
themselves, their
families and
communities.

Using a
popular education
approach,
Capacitar works
with grassroots
people in
30 countries.

20 Years Healing Ourselves Healing Our World — Patricia Mathes Cane, Ph.D., Capacitar Founder/Director

This year marks Capacitar's 20th Anniversary! As we prepare to celebrate our Global Conference at La Casa de Maria in Santa Barbara, people are asking: How did you begin? How has Capacitar been able to touch so many lives around the world? This newsletter will share that story and introduce you to some of the many hands that have created the spirit we celebrate.

Capacitar's roots go back to the 1980s, the war years in Central America, when on a solidarity trip with Witness for Peace we first met Sr. Mary Hartman, CSA, a member of the Human Rights Commission for Nicaraguan prisons. It was Mary who invited me to work on a grassroots art festival in 1988. And when, for my own self-care, I practiced Tai Chi and acupressure, it was Mary who said: "Your art is great, but when will you teach us how to do 'that!'" She intuitively recognized the value of body mind spirit practices to help people deal with violence and trauma. From Mary's insight Capacitar was born. Mary, who will be 80 this summer, affectionately calls herself Capacitar's Grandmother. From grassroots Nicaraguans we first learned the word "capacitar"—a Spanish verb meaning to empower, to encourage, to bring to life—that became the name of our organization and the spirit of our movement. In Nicaragua we also had our first experience of popular education with the CANTERA team in Managua. Based on the work of Brazilian Paulo Freire, popular education awakens people to their own wisdom and empowers them to multiply what they learn in the community. Capacitar embodies Freire's method, awakening people through "body literacy," so they can reach out to heal and transform their families and communities.

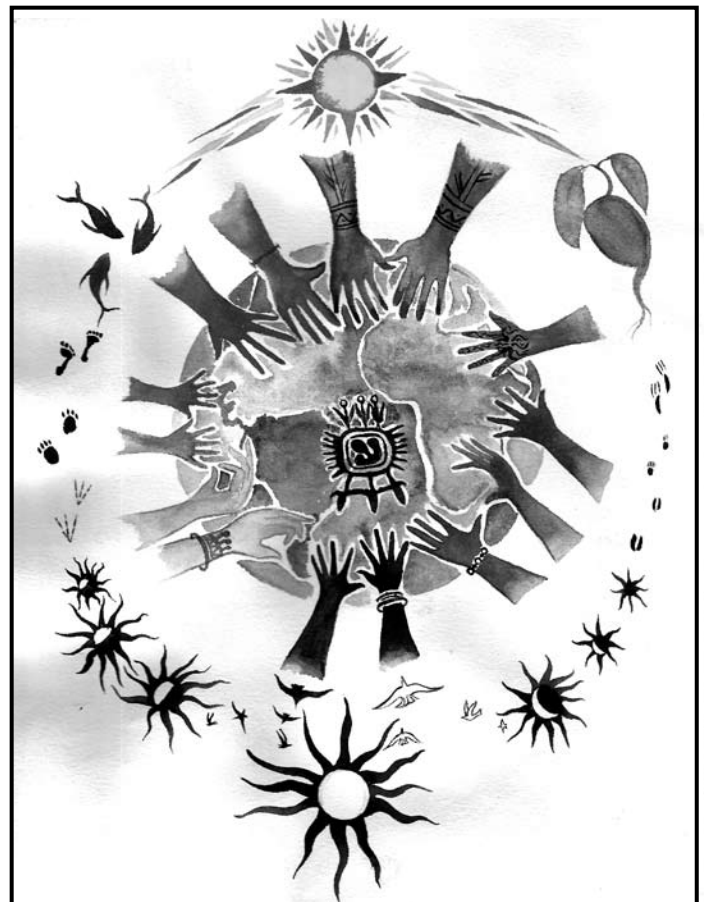
First Years and the Healing Tents

In the early 1990s union friends in Guatemala, who were dealing with violence and death threats, heard of our work in Nicaragua and requested "relaxation" workshops to help them cope. Then friends in Chile invited us to share what we were doing in Central America. We needed materials for the work, so the first Capacitar manuals were developed in Spanish. In 1993 we were invited to El Salvador to coordinate the Healing Tent for the Feminist Congress of Latin America. Because the congress had received bomb threats, a guard stood watch with his machine gun while we taught bodywork and Tai Chi on the beach.

