

# The Wisdom Box

The Official Newsletter of the Satir Institute of the Pacific

Winter 2009 Issue

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2008—2009

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## Where in the World is Satir?-Voices from many Countries

This edition of the Wisdom box takes us to Singapore, New Zealand, China and Taiwan, The Satir model is being used by individuals and now as Angie Dairou describes by major Corporations . John Banmen tells us how China is embracing the Satir model and requesting training for all their counsellors and psychologists as well as all the prison guards in China. In an interview in this edition Virginia says, “I had an experience once that taught me a lot about how to lead people into scary places. I was in Europe, staying with some friends. I wanted to descend into a cave but was very frightened. My friend said, “I’ll carry the light. If you give me your hand and allow me to lead the way, then maybe we can go down together.” The image of light is found again in this edition in New Zealand as Bronwyn Anderson describes how grief illuminated all the layers of the iceberg” to shine on the true spiritual self”. In this way the participants could focus on the light that their loved ones gave them as opposed to despair. Their memory table was a display of the Love and Light.

That is what Positively Directional goals really means to me- always moving towards the light of the individuals’ soul, so that their yearnings may be met . It is not about making things change on the outside. I see the Satir model as making room for the space between the shadows to let the light shine through.

“Where there is light there is hope.” Madeleine De Little (Editor)



“Where there is light there is hope”-

Painting by Nira Dabush

## The Satir Model in Singapore: As I see it.

*A reflection by Anna Low*

I first started to learn this model about 8 years ago, felt like I had struck “eureka” and went on to do supervision and training in this model. I find that it fits with who I am and the values I hold and how I view the world. So, learning this model actually helped me become more effective professionally and a more congruent me.

Here in Singapore, as I see it, the acceptance of the Satir model among individuals who have learnt it, falls in 3 different categories. The first are those who take to it immediately, practice it and want to keep getting better at using this model. They don’t just use it professionally but also personally as part of their lifestyle and in their interactions and relationship with others. There’s the second group who find it very difficult to grasp and practice this model, and they eventually move on and learn something else. Then there’s the third group that can’t decide – they like what they see the model can do, but are not sure they want to do what it takes to really learn how to use it effectively. They then tend to speak well of it but also tend to admire it from a distance.

I have wondered about this for some time and I have come up with this hypothesis. I chanced upon this line from a Satir Institute of the Pacific Level 1 brochure, *“The process requires that the therapist has a high level of therapeutic competence and congruence.”* Whilst everyone can agree on requiring a “high level of therapeutic competence”, not all can accept the requirement of a “high level of congruence”. For very personal reasons, some of us distance ourselves from our own incongruence. This as I see it, becomes a stumbling block for those in groups 2 and 3 as described in the paragraph above. They then try to focus on just learning the skills and soon experience that that is not enough as they are not willing to go inside (self reflexivity) and move towards congruence. Group 2 becomes discouraged and say the model is difficult to learn. Group 3 becomes intrigued but keeps a distance.

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~~From a cultural perspective, Singapore is a place where quick-fixes are popular. When there are problems, the focus is usually on the practical side of things – tell me how to solve this, my internal experience is not relevant here, solve the problem and I will feel better, i.e. the problem is outside so why ask about my inside. Another challenge is the paradigm shift that is needed to move from the deeply entrenched hierarchical model to what is perceived as “new-age” and therefore highly suspicious growth model.~~

As for academic acceptance of this model as a credible one, it is slow. The model is not part of any university curriculum though we have 2 people (to my knowledge) who have done their Masters thesis on the Model. As for other professionals, I have experienced people saying to me in (my perception) derisive tones, “So, you are a Satir-ian”, or “Satir is just iceberg”, or “Satir is all about feelings”. At the other end of the spectrum, I have also experienced people insisting that they only want to see a Satir therapist and are willing to travel across this island just to see one.

My reflection on this is that each of us must choose what fits best for us. Loyalty to any model is not the point. We must know ourselves and be willing to learn what would help us become more effective with clients - that’s the first, and then, if we would also like the bonus of becoming more fulfilled in our personal lives.

Some news: we are finally on the threshold of having our own registered Singapore Satir Centre. It has taken 10 years since Warren Tan brought John Banmen over to Singapore to teach the Satir Model for us individuals to pool together, and establish the Singapore Satir Centre.

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Need for ongoing supervision support: However, there is another aspect to look at this for those who have found it difficult to learn the model or to practise it – little support is available to them. After the end of a programme, the new graduates have to rely on informal support

and networks as the Satir Centre till now, has existed only in cyber-space (i.e. we have a simple website). I think many of these new graduates also do not have the support of a clinical supervisor who is trained or is at least open to the Satir Model. Facing high demands at their workplace to show results and being not too confident in using the model, they end up dropping it altogether. Although we now have a small pool of trained Satir supervisors in Singapore, these are working professionals who have very little time to provide supervision outside their offices. The recently formed Satir Centre must take up this challenge.

Recognition: And another aspect to look at this is that not many professionals recognise the Satir Model as part of Family Therapy and there is a perception that the model is not sufficiently grounded in family therapy theories for one to choose it as a choice of theory to practice at the workplace. They seem to miss the point that the Satir Model is one of the oldest family therapy models in existence.

