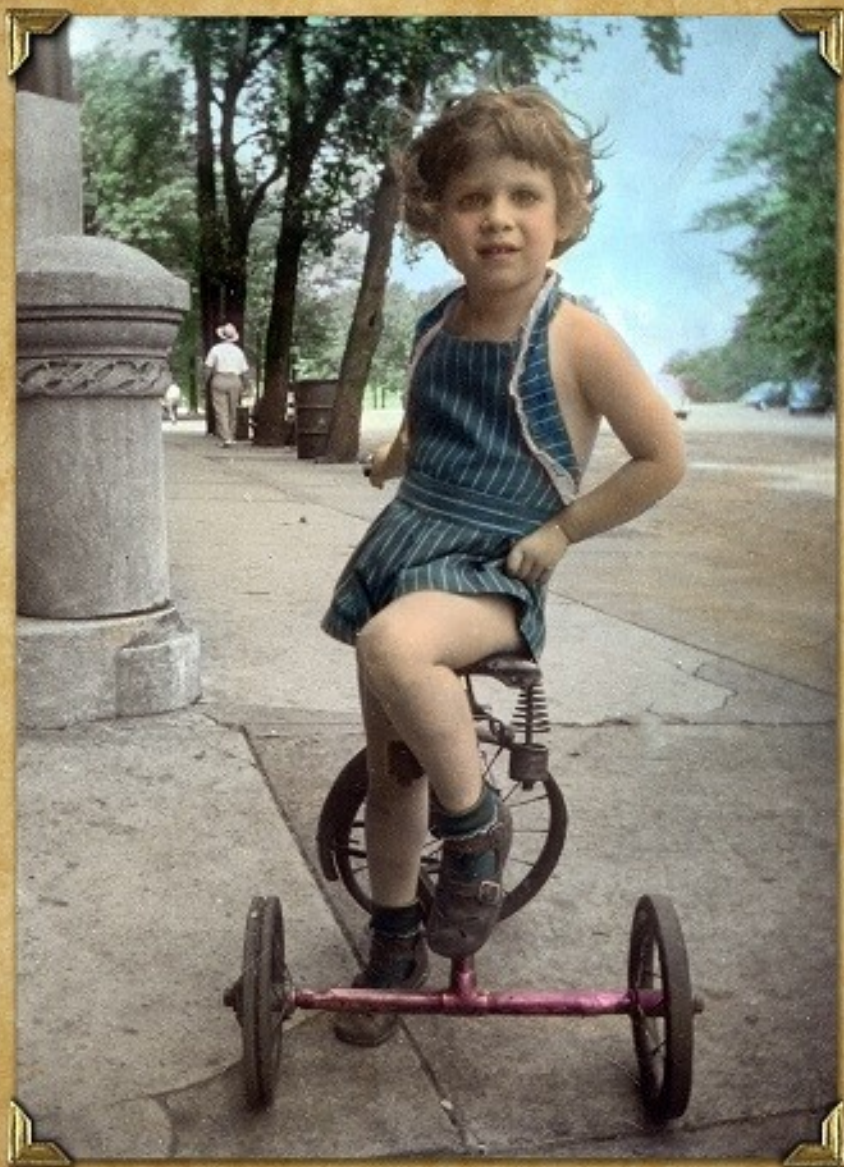


Journeys

Finding my Inner Orca and Raven



A Memoir by Phyllis Selinker

JOURNEYS

Finding My Inner Orca and Raven

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Front Cover Photo:

An early journey: Phyllis at age 3, Philadelphia

Back Cover Photos:

Phyllis arriving by float plane at Friday Harbor, 1986

“Willow” sailing in Princess Louisa Inlet, 1987

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Prologue
OF ORCAS AND RAVENS

*Sooner or later we must realize there is no station,
no one place to arrive at once and for all.
The true joy of life is the trip.*

—ROBERT J. HASTINGS

I have always been a planner. I am in love with spiral notebooks of all sizes as well as yellow narrow-ruled legal pads in both the 8.5x11 version and the 5x7 smaller one. I must have calendars: one for my purse, one for my desk, and one for the wall in the hall. I learned at an early age that in order to achieve my goals, especially Big Goals, I would need to make plans. And I found that I would have more chance of success if I wrote those plans down on paper and perhaps gave myself some dates to achieve them.

From the time I was ten and throughout much of my adult life, I looked to the future, trying to meet the goals I had set or trying to figure out what new goals I needed. Planners rarely look back at what has come before. Even my photographs lay in assorted boxes, never put into albums to make for easy reminiscing and reflection. Writing an autobiography or memoir was not among my plans. I anticipated that if I became ill with something that might abruptly shorten my life, I would spend every day living life

to the fullest and enjoying memories from my past with my loved ones.

But I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease—an unwelcome thief that not only robs you of a long future but also vandalizes your past. When my daughter-in-law Melanie asked me to write down some stories about my life, I felt compelled to do so before my memories disappeared altogether.

I started writing about my travels to exciting places, thinking that to be the most interesting part of my life. Initially I omitted everything about being an attorney. But as I wrote and revised, I found that I could not isolate my trips from the circumstances which gave rise to my passion to travel nor the lessons learned from traveling which affected other aspects of my life.

At times I doubted that my memories were accurate. Many memoirists deal with this issue, not just those who receive a diagnosis of memory loss. But it seemed like the more I wrote, the more I remembered. Photos, letters and postcards, boat logs, newspaper articles, and the internet helped the writing process, and at times I sought corroboration from others. At a point I stopped over-worrying and became content with presenting my remembered truth. It has been an arduous process, taking many years to complete.

In the retrospection that is critical to memoir, I found that most of the threads that make up the tapestry of my life were silver and gold—a life filled with adventures, successes, and joys. Some threads were dark—unanticipated failures, setbacks, and disappointments. I saw my past and

present as a series of journeys, each very different from the others and posing unique challenges, teaching different lessons and providing different joys, but all threads that make up my particular life tapestry.

I have been inspired by two other “journeys” (coincidentally by people with the same last name): a serigraph by Northwest Coast artist Marvin Oliver entitled “Journey” and a poem by Mary Oliver called “The Journey.”

Marvin Oliver's beautiful embossed serigraph of an emerging raven in the dorsal fin of an orca hangs on my bedroom wall so that I can see it daily when I wake up. It was a farewell gift from the Board of Directors of Snohomish County Legal Services when I retired from my position as Executive Director in July 1999. After I began writing about my own journeys, I researched North Coast legends and stories and came to see the Orca and the Raven as symbols of various aspects of my life.

Orca, or killer whale, is said to symbolize family unity and community, traveling in family groups called pods. I have witnessed these large but sleek black and white creatures ply the waters of Puget Sound and the Johnstone Strait, marveling at how they keep their families together during their long passage. The love of my family has been the greatest source of my strength from the time of my childhood to the present day. Like the orca calf swimming in its pod, I was nurtured by the love of my large, extended Fox and Namm families, and was protected from those harms it was possible to protect against. As I grew older I built my own family—first small, ever growing—and it is my

most important treasure. I also had a very strong need for community, not only during the sixteen years that I lived communally with people unrelated to me, but also when I was a teenager, in my professional life, and in facing a devastating disease.

Orca is a popular symbol for romance because it mates for life. Romance plays an important part in my journeys. When Charlie and I were married in 1994 after fifteen years of being together, the wedding rings we had made for one another had an orca engraved on them, as well as an image of our sailboat and Glacier Peak where we hiked. Our travels together, whether in our sailboat or later to Europe, have kept our marriage full of romance and adventure.

Orca is known as the guardian of the sea and guardian of travel, offering protection to those who travel away from home and leading them back when the time comes. I have been blessed with amazing opportunities to travel in my lifetime, not just as a tourist for short periods of time, but as one who could taste what life is like in other cultures for three months to a year at a time.

Orca symbolizes longevity. When I was much younger I believed that I would not live beyond age 35. Indeed there were some big trials when I developed meningitis at age 11 and malaria at age 19, and then hemorrhaged in childbirth at age 26. But I was pleasantly surprised when I awoke on my 35th birthday and I am now twice past that at 70+, so Orca is bringing me longevity as well.

Other Orca traits include kindness, intelligence, harmony, and compassion— helping people in need whether

helpless or wounded. Those are traits to which I aspire. My professional life as an attorney and a mediator has been to resolve conflict and my being drawn to the practice of Compassionate Listening after retirement stems from my great desire for harmony.

Raven, on the other hand, is often described as “the trickster” in Native American mythology. At first I didn't see how that applied to my life. But I learned that one can also view Raven as symbolizing creation, change, and adaptability—the courage to try new things and to be unafraid of the little known. Raven reminds us that the world has many faces and is full of surprises, and that every person sees the world in a different way from another. When I look back at my life in that light, Raven seems appropriate. I have had my share of opportunities to create, to change, to take risks, to adapt. I've made big U-turns in my career choices; I took financial risks in order to do what I wanted to do.

Raven is also a powerful symbol of transformation. While many of these pages detail journeys to exciting places, and others speak about life passages from one stage to another, some of my journeys have required transforming emotions: learning how to replace fear and hate with compassion and love and a closed mind with an open heart; learning how to replace the fear of being alone or the fear of dying with choosing life.

I was introduced to Mary Oliver's poem in 2002. She uses the physical journey as a metaphor for the emotional or spiritual one, the process of finding your own voice.

The Journey

*One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice –
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
“Mend my life!”
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do –*

*determined to save
the only life you could save.*

—MARY OLIVER

This greater transformation or paradigm shift requires one to summon every ounce of energy. Sometimes it requires help.

Raven symbolizes adaptability to change, to the newness that is born. While the orca is protected by its family, by its community as it travels through the waters of life, the raven is protected by its ability to adapt to its transformed being and environment.

This is a book about dreams come true. My childhood longings to be in the chorus line on Broadway or to become another Cyd Charise in the arms of the next Fred Astaire were dumped overboard a long time ago. Not all of my goals and plans were achieved and many that came to fruition came about in ways I could not have imagined.

This is a book about a life well-lived. I have never wanted to be in another family or live a life other than my own. When pain or loss came my way, I felt it strongly. But I allowed myself to grieve and found the lessons it had to teach me. What I have done or achieved is much less important than what I have felt, thought, feared, and discovered through the events of my life.

This is a book about a person well-loved. With the support of my family, as well as the community of friends I have found on my journeys, I have been able to venture far. I am grateful beyond measure for all that I have received

from them. I am especially grateful to my husband Charlie who has shared my journeys fully for 35 years and has been my travel partner *extraordinaire*. Every hard life decision has been made easier with his patience, wisdom, and positive outlook on life. Every new adventure has been more thrilling with his skillful planning and infectious enthusiasm. In the security of his love, no destination has seemed too far to reach.

I am also grateful to Joan Bergman, facilitator of my memory loss support group, who kept me communicating with others at a time when I otherwise might have retreated inward, and who helped me appreciate my "gifts" at a time when I might have focused instead on my losses. She encouraged me to write this memoir and had me do a "reading" of some early pages to our group. Valuable comments on previous drafts came to me from my cousin, author Reina Weiner, and especially from the poet, author, teacher and editor Sheila Bender.

Orca urges us to revisit our memories, to reconnect us to our whole self (past, present, and future), and to bring our spirit into harmony with the Great Mystery. In the process of looking backward, I found more hope for going forward. I read that attempting to write down memories might be beneficial to my brain. In the end, this project has been worthwhile on many fronts. I wanted to explore how the times we live in greatly influence the direction of our lives and which people speak to our hearts. I wanted to honor that we each interpret the world in our own unique way and from this bring our special gifts to the world.

Despite our differences, there are passages and turning points in life that are universal. Anna Quindlen writes in her memoir *Lots of Candles, Plenty of Cake*:

First I was who I was. Then I didn't know who I was. Then I invented someone and became her. Then I began to like what I'd invented. And finally I was what I was again.

That is the essence of my story as well. I connect with Anna and others may connect with me. If my story inspires others to tell their own stories, I will have helped many recognize our interconnectedness. I will, I hope, have encouraged my children and grandchildren to pursue their passions as I have mine. I believe that doing so in combination with ultimately telling our stories makes us better able to co-exist peacefully on this small planet.

Chapter 1

SPROUTING WINGS: THE LITTLE BIRD

A traveler without observation is a bird without wings.

—MOSLIH EDDIN SAADI

“Why do you have to go on so many trips, Grandma?” my then ten-year old granddaughter Izabel asked me.

How could I explain to her that I had an incurable disease, not the Alzheimer’s kind that I still had not told her about, but the chronic disease of wanderlust, that intense desire to travel and explore? Each trip that I took, always “the best trip ever,” not only made me want to go back again to the same places but intensified the desire to seek out new ones. I felt more alive when I traveled, all of my senses heightened by what I saw around me. I fell in love over and over again.

“Do you miss me when I’m away?” I asked her.

“Yes,” she answered, “but you’ll send me postcards, won’t you?”

Since she was old enough to stand erect, Izabel has had a love affair with the spinning globe in my living room. She first gave the continents names such as “Chocolateland” and “Strawberryland.” Later she came up with “Up Amer-

ica” and “Down America.” She has pictures of Paris plastered on her bedroom wall.

I too had a strong awareness of the world and a great desire to travel when I turned 10 in 1951. Although my father had been a navigator in the Army Air Corps during World War II and never wanted to be in an airplane again, he instilled in me a love of traveling on our many road trips and Sunday drives. He taught me how to read maps and drilled me on capital cities of states in the U.S. and of foreign countries. There were many forces at work when I completed my first decade that sowed the seeds for leaving the safety of my parents’ home when I was still a teenager. I had big dreams.

Suitland

When I was ten, we lived in Suitland, Maryland near Andrews Air Force Base and the nation’s capital. We came to Suitland via Washington, D.C., where I was born in 1941, and Philadelphia, where my brother Rick was born in 1944. My parents, Murray and Sylvia Namm, originally from New York, moved to Washington, D.C before my birth for better work opportunities. To hear my grandmother tell it, they were the original pioneers. I can imagine the smell of their small car filled with pumpernickel bread and bagels, chicken soup with matzo balls, and all the necessities that were unavailable in the “new world.”

My family was Jewish but not particularly observant. Like most Jewish children I was named after people who had died. My first name, Phyllis, came from my mother’s favorite uncle Philip; my middle name, Joyce, came from my father’s uncle Jack. I was given the Yiddish name

Feygele, meaning a little female bird. But most often I was called *Maidel* (the word for maiden or unmarried girl) by my mother, my grandmother, my Aunt Shirley, and perhaps a few others in my family.

My cousin Barry, often called *Tatele* (meaning little father), came to live with us in Suitland after the death of his mother, my Aunt Anne, from tuberculosis. He had previously lived with us on and off in Philadelphia when his mother was in a sanitarium and his father was in military service. Rick and I regarded Barry as our brother and the three of us were inseparable.

Our home in Suitland, 4211 Spring Street, was a wooden post-World War II barracks-style building which housed four families. Many low-income housing units today remind me of it. My father worked for the federal government and my mother had just started working again in a retail clothing store following a long stint of childrearing.

Children in our neighborhood spent time outdoors between school and dinnertime. We searched for Indian arrow heads in the woods behind our house. I played hopscotch, jump rope, and jacks with the girls in the neighborhood, but more often than not I was with the boys playing Red Rover or Johnny on a Pony—a game where three or four people get on their hands and knees to form an interlocking bridge (the Pony) and, one at a time, everyone else jumps onto their backs, seeing how many it takes for the Pony to collapse.

The radio was the center of our entertainment after our homework was done. Favorite programs included “The

Lone Ranger,” “Sky King,” “The Shadow,” and “The Green Hornet.” Radio was a dream for multitaskers. You could listen to your program and also be playing a game of Sorry! or Monopoly. We were the first family in our building and surrounding homes to get a television set. We would frequently bring the TV out onto the front porch of our house so that all of our neighbors could watch programs like Sid Caesar’s “Your Show of Shows” or the antics of Milton Berle. It was like going to the drive-in movie, except that you didn’t need a car (which many people didn’t have either).

Baseball was the number one sport in America and I collected the cards of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Roy Campanella, Jackie Robinson, Gil Hodges, and Duke Snider were all coveted cards, but my personal favorite, perhaps because of my own short stature, was shortstop Pee Wee Reese. Everyone on my father’s side of the family rooted for the Dodgers, except for my little brother Rick who insisted he was a Yankees fan—a heresy in our family. For a long time I thought that my Grandpa Joe lived at Ebbetts Field; he always seemed to be at the Dodgers’ stadium when we visited my father’s family. If you asked my father what the Jewish holiday *Yom Kippur* meant, he would say “*Yom*” means “World” and “*Kippur*” means “Series”.

I took weekly dance lessons, preferring tap dancing to ballet. My mother was a whiz at sewing my many recital costumes. I loved school and was a good student, but I especially loved traveling back and forth to school that year. I was a bus patrol sergeant, wearing my sash and badge

proudly. And I was madly in love as only ten-year-olds can be with the captain of the bus patrol.

But in the same year that my heart felt as if it might burst, my imagination was ignited in my fifth-grade class. My teacher would arrange our chairs in a circle each day and read to us from Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon Tiki*, the thrilling account of five Norwegians, one Swede, a green parrot, and a pet crab who cross more than 4,000 miles of the Pacific Ocean on a handmade balsa log raft.

Heyerdahl had a theory: what we know as Polynesia today was actually populated centuries before by an early civilization from Peru who had crossed the Pacific in rafts. He decided to prove it by building a raft and making the trip. The single-mindedness and determination of the crew against all odds in the face of those experts who said the journey never would or could succeed sets a great example of what determination and perseverance can accomplish. But for me adventure trumped life lessons. I was totally drawn into the planning of the expedition and the day-to-day life of the crew. By the end of the book, ten-year-old me felt as though I were aboard the *Kon Tiki* with the men catching flying fish, watching for sharks, standing watch while the others slept, avoiding reefs.

Graham Greene said, "There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in." Following the story of the men on *Kon Tiki* unleashed the dreamer in me. It wasn't so much that I wanted to be on a boat crossing the ocean (certainly not on a raft!), but I knew

I wanted to go far beyond the confines of Suitland or anything familiar.

Summers in the Country

When I was ten, Rick, Barry, and I spent the entire summer living with my maternal grandparents in the Catskill Mountains in New York, an event for me from the age of seven until I was fifteen, a year after my grandfather's death. No one in my family referred to the area as the Catskills; one simply said "the mountains" or "the country" as if no other mountains or country existed.

My Bubbie and Zayde (Grandma and Grandpa) purchased two acres in Burlingham, N.Y. a few years after World War II ended. Five of their 11 children bought prefabricated one-room wooden bungalows and placed them on the hill above my grandparents' house which we all called "The Big House." My parents had one of the three front bungalows which they furnished with a double bed and singles for us kids, a dinette set, an icebox, and a gas burner. Everyone in the bungalows used an outhouse down the hill. We bathed outdoors in large, round metal containers, the water heated by the summer sun.

When my parents had their two weeks of vacation from work we would stay in our bungalow; the rest of the time my brothers and I lived in The Big House with my grandparents. Usually there would be at least one other aunt and uncle around to help supervise us, but in the 1940s and 50s children had a great deal of freedom. We were out most of the day—walking to town or hiking in the woods, swimming in the lakes at various bungalow colonies, hanging out at

the general store, or playing the pinball machines at the ice cream shop.

Each summer when it was time for our trip to the country, my mom and dad woke us up about 4:00 AM for an early start on what was then a 10-hour trip. Our pillows and blankets were thrown in the back seat of the car with us so that we could continue our sleep for awhile. My mother didn't know how to drive so she was responsible for the entertainment which mostly consisted, once we were awake, of leading the singing: "The Bear Went over the Mountain," "Comin' Thru the Rye," and "One Hundred Bottles of Beer."

One of my favorite parts of the trip was when we reached the Delaware River before crossing over to New Jersey. The only way to cross by car before the Delaware Memorial Bridge was built in 1951 was by ferry boat. Sometimes we timed it just right; other times it seemed we had to wait forever for the next one. I used to imagine I was General George Washington crossing the Delaware River with the Continental Army troops.

By noon we were ready to stop at the Red Apple Rest on Highway 17 in Tuxedo, NY along with practically everyone else who was making the trip up to the Catskills from New York City. A couple of hours later we would spot the billboard that said "Burlingham—Vacation Capital of America."

Burlingham's four corners at its only crossroads consisted of a cemetery on one corner, Paddy's Bar on another, George Hamilton's General Store and Post Office on the third, and on the fourth corner a sometimes changing ice

cream parlor or luncheonette. On the road between my grandparents' home and town one could find Camp NYDA for diabetics, Mrs. Moses' Bungalow Colony, and the one-room schoolhouse I would later attend briefly when my parents believed the country air would help in my recovery from meningitis.

Excitement reigned when many of my aunts, uncles, and cousins were there at the same time as we were. We combined our food and ate most of our meals outdoors. My uncles nicknamed me "Miss Del Monte" because my favorite meal was spaghetti with Del Monte tomato sauce. In the evenings we hung out on my grandparents' screened porch, putting records on the upright Victrola that had to be wound up by hand. We danced late into the night. We were a noisy, fun-loving bunch of people and I adored every moment of it.

But I also craved the times when it was just Barry, Rick and me with my grandparents. I adored my Zayde, my grandfather Abraham Fox. He had emigrated to the U.S. from Austria by himself when he was only 14 years old, the same year that his hair turned snow white. He had a photographic memory and was taught by the daughter of his first employer in a garment factory to read and write English. The New York Library opened the world to him. He became an electrician, a carpenter, a fixer of everything, an inventor.

He sequentially married three of the four Butler sisters. He had five children with my Aunt Esther; when she died in childbirth, he married my Aunt Rachel; when she died in

childbirth, he married my grandmother Pauline. My mother Sylvia was the eldest of their six children.

My grandfather had a reputation for being stern, and a cat-o'-nine-tails hung on the kitchen wall reminding us to be well-behaved. I loved to sit on the porch with him, sharing a snack of Ritz crackers with strawberry jam. Barry and I imitated the way he ate his morning farina—on a flat plate, moving the spoon around the outer edge until the middle finally disappeared. I marveled at the things that he invented and how intelligent he was. One of my memories is of the wooden press for ground meat that made hamburger patties the exact shape of the square white bread we ate them on.

Zayde encouraged me to read and think for myself and do well in school. With lots of time on my hands during the summers, I read almost every book that my grandparents owned. I purchased some of my own, particularly books about growing up poor in New York, like Shulman's *The Amboy Dukes*, Robbins' *A Stone for Danny Fisher*, Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, and Wouk's *Marjorie Morningstar*.

So many positive attributes grew out of the experience of the summers with my grandparents: a love of travel on the trips up to the beautiful Catskill Mountains and a love of the outdoors; a wonderful sense of community being with my large, extended Fox family; and a growing independence based on increased self-esteem and self-reliance.

Wars Hot and Cold

The year I was ten, President Truman ordered U.S. military forces to aid in the defense of South Korea (supported by the United Nations), which had been invaded by North Korea (supported by the Peoples Republic of China with military aid from the Soviet Union). Three of my older cousins fought in the three-year war and I remember their visits to our home, often bringing their buddies, all looking so handsome in their uniforms. My favorite picture of my father had been when he was in uniform after he had been drafted into the Army Air Corps in January 1944, when I was three years old. My mother and I baked Toll House cookies to send to him and “the boys.” He sent me silk handkerchiefs with the Army Air Corps insignia as well as a doll which I named “Air Cor.”

My brother Rick was born 6 months after my dad left; not long after Barry came to live with us for awhile because of his mother had to enter a sanitarium for tuberculosis. Life was hard because of rationing and because my mother had so little money on which to support four people. When my mother developed pneumonia in June 1945 and could not care for the three of us, my father was sent home, just before he was going to be shipped out to the Pacific. Victory over Japan was declared a few months later after we dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Stories and photos of the concentration camps that the Allies liberated in Europe at the end of World War II appeared in the Movietone News in theaters; books about the war, much more graphic than *Anne Frank: The Diary of a*

Young Girl were in abundance in libraries in the early 1950s. I couldn't stop reading the books, even though they terrified and haunted me. It was not a topic of discussion in my family even though my Aunt Sarah, married to my mother's brother, was from France and lost family members in the war. The world I knew was out there no longer included Germany. More than half a century passed before my view of the world and indeed my inner core became whole again.

It is estimated that more than 60 million people perished during World War II and it caused more far-reaching changes than any other war in history. World War II morphed into the Cold War and its main effect on my life came after Russia exploded its own atomic bomb in 1949. Following that in the autumn of 1950, American school children were taught to crouch under their desks with their eyes tightly closed and their heads buried in their arms. We practiced air raid drills regularly to learn how to protect ourselves from flying glass, falling debris and flash burns in the event of an atomic bomb attack. My husband Charlie recalled that long-ago period when we hosted a Russian exchange student in 1995:

Childhood Memories

*When we were children, we knew that they would come.
The Russians or perhaps the Chinese.
Communists, anyway.*

*First the sirens sound.
Then, hand in hand,
quietly,*

*without running,
without speaking,
boys with boys, girls with girls,
in proper order by our heights,
we march down flights of stairs
to the basement of the school.*

*Under strongly built tables,
sitting,
arms around knees,
chins on knees,
eyes closed and covered
as we have been taught,
we hide and wait.*

*Between the cafeteria in the basement,
and the school auditorium runs a tunnel.
This is the safest place
and younger ones hide here –
as many as can fit.
We are under the tables.*

*In the classroom,
on the second floor,
under lemon-polished desks,
we practice
hiding from A-bombs.*

*This is in case there is no time,
in case it is decided there is no time,
for orderly descent
to the basement
with its concrete-bedded tables,
strongly built.*

*We wonder who will decide
where we will hide
and about the time –*

*about there being enough time –
when they come.*

—CHARLIE POOLE

Civil defense was the order of the day and nuclear Armageddon was always just around the corner. My father became a Civil Defense Officer and went to secret meetings every year. For some children, bombing got added to the games of cowboys and Indians and cops and robbers; for others it became part of our nightmares along with the incomprehensible experiments of the German doctors in the Nazi concentration camps.

Growing up during World War II and the Korean War, and thinking about war even during peace time, created a desire in me to accomplish many things very quickly. I was in a hurry to date, to go steady, and to get married. But even at a young age, I knew I also wanted so much more for myself.

Chapter 2

COMING OF AGE: BELONGING

A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles.

—TIM CAHILL

The need for belonging and acceptance is a primal one. I was fortunate to have found this in my family, my tribe, my “orca pod.” But like most young people in the 1950s and of today, the real challenge was to find acceptance in my teen years among my peers.

We moved from Suitland to the Anacostia area of Washington, D.C. when I was eleven. Barry had moved back to New York to live with his father who had remarried. I had to cope with a new neighborhood and a new elementary school, and shortly thereafter I contracted an illness (meningitis) which isolated me further from potential friends. Polio had been the scourge of my childhood, but we were to learn that meningitis could cause paralysis and death as well, very scary thoughts for my parents and me. Fortunately I responded well to tetracycline, which was administered after discovering that I was allergic to penicillin. My tap dance teacher stopped by regularly to help exercise my legs. Some of my recovery time was spent at my grandparents’ home in the Catskills. My sixth grade teacher gave me assignments while I was away from school and I man-

aged to graduate from Congress Heights Elementary School on time.

Junior high school was a huge transition and I set about trying to fit in. While in seventh grade I learned about a “junior sorority,” Sigma Kappa Sigma, and I determined that my route to acceptance was to become a “pledge.” One of my duties during the pledge period was to carry a pack of cigarettes at all times—I was not yet a smoker myself—and make them available when asked by anyone in the sorority. One day I was the girls’ bathroom and was approached by two sorority members who asked me for cigarettes. I took out my red leather pouch containing a pack of Marlboros and gave them each one. They went into separate stalls and lit up. As I was finishing washing up and combing my hair, a teacher came into the bathroom and immediately smelled and saw the smoke. We were all sent to the principal’s office and my protestations of innocence fell on deaf ears. After spending time in detention, I quit pledging the sorority. I found that a better way to make friends was through team sports, and I earned a school letter playing volleyball.

I was never in the “most popular” crowd, but I had my share of school buddies. I went out on dates, at least to the extent that one was able without any of us being old enough to drive a car. We were able to get to the movies by ourselves on public transportation, and parents would chauffeur us to the “sock hops,” the school dances at that time.

When I was in eighth grade, I visited my old friend Sandi from Philadelphia who had since moved to Baltimore, only 40 miles away. She introduced me to some of her new friends who belonged to a Jewish youth group

called Habonim. Many of her friends spoke Hebrew and were from religiously observant homes. Some of the boys attended a private Jewish school rather than public school.

That had not been my background. Although my maternal grandmother was very religious and kept a kosher home, my parents were not observant at all. My younger brother was later to have a *Bar Mitzvah* (a coming of age ceremony in which the Jewish boy becomes an adult in the eyes of the synagogue), but it was not common for Jewish girls at that time to have a comparable coming of age celebration. I had attended a Sunday school at our temple for several years, learning Jewish history and culture, but not Hebrew. The language used in my family was Yiddish, which I was able to understand fairly well for a time.

Habonim (Hebrew for “the builders”) was an international Labor Zionist youth group with ties to the relatively new country of Israel. The State of Israel had been established in May 1948 following the expiration of the British Mandate over Palestine. For many years those of us in the Diaspora (the lands outside of Israel) collected money through the Jewish National Fund in tin blue boxes which were called *pushkes* in Yiddish. This was my first experience at fundraising, and to this day when I have to do it I see an image of myself with the tin blue box. Land was purchased in Israel and many trees were planted, something wonderful for reclaiming the desert.

I became infatuated with one of the Baltimore boys and we began a lengthy long-distance romance. I also discovered a Washington, D.C. chapter of Habonim after my fam-

ily moved to the predominantly Jewish neighborhood of Riggs Park. At Habonim, singing folk songs, both Israeli folk songs and music by groups such as the Weavers and Pete Seeger, was part of every activity. Israeli dancing was also very popular and I loved the music, the dance steps, and my partners. We gave many dance performances over the years including one at D.C.'s Constitution Hall.

I had worked from the time I was 11, babysitting quite a bit at first, and later working at the retail department store where my mother worked when I was old enough to get a work permit at age 14. Having my own money gave me increasing independence to travel out of town for special Habonim programs.

The Washington, D.C. and Baltimore chapters had many programs in common. We frequently rode the Greyhound buses for the 40-mile trip between our two cities.

Habonim had summer camps in various parts of the country. Camp Moshava was the closest in Annapolis, Maryland. I was still going to my grandparents' home in the Catskills during the summer so I didn't attend camp until I was 16.

The camps were modeled after *kibbutzim*, collective farms in Israel, and emphasized collective responsibility, respect, equality, and friendship. We took turns working in the kitchen to prepare the meals we ate together in the communal dining room. We had arts and crafts, a full sports program, and nature study like most summer camps. One day each week only Hebrew was spoken. But what I re-

member most is the sense of community that we had, with its emphasis on sharing, inclusiveness, and responsibility.

The three founding principles of Habonim were socialism, Zionism and Judaism, and my education in all three areas grew considerably over the years. It was in Habonim that I first encountered the notion of social justice (*Tikun Olam*), an important part of Judaism. Perhaps I gravitated to the principles of socialism and the structure of the *kibbutz* in Israel because it seemed that was the way my large extended family operated. Everyone was equal. Everyone had a voice in making decisions. Everyone was provided for. Of course, the means of production weren't owned by all in my family and that was a critical difference.

I began to see myself as a *chalutza*, a pioneer woman. I was enchanted by *kibbutz* life in Israel and made it my plan to spend a year at Kibbutz Kfar Blum after graduation from high school. I took as my mantra the message from Theodore Herzl, the father of Zionism: "If you will it, it is no dream."

My parents were supportive of my being in Habonim and my father drove me to meetings until I got my driver's license and was able to transport myself. However, I remember my dad, a federal government employee, worrying at one point whether Habonim might be on a list of subversive organizations maintained by the U.S. Attorney General. Although it wasn't on the list, there was still some apprehension in our 1950s Washington, D.C. Jewish home following the Ethel and Julius Rosenberg trials for treason

and the anti-communist (anti-Jewish) witch hunts of Senator Joseph McCarthy.

I adopted the Hebrew name "Zipporah," the name of Moses' wife in the Bible and also the translation of my Yiddish name, *Feygele*, a little bird. I was proud to be Jewish, having a better understanding of my history and also something tangible to aspire to. Being in Habonim felt natural and good. I used my skills for editing our monthly newspaper and producing it on a mimeograph machine, being a participating member of our "steering committee," and dancing. I didn't have to be anything other than myself; I was valued for who I was and was becoming.

In Habonim I found my closest friends and my community. Being in Habonim not only provided the belonging and acceptance that I craved in my teen years, but it also provided an outlet for my natural idealism and the sense that I was part of something much bigger than my own family life, bigger even than the community of friends I was in, bigger even than the country I resided in. Living on a *kibbutz* was going to be my "Kon Tiki."

William Deresiewicz, in *A Jane Austen Education*, speaks about the dream of living on a *kibbutz* in Israel when he was part of the Jewish youth movement.

It was a dream about sharing everything and being together forever. But however naïve the idea might have been, it meant that while we were dreaming about community, we were also living it....We talked about social justice and social action, idealism and identity, being Jewish and being human. We talked until we could barely keep

our eyes open... We were going to change the world, but along the way, without even noticing it, we changed ourselves.

Coming together with my friends in Habonim enhanced my belief in the equality of males and females, in the equality of all people. It spoke to the dreamer in me but also inspired me to take social action, to work with others to make the world better.

On my seventeenth birthday my best friend Etta, who had lost her mother to cancer, wrote a birthday poem for me:

Ode to Phyllis

*I have a friend named Phyllis Namm
who's just turned seventeen,
In the first month of every year
there's a special day when she is queen.*

*To me she's been a friend, in times
of joy and happiness
To me she's been a friend, in times
of trouble and distress.*

*She is a friend to whom I can turn
when I feel sick or sad,
She is a friend to whom I can turn
when I feel great or mad.*

*I only want to wish her success & luck
in the important coming years,
That she should be happy wherever she is
and have a rich life free from fears.*

*And when we can no longer dance a hora lively,
and we're both decrepit, old, & gray,
I hope we'll still be best of friends
watching our sabra grandchildren dancing
the very same way.*

—ETTA POLLACK

A *sabra* is a native-born Israeli. Etta had been to Israel the previous year and wanted to make it her home. Six months later I graduated from high school. On July 10, 1958, I had it in hand:

PASSPORT

United States of America

No. 1155790

I had listed the bearer's foreign address as: Kibbutz Kfar Blum, Doar Na, Galil Eliyon, Israel. I was 17 years old and ready to see the world.

Chapter 3

INDEPENDENCE: AFRICA'S AND MY OWN

One's destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things.

—HENRY MILLER

The transition from childhood to adulthood, often called “launching,” doesn’t take place in one fell swoop. We don’t suddenly “grow up” when we turn 18 or 21, when we go away to college, or even get married. Those events are often catalysts for internal development, but in themselves do not guarantee greater maturity, wisdom, and responsibility.

This journey began for me in the summer of 1958. The excitement which had reached a fevered pitch regarding my planned trip to Israel plummeted when my application was rejected because the necessary financing did not come together in a timely manner. My mother has apologized to me for this over and over despite my telling her how happy I am with how my life has turned out.

At the time, though, I was incredibly disheartened. My goal had been to go to Israel to live on a *kibbutz* as my best friends had done and were doing. I had no backup plan whatsoever. But what were my choices? I could sit at home and feel sorry for myself, making everyone miserable, or I could find something else to do with my life. I had grown

up with *Pollyanna* books and musicals announcing that “every cloud has a silver lining.” I also had my grandmother’s notion of the Yiddish *bashert*, meaning “fate” or “destiny.” If it was meant to be, it would be. There were strong models in my family for handling rough times. We didn’t fall apart.

School of International Service

Going to college seemed the appropriate thing to do, but whether I could get admitted anywhere for the September term one month before it started was another matter. Going to a school out of town was not in consideration. I investigated a new program in International Relations beginning that term at American University. The School of International Service was accepting approximately 40–45 students from all over the country and, except for a few courses required for all freshmen, the students would have their own small classes throughout the four years. I was invited to apply and the administration expedited the paperwork and transcripts. When I was accepted into the program, I envisioned that the new direction for my life would include travel to foreign countries. I was positive that I was going to get to Israel one way or the other.

The first year of college I lived at home with my parents. I had to transfer three times on buses from our house to campus, and to make my 8:00 AM classes I started the day at 5:00 AM. I finished classes around 1:00 PM and then bussed downtown to work all afternoon in the office at the department store where my mom worked. Although I had one of the new National Defense Education Act loans, available to promote college education after the Russians launched Sputnik in 1957, I had to contribute substantially

to my education since private university costs were so high. I didn't get to study until the evenings after work and before getting a few hours of sleep.

The second year I lobbied for and was able to live on campus at one of the dormitories. This not only saved me hours of commuting but allowed me a social life as well. Each floor in my dorm had one two-room suite; I was lucky enough to share one with my roommates Ann, a product of Catholic school education from New Jersey, and Brenda, a Southern Baptist from Little Rock, Arkansas. We were joined almost nightly by Yenne, the daughter of the Liberian ambassador to the United Nations. We were all students in the School of International Service; we studied together all the time and fascinated each other in discussions about religion. Because they were so small, our classes required us to be well-prepared each meeting. I felt privileged to be getting such a thorough educational experience.

