



SHANTI PROJECT

890 Hayes Street • San Francisco, California 94117 • 558-9644

Support Services for People with AIDS and Their Loved Ones

February 25, 1986

Dear Friend,

You can make the quality of life for people with AIDS more meaningful. Your financial support in the past gave Shanti Project the means to provide emotional, practical and residential support for countless people with AIDS, their families and loved ones.

Without your support, the picture is bleak...

Without your support, it will be difficult to train needed volunteers...

Without your support, the possibility of a waiting list for services is foreseen for the first time in the history of Shanti...

Please let us hear from you. These are not the times when we want to lose contact with dear friends. More than ever, so many need affection, not rejection.

Our records indicate that the last financial contribution we received from you was prior to 1985. The Project spends \$2.10 a year to send you four newsletters, four donor letters, and to maintain your name on our mailing list. Your \$10.00 contribution will let us know you are reading our newsletter and that you want to stay in contact with us. We've been on such a journey together, and we want to know you are still with us.

If our records are inaccurate and you have contributed in 1985, please indicate that on the Donor Card and return it. Also, if you are experiencing financial hardship, but would like to continue to receive our newsletter, please indicate your interest on the Donor Card and return it. If we do not hear from you in eight weeks, we will be faced with the decision of removing your name from our mailing list. Thank you for the contributions you have made, they have enabled Shanti Project to provide vital services.

