

MULTI-FACETED TRANSFORMATION IN HAITI

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August 5, 2010

When I was in Haiti, six months after this January's massive earthquake of January 12, 2010, the situation was much worse than it had been even a month after the disaster. The reason for this is that most non-government organizations have run out of money and have left. In addition, almost all governments that promised to send money, including the United States and Canada, have not sent a penny. Prior to the earthquake, billions of dollars have been spent trying to help Haitians in ways that focus too narrowly on one issue or another rather than focus on them holistically. The approach used here attempts to develop a more effective approach to helping the people of Haiti. I ended up working in the downtown core, which has become a city of uncleared rubble, tents, and tiny shacks. I worked with a group of fifty women and their children who lost everything. They're provided with only toilets and water, no food or other services, in part because the United Nations has labeled the area as being unsafe. This article discusses the situation of these people, the multi-faceted work I did with them, and how we can help them further. The reality is that it takes very little to help one of these families to get on their feet if we approach it the right way.

INTRODUCTION

As everyone knows, Haiti experienced a massive earthquake on January 12th of this year in its most densely populated area – just outside the capital city Port-au-Prince.



I was in Port-au-Prince six months after the earthquake to see what I could do to help. I waited that long to go there because the psychological trauma of most people in a disaster is resolved within three or four months. However, Port-au-Prince was still devastated. Here are some examples:

- I saw tent cities in the center of the city where the people received only water and had access to toilets. Nothing else. No one brought them food, provided them with medical services, or spoke with them.
- I worked with four mothers who had babies fifteen days old or younger. Two of them were sick because of the lack of food and living conditions. They might not survive the next six months.
- I saw many beggars who called out to me, “Blanc, donne moi un dollar” – “White, give me a dollar.”
- I saw many people praying and singing praise to God, but with no hope that anyone, including their own government, would help them.

Following is a photo of the destroyed Palace, the parliament buildings, and a little tent in the foreground, in which a number of people are living, right next to the street. There are hundreds of these tents all around there, one right next to each other, with nothing for people to do.



The people of Haiti are in the depths of despair. I did a bit of work with a community in Sri Lanka after the tsunami. I've also worked with the lowest caste in India, with people who have been marginalized for thousands of years, and had practically nothing. I've done healing work with homeless people in Vancouver, and many others. But I've never seen the extent and the depth of suffering anywhere near what I saw in Haiti.

It touched me very deeply to be there with the people. It helped to transform me and my priorities in life. Among other things, it took me more deeply into a place of compassion, and to wish to serve others even more than I have in the past.

I felt guided to work with the poorest of the poor in Haiti – fifty homeless women and their children in the downtown core. I had no idea who I was going to work with when I got to Haiti. I had tried to link with various people and organizations before going and that mostly didn't work out, except for connecting with the owner of a bed and breakfast who helped to orient me and introduce me to my driver-interpreter. All I had was the resolve to go there, despite various road blocks that were put in my way to test my resolve. Once I got here, I put out various seeds and, despite the interest of some groups such as hospitals and schools, the only one that really took off was my work with these fifty families. The only exception was that I gave a workshop on healing skills to a group of physicians and nurses at a small hospital. Spirit not only guided me to the group of women I worked with but blocked most of the other options in order that my work would be more focused.

The day after I arrived in Port-au-Prince, I was given a tour of the area by my driver-interpreter, Avenu. We ended up in the downtown core, two blocks from the devastated government buildings, at a statue called the "Marron Inconnu." This is a statue of an escaped slave who carries a sword and still has a chain around his ankle. He represents slaves fighting for freedom and achieving independence from France in 1804.



For me, this statue came to symbolize my work with the people in Haiti, to help free some of them from their historic shackles and trauma, thus allowing them to move freely toward a healthier future. It also came to symbolize my work with the disadvantaged and oppressed of the world. Although you can't see it from the next photo, he wears a chain around his left ankle and has a sword in his left hand, and is trumpeting other slaves to fight for their freedom. It's a fabulous symbol for Haiti, for disempowered areas of the world, and perhaps for all of us.

