

## The Power of Vision

**A**s I sit in front of my computer thinking about a new story for my newsletter, as usual I look to see what's "hot" for me. Life for me these days seems to be about the importance of vision. I believe it's possible to invent life on a daily basis. In fact, I think we're always doing it, but we're not aware of it. The thoughts going through our minds every moment are that invention. Most of the time, we don't pay attention. And in learning to attend to our thoughts we may have some power over them. As I think about this, I realize that the only thing that I can control is my mind. Nothing else. But if I can control my thoughts and my attitude about them, isn't that ultimate control? Life happens all around me with its many opportunities and challenges. How do I respond? What choices am I making?

### "It's All Invented"

I learned the power of visualization a long time ago when I was a new real estate agent. I had no formal training in goal-setting before I took the job. I was taught to set aside a few minutes every day, close my eyes, and visualize what I wanted in my future – knowledge, money, relationships, awards, confidence – the only limit being my own imagination. I played with this new tool and discovered it to be magical in its ability to manifest in reality what I first saw in my mind. Since then I've experimented with the power of vision in many ways. I keep a note up in front of my desk that says "It's all invented," a principle I first encountered in *The Art of Possibility*, by Benjamin Zander and Rosamund Stone Zander. "It's All Invented!" Do you believe it? I do. I believe we invent our world from moment to moment by the way we think about it. If I believe that I'm a good trainer, then when I stand up in front of a group I am a good trainer and that's what the group sees. If I have doubts, that's what's true and that's what they see. It's a little like "fake it 'till you make it," but it goes beyond that. At that moment I'm not faking it, I'm not acting. I AM a good trainer as I go to that place in my mind and being where she exists.

This belief is an important one, not only for our

individual dreams and goals, but for the world. In her book, *Dreaming the Dark*, Starhawk says that we "dream the world into being" with our hopes and fears about the future. You may have heard the saying "be careful what you wish for because you might get it," or "what we fear we bring to us." I think these sayings are true. We need to be aware of what we are thinking, visualizing, hearing in our minds, because on some level we are believing they are possible, even if we don't want them. And we could be "dreaming them into being."

So here are some suggestions to add to your ever-growing list of "New Year's Resolutions," ones that will help you gain control over your own life and invent a world that you want to live in.

- **Pay Attention.** Pay attention to your thoughts. Are they furthering your dreams for yourself, your relationships and for the world you want to live in? What do you do with the ones that are not? Notice negative internal dialogues about yourself and change them into positive affirmations. What would it take to change "What an idiot!" to "Wow! That was a surprise. I learned a lot on that one. I'm getting better at this all the time!"

- **Invent Your Life.** Find five minutes every day to invent your life. Close your eyes and see yourself in the future – tomorrow or ten years from now, it doesn't matter. Tough presentation coming up at 2 p.m.? See yourself giving it with poise, equanimity, clarity and center. See the outcome you want. Be specific – hear the praise and feel the satisfaction with a job well done. Is your life out of balance? Close your eyes and visualize the life you want, what you're doing and saying, who you're with, how you're feeling and where you are. The more sense details you can add, the more you will get exactly what you ask for.

In her book on the art of centering, *From Chaos to Center*, Judy Warner says that without vision, it is difficult to be truly powerful. Our vision focuses our energy, inspires action, and supports us at difficult times. It is the key to a life of purpose, clarity and connection. And it is within our grasp.

**Our vision focuses our energy, inspires action, and supports us at difficult times. It is the key to a life of purpose, clarity and connection. And it is within our grasp.**

poem  
I am so glad and very  
merely my fourth will cure  
the laziest self of weary  
the hugest sea of shore

so far your nearness reaches  
a lucky fifth of you  
turns people into eachs  
and cowards into grow

our can'ts were born to happen  
our mosts have died in more  
our twentieth will open  
wide a wide open door

we are so both and oneful  
night cannot be so sky  
sky cannot be so sunful  
i am through you so I

— E. E. Cummings

**Conflict Management**  
**Communication Skills**  
**Training & Facilitation**



## The Butterfly

Sometimes it seems as if life is changing before my very eyes. Daily I read about a new development in science or technology that could affect life on Earth in dramatic ways. World events affect the way I travel, shop, and receive mail. I'm tempted to waste energy on fear and anxiety. Awareness is very important, but I also need to decide where my energy is best applied — on the problem or on the solution.

*"...To conclude, I'll remind you about the butterfly metamorphosis, when the caterpillar goes into a cocoon. It's a nice biological model for today. Inside the body of the caterpillar little "imaginal disks," as the biologists call them, begin to form. And the immune system of the caterpillar destroys them as long as they are isolated. But they crop up faster and faster and they link together and transform into "imaginal cells," and then the rest of the body of the caterpillar breaks down, the immune system doesn't function, and it literally goes to sludge as fertilizer for the development of more and more cells that form the butterfly.*

*There's no one turning point at which we shift from going downhill in the world to going uphill. We have work to do: to be positive and to build the butterfly. The caterpillar will be recycled by itself: no head-on collisions are needed. Don't focus on the caterpillar; you don't have to. Just keep building the butterfly. Focus on all the things that are going in a positive direction. And . . . be sure that the way you choose to make a better world is a way you enjoy, or no one else will want to do it with you."*

— from an address by Elisabet Sahtouris, author of Earthdance: Living Systems in Evolution, as reprinted in Timeline, a publication of The Foundation for Global Community, Sept./Oct., 1997

## real life

### On Stress – A Centering Hint from Judy Warner of AikiWorks, Inc. (Reprinted with permission from Centering Hints, by Thomas Crum and Judith Warner.)

Stress is a commonplace event in most lives these days. In addition to our personal conflicts, the events of September 11 and their aftermath escalate our stress levels even more. So, what can we do? How can we improve the quality of our day?

Tune into your body's needs. Once you notice your level of anxiety increasing, whether from the latest CNN bulletin, your pending team meeting, or your current parenting dilemma, pause. Breathe deeply and center. Then notice if your body wishes to move and how. It may be as simple as rotating your neck or shoulders, stretching your arms or taking a brief walk to the coffee machine. Movement provides the chance for your body to release some of its

pent up energy. Movement also helps you process whatever emotions or thoughts are passing through your system.

While you are at it, review your daily routines. Do you have some built in breaks for movement? A gym workout or evening run? It doesn't have to be aerobic to serve as a stress buster. A Tai Chi class, our Aiki Energizer routine, or a simple series of stretches can do wonders for your health and your psyche. The movement can be as brief as a few minutes and be beneficial. So as stress builds, breathe, center, and move!

*(For more information on Centering Hints or the Aiki Energizer, contact Judy Ringer by phone, e-mail, or a visit to [JudyRinger.com](http://JudyRinger.com) or [AikiWorks.com](http://AikiWorks.com).)*

## "Shodan – Judy Ringer"

On December 17, 2001, I heard these words called out by Mitsunari Kanai Sensei of New England Aikikai in Cambridge, MA. I took a deep breath, centered and walked out onto the mat for the black belt test I had been preparing to take for the last six months intensively and, in one way or another, for the last eight years. Fifteen minutes, multiple attackers and many techniques later it was over, and I subsequently was notified that I'd passed and could wear the black belt, the mark of the true beginner in the art of aikido. The combination of focused practice, mental and physical preparation, and wholehearted support from fellow students and friends that led to the test was a transforming experience and certainly a watershed in my life. I'd like to thank all who participated in it with me. *Domo!*



## resources

### [www.JudyRinger.com](http://www.JudyRinger.com)

If you enjoy surfing the web, you can now receive *Power & Presence* — and a lot more tips and information — at [www.JudyRinger.com](http://www.JudyRinger.com). Our new site offers support on conflict skills and communication training, conflict facilitation, private coaching and aikido. You'll also find in-service workshops and upcoming events. Please stop by!

### [www.AikiWorks.com](http://www.AikiWorks.com)

For more information and trainings on centering and the Aiki approach to resolving conflict, visit this excellent web site. Upcoming public programs on The Magic of Skiing and The Magic of Golf are listed as well as many other resources for individuals and organizations.

**"The future is not a result of choice among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created ... created first in mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination."**

— John Scharr (Loyalty in America)

### Women's Aikido – Feb. 17 to Mar. 24

Many of the principles reflected in *Power & Presence* come from Aikido, the Japanese martial art whose name means "The Way of Harmony." In Aikido, students learn to use the energy of attack and redirect it, rather than harming their opponent. **A Women's Introductory** course in the martial art of Aikido will start at the Seacoast Family Y in Portsmouth on Feb. 17. The six-week course will run through March 24, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. each Sunday. The cost is \$50.00 per person for the course, and any girl or woman aged 12 and up is welcome to attend. For information or to register, please call Judy at 431-8560 or send an email to [judyringer@rcn.com](mailto:judyringer@rcn.com).

### Portsmouth Aikido

Regular mixed level aikido classes are held at the Seacoast Y on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:45 to 9:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 2:15 to 3:30 p.m. Monthly dues are \$40.00 per person and there are discounts for family memberships. Beginners (aged 12 and up) through advanced students are always welcome. You may stop by anytime and watch a class, or jump in a practice once at no charge. Portsmouth Aikido was founded in 1995 and is a member the United States Aikido federation.

## workshops

(See calendar to the right for dates and times.)

