



Attitudinal Healing

By Drs. Jerry Jampolsky and Diane Cirincione

Editor's Note: Stress may not be a frequent topic in the news, but it is certainly a dominant theme in much of the reportage we've seen about common people in the past year: survivors of a tsunami, the displaced poor after Katrina, the earthquake in Kashmir, shellshocked civilians in Iraq...the list seems endless.

Drs. **Jerry Jampolsky** and **Diane Cirincione**, recently named as Fellows of the Academy, have been dealing with stress for 30 years, from venues as disparate as Bosnia and children's hospices. Recently, they have turned their attention to

business, where the twin realities of globalization and the Information Age have co-conspired to create work conditions producing high levels of stress which *homo sapiens* has not evolved to endure.

Introducing them at September's Global MindChange Forum, Academy President **Rinaldo Brutoco** said, "... if you had to pick any two people in the world to be your spiritual medics when you took this mission, these are the two (if you would have known) you would have asked for."

They have been pioneering the mind-body relationship for 30 years. Now they have 130 centers around the world and have recently

launched a business initiative called [Pro-Attitude](#) to reduce stress in the workplace.

The [principles of attitudinal healing](#) are applicable in any context because they speak to a common denominator of human character. The following edited remarks from their presentation offer an informal introduction to the attitudinal healing process.



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Jerry:

This is a story that tells how it's possible to have a sense of joy, a sense of peace, regardless of what's put on your plate in life. It is about a little place about 15 miles outside of Fresno, California. Two guys were in a local bar around 5:30 after their work, and this one guy was talking about his new job working for the sewer company. And as he described it he said, "I'm an executive now." The other guy said, "Well, I don't know how to say this, but how you can be an executive. All you do is dig **** all day." The first one said, "I'm an executive. I'll tell you how: I'm the number one guy, and I'm down at the bottom, and I shove the **** to the number two guy, and the number two guy shoves it to the number three guy, and the number three guy puts it on a truck."

"Well, how does that make you an executive?"

"Well, I'm an executive because I don't *take* **** from *anybody*!"

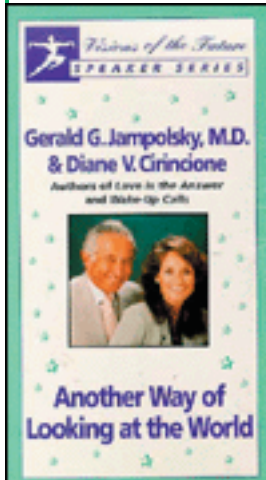
Diane:

"In the book, [*Attitudes That Attract Success*](#), Wayne Cordeiro really summarizes what we think about attitudes and the importance of them. He basically says that your attitude is literally one of the most important things you have. It's your number one skill. It's more important than your money, more important than your looks, it's even more important than your education. It's the most important skill you're going to take into anything that you do. There's an excellent study released in the [*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*](#).

It was a 25-year longitudinal study from Yale, 660 men and women. They looked at the attitudes of individuals around aging. One of the primary questions was, "How do you feel about aging?" They had to react to a statement: "Things are getting worse when I get older." They separated the responses into the categories of those who responded positively, "Yes, I agree with this," and those who rejected the societal stereotype and said, "No, that's not true for me. I am going to make sure they get better." After 25 years they found that those who rejected the societal norm, of saying things get worse as I get older, lived not 7.5 weeks, not 7.5 months, but 7.5 years longer. This is a radical study. Yet there are other studies that are supporting it now. So, literally, how we look at our attitude, how we hold it in our lives, not only affects experiences with friends, it will bring people to us. It will push people away from us. It will determine how successful we are in our business. It also determines much of our health. Thirty years ago, Jerry was saying, "I really believe there is a relationship between the mind and the body." There wasn't anyone from science standing with him at the time to be able to say that. Intuitively, and from his own spiritual experience and teaching, he knew that it was true. It's pretty exciting today that the AMA has acknowledged this, etc., but it really is literally the most important thing we have in our lives.

Jerry:

"Speaking of aging, Robert Young and his wife Betty were close friends of ours and supporters of our work. One time Robert Young and I were on a panel and someone came up and said, "You guys look very much alike." Bob said, "We look



Your attitude is literally one of the most important things you have.

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alike because we have the same smile wrinkles." When my mother was 97 (can you imagine this), Bob and Betty came to a birthday party we had at the Jewish Home for the Aged. She [my mother] had a lot of medical problems so she had [Dr. Welby](#) sitting right beside her at the age of 97.