Singapore trainers: I want to add the point that Singapore has also started to build its own “stable” of Satir trainers. To the best of my knowledge, there is Warren Tan the Satir pioneer in Singapore and who has been doing training for a number of years in this region; Peh Kim Choo who incorporates the model in her training programmes; Susan Chia who also incorporates the model in leadership and training with the Good Shepherd Sisters internationally and Anna Low who is doing Satir training in Singapore.

The spirit of the Satir Model: I find that the Satir Model is not a static model that died with Virginia. Whilst I agree that our focus must be on helping clients more effectively instead of blind loyalty to any particular model, I find that the Satir Model keeps that focus even as our body of knowledge and understanding of people and healing grow. This is the spirit (thank you, Virginia) of the Model, we “add-on” as we grow. For example, in the personal iceberg metaphor and the mandala, we have a template to look at persons and their internal dynamics and how they use their energies. Is there a limit to knowing and understanding how feelings and for that matter, the other parts of the iceberg, are impacted and how they then impact the person and the chain reaction that follows? No – that body of knowledge is still growing. Virginia has given us templates not “how-to” manuals; we are invited to be in her words, *“co-creators of ourselves. We are given life to begin with, and as a shepherd to ourselves, we co-create what happens.”* So, if these “templates” could be said to have loyalties, I think it’s main one would be to the potential of the person to become more fully human. First things first: As a therapist, I find that I could only have a meaningful appreciation of the model when I interact it with hard questions arising from my own struggles. That is, the essence espoused by the model makes an impact on my own life first, before I attempt to bring it to the therapeutic level with my clients. Many who try to understand the therapeutic use of the model often ask: “What is next after I ask this question? Then what?” The resolution of the issue must be from inside-out. When we reach that point, it no longer matters (at least to me) what we call this ‘model’. The concern of the model is not its own proliferation but the exaltation to honour and give life.

(Anna Low is the founding president of the Singapore Satir Centre. John Banmen)

## Taiwan Satir Center

By Kent Chen

### History and Development

Shiuh-Li Liuh Memorial Foundation (the Foundation) first introduced Dr. Maria Gomori's Satir Model training program into Taiwan in 1991. Considering the similarities between Chinese culture and the spirit of the Satir Model that values humanity and family, the Foundation decided to promote Satir Model in Taiwan by establishing the Taiwan Satir Center to bring in top-notch Satir Model training programs on a continuous basis. The long term objective of this center is to cultivate local professionals so that the Satir Model concepts and Family Therapy can take deep roots in Taiwan.

Through the effort of the Foundation, and other renowned helping professional such as Xing Wang, Feng-Lei Wang, Xu-Ya Lyu, Pei-Xuan Wu, Ming-Ying Chen, Xing-Xia Lin, Min-Hui Lin, Li-Fang Xu, Pei Yang and Yu-Ying Zheng, Taiwan Satir Center was officially established on April 1, 1992.

### Mission Statement

The mission of Taiwan Satir Center is to promote the Satir Model in Taiwan. The Center's work begins with the following assumptions:

Each of us can live in congruence with our unique selves and in harmony with others.

The potential for growth and change is inherent.

Positive evolution personally and globally is not only possible but also essential.

With these assumptions in mind, Taiwan Satir Center will be devoted to helping people in Taiwan to learn Virginia Satir's teaching and to apply it to their daily lives. This mission is to be accomplished through the provision of quality training programs and practice works.

### Work Directions

Taiwan Satir Center will focus on the following:

1. Conducting workshops and seminars to facilitate personal growth and improve family relationships for the general public.
2. Conducting individual and family therapy training programs for the helping professionals.
3. Providing individual and family therapy services.
4. Providing supervision for the helping professionals.
5. Publishing related books and videotapes.

Engaging in research and development of localized family therapy approaches.

### Progress

Up to the end of 2008, Taiwan Satir Center has delivered 330 days of workshops and seminars, with some 12,000 student days of participation from the general public on themes related to personal growth. The Center has also delivered 45 days of short term professional training programs with 2,000 student days, and 160 days of long term professional training programs with 6,000 student days of participation from the professional community. The center has been providing individual counselling and family therapy since 1992, and has published various training manuals and video tapes. Over the years, Taiwan Satir Center has brought in trainers and practitioners with internal reputation to conduct the training programs, and has developed many local talents to accomplish its mission.

### International Professional Trainers

The three main international trainers that come to Taiwan are: Maria Gomori, from Manitoba, Canada, John

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Banmen from British Columbia, Canada and Marie Lam from Hong Kong, China. They usually come on the average of twice each year. Marie Lam has also been the translator for both for over ten years. We really appreciate their contribution to the growth of the Satir Model in Taiwan.

### Local Professional Trainers

Luckily we also have excellent local professional trainers. These include Feng-Lei Wang, Di cheng, Kai-Min Lee, Gui-Fang Chen and Qi-Feng Hai. They provide workshops, supervision and counselling services. Many, many others are providing counselling services and workshops outside the Taiwan Satir Center as well as offer some courses at various universities. We also have some master's thesis and doctoral dissertations about the Satir Model. (One example is Dr. Yang Pei's article in the *Satir Journal*, volume 2, issue1, pp. 55 -107).

### Satir Model Publications

We have also printed some teaching resources.

1. Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Counselling Practicum Workbook, edited by John Banmen and translated by Marie Lam.
2. Technique of the Satir Model Iceberg Metaphor, edited by John Banmen and translated by Marie Lam.
3. The Iceberg Metaphor Poster in English and Chinese.

The Temperature Reading Poster in English and Chinese.



Maria Gomori



John Banmen

## From The Inside Out - Take 2

Alas, alack the clocks have moved forward. YET AGAIN!

Aticking and atocking life moments away.

What will I be in this moment? My story or myself?

I'm lulled into nothingness between these two states by a soporific wave;

NOTHINGNESS - where all things come.

Today, my psyche cajoles, calls softly, urging the discovery of my YEARNINGS.

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.....One does.....and the rest respond in this dance of connectivity.

Like jewels splashing forth, blessed are we all as we stand at the portal of this intra psychic transformation.

The End

Jean de Bruyne  
Auckland, New Zealand

Dec 08

## Life Reaching Out To Life

### A conversation with Virginia Satir.

This is part of an interview Satir had with Richard Simon, presently the editor of the *Psychotherapy Networker*. Printed in *The Common Boundary*, Vol. 3, Issue I, 1985.

**Q.** *I (Richard Simon) have had the opportunity to watch your work several times and what stands out is how you create a therapeutic world in which ordinary resistance does not seem to exist. How do you understand your ability to get people, whom other therapists consider unbudgeable, to make changes in their lives?*

**A.** Some therapists think people come into therapy not wanting to be changed: I don't think that's true. They don't think they can change. Going into some new, unfamiliar place is a scary thing. When I first begin to work with someone, I am not interested in changing them. I am interested in finding their rhythms, being able to join with them, and helping them go into those scary places. Resistance is mainly the fear of going somewhere you have not been.

I had an experience once that taught me a lot about how to lead people into scary places. I was in Europe, staying with some friends. I wanted to descend into a cave but was very frightened. My friend said, "I'll carry the light. If you give me your hand and allow me to lead the way, then maybe we can go down together." Now look at the decisions I had to make. I had to choose to allow him to lead me. That was something I was willing to do because I was interested in getting down there. Unless he had been willing to give me his hand and unless his hand felt trustworthy, I would not have gone.

When people come to see me, I don't ask them if they want to change. I just assume they do. I don't tell them what's wrong with them or what they ought to do. I just offer them my hand, literally and metaphorically. If I can convey to the person that I am trustworthy, then we can move and go to the scary places.

**Q.** *Do you ever come across people, who, for whatever reason, will not take your hand?*

**A.** Very seldom. When I am completely harmonious with myself, it is like one light reaching out to another. At the outset, it is not a question of "I will help you." It is simply a question of life reaching out to life. All life talks to life when it is in a harmonious state. If my ego is involved or if I need them to get well, then it is a different story. This is one of the secrets of what I do, if there is a secret.

**Q.** *So if you are in pretty good shape with yourself, the first step with a client is never a problem.*

**A.** Let me elaborate. If you and I meet at a revolving door which only has room for one, we have to decide who will go first. In going first, I have to go on the faith that my energies translate in a positive way to the other person and that they follow. Now once we get outside, I say, "Where do you want to go?" I no longer set the direction. I need to find out where they want to go.

Being asked that question shocks many people. They cannot believe that anybody really wants to know the direction in which they want to go. They keep rationalizing, justifying, questioning, and so on. Finally, they decide, "Yeah, I believe she really does want to go in the direction I want to go." Then we take the steps. We can walk five steps and see how it is: whether it really fits. If not, then we see what else we want to do. The big problem in whether or not somebody continues to take your hand is whether or not your hand is sending dominating messages. As a therapist, I am a companion. I try to help people tune into their own wisdom. Of course, all this doesn't fit much in a psychotherapeutic theory.



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**Q.** *You clearly prefer not to discuss therapy in a technical or professional language. Whenever I have heard you speak, I have been impressed with the spiritual appeal you make to people. You speak the language of hope.*

**A.** I think one of the most important things I do for people is give them some kind of hope for themselves. But it is not only in relation to me that they get their hope, it is in relation to seeing more clearly what they have.

**Q.** *What about your own spiritual beliefs? Many people think of you as a kind of apostle of the religion of human potential. Does it go beyond that for you?*

I try to help people see what is right in front of their faces. What is obvious to me is that we did not create ourselves. Egg and sperm do that job. All we do is activate the opportunity for those two things to get together. Realizing that puts you in a place where you know that life is something inside of you. You did not create it. Once you understand that, you are in a spiritual realm. That does not mean “religion” in the usual sense. The physicists know about this. More and more I am seeing that the physicists and the good theologians know what the basic life force is all about. It is something you can call “spirit,” “soul,” or whatever you want. In any case, it is there and the only thing that really changes people is when they get in contact with their life force. That is the essence of self-worth.

**Q.** *Do you think this perspective or belief system is influencing the field of psychotherapy?*

**A.** Oh yes, especially in the current interest in the right brain and how it works. You see, a long time ago, people knew there was access to a person, though not through the usual channels. At one time, it was called “mesmerism”, then “hypnotism.” That is where Freud started out. All those words really refer to accessing the right brain. Thanks to Buckminster Fuller and other people, we now know that the right brain is a residual for all the information that there is in life. Today, hypnotherapists, parapsychologists, psychics, some physicists, and those who are studying death are coming together in the knowledge that there are levels of knowing beyond our linear understanding. One therapist who obviously used these ideas was Milton Erickson. He accessed the right brain all the time, which helped people to get to some new places. What was called “psychic phenomena” yesterday is the same as what many people call “hypnosis” today. It is not that there is something over here called “hypnotism, something over there called “biofeedback,” and something called “out-of-body experiences.” All these are manifestations of the same thing.

**Q.** *But would you ever refer to what you do in therapy as “hypnotic?”*

**A.** No, but I know that it is. What am I doing? I am accessing the right brain when I ask somebody how they feel and when I help them to connect with parts of their body. I am engaging in what the hypnotist would call a “trance” or an altered state.

**Q.** *Even though you would not, I have heard Richard Bandler and John Grinder talk about your work as a form of very powerful hypnosis. Supposedly you are one of the models for Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP). What do you think of NLP as a translation of what you do?*

**A.** Let me put it this way. If I look at an orange, I have many ways of describing it. I can describe it in terms of its uses, its color, its form. I can also just eat the orange. With that analogy, what I think Richard and John did is make a left-brain analysis of my work related to psycho-linguistics. It was another level of looking at something. When I first met them, I was very excited about what they were doing. But I would not want to learn NLP, if you want to know the truth. I am not sure I could learn it. The part that bothers me about NLP is where practitioners take it as the end all and be all and forget the heart and soul of people involved. For me, any process that leaves out the heart and soul of an individual has the danger of reinforcing what I consider the “scourge” (misfortune) in our society, touching the surface, instead of the core.



## Continued from page 8

**Q** *You seem to have a curious position in the family therapy field today. While various surveys of practitioners cite you as one of the most influential forces on their work you don't seem to be involved in the field any longer?*

**A** Some time ago I decided to stop going to any of the professional big meetings. The competitiveness and the bullfights got to be too much for me. Listening to people talk, I began to feel it was not professional to care about people.

Dec 08

## From The Inside Out – Take 2

Alas, alack the clocks have moved forward. YET AGAIN!

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I breathe deeply and plunge down into my depths meeting parts of ME that I had ignored, tolerated, disliked even.

We begin the re acquaintance like shy teenagers, each tentative about making the first move.

.....One does.....and the rest respond in this dance of connectivity.

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The End

Jean de Bruyne

Auckland, New Zealand



**Grief, Loss and Change: Opportunities for Transformation**  
***A Two Day Professional Development/Personal Growth Course***

based on the Satir Model of Systemic Transformational Change

**December 6-7, 2008**

**Wellington, New Zealand**

**Designed and facilitated by Anne K. Morrison**

***A Participant's Testimonial.....***

**By Bronwyn Anderson**

**Psychologist, Trainer**

**Wellington, New Zealand**

It was with great excitement that a group of 14 Satir enthusiasts gathered on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> December to work with Anne Morrison again. This was a long-awaited day for us to continue with our Satir training as we had all, bar two people, worked with Anne during our Level 1 training. There were three participants from the Level 1 training Anne had just finished, and the rest of us had waited for this for just over a year since our Level 1 Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy training. We had two people who had travelled up from the South Island, and one who had come down from the top of the North Island.

We truly are a growing and close Satir community in New Zealand.

Once again our faith in Anne as a brilliant trainer and therapist and our belief in the transformational effectiveness of the Satir model were confirmed. We quickly formed a close bond with those we had not met before, and moved into a calm and safe place for exploring our grief through the Satir model.

The theme of light was carried through our two days, and I particularly loved the idea of grief illuminating through all layers of the iceberg to shine on the true spiritual self. This is such a positive spiritual way of considering grief. A new way for many of us I think. As we grew inside in our understanding and felt lighter all the while, we were able to focus more and more on the light our loved and lost ones gave us rather than our despair over their loss.

Special lines I noted include: "We are our own lighthouse with our self lighting up the rooms of our lighthouse. We carry our own light." With this in mind I so look forward to being able to use this metaphor with clients, and asking them, "Which rooms are more lightly lit than others? Which could do with more light in them?"

I do not think I was alone in having the exciting revelation that grief has many positive aspects to it, e.g. the discovery of what is really precious to us. Some new ways of languaging the stages of grief, e.g. protest rather than resistance or denial, were particularly pertinent for me, and I look forward to using them in my work. I think everyone loved the analogy of a path through the forest, and it was so satisfying to be using the iceberg metaphor again, this time focusing on working with grief. Many of us found that we were able to resolve some underlying grief we had not previously been able to name, and some of us had very obvious grieving to process. Seeing Anne work with gentleness and persistence with those in despair was very humbling and awe-inspiring. We all had the opportunity to honour and share loved ones who had passed on during our last day with a memory table. This was so special for everyone.

We have been left with a more profound sense of inner peace, much resolution of grief, a comprehensive workbook, and a hunger for more Satir training with Anne. Roll on Level 11 in January 2010.

Thank you Anne from the very bottom of our hearts, and our icebergs!

The *Memory Table* included pictures, symbols, and memories that participants co-created into a beautiful display of the Love and Light they experienced through loved ones they had lost through death, separation, or divorce. The following is a brief poem, that one of our participants shared, in gratitude for the healing effect of sharing the Light that came through loss:

## **T h e   M e m o r y   T a b l e**

Memories renewed by images of past lives. Evoking feelings of –

grief and relationships

sadness and love

hurt and healing

loss and fond memories

pain and growth

illumination and understanding

The gifts given by friends and family, and shared with those who cared

Submitted by:

**Lois Meneer**

**Management Consultant**

**Hamilton, New Zealand**

## Experiencing Level One Satir Training

By Bronwyn Russo, Masters Counselling student, Sydney, Australia

In November and December 2008, Anne Morrison and Linda Lucas travelled to Island Bay, New Zealand to conduct the second Level I Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Training Programme. It involves 12 full days of intensive training spaced over 3 weeks within a beautiful retreat setting at the Home of Compassion, Island Bay, New Zealand.

Last year, Linda and Anne co-conducted the first ever Level I programme for New Zealand which was a resounding success; this year, the training was also very well received. With this New Zealand base of growing trainees, Anne will be returning to New Zealand to conduct the first Level II training programme in January, 2010.

The following is our first Australian's student's perspective on what this training means for her. Bronwyn Russo is a growing counsellor who is now undertaking graduate training in Sydney Australia. She was so excited by our training programme, and by the experiential growth she experienced, that she wanted to share her joy with all of us. She is keen to help bring our Satir training to Australia. Bronwyn sent me this email as she flew back to Sydney, Australia:

"Before coming to Satir training level I, I was inspired by watching a video of Virginia Satir working with a family. This video was shown as part of one of my graduate school classes. I read as many books as I could get my hands on regarding the Satir method of counselling. However, in participating in the experience of what is termed 'Level I Satir Transformational Change' Training, I encountered two women who embodied a life connecting, free way to be.

I discovered that not only was this experience a freeing connecting one for myself as a trainee counsellor but a wonder filled porthole to a new way of being that is available for all people to enjoy. As a result of encountering the 'trainers' Anne and Linda and experiencing this new way of being, I feel a strength of Self/

I feel happy about that; I perceive the world as offering expansive opportunities for myself and everyone in it.

I expect to encounter growth opportunities and embrace the joy of continued unfolding connection with myself and others. This speak so fully to every yearning I have: to love, to experience being loved, to experience freedom, to experience peace, and to experience meaning, being connected as a whole being with myself.

I cannot recommend the experience more highly for anyone who is seeking to **live** in this world. And the most exciting piece for me is that there is still more!.... I look forward to further experiencing **Life** through level 2 and 3 and any other 'trainings' available.

Take a step, take Level I training and allow yourself an *opportunity to grow!*

***Wishing for you the freedom and wholeness I found,***



## 尊敬 纯洁 寧靜 和諧

### *A Tea Poem*

*A work by Melissa Huff*

*Chado - The Way of Tea*

*(Harmony, Respect, Purity and Tranquillity)*

### *Harmony*

*between ourselves and nature,  
between all the different aspects of our surroundings,  
between nature's seasons and our man-made environment,  
between us and other people. Harmony never means that everything becomes alike. The point  
is to achieve a balanced relationship, not between things which are identical, but between  
things which are complementary. Harmony with contrast, as in the black ink of the words  
and the space of the white paper. Harmony weaves everything together into an intricate, yet  
oh-so-simple web.*

### *Respect*

*for the moment, for each person, for time, for ourselves, for the objects we use,  
for nature. Respect could be defined as the act of giving particular attention  
to the recipient. In showing respect, we demonstrate our understanding of the  
interconnectedness of all things. And having shown respect, we understand even better why  
it is valued.*

### *Purity*

*of mind (like the clear stream),  
of purpose (has everything unnecessary been swept away?),  
of action (at any one moment, we should be completely focused on the action of that mo-  
ment), of vision (do I see my goal clearly?...). To be pure is to contain nothing that does not  
properly belong; so that we are not weighed down or distracted by that which contributes  
nothing to the good of the whole.*

### *Tranquillity*

*The state of being free from agitation of mind  
and spirit. If we are in harmony with our surroundings and if we respect the moment and  
what it brings us, then we can achieve purity of mind, purpose and action, and thus carry  
with us a state of tranquillity. Tranquillity through the practice of Harmony  
Respect and Purity is ours to choose, and ours to create within ourselves.*

*This poem was read by Jean in NZ*

## Virginia Satir (1916 – 1988)

by Dr. John Banmen

Virginia Satir was born in 1916 in Neilville, Wisconsin, USA. She graduated with her bachelor's degree in education from Wisconsin State University at the age of 20 in 1936. Her first professional career was an elementary school teacher in rural Wisconsin and ended as a school principal. It was in her role as teacher that she found that many of the problems children had in school had a direct correlation to their home life. Her quest to gain further knowledge about children's school success and family member interaction took her to the University of Chicago.

She received her master's degree from the School of Social Service Administration in 1948. It was during this time she began to make formal connections between the individual and family members as systems while working with high risk juvenile girls.

In 1959 Virginia Satir moved from the Chicago area to California where she became a co-founder with Don Jackson and Jules Riskin of the now famous Mental Research Institute of Palo Alto. In 1962, with a grant from NIMH, she started the first ever family therapy training program. By 1964 her ground breaking book *Conjoint Family Therapy* was published, establishing her as a pioneer in working with whole families in a systemic manner.

In 1963 Virginia Satir move on and became the first Director of Training at the Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California. In 1976 the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration awarded her the Gold Medal for "Outstanding and Consistent Service to Mankind". In her life time she received four honorary doctorate degrees, one from the University of Wisconsin. She also received the Distinguished Family Therapy Award from the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Her interest in family-based interventions might go back to her childhood. She tells the story that at age 5 she wanted to be a detective on parents. When she was an elementary school teacher, she would often accompany her students home to meet their parents and help the parents assist their children with their schooling. She was the oldest of five children including a set of twin boys who she was often asked to take care of. Early in life she was curious about people saying one thing and doing another. She said she grew up in a dysfunctional family. All these things might be contributing factors that influenced her drive to make working with families compelling.

Seeing family members together was at that time against the therapeutic "rules" of the day. It was a major break-through to challenge that practice and provide an alternative systemic manner of practicing therapy by seeing the whole family.

Looking back to the contributions of Virginia Satir, one might say that her beliefs provided her with an unshakable confidence that human growth is natural and that family therapy is an effective way of helping people change and grow.

Her system and practice is not magic even though many people see it as magical. She worked at a level of being that included behavior, feelings, perceptions, cognition, expectations and yearning and transformed the energy through connecting people with their life force. She says in *New Peoplemaking* (1988).



*Very early I understood that growth was life force revealing itself, a manifestation of spirit.....it is the realization that we are spiritual beings in human form (pp. 334 – 336).*

Satir saw, taught and practiced intrapsychic and interactive processes, simultaneous as an integrative process.

Her four meta-goals in her positively directional family therapy are:

- raising self-esteem – experiencing one's self-worth, not just feeling good

- becoming a better choice maker – choices that fulfill one's yearnings, living her "five freedoms"

- becoming responsible – responsible for one's internal conscious and sub-conscious process and one's part in relationships with others

- becoming more congruent – this means being integrated, real, genuine, authentic

The five essential elements for transformational change in her therapy model are:

- therapy is experiential

- therapy is systemic

- therapy is positively directional

- therapy is change focused

- therapy is based on the use of Self of the therapist.

Before Virginia Satir died in 1988, she had established the Avanta Network in

1977 to ease her training load and to provide her with a cadre of trainers to assist her with the many training requests she could not fulfill. Since then from the mid 1980's numerous Satir Institutes have emerged in numerous countries in Europe, Asia and North America. These provide training opportunities in the Satir Model, now therapeutically often called *Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy*. Recently a *Satir Journal* was launched and several new books and video tapes have been added to the books Satir wrote and co-authored.

Now twenty years after Virginia Satir's death, many of the best Satir Model trainers never had the opportunity to meet her and yet are as enthusiastic and competent as those of us who studied with her. It would please her to no end.

Banmen, J. (ed.) (2008). *In Her Own Words....Virginia Satir*. Phoenix, AZ: Zeig, Tucker and Theisen, Publishers.

Banmen, J. (ed) (2008). *Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc.

Satir, V., Banmen, J. Gerber, J., and Gomori, M. (1991). *The Satir Model: Family Therapy and Beyond*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc.

Satir, V. (1988). *The New Peoplemaking*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc.

## Book Review

**Satir Family Camp, *An Intentional Community* by Elsa Ten Broeck M.S.W., Mary D. Garrison L.C.S.W.**

*Review by Angie Dairou*

Satir Family Camp is the story of Virginia Satir's experiment of creating an intentional community. In 1977 Virginia created an opportunity for families to live together in the wilderness for a week with the purpose of becoming more fully human. Participants in the family camp took part in both traditional camp activities such as hiking and campfires as well as personal process activities such as process groups and temperature readings.

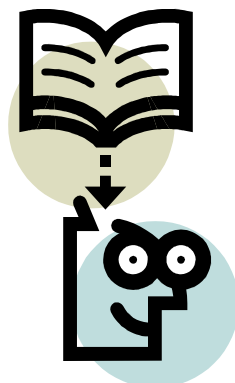
As an organizational development consultant and as a member of a Satir community for more than 8 years, I found this book to be *compelling*. It is written in two voices, one, which tells many amusing stories of the people and challenges which occurred at the camp and another, which describes the various stages of community development through the camp's 30-year history.

What was most interesting to me was the honesty with which this book has been written. According to the authors, "What makes us succeed as a community is that we look at our dark side and shine a light on it. We also work very hard to deal with our dark side. We keep learning and each time we go through a struggle on a community level we get stronger as individuals and as a community". I was relieved to find an authentic portrayal of Virginia, including her tendency to have "favourites" which led to a dynamic of inclusion and exclusion within the group.

In 1984, Virginia ended her relationship with the camp to commit to other projects. I was most impressed with how this community not only survived the loss of her leadership, but also seemed to find it's own more efficient and authentic way of operating through long term patience, commitment and perseverance.

This book is an entertaining account of the participants of the camp, a good model of community development, but most importantly, it is an historical account of how one group of people succeeded in developing a movement after the loss of a charismatic leader, something that is an anomaly in the field of organizational change.

Satir Family Camp is available directly from the publisher: Science and Behavior Books, Inc.



