

HAL AND ME (AND DON AND BILL), OR HOW WE GOT WELLNESS ON THE MAP, AND HOW HAL'S VISION HAS BEEN OVERLOOKED/IGNORED/BYPASSED/WATERED DOWN

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Synopsis:

Halbert Dunn (Hal) profoundly shaped my 46-year career. His work led to my founding the first wellness center in the US in 1975. His death, the same week I opened the Center, might even be significant.

As I launched Wellness Resource Center, Don Ardell, PhD, and Bill Hettler, MD, co-conspired with me to help bring the word “wellness” from obscurity to its current popularity. In addition, a Dan Rather feature on our Center on *60 Minutes* in 1979, likely helped lead to its status of half a billion hits on Google.

My Center evolved into much more than I envisioned, thanks to Don's bringing it to national attention. Similarly, Bill's National Wellness Conferences at the U. of Wisconsin, Stevens Point campus, connected me with amazing people, many of whom became close friends as we all helped put wellness on the map.

Later in my career, I came to appreciate even more how much Hal had contributed to me and how little-known he and his writings currently are, so I researched him, locating and interviewing his only daughter-in-law and granddaughter. They supplied me with photos of Hal as a young man and also revealed many other interesting facts beyond his varied accomplishments—which I had learned about from his widow's collection of Hal's publications and Wikipedia. One startling fact was that he had left his three young sons to marry another woman.

Like Hal, my work has evolved through several career changes: from my medical training, to adult wellness, to infant wellness, to my current passion, resulting from my self-discovery and naming of Male Postpartum Abandonment Syndrome (MPAS). MPAS explains the epidemic of disappearing dads and broken marriages, which occurs soon after a child is born. The likelihood that Hal also experienced MPAS is my final connection with him.

I hope to inspire readers to contribute their gifts to further the much larger vision that Hal laid out for wellness over 60 years ago.

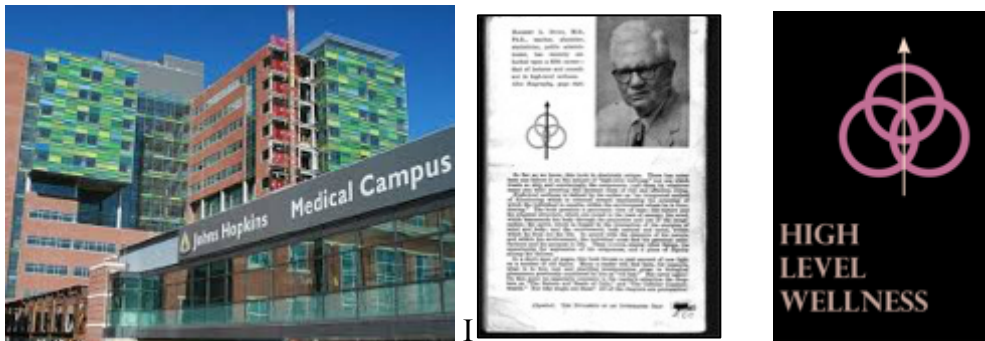
A Defining Moment—How I “Met” Hal

Forty-six years ago I was a first-year resident in preventive medicine at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, taking classes for my masters in public health. I was bored out of my mind.

I had previously graduated from Tufts medical school in Boston and then done an internship at the San Francisco US Public Health Service Hospital. It was there that I discovered how much I hated writing prescriptions for drugs. I had trouble remembering the right doses or even the spellings the drug names right. Something seemed really wrong about drugging away symptoms. I wanted to get to the underlying issues.

My master's studies hadn't addressing those issues, so I treated my boredom by frequently browsing the Hopkins Medical Bookstore.

One April day in 1971, I stumbled on a little book on the clearance table that was marked down to \$2. It was called *High-Level Wellness* by Halbert L. Dunn, MD, PhD. It was the best \$2 I ever spent.



He was the first person I'd ever seen put together the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of our selves in order to attain greater wellness.

It changed my life, formed my career, and it probably even led to the then-unknown word “wellness” becoming commonplace today.

From his picture, I thought Hal, as he was known by his friends, looked like he needed an enema. Not a happy camper. Forty years later I learned that he was quite jovial, but suffered from Bell's palsy and was blind in one eye.

I also thought “wellness” was a silly word, but his thinking made up for it.

My Purpose with this Talk

I want to show how the antics of three, somewhat weird, guys managed to get a then-unknown word, wellness, to where it is today—half a billion hits on Google.

I also believe that the word has been so badly distorted that it's hardly recognizable. Because almost no one knows what he proposed in the 1950, ignorance of what high-level wellness truly can be, is rampant. I hope to inspire you to contribute your gifts to further the much larger, as-yet-unfulfilled, vision that Hal laid out for wellness over 60 years ago.

Our Many Connections

Hal and I:

1. Both were born in Ohio
2. Both had fathers who were surgeons
3. Both were officers in the US Public Health Service
4. Both were at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
5. Both wrote books with “wellness” in title before it was popular
6. Both designed wellness models involving many circles
7. Lived near each other in Maryland in the early 70s
8. Both had multiple careers
9. Both were influenced by Unitarian thinking
10. Both experienced Male Postpartum Abandonment Syndrome (MPAS)

Hal also died the same week that I opened the Wellness Resource Center. Was he passing a baton?

Don, Bill and Me—and the Start of How Wellness Became a Popular Word

His book influenced three of us outliers, Don, Bill, and me, to do things that would eventually lead to the word becoming ubiquitous.



1977, Frost Valley, NY, YMCA Camp: Don Ardell, me, and Bill Hettler

The Story Begins

Before I reveal how this came to be, biased as it may be, a pop quiz:

Before this week, how many have:

1. been to a National Wellness Conference?
2. heard of Halbert Dunn?
3. read his *High-Level Wellness*?
4. heard of me?
5. read my *Wellness Workbook*?
6. heard of Don Ardell?
7. read Don's *High-Level Wellness*?
8. heard of Bill Hettler?

Now that the popularity contest is complete, let's get to the story, but first another connection.

- Hal was born in New Paris, Ohio in 1896.
- Bill was born in Alliance, Ohio in 1943.
- I was born in Bluffton, Ohio in 1943.

How My Education Led to Finding Hal

My dad was a country doctor/surgeon/obstetrician/ophthalmologist/dermatologist, and pharmacist who dispensed his own medicines and once made 16 house calls in one day. He was voted Ohio Physician of the Year in 1984. His most famous patient was Phyllis Diller—a friend of my mother's and my babysitter at age two.

By age five, I decided to be doctor like my daddy. I wanted the love and attention I saw he got from his patients and it was pretty easy to figure out the right answer to, "Are you going to be a doctor like your daddy when you grow up." Plus I'd get to see girls naked, and that was important to a five-year-old mind.



I blindly pursued a path to medical school, which included majoring in chemistry at the College of Wooster (I didn't much like chemistry but it was a ticket to med school).

I met my first wife, a sophomore at Wooster, at the end of my senior year. She was programmed to marry a doctor (her father taught at a med school in Alabama) and I was glad to find someone who'd have me, so we

got married half-way through my second year at Tufts Medical School in Boston. I graduated in 1969—three months before Woodstock, which I only heard about later. I then did an internship in San Francisco, which was still reeling from the Summer of Love’s aftermath in the Haight.

During this clinical year, I discovered that I didn’t have any interest in surgery and that I had an outright aversion to prescribing drugs—I thought they only masked symptoms and rarely did anything to heal the underlying problems.



The Pill Fairy



I had a transformation in worldview in April of that year when a surgical patient showed me a peer-reviewed publication by Herbert Benson, MD, which described how meditation practices could lower blood pressure. I was shocked. As a result, I spent the next three months apprenticing myself to a fellow intern, Marc Sanders, MD, who I had previously avoided because he seemed too hippie-like for my then-conservative tastes.

It was clear that a career in sick-care was not for me, so I accepted a preventive medicine residency at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, hoping to buy time to find out what I wanted to do when I grew up. I also discovered I could lower patients’ blood pressures by prescribing Theodore Isaac Rubin’s, *The Angry Book*.