As work continued to grow, Capacitar incorporated in 1994 as a California-based nonprofit. In 1995 a team of 25 Capacitar women from 12 countries traveled to China to coordinate (in English, Spanish and Chinese) the Healing Tent for the NGO World Forum on Women, in collaboration with the Chinese Medical and Traditional Medical Associations. Capacitar teams also led solidarity trips to Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador building bridges of understanding and friendship between people of the US and Central America. Workshops multiplied in many places: Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico.

Growth through Sisters in the US

From the beginning many communities of Sisters empowered Capacitar's growth and through their support the work began to spread in the US. With the Holy Names Sisters Capacitar offered workshops in Watsonville, CA, to migrant camp women, Head Start teachers and families. In St. Louis, MO, Mercy Sisters organized national-level workshops, bringing together Mercy partners from the Midwest, Belize, Texas and Mexico. The first manuals in English were developed



*We join with the Earth and with each other
with our ancestors and all beings of the future
to bring new life to the land,
to recreate the human community,
to provide justice and peace,
to remember our children, to remember who we are.
We join together as many and diverse expressions
of one loving mystery,
For the healing of the earth and the renewal of all life.*

—CAPACITAR Prayer
adapted from the UN Prayer of the Sabbath
Art: Ana María Vasquez Restrepo



for these trainings. In Wisconsin Sisters of St. Agnes invited us to offer workshops at the newly-formed Center to BE. In Richlands, VA, Mercy Sisters opened Sunrise Center and brought Capacitar to Appalachian women affected by domestic violence and the poverty of the coal mines. Sisters at

Mercy Hospital in Laredo, TX, hosted Capacitar workshops for women and families who lived in poverty in border communities. Sisters of Charity of Nazareth brought Capacitar to their center in Bardstown, KY. Sisters of the Presentation supported the new office in Watsonville with a development director, and later Salvatorian Sisters joined our staff in Santa Cruz. In the 1990s "wellness" was a new concept in the consciousness of health systems, so in 1997 Mercy Sisters sponsored our workshops at their wellness center in Cincinnati and supported a pilot program in Multicultural Wellness Education developed for my doctoral studies.

A New Focus on Trauma Healing

While I was preparing my dissertation studying the process of healing in different countries, Hurricane Mitch devastated Central America. Capacitar co-director Joan Condon and I were scheduled to arrive in Honduras the day the hurricane hit, and were on the phone with friends there who said they wanted to go ahead with the workshops no matter what happened. We promised that Capacitar would walk with them in solidarity when the disaster was over. With heavy hearts we watched as the hurricane circled over parts of Central America for eight days with great loss of life and infrastructure. In response to the disaster and the suffering of many, the focus of my research changed to trauma healing and a study of the impact of body mind spirit practices on people dealing with traumatic stress from Hurricane Mitch and political violence. The manual [Trauma Healing and Transformation](#) was the outcome of this research. In many ways "trauma healing" was what Capacitar had been doing all along. So this study gave us a clearer understanding of the process, the method and the multicultural potential of Capacitar's popular education approach to trauma healing with grassroots people.

Little did we realize how relevant this new focus would become, until September 11, 2001. Synchronistically we were invited to New York the year before by Dominican Sisters of Hope to share Capacitar skills with Hispanics and African Americans living in East Harlem. Our work had been scheduled for late September, 2001. The trauma healing workshops that we offered two weeks after the disaster helped many people who lost family and friends in the Twin Towers or who were too poor to get professional help for their traumatic stress.

International Growth in Africa, Asia and Ireland

As Capacitar continued to grow in the Americas, team members Joan Condon and Mary Litell, OSF, felt called to respond to the plight of the people of East Timor. In 2001 Joan and Mary traveled to East Timor to work with families, refugees and orphans affected by the trauma, violence and massive destruction

that happened after their vote for independence from Indonesia. With the Bali bombings Capacitar extended outreach to Indonesia and after the tsunami and violent earthquakes, offered trainings in different areas and conflict zones.

