

# Moving Words from One Who Cares

## A Veteran Volunteer Says 'Thanks'

The Integrative Wellness department recently received a moving letter from veteran HIP Hospital Visitor John Reed, a social worker and administrator of the methadone clinic at King's County Hospital in Brooklyn. John, who has been a HIP volunteer for eight years, has had to step down due to illness. The following is excerpted from his letter:

*"It is with deepest regret that I submit my resignation as a volunteer in the Hospital Visitation Program. I will sincerely miss the grateful handshakes, smiles, tears and other forms of expression from the patients at Forest Hills Hospital, my assigned hospital. The eight years have been wonderful for me. I want to express my deepest appreciation to the Rev. Carl Flemister, for his amazing insight and inspiration to initiate the program and for allowing me to participate in it. To the other staff members, Souci Grimsley, Miriam Shelton and Richard Burke, I also owe you a great debt as well and will remember you always.*

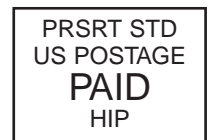
*Again, thank you, and may God continue to bless the Hospital Visitation Program and the staff and volunteers who by their presence and compassionate listening, share in the suffering of the patients they visit." - John Reed*



*The Rev. Carl E. Flemister, Vice President for Integrative Wellness, and Souci F. Grimsley, Director of Integrative Wellness, congratulate John Reed (shown at right) upon his retirement after serving as a hospital visitor for eight years at North Shore Hospital at Forest Hills.*



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# Care Connections

FALL 2003

## A Decade of Caring: The Journey Continues

What started as an experiment 10 years ago at two HIP hospitals has grown into something special: a program that has brought caring and hope to thousands of hospitalized HIP patients and changed the lives of those who visit and comfort them. Over the last decade, the HIP Hospital Visitation Program has recorded an impressive list of accomplishments:

- More than 27,500 patient visits in 2002.
- Over 300 program volunteers.
- Twenty-five HIP affiliated hospitals served.

"That kind of growth is mind-boggling," said the Rev. Carl E. Flemister, founder of the HIP Hospital Visitation Program and now Senior Vice President for Integrative Wellness. "Thanks to the support of HIP senior management, the dedication of our staff and the commitment of our volunteers, we have been able to see our dream become a reality; one that continues to make a difference in people's lives."

The Hospital Visitation Program initially began in two HIP-owned facilities: LaGuardia Hospital, now North Shore Hospital at Forest Hills, and Syosset Hospital, also a North Shore hospital. The first training class consisted of nine members. Six of the original nine are still serving

and two others continued until illness prompted their retirement. Today there are 70 active volunteers serving as hospital visitors – and more being trained routinely. Who could have imagined that so many lives could be affected in such a positive manner?

But the story doesn't end there. Not only did the Hospital Visitation Program succeed beyond all expectations, but a new organization grew out of its success, the Integrative Wellness department, which now oversees five additional initiatives. This unique concept provides a unified and holistic approach to caring for the needs of HIP patients and supports the ever-expanding HIP family and communities it serves.



*Daniel T. McGowan, HIP President and COO, summed up the contribution of Hospital Visitation Volunteers by saying, "You do monumental work because you give yourself."*

"The last 10 years have been a remarkable journey and a great deal of progress has been made," says Rev. Flemister proudly. "But I am convinced our best years still lie ahead as we further HIP's mission of excellence in the realm of health care."

### Herbert Benson to Address HIP Physicians and Nurses



Physician and best-selling author Herbert Benson will present his landmark research findings in a special lecture to HIP's physicians and nurses on October 23, 2003. Dr. Benson's lecture is titled "The Power and Biology of Belief: The Science of Spirituality and Healing in Medicine." Dr. Benson will address the role of belief and spirituality in healing and well-being and will explain why a therapeutic focus that incorporates a spiritual approach is increasing seen as optimal for good patient care. He will also discuss the scientific basis for educating physicians in the area of spirituality and medicine. Dr. Benson's lecture will be held at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street beginning at 5:30pm.

