

Fa11 1983



AIDS Support Group

# **SHANTI Responds to Crisis**

In the growing awareness of the AIDS epidemic, the Shanti Project has become a significant resource for those coping with these diseases. Working closely with numerous local and regional agencies, Shanti provides support, through education and counseling, for those facing life-threatening illness and bereavement.

#### HISTORY:

Clinical Psychologist Charles Garfield founded the Shanti Project in 1974. In less than a decade, Shanti has become a model for volunteer counseling agencies.

Largely funded by private foundations, Shanti soon increased its outreach. In November of 1981, Shanti initiated the first AIDS support group. At the same time, the Project began to recruit "gay sensitive" and "gay identified" counselors. Shanti sponsors several AIDS support groups, two for persons with AIDS, a group for lovers, family, and friends of persons with AIDS, and a chronic health crisis group for persons with AIDS symptoms.

The Shanti Project relocated to the Pride Center in San

Francisco in September 1982. With the growing demand through the Bay Area for volunteer counselors, the Project has expanded its outreach efforts to meet this critical need.

Although not all volunteers have a counseling background, without exception they are individuals willing to explore their own feelings about grief, death, and dying. More importantly, they are able to put aside their own issues while with clients, honoring the clients' needs and beliefs and offering emotional support. In addition to working with persons with AIDS, volunteers assist people with life-threatening illnesses and those who are experiencing the loss of a loved one.

Due to the AIDS epidemic, Shanti has conducted several emergency training sessions in addition to the regularly scheduled ones. The July training was highly successful, and another will be held in September. Volunteers make a one year commitment to the Project, often working more than the required minimum of eight hours weekly. (A detailed article on the application and training process for Shanti counselors appears on Page 6.) cont. Page 3

# ECLIPSE The Shanti Project Newsletter

Published by the Shanti Project for the friends, volunteers and staff of the Shanti Project, 890 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 558-9644. Shanti Project is a contract agency San Francisco Department of Public Health.

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## Fall 1983 Newsletter

Managing Editors:

Jan Boddie, Carol Tocher, Jim
Geary

Contributing Writers:

Jeremy Landau, Leland Moss, Monica Greene, Jan Boddie, Bill Shear, Gary Lee, Nancy Kaye

Photography:

Droux Photo

Graphics:

John Miller

Typing:

Andrew Lewallen, Janet Tressel, Ed Wolf

Distribution:

Rob Grantham and other volunteers Special Thanks:

Matthew Holtz for donating word processing services (telephone: TULIP-31).

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Shanti is a Sanskrit word meaning "inner peace."

The Shanti Project logo is an eclipse, a circle within a square. The circle portrays the inner world of the mind. The square conveys the solid reality of earth and body. United, they indicate the wholeness of the human being.

An eclipse is the passage from light to darkness and the return to light. For the Shanti Project, it represents the changes brought about by illness and death, the darkness that can fall upon people experiencing these events, and the light that can follow in the wake of helpers who bring love and caring.

Denny Thompson, Coming Attractions Communication Service, created the logo.

# DYING: A Part of Living

Some time ago, two Shanti clients, who participate in a Shanti support group for persons with AIDS, were interviewed about their disease by Monica Greene, a Shanti volunteer. Monica commented on the willingness of these young men to speak openly and honestly about their feelings that dying is a part of living. Following are some excerpts from her conversations with Chuck Morris and Bobby Reynolds:

#### CHUCK:

I contacted Shanti out of desperation. No place left to run. My God, now what am I to do? Is there any way I'm supposed to act? I realized I couldn't do it alone. I was looking for a personal miracle, a rescuer, a saviour. My emotional needs have been met through Shanti. The support group has been most valuable. I've been made aware of strengths I didn't know I had. You don't have to pretend in the group; you can be honest. Since everyone has been there, it doesn't take much time to communicate; everyone knows exactly where you are. When I was freaking out and didn't know why, I only had to say a few words and everyone understood. Almost everyone new in the group says they're confused, but someone who doesn't have AIDS could not know the extent of this confusion. It's overwhelming. It's devastating. It's so disorienting. Sometimes it seems like I've lived this way forever ...

Suicide is not really a viable alternative. I keep looking to see what's around the corner. My philosophy is a "meant-to-be" sort of thing: meant to be that I'm sick; meant to be that I joined Shanti. Somewhere down the line I'll be a better person. I'm here for a reason. I have to do the best with what I have for as long as I can. Different people keep going for different reasons. I would like to feel that I will leave having accomplished something. I used to see someone going through something painful and think I'd not be able to deal with that if those things happened to me. But here I am, dealing with those things.