I love you,

Jim Geary
Executive Director

JG:es



ECLIPSE™

The Shanti Project Newsletter

Summer, 1985

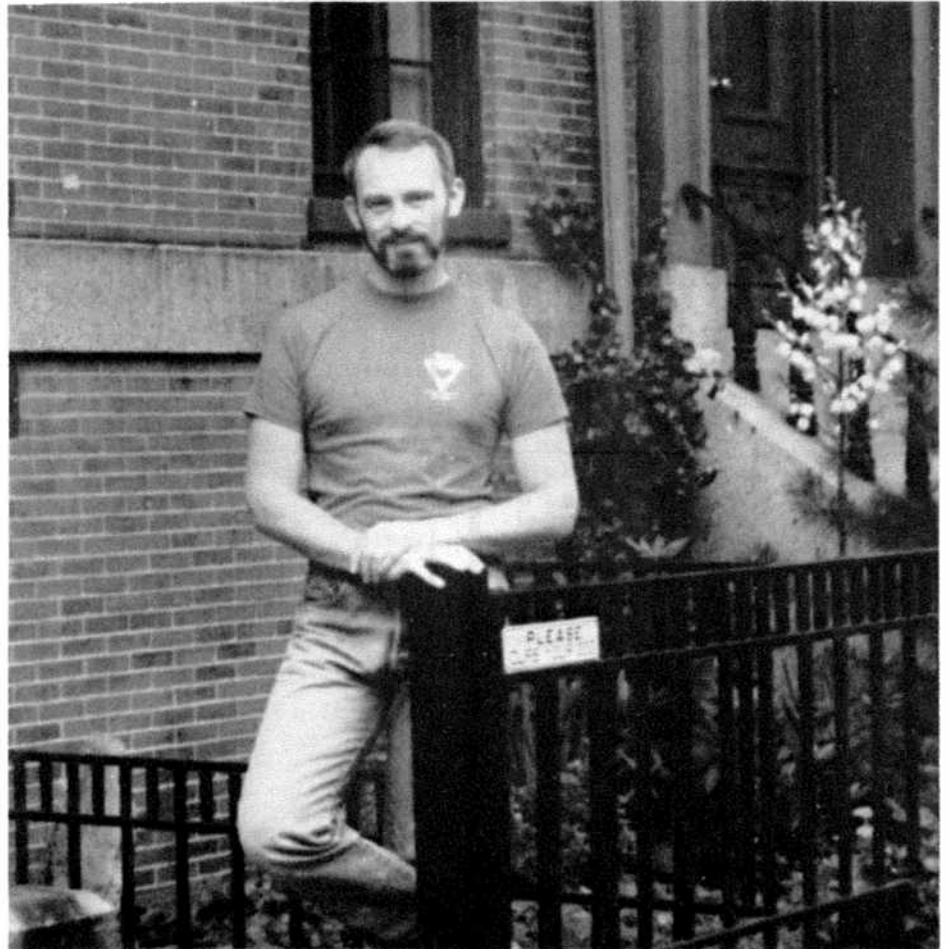
Gentle Brother, Gentle Friend

By Jim Geary

It was June, 1982 when we first connected. He had just been diagnosed and was reaching out to this mysterious group called Shanti, which was then located in Berkeley. There was a remarkable quality in his voice, of steadiness (readiness?), soft spoken determination to take the bull by the horns or at least not get needlessly wounded.

Speaking at his first Shanti volunteer training in July 1982, he addressed forty-five emotional support volunteers on what it was like to have AIDS. He was dazed, scattered but oh, so vulnerable. He wanted so much to serve, teach and help. He sat seemingly naked in a room full of strangers and bared his heart for all to see. He made himself and AIDS real for each of us to learn from and he didn't know what a gift he was giving and how beautiful he shown.

Bobby and I went on to talk at dozens of trainings and inservices on the psychosocial aspects of AIDS. In June, 1983 we presented at the 2nd National AIDS Conference in Denver. It was there I came to see the magic of Bobby Reynolds in relation to other people with AIDS. His immense caring, his childlike desire for everyone to get along, his genuine warmth which had the effect of making everyone realize their importance. His unique



Bobby Reynolds

commitment to the Voice of people with AIDS belonging to all and not a few.

During the conference, as we spent quiet time together in our room, I experienced my own frustration and sense of helplessness. I felt all I could do was to listen to his stated desire for intimacy and his longing for contact with others. He revealed to me his boy-like shyness as he talked about his fear of rejection. I wanted so much for him not to hurt

and feel lonely. Yet I also knew he needed to walk his path and learn his own truth.

After the conference, Bobby and I drove south to Colorado Springs to see some property his lover Mark and he owned. We stopped at a magnificent area called Garden of the Gods and freed ourselves of AIDS a bit. Seeing him amidst the rocks and blue Colorado skies, I felt suspended -- timeless -- in love with life and him.