My work began right here at this statue. How symbolic! When I was taking a picture of this sculpture, Béatrice, who lives next to the sculpture, invited me to come into her very small shelter. It was built from bits of wood, and a tin roof with holes in it which allows rain to come in. The floor then becomes a muddy mess.

My work flowed from there, very easily and wonderfully.

THE DISASTER

We can't even comprehend the statistics – about a quarter of a million dead, 300,000 severely wounded, and one and a half million homeless in a city the size of Greater Vancouver, Canada. With more earthquakes happening all around the Pacific Ocean and in other places since January, it could happen to us.

With Haiti's population of about nine to ten million, one in five was either killed or severely affected. The centre of the city where I ended up working was labeled as a red zone by the United Nations – a safety risk. However, I saw or heard precious little evidence of safety concerns except that a couple of people had been kidnapped. The result of it being labeled as a red zone is that helping organizations don't go to this area. As a result, the people there are provided with only water and toilets.

However, the reality is that there's little help going into the country as a whole at this point. I saw no ships coming into port over the three weeks that I was there and no planes came in with cargo. The initial money that came in after the earthquake has been spent on the urgent need in the first month or two right after the earthquake, and most helping organizations have run out of money and gone home within the first two months after the earthquake.

And almost every country has not paid the money they promised to help Haiti. Less than 2% of the promised money had come in six months after the earthquake. Countries such as Canada and the United States have paid absolutely nothing. Only Norway, Argentina, Estonia, and Australia have made good on their promises. The United States' donation is tied up in Congress (CNN website, July 15, 2010).

The same occurred after the tsunami in Indonesia in December 2004. Most countries did not give the money they had promised soon after that disaster. Unfulfilled promises by politicians occur regularly, but this is particularly damaging for a country such as Haiti, that has practically nothing and relies on prayers and promises for the future.

The result is that Haiti, which was the poorest country in the Americas before the earthquake, can't afford to provide even basic services. An example of this is that the government wants to move some of the people from the downtown core but can't afford to do so. Another result is that even the main streets still have rubble blocking them, and these are not being cleared. There is almost no heavy equipment in Port-au-Prince to move this debris.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Christopher Columbus first touched base in the Americas in 1492 in Haiti, where his ship foundered. He and his crew were rescued by the locals. The Europeans then turned them all into slaves in order to do mining and the plantation of sugar cane. Because they were treated terribly and because of disease brought by the Europeans, the indigenous people all died within a few decades.

Europeans then began bringing slave ships from Africa. They worked the slaves very hard. They found that it was cheaper to literally work them to death and then bring new slaves in, rather than treat them tolerably well and allow them to reproduce. As a result, the vast majority of the population is black.

All this blood spilled by the Europeans is still in the earth of Haiti. In addition, many who came from Africa brought with them practices related to voodoo. As a result, there have been many curses between the people there, and this also has a negative impact on the people.