American University was a Methodist school but there were a fair number of Jewish students on campus. During my sophomore year I was active in Hillel, the campus Jewish student group. There I became friendly with Larry Selinker, a graduate student in Linguistics. Larry was moderately tall, thin, with curly blond hair and blue eyes. He was the eldest of three children whose parents were observant Jews who went to synagogue regularly and kept a kosher home in Providence, Rhode Island. He had completed his undergraduate work in Near Eastern studies at Brandeis University, spending his junior year abroad at the

Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Larry had a room in a house near our campus, and I often spent time there with him and his Lebanese roommate Hani. More often, though, I spent time moving from dirty table to dirty table in the school cafeteria where Larry worked as a bus boy to help defray his college expenses.

During winter break in January 1960 Larry and I went on a mission for Hillel to help start chapters at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia and the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. We hitchhiked from Washington, D.C., and we hadn't gotten very far before a state trooper, who thought we were running away from home, stopped us. We managed to convince him we hadn't run away and continued on to Newport News, Virginia where we checked into a motel as a married couple to save money. We were naïve about conditions in the South, but by the time we got down to the Carolinas, we caught up hearing talk about "rabble-rousers from the North."

The following month four African American college students would sit down at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina asking for service; when they were asked to leave, they would politely refuse. Their passive resistance helped ignite a youth-led movement to challenge racial inequality throughout the South, with strikes and sit-ins being the main tool. Southerners had reason to be suspicious of us. Who had heard of Hillel? However, in spite of some scary moments, our visits to the college campuses were successful in that Hillel chapters became estab-

lished there. And I became certain that this was the man I was going to marry.

Larry invited me to his home in Providence to spend Passover with his family—a very big deal. His sister Lea was my age and Jan was quite a bit younger. I liked them both. When Larry graduated that year, his family came down to Washington and met my family.

Teaching English in Guinea

The Master's degree that Larry received in June 1960 was in Applied Linguistics. He was ready to consider teaching English as a foreign language, which for all intents and purposes meant that he would be working overseas. The program through the African-American Institute to send English teachers to the French-speaking *Republique de la Guinée* in West Africa attracted him the most. Guinea (the English name) had been the first sub-Saharan country to become independent from French colonial rule. Its president of two years, Sékou Touré, had a dream of Pan-Africanism along with Kwame Nkrumah, the president of English-speaking Ghana.

We met with the Guinean ambassador to the United States in September along with four or five others who were eager to sign up. Although I was only 19 and had several years of college to complete, I felt ready to spend two years 5,000 miles away from home. I was in love. The adventurer in me looked forward to a new life. The headline of the article in the Washington Post was “Modern Pioneers Sign for Guinea.”

“Just a minute,” said my shocked parents, “you’ll have to get married before you go.”

Married. Had Larry given marriage much thought? In my child’s mind my future self would be married with four children. I had been thinking about marrying every boyfriend I had since I was eight years old and scribbling “Mrs. Xxx Xxxx” (all male names) on countless sheets of papers. Marriage was going to be the route to my independence.

With only three weeks to go before we were to depart for our group training in Paris, France, and with the high holy days of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* presenting a period when we could not be married, Larry and I thought a simple wedding with a few friends and family attending would suffice. We needed to spend our time purchasing supplies for the next two years. But my mother prevailed with a formal wedding for 300 people. She arranged printed invitations, a synagogue with two Rabbis (one from our congregation and the other from our Hillel group), a catered dinner, a band, and flowers—the works.

Our families came in from New York and Rhode Island on short notice and the room was filled with my friends from Habonim and our friends from Hillel. Israeli dancing competed with rock and roll, but my favorite dance was the waltz with my dad. In his arms I felt protected and blessed, loved yet freed to have my own life.

Leaving the merrymakers at midnight, we boarded a sleeper train to New York. We received a last minute present from my Uncle Phil, a short-wave radio. We

checked on the loading of the crates containing the supplies we were told we would need: kitchen gear, linens, mosquito netting, clothing, books and school supplies, medical supplies, toilet paper and Kotex.

Soon we were ready to take off. Larry was an experienced traveler, but I had flown in an airplane only once, when my Uncle Phil treated me to a flight from New York to Washington, D.C. just a couple of years before. We were about to fly in a jet-propelled plane across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris for our honeymoon and a quick training program before flying the rest of the way to Africa.

Paris was quite exciting. It had the grandeur of Washington, D.C. with all its monuments, but it had a charm that D.C. did not. I loved the Seine River flowing right through the city and all its bridges. I loved the cafés where one could sit and watch the parade of wonderfully-dressed people pass by. We were housed in the Champerret district, a distance from the main tourist areas, and we quickly became familiar with the *Métro*. Our training consisted of basic information about Guinea (history, politics, climate, educational system) and some French language lessons. I was happy that I had studied French for many years.

During the flight from Paris to Conakry, the capital of Guinea, my excitement kept me from sleeping. I had the window seat and kept looking out, although for most of the flight there was darkness. When the sun rose at 5:00 AM, making visible the West African coast, I exclaimed, "It looks just like the Atlantic Ocean!"

"It is the Atlantic Ocean," my new husband replied.

I had meant that “other” Atlantic Ocean, the one I went swimming in as a child. The Atlantic Ocean of Coney Island, New York where I played with my cousin Helene. The Atlantic Ocean of Ocean City, Maryland where I frolicked in the waves with my brother. The Atlantic Ocean of Atlantic City, New Jersey, the site of the last beach trip with my parents. I realized that my Atlantic childhood was gone forever.

Our delegation of teachers arrived in Conakry towards the end of the rainy season. Everything was very green and lush; palm trees swayed in the breeze. Women swayed as well, moving serenely down the road in long, boldly-colored skirts carrying baskets on their heads. The U.S. and U.S.S.R. had moved the Cold War to the African continent, trying to outdo one another with foreign aid to the newly emerging nations. The Americans sent cement mix that hardened on the dock in the humid heat of the tropics; the Russians sent snow plows.

At the Hotel de France where all the foreigners stayed, we tried to guess which of the people with newspapers in front of their faces were CIA or KGB agents. Even the Chinese had a contingent of technical people there, and we were fascinated watching them stand or sit completely in unison as if an invisible symphony conductor raised and lowered the baton. We wandered around the city, but we were prevented by soldiers from taking photographs freely. We had a hard time figuring out why. We were happy when it was finally time to leave for our teaching post in Mamou.

Mamou was situated on the main railroad line between Conakry and Kankan. It was the gateway to the mountainous Foutah Djallon. The 120-mile trip took approximately 10 hours in the open jeep; all of our clothing and pores of our skin were full of the red dust of the unpaved road. Half of the trip was in total darkness; you could only make out shadows of the tall vegetation on the sides of the road.

When we arrived at the hotel at the Mamou railroad station, I crawled into the mosquito netting on the bed with my clothes still on, a mixture of exhaustion and anxiety. It had been quite a day. The next morning, as I opened the shutters, I had my first glimpse of the town. Puddles were on the ground from the previous night's rain. The air felt cool and smelled wonderfully fresh. Beautiful red flowers were in bloom close to the hotel and several women in colorful garb with pans on their heads strolled by.

We spent three weeks waking up to that marvelous view while our permanent housing was being made ready for us. Our meals were prepared by Charlie, the French owner of the railway hotel and restaurant who had a great 1950s record collection. Larry, Charlie, his friend Jean, and I spent some part of every night singing and dancing while we were at his place. As I danced to Perry Como crooning the lyrics to "Magic Moments," I was certain that time would never erase the magical moments in this new land.

Most people in Mamou lived in large, round grass-roofed huts or in one-story stucco or plaster houses built by the French colonials. Our new home was one of the latter, a duplex single-story house with porches at each end and a

red tile roof. The windows had no glass; the shutters opened to the outside and provided air cooling for the entire house.

Not long after we moved in I was visited by a young Guinean in khaki shorts, a white shirt, red sandals, and a French beret on his head. He said he would like to work for me as a “houseboy.” I politely told him I did not need anyone. The next day I was visited by a very elderly man in a long white kaftan with a red fez on his head. He told me he would like to be my cook. I told him as well that I did not plan to hire anybody. As a new bride I planned to take care of my first home, shop in the local market, and cook wonderful meals for my husband and myself.

The following day I was visited by a woman who told me she was the secretary-general of the trade union in Mamou. She then proceeded to lecture me about how I was not doing my part to promote trade and that it was my duty to employ people while I was in the country. No ifs, ands, or buts! Thus Mamadou became our wonderful cook and Boubakar became our houseboy. They contributed much to our stay in their country.

Morning had its rituals. Scorpions loved to hide in slippers and shoes. You risked paralysis and possible death if you put your shoes on without doing a thorough check. Another daily occurrence was seeing the elderly woman who passed by my house and called out “*Ça va* (how are you), *madame? Ça va, le monsieur? Ça va, le petit?*” At first I would explain over and over that I didn’t have a baby, but

she always asked. After awhile I just told her that we were all fine.

The school in which we taught, called the “College Court,” was a secondary school. Our students were ages 13–19. They left their families from all over the country to live and attend school in Mamou. The intent of the Ministry of Education was to use boarding schools to help break down the still powerful tribalism and to strengthen the identity and power of the new political state.

Larry and I were the only American teachers assigned to the school. Larry taught English and geography; I taught English and music. I had no expertise in music whatsoever, but I had the only music textbook in town. The other foreign teachers were two Yugoslavs who taught French, history, and science; a Russian who taught mathematics; and a Lebanese who taught Arabic. There were a few local teachers as well. Our language of instruction, except when we were teaching English, was French; our communication with the teachers and staff was in French.

I loved teaching. It made no difference that most of the students were only a few years younger than I was. They were so eager to learn. President Touré realized that to achieve his vision of pan-African unity, knowledge of the English language would be essential. And this mission was passed down to the students. They had been used to doing a lot of rote learning under their French teachers. Larry and I tried to make learning English fun for them and they were very responsive.

A beginning task was learning each other's names. Larry was called "*Monsieur Larry*" and I was most often called "*Madame Larry*." I had three students in my English class who all had the same name: Amadou Diallo, a common name in the Foutah Djallon tribe. After some confusion, I started calling them simply "*un, deux, trois*." Almost of our students were boys. I recall one or two young women in Larry's English class, but there were none in mine.

Even though education for girls was not yet a priority in this society, there seemed to be a role for women in the new politics. That was evidenced by my visit from the head of the trade union on the subject of employing household help. She approached me some months later to ask me to speak at the International Women's Day celebration. Although I had never heard of International Women's Day, I was much honored and agreed to do so. The American cultural affairs attaché arrived from Conakry to bring us new textbooks, but also to dissuade me from participating in the event because it was celebrated primarily in Communist countries. I thought it would be insulting not to participate as we were in Africa trying to promote closer relations. I agreed I would not pass myself off as a "representative" of my country. I gave a brief talk in French. There were a few fiery speeches and then the usual singing and dancing began. It was a lovely celebration of women, Guinean-style.

Each of the Yugoslav teachers was married and the two couples lived near one another. We were friendly with them, but their social lives were spent apart from us. Our Russian counterpart, Mikhail (Michel) was very lonely. He

lived directly across from us and we tried to include him in our lives. But what Larry and I did for fun was mainly to play gin rummy and read books.

We finally hit on something that worked: the three of us would read the news to each other from our respective newspapers. Larry and I had received as a wedding gift a subscription to the *Washington Post* and Mikhail had a subscription to *Tass*. Neither he nor we were very political, so we found it amusing when we encountered different perspectives on the same event from American and Russian viewpoints. Besides, we were thousands of miles away from anything that was happening in the world. Eventually the Russians figured out that Mikhail needed company and they sent a female science teacher to Mamou.

Although we were careful about boiling water, taking malaria preventatives, and peeling fruits, we did not escape illness while in Africa. Larry developed hepatitis early in our stay, necessitating injections of B-12 for a period. Later he suffered from a horrible parasite, cured only after we returned to the States. In December I came down with malaria. I would teach my classes in the morning and early afternoon; in the late afternoon I would develop incredible chills. This would develop during the evening into a fever that would go as high as 104°. During the early morning hours it would break and I would wake up with soaking wet sheets. We had brought plenty of sheets with us, but the medication that we had wasn't making me any better.

After weeks of this crazy cycle, Larry obtained a French drug from American missionaries in our town which did the

trick. In order to get the medication, he defied an order to remain in our home—we think there was an attempted coup — and successfully hitched a ride with a Guinean soldier in a truck full of Chinese men. They were impressed that he was a teacher working for the country. The missionaries drove him back to our home past all the tanks. In January I was glad to have a four-day vacation in Dalaba, where there was another American teacher and where I could rest and recuperate in the cool, green mountains of the Foutah Djallon.

One morning in January stands out clearly in my memories. I awoke to the crackling noise and acrid smell of smoke. Quite alarmed I ran around the house checking all the rooms. My house was okay, but I could see flames everywhere when I peered out from the windows. The ground around all of the houses in the neighborhood was ablaze. Our houseboy Boubacar explained to me that every year after the rainy season the tall grasses have to be burned down to the ground so that the snakes could not hide in them. My fear of the fire suddenly grew a hundredfold as I imagined myself surrounded by slithering green mambas seeking refuge in my house.

The pace of life moved slowly in Mamou. One has to conserve movement in the heat of the blazing sun as a survival mechanism. I admired the slow, regal gait of the women carrying all their produce and goods on their heads as they proceeded down the road with a child on each hip. I practiced carrying books on my head, but I never got the hang of it. There was a building being constructed in the

town with everyone's "voluntary labor" on Sundays. It was actually pretty involuntary; you had to show up. But not too much building got done. A little building and lots of singing and dancing was par for the course.

Music played a central role on many occasions. Our principal, a Moslem, took a second wife and had a gigantic party on the streets. Our students put on a play, the band played, and there were dances and songs for hours. I was surprised to learn that when a child died, there was celebration because he was closer to God. Political holidays called for incredible celebrations. People dressed in their finest clothes—the men usually in white shirts and pants, the women in colorful print dresses and head scarves. The little girls were dressed like their mothers and mesmerized me as they kept perfect rhythm to the music.

In March 1961, six months into our first year, we were very well settled into our teaching, our neighborhood, and our way of life in Mamou. But one day Larry was accused of making a racist remark to one of the Guinean school staff members. We knew the accusation was totally fabricated—Larry didn't have the phrase in his French vocabulary—but a "kangaroo court" was convened and found Larry "guilty." We didn't know what had hit us with a year and a half to go on our contract. We became very frightened. At night we kept hearing the squeal of tires from cars going by the road near our house. We heard that all the remaining French people had been rounded up at gunpoint and thrown out of the country. Then the same thing happened to the U.N.

mission. We were expecting men with guns to come and get us.

The worst never happened, but we were eventually moved to the capital city. Most of what we brought had to be left behind. The goodbyes with our students were heart-breakingly painful as we had become so bonded even in that short time. Once in Conakry we had access to a little more information. A similar situation had occurred with our friend Hal up in Dalaba. He had to leave. A fourth American teacher was having trouble.

We were back at the Hotel de France, which was not inexpensive. We had not been paid our salaries by the Guinean government for several months. Many times we were told that it would happen the next week “*en principe*.” While some might translate this term as “is expected to” or “as a rule,” in Guinea it seemed to mean “but in reality, probably not.” Someone told us that we had to go to the Presidential Palace to see about our money. After many days of being turned away, we were finally successful in obtaining some of our back pay, paid out in Guinean francs in small denominations which completely filled a large leather handbag I was carrying. That took care of our expenses while we were in Conakry, but it remained to be seen whether we would be able to exchange the currency on any market.

Several times we were told that we would be leaving, only to be bumped off the flight for someone else. Our fear was growing. We came to understand that Patrice Lumumba, the democratically-elected Marxist leader in the

Congo, had been assassinated in January. The Guineans believed he was the victim of a CIA-orchestrated plot. Our embassy could not be of much help although we were able to get some mail to my parents sent through the diplomatic pouch.

And then on April 10, 1961, we boarded a plane to Zurich, Switzerland and were out of Guinea. We were relieved because we felt safe for the first time in many weeks, but we felt terrible to be leaving behind our dreams of a great cross-cultural experience. The daily interactions with our students, our fellow teachers, and the villagers were by and large wonderful and it was a tremendous learning experience to be on a continent so different from ours. I could not have learned that much by taking a year of coursework at the School of International Service.

Europe and Israel

Thankfully, we were able to exchange some of our Guinean francs into French francs in Zurich. We also wired my parents to send us some money c/o American Express so that we could spend some time in Europe and go to Israel before coming home. Zurich was in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. In the incredibly clean streets, I didn't know what to do with my cigarette butts. Larry surprised me with a present: brown toreador pants and a striped top. We sat in the first row of the cinema playing "High Noon" starring Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly, and enjoyed riding in the articulated trolleys.

From Zurich we went south to beautiful Locarno in the Alps. The lake and alpine setting were spectacular and af-

forded relaxation—the perfect antidote to the stress we had been under. One sunny day we took a bus tour to Domodossola, over the border in the Italian Alps. We ascended by chairlift high up on Monte Rosa, stopping at the restaurant at the end of the lift.

As we looked at our menus, I caught glimpses of the waiters passing by with steaming bowls of spaghetti. I knew that no matter what else was on the menu, "Miss Del Monte" was going to have her first spaghetti in Italy. I had dreamed about this moment for years. I hadn't expected it to be on top of a mountain; I thought it would be in Rome or Naples, but here I was—this was Italy. But when I ordered my spaghetti and meatballs, the waiter said they were all out of spaghetti. I had another kind of pasta but I was unable to appreciate it fully because of my disappointment.

Our plan was to spend quite a bit of time in Italy. We stopped in Genoa where I did have my first bowl of spaghetti. But then we mistakenly got on an express train that didn't stop again until we reached Naples. We had missed almost all of Italy!

From Naples we booked passage on a ship to Israel. I couldn't believe that I was finally going to Israel three years after I had planned to go there. The Mediterranean crossing was horrible. The boat pitched and yawed the entire trip and I barely came out of the small closet of a room. I couldn't eat anything. That was a mistake, of course, since food was what my stomach needed.

Eventually the Port of Haifa came into view and I could not quell the tears. I was not coming as a tourist; I felt as if

I were coming home even though I had never been to Israel. I had written a letter to my parents while on the boat, which they saved and gave back to me, thanking them for their support when I was not able to go in 1958. The letter included the following:

I could never properly put on paper what I feel inside of me now. Thousands of people have gone to Israel before me and thousands of people will go after me, but right now I feel I am the luckiest person alive. Everyone has a dream of sorts. But not everyone is lucky enough to see their dreams come true.

We spent a few days in Haifa, and then were off to Jerusalem to see Larry's good friend Eliezer, who Larry had come to know well during his junior year abroad. The road to Jerusalem contained old, rusted military vehicles, somber reminders of the 1948 War of Independence. Eliezer met us at the bus station and took us home to meet his wonderful family; five-year-old Nurit was especially charming. Staying with an Israeli family gave me the opportunity to learn how children were educated, how available and expensive food was, how people lived. Jerusalem was a fascinating city to explore, so rich in history. I loved everything about Israeli and Middle Eastern food that I tasted: *hummus*, *falafel*, *pita*, and *glida* (ice cream).

The biggest event to take place while we were in Jerusalem was the trial of former Nazi officer Adolf Eichmann, one of the major organizers of the Holocaust. Israeli intelligence agents from Mossad had captured Eichmann in Argentina where he had been working for Mercedes Benz

under a false identity until 1960. He was charged with 15 counts including crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes against the Jewish people. Witnesses came from all over the world to give testimony. Eichmann sat in a bullet-proof glass booth to protect him from harm from victims' families. I had a small view of the courtroom one day; I knew that I was seeing something extraordinary, the likes of which I might never see again.

We visited Ein Gedi in the north and Eilat in the south. I renewed contact with my best friend Etta, married and living at Kibbutz Urim in the Negev. We ate our meals in the collective dining hall with everyone, learned how the *kibbutz* supported itself economically and how work was distributed, and how the children lived in and were cared for in the *kibbutz* nursery. I was over my great disappointment of missing the opportunity to experience *kibbutz* life myself, and enjoyed the vicarious experience of being with Etta (now called Chaya). I enjoyed riding the tractor and helping with some of the chores. The sense of community I felt at Kibbutz Urim was reminiscent of our Habonim days together at Camp Moshava.

The time in Israel passed all too quickly and we headed back to Europe. Slides that I have from that period indicate stops in Venice, Rome, Pisa, Florence, Innsbruck (Austria), Lichtenstein, Paris, and Amsterdam. With the exception of Lichtenstein, they are all places I have since been back to. Suffice it to say, this was the trip where I did the things that tourists do. I went to the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Trevi Fountain, the Coliseum, the Statue of David, and the Anne

Frank House. I wanted to do everything that a place was famous for and not miss out on anything.

We flew back to the States from Amsterdam. They were still flying prop jets at the time and you couldn't make it across the ocean without a stop in Iceland. But this flight was a bit worrisome because KLM was weighing everything carefully before the flight. Not just the luggage but the passengers as well. I was thin enough; I had lost quite a bit of weight in Guinea and was pretty petite when I went there. But there were some pretty sturdy-looking passengers sharing my plane and I worried that they were letting on more people than they should have. However, we made it safely to New York where we were met by the Namms and the Selinkers and a few of my New York cousins.

Graduation

Over the next two years I completed my studies, finishing all of my course work except for three credits in a year and two summers. Although I couldn't graduate with the first class of the School of International Service in June 1962, it was worth the wait of one year. On June 10, 1963, I sat in the blazing sun wearing cap and gown ready to receive my Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations. My mom, dad, grandmother, and husband looked on. After the Invocation, the band struck up the tune "Hail to the Chief" and President John Fitzgerald Kennedy walked up to the dais to deliver the commencement address and receive his honorary doctor of civil laws degree.

The title of his speech was "A Strategy of Peace," wholly written by him and known only to a few trusted aides.

Keeping his national security advisors in the dark about his intentions, Kennedy made a broad appeal to the public to change the Cold War standoff between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. He announced the development of a nuclear test ban treaty and vowed that the U.S. would suspend atmospheric nuclear tests as long as other nations followed suit.

It is believed that Kennedy began preparing this speech after he had stared into the abyss of nuclear war the previous October, during what came to be known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. On October 22, 1962 President Kennedy had told the nation that the Soviet Union had secretly installed nuclear missiles on Cuban soil and he had ordered the Navy to set up a quarantine or blockade around Cuba. He threatened to invade Cuba if the missiles were not removed. The shooting down of a U.S. spy plane over Cuba a few days later ratcheted up the tension.

The whole nation was panicked, but those of us living in Washington, D.C. knew that retaliation by the Soviets if we invaded Cuba would result in a direct attack on us. I almost fainted when a special delivery letter came for Larry, a member of the Air National Guard. However, it was only routine correspondence about his service; his unit was not being activated. You could cut the tension with a knife riding on the buses. But despite the pressure by many in government to go to war, Kennedy and Khrushchev reached an agreement. The missiles were removed and we did not invade Cuba.

We had come so perilously close to the possibility of nuclear war. I had idolized Kennedy throughout his presidency, but I was never more inspired by him as I was on my graduation day listening to his words:

Some say that it is useless to speak of world peace or world law or world disarmament...until the leaders of the Soviet Union adopt a more enlightened attitude. I hope they do...But I also believe that we must re-examine our own attitude. Every graduate of this school, every thoughtful citizen who despairs of war and wishes to bring peace, should begin by looking inward—by examining his own attitude toward the possibilities of peace, toward the Soviet Union, toward the course of the Cold War and toward freedom and peace at home.

As he spoke these words, I thought about teaching in Mamou, Guinea alongside Mikhail, my Soviet counterpart from Kishinev—how Mikhail, Larry and I had spent many moments together in Mikhail's home opposite ours drinking tea and reading aloud to each other from the *Washington Post* and *Tass*, using our common language French. We had created our own thaw in the Cold War, and I would never look at Russians as my enemy again. President Kennedy mentioned the new Peace Corps in his speech, and I was proud to have served in a pilot project to this exciting international program. He continued:

So let us not be blind to our differences—but let us also direct our attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world

safe for diversity. For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

I was 22 years old, a college graduate. Not only had I achieved my dream of going to Israel, but I had taught school in West Africa, eaten pasta in Italy, and seen the Alps. My adventures in other countries were the beginning of a romance that has never lost its passion. They changed how I thought about the world and about myself. I was no longer just an American. I was a citizen of the world, my fate tied to those in other countries.

Married for almost three years, having held down several jobs, and having survived our forced exit from Guinea and before that my fears surrounding serious illness, I was learning that life doesn't always go the way you planned it, that you had to be flexible and trust that it is going in a good direction. It would take me many decades, however, to be as "grounded" as the African women seemed to be, to have the grace and balance that they seemed to exude.

But I was as "adult" as I could be at that time of life. I believed my country had elected a president who shared my aversion to war and who promised that we would not be the first to initiate a nuclear test. I was ready to dive into a career proudly representing my country.

Chapter 4

WESTWARD HO! A NEW HOME AND NEW ROLES

*Travel and change of place impart new vigor to the
mind.*

—SENECA

As Pearl Harbor did to my parents' generation and 9/11 did to that of my children and grandchildren, the assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963 turned my generation's world upside down—a seismic shock, followed by intense fear, followed by inconsolable sorrow. I had experienced death in my family, but this felt different. Jack Kennedy was not only my president; he was my “neighbor” in Washington, D.C and he had spoken to my heart at my college graduation. I was part of the generation that the “torch” had been passed to. Our leader was gone and so was our hope.

I had also been losing hope that year of implementing my dreams. One would have thought there would be a multitude of jobs waiting for this bright-eyed, energetic holder of a B.A. degree in International Relations. I tried the State Department, the Voice of America, and various international agencies. But I possessed a trifecta of reasons for rejection in early 1960s Washington, D.C.—I was a Jewish married female. My dean had not been far off the mark

when he said that the work opportunities for women in the field were in the Red Cross and the U.S.O.

So I kept working at the job that I worked at in the retail business when I was putting myself through college. For the three years following my graduation from college, I was getting what my mother-in-law called the P.H.T. Degree, short for “Putting Hubby Through.” Larry was a student at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., earning his doctorate in Applied Linguistics. They were not particularly fun years for me. Larry and I were like ships passing in the night. I worked all day and he had many classes in the evening. I was jealous of the camaraderie he had with his fellow students and professors.

We took one trip overseas during this period to do research for Larry's dissertation. In January 1965 we celebrated my birthday on a Greek ship bound for Patras, and subsequently made our way to Tel Aviv, Israel where we spent six months living with a Rabbi and his wife. It was a wonderful time developing Larry's theory of “Interlanguage”—later to become an important contribution to the field of second language acquisition—as well as swimming in the Mediterranean and eating lots of *falafel*. I also took an intensive Hebrew course along with new immigrants to the country from Russia, Romania, and Morocco. Larry and I traveled throughout the country, visiting my friends from Habonim who made Israel their home and Larry's friends from his stay there during his college junior year abroad.

Moving to Seattle

Larry's doctoral thesis was approved and he received his Ph.D. in June 1966. He had applied to a number of univer-

sities for an Assistant Professorship and it was time for us to choose where we were going to spend the next six or more years of our lives. We were most intrigued by Seattle, but neither of us knew exactly where it was. I thought it was somewhere near Alaska. It was amazing how well-traveled we were internationally, but how little we knew about the United States. When we located it on the map it seemed pretty far away, but not nearly as far away as we had been when we were in Africa or Israel. Larry accepted the position and signed up for a Linguistics Institute with Noam Chomsky in Los Angeles for the summer. I stayed in D.C. to make as much money as I could to help finance the big move. Afterwards I flew to L.A. where we rented a car for the drive up the coast to Seattle.

It was a spectacularly scenic trip. The Pacific Ocean, aside from being on our left hand side, really didn't look like the Atlantic Ocean. It seemed wilder, with more surf. I fell in love with Carmel, Monterey, Big Sur. It was difficult to tear ourselves away from San Francisco, a city of great natural beauty, sophistication, and marvelous cuisine. We continued up Route 1 until the road turned inland. And then they were before us, the incredible Redwood trees, taller than anything I could have imagined. We were back on the coast again in northern California and then across the border to Oregon. It was unbelievable to me to realize how long it took to get from one state to another. On the East Coast we would have been through six states in the time it took us to get from one end of California to the other.

In Oregon we pulled over at almost every turnout to see the ocean; we cavorted in the sand dunes along the coast. Following Route 101 around the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, we were often behind logging trucks carrying the most enormous logs I'd ever seen. On August 22, 1966, with an azure sky and bright sunshine beckoning, we boarded a ferry on Bainbridge Island. Our destination: Seattle, our new home. As we cleared the island, the giant icecap of Mount Rainier came into view, seeming to float above the horizon. We later learned that locals referred to it as “the mountain”—as in “The Mountain is out today”—just as my family referred to the Catskills as “the mountains.” Enthralled, we remained outside on the passenger deck the entire car ferry ride. We were grateful that our entrance to Seattle was by water rather than by the highway from California or by plane.

Life in Seattle had a different pace from the East Coast. Even though we were both extremely busy, everything seemed more relaxed. People in the Linguistics Department were very friendly. We were invited out to dinner by one couple soon after we arrived, and after we were driving on the freeway for what seemed a long time I asked how far the restaurant was. They said a few more hours! They took us to Grouse Mountain Restaurant in Vancouver, British Columbia over the border. That people would drive for three hours for dinner blew me away. We were introduced by others to Seattle's wonderful International District, especially to the venerable Tai Tung Restaurant. I spent many evenings feeding Larry's impecunious graduate students,

learning to cook up tasty meals from Craig Claiborne's *New York Times Cookbook*.

I was a graduate student myself, having been admitted to the School of Librarianship for the Master's program. After my dismal job search with my B.A. in International Relations, I decided to do something "practical." My reasoning was that I could find work as a librarian on any campus where Larry worked or in any city. Unfortunately, the prerequisites to the graduate courses (which I could have taken in the summer had I not had to work) were strung out over the entire year. I filled in the rest of the year with Intensive Japanese, which seemed very exotic. Most of the students were Japanese-Americans, trying to learn the language of their Japanese forebears.

We quickly adapted ourselves to living in a university town. Our apartment was two blocks from the University of Washington and just a block from what was called "The Ave" (University Way). "The Ave" contained the University bookstore, two movie theaters, tons of inexpensive and very good restaurants, and a smattering of small shops with imported goods. Seattle was a major port, particularly to the Far East. My favorite shop was Shiga's which carried myriad goods from Japan and China. I bought tea pots, rice bowls, chopsticks, and mats to add to the things I had brought with me from Washington, D.C.

We frequented all of the restaurants and were introduced to what became our new favorite sandwich, the "French Dip"—roast beef on crusty French bread dipped in *au jus* gravy. Never again would we eat those roast beef

sandwiches on white bread with gelatinous gravy poured over them that we had grown up with.

We continued life without a car as we had on the East Coast. However, we were now living in paradise and needed transportation to see the incredible scenery of mountains and water. With a rental car, we traveled to the San Juan Islands north and west of Seattle, little jewels in northwest waterways where people were even more laidback than they were in Seattle. People on the road waved to us as we drove by, more so on Lopez Island than the others. But friendliness ruled everywhere in the northwest. It was a way of life.

Our Family Grows

We were overjoyed to learn in the winter that I was pregnant. The summer before I gave birth we lived in a cottage on Lake Washington, taking care of the home and car of one of Larry's colleagues who went to Finland for a few months. The summer weather was absolutely gorgeous—in the 70s and 80s the entire time. My mother came out to visit for several weeks and we took her all over Seattle and to Mt. Rainier. She understood why we loved the Pacific Northwest so much.

In September we moved into University Faculty Housing in preparation for our new family. Following a Husky football game in which I probably jumped up and down cheering too much, and a "nesting" day spent ironing everything in sight, including the curtains, I took a taxi to the hospital by myself after my water broke. All of Larry's colleagues who had volunteered to drive me to the hospital even in the middle of the night could not be found on cam-

pus in the middle of the day. I left a note for Larry at home. On September 27, 1967, Michael David Selinker was welcomed into this world—by us, by the medical staff at Group Health, and by jazz pianist Oscar Peterson at the club Larry went to after a tense time awaiting our son's birth.

Childbirth was not without its problems for me. I developed a high fever and chills. Larry told the doctors that I had malaria while in Guinea; the hospital had not seen a case of it since World War II. I ended up having a Caesarian section and hemorrhaged during delivery, needing transfusions of blood and fibrinogen for clotting. I stayed in the hospital for two weeks. Unfortunately, I contracted hepatitis from the transfusions; I had to stop nursing and was quarantined by the Public Health Service. Larry and Michael got gamma globulin shots. No one could visit me, although occasionally we would find little gifts or dinner left on our doorstep. The only thing that kept my spirits up was my adorable baby. By spring I had just enough energy to continue one or two classes in addition to caring for Michael.

We took our first big trip with six-month-old Michael to Rhode Island to be with Larry's parents for Passover. He did well on the flight and in the new surroundings. We decided at that time that having a baby was not going to keep us from being world travelers.

Our next trip was closer to home. We borrowed a car from some friends and headed out to the Olympic Peninsula. We rigged up a hanging portable crib in the back seat and Michael slept most of the trip. However, when we

reached the top of Hurricane Ridge, he woke up just as the sun came out. One of my favorite photographs of him is sitting on top of Hurricane Ridge with the mountains behind him with a huge smile on his face. All was right with his world.

But in reality all was not right with the world at large. So much was happening at the beginning of 1968. The North Vietnamese had launched the Tet offensive on my birthday in January. A South Vietnamese security officer was captured on film executing a Viet Cong prisoner. Newsman Walter Cronkite delivered a blistering report that was highly critical of U.S. officials and their statements on the progress of the war. Although not known to us at the time, U.S. ground troops massacred more than 500 civilians in My Lai. Martin Luther King, who had inspired us with his “mountaintop” speech in February, was forever silenced in April. Eugene McCarthy came within 230 votes of defeating sitting president Lyndon Johnson in the New Hampshire primary; Johnson declared he would not seek another term. Richard Nixon declared his candidacy as did Senator Robert Kennedy.

Angst, Edinburgh, and Eldridge

When I heard the news on the radio in June 1968 that Robert Kennedy had been assassinated, I cried for hours in my tiny kitchen. I wept for the end of the hope he rekindled in me after cynicism had begun setting in. I wept anew for the deaths of his brother, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, of Martin Luther King, of Medgar Evers. I wept for the deaths of the three civil rights workers in Philadelphia, Mississippi:

Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney. I wept for the four little girls who were killed in the 1963 Baptist church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. I wept for the country I once declared my love for in a prize-winning essay in Suitland Elementary School. I cried my heart out because I was certain I could not continue to live in the U.S.

Fortune shone upon us. Larry received a Fulbright Scholarship to teach at the University of Edinburgh Department of Applied Linguistics for the 1968–69 academic year. We were allowed to choose any mode of transportation that we wanted, so we elected a train across the U.S., a ship from New York to Southampton (the S.S. United States), and a train from London to Edinburgh. Michael was fascinated with all the transportation until the ship's mighty horn scared him as he was crawling around on the deck.

Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, is a magical city dominated by a castle. The year that I spent there with Michael and Larry remains one of the finest in my life. I did not have to work and I wasn't in school, although I completed a four-week internship at the University's theology department library as part of my Master of Librarianship degree. But apart from that my days were devoted to enjoying my baby from ages one to two and the city of Edinburgh. And enjoy them both I did.

Our flat (apartment) was located at 6 Lonsdale Terrace overlooking The Meadows, a grassy, park-like area used for football (soccer) games, picnics, and the like. Larry was able to walk to the University from there. I developed muscles as

I carried the heavy pram (carriage), bags of groceries, and Michael up several flights of stairs to our flat.

Our neighborhood contained all the necessary shops for obtaining the supplies we needed for feeding ourselves: the greengrocer for our fruits and vegetables, the butcher, the fishmonger, the bakery, and the shop selling wine and spirits. Calvinist Edinburgh closed up its streets at 7:00 PM; eating dinner out in restaurants was not a common practice at that time. So it was in Edinburgh that I took the time to learn to become a reasonably good cook, entertaining Larry's colleagues and our new friends. We were invited to dinner in many homes as well, relying on a cadre of university students who loved to babysit for us because we had something akin to central heating.

Michael learned to walk in Edinburgh. He was already talking before we left Seattle and his vocabulary increased considerably while we were in Edinburgh, adding many British and Scottish words: lorries (trucks), sweets (candy), nappies (diapers), pram (carriage). His cheeks were red and chapped due to the cold Scottish winter and he was often mistaken for a Scottish bairn (baby).

Edinburgh sits at latitude of 53°55' N. When the sun is not shining, everything is gray, gray, gray. (Or, as they say in the United Kingdom, grey, grey, grey.) I was used to somber skies after two winters in rainy Seattle, but at home most of the houses were painted wood of many colors. All of Edinburgh's buildings and sidewalks were made out of grey stone. To offset the monochromatic days, I purchased bright red Melmac dishes and an orange wool coat.

During the winter months we had only five hours of daylight—from 10AM until 3PM—so we had to be very organized if we wanted to spend time out and still have time for errands. We never tired of the streets and sights of the city. We walked the Royal Mile, the pram clicking noisily over the cobblestone streets, peeking down every “close” or tiny alley to see the shops and buildings of the Old Town. We climbed up the hill to the Castle which had been both a fort and a royal residence since the 11th century. We pretended to shoot the 15th century cannon called "Mons Meg." As we sat in the Princes Street Gardens, I read Michael a story about Edinburgh from a delightful picture book showing the gardens and the castle. The streets of the Old Town and the New Town were ours for the asking, and as long as we stopped at the shops to pick up some food for dinner before the darkness came, we had no one to answer to.