## Advertising and Classified Ads in *The Wisdom*

The **Wisdom Box** is now accepting classified ads and regular advertising. Here is our policy.

Advertising is welcome. The *Satir Institute of the Pacific* reserves the right to reject advertisements which do not meet the general purpose of the organization. Send all copies, payments and inquiries to the Editor. A cheque payable to the *Satir Institute of the Pacific* must accompany your copy.

### Display advertising rates:

- w Full page — \$50
- w Half page — \$25
- w Quarter page — \$12

### Classified advertising:

The cost for professional related items such as office rentals, items for sale, equipment needs, supervision etc. for up to 3 lines are free for members and \$1 per line for others.

If possible, please forward articles and advertisements via e-mail

attachment (in Word for Windows format) and/or computer disc, camera ready, for the Editor at the address listed below.

### Attention Advertisers:

The *Wisdom Box* is published four times per year: Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring. the next **deadline** for submission will be March 15th 1009

Please submit any articles, ideas, gossip, poems or anything else to the Editor.

mdelittle@shaw.ca

## It is time to renew your Membership

\$50 membership

\$60 for three *Satir* journal editions. \$75 for non members

<http://www.satirpacific.org/membership/documents/Membership>

### Wisdom Box Production Team

Madeleine De Little Editor

**mdelittle@shaw.ca**

Cindi Mueller, Distribution

### Address Change ??

If you have changed or are about to change your address or e-mail

Don't forget our website!!!

**[www.satirpacific.org](http://www.satirpacific.org)**

## Satir Training Programs

**Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Level III** with Linda Lucas and Dr. John Banmen

Attachment Issues with At-Risk Adolescents: Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy and Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy Model

February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 1st, 2009 9 am – 5 pm **NOW REGISTERING**

**Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Level III** with Kathlyne Maki-Banmen

Family Reconstruction Using The Satir Model

April 18 & 19, 2009 9 am – 5 pm **NOW REGISTERING**

**Satir Institute of the Pacific Special Event**

**(Also applicable to STST Level III)**

Premarital and Remarital Counselling with Dr. William J. Hiebert, D. Min., Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist,, Rock Island, Illinois, USA

May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31st, 2009 9 am – 5 pm **NOW REGISTERING**

All Satir and non-Satir helping professionals are welcome!

**The Summer Intensive: Advanced 8 Day Practicum in Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy**

With Dr. John Banmen & Kathlyne Maki-Banmen

**NOW REGISTERING**

July 3 – July 10, 2009 Rosemary Heights Retreat Centre, South Surrey, B.C., Canada

**Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Level I-8 Day Residential Summer Intensive Training**

July 13 – July 20, 2009 Rosemary Heights Retreat Centre, South Surrey, B.C., Canada

With Kathlyne Maki-Banmen & Anne Morrison

**NOW REGISTERING**

**Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Level II** with Kathlyne Maki-Banmen, Guest faculty: Dr. John Banmen

September 19 & 20; October 24 & 25; November 21 & 22, 2009; January 9 & 10; February 6 & 7, 2010

Location: 13686 – 94A Street, Surrey, BC

**NOW REGISTERING**

**Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy Level I** with Kathlyne Maki-Banmen & Linda Lucas; Guest Faculty: Dr. John Banmen

September 26 & 27; October 31 & November 1; November 28 & 29, 2009; January 16 & 17; February 13 & 14, 2010

Location: 13686 – 94A Street, Surrey, BC

**NOW REGISTERING**

**For program information**, contact Cindi Mueller, Administrative Assistant, at

604-634-0572 or [admin@satirpacific.org](mailto:admin@satirpacific.org) or check the SIP website at [www.satirpacific.org](http://www.satirpacific.org)

### **Satir Transformational Systemic Theory Level III**

#### **Attachment Issues with At-Risk Adolescents: Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy and Dyadic Developmental**

#### **Psychotherapy Model**

*with*

**Linda Lucas, LCPC, Clinical Professional Counsellor**

*and*

**Dr. John Banmen, RPsych, RMFT Psychologist and Family Therapist**

February 28th and March 1st, 2009 9 am - 5 pm

sponsored by

**Satir Institute of the Pacific, Dr. John Banmen, Director of Training**

#### **Program Description**

Over the next year, 2008 / 2009, SIP will offer a variety of two day weekend workshops on therapeutic topics using the Satir Model. These will include working with grief, childhood sexual abuse, at risk adolescents, and marriage preparation. As the weekends are confirmed, they will be announced in the Wisdom Box and on the SIP website at [www.satirpacific.org](http://www.satirpacific.org).

#### **Program Prerequisites**

Participants of STST Level I training programs are all invited to attend the workshops.

Location TBA

Certificates of attendance for each two day workshop will be issued by SIP. In order to receive a STST Level III graduate level certificate, participants must:

1. Have successfully completed a STST Level II training program or equivalent (at the discretion of Dr. John Banmen, Director of Training).
2. Have a Master's degree or equivalent (or special permission from Dr. John Banmen, Director of Training)
3. Complete a minimum of 5 of the 8 two-day weekend workshops in a period of 24 consecutive months.
4. Complete a written case study of one of their client cases dealing with one of the topics from one of the attended workshops.

STST Level II programs may be taken concurrently with STST Level III. Participants wishing to receive a STST Level III graduation certificate must have completed STST Level II before

completing the 5 required weekend workshops for the STST Level III program.

