



Healing Spirit

LESLIE SAFFER, MAT Reiki Master

August 2003

*Claim your Stories and share them!*

**My father always loved to tell ancestral stories.** One was linked to the Church of the Virgin Mary in Harput, Turkey, where my more immediate Assyrian relations lived until the early 20th century. Formerly a pagan temple, the cave-like structure was central to the life of the villagers. Though it's now an archaeological site, it served many roles from primitive times, both sacred and secular ... from providing shelter during invasions ... to nourishing the spirit of my ancestors.

The story I share here is more recent than ancient. Yet it mirrors the age-old trust my ancestors had in God and in the power of unseen mysteries to aid in healing body, mind and spirit.

In the dark of night, the people of Harput would chain a loved one with severe mental and emotional problems inside the Church, leaving him alone there overnight. When they returned in the morning, his caretakers would find the formerly non-functioning relation miraculously healed. No longer chained by the agonies of his illness, he was free to live a healthy, productive life in the community.

**When my students come for Reiki I certification,** I ask them to bring an ancestral story to share with the class during the weekend. I encourage them to identify a story that links them to an ancestor in an uplifting or inspirational way. For some students, meeting this request comes freely and easily. For others, it's a process of enquiry involving their living relations. For still others, it's a difficult, if not seemingly impossible stretch, fraught with the feeling of nowhere-to-start, nowhere-to-go.

**Whichever the path, the effort sets into motion a process** of uncovering, of discovering and of *tracking that link in a conscious way*, something many have never done before in their lives.

**I realize how fortunate I was to have had a father who valued the stories** and passed them on as a precious legacy. Many, like the story I recount here, bring up more questions than they answer ... questions that couldn't be answered when I asked them ... questions that will never be answered because of

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**REIKI III Class:** Please see page 2.

gaps that widened over time, long before my father had the wisdom to pass them on to me.

**Not all my ancestral stories are about miracles.**

Not all have happy endings. And not all have some critical parts. Even in their incompleteness, even with the holes, even with the unanswered questions, they are my stories and I cherish every one.

**So many cultures have lost the ancient practice of maintaining oral tradition.** At the same time, scholars are revealing that the true stories -- both written and oral -- of many of the oldest peoples, have been distorted and rewritten as fictitious "history". This has been done to cover atrocities, to claim credit where credit was not due and to satisfy a lust for dominance, for "power over" versus the "power within" characteristic of the authentic original tales. Sadly, many stories *may* indeed be lost forever or have been distorted over time, either through attrition or manipulation.

**You may be at a loss to uncover your own stories.** You may think you have none to hear or to pass on. But think again.

**However modest they may be, we all have ancestral stories ...** those that link us with the struggles and triumphs; the defeat and the determination; the tears and the terrors; the wisdom and the essence of the ones who live on in the spirit world ... the ones who live on in our bones. *Their* stories are *our* stories. Find your way. Reclaim your stories and share them!

Please phone or e-mail to let me know if you would like to discontinue these mailings. Thank you.



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Starting in October

**REIKI III MASTERSHIP**

The Reiki III Mastership is awarded to those certified at the Reiki II level following completion of a seven-month apprenticeship, a process for developing power and consciousness as well as equipping students with tools appropriate to teaching Reiki.

**For more information, please phone by 9/10.**

**203.865.8440**

Story is far older than the art and science of psychology, and will always be the elder ...

Stories are medicine ... They have such power ... They are embedded with instructions which guide us about the complexities of life ... They set the inner life in motion ... show us the way out, down or up ... Stories are soul vitamins.

Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD from  
Women Who Run with the Wolves

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**REIKI SHARING** Second Wednesday of each month, 6:45 to 9:30pm

• \$15 contribution.

For Reiki I, II and III students.

Please phone **203.865.8440.**

This issue of *Healing Spirit* is dedicated to the spirit of my father, Kasper "Kay" Aaron Saffer who passed from this life on 10 March 2003. May he be embraced by the ancestors. May the stories he told continue to be told. May they vibrate like the sound of his drum, to elevate his spirit, to keep him in the light. Shlomo, Dad. Peace be with you.