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Summer, 1985

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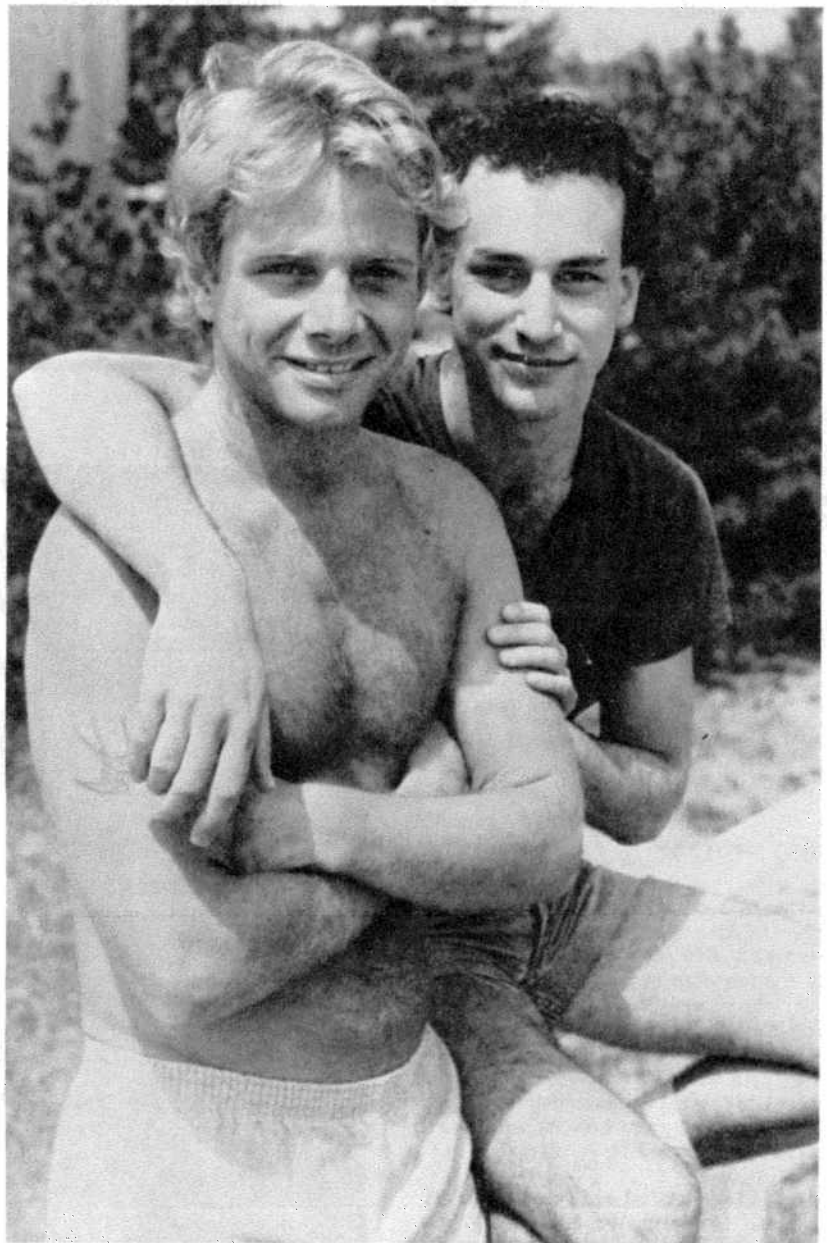


Shanti is a Sanskrit word meaning "inner peace."

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 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.



BUDDIES, an Artie Bressan film starring Geoff Edholm as a person with AIDS and David Schachter as a sympathetic volunteer who becomes his "buddy" (Edholm and Schachter are pictured above), will premiere at the Castro Theater September 12, 1985 at 8:30 p.m. as a benefit for Shanti Project.

FRAMELINE is presenting and hosting the benefit. A \$10 minimum donation has been set for general admission; a \$25 minimum donation includes the 7 p.m. reception with Bressan, Edholm and Schachter.

Dispatch From . . . A New Battlefield

By Paul Moor

The day I phoned the Shanti Project's office to find out about volunteering for training to become a peer counselor, I led off by saying "My age might disqualify me: I'm sixty-one."

"No problem," said Marta briskly. And that settled that. When I turned up for the training, my sweatshirt attracted understanding, welcoming smiles; it bore a quotation from Gertrude Stein: "We are always the same age inside." In Shanti's program of offering all manner of direct personal help to the thousands of people affected by San Francisco's horrific AIDS epidemic, the Project needs all the personal and financial help it can get - old, young, gay, straight, black, white, or any gradation in between.

As I write this, I have behind me the two long, intensive weekends of training but I still await - at any time now - the phone call informing me of my first client's name and phone number. When that call comes, I know it will open a new, even more important phase of what I already recognize as one of the pivotal experiences of my life - possibly the most challenging and demanding of all, but also possibly the most rewarding, the most enriching.

As I had expected, I proved the oldest in my class of trainees. The morning after the first evening, the next oldest - an East Bay business executive, the divorced father of three - struck up a conversation and finally, with a quizzical expression on his face, he asked what he obviously had on his mind: "Would you mind telling me just why you volunteered to take this training and do this volunteer work?"

