



CAPACITAR—Women Planting One Heart

An International Project of Empowerment and Solidarity

CAPACITAR and Planetary Service

The following is an excerpt from a presentation to be given by Executive Director Pat Cane at the Rosenstock Huessy Conference in Hanover, Germany at the end of September.

Thirty years ago German historian-philosopher Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy wrote in his inspiring book Planetary Service: "Only by again saying—each of us—the right word to our neighbor from the bottom of our heart, can broken justice be spoken anew, and the future of our planet be put at ease." He advises us to slow down, to listen, to sacrifice, to enter into "loving participation" across boundaries, because only loving participation will create the bonds between human beings that will knit our planet together in the future. "The Earth demands that we participate, engage ourselves, and join up passionately. The efforts of people serving the planet have to make themselves felt by the next two generations. . ."

CAPACITAR is a project in planetary service, reaching out across borders, serving others with love and with passion. I had not read Planetary Service when I was invited seven years ago to work

on a folkloric festival at a center for popular education in the barrios of Nicaragua. To stay centered and peaceful during long exhausting hours, I practiced Tai Chi and self-acupressure. At one point my Nicaraguan friends said, "Your artwork is great, but when are you going to teach us how to do THAT?" Mindful of the 500 years of domination of Latin America, I had tried hard not to impose on my friends what I thought was my "California culture". However, I realized that what they were hungering to learn came from many ancient cultures, and represented practices to reconnect us with our Higher Self. Listening to my heart and to these people living in the midst of poverty and violence, I desired to reach out and serve, to help heal and make up for what my own government had destroyed by embargos, weapons sales, espionage, political violence and economic policies. I learned from my Central American friends the Spanish word "capacitar", meaning to empower, to encourage, to bring forth, which later became the name of our organization.

CAPACITAR has grown over the last few years to be of service to people in Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Chile, Peru, Brazil, South Africa and the United States. We receive invitations for workshops from many different places and will be participating in the NGO World Forum on Women in China. Our work has focused primarily on women, on those who suffer most from repression and violence, on those who are committed to healing and transforming their own societies. Through our interaction with many remarkable people, we are learning from them the meaning of "planetary service". This kind of service is more than a concept. It is a natural process which unfolds from the heart as we discover what it means to be truly human at this time in our history.

*THE SERVICE DONE FOR PEACE WILL HAVE TO
LAST BEYOND THE SHORT SPAN OF LIFE. . .*

*THE SPIRIT OF PEACE AND THE PEACE OF
THE SPIRIT REQUIRE THAT WE THINK, ACT AND
DECIDE BY OVERCOMING OUR RACE, CLASS AND OUR
SELF-INTEREST. . .*

*AS LONG AS WE DO NOT LISTEN AND SPEAK
AS INHABITANTS OF OUR PLANET, WE HINDER THE
PLANET EARTH FROM COMING INTO ITS OWN. . .*

—ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY



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 involved are empowered to take control of their lives, inspire communities, and struggle for liberation and peace in the world. CAPACITAR connects women through an international network of solidarity, building relationships of cultural and personal understanding. Our name, CAPACITAR, is a Spanish word meaning to empower, to encourage, to bring forth.

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. . .



Planetary Service—A Way into the Third Millennium

Rosenstock-Huessy subtitled his book "A Way into the Third Millennium." From his viewpoint of the long haul of history he suggests some of the characteristics of global service to move us into the future. This service requires a new way of thinking and acting as inhabitants of planet Earth, our common home. "We are part of the Whole. . . This little globe is all that is left. . . Serving the planet is not a tacit habit, and can never become mere routine, you have to start doing it explicitly."

He speaks of moving beyond the personal and territorial borders and boundaries that divide us and provoke wars. "Babies in cradles stretch their arms toward an undivided universe. . . We arrive at our borders in space later. . . Crossing a border will consist in talking freely and opening to one another. . . People have something to say to one another only when they belong to one another or when they have toiled together. . . After working together we can speak together. . . and sing together afterwards."

Planetary service requires a passionate dedication, a sense of risk and self-sacrifice, a giving of our lives and time, and a connection to past and future generations. "War must be replaced by something in earnest. . . It is necessary to sacrifice some period of time, a chapter of your life. . . The world will become a planet only when worldly development is stopped and replaced by loving participation. . . Participating is nothing complex that needs to be developed, but you do need to sow a seed, to declare love, to prove yourself."