Mary Litell also initiated Capacitar's work in Africa. When several funding proposals were rejected, I said to Mary, "If Capacitar is to go to Africa, let's be creative and figure out a way to get the funds." Mary sent a letter to her friends and within a short time she received several thousand dollars, and from her cousins, two frequent flyer tickets. In 2002 Mary and I offered the first workshops in Tanzania and Kenya in collaboration with the Maryknoll Sisters, and in South Africa with several AIDS groups. Again, synchronistically, I was invited to lunch with the Oakford Dominicans in Johannesburg where I met the sister who directed the AIDS Office for the Southern African Bishops Conference. After talking for a half hour, she invited me to return the following year to offer workshops for hundreds of caregivers and AIDS groups in South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland. One young man with AIDS inspired the theme for these trainings. During a workshop he challenged me: "Pat, you're going to die and I'm going to die. You will probably die of old age or an accident and I will die of AIDS. I want you to teach me how to live well!" "Living in Wellness" became the theme of our work as well as the AIDS and caregivers manual. Since then Capacitar South Africa has grown nationally with a team of trainers and a program of outreach.

About the same time that African outreach was developing, an email came from Dublin asking if Capacitar was doing anything in Ireland. Toni Ryan had just returned from a year in Chile where she worked with the Capacitar Chile team. I wrote to Toni saying that Capacitar hadn't as yet worked in Ireland, but by coincidence, I was planning a holiday there with my twin sister and would be happy to offer some workshops. Since May 2003, Capacitar Ireland has grown remarkably and now has NGO status, nationally accredited courses for health and childcare workers, and a fine national team. It has hosted 8 in depth Multicultural Wellness trainings and numerous taster days in all parts of Ireland, Northern Ireland and England. Members of the Ireland team have also taken Capacitar to Brazil, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka and other countries.

Evolution of Programs and Outreach

As accredited programs developed, Capacitar reached another level of maturation and outreach. A yearly Multicultural Wellness Education (MWE) program, now in its 8th year, was established at the Center to BE in Milwaukee under the leadership of Director Marjorie Wilbur. Juliet Spong Twomey of La





Capacitar National Gathering in San Diego, CA—Summer 2004

Casa de Maria developed retreats for Hispanics, along with bi-lingual MWE trainings for Southern California. In Northern California St. Anthony's Foundation established MWE trainings in San Francisco. In Canada MWE programs and workshops were scheduled for Victoria, Winnipeg and Toronto. And at the border with Mexico, bi-lingual MWE trainings have been held in San Diego and El Paso.

In Cincinnati, parish nurse Mary Duennes was concerned about the health problems of inner city children. With hospital funding Mary led a 3-year pilot, Capacitar for Kids, in two parish schools with continued outreach in her area. A manual was produced for teachers and families that is now being used in Europe and Africa, with a Spanish translation in process. In El Paso, TX and border communities with Mexico, cancer was the concern. There women were diagnosed for cancer, but there were few resources for treatment. With support from the cancer consortium, Capacitar offered trainings for health promoters and developed a cancer manual in Spanish and English.

With Hurricane Katrina and other massive disasters, Capacitar stepped with greater commitment into community trauma. An "Emergency Kit" of best practices was created for use by individuals and communities and to be downloaded from our website (www.capacitar.org/publications). When Hurricane Stan hit Guatemala, a friend there translated the materials into Spanish for use in devastated Mayan communities. From Rwanda we received back a French translation, and from Brazil, a Portuguese translation. Currently the materials are available in nine languages on our website.

In response to the continued violence of the Middle East, Juliet Spohn Twomey and I traveled to Israel and Palestine last summer to work with Women in the Center in Nazareth, as well as with trauma groups near the Lebanese border and on the West-bank. Materials are being translated into Hebrew and Arabic with plans for an in depth training to form a Capacitar team for the region.



We had not envisioned work with genocide survivors, but when Sr. Anrtoinette Gasibirege, SH, a survivor from Rwanda came to a training and experienced the impact of the healing practices on herself, she asked: "When are you and Capacitar going to Rwanda?" With Antoinette and the leadership of Dr. Genevieve van Waesberghe, MMM, trauma healing trainings were offered to participants from Rwanda, Burundi and Congo with very positive outcomes. A national team is in the process of being formed. Trocaire, the Catholic Development Agency of Ireland, has supported the Rwanda work, as well as a training in Burundi where violence continues. Trocaire also supported AIDS/Trauma workshops in February in three regions of Nigeria, and in August, another series of workshops to be offered in Sierra Leone. 2009 plans include new work in Uganda and Congo DRC.