Unfortunately I could not totally separate myself from life in America. I was torn between wanting to escape from it and feeling that I should do something. It was an election year and I had only been able to exercise my right to vote a short time in my life. The choices for U.S. President were not great in 1968. Richard Nixon was the Republican nominee. Hubert Humphrey, Johnson’s Vice-President who was closely identified with the Vietnam policies, had sewn up the Democratic nomination even before the disastrous convention. Former Alabama Governor George Wallace was running on the American Independent Party ticket. In Washington State, however, black activist Eldridge Cleaver was running on behalf of the Peace and Freedom Party. I had read his book *Soul on Ice* that year, an unflinchingly

raw and shocking series of letters and essays written from Folsom Prison about his life as a black man in society. I cast my vote for him by absentee ballot.

Our friendships blossomed with the faculty families at the Department of Applied Linguistics and with Larry's colleagues at other universities in the U.K. We were invited down for visits to other cities such as York, and given wonderful personal tours. We trained down to London for a long weekend, discovering a bed and breakfast in Kensington Gardens that provided babysitting services while we went to hear jazz great Cleo Laine sing with the Johnny Dankworth Band. One of our friends offered to have Michael stay with their family while Larry and I had a second honeymoon in Paris on a holiday weekend.

We made a third trip to Israel—the first since the 1967 war in which Israel had acquired new territory. I visited Chaya, who now had two boys, at Kibbutz Urim. I was happy to show her Michael. My friend Gilda from Habonim had also settled permanently in Jerusalem. I was not able to bring myself to enter the old city of Jerusalem. The mood in Israel was very different in 1969 than previously, and I found that my anti-war sentiments heightened because of Vietnam were getting me into arguments with our friends. It was to be my last visit there.

Our favorite trips, however, were those in Scotland. With Michael in the back of our rented car, we sang our way around the bonnie, bonnie banks of nearby Loch Lomond. The Loch Ness monster eluded us. Visits to Inverness, Aberdeen, and Fort William provided glimpses of

cities that were quite different from Edinburgh. We walked on the moors and partway up Ben Nevis. I found the castle that I wanted to live in forever. Although we didn't make it to Skye, I knew I would be back again to this place that called to my heart. As we crossed the Firth of Forth Bridge to Edinburgh, I felt so content to be living in Scotland.

However, the Fulbright was coming to an end and Larry did have a position to return to at the University of Washington. We decided to see a bit more of the world first. Larry arranged an invitation to Yugoslavia, and we had a delightful time in Belgrade followed by time in the sun at Baška Voda on the Dalmatian coast. From Yugoslavia we headed into Bulgaria to visit our friends Jim and Joan from Seattle. Jim, an assistant professor at the University of Washington's Romance Languages Department, was teaching in Sofia for a year, and he and his family gave us a wonderful introduction to the city. From Sofia we went to the capital of Romania to visit more Seattle friends.

We went to the south of France for the Antibes Jazz Festival at Juan les Pins. We swam in the Mediterranean and warmed ourselves in the hot sun. Michael made friends wherever we went and language seemed to be no barrier. The Punch and Judy puppet show in a Paris park required no translation. Wherever we traveled, East or West, we created a mild sensation. For we were traveling with one of the very first folding "umbrella" strollers created by the MacLaren company in Scotland—so light that you could easily take them on an airplane. People rushed up to us on the street, pinched Michael's rosy cheeks, and started asking

questions about the new invention that was to make parents' lives easier for decades to come.

Home Again

There really was no question that we would return to Seattle despite my despair when Robert Kennedy was assassinated. Being an Assistant Professor of Linguistics was important to Larry and to me. We had both worked hard for this. We now had a family. I still had my master's degree to complete.

We didn't have a place to live, but that was nothing new. It seemed like we were the wandering Jews, not quite wandering through the desert but changing addresses very frequently. We found a rented house with two bedrooms very close to the University, a big step up from the faculty housing we were living in the year Michael was born.

I took only one class the first quarter as I adjusted to being back home again, and then completed my coursework during winter quarter. It had taken me four years to complete what was essentially a one-year degree, and by the time I finished all the course work, I wasn't sure anymore that I wanted to be a librarian.

There were constant demonstrations on campus that year, and numerous physical assaults on Clark Hall, the Navy R.O.T.C. building. One of the most interesting figures to arrive on campus was Assistant Professor Michael Lerner—newly arrived from Berkeley, California, to teach ethics, social and political philosophy, and intro to philosophy—who captivated students and faculty alike with his speeches. He brought Jerry Rubin to campus, started the Seattle Lib-

eration Front, and was part of the infamous Seattle Seven conspiracy trial.

Many people think of the 1960s, or at least the latter part, as the time of sexual freedom (the summer of love), rampant drug use (Haight Ashbury), and great music (Woodstock). Music continued to be a large part of my life, but experimentation with drugs and sex was not.

My 1960s meant marriage, a baby, taking coursework for two university degrees, traveling the world, and at times being the sole support of my family. My early twenties meant responsibility and maturity, the beginning of my adulthood. My view of the world had begun to form. Eight years of President Eisenhower had ended and my idealism was ignited by the young Jack Kennedy. There was radical change in Africa as thirty-two African nations emerged from the yoke of colonial rule. At home there was an attempt to end many of the institutional causes of racial segregation and discrimination with passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act, and legislation pertaining to education, housing, and work opportunities.

But it seemed that whenever a truly inspirational leader for change emerged on the national scene, he was gunned down. Black power was ascendant, and it was becoming difficult for white people to be part of the civil rights movement. The country was mired in an unpopular war that seemed to have no end. At the end of the decade, Camelot was history and the feat of landing on the moon seemed like something out of science fiction.

Chapter 5

BREAKING OUT, BREAKING UP, BREAKING DOWN

The world is before you, and you need not take it or leave it as it was before you came in.

—JAMES BALDWIN

Kent State and the Child Care Struggle

“Kent State” was a defining moment in my life, as it was for tens of thousands of my generation. On April 30, 1970, President Nixon announced he was sending U.S. troops into Cambodia. He also resumed heavy bombing of North Vietnam, which had been suspended for nearly a year and a half. There were protests on virtually every campus. At Ohio’s Kent State University, students went further and burned down the Army R.O.T.C. building. National Guard troops were dispatched to prevent additional arson or vandalism. Suddenly they began firing, and on May 4, 1970, four students lay dead. They are immortalized in Neil Young’s haunting protest song “Ohio.”

On campuses across the nation, classes ground to a halt. Several universities closed for the balance of the spring quarter. At the University of Washington a “strike” was called and marches down the freeway to the Federal Court-house, sometimes as many as 15,000 strong, took place for a number of days in a row. Marchers were met with riot po-

lice using tear gas and clubs. I had developed political opinions, sometimes strong ones, and I certainly considered myself to be against this war. But I had never before considered myself a protester. So I was surprised when I found myself marching down the freeway with thousands of people that I didn't know.

And when I wasn't able to keep marching day after day because I had a two- and-a-half-year-old child in tow, I did the next best thing that I could think of at the time. I participated in a "child-in" on May 25th in Clark Hall (the Navy R.O.T.C. building) to press for a day care center on campus for students, staff, and faculty. As word circulated that the Strike Coalition was making university-sponsored child care a central demand, the numbers of parents who supported the demand increased; it soon became clear that a different facility would be necessary to accommodate all the children. The Strike Coalition took over the old Physics Annex (the Air Force R.O.T.C. building), where it set up a mimeo machine and a functioning day care center.

Students from the School of Social Work and the School of Nursing helped take care of the children who were dropped off while their parents attended classes. I had completed all the coursework for my Master's degree, and soon found myself in a leadership role in organizing the running of the child care center. This continued for several months during the summer when things were fairly quiet on campus.

Then one day we got word that the University was going to oust us from the Physics Annex. No one had discussed the matter with us. Instead the University chose to have the

Seattle Police Department Tactical Squad advance on the child care center in full riot gear—a frightening scene for the children. I met the police at the door holding my son in my arms and refused to let them in. The TV cameras were there by that time and the police didn't want to be seen clubbing babies. They backed off.

Susan Griffin captured the sense of urgency and frustration that I and countless other women were beginning to feel in 1970:

I Like to Think of Harriet Tubman

*I like to think of Harriet Tubman.
Harriet Tubman who carried a revolver,
who had a scar on her head from a rock thrown
by a slave-master because she
talked back), and who
had a ransom on her head
of thousands of dollars and who
had no use for the law
when the law was wrong,
who defied the law. I like
to think of her.
I like to think of her especially
when I think of the problem of
feeding children.*

*The legal answer
to the problem of feeding children
is ten free lunches every month,
being equal, in the child's real life,
to eating lunch every other day.
Monday but not Tuesday.
I like to think of the President
eating lunch Monday, but not*

*Tuesday.
And when I think of the President
and the law, and the problem of
feeding children, I like to
think of Harriet Tubman
and her revolver.*

*And then sometimes
I think of the President
and other men,
men who practice the law,
who revere the law,
who make the law,
who enforce the law,
who live behind
and operate through
and feed themselves
at the expense of
starving children
because of the law,
men who sit in paneled offices
and think about vacations
and tell women
whose care it is
to feed children
not to be hysterical
not to be hysterical as in the word
hysterikos, the greek for
womb suffering,
not to suffer in their
wombs,
not to care,
not to bother the men
because they want to think
of other things
and do not want*

*to take the women seriously.
I want them
to take women seriously.
I want them to think about Harriet Tubman,
and remember,
remember she was beat by a white man
and she lived
and she lived to redress her grievances,
and she lived in swamps
and wore the clothes of a man
bringing hundreds of fugitives from
slavery, and was never caught,
and led an army,
and won a battle,
and defied the laws
because the laws were wrong, I want men
to take us seriously.
I am tired wanting them to think
about right and wrong.
I want them to fear.
I want them to feel fear now
as I have felt suffering in the womb, and
I want them
to know
that there is always a time to make right
what is wrong,
there is always a time
for retribution
and that time
is beginning.*

—SUSAN GRIFFIN

But our goal was not to remain in the old Physics annex. Our goal was for the U.W. to provide affordable child care by trained teachers in a suitable facility licensed by the state

on or near campus. We therefore agreed to move out of the temporary child care center in exchange for a commitment from the University to this goal. They agreed and the child care center relocated temporarily at Freeway Hall, headquarters of Radical Women. The child care issue had gained a lot of momentum since May and a large group had been formed called the Campus-Community Coalition for University-Sponsored Child Care.

A member of Radical Women and I were selected as representatives to negotiate with the University. The negotiations were not easy—at times they broke down and were hard to get going again—and I reflected on how much easier it was to march down the freeway. Both seemed necessary for social change. And at that point in my life I was becoming equally comfortable marching with my two-year-old holding a sign saying “Free My Mommy” and sitting at the table with the men in suits working out the framework for the first University-sponsored child care center at U.W. How I was transformed from the quiet, shy person I had been is still a mystery to me.

The child care struggle was not limited to the University of Washington campus. It was being waged simultaneously at Harvard, Princeton, University of Chicago, State University of Buffalo, and our neighbors at Oregon State University and Portland State University. Our campus-community child care coalition kept organizing meetings and rallying the troops to keep the pressure on the U.W. to negotiate in good faith. We ultimately succeeded in having the univer-

sity open a child care center and creating a coordinator position at the University.

We would not have succeeded without the contributions of so many people in diverse ways—those who were willing to sit-in or protest in many forms; those who were willing to care for our children in their temporary habitats; those who were willing to organize and/or come to numerous meetings; those who were willing to talk, negotiate, and plan. We didn't end the war; we didn't bring down the government. But we made it easier for women to study and work and contributed to the discussion about women's changing roles in the family and in society.

The Women's Liberation Movement

The discussion about “the woman question” predated the child care struggle on campus by several years and along two tracks. President Kennedy had established a President's Commission of Women's Rights, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was amended in 1964 to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sex and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was set up. To pressure EEOC to enforce the law against sex discrimination, Betty Freidan and 300 other women formed the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Alongside NOW, other more radical feminist groups emerged among college students who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left. When Ruby Doris Smith presented an indignant assault on the treatment of women in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Commit-

tee (SNCC) in 1964, its leader Stokely Carmichael reputedly responded, “The only position for women in SNCC is prone.” So too in the New Left, where women complained about being responsible for kitchen work, typing, and serving “as a sexual supply for their male comrades after hours.”

By 1970 there were at least 500 women’s liberation groups nationally. In Seattle, second wave feminism had its formative years from 1967–1969. Women had come from the Old Left (Freedom Socialist Party, Socialist Workers’ Party) and the New Left—primarily Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) on campus and the antiwar movement. By the fall of 1968 there were three active groups: Seattle Radical Women (one of the very first women’s liberation groups in the country), Women’s Liberation-Seattle, and the Seattle Majority Union which published a magazine called “Lilith.”

I was late for the show, having spent those years having a baby and living overseas. Back on the U.W. campus for the 1969–70 academic years to complete my Master’s degree in Librarianship, I was curious about these new groups. I was not unhappy with my life—a mother of an adorable, precocious two-year-old, a faculty wife, and a graduate student. I was drawn to the meetings mainly by my feeling of having been denied work opportunities in the field of international relations because of my sex.

The meetings of Women’s Liberation-Seattle were educational and “consciousness-raising.” We would sit in a circle and share stories of our experiences, most of us for the

very first time in our lives. From the sharing of personal problems, feelings, experiences, and concerns came the realization that what was thought to be individual is indeed common among us. In fact, what was thought to be a personal problem might have a social cause and a political solution.

We were a generation that had grown up with television shows like “Father Knows Best,” with its lessons on the inadvisability of competing with boys. Although it is unimaginable today with three women having been Secretaries of State and four women having been appointed to the Supreme Court, most of us had never seen a female doctor or lawyer. Books such as Betty Freidan’s *The Feminine Mystique* and Robin Morgan’s *Sisterhood is Powerful* became early Bibles.

Action was also a large part of the women’s liberation movement. In Boston a small group of women created a course on women and their bodies which became the basis for the book *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. Seattle women worked on child care, reproductive care for University of Washington women, abortion laws (Washington legalized abortion in Dec.1970), and union rights. Panels on sexism in sports were held and a Women’s Studies program was introduced at the University.

Initially I felt out of place at the meetings, being a mother and being in an intact marriage. There was no mistaking me for other than the middle class, educated faculty wife that I was—more comfortable in a lilac pantsuit than in jeans. But I developed a feeling of solidarity with other

women that I had not had in my adult life before. From the time that I married Larry at age 19, much of my separate identity disappeared. I no longer had friends of my own that I saw regularly. In Washington, D.C. almost all of our friends were Larry's friends from Georgetown. In Seattle, they were his students and colleagues from the Linguistics Department. In Edinburgh, they were on the faculty where he taught. My identity was first and foremost as Larry's wife. *Madame Larry*.

The women's movement did not make me love any less those patriarchs in my life whom I adored: my beloved Zayde, in whose company I shared most of my childhood summers, and my father whom I loved fiercely. These men encouraged me always to be anything and do anything that I desired, and I was grateful to them even though I was unprepared for the blatant and subtle sexism I would later come to experience.

The women's movement gave me an appreciation for my mother that I had lacked growing up. This woman, so different in her personality from my father and me, so talkative and "out there" in contrast to our quiet dispositions, had grated on me so often as I was growing up. With more of an understanding of the institution of patriarchy, I began to see her as a remarkable woman for her times—someone who was self-confident in her skin, who took a risk moving far from her family but who could be counted on to support them always, someone who was fully present for and who excelled in her workplace, someone who was fully present for and who excelled as a wife and as a mother.

When cracks in my marital relationship did start appearing in 1970, discussions about double standards and sexism in marriage took on new meaning. The personal and political merged for me in writings such as Pat Mainardi's "The Politics of Housework." I joined a different, newly formed group—the Anna Louise Strong Brigade—to which several of my new neighbors belonged. The Feminist Karate Union was formed to teach women how to defend themselves from attack. Some women learned to shoot guns.

The Death of My Marriage

In August 1970, during the child care struggle on campus, I learned that my husband was having an affair with one of his students. The life that I had counted on and felt safe in shattered in a moment. It was a feeling, captured by writer Erica Baumeister, "as if life had suddenly put a different reel in the movie projector midway through a screening." At times I reviewed my life on a dual screen: the life I experienced on one side and the new "true" version on the other.

I wasn't able to cope with the political situation on campus, motherhood, and my marriage falling apart. Although I had stopped smoking when the Surgeon General's Report was released in 1963, I started smoking again. Needing to get some distance from everyone and everything, I applied for a new passport and booked an inexpensive charter flight to London, leaving my young son with his father. My intent was to head for somewhere in Scotland, the country that had brought me great joy only a few years prior.

After arriving at Heathrow, I spent a restless night near Euston Station and in the morning boarded a train to Edinburgh. Looking out the train window at the changing scenery, I spied the stone ruins of a magnificent Augustinian abbey on a river about 10 miles from the English/Scottish border. I jumped off at the market town of Jedburgh, staying there for three days while spending most of my time at the centuries-old Jedburgh Abbey and ambling through the town each day. I hardly spoke the entire time, other than to order food and pay my bill.

In the silence of the abbey, far from the cacophony of my life at home, I entered a zone where my mind was clearer, where all my senses were alive. I could feel fear subsiding and hear what my heart told me it wanted. The physical beauty around me made me feel that all was possible. Larry and I had ten years invested in our marriage and a young child. I was terribly hurt, but I believed I was capable of forgiveness if Larry was serious about recommitting to the marriage. After two weeks in Edinburgh talking with our married friends, I came home and was welcomed. We forged ahead.

In January 1971, with Larry at a conference in Hawaii and my thirtieth birthday approaching, I came to a realization about the choices I had made regarding my own education and career. My undergraduate degree in International Relations took five years to complete and produced no viable work for me. When I arrived in Seattle in 1966 with Larry, I made a “practical” decision to pursue a Master’s degree in Librarianship in order to have a portable skill in the

event Larry did not get tenure at the University of Washington. That degree took me four years to complete, and although I had a job in the Foreign Documents Division of the U.W. Library, I was not particularly excited about what I was doing.

I had given some thought to becoming a lawyer when I was in high school in Washington, D.C. I had passed by the Supreme Court building many times, noting the chiseled words “Equal Justice Under Law.” My mother had often called me “Portia” when I was growing up—I was frequently defending my brothers—but it was not after the clever, determined young heroine in Shakespeare’s “The Merchant of Venice” who disguises herself as a lawyer to save her husband’s life. The other “Portia” was a soap opera character on the radio in the 1940s and 1950s. In “Portia Faces Life” a female attorney, a widowed single parent in the fictional small town of Parkersburg, battled the forces of crime, injustice, and civic corruption.

The unhappiness I was feeling as a librarian, the recognition of the fissures in my marriage, and the new energy I felt from the women’s liberation movement about entering fields hitherto dominated by men all gave me the courage to apply to the University of Washington Law School. My friend Sara, also a member of the Anna Louise Strong Brigade, received her acceptance at the same time that I did. When it was learned that a male friend of mine was also accepted, my three-and-a-half-year-old son asked, “But how can *he* go to law school? He’s not a girl.”

I was in the first law school class with a large contingent of women: 35 out of 150. In previous years there had been eight or ten women at most. We were a large enough group and loud enough to have our demand for a women's lounge met. A number of us, including some second- and third-year students, formed our own consciousness-raising or "rap" group. I would not have made it through law without it.

At the same time that I began law school, Larry and I took a radical departure from the way that we had always lived. For a number of years we had been involved with a group of people who shared ideas about early childhood learning. We decided to have a cooperative child care center in a rented house that we and another family would live in and that would host the child care program during the day. A beautiful large home across from Volunteer Park in the Capitol Hill neighborhood was selected.

My first year law school experience was less than ideal. With a child care center operating in my house, I caught every communicable whatever under the sun. I had conjunctivitis and couldn't read or see for days. I came down with mononucleosis and hepatitis B in the fall and mycoplasma pneumonia in the spring. I had the ordinary stuff like colds, coughs, and flu. I missed many classes and rarely made it to the library to study. At the end of the year I studied for the exams and miraculously I passed. But it had taken a tremendous toll on my personal life. We had significant problems with the other family sharing our household. I was trying to be a student, a wife, a mother, and a friend to

our housemates. I found I was not able to juggle all the balls in the air.

Larry, Michael, and I took a lovely trip that summer. Larry was invited to teach English as a second language at Osijek and Ohrid in the Yugoslav Republic and at Poznan in Poland. Michael was almost five years old and it seemed the perfect time to travel with him, although he was an easy traveler at every age. The first workshop was in the mountains of Serbia, on the beautiful Drina River. We feasted on trout and other local fish dinners and greatly enjoyed the customs and company of the young Serb students.

On our way to the magnificent Lake Ohrid in Macedonia, we visited Sarajevo, often called the “Jerusalem of the Balkans” because of its history of religious diversity. From our Ohrid lodgings we could see across the lake into Albania, the very mysterious country in the Communist bloc. Before flying to Poland, we visited Ljubljana, Dubrovnik, and Split. I was enchanted with Yugoslavia and hoped to return there again.

After a rigorous search at the Warsaw airport, we settled into the capital city. I set out on a search for the Warsaw Ghetto that had been a part of my Jewish teenage reading, and was sorely disappointed to find only a modern apartment complex with a tiny plaque in a park. I was happy to learn recently that a Museum of the History of Polish Jews has been erected on the site. In Poznan, a university town, our students were extremely excited to be learning English. They especially wanted to learn all the words to all the Beatles’ songs, so we were constantly singing. Michael loved it.

Back at home we terminated the arrangements with the other family and helped find a new location for the child care center. We invited other friends to move in with us: a single mother with a child Michael's age that had been at the campus child care center with him, a single woman who had been living with her, and a man who was a classmate of mine at law school and his wife. We organized our house as a true communal household sharing meals, chores, and expenses. Communal living freed me from the responsibility of cooking dinner every night and enabled me to spend a great deal of my free time with the children. It gave Larry the opportunity to improve his cooking skills and it gave Michael and his friend Douglas good role models seeing the men participate in all the household chores. We held regular house meetings and provided for the care of the two boys. It worked well. The neighborhood that we lived in was at one time predominantly Catholic, its large houses in between St. Joseph's Church and Holy Names Academy. One of our neighbors, a married parent of six children, was over at our two-child, six-adult home one day and said, "You know, maybe you all have got the numbers right after all."

My second year of law school was substantially more relaxing than the first; my only health condition was an ankle sprain. I still was not enamored with how we were treated by the professors. I was over thirty and had held many jobs; I resented being talked down to. In addition to my studies I did an internship at the ASUW Women's Commission on campus. Several things we worked on were passage of Washington's Equal Rights Amendment and the opening of the Aradia Women's Health Center. We also assisted the

Women Studies Program which had been in existence since 1970. The creative, supportive environment at the Women's Commission helped make that year a good one for me.

Larry and I had planned to take a car trip with Michael across the U.S. to visit family on the East Coast. We knew that upon our return we would need to find a new place to live because the owner of the home wanted to sell the house. We (the six adults who lived there) could not come up with \$26,000 to purchase it individually or together.

I stayed at one of the University dorms for a short while to study for my exams. I had missed my family and other housemates and was anxious to see them. I was excited about the forthcoming road trip. Larry picked me up at the University in the AMC Gremlin we had purchased the previous winter, our very first car. Before getting out of the car in front of our house, he told me that he had begun a relationship with a young woman when ski season started and that he had plans to meet her in Colorado in August. He wanted Michael to join them. Apparently everyone in the house knew about the affair; only I had been blind to it. I had gone through the school year feeling that everything was finally working fairly well.

Much later I would recognize how we both contributed to the failure of our marriage. But at the time all I felt was humiliation, shame, and anger—emotions I had not let myself feel three years prior. Even if Larry wanted the marriage to continue, I didn't think that I could live this way. The trust was gone.

I wanted to resolve things quickly. And so we packed up the Gremlin and took our intended journey across the country while discussing our marriage/separation/divorce. The scenery was breathtaking and I would alternately be sitting with tears in my eyes or screaming, “Stop the car! This is absolutely incredible!” I remember feeling bipolar at the Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho one day, at once thrilled by the scenery and sad for myself and Michael. We had never seen places like Yellowstone. We tried to make it wonderful for Michael.

Larry wanted stay in Minneapolis/St. Paul for a Linguistics Institute and have me do the family visits without him. He did not want his family to know about the separation. I went through the difficult charade on the East Coast and returned to Seattle. I had no money of my own, and Larry was not going to get a paycheck until the end of October. I found an apartment above the Canterbury Tavern for \$95 per month including utilities. It had two small bedrooms, a small sitting room, and a kitchen even tinier than the one I had in Faculty Housing when Michael was a baby. But it was adequate for me and Michael and in walking distance of Stevens Elementary where he was to begin first grade.

Although I tried to keep life normal for Michael, there was nothing “normal” about it. His father was out of the picture for awhile. Michael alternated between missing Larry and being angry with him for leaving. He no longer lived in a beautiful home with his good friend Douglas. He no longer had happy dinners with lots of food and lots of talking. Even though I shouldn’t have, I cried at times in his

presence. He would try to cheer me up—a heavy burden for a six-year-old.

And I didn't know how depressed I really was. I was grieving the loss of my marriage, but I was also masking anger and fear. This was the first time in my life that I lived without another person over the age of 18. I got up every morning, made Michael breakfast, and got him off to school. And then I would get myself off to school when the term started. But going to class meant that there was some chance that I would run into Larry. It did happen several times and it was disastrous. Mainly because I tortured myself. I needed to ask the question: WHY? Why wasn't I good enough? Why wasn't I enough? Why did this happen?

Larry didn't want to analyze it. One time he told me it wasn't my fault, that I was perfect. That statement made me later reflect on a joke he and I had when we lived for a year with my parents in Maryland. Our next door neighbor Phil and his girlfriend Ruth and the two of us had given one another nicknames: "Lousy Larry," "Phooey Phil," and "Rotten Ruth." The name that they came up with for me was "Perfect Phyllis." Perfect was as bad as lousy and rotten.

Shame makes us hide and retreat into isolation. I stopped going to classes. Even though mine was not the only failed relationship among my law school friends, I was very embarrassed and became isolated from my women friends. I stopped calling people on the telephone, including my family. I was the first person in my family to be getting divorced.

I had mood swings. I had no energy and I felt unlovable and unworthy. My profound sense of helplessness led to a contemplation of suicide. My dear friend Cathy, sensing my desperation during a telephone call she made to me, helped me get to the Group Health mental health department where I began counseling with a wonderful therapist.

The time that I was in therapy with Betsy helped me to understand that I had hard work ahead to figure out on my own, and not through someone else's eyes, the person I was going to become. Slowly I began to understand more about my perfectionism. My dad was joking when he asked about the other two points after I brought home a grade of 98. But I had internalized the notion of 100% rather than merely striving to do my best. In the School of Librarianship, I had chastised myself for the one grade of B that I received in my sea of As. Most perfectionists, according to Dr. Brene Brown, were raised being praised for achievement and performance (grades, manners, rule-following, people-pleasing, appearance, sports). Somewhere along the line we adopt the belief system: I am what I accomplish and how well I accomplish it.

I began to see the burden of striving to be perfect, described by Brown as a “twenty-ton shield that we lug around thinking it will protect us” and by Anna Quindlen as “carrying a backpack filled with bricks every single day.” I not only needed to accept Larry as being imperfect (as being human); I needed to accept myself that way as well. We had both tried our best. Larry was in the midst of a difficult tenure battle which he ultimately lost; he may have felt un-

supported while I was busy focusing on my needs. Our attitudes about gender roles were rapidly being turned upside down. The expression of sexuality had been changed by “the pill” and by popular culture and experimentation with alternatives to the nuclear family occurred. Believing this did not totally assuage my guilt, but it ultimately helped me to survive.

Because of my depression I had missed many classes. I gave some thought to becoming a law librarian instead of a lawyer; the Law Librarian at U.W. told me about an open position at the United Nations. She thought I would be uniquely qualified with my degrees in International Relations and Librarianship, and my law background. But I was not ready to pull up roots and move to New York.

I took the time for introspection, relying on the assistance of friends and my therapist. A substantial turning point for me occurred that spring when I had an opportunity to spend a long weekend in San Francisco with Larry’s sister Lea who was experiencing problems in her marriage as well. We talked and listened deeply to one another, in a way that was new for us. Rachel Naomi Remen calls the relationships in which we are truly seen and heard “holy relationships.” They remind us of our value and give us strength to go on.

On her flight home, Lea penned this poem and sent it to me:

Different

*I am different
Affected by you.
Your warmth
Your insight
Your bravery
Your attempts at life
Your ability to stop
 to evaluate
 to rest
 to turn off
 to block out when needed*

*To show me the way
 to calm down
 slow down
To look for alternatives
 to over-stimulation
 over-excitement
 over-you
 over-me
 over-life.*

*To overcome the barriers
Of vulnerability
Of fear.*

*To open up
to my soul
my pain
me.*

*I admire your strength
 your honesty
The treasure of honesty.
The forcefulness of simplicity
 naturalness.*

of confronting yourself.
The expectations –
Your search for perfection.
Your recognition of its fallibility.
The fallibility of relationship
of contact.
Your search for humanness
In work
In life.
I am different
Affected by you.

—LEA SCHNEIDER

Her tribute touched me to the core. It made me realize that this difficult process of finding meaning in my life was a process which could be shared. What I was trying to do for myself might be of benefit to my future clients or perhaps inspirational to other women who wanted to work outside the home. Transforming an incredibly painful time in my life into a vehicle of healing for me and potentially others was the most important journey at that point in my life and would continue to be so for many years to come.

Chapter 6

BREAKING NEW GROUND: BEGINNING/BECOMING

*You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself
any direction you choose.
You're on your own,
and you know what you know.
And you are the only one
who'll decide where you'll go.*

—DR. SEUSS

Despite my sister-in-law's vote of confidence, I knew that I was still closer to the beginning process of finding meaning in my life than I was to the end of the road. Ann Morrow Lindberg writes, in her insightful *Gift from the Sea*, that “woman must find herself by losing herself in some kind of creative activity of her own. Here she will be able to find her strength.” Jacques Barzun says that “finding yourself” is a misconception: “A self is not discovered but formed by deliberative contemplation and action.”

A historian of the women's liberation movement wrote that once one has gone through such a “resocialization,” one's view of oneself and the world is never the same again, whether or not there is further participation in the movement. There is no doubt that the influence of the women's liberation movement on my life went far beyond those early

meetings. It gave me the courage to apply to law school and shaped how I practiced law. It informed who I became, how I raised my son, how I relate to people, how I see the world. My feminist politics can't be separated from the rest of "me."

In the spring of 1974, however, I still had significant barriers in the way of creating a new life: passing my third-year law exams and, if successful, passing the bar exam for admission to practice in Washington. I came close to not graduating with my class. My father, who had previously suffered two heart attacks, became quite ill that spring and needed to have triple by-pass surgery. I flew to Florida, where they had moved several years before, to be with him and my mother. It had been the case that one's grades for a class in law school were determined solely by the final exam. However, the required third-year Ethics class had a mandatory attendance policy: if you missed more than two classes, you automatically failed the course. As a result of my decision to be with my parents, I ran afoul of the policy. Fortunately for me, my fellow law students threatened to go on strike, and the mandatory attendance policy was removed.

After my father's successful surgery, I returned to study for the final exams. Michael helped me by reading passages to me from my law books. He was six and a half years old and his reading skills were phenomenal. While other children were sounding out words from their picture books, Michael read law. I passed my exams and earned my Juris Doctor degree in June 1974.

Michael stayed with Larry for the summer while I studied intensively for the bar exam at the end of August, an intense, grueling three-day period of time. The results would not be known until late October or November. My law school friend Christine and I decided to go to Jamaica together for a vacation. After stopping in Florida to see my parents, we flew to Kingston where we spent a few days with a friend of Christine.

At our next stop in Ocho Rios, we went to a dance where the reggae music flowed and so did the *ganja* (marijuana). It was the first time that summer that I felt completely relaxed. Unfortunately for me, the partner that I found to dance with had more than dancing on his mind. We were separated from the group after awhile and he managed to position me between himself and a tree and sexually assaulted me. I had not taken the classes at the Feminist Karate Union. I was too shocked to scream for help, even if I could have been heard over the loud music. And I blamed myself: I was smoking marijuana, I was wearing a tank top with no bra and a lovely-smelling clove necklace, and I “let” myself get separated from everyone. In a strange country, I did not know what to do. I found Chris and we went back to the place we were staying at. We left town immediately the next morning to avoid further trouble.

In the beach town of Negril, I fell off a short ledge while walking at night above the water and severely sprained my ankle. Returning home for the start of Michael’s school year, I was again an emotional mess. But I knew that I could not delay any more in looking for the ways to build a

successful life as a single parent. Therapy was no longer my answer; “deliberate contemplation and action” was. I knew that I needed to try to structure a life for myself and my son where I felt valued and cared about, where I was part of a community, where shared values were the driving force.

Communal living

Christine had been living on Queen Anne Hill with Joan and Anne, two other friends from law school. Anne needed to move to Olympia where she would begin clerking for a judge on the Washington Supreme Court. Michael and I were invited to move in with Chris and Joan, and I thought that would be preferable to living alone in my tiny apartment over a tavern. However, I did not want to leave Capitol Hill because of Michael’s schooling. We looked for a rental house in my neighborhood for the four of us, but were unsuccessful in finding one.

The realtor helping us to find a place asked if we would consider purchasing a house. At the time we were still waiting for the results of the bar exam. Christine had the promise of a job at the National Labor Relations Board if she passed. Joan and I were not certain what we were going to do. However, Joan volunteered the information that she would soon get a large amount of cash in the property settlement of her divorce and was willing to use it for the down payment on a house. That changed everything. We found a large house three blocks from Stevens Elementary School for \$40,000. Joan put up half for the down payment, and the owners were tickled to carry a real estate contract on “three lady lawyers.” We were quite the novelty.

Michael and I moved in before anyone else. The empty house was so enormous and scary that I threw down a mattress in the smallest room in the house that wasn't a bathroom and we huddled together the first night with the radio playing. But it was not long before it became a very special place for both of us, serving as our home for 14 years and providing security that we both needed in our lives.

Our house accommodated numerous changes. At the beginning we rented out the finished basement with its many rooms, and the four of us (Michael, Joan, Chris, and me) inhabited the upstairs floors, cooking our meals together and sharing expenses. In the first years all of our friends were other lawyers. When Chris left to purchase a home with her partner Rick several years later, Abbie (a welder) moved in and became a mainstay in our lives. Over the years we had dancers, artists, and another child living with us. Also a dog and two cats. But it rarely seemed chaotic.

My housemates supported me through a second failed relationship with a man who was a fellow student in law school and with whom I had lived in my first communal experience when we were both married to other people. The two-year relationship helped me get over the feeling of being "damaged goods" after the rape in Jamaica. But it also included a termination of an unplanned pregnancy which was emotionally difficult for both of us, an extremely scary manic phase of his soon-to-be diagnosed bipolar disorder, and his ultimate rejection of me. "Perfect Phyllis" no longer existed. I made mistakes and I found I could accept that. I

also stopped blaming myself for everything bad that happened to me.

For Michael our communal home was a place where he learned to hold his own in conversations with adults, where he learned to cook a meal for everyone, where he could bring his friends home anytime to share the huge basement digs which we moved down to after a few years. He had three rooms: a small one for sleeping, another small one that served as his music room, and a larger one for a giant game table and his toys and books. My small bedroom, a bathroom, a comfy living room with TV, and a second kitchen were on the same floor. Our upstairs living room and the dining room where we ate our meals together often served as the theater for the plays Michael wrote, with the sliding oak doors between them acting as the curtain for scene changes.

I was able to provide a very lovely home for him without a huge outlay of money. Because of this I was able to pursue the work that I wanted even though it was not very lucrative financially. The support and camaraderie that we received from our shared household more than made up for what we gave up in “privacy.” I wasn’t making a political statement. It was just something that made sense to me as a single parent and it worked.

The Women’s Law Collective

The other major decision that I made in the fall of 1974 was regarding the type of lawyer I would become. While awaiting the bar exam results, I vacillated between the fear of failure and the fear of success. I had not applied for any

jobs with law firms or government agencies and I was unsure as to what I would do. When I started law school I had wanted to practice criminal law, but the separation from Larry made me realize that family law was an area that needed more women attorneys in it. While in law school many of us had talked about one day starting a women's law collective.

And after only several months of discussions and planning, in November 1974 we opened the office of Selinker Hillenbrand Vestal & Klockars—four women who had become close friends in law school, who all identified ourselves as feminists, and who already had some degree of political perspective on our function as lawyers. A collective form offered us control, equality, and support—the power to choose the work we would do without an employer exercising dominion over us. We chose a non-hierarchical structure where we would make equal money and have equal power in all decision-making, except that which of necessity had to be done by each individual on her singly-managed cases.

As close friends with shared experiences as women working together, we had an easier time in a profession that exemplified much of the sexism of our society. Our ability to provide support to one another gave us energy to come to grips with sexism in dealing with the problems clients brought through our doors. We hoped that we could serve as role models for women who wanted to take control of their own lives and to develop alternatives to the commonly defined methods of being successful. In addition to serving

as support by example, we provided a supportive environment for our women clients in a very personal sense.