Computers were just coming into use and I was fascinated with the possibilities they offered clinical medicine. While a resident at Hopkins, I was also a commissioned lieutenant in the US Public Health Service’s Division of Health Services Research, while fulfilling my military service, as well as having tuition paid and a decent salary.



The High Tech Path to Hal

Health Services Research had three brand new CDC 1700 process control computers in an air conditioned room the size of a small home. Each computer had a typewriter interface and **16 kilobytes of memory** (the iPhone has 16 million times as much memory as our computers had)!

Factoid: The iPhone likely has even more memory than Hal, the computer in “2001: A Space Odyssey,” but it probably can’t yet open pod bay doors.



I was bored slogging through master's degree classes, eagerly awaiting the second year of residency. Then I'd be in charge of our computer's main project, the multiphasic health screening center at our hospital next door. So I was ripe for Dunn's gem to appear that fateful day in the bookstore.

I had already been primed by reading the works of Carl Rogers, Hans Selye, and Abraham Maslow. I was also living in a spiritual community, Koinonia, just outside Baltimore where I was exposed to people from Findhorn, and weird California-types who greatly expanded my mind. I was totally gripped by Hal's integration of so many global issues, described in his collection of transcribed radio talks. Here are a few of the chapter titles from *High-Level Wellness*:

3. Man as a Manifestation of Energy
4. The Inner and the Outer Worlds
5. The Nature and the Needs of Cells
10. Social Change and the Changing Life Cycle
15. Values and Value Judgments
18. Balance and Integration of Self
19. Maturity in Wholeness
22. Family Wellness
23. Community Wellness
24. Environmental Wellness
25. Social Wellness
29. The Dignity of Man, Relativity, Purpose, and Human Dignity

Another key influence shortly thereafter was the 1973 classic *Well Body Book*, by Mike Samuels, MD, and Hal Zina Bennett, shown to me by a veterinarian in Pacific Grove, CA, Ted Hollister.

Hal's Status and Early Publications

He was a member of the prestigious Cosmos Club in DC, "...headquarters of Washington's intellectual elite."

Cosmos Club



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He was so admired that there is not just one, but two Halbert L. Dunn awards.

The **Halbert L. Dunn Award** is the most prestigious award presented by the [National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems](#). It has been given to 32 public health statistics experts since 1981.

I let NWI know about this different award after they announced their first HLD award in 2008. They then added “wellness” to the title.

It was only when Hal was getting close to retirement in the late 50s that he came up with the concept of high-level wellness—promoting the *positive* aspects of health—aspects that went beyond simply avoiding illness. The first article was published over 60 years ago in the *Journal of the National Medical Association*:

Points of Attack for Raising the Levels of Wellness

Halbert L. Dunn, MD, PhD

Chief, National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC

Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of the District of Columbia, March 28, 1957.

Published In The *Journal of the National Medical Association*, July, 1957.

A number of his other publications on wellness appeared before his book. The last one was in the *American Journal of Public Health* in June 1959:

In this paper the author presents a conceptualization of positive health (high-level wellness) and indicates the ways in which he thinks it might be used for research in this area.

HIGH-LEVEL WELLNESS FOR MAN AND SOCIETY

Halbert L. Dunn, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.P.H.A.

THE AWAKENED INTEREST of public health circles in full-time local health departments and in the family and community programs of health maintenance is an indication that health workers are

take a multiple and thoroughgoing exploration of the factors responsible for good health. Without prejudice to the importance or the continuation and support of existing medical and health pro-

Hal Didn't Coin the Word “Wellness”

I was surprised to learn, back in the 80s, that the word wellness was first coined in 1654 by Sir A. Johnston, though he spelled it “wealnesse.”

Wellness (we•lnés). [f. WELL *a.* + -NESS.] The state of being well or in good health.

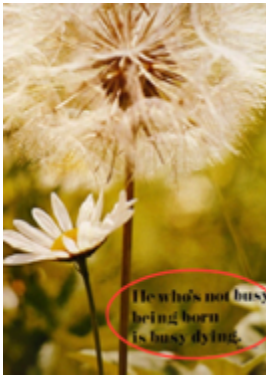
Rather a nonce-wd. than of settled status like *illness*.

1654 SIR A. JOHNSTON (Ld. Wariston) *Diary* (S.H.S.) II. 197, I. blessed God...for my daughter's *wealnesse*. c 1655 DOR. OSBORNE *Lett.* xxviii. (1903) 126 You..never send me any of the new phrases of the town...Pray what is meant by wellness and unwellness? 1791 T. TWINING *Recreat. and Stud.* (1882) 145 When I say 'well,' I can't be supposed to mean the wellness that one should predicate of a professor who makes those instruments his study. 1836 CARLYLE *New Lett.* (1904) I. 33, I feel really very well at present; and could almost persuade myself it were the natural state of *wellness*. 1864 MRS. CARLYLE *Lett.* III. 210 Some weeks of such comparative ease and well-ness. 1896 MRS. DREW in A.C. Benson *Life Abp. Benson* (1899) II. 776 We were all struck by his *wellness*. 1905 H.H. COLVILL *Stepping Stone* 264 With an old man like that, wellness was illness, and illness didn't seem not so very different from wellness.

What Hal came up with was the term “high-level wellness” and he connected it with a broad spectrum of ideas.

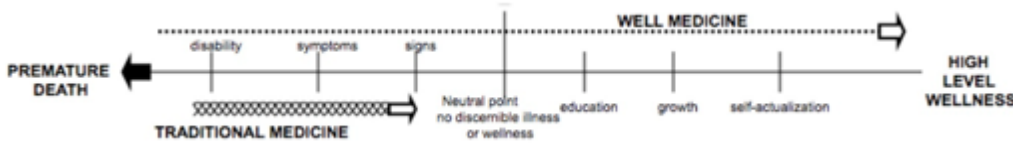
Hal, Through Bob Dylan, Inspires My Illness-Wellness Continuum

Primed by reading Hal's book, it was actually a poster on the wall in a friend's home that tipped my scales. A line from a Bob Dylan song, inspired me to think up my Illness-Wellness Continuum.



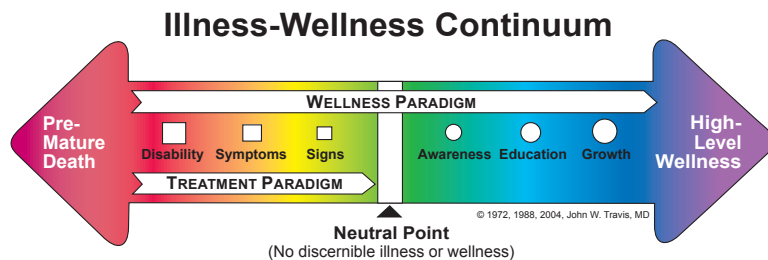
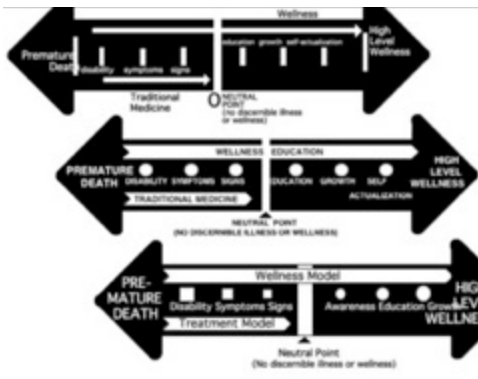
← “He not busy being born, is busy dying,”

A few nights later, I stayed late in our darkened Health Services Research offices to graphically illustrate the Illness-Wellness Continuum on a variable spacing typewriter with press-on graphics.



I realized, just as there were many degrees of illness, there were also as many degrees of wellness.

I later hired a graphic artist to improve it and it has continued to evolve over the years. Note that “Well Medicine,” an oxymoron, became “Wellness,” then “Wellness Education, then Wellness Model” and finally “Wellness Paradigm.” Similarly, “Traditional Medicine” became “Treatment Paradigm.”