#### BORRY .

Communication between the medical profession and persons with AIDS is a big problem. Trying to get information from the medical profession

is difficult. The sensitivity of doctors is often lacking. Many doctors are not trained to talk openly with patients about lifethreatening illnesses.

I can't think of anything in my life that is the same. You can't come through something like this without being profoundly affected. I'm more emotionally dependent on people than I ever was and a lot more honest. My perspective on a lot of things in life has changed. I'm more aware of health now; I get more rest, eat more sensibly; I am aware of my body's needs and the changes necessary because of my lowered resistance.

I'm more peaceful with myself than I've ever been. I've stopped going to work. I take more vitamins and seek more quiet moments. I think about God more. I use visualization. I try to show people that I care with a hug or a touch, a phone call, a card to let them know I'm thinking of them. I'm doing more interviews and working at giving facts to people to minimize AIDS hysteria. I'm more willing to talk about my feelings. My relationship with my lover has deepened and strengthened. It's nice to know how many people care. People in the support group have become better friends to me than some people I've known for years. I don't brood about those friends who find it hard to call. I can sort of understand where they're coming from. It's a fearful thing, this disease.

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CRISIS cont.

#### VOLUNTEER TRAINING:

The Shanti Project maintains a high standard of excellence in training volunteer counselors. For two successive weekends, 30 to 40 participants receive an intensive 40 hour training. The staff provides close and caring supervision. "These training sessions have a unique dynamic which is life-changing for new as well as experienced counselors," asserts Jim Geary, Executive Director.

#### FUNDING:

The Shanti Project receives funding in a variety of ways. Donations and funding from private foundations, much greater in the past, constitute only a portion of current expenses. Newly acquired contracts with the City and County of San Francisco are presently Shanti's main source of income.

The initial contract, approved in October 1982, supports operation expenses of the Project, including position of Executive Director and Office Manager. The city granted substantial funding for the Shanti AIDS Residence Program to provide housing for displaced persons with AIDS.

The City has also awarded a contract to Shanti for a Director of Community Volunteers. In this newest program, Shanti will train volunteers to assist persons with AIDS who have practical needs such as transportation, shopping, or help with errands.



Shanti Director meets with Mayor for AIDS Funding

With additional grants from the City, Shanti has established two part-time Volunteer Coordinator positions. Furthermore, the Project is now able to provide San Francisco General Hospital with inpatient counseling for persons with AIDS. (Articles about Shanti's staff and programs appear on Pages 6 & 7).

The Shanti Project receives contributions from private donors and concerned organizations and businesses.

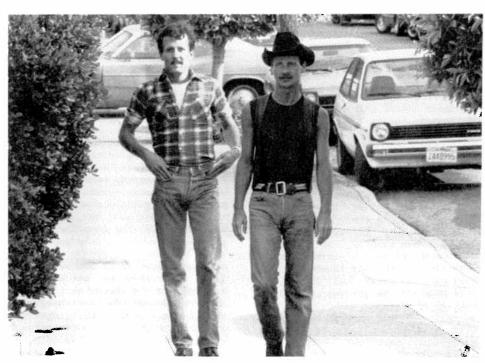
A major fundraising campaign, the AIDS Fund Emergency Sweepstakes, is currently underway to provide support services for persons with AIDS and to assist in needed research. (For details, see Page 5.)

Although funding is considerable, Director Jim Geary makes it clear that the needs are greater: "The funding we have received due to increased outreach in response to the AIDS crisis is seen as necessary to fulfill only the basic mandates of our work. There is a minimum nofrills staffing at the Shanti for reaching over Project persons with AIDS and over family lovers." friends, members, and

#### SHANTI'S COMMITMENT:

"The heart of the Shanti Project has always been and continues to be the relationship between clients and counselors. Despite the recent increase in staff and the demand for funding, we continue to train and maintain excellence in volunteer services," says Jim Geary. "I feel that Shanti Project has maintained the essence which has always made it outstanding in meeting community needs as a model volunteer services agency. That essence remains the one-to-one relationship between volunteer and client."

Shanti remains committed to all levels of support services for persons with AIDS and other lifethreatening illnesses, and for persons who are grieving the loss of a loved one.