Our offices were in a converted house, the living room with fireplace being the friendly waiting room. Many of the women who came through our door were asserting themselves for the first time, often in the context of a very messy life situation such as divorce, needing to develop a sense of self-confidence in their abilities to make decisions about themselves and their futures. Some of our clients were women who were suffering at the hands of men, physically and emotionally, who were on the run from an abusive situation. We provided a place for a woman to be free from male intrusion, where she could have whatever space she required to begin building the strength needed to deal clearly and creatively with her particular crisis or dilemma.

Education was an inherent part of our work. On a very individual level, we involved our clients in as much decision-making and control of their cases as they were willing or able to accept, providing them with an understanding of the legal system and its limitations. On a broader, more preventive scale, we provided joint classes and workshops for larger groups of women. A divorce workshop that we presented with social workers dealt with divorce as the immensely complex, emotionally-laden process that it is, rather than as a problem for which the law provides cut and dried, formulaic answers.

Local newspapers gave us positive publicity, one with the headline "Women Take Law Into Their Own Hands." We were amazed years later when clients came in with a

clipped newspaper article about us that had been carefully hidden in their underwear drawers until such time it was needed.

Selinker Hillenbrand Vestal & Klockars offered a full range of services. Margaret handled criminal cases, Jo did estate planning and probate, Cathy was a whiz at business incorporation, and I gravitated toward child custody cases. We all handled marriage dissolution (divorce) cases and juvenile court dependency cases. We took on some cases for males, especially those that were court-appointed cases, but we didn't take a case where a man was in direct conflict with a woman, as in contested custody cases. Our clients were treated holistically; solutions for problems beyond the legal issues were discussed.

For the first two years, we did our own typing on typewriters with carbon paper and onion skin paper. We felt we had to educate ourselves in all aspects of legal work in order to maximize our understanding of how a law practice such as ours should operate. From this understanding we hoped to develop an approach to the integration of lawyers and non-lawyers before beginning the actual day-to-day working out of such relationships.

In our third year we moved our collective to downtown Seattle and decided to hire a legal secretary. A key decision was how she would be paid. Our collective operated on an egalitarian principle: all income earned by any of us went into the bank account, bills were paid, and then draws were taken. We proposed that the secretary could be an equal member of the collective and take an equal draw. However,

she decided that she would be better off having a fixed income each month. There were certainly many months when she did considerably better than the rest of us.

We tried to walk the boundary between providing good, inexpensive legal services to middle-income people who were ineligible for free legal services, and not being taken advantage of by doing things voluntarily that we should be paid for. Women come from a history of underpaid work, volunteerism, and mistaken self-sacrifice for the benefit of others. However, dealing with “money” was difficult for us as women committed to a non-elitist, non-exploitative, feminist practice of law. Fortunately, most of our clients were supportive of us and committed themselves to pay, even if it meant extended payment on the installment plan.

Being downtown rather than in the north end of Seattle had its advantages and disadvantages. I missed the comfort of our old offices and the feeling of “safety” that our clients had on Stone Way. But being downtown gave us very easy access to the courthouse for filing documents, doing research, and obtaining emergency orders for our clients. It also put us in touch with other attorneys regularly for lunch and meetings. We were able to participate in the Family Law section of the Bar Association and initiate a Children’s Rights section.

The greatest advantage of having our own practice was that we could choose our cases. An early case that we worked on was an appellate case in which we filed an *amicus* (friend of the court) brief on behalf of the Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund. The Washington Supreme

Court decided in favor of the mothers, albeit on statutory grounds rather than the constitutional arguments which we proffered. We had many cases for the gay and transgendered community, ranging from name changes, partnership agreements, wills, and consumer issues. Our clients included a jazz musician, a poet, an author, and a television anchor—all of whom later made it big on the Seattle and/or national scene. At the time they were struggling with a legal problem with which we were able to help.

Unfortunately we were not able to maintain the structure of the collective for more than five years. Cathy left after two years and decided to run a tavern instead. My housemate Joan joined us. Margaret became pregnant and took leave for a time after the baby was born. We supported her through her time off. Finally Jo became pregnant and thought that she might take an extended leave. Margaret was considering a position as a Hearing Examiner, and at that point I decided it was time for me to take a sabbatical.

Co-Parenting

My separation from Larry in 1973 had caused tremendous dislocation for all three of us. We tried to provide stability for Michael by having him reside with me during the school year and having overnight weekend visits with Larry. Although it was initially awkward, we attended all of his school functions together. While I studied for the bar exam in the summer of 1974, we reversed Michael's living situation and he lived primarily with Larry and had visits with me. Larry had always been an excellent father, having

bonded with Michael very early in his infancy when I was ill with hepatitis.

Neither of us was in a hurry to involve the court in our lives. Larry felt disadvantaged by my being part of the legal system. My knowledge of it only made me more leery. Washington State had completely overhauled the divorce statutes in 1973, eliminating “fault” and other grounds for divorce, granting a dissolution of marriage upon one party’s belief that the marriage was “irretrievably broken.” That was not an issue for us; at stake was our contact with our child and the responsibility for parental decision-making. Neither one of us could imagine our lives as parents limited by the court or by the other parent.

As we moved into the second year of our separation, the new rhythm of our lives became clearer. It was helpful that I had a stable living situation near Michael’s school and Larry had his own apartment which was suitable for Michael’s time with him. As I was getting my own life together, I was better able to focus on what was best for Michael rather than my own needs. I learned that forgiveness could be given not to excuse an act but because it allowed me to live without the toxicity of bitterness.

Larry and I had shared so much that was good during our years together. I supported him financially and in other ways through his Ph.D.; he helped me to complete all three of my degrees. We were fellow adventurers on our overseas trips. That history, combined with our love for our child, was stronger than any current disappointment we could harbor toward the other. We developed a new relationship,

as co-parents, working together toward creating a good life for Michael. We trusted each other with regard to his welfare, so much so that I agreed to let Larry take Michael out of the country for a visit to Israel.

We both knew in our hearts that neither one of us would do anything to damage the other person's relationship with him. Once we were able to set fears aside, we worked out an uncontested dissolution of marriage which was finalized in September 1975. We did not have anything like the detailed Parenting Plans that are required by the Washington courts today, and our Decree contains the old-fashioned language of custody to me and visitation rights to Larry. This grew out of our knowledge that Larry would need to seek work outside of Seattle after not receiving tenure at the University of Washington.

We never needed the courts to determine how we would provide for the best interests of our son. We communicated with one another over the years about major decisions. We made changes in Michael's schedule when we deemed it advantageous for him. It wasn't always easy and, as an attorney doing divorce and custody work, I understand how fortunate we were to be able to communicate well after a marriage ends. We may not have had a golden anniversary to look forward to as my parents did, but our new cooperative relationship as Michael's parents would be until death do us part.

Taking Stock

1979 marked the end of a turbulent and tumultuous decade. Kent State. Watergate. The Vietnam War. Nixon's resignation.

I was thirty eight years old. I had changed my marital status. I had changed careers. I had changed the way that I lived and how I raised my son. I had learned, as Joseph Campbell says, that "we must be willing to get rid of the life we planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us." I was not in a romantic relationship with anyone but I felt whole. I did not feel like an incomplete half of something that I used to be attached to. I had my own friends—great friends—ones that I worked with during the day and ones that I spent evening hours with.

I loved being Michael's mother. I had the power to schedule my work hours so that I could be available for the majority of his non-school non-sleeping hours. When my law collective disbanded, I took a sabbatical for almost a year and became a full-time mom again.

I was on my way to becoming what my friend Linda Wolf—internationally acclaimed photographer, author, and facilitator of teen and women's groups— calls "Full Woman." She talks about the strengths that make each woman a full woman to be valued simply as a woman:

Resilience
Heart
Wisdom
Intelligence
Compassion

Experience
Intuition
Beauty
Love

During this decade I experienced betrayal, rejection, humiliation, loneliness, fear, despair, divorce, rape, shame, abortion, near poverty. Rachel Naomi Remen says that it is our wounds that make us trustworthy, our imperfections and our pain that draws others to us. It allows others to be open to us without feeling small.

With time and assistance, both professionally and from friends, I became more emotionally resilient. Compassion for others having similar experiences helped me become a better lawyer and a better friend. I learned to rely on my intuition and heart wisdom as much as my brain in helping me to survive my challenges. As a mother I learned how to love without expectation of anything back, but more importantly I learned self-love. I learned to trust myself, to be respectful to myself, and to be kind and affectionate to myself. When we learn to love ourselves, we can love others better.

As the decade closed I felt I was a much different person than I had been in 1969. I liked myself more. Although my life would always be a work-in-progress, I felt I truly knew who I was, what I believed in, what was important to me in life. I didn't have it all planned out—I left room for mystery. I could not have guessed how many blessings would come into my life.

Chapter 7

SAILING WITH CHARLIE

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the things you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

—MARK TWAIN

In 1951 Thor Heyerdahl made me dream of the Pacific Ocean with his captivating tale of *Kon Tiki*. Fifteen years later I drove along the Pacific coastline with Larry from Los Angeles to Neah Bay, marvelling at the crystalline beaches, jagged rocks and sea stacks, and unique lighthouses that offered protection to seafarers. But it was not until I fell in love with Charlie Poole that I entertained the notion that I could one day sail across the Pacific Ocean in a little boat.

Finding My Shipmate

I first heard about Charlie from my housemate Abbie in 1977 when he was separated from his wife and in need of child care for his infant son Michael. Abbie had formerly been a live-in nanny who cared for his children John and Marie. Their friendship was rekindled and, like most friendships in our communal household, Charlie became a “house” friend. My son Michael and his son John were the same age and found they had much in common. Charlie

and John came in costume to Michael's Star Trek-themed 11th birthday party. Their gifts for him were a chess set and a new game with funny-shaped dice: Dungeons and Dragons. Michael and John were rarely seen out of my son's basement cave again for years. (Michael's trajectory from a fledgling D&D player to an internationally famous game designer merits a book of its own.)

I had sworn off relationships with men after a two-year relationship ended badly in 1977. But I found Charlie very easy to be with. Although our career paths were different (he was a Systems Analyst with the Seattle Water Department), we had much in common with our East Coast roots, our ages, our struggles as single parents. And in the course of going out as a threesome with Abbie, we discovered that we liked the same movies and food.

On a trip to New England to visit my ex-inlaws in April 1979, my sister-in-law Lea asked me about men in my life. I replied that there was no one.

"Why not?" she asked.

"Well, maybe if I could find someone who was as easy to be with as Charlie," I answered.

"What's wrong with Charlie?" was her comeback.

What indeed? I hadn't thought about Charlie in those terms because I wasn't thinking about new relationships at all. I was just letting life happen. But I had spent a year and a half getting to know a man who was good-looking, smart, funny, sensitive, and so much more. Was I looking for anything else in a relationship?

When I returned home from Rhode Island, Charlie was at my house waiting for me. I could not look at him the same way any more. Unbeknownst to me, he had also decided to move our relationship further down the line. Within a few weeks the chemicals in my brain and body had changed. I was happy and anxious at the same time, but most of the time I wore a huge smile that made my friends and colleagues ask me what was going on in my life. It had to be more than the power of Lea's suggestion.

All new love affairs need an out-of-town trip where you are transported away from the realities of life—the unwashed laundry, the interruptions from children, and the necessity to cook—and you can focus intently on each other. Our destination was Mount Rainier. The mountain was out in all its glory, providing opportunities for easy hiking and wonderful views while driving by. We feasted on a sumptuous trout dinner and blackberry pie. And we thought that the Gateway Motel where we stayed had to be the symbolic gateway to an incredible relationship ahead.

Despite the rush of new feeling that we had for one another, we were both content to move slowly with regard to changing the lives of our children. We lived just a few blocks from one another, making it easy to have frequent contact even for brief periods of time. On occasion we would do things with the three eldest children, such as going out for dinner or going on a ski trip to Oregon. There were enough times when neither of us had parental responsibility, e.g. when my Michael was with his dad for the sum-

mer and when Charlie's two eldest children were at camp or visiting their grandmother in North Carolina.

By the next year Charlie had me convinced that I could climb a mountain. Despite my childhood summers in the Catskill Mountains and 14 years living in the Pacific Northwest, I was basically a city person. I was afraid of the dark. My year in Africa had heightened my fear of snakes. Now I had to watch for bears. Charlie, however, was in his element. Although he grew up on the city streets of New York, he was an experienced Boy Scout. He knew how to navigate by the sun, how to start a fire, how to tell which way the trail was veering. Not only was he self-confident, he was confident that I would do great.

We set off for the Glacier Peak Wilderness in the North Cascades, approximately 70 miles from Seattle. Glacier Peak, measuring 10,541 ft., is one of five volcanoes in Washington State. It often goes unnoticed because it is so deep into the crest of the Cascades, it is far from any town, and there are no access roads to it. The Sauk tribe calls it *Takobia*, meaning "The Great Parent."

We began our hike on a wide trail through dense forest following the lovely White Chuck River. It was my first backpacking trip and I was amazed at how much everything weighed. Charlie carried the tent and stove, but nevertheless my sleeping bag, rubber mat, clothing, water, food for three days, dishes, and the "ten essentials" towered over my head and felt heavier with each mile that we trekked. I collapsed in a heap on top of my pack when we rested.

After many miles we intersected with the Pacific Crest Trail which has its northern terminus in British Columbia and its southern terminus at the Mexican border in California. The trail became much narrower and steeper and alongside there were fields of purple, red, and yellow wildflowers which I later learned were lupine, Indian paintbrush, and lilies. The weather was still warm and wonderful, and we were sweating in our shorts and tee shirts.

Eventually we reached the part of the day we were waiting for—the viewpoint which would provide the magnificent vistas of so many of the Cascade peaks. But it seemed like only seconds after we made it to the top that the sky became very black and opened up with ear-splitting thunder and huge bolts of lightning. Sensing the danger of remaining there, we quickly began descending. Charlie headed us off-trail for speed, causing a scary slide down an enormous forested hill. Fortunately, we landed in a meadow in which we could pitch our tent. I huddled inside fully clothed that night, not unlike my first night under mosquito netting in West Africa.

The next morning was sunny and beautiful again. We continued exploring the area and making our descent. We noticed that something was in the air, particles of white dust floating around. When we reached my car, it was covered in ash from Mt. St. Helens erupting again.

Our big journey in the summer of 1982 was a road trip in my blue non-air-conditioned Gremlin to Albuquerque, New Mexico for the christening of my niece Stephanie. On the way down we explored new areas in eastern Oregon and

followed the Snake River in southern Idaho. Passing the Great Salt Lake in Utah we made our way down to beautiful Moab in the southeast. The dramatic red sandstone formations in Arches National Park, the largest number of them in the world, were thrilling. At Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado we were fascinated by the cliff dwellings and archaeological ruins of the Anasazi, the ancestral Pueblo people who inhabited Mesa Verde from AD 600 to 1300.

On the way home we stopped briefly at the Petrified Forest, the Grand Canyon, and Bryce Canyon. I drove most of the way because Charlie became ill. Although the scenery was incredible, the trip to the Southwest was so taxing without air conditioning that it would be a very long time before we would do another road trip.

We both liked being outdoors in the Pacific Northwest, and hiked numerous times by ourselves or with some of the children. I tried bicycle riding with Charlie, but when I skidded on gravel and broke my thumb, I called it quits. More successful were my efforts learning to cross-country ski; I never became great at it, but I found it very enjoyable. It made the winters in our area much more inviting.

“Sailing, sailing over the bounding main...”

Charlie later came up with what he believed to be the perfect recreational vehicle for all of us: a sailboat. He had been sailing before and wanted us all to experience it. The Catalina that he purchased was too small to sleep six of us, but that turned out not to be a problem. Only Charlie's youngest son Michael and/or I signed up as crew for most of our trips, although my son will undoubtedly recall get-

ting hit on the noggin by the swinging mast on the way to the San Juan Island Jazz Festival.

Learning to sail was not easy for me. Learning anything mechanical is not easy for me. Learning anything involving knowing your left from your right is not easy for me and calling it port and starboard made it hopeless. It was frustrating having Charlie act as my teacher. I quickly learned why tee shirts were made that said “Don’t yell at me!” and “I’m not yelling.” I enrolled in a course taught by women on Lake Union called “The ABCs of Sailing.” Walkie-talkies made communication easier on deck when the wind was lapping against the sails.

There was so much to learn in order to sail a boat. It wasn’t so difficult learning new words, e.g. sloop, ketch, cutter and yawl for certain types of boats. The difficulty for me was with words that were already in my vocabulary, but had different meanings in the boating world. “Lines” were ropes. “Heel” was not a part of the foot but had to do with the way the boat tilted when it was sideways to the wind. A “tack” meant going in a zig-zag direction when the wind wouldn’t let you go straight to your destination.

And then there was the issue of learning to tie knots. There were bowlines, clove hitches, sheet bends and figure eights. In fact, there were 3900 different types according to Mr. Ashley, author of the knot Bible. I was a person who couldn’t tie her shoes so the laces would not come undone. My son’s kindergarten teacher took pity on him and taught him how to tie his shoes properly.

In addition to new knowledge, sailing required patience, fortitude, and humility. I learned to enjoy it even though I wasn't in total control a great deal of the time. A shift of the wind would come and suddenly it was impossible to reach our destination by going in a straight line. Obstacles such as a log or a ferry boat might appear seemingly out of nowhere; once a submarine surfaced right before my eyes. My attempts to tack would often be "unbeautiful." We sometimes had to sit and wait for rapids to turn to slack water. Richard Bode says in *First You Have to Have a Little Boat*:

To tack a boat, to sail a zig-zag course is not to deny our destination—it's to recognize the obstacles that stand between ourselves and where we want to go, and then to maneuver with patience and fortitude, making the most of each leg of our journey, until we reach our landfall.

It was a powerful lesson for living as well as for sailing. And when everything was working as it should, the peace and quiet that came with sailing made me relax totally. Being at one with the wind felt like a state of grace. It was the perfect antidote to the stresses of lawyering.

We cruised in the Catalina, which we called *Magic Dragon*, for three summers from 1984 through 1986. Our moorage was Lake Union for the first couple of years, necessitating a transit through the locks out to Puget Sound. We would generally dock at Kingston, stay overnight at Langley, transit the Swinomish Channel to La Conner, and then head out to the San Juan Islands. In 1986 we moored the boat at the new Cap Sante marina in Anacortes and

spent almost every weekend of the summer working on the boat or cruising a bit.

The first year Charlie and I explored the San Juans. The second year we crossed over to Canada at Bedwell Harbor and explored the beautiful Gulf Islands. After a stop at sleepy Saturna Island, we moored in Horton Bay, where we took a dinghy ride, stalked a heron, and slept under millions of stars. Beautiful Montague Harbor provided three days of swimming, walking the beach, attempting to climb Mt. Galiano, and singing Fats Domino songs with the bus driver on the way to the Hummingbird Pub. The following year I was stuck in a trial, necessitating a trip by floatplane to meet Charlie and young Michael at Friday Harbor from where we continued our trip to the Gulf Islands.

But we wanted to go much further than the Gulf Islands. We had talked about one day sailing up the Inside Passage and circumnavigating Vancouver Island as well as cruising to the Queen Charlotte Islands and on to Alaska. The Catalina was not the kind of boat to make that kind of voyage. We scoured our library of books and magazines for tales of voyages made to faraway places, noting the boats used.

After much research we decided to purchase a Westsail 32', a heavy displacement sailboat built for ultimate seaworthiness. Descended from the double-ended pilot and rescue boats designed by Norwegian naval architect Colin Archer for navigation in the North Seas, the Westsail could not only circumnavigate Vancouver Island but also cross the ocean. After looking at a number of them, we purchased

Willow at the Port Townsend Marina in April 1987, trading in the Catalina. We now had the means; the rest was up to us.

Our inaugural cruise in *Willow* from our moorage in Shilshole Bay to Desolation Sound and back took us six weeks. Charlie had accumulated comp time in addition to his vacation time, and I made arrangements for my cases to be covered. The first day we motored for 10 hours to La Connor, a trip that previously caused us to make stops for the night in Kingston and Langley. After a second night in Point Roberts, we found transient moorage in Vancouver, B.C.'s False Creek. Eighteen-year-old Marie and 20-year-old Michael came up by bus to help celebrate young Michael's 10th birthday, visit Stanley Park, and see the sights in our beautiful neighbor to the north.

After our older children went back home, our friend Abbie (who had introduced us to one another) joined us for the next leg of the cruise to Princess Louisa Inlet. Although Charlie and I had spent a number of years cruising in British Columbia, this was all new territory for us. We spent the first night in Plumper Cove, enjoying lunch at the colorful Gibson's Landing the next day. On leaving Gibson's we were hit by seas over four feet, too much for me and Michael. We found a passage and tied up to a log boom in Centre Bay. Finding the winds and seas still too rough the next day, we instead enjoyed the camaraderie of our stranded neighbors on the log boom.

The rest of the trip to Princess Louisa Inlet was uneventful except for getting the dinghy line wrapped around

the propeller shaft. Abbie dove down in the icy water to fix it. Malibu Rapids was flat as a pond when we crossed at slack. We were at the marine park dock an hour later. The inlet, named either for Queen Victoria's fourth daughter or for her mother, is six kilometers long and is surrounded by mountains. Charlie, Abbie, and Michael hiked to Chatterbox Falls at the top to get a full view of the inlet while I stayed behind to rest. Out of the corner of my eye, I spied a pair of Birkenstocks going by. I knew that this would be my kind of person. I immediately popped up to say hello and met Jan, who with her husband Jim, became our dear friends of many years.

After leaving Princess Louisa, we searched for petroglyphs on the walls surrounding the inlet. At one point Abbie joined Jan and Jim on their boat *Cresset* to race *Willow* down Jervis Inlet, taking the only photos we have of *Willow* under sail. Back on our boat we sailed to Lund, the northernmost point on the B.C. coast, and the drop-off point for Abbie to make her way back to Seattle. Wonderful-sounding places awaited us: Octopus Islands and Squirrel Cove. At Squirrel Cove Michael and a friend he made there shot the rapids on a rubber raft while Charlie and Jonathan's dad followed behind in our dinghy. We went as far as Cortes Island (Mansons Landing) on that first trip, spending a week there because of a broken boat part, feeding ourselves with our limited canned goods and fishing out of the lagoon for shellfish and seaweed.

The almost idyllic six-week trip in 1987 paved the way for the move out of my communal living arrangement of 14

years into Charlie's house a mere three blocks away. My son Michael was beginning his third year at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois; he had established a life there among friends and did not need to come home as often. I had expected to avoid "empty nest syndrome" because I lived with other people, but it nevertheless hit me hard.

It seemed a good time to make the move. Charlie's son Michael was living near Reno, Nevada with his mother; Marie was living on her own. Only 20-year-old John remained at home with Charlie. However, not too long after my arrival in February 1988 all three of Charlie's children came to live with us. Because I also left the private practice of law that February and didn't begin a new job until November, we were able to take more sailing trips in 1988.

Our four-week trip with the younger Michael took us on an exploration of Sucia Island in the San Juans, a place you can only visit if you have a boat. We hiked all around Sucia, peeking in at Echo Bay, Fossil Bay, and Fox Cove. On July 11th we celebrated Michael's 11th birthday with a breakfast of Charlie's famous corned beef hash and a trip to Deer Harbor on Orcas Island so that Michael could swim in an indoor pool. Seals and bald eagles charmed us on Stuart Island in the San Juans and Cabbage Island Marine Park in the Gulf Islands.

After a few days back at Montague Harbor which we had enjoyed so much the previous year, we explored Nanaimo, a city on the coast of Vancouver Island. We briefly visited our friends Jan and Jim on Lasqueti Island, helping them move to their new home where we pooled resources for a mar-

velous dinner on the beach around a bonfire. One highlight of this trip was Michael finding a large piece of wood resembling a horse's head when he was exploring Pirates Cove on his own. He was so proud of himself, as were we, that he had rowed alone in our dinghy. It was also very special coming by boat and mooring at the famous Butchard Gardens near Victoria, a place I had enjoyed earlier with my parents.

On Labor Day weekend we went back to Stuart Island for our first Pacific Northwest Westsail Rendezvous. The annual get-together brings Westsails of all sizes from Washington and Oregon and, at that time, from British Columbia as well. It is a beautiful sight to see these lovely boats moored together at a dock. We shared potluck meals, visited one another's boats, and attended a class or two on sailboat maintenance or sailing fundamentals. But the main thing we did was swap: addresses, tales of adventures, equipment, and photos. The community of Westsail owners was very welcoming and wonderful to be with. From that time on, it was exciting to spot our Westsail family members when we were out cruising.

In November we took a sail from Seattle to Poulsbo, docking at scenic Liberty Bay. I knew that our sailing days would be more limited when I started work at Snohomish County Legal Services that same month. Although I welcomed having a steady paycheck, there were drawbacks to working for someone other than myself.

Charlie and Michael began our trip in the summer of 1989 without me. I drove up when they reached the north-

ern town of Lund, and then delivered Michael to Camp Orkila in the San Juans for a two-week stay. Shortly thereafter I took a float plane to Mansons Landing on Cortez Island to meet Charlie and the boat. We were at the entrance to Desolation Sound which we heard was even more wonderful than the Gulf Islands. We found three other Westsails in the area. However, a combination of illness and bad weather led us to make the turnaround at Camp Cordero, a restaurant on a barge in the middle of nowhere. When we picked Michael up at Camp Orkila on the way home, I fell into the water when I tried to get into the dinghy. The children watching thought it was hysterical. Humility was called for.

In 1990 Charlie and I decided that we would find a new house to live in and listed his house with a realtor. Our boat trip was interrupted after five days when Charlie's beeper went off. His real estate agent called with an offer on his house. We headed to gorgeous Mats Mats Bay off Puget Sound where our friends Irene and Bob moored their Westsail and had a small home. After many calls back and forth, Charlie signed papers in Kingston, the nearest place his real estate agent could get to. The rest of that summer was spent looking for a new place to live. As a result of our cruises, we had come to love island life. Whidbey Island and Vashon Island were explored, but we decided it would be a horrendous commute for one of us in either place. Our final choice: picturesque Poulsbo, where we had docked two years prior. In December we welcomed our first grandchild Beverly, daughter of John and Kim, into the world.

1991 was not a good year for us. In late January my father was in the hospital; his heart was failing. Rick, Barry, and I all flew down, knowing that this might be our last visit with him. I brought many photographs of our new house, our boat, and our new granddaughter to share with him. He was very happy for me and Charlie. On the morning of January 31st, my 50th birthday, the florist delivered 50 roses to my parents' apartment. My father was determined not to die on my birthday and wanted us to celebrate it. He died on February 5th.

In March I discovered a lump in my right breast; after the ultrasound I was referred to a surgeon. I had a right breast biopsy done and was relieved when told it was benign. Towards the end of the year it was discovered that Charlie had a tumor at the base of his brain, a possible meningioma or neuroma. Certainty about what it was could only be made with surgery. However, it was not recommended at that time because it was so close to his carotid artery. We were to be on the lookout for impaired vision or facial paralysis. The only sailing we did that year was a three-day sail to Gig Harbor where we experienced rain the whole time.

I managed to get four weeks vacation in 1992 and we decided to go further than we had gone before. We got to Canada quickly, spending a night in Port Browning. It was a lovely anchorage and we thought about staying for a few days, but the North was calling. After phoning Jan (who had changed her name to Lily) and Jim from Nanaimo, we

headed over to Lasqueti Island, avoiding the military exercises in Active Pass.

A special party was occurring in honor of Allen Farrell, an octogenarian boat builder from the island. People who had boats built by him came from all over to gather in False Bay. A plot was hatched to dress up as pirates and board Allen's boat, the *China Cloud*. After breakfast, we were off in Jim's new aluminum sailboat with a gang of "pirates," complete with a cannon, swords, and costumes. The *China Cloud* was an amazing boat, built by hand on the island. Allen and his wife lived aboard, taking nothing on the boat without parting with something else.

The next day was Jim's birthday. Our Calabrese sausage from Bainbridge Island topped the delicious pizza made by someone else for the celebratory potluck meal. Music, tasty food, and great conversations filled the day. Jim and Lily had acquired 120 additional acres at their new place. They had horses, a hot tub, and many amenities, including a barn that they fixed up as a guesthouse. We convinced them to meet us in Telegraph Harbor to come sailing with us.

Our second day out from Lasqueti took us back to Camp Cordero, the point of our turnaround on our previous Canadian trip. Bright sun and crisp air greeted us the next morning—a good omen. We navigated the Whirlpool Rapids, peeked in at a lovely anchorage by Forward Harbor, and then headed out to the Johnstone Strait to meet our friends.

Unfortunately there were gale warnings the first morning we were all together. Anchoring in Rough Bay off Mal-

colm Island, we hitchhiked into the charming town of Sointula, founded by settlers from Finland looking for a utopian communal way of life and whose name means “place of harmony.” Charlie noted in the log that we crossed the 127° longitude line—the farthest west that we had been. Our many plans included catching fish, spotting whales, and sailing to islands, including an Indian settlement. The orcas appeared at exactly the spot we thought they would be. At the old Indian village of Mamalilikulla we explored the totems, logs, and shells on the beach.

The next day was gorgeous with no clouds in sight. We got an early start, eating only pilot bread and peanut butter. After passing several other abandoned settlements, we spotted an eagle and a herring boil. Finally, we caught the fish that eluded us the day before. By this time the crew was ravenous and demanded Charlie’s corned beef hash. After a wonderful sail in Blackfish Sound and the accompaniment by porpoises in Weyton Passage, we spent the night in Telegraph Harbor feasting on the day’s catch.

When our friends left for their drive and ferry home, we restored our boat to a two-person hotel. We headed out to the Queen Charlotte Strait, crossing the 50° 50’ latitude line, the farthest north we had ever been. Late afternoon found us in Fife Sound surrounded by mountains and exquisite scenery. I had sprained my ankle jumping off the boat in Telegraph Harbor, so Charlie brought us into Echo Bay single-handedly. He then did all our chores without me, making him the hit of the dock—at least to the females there.

After lazing around Echo Bay the next morning, we headed out through Cramer Passage, poking into various passages, gunkholes, and bays at the southern end of Queen Charlotte Strait. There were hardly any other boats around and we had the Matilpi anchorage to ourselves. The Johnstone Strait awaited us. After docking the next night at Kelsey Bay, we headed back out in the relatively calm strait, but soon experienced incredibly large whitecaps. I was sure we were going to die, but Charlie kept reminding me that Westsails are made for such weather. Nevertheless, I got down on my knees on the boat's floor and prayed hard. I was not made for such weather.

We made it to Blind Channel where the weather was sunny and the power boaters were sipping wine while wearing shorts. I was sure that we died in the Johnstone and were in heaven. Blind Channel was tastefully built, well supplied, and in a beautiful setting. A mouth-watering meal there and the purchase of some ice and Loughborough prawns readied us for the sail down Mayne Passage and back into the Johnstone Strait. Unlike our previous experience, there was no wind to fill the main and the genoa. When we realized we were going backwards, we lowered the genny and motor sailed.

Just south of Bear Point, Charlie spotted the orcas. Three of them came within 50 yards of us—truly exciting! Because of the strong current, we followed a fishing boat along the back eddies near the shore. Just north of Chatham Point, six more whales came even closer to our boat than the others. They treated us to flips and seemed to

be having great fun with *Willow*. Neither of us wanted to leave them for a second to find the camera.

After an early start from our anchorage at the Octopus Islands, we headed back to Lasqueti Island, stopping briefly at Tribune Bay on Hornby Island. It was a good thing that we hadn't stopped at Hornby on the way up or we might not have gotten any further. There is a large sandy beach there that makes you want to stay forever. After a swim and a walk on the beach, we rowed back for a supper of Loughborough prawns and green salad.

Three days later we were back in the U.S. A group of porpoises greeted us in Haro Strait. In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the wind was light and the sea calm with a swell. It was enough to keep us going around four or five knots with the genny and the main. The visibility was great. We could see westward out to the Pacific Ocean. We dropped sails outside of Port Townsend and moored at Fort Flagler, arriving home the next day.

From Shipmate to Soul Mate

After 15 years of being together, Charlie and I decided to officially “tie the knot” in October 1994, a few years after moving into the Poulsbo house. Spending so much time in the small space of a boat had given us confidence about living together for the duration. Our boat trips showed us that we were each capable of steering and of taking direction. Our profound respect for one another enabled us to make critical decisions together. We had separate skill sets which we could apply to a common purpose. Together we learned how to navigate the treacherous rapids and shoals and to

weather the unexpected storms. We were both people who set out on journeys with destinations in mind, but for whom it was not that important to reach the destination—the passage or journey was what it was about. Celebrating our relationship with marriage seemed right to both of us.

We designed nautically-themed invitations for our tying-the-knot ceremony. Charlie designed our wedding rings with a goldsmith, choosing etchings representing our hike to Glacier Peak at the beginning of our relationship, our 32' Westsail under sail as we came down Jervis Inlet, and an orca from the pod we happily came across as we came out of Johnstone Strait. We chose my friend Anne, with whom I attended law school and also shared office space before she became a judge, to marry us. Painstakingly, we wrote our wedding vows.

Approximately thirty of our loved ones joined us for an intimate ceremony in the outdoor garden at the Old Kingston Hotel Cafe. Our three-year-old granddaughter Beverly, our flower girl, walked down the aisle with my mother. Marie sang John Denver's "Annie's Song." Charlie's sister and her husband both spoke. My son Michael made the toast. John and my mother witnessed and signed our marriage certificate. My nephew Todd, Barry's son, came up from California bringing the love from my extended Fox family. Charlie's teenage son Michael, who I had known since he was a baby, reinforced the strong roots of our relationship. Our families merged in such a beautiful way on that crisp October day as we all embarked on a new journey together.

When the cool air descended, we went inside the café to warm ourselves by the pot-bellied stove and feast on a marvelous dinner of salmon with sorrel sauce, vegetables, and a delectable layer cake. In the background Diane Schuur belted out “The Best is Yet to Come”:

*Out of the tree of life, I just picked me a plum
You came along and everything started to hum
Still it's a real good bet, the best is yet to come.*

*The best is yet to come, and won't that be fine
You think you've seen the sun, but you aint seen it shine.*

*Wait till the warm-up is underway
Wait till our lips have met
Wait till you see that sunshine day
You aint seen nothing yet.*

*The best is yet to come, and won't that be fine.
The best is yet to come, come the day you're mine.*

*Come the day you're mine
I'm gonna teach you to fly
We've only tasted the wine
We're gonna drain the cup dry.*

*Wait till your charms are right, for the arms to surround
You think you've flown before, but you aint left the
ground.*

*Wait till you're locked in my embrace
Wait till I hold you near
Wait till you see that sunshine place
There aint nothing like it here.*

*The best is yet to come, and won't that be fine
The best is yet to come, come the day you're mine.*

Chapter 8

CHARTING A COURSE TOWARD JUSTICE

*Do not follow where a path may lead. Go instead
where there is no path and leave a trail.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

When Charlie and I recited our wedding vows, we had faith in our relationship together. Each of us had been parenting children since 1967, a combined total of over 50 years. We had one remaining child to finish raising, Charlie's youngest son Michael, age 17. I had gained "legal" grandmother status; we both looked forward to our roles as grandparents of John and Kim's adorable children: Beverly, age three, and Kyle, age one. After discussing our finances, we made the decision for Charlie to take early retirement at age 52 from his many years of service at the Seattle Water Department. He did not have a plan for the rest of his life, now our life as a married couple.

I was embarking on a period which would be the high point of my legal career, membership on the Washington State Access to Justice (ATJ) Board. In May 1994 I had been appointed by the Supreme Court of our state to help revamp and coordinate the delivery of civil equal justice efforts. Nine of us were appointed, all attorneys recommended by the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA). Our board included a judge, a state legislator, bar leaders,

and others committed to access to justice. I had been appointed to represent the interests of all the volunteer attorney programs, otherwise known as *pro bono* programs, which existed in most of the counties of our state.

The path that led me to this point was a long one. When the women's law collective disbanded after five years in January, 1980, I took a needed break during which I stopped smoking for good, enjoyed life as a full-time mom, and thought about next steps.

Private Practice

In November 1980, I was invited by two other law school friends (Anne and Helen) to rent space above their Pioneer Square office. It was a great location and I was delighted to work in close proximity to these two wonderful women. I also partnered with two other colleagues to bid for a contract with the King County Juvenile Court to act as legal counsel for the *guardians ad litem* (GALs)—those people appointed by the court to represent the interests of children in dependency cases. Our bid was successful, providing us with a wealth of court experience as well as steady income. I did this for several years until the GAL program was replaced by the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program which did not require legal counsel. I loved my work representing children. I benefited from all the years I represented parents in Juvenile Court dependency cases in my early years of practice. I knew most arguments that parents' counsel would make and how to cross-examine their expert witnesses.

After the GAL contract ended, I was frequently appointed by Superior Court judges to represent children's in-

terests in dissolution of marriage proceedings, either as an attorney for teenage children or as an attorney *Guardian ad Litem* for younger children. I was not limited to investigating and writing a report for the Court. I was given the opportunity to present a case in chief: to bring motions, to present my own witnesses at trial, to cross examine the other parties' witnesses, to make opening and closing statements on behalf of the children, to write briefs.

Among my memorable cases on behalf of children were one on behalf of a 16-year-old Goth girl whose parents had her "kidnapped" and taken to a Utah facility for "reprogramming"; one on behalf of a 10-month old who was brain-dead because of alleged physical abuse by his parents; and one on behalf of a five-year-old boy who was allegedly sexually abused by his father and whose mother was on welfare and without an attorney. I could not help but be greatly affected by cases like these. My biggest honor came when the judge in one case asked me for the notes from my closing argument and made them the opinion of the Court.