### Creating a Positive Work Environment

We spend much of our day at work, but often it is not a fulfilling place to be. It saps our energy, stresses us to the max and sends us home ready for a fight with our loved ones. It's all the more disappointing because in all of us there exists a vision of what work life could be – a place of mutual support and collegial interactions where we feel good about ourselves and proud of our work. Is it possible to have a positive work environment, and what is your role in creating and supporting it?

This workshop is for owners, managers and supervisors. There will be a structured format, with skills and tools offered for consideration. There will also be time for participants to offer ideas that have worked for them. Please come to learn and to teach.

**Objectives:** At the end of the course, you will have skills, ideas and tools to –

- ✓ foster a more positive work environment
- ✓ enroll others in the process
- ✓ choose your attitude even when you can't choose your work
- ✓ manage your emotions and behavior under stress.

### Difficult People – Tormentors or Teachers?

Can you turn even the most challenging co-worker into an ally? The “difficult” people in our lives can be our greatest source of stress or our best teachers. When we meet force with force we escalate the conflict, and if we don't we feel we've lost. Is there something in between? In this program we'll learn the power of changing ourselves instead of trying to change others and begin to transform those interpersonal relationships that give us headaches, both at home and in the workplace.

**Objectives:** Come to learn, play and discover how to:

- ✓ appreciate your opponent's energy
- ✓ let go of judgment and practice interest and curiosity
- ✓ turn frustration into fascination
- ✓ channel energy toward your vision instead of getting stuck in resistance

“True power is energy  
flowing freely towards a vision.”  
-Thomas Crum

## registration

### Yes, I want more information about:

Creating a Positive Work Environment  Difficult People  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add me/my colleague to your mailing list:

Please call to discuss creating a program for my organization:

Please reserve space for me in your upcoming workshop:

Title of Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum \$50)\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day): \_\_\_\_\_ (night): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Discounts available for multiple participants from the same family or company as well as some partial scholarships.

### Please tell me!

If you prefer to receive *Power & Presence* electronically, let me know:

- By phone 603-431-8560, • By email [judyringer@rcn.com](mailto:judyringer@rcn.com), or
- Online at [JudyRinger.com](http://JudyRinger.com) on the Contact page.

MAIL TO: Judy Ringer • 76 Park Street • Portsmouth, NH • 03801-5031

## workshop calendar

March 6 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**CREATING A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Tuition: \$150.00 per person  
(Lunch and materials provided)  
Minimum: 10 participants  
Portsmouth Location TBA  
Call, email, or return Registration Form

April 9 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**DIFFICULT PEOPLE:  
TORMENTORS OR TEACHERS**

Tuition: \$135.00 per person  
(Lunch and handout materials provided)  
Minimum: 6 participants  
Portsmouth Location TBA  
Call, email, or return Registration Form

Please register early.  
All workshops have minimum and maximum  
participant requirements.

### CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMS

The following are examples of programs designed for organizations. All trainings are tailored to meet specific goals and objectives. Please call for additional information.

#### CORPORATE/BUSINESS SEMINARS

- Conflict in the Workplace
- Creating a Positive Work Environment
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively
  - Assertive Communication
  - Powerful Presentations
- Difficult People: Tormentors or Teachers
  - Principled Negotiation
- Aikido and Conflict: Getting on the Mat

#### PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS

- The Magic of Conflict
- Violence: Dealing with Anger (for students)
  - Helping Students Deal with Anger and Conflict (for teachers)
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively



# Judy Ringer

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## inside

**The Power of Vision**  
**On Stress—Centering Techniques**  
**Women's Aikido**  
**Creating a Positive Work Environment**  
**Difficult People**

*"Be what you would wish to seem." – Socrates*

## quotables

- *First, I must thank you for a very successful staff development training session with our personnel last week. Many people, including me, have used strategies learned from you already. We collectively feel that your work with us was productive, thought provoking, and useful.*
- *I invited you in the interest of team building, offering the gang a fresh perspective, and to have fun. You were terrific in all three. Everybody I've spoken to enjoyed themselves, learned something new, and felt good about participating. Thank YOU!*
- *It is always great to see how you bring out the best and turn conflicts into honest discussion. It was great to have you be a valuable part of our training.*

## solutions

*Questions from workshop participants and readers. (Feel free to contact us with questions of your own.)*

### question

***It's fairly easy to center when you know a difficult situation, meeting or conversation is coming up. But what do you do when you're suddenly in a conflict that you hadn't planned on – a surprise attack?!***

### answer

As soon as you notice you're off center, that's the time to center. Breathe, center and expand your energy. Connect with your opponent, step to their side and listen. If they're emotional, let them vent. Keep breathing, centering, listening and acknowledging both their energy and yours. As you center, you'll find that you have more options available to you and you can begin to use them.



**Conflict Management**  
**Communication Skills**  
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