#### **Program Registration**

To register for the STST Level III weekends:

1. Complete the registration form for each weekend and submit the registration fee with your form.
2. The cost of each weekend will be \$150 for SIP members and \$165 for non-members in Canadian funds.
3. Please ensure that you have checked "yes" to apply the workshop towards your completion of the STST Level II requirements.

Discovering Life:  
 Healing the Impacts of  
 Childhood Sexual Abuse  
 Using Satir  
 Transformational Systemic  
 Therapy  
 with  
**Anne Morrison, MSW, RSW, RMFT**  
 Individual, Couple and Family Therapist  
 and  
**Dr. John Banmen, RPsych, RMFT**  
 Psychologist and Family Therapist  
**January 31 & February 1, 2009**  
**9am - 5pm**  
 sponsored by:  
**Satir Institute of the Pacific**  
**Dr. John Banmen, Director of Training**

*Postponed-until  
 September  
 26th-27th  
 September 2009*

The Satir Institute of the Pacific Clinical Evenings

Clinical members of the Satir Institute of the Pacific are invited to attend the clinical evenings beginning this fall.

These are important for the continued growth and development of Satir clinical members.

Presenters will share their knowledge of their respective fields.

Sessions will be held at the Satir Institute of the Pacific 13686 94A Avenue, Surrey, BC.

If you have any questions please contact Linda Prochaska at lprochaska@shaw.ca or (604) 879-6654.

To register: send your name, address, telephone number and e-mail along with \$10.00 per evening to

Cindi Mueller, Admin. Assistant

Satir Institute of the Pacific

13686 94A Ave. Surrey, BC V3V 1N1

Future sessions: tentative dates: January 15, April 16, and June 18, 2009

*In Progress*



### SIP Board of Directors is Seeking a Director of Membership Services:

Would you volunteer to support our members, help them to connect with one another and invite new people into our Satir community?

Duties are based on creating strong relationships with current members and welcoming new ones.

Skills and Attitudes needed: Congenial, and networking ability. Locally based in the Greater Vancouver or surrounding areas. Some administrative skills to manage membership lists/ new member applications/ needed.

Time Commitment: approx 6 hours per month.



### Why Join the board?

The SIP board of Directors is a diverse team of people working together to grow personally as well as to support the institute in becoming a world leader in The Satir Model. The most recent board retreat included a sweat lodge, drumming, strategic planning, creative dialogue and some operations management. Come join us to get experience on an executive board, support the institute and connect with like minded people.

Please contact Angie Dairou for a job description and for more information: [angiedairou@yahoo.ca](mailto:angiedairou@yahoo.ca)

On a last note. As Valentines Day is here, I thought I would surround my note with hearts

I have to go into a huge meeting next week with professionals and family members on a First Nations Reserve. I have been told by the organizers to tell the parents of the children I have seen for four years what they need to do in order for their children to be handed back to them from the ministry. I have been asked to describe the impact their behaviours has had on the children. This has not been sitting well with me for weeks. Last night I asked myself what would Virginia Satir have done? She would have found such a beautiful, respectful way for the family themselves to see what is happening and to experience different ways of being as a family. And that my dear reader is exactly what I am going to do as well. I will let you know how it went in the next edition.

To you all have a wonderful time as winter merges into spring. I will see you all in the next Spring Edition of the Wisdom Box.

MDL

## Satir Institute of the Pacific Clinical Evenings

### Nov 13, 2008

Pauline Mullaney presented at the first clinical evening on the topic of Working with the Family of a Child with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) using the Satir Transformational Model.

She gave an overview of ADHD symptoms, common struggles, assessment and use of the Satir model in a case study. Pauline uses the Satir iceberg, genogram, sculpting etc. to determine how people cope with their situation and how to plan for the future. Education about ADHD is most important but so is practical support. Pauline led a lively interaction with the clinical members. In the future she will present at another evening along with Enrique Montes on ADHD.

### January 15, 2009

Bianca Rucker's presentation and discussion of The Satir Approach to Sexuality and Intimacy was quite interesting. She looked at goals for positive intimate sex (congruent with the Satir Model), sexual history-taking, factors that affect quality of the sexual experience, h

### Coming Soon

**April 16, 2009 7:00 pm** with Bonnie Mason presenting

**June 18, 2009 7:00 pm** (speaker to be announced)

The clinical evenings will be held at:

The Satir Institute of the Pacific in the Phoenix Centre

13686-94A Ave. Surrey, BC. (East of King George Highway-turn at Dairy Queen- across from Surrey Memorial Hospital south entrance. There is a florist shop at front of the Phoenix building and secure door on west side for entry)

**Cost per evening is \$10.** Please register early so sufficient refreshments can be purchased.

I would like to hear what topics you would be interested in learning about/presenting on and how often you would like the clinical evenings to take place. Originally the plan was to have four per year but that could change depending on your input. I would like to hear from you.

**To Register:** Call or e-mail Cindi Mueller at the SIP 604-634-0572 [admin@satirpacific.org](mailto:admin@satirpacific.org)

**Questions or comments about the Clinical evenings:** Call Linda Prochaska at 604-879-6654 or e-mail to [lprochaska@shaw.ca](mailto:lprochaska@shaw.ca)