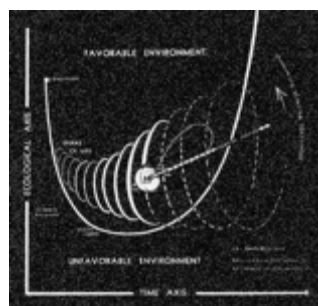
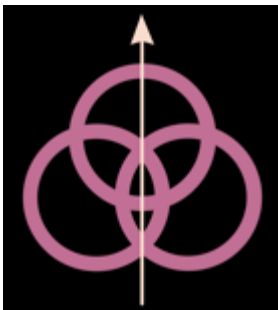


Illness-Wellness Continuum © 1972, 1981, 1988, 2004 by John W. Travis, MD. Reproduced with permission, from *Wellness Workbook: How to achieve enduring health and vitality*, 3rd edition, by John W. Travis and Regina Sara Ryan, Celestial Arts, 2004. www.wellnessworkbook.com

Presently the Continuum is being reprinted in dozens of health textbooks all over the globe.

Wellness Models Using Circles—Hal’s and Mine

But there’re more connections. Dunn had a model of wellness theory using circles (I’ve never figured out the second one, but it’s impressive-looking!).

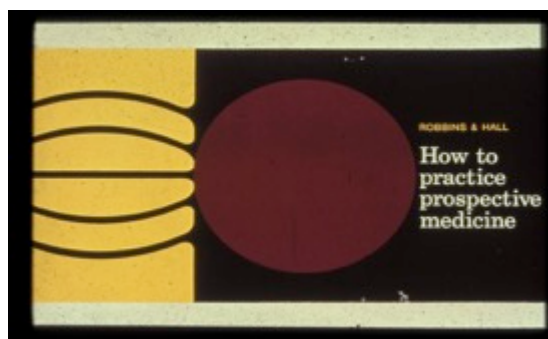


And similarly, I have a model of wellness using circles, as did Ardell, but Hettler went with a hexagon:



Louie, a Colleague of Hal's Tilts My Brain

I realized Hal had led me into another whole dimension that medicine wasn't addressing, but it was pretty theoretical with little practical application I could see. It was a colleague of his, Lewis Robbins, MD, known as Louie to his friends, who bridged me into a practical application for wellness. Here he is with Bill Hettler and me in 1976.



In 1971, shortly after discovering Hal's book, while on a field study trip to the original multiphasic screening clinic at the Oakland California Kaiser Hospital that our department was emulating, I stumbled upon Robbins' book, *How to Practice Prospective Medicine*.

It was sitting on a shelf above the desk of the then-retired founder of the Kaiser Permanente Medical system, the original health maintenance organization (HMO), Sidney Garfield, MD. I was using his office that week because he shared it with my Hopkins advisor, when he consulted at Kaiser, and it was seldom occupied.

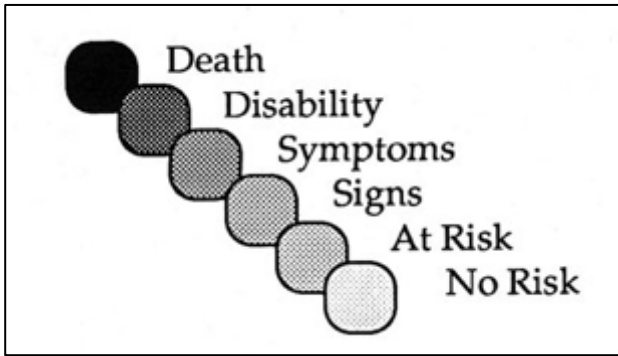
The book's title, let alone its indecipherable contents—talking about risk reduction using life insurance statistics—put my brain on tilt. Prospective Medicine? What's that?

Upon returning to Baltimore, the chair of HSR showed me the *Proceedings of the 8th Annual Meeting of the Society of Prospective Medicine*, which was filled with practical applications of Health Hazard Appraisals (later to be renamed Health Risk Assessments). I went to town with it.

I visited Louie at his office in the Methodist Hospital of Indianapolis. He had named the tool the Health Hazard Appraisal and his small staff was calculating results from answers on mailed-in forms using desktop calculators. They then drew bar graphs with magic markers and returned the output to users by mail.

Louie Leads Me to a Practical Application of Hal's Work

It was two years after finding Dunn's book that I needed to produce a thesis to complete my residency. I decided to program the Health Risk Appraisal since we had the computer power, a hotshot programmer, and a multiphasic screening clinic next door in our outpatient clinic that would benefit from its use.



HEALTH HAZARD APPRAISAL		DATE	BY	MULTIPLY BY
AGE	SEX	HT	WT	
...
TOTAL RISK REACTION IS ...				

Robbins' Health Risk Continuum

It was Robbins' Risk Continuum that provided the left side of my Continuum.

The computer program, done on IBM punch cards, took 3 months to develop and required many hours on the phone with Louie and his actuarial consultant. I then introduced it into our multiphasic screening program.

I soon discovered that, even if I could get the doctors who saw the patients for follow-up results to even *look* at it, we were only scaring people by showing them how their high-risk behavior was affecting their health. Fear did not seem to motivate much behavior change.

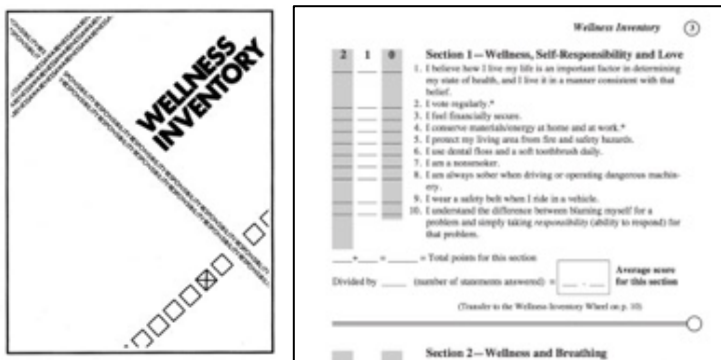
It was time to find a greater role for wellness, because even though Hal's book had led to my creating the Continuum, by itself, it wasn't much use.

I wanted to get to the underlying attitudes and behaviors that led to high-risk lifestyles.

One afternoon, at the Baltimore Public Library near our offices, I started writing down what seemed like unusual questions on 3x5 cards like: "I drive on radial tires (rare in the early 70s)." "I have a fire extinguisher in my kitchen." "When I see a broken bottle on the sidewalk, I pick it up." "I eat whole foods." "I avoid sugar." "I have at least five close friends." "It's easy for me to express fear, sadness, anger, and joy." These questions just flowed out effortlessly.

Soon I had nearly 90 cards, which I then sorted into 10 categories, making up a few more questions to produce 10 questions in each of 10 categories such as self care, nutrition, exercise, stress reduction, etc.

In the summer of 1975, after testing the questions on staff (and having it spoofed by the computer programmers), I published them as the first Wellness Inventory.



A Digression—The Real Hal, as Revealed through Don's Adventuressomeness

During the latter part of my residency, I was living in Columbia, MD, only 20 miles from Dunn's home in a retirement community in Bethesda. I still rue that it never occurred to me to visit him. This part of the story would have been much richer if I had, but let's resume my saga with Hal.

Fortunately a few years later, in 1978, three years after Dunn's death, Don Ardell paid a visit to his widow and colleague, Elizabeth Phelps (Phelpsie). She gave Don one of the three copies she'd assembled of all of Hal's publications.

A few years later, Don passed them on to me, which I kept bundled up securely with the intent of reading them all some day. About 7 years ago, I digitally scanned some of the papers for a presentation at the National Wellness Conference. It was then that I discovered copies of four eulogies given at his memorial service in November 1975.

Hal Had a Family!

One of his eulogies mentioned his sons.... Wait a minute! Sons?

No one had ever mentioned him having children. He and Phelpsie were busy professionals. How could this be?

I asked a genealogical expert if he could track this down. My friend soon turned up Dunn's draft records for WWI, along with the name of his first wife and the fact that he had 3 sons by her, including telephone numbers of his grandson and granddaughter.