I did not, I realize, fit the mould of most of the others, many of them still in their twenties, just getting started professionally. I speak the local language without an accent, but sometimes almost like a foreigner -- the result of having lived for the majority of my life in Paris, then Munich, and finally, until 1981, in Berlin, where (among other things) I served as accredited correspondent for Time & Life and then CBS Radio. (I had also had seven years of post-graduate

"informatory" training at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute). As a journalist, I have helped cover a number of big, historic events: the Soviet-Polish confrontation in Warsaw in 1956, when Moscow had to back down for the first time ever; the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising, which turned Budapest into a battlefield; the building of the Berlin wall, and all the other events which turned Berlin -- my home for a quarter of a century - into the focal ideological battlefield between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. And now, in San Francisco, the scourge of AIDS has turned this lovely city into another kind of battlefield.

So why, my friend asked me, had I volunteered for the Shanti training? Because I view with a jaundiced, European eye many aspects of the vaunted "American way of life," especially in the medical field, most especially in mental health, and because it enraged me to discover that Shanti, because of limited funds, could continue and expand its invaluable work only by appealing for volunteers and for contributions. Any show of valor in the face of adversity has always tended to make me choke up a little, and when I discovered the vast scope of Shanti's operation - mostly young men and women, most (but far from all) of them gay, quietly but heroically helping themselves because almost no one else has cared to help them - it not only made me choke up a little, it made me feel a moral obligation of solidarity to pitch in and help in whatever way I can.

As an incorrigible news junky (my keeping up merely begins with reading the Chron and The New York Times from front to back every morning), I had thought, complacently, that I knew more about the appalling, probably unprecedented AIDS tragedy than most people. And then I started, very belatedly, hearing about the quiet, unassuming, heroic, but largely unsung activities carried out by Shanti's volunteers, as what had become for them an everyday matter of course, and I gradually discovered how little I really, in fact, knew. The more I learned, the more the almost indescribable abyss of suffering, misery, and grief yawned and expanded before my incredulous eyes. This appalling

disease takes forms of disfigurement and torture I had never before even dreamed of; the training manual I subsequently received lists fifteen separate infections "frequently associated with AIDS." Adversity, we all know, brings out the best in everyone. I have recently, in Shanti, enriched my life by coming to know fellow human beings - clients and counsellors, people with AIDS and without - who have risen to the adversity of this emergency with behavior I can only describe as magnificent.

The urgency of this adversity has stripped away from an extensive gamut of individuals all superficiality, all frivolity, all frippery, all tinsel, and revealed, in each of them, a tough, resourceful, thoroughly admirable core. At the end of the first weekend of training, as we all stood in a big circle in that huge room with our arms round one another's shoulders - Shanti staff members, experienced volunteers, men with AIDS, and trainees - I consciously scrutinized each face in the circle. Before we unlinked arms, I kissed the cheek of the woman beside me and said, "I can't remember how long since I've felt so proud of an entire big roomful of people - or felt such pride in belonging here among them." Driving home, a close shave in traffic decided me to revise my will: if I should die unexpectedly, I wanted to have thought of Shanti and done whatever I could.

The AIDS emergency in San Francisco - the most terrible anywhere in the world, statistically regarded - has already become horrifying, but even the medical experts, when they talk about the development of a vaccine or a curative remedy, talk in terms not of weeks or months but of years. The number of reported AIDS cases now doubles every nine months. That means that the already horrible situation can only get worse, possibly much worse, before it even begins to get better. On May 16, 1985, when The New York Times reported the total number of American AIDS cases at 10,226, I did a little simple calculation. Three years from now, at the present rate, this country would have 163,616 cases; six years from now 2,617,856. Needless to say, any such epidemic

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DISCOVERING A NEW VALUE

[EDITOR'S NOTE; Larry Marcus is one of many persons with AIDS who continues to make a substantial contribution to Shanti Project in many ways. We talked to Larry recently about his involvement with Shanti Project as a volunteer and about how living with AIDS has changed his life.]

LARRY, WHAT WERE THE EVENTS LEADING TO YOUR DIAGNOSIS?

At the end of August, 1984 I was feeling like I had a cold coming on -- a little achy. My appetite wasn't right, my stomach was bothering me a little bit. In the middle of September, I was diagnosed with Shingles. At that point, my doctor didn't seem to think it was AIDS-related. I don't know if I agree with him now. Then, after feeling better for a short period of time, I started going downhill again.