As a graphic way of demonstrating how our thoughts can create our reality, Diane had an experience walking with me on a beach in Kailua. We're going to share it now....

Diane:

"It happened last year. We all believe that our thoughts pretty much have to do with our reality. Jerry and I believe that it has a lot to do with our reality, and in many ways we create the reality that we see. And what we see is determined by how we think.

We always take a walk on the beach; we take a long walk every morning. The first part of the walk is always meditative so it's quiet and it's about nature. On the way back we'll talk about other things. This one day I was really anxious and I couldn't wait to get to the other end so I could start talking. Jerry could see that I was anxious, and I wanted to make sure he could see that I wasn't upset with him. I was upset about something else that happened. So I said something to him – I don't recall what it was, but it fit the moment – and I said to Jerry, "I feel like I got pooped on." He said, "Diane, don't you feel that you help create your own reality?" And I said, "Not this time!" We walked one, two, and on the third step this giant green blob from a bird came out of the sky, from I don't know where, and landed right here on me!" This was after decades of walking on the beach. I looked at Jerry, and he said, "I just want you to notice, honey, it didn't land on me."

We do have something to do with our reality. What happens is that the more we know that, the shorter the time is between the thought and the experience.

Jerry:

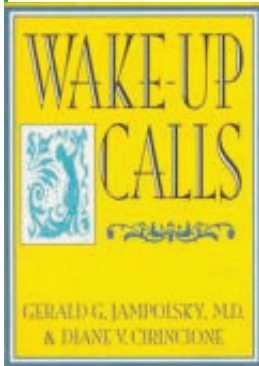
In 1975 I had some crazy things in my being, attached to my ego, and I was attached to dealing with more stress than I ever had before, being depressed, feeling that I was a victim, feeling sorry for myself, being angry and irritable, incapable of love or being loved. I had a spiritual awakening. I was an atheist at the time, and shortly thereafter I was making rounds at the University of California Medical Center, and a seven-year-old kid in oncology asked, "What is it like to die?" He had cancer. The oncologist changed the subject and was fearful of talking to him about it. I found out that the kid found someone he could talk to about it. It was the cleaning lady who was mopping up the floor. So I had the idea to start a small center for children who were facing life-threatening illness, and they would help me and other volunteers look at life and death differently. I was in the process of killing myself with alcohol, and I was scared to die. That was how the Center actually started. Diane, you might want to take it from there....

Diane:

Some of you know that the Center for Attitudinal Healing started in 1975. One of the ways we define attitudinal healing is through the realization that it's

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not other people or events or experiences in the past that are causing us to have distress in the moment, but what causes us distress in the moment are our thoughts, attitudes and judgments about those things. They are no longer happening to us. They are in the past. We may feel that we had been a victim at the time. So how do we get out of the victim mentality and realize "I can do something about that." There is no place for denial at all. It's about looking at it straight in the face and realizing that I have a choice about what I do about that. It's about the development of the tools that people use for life-threatening illnesses, loss of loved ones or children, working in war zones, in Oklahoma City and Croatia. Before I talk about the children, maybe you want to share some thoughts about how the children have inspired us.

Jerry:

I always felt these young children with cancers were wise spirits in young bodies teaching me and other people spiritual truths. I would like to share just a few sound bites about kids, that I have learned apply to business and every aspect of your lives. One is a kid named Bobby who had decided that he wanted to die at home. He was on an IV morphine drip when I was visiting him, and I was holding his hand, and his eyes were closed for about half an hour, and I was giving him the biggest gift I know how to give another person, my peace and love. After about a half an hour my heart had an idea, and I said, "Bobby, I have a tape recorder in my briefcase. If you have the energy, it would be helpful if you were to share your advice with other kids who might have cancer and might be facing death. And to my surprise he started to sit up in his bed and he took the tape recorder. He started to talk and blood started to rush to his face. The paleness disappeared and he shared many, many pearls, but the one I remember most was when he said, "Tell everyone, regardless of their sickness, regardless of the shape their body is in, regardless of their aches and pains, as long as they are breathing, their purpose in life is to love one another."

Another child named Greg Harrison was dying. He was 11 years old and they had stopped all medication. They knew in a few weeks he would be dead. That night I asked Greg, "What's it like to know you are going to die in two or three weeks?" While I was trying to think of something I might be able to say, Greg very nonchalantly said, "Well, I think when you die you just discard your body, which was never real in the first place. Then you're at one with all the souls, and sometimes you act as a guardian angel to someone." There is no question in my mind that Greg continues to be the guardian angel for me.