# Herbert Benson to Address HIP Physicians and Nurses

*(Continued from cover)*

Dr. Herbert Benson is the Mind/Body Medical Institute Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and founding president of the Mind/Body Medical Institute. He is a graduate of Wesleyan University and the Harvard Medical School. Dr. Benson has authored or co-authored over 170 scientific publications and seven books, including the best-selling *The Relaxation Response* and *Timeless Healing*. More than four million copies of his books have been printed in many languages. He is considered one of the world's foremost experts in the study of mind/body medicine and the role of spirituality and belief in healing. As a recipient of many national and international awards, Benson has lectured all over the world.

Dr. Benson is recognized as a pioneer in the study of mind/body medicine and the healing effects of spirituality. During a career spanning over 35 years, Dr. Benson has documented the scientific basis of mind/body medicine, including the role of belief. He defined the groundbreaking "relaxation response" and led teaching and research efforts demonstrating its efficacy in counteracting the harmful effects of stress. He has presented scientific findings regarding the health benefits of forgiveness. He has offered evidence-based data documenting that people who feel "spiritual" report fewer medical problems.

Dr. Benson and his colleagues at The Mind/Body Medical Institute are currently pursuing hundreds of research studies centering on the relaxation response, belief systems and other mind/body interactions. The Institute was recently awarded \$2.7 million from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to investigate the scientific basis of the relaxation response and its clinical applications, including establishing a trial aimed at reducing the need for blood pressure medication in elderly hypertensive patients. The John Templeton Foundation also recently awarded a \$2 million dollar grant to study intercessory prayer in medical settings; providing funding for the largest such study in the world.

In a recent conversation, Dr. Benson told Integrative Wellness staff that in his view, the integration of scientifically based spirituality into the managed care setting is the next great frontier for medicine. He further believes HIP's Spirituality and Medicine Initiative "is breaking new ground and could serve as a model for other health plans."

The Benson lecture is a major event in the Integrative Wellness department's ongoing Spirituality and Medicine initiative, which seeks to raise awareness about the role of spirituality in patient and practitioner care. For additional details about this exciting event, call Yolanda Fields at 1-212-630-8622.

## Hospital Visitation Volunteer News

### Condolences

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- To Karrie Cooper, Montefiore Hospital visitor, on the death of her niece.
- To Annie Hickson, Brookdale Hospital, on the death of her sister.
- To Laura Jackson, Brooklyn Hospital visitor, on the death of her niece.
- To Barbara Jamison, Einstein Hospital visitor, on the death of her brother.
- To Reatherline Miles, St. Luke's Hospital visitor, on the death of her brother.
- To Cornelia Boddie-Sypher, Coney Island Hospital visitor, on the death of her stepdaughter.

### Well-Wishes

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- To Joy Moodie, Brookdale Hospital visitor, who is recuperating from surgery.
- To Janet Olonko, Staten Island Hospital, who is recuperating from surgery.



### Welcome New Trainees

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A new class of recently trained hospital visitors has started volunteering at various hospitals: Walter Carson, Jr., Christine Clarke-Nicholson, B. Diane Gibson, Robert Miller, Frances Palmer, Oliver Shannon, Yvonne Shannon, and Olga Smith. We welcome these new volunteers and look forward to working with them.

# HLCC Works!

Attending or leading a Healthy Living with Chronic Conditions (HLCC) workshop can be a life-changing experience. Many participants report that the classes have influenced their quality of life. From learning how to take the stairs instead of the elevator...to using deep breathing in order to fall asleep at night, attendees report a myriad of simple behavior changes that have affected their health and well-being.

Now, thanks to an in-depth analysis\* of the program, we are able to see some of the quantitative results as well. Preliminary findings on the effectiveness of the program as presented by Joyce Co, a manager in HIP's Health Services Analysis department, at the annual meeting of the American Association of Health Professionals in Atlanta on May 1, show significant improvement in HLCC participants' self-rated general health and quality of life measures. After completing the program, attendees felt less limited in their daily activities, less interfered with by their illness in other aspects of their lives and more confident of reaching specific goals.