I live in a third floor walk-up and it became increasingly difficult to climb the stairs. Finally, one day I walked up the stairs and into my apartment and had to lay down on the bed for at least half an hour to catch up with myself, with my breathing. I was also having fevers at the time which I thought was all related to the bout of Shingles. It suddenly dawned on me that I wasn't alright.

I went to the doctor and as I was describing my symptoms to him, as the story was unfolding, he was asking me all these questions, and he said to me, "I want to check some things, and I think you have AIDS -- I think you have pneumocystis pneumonia." Frank [Larry's lover of six years] had been with me at the doctor's office and my doctor went out and told Frank what his suspicions were.

I went to the hospital right from that appointment and the next day I had a bronchoscopy done which confirmed the diagnosis, November 3, 1984.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A TREMENDOUS SHOCK FOR BOTH OF YOU. DO YOU RECALL YOUR FEELINGS AT THE TIME?

There's so much that went on. It took months for me to really realize how I felt and to accept what was

happening. I think I felt a couple of different things. It was like, "Oh my God, I have this." This is what has been the Gay community concern for a couple of years and now I have this. And it had been a concern of mine. I got panicky at one point about coming down with AIDS. So, the other side of that was that there was almost a perverse sense of relief. Well I finally got this so I don't have to worry about getting it anymore. I don't want that to be misconstrued that I'm happy with AIDS because I hate that I have this. But, there was that sense that after worrying for two years and going to the doctor every few weeks that the burden of worrying about getting AIDS was lifted and replaced by entirely different feelings and concerns.

IS YOUR FAMILY AWARE OF YOUR DIAGNOSIS?

Yes. When I was diagnosed with AIDS and pneumocystis and was being hospitalized I called and told them. It was a really difficult call to make. I remember near the end of the phone conversation making a statement that I sort of buried in a bunch of words that this was an AIDS-related kind of pneumonia.

WHAT WAS THEIR REACTION?

My perception is that they did real well accepting it even though it was a real hard thing for them. Some fear and panic and concern, but very supportive. I mean, my whole

family flew out here during my second hospitalization. My mother got here Friday with my sister and my father got here Saturday. My brother was here. They were right here for me and some of them even attended the Shanti Friends, Family and Lovers support group.

HOW HAS YOUR DIAGNOSIS AFFECTED YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR LOVER FRANK?

How this diagnosis has affected our relationship is that he stuck by me and, not that I ever really thought that he wouldn't, but there's that fear of being abandoned. It's like, "Oh my God, I have this plague," and the fear that everyone is going to desert me. He has some fears around AIDS, but I feel things are on an even keel within the context of what's going on for me and for us.

I WOULD IMAGINE THAT TELLING YOUR FRIENDS WAS ALSO DIFFICULT?

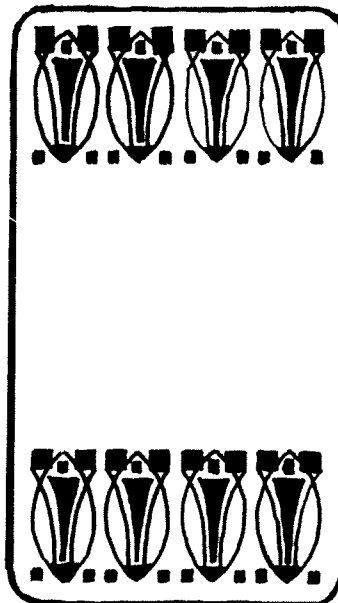
Yes. I told very few people. My fear was that the whole world was going to know and I was going to be a leper type, a social outcast and I didn't want people to know at first. Some of my friends pulled back from me and I pulled back from some of them. I think I started rejecting people before I gave them a chance to reject me or not. What happened though was that my circle of friends all of a sudden moved in real quickly. It was like, I found out who the people were who were going to really be there for me and who wasn't. A couple of people really came through with unbelievable, or actually I should say believable, amounts of love and support.