Volunteer Counselor with AIDS Client



Volunteer Counselor with Grieving Client

## **Poetry**

Gary Lee, a published poet, was a Shanti volunteer counselor for the last year. His professional name, below, means "truth seeker."

### NIGHTMARES

I am often misled by familiar shadows that bring me to the darkest edge Nightmares without a memory faceless bodies calling out from a fiery altar A glimpse of death exchanged for water A child asleep inside my mother's mouth full of smoke and kisses

I bleed watching the ashes of my father's words pull me into winter's arms Retreat, holding sorrow deep inside my eyes Why must I always wait in places only he remembers When I, too, have visions

Shanti volunteer during the final year of her life. This was written six months after she was diagnosed with cancer and is the only poem she ever wrote. On May 29, 1983, Nancy died.

Nancy was a Shanti client and a

Wrapped in pure clarity while the universe hung suspended.

Time Space Matter

Hovering on the edge of movement. Breath held beyond endurance waiting for absorption.

Barren anguish
pierced my soul.
Gripping the sides of reality
Mauled
Violated
I'm raped
Plunged into an abyss of terror
Not knowing
shattered against my being.

Wailing
Writhing
I turned
I turned inward
I turned to my bed
I turned to the wall.

Sweet G\_d
Cover me.
Hold me.
Save me.
Nourish me.
Strengthen me.
Give me life

I HAVE CANCER

-Nancy Kaye 17 JUNE 1982

## **Imaging**

Dis-ease, whether caused by physical illness, grief from the loss of a loved one, or some other form of stress, often manifests as tension, fatigue, restlessness, headaches, or other pains. Many people are able to alleviate these symptoms through relaxation and visualization exercises. The following is an imaging technique which can be done alone or with a guide.

Begin by becoming settled in a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Take a deep breath, and as you inhale, sense the life force of the universe flowing through your body, penetrating every cell. As you exhale, begin to let go of any tightness, any tension, any holding in your body. Continue this for several minutes, focusing on your breath, the inhale and the exhale.

As your body becomes more relaxed, fewer thoughts interfere with the process. If you find yourself distracted, be gentle with yourself. Your awareness of the distractions allows you the choice to let them go and again place your attention on your breathing.

Pace yourself. You are in control. When your body feels a little softer, when your mind becomes more quiet, notice the place in your body that is behind your navel. Imagine a gold dot in that space and let it expand into your personal inner gold sun. Let it be as large or as small as is comfortable for you. Stay with that image, and at your own pace, begin to sense the warm rays from your sun reaching out in all directions throughout your body. Let yourself feel its gentle healing as it melts any tightness, dissolves any pain.

Some people sense a dark color at the points of pain, and as the golden rays penetrate those areas, they become lighter while simultaneously diminishing the pain. Those who have felt restless become relaxed, sometimes falling asleep during this imagery exercise. Others feel the fatigue leaving and become more energized. It is a very personal experience, with the results corresponding to your purpose for using it.

You can do the exercise for five minutes or twenty. It's your decision. You can end it by seeing the sun contract. Let it become a dot of gold that you allow to disappear, knowing you can recreate it another time. Focus on your breathing again for a moment, and gently open your eyes. You might want to stretch.

If the image of the sun is not a comfortable one for you, relax, and let your non-ego state present the image which will be most healing.

## AIDS

## **Sweepstakes**

The AIDS Fund Emergency Sweepstakes is a campaign of Shanti Project designed to help persons with AIDS and to fight the AIDS epidemic. One goal is to raise \$150,000 to provide support services, such as individual and group counseling, training and supervision of additional volunteer counselors, residential facilities for displaced persons with AIDS. This money will be divided between Shanti Project in San Francisco and a similar service in the Los Angeles area. Additional proceeds will support AIDS medical research.

About the time Mark Feldman was diagnosed with AIDS, he and his close friend and business partner, Bill Shear, began formulating the idea of a major fundraiser for Shanti Project in response to the AIDS crisis. Mark had been active with Bill in similar public relations activities for many years. They started a continuing education program for New College, where Mark became the Director of Admissions. Since Mark's death on June 2nd, 1983, Bill, along with Stephen Tripp, Mark's Shanti volunteer, have dedicated themselves to making this a truly successful fundraising campaign.

