November 8, 1983

Dear Friends,

I went to Washington, D.C., for the National AIDS Vigil and Candlelight March. The city is beautiful. Lots of open space, trees, shrubs, and flowers. It was amazing for me to see the places, monuments and statues I had read about while in school.

About 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 8, we began to assemble at the Ellipse. Turning one way, we could see the Washington Monument piercing the sky; turning the other way, we saw the White House set nestled in trees. As the crowd gathered, they would form under state banners. Some sat in groups eating, others watched the media do their number.

At 6:00 p.m. the monitors began to "whip" us into some semblance of order. People with AIDS from New York, San Francisco, and D.C. gathered behind New York's red and white "Fighting For Our Lives" banner. Behind us came the deaf/hearing impaired contingent, then the dignitaries and then the states in alphabetical order.

At 6:30, amidst lights, cameras, microphones, and scurrying reporters, we left the Ellipse. We started off slowly, with monitors and motorcycle cops as escorts. I was excited. We walked past the Old Executive Office Building, turned the corner, and there was the White House. I don't know if our First Family was in residence, but the security force was very much in evidence. An armed guard was stationed every five feet in front of the fence surrounding the White House. As we turned the banner to face them, I wondered what they were thinking.

We continued to the corner and turned right. The sky was darkening and the candles became more visible. We were marching to the Capitol Building, and I could see it awash with light at the end of the boulevard. We continued past darkened buildings.

Looking back, I could see the state banners and hundreds of people with their candles, in a line stretching back to the White House. I shivered and not from the cold. It was a very moving sight.

The end of the march came near, and the excitement I felt was partly because I got an early start at the "porta potties." We were at the nation's Capitol. People with AIDS were led to the stage which looked out over the reflecting pool toward the Washington Monument. We watched as the candles and state banners began to line the pool. It was a magical sight.
Bobbi Campbell was the first speaker, and Paul Castro was next. Then we heard four men from New York--Artie, Richard, Patrick and Peter. I was the last speaker. I climbed the stairs and looked out. It was everything I had imagined it would be and it seemed unreal at the same time. I began--

Hello. My name is Bob Reynolds, and I was born and raised in San Francisco.

I have hopes and dreams. I have doubts and fears. I get happy; I get sad. I laugh and I cry. And when they stick a needle into my arm--it hurts!

Many of you have the same emotions and feelings. The difference for me is that in June of 1982 I was diagnosed with Kaposi's sarcoma. I have AIDS.

Now the world views me as a vague statistic, as a victim.

I want to set the record straight.

HEY, WORLD--I AM A PERSON!!!

I am not a number on a file card at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta. I definitely DO NOT see myself as a victim. I have put too much effort and energy into meeting the challenges of this epidemic.

I stand here tonight as a caring, feeling, loving human being.

I AM A FIGHTER!!!

I am proud and happy to have been asked to be here tonight to speak to you.

I'd like to send a hug to my lover, Mark Wood. He has been my Rock of Gibraltar, a constant source of love and strength and understanding.

I'd also like to send a hug to and acknowledge those people with AIDS who are unable to attend the marches and vigils being held tonight across our country. I feel their spirit is with us here at the nation's Capitol.

I'd like to thank all my wonderful friends for their loving and caring, especially those men and women of Shanti Project who have helped me to find a new and rewarding way to live my life.

And I'd like to acknowledge each and every one of you for making a personal statement about AIDS by marching with us tonight. Give yourself a hand!

I was asked to come here to take you on a little journey. It's a journey of the mind and of the heart. After we complete this journey together, I think you'll leave here feeling good--and with a warm glow of love in your heart.
(At this point, I asked all the people with AIDS to join me on the stage. There were about 17 of us. We were given a five minute ovation.)

If it's possible, I'd like you to take the hand of the person next to you.

Close your eyes.
Take a deep breath,
And let it out.
Take another deep breath, and as you exhale, allow the tension to leave your body.

Relax.

Become aware of the heart beating in your chest.
Notice that your heartbeat is calm and regular.

Imagine--
that the place in your chest where you feel your heart beating is the part of your being that is the most loving.

As you take your next breath, imagine that this heart space is being filled with a warm golden light, a light of love.
You can feel your heart pump this healing light to every part of your body.
It touches your pain and grief, your anger and hurt, your fear and sorrow.
As this light radiates within you, you are calmed and soothed and comforted.
As it permeates every cell in your body, you realize your own special uniqueness and how worthy of love you are.

The love within you continues to grow and becomes stronger with every breath.
It reaches outside your body and merges with the love of the sisters and brothers around you.

The power of this love is mighty!
In this moment, in this place, our love is the most powerful energy in the universe.
And we can form this energy into a golden beam of lovelight.
With this beam we can reach out to the fear and homophobia in our friends and loved ones, and we can educate.
We can reach out to the hate and hysteria in all segments of our communities, and we can surround it and diffuse it with our love.
We can send this lovelight within ourselves to the doubts and anxieties that torment us. We can find a calmness and the strength to face another day.

We can help all factions in our society to put aside their past differences and to unite with a common purpose, a human purpose—to overcome AIDS.

We can reach out to those people with AIDS in the small towns and the big cities throughout our country, and we can send them our wishes for healing and well being. We can give them the strength and the courage to stand tall and speak out for their rights.

We can send this powerful golden beam to the hearts and consciousness of the policy makers in all levels of government, and we can believe in this moment in our ability to affect changes.

And we can affect changes in those we meet in our everyday life.

Take a moment now and picture in your mind and heart those people with AIDS who have touched your life.

(Pause)

With our combined energies we can surround these friends, wherever they may be, with our love—a healing force that knows no limitations.

- We can cry with them for the many losses.
- We can scream with them over the unfairness.
- We can share the rainbows, the joy of our laughter, and the warm glow of a smile.
- We can share ourselves fully.
- By not holding back we become vulnerable.
- By being vulnerable, we can allow ourselves to heal and be healed, to care and be cared for, to love and be loved.
- By reaching out to another person to touch another life with compassion and love—

WE CAN WORK MIRACLES!

Take a deep breath.
Let it out.

You have just allowed yourself to feel the power and magic of love, to reach out to another and show you care.

When you feel low, or when those doubts and anxieties arise, you have a place to go now, a place within yourself, a safe place, a loving place.

You can retreat to your heart space and find comfort and the strength and courage to go on.
AIDS has disrupted many lives. It has left much heartache and many questions unanswered.

But know—in every cell of your being—that your loving, your caring, your just being there does make a difference and will help those of us with AIDS to continue to fight for our lives.

Take a breath.
Let it out.

Become aware of the people around you, your feet on the ground, the hand you're holding, the wind in your face.

People with AIDS need you to help us through the rough times and to share the good times.

There may come a time when you, too, will need someone to share your rough times or your good times.

Don't be afraid to reach out!

(Pause)
Open your eyes.
Look around you at all the wonderful people.

And reach out and find someone to hug.

I love you.

Thank you and goodnight.

The drawing for the Shanti AIDS Emergency Sweepstakes was held at the Trocadero Transfer on October 15. It was a festive evening with food, dancing and high spirits. Senator Milton Marks, Dr. Mervyn Silverman, Supervisor Harry Britt, Sheriff Mike Hennessey, Trocadero Transfer owner Dick Collier and several other community figures helped us draw the winning tickets for the door prizes and the five big prizes. Congratulations to all the winners! Thanks to all of you who supported the Sweepstakes and helped to make it a success. The money raised will be allocated for direct services for persons with AIDS.

On September 19, at a reception at the Pride Center, the City and County of San Francisco awarded several certificates of merit. The first was to all the volunteers of Shanti Project in recognition of their work with people with AIDS. A second award was presented to members of the Community Volunteer Program who have worked in the AIDS residence program. Shanti Project is comprised of dedicated men and women who have donated many hours of loving and caring. A big hug and thank you from people with AIDS.
Jack has KS and receives his interferon treatment each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Ward 86, SFGH. He suggests a carpool be arranged. It sounds like a good idea to me. Those that drive would pick up those that don't, and they would help with gas money. If you are interested in participating, contact Randy Chelsey at 558-9644.

Jim, a person with AIDS-Related Conditions, and the Reverend Michael England of MCC on Eureka Street have asked that this memo be included in our newsletter:

This past summer the international General Conference of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches adopted two extensive resolutions establishing AIDS ministry as one of our highest priorities. The resolutions included calling local congregations to examine their own attitudes and to establish gay-positive, wellness-positive and sex-positive Christian outreach. They also included specific steps, both long-term and shorter-term, to be taken at the denominational level to equip clergy and congregations to provide effective ministry.

Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco (one of two MCC's in the City and eight in the Bay Area) is already active in providing free meeting space for AIDS groups, blood donations by MCC SF women, participating in AIDS-awareness-raising demonstrations, ministering to people with AIDS and their loved ones in the congregation and so forth. A grant proposal has just been submitted which may provide a full-time salary for a clergyperson from MCC SF ministering full-time in the area of AIDS.

In the meantime, MCC SF wants you to be fully aware that we are eager to provide personal ministry (counseling, peer support and so forth), especially in religious/spiritual areas. Our denomination has its primary ministry among lesbian/gay men, so we feel a special involvement in the struggles and pain this illness is causing our brothers and their loved ones. We know our gayness is God's gift to us and we find shocking the perverted idea that we somehow deserve AIDS or that it may be God's punishment.

We are eager to be present with you in ministry in whatever ways you feel you need. It isn't important whether you see yourself as Christian or not. We care because of the care we ourselves receive from God, not for what we can get you to do or become. Please feel free to call on us, or have someone call on your behalf, whether you just want someone to listen, to help you work through difficult or uncomfortable feelings (especially about God or your spirituality), to help intervene with loved ones. We are here for you.

The MCC's number is 863-4434.

We at Shanti are still in the process of developing a referral list of gay and lesbian therapists. If you would like a referral, contact Flo Elyon or Bea Tracy at 558-9644. If you have worked with a sensitive therapist, please call with the therapist's name and phone number so we can add them to our list.
When I developed this newsletter in the last months of 1982, my intention was to reach as many people with AIDS as possible, to pass on information that we were getting at SFGH which didn't seem to be given at other hospitals. The focus this past year has expanded however, with information on alternative therapies, legal services, Social Security, forums, parties, and much more. I would still like to reach as many as possible with this newsletter. If you know of a person with AIDS or someone in the "gray zone" who is not on our mailing list, please forward their name and address to me, c/o Shanti Project. Thanks.

This weekend (November 5 and 6) will be the next training for those interested in becoming Community Volunteers. With the increased number of volunteers available, we should be able to furnish services to more people with AIDS. Call Randy with your requests at 558-9644. She has asked us to include the following memo:

The Community Volunteer Program is entering its second month and we are already planning a new training! People have asked me why anyone would want to do this sort of volunteer work. The volunteers have told me that this is a way they can do something rather than simply sitting with their anger and helplessness while they watch their friends who are being diagnosed with AIDS. During the month of September, the 28 Community Volunteers provided 426 hours of service, including cooking, house-cleaning, laundry and medical transportation. As many of you know, our largest unmet need at this time is medical transportation. I've been actively recruiting people who are available during the day and have cars.

I know it's hard to ask for help. Please know that there is a list of fully screened and trained volunteers ready to assist you. If you can use any of the services we offer or have any questions, or if you know of anyone who would like to be volunteers, please call me - Randy Chelsey - at 558-9644. I hope to hear from you soon.

The next training for those interested in becoming volunteer counselors with Shanti will be the weekends of November 11-13 and 18-20.

Shanti has received a letter from a prison inmate, a gay 19-year-old man, who would like to correspond with a lonely person with AIDS. His name and address can be obtained from Andrew, the Shanti office manager. This young man seems sincere, but since there have been reports in B.A.R. recently where money orders have been altered in a scam with prison inmates, I suggest caution if you decide to write to him.

In the bi-weekly listing of AIDS-related educational events published by the AIDS/KS Foundation, notice on November 17, "The Media and AIDS: Immune to the Facts?", scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at 1021 Sanchez Street, with a door charge of $1 for Media Alliance Members and $3 for non-members. Participants are listed as Bobbi Campbell, a person with AIDS; David Horowitz, of California magazine "Whitewash" fame; Paul Lorch, editor of the B.A.R.; Jay Levy, M.D., from UCSF; and Randy Schiltz, from the Chronicle. If your blood pressure allows, you might just drop in and tell them what you think the media has done to hinder/help you in your fight against AIDS. Information person is Jim Greenberg, 441-2557.
To be included in the AIDS/KS Foundation bi-weekly mailing of educational events, send your name and address to the AIDS/KS Foundation at 54--10th Street, SF, CA 94103, or call Mitch Bart, 864-4376.

Speaking of the AIDS/KS Foundation, they are now providing services in Santa Clara County. They have a speakers bureau and an AIDS hotline which operates noon to 9:00 p.m. weekdays. They sponsor a worried well support group each Tuesday evening and a "Living with AIDS" group for people with AIDS, their families and friends. Their offices are at 715 North First Street, Ste. 10; San Jose, CA 95112. Their telephone number is 408/298-AIDS.

The following is from a letter I received from Peter:

Hi. My name is Peter. I have been having a wide variety of AIDS-Related Condition symptoms for nine months. As I don't have KS or pneumocystis, I don't currently qualify for the "AIDS" label. As far as I'm concerned, it is all a gradation of the same illness.

I am pursuing holistic therapy and am working with a homeopath. I am also experimenting with diet and nutritional supplements.

It would be wonderful to meet one or several persons who are ill and are currently working with alternative therapies or are seriously interested in them.

Please contact me if you would like to share your experiences. I need your support and perhaps you need mine, as we must maintain a positive attitude if we're going to recover.

Peter's phone number and/or address are available through Andrew, 558-9644.

Richard Kerr, a homeopathic therapist, was given a large assortment of homeopathic remedies that had been donated to Shanti. Enclosed is a copy of his agreement with Shanti.

A memo from Eric Moore:

One of the difficult choices facing a person with AIDS is the choice of which course of treatment, if any, to pursue.

To aid this process, several of us are working on a questionnaire to be sent to people with AIDS asking about the kinds of treatments, traditional and alternative, we have tried and what the results have been.

If you are interested in working with me on this project, leave a message for me at Shanti. The primary purpose will be to provide a more complete source of information to other people with AIDS who are facing these choices for the first time. When you receive our questionnaire in the mail, please fill it out and return it. Thank you.
Due to a reoccurring interest in and need for an alcoholics anonymous group for persons with AIDS, a couple are being formed at this time. For further information, contact Bea Tracy, 558-9644.

There will be no KS Forum at UCSF this month. In its place, people with AIDS are invited to attend the KS Study Group on Thursday, November 10, from 11:00-noon, at the Dermatology Clinic. Dr. Dan Stiles will present on the role of interleukons as T-cell stimulators.

We had our Halloween dance and party on October 22 at Pride Center. About 75 people enjoyed an evening of music, costumes and good times. I would especially like to thank Dale Hansen for an incredible job of organization and morning-after cleanup (someone in black body paint left his mark EVERYWHERE!!). Also, big hugs to Ron Carey for the cake and to the volunteers who cut and peeled vegies. The music was presented by Jake. I understand he had everyones' toes tapping--THANKS for a great time.

To those of you who came--I understand some costumes were exceptional--thanks for helping to make the party a success. To those of you who didn't make it, I hope we can look forward to seeing you at upcoming events.

This party was intended as a place where people with AIDS could come to socialize and have fun with other people with AIDS--to meet them outside the hospital/clinic. Also, a place where we could meet the volunteers, staff and board members of Shanti and the AIDS/KS Foundation in a non-formal, friendly setting.

The night of the dance, one of the guys was sitting there tapping his foot to the music. He looked up and said, "Would anyone like to dance?" He found a partner and danced for a few minutes. Coming back to his seat, he was beaming with a smile from ear to ear. "That was fun. I haven't danced in a real long time."

This one event made the whole evening worthwhile. I hope we can bring that smile to more of your faces!

The Board of Directors of Shanti Project has allocated $5,000 from the monies collected in the Sweepstakes to be used to develop a recreation program for people with AIDS. We've started calling it The Fun Squad. More details will be reported as the program becomes a reality.

In the near future we have plans for a weekly or bi-weekly meeting to play cards or board games. At this point we have chosen Thursday afternoons from 1:00-4:00 p.m. We have the encouragement and cooperation of Steve Harris, owner of the Castro Country Club on 18th Street, to use his facilities. As the details stack up, we'll shuffle them your way.

Ken Joachim and Jim Gotzman, Shanti volunteers, have planned holiday dinners on Thanksgiving and Christmas days. The turkey will be donated; the rest of the meal will be potluck. Please bring a prepared dish (kitchen facilities not available). Also, bring utensils and plates so the atmosphere will be homier--instead of eating off paper plates. Also bring the beverage of your choice. Coffee and tea will be served. The dinner will be at 3:00 p.m. on each holiday at the Kabuki Shiatsu School (Amma Institute) at 1865 Post in Japantown. Invited are all Shanti volunteers and clients and their friends and significant others. Please RSVP by the Monday before (11/21).
Gayling Gee, head nurse at Ward 86, SFGH, would like to decorate the examining rooms, halls, and waiting rooms with pictures and wall hangings. It is rather plain and very WHITE right now. If you would like to donate or know of someone that does, call her at 821-8830. Also, there have been some posters donated. If you know of someplace that will give a "deal" on framing, call Gayling. Thanks!

Ed Power of the AIDS/KS Foundation asked me to include the following:

As many of you may know from past issues of this newsletter, the San Francisco AIDS/KS Foundation administers a grant program designed to assist people with AIDS who have low incomes. This program can provide you with up to $200 to meet an immediate need which will alleviate an ongoing need. Last month, 12 people applied for grants totalling $2865. All but one of these grants were approved.

The grants are commonly used to meet obvious needs. People have used this program to get stoves, refrigerators, eyeglasses, heaters, clothes, and blankets. However, the program can also help with less obvious needs such as dental work, medical expenses which are not covered by insurance and moving expenses.

There is another component of this program which can help you if you have to move. Grants can be submitted for up to $500 to help you meet the costs of moving into a new apartment (last month's rent, security deposit, etc.). As long as your rent is 60% or less of your monthly income, this program can help you over the initial financial burden of getting a new apartment.

If you are interested in more information about these programs, please call Ed Power at the SF AIDS/KS Foundation, 864-4376.

Love and peace,

Bobby Reynolds
Persons with AIDS Coordinator
Shanti Project

BR:al
To the Shanti Project
The Pride Center
San Francisco, California

In consequence of the gift of a large quantity of homeopathic remedies, I agree to the following conditions:

1) I will treat any AIDS patient who seeks my counsel at no fee for any medication. Furthermore, if any AIDS patient is indigent in consequence of his/her disease I will treat that person without fee for my services.
2) I will not charge any person if they are treated with the remedies given me by Shanti for the medications used.
3) I am prepared to offer sliding scale fees for my services to any person who seeks my services.
4) I will treat any person who seeks my advice without respect to race, religion, national origin, sex or sexual orientation.
5) I am willing to treat any person desirous of my services who is also utilizing the services of a Medical Doctor, if it is my opinion that homeopathic intervention might be useful for such a person.
6) I do not advise my clients that it is necessary to abandon classical medical treatment in order to benefit from homeopathic therapy.

In addition to these agreements, I am willing to cooperate with the Shanti Project so far as educational programs which might acquaint our community with the benefits of homeopathy. Such programs will be organized as mutually convenient for information and education purposes.

Cordially,

The Rev. Richard Kerr
The San Francisco AIDS/KS Foundation presents

SEX
in the age of AIDS

A FORUM FOR GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN

Tuesday, November 15, 7 PM
MCC Church, 150 Eureka Street

- Presentations and workshops on how to reduce your risk of contracting AIDS, by David Lourea, EdD
  Tom Smith, MD
- Small discussion groups after the presentation will be led by psychotherapists
- For more information:
  San Francisco AIDS/KS Foundation
  54 10th Street, San Francisco 94103
  864-4376

Photo by Mick Hicks
September 7, 1984

Dear Friends,

What is healing? Are we capable of healing ourselves? It appears that our ability to heal ourselves both physically and emotionally lies in our continued willingness to accept our own transformative power. This same power allows children to take their first unassisted steps and enables young men and women to say what they feel, even at the risk of family and social ridicule. Healing is born in our commitment to take risks - to live our vision instead of our fear.

I want to believe in my ability to heal myself, yet more importantly, I am willing to play my part in making it happen. When we clearly affirm that healing does exist and believe in our ability to change, we open to the healing process. Often, our attitudes appear so rigid that we get hooked into thinking that where we are is so far from where we want to be. However, spontaneous remissions and physical healings do happen, and thoughts and feelings of lack and limitation can lift in a moment.

A friend of ours died recently. His name was Bobbi. He was the longest living person with AIDS in San Francisco, having been diagnosed in September 1981. Bobbi believed in healing and he was an instrument of healing both for himself and for others. He inspired us to believe in our own power to transform. His death was in no way a defeat of healing; his life was a testament to living each moment more fully than the previous. Bobbi lived and died healing, for he knew that healing was not an end, but rather the means by which one lives.
Our Shanti staff, as does our community, has periods of despair and hopelessness. At times it feels as if every person with AIDS is going to die from the disease. But daily we are joined by people all over this planet who confront despair and hopelessness and focus on healing and transformation. It seems that in the end, regardless of how we live or die, we all gain by entering each moment with a sense of our own magic and our limitless possibilities.

Your contribution allows this healing process to continue. You enable over 160 emotional and practical support volunteers to provide over 70,000 hours annually to our clients. Your gift helps provide supportive housing and transportation to medical appointments. Moreover, you join the hundreds of other donors who are helping to fund an organization which supports people in living, in dying and in healing. You, dear friend, are a treasure and your financial support and your uplifting attitude toward our work makes what we do possible.

I love you.

Sincerely,

Jim Geary
Executive Director
Thank you for expressing interest in volunteering for Shanti Project. Currently we have more than 150 Emotional Support Volunteers working with people with AIDS, their lovers, families and friends. These volunteers provide the community with approximately 60,000 free counseling hours annually. Emotional Support Volunteers participate in a comprehensive, experientially oriented training program and have ongoing resource and support systems available to them.

A Shanti Emotional Support volunteer is expected to commit a minimum of six to eight hours a week for a minimum of six months. Volunteers are required to attend supervision/support group meetings every Monday evening. Because our volunteers must be accessible to emergency needs of our clients, we accept applications from residents of San Francisco only.

Please complete the enclosed application form and essay. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged. You may then be contacted for an interview session a few weeks before the next training (see below).

Thank you again. We hope that you benefit from the application process and that we will be hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jim Geary
Executive Director

P.S. Our next training for Emotional Support Volunteers will be held March 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 1985. Attendance is required for the entire training. The hours of the training are 6-9:30pm on Friday evenings and 9am-6pm on Saturdays and Sundays. A $50 donation is requested to cover expenses of the training and manual; if this is a hardship, please contact the office. We accept a limited number of trainees who wish to take the training for their own experience but who do not wish to volunteer; we request these trainees to make a $150 donation.

Please return the application before February 25 so that we may conveniently schedule interviews.

Enc.
SHANTI PROJECT
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

NAME__________________________________________ PHONE: HOME_________
ADDRESS________________________________________ WORK_________
________________________________________________ BIRTH DATE_________

Date:________

How did you first hear about Shanti Project?________

Are you presently employed?_____ Part or Full Time?_______

What is your occupation?________

Are you a student?_____ Where?___________ Field?__________

Have you had any previous counseling experience?_____ What kind and where?______________

Do you speak any language other than English?____________

Have you recently experienced a major life change (work situation, relationships, living situation, etc.)?_____ If yes, please elaborate.___________________________________________

Are you now grieving a death that has occurred either recently or in the distant past?_____ If yes, when and who?_________________________________

Briefly tell us why you want to be a Shanti volunteer counselor. Cover the following points in your essay:
**your personal experience with serious illness and the effect it has had on you.
**your personal experience with grief and your feelings about the grieving process.
**your feelings about the AIDS epidemic and its effect on your life.
**your responses to feelings of helplessness in yourself and others.
**the sources of emotional support in your life.
**your feelings about meeting the commitment in time and energy the Project requires.
**anything else you would like us to know.

We appreciate the time and thought involved in completing this application and hope that you have benefited from the process. After a careful review of your application, you may be contacted for a prospective volunteer interview a few weeks before the next training.
SHANTI PROJECT SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS, THEIR LOVERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS IN SAN FRANCISCO

Individual Counseling

Shanti Project provides free volunteer counseling services in San Francisco to people with AIDS, their lovers, families and friends. Counseling is provided wherever it is needed—in the home, hospital, or other care facility. Please refer to the attached "What is Shanti Project" for a more detailed description of Shanti's counseling services.

Support Groups

Shanti has ongoing group meetings so that clients facing similar situations can utilize each other for support and strength. AIDS-related support groups are: two weekly groups for people with AIDS; a weekly anticipatory grief group for friends, families, and lovers of people with AIDS; and a weekly bereavement group for those grieving the death of someone with AIDS. Persons are asked to make a commitment to attend the group for at least four weeks after the first meeting.

Practical Support Program

The Practical Support Program volunteers assist people with AIDS and their lovers and housemates with errands such as transportation, housework, shopping, and preparing meals. Shanti Project will soon have a van available to transport people with AIDS to medical appointments.

AIDS Residence Program

Shanti's AIDS Residence Program provides long-term, low-cost housing for people with AIDS who have experienced housing difficulties due to finances or AIDS hysteria. Residents are self-governing and make group household decisions within
the aegis of Shanti. Shanti works with other agencies (SF Hospice and Visiting Nurses' Association) in assisting them to provide home care to persons within the Residence Program.

**San Francisco General Hospital Counseling**

Shanti Project staff counselors work with people with AIDS on the AIDS Special Care Unit (5B) and on other units at SF General Hospital. A staff counselor is also available at the AIDS Outpatient Unit (Ward 86). These counselors are available for emotional support to the patients and to their family members, lovers and friends; they also provide support to healthcare professionals working with people with AIDS.

**People with AIDS Newsletter**

A monthly newsletter is available to persons with AIDS. The newsletter provides information about upcoming events of interest, resources available to people with AIDS, helpful hints, etc.

**AIDS Recreational Program**

The AIDS Recreational Program, affectionately known as "The Fun Squad," plans social events such as dances, parties, and picnics, for people with AIDS and their friends. A weekly gathering is held to socialize, play cards and board games.

**Videotape Training Materials**

A series of 22 videotapes with accompanying manual are available to organizations wishing to train volunteers to work with people with AIDS. For more information, please contact our office.
August 30, 1985

Dear Friends,

This morning I visited one of our Emotional Support Volunteers who was diagnosed with Pneumocystis pneumonia three weeks ago. Lee had been a volunteer counselor working with persons with AIDS and their loved ones for three months. One of our volunteer coordinators had informed me that Lee had decided against any medical treatment. I was aware that when Pneumocystis pneumonia is left untreated death usually occurs within a month. Receiving treatment is often effective in sustaining one's life for a considerably longer duration.

Before visiting Lee, I had entertained brief fantasies of "saving" him from the effects of his decision. I imagined cross-examining him to assure that he had thought of all the ramifications of his actions. In our Shanti trainings we talk a great deal about suicidal ideation and "right to die" issues. In our work with clients who are grieving, we instruct volunteers to explore in depth their client's suicidal feelings, seek additional therapeutic counsel if needed, and be ready to intervene whenever necessary. However, when working with a client who is in the last stages of a life-threatening illness, we recognize and respect the right of an individual, who after comprehensive personal review of their intended actions, decides to surrender to the dying process. My visit with Lee posed a slightly more complex situation, in that if he opted for medical treatment he would very likely live a longer time.

When I called to schedule my visit Lee had made it clear that he was angry at several Shanti friends who had persistently challenged him on his decision. As I sat at his bedside I opened to a man who dreaded the prospect of a lingering dying process, who shared his excitement regarding being reunited with his deceased lover who died of AIDS three years ago, and who was apprehensive but hopeful about a visit from his alcoholic father, whom Lee had not seen in thirteen years, on the following day.
In the hour we spent together I found that by listening closely to Lee my feelings of uncertainty regarding his decision lifted. With respect to all my feelings about how I might make a different choice, he was making the choice right for himself. As I said my final goodbyes to him this morning and thanked him for his volunteer work, I knew that his and my relationship with Shanti were restored. His Shanti friends who questioned him did so out of love and concern. If they had not asked him so many soul searching questions I would have. However, the magic of Shanti is ultimately in letting go of our own agenda and honoring another's truth. Lee had his truth honored today and I was given the gift of witnessing it.

Each of you have witnessed the truth of Shanti Project and have honored us with your financial support and notes of praise. At this time of year we ask you to honor us again with your financial contribution. As we continue to respond to the needs created by the AIDS epidemic, your support continues to be an integral part of our success. Funds are urgently needed to supervise our 300 emotional and practical support volunteers and to train additional volunteers as the epidemic expands. Our current eight residential houses for persons with AIDS are filled and money is needed to open and manage six more by June 1986.

The AIDS unit at San Francisco General Hospital is expanding from a 12 to 20 bed facility. More staff counselors are needed to deal with the array of often painful emotions of patients and their loved ones.

Whether dealing with one individual, such as Lee, or the needs of an entire city faced with a devasting epidemic your role is essential in assuring that Shanti's presence will be there.

Please contribute today. Your financial gift today awakens our dreams for tomorrow.

Thank you,

Jim Geary
Executive Director

P.S. It has been four days since I visited Lee. I called this morning to get approval for this letter. I learned from Lee's friend John that Lee is very close to death and that the reconciliation with his father was everything of which Lee had ever dreamed.
November 27, 1985

You Have Made...

an important difference in the quality of the lives of people with AIDS in San Francisco. Your donation made it possible for Shanti Project to provide emotional, practical or residential support for over 3,500 clients last year.

The number of new cases continues to climb.

Shanti Project is hard pressed to meet the ever increasing needs of these newly diagnosed clients, while maintaining the same quality services to our ongoing clients.

Your financial support will make the difference...

Your donation will help train needed counselors...

Your donation will help provide housing for displaced people with AIDS...

Your donation will ensure the continuity of excellence that Shanti services provide to our community...

So many are so grateful for your kind and generous support. You are Shanti.

Thank you,

Jim Geary
Executive Director

**P.S. We missed your support in 1985.**
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
Dear Friend,

Thank you for your interest in Shanti Project's AIDS Support Workshop. We are pleased to accept you for the weekend workshop.

The hours of the workshop are:

- Friday, June 6: 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Saturday, June 7: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday, June 8: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

The location of the training is 890 Hayes Street (at Fillmore), San Francisco.

Shanti Executive Director Jim Geary, assisted by other staff, board and volunteer members, will lead the workshop. The workshop, based on Shanti's Emotional Support Volunteer Training, will include an overview of medical and psycho-social issues surrounding AIDS and will emphasize effective ways of supporting people with AIDS and their loved ones. The workshop also presents participants with an opportunity to explore their own feelings as caregivers and people working in AIDS-related service organizations. We will include an overview of the organization, policies and procedures of our volunteer counseling program.

On Saturday and Sunday, we will provide beverages and light lunches. We ask that you bring a sleeping bag, mat or something comfortable to lie on for some of the workshop exercises on Saturday and Sunday.

The training fee of $100 is payable by the beginning of the workshop on Friday evening.

We look forward to this weekend with you!

Sincerely,

Andrew R. Lewallen
Volunteer Coordinator
August 28, 1986

Dear Friends,

It is so hard to watch someone die.

My friend Pete is dying and a big part of me wants to run away. I want my old familiar Pete, distinguished, gracious and fun-loving instead of the new Pete who is ashen, thin, self-absorbed, lingering. At times I want to scream, "It is not fair!" I do not know why it is happening and I do not want to make sense of it. I want to cry and stop being strong and spiritually understanding.

I am continuing to learn the importance of allowing myself to feel what I am experiencing, rather than trying to feel something else. Yet it is so difficult to sit with feelings of helplessness, anger, awkwardness and hurt.

I want the confusion, the pain and Pete's suffering to end. But more important, I want to know how to be during this period. I need to give myself permission to cry and let go of my desire to have the answers. I need to grieve my friend's dying now.

Pete's dying has made me once again aware of the special role Shanti volunteers play. Volunteers give permission for family members and friends to be themselves. Our volunteers continue to offer support, even when those they work with can not find answers, are not always positive and are not in control. Shanti volunteers validate our relationships and the sometimes painful and confusing ways we respond when someone we love is suffering. There are times when I need to hurt, and I need to be reminded that hurting does not translate to having failed myself or others.
I ask that you join me in feeling and healing your own places of hurt. I also ask that you join me in supporting the wonderfully simple, yet magnificent, work of hundreds of Shanti volunteers, volunteers who, by their non-judgmental listening, enable and guide us in understanding our human experience.

In San Francisco, we now have one hundred newly diagnosed people with AIDS each month. Hundreds of new Shanti volunteers are needed to support these people and the many loved ones affected by their diagnoses.

Your financial support is essential. Sixty percent of our 1986/87 budget will be provided by people like ourselves, who know the value of the services Shanti Project provides. Please join me in contributing today.

My love to you,

Jim Geary
Executive Director
August 27, 1987

Dear Friends:

In past quarterly donor letters, I have intentionally avoided hard-hitting fundraising appeals. I have done this because of my desire to share with you a deeper understanding of the work we do. It is still my intention to do this. However, I need for you to also understand how essential your ongoing support is to the thousands of people we serve. I also am concerned that people think Shanti Project is better off financially than it is. Shanti Project's current capabilities and the Project's ability to do what lies ahead are directly linked to how you respond to this letter.

During this current fiscal year, Shanti Project needs your help to raise over two million dollars. These quarterly appeal letters, alone, must yield five hundred fifty thousand dollars. In addition, to realize our 1987-88 budget, Shanti will have to secure one hundred fifty thousand dollars from non-mailing list donors, two hundred seventy thousand dollars from benefits, and two hundred twenty five thousand dollars from grants. As you can see, we have our work cut out for us.

Shanti Project's July 1987 to June 1988 budget is three million, two hundred thousand dollars. Less than 37% of this budget will be funded by local and state government. Our recently negotiated contract with United Way will increase United Way's funding level to three hundred thousand dollars. However, these funds will not be forthcoming until fiscal year 1988-89, nearly a year away. Shanti Project needs your support today.

You may be unaware that less than 50% of our internationally acclaimed Emotional and Practical Support Programs' budgets are funded by the City and County of San Francisco. Within these programs, currently, over 600 volunteers donate a minimum of eight hours weekly for six months, to care for people with AIDS and their loved ones. Over seventy five thousand dollars is needed this fiscal year just to cover advertising costs for the recruitment of volunteers.

525 Howard Street
San Francisco
California 94105
415-777-CARE
Shanti Project knows that these future volunteers are available for us to train. Yet, Shanti also realizes that to do this massive recruitment drive, your financial support is the key. One hour of these volunteer services, when divided into total programmatic costs, averages less than $5.60. With your donations, over 200,000 volunteer hours will be supplied to people with AIDS and their loved ones in the coming fiscal year.

Approximately 25% of Shanti Project's Residence Program and 33% of our counseling services at San Francisco General Hospital need to be funded. Our Residence Program shelters people with AIDS for forty dollars per day, compared to over two hundred fifty dollars per day for convalescent care. Our staff counselors at San Francisco General Hospital provide immensely effective peer counseling to patients and families faced with extraordinarily difficult issues, such as being diagnosed with AIDS, life support options, family rejection, substance abuse and suicidal ideation. These services are offered free of charge to clients, at a cost that is less than half the amount that would be required for hospital psychiatric services.

Shanti Project's total cost for its Public Education and Information and Referral programs must be supported by non-City and State funds. Currently over five hundred telephone calls a day are received through our main switchboard, and our Public Education Department will directly interact with an estimated forty-eight thousand concerned people this coming year. In addition, the comprehensive updating of Shanti's internationally used training video tapes and Shanti's entire Public Education Campaign to outreach children, women, minorities and IV drug users are dependent upon Shanti Project's ability to raise non-City funds.

I, too, take pride in supporting Shanti Project financially. I would not financially support Shanti if I felt that the money was being poorly managed, that salary levels were too high, or that client services were ineffective. I know you share my respect for the work of our volunteers and staff. Because of this respect, and my daily witness to the many benefits Shanti Project's clients receive, I ask you to join me in increasing your current level of support. Together we can assure that Shanti Project will be able to respond to the growing epidemic in consistently effective ways.

Sincerely,

Jim Geary
Executive Director
April 13, 1989

Dear Health Care Provider,

As you know from working with the PWAs in your practice, a diagnosis of AIDS brings with it complex psychosocial concerns. In an effort to meet these needs for PWAs, their family, friends, and lovers, Shanti Project offers a Client Support Group Program. Based on a active-listening peer counseling model, these groups are facilitated by experienced Shanti volunteers and staff. The groups are clinically supervised by Gail Winston, MFCC.

Often the most effective form of emotional support can come simply from knowing that one is not alone with the overwhelming issues of an AIDS diagnosis.

In your efforts to set up a support structure for your AIDS-affected clients, please consider referring them to Shanti Project. With the approval of your clients, our Clinical Coordinator will be happy to work with you to insure optimal support. Individual peer counseling is also available. Recognizing the limits of peer counseling, we have often referred clients to therapists for additional support.

If you have any questions about the Client Support Group Program or individual peer counseling, please call me at 777-2273.

Sincerely,

Carol Kleinmaier
Emotional Support Volunteer Coordinator

p.s. If you would like additional information and flyers to distribute to clients, please let me know.

CK/clb
Dear Friend,

On my first day at work here, my most important meeting was not with the Board of Directors, Shanti staff, or the representatives of other groups who came to welcome me to San Francisco. It was with Dan, a person with AIDS who receives services from Shanti. His story showed me just how effective Shanti Project is -- and how much your support is needed for us to continue our work.

He told me about his life since diagnosis three years ago: a familiar litany of medical problems, bureaucratic logjams, and emotional turmoil. But as he spoke, Dan was smiling, almost serene. "I can live with AIDS," he said. "But there are two things no one can live without -- dignity and hope."

Because of Shanti Project, an AIDS diagnosis no longer means a loss of these essentials.

Many of you know how important a Shanti emotional support volunteer can be to someone who is grappling with an AIDS diagnosis. Last year, 520 peer counselors put in more than 120,000 hours working with over 1,800 people with AIDS and their loved ones. You have heard stories of Shanti practical support volunteers shopping, cooking or cleaning house for people living with AIDS. Almost 900 clients received such support last year.

But as dramatic as these numbers are, they reflect only part of the range of services Shanti provides. For instance, you may not know that:

* Eight Shanti counselors at San Francisco General Hospital see an average of more than 200 people a week, helping them through the trauma of initial diagnosis, supporting them through the transition back into the community -- and sharing the final moments of those who will not leave the hospital.

* Shanti's residence program provides affordable housing to 100 people with AIDS each year.

* Our FWA Recreation Program hosts dozens of parties, field trips and retreats, where people with AIDS can socialize in a safe environment.

* Every day, Shanti vans offer people with AIDS free door-to-door transportation to medical appointments.

The quality of our services has garnered an international reputation. Each week, people from around the world gather for an orientation and tour of our headquarters. We are developing a national series of training workshops for volunteers dealing with AIDS in other communities. We also offer a series of videotapes which outline our approach.

Shanti needs your help now more than ever if we are to continue to help people with AIDS maintain hope and dignity.

525 Howard Street
San Francisco
California 94105
415-777-CARE
More than 2,100 San Franciscans are now living with AIDS. 80% of them use at least one of Shanti's services. And a new diagnosis is made every 5 hours.

One out of every six people with AIDS in San Francisco is a Black, Latino, or Asian/Pacific. To continue our leadership, we need to expand these communities' participation in Shanti.

With new treatments, many of us are beginning to deal with AIDS like other chronic illnesses -- as a manageable infection, and no longer the death sentence many believed it was. This good news confronts us with a most welcome challenge: providing even more comprehensive services to more people, and for longer periods.

I am excited about starting at Shanti at this time, and I expect the Project may move in new directions. What is clear is that Shanti will not falter in our basic mission: providing hope and dignity to people with AIDS. We are already planning new ways of addressing the changing needs presented by the AIDS epidemic:

* The waiting list for our residence program is now so long that we could immediately fill twice the present number of Shanti houses. We are already planning how best to address the special housing needs of women, children and families struggling with AIDS.

* In the past year, the number of Emotional Support Groups has doubled. While groups are led by volunteers, we need to rent more and more meeting spaces in neighborhoods around the city.

* There is a mushrooming need for trained emotional and practical support workers -- with a particular need for Black, Latino, or Asian/Pacific volunteers.

Shanti already does so much to offer hope and dignity to people living with AIDS. And we need to do still more. Which is why I'm asking for your support. We are being called upon to move in new directions, to take on new challenges. Without your help we cannot continue.

Please help us to continue to meet the growing and changing needs presented by the epidemic. Please take a moment right now to fill in the enclosed contribution card. Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,

Eric E. Rofes
Executive Director

P.S. Please be generous. Your $25 gift pays a week's rent for a FWA Emotional Support Group. Shanti residence services -- case management, maintenance, sanitation and a home in which to live for each resident -- come to $40 a day. $100 buys the fuel for one month to transport twelve persons with AIDS to medical appointments. $250 enables up to ten newly diagnosed persons with AIDS at San Francisco General Hospital to receive invaluable support from a Shanti staff counselor.
Couples Support Group
(for People with AIDS and their partners)
meets every
WEDNESDAY, 7:00-9:00 pm

This group requires an 8 week commitment from all participants

Our next group for couples begins on
Wednesday, May 10, 1989

for more information

CALL 777-CARE

ADVANCE INTAKE NECESSARY
PLEASE TALK WITH CAROL KLEINMAIER,
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
SUPPORT GROUP for NEWLY DIAGNOSED PERSONS WITH AIDS
(diagnosed up to 6 months)

beginning
THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1989

meets
EVERY THURSDAY, 7:00-9:00pm
AT SHANTI PROJECT

This group requires an 8 week commitment from all participants

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL 777-CARE
Advance intake necessary
Dear Friends:

I want to tell you about some changes in Shanti’s services to our clients. We are making these changes to make it easier for you to get the services you are currently using as well as providing additional services that clients have requested. These changes will begin on April 1 and be completed over a period of time.

1. **Centralized intake and assessment for all Shanti clients**
Now you will need just one application when you want services from Shanti; this will automatically sign you up for all services. When you need a service such as a ride to a medical appointment, taking part in our Activities Program or getting a volunteer, you can call or stop by our office. This will save you time and effort and make sure you can easily get the services you need.

2. **Service plans**
As part of the intake and assessment process, you and your Shanti Case Worker will create a list of services you need and how you can get them. This will include services from other service providers such as food banks, support groups and benefit counselors. This plan will be changed as your needs change.

3. **Information & Referral and Client Advocacy**
Shanti Case Workers will be able to give you names and phone numbers of places that offer services and programs you may need. If necessary, your Case Worker will help you make the phone call or go with you to the agency on your first appointment.

4. **Crisis Intervention**
We know that sometimes problems can be overwhelming and it feels like there are just no answers. If this happens to you, your Case Worker will be there to help you find the answers and get the help you need quickly.

To provide these new services, we are changing the duties of some Shanti staff positions. When our new plan goes into effect each Shanti client will have his or her Case Worker. You, your Case Worker and your volunteer, if you have one, will become a team to make sure that you get the services you want and need in the best and quickest way possible.

This new plan is designed solely to provide better service to all of our clients because you are the reason that Shanti exists. If you have any questions, feel free to call us at 415-864-2273 or stop in the office at 1540 Market Street (at Van Ness).

Sincerely,

Gloria J. Sandoval
Executive Director
I received a call yesterday from the mother of a Person With AIDS. It was my first call of the day at 9:00 am. She had just flown in from a tiny town in Oklahoma. She had called her son and had been scared when he forgot he was on the telephone. He agreed to meet her at the airport, not realizing that he could not do this.

She arrived in the early morning hours finding no one there. She waited three hours at the airport before taking a cab to her son's Tenderloin hotel. She found her son disoriented, lying in bed with absolutely no food in his room. He had apparently not received medical attention in quite a while.

She decided she needed to get him food and walked up and down the streets of the Tenderloin from 7:00 am to 9:00 am looking for an open grocery store. Of course she found nothing.

At the hotel she was informed she owed $45.00 for the night. She was astonished. They suggested she call Shanti.

Our Information and Referral Unit gave her a referral to Family Link, a place where visiting families of People With AIDS can stay.

I explained our van services for medical appointments and she made arrangements for both her and her son to get to a doctor. After explaining the Practical Support Volunteer Program she said she did want a volunteer.

