



CAPACITAR— Women Planting One Heart

An Empowerment Project connecting Women of North America with Women around the World

CAPACITAR is a local and international network of women bringing each other to life. Our logo comes from a pre-Columbian design of aquatic flowers of ancient Mexico. For us it symbolizes the creativity and empowerment

of women—women coming to life, rooted to the earth, birthing new life, joining together, empowering each other.

CAPACITAR shares techniques of healing, team building and self-development with women leaders to encourage physical and spiritual transformation. We act so that all women lived are empowered to take control of their lives, inspire communities, and struggle for liberation and peace in the world.

International teams of women model alternative uses of power to aid in this self-transformation. As a grassroots organization, CAPACITAR connects women through an international network of solidarity, building relationships of cultural and personal understanding.

CAPACITAR works with sensitivity towards cultural awareness and responds to needs identified by community groups within a country.

Our name, CAPACITAR, is a Spanish word meaning to empower, to encourage, to bring forth.

Women and Spirituality

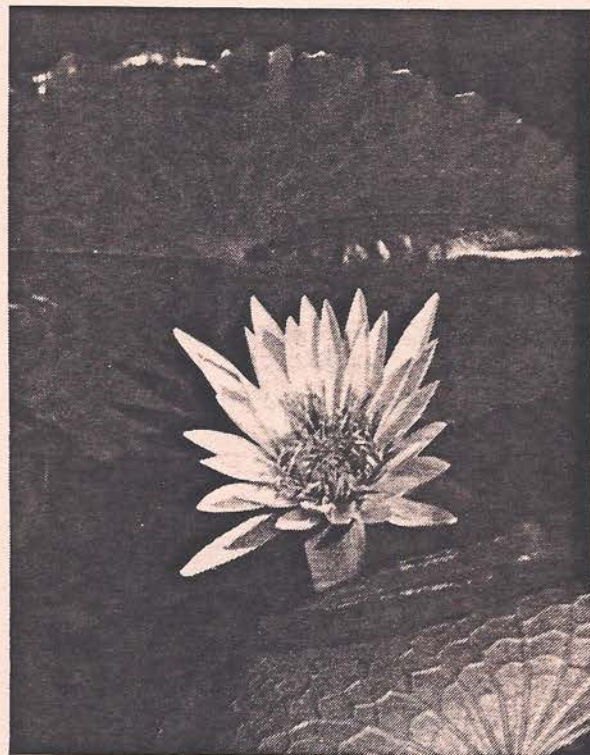
An inspiring new movement seems to be growing in many Latin American countries in which CAPACITAR has worked within the last year. Women and men from varied backgrounds and socioeconomic levels are awakening and reclaiming their spiritual roots, their connection with the Earth, and their strength and power of heart and soul. We experienced this spiritual hunger and awakening in El Salvador last November at the International Feminist Congress of Latin America, and most recently in our work in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Chile and Peru.

Anne Hillman in her book *The Dancing Animal Woman* (Bramble Books, 1994) talks about this deep-down movement of the human spirit:

"Life seems to be addressing us in the last days of the twentieth century, with an insistence that calls us beyond the forms we know. . . One by one and as a human species, it calls us past who we think we are. . . We stand at a turning point. At the same time we yearn to belong, the old social structures which once gave us a sense of membership are crumbling. . . The cultural containers of political, social and religious belief prove too small to address the personal, cultural and planetary upheavals we are facing. . . We are searching for what it means to be human beings in this great cosmic unfolding of which we are a part. . . The yearning is in all of us. Underneath the busy activities of our days we are silently seeking guidance for our decisions. . . I believe that what we are seeking is a wisdom that comes in the form of a bodily experience. It is a wisdom that exists in all of life. It is here that we will find guidance and meaning for the crucial years ahead for our planet. . . for what it means to be a human being who belongs to a universe that is alive. . ."

Our work with CAPACITAR focuses on empowering this deeper movement of spirit, especially with women at the grassroots who are dedicated to healing themselves as well as healing and rebuilding their societies and the larger world. In this Newsletter you will meet some of the women and groups with whom we recently worked, who exemplify this emerging spirit: Gladys Lanza and the women of the center Visitación Padilla in

Tegucigalpa, Honduras; women union leaders of Guatemala and El Salvador; the women of Tierra Viva in Guatemala City; and the men and families of the Pepsi Cola Union in Guatemala City. As one Honduran union leader who works with teachers and youth expressed after a recent workshop: "At this moment in which we are suffering so much from violence, economic crisis, and lack of values in Honduras, I never could have imagined how beautiful this inner spirit is, which fills our hearts and and gives us the strength to believe in a world where there still is hope."