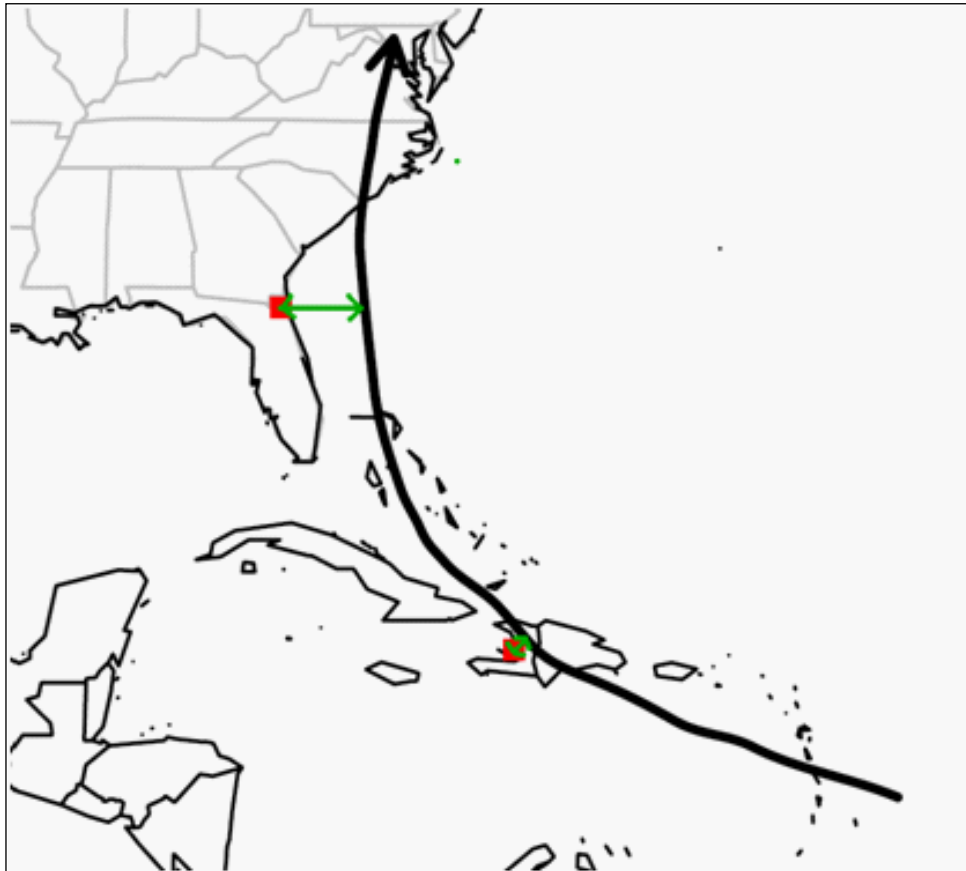
The slaves of Haiti revolted and finally gained independence from France in 1804. They even defeated Napoleon's army. Other countries, such as England, France, and the United States, refused to recognize Haiti after its independence for fear that the idea of freedom for slaves would be spread more broadly. Politics have also played a part in creating damage, such as the tactics of Papa Doc Duvalier. Some efforts to help have also been disastrous, such as Canada and the United States bringing in food to give to the people, which resulted in local farmers being unable to sell their crops and then going bankrupt. I saw that a great deal of farm in Haiti land lays fallow as a result.

Countries such as the United States, Canada, and France plunder Haiti's most educated, taking in their physicians and other professionals, but refusing to accept for immigration those most in need. However we look at it, our countries oppress Haiti as well other poor countries.

Given all this, Haiti, which had previously been the richest colony in the world, gradually became poorer and poorer, to the point where it's now the poorest country in the Americas.

Haiti appears to have been a magnet for negativity even before Europeans arrived. For example, Haiti experienced far more hurricanes than countries even fifty miles away, including Cuba, as you can see from the following map, taken from the web by Kelsey Scheitlin and others entitled "Towards Increased Utilization of Historical Hurricane Chronologies." This map summarizes the

path of hurricanes from 1766 to the present. As you can see, most hurricanes go to the east of Florida and Cuba, which is fifty miles away from Haiti, although it hits Haiti directly in most cases.



A psychic told me that Haiti is an energy center for the earth, like a chakra or meridian point, but a center of negativity rather than a center of light. I was told that if some healing work was done for Haiti, it would have a positive impact in other parts of the world as well. You believe whatever fits for you, but the reality is that Haiti was the most impoverished place in the Americas before the earthquake and is far worse off since then.

Part of the reason for Haiti being a centre of negativity may be because Atlantis was nearby. This continent reportedly sank in 1600 BC. Some believe that dark Atlanteans, who practiced dark arts, came to Haiti, and this created some of the negativity that has accumulated here. There may also be other reasons for negativity here from cultures before Atlantis or from extraterrestrials as well, but we have no way of verifying this.

THE FIFTY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

One woman lost her twelve-year-old son in the earthquake. He was physically close to his mother – he was crushed by the rubble. She was unhurt physically, but she was crushed emotionally. Two pregnant women lost their husbands; one of them has four children. Four of

the women I worked with had babies less than fifteen days old when I met them. Two of those babies were sick because of the terrible living conditions and lack of healthy food. At least two of the four babies are likely to die in the next six months or year unless they're provided with additional help. The women I worked with had an average of three children, most of them small children or in elementary school.