HIP offers over 14 series of HLCC workshops each year throughout the metropolitan area. These classes are led



*Program Coordinator Ann Kansfield leads participants in the Healthy Living workshops as they learn how to control pain, deal with depression, fight fatigue and manage stress.*

by a group of 15 dedicated volunteers, but additional volunteers are always needed. The Integrative Wellness department is actively recruiting volunteers from various community organizations to serve as workshop leaders. If you would like to participate in an HLCC workshop or volunteer as a lay leader, please contact **Ann Kansfield** at **1-212-216-7966**.

*\* The full text of the study may be obtained by calling Ann Kansfield at 1-212-216-7966.*

## Words of Encouragement from Dr. Grace

Dr. Grace Griffenberg has been affiliated with HIP for 25 years. She has served the company in many capacities, but is best known for her role as HIP ombudsman from 1989 to 2000. She now serves as consultant to the Integrative Wellness department. What follows are her reflections on HIP, its Integrative Wellness Department and one of its key programs.



Over the years, I have observed and shared in the enormous growth and transformation of HIP

during exciting and challenging times. Now, as a consultant to the Integrative Wellness department, I have the same feeling of excitement as I watch the organization grow and provide services that make a difference in people's lives.

Recently, I recorded the Encouraging Words of the week for the OnCall Program. OnCall is the Integrative Wellness initiative that provides spiritual support to HIP employees in the workplace. Here's part of the message:

*It is important to understand that there is a space between an event and how we choose to respond to it. And our choice of response often determines our growth and happiness. Next to life, this self-awareness and freedom to choose represent our most*

*precious gifts and power. We are not pawns to be moved by others – instead we possess the strength to make and carry out our own decisions.*

*Regardless of the social and emotional scars you may carry inside, regardless of the strains and setbacks that have affected your finest intentions, focus on your freedom to choose and your power to respond to a new event.*

*Remember: How we view the problem may indeed be part of the problem. Be a model, not a critic. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.*

# On With the Show

By Greg Johnson

The Care for the Caregiver initiative, begun less than 18 months ago, has gone from a mere idea in the mind of the Rev. Carl E. Flemister to a traveling theatrical production that has attracted local, national and even international interest, receiving rave reviews, standing ovations and much praise for HIP. Countless audience members have exclaimed, "An insurance company does this? Wow, am I impressed!"

The play, "Caring for Me; Caring for You" is a dramatic exploration of the professional and personal challenges of caregiving, a role that society frequently undervalues and often overlooks. These "silent patients," as caregivers are known, receive little, if any, validation for their needs. In introducing the play and leading the discussion that follows, the facilitator opens the doors to the acceptance of this issue, shares its universality and begins to explore positive ways for audience members to respond to caregivers or serve as caregivers themselves.

The theme of the play – accepting the reality that to be an effective caregiver, one must first care for oneself – has resonated extremely well with audience members. Those who see the play leave the theater with a newfound understanding that only by coming to terms with this basic and profound human dynamic will any of us be able to be effective caregivers.



*Pictured at the New York Hilton performance of "Caring for Me; Caring for You" in January were (left to right) John White, Managing Director of Integrative Wellness; The Hon. Eleanor Guggenheimer, former Commissioner on Aging and founder of the Council of Senior Centers and Services; and Greg Johnson, Care for the Caregiver initiative coordinator.*

In the first five months of 2003, over 2,100 people throughout the New York area have seen the production, which represents a 200 percent increase over last year's attendance. Several prestigious organizations, including the Council of Senior Centers and Services (CSCS), featured the play as the keystone event of their annual meetings. At the CSCS meeting alone, 728 people attended the performance.

Last year this initiative was featured in panel discussions at both the National Conference on Aging in Denver and at the International Conference on Aging in Madrid.

For more information, contact **Greg Johnson**, at 1-212-216-7180 or by e-mail at [gjohnson@hipusa.com](mailto:gjohnson@hipusa.com).

## HIP Initiative to Play Leading Role at National Summit on Creating Caring Communities

"Caring for Me; Caring for You," the HIP Foundation theatrical exploration of caregiving will be included as the finale to the opening event of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging's National Summit on Creating Caring Communities. The event will be held in Orlando, Florida on September 21.

Along with HIP, other distinguished participants in the opening ceremony include the Honorable Jeb Bush, Governor of Florida, Tommy Thompson, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, and Josefina Carbonell, Assistant Secretary of Aging. The Rev. Carl E. Flemister, Senior Vice President for Integrative Wellness will bring official greetings from HIP and the Rev. Gregory Johnson, Care for the Caregiver program coordinator, will introduce the play.