The co-chairs of the AIDS Fund Emergency Sweepstakes are Mike Hennessey, Sheriff of San Francisco; Elizabeth Gatov, former Treasurer of the U.S.; Dick Collier, owner of the U.S.; Dick Collier, owner of and Sherman Williamson, M.D., President of the Southern California Physicians for Human Rights. A number of community groups are promoting this statewide campaign: the Lesbian/Gay Community Center in Orange County, the AIDS/KS Foundation in Sacramento, the Mariposa Foundation, Human Rights Foundation, Universal Federation of Metropolitan Community Churches and others.

Tickets can be obtained at the Shanti Project AIDS Sweepstakes Office; a tax deductible donation of \$10 is requested. Major prizes include \$25,000 in cash; a Kawai Console piano valued at \$4,000, donated by Russel Kassman Pianos in honor of Mark Feldman; a sailing weekend for two from Los Angeles to Catalina Island on a 60' ketch; a \$1,000 gift certificate for a trip of your choice; a case of 1970 Special Selection Cabernet Sauvignon wine valued at more than \$400 (donated by Shanti board member and volunteer counselor Carol Tocher). Other prizes will be announced. The drawing will be held on October 15th at Trocadero Transfer. Winners need not be present.

Sweepstakes tickets will be distributed through direct mail



solicitation. Everyone is invited to send a mailing list of potential donors to the Sweepstakes office. Consider enclosing copies of a personal note in support of the Sweepstakes. The Sweepstakes staff will mail tickets, return envelopes, and your personal notes to all the people on your list. The office is located at 890 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.

If you would like to participate as a volunteer in this fundraising campaign to fight AIDS, call Stephen at (415) 558-9625.

## **Board of Directors**

The management of the Shanti Project is the responsibility of its Board of Directors. The Board President and members all volunteer their services in securing adequate funding, overseeing Shanti's administrative and financial functionings, establishing community contacts, and assuming responsibility for the Project's direction.

Each member is elected to a three-year term following a three-meeting trial period as a Board Member Elect. This process provides a mutual period of assessment for potential new members and current board members. Currently, there are nine members of the Board of Directors, with Sam Mills of Orinda, California, serving as President.

Other Board Members Include:

Bill Bradley, marketing consultant, who is Acting Secretary/Treasurer and is responsible for Public Relations:

#### Shanti's Board of Directors

Carol Tocher, counselor and teacher, who chairs the Community Outreach Committee and is responsible for the Speaker's Bureau;

Dr. Steve Mehalko, a San Francisco physician in private practice;

Bobby Reynolds, a person with AIDS who serves as the Persons with AIDS Coordinator for Shanti;

Dr. Charles Garfield, clinical psychologist and founder of the Shanti Project;

George Tuttle, attorney at law with the firm of Brobeck, Phleger and Harrison;

Gary Walsh, a counselor and a person with AIDS who is active in the community;

Auna Preston, counselor and Ph.D. candidate who helps coordinate special fundraising events.

Members are chosen on the basis of particular skills needed. Seats on the Board of Directors are open to former and current Shanti volunteers and clients, and also to interested and active members of the community. All members of Shanti's Board of Directors are available and interested in your input. People who are interested and willing to commit themselves to a working Board of Directors should submit a letter outlining experience and skills that might be useful to Shanti. Letter should be sent to:

Sam Mills c/o Shanti Project 890 Hayes San Francisco, CA 94117



Weekly Support Groups converge for Monthly Meeting

## **Becoming a Volunteer Counselor**

When you make your first call, a Shanti staff member will briefly explain the volunteer process and will mail an application to those interested in becoming volunteers. All volunteers must serve at least eight hours a week for a minimum of one year.

The application provides a vehicle for self-examination. Applicants answer a few factual questions and respond in essay form to others. Most would-be volunteers find this application process helpful in defining their commitment to this special work.

After the application has been reviewed, an interview appointment is usually scheduled. Experienced Shanti counselors facilitate this interview in a group situation.

After an interview of about  $l_{\frac{1}{2}}^{\frac{1}{2}}$ hours, facilitators give feedback to applicants and inform them of their suitability for the Project. Those who are not accepted into training program for counselors are often invited to participate in other ways, such as being an office volunteer or helping clients with services non-counseling direct the Community Volunteer through program.

People who have been invited to participate in the training have two long weekends ahead, filled with a well-organized series of experiences exploring their responses to illness, survival, death, and grief. Members of the health professions share areas of special expertise

such as AIDS or hospice work or working with children. Potluck lunches provide an opportunity for participants to socialize and process their experiences in a more informal setting. Most of those who complete the training eventually become volunteer counselors.