20th Anniversary Global Celebration

As Capacitar people prepare to meet July 20-23 in Santa Barbara, we have much to celebrate! This will be our first global gathering. In past years two Central American regional conferences were held in El Salvador. In 2004 a US National Gathering was convened in San Diego, CA, with 50 participants from 10 states and Mexico. Now we anticipate a gathering of 80 women and men from 22 countries spanning the generations from the 20s to the 80s. We will communicate in two main languages, English and Spanish, with additional translation in French, and with more than twelve languages represented. We will learn and share, dance and celebrate, drawing from each other the inspiration, courage and strength to continue the work of healing and transformation in our communities and countries.

Like the African Tree of Life where each generation stands and grows on the shoulders of their forebears, Capacitar has grown strong with the spirit of diverse people and cultures as we work to heal and transform the wounds of our world. Salvadoran María Isabel Figueroa, Archbishop Romero's secretary, once said, "What Capacitar is really doing is awakening a new heart." As we anticipate the coming years of global change and challenge, may Capacitar be an instrument of healing and awakening, bringing hope and a new heart to the human family.

Day of Solidarity & Remembrance

June 16, 2008 12:00 pm Midday

You are invited to join hands and hearts with Capacitar around the world in a Day of Solidarity and Remembrance as together we pray for healing and transformation, wherever we are on the planet. At midday on June 16 we invite you to take a moment for silent prayer, inviting family, friends and community to join you. You can lead a Tai Chi movement, like the "Shower of Light" or "Salute to the Sun", opening to light and healing for the community and for the world.

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Indonesia

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Sri Lanka

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Asmahan Mansur

Lora Hillel Dicker

Gifts Made In Honor of

Martha Rebmam • Mary Duennes • Pat Cane • Joan Condon • Pat Wyman

David House (Charlie, Pat, Chris, Sam, Roger, David & Stephanie)

Gifts Made In Memory of

Austen Wright • Tom Condon • Ginger Galvin • Rev. Patrick Stanley

REMEMBER CAPACITAR IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN

Bequests made through your will may be for a specific percentage or sum of an estate.

Gifts of Life insurance - Transfer ownership of a life insurance policy to CAPACITAR.

The legal name is CAPACITAR International, Inc., Santa Cruz, CA.

Gift Capacitar With

Stocks - Shares may be sent to Prudential Financial, 26135 Carmel Rancho Blvd.

Carmel CA 93923 (831)625-6890. Capacitar's account number is OWW-961815.

FREQUENT FLYER MILES

Support our outreach to areas of conflict and violence: We need airline tickets to:

Indonesia, East Timor, Southern or Eastern Africa, Asia Pacific (60,000-70,000 miles)

Central America, South America (35,000-50,000 miles).

If you can help us with miles for tickets, call the Capacitar office at 831-471-9215.