I represented many women who were victims of domestic violence. A huge change came with the passage of the Protection Order legislation in 1981, making it possible to obtain a domestic violence protection order without having to file for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, or paternity. At our women's law collective it often took more than four hours to put together the necessary paperwork to obtain a restraining order. The paperwork for a Protection Order could be done in a half hour's time in some cases. The difficulty in working on such cases was how to help the

abused person see this event in the context of the power dynamics of the relationship; how to help her see what options existed so that she could decide what her goals for herself and her children were; how to help her create a good safety plan. It was not easy work. I had memories of one of my former partner's clients who was shot and killed by her husband on her way to the Courthouse.

I continued to do many dissolutions of marriage, most involving children. Although I believe I was a strong advocate for my clients, I worked very hard to avoid a trial in such cases, preferring the negotiation of a fair settlement which kept in mind the needs and goals of both parties and the needs of their children. When I couldn't effect a settlement with the opposing counsel, I would often ask for a Settlement Conference with a judge before trial.

My ongoing distaste of the adversarial process in dissolution of marriage proceedings led me in 1984 to pursue becoming a mediator. Following five intensive days receiving training in Mediation and Conflict Resolution, I proceeded to work with couples who wanted to settle their differences amicably and do their divorces without an attorney, but who needed help in arriving at an agreement. This seemed a much better fit for me. I moved my office to the Lake Union area after my friend Anne, one of the lawyers I was renting office space from, made a successful bid for the Superior Court bench.

But in spite of my gorgeous view of Lake Union and my less adversarial practice, I was feeling a malaise about practicing law. Being a solo practitioner was very different from

being in our women’s law collective where we shared a common purpose, were energized by each other’s successes, and provided incredible support for one another. I didn’t realize it at the time, but I would come to understand how necessary “community” is for me to do my best work.

In February 1988, I withdrew from my remaining cases and closed my office. My son was still in college and I wasn’t sure how long my receivables would keep us both afloat. It was a difficult and risky decision. Many people urged me not to give up my law practice. But I was burned out and seemingly at a point of no return.

I discovered a newly formed group called “Lawyers in Transition” where I tried to figure out the next phase of my life. I applied for jobs in the public school system, city government, and the private sector, believing that the skills I acquired as a lawyer would be portable. I almost took a job in the recycling business. When I tried to figure out what I was most passionate about, “garbage” came to the forefront.

Snohomish County Legal Services

But my passion for helping people to have access to justice had not left me for good. In November 1988 my former housemate and law partner Joan told me about a job opening with Snohomish County Legal Services (SCLS), the *pro bono* program based in Everett. During my private practice in Seattle, I had taken *pro bono* cases from the King County program where she worked, assisting low-income people without charge on their divorces. As Executive Director at SCLS, I would not be representing clients myself; rather I

would be recruiting attorneys in private practice for that purpose. I would be training volunteers and teaching low-income people how to do their own divorces.

I wrote my resume in a way that I had never done before, listing my qualifications for the position before my education, professional training, employment background, and organizations. When I finished writing it I became convinced that everything I had done before that point had led me there, including my teaching experience in Africa. I knew that my years in private practice and work with low-income people would make me a good candidate, but I had no idea who else was applying for the job. I enclosed a cover letter indicating that I was at a juncture in my life where I had a good grasp of the activities from which I derived the most personal satisfaction:

I have strong interpersonal skills because I enjoy meeting and interacting with people. I have good management skills because I enjoy an orderly environment. My teaching and training experiences have been successful because I enjoy sharing. The areas in which my strengths lie are those which are critical to the success of your program.

After an interview with the full Board of Directors, I was offered the position of Executive Director. And thus began my true love affair with my work at age 47. It was, as theologian Frederick Buechner said, the place where deep gladness— my greatest joy, my passion—and the world's deep hunger met. I found my niche securing legal services for those who could not otherwise afford them.

Our offices consisted of two rooms with exposed pipes and peeling paint on the fourth floor of a poorly heated and poorly maintained building. I had the back room which I quickly filled with the oak library table/desk that I bought when I first started practicing law in 1974, the round table and two blue side chairs that I preferred for talking to clients, some bookcases, a desk chair, a small file cabinet, and some pictures. I still didn't know how to use a computer. Our legal assistant had the much larger front room with all the client file cabinets and equipment.

Although I had almost no overlap with the person I was replacing, many people helped me to learn the fundamentals of my position. I was part of a statewide association of *pro bono* coordinators who shared information, and there was a WSBA employee whose job it was to be a liaison to the programs.

Additionally, my board allowed me to attend a national conference in Miami, near to where my parents lived, where I might benefit from a two-day program in "The Nuts and Bolts of Pro Bono Management." In addition to being with other new coordinators, I met very experienced people at the remainder of the five-day conference, bringing back many ideas to implement in my program. I subsequently attended every annual conference while I was at SCLS, collaborating with a large national community that shared my values.

Down the hall from SCLS were the offices of Evergreen Legal Services, one of the three legal services program in Washington that received federal funding and that pro-

vided staff attorneys for low-income people. Our two programs developed a great working relationship with one another, combining our resources to do publicity and outreach in the community and collaborating about service priorities so that we did not duplicate services.

SCLS relied on attorneys in private practice to provide services to low-income people by volunteering their time at two weekly legal advice clinics (one in Everett and one in Edmonds) and by providing free legal representation for court hearings. A major part of my job was recruiting attorneys for our panels, providing appropriate training programs, and making referrals for representation.

The volunteer attorneys were amazing. We had approximately two hundred fifty of them, many of them staffing our legal clinics from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Tuesday evenings after a full day's work. They would each see approximately six clients in an evening and many would leave with three new cases for further representation. We opened a third advice clinic in North Snohomish County, structured similarly to the ones in Edmonds and Everett. Our volunteers exemplified the very best in the legal profession. I referred to them as the "white hats."

A part of my job that I liked best was teaching a class for people who were doing their own dissolutions of marriage. There simply are not enough legal services lawyers or volunteer attorneys to provide every low-income person with representation. Thus many programs like SCLS attempt to assist people who have to represent themselves, who are *pro se* litigants.

I taught a 90-minute class initially using a videotape for part of the class—introducing people to the courthouse, the basics of filing for divorce and service of process, how property and liabilities were divided. Those people who did not have children left early. The remaining time was spent talking about parenting plans and child support. Prior to mandatory family law forms being introduced in 1992, we used a workbook from Evergreen Legal Services with easy-to-use forms and explanations. Class participants filled out the forms at home and then made individual appointments with me to have them reviewed. The first appointment was prior to filing and serving their documents or perhaps having their spouse sign a joinder in the petition. The second appointment was prior to going into court for the entry of the final decree.

When court-ordered forms came into existence in 1992, neither the videotape nor the workbook was useful. The new forms were much harder to use. The demand for the class became greater and I had to schedule more of them each month with larger numbers of people per class. However, in tracking the dissolutions granted on the Wednesday *Pro Se Dissolution Calendar*, we continued to have an extremely high completion rate from our program. Even though our clients were not being represented, the fact that they had access to an experienced family law attorney who could answer all their questions and make sure their paperwork was accurately completed made all the difference in the world. They did not fall through the cracks.

My vision was to create an abundance of legal services for the poor of Snohomish County. Our staff of two and cadre of volunteers were doing a lot, but it was not enough. Our telephones were ringing off the hook constantly. We needed more cash resources in order to really expand. I taught myself how to write proposals for government grants.

One of the real gaps in services was for victims of domestic violence. DV advocates in the community were invaluable for assistance in obtaining Protection Orders and in helping women find emergency housing. But legal help beyond that was sporadic at best. What was needed was to have attorneys available to file dissolutions of marriage or paternity actions and have the court enter solid temporary orders—with permanent restraining orders, orders for child support, referrals for anger management, and restricted, supervised visitation in Parenting Plans. I believed that such stabilization could make a difference.

We worked in collaboration with the domestic violence shelters and court services in our community. We applied for and received a Community Services Block Grant. The DOMestic Violence Eradication (DOVE) Project was born and we began providing much needed services. But our expansion really took off when Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds became available through the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services in 1997. We submitted a proposal and received a \$60,000 grant, renewable annually, which enabled me to hire an experienced domestic violence advocate in-house. She was able to do extensive

client interviews and safety planning, take clients through the Protection Order process, find the volunteer attorneys to represent the clients in Superior Court actions, and be the liaison between the client and the attorney.

The number of cases with successful outcomes increased exponentially. For years as a family law attorney I had heard attorneys complain about DV cases; they would do massive amounts of paperwork and then their clients never went through with the divorces. But we had an excellent success rate for these types of cases, largely due to understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and the extremely close contact we maintained with our clients and the attorneys representing them.

Another area that I sought to expand was services to *pro se* litigants, those individuals who for various reasons represented themselves in court. When I attended a conference in Phoenix one year, I was impressed by a program in the Maricopa County Court to help people get through the court system on their own. I began working with a committee of people from several counties in Washington exploring the idea of creating something similar in Washington.

In January 1992 I began a year-long experiment in Snohomish County Superior Court. I spent several hours on the Wednesday *Pro Se Dissolution Calendar* providing assistance to anyone who needed it by reviewing their final paperwork before presentation to the Court Commissioner. At the conclusion of the year the bailiff compared statistics with the previous year regarding the percentage of people who were successful in having their dissolutions granted.

The increase was impressive. The following year, in collaboration with the Snohomish County Deputy Court Clerk and with the blessing of the judges, I helped develop a successful proposal for a pilot project for our county.

From 1993–1999 I provided the legal training and support to the Courthouse Facilitator Program, and the program grew from one facilitator to three. Anyone in the county could schedule an appointment with the Courthouse Facilitator to have their family law forms reviewed. This single program had an incredible impact on increased access to justice in our county. Snohomish County received an award for the program from the National Association of Counties in 1995. Nine pilot projects were initially funded by a grant; within a few years there were programs in every county of our state using varying models.

Additional funds enabled us to hire a full-time Family Law staff attorney and a half-time Housing Law attorney. We had moved our offices to a modern building where we shared office space with the Northwest Justice Project. During one summer we had a law student working for us as a Goldmark Intern; she commented on how unusual it was to be in a law office with nine women working together. Despite the fact that we were two agencies and we were very careful about client confidentiality, our office had the feel of my old law collective. We all met regularly in our shared library for meetings and for lunches. We celebrated each others' successes and supported each other through the bad times. It was a happy, productive and inspiring place to work.

Access to Justice Board

There were volunteer lawyer programs like mine throughout Washington State, and we met one or two times during the year to share ideas. SCLS was one of the few programs that had attorney coordinators back in the late 80s and early 90s, particularly those experienced in family law, the main area of client demand for services. It did not take me very long to be sharing ideas on a state level. I received an award in 1991 from the Washington State Bar Association naming me as *pro bono* coordinator of the year.

When the Washington Supreme Court created the ATJ Board in 1994, it recognized the importance of civil equal justice to the proper functioning of our democracy, the need for leadership and effective coordination of the civil equal justice efforts in our state. I was honored and thrilled to be meeting regularly with some of the best hearts and minds in the state to be discussing issues that I cared passionately about.

Membership on the ATJ Board became at least another half-time job. One of our immediate challenges was facing a new Congress that threatened to put funding for the Legal Services Corporation, the main source of funding for the three staffed legal services programs, on the “glide path to zero.” At the same time our state legislature moved to cut funding for legal services. This crisis required new thinking. It was a crisis for which rugged individualism, hard work, and perseverance were not enough. Everyone needed to pitch in and pull together if we were going to “right the ship.”

Under the ATJ Board's direction, a major reorganization took place among the three staffed legal services programs. Evergreen Legal Services, Puget Sound Legal Assistance, and Spokane Legal Services merged to form Columbia Legal Services and became a leaner organization that would not depend on federal funding. A new nonprofit was born, the Northwest Justice Project, which would bid for federal dollars and work within the restrictions placed by Congress on the recipient organizations. At the same time the Equal Justice Coalition was formed for the purpose of mobilizing the private bar to speak and write to their state and federal legislators to preserve funding for civil legal services. We were successful in doing so.

We developed two important documents in the first two years: "Hallmarks of an Effective Delivery System" and the "State Plan for the Delivery of an Effective Legal Services Delivery System." In order to develop a plan for the state, numerous meetings were held throughout the state to make sure we had input from all of the stakeholders. The meetings with the *pro bono* coordinators were long, emotional, and difficult. There was great fear that local identity would be lost as we began developing statewide services.

One of the statewide services that we had envisioned was a statewide intake system so that any income-eligible person, regardless of where they lived in Washington, could telephone about his/her legal problem, speak briefly to an attorney about it, and find out how and where to get legal help beyond that call. The Coordinated Legal Access, Education and Referral (CLEAR) line was birthed in 1996 and

administered under the auspices of the Northwest Justice Project. Once again a single project had an incredible impact on access to justice. Snohomish County was the second county (Kitsap being first) to try out the new system. We found it absolutely wonderful to have our telephones fairly quiet and to receive the information from CLEAR over the fax lines regarding the clients who needed our services.

My appointment to the ATJ Board was renewed in 1996 for three more years. By this time we had developed an annual statewide conference combining the bar leaders conference with legal services. We had a plethora of ATJ committees which had attorneys, judges, and others throughout the state working on issues such as impediments to justice, use of non-attorneys in the practice of law, technology, and services for moderate-income people. One of the changes that came to fruition and later impacted my life was the *emeritus* rule which allowed retired attorneys to provide free legal services through qualified providers and pay a reduced bar association fee and be exempt from Continuing Legal Education requirements.

Some of us traveled around the country talking about what our ATJ Board was doing. We became a national model, and with a grant from the Open Society Institute, wrote a manual which could be used by other states.

I was very fortunate that Snohomish County Legal Services supported the work that I was doing on the ATJ Board. The SCLS board never complained about my days in Seattle or my trips to conferences. My five-year service on the ATJ Board was the fulfillment of a dream for me. When

Cathy, Jo, Margaret, and I opened up our little law collective on Stone Way in Seattle in 1974, I envisioned little houses all over Seattle—friendly places that everyone could go to have a legal question answered, where a legal brochure might be obtained at no cost, where one could learn how to get more extensive legal help. What came to fruition in Washington State was so much more—the result of collaboration, that beautiful process where intelligent people choose to forego ego and instead soak up each other’s delicious, scintillating and powerful ideas.

Leaving

At the beginning of 1999 I felt exhausted. I was in good health physically, having lost 52 pounds of slowly-accumulated weight in 1998 with the help of a monitored program at my HMO and lots of walking. But I had been trying to do three jobs at the same time: managing a 250+ attorney *pro bono* program and supervising staff; acting as legal counsel and providing training to the Snohomish County Courthouse Facilitator program; and serving as a liaison to all the *pro bono* programs while being part of the ATJ team that was visioning and restructuring the delivery of legal services in Washington state.

My commute from Poulsbo to Everett had increased from one hour ten minutes to two hours thirty minutes each way. My day began at 6:00 A.M. If I had to fill in at one of Neighborhood Legal Clinics because an attorney didn’t show, I wasn't home until midnight. My headaches, which were later diagnosed as migraines, sometimes made it necessary for me to stay in Everett overnight.

I had been deeply affected by the life-threatening illness of one of the young Northwest Justice Project attorneys in my office. Her heart had stopped suddenly while at home and she almost died. The paramedics were able to restart her heart, but the lack of oxygen to her brain caused some damage and made it impossible for her to continue working in the same way. I thought of my husband Charlie who, we discovered some years before, had an inoperable tumor at the base of his brain. It was believed to be slow-growing, most likely benign, but we had to be on the lookout for symptoms. He had retired and I wanted to spend more time with him.

But what I could not voice to anyone at that time was my increasing fear that I was losing my mind. I was finding that things that had been easy for me to do were becoming difficult. I was making errors. I was less organized. I was afraid that if I kept doing what I was doing I would go on a downward trajectory. My ego was such that I wanted to go out while I was on top of my game, where I would be remembered for what had been achieved rather than how everything fell apart.

And so I gave six months notice of my decision to retire, allowing plenty of time for a successor to be found. Several board members “refused” my request. But I was certain that I needed to do this. Three years later I was introduced to the poem by Mary Oliver called “The Journey” which is contained in the Prologue. When it was first read to me, I cried for 15 minutes. It so aptly described the feelings that I had when I was leaving my job at SCLS.

Mary Oliver’s poem captures the moment when we must listen to our own voices to live authentic lives. She uses the metaphor of the physical journey for the spiritual journey towards individual change. And it is a reminder that no one can walk our journeys for us; each of us must respond to the call on our own.

I have a treasure chest of farewell cards, awards, and journals with notes from hundreds of people who accompanied me on my justice journey. The SCLS board gave me the Marvin Oliver print with the orca and the raven aptly called “Journey.” Charlie bought me a beautiful gold necklace etched with mountains and studded with sapphires—for the mountains I have climbed and the stars I am still reaching for.

My legal career would cement my view that collaboration with others was not just necessary for me to work passionately; it produced better results. The collective efforts of staffed legal services programs, *pro bono* programs, specialty legal service providers, funding sources, and the courts increased, and continue to increase, the goal of equal justice for all. But it also cemented my belief that an individual can make a difference. As Robert Kennedy eloquently stated:

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Chapter 9

HELLO WORLD, I'M BACK AGAIN

I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list.

—SUSAN SONTAG

To Russia with Love

“Can I go to Russia, Dad?”

Those six words, uttered by our last remaining child at home, changed the direction of our lives.

Shortly before our wedding in October 1994, Michael asked if he could go to Russia as part of a foreign exchange program at Spectrum High School where he was in his junior year. Spectrum had hosted a student from Ekaterinburg that term. The school hoped to send a group of students with one of the teachers thanks to a grant from the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) plus funds that the students would raise on their own. We agreed it would be a wonderful opportunity for him. He spent four weeks there in August 1994, living with a Russian family and immersing himself in another culture for the first time in his life. It was indeed a marvelous experience for him. And he was positively overjoyed to be in a country that I had never been to.

The next academic year Spectrum brought more students from Ekaterinburg to study here. We became a host

family for 18-year old Maria (Masha) Veselova who had planned to study law. Charlie and I fell in love with Masha immediately; she became our Russian daughter forever. Because Charlie had retired from his job at the Seattle Water Department, he had plenty of time to spend with all of the Russian students. He became fascinated by their language, culture and history, and became a very important bridge for them in adapting to life in America.

In 1996 Spectrum was ready to send the next group of American students to Ekaterinburg. The USIA grant covered five students and a teacher but Spectrum wanted to send more. They asked Charlie if he would be willing to go as a chaperone. He wanted very much to go. He had the time and he had the financial resources. There was only one issue standing in the way: Charlie had a powerful fear of flying which kept him from ever flying on an airplane.

His desire to participate in the Russian exchange program was great enough that he sought out a “Fear of Flying” program. However, the length of the program took more time than he had before the students were due in Russia. Fortunately, the program leaders worked out a “tailored” program for him: telephone chats with a former United Airlines pilot who answered Charlie’s questions about how planes fly, contact with someone else who had been through the Fear of Flying program, and several sessions with a psychologist who gave him exercises he could do on the plane to help him calm himself.

With that under his belt, Charlie and a sixth Spectrum student boarded an Aeroflot flight at the beginning of April from Seattle to Moscow, a 10½ hour journey. The flight

was only half full and Charlie had incredible views of Greenland and the Sea of Murmansk. Not only did he tolerate the airplane trip, he absolutely loved it. He was also excited about his stay in Moscow and living with the Veselov family in Ekaterinburg. We made plans for me to join him there after the students were done with their part of their exchange program.

I flew into Moscow's Sheremetyovo airport on May 11th, also on Aeroflot. My flight was packed. I had no views. There was rampant smoking and drinking the entire flight. I arrived in Moscow with a powerful migraine. It took about an hour and a half to get my luggage and another hour to get through passport control and customs. I had made a hotel reservation through a service before I left Seattle and found a taxi that would take me there. My room was tiny, not much wider or longer than the single bed it housed. Because of all the commotion in the hallway, I placed a chair against the door.

My flight from Domodedovo airport (26 miles away) to Ekaterinburg was not until the next afternoon. I had the morning to explore some of Moscow's streets. It's an immense city, but luckily I found my way to Arbat Square, one of the city's oldest squares with quiet and charming side streets stretching out from it. The wide pedestrian street with beautiful architecture made the city appear less formidable.

Charlie and Masha met me at the airport in Ekaterinburg to take me to the Veselov home where we would be staying. At Charlie's suggestion, I had brought small gifts

for everyone, including real maple syrup for Masha's mother. We were given the best of everything—the best room to sleep in, excellent food that was certainly above their normal budget, and a seemingly unending supply of vodka shots. Since I spoke no Russian at all, they made a great effort to communicate with me in English even though that was difficult for them.

Although Masha had school exams ahead of her, she took time off to make sure I saw the sights of her city. Ekaterinburg is situated on the border of Europe and Asia, about 1,000 miles from Moscow. It was formerly called Sverdlovsk and was a closed city until 1991. It is most famous for being the site where Tsar Nicholas II, his wife Alexandra, and their five children were murdered by the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution of 1917. For Americans of my age, it is remembered as the place where an American U-2 spy plane flown by Francis Gary Powers was shot down in 1960.

Although it is primarily an industrial city, it contains many architectural gems and a thriving cultural life of theater, dance, and music (both classical and rock). There are over 30 museums in the city. In addition to seeing the sights, I had the opportunity to visit the homes of several of the exchange students who had come to Spectrum the year before.

Charlie and I wanted to see a bit more of Russia. It was not difficult to convince Masha to accompany us by train to St. Petersburg, a trip of about 35 hours. Her mother packed us up with what seemed an enormous amount of food for

the long train trip—cooked chicken, vegetables, fruit, bread, homemade jam— but we managed to devour every ounce of it.

St. Petersburg (formerly Petrograd and Leningrad) is a beautiful city, sometimes called “the Venice of the North.” It has splendid palaces and churches, impressive historical monuments, tree-lined avenues, and lovely bridges crossing the Neva River. The Hermitage, housed partially in the three-story green and white Baroque Winter Palace, is one of the premier art museums in the world. We were all somewhat overwhelmed by the size of the collection and did not do it justice.

Our preference was to be outdoors. Strolling down Nevsky Prospekt, the main boulevard, we photographed the stunning onion-domed Church of our Savior of Spilled Blood which can be seen from all over the city. A boat ride down the Neva River, a stroll through the Summer Garden with its copies of ancient Greek statues, and a climb up a tower provided different views of the city.

It took almost an entire day to purchase our train ticket to Moscow. Even with Masha's assistance it was not an easy thing for foreigners to do. She then returned to Ekaterinburg while we went on to the capital. Charlie had already spent time in Moscow and was a great guide for me. We went to Red Square to see the famous St. Basil's Cathedral, walked around the Kremlin, and went back to Arbat Square. I had a much more favorable impression of the city than I had when I first arrived.

It was exciting being in a new country, especially one that had officially been our “enemy” for most of my life. Charlie had experienced the same feeling that I had while in West Africa, when I got to know Mikhail personally and my view of Russians changed. Through being a part of the student exchange program and visiting some of their families, we were better able to see the country through the eyes of those who lived there. Our discussions with the parents caused me to reflect on those “common interests” that President Kennedy spoke about at my graduation from American University, especially the phrase: “We all cherish our children’s future.”

Charlie and I continued to be involved with the exchange program for several more years. We hosted another student and Charlie made another trip to Russia in 1997 to be the chaperone for four more Spectrum students. We even hosted a visiting Russian actor. Masha came back to visit us and we arranged for her to take classes at the University of Washington. But the most important outcome of the first trip to Russia was that the world was now open to us as a result of my husband coming to grips with a life-limiting phobia. I didn’t think my love for him could increase anymore, but it did.

Backpacking: France, Italy and Ireland

When Charlie was planning his second Russian trip, he wanted to see more of the world, particularly Europe. My board of directors at Snohomish County Legal Services allowed me to take six weeks off by combining my vacation hours and a lot of comp time. France and Italy were our

chosen destinations. With guidebooks by local travel guru Rick Steves, Eurail passes, and backpacks for maximum efficiency to get on and off trains, we embarked on our adventure. Our hub was Copenhagen, where we walked off our jet lag seeing the sights, and where we made arrangements to leave Charlie's gear for Russia at the B&B we would return to six weeks later.

We were in Paris for five days, and from there we headed south to the walled city of Avignon. In school we had both learned the French nursery rhyme "*Sur le pont d'Avignon*" (on the Avignon bridge) that dates back to the fifth century. The bridge, officially called the Pont Saint-Benezet, originally spanned the Rhone River; however, only four of the original 22 arches remain. We delighted in exploring the narrow streets of the city and viewing the magnificent vistas from the gardens of the Palace of the Popes.

Renting a car for a day to explore the Luberon towns of Provence was next on the agenda, including a stop at an outdoor market along the way to pick up fixings for lunch and a picnic on the banks of the Sorgue River in Isle-sur-la-Sorgue. Big water wheels remain on the river from the time that the town had a thriving silk and paper industry which used the mills to manufacture their products. The hill town of Gordes, with its buildings carved out of white stone, provided a nice contrast to the village center of Rousillon, with its red buildings and red roofs set in a deep green pine forest on bright red-ochre hills. After savoring decadent ice cream sundaes, we returned via the hill towns of Bonnieux and Menerbes.

From the narrow medieval lanes of Avignon, we went to Aix-en-Provence, a university town with wide streets lined with plane trees. We were treated to street theater with actors in elaborate period costumes. Our last stop in France was the Riviera town of Nice where we strolled along the pebbled beach, went to the Chagall Museum, and ate fantastic food.

Italy was next. On the recommendation of a colleague of mine, we explored the pastel villages of the Cinque Terre, with its five towns connected by a train, the sea, and a lovely hiking trail. We hiked from town to town along the terraced vineyards and took a boat to Porto Venere where Byron and Shelley had spent time. A train ride to Rome found the city to be noisy, crowded, and hot. We saw the main sights in a brief two days, making our way through Umbria to the Tuscan town of Siena.

In Siena we stayed in a charming B&B where our hosts, who clearly had a great love of their city, spent lots of time informing us of what to see and do. Their terrace had a sensational view of the *Duomo* (cathedral) and the rooftops of homes whose roofs were the burnt sienna color that I have always liked. Using Siena as our base, we took a bus to nearby Florence to see Michelangelo's statue of David, the Ponte Vecchio bridge over the Arno River, and the magnificent *Duomo* which took more than 100 years to build and is famous for its striking rounded dome engineered by Brunelleschi.

We were captivated by Venice—its canals, bridges, boats, art, and monuments. We could have stayed there for

weeks. But it was time to go back to Copenhagen; I flew to Seattle with 60 rolls of film and Charlie went on to Russia to meet his students. Six weeks of seeing incredible sights in France and Italy pushed us to another level of wanting to travel.

Unfortunately I paid a heavy price for my time away from work, facing personnel problems that took a long time to resolve. We didn't travel the next year. At the beginning of 1999 I thought a lot about mortality when a co-worker almost died. I couldn't see into our own futures with regard to health, but I knew that traveling to exciting places kept us physically healthy. We ate better and walked a lot; we were intellectually stimulated and stress-free. I knew that my job with Snohomish County Legal Services could not give us the freedom to travel that we craved. We reviewed our finances and I gave six months' notice.

Immediately after my many retirement parties, we set out for an amazing trip to Ireland, France, and Italy which lasted from the beginning of September until mid-November. We flew into London for this trip, walking around the city and taking a boat ride up the Thames to Greenwich. But we were in a hurry to get to Ireland where we planned to stay for several weeks before going to the Channel Islands and on to the continent.

Not long after our arrival at the B&B in Dun Laoghaire near Dublin, I noticed that Charlie's speech was taking on a distinct Irish accent. He felt at home in Ireland, the same way I had felt when I first arrived in Israel. It was part of his history. Dun Laoghaire was located on the sea, and I

never tired of walking on the long promenade along its shores. When Charlie decided one day to visit Microsoft's Irish branch, I did a 10-mile walk to and from the neighboring town of Bray. Along the way at Sandycove, there is a rounded Martello tower originally built to withstand an invasion by Napoleon which now houses memorabilia of James Joyce. He wrote the opening of *Ulysses* while staying there.

Dublin was a short DART train ride away. A guided walking tour by a Trinity College student gave us a deep appreciation for the history of the city. We visited the General Post Office on O'Connell Street, site of the 1916 rebellion against English rule called the Easter Rising. The River Liffey cuts through Dublin with 14 bridges crossing it, the most colorful of them being the Ha'Penny Bridge—so named because when built in 1816 users had to pay a half-penny toll to cross it.

The hip Temple Bar area contrasted with the 18th century buildings of Trinity College, home of the illuminated manuscript called the Book of Kells. Colorful doors on the Georgian homes in Merrion Square were photo-worthy as we made our way to St. Stephen's Green, a 22-acre Victorian-style public park. There was much to see in Dublin, but we were anxious to explore the west coast of Ireland known for its rugged beauty.

We rented a car and spent a few days at the university town of Galway. From there we drove to the nearby region called the Connemara, the name derived from the Gaelic meaning "harbors of the sea." The town of Spiddal yielded a

fantastic seafood lunch and the purchase our wonderfully warm handknit Aran fisherman sweaters. On the Sky Road near Clifden, panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Twelve Bens Mountains delighted us. The tranquil lakeside setting of the stately Kylemore Abbey, now home to Benedictine nuns, spoke to my heart in much the same way that the riverside Jedburgh Abbey did for me on my way to Scotland. The bit of rain that we had in the Connemara gave rise to a spectacular rainbow.

Our next destination was Dingle, a picturesque fishing village on the Dingle Peninsula. As we ascended the winding and twisting road to Connor Pass, we stopped to take photos of the incredible green hills. One of us must have left the car door open, for when we were ready to take off again we had a passenger: a black and white goat!

The area around Dingle was the backdrop for two American films: “Ryan’s Daughter” and “Far and Away.” We missed seeing Fungie, a bottlenose dolphin that took up residence in Dingle Harbor and regularly swam with the local boats. We enjoyed the *craic* (talk, but Irish-style) in the local pub. Dingle Peninsula is rimmed by the Atlantic, Tralee Bay, and Dingle Bay. Spectacular scenery had us stopping often, staying the longest at Inch Strand, a four-mile expanse of sandy beach where we found very unusual sea shells.

In County Clare we clambered on the dramatic Cliffs of Moher rising high above the Atlantic, and were treated to another incredible rainbow. We entered “The Burren,” a huge expanse of limestone desert that looked like a lunar

landscape. In the middle of nowhere there appeared a large “dolmen,” a three-legged stone structure with a horizontal capstone that was believed to have been used as a burial tomb in the Neolithic period.

In County Cork we stopped at Bantry Bay, more beautiful than anything we had previously seen. Charlie kissed the Blarney Stone at Blarney Castle and we went on to spend the night at the well-preserved medieval town of Kilkenny. An off-the-tourist-route stop was at Tullow, the home town of our favorite *barista* at our local grocery store.

In spite of rain and sometimes cold weather, Ireland warmed our hearts. Had we then been able to look into our future, we would have seen that Charlie would return to Dublin several times for consulting work, and we would both come back to see new places in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland.

The “Chunnel train” took us from London to Paris where we spent five happy days. On our previous visit there, we had day-tripped to Versailles; this time we chose Giverny, Claude Monet’s home and incredible gardens. It was lovely standing on the bridge over the pond with water-lilies that figured in so many of his Impressionist paintings.

We celebrated our October 1 anniversary at Chenonceau, site of the 16th century Renaissance chateau that King Henry II gifted to his mistress Diane de Poitiers. She was responsible for the arched bridge which connects the chateau to the other side of the Cher River. When Henry died, his widow, Catherine de Medici, tossed Diane out and installed herself in. The beauty of the chateau and the gar-

dens reflect the great style and care both women both gave it.

Our plan was to cross central France and north and central Italy before heading to the southern parts of the two countries. We wanted to have as much warmth as possible by the time we hit the beginning of November. Our drive through the wine country of Burgundy, with stops in Beaune and Dijon, finished that part of France.

In Italy we mainly concentrated on familiar places, except for Milan and the very spectacular Lake Como. Once again we celebrated Charlie's birthday with dinner at La Fontinella restaurant in Venice, our great discovery in 1997. Staying in Florence this time, we were able to visit the Uffizi Gallery and other new sights. We took a bus up to Fiesole and followed a hiking route from a book of hikes in Tuscany that we brought with us.

We went back to Siena and encountered rainy day after rainy day. Our hike in the nearby hill town of Monteriggioni soaked us through and through. But Siena is a great city to visit in any kind of weather, especially exploring the 17 different *contrade*. These are self-governing districts of the city, each with a different animal or symbol representing it. They compete in an annual horserace (the *Palio*) around Siena's central square two times every summer. There are centuries of history behind the *contrade* and the competition among them is fierce.

As we headed south and then west, we revisited the Cinque Terre and Nice. Back in Avignon again, we were surprised to see Halloween being celebrated, the city com-

pletely decorated in orange and black. A long hike on the other side of the Rhone River, with its fascinating *peniches* (houseboats) and barges, ended with a leisurely Sunday lunch at a riverside restaurant where we seemed to be the only ones not eating with several generations of family.

New for us was Arles, the town in which Vincent Van Gogh produced so many of his famous paintings, where we attended a concert of harpists, and visited Roman ruins including a coliseum. A day trip to the nearby cobblestone medieval village of Les-Baux-de-Provence capped off a great stay in Provence.

Our last days were spent in the small town called Colliure, situated on the Mediterranean Sea approximately 40 miles from the border with Spain. The summer crowds were long gone and we had the beaches almost entirely to ourselves.

We financed the above trips with our savings and money that Charlie earned as a consultant after his retirement, primarily contract work for Microsoft. As we entered the new millennium, I began to see the possibility of my working as a consultant as well, providing assistance to legal services management. We were still some years away from being able to collect Social Security. Our new goal was to have professional opportunities where we could choose the length of commitment, e.g. short-term consulting opportunities with a variety of companies and agencies or full-time work for one company for a limited period of time. With the money we might make, we could fund our joint desire to travel to more places overseas.

Chapter 10

THE UNPLANNED JOURNEY: MY MOTHER, MYSELF

*I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have
ended up where I needed to be.*

—DOUGLAS ADAMS

It was difficult to think of flying anywhere after September 11, 2001. The images of planes crashing into the World Trade Center, played over and over by television news, were burned into our brains. Charlie's fear of flying resurfaced. I felt a very strong need to be close to my children and my two grandchildren. We incorporated Charlie's consulting business as an LLC and continued to seek work.

Our low-grade depression finally disappeared in January 2002 with the birth of our third grandchild, Izabel Danyelle Rose Poole, daughter of Charlie's youngest son Michael and his wife Melanie. Having a grandchild on our side of Puget Sound rather than in Seattle made it possible for us to see her very often and to witness her changes every month. When Melanie decided to take classes at the local community college, I was more than happy to care for Izabel.

But I felt that something was still missing from my life. I wasn't passionate about the consulting work I was doing for

legal services management, consisting principally of drafting policies. After 45 years of either full-time academia and/or employment and 30 years of rearing children, I was anxious to find a new direction for my life. My yoga instructor, with whom I had worked since 1988 in Seattle and then in Indianola, suggested that I come to a workshop that her partner was organizing with Natasha Mann, a renowned Gestalt psychotherapist.

Fifteen of us were sequestered for four days at Camp Indianola in a setting of utter peacefulness and beauty. Mt. Rainier rose in front of us in all its glory across Puget Sound. Eagles soared over the cliffs on which our cabins stood. We felt the sacred earth of the First Nation ancestors as we walked along the beach. Inside our meeting rooms, however, great turmoil was being unleashed and we felt each other's pain as we became one another's temporary families. The healing began.

For one exercise we were asked to draw a picture of an early childhood memory. I had been deeply affected by the morning narration of one of the participants whose young daughter had died. I took a walk on the beach and thought about my father, whose death eleven years prior was very hard on me. Before the afternoon session began, I drew a picture of the funeral of my Aunt Anne (Barry's mother) who died of tuberculosis at age 28 when I was seven years old. I placed my grandmother prostrate on top of the coffin, my large extended family on one side of it, and Barry and me on the other side holding hands—almost outside of the picture. The background of my picture was totally filled up with gravestones.

During the discussion of what I had drawn Natasha said, "There are quite a lot of gravestones in your picture."

"Yes, there are millions," I replied.

I hadn't realized the significance of what I said until I saw the shock on the face of my friend Andrea who brought me to the workshop. She was the daughter of Holocaust survivors, those who were luckier than the six million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis during World War II.

As Natasha and I continued talking, my awareness grew that I, this Jewish grandma who had lived and worked on four continents but would not/could not set foot on German soil, might have some unfinished business regarding the Holocaust.

Natasha simply said, "You need to go to Germany, Phyllis."

At the time I thought she might as well have told me to go to the moon. I didn't see how I could conquer the substantial fears and anger about Germany that I had carried for more than 50 years.

Shortly after the workshop, Charlie was trying to choose between attending a professional conference in Chicago or one given in Alghero, Sardinia. He was not working at the time and the consulting jobs available for people in his field were becoming fewer. After listing the pros and cons of each conference (cost, program content, potential for further employment), we concluded that even if we were going to be broke, it would be more fun to be broke in Sardinia

than in Chicago or Poulsbo. We headed for the Extreme Programming (XP) Conference in Alghero.

Sardinia is part of Italy and is the second largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. Alghero is in the northwest part of the island. The defensive walls of the old city rise up from the sea and a few of the old towers remain. The conference was at a hotel away from the town center but within walking distance of it. Many conference sessions gravitated to the chairs surrounding the outdoor swimming pool. Charlie was excited by the conference content and the people that he met there. I also enjoyed their company, finding that the Europeans had much to talk about beside the technical content of their professions.