WHEN YOU WERE AT A PLACE OF PULLING BACK, WHAT DID THAT FEEL LIKE?

I felt like I had to pull back and get back in control. I sort of had this thing that I had to take care of everybody's concerns and fears and I exerted an awful lot of energy in that direction for awhile. I finally realized I couldn't do that. I realized that they were going to have to go through whatever they were going to go through and that I needed to take care of my own fears and concerns. I closed down a little and was sort of afraid of the world for awhile.

YOU DON'T SEEM OUT OF CONTROL NOW. HOW DID YOU WORK THROUGH THAT?

I got a lot of help from Frank, my family and the friends I did stay



close with. The other area that I really received a lot of support and help from was Shanti. I'd been going to the support group after the first hospital visit. That was really helpful for me in several ways. One was to physically see other people with AIDS. I didn't know anybody else who had AIDS or even know of somebody's friend who had AIDS so it was helpful to see other people. Going to the group allayed a lot of fears. Hearing other peoples' stories made me feel not so alone. I get a lot of information from the group and find out what they have gone through and how awful it was or how awful it wasn't.

ARE YOU MATCHED WITH AN EMOTIONAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEER?

Yes. His name is Mike and I've found him real helpful. At first, although it didn't feel like a forced situation exactly, here I was with this guy who I didn't know at all and almost immediately I'm talking about the most personal feelings, fears and concerns that I'm having inside. What was real good about it was that I worked through my own self-consciousness about AIDS and I said if I need this to work I've got to not hold back.

I talk with him about a lot of things that are AIDS-related issues but also my life issues. Some of the stuff that I talk to him about are topics that I felt sort of awkward talking to friends about because it is real sensitive. To talk about dying to the people who are emotionally close to me is a real hard thing and I also imagine it's a hard thing to hear. With Mike I get a chance to discuss with him the uncomfortable parts of these issues.

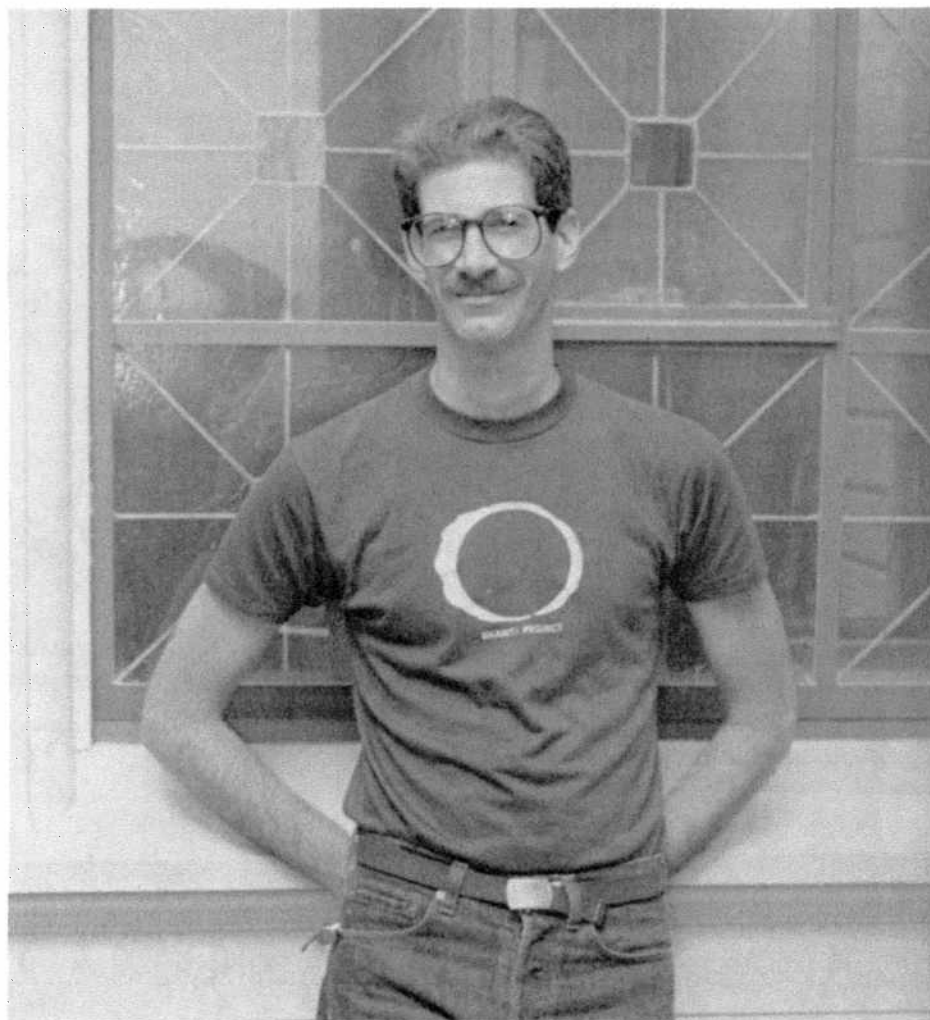
WHERE ARE YOU AT NOW IN TERMS OF YOUR FEELINGS?