All fifty families lost their worldly possessions, or what they had of them. Remember that 80% to 85% of Haitians were unemployed before the quake and most earned less than \$2 per day. When I visited their shelters, the lucky ones had a bed. Others slept on the floor, many of which turned into mud when it rained because the roofs were leaky. One family had a little shelter that was big enough to sleep three but there were four of them – so one slept outside, rain or shine.

When I got there, the women prayed but expected no help from other people. They just sat there – each sitting in their own misery. I saw no children play there. Nor did they smile – they just sat. I had brought soccer balls to give away, and couldn't give them one because they would have had to play in the traffic. In comparison, I spent time with children in a school outside of Port-au-Prince, outside of the disaster zone. They were playing, friendly, and joyful.

Have a look at the next two photos. There's no joy there. Simply despair.





Many of the people in Haiti have what is called “learned helplessness.” This refers to a phenomenon where, if you are beaten down often enough, you simply give up. The term comes from research that was done with dogs. A dog was placed in a cage and the grid beneath their feet gave them a shock at times. Initially, the dogs ran around trying to escape. After a number of times, they simply lay there and accepted the shock. They continued to lay there even after a door was opened, which would allow them to escape. They had learned that they could not escape their suffering. In comparison, new dogs were put in the cage and were shocked, but the door was open so they could escape. These dogs learned to escape the shock in a few seconds. The others acted as though they were completely powerless and acted as though there was no point in trying to change their situation.

Think of what these people have gone through – slavery, destructive politics, hurricanes, massive earthquake, undelivered promises from rich countries, and so on. After being beaten down so many times, the easiest thing is to just sit and do as little as possible. Why bother. The people in downtown Haiti, surrounded by rubble and with no room to move, are in this very position.

Learned helplessness and other major difficulties must be healed for people such as the Haitian women I worked with to be able to make progress. Otherwise, all efforts to help them will fail. In most cases, the same has occurred with efforts through the use of counseling and practical efforts to help people in the slums of North America. In my experience, the most useful

approach is to use some types of holistic healing to help resolve trauma and learned helplessness. In some cases where people have very little, providing them with a bit of money or practical help is essential for them to want to participate or to give them a hand up. For example, when I did healing work with a group of homeless men, each was given a small amount to attend individual and group sessions. This greatly increased participation.

MULTI-FACETED WORK

I worked on a number of angles in this project – healing work with the people, community development, funding, and multi-dimensional healing.

Healing work with the people involved meeting with twelve or so women in four groups and assisting them to heal their suffering. We would start the meetings with a prayer and a spiritual song. Although most if not all were Catholics, the country is also made up of Protestants and practitioners of voodoo – the positive side of what is generally known in the West as a dark form of spirituality involving curses and zombies. I made it clear to them that we all believe in God/Spirit and are all brothers and sisters regardless of the brand of spirituality we practice.

I mostly made use of healing visualizations with these groups. These methods are very powerful for assisting to heal various types of negativity. They first came to the West from Asia in the 1970s through Russian Olympic athletes who were visualizing their performing very well in their sport – such as going down ski hills more quickly. They won more medals as a result. These methods are also used in mind/body work to assist in healing physical illnesses. I've integrated these and other methods into my healing and training work. In my experience, these healing methods are very powerful to help transform difficulties that people have had for decades, generations, and lifetimes.

I also used methods related to energy psychotherapy, a combination of cutting edge modes of healing from the West and ancient healing approaches from the East. The photo below is of doing the butterfly hug with a group of fifty women. This is a very powerful method for healing trauma which combines two very effective methods for resolving trauma in minutes – Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).



I use these and other methods in my practice, teach them in my training program in Vancouver and discuss them in a book I've written, "Profound Healing for Indigo Children & Youth and Other Sensitive Souls." I've found these methods to be very effective with clients, including people who've been extensively abused or neglected, as well as homeless people in Vancouver, First Nations clients, and the lowest caste in India, who've been marginalized for thousands of years.