When I wasn't reading a book on deck chairs around the pool, I explored the Gothic town center, its narrow and cobbled lanes jammed with bars, boutiques, and restaurants. The Catalonian history of the island is preserved and street names were in both Italian and Catalan. I also took a bus ride to the town of Bosa to the south, a picturesque town on the Temo River with a castle above and a cathedral with a multicolored tiled dome. There was virtually no settlement between the two towns, just miles and miles of unspoiled coastline on the sea.

When the conference ended we rented a car for three days, discovering a large sandy beach in the north at Stintino and feasting on fresh-caught lobster at Castelsardo on the top part of the island. We peeked into Sardinia's mountainous interior, the Gallura, green from the trees and other plant life covering its slopes. Our stay ended at Olbia

where we caught a boat back to the Italian mainland. We were totally hooked on Sardinia and hoped to come back again to explore the rest of the island.

The XP Conference changed Charlie's ideas about how he wanted to work. It also changed both of our views on where that work would take place. In Paris for a few weeks after the conference, we explored legal requirements and work opportunities for later employment in France.

Before returning home we stopped at Kutcher's Resort in New York's Catskill Mountains, close to the town where I spent most of my childhood summers. Charlie had his own attachment to the Catskills, having hiked and camped in them when he was a Boy Scout in New York. The purpose of this trip was to attend the very first Fox Family Reunion, a gathering of my mother and her remaining sisters and brothers, my many cousins, and their children. We all wore tee shirts with a fox on them, a different color representing each of my grandparents' 11 children and their descendants. Being in community with the extended family that had been such a big part of my growing up years reinforced the notion that I needed to be/work in concert with people who shared the same history and/or values.

Back in Poulsbo, however, I continued to be haunted by Natasha's words: *You need to go to Germany, Phyllis*. I couldn't imagine making that trip by myself or even with Charlie. I came across an article in my local newspaper about a group called The Compassionate Listening Project based in Indianola and the work that its director, Leah Green, was doing in the Middle East to promote communi-

cation between Israelis and Palestinians. I met with Leah in Indianola and soon began doing volunteer work at her office several days per week. Leah had vast experience leading delegations of Americans to the Middle East. But she had recently started another program: The German-Jewish Reconciliation Project.

Leah planned to bring American Jews to Germany to meet with Germans and, using the tools of Compassionate Listening, begin to heal the wounds of war. I knew that despite my fears, this is what I needed to do. Only through the safety of such a project could I think about being in Germany. One and a half years after Natasha planted a seed, I paid the fee for the October 2003 delegation to Hanover, Germany and purchased my air ticket.

But life had other plans for me. At the end of August my sister-in-law Sheryl, who had been visiting my mother with my brother Rick, called to say that Mom was having difficulty breathing, her heart was beating rapidly, and they had called an ambulance to take her to nearby Memorial Hospital. I was in shock. My father had been the one who had all the serious health problems before his death in 1991: two heart attacks, triple bypass surgery, and cancer of the colon. My mother's health had been exceptionally good for her age. The migraines which plagued her when I was growing up disappeared after menopause. She had high cholesterol and sinus problems, but both were treated adequately with medication. She walked faster than anyone I knew, danced up a storm when the opportunity presented, and had a seemingly endless supply of energy and optimism. I could

not imagine her being seriously ill, let alone possibly dying. I called the airlines immediately and packed a bag.

I was told by my mother's doctor (formerly my father's cardiologist) that she had pneumonia and he had called in a pulmonary specialist. I was relieved that she hadn't had a heart attack. But when the pulmonary specialist told us that the pneumonia was too advanced to be treatable with antibiotics and she would need surgery to cut it out of her lungs, I was once again shaken. She was in her upper 80s; surgery at that age was risky. I wondered what her lung capacity would be even if she survived the surgery. We were introduced to the third doctor, a surgeon, who believed that the surgery should be done right away.

Sheryl and Rick had been away from their jobs for several weeks and it made sense for me to stay in Florida since I was not working. Melanie made other arrangements for Izabel's care. I shared Mom's one-bedroom condo with Max, an elderly male companion with whom she had developed a close relationship. I slept on the couch and soon developed an insane schedule. I would start the day at 5:30 or 6:00 AM in order to speak with the lung doctor who made early rounds. I returned to the condo to see that Max was up and had his breakfast and prepared something for his lunch. I stayed in the hospital most of the day, bringing food from the cafeteria into Mom's room so that I wouldn't be away from her long and would not miss rounds that her primary physician would make. When her surgery was scheduled for an evening rather than a morning, I had to go back to the condo to make dinner for Max before camping

out again at the hospital. I was using Max's car to go back and forth from the hospital, so he really couldn't go out to get food.

The surgery was done close to midnight about five days after I arrived. My mother was taken to the Intensive Care Unit and put on a ventilator. The surgeon was called away for a family emergency in Israel and I was left to speak with more people I hadn't met before. The surgery had been quite extensive and an open wound was left to heal. I was assured that all was well.

Then all hell broke loose. Mom's white count went through the roof. Levels of other things were dangerously low. One of the surgeon's assistants talked to me about hospice. I could not accept that she was terminally ill. I talked to her primary physician and through him secured a fourth specialist on the team: an internist. The diagnosis was *C. difficile*, an infection not uncommon in hospitals. It was explained to me that the anesthesia used for the surgery had paralyzed her bowel and the infection was due to this. She was moved from the ICU to an isolation room. Signs were everywhere about washing hands before and after being in the room, no visitors except family, no food or water to be given orally. It brought back memories of being quarantined after I acquired hepatitis in 1967.

My mother looked miserable. She was off the ventilator but hooked up to a variety of plastic bags for nutrition, hydration, and antibiotics. Tubes were in her arms, in her chest, in her nose. She was constantly trying to pull them out. One day, when she had a bit of energy and coherence,

she wrote me a note. It said: PLEASE KILL ME. I lost it altogether.

Three doctors and the surgeon's assistants were coming by briefly each day. On occasion they sent in other doctors from their offices who stayed even less time. They wrote notes on her chart that the others couldn't always read. I had started to keep a diary in a spiral notebook, recording everything that I could. Some of the medical staff viewed my note-taking with suspicion; others were grateful that I could pass on relevant information to them. I felt compelled to record her temperature, her pulse, her oxygen saturation. I had convinced myself that if I didn't do so, she would die.

I knew that my mother had executed a living will after my father's death, a directive to physicians. She did not want to be kept alive with machines if her situation was terminal. I wanted to respect her wishes, but I also wanted to make sure everything was done for her short of invasive measures. I talked to the internist about removing the nasal tube and trying her on oral nutrition. The danger was aspiration of food into the lungs. He wrote the order for a nutrition expert to give her a "swallowing test." Unfortunately she failed it. However, there were no subsequent orders and she was left with no nutrition at all—not through tubes and not orally. None of her doctors could be reached to provide new orders because it was a holiday weekend. I feared that my mother would die from starvation.

In extreme frustration, I went out into the hallway and screamed on top of my lungs "Will somebody please come

feed my mother!” My totally out-of-character behavior produced some scurrying and before long the nutrition person reappeared to administer the swallowing test again. This time it was successful. A tray of pureed food and a protein shake arrived.

When the long weekend was over and the doctors returned, my mother was transferred to a telemetry room where her vital signs were better monitored. Her doctors tried to prepare me for the end again when she had another setback. My husband mailed me my first cell phone and instructions for its use so that I didn't have to continually look for change for the long distance calls to him and to my brothers. I found a home health aide to care for Max, so I could remain at the hospital all day.

It became clear to me that I wasn't going to be able to make the trip to Germany. My family assured me that if I wanted to go, someone else would come to stay with my mother. But I knew I could not leave her. My caring for her was more about what *I* needed rather than what *she* needed.

The September weeks flew by. My mother's infection gradually subsided. She was receiving a minimum of physical therapy and I was concerned about her inability to walk. Her primary physician wanted her to be admitted to the rehabilitation facility at the hospital, but they turned her down. I was also greatly concerned about her mental state. At times she was very incoherent. Memorial Hospital wanted to discharge her—to hospice or to another hospital.

My brother Rick came down for a long weekend in October, allowing me to fly home to see my family. Charlie's full-time consulting job made it difficult for him to come to Florida. The social work staff at Memorial, who I was often at odds with, promised that my mother would not be moved during my short absence.

I was away for three days and when I came back my mother had been transferred to a different hospital. Her eyeglasses were lost. My brother had done all that was possible to do; Memorial was determined to recoup its bed space. Rick kept my notebooks up to date while I was away. It was wonderful to have a day together so we could bounce ideas for Mom around.

Kindred Hospital turned out to be a blessing. They gave my mother something to boost her appetite. She had gone down to 86 pounds when discharged from Memorial; she began to gain some weight back. The physical therapy staff was very committed to helping her regain function. The only one of the four doctors she had while at Memorial who monitored her daily at Kindred was the pulmonary specialist, Dr B. We communicated very well, albeit in what seemed like the middle of the night. We were on the same page; we both wanted to see my mother walk out of the hospital by herself.

One of the biggest obstacles to my mother's well-being had been her level of depression. I tried my best to be upbeat but not pushy with her. I arranged for someone to come in to give her a haircut and manicure her nails. I asked that she be seen by a psychiatrist. He put her on

Zoloft for depression, but it helped only a little. When she refused to eat her food and was uncooperative at physical therapy, I finally got angry with her and told her that if she didn't care enough to return to her home, I was going back to mine in Poulsbo.

She became pensive and said, "You mean I could go back to my apartment?"

"Yes," I said, "that's what Dr. B. and I both want for you."

"I thought that was over, that I would have to be in a nursing home."

I was amazed. How could it not have occurred to me that she was depressed because she believed that life as she knew it, living in her own apartment with Max, was over?

After that she began improving, both as to eating and in the physical therapy room. She recovered well from a second surgery to close up the open wound she was left with after the pneumonia surgery.

We were into November. Mom was getting stronger but was still far from being ready to return home. I asked for a Multi-Disciplinary meeting to be set, to bring all the medical people who were interacting with her together to compare notes and come up with a plan. The hospital social worker, administrator, and heads of physical therapy, nursing, and nutrition were there, but they neglected to inform her biggest cheerleader, Dr. B., about the meeting. I was told that none of them believed that returning to her home was realistic for my mother, even with home health care.

They suggested I spend my time looking at nursing homes. Rick and I had looked at several earlier and I looked at another suggested by the social worker. I became depressed because I didn't think my mother would get better in any of them.

I talked with the people actually doing the physical therapy work about their views of whether she could walk again on her own and possibly live in her condo. They were more optimistic and suggested a facility that had an excellent rehab department. They further suggested that she enter as a rehab patient rather than as a nursing home resident. Dr. B. thought she should stay at Kindred until she could walk out, but nevertheless had good things to say about Hillcrest. Thinking that the transfer might take place in December, I arranged for a visit home for Thanksgiving. My sister-in-law Patricia (Barry's wife) came down to Florida in my absence.

Our children and grandchildren gathered at our Poulsbo home for Thanksgiving as was the usual practice. Izabel clung to me the entire time she was there. I felt badly that I had abandoned her after we bonded so closely. But my guilt over abandonment soon switched persons when Patricia called me to say that Mom was taken back to the much larger Memorial Hospital because she was having difficulty breathing.

She was still in the hospital when I arrived back in Florida. After multiple tests showed no cause for concern, we made arrangements for her to be transferred to Hillcrest as a rehab patient. It was another big adjustment for my

mother, the third since she left her home in August. At the beginning she didn't fare very well. Her roommate moaned 24/7 and did not speak. I never understood why this woman was in the rehabilitation section as she was much too ill to participate in physical therapy. I was unsuccessful in arranging for another room. Physical therapy produced only small results for my mother at the beginning. The doctor on staff made infrequent visits and rarely spent more than five minutes with each patient. He had no time to discuss her case with me.

Things took off near the end of December when an excellent physical therapist came to sub for those on vacation. Diane took a shine to my mother and got her to do amazing things. Not only was she successful in getting Mom to dress herself and walk on all of the equipment in the therapy room, but she got her outside, into a car, and to a restaurant. She gave Mom real hope of going home.

In January 2004 my mother was back in her apartment. For two weeks we had Medicare-provided nursing, physical therapy, and home health care. I then found a home health care agency on a private-pay basis. Angela came for 12 hours per day, doing the shopping, cooking, bathing, and personal care for my mother and Max. In February I determined that this was working satisfactorily and flew home. More than five months since I first left home in August 2003, I was at my lowest weight (106 lbs.) since the 1960s, exhausted, and depressed.

But I had learned many valuable things. One was that you absolutely need to have a full-time advocate when you

are seriously ill. The medical system is so entrenched with bureaucracy and rules that do not benefit the patient and/or his family. I ended up being an advocate not only for my mother, but also for her roommates and others in the hospital. I have nothing but high praise for the nurses, LPNs, and CAs who worked with my mom. They truly care about patients and are not paid nearly enough. The doctors I dealt with, with the exception of Dr. B., seemed to have too many patients and too little time to interact with their patients and families. My experiences with hospital social workers and administrators were not optimal. I was misled and lied to; even though I had a valid power of attorney, I had to get an order to see information in my mother's charts that had been suppressed, e.g. her falling out of bed.

I learned that I have an amazing family. Just as when my father died, my brothers and their wives rallied together with me to make decisions; we trusted one another implicitly. I was constantly supported by them and by Charlie. Charlie took over all my responsibilities at home, called me nightly, and never once complained about my long absence.

I learned that my mother is even more amazing than I had previously thought. When her depression lessened, she exhibited great physical strength and strength of character. She defied those who had written off her recovery.

I loved the time that I spent with her listening to the many stories from her life. Although I remembered my grandparents as being poor, she remembered her childhood on Long Island before the 1929 Depression and its long aftermath, when my grandfather drove a Rolls Royce with a

Mercedes engine (or perhaps the other way around) and my grandmother wore suits to match the car's interior. My grandfather built a beautiful cabinet in the synagogue to house the *Shulchan Aruch* (body of Jewish Law). My mother went to the best school around.

She told stories about meeting my father when they were both 13 years old, how neighbors and friends of her parents thought that he was deaf and dumb because he was so quiet, how she and my father dated other people for a short while before coming back to their incredible long-term relationship.

I thought about my own teenage years, wishing I had a dollar for all the times I said, "I'm never gonna be like my mother!" But the reality is that my mother was indeed my role model. She showed me how to be a good daughter by the way that she treated her mother Pauline who lived with us for many years after my grandfather died. Although their temperaments, housekeeping styles, views about money and religion were different, my mother always treated my grandmother with honor and respect.

Later on she served as the role model for the mother that I was to become. Her many great mothering skills included her physical affection, her encouragement for me to think for myself and find my own path in life, and her ability to make me feel absolutely secure about her love for me.

When I became a grandmother I wanted to have the great relationship that she had with her grandchildren, especially my son Michael. She was a playful, patient, be-in-

the-moment person who would stretch out on the floor to build all kinds of structures.

Additionally, she was my role model for commitment, compassion, and courage. In 2005, while living in London where Charlie worked as a consultant for the software development team of a publishing company, I helped plan a 90th birthday celebration for my mother to take place shortly after our return. The catered lunch was attended by my children and grandchildren, my brothers and their families, my mother's living sisters and brothers, and many of my cousins. Additionally, we invited her close friends from the Florida condo development in which she had lived for 30+ years. When it was my turn to speak to the gathering about my mother, I spoke about the things my mother taught me:

1. About Marriage.

Never go to bed angry at your partner.

Have independent activities that make each of you happy. You'll have a lot more to talk about and share.

Keep the romance alive even after you have children. Send them to their grandparents, camp, or wherever you can.

2. About Raising Children.

You can never tell a child too many times that you love him or her.

Believe in your child's unlimited potential and help him or her believe in it also.

There's always enough food in the house to share it with your child's friends.

3. About Family.

Be someone your entire family can count on when the chips are down, whether it is emotional or financial support or providing a home when necessary.

There are no in-laws in the family. Everyone is a brother or a sister, daughter or son, etc. And once you're in, you're in forever.

“Family” encompasses great friends as well, and is color-blind and tolerant to all religions, races, and sexual preferences.

4. About Work.

Dress neatly, show up on time, and try to make your co-workers' day pleasant.

Learn as much as you can about the total operation of wherever you work so you can pitch in when necessary.

You don't have to take credit for every good idea you have. Getting it implemented is important enough.

5. About Getting Through Life.

Doing the Charleston or a slow dance with your honey makes all your troubles go away.

Greet each day as a new beginning and try to make it special.

Count your blessings often, especially the number of your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

I also read Maya Angelou's *Phenomenal Woman* as a tribute to my mother Sylvia, known to many in my family as "Simkie," from her Hebrew name *Simcha* meaning "joy."

*Pretty Women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.*

*I walk into a room,
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man,
The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.
I say,
It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.*

*Phenomenal woman,
That's me.*

*Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me.
They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.
When I try to show them,
They say they still can't see.
I say,
It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.*

*Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing,
It ought to make you proud.
I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
The palm of my hand,
The need for my care.
'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.*

—MAYA ANGELOU

My mother Sylvia is a hard act to follow, and I will continue to emulate the richness in her character and in her life.

Chapter 11

THE COMPASSIONATE JOURNEY: BERLIN

Journeys rarely begin where we think they do.

—COLIN THURBON

Indianola

When I returned home from Florida in the winter of 2004, I joined what was called “the Monday Night Group” of the Compassionate Listening Project. There I found a wonderful community of friends with whom I could practice the fundamentals of Compassionate Listening, including “listening and speaking from the heart.” Having been an attorney for 30 years, I thought I was an excellent listener and good at helping people. But while I was “listening” as a lawyer, I was constantly making judgments, formulating what I was going to do and what it would entail. I needed to leave that “helping” role, listen empathetically, and encourage the solutions that the other person had within them.

Although I had taken two introductory seminars, I did not find it easy to change. But gradually, with practice in the Monday Night Group, I became better at listening to my children, withholding parental advice unless it was asked for. I became less judgmental. I was getting better at dealing with conflict. And I wanted desperately to go to Germany. The 2004 delegation was held in Washington, D.C. instead of Germany, and I chose not to attend that. I signed

up for 2005, but it was later cancelled. Ditto for 2006. I purposefully skipped the XP conference in Garmisch, Germany that Charlie went to.

I became discouraged. But in September 2006, it appeared that it was actually going to happen:

**A Compassionate Journey
to Berlin, Germany
May 8–15, 2007**

**With Brian and Lisa Berman
A Compassionate Listening Delegation**

I was extremely excited. Charlie wanted to come as well. We checked with Brian to make sure this was okay, as in the past the delegation was for American Jews. Brian confirmed that the delegation was open to anyone who sincerely wanted to deal with the wounds of the World War II. Even my mother was excited that I was finally going to go and donated funds for our trip.

Paris

I didn't want to fly directly to Germany. I wanted to arrive there mentally prepared to begin the workshop. We chose Paris as our European landing place and spent two nights at the Lindbergh Hotel in the 6th *arrondissement*. While there I was able to walk off my jet lag on familiar streets. I also found a comfortable place to write about the reasons that brought me to the point in my life where transforming my repressed anger, fear, and grief into a positive force in my life was necessary for me to go on.

Memories long forgotten flooded in as I wrote:

...A drive to the beach in Eastern, Maryland near Ocean City and a sign that said “No niggers and no Jews.” My parents made light of it, saying that there were plenty of beaches where we would be welcome. There were, but I kept looking out the back seat window to see if anyone was following us.

...A terrible night in the early 1950s when my father came home and told my mother that a colleague of his committed suicide by jumping out of a window. He had discovered that his name was on Senator Joseph McCarthy’s list of Communists in the federal government. Most of the people on McCarthy’s list were not Communists; they were simply Jewish.

...Being told not to talk about the Holocaust because family members of my Aunt Sarah had been killed by the Germans in France. Recalling my terror when reading about the medical experiments and exterminations in the concentration camps. Remembering the first time I saw a number on the arm of my mother's co-worker who had been in a concentration camp in Czechoslovakia.

...Being terrified when Larry was arrested in Washington D.C. after a scuffle with someone from the American Nazi Party. Being frightened in Paris in 1968 when I first heard the klaxon horns and thought the Gestapo was coming. Becoming hysterical when I saw a swastika chalked on the sidewalk in Ashland, Oregon where *The Merchant of Venice* was playing.

Berlin

As we approached Berlin from the air on the afternoon of May 8th, a rainbow appeared in the sky. I felt that positive things lay ahead. We arrived at the small boutique hotel in what had been the old Jewish quarter in East Berlin in time for dinner with the 10 other non-German participants in the delegation and the three facilitators. Following dinner we got to know one another better.

The essentials of Compassionate Listening were introduced the following day: cultivating compassion, developing the fair witness, respecting self and others, listening with the heart, and speaking with the heart. This was new ground for almost everyone and it was an excellent review for me. It was clear that we were going to be dealing with very strong emotions during the week, and that we needed to learn to be respectful of differing tolerance levels and capacity for conflict.

We had been asked to bring family photographs for the evening's activity called "Honor Ancestors." The large, low square table in the middle of the room contained lit votive candles and boughs of pine. I think there was music playing in the background as we all gathered around the table. One at a time we came forward, stated our names, placed our pictures on the table, and told stories about who they were. A number of German participants from a prior delegation joined us in the event. When everyone was finished speaking we took in the majesty of the table. Many of us cried. Not only did those of us in the room feel connected, but it

seemed that our parents and grandparents were connected as well in the common family of man.

Our expanded group took a four-hour bus tour the next day of many of the Holocaust memorials in Berlin. Our first stop was the Bavarian Quarter Memorial. Before Hitler came to power, 16,000 Jews lived in the Bavarian Quarter of Berlin's Schöneberg district, an affluent neighborhood of physicians, businessmen, lawyers, and artists. The memorial consists of 80 two-sided plaques affixed on 80 lamp posts throughout the neighborhood. Each plaque contains a Nazi statute passed between 1933 and 1945. The goal of the memorial is to focus on the many small steps in the persecution of the Jews that affected the "everyday lives" of the inhabitants of the Bavarian Quarter. Some examples were:

Jews are excluded from civic choirs. 8/16/33

Jewish actors and actresses are not allowed to perform. 3/4/34

Jewish musicians are no longer allowed to work. 3/31/35

Postal workers married to Jews are forced into retirement. 6/8/37

Jews are not allowed to use any of the public pools. 12/3/38

By 1942, Jewish children could not attend public school, indeed any kind of school. No professions were open to Jews and all Jews had to perform forced labor. The Star of David was to be marked on all apartments inhabited by Jews in the quarter; travel out of the city without an official permit was not permitted.

We visited several memorials commemorating deportations to the concentration camps, including a single railway train on tracks. I became overcome with emotion at that point. Later in the day we talked about our experiences in our small groups called “pods.” I broke down again, but what came out was not grief about the incredible loss, but rather a feeling of releasing hatred and anger. I was overwhelmed at the efforts of the Germans to remember what had happened to the Jews under National Socialism and the message to never let anything like this happen again.

Prior to coming to Germany the emotions of fear, anger, and grief were all tangled up in my thoughts about the Holocaust. Often when I got triggered by something I would just dissolve into tears. I would not be able to identify what I was feeling—whether it was anger or fear, anger or intense sadness. That had been my experience during my final separation from Larry, the emotions all tangled together. When my father died, however, I experienced pure grief—there was no anger or fear, nothing was unresolved. That was my goal in Berlin.

Over several days and nights layers of emotions peeled away. Fear was the first to go as my arrival in Germany was smooth, as I got to know the Germans on the delegation and listened to their stories, as I walked the streets of Berlin and began to feel as comfortable as I would feel in any new city. Then anger was chipped away, as respect and appreciation were moving to the foreground.

The release of fear, hatred and anger led me on Thursday evening to be able to listen to a woman and feel a more

pure empathetic grief about her life experiences: the death of her parents (gassed at Auschwitz), not having any memory of her life before age seven, the death of her beloved sister, and wanting to commit suicide at age 55. As I listened further to her story about why and how she transformed her grief into healing and love, I felt that perhaps I was on a path toward reconciliation.

We had two incredible listening sessions with elderly gentlemen who had experienced the war in Germany and have dedicated their lives to speaking about the Holocaust before groups, especially schoolchildren. Herr Werk was a first grader when Hitler came to power and he was a fervent member of the Hitler youth. Against his father's wishes he joined the Waffen-SS, although he never fired a gun. He was in a radio and wireless unit. In 1951 a friend who had been imprisoned during the Third Reich convinced him how inhumane his attitude was and that is when he began the mission to speak to children.

On Sunday morning we listened to Herr Joseph, a Jew who grew up in Berlin during the Third Reich. He described how difficult life became day by day. Although he did not emphasize it at all, his bravery and heroism stood out. He managed to escape from the train to Auschwitz, to escape again after the Gestapo caught him, and with some luck, to escape a third time. Herr Joseph is one of those who have overcome what he has gone through and is able to talk about it; he said his brother cannot.

The individual stories of all the participants in the delegation and those who joined us (Jews, Germans, and oth-

ers) filled my heart to overflowing as I watched their tremendous courage in giving voice to their emotions and their processes for transforming their emotions. I learned something from each and every person that was there.

Before going to Berlin, I had viewed myself as having a closed mind about Germany or Germans. I found justification for this for much of my adult life. I viewed the delegation to Germany as a mind-opening vehicle. What I came to realize was that my childhood reactions of fear and hate concerning the Holocaust closed down my heart as well and altered my capacity to love fully. Rachel Naomi Remen, in *Kitchen Table Wisdom*, said, "The way to freedom from fear often lies through an open heart." My journey to Berlin filled me with such compassion that at times I thought my heart could open no further. But it had no bounds.

On the last afternoon in Berlin in the laundromat, I found a piece of paper in my purse on which I had written five words the previous year after reading Michael Lerner's *The Left Hand of God*. I had been trying to capture my most important values and had written down:

FREEDOM
JUSTICE
COMPASSION
TRUTH
PEACE

As I thought about my week in Berlin, I realized how much I had been rubbing up against those five words.

Freedom. On the bus tour of the city we saw the gradual deprivation of human rights—who children can play with, what hours Jews could buy bread, making Jews wear the Star of David, the deportations. Freedoms gradually but systematically taken away.

Justice. How I wanted justice for so long. I read about the Nuremburg trials; I saw the film many times. The trial of SS officer Adolf Eichmann was held in Jerusalem when I was a young adult there in May 1961; it was chilling. I became a lawyer—seeking justice.

Compassion. I was overwhelmed by the extent of the memorials to the Holocaust in Berlin and the caring of its victims, Jews and non-Jews. The concern as well for the future of humanity—that it never happens again—filled me up. Throughout the week I was amazed at my capacity to hold the stories of all the people who made this journey to Berlin with me as well as those who were already in Germany. Our guests who had experienced World War II from both sides expanded my heart greatly. But surprisingly it was my generation—the sons and daughters who were children of the Nazis—who in the end touched me the most. And I touched them. The tears still come when I think about the pain and guilt they carry. I don't know if I would have the courage to confront a parent about their actions during the war.

Truth. Some participants in my group were saying that the memorials were too much information for children, that there would be a backlash. I think you need to tell the truth and give children the tools to handle the facts. Many truths

in my life were omitted: the Holocaust, the worst aspects of slavery such as lynching simply because of the color of one's skin, the roundup and incarceration of Japanese-Americans during World War II, what we did to Native Americans. Among the lessons learned from this week in Berlin were that the Hitler youth seduced children who had not known Jewish people personally yet already had prejudices passed down through the family. We clearly can't wait until adulthood to pass on the message that intolerance is wrong.

Peace. Towards the end of an emotional visit to the new Holocaust Museum, I came across a powerful poem written by a Russian survivor:

Song of Resurrection

*My little daughter, my first one, Lorotschka
Probably would have been a grandmother by now.*

*Yet for all time she remains a little child.
One out of the bloody number of six million.*

*It sometimes seems to me in the silence of
a sleepless night that
I hear moaning. I hear weeping, a child
is screaming.*

*This moaning, this weeping penetrates to
the depths of my consciousness.
Although the years pass, the feeling and
the shivering do not diminish.*

*That mortal enemy, that common criminal wanted
To wipe out children's laughter in my people.*

*That lunatic wanted to chop the thread that
links generation to generation.*

To burn it so that only ash remained.

*But the thread will not be severed. Oh, no.
I am leaving a deep imprint on this earth.*

*The madman with those crazy ideas rotted
away long ago.*

My children will have grandchildren.

*My descendants grow with every passing day—
My lovely, beautiful Elena.*

*Like flowers in the spring
Marinuska and Ilya have come into bloom.*

*The sky will be bright and blue.
There will be wedding celebrations—weddings of
the young and wedding anniversaries of the old.*

*And my grandchildren will become grandmothers
and grandfathers
So let the music play—the great march of Victory!*

*Nobody, never in the whole wide world
Should ever dare besmirch the sanctity of childhood.*

*On the whole earthly, living, human planet—
Grant*

*Peace and happiness,
Peace and happiness—to the children!
...So that the horror never is repeated—
I sing this my song of resurrection.*

—MORDECHAI KAPLAN, 1984

I looked at the many children on the streets of Berlin and I wanted peace for them. Even though there were still problems of East and West despite the Wall being down,

and even though the neo-Nazis on occasion rear their ugly heads and write graffiti on buildings, Berlin seemed a hopeful city. It was, for me, the city where I found my peace.

Chapter 12

LOST AND FOUND: MY ALZHEIMER'S JOURNEY

*The brain is a world consisting of a number
of unexplored continents and great stretches
of unknown territory.*

—SANTIAGO RAMON Y CAJAL

Lost

The losses crept up slowly and silently, like cat's paws on a carpet. They caught me by surprise. I had come to terms with the loss of my waistline, the hair staying behind on my brush or accumulating in the shower drain after a shampoo, the hearing that I was gradually losing that was not caused by earwax buildup. Memory loss was what I feared.

Charlie and I were driving in the car one morning in 2002 tuned to NPR when Billy Collins, the poet laureate, began reading his poem “Forgetfulness”:

*The name of the author is the first to go
followed obediently by the title, the plot,
the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel
which suddenly becomes one you have never read,
never even heard of,*

*as if, one by one, the memories you used to harbor
decided to retire to the southern hemisphere of the brain,
to a little fishing village where there are no phones....*

We laughed uproariously. We had entertained “senior moments” and the picture of a fishing village with no phones was delightful. He continued:

*Whatever it is you are struggling to remember
it is not poised on the tip of your tongue,
not even lurking in some obscure corner of your spleen.*

*It has floated away down a dark mythological river
whose name begins with an L as far as you can recall,
well on your own way to oblivion where you will join
those
who have even
forgotten how to swim and how to ride a bicycle.*

We were able to laugh about aging because we still felt young and vital. Our recall in our sixties may not have been as great as it used to be, but our intelligence and experience was valued. Charlie had an active and lucrative consulting practice; I had also begun consulting work to legal services management. Although I had been worried about my mental condition immediately before I retired from full-time work in 1999, I felt I had recovered.

But then a number of incidents caused me some concern. In the summer of 2003 I attended an introductory Compassionate Listening workshop with my friend Anita. After a luncheon talk regarding the origins of Camp Brotherhood where we were meeting, I was surprised when Anita started talking about the speaker having been a Holocaust survivor and living in England. Had my mind wandered during that part of the speech? How could I not remember something about the Holocaust, something I am so tuned into? It had been only a brief time since I reserved my place

for the October 2003 trip to Germany to deal with the wounds of the Holocaust.

Later on in the day, both in watching a video and being in a group, I was only able to remember later information and statements that I heard at the end of the session and had forgotten all of the earlier information. I might have attributed it all to a bad day (weekend!), but it bothered me enough to have made written notes about it and to remark that I was feeling that my memory was slipping.

I was also having noticeable problems communicating with Charlie. In 2003 I noted that I was not hearing things he said he had told me before. He remembered whole discussions that we had that I could not remember at all.

Although I was still acing crossword puzzles, a very different skill was involved to do reflective listening—to be able to show that I have heard the other person. The Compassionate Listening Monday Night Group which I joined after returning home from Florida in 2004 became a challenge for me as I practiced my reflective listening skills. There was one exercise in particular that was very difficult for me: “Facts, Feelings, and Values.” The speaker would tell his/her story of a personal conflict for about twenty minutes to a group of three or more people. Then someone would reflect back the facts that they heard in the story. The second person would reflect back the feelings that they heard, and the third the values. As each person did this the original speaker could correct or comment. By the end of the exercise, the speaker usually had a clearer idea of what was important and a direction for resolution. I hated being

the person who had to reflect back facts, because I was finding it very difficult to remember 20 minutes worth of facts, something that I was able to do when practicing law.

Several times I brought up my concern to the Monday Night Group that I was experiencing difficulty remembering things that I heard. But this was not a group that would say, “Get thee immediately to a doctor; you may have Alzheimer’s.” It was a group that supported me by saying that there are many ways to listen to people and connect with them. And I was good at that. And there was no doubt that I was a highly functioning individual, so Alzheimer’s did not really enter my mind at the time.

My small memory blips continued. But it was not until the beginning of 2008 that everything became totally unmanageable. The previous fall had been very busy. Charlie had been doing quite a bit of traveling in his consulting business: to Cleveland in October, to San Francisco in November, to Madrid right after Thanksgiving and then on to Dublin in December. We had a full house at Thanksgiving with our regular large gang plus Charlie’s sister and entire family up from California. I was working part-time in the office of The Compassionate Listening Project. I served on their Board of Directors as well as on the Board of Kitsap Legal Services (KLS), a *pro bono* program in my county that I had begun volunteering at some years before. I had evening meetings at least four times a week.

I had a major role in a new fundraiser for KLS and I was also on the search committee for a new Executive Director, so I was conducting candidate interviews during many days

in November. Plus there was the usual hecticness between Thanksgiving and Christmas when we have four family birthdays to celebrate in addition to organizing the Chanukah and Christmas gift-giving and celebrations.

In January 2008 Charlie made a second trip to Dublin and I made an appointment with my primary physician because of pains in my chest. I thought I was having a heart attack. A referral to a cardiologist and tests such as an EKG and stress test came up negative. We left on a trip to Tucson to see our daughter Marie, to Albuquerque to see my brother Rick, and to Florida to see my mother. I continued to have severe chest pains, which by then were diagnosed as acid reflux. Not long after, I felt as if I was losing my mind.

Several times coming home from meetings in Bremer-ton, I passed my exit and did not realize it until I was almost at the Hood Canal Bridge. I could not remember how to drive to my friend Olivia's house. I would go up the stairs of my house and forget what I intended to do. I would come down and forget what I intended to do. Not once, not twice, but constantly. Each day I would enter the bathroom and not know whether I had to use the toilet, brush my teeth, or get the dirty towels for the washing machine. I would forget things that Charlie told me 15 minutes before. I could not remember the steps involved in making my morning cup of tea.

A tremor that I once had in London in 2005 was back and had been noticed by our daughter Marie and also a friend. I had fallen twice on the stairs, once going up to my office and once going down from the porch. I felt lopsided

and confused. I would lose words and resorted to substituting other words for those I couldn't recall.

One day I was talking to my then six-year-old granddaughter Izabel in my kitchen. I don't remember the topic of conversation, but when she looked up at me in confusion and said, "Why did you say that, Grandma?," I knew I needed medical attention. List maker that I am, I wrote all of my strange symptoms on a legal pad and brought it to the neurologist who had been treating me for migraine disease since 2002.

My doctor took my concerns seriously when I saw her on April 1, 2008. She immediately administered some neurological tests and set up an appointment with Group Health for an MRI on April 16th. She scheduled another appointment for me to see her on April 21st, requesting I bring my husband along. Having Charlie come to a doctor's appointment with me marked the beginning of my loss of independence and a change in our marital relationship that we would need to discuss many times over the next few years.

It was a relief when the MRI revealed that there was no brain tumor. It revealed that my brain was small in size for my age. My doctor said it looked like the brain of someone in their 80s; I was only 67. My father had always called me his "little girl with the big brain" so the remark was hard to take.

The neurologist felt that a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Scan would offer more help in the way of diagnosis, and that given the seriousness of my symptoms she rec-

commended it. She was doubtful that my Group Health HMO would pay for it. We said that we would pay for it and asked how soon it could be done. We were scheduled to leave on May 8th for Munich. The PET scan, done on April 23rd, was a painless procedure, the only inconveniences being the early hour that we had to get up, the fasting, and the noise inside the machine.

Two days after the scan, we again met with the neurologist to learn the results. The PET scan showed “relatively diminished activity in the posterior, frontal, and parietal regions as well as diminished activity in the medial aspects of both temporal lobes.” It referenced mild to moderate hippocampal volume loss being evident on the MRI study. The radiologist indicated that the PET study, as well as the outside MRI study, was suggestive of Alzheimer’s disease. Charlie was totally shocked at hearing this news, but I was not. I felt relieved that there was an answer that made sense relative to the symptoms that I was experiencing. I wasn’t going crazy.

We next talked about treatment options. I knew that there was no cure for Alzheimer’s disease. But my doctor indicated that there were a few drugs on the market that might ease some of the symptoms for a period of time. She suggested that I begin with a low dose of the Exelon Patch. We asked whether we should cancel our forthcoming trip to Europe and she said that there was no reason to postpone it if I was feeling okay.

Charlie came with me to a follow-up appointment at the beginning of May. I retook the Mini Mental Status Exam

and scored somewhat better than I had when I first reported my symptoms on April 1st. A few days later we were off to Europe.