And lastly, there was a kid named Timmon Walker who was about 15, was riding a bike and was hit by a truck. He was in the hospital in a coma for about 85 days, and [after he came out of it] started coming to our Center. He had aphasia – found it very difficult to talk – and I remember the first time he was there he was telling a joke. A one-minute joke was taking about eight minutes to tell. All the 15 other kids in that group just listened until he finished, and then Timmon started to cry and said, "You know, this is the first time since my accident that I have been able to tell a joke to its completion and no one has interrupted me, and thank you." So we learned a lot about the art of listening and how important that is.

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Diane:

So the first group started with children, and then their brothers and sisters came in and said, "What about us?" They have a lot of issues, and then [came] the parents of children with life-threatening issues that you see in a lot of hospitals now. Also, children who are healthy whose parents were dying or who have died, and the person-to-person program, perhaps the biggest program, which is people who don't have life-threatening illnesses who want to use these principles in their lives. In 1981 when AIDS was first named, we began working on AIDS, for many decades working with San Francisco General Hospital, training healthcare people. So the principles are used in so many areas, and so people have decided to start centers just like it, and now there are about 130 centers in 26 countries, and growing. They just keep growing. The gift we get from it is that attitudinal healing applies to every aspect of life, including business.

One of the things we want to say about attitudinal healing is something Lance (Secretan) had mentioned just the other day about the harmony and integrity of what you think, say, and do....

Jerry:

We really believe that we have no secret thoughts. We really do believe in the harmony between what you say and think and do. This exercise, if you were to do it for the rest of your life, you might find it very helpful. Imagine for a moment, use your imagination, that there is a TV monitor on top of your head. Everyone can see what you are thinking. Every thought.... Wouldn't we clean up our act? (Laughter). Wouldn't we choose to have loving thoughts instead of anger and judgmental thoughts? So we remind ourselves that if we really want continuity, integrity and honesty, there is harmony between what we think, say, and do. This is a good exercise.

When we go through the emotions, love and fear, rather than seeing someone attacking us, we prefer to see someone as fearful, giving us a call for help and love. We believe that it is only our own thoughts that hurt us, that we are responsible for our own happiness, that it is possible to live a life where there is neither blame nor guilt playing back and forth. It's possible to learn not to see the shadow of one's past as we talk to that person. We can learn the importance of forgiveness. That is the core of attitudinal healing. I have often thought in my fantasy that if someone had invented a pill that we heard about on the TV or the radio, and it's free, and it is guaranteed to get rid of all the anger, depression and irritation, and we can't overdose on it, wouldn't we immediately go out and buy that pill? This is what forgiveness can do and it is free, and it is a mighty, mighty powerful thing.

About two years ago I was having some challenges about forgiveness, and I was asking for some guidance, and what I got was a little shoe insert for myself. The shoe insert says, "May every step you take be one of forgiveness." And it heals your soul! When you go in the airport and you have to take off your shoe, you can feel the energy there.

Diane:

Someone once gave us a definition of forgiveness in one of our workshops. She said, "Forgiveness is giving up all hopes for a better past." Forgiveness is like the illusion of the ego. We think that our lack of forgiveness is actually hurting

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somebody else. Not forgiving is like taking poison and expecting somebody else to die. In reality, it is the toxicity of not forgiving that we know now -- and there's lots of science to back this up -- is harmful to our immune system. It's a cause of backaches, headaches, ulcers. The effects of medications are known to work better once one has an attitude that is positive and forgiving. I mean positive in terms of taking responsibility for your life, for what you think, for your actions, for your relationships, for your part. It sounds burdensome but in reality it's very, very freeing. Why don't we forgive?

Jerry:

It's our ego-voice. We say, "Well, if you forgive that, then that person will just do that again." "He deserves your punishment. Withdraw your love and keep your anger." Those are some of the things that we listen to when we listen to the ego.

Diane:

There are dozens of reasons why we don't forgive. When we look at what forgiveness is, and what forgiveness is not, it doesn't mean not having justice. It doesn't mean that the other person isn't responsible for what they do. It doesn't mean we don't take some kind of action. The kind of forgiveness we are talking about is like attitudinal healing. Attitudinal healing is completely inside the human being, inside the individual. That's why it's so culturally adaptable. There's no should or shouldn't, or "you should do this" or "you'd be a better person if you'd do that." None of that.... It helps nurses be better nurses. It helps people of faith go back and hear the relationships with their faith. It helps people with life-threatening illnesses take responsibility for their own healing processes, and their own dying processes, if that's the case. So forgiveness is really an internal experience. Once we take responsibility for that experience, then we ask for guidance in what we need to think and say and do. And that may be taking someone to court. It may be saying "no." It doesn't mean supporting another person's insane behavior. Allowing someone to abuse us or to mistreat us continuously is not forgiveness: it's pathology. Attitudinal healing is working a lot at redefining that.

Jerry:

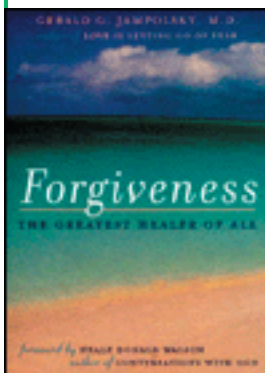
So forgiveness doesn't need a form?

Diane:

There is no form to it. We create the form once we create the process, and then we ask for guidance. How do we do this? It may mean that we never see another person again. It doesn't mean we have to talk to them, or make amends or anything. Maybe that's your guidance to do it. One of the reasons we don't forgive is because the ego says that forgiveness has a form to it. So I have an argument with Jerry and my ego says, "Oh! I'll forgive him if he forgives me." We were in Bosnia, when for the first time religious leaders came together after the war -- the Croats, the Serbs, and the Bosnians -- and it was just intense. These priests and bishops and cardinals weren't even going to come into the room together until somebody forgave.

Jerry:

Forgiveness is a process of letting go. Several years ago I was consulting for a company called the Will Harper Group. John Robinson was the CEO. He came in



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his limousine at 6:30 as he usually does Tuesday mornings. He was truly upset because there was going to be a stockbroker meeting that day, and they had gotten some information he was trying to hide from them. He had just been meeting with his lawyers about how to be defensive and get out of it. So I asked John about attitudinal healing principles. "Do you want to cause more separation or do you want to cause joining?"

"I want to cause joining."

"Well, you might want to consider another way of looking at it than your lawyers [do], and you might want to think about telling the truth and being vulnerable and sharing mistakes that you made and sharing how you would like to start doing it differently. That might take some of courage, and it would certainly take a lot of love for yourself and the people you are talking with. I cannot guarantee what the results would be, but it might form a foundation for a sense of joining and support.

Well, he came back next week and made the decision to do that. And things went swimmingly well. About four weeks later he had a little white card I gave him which said, "In my defenselessness my safety lies." The head of another company happened to be riding in his limousine. He asked, "What's that?" John told him about the whole story. He said, "I'm having the same trouble. Let me borrow your card."

Attitudinal healing principles and practical spirituality are very effective in the world of business.

A guy by the name of Wally Haas – his father was Walter Haas of Levi Strauss – was on our board for a number of years; he was a volunteer. I was having lunch with him one day and he was rather depressed. He started working with the Levi Strauss Foundation and didn't really know what to do.

I said, "What's your passion?"

"My passion would be to own a baseball club. But that's impossible."

I said, "It's only impossible because that's what you think. You dad loves sports. Why don't you talk to him about it?" And he did. There were no baseball teams [available] until about two months later when Charlie Finley put the As up for sale. They agreed on a price. He went back to sign the papers and Charlie Finley – those of you who knew him knew he was a pretty difficult guy for many people – and he changed the ante. He said, "I want more money."

Well, immediately his brother and he walked out of the meeting. But Wally decided, "I am going to stay here. I am going to try and see this guy Charlie as just being fearful. And I am going to be compassionate, not attack, and just be with him. After about a half hour he signed the papers. Very fascinating. And our Center got to go to the As games free; that was a benefit I hadn't thought about before.

Diane:

Our Center was encouraged by certain business leaders to see if we could take these universal principles that we had applied for over 25 years to people's life-stress situations. How could we use them in business? The challenge would be to see how could we rapidly reduce or eliminate stress. We know hundreds of billions of dollars a year are caused by stress, through illnesses, etc. That would



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This is a gigantic request. And yet, we are open to this because we know it works here. We have seen it work in the worst situations. War zones, and incredible family conflicts, and illnesses, and loss and grief. It's used in school systems. It's now used in Juvenile Hall in San Francisco. We started with one program, and now they are using it throughout the system there, training the counselors, etc. into groups with all the young people.

We know it works in these worst circumstances, in prisons also. What it would take would be adapting what we do into a language and a frame that would work for business. That's what has happened. It's called [Pro-Attitude](#). It's really an exciting program for us because it challenges everything that we know about business. It is possible to change the individuals' environments, which will ultimately change the work environment. It's part of an attitude that's so important that determines whether one is going to have a successful experience themselves in the workplace, and then the workplace itself will shift.