CAPACITAR Calendar—2008

- Apr 9 Keynote-Conference: Childcare Initiative Project, Santa Rosa, CA
- Apr 16-17 Brazil Tr 1, Bahia, Brazil • Apr 20-21 Brazil Tr 1, Feira Santana
- Apr 18-19 Training Sophia Center, Holy Names University, Oakland, CA
- Apr 26-27 Team Tutor Training 3, Dublin,
- May 3-4 Training 1 Galway, Ireland
- May 7 Taster day Scotland May 9-London Taster Day
- May 10-11 London Training 4, Hammersmith
- May 12-13 Training 1 Connecticut
- May 14 South African Retreat, Pretoria • May 15-17 South Africa Team Tr.
- May 16-18 Training 2, San Francisco, CA
- May 24-25 Training 4, Rio, Brazil • May 31, Jun 1 Training 3 Rio, Brazil
- May 30-Jun 1 Training 2, Center to BE, Milwaukee, WI
- Jun 4, 5 Caregivers Trs • Jun 6-8 Training 2, La Casa de Maria, S. Barbara
- Jun 7-8 Training 4 San Francisco, St. Anthony's Foundation
- Jun 14-15 Training 4 Victoria, Canada
- Jun 20-21 Conference Keynote, Irish & British Psychological Assoc. Trinity College, Dublin
- Jun 17-22 Workshops, CANTERA, and other groups, Nicaragua
- Jun 30-Jul 5 Workshops in Quiche, Guatemala
- Jul 20-23 Capacitar Global Conference, La Casa de Maria, Santa Barbara, CA
- Jul 25 Evening Event, Global Celebration, Unitarian Fellowship, Aptos, CA
- Aug 7-23 Workshops in Sierra Leone
- Aug 29-31 Training 3, San Francisco, CA
- Aug 28-30 Team Training 1, Butare, Rwanda
- Sep 4-6 Trauma Healing Module 1, Gihindamuyaga, Butare, Rwanda
- Sep 12-13 Training 4 Appalachia, Virginia
- Sep 12-14 Training 3 Center to BE, Milwaukee, WI
- Sep 19-21 Training 3, La Casa de Maria, Santa Barbara
- Sep 27-28 Training 1, San Salvador ES
- Oct 11-12 Team Tutor Training 4 Swords, Dublin, Ireland
- Oct 18-19 Training 2, Galway, Ireland
- Oct 23 Cape Town Retreat • Oct 24-26 Team Training, Cape Town, South Africa
- Nov Trainings in Indonesia, East Timor
- Nov 7-9 Training 4 San Francisco, CA
- Nov 12-13 Caregivers Tr. • Nov 14-16 Tr 4, La Casa de Maria, S. Barbara, CA
- Nov 22-23 Training 1, Centro Mujeres Esperanza, El Paso TX
- Dec 5-7 Training 4 Center to BE, Milwaukee, WI
- Dec 17-19 Dance Retreat, Cantera, Nicaragua

2008-2009 Trainings—Multicultural Wellness Education

• **Milwaukee, WI** Center to BE, Marjorie Wilbur (414)672-5932 mwilbur.centertobe@sbcglobal.net

2008 Training: Mar 14-16 May 30-Jun 1 Sept 12-14 Dec 5-7 CEUs—Marian College

2009 Training: Mar 20-22 Jun 5-7 Sept 18-20 Dec 4-6 CEUs—Marian College

• **Santa Barbara, CA** La Casa de Maria, Juliet Spohn Twomey 805-969-5031 juliet@lcmdm.org

2008 Training: Mar 7-9 June 6-8 Sept 19-21 Nov 14-16 CEUs

2009 Training: Mar 27-29 June 12-14 Sept 18-20 Nov 20-22 CEUs

• **San Francisco, CA** Mary Litell, Sheila Novak capacitar@capacitar.org

2008: May 16-18 Aug 29-31 Nov 7-9 CEUs

• **El Paso, TX** Maureen Jerkowski, Centro Mujeres Esperanza. matj7@sbcglobal.net

2008 Training: Nov 22-23 2009: Jan 10-11 Mar 14-15 Aug 1-2

• **Connecticut** Joan Condon, Sheila Novak capacitar@capacitar.org

2008: May 12-13 Sep 8-9 Dec 8-9 2009: Mar 30-31

• **El Salvador, San Salvador** Joan Condon jcondon@igc.org

2008 Training: Sept 27-28 2009: Jan 24-25 May 2-3 Aug 29-30

• **Ireland** Kathleen Day ijs cap.ireland@eircom.net

Galway Training: 2008: May 3-4 Oct 18-19 2009: Jan 31, Feb 1 May 23-24

• **London, England** Margaret Wilson RSCJ, margaretwilsonrscj@hotmail.com

Cycle 2 Training 2009: Feb 14-15 May 16-17 Oct 10-11 2010: Jan 30-31

• **Winnipeg, Canada** Lorraine Dumont lorrainedumont@hotmail.com

Training 2009: Apr 4-5 Jun 20-21 Sep 12-13 Nov 14-15

• **Rwanda** Butare, Gihindamuyaga, Antoinette Gasibirege, capacitarbutare@yahoo.fr

Team Tr. 2008: Aug 28-30 2009: Feb 26-28 Jul 9-11 Trauma Tr 2008: Sep 5-7 2009: Mar 4-6 Jul 16-18

CAPACITAR 20th Anniversary International Conference—July 20-23, 2008

La Casa de Maria, Santa Barbara, California