*WE JOIN WITH THE EARTH AND WITH EACH OTHER,
WITH OUR ANCESTORS AND WITH 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. . .*

-UN ENVIRONMENTAL SABBATH PROGRAM

CAPACITAR—Spirituality and Healing the Wounds

Honduran Women for Peace

Gladys Lanza has fought for justice and human rights most of her life. At one point she was the highest ranking woman union leader in Central America, until the government broke her union, and she suffered torture and the bombing of her home. Gladys played a key role this past August in organizing our new CAPACITAR program in Tegucigalpa, under the auspices of Comité Hondureño de Mujeres por la Paz "Visitación Padilla". Gladys has known first hand the need for healing and deepening her spirit. During the course of our week's workshop, Gladys learned quickly, and immediately began to share what she had learned. When a group of local women lost their jobs the second day of the workshop, Gladys went with them to help negotiate with their bosses and to demand their just pay. When the bank refused to cash their checks and one of the women started to break down, Gladys massaged and comforted her in the middle of the bank! Gladys seems to have moved to a point in her life where she is able to love and deeply understand the human condition and be fully part of that struggle with wisdom and joy.

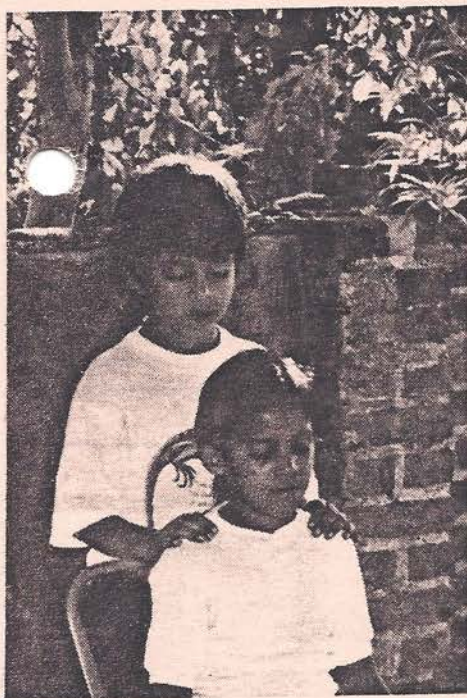
So many of the women who participated in our Honduras workshops showed a similar desire to heal their own lives as well as deepen their commitment to the long haul of building peace and justice in their society—teachers, social workers, union leaders, psychologists, feminists, and grassroots leaders working with abused women. Other workshop participants included children, ages 7 to 11, who greatly enjoyed learning some simple Tai Chi movements and hand and back massage to share with their families. Another workshop was for the gay community. Visitación Padilla recently started a support group for families of gays and lesbians, who are usually ostracized by Latin American society. The mother who founded the group described how she had disowned her gay son until she realized that if she rejected him, how could she expect others to accept him. She glowed with love and understanding after suffering so greatly with her son.

The Peace Committee of Honduran Women "Visitación Padilla" is celebrating its tenth anniversary of fasts, marches, vigils and protests in support of the struggle of the people. During our closing ritual, Director Alba de Mejia expressed how now is the time to refocus and deepen our commitment to spiritual growth in order to more effectively heal ourselves and our societies and build a world of peace.



Top: Tai Chi at the Women and Spirituality Conference led by Tierra Viva and CAPACITAR, Guatemala City Right: Rudy and Cristobal, directors of the Pepsi Cola Union, practicing active listening skills

Top: Gladys Lanza working with a woman who recently lost her job in Honduras Middle: Pepsi Cola Union head Favio Mazariegos sharing a hand massage with his son, Guatemala



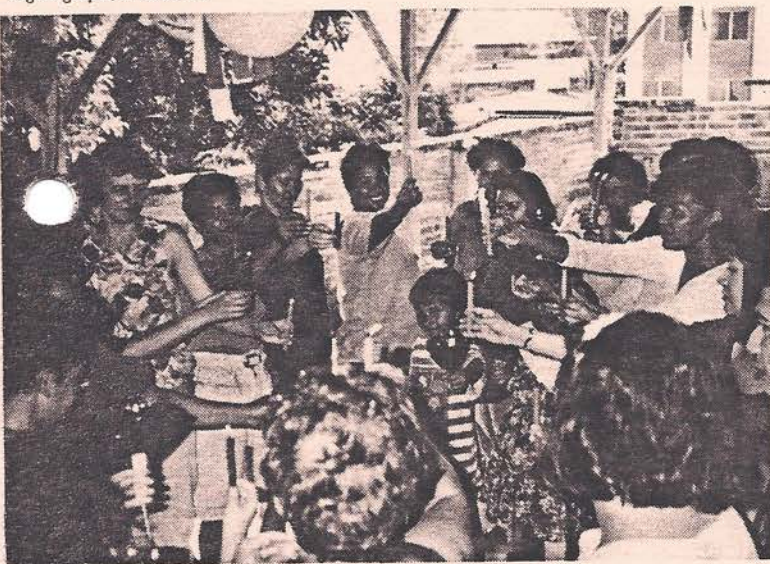
Top: Children of Visitación Padilla sharing massage
Below: Women and children celebrating a ritual in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Tierra Viva—Women and Spirituality

The focus of our September Spirituality Workshop with Tierra Viva in Guatemala was nourishing our body-mind-spirit by reconnecting with the sources of Energy in the Earth and the Heavens. The week-long conference was a first of its kind for women in Guatemala, gathering together Christian theologians, Mayan priestesses, feminists, activists, leaders of grassroots organizations, as well as women who have suffered abuse. Together we flowed with the movements of Tai Chi and bodywork; celebrated Mayan rituals; remembered our ancestors and the martyrs of Guatemala; and honored and appreciated our personal uniqueness and the richness of our differences. Barriers melted away as we recognized our common struggles and strengths as women and dedicated ourselves to healing and building the future.

