



Journaling: Healing With Words

Howard M. Rice

March 1, 2009

STACY LEWIS, CHES:

Good morning ... everyone. ... I welcome you to ... Workshop Z, "Journaling: Healing With Words." My name is Stacy Lewis. I'm the vice-president of programming at the Young Survival Coalition [<http://www.youngsurvival.org>]. It's our pleasure to have you here at this workshop, featuring Mr. Howard Rice. ...

... With that, I'm going to introduce you to Sir Rice. Howard M. Rice is the president of the Howard Rice Company, an advertising, marketing and consulting firm, and also serves as professor at Temple University School of Communications. Mr. Rice creates and presents various writing and journaling workshops, including [events] for women who have had cancer and children who have lost a parent. He has come to this [focus] in his work [by drawing on] ... 35 years of teaching, various writing courses and writing workshops, and his own experience with cancer. Writing has helped him to cope through [that] journey.

With that said, I turn it over to Mr. Rice.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Thank you. [Applause] I should start by saying I'm not a doctor, but I play one on television. So I just wanted to get that straight. I'm really not — in my fondest dreams, maybe.

I am going to start this in a different way than I thought I was when I was preparing for it for the last several weeks. Something happened last night that profoundly moved me ... There were two things about what happened last night [that made me realize I needed to bring this up in my next workshop]. When I was at the dinner and saw the dancing — I shouldn't just say saw the dancing but felt the dancing — it was as powerful an experience as I can remember having in a long, long time. Maybe [as powerful an experience as I have] ever [seen] — the energy and the passion of the people who were dancing. It just filled me up.

It made me rethink how I was going to begin this [workshop].

The other reason it made me think about things that I appreciated was the fact that these women could dance, and I can't. I've never been able to in my life. [Laughter] You know how when you're going to high school, I would take a girl to the prom or something and say, "I'm not a very good dancer," and expect her to say, "Oh, you're not bad, really." That didn't happen. [Laughter] They'd say, "You're right. You're really not a good dancer, are you?" ...

Some time ago, I told my wife I was going to give her the biggest surprise I've ever given her. In our relationship, we enjoy giving surprises. I especially enjoy surprising her. When she heard this was going to be the biggest surprise ever, she said, "What could it be?" One year as a surprise, I asked her if she wanted to go on a trip with me to see one of my clients on Portland, Oregon. She said, "Yes, that would be good." But, in fact, we weren't going to Portland, Oregon — we were going to Paris, France. She did not know that, and I wanted to hold it as a surprise until the very, very last minute.

When we got to the airport, they have this thing called this valet parking ... where you give your car to somebody, they take you to the airport. Then they deliver your car back to you. It's easier than trying to get into the airport [parking] lots. I wanted this whole thing to be really a surprise up until the very last minute. [So] when I ... gave the [valet] driver my keys ... I told him what was going on. I said to him, "Look. I know we're going to the international terminal. I don't want her to get suspicious. So what I'd like you to say is, 'Hey, there's been some difficult weather, and they're having planes come into the international terminal.' So would you please say that?" ... The weather was as clear as it is today. [Laughter] ... [But] he said, "I can do that."

... My wife [has a way of] instantly becom[ing] somebody's ... best friend ever within

the first five seconds [of meeting that person]. So she and this guy are talking, and we're getting closer and closer to the airport. He's not saying a thing. And I can't say, "When is he going to do it? When is he going to do it?" So finally I said, looking up into this very clear sky, "Looks like there may be some bad weather out there." [Laughter] Then he says, "Oh, yes, yes. It could be. It could be some bad weather coming, so the planes are diverted. We're going to the international terminal instead." Okay. She's completely oblivious to all this. That's fine. We're going to the international terminal. [Laughter]

When we get there ... we're standing in line, and in her way of becoming everybody's best friend within the first five seconds, she says to the person in front of her, "Do you go to Portland often?" [Laughter] And this woman said, "What are you talking about?" She said, "I'm just curious. Do you go to Portland often? Do you live there? Are you going there for business or pleasure?" And the woman gives her the strangest look and says, "We're not going to Portland. This is the line for Paris," at which point [my wife] started screaming and jumping up and down ... in the airport [Laughter].

... That's another reason why I could appreciate the dancing. But the most important one was seeing the energy. I was determined coming into today to really try hard to give you something you could take away that would be of value. After last night, it meant even more to me. I do hope I'm going to do that [today].

The title here, they're talking about journaling. But journaling is a word that sounds pretty cold. I want to deal with that in a minute and try to say to you it's not so much just journaling — putting words down — but it's something else. Speaking of words, I love the language a lot. In my classes at Temple University, I typically start off by giving them a grammar question and a vocabulary question. I say if you can get two out of the three



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words of vocabulary, I'll give you a nice muffin. I'm going to do that with you guys this morning. I'm going to give you three words and see who can come up with two of the three words. If you can get them — if you do get two of these three words — you're going to win a really nice journal.