Even though he was born in Ohio, his family had moved to Minneapolis shortly thereafter, where he grew up and was schooled. After getting his MD and PhD at the U. of Minnesota, he taught medicine at Presbyterian Hospital in New York and then became an associate professor of biometry and vital statistics at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore (another connection!).

His growing family then moved back to his home state of Minnesota where he became the first biostatistician at the Mayo Clinic, and then a director of University Hospital and Professor of Medical Statistics at the U. of Minnesota.

At some point when his three boys were in grade school, he met a secretary at a conference, Elizabeth Phelps, and they apparently fell madly in love. She pursued him until he left his young sons in Minneapolis and moved to Washington, DC, where he married her.

I believe this was a classic case of Male Postpartum Abandonment Syndrome (MPAS)—my current professional interest, presented at yesterday's talk. I will summarize it at the close of this story. Yet another connection, since I experienced MPAS with both my daughters' mothers.

After moving to Washington, Hal founded, and became chief of the US National Office of Vital Statistics from 1935 through 1960. In his final year before retirement, he was with the [US Public Health Service \(yet another connection\)](#), where he was Assistant Surgeon General for Aging.

I discovered that the last of his sons had died just 3 months earlier, but was able to record a phone interview with that son's widow. I also corresponded with her daughter, Katherine Dunn, and artist and author who was in her 50s and living on a farm in Oregon (she recently moved to Maine) where she rescues wounded animals and raises goats and lavender along with her partner, who also has the surname, Dunn (no relation).

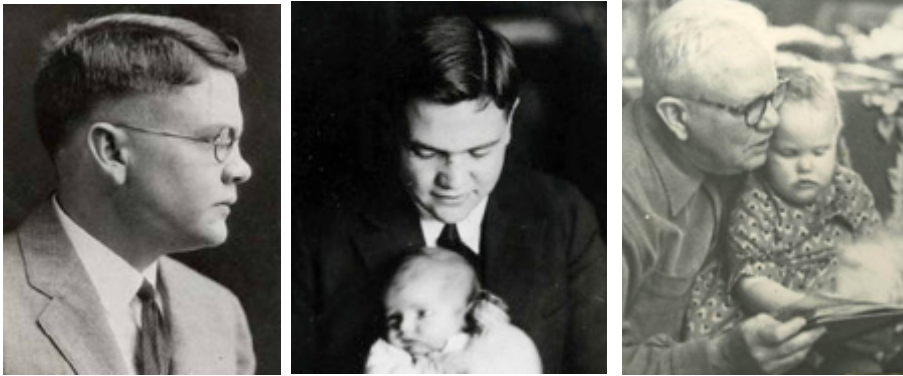
She sent me photos and more descriptions of her experience of Hal, plus arranged for me to interview her 81-year-old mother by phone.



Katherine Dunn

Sleuthing Hal's Personal Life

While there had been little contact between Hal and his sons, when I interviewed Kathryn's mother, she told me that he did visit his grandchildren regularly when coming near Minneapolis. Kathrine had also visited him a few times in Washington, both as a child and teenager and she related how he's taken her out to his garage to eat junk food together without his second wife, Phelpsie, finding out. Later, when she was a teen, they drank beer together in the garage. She sent me these photos of him: as a young man, with his firstborn son, and with her as a baby.



As we know, it was Hal who first introduced the concept of high-level wellness to the public through a series of twenty-nine radio broadcasts that he gave at the Unitarian Church in Arlington, Virginia, in the late 1950s. These lectures were later transcribed to become his book, *High Level Wellness*, two years after the last broadcast.

Despite a revival of interest that led to a new edition of his book in 1975, it is currently out of print. The rare used copies on Amazon can go for hundreds of dollars, but since it is now be in the public domain, you can download a free copy in PDF from our website.¹ I hope to reissue a paper copy soon.

Hal appears to have been a member of the Unitarian church on Cedar Lane, in Bethesda, MD, where he lived in retirement and where his memorial service was held.

What this means is, like the women's suffrage movement in the last century, which was largely the work of Unitarian women, the wellness movement also has its roots in Unitarian thinking.

Yet another connection I have with Hal is that I became a member of the Unitarian church in Harvard Square while in medical school in 1966 as a means of finding intellectual stimulation (which medical school did not provide).

I presently attend a Unitarian church in San Rafael, CA, that has a fascinating discussion group, which includes brilliant thinkers such as the lead founder of the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change (or the Six Stages of Change Model) along with my partner, Yvonne, and long-time colleague, and past co-president of NWI, Meg Jordan.

Don and Me

After several failed efforts to interest both Johns Hopkins' pioneering family comprehensive health program in Columbia, Maryland, and the US Public Health Service, my employer at the time, in a wellness center, I decided to go out on my own and, moved back to Mill Valley, California, in July 1975, preparing to open my own wellness center

In late August 1975, I was waiting for the completion of the remodeling of the former residence into office space, which the Wellness Resource Center would occupy near downtown Mill Valley.

I was presenting my early notions of wellness at the nearby Wholistic (that's how the spelled it then) Health and Nutrition Center (WHN), set up a year earlier by Richard Shames, MD, and Rick Koslenko, DC. There

¹ TinyURL.com/HLW123

probably were only a dozen participants, but one of them was to radically change the course of my work and life—Donald B. Ardell.

Don was the only other person I met who had also read Hal's then out-of-print book. We immediately bonded and began a collegueship that has lasted 42 years. He has a playful side, as you can see.

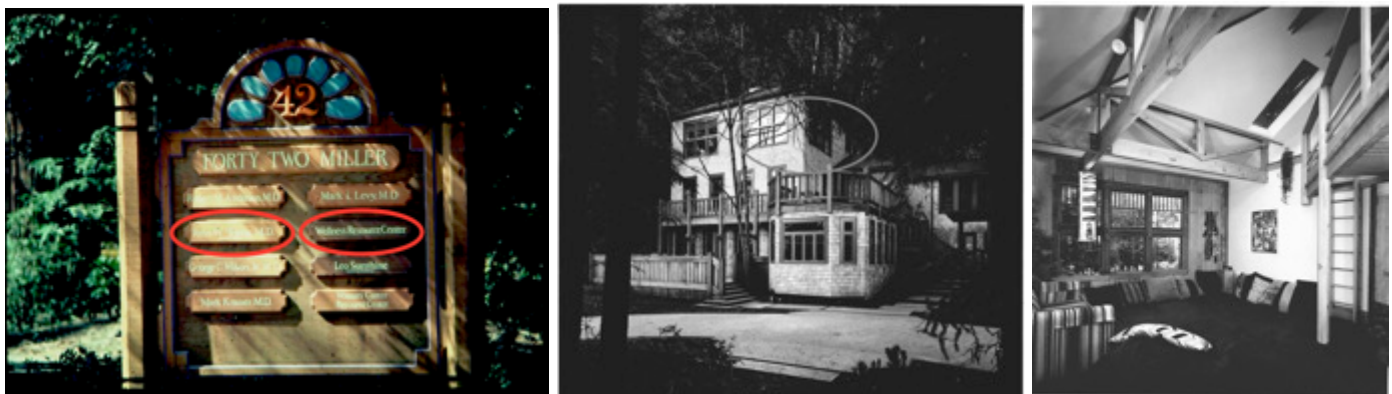


Don had just completed three years as executive director of the San Francisco Bay Area Health Planning Council and had taken on three new roles that led him down the path toward a career in wellness promotion: editor of the *American Journal of Health Planning*, consultant with Arthur Young & Company, and doctoral studies at the Union Institute and University based in Cincinnati (then called Union Graduate School).