I sort of pared down a lot of things and in an emotional and intellectual way I have gotten rid of a lot of garbage. I've cut through a lot of my own bullshit. I'm realizing that I have a limited amount of time and I've got a real full agenda of things that I need to get done.

LIKE WHAT? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

I want to let Frank, my friends and family know that I really love them -- that I appreciate them. I've told them that this is sad, but this is what I have to face. I guess its like saying goodbye.

Also, I want to do something that feels like I'm making a difference in this world, something that I feel that I can be proud of that feels



Larry Marcus

like an accomplishment to me. How I'm doing that is by becoming involved in working in the Shanti Project in the office on a volunteer basis. I went through the emotional support volunteer training and I'm real glad that I did. It helps me to know that I'm part of something that although it isn't claiming to be a solution to the problem of AIDS, is an avenue for us to seek help and support and understanding. Part of working for Shanti is that some of my painful issues are not issues there. That I am gay is not an issue at Shanti. It's not an issue there that I have AIDS. Those are two big things that I don't have to deal with in the context of the rest of my life. Also, working in this context helps me to not feel so helpless that I'm doing something about my situation.

WHY DID YOU GO THROUGH THE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEER TRAINING?

I went through it for two reasons. Hearing about it from

others made me think it could be a personally enriching experience. That was one reason. The other reason was that I felt like I wanted to bring all my personal experience to this training so that it might help all these other people who were going through the training to hear from a person with AIDS about the experiences I've had so far and what my feelings have been.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE TRAINING?

What I'm learning still from the training is that I'm OK. What I found is that having AIDS doesn't make a difference at least to some people. I'm learning how to be more open. I'm learning how to be more vulnerable. I've been learning to reach out and I've been learning a lot about having friends and being someone's friend. I'm learning how special some people are and I'm learning about how special I am. I'm discovering a new value in myself that I misplaced for a long time.



AFFECTION NOT REJECTION was the message of the Shanti Project float in the 1985 Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade. The float was accompanied by more than 150 Shanti volunteers, clients, staff, board members and friends and won a Cable Car Award as the Most Inspirational float in the parade. Our congratulations to all who participated in the building and presentation of the float including the Floatettes, the volunteer planning group for the float; Eric Gomoll, Richard McNally, Carol Kleinmaier, Daniel Pike, Manuel Chen, Terry Davidson, Michael Strain and Jim Rulon.