I considered myself incredibly fortunate. I was the beneficiary of a health care system which worked swiftly and efficiently to diagnose and treat a very serious condition in a humane way. My neurologist met with me on four separate occasions in that 33-day period for appointments lasting 45 minutes to two plus hours. She spent additional time making referrals for me and reviewing reports.

Of course, not everyone is in such a hurry to find out bad news. Many people experience symptoms such as I had without mentioning them to a doctor, and many families are in denial as well about their loved ones' behavior. Some people report them to their primary doctors who then fail to take them seriously. Almost everyone I know who has Alzheimer's believes that early diagnosis is extremely important for a number of reasons. The few medications that are available at the current time may be more effective at the early stages of the disease and can enhance the quality of life. One has time to think about, make decisions, and plan for the future—whether it is for care, finances, or legacy.

From “Dying from” to “Living with”

Looking back it is hard to believe that our main concern at the time of diagnosis was whether we could go forward with our planned trip to Europe. We had no idea how Alzheimer's was going to affect our entire lives. We could only question how it was going to affect the immediate

weeks ahead. I didn't ask how long I had to live. Even though Alzheimer's is a fatal disease, we don't think of it as shortening our life the same way as cancer. Indeed most people view living with Alzheimer's as the tragedy rather than dying from it.

Charlie and I flew to Munich and took a train to Innsbruck, Austria—home of our friends Barbara and Werner—where Charlie was going to present a workshop. I had been to Innsbruck in the 1960s and was delighted to be back in the beautiful mountain scenery and attractive city. The weather was lovely and I found plenty to do while Charlie was working. From Innsbruck we trained to Verona, revisiting many of the places we had fallen in love with on the previous year's trip. Charlie had booked passage for us on an overnight boat from Genoa to Barcelona. I had never been to Spain and neither of us had been to Barcelona before. One of Charlie's colleagues took us out for a tasty *tapas* meal and showed us around the old part of the city the first evening. For several days and nights thereafter we walked the city on our own seeing the sights, including a chocolate museum where all the exhibits were made of chocolate.

From Barcelona we took the train to Madrid where we rented an apartment for a week. Having a home base rather than a hotel was a delightful experience and we loved the neighborhood we were in. Madrid is a city of grand buildings; everything seemed larger than life. While I enjoyed it a lot, I was much happier spending three days in smaller Seville. Limerick, Ireland was our last stop for Charlie's conference.

After I returned home, I saw my neurologist again to report on how I did on the trip with the medication. At that time we increased the dosage to double the amount. After reading our mail, talking to our family, and paying our bills, it occurred to me that I needed to begin telling people what was going on in my life. I started by making a list: family members, close friends, colleagues. And that's when it hit me—like a brick, or perhaps a ton of them. It was one thing for *me* to accept that I had a fatal disease. It was another thing to tell my children. And my brothers. And my mother who was in her 90s. I did not have the courage to give them such painful news.

I called my closest friends and had long teary phone conversations with them. They were wonderfully supportive and I knew I had a treasured network around me to help me get through whatever I was to meet on this journey. They would be there not only for me but also for Charlie and my children if necessary. I went to a board meeting of The Compassionate Listening Project and told people there about my diagnosis and why I felt I needed to resign from the board. I cut back on some other professional activities without an announcement to everyone, but with key people knowing what was happening. I wanted to keep active with some of my professional life for as long as I could. Staying on the Board of Directors of and assisting at the office of KLS, my local volunteer legal services program, seemed to be the best use of my time and remaining talents and would involve the least amount of travel.

I struggled long and hard with how to tell my children. They are all very loving, very mature adults in whom I have the utmost of trust. But in addition to not wanting to cause them pain, I didn't want them to start viewing me differently. I kept procrastinating. It was not until October, a full six months after my diagnosis, that I felt I was able to do it. Charlie and I arranged to visit all four households in a relatively short space of time. Marie had moved back to Seattle from Tucson; our elder Michael was in Renton south of Seattle, and brother John was in West Seattle. The younger Michael lived near us.

We wanted to give each of them time to ask questions individually, as opposed to being in a group, but we didn't want them talking to one another before we had a chance to talk to each one. We think that worked well as their reactions to the news were all very different. It might have been harder for some to voice their concerns in a group setting. In the first few years some of them were more comfortable than others talking about my future. I respected how each one of them dealt with it and trusted that if I needed them to do anything, they would find a way to do it.

I did not tell my brothers until 15 months after diagnosis. I had wanted to tell them in person, but the opportunity did not present itself. I finally wrote them each a long letter including an apology, asking them to call me after they had read it. We cried a lot and became much closer. I didn't tell my mother and prayed that I would never have to.

What made telling my family so difficult at the beginning was my perception that I was already dying. That was

how I felt when I came back from Europe after the diagnosis. I learned that the average Alzheimer's patient lives eight years after diagnosis. How many good years was I going to have out of that eight? Three? I felt there wasn't time enough to do anything.

I was obsessively reading everything on the Internet about Alzheimer's disease—the blogs, the chat rooms, the websites. I knew all of the stages and symptoms of the disease. Knowing what lay ahead scared me terribly and I became very depressed. The stigma of Alzheimer's causes your spirit to die just as assuredly as the neurons in your brain.

Charlie kept telling me that I was an outlier; I would be the one who would beat this. But I didn't believe that. I thought he was in full denial. Like the fictional character in *Still Alice* by Lisa Genova, I thought about suicide down the road when my symptoms got worse, when I had no quality of life.

But it wasn't Alzheimer's that was killing me; it was fear. Fear of the loss of my intellect and the loss of a purposeful life. Fear of helplessness and the loss of my independence. Fear of losing control, of becoming violent, of people fearing me. Fearing the loss of love from Charlie, my children, my grandchildren. Fearing I might not remember what special people they are. By naming what I was afraid of, I hoped I could find a way to be *living with Alzheimer's* rather than to be *dying from Alzheimer's*.

I had faced fear before in my life and arrived at a place where I shed my paralysis and was able to move forward. At

times it was fear of the known; more often it was fear of the unknown. I could invite courage into my life again. I could remember my mantra from work that there are no problems, only challenges and solutions. I could call up the traits I acquired when learning to sail a boat—patience, fortitude and, most of all, humility.

I took a reality check of myself. I did not fit the stereotype of a person with Alzheimer's disease: the person who cannot recognize family members or who sits mutely in a wheelchair, perhaps drooling. That stereotype engenders great fear. Perhaps I would never be the stereotype. Maybe my path would be a little different. The disease seemed to be progressing slowly. I was still driving a car, cooking, handling the family finances, sitting on the board of a non-profit organization, reading a lot, and doing hard crossword puzzles. Celebrating what I could do instead of grieving what I was losing helped. I stopped grieving what I thought I might be losing sometime in the future. I tried to adopt Charlie's attitude of "We'll deal with it when it happens."

I needed to acquire hope. Not the hope that the diagnosis was wrong. Not the hope that there would be a cure for Alzheimer's in my lifetime. Not the hope for a miracle. I needed to acquire the hope that I would be able to meet this challenge as I have met other challenges in my life. I needed the hope that the bonds of love between me and my family would survive a tortuous process. I sought the hope that I would be able to pass on the lessons about living that I learned. I needed hope that I could continue traveling for a bit longer.

I sought inspiration from others, at first beginning with an Internet search for people who had very positive approaches to life despite having Alzheimer's. One such person was a former trial lawyer in Minneapolis who had a well-written and inspiring blog. He reminded readers that Alzheimer's affects each person differently. Another person that I read about had improved some of her test scores with her regime of "best practices": (1) medication, (2) Mediterranean diet, (3) vigorous exercise, (4) vigorous mental activities, and (5) socialization. It didn't seem that hard to incorporate these into my life.

I started giving thought to how I wanted to live my life: simply and peacefully. I discovered a Wiki-how that tells you exactly how to do that:

1. Decide what is important.
2. Examine your commitments.
3. Do less each day.
4. Leave space between tasks and appointments.
5. Eliminate as much as possible from your to-do list.
6. Slow down and enjoy every task.
7. Single-task.
8. Eliminate stress.
9. Create time for solitude.
10. Do nothing.
11. Sprinkle simple pleasures throughout your day.
12. Practice being present.
13. Live in the moment.

This advice was geared for everyone, not specifically those with Alzheimer's, and I found that it worked well for me.

Charlie and I took a trip to Port Townsend about 10 months after I was diagnosed to take time for a personal retreat—to unplug, avoid distractions, and do some goal-setting. On our first night over dinner we did a free-flowing discussion of things we would each like to do or see happen in our life. We didn't think of it as a "bucket list"—neither of us likes that term because it focuses on dying. We prefer to think of it as things that improve our quality of life. We surprised each other with some of the choices, not because they were strange, but because we had failed to mention them before despite all of our talking.

It came to light, for example, that Charlie really wanted to learn to speak another language besides French fluently. We also discovered that I had been longing to go to a very small town in Italy called Lucca and had never said anything about it before. One result of that discussion was that 15 months later we were living in a lovely apartment in Lucca and Charlie was studying intensive Italian. And I was doing number 10 on the Wiki-how list, only doing it Italian style: *la dolce far niente* "the sweetness of doing nothing."

I asked myself: what were the things in my life that made me happy and what was missing? Alzheimer's may rob you of the ability to think about a rosy future and it chips away at your past, but it gives you a "now" and the capability to create what that "now" can look like for you. I don't always succeed in doing what I want everyday, but I live much more intentionally than I used to.

I have spent time thinking about the things that I want in my life and what I need to do to get them: spending qual-

ity time with family and friends; helping others; staying healthy; learning new things; writing or self-expression; having more laughter and music in my life; solitude; appreciation and gratitude. Things that I try to eliminate are multitasking, rushing, noise, stress, and obligation. Living with intention enabled me to tackle organizing projects in the house that I had avoided for years and to get started writing this book. It left me with feelings of accomplishment.

Finding Community

My years of communal living, working cooperatively with others, and being in support groups made me certain that "going it alone" with this disease was not right for me. Part of finding a way to learn to live with the disease was being in community with others. I wasn't *seeing* anyone who had AD. Corresponding with people was great, but I needed to be around other people who suffered from memory loss. I called the local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association in the spring of 2010 to ask about support groups. In many places there are only support groups for those caring for people with memory loss. I was told there was a support group in my county for people with memory loss that had been meeting for a number of years; however, I couldn't get into it without taking an educational eight-week class. And there were none of those on the horizon. Finally in the fall I was advised that a new educational seminar would begin for those in the early stage and their care partners. We registered. Up to that point I had essentially been on this journey by myself; now I would have a full partner.

The Alzheimer's journey is not one traveled exclusively by those suffering from cognitive loss. It is a journey for the care partner, a separate journey rather than one which is truly shared. Tom and Karen Brenner, Montessori gerontologists, give the following advice to care partners:

You will need to travel light, and learn how to be flexible, to find new routes to familiar faces, to throw away all of the old maps, all of the old guides. You are on a trip that will demand all of your patience, your stamina, your love.

Bob DeMarco, in his extremely informative blog "The Alzheimer's Reading Room" also uses the travel metaphor, reminding care partners to step into "Alzheimer's World," speak the local language, follow the local pace, and never forget that you are in a new place.

There was much for both me and Charlie to learn. Topics for the weekly Early Stage Memory Loss Seminar included coping with memory problems, medical updates, social and family relationships, considerations in daily living, legal and financial considerations, planning for the future, and health considerations. At the close of each educational component, the groups would divide into those with memory loss and those who were care partners. Each group was led by a facilitator.

Many of the people were my age but a few were considerably younger. I became acquainted with Young Onset Alzheimer's Disease which can affect people in their 40s and 50s, causing loss of employment and other hardships that older people with the disease may not face. We all got

to know one another better by going out to dinner after the sessions.

We ended our eight-week educational program with a potluck, and were then invited into the two monthly support groups that had been meeting for three years: again one for care partners and one for those with memory loss. I was able to get a glimpse of some people in a more advanced stage of Alzheimer's. My group had a different facilitator than we had before, but the format was similar. There would often be a pre-selected topic, but we had opportunity to talk about anything that was pressing for us. Confidentiality concerning what we discussed was important; sometimes what was needed was to discuss a communication problem with the care partner.

I have been in support groups since the early days of the Women's Liberation Movement; I am used to giving voice to my feelings. In the Compassionate Listening Project I learned to listen with a compassionate ear and to reflect back what others are expressing. I felt I could make a contribution. What I received back was acceptance and the comfort of never having to worry whether I would lose my words or train of thought. We all quickly became kindred spirits. The disease wiped out the differences in our ages, our backgrounds, our genders. What I used to be or what I used to be able to do was unimportant.

Our original group of seven couples was missing weekly contact so someone suggested that we get together for coffee every Wednesday. We have kept this going to date, moving the venue from a coffee house to a place above our local

market where we can spread out, have lunch, and sit for a long time. Not everyone makes it each week and we have added some new couples to the group. We have potluck dinners and birthday celebrations.

The Wednesday lunches have been a huge part of all of our lives. Meeting as couples rather than being labeled as those with the disease and those who don't have it has made it possible for all of us to get to know one another better and for all of us to help one another more. We share the latest news about clinical trials or research in the field, but we also share jokes and travel photos. We talk about each other's health, but we also talk about how the chili peppers in Joe's garden are doing, how Frank's art work is coming along, whether I've made much progress on this book. We've become good friends—and we talk like friends talk. It is a safe, supportive place for all, and I can't imagine my life without it.

Email has also been a big part of the support network. Sharing links and information has saved everyone a lot of time researching things or reinventing the wheel. Humorous stories, cartoons, and the like are also shared. There isn't a week that goes by without something of interest or something hilariously funny hitting my Inbox.

There is richness to these new relationships that I didn't believe would be possible at this stage in my life. We learn so much from one another. Not only is there opportunity to explore problems and strategies for coping with memory loss, but there is the opportunity for connecting on a deep

level. Australian writer Christine Bryden, who has memory loss, says in her book *Dancing with Dementia*:

Each person with dementia is travelling a journey deep into the core of their spirit, away from the complex cognitive outer layer that once defined them, through the jumble and tangle of emotions created through their life experiences, into the centre of their being, into what truly gives them meaning in life.

She has come to believe that what remains throughout the journey is what is really important and what disappears is what is not important.

Since the early 1970s I have attempted to integrate the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual layers of my life. By following my heart as well as my head, I derived great satisfaction and nourished my soul in my professional career, in the passions I followed, and in my relationships with family and friends. Connecting with people seems more important than being able to drive a car, or spell properly, or being able to grocery shop. I have a spell-checker and a Charlie for those things when I need him. Knowing that I can tap into my emotions and my spiritual core when needed gives me comfort rather than fear for the future.

After some time in my support group, I felt that I should be doing more. I was inspired by Pat Summitt and Glenn Campbell going public. I became convinced that it was necessary for those in the early stages of the disease to “come out of the closet” and to share their journeys: how the disease was changing them and what was helpful to them. So in 2012 I began volunteering for the Alzheimer’s Associa-

tion. I became a member of the Early Stage Advisory Council which advises the Association on the needs of those with early memory loss. We held our first one-day forum geared for Early Stagers in May, 2012.

I became a Peer Volunteer speaking on the telephone to people who were recently diagnosed. I listened to their concerns and shared my story. It was my hope that connecting people to services and to others who have walked in their shoes would reduce a lot of the isolation and depression I felt for quite awhile after my own diagnosis.

I wrote a brief description of my journey for “Why I Walk,” part of the publicity for the Alzheimer’s Association’s Walks to End Alzheimer’s. For the second annual Early Stage forum in June 2013 I was one of the main speakers. It was gratifying when two individuals who had been diagnosed less than one month before told me how much of a difference my talk made to the way they would now view their lives.

Journeys along the Journey

How did the Alzheimer’s journey affect my great love for travel? In the spring of 2009, a year after my diagnosis, we were in Paris, Sardinia, and Lucca together. I loved it all—even when Charlie was busy with his conference. The following year, we were in Lucca for three weeks, then Trondheim, Norway for the conference, and together on the Norwegian coast. I loved Lucca but didn’t enjoy Charlie’s being away for four to five hours each day studying Italian. In Trondheim, sightseeing alone while Charlie was busy at his conference, I became confused at times as to where I was. I

skipped the Madrid conference in 2011, deciding that we would only travel when we could be together.

Instead we planned a road trip, one of those things we found we wanted to do when we had our retreat in Port Townsend in 2009. We traded in my 15-year-old Toyota for a 2010 Subaru Forester in August 2011, and in September we took off for a six-state, 6,000+ mile trip to the Southwest. We both thought it would be fun, but it turned out to be one of the most thrilling, inspirational, bonding experiences we have had. It helped that we sought out and found near-perfect weather and stuck mainly to two-lane roads. We got our kicks on Route 66. Our \$10 pass took us to the National Parks such as Yosemite and Grand Canyon as well as many small ones. We took guided jeep rides into the Canyon de Chelly and Monument Valley, learning more about the historical Navaho sites.

We gasped at the breathtaking reds and yellows in the fall foliage and reveled in what I called “my five mountain day”: Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Rainier—a spectacular ending to the trip. Taking hikes together and seeing rivers and waterfalls and snowy mountains made us feel at one with nature and creation, a feeling both exhilarating and peaceful. For at least a week or so after we returned home, we would get in the car and take off for some more local hikes to Hurricane Ridge, the Hood Canal area, or nearby Seabeck.

In June 2012 we took our eldest granddaughter Beverly with us to London and Paris for three weeks. Being challenged by the energy of a 21-year-old provided the best

workout for my brain in four years. We walked miles and miles each day, saw incredible art, talked till the wee hours of the morning, laughed ourselves silly, ate sumptuous but healthy food, and spoke a bit of French for two weeks. It was very energizing.

The following year Charlie and I had a fantastic time in Vienna (Charlie's conference site), Istanbul, Sarajevo, and Croatia. We want to take more road trips. We learned to take more precautions than we had in the past to deal with becoming separated, e.g. being very clear about meeting places and having a backup plan. This is all part of the challenge of learning how to keep doing as much as you possibly can for as long as you can.

Found

In the spring of 2012, my neurologist of ten years became ill. When I last saw her in December 2011 my test scores had improved in semantic memory and gone down slightly in spatial perception. She was still not back to her practice the following December when I was due for retesting.

I had been feeling fairly good. I didn't seem to be getting worse. I had read about "cognitive reserve" which can allow people with a lot of education and professional training to function highly despite physical damage to their brains. I was intrigued by "neuroplasticity," the capacity of the brain to form new connections in order to compensate for injury or damage. I believed that if I challenged my brain daily to remember things and learn new information, there would be more than dying going on in there.

By the spring of 2013 my neurologist had not come back and I faced the reality that I needed to find another doctor. I had questions about medications other than what I was on. My HMO referred me to another neurologist; Dr. P. reviewed my medical records and spent almost two hours with me and Charlie right before our annual trip to Europe. She recommended that I undergo extensive neuropsychological testing with a clinical psychologist, something that I had never had before. She indicated that the brief memory tests done in most offices are often too easy for people with my level of education and don't always give a true picture of someone's deficits.

When we returned from our overseas trip in July, we both met with the clinical psychologist. A week later I had the testing done. It took between four and five hours and covered many different types of memory, attention, executive functioning (planning, organizing, judgment), spatial skills and the like. My results were then compared to other women approximately my age who were college-educated.

I expected the news to be bad as I am generally not a good test taker. When we next met with the psychologist to go over the test results and his overall impressions, he told us that the test results showed normal to high functioning in most areas, especially memory. I could not believe what my ears heard. I should have been dancing up and down, hugging and thanking him, but I was in a state of shock.

We did not say anything to our family until after we met with Dr. P. She said that she places great confidence in the tests that were given. The test results showed no dementia

of any type. Furthermore, they did not even indicate “mild cognitive impairment” (MCI)—a diagnosis that is very often a precursor to Alzheimer’s disease.

We had questions about the symptoms I had experienced in 2008 and what else could have caused them. I had undergone tests to rule out thyroid problems, Vitamin B-12 deficiency, and even syphilis. She indicated that the cause could have been hormonal or metabolic, or perhaps an infection or a medication reaction. There was no real way to tell at this point.

Our next questions were about my current problems. I still lose things. I still lose words on occasion. I have days when I lose track of what I am doing. It takes me two or three times longer to write anything and I have to spell-check everything. I have to work harder to be organized and sometimes I have to ask for help. She felt that all these things can come with aging and are normal. She said that we (the medical profession) don’t always have a clear idea about what “normal” is.

She took me off the Exelon Patch as well as one of my migraine prescriptions that she felt could cause memory problems. She asked me to touch base with her in three months and, if I wanted, I could do another round of neuropsychological testing in 18–24 months. She removed the diagnosis of dementia of the Alzheimer’s type from my medical records and told me to go live my life.

My family and friends were over the moon with the news, but I had difficulty adjusting. I felt unmoored again. I didn’t know how to do “normal” anymore. I wondered

about my support group, about my role in the Alzheimer's Association. I didn't know how to suddenly lead my life differently. And I was experiencing something akin to "survivor's guilt."

I announced the news at my next monthly support group meeting. It made some people wonder about their own diagnoses. I wasn't surprised. But when the care partners who were given the news by Charlie came into the room, it was big hugs all around. They assured us that despite our no longer being "eligible" for the official support group, they wanted us both to come to the Wednesday lunches, the potlucks, etc. We were still an important part of the network we helped to create in Kitsap County. And so we still participate.

I announced the news at the next meeting of the Early Stage Advisory Council. Once again there were questions about the tests, the PET scan, and the like. But people were thrilled for my news and wanted me to stay on the Council if I wanted to. I have since resigned, but maintain a connection with the Alzheimer's Association. I know that I can contribute to the discussion of the need for a timely and accurate diagnosis, to the need for a statewide Alzheimer's plan in Washington, to the process of creating dementia-friendly communities.

I believe I have been given an opportunity. For five years of my life, I experienced what it is like to live every day with an Alzheimer's diagnosis hanging over me. I acquired new knowledge, inspiration from others, and hope for things within my grasp. I acquired new meaning in my

life. I learned to live intentionally, with deep connection to others, to find joy in small things, in spite of that diagnosis. I learned the lifestyle things that one can and should do for brain health: exercise, proper diet, mental stimulation, socialization. Those are all things which I will keep in my life. I also hope that I will be able to retain other things like gratitude, appreciation, and compassion.

Patrick Reardon, writing in the *Chicago Tribune* in 2012 said:

The threat of Alzheimer's is a reminder to tell my wife I love her, to enjoy the play of shadows against the brick wall across the yard, to drop everything and drive my son to the airport. Maybe I should be thankful for the threat of Alzheimer's. It reminds me to live life as fully as I can.

We should all live life as fully as we can. I wanted a life with excitement and passion. As a teenager I was ready to live on a *kibbutz* and as a young bride I was ready to go 5,000 miles from home to teach in West Africa. I wanted to do something important. I sought perfection in all things until I learned that striving to do your very best is good enough and healthier. The opportunities I had with regard to education, travel, economic security, and having children enriched my life. In my Alzheimer's journey I learned that living fully is not about having Big Goals. It has more to do with acceptance, being in the moment, living intentionally, having deep connections, and being grateful.

My family—always important to me in my journeys through life with the orca and the raven—became even

more special to me during these years. Their support of me was tremendous. Their individual reactions to the fortuitous turn of events which took Alzheimer's away are all memorable and I carry them with me. Izabel's, though, is the one I am already planning to fulfill:

“Grandma, this means we can take more trips!”

Chapter 13

WHY I LOVE EUROPE

People don't take trips—trips take people.

—JOHN STEINBECK

Charlie has been to every annual Extreme Programming conference since 2002. He is a member of the Steering Committee which plans them. I have been to most of them. The location moves to a different place in Europe each year. The conference sites I have enjoyed the most include Oulu (Finland), Lake Como (Italy), Vienna (Austria), and both conferences in Sardinia at the western port of Alghero and at Pula in the south near Cagliari.

We try to add a three- or four-week European vacation on either side of the conference. Italy and France beckoned again after the first conference in Sardinia. From the Oulu conference, we boarded trains across Finland, Sweden, and Norway and a boat to the Lofoten Islands above the Arctic Circle. Afterward we explored the fjords and coastal scenery of Norway, finally visiting Oslo and Stockholm.

Following the Compassionate Journey in Berlin in 2007, we became vagabonds for almost 5 weeks in the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, and Italy. Arriving at our final destination at Lake Como for Charlie's conference, we were so laid back that it was difficult to keep up with Charlie's

colleagues. They kept thinking they were so relaxed since they were away from their offices and on the lake, and we kept thinking they were moving so fast and were still tied to their BlackBerrys.

In 2010 we were happily ensconced in an apartment in Lucca, Italy for three weeks before we went to the Trondheim conference. After the Vienna conference in 2013 we spent an incredible four weeks in Istanbul, Sarajevo, and many lovely places in Croatia.

Charlie's knowledge and experience, as well as contacts that he has made at the XP conferences, have led to work opportunities which have taken him or both of us to Europe. In 2005 he came home from the conference in Sheffield, England and said, "Where do you want to live: Ireland or England?" The job that materialized was in London, and we spent three months living in the heart of Soho, going to plays, and seeing all the sights of the city. Our daughter Marie visited us and I had a great time sightseeing with her while Charlie worked. Shorter professional opportunities later came to fruition in Dublin, Paris, Innsbruck (Austria), Sweden, and Spain.

We did take one trip unattached to work in the autumn of 2004. When my mother became ill in 2003, I cancelled the workshop in Germany for which I had previously registered. My cancelled airline ticket was good for one year. The five-month sojourn in Florida, while benefiting my mother, had left me exhausted, thin, and mildly depressed. Charlie had been working full-time for a company for over a year and when his contract was done, he was fairly exhausted as well. We decided to use the ticket to travel to Honfleur

(France), Bruges (Belgium), and Paris. It was an exciting and uplifting three weeks, just the thing that I needed to restore my physical health and spirit.

We are grateful for the opportunities that have come our way, opportunities we did not foresee when we married in 1994, when Charlie had his fear of flying. While I have not sailed across the Pacific Ocean in a boat, and do not anticipate that I will except perhaps on a traditional cruise, I am more than content with my memories from our sailing trips and the new memories we make each year with our overseas travels.

I am often asked what my favorite place has been. Paris is the city I keep returning to. But the reality is that I have loved almost every place that I have visited and so has Charlie. We almost always think that the trip we are on is the best trip. I thought of writing about my ten favorite places, but even that proved too difficult. Instead I will give you ten reasons (in alphabetical order) why I love Europe.

Architecture

Although Paris contains the Gothic Notre Dame with its flying buttresses and pointed arches, as well as buildings from other architectural periods, it is primarily known for the classical style developed in the 1600s. This has been emulated around the world, especially in Washington, D.C. where I grew up. The French have budgeted money to sandblast most of the museums, government buildings, and monuments, making the city especially light and beautiful. Traveling through other parts of France, I was enchanted by the multicolored, tile-glazed roofs in the Burgundy town

of Beaune and the half-timbered farmhouses and public houses in Normandy.

The colorful pink, yellow, and green pastel houses of the five Italian villages of the Cinque Terre, built on hills above the Mediterranean Sea, are a delight to behold. The colorful facades on the old Hanseatic wooden houses lining the wharf in Bergen, Norway, as well as the multicolored ones in the Nyhaven neighborhood of Copenhagen, made me smile. I was surprised in Vienna to see many stately historic buildings exhibiting pastel stone facades.

The entire town of Bruges in Belgium, home to some of the best chocolate in the world, is an outstanding example of a medieval settlement which has maintained its historic fabric as it has evolved over the centuries. Other medieval towns such as Carcassone are mainly tourist attractions but still enjoyable.

In Spain it was the intricate Moorish architecture of Seville that delighted me as well as the eclectic style of architect Antoni Gaudi in Barcelona. The Byzantine and Ottoman era architecture in the old city of Istanbul, especially the many-domed Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia, was for me the architecture that elicited the most emotion. It is not surprising to me that many of the places I most enjoy have become UNESCO heritage sites.

Art

I have been fortunate to have spent time in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the Prado in Madrid, the Tate Modern in London, the Uffizi in Florence, and the Louvre in Paris. We visit the Musée d'Orsay in Paris on almost ev-

ery trip. We are drawn to the people that Pierre-Auguste Renoir painted (especially “Dance at the Moulin de la Galette”) and the lovely landscapes of Claude Monet.

I became so enchanted with what Monet painted in Normandy that I wanted to go to Honfleur to personally see the light and the sky that Monet found so magical. I was thrilled to stand on the nearby Étretat cliffs overlooking the beach, seeing the arches and sea that he painted. In Honfleur I also discovered the paintings of Eugene Boudin, one of the first French landscape painters to paint outdoors and a major influence on Monet. We stayed in a small house that Boudin had lived in for a time.

Great paintings are not just in the grand museums, but in smaller galleries and in churches. The most emotional reaction that I had to a painting was seeing Gustav Klimt’s “The Kiss” in a smaller gallery in Vienna. As you walk into the room, the huge painting is alone on the far wall. The lovers are wrapped in the most dazzling gold robes, the brightness of which brought tears to my eyes. I could not pull away from it. Previously I had thought about buying a print for my bedroom, but after seeing the original I know I could not be content with a reproduction.

We traveled to Antibes on the French Riviera to see what Picasso painted during his years there and to Nice to see some great Chagalls. One of the truly great experiences has been to see enormous paintings in the churches they were designed for: huge Tintoretto canvasses in Venetian churches and, of course, Michelangelo’s famous frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

I have gained more of an appreciation for sculpture. Michelangelo's "David" and "Pieta" in Italy and the "Venus de Milo" in the Louvre were must-sees, but the sculptures that keep us returning again and again are by Auguste Rodin and his student/mistress Camille Claudel, found in a beautiful home and garden in Paris. The sculpture gardens at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art on Oresund Sound are worth the short train ride from Copenhagen, containing works by Henry Moore, Jean Arp, and Alexander Calder. And there is nothing that I have seen that can compare to Oslo's Frogner Park—a huge public garden featuring innumerable sculptures by Gustav Vigeland.

Boats

Although we have not been sailing since we began our European journeys, we still love to spend hours looking at boats of all kinds. The many big boats at the Viking Museum in Oslo and lining the wharf at Bergen were photographed. We watched intently as small fishing boats were lowered each day from town to sea in the Cinque Terre town of Manarola. Several hours at the old port of Marseilles passed the time while waiting for the train between Aix-en-Provence and Nice.

In Venice we learned to distinguish between the flat-bottomed *gondola* for hire and the *vaporetto* and *traghetto* which form the public transportation network. Every type of small boat and barge imaginable can be found lining Venetian canals.

In Rovigno, Croatia we discovered a type of fishing boat called the *batana*, a traditional small sailing boat of the

Adriatic. One new one is built every year. After learning all about the *batanas* at the two-story museum dedicated to this craft, we explored the wharfs trying to pick them out.

However, the best boat experience for me was in Oslo at the Kon Tiki Museum, home of the rescued raft of my childhood dreams. That is where the memories of my elementary school class came flooding back and I realized where my great desire to see the world came from.

Food

How does one do justice to the food that you can get in Europe? Suffice it to say, I have never eaten a bad meal in Paris whether in a Michelin-starred restaurant or a small, unknown family-run *bistro*. The Parisians know how to prepare food. It hasn't mattered whether we've eaten fish, fowl or meat; whether it's been a salad for lunch or an omelet or simply coffee and a piece of French bread with jam for breakfast. French open-air markets provide the very best of organic produce and eggs/chicken/meat from humanely-raised chickens and animals.

Steven Erlanger, writing in the New York Times on 8/21/13, describes *terroir*, the cultivation of a region's particular products:

The importance of *terroir* to the French psyche and self-image is difficult to overestimate, because it is a concept almost untranslatable, combining soil, weather, region and notions of authenticity, of genuineness and particularity—of roots, and home—in contrast to globalized products designed to taste the same everywhere.

We have savored *cassoulet* near Carcassone in the south, Calvados brandy over apples in Normandy, *salade niçoise* in Nice, and the best *bouillabaisse* that I've ever eaten in Villefranche. Choosing a favorite dessert is next to impossible. When we first started traveling in France, we spent three hours eating dinner and two hours eating lunch. That may be one reason we had to keep going back to see the sights we missed.

We have spent a lot of time eating our meals in Italy as well. Pasta is a separate course on Italian menus, not the main meal. I have read that there are 300 varieties of pasta. I tasted some new ones: *pappardelle*, *fusilli*, *trenette*, *trofie*. I swooned to my first taste of *cinghiale dolce e forte* (wild boar with sweet and sour sauce) in Siena; I savored each bite of fresh octopus, scallops, and mussels in my first seafood salad in Manarola; and I had the best steak I have ever eaten fixed Florentine-style. It seemed that there were an infinite number of types of *gelato*. It became crucial to know who supplied the best *gelato* everywhere we went.

We expected the food to be dull in England and Ireland after traveling throughout France and Italy. That was not the case. London is so cosmopolitan that you can find every kind of mouth-watering ethnic food. I was introduced to seared tuna at a little organic restaurant in Notting Hill, and to morel mushrooms as well as fried ice cream with butterscotch sauce at a wonderful restaurant in Dun Laoghaire outside of Dublin.

You can make a whole meal out of appetizers served in many places: *tapas* in Spain, *cicchetti* at bars in Venice, and

mezzes in Istanbul. Whether we were in Stockholm or Slovenia, Innsbruck or Istanbul, we always sought out the local specialties. Sometimes we had no idea what we would be getting, but we were never disappointed. I took a cooking class in Paris and loved trying to replicate what we had tasted in France. My inspiration to go to Lucca came from recipes that I had in one of my two massive Italian cookbooks.

History

I hated the year-long History of Western Civilization class that was required of all freshmen at American University. However, I came to love history while traveling abroad.

Rick Steves' guidebooks provided much history of the areas we visited, supplemented by the purchase of books by local authors in the many wonderful book stores along the way. We spent half a day at the British Museum learning about ancient history, but it stuck a whole lot more when we visited the Neolithic upright pillars of Stonehenge, saw *dolmens* in fields in Ireland, and clambered around the remains of a Bronze Age village called a *nuraghi* in Sardinia.

One of our most interesting visits was to Civita di Bagnoregio, a stunning example of a medieval city left relatively untouched by modernity. Sitting atop a rocky outcrop, it is accessible by a long footbridge. It is believed to have been settled by Etruscans in 5,000 B.C. and we were given a tour of Etruscan implements found on the property of an elderly woman who was one of the 15 remaining inhabitants.

The Coliseum in Rome was a marvel, but finding a Roman coliseum or amphitheater in Verona (Italy), in Arles (France), and in Pula (Croatia)—all built in the first century—gave us a better understanding of the breadth of the Roman Empire. We tried to imagine what the Arles Arena with its 20 arches looked like in the 18th century, when it was transformed into a fortress with 200 houses and two chapels inside of it. It is now used for bullfighting, concerts, and plays. After seeing the 2,000 year old Pont du Gard in Nimes (France), one of the most beautiful and complete Roman aqueducts in the world, it was not hard to imagine how others must have looked when we came across their ruins.

The Middle Ages came alive when we made short visits to Carcassone and Bruges, and on our longer, repeated visits to Avignon where the popes resided during the schism in the Catholic Church. Throughout central Italy, which was composed of 60 city-states in the 13th century, we heard references made to the bloody wars between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, factions supporting the Pope and the Holy Roman Empire, respectively. The feud continued for centuries and is the backdrop to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*: Romeo being a Montecchi (Montague) whose family supported the Ghibbelines, and Juliet being a Capuleti (Capulet) whose family supported the Guelphs.

We learned much about the history of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam while visiting churches, synagogues, and mosques. I felt calmed by the many calls to prayer in Istanbul and Bosnia. The expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492

became more real for me when I read about it while visiting the city of Seville in Spain. It was fascinating to visit the area of the Jewish ghetto in Venice with its very tall buildings. I sought out the Sarajevo Haggadah that came from Spain, was protected from the Nazis by Christians, and has been preserved in Bosnia.

Sarajevo was a special place for me. I had visited this beautiful city once known for its religious diversity in the early 1970s with Larry and Michael. I thrilled to the ice dancing of Jane Torvil and Christopher Dean who received 12 perfect 6.0s for their interpretation of Ravel's Bolero in the 1984 winter Olympics held there. Sarajevo has interesting history from the long rules of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires and was the site of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand launching World War I. My heart broke as I heard the news of the deaths and destruction during the four-year siege of the city in the 1990s as Bosnia was trying to become an independent state.

Although we rarely go on organized tours, we took one with a young Bosniak guide who had been a child during the war. We visited historical sites, listened to her stories of the hardships that people had to endure, and saw the grave-stones everywhere of the 13,000 people who were killed, including 1600 children. Throughout our days there, as we looked up at their beautiful Olympic Mountains, we felt both awe and vulnerability. Practically everyone that we spoke to had a story about the war, whether it was about a small lime tree that was planted to replace the huge one that was obliterated during the war, or the former antique

desk in our hotel that had to be used for firewood. We were so impressed by the resilience of the people that we met there.

Languages

When my son Michael was very young, he and I were traveling on a European train to meet his dad in Belgrade. There were six of us in the cabin; the other people were sharing food and conversing with one another. Michael kept staring at them intently. I thought to myself that he must be hungry. He suddenly turned to me with his face lit up like a light bulb and said “Languages!”