I served as one of three adjunct faculty members on Don's doctoral committee at Union, where he would soon complete his thesis. Borrowing Dunn's title with his widow's permission, he converted the thesis into a book for Rodale Publications—*High-Level Wellness: An Alternative to Doctors, Drugs, and Disease*, in 1977.²

My Second Career—Wellness Resource Center

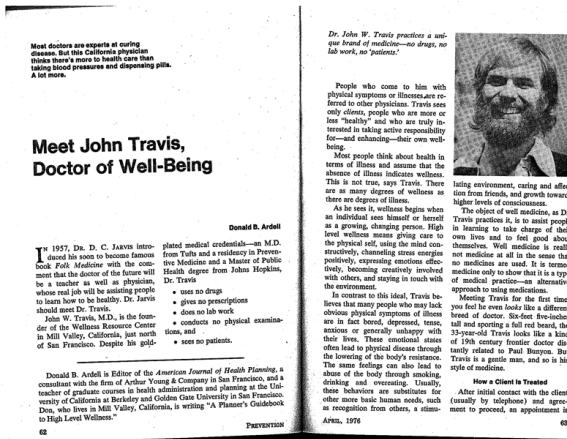
In November 1975, the same month Hal died at age 79, I moved into our newly-remodeled offices in Mill Valley. I had expected to have only a small practice with a part-time biofeedback practitioner and a shared secretary with the psychiatrist who owned the building. I wasn't even sure about keeping "wellness" in the name of the Center, having separated it from my name on the sign out front. I thought the word might just be too weird for the public.



² goo.gl/8efqwK

Don Expands My Vision for a Wellness Center

During this time, Don wrote an article about my plans for the Wellness Resource Center, even though it had barely opened. It was published in Rodale's *Prevention Magazine*, and entitled, "Meet John Travis, Doctor of Wellbeing."



Prevention's circulation at the time was about 13 million. As a result, my small staff and I were flooded with mail, often from nurses wanting to know how they could interest their doctors in wellness.

We mailed out over a thousand replies at considerable cost in time and money, even though we had nothing to sell to help cover expenses. But it helped put us on the map. Even patients in my father's general practice in rural Ohio surprised him by showing him the article—both surprised by the magazine's extensive reach.

Don's ceaseless promotion of wellness to hospitals, health systems planners, and anyone else who would listen often cited our center. This, and a cover story by friend and colleague, George Leonard, a former editor of *Look Magazine* in the second issue of *New West Magazine*, led to my being plunged into a limelight for which I was little prepared.

The Rise of the Wellness Resource Center

While I was developing our Wellness Resource Center, Kenneth Maue, PhD (Music), dropped in one day and we hit it off. He soon came on staff and was instrumental in our growth. He also saw that we needed a secretary of our own and found one Bobbie Burdett. He later published an amazing book of "pieces" called *Water in the Lake* and his creativity was inspiring.

I soon discovered that she knew more nutrition than I did, as well as other subjects. Not long afterwards she began seeing clients, doing personal style consults, and then became our director of client services.

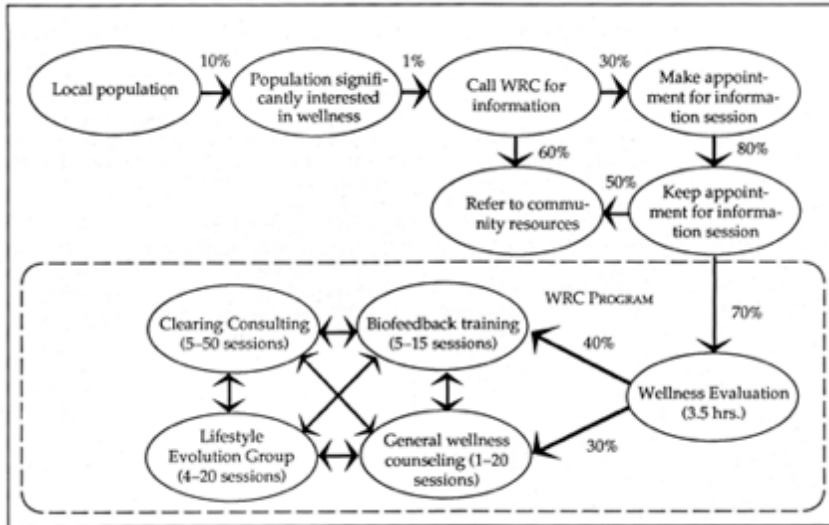


- Having recently divorced, I met another recent divorcee, Joy Holloway, within a week or two of meeting Ardell and she shortly became my personal as well as professional partner. She began doing what Clearing Consulting with our clients, as well as our staff.

One of the authors of my favorite bestselling book, *Born to Win*, about Transactional Analysis (TA), drove over an hour to attend clearing sessions with Joy. TA had, and continues to influence my life and our work.

In those early days, “wellness” was so strange-sounding to most people’s ears that we often had to spell it over the phone—W-E-L-L-N-E-S-S. I had no idea where it would eventually go. I’m sure Hal didn’t either in the 60s.

The rapid expansion of our services led to developing several client programs, including a 3-hour wellness assessment, biofeedback for stress reduction, nutrition and fitness education, clearing consulting for resolving psychological blocks to wellness, and my lifestyle evolution group, which was like a therapy group but with an emphasis on wellness.



Our staff grew from 1.75 to 4 and then 8 and ultimately, 13, before I burned out.



As the inevitable interpersonal issues began to arise, Kenneth had the foresight to hire a family therapist who helped us transform into a true family. We held weekly process meetings, often ending with our going out to dinner together. As you can see from the photos, we were warm and a little fuzzy, as the photo shows.

In those days, four hugs a day was believed to be the minimum daily requirement, but I now believe this is probably too low. Here Bobbie is hugging a client—a criminal trial lawyer from Chicago who exposed the Chicago police for the brutal murder of Black Panther Fred Hampton in his bed with his family present. Skip then became a life-long friend and I still have weekly phone check-ins with him.



We attracted clients like the original creators of Victoria's Secret, Goldie Hawn's rabbi, the world's largest grower of seed rice, and the founder of a high-end Union Square department store, but most were average Marin County folks who were struggling with issues that caused mental or physical pain. We did a lot of hug therapy as part our goal of helping clients to know themselves better so they could take better care of themselves.

In addition to private sessions and group meetings, we also led weekend workshops and conferences, both in California and Maryland. Many attendees raved about them because of the down-to-earth warm, loving energy we fostered. We deliberately did not act like "professionals." One of the attendees was Kent Peterson, MD, then Executive Director of the American College of Preventive Medicine in Washington, DC, who brought his entire staff and has remained a lifelong friend and colleague.



Our team also put on Ten-Day Intensives where clients, mostly helping professionals, stayed nearby and availed themselves of our various services.

While I used all my life savings, borrowed on my life insurance, and took loans from my father to fund the Center, it was my income from public speaking that kept the Center afloat. Client fees were never quite enough to be self-supporting.

Me? A Writer? (But Hal Had Been...)

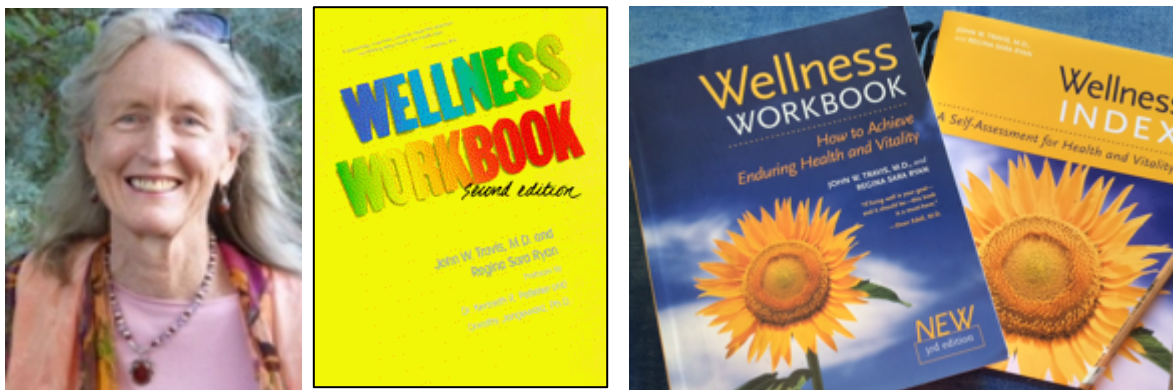
I was such a poor writer that I had to take a remedial course upon entering college. I managed to write a few technical term papers there, but writing was low in my professional skillset.

