



BY KAREN STEWART, MA

miracles

Although this issue of *Health & Healing* is focused on myths, I want to focus instead on miracles and have adapted a previously published article.

On the bookshelf next to my desk I have a picture and quote that was sent via the Internet by a friend. The black and white, grainy photo is of an infant, beautiful and perfectly formed, but so tiny that she is being held in the palms of a man's hands. The quote underneath is from Albert Einstein and reads: "There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle and the other is as though everything is a miracle." I think it would be difficult to see the photo of the tiny infant and not be filled with awe at both the miracle of life and the technological skill that enables us to help such tiny premature infants survive. In the bustle of our daily lives it is easy to lose sight of the presence of the miracles that surround us, the spectacular wonders in our own backyards.

I feel like my life has been full of miracles. Finding my husband, having two beautiful healthy children, wonderful loyal friends, and a solid faith community all seem like miracles to me. Professionally I am extraordinarily grateful that through a very circuitous route I found my way to work that I cherish. I wish everyone were paid to do work that they would do even if they were independently wealthy! As one of the first in my family to attend college, I didn't even know what graduate school was and had no idea of the existence of therapists. Through a series of experiences I was able to find the work I feel I was meant to do. While I had to work hard to get the necessary training, even it was enjoyable.

The next miracle is the presence of my clients. I have the most amazing clients. Each of them is special beyond description. Getting to know a new client is like discovering a treasure. Many people fear that if they talk about their deepest, darkest secrets, others will turn away in disgust. In fact the opposite is always true. As we reveal our pain, shame, angry thoughts and feelings we make ourselves more vulnerable. As we let go of old defenses we actually become more lovable. While my clients vary in the degree to which they have been subjected to traumatic events, all share painful experiences which have shaped them and which they have had to overcome. I am grateful for these clients who put their trust in me.

Being with people as they are doing the difficult work of change is miraculous. As I listen to the stories of clients, I am impressed with how children survive in the most hostile of environments. I sit in awe as clients find the courage to face old painful experiences that they fear will overwhelm them. As I work with couples and watch their efforts to increase their understanding and appreciation of each other, I am deeply touched. As people heal, their lives become more rewarding, their energy increases, and they often find ways to reach out and make a difference in the lives of others.

As I write this, I look outside to a beautiful day with hummingbirds coming to the feeder outside my window—a miracle if ever there was one! My wish for myself and for you is that every day we recognize one of the miracles around us and live as much as possible with gratitude for all that we have. hkt

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