One of the challenges that Charlie and I like about traveling in Europe is the diversity of languages. Rather than seeing it as a barrier to communication, we study our phrase books and try to learn how to navigate in a foreign language with new people and new places. Charlie speaks French fluently and, after his trips to Russia, studied Russian in Seattle. In recent years he has been to Lucca on three occasions to take intensive Italian language classes and is also in an Italian class here at home.

I don't have the same interest and skill to master another language, but I love being around foreign languages. I enjoy figuring out the menus and learning how to shop. It was somewhat harder when we contended with German in Vienna, Turkish in Istanbul, Bosnian in Sarajevo, and Croatian during the last two weeks of our 2013 trip. When we got to Rovigno on the Adriatic coast, it was wonderful to be in a bilingual place where Italian was spoken.

Scenic Beauty

Norway was perhaps the most scenic country with its snowy mountains and fjords running through them. The Lofoten Islands near the Arctic Circle with their black jagged mountains, picturesque bays, racks of codfish drying in the sun, and simple red wood buildings called *rorbuers* delighted us. The mountains surrounding Innsbruck, Austria also made for a lovely visit with friends.

Our visits to the Cinque Terre had us staying in rooms both in Vernazza and Manarola with views of the Mediterranean Sea. Sunsets were unimaginably beautiful, the blood-red orb of the sun producing dazzling arrays of orange, pink, and purple as it descended. On our last night in Croatia, we stayed at a small hotel on the Adriatic where we were treated to a magnificent sunset while eating dinner on the terrace.

In Croatia we spent a full day hiking in the spectacular Plitvice National Park, a UNESCO heritage site. Sixteen lakes, formed by runoff from the mountains, are interconnected by waterfalls and cascades and separated by natural dams of travertine, a form of limestone. The color of the lakes changes depending on the angle of the sun and the mineral deposits; they shimmered like turquoise jewels on the day we were there.

We have been enchanted by flowers everywhere, but especially in the warmest regions of France, Italy, and Spain where sumptuous bougainvilleas in gorgeous shades of purple tinted parks, walls, and house fronts. We felt very welcomed to Istanbul by the riot of color from all the marigolds

and begonias along the road from the airport to the historic center.

Transportation

In our almost twenty years of traveling to Europe, we have rented a car on very few occasions (with the exception of our recent Italian road trip): a day around Provence, a day around the Lofoten Islands, two days in the Loire Valley and Burgundy, three days on each of our Sardinian trips, four days in Tuscany, a week exploring Croatia, and slightly more around Ireland. Getting around Europe on public transportation is a snap.

We have used Eurail passes to travel around Italy and France and a Scanrail pass for our amazing Scandinavian vacation. One learns a lot about timetables: you dare not be a second late for the German trains, French trains are fairly punctual, and Italian trains make you wish you had purchased something to eat to tide you over while you are waiting. The bullet trains (TGV) from Paris to Avignon or the Riviera bring you to a destination so different from the hustle and bustle of the city in a little over two hours.

Our travels to and on the fjords of Norway were made possible by a careful scheduling of trains, buses, and boats, the schedules for which we found on the Internet. Between Dombas and Åndalsnes we were on the Raumba train consisting of only two cars with very large windows for maximum views. It felt like a combination *funiculare* and “the little train that could” as it chugged and tooted through the snow-capped mountains. Raging rivers, cascading waterfalls—an amazing hour and 15 minutes.

We then took a three-hour ride on a bus over the Trollstigen with all of its white-knuckling hairpin turns through the mountainous pass. The (public) bus driver was kind enough to stop at the majestic Stigfossen waterfall to let us take pictures and again when we were above the beautiful Geiranger fjord. He even dropped us off in front of our hotel which was a distance from the regular stop in the town. The boat along the fjord came with narration of the sights along the way. With a bit of planning, we avoided spending the money that most tourists do to see a country.

Transportation within cities is well-developed. In Moscow, Paris, London, and Vienna we made good use of the extensive network of underground and occasionally overhead trains. The trains were clean, fast, and frequent. Some of the stations were works of art, especially in Moscow. We found it difficult to return home and have to rely on our car to get anywhere.

Walkability

When we leave home for our European adventures, we try to fly into cities that are very amenable for walking so that we can get rid of our jet lag. When SAS had a route from Seattle, we made Copenhagen our hub. It was not unusual to cover as much as 10 miles in a day on foot looking at all the buildings, parks, canals, and boats. Paris was a lovely three-day jet lag reliever when we were on our way to a workshop in Berlin and Charlie's conference in Italy.

We are increasingly drawn to cities and towns where cars are not part of the environment. Venice is a city in which getting lost is part of the fun. Away from the tourist

sites one can turn a corner and find a tree-lined square with children playing soccer or a lovely canal with a picturesque little bridge crossing it. For many years our favorite place was Siena where cars were not allowed except to deposit tourists at their hotels or for food deliveries. It was so relaxing to not have to worry about getting hit by a car as we made our way to the shell-shaped *Piazza del Campo* (the town square) with its beautiful *Palazzo Pubblico* and *Torre (tower) del Mangia*.

In the last few years we have gravitated to the historic center of Lucca which is also car-free and surrounded by medieval walls that one can walk on top of. Inside the walls there are cobblestoned streets, pretty shops, cathedrals and churches galore. The tourists arrive by buses for part of the day, but it is relaxing place to be in the early morning and the evening. In Dubrovnik the tourists arrive by boat in the morning; we walked on top of its walls in the afternoon in the blazing sun. A lot of walking in Dubrovnik is uphill; we had 117 steps to climb every time we returned to our room.

We are always amazed when we get on the scale upon our return home. I usually weigh about the same as when I left though Charlie loses a little weight. We are amazed because eating is one of the joys of being in Europe and we eat very heartily. But walking the way we do on all of our European trips keeps us healthy, happy, and stimulated all at the same time.

Water

My zodiac sign is Aquarius, the water-bearer. I feel best when I am looking at water. It doesn't matter whether it is

the sea, a lake, a river, or a canal. In Venice, Amsterdam, and Bruges I think I stopped on nearly every bridge to commune with the water.

When I was studying French in junior high school, I used to sing a song about the Seine River: “*elle roucoule coule coule.....car la Seine est une amante et son amant c’est Paris.*” She is billing and cooing, cooing, cooing.....because the Seine is a lover and her lover is Paris. I was in love with the Seine long before I arrived in Paris in 1960. Charlie and I took a boat ride in a *bateau mouche* (excursion boat) on the first night we were in Paris, passing by some of the most iconic sites in Paris all aglitter. The river is a central part of the city in a way that the Thames in London or the Danube in Vienna is not. I have loved walking along it and crossing over its many majestic bridges from one *arrondissement* (administrative district) to the other. We also had one of our favorite picnic lunches on the Sorgue River in Provence and a lovely anniversary on the Cher River in the Loire valley.

We spent serene days on lakes, especially Lake Bled in Slovenia and Lake Como in Italy. In the middle of Lake Bled there is a tiny island on which a pilgrimage church sits. We stayed at the charming town of Varenna on Lake Como, taking the ferry to more-bustling Bellagio where the moneyed people live.

The fjords of Norway were stupendous. We stayed outside the town of Gerainger on the very narrow Geraingerfjord as well as in the sweet town of Balestrand on the much larger but nevertheless scenic Sognefjord.

Some of our very favorite places have been on the sea: Piran in Slovenia, Rovign in Croatia, Cinque Terre in Italy, and Colliure in France. We were on our ten-week journey in 1999 when we came to Colliure intending to stop there briefly on our way to Barcelona. We never made it to Spain that year as we were totally enchanted by Colliure. It is located near the border of the two countries where the Pyrenees slip down to the Mediterranean and the vineyards come to the edge of the town. It was November and too cold to go swimming, but watching the waves crash up against the seawall not far from our hotel provided endless entertainment.

Colliure had everything we wanted: the Mediterranean Sea, Catalan *barques* (fishing boats), Fauvist art by Henri Matisse and Alain Derain, a historic center with lovely architecture, scenic beauty, sumptuous Catalan food, two languages, exciting hikes up the foothills, easy bus rides to other towns along the coast. We thought we had found paradise.

Paradise—that is at least until we found another on the next trip. Which is why we keep going back to Europe.

Chapter 14

WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS

Paris is always a good idea.

—AUDREY HEPBURN AS “SABRINA”

I fell in love with the City of Light in 1960. I have not lost my passion for it after more than a dozen trips there. While I have passed on some trips to other places with Charlie, I never say no to a Paris trip. As Woody Allen shows us in “Midnight in Paris,” it is a place where magic can happen.

Paris Memories

1960: Rain, rain, rain. But not enough to dampen my excitement about being in Paris. The Eiffel Tower. Notre Dame. The Seine. To see them, to smell them, to touch them was quite a different experience than seeing pictures of them. There was no time to take it all in as we were training for our stay in Guinea and there was so much to learn. I received a new name: Madame Selinker. *Je m'appelle Phyllis Selinker*. And could there be anything better first thing in the morning than *café au lait*, especially when served with a *croissant* smeared with butter and apricot jam?

1961: Larry and I stopped in Paris on our way home from Guinea. Larry had surprised me in Zurich with taylor-made pants and a striped shirt, but I still looked pale and

drawn after my bout with malaria and the stress of being thrown out of the country. Everywhere in Paris I was surrounded by the most glamorous women, not only dressed exquisitely but with every hair in place. I decided to have a makeover. Strolling up the Champs-Élysées, I found an English-speaking beauty salon. Even though I could speak French, I didn't speak "hair French." I emerged later with a very fashionable beehive hair-do. When I deplaned at the airport in New York, my parents thought I looked like Jacqueline Kennedy.

1968: While living in Edinburgh, Larry and I decided to steal away for a long weekend in Paris as friends graciously agreed to take care of Michael for us so we could have some time to explore by ourselves. We found the mood very different from the times we had been there previously. Police cars were everywhere. I heard the gronking sound of the klaxon horn (which I knew from films were the horns Nazis used). Paris had not yet recovered from the month-long student strike at the Sorbonne and the workers' strike that followed. There had been violence during Bastille Day, resulting in several tourists injured. In spite of this, we had a wonderful vacation there—sleeping late, enjoying good music in the Latin Quarter, and partaking of some very fine food.

1997: How fortunate I was to have had another chance to be in love in Paris. Charlie and I had read Rick Steves' travel book and decided to stay on Rue (street) Cler in the 7th *arrondissement*. Our hotel, the Grand Hotel Lévêque, provided us with an extremely tiny room with bath and with what Steves calls the Starship Enterprise elevator.

However, it was the wide cobblestone, pedestrian-only street itself that we were paying for.

Directly across from us was an open-air market not unlike Seattle's Pike Place market that had a very large artistically displayed selection of fruits and vegetables. You could also purchase rotisserie chicken, fresh cheeses, breads and pastries, and take-out food Asian-style. We had our morning breakfast at the Café du Marché: *café crème*, *une tartine* (crusty French bread), sometimes a *croissant*, sometimes both. Then we bought a picnic lunch to take with us for the day's outing. We were impressed by the large number of elderly people in the area with their shopping bags. It was so easy for them to get around, benches everywhere for a rest.

This was Charlie's first time in Paris and he wanted to see everything. A climb up the 400 steps of Notre Dame gave us spectacular views of the city. Our mood was somber at the Deportation Memorial which commemorated the 200,000 French victims of Nazi concentration camps. The streets of Ile St. Louis, with elegant apartments and shops, cheered us up and invited us to come strolling.

Plying the waters of the Seine were the distinctive tourist excursion boats, the *bateaux-mouches*. We took an evening ride in one, seeing the Eiffel Tower sparkling like a giant Christmas tree, the many bridges over the Seine illuminated, and other famous buildings lit up—only one of the reasons Paris is called "*la ville lumière*".

We purchased a five-day museum pass so we would not miss anything. At the Rodin Museum, we fell in love with

every sculpture by Rodin and his student/mistress Camille Claudel. So, too, with the paintings in the Orsay Museum; we each had our favorites which would have to be revisited every time we came to Paris. Midway through the Louvre, museum exhaustion hit us. Five days of it was impossible.

Instead we spent an entire day following the Seine and the Canal St. Denis into a part of Paris that is not in the tourist guidebooks. The many canal locks, operated by hand, allowed boats to pass through. All along we saw children riding bikes or playing in wonderfully constructed play areas. Restaurants became more ethnic as we proceeded down the canal and apartment buildings became higher. We were definitely out of the hustle and bustle of the metropolitan area and it felt very relaxing.

1999: Back at the Rue Cler for five days, we stayed at the Hotel La Serre and ate frequently at the same owners' restaurant, which unhappily would be gone when we checked back on a future trip. My favorite dish was ostrich served with cherry sauce. We had so many marvelous meals there—*coquilles St. Jacques* (scallops), *magret de canard* (duck breast filet)—fixed in ways that we never before had them. We licked our lips with every appetizer, main course, and dessert, accompanied by plenty of good house wine. Our other favorite place was La Fontaine de Mars, a small restaurant with outdoor tables situated on a tiny square next to a fountain off Rue St. Dominique. The entire dinner was wonderful, but the chocolate dessert was absolutely exquisite. When President and Mrs. Obama visited Paris a few years ago, the Embassy staff recommended they go to La

Fontaine de Mars; it is now virtually impossible to get reservations at a decent time.

2002: In between the Extreme Programming conference in Sardinia and a family reunion I had scheduled in the New York Catskill Mountains, we decided to spend several weeks in Paris. Charlie had been excited by his conference and the people he had met there. There was no work for him in the software industry to return home to, so we thought we would explore the possibility of working in France. We obtained a lot of information from our meeting with a lawyer. Charlie had several interviews following up on leads given to him in Sardinia. While nothing came of it immediately, good groundwork had been laid.

We stayed at a different hotel in the 7th, Hotel les Jardins d'Eiffel, very close to the Eiffel Tower. It was more business-like, with a formal lobby; however, our room looked like a boat— pretty funky. We got to know the 7th a lot better and found another wonderful restaurant to eat in, Léo le Lion, that had the best *crème brûlée* we had ever tasted.

The highlight of this trip for me was a cooking class, arranged beforehand from home through Promenade Gourmandes. The instructor was a petite, bilingual French woman named Paule Caillat. She met me along with two other American women at a café close to the open-air market where we were to purchase the food that we would cook for our lunch. I enjoyed listening to Paule and the merchants chattering away in French over the vegetables and the meat. We must have spent an hour and a half picking

up the needed supplies. Back at Paule's apartment in the 3rd *arrondissement*, with its specially equipped kitchen, we began instruction in the art of preparing the dishes:

Tomates farcies au chèvre (tomatoes stuffed w. goat cheese)

Ossobucco aux 2 zestes (Veal provencal style with citrus rinds)

Petits pois à la française (fresh green peas French style)

Tarte au chocolat (yum, yum, yum)

And then we ate it all! And drank wine and laughed and talked and drank more wine.

The other American women had signed up for a half day only, but I bit the bullet and bought the entire day. Paule invited her close friend, Thirza Vallois, author of the three-volume *Around and About Paris*, to join us on a culinary tour of Paris. At the famous La Poilane *boulangerie* (bakery), I had a tour of *le fournil*—the wood-fired oven where the breads that are shipped all over the world are baked. Lionel Poilane and his wife were killed in a helicopter crash only months after this, so it was a real treat to have met him.

We went to a spice shop where I learned all about sea salt, especially the wonderful grey salt from Brittany. We walked and walked, hopped on and off buses, moving from one *arrondissement* to another exploring the best kitchen stores that Paris had to offer. I almost bought a very heavy pot at Dehillerin's, but wrongly decided that I could proba-

bly find it at the Sur La Table store in Seattle. Instead I purchased a type of new kind of wire whisk for my daughters and me, much easier to cart home.

In addition to cooking and talking about food, we talked a lot about U.S. politics. I learned once again that Europeans distinguish between Americans and American policy. I learned more history, this time about the Knights Templar in France. Although we spoke some English, I also was able to speak French quite a bit. All in all, it was a grand day.

While Charlie was busy networking, I kept busy walking the streets. I had purchased Volume One of Thirza's three-volume set which covered the first seven *arrondissements*. I wanted to get to know the 3rd and 4th districts, especially the old Jewish quarter. I took the *Métro* to the stop nearest to the Museum of Jewish Art and History on Rue de Temple in the 3rd. It is located in the 17th century Hotel de St. Aignon and its informative exhibits covering Jewish history and cultural life in France and Europe were well laid out over its many floors. After spending a few hours there, I headed to Rue des Rosiers which is still the true heart of the Jewish Parisian population. Due to the strong influx of North African Jews in the area, it was easier to get Middle Eastern dishes than the traditional Jewish fare I was used to eating. I stopped in the old synagogue as well as the centuries-old cemetery where gravestones were piled higgledy-piggledy one on top of another.

My journey through the 4th took me to the beautiful Place des Vosges, its large square surrounded by a colonnaded walkway where café tables beckoned. Inside the 17th

century buildings on the square Victor Hugo had an apartment, as did the Jewish actress Rachel. There was even a synagogue on the second floor in one of the buildings. It was hard to tear myself away to continue walking through the 4th, but it was worth it. I encountered a lovely formal garden at the historic Hotel de Sens and sumptuous displays of flowers tucked in front of mostly hidden homes.

2004: We book-ended our visit to Normandy and Bruges with two Paris visits, staying in the 12th and then in the 6th. Our hotel in the 12th was across from the Bois de Vincennes Park in a very working-class neighborhood—a very nice venue and much cheaper than ones we had stayed in previously. We didn't mind having to take the efficient *Métro* into the center of town to see museums and other sights; however, in the neighborhood we walked greater distances to find recommended restaurants for dinner.

Thus we moved to the 6th right near the elegant St. Sulpice Church for the last part of the visit. That location gave me a morning walk into the Luxembourg Gardens and up the Boulevard Saint Michel to Boulevard Saint Germain—the home of expensive shops and famous cafés where Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir used to hang out.

The antique shops of the Rue de Bac held my interest for hours until I reached the Musée d'Orsay for my fix of Monet and Renoir and Gauguin. Sometimes I would forget to eat, in spite of there being café after café filled with people on every street corner. For they were simply part of the wonderful sights to take in as I walked, and it was only

when my blood sugar dropped precipitously and made me dizzy that I remembered to eat lunch.

2006: Charlie was invited to give a talk at the XP Paris Conference—in French!

He had majored in French in school and taught it for awhile before I met him. He spoke fluently, but needed to brush up on technical vocabulary. We found the charming St. Louis Bastille Hotel in the Oberkampf district in the 10th for him to write undisturbed. With my handy Therese Vallois *Around and About Paris* book for that area and nearby environs, I explored the Canal St. Martin, the Bastille area, and the Belleville neighborhoods of Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier. Charlie and I learned more about life in Paris from friends of his living in the neighborhood.

After spending some time in Avignon, we were back in Paris, this time in the 6th again at the Hotel Odeon. Dining one evening at Le Polidor restaurant on Rue Monsieur le Prince, which we spotted in “Midnight in Paris,” a young Asian woman seated across from us at the long communal table introduced herself after hearing us speak English. From San Francisco, she was in Paris to act in a play called “The Immortal Heart,” based on *The Bonesetter’s Daughter* by Amy Tan. She invited us to come to the performance at a small theatre the next night in the 7th, and told us that Amy Tan would be at a cocktail party and book signing at the American Library afterwards. We loved the performance and we especially loved getting to meet Amy Tan who signed our book wishing us “joy and luck.”

Another memorable event on that trip was stepping off the curb about two blocks from our hotel and twisting my ankle. I am an expert ankle twister. I have done so jumping off our boat, in ordinary places like Seattle and Chicago, and more exotic places like Baška Voda, (now) Serbia, where they poured *slivovic* (plum brandy) over my ankle to reduce the swelling. For my sprained ankle in Negril, Jamaica, I decided that the Tia Maria was made for drinking rather than pouring. I limped back to our Paris hotel, but it was not long before I knew that a visit to the emergency room was going to be necessary. Getting around Paris by *Métro* and even by foot was easy; going in a taxi to the hospital seemed to take forever.

It is wonderful to be able to get medical care in a foreign country so easily. No money was required. It was helpful that we were able to speak French, although it didn't make the X-ray technician more gentle. The doctor was extremely informative and told Charlie exactly what kind of walking cast we would need to purchase so that I could make the trip back home easily. In addition to this contraption, still among my Paris souvenirs, he had to buy me some new shoes that I could wear with the cast. Luckily the accident came at the end of our trip.

2009: We changed how we want to stay in Paris. No more hotels, except for perhaps the briefest of stays. We rented an apartment for nine days in the 6th. This has become "our" neighborhood; we stayed there in 2007 briefly as well. The apartment was on Rue du Cherche Midi—a great location for buying groceries and anything that we

might need. It was well situated on a great *Métro* line, but I was able to get to all of my favorite places on foot. The living room was quite elegant, the kitchen very serviceable, and the bedroom extremely quiet and comfortable. The walk-up was only two flights of stairs, very easy to do multiple times during the day.

We found a Sunday outdoor market—replete with great French “fast food,” fresh fruit, vegetables and cheese, second-hand goods and books. It kept us busy the entire morning. If I didn’t have children and grandchildren, I would move to Paris. I never tire of walking the streets of the city—a feast for the senses always.

Beverly’s Trip

In June 2012 we came to Paris with our 21-year old granddaughter Beverly, arriving by Chunnel train from London. Our prior week had consisted of seeing four plays: Shakespeare’s “Henry V” at the Globe, Eugene O’Neill’s “Long Day’s Journey into Night,” the hilarious “Noises Off,” and ending with the absolutely thrilling “The Lion King.” We followed in the footsteps of Jane Austen’s heroines Catherine Moreland (*Northanger Abbey*) and Anne Eliot (*Persuasion*) in Bath, and partook in a sumptuous high tea at Harrod’s. The British Museum, Westminster Abbey, the London Eye, and a bit of Holmes and Hogwarts capped off a whirlwind week.

But now we had two weeks in beautiful Paris with its gorgeous old buildings lining both banks of the Seine. In London, when Beverly would admire an old building or a small curvy street or even the Thames, I found myself say-

ing, “Wait till you see Paris.” Now she understood what I meant. Every small street beckoned us to come explore; every neighborhood café seemed the perfect place for a *café crème* and hours of people-watching. The cafés were full to the brim. Everyone in Paris seemed to be eating out of doors in the nice weather.

Our two-bedroom apartment, which we had arranged before we left Seattle, was located in the 12th not far from the Bastille. The Faubourg St. Antoine had been the cradle of foment leading to the 1789 revolution. Throughout the 18th century this area of furniture and cabinet makers supplied all the courts and mansions of Europe. There are still students turning out Renaissance pieces at the École Boulle.

We were only a few blocks away from the Marché d’Ali-gré, a huge open-air market where you could purchase almost any kind of food as well as clothing and handicrafts. We often spent our mornings at a café overlooking the market where we sipped our *grande crèmes* and ate *croissants* or *tartines*.

On our first full day in the city, Charlie and Beverly took a huge walk from the 12th through the 4th to the 1st. However, most days we would take the *Métro* to the center of town and begin our sightseeing from there. We visited the main museums: the Louvre, the Musée d’Orsay, the Rodin. Beverly was wide-eyed at all the wonderful art that she had only seen in books. One of our favorite exhibitions was at the smaller Marmottan Museum in the 16th where the paintings of Berthe Morrissot, one of the few women in the

Impressionist circle, had been brought in from all over the world. Beverly was also attracted to the huge Monet canvases at the Orangerie which had just opened after being closed for many years for restoration.

In the Rue Cler area in the 7th we purchased food for a picnic, eating while sitting on a bench at the Champs de Mars, a large public greenspace with a view of the Eiffel Tower. When rain dampened our plans, we headed for shelter. We came across a joyful group of visiting singers from Britain in a gazebo in the middle of the park, keeping the crowd happy in the inclement weather.

Beverly wanted to visit the Catacombs. It was a first for Charlie and me. There are 170 miles of tunnels, caves, and catacombs that underlie large parts of Paris. They are essentially former quarries, dating back from Roman times, from which much of the stone was dug to build the city. Today visitors can take guided tours around a tightly restricted section, Les Catacombes, where the remains of up to 6,000,000 Parisians were transferred from overcrowded cemeteries in the late 1700s.

A lovely art fair entertained us in the 6th, after our walk from the Musée d'Orsay to St. Sulpice. We ate in the Polidor restaurant that Charlie and I had enjoyed so much on a past visit. Walking through the 5th, we stopped at the famous English-language bookshop Shakespeare and Company. Beverly's favorite area was Montmartre in the 9th. The dessert that we had no room for at dinner called to us at Berthillon on the Ile St. Louis, wonderful *gelato* in flavors

of *pain de gingembre* (gingerbread), *fraise de bois* (wild strawberry), and *figue* (fig).

Beverly was in love with all kinds of food in Paris and, although we had a kitchen in our apartment, we ate out quite a bit. We introduced her to some of our favorite dishes, like *magret de canard* (duck). But what Beverly absolutely adored was dessert. Especially something called “*dégustation de desserts*” which gave you three different ones to sample. We found a *salon de thé* (teahouse) in the 12th where we lived that served beautiful *pâtisseries*. We went to the famous Ladurée on the Champs Élysées to have *macarons*. At the Musée d’Orsay it was giant *éclairs*. Beverly was head over heels in love with a *moelleux au chocolat* at an Italian restaurant until she tasted my similarly made *mi cuit* another evening—a muffin-shaped ultra-moist chocolate cake with a soft “sunken” center served warm, its velvety molten dark chocolate flowing seductively onto one’s plate with the first taste.

We traveled to Versailles, visiting the Petit Triannon and the *hameau* or farm designed for Marie Antoinette, and taking in the incredible display of the many fountains scattered through the grounds. The last photographs of the trip were taken atop the Promenade Plantée, the world’s first elevated park built on an abandoned railway viaduct.

But the most memorable thing that we did during those two weeks was something uniquely Beverly. She loves to tango. She brought her slim skirt and high heels with her in the event we “might” come across a tango club. Charlie found something even better—a two-hour tango class that

she took from some masters followed by a tango show which we all went to.

Towards the end of the trip she thanked me for “the trip of a lifetime.” I told her she shouldn’t think of the trip that way, but rather she should regard it as the first of many, just as my Paris trip was in 1960. She surprised us the next year with a request: she wanted to study at a four-week drama workshop in the Loire Valley of France. We were able to help her achieve this and we were pleased to get her dispatches about her visits to Paris.

She was in Paris for the weekend before her class started. She navigated the *Métro* on her own easily and dealt with a problem regarding her hostel reservation. She stayed in Montmartre, her favorite area the year before. She went to the Pompidou Museum and became better acquainted with modern art. She wrote to us:

There is something awful liberating about wandering the city alone. I kind of like it. Plus, it has given me plenty of opportunity to work on my French. I got to be “the French speaker” when I met with friends of mine on the trains to Pontlevoy and I had a lovely conversation with a man on the train from St. Pierre des Corps to Montrichard.

After the workshop she was back in Paris with friends and delighted in being the knowledgeable one about Paris. She took them to Montmartre and they went inside the beautiful Sacre Coeur church, one of the most iconic monuments in Paris. They saw Notre Dame one night and the Moulin Rouge another. She took them to the Orangerie mu-

seum to see the Monets she liked so much the previous year. They visited Shakespeare and Company, the Pantheon, and the Bon Marché department store. She wrote:

And I want you to know that my friends also thought my inexhaustibility was odd, that I had too much energy. I was just excited to be in Paris!

She has clearly caught my Paris fever.

Izabel's Dream

Will Izabel get to Paris? I am certain that she will. Her desire to travel is many times stronger than my desire to travel was when I first heard the words of *Kon Tiki*. She now has four people in her family who have been to Paris plus her friend Montana who went with her parents. She had her mom print out pictures of the Eiffel Tower when she was in second grade and has been drawing Paris pictures herself since third grade. She has a plan to go there with Charlie and me, just as Beverly did.

Of course I would love to take her there, but I cannot see 10 years into the future. Perhaps we will need to do it before she turns 21; perhaps she will figure out how to get there on her own.

When I worried that memory loss might hamper my travel dreams, I thought about how to keep Paris alive for me. I thought about the music of Edith Piaf, especially her renditions of “La Vie en Rose,” “Milord,” and “Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien.” Like Piaf, I do not live with regret. I made choices, good and bad, with the knowledge I had at the time. Those choices have led me down a road blessed with

love and opportunities rather than a road full of heartache and things I did not get to do.

To keep my memories of Paris alive, I would love to see movies that celebrate Paris. “An American in Paris” starring Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron with the great ballet choreographed to George Gershwin’s music was my first. It reminds me of how important dance once was in my life. There are many great films as well as photographs of the many trips that I’ve taken there.

And then there is great food to evoke a memory of Paris. Crusty French bread and *pain au chocolat* that comprised so many wonderful breakfasts. And a really good *crème brûlée* for dessert.

Paris will always feel special to me because it was the first foreign city that I fell in love with, the first place I felt I was an adult. Because I have walked the streets of Paris on so many trips, I know it better in many ways than places I have lived. I have met people there with whom I share similar values. Alexandra Stoddard, author of numerous books on the art of living, says of Paris:

Many people have never been to Paris, and if they did go, it is possible they would not love it as much as we do. It is not important to go to Paris; Paris is symbolic. It is really about doing what is in your heart...Each of us has to find *our* Paris— a place we love that holds our hearts, where we feel comfortable and happy.

Paris holds my heart. *Je t'aime Paris*. I am grateful that Charlie shares my love for the city, and how wonderful it becomes that happy place for my two granddaughters.

Epilogue

HOME

I should... like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home.

—WILLIAM HAZLITT

Two lives—that’s what I need! The call of the world and the comforts of home compete in my heart.

Marguerite Manteau-Rao states in “Living with Alzheimer’s, Looking for a Home” that “home” is not just a physical space, but an emotional experience which transcends culture, gender, age, and race. For a person with dementia, “home” must satisfy seven needs: safety, familiarity, comfort, freedom, closeness, identity, and domesticity. All of us, not just those with dementia, have a need for all or most of these. Home is a place of refuge from the outside world, a reassurance of predictability—where we can find our old slippers and be ourselves.

Charlie and I live in a small house in the middle of the woods in rural Kitsap County near the town of Poulsbo. Rabbits, deer, woodpeckers, and occasionally a bear visit our property. We love the area we live in and even if we were to downsize again we would likely choose to remain on this side of Puget Sound. We can see the beautiful

Olympic Mountains on a clear day when we drive into town. Our grocery store, Central Market, has organic produce from local farms and a fresh fish market of the kind you usually see only in big cities. You will find me there on most Wednesdays—along with my friends from the memory loss group I cannot leave—partaking from the soup bar which has over a dozen different soups, the salad bar, or the hot meals section.

We live quietly but with connection to others. In retirement I have found it easier to feel "grounded" or have balance in the way I imagined the graceful African women of Guinea went through life. As a single mother working full-time at a stressful occupation, I was happy just to make it through the day. Yoga and meditation often helped me find my center in the past. My life is easier now because I understand more about my physical and emotional needs and act accordingly.

Charlie heads up a large, international open-source software project and has a hand in organizing a number of conferences in his field. I continue to do some volunteer work with Kitsap Legal Services and with the Alzheimer's Association.

Home is where I lend my voice by signing petitions and writing letters to Congress about universal health care, global warming, women's reproductive rights, a living wage, gun control—many of my opinions influenced by my travels to other countries.

Home is where I try to find an end to my chronic migraine headaches, a genetic trait on my mother's side of the

family. Many of the stressors for people with dementia also apply to migraineurs, so I try to heed the lessons learned.

Home is where Charlie and I fire up our imaginations to make plans for the next fantastic trip. This past summer we spent ten weeks in Italy, riding around in a tiny Fiat visiting the mountains, lakes, beaches, and small towns. A highlight of our trip was being in Siena at *Palio* time, watching the parade and horse race from a spot we shared with 50,000 people.

Home is where all my grandchildren learned to cook, taking pride in preparing food for others; where they spent many school vacations and would sit on the porch glider with me before going home, recalling all the wonderful times we had.

Nurturing meaningful relationships is the most important aspect of my life at home. Here is where I am active as a daughter, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend. My mother Sylvia is still bringing us joy—she lives in an assisted living facility in Albuquerque near my brother Rick. We recently celebrated her 99th birthday. This amazing woman gave me her love and my wings to venture out into the world. I am forever grateful to her.

I try to see my brothers and their families more often as well as Charlie's sister and her family in California. I am an aunt to a large number of nieces and nephews and have joined Facebook to keep up with their exploits and thinking. And I am still connected with many of my cousins that I grew up with at my grandparents' home in the Catskills;

we have wonderful reminiscences about those days whenever we are together.

I am in touch with old friends. My best friend of 50+ years lives in Oregon and we telephone, email, and get together at one of our homes or midway at a hotel several times a year. I try to have lunch or dinner periodically with my former housemates and close friends from law school that I have known for over 40 years. Recently six of us from my law school consciousness-raising group met to catch up on each other's lives. My years in the Access to Justice Community have produced wonderful relationships from which I continue to derive great pleasure.

And then there is “my” family—my children and my grandchildren—that are the most special people in the world to me. It has been a joy to watch my children become the wonderful persons that they are. I have always loved Khalil Gibran's “On Children” from *The Prophet*, never trying to make them in my image, believing that “their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.” They are unique.

Our younger Michael, his wife Melanie, and 13-year-old daughter Izabel live 20–25 minutes from our house. Izabel spends many weekends with us and it has been a thrill to watch her grow up. Michael is a cook in a local restaurant, but his passion is music. His band, Black Beat Blue, has cut an album and is gaining popularity.

Our son John indulges his passion for gaming outside of work. He and his wife Kim have worked hard to provide a good life for their two children, Beverly (age 24) and Kyle

(age 21). Beverly graduated from the University of Washington with a Bachelor of Arts degree in drama and psychology. She lives with her boyfriend Mike, who my family calls "Sparky" because two Mikes in our family are confusing enough. My grandson Kyle is a sweetheart and very creative. He is just at the beginning of finding his passion.

Our older Michael is an internationally-known game designer, puzzle constructor, and author. His wife Evon, who works in the retail business, assists him in many ways in running his collective, Lone Shark Games. Aside from designing games, the studio puts on exciting puzzle hunts for local corporations and nonprofit organizations in the greater Seattle area.

Marie has her own accounting firm in Seattle. One of her clients is her brother's gaming company for which she is the Chief Operating Officer. She also assists nonprofit groups with her talents.

Thanksgiving at my house is one of my favorite times. All my children and grandchildren have gathered at our home each year, with the exception of the years my mother turned 90 and 95 and we all celebrated Thanksgiving with her in Florida. Charlie makes his delicious egg nog. I enjoy preparing the huge dinner and gazing at everyone seated around our large dining room table and the spare folding table we bring up from the basement. We sit down to a traditional meal of roast turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, gravy, sweet potatoes, glazed carrots, green beans, and Brussels sprouts. Most of my children and grandchildren play board games or card games that we

have in the house or ones they bring from home. Dessert usually includes several pies and cakes, as we usually are celebrating a few November birthdays. It is a time when I feel immense gratitude for all of my blessings.

There is no doubt that I love that my granddaughters are crazy about Paris and have a great desire to travel. It has been said that every journey has two parallel experiences: the external, in which we see our interconnectedness with the world around us, and the internal, in which we visit new places within ourselves. I certainly believe that my travels have been more than a list of countries I can check off; they have helped to shape who I am.

I know my grandchildren must create their own dreams. I also know the lessons I've learned in life will help them achieve compassion and fulfillment, no matter their dreams. Here are the important messages I have for them:

Curiosity—Live life with your eyes and your mind open. There is something to learn from every person that you meet. Make learning a lifelong practice rather than something you do/did in school as a child. Roald Dahl said, “Watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places.”

Authenticity and Integrity—Listen to your inner voice. Seek out that which makes you feel deeply alive and say no to that which is not serving you. Be honest and transparent. Mother Theresa said, “Honesty and transparency make you vulnerable. Be honest and transparent anyway.”

Gratitude and Appreciation—Focus on the abundance in your life, not the lack. Count your rainbows rather than your thundershowers. A.A. Milne said, “Piglet noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude.”

Compassion—Listen more than you speak. Be empathetic to the suffering of others. Practice kindness towards others and to yourself. It will make you healthier. The Dalai Lama said, “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.”

Generosity—Cultivate the habit of giving without expecting anything in return. Give your time, your talents, or other resources to those in need or to those who serve them. Winston Churchill said, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

Courage—Everyone’s life has its share of struggles: in education, in work, in relationships, in health. If you can find the courage to plod on despite the challenges, it is possible to grow in wisdom and find joy. Nelson Mandela said, “I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

Community and Connection—Family love is not always enough to get you through times of transition, crisis, and change. Cultivate friendships. Work cooperatively with other people to meet your goals. John Lennon said, “A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality.”

I dreamt about being married and having four children. I dreamt about traveling the world. I dreamt about being an attorney and helping people find justice. As a child I could not foresee how all of these dreams would fit together to form a life. Indeed for many years as an adult, it didn't seem possible.

In reflection, I can see that my life has embraced both perseverance—staying with one thing and working hard to be good at it—and stretching myself with new learning. I have embraced passion in my life and nurtured my soul. I am still a planner, with my calendars and spiral notebooks, but I have grown comfortable with having little or no pre-planned itinerary in my travels, and being spontaneous. I am mindful that many things in life happen in spite of me. And I recognize that all of my dreams have become a reality because I enlisted the help of partners in my journeys through life.

It is my dream now that my future will enable me to see all my grandchildren, the ones here now and the ones to come, sprouting their own wings, moving down pathways to living their own dreams, and taking journeys of their own.