Here are the words: First person to raise her hand who can tell me what cacophony, brouhaha or blunderbuss mean — the lady in — I'm sorry if I didn't get the very first one. My eyes went to you. You've got to get two of the three.

WOMAN:

Cacophony?

HOWARD M. RICE:

Pardon me? Cacophony means what?

WOMAN:

Loud, boisterous, noisy.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Good.

WOMAN:

Brouhaha is like a disruption, riotous.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Excellent. Blunderbuss?

WOMAN:

Got me on that one.

HOWARD M. RICE:

That was good. You did get two of the three. Does anybody know what blunderbuss means? Actually, it has two meanings. It's an interesting word. Anybody? Yes.

WOMAN:

Is it a mistake?

HOWARD M. RICE:

It's a big mistake. It's also an old English rifle. But you get ... your journal. This is one of my favorites. Not that a journal has to be anything except a \$1.99 pad you can get at a drugstore, but this journal I particularly love for a lot of reasons. It's one of a series, and what it says is ... ironic because the word "dance" came up in it. "She decided to free herself, dance into the wind, create a new language. And birds fluttered around her, writing 'Yes' in the sky." ...

... Some students are better at this than others, of course. One semester I was doing this [same exercise]. There was a kid who sat in the back and he never raised his hand on anything, including the vocabulary words. It was okay. He just wasn't participating. I didn't mind it too much

— seemed like a nice enough guy. One day I [came] to the word ... conundrum, and he raise[d] his hand. [His hand] shot up. I [was] so excited. I said, "Bruce, what does conundrum mean?" He said, "Conundrum is what you should wear when you want to practice safe sex." [Laughter] I said, "No, Bruce. I think we ought to talk about that after class, but that's close. That's close. You should wear something else, Bruce, if you want to do that."

In any event, I started that way because I wish there [was] a better definition for the words "journal" or "journaling" ... What it really is, is getting thoughts out of your heart and mind, [and getting them] down on paper. We're going to be looking at some ways to do that — to make the process [easier]. Throughout this morning, I'm going to be reading ... some things. [Things] that I have gathered over the years, that I've been working with women back in the Philadelphia area who have breast cancer. I've gathered all kinds of poems and all kinds of sayings and quotes. [Those words are] going to be interjected into this [presentation].

I want to read you this right at the start. It's [a book by Musa Mayer] called *Examining Myself: One Woman's Story of Breast Cancer Treatment and Recovery*.

"Somewhere out there in that darkness are hundreds of thousands of women like myself, the new citizens of this other country, a huge army of the wounded, each believing herself to be alone in her shock and grief, with no target for her anger, no answering voice for her loss. In one moment of discovery, these lives have been transformed, just as mine has been, as surely as if they had been plucked up from their native land and forced to survive in a hostile new landscape, fraught with dangers real and imagined."

Writing in a journal can help you deal with that hostile landscape. I know it can. I've seen it happen. I see it happen all the time. I continue to see it happen when I work with people ... in Philadelphia. ... So it can work. It can help. Is it a magic elixir? Absolutely not. Can it help you? Absolutely yes. I hope today you will get some feeling of how it might [help you].

... I come to this point today from several different places. One of them is the writing and journaling workshops I've been doing for nearly six years. [Workshops] with women who went through [breast cancer treatment] ... at two hospitals in suburban Philadelphia. [I also draw from] my work and observations at a place called Fox Chase Cancer Center [<http://www.fccc.edu>],

which is a big cancer hospital in the suburbs of Philadelphia. When I was in the advertising business full-time, Fox Chase was a client of ours. I got to know the process a bit. I got to know the nurses, ... some of the women and certainly a lot of the doctors. So [those relationships] came into play.

[For the next 35 years I was] ... teaching various writing courses and ... workshops. [In that time] ... something very interesting was touched on. There's a pitcher for the Philadelphia Phillies by the name of Jamie Moyer. He and his wife, [Karen], are doing something absolutely extraordinary [through The Moyer Foundation, <http://www.moyerfoundation.org>]. They're having camps for children who have lost either a parent or a sibling ... Right now there are [28 camps in 18 states, with a goal to expand, adding another 60 camps in every Major League Baseball city]. ... They're called "Camp Erin" [<http://www.moyerfoundation.org/events/erin.aspx>] ... [The kids that take part in the camps] had not had the opportunity to be with other children [who had experienced losing a parent or sibling. Being with other children with similar experiences helps them feel as if they] ... are not alone in ... their grief.

When I heard about this, I volunteered to do a writing workshop there ... and I've been doing it for several years now. It's been miraculous to see these kids putting down their feelings, writing them and then sharing them, reading them to other children. So I come to this place today because I've seen the power of that [process].

[In addition to my group work], I do a lot of one-on-one writing sