



Welcome to the first edition of our Circle Connections Member Newsletter. **CONNECT!** will be published quarterly starting with this issue on the first of Sept., Dec., Mar., & June.



### News Flash!! A Massive Outbreak of Peace

By Rhonda Hull, Ph.D.

New peacemakers have emerged in the 21st century. They're not political leaders. They're not savvy diplomats. They're not religious leaders. They're not famous rock stars and billionaires. They are women and men like you and me.

Together, holding hands and sensing the truth beyond circumstances, seeing beyond our limiting beliefs, we dare to remember our magnificence. Women are called to reclaim our voice, and the men in our lives are invited to reconnect with their hearts. It is only together that we can manifest the balance and compassion needed and called for by love. It is only when we realize that we must choose happiness and co-create it.

Together, in this circle of connection, we intend that there be peace... we choose to see it amidst hard times, we celebrate it with each smile, we materialize it through our relentless focus, we require it as a pre-requisite to relationships, we call for it through our tears, we taste it, walk for it, teach about it, sing it, write about it,

paint it, trust it, design our work around it, pray for it, stretch for it, encourage with it, bless the ill with it, smother our grandchildren in it, heal with it, meditate on it, surrender to it, take leaps of faith for it, nurture ourselves with it, wish on a star for it, have our words and actions match it, dream about it, are an activist for it, gather in it's name, share it with every embrace or gentle thought for another, embody it by remembering who we really are. And, we forgive the rest, letting it go to be transformed back into what it has always really been... peace. We waste no more time infighting and ego dancing. We dare instead to let Her lead. We claim happiness more important than being right.

The massive outbreak is here, and we are it. We are the ordinary extraordinary ones daring to BE peace, collaborating regardless of what costumes, religions, titles, or colors we wear. We know it is time to unite our cellular BEing, holding her vision in every breath, allowing her footsteps to call us forward.

**"One day you finally knew what you had to do and began."**

- Mary Oliver,  
Pulitzer Prize Winner and Poet

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Circle Connections, Inc. is a membership organization that helps people start, revitalize, sustain and connect their circles within the United States and Canada. Our intention is to be a resource hub that makes it easy for us to be accessible to one another. **CONNECT!** offers ideas, inspiration, stories and news about circles, circle events, and circle leadership.  
[www.circleconnections.com](http://www.circleconnections.com)



## CIRCLE TIPS

by Ann Smith

### What is the optimum way to handle two or more opposing comments from members of the circle?

When you have two or more opposing comments from members of the circle let them reside together in the center without taking sides.

The Circle is the place where opposites can meet. It is the place where we can come together and transform opposite positions and thoughts by allowing all thoughts offered by circle members to dwell without judgment.

When an opposing thought is brought into the circle call for silence. The center of the circle is a vast container of space and time that can hold opposites. When they are not debated and allowed to reside in silence the Oneness of our thoughts will unfold. You can move on to other topics while letting this stay in the center.

When we shift our perspective from dualistic thinking to knowing that all perspectives lead to a greater truth we live into the magic of Circle.

## THE MANY JOYS OF CIRCLE CONNECTIONS

(A review by Linda Sechrist of the Circle Connections training that took place on July 22, 2006 at the Happehatche Center in Estero, FL)

Keeping pace with life as it whizzes by my doorstep at lightning speed has caused me to muse over the possibility that life is no longer for amateurs who don't have the endurance of an Olympic Goddess, the wisdom and patience of Buddha or Jesus, the compassion of Mother Theresa and the deep knowledge of Yoda.

"Where does my time go?" is a question that comes up in nearly everyone's conversation.

Though I cannot always account for dates, I have discovered that I can relate stories of my time spent – but only "if" I have chosen my activities wisely and fully invested my self and my attention in them.

Since becoming involved in Gather the Women of South Florida and Circle Connections, I have come to a profound conclusion – to have a rich, memorable and meaningful life I must compose my time as meticulously as any story I craft. Since experiencing the unity of Circle, I am no longer satisfied to simply live through the minutes, hours and weeks of each month. Instead, my soul's yearnings have wafted up from deep within. Whispering to me "sing, dance, drum, draw, paint, write, dream and celebrate," I yearn to collectively co-create positive change in the world along with women of substance, like those I met in June at my first Circle Connections event in Estero.

Though it rained, spirits soared as everyone stepped lightly across a unique suspension bridge in route to bless and initiate the opening of Ellen Petersen's Happehatche Center. The anticipation of meeting other likeminded women lingered on the fragrant earth-scented air, teasing our nostrils and heightening our sensitivity to the splendor of what was to unfold throughout



**"If we can stay with the tension of opposites long enough ~ sustain it, be true to it - we can sometimes become vessels within which the divine opposites come together and give birth to a new reality."**

**– Marie-Louise von Franz  
1917-1998**

*The Many Joys of Circle Connections  
(continued from page 2)*

the day – the awesome vision of 14 women unfurling the magnificence of their authentic selves in a safe space.

The gentle drizzle and intermittent showers co-mingled with the sharing of lunch, rich storytelling, laughter, singing, drumming and uplifting flute playing by Kat Epple. Further enhancing the experience, Carlene Thissen's lovely voice and guitar playing introduced Circle participants to one of her newly written songs "Go Change the World."

The gentle yet engaging TAT & T'ai offerings by Janet Weisberg and Deb Stump-Burger allowed for all to feel connected to their bodies and to a nearly tangible air of sacredness that lay about Circle like a protective mantle. At 9:30 a.m. when Ann Smith opened Circle, we were women who had gathered to learn about the Magnificence of Circle and the Eight Ingredients for Creating a Delicious and Nutritious Way of Life. Reluctant to break Circle at 4 p.m., we had become sisters whose intimate lives had gently been stitched together like "An American Quilt."

The pace of my life over the last few months has occasionally resembled that of a train whose speed allows for a barely recognizable landscape. However, the music, stories and women from Circle who wove themselves into my heartscape have provided a banquet for my soul on its journey.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sept. 8: Membership Call

We are pleased to announce that we have scheduled our first Circle Connections Membership call and hope you can participate. It will take place on Friday, September 8 at 9:00 AM Pacific Time (Noon East Coast Time). We will be scheduling these calls every two months to enable our members to get to know one another, to let you know what we are up to and to answer any questions you might have about Circle Connections and/or about sustaining, revitalizing or starting your circle. Call details: Sept. 8 at 9:00 am (Pacific Time): Phone Number: 712-580-1100 Access Code: 88988

### Sept. 22-24: Magnificence of Circle Expo & Retreat

Do you long to feel connected, empowered, and truly honored? Coming together in Circle is a powerful, ancient, and potent form of shared leadership, and a way of connecting in a deep way at a time we feel so disjointed and alone even though we share this globe with 6 billion people.

Join us in Burlingame, CA (near SFO) for this unique weekend as together we will experience and apply the power of the Magnificence of Circle and forge the way to taking Circle mainstream.

For more information go to the following [www.circleconnections.com](http://www.circleconnections.com).

#### ONLINE TIP by Carol Hansen Grey

Did you know that everything you add to the NETWORKING section of the directory is keyword searchable. You can use the directory to advertise your products, services and/or organizations by filling in the networking section. Then when someone in the group is looking for a "circle trainer", and if that is the specialty you placed in your networking data, your profile will come up.

If you are interested in a free teleconference training explaining how to use the many features of the Circle Connections Living Directory, email [carol@circleconnections.com](mailto:carol@circleconnections.com). If at least three people are interested, I'll schedule a training.

## MEET OUR ADVISORY COUNCIL

### Introducing Jan Phillips



We feel we have a spectacular, lively, devoted and creative advisory council to join with us in the co-leadership and evolution of Circle Connections. Each person has an important gift to bring to the Magnificence of Circle and leadership that is unique and transformative. In each issue of CONNECT! we will profile one of our council members.

In this issue we invite you to meet Jan Phillips, author of many books, photographer extraordinaire, world traveler, educator, speaker, and Circle advocate. She teaches individuals and organizations to ignite their original thinking and capitalize on their diverse strengths to achieve success while being a force for good in the world.

In her own words...

“I became aware of the power of circles in 1975 when I dove into the second wave of the women’s movement at the age of 26. I have been circling ever since, as an activist, artist and author.”

In 1982, Jan co-founded the Syracuse Cultural Workers to publish and distribute artwork for global peace and justice. From 1983-85, she traveled around the world on a peace pilgrimage showing slides of the US/Canadian peace movements and published her first book, “Making Peace,” when she returned. In 1989 she became involved in the International Women’s Writing Guild and has been teaching at their annual summer conference ever since, creating circles that support women’s belief in the power of their stories and their ability to write them. Since then she has written 6 other books: *Marry Your Muse*, *Divining the Body*, *God is at Eye Level*, *A Waist is a Terrible Thing to Mind*, *The Art of Original Thinking*, and *Circling-A Guidebook for a Group Experience in Creative Consciousness*. She also has published a CD of

original music, *All the Way to Heaven*, and several videos that help us remember the power of our connectedness. She teaches workshops around the country that connect the dots between spirituality, creativity and social consciousness, and trains individuals as group facilitators so that we can continue to be mirrors and lights to each other.

Jan believes that our collective consciousness is awakening and that women are the primary midwives to the global transformation that is happening through us, not to us. She is committed to delivering the good news of this transformation through images, music and story and sees herself as an artist, more than anything else. As her favorite poet Mary Oliver says: “I am a performing artist. I perform adoration.”

To learn more about Jan, visit her website at [www.janphillips.com](http://www.janphillips.com),

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## BOOK REVIEW

### The Art of Original Thinking: The Making of a Thought Leader by Jan Phillips

*Review by Ann Smith*

The Art of Original Thinking inspires us to become creative leaders who think and live out of the box. It is filled with success stories of corporations that have increased their profits while tending to the needs of people and the environment. It brings solutions to today’s problems related to the poor and the planet. The principles of a Thought Leader found in this invaluable book can be used by everyone. They bring spirit-filled values for success at work, family and local and global community. It is a book of hope and inspiration.

Ann Smith and Rhonda Hull offer a lively audio review of this provocative and inspiring book on the Circle Connections website.