So we went ahead and did this. It has been tested and it's out there in the world. We realized that we first had to look at the current science. We delved into that and what we found, especially in this last six or seven years, is that science is right on the exact same page as attitudinal healing. We have now the methodology to put into action how to reduce the stress.

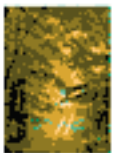
Jerry:

Much of our stress is caused by our own attitudes. Much of the burnout as well. Here's a brief story. A nurse was having a terrible day at the hospital and went home early and was going to watch TV and went to bed. Then her best friend, whom she hadn't seen for a couple of years, called and said she was at the airport for three hours, and could she come? So she showered and was whistling. There was no change in her body, but her attitude shifted in terms of what was happening to her.

When I was in medical school, when you had an appendectomy, you had to stay in the hospital for five days. Now you're up the same day walking around. So attitudes have changed tremendously about every part of our lives.

In conclusion, we'd like to say that attitudinal healing has the potential for being a paradigm shift. We realize that maybe we're here to change the world out there; maybe we need to do inner healing, and as we do our inner healing, the world gets changed. The power of this is beyond our imagination in how it's being used in so many different cultures and languages. I think it's because it's simple, it's deep, and it works. Every moment that we're here we can use it. We can look at our attitudes and recognize that, indeed, it is a big gift that we can choose what we have in our mind, and we can choose peace rather than conflict at any given moment. We can choose to experience love rather than fear. We can choose to be a love-finder rather than a fault-finder. A love-giver rather than a love-seeker. And we can choose to demonstrate love by seeing what we are here to do. We are here to teach only love because that is what we are. The essence of our being is light and passion and happiness. And when we are not in that state it means we are in a trap, we've lost our way, and have forgotten to have inner peace as our living goal.

*Simple Thoughts
That Can Change
Your Life*



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Authors of Love Is the Answer: Write-Up Calls and
Change Your Mind, Change Your Life

About the Authors:

Dr. Diane Cirincione is a Fellow of the World Business Academy, a therapist, and former postdoctoral clinical researcher at Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute at the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Cirincione is an internationally known lecturer and author as well as an entrepreneur with 30 years' business experience in corporate life as well as her own four companies. She is co-founder with Barbara Marx Hubbard of "The Regenopause Dialogues," re-valuing and redefining the stages of women's lives. She serves as Vice-President of the Jampolsky Outreach Foundation, a non-profit foundation responding to worldwide requests to introduce and mentor culturally appropriate adaptations of Attitudinal Healing, integrating this innovative, time-tested psycho-social-spiritual model into every aspect of daily life. From 1982-1992, with Dr. Jerry Jampolsky's project, "Children As Teachers of Peace," Dr. Cirincione inspired individuals from numerous countries to bring youth together from conflicting countries around the world including Russia, China, and Central America. She is author of *Sounds Of The Morning Sun*, and *The Identification of Relationships Between Women Witnessing Spousal Abuse in Childhood and Psychological Symptomatic Distress in Adulthood*. She is co-author with her husband, Dr. Jampolsky, of *Love Is The Answer; Wake-Up Calls; Change Your Mind, Change Your Life; Simple Thoughts That Can Change Your Life*; and for children, *Me First and the Gimme Gimmes*.

Dr. Gerald Jampolsky is a Fellow of the World Business Academy, a graduate of Stanford Medical School and a former faculty member of the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco, where he held fellowships in child psychiatry at Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute. He is an internationally recognized authority in the fields of psychiatry, health, and education. In 1975, he and some friends established the original Center for Attitudinal Healing in Tiburon, California, where children and adults with life-threatening illness may find peace of mind that is transforming for them and their families. Through his work at the Center, Dr. Jampolsky created the first Support Group Model now used extensively worldwide. In 1987, he helped co-found with his wife, Dr. Diane Cirincione, the AIDS Hotline for Kids based at the Center. There are now over 130 independent Centers for Attitudinal Healing, all serving their communities in 26 countries. Dr. Jampolsky has published extensively and is also the author of *Love is Letting Go Of Fear; Teach Only Love: The 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing; Goodbye to Guilt; Out of Darkness Into the Light; One Person Can Make a Difference; Forgiveness, The Greatest Healer of All; and Shortcuts to God*. In addition to his co-authored books and tapes with Dr. Cirincione, he has authored and narrated the audiotapes, *Love Is Letting Go Of Fear; Teach Only Love; One Person Can Make a Difference; and Forgiveness, The Greatest Healer Of All*.