The visualizations I did with them included such methods as imagining that Spirit comes in through the crown of their heads and healing themselves, their loved ones, and the earth. For example, I asked them to imagine that the earthquake energy disruption was still in their energy field as well as in the earth and then to imagine transforming it into calm energy with the help of Spirit. I assisted them to become more grounded after that. I also asked them to imagine that they carried death energy of people who had died, including their loved ones, and to heal this energy as well as the grief in their hearts, bellies, and cellular levels. We also healed historical trauma relating to their ancestors, including the effects of slavery, among other things. I suggested that they ask their favorite spiritual beings, such as Christ and Mother Mary for Catholics, to assist in their healing work.

I also assisted in healing the children a bit, including advising them to watch over the adults and be supportive to them when they felt badly, although I made it clear that they were not responsible for the adults' well-being.

I assisted the participants to discuss who and what they had lost as well as discussing their abilities and what they would like to establish, such as a small business, arts and crafts, teaching, and so on. I then helped them to connect with each other more positively to help meet each other's needs. We also spoke of the possibility of their getting micro-financing.

Financially, I gave the group participants \$1 US each time they came to a meeting, and \$5 to the organizers. I bought some bags of rice and beans and, for the meetings, I provided fruit and drinking water. Once they were organized and agreed on a contract, shortly after my return home, I provided 22 of the 50 with micro-financing for them to start little businesses. This is to be repaid over a year, and the money to go partly toward food for the others, and partly for micro-financing for other group members. I also provided a bit of money to start a school.

I took all their stories and these are to go on the internet, along with their photos and what they want to create for themselves, such as little businesses, and the cost. People from around the world will now be able to send money for individual women and their children.

I also helped to organize them. We set up an executive committee, with the photo below. The male two to the left of me is not part of the group of fifty or of the executive committee. The task of this group is to assist in organizing the people, including micro-financing, setting up a school, assisting people with various skills to help each other, etc. Since many of the people tend to be passive, and focused mostly on their own needs, working with this group will be a challenge. This is not surprising given the various difficulties the people have gone through, and the layers of trauma and the learned helplessness that needs to be healed in them.



In terms of multi-dimensional transformation, I did healing work while my driver was taking me around, and in the mornings and evenings when I was not with the group of women. This included such issues as healing of voodoo curses, assisting lost souls to return to Source, transformation of negative energies from previous cultures, left-over issues in their DNA of slaves, oppression of European cultures in various ways, healing of the land, etc. I asked a couple of healers who are particularly sensitive to such energies to give me their perspective on my work. They said they could feel a difference in the group of fifty and in the area of the earthquake as a result of my efforts. In my training program, I work with various types of energies, such as DNA level, past life, negative energy in the land and so on. For those who are interested, you can choose to check out the articles and videos on my website at www.dynamicharmony.com.

I had also done a great deal of this healing work before going to Haiti – sending healing energy to such issues as curses, death energy in the land, etc. One of the results was that I was attacked by negative energies such as voodoo, negative Atlantean energies, and so on. I had to learn how to transform them in the process, even before I went to Haiti. This experience helped to prepare me for Haiti long before I went there.

LESSONS LEARNED

The main conclusion I learned was that, although the type of healing work I do can be very effective in working with various groups, including such difficult issues as homeless people and disenfranchised groups in India, it was simply not enough for Haiti because of the extent of the problem. Many people have spent billions of dollars trying to help in practical terms in Haiti, with very little noticeable results. I believe that it's essential to try to have impact on the people through a variety of methods at the same time – healing trauma and other issues, community development, micro-financing, and broader transformational healing work.

THE FUTURE

Two weeks into the project and one week before coming back home, I was becoming concerned that there was still a great deal of work to do with the families I was working with, and that their progress was perhaps not firmed up enough to leave them yet. However, it would be somewhat helpful that I was planning on connecting with them regularly over the phone and internet after leaving. God willing and if enough donations came in, I wanted to go back to Haiti on a regular basis over the coming year, with my first trip planned for September. However, a two month gap for people in their plight is an extremely long time.