Planetary service involves a listening and a "calling into being". By listening to the language of body and soul, we come to recognize the inner callings which move and impel us into action and into greater being. Often we can't see where our humble efforts will lead us. "The future paths toward peace, like all new paths in the beginning are probably very insignificant-looking." This building of the basis for a new future demands patient, slow and unobtrusive work often done without visible gain. "The whole future of our planet depends on making this 'not yet' time to bear fruit. We must learn to live in that strange time after our will and skill have done all they could, in which we await the results." And with great hearts we must long for the possibility!



Left: Congregation Presidents, Provincials and Heads of Formation of CONFREGUA (National Federation of Religious of Guatemala) at a CAPACITAR workshop. On the wall are photos of the martyred religious of Guatemala who have given their lives in loving service. Right: Closing ritual at the Tierra Viva-CAPACITAR June Conference on Spirituality. Above center: Guatemalan and Salvadoran Union leaders who serve communities of banana processors, shrimp packers, and laborers in the food industry of Central America.

CAPACITAR—Learning to SERVE

Much of the service of CAPACITAR involves listening to our souls and bodies, "calling into being" the possibilities, creating bonds, crossing boundaries and empowering each other in the process. In June we worked in Guatemala with hundreds of women and men—religious, the disabled, feminists, psychologists, union leaders—committed to serving their communities and to building the future of their society. Our workshops helped encourage connections and relationships between people who had not worked together in the past.

In Quetzaltenango we met with leaders at workshops hosted by Nuevos Horizontes, a center working with abused women and their children. Petrona, an indigenous woman, has started a school for the children of her community. Enrique, a gynecologist and professor at the medical university wished to serve his patients with greater compassion and teach his students alternative methods of healing. Patricia, a lawyer with the human rights office, talked of bringing a greater sense of peace to her work. Cristobal, president of a federation of Mayan peoples affected by political violence, wanted to teach his people meditation and bodywork skills.

In Guatemala City we facilitated, with the feminist center Tierra Viva, a large conference on spirituality. Tierra Viva has served women for many years through research, publications and workshops on abuse, land issues, human rights, gender and reproductive rights. The leadership came to realize that they could not survive without a deeper spiritual basis for their work, so last September the team of 15 women started practicing daily meditation and Tai Chi. The recent spirituality conference attracted men and women from many backgrounds and reflected the hunger of the people for connecting with their Higher Self and with each other in the midst of the poverty and violence of their lives. One psychologist brought three *niña madres* (child mothers) with their babies. At the closing ritual 12 year-old Maria spoke of how she had come to the conference, feeling so desperate and hating herself. Through the understanding support given her by other participants, she now wanted to reach out and do something for others.

As CAPACITAR continues to cross boundaries and create bonds through our service, we realize that we are the ones who receive so much in return. And in the process we are learning the meaning of planetary service.



Top: Niña madres, 12 and 14 year-old child mothers of Guatemala. Middle: Disabled children and adults of Hogar Nazaret learning how to share massage. Bottom right: Grassroots and indigenous leaders, psychologists, doctors, social workers and people serving different communities in Quetzaltenango



The Deeper Meaning of SERVICE

Marguerite Craig recently participated in a conference on service sponsored by the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Sausalito, CA. The following are comments related to service that she heard from participants and presenters.

❖ Service is different than helping. In helping you use your strength. We serve with our wholeness, and even our darkness can serve. We serve the wholeness in others and in life itself. Helping brings a feeling of satisfaction. Service brings a feeling of gratitude. We can only serve what we are profoundly connected to. Service is the experience of mystery and surrender—Soul work. Fixing and helping are ego work. We cannot help people if we are not willing to serve them. Service rewards the soul. Only service heals.—Naomi Remen M.D.

❖ Service is belonging. Service heals the isolation which is the woundedness of our time. The important thing is sitting in a circle on the ground.—Marion Weber

❖ Service is the most direct expression of our real nature. It is the outward expression of gratitude not encumbered by the little me. The motivation for service has to be altruism... communion plus the common ethic, love one another. Be good to one another. We need to stay humble before the Divine, have an awareness of our place in the whole, relaxing life into service for gratitude of having the choice to serve.—Bo Lozoff

❖ Remember to hold a listening-opening space in your awareness of who a person really is... There is a state at which each person is unlimited. Listen for it—you'll hear it. What you focus on you get, so focus on the full potential.—Lynne Woolf

❖ Service is expressing your unique talents to fulfill needs.—Gangaji



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