Soon after training is complete, volunteers are matched with clients by the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers attempt to make contact within 48 hours.

Client-volunteer relationships take many forms, and it is impossible to predict how much time a volunteer will spend with any client. A volunteer with three clients might spend less time in active counseling than another with only one. In many instances, a close bond forms between client and volunteer, with each person learning and growing.

Each volunteer meets on every Monday evening in a small support group. Experienced counselors serve as group leaders and supervisors who provide essential support for volunteers. These meetings are mandatory.

Training does not end once one becomes a counselor. Shanti offers inservice training for all volunteers throughout the year. Trainings focus on specific issues of interest and concern.

Although the commitment required is great and the work with clients often difficult, volunteers value the rewards and meaning derived from this work.

## SHANTI Staff

The Shanti Project has grown quickly into an organization that demands a larger professional staff. With the help of city funding several people have been hired to oversee both ongoing and new programs:

JIM GEARY, Executive Director for the past 18 months, is responsible for the fiscal management of Shanti, community and media outreach, volunteer counselor training and facilitation of weekly groups for people with AIDS. An interview with Jim appears on Page 7.

RANDY CHELSEY is the new Community Volunteer Director. She trains and coordinates the Friends of Shanti who provide non-counseling direct services to clients. A psychotherapist with a small private practice, Randy has been a volunteer counselor for a year.

FLO ELYON, Volunteer Coordinator, matches clients with volunteers and shares with Rik the supervision of support groups and counselors. Flo's first association with Shanti was as a client. She became a volunteer counselor in November 1981. Flo's other work includes massage visualization and stress reduction techniques. Both Flo and Rik's positions are currently funded as half time positions. Our hope is with increasing donations we will be able to have two full-time positions.

RIK ISENSEE serves as Clinical Supervisor and provides crisis intervention and makes further professional referrals when necessary. In cooperation with the Volunteer Coordinator, he supervises support groups and participates in training and supervising volunteer counselors.

ANDREW LEWALLEN has recently assumed the responsibilities of Office Manager. He channels all incoming calls, prepares monthly volunteer memos, maintains office security, and supervises office volunteers. Andrew co-facilitates a support group for persons with chronic illness who fear development of AIDS in addition to serving as a volunteer counselor and group leader.

JESS RANDALL, newly appointed Administrative Assistant/Financial Manager, comes from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years of service with the Institute for Food and Development Policy, where the budget grew from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000 under his management. His duties include keeping account of Shanti's city contracts, assisting the Executive Director with budgets and supervising all financial transactions and reports.

Other Shanti staff members, Helen, Linda, Ed, Jan, and Jeremy, are introduced in the articles on Page 7.

## **Director Speaks**

Executive Director Jim Geary joined Shanti as a volunteer more than 5 years ago, after eight years experience in crisis intervention and work with the dying and the bereaved. Jim has a warm laugh and an animated face which readily reflect his inner thoughts and feelings. The meaning of his work with Shanti came through in the following statements excerpted from an interview.

"It's hard to open oneself to what is, because to do so, we feel the pain within another. And yet, by opening and feeling, the more fully we can respond with an appropriate degree of empathy and compassion. To find I can be there with someone is not always easy, but it is possible.

"My experience of living and my experience with Shanti are one. Dying is all around us, as is joy and suffering. I cannot escape, nor do I wish to, that reality in my work and in my life. My goal is to resist holding back, to live each moment as fully as I can.

"In each moment we surrender to death, for each moment could be our last. Life is a constant process of letting go and becoming more. People ask: "How can you let go and become more?" For me, it is letting go of the limited way in which I see myself, the safe ways in which I operate. Letting go of both the pains and joys of life allow me to experience each moment as richly and honestly as I can.

"This work has made me easier on myself, more loving and tender with myself. I value others and myself much more by seeing the threads that connect us all. People want to love and people want to be loved; for me, it's as simple as that.

"In terms of Shanti's direction,
I see its ripples extending far and
wide. I see the Project as one of
the necessary organizations working

to transform this land into a world of no barriers."

## **AIDS Residence**

"Twenty of us with AIDS are living around town in transient hotels with minimum financial subsistence because our landlords and roommates think we're pariahs," related one member of an AIDS support group.