I called a volunteer who said he would love to help her out. I could hear the excitement in his voice. He went over that night, got her established at Family Link and picked up food for them.

Sometimes people ask me how I can stand to do this work with all the intensity of pain and grief.

I love my job. Shanti is a place where, as staff or volunteer, we truly make a difference in the world. Each Person With AIDS that has a meal cooked or clean sheets on their bed has been made that much more comfortable.

A couple of years ago one of our Practical Support Volunteers described our program as doing what needs to be done. And we do it with love.

Randy Chelsey
Administrative Coordinator
Practical Support Program
Dear Friend of Shanti,

Can you remember where you were on June 5, 1981?

Most of us can't. And yet, it was a day that changed our lives forever.

June 5, 1981, was the day the Centers for Disease Control first published their findings about a mysterious new cancer. The Centers called it Gay-Related Immune Deficiency (GRID).

Today, we call it AIDS.

At first, the media virtually ignored the reports of this cruel disease killing members of the gay community. That's why most of us can't recall when the most devastating epidemic of our time actually started.

I was in San Francisco in the spring of 1981. I've seen the gay community turn to fear, panic, and despair. There were stories and rumors about who was sick and who was dying. But there was also hope -- a vision that maybe tomorrow or the next day, a cure would be found.

I can't believe that ten years have passed and there's still no cure. A decade later, some of us are still here -- but a lot of our friends have died.

And yet, as a community, I know we've made tremendous progress. In the middle of it, throughout this challenging decade, Shanti Project has been there.

As a Shanti supporter, you've been there to turn to when the pain, fear, and isolation of an AIDS diagnosis seemed almost unbearable. You helped provide desperately needed support services to thousands of people with AIDS and dis ability HIV, and their loved ones.

And as we end the first decade of the AIDS epidemic, I want to remind you of how far we've come as a community. In memory of our friends and neighbors who have passed away, I'm enclosing a "Decade of Caring and Compassion" timeline for you.

Take a minute to look at it, now, and you will
see ten years of commitment from Shanti Project — underwritten at every turn by compassionate and caring Shanti supporters like you.

I remember my very first call to Shanti in 1983. It was such a different world then. I had a good job. I enjoyed the company of friends on the weekends. I travelled a lot. I loved living in San Francisco.

And then, I started getting sick. I would get so tired, it would take ten cups of coffee to get through the day. I had stomach problems. I was terrified.

There was no one to whom I could talk. I was afraid everyone might walk out the door, and never come back.

And then there was Shanti Project.

By the time I called, in 1983, Shanti Project had already seen a lot of people with AIDS. In fact, Shanti existed before June 5, 1981, providing support to the first gay men diagnosed with a rare skin cancer known as Kaposi's sarcoma — before we even knew about GRID or AIDS.

Shanti had a wonderful support group called the "Gray Zone" — for people like me who had troubling symptoms, but didn't yet have AIDS.

When I joined that group, I felt such enormous relief. Here was a place I could feel safe to talk and be accepted. I heard a lot of pain, but amidst all of it, I met some incredible caring friends. Hearing it all then helped me, later, to deal with my own pain.

I stayed in that group for almost a year. It's hard to look back on it now. Most of the people in the group have died, even the leader of the group, the facilitator, whom I absolutely loved.

Then, in 1984, my doctor told me I had AIDS.

I walked out of the doctor's office and I wandered the streets, just looking at things. Then I went back to my office and cried.

Shanti immediately matched me with an Emotional Support Volunteer. I've had a volunteer ever since.
Learning I had AIDS was so horrible. There was nothing anyone could do, really. And yet, here was my volunteer. He was there beside me the whole time, witnessing what I was going through, without judging me.

I know now that as long as I have this disease, there will be things to talk about. We don't really talk much about dying. That's a small part of it. Mostly, it's about living, one day at a time, and still being productive.

And then one day, I decided to be a Shanti Emotional Support Volunteer myself. I did it for two years. And it was painful because I lost people.

But it also helped me. I learned how to be there for someone, and not to put my judgments on them. I also learned, through the courage of other people, how to face the worsening symptoms of the disease, and keep on living.

Today, I have an Emotional Support Volunteer and a Practical Support Volunteer. I'm getting so weak I find it difficult to even get up the stairs with my groceries.

Sometimes, it's not easy to look back on the past decade. We've lost so many friends. But Shanti, for me, has been about living the best life I can, even with this dreaded disease.

And that's what it's all about -- the Shanti Residences, the Activities Program, the volunteers, and all the other services.

Despite the loss and the pain, you and I have so much of which to be proud. I want you to know what you've helped create at Shanti Project. Every new Shanti program has been developed in response to people with AIDS saying, "Here's what we need."

And with friends like you saying, "Yes, we will be there to respond to that need."

When people with AIDS began losing their homes, Shanti opened residences. When people needed rides to the doctor, Shanti began a van transportation service. When families with kids started being affected by AIDS, Shanti opened a house for families.
Shanti could never have launched these services without caring people like you. And Shanti can only continue if you'll continue to offer your generous support.

Every month, more and more people turn to Shanti Project for help. Please help make sure Shanti is there for them by giving, once again, a special gift in support of Shanti's life-saving work.

Shanti is commemorating the ten-year history of the AIDS epidemic this month. So I ask you, please, send your contribution today.

I know there are many worthy causes competing for your attention. But I hope you'll make the AIDS services that Shanti Project provides a priority in your giving.

You see, despite all that has happened in the past decade, people who learn they have AIDS today have the exact same fears as they did ten years ago. They feel just as afraid and lonely as I have felt all these years.

That's why I ask you, as we gather our resources to face the second decade of this epidemic, please give generously once again to Shanti Project.

Somewhere out there, there's a person with AIDS who will come to Shanti's doors feeling afraid and very confused. When that day comes -- with your help -- Shanti's doors will be open.

With many, many thanks,

[Signature]
Jay Feinstein
Shanti Board Member

P.S. I hope you'll take a look at the enclosed "Decade of Caring and Compassion" timeline, and feel as proud as I do about all you've helped Shanti Project accomplish. But the number of people needing help from Shanti grows each month. Each one needs services at least as much as I did. Please help make sure Shanti is there for them.
From: Stephen McNeil
841 14th Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

Dear Jay,

Yes, I'll help make sure Shanti Project is there for you -- as we enter our second decade of caring for people with AIDS. Here's my special gift of:

[ ] $100  [ ] $50
[ ] $25    [ ] $____

[ ] Please send me information about becoming a Shanti volunteer.

Please make your tax-deductible gift payable to Shanti Project. Thank you very much.
With many thanks and the very best wishes for the new year.

From all of us at Shanti Project