In 1977, after several years of resisting strong encouragement to write a book, I relented and self-published the first version of the *Wellness Workbook* in a 3-ring binder. High school girls were hired to assemble it on the floor of our main room, and we were surprised to sell several thousand at \$40 each.

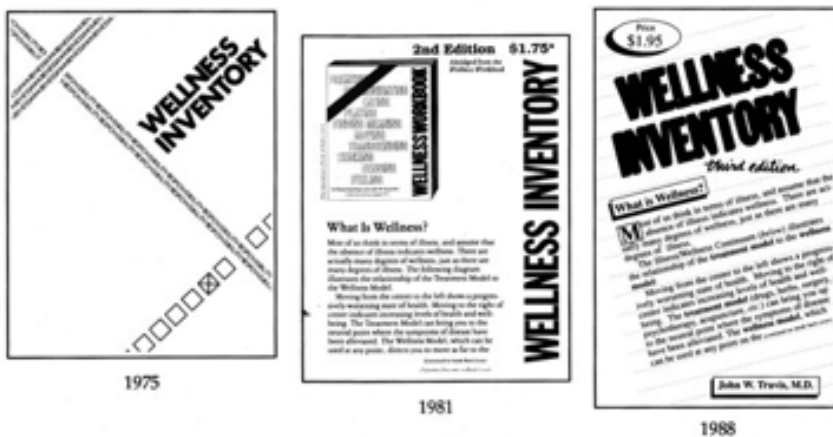


Two years later I met Regina Ryan, who was to become my co-author in a vastly expanded version of the Workbook. She shared most of my views and had the writing gift I lacked. We were a great team. Oh, how I wish we'd had a computer in those days!

In 1981, we published the trade paperback version of the *Wellness Workbook* with Ten Speed Press.³ It has now sold nearly a quarter of a million copies in three editions and is often used as a textbook. Along with the new book, I revised the *Wellness Inventory* and also expanded it into the much more detailed *Wellness Index*, included in the *Wellness Workbook* and also published as a separate booklet.



The original *Wellness Inventory*, which had sold only 50 copies the first year, went on to sell tens of thousands of copies in three editions of its 12-page booklet form.



In the late 90s the *Wellness Inventory* was also computerized and put online as part of a whole person assessment program developed at Wellpeople.com. It is now used by universities, nursing schools, and even the military.

³ goo.gl/z7kkvP

WELLNESS INVENTORY WellPeople

BREATHING
Elimination 2 of 12

How True? How fully is the statement being expressed in your life at this point in time?
Slider score rating: 0 = Not at all, 10 = Completely

How Motivated to Improve? If your 'How True' score is not as high as you desire, what is your current level of motivation to improve it (readiness for action) in the next 30 days?
Slider score rating: 0 = Lowest, 10 = Highest (See 'Help' for further clarification)

Entering your Score: Move the slider to the desired score. If you are on a mobile device, click on bar to move slider to desired score. For a 0 score, type 0 in the box.

Options: Type 0-10 score in box. Hit tab key to move from box to box (tab only).

Customize? CLICK on blue statements to learn how they apply to your life.

Wellness Statement	How True?	How Motivated to Improve?
I wear clothing that is comfortable and loose enough to allow unrestricted breathing.	<input type="range"/>	<input type="range"/>
I pause during the day to notice if my posture is facilitating full, natural breathing.	<input type="range"/>	<input type="range"/>
I take breaks during the day to notice if I am breathing deeply and smoothly.	<input type="range"/>	<input type="range"/>
When I am experiencing stress, I use my breath to help release my tension.	<input type="range"/>	<input type="range"/>



Public Speaking—The Last Thing I Was Prepared to Do—But Hal Did It!

As if writing wasn't hard enough for me, in response to the publicity that Ardell and others provided, I was invited to speak about our Center all over North America. I rose to the calling, but still wince inwardly recalling some of the public speaking gaffes I made.

In 1978, Bill also invited me to lecture to students at the U. of Wisconsin, Stevens Point campus, where he was the director of the student health center. You can see how several of them seemed more interested in looking at him taking the photo than listening to my rantings about wellness (and was my posture really that bad?).



Bill also brought Don and me to Frost Valley YMCA in the Catskills—the YMCA's largest camp—where he had organized a wellness program (it looks like I flew in with my Mercury-winged cap).

Most of my presentations proved to be more popular than the one pictured above, and my fees helped keep the Center running.

Some of my favorite experiences were speaking to the Surgeon General of Canada and his staff, and to Colorado Governor Richard Lamm and his staff. Patch Adams and his brother attended a talk at Johns Hopkins in 1978 and we've remained friends ever since.



Sampling of sponsors for speaking engagements:

American Association of Retired People (AARP)
 American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology
 American Public Health Association
 American Medical Association
 American Medical Student Association
 Japan Wellness Association, Tokyo, Japan
 Kaiser Permanente, (US Hospital Administrators Conference)
 Latrobe University (Australia)
 Stanford University School of Medicine
 Tokyo College of Wellness Science
 University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine
 University of Auckland, School of Medicine (New Zealand)
 Washington University School of Medicine, (St Louis)
 US Public Health Service, National Health Training Corps
 Peace Corps, Liberia, Africa, medical staff

Bill and Me

I met Bill at the 1976 Society of Prospective Medicine meeting, shown earlier with Louie. He, Dennis Elsenrath, and Fred Leafgren were simultaneously launching the National Wellness Institute and had held the first of their annual conferences at U. Wisc., Stevens Point.



Bill inspired me with his focus on both exercise and kids, and the importance of carrying children when young. He also took them on wild rides like this, and he regrets that he failed to patent this device.

In 1977 Bill sent a staff member to one of our conferences in Mill Valley, which marked the beginning of my 40-year connection with NWI.

I presented dozens of times at the their annual conferences held in the wonderful summer camp-like environment at their Stevens Point campus. As a result, I have become close friends with many of the amazing people it attracted.

While it started out pretty much as a “Boys Club,” soon Elaine Sullivan joined them with her amazing ability to open up crowds of people to their emotions. I’ll never forget her getting an auditorium of nearly a thousand people to cry during her keynote in 1982.



Others of the Old Guard that I came to know well are: Anne Abbott, John Munson, Judd Allen, Craig Washington, Sandy Queen...



...Michael Arloski, Jim Strohecker, Bob Boyd, Meg Jordan, and Bob Fellows



A third wave of amazing folks soon appeared—too numerous to mention—but I make exception for the laughter invoked by Jennie Trotter and Gloria Elder, and the possibly-even-wilder-and-wackier Michaela Conley.



Here are many of us, years later at the 40th annual Conference. Don, Bill, and I are on the right side. I suddenly grew hair and scared Don away in the second photo.



The Demise of the Wellness Resource Center

In its five-year existence, despite a peak staff size of 13, our WRC could never attain financial sustainability, largely because we didn't take insurance, since we did not diagnose, treat, or prescribe. The money is in sick-care. Also, I didn't like having to be manager. About two years into the project, we hired a manager, who started out looking great but soon it became clear he didn't understand our family style of working together. He soon alienated most of the staff.

We hired another man, this time with even more staff input, but he turned out to be even worse. I was burned out, but just before I decided to close the Center, in April of 1979 we were interviewed for 60 Minutes with Dan Rather. Dan opened the segment with, "Wellness—now there's a word you don't hear every day!"



When it aired in November 1979, Dan's opening line about wellness, plus the favorable portrayal of our program, along with Don's tireless promotion, and the growing visibility of Bill's National Wellness Conference, brought wellness into common parlance. I didn't know it yet, but it was, in name at least, on the cusp of a tremendous transformation, soon to be used to feed a ubiquitous, big-bucks global industry.

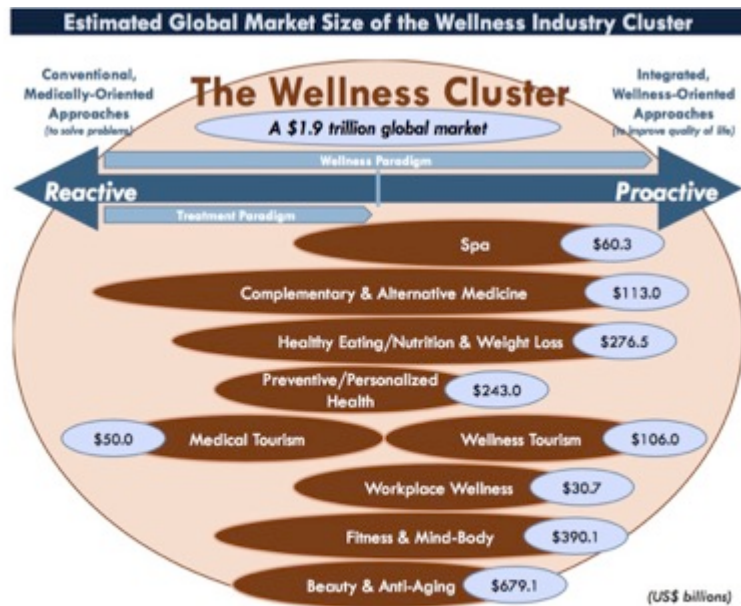
Meanwhile, I was longing to lead a simpler life, and was encouraged by finding Duane Elgin's book, *Voluntary Simplicity*,⁴ and began my search, ultimately leading to the mountains of Costa Rica (below).

Before long, thousands of hospital wellness centers sprang up across the US. Not only did the medical system co-opt the word, but many forms of alternative treatment did the same—from chiropractors to colonic therapists. Wellness treatment spas came into fashion, as did workplace wellness programs. Wellness even entered the lexicons of the world's largest insurance companies.

⁴ goo.gl/sXyq2C

The Rise of the Wellness “Industry” (I picture smokestacks...)

In 2010, the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI, International) estimated the various segments of the wellness “industry” (a horrible term) to generate nearly \$2 trillion annually. Today it’s probably doubled (note that they used my Illness-Wellness Continuum as the scale on the top of the graphic).



¹ The continuum concept used in this model of the wellness cluster is adapted from Dr. John W. Travis' wellness-illness continuum, detailed in Appendix A.

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SRI International

Googling the phrase “wellness center” in 2017 nets 28.5 *million* hits. That’s a little hard for even me to believe, not having the patience to check them all. The word “wellness” alone nets nearly half a *billion* hits! But the number one Google result is a wellness pet food company—has the word been degraded?

I believe few people have had such an influence on the English language as Hal did—not to mention the other languages that have adopted the word.

Unfortunately this is also when the concept became terribly watered down from what Hal envisioned in the 1950s. And almost all of the wellness centers I’ve encountered are really doing alternative treatment, not wellness. And most of the half-billion Google hits refer to things that have little to do with what Hal was writing about in the 1950. It truly sadness me to see how far off the mark we are.

For over 30 years, I’ve felt like the little boy who could see the emperor was naked, and I want to shout it out today. And I’m sure Hal’s turned over in his grave so many times that he’s probably dizzy.

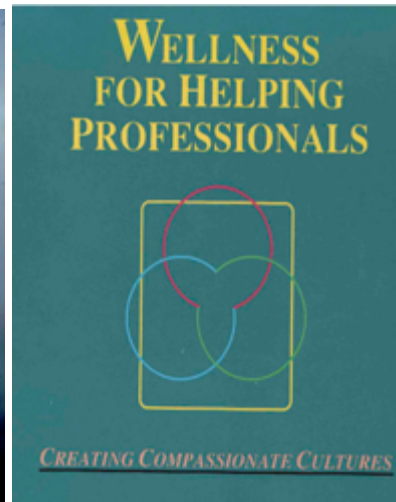
The Next Phase, Back to the Land

As I was burned out, I met an Australian woman at our final workshop who would become my wife for 32 years. We discovered that we shared a vision of a simple life, living off the land, and soon we moved to a small community of North American Quakers called Monteverde in the mountains of Costa Rica. We bought a 100-acre farm and began to form a small community, but the US-backed war in neighboring Nicaragua scared many potential members from joining us, so it never fully developed

While living there, we made frequent trips back to the US to do “circuit riding” in our VW camper, “preaching” wellness to helping professionals from Peoria to Palm Beach.

CultureMaking with Helping Professionals

We soon discovered how hard it was to become self-sufficient off the land, and with the rise of the peace movement of the mid-80s, moved to Cazadero in rural northern California.

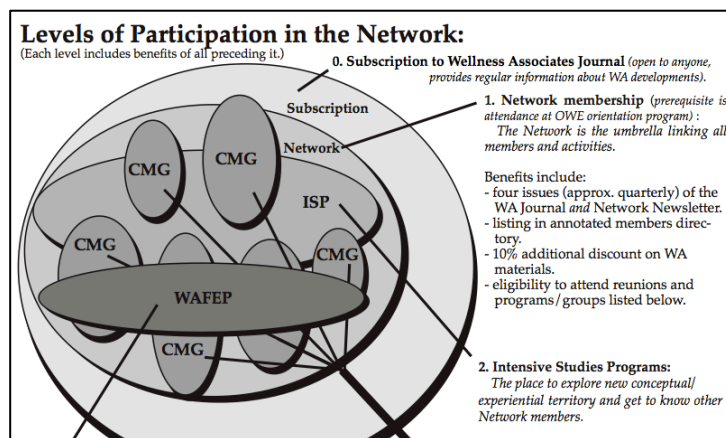


We then began work on our self-published 400-page *Wellness for Helping Professionals: Creating Compassionate Cultures* (please note the connection with the theme of this year's conference).⁵

With this manual we facilitated hundreds of helping professionals, in small residential seminars, on how to replace the authoritarian culture of the medical paradigm with the partnership culture of the wellness paradigm.

Integral to the program was an ongoing support network we set up, in which participants could practice “culturemaking”—a term we believe we were the first to coin in 1987, which now Googles 81,000 hits.

Wellness Associates Culturemaking Network (1986–94)



Meg Jordan was a poster-woman for this project, co-founding a local support group that has lasted over 30 years.

Culturemaking is an important step in reclaiming Hal's vision for wellness—addressing the underlying cultural blindness to the many barriers to wellness.

My Fourth Career: Infant Wellness

At the peak of this work, in the late 80s, I read Jean Liedloff's book, *The Continuum Concept*.⁶

⁵ goo.gl/GKLRVi

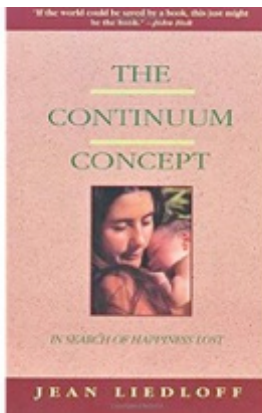
⁶ goo.gl/k2YSux

While reading it, I became depressed for nearly two weeks (not uncommon according to Jean who later became a friend) realizing that I had been denied my birthright of connection to the continuum of humanity through our culture's disconnected birthing and childrearing practices. I also realized that our work in adult wellness was like locking the barn door after the cow had left, so I switched my career to focus on infant wellness.

Over the next two decades, this huge life change led to my wife and I undertaking two major projects simultaneously:

- a) Recognizing an entirely new way to raise children, which was more likely to produce secure attachment, led us to commit to parenthood—something we never considered.


After 2 years of planning, we had a conscious conception and a home birth (much safer than hospitals for low-risk mothers) using a midwife trained in waterbirth (which is vastly easier on both the mother and babe).



- b) After a lead-up of nearly a decade, in 1999, Meryn and I, along with 11 other connection-oriented birth and parenting experts, co-founded the Alliance for Transforming the Lives of Children. Kent Peterson, MD, is now the president of the Alliance.⁷

During its first five years, a dozen of us put over 10,000 volunteer hours into researching, writing, and validating its centerpieces—the *Proclamation* and *Blueprint for Transforming the Lives of Children: Principles and Actions for Creating the Foundations for Optimal Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Social, and Spiritual Development*.

A Proclamation for Transforming the Lives of Children



ALLIANCE FOR TRANSFORMING
THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

Envision a world where:

- every child is wanted, welcomed, loved, and valued;
- every family is prepared for and supported in practicing the art and science of nurturing children;
- adults respect children and honor childhood;
- children joyfully participate in the vital life of family and community; and
- dynamic, resilient life-honoring cultures flourish.

We will create this world by:

- recognizing that in nature's design there are biological imperatives* that must be fulfilled to support optimal human development;
- identifying the evidence-linked principles that arise from these imperatives; and
- acting on these principles that are essential for transforming the lives of children.

Families today face unprecedented challenges—isolation, loss of the extended family, conflicting advice about how to parent, and

brighter future for our world.
A growing body of evidence now documents

⁷ aTLC.org

The Alliance also sponsored two major international summit conferences, bringing together hundreds of attachment experts from different fields to brainstorm and cross-fertilize. It now sponsors projects such as the Book Fairy Pantry Project, which provides free children's books for impoverished families and supports their parents in reading to their young children <BookFairyPantryProject.com>, as well as my project, Connected Couples—Thriving Families described below.

Moving to Australia

In 2000, after 20 years together in the US, we moved to Meryn's homeland of Australia, finding it to be a friendlier, slower-paced culture in which to raise our then seven-year-old daughter. We home-schooled her through grade 6, after which she attended a Waldorf school that fostered many of Hal's wellness principles.

My Fifth Career: Helping Couples Grow their Relationship after Children Enter the Family

The last decade has been largely devoted developing my current project, just launched on Father's Day this year, and sponsored by aTLC: Connected Couples—Thriving Families <ConnectedAndThriving.org>.

With it, we convey the basics of the widespread problem of disappearing dads and broken marriages, aimed at helping professionals who work with young families. Simultaneously, we provide resources to prevent and counteract it.

This work came out of my personal experiences, which led to my discovering and naming an all-to-common phenomenon in English-speaking cultures—Male Postpartum Abandonment Syndrome (MPAS) previously mentioned.

My first experience of MPAS occurred 45 years ago while I was formulating the Illness-Wellness Continuum and preparing to launch the Wellness Resource Center. Despite three years of intensive therapy and becoming trained to be Transactional Analysis therapists, my first wife and I separated when our daughter was 2.



First daughter



Second daughter

Shortly afterwards I moved across the country from Baltimore to California to start the Center, regretfully leaving my daughter behind—the hardest decision I ever made.

Twenty-one years later, with my second wife, after discovering attachment parenting through *The Continuum Concept*, we gave birth to my second daughter. I again began to experience MPAS, but this time it was spread out over 18 years, gradually getting more painful until we separated when our daughter left home at age 18. I think I was the frog in the pot slowly being brought to a boil. I wish I had known what I know now, but I believe we teach what we need to learn.

As I began to more clearly see this life pattern unfold in me, I was able to trace it to my underlying, still largely unconscious, wounding—infant PTSD—and our lack attention to our primary relationship.

From my two experiences with fathering children, and observing many other examples of what looked like similar dynamics in couples around us, I formulated the hypothesis of MPAS. This can be summarized as:

Generations of boys, alienated from their emotions through the commonplace disconnected Western birthing and childrearing practices, grow up looking for the mommy they never really had. If they're fortunate, they find and marry her, and think everything's OK—until the first baby comes along. The resulting pressures on the parents from attempting to raise a child in a nuclear family lead to everyone's needs going unmet.

The ensuing emotional distraction of a man's overwhelmed partner plunges many men into a restimulation of their own early, unresolved birth and childhood traumas—usually quite unconscious.

For optimal development, babies require far more attention than one or two people can provide. At least 3.87 adults per infant are required for everyone's needs to be met. We were designed to raise children in a village, and as Scott Noelle says, "One or two people do not a village make."

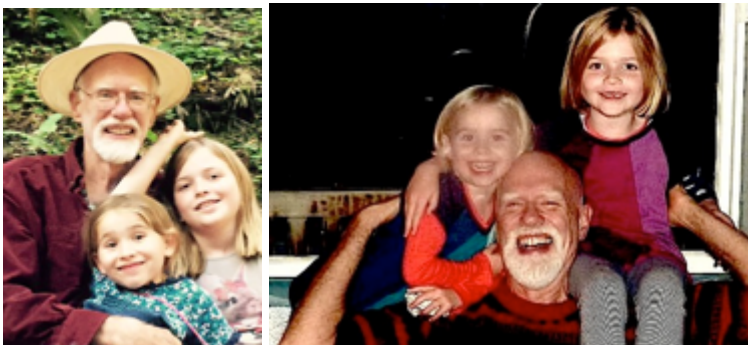
Feeling the pain of his early abandonment once again, the father often self-medicates with drugs, alcohol, work, gaming, porn, affairs, etc, until the pain becomes too great. It is then that about 30% of men physically leave their partners, and upwards of 90% abandon their partner emotionally.



For more on the topic, see *Why Dads Leave*.⁸ It addresses the epidemic of disappearing dads and broken marriages, describing the phenomenon of MPAS and how to heal and prevent it in subsequent generations. Also see my handout for yesterday's presentation "Why Does Having Children Often Destroy Marriages?"⁹

Two Failed Marriages

While I'm still in the process of healing the break with my second wife and our daughter's negative reaction to it, I have made great strides in healing the break with my first daughter through connecting with her daughters like I wish I could have with her. I now live near them, in Mill Valley, California, half the year (I live in Australia the other half of the year) and see them weekly when I can. I admire how she's created such a fine family with her husband, given the trauma she experienced with our breakup and her subsequently inheriting two step-brothers when her mother remarried.



A Final Connection with Hal—Falling Madly in Love at Age 68

The outcome of my second case of MPAS for me was ending a largely successful 32-year marriage that unfortunately dried up due to our poor ability to recognize its insidious development. I was dying inside, thought I was too over-the-hill to ever fall in love again, but I was wrong.

⁸ goo.gl/IB3NP3

⁹ goo.gl/LJVUcb

The final connection shared with Hal, from us both experiencing MPAS, led to me, like he, finding the love of our lives. It just took me a lot longer. At age 68, I fell madly in love with Yvonne Devine, who was also 68, leading to the happiest 6 years of my life



Summary

I've conveyed some of the antics of the three of us who were influenced by Hal in the 70s, and how they led to the word "wellness" now showing half a billion hits on Google.

I also hope I've shown how so many special interests have badly subverted Hal's 60-year-old vision, and how they've co-opted the word without a trace the multidimensionality of the concept of high-level wellness.

I hope I have inspired you to see how your work can fit into Hal's larger vision. If each of us holds this the whole in mind, perhaps Hal's *high-level wellness* can be come about and we can get some clothes on the emperor. Or maybe we can depose him and become a *leaderful* society, where clothing's not even required!

Don sets and example as continues to do this with his promotion of what he named "R.E.A.L. Wellness," having fun with it by dressing up and spouting the words of his guru, Robert Greene Ingersoll, at the drop of his top hat. It was Don who first said, "Wellness is too important to be pursued grimly."

Bill has focused on infant wellness, but moving to be closer to his grandchildren and spending great amounts of time with them

I've developed an integration of my work in adult wellness, professional wellness, infant wellness, and now couples' wellness, calling it **full-spectrum wellness**—a treatise on which you can now download.¹⁰

To do join us in this quest, you may need to step out of line, which may cost you some comforts, but I believe the rewards are worth it. My own path, far from making me rich monetarily, has been extremely rewarding in other ways. While I've lived near the official poverty level for 42 years (remember, the money's in sick-care), I've embraced voluntary simplicity. This has given me the freedom to follow my passions, live in Australia half the year, travel extensively (at sponsors' expense), and work the hours I choose.

The six-word summary of my 46 years in wellness: *The currency of wellness is connection.*

May your path give you as many rewards as mine has given to me.



To be continued....

¹⁰ goo.gl/r4AbFR