Begun less than 18 months ago, the Care for the Caregiver initiative has received unprecedented recognition at local, state, national and international levels. Caregiving is universal and HIP cares.



# My Journey to Chaplaincy

## Profile: Pat Reagan

Pat Reagan is living proof that you can turn tragedy into triumph – and change lives in the process. You have to speak with Pat for only a short time to understand why she has had an impact in so many



ways, especially now as a hospice chaplain. Her compassionate, empathetic presence – an expression of her own spirituality – is precisely what hospice patients and their families need. Pat has personal knowledge of illness and the excruciating pain of losing a loved one. On Memorial Day 2000, Pat and Tom's youngest son, David, a police officer, was killed in the line of duty a few days before his 28th birthday.

In describing Pat, Souci Grimsley, Director of Integrative Wellness, says: "Pat is a model of what the HIP Hospital Visitation Program is all about. Her positive use of life experience – even tragedy – as well as her compassion, defines the mission of hospital visitors." The following is the story of Pat's journey from being a visitor in HIP's non-sectarian hospital visitation program to becoming a certified hospital chaplain in her own religious tradition.

### By Pat Reagan

As I sat in a HIP health center in Hempstead, Long Island, I noticed a newsletter, *Spiritual Rounds*, published by the HIP Hospital Visitation Program, and began to read about a pastoral care program. What I read sounded interesting. So much so, that I called for an application for the training class and went into New York City for an interview.

During the summer of 1998, I received hospital visitation training at a hospital on Long Island. In September, I began volunteering as a Hospital Visitor at Franklin Medical Center and at Long Island Jewish Hospital.

My visits went amazingly well. I was guided and encouraged by my HIP supervisor and the directors of pastoral care at the hospitals. As a hospital visitor who offers emotional and spiritual support, I learned, among other things, to listen, to allow for silences and to pray with patients, if they so desired.

I was visiting about four hours a week after work. One day, as I was making my visits, the Rev. Jon Overvald, Director of Pastoral Care at Franklin Hospital, stopped me and asked several probing questions about my visiting. He didn't know it, but he planted a seed that day which ultimately led to my interest in becoming a chaplain.

A few months later, when I told the Rev. Overvald that I was retiring from teaching, he suggested that I begin Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), the chaplaincy-training program. My HIP supervisor concurred and suggested the program at Mary Immaculate Hospital in Queens.

CPE is rigorous, but not impossible. Throughout the program, you grow in your relationship to God, yourself and others. You learn the skills you need to be a good chaplain ministering to patients, families and staff. You also learn about yourself –

who you are, why you do what you do, what you are feeling and where and how you can grow or change. It is a process that involves action and reflection. You begin to identify your strengths and weaknesses and you work at becoming all that God gave you the potential to be.

In my third unit of CPE, I was assigned to a large hematology/oncology unit and a pediatrics unit with a growing number of children who were seriously ill. I began to see that I could minister effectively to people who were dying. When I heard that a hospice chaplain position was available, I felt that this was where God had been leading me all along. I now work as a part-time chaplain for Good Shepherd Hospice on Long Island.

On May 5, 2003, in Baltimore, I appeared before a certifying committee of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains. After thoroughly reviewing my credentials and interviewing me, the committee recommended that I be certified as a chaplain. In July, it became final and I should be commissioned in the fall. It has been an astounding journey.

When I first read that article in *Spiritual Rounds* five years ago, I remember thinking, "What kind of pastoral care can an HMO provide?" My family had been a member of HIP for 38 years, and it had provided wonderfully for us, but pastoral care too? Was HIP also interested in our spiritual health? As I learned about the HIP Hospital Visitation Program, I found the answer to be a resounding "yes." The HIP Hospital Visitation Program is an amazing initiative. The staff not only provides intensive training in hospital visitation, but also takes a personal interest in each volunteer. Staff members have been supportive all along my personal and professional journey, including the losses I experienced when our son and my father died, and throughout my quest to become a chaplain.