Women Union Leaders reclaiming their lives

Our CAPACITAR workshop for UITA involved Guatemalan and Salvadoran union leaders connected with food production related to coffee, fish, bananas, chicken, beverages and agricultural products. For the majority of the women this was the first time they had ever taken time for their own bodies and spirits. It was a joy to see the women release the emotion of years of grief and personal pain, and discover the beauty, joy and strength of their own spirits. Sylvia had witnessed the torture of her husband; Sonia, the disappearance of her brother; Ana María was currently receiving death threats for her union work; Domatilla was awaiting radical surgery for a large abdominal tumor. In spite of their many personal problems, the women's first response was how could they share what they had learned with their families and fellow workers.



CAPACITAR empowering the Men of Pepsi Cola

The Guatemala Pepsi Cola Union is a success story in which many of us have participated by our letters of support. After 50 years of struggle to form a union (including death threats, kidnapping of members, etc.) the group won legal status last fall. Within a year the union has grown to include 700 members. Now the Directors see the need to strengthen the family, deal with alcohol abuse and help the personal lives of their members. Our September CAPACITAR workshop included the Directors of the Union, along with their wives and children. The men wish to form support groups to help the men learn how to deal with health problems and the stress of living in a very violent society. This kind of men's group is also a way of addressing gender issues and the problem of machismo in Latin America. When men begin to respect and listen to their own bodies and spirits, they likewise can begin to be more open to respecting the bodies and rights of women.



Above: Union leaders from Guatemala and El Salvador with workshop facilitator Pat Cane



CAPACITAR Workshop for the gay community and their families, Tegucigalpa



CAPACITAR Empowerment Team

We invite you to join our Empowerment Team of monthly donors who help support the work and growth of CAPACITAR. The monthly donor base empowers us to run our local and international programs, develop curriculum and resources for our programs, and run our office at Lake Freedom. The Empowerment Team is invited to special events, retreat days and local training programs. We also need volunteers for the office if you are interested in donating your time and talent. We are currently in the process of filing for our own nonprofit corporation.

Besides our programs in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Chile and Peru, we plan to inaugurate a program in El Salvador in 1995. We are also developing an international team to attend and offer workshops at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in August/Sept. 1995.

CAPACITAR Training Manual

The new 150 page CAPACITAR Manual is now available in Spanish and will be available in English in early January. The Manual is well illustrated with many photos, and includes material on all the techniques used in workshops (Energy, visualization, Tai Chi, Pal Dan Gum, massage, polarity, etc.) plus suggestions for group leaders. To order send in the form.

CAPACITAR Executive Committee: Hilary Bendon, Julianne Boyajian, Teddy Carney, Johanne Christmas, Doris DeVilliers, Alice Godfrey, Diane Klein, Lucia Lopez Hecker, Penny Mann, Suzy Marks, Sr. Mary Ondreyco, Teresa Padilla, Yolanda Provoste-Fuentes, Barbara Richmond, Joan Seybold, Zenaida Velasquez

International Advisors: Guatemala: Marisa Grijalva, Carmen Lucia Pellecer Nicaragua: Sr. Mary Hartman, Anabel Torres Honduras: Gladys Lanza, Alba de Mejia El Salvador: Isabel Ascención Peru: Sr. Magdalena Castro, Nelly Rumprell Chile: Victoria Martinez, Mary Judith Ress Europe: Sr. Mary Litell **CAPACITAR Executive Director:** Pat Cane

We welcome you to become part of our CAPACITAR network. Please return the form below to:

CAPACITAR

3015 Freedom Blvd. Lake Freedom
Watsonville, California 95076
408-761-5893 FAX 408-761-5893 Access Code 761
Pat Cane, Executive Director

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (____) _____ FAX _____

☐ I would like to be part of the CAPACITAR network. Please send me future mailings.

☐ I would like to do volunteer work or join a working committee and can offer the following skills:

☐ Our group _____ is interested in a slide presentation or educational program.

☐ I would like to give a donation of \$ _____

☐ I would like to order _____ CAPACITAR Manuals (Spanish, English). Cost per manual: \$12, plus \$3 for postage and handling.

Make tax-deductible donations payable to:

CAPACITAR-IF

CAPACITAR is sponsored by IF, a Nonprofit Corporation



CAPACITAR-IF

3015 Freedom Blvd. Lake Freedom
Watsonville, CA 95076
408-761-5893

Return Postage Guaranteed
Address Correction Requested

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Freedom, CA 95019
Permit No. 109