As part of my being guided and co-creating with Spirit, I met someone who would help to fill the gap the weekend before I was to return home. I went to Jacmel to explore the possibilities in terms of Jennifer van Wyck working there. She's a psychotherapist from Vancouver who plans on giving a year of her time to community development and healing work in Haiti beginning in November 2010. As it turns out, there is not sufficient damage in Jacmel to warrant Jennifer going there.

However, I met Géo Sainristil, a social worker and community developer who was taking a day off in Jacmel. We happened to meet at the beach at 7 a.m., with no one else around. Coincidence? Absolutely not. When we open, give unconditionally, and surrender, magic happens. We were meant to meet so that he could help Jennifer to get oriented in Haiti and they could work together, and so that he could assist the women in becoming more organized.

Géo and I met with the executive committee of the fifty women, and he has begun working with them since I left Haiti a week ago. They plan to continue working together on an ongoing basis. I also met a pastor at a church, Brother Guy, who will assist the group of women and their children in terms of medical services, an occasional meal, and perhaps other services.

I nearly made a deal with landowners to rent to own a piece of land for up to 300 people to move to. This is an important option for us to consider because the people are basically piled on top of each other in the disaster zone, and the rubble has not been cleaned up whatsoever there. It's not possible to build anything in that area. The hope is to assist people to build adobe huts on a piece of land near a city so they can have a school, have little businesses, and so on. The

degree of support we get from people such as yourself will determine whether this will happen.

The vision is that, God willing, we will assist this group of fifty women and their children to get more fully on their feet and, next trip, begin working with another group of fifty. A few people from the first group can assist the new group, and another 50 or 100 the trip after that. And so on. And we hope that people will come forward to assist these groups more and more, as I and others continue take the initial healing and organizing steps with new groups. In my perfect world, many youth will want to receive training to help out in Haiti and in other places, including in their own communities.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are a variety of things you and your loved ones can do. For example, you could simply pass this information on to people you think might be interested. You could send us some money – even \$20 would help. You could send prayers and healing energy to Haiti. And ask God or your favorite high beings to help. You could choose to go to Haiti to help out on your own, or consider going with us and assist with our project.

If you want to assist from where you are, you could do one or more of the following:

- Participate in a new Board of Directors and work toward creating a non-profit organization
- Program manager
- Fundraising
- Expertise in writing grant proposals
- Someone with expertise in micro-credit
- Secretarial/Administrative
- Communication
- Coordination of volunteers
- Consultants re. community development, research on effectiveness, program management
- Website development
- Developing a group of women, youth, or mixed group to adopt a group of desperate women and their children in Haiti.

If you would like to go to Haiti:

- Trainees to provide healing work based on the Dynamic Harmony Training Program, of which I am director
- Program manager – Teachers, physicians, nurses, various types of healers

- Teach arts and crafts
- Community development
- Expertise in making adobe bricks (made of mud and straw)
- Builders to help create a new community to house people
- Trainers to teach people carpentry, electrical work, etc.
- Consultant re. land use.

Funding is greatly needed – even \$20 will help.

- Support a family to gain independence – for a total of \$65. When this is repaid, it will go to another woman for micro-financing
- Funding to support the project and our trips for two weeks, including flight, food and accommodation, driver/translator, food for the group, community development, micro-financing, etc., to help fifty women and their families get on their feet – \$7,000
- Additional helpers to go for two weeks – \$2500 per helper
- Jennifer van Wyck's year in Haiti – \$3000 per month for living expenses and to assist in developing many groups of fifty
- Rent to own land to move 300 people (gradual payments, \$48,000 to purchase the land depending on the size), plus costs for the move and for building a well, infrastructure and buildings. The people will pick up the costs after a year.

We're open to all offers. If you wish for more information or to donate money, go to www.dynamicharmony.com or email us at info@dynamicharmony.com. You can also phone us at (604) 662-7837.