I never imagined that I could be a chaplain, but I am a good one. I thank God and I thank HIP for leading me to this journey.

# A Night to Remember

The 10th Anniversary Gala of the HIP Hospital Visitation Program, held at HIP corporate headquarters on June 19, honored a group of special people who have truly made a difference to HIP and its members.

The evening's festivities brought together HIP board members, HIP senior management, pastoral care directors from HIP affiliated hospitals and staff members of the Integrative Wellness department. All gathered to honor the lifeblood of the Hospital Visitation Program – the hospital visitors.

The Rev. Carl E. Flemister, Senior Vice President for Integrative Wellness and founder of the Hospital Visitation Program, welcomed the volunteers and guests. In his remarks, Rev. Flemister announced with pride that the volunteers had visited more than 27,500 patients in HIP affiliated hospitals in the New York City area last year.

Thanking the volunteers, he said, "Perhaps you have heard of the song, 'Let the Work I've Done Speak for Me.' The work you have done speaks volumes about your faithfulness and dedication. We look forward to our continued partnership and salute you with the highest accolades on this day of recognition and praise."

Daniel T. McGowan, HIP President and COO, thanked the volunteers on behalf of HIP for the many contributions they have made to the HIP organization, to hospitalized HIP members and to their communities.

In a stirring keynote address, Mary T. O'Neill, Vice President for Spiritual Care and Pastoral Education at Catholic Health Services of Long Island, praised the volunteers for their contribution to the emotional and spiritual needs of patients. Ms. O'Neill, a leader in the Clinical Pastoral Education movement in the United States and Canada, then challenged the hospital visitors to:



*Mary T. O'Neill, a leader in the Clinical Pastoral Care Education movement, was the evening's keynote speaker.*

- Be there with patients and family members who ask difficult questions about life's meaning and direction.
- Be there to witness the distress deep in a person's inner core.
- Be there to listen to pain that exists beyond what words can describe.



*Souci Grimsley, (left) and Florence Henderson (right) congratulate Helen Adrian on the special recognition she received for her 10 years of visiting patients at North Shore Hospital in Syosset.*

- Be there to help express suffering so that a person feels heard and understood.
- Be there as the one who is not afraid of patients' pain, but rather one who can help them articulate their desolation and despair.
- Be there to help patients maintain their worth and dignity in a medical system that can easily neglect and dehumanize the sick.
- Be there, not as the one with the answers, the clichés, or easy solutions, but rather as one who can listen to spiritual struggles.

Another highlight of the evening included recognition of those who have served five years or more as hospital visitors. Helen Adrian, the longest-serving HIP Hospital Visitor, received special recognition for her 10 years of service at North Shore Hospital in Syosset. John Reed, a retiring HIP Hospital Visitor at North Shore Hospital in Forest Hills, received a certificate of appreciation for his eight years of dedicated service.

John White, Integrative Wellness Managing Director, Richard Burke, Manager of the Hospital Visitation Program and Florence Henderson, Hospital Visitation Program Assistant also expressed their appreciation to the volunteers.

Souci Grimsley, Director of Integrative Wellness and co-founder of the Hospital Visitation Program, closed the evening with words of praise that mentioned the impact that the volunteers have had on program staff members over the past 10 years.

If you would like more information about the Hospital Visitation Program, please call 1-212-630-0672.

# Our Longest-Serving HIP Hospital Visitation Volunteers

## In Recognition

### 10 YEARS

Helen Adrian

### 9 YEARS

Marie Edwards  
Mario Fasano  
Kitty McGarry  
Mary O'Hagan  
Marion Starnes  
Dorothy Vale

### 8 YEARS

Barbara Jamison  
Jennie Olonko  
John Reed

### 7 YEARS

Claudia Moore  
Beatrice Rogers  
Louis Schwartz

### 6 YEARS

Alma Ross  
Olivia Smith

### 5 YEARS

Edina Gill  
Odell Griggs  
Joyce Horne  
Sadie Lee  
Joy Moodie  
Patricia Regan  
Vera Weekes

### MEMBERS OF THE FIRST TRAINING CLASS:

Helen Adrian  
Kitty McGarry  
Martha Bell  
Mary O'Hagan  
Mildred Burns  
Marion Starnes  
James Chang  
Dorothy Vale  
Marie Edwards

*"There is no way to put a price tag on what you do.  
You don't make money, you make goodwill for HIP."  
- THE REV. CARL E. FLEMISTER*



Lou Schwartz has been a Hospital Visitation Program volunteer at Montefiore Hospital for seven years.