(Photo by Rink)

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 the Shanti Project with a donation of
☐ \$15.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$100.00 ☐ Other \$_____

☐ I am interested in becoming a volunteer

☐ The enclosed is a Memorial Gift from _____
 IN MEMORY OF _____

☐ Please notify the family members at the address below:

Name _____ Phone _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ I have moved; my new address is:

Name _____ Phone _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Bobby, Continued)

On Thanksgiving that year a group of us stayed at a resort near the Russian River and after dinner wrote Japanese haikus. Using the format of 5-7-5 syllables, Bobby wrote about me:

EARTH MOTHER, BUDDHA

RACOUS LAUGHTER, JOY AND TEARS

HE IS LOVE, MY FRIEND

Christmas that year I brought him a crystal which he has worn around his neck ever since. I can remember circling his house several times as I prayed to every diety I could think of to empower the stone. I opened myself to my desire to give him everything I could, the crystal becoming my heart extended.

February 1984 brought the death of a very close friend of ours. Bobby would often say that he had let Gary in farther than the rest. Gary and Bobby had played a major role in planning the first AIDS candlelight March. They admired and loved each other deeply, gaining strength from one another to keep opening to what was needed. Bobby grieved a long while after Gary's death. In ways, I think Gary's death not only allowed Bobby to grieve for him but for the hundreds of friends Bobby had already lost to AIDS. After Gary's death, Bobby would frequently tell me he doubted he would ever be able to open that much again but at the same time, we both knew he would.

Bobby has continued to serve on Shanti's Board of Directors, participate as a facilitator at our emotional and practical support

volunteer trainings, talk to dozens of newly diagnosed persons monthly in San Francisco, write and help produce a monthly person with AIDS newsletter, and continue to open to the depth of his own feelings as a way of teaching.

At a bereavement workshop we did in New York City this April, Bobby participated with the knowledge that Mark, his lover of six years, had been diagnosed with AIDS a week before. He decided to do the workshop and used it as an opportunity for his own healing and our learning.

Since that time, Mark has been on the respirator twice and Bobby has had to let go of, or at least suspend, his hope that Mark would be there to take care of him. Instead, he has opened to what Mark is teaching him on what may lie ahead.

The two of us had breakfast this morning. As we walked through the San Francisco Castro district arm and arm, we talked about what we have been through and of our feelings for each other. Bobby shared how, in the midst of all the suffering, he was still glad he could treasure this time with Mark and open to the beauty life still offers. He stopped me twice to smell the roses and I stopped him once to tell him how much he had grown in knowledge and unassuming acceptance of the vital role he has played.

As we continued walking, I was increasingly aware of what Bobby has taught me and the truth that he shares with us all. He has lived a life of tremendous change. Yet, despite periods of considerable pain and doubt, he keeps opening to

it and offers his insights as a teaching. Faced with so much visable suffering, he still beholds the beauty.

Bobby Reynolds isn't an extraordinary man, at least he doesn't want to be. And, perhaps, this is his greatest gift to us all -- that when with him we believe that what he has done is attainable for each of us -- if we but open to all of who we are.



(Battlefield, Continued)

ignores all such factors as age, sex, social class, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation.

The Shanti training weekends dredged up out of my memory, for the first time in several decades, something I remembered reading in Victor Hugo's great novel Les Miserables; meanwhile, I have managed to track down the exact quotation:

"Life, misfortunes, isolation, abandonment, and poverty are battlefields which have their heroes; obscure heroes, sometimes greater than the illustrious heroes."

My acceptance by Shanti has afforded me, late in my life, the privilege of admission into personal contact and friendship with the heroes and heroines emerging now from this new sort of battlefield.

Volunteer Counseling
for Persons with AIDS
and Their Loved Ones



Shanti Project

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SHANTI PROJECT Provides

Free Services To Persons With AIDS And Their Loved Ones

Individual Counseling - Support Groups
Residence Program - Practical Support Program
SF General Hospital Counseling

SHANTI VIDEOTAPES

The Shanti Project is proud to announce the availability of our complete volunteer training program on videotape. Videotapes of the training program can be used by any group wishing to start an organization to provide volunteer counseling to people with AIDS, their loved ones and friends. These training materials are designed to be used both as a resource by the organizers of a new group and in the training of volunteer counselors.

For more information about the Shanti training videotapes, call the Shanti Project office at 415/558-9644.