"The situation is no longer unusual," said Helen Schietinger, newly appointed Director of Shanti Project's AIDS Residence Program. "Our community is slow in learning that persons with AIDS—lovely, vital people—are not casually contagious nor unhealthy to live with. The AIDS Residence Program is providing a solution to this serious community problem."

Helen Schietinger comes to Shanti Project from her position as Nurse Coordinator for the U.C.S.F. Kaposi's Sarcoma Clinic. Helen was also Co-Chair of the Second Annual National AIDS Forum which was held in Denver recently. Her administrative expertise, counseling background and experience in working with the AIDS crisis have proven invaluable in coordinating this new outreach project.

Emergency housing will continue to be provided by the AIDS/KS Foundation and the City, while Shanti's AIDS Residence Program is geared to providing long-term, low-cost housing.

For the most part, residents will be self-governing in order to create as homelike an atmosphere as possible. Residents make some group household decisions while maintaining supportive contact with Shanti.

The first two residences opened on July 15, 1983. Despite this progress, however, Helen warns us, "We must remember that the Residence Program is necessary because of community hysteria. Our greater need is to educate people so that persons with AIDS are not further isolated by community rejection."

## AIDS Unit at SFGH

Shanti Project has received funding from the City of San Francisco to contract with San Francisco General Hospital for AIDS inpatient counseling. Linda Maxey, R.N., a Shanti volunteer and board member for the past year and a half, is serving as Counseling Coordinator of this program.

"We hope to increase the quality of care given to AIDS patients. Right now many hospital staff members are fearful of working with these patients." This new program will offer support and education to hospital staff, hopefully alleviating their fears. The Shanti staff has been chosen on the basis of their expertise, sensitivity and skill in working with AIDS patients.

Two part-time counselors will be working with Linda, Ed Brophy and Jan Boddie, both of whom are Shanti volunteers with professional counseling background.

The program started in August 1983. The three-member team will provide psychological support seven days a week through individual and group counseling with patients, their families and loved ones.

In addition to these services to inpatients at SFGH, another Shanti volunteer, Jeremy Landau, works at the AIDS outpatient clinic at SFGH. Jeremy, a professional counselor and minister, provides counseling for newly diagnosed patients and persons with AIDS awaiting weekly chemotherapy or interferon treatments.

The Shanti Project, a volunteer-based organization, welcomes financial contributions from those who appreciate our efforts and want to help. Please send your tax-deductible donation to the Shanti Project, 890 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94117.						
☐ I would like to support ☐ \$15.00	the Shanti Project w	ith a donation of	□ \$100.00	☐ Other \$		
☐ I am interested in beco	ming a volunteer					
☐ The enclosed is a Mem	orial Gift from					
IN MEMORY OF  □ Please notify the family members at the address below:						
NamePhone						
Street						
City			State	Zip		
☐ I have moved; my new a	address is:			41V		
Name				Phone		
Street				1 110110		
City			State			

Daniel McTague 2480 Washington St 406 San Francisco CA 94115 Volunteer Counseling for Persons Facing Life-Threatening Illness and Bereavement



## Shanti Project

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890 Hayes Street San Francisco, California 94117 (415) 558-9644

## Meeting Community Needs

Another major aspect of work is providing community education.

Shanti Project speakers bureau has provided over two hundred specialized presentations in the past six months. Participants in these sessions include Chief Administrator Roger Boas, city departmental heads, numerous Department of Public Health workers, including 600 social service workers, employees of San Francisco General Hospital and other City health center workers.

Shanti played a major role in the Mayor's AIDS symposium in May. Shanti has also held two well-attended trainings for therapists and another for the clergy.

Shanti has responded to requests from other cities and conducted successful trainings in Sacramento and has been asked to provide training for new organizations in Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, and Houston.

## **Announcement**

SHANTI TRAINING

for Volunteer Counselors

November 11, 12, 13, 18,19, 20

For details and application, phone the Shanti Project at 558-9644.

## SHANTI Client Groups

The Shanti Project currently facilitates four Support Groups which meet weekly:

Wednesday 7-9 p.m. for persons with diagnosed AIDS, led by Bill Bradley and Jim Geary.

Wednesday 7-9 p.m. for lovers, friends and families of those with AIDS, led by Rob Grantham and Tina Murch.

Thursday 7-9 p.m. for persons with chronic AIDS symptoms who fear development of AIDS, led by Andrew Lewallen and Jim Tate.

Friday 11 a.m. -1 p.m. for those with diagnosed AIDS, led by Jim Geary and Don Briggs.