Barbara Jamison has been visiting hospitalized HIP members at Einstein Hospital in the Bronx for eight years.



Mario Fasano has been a hospital visitor at North Shore Hospital in Syosset for nine years.

## Volunteers Needed

HIP's Hospital Visitation Program needs additional volunteers to provide encouraging and caring support to hospitalized HIP members. If you would like more information about the program or to request an application for training, please call 1-212-630-0672.



Mary O'Hagan (left) and Kitty McGarry were members of the first Hospital Visitation training class and have been Syosset Hospital visitors for nine years.

# Frequently Asked Questions: Dr. Herbert Benson, M.D.



## **Who is Dr. Herbert Benson?**

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Herbert Benson, M.D. is the Mind/Body Medical Institute Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Chief of the Division of Behavioral Medicine at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; and the Founding President of the Mind/Body Medical Institute. Dr. Benson is widely acknowledged as a pioneer in the fields of behavioral medicine and mind/body studies, and spirituality and healing in medicine. Dr. Benson has authored more than 170 scientific publications and his seven books have sold over four million copies.

## **What is considered Dr. Benson's most significant contribution?**

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Working at Harvard Medical School in the late 1960's, Dr. Benson found that there is a counterbalancing mechanism to the fight-or-flight response. Just as stimulating an area of the hypothalamus can cause the stress response, so activating other areas of the brain results in its reduction. This "relaxation response" is a physical state of deep rest that changes the physical and emotional responses to stress (e.g., decrease in heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension). When practiced regularly it can have significant effects when encountering stress. Elicitation of the relaxation response is at the heart of The Mind/Body Medical Institute's research and programs.

The relaxation response, as described by Dr. Benson in his best selling book of the same title, is a series of coordinated physiologic changes elicited when a person engages in a repetitive word, sound or phrase or prayer, and passively disregards intrusive thoughts. Practice of the relaxation response results in decreased metabolism, heart rate, rate of breathing, and distinctive slower brain waves. These changes are exactly the opposite of those induced by the fight or flight response.

## **What is Dr. Benson's definition of mind/body medicine?**

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Dr. Benson's research over the course of thirty years has led him to the conclusion that there is an inseparable connection between the mind and body—the complicated interactions that take place between thoughts and emo-

tions, the body, and the outside world. Mind/body medicine integrates scientific medicine, psychology, nursing, nutrition, exercise physiology,

belief and spirituality, to enhance the natural healing capacities of body and mind.

Citing studies showing that between 60% and 90% of all physician visits are for stress-related complaints, Benson and his colleagues at The Mind/Body Medical Institute have proven the efficacy of mind/body medicine in the treatment of these complaints to the extent that they are caused by or made worse by stress. The Mind/Body Medical Institute has shown that mind/body approaches to healing and health have helped millions reduce the stress that can cause or exacerbate conditions such as: joint pain, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, hypertension, repetitive strain injury, cardiac disorders, chronic pain, infertility, migraine headaches, diabetes, perimenopause/menopause, and gastrointestinal disorders.

## **What is the mission of the Mind/Body Medical Institute?**

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The Mind/Body Medical Institute has evolved from more than thirty years of work in the field of mind/body medicine by Dr. Benson and colleagues at Harvard Medical School. The Mind/Body Medical Institute is a non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to the study of mind/body interactions, including the relaxation response, and documenting and furthering the understanding of the scientific basis of mind/body medicine, including the role of spirituality and belief in medicine. Dr. Benson and his colleagues at the Mind/Body Medical Institute are seeking to explore the application of mind/body interactions by independently and collaboratively conducting basic and clinical research, expand these applications of mind/body interactions in healthcare, and thereby advance health and well-being throughout the world.

To learn more about Dr. Benson and the work of the Mind/Body Medical Institute, visit their website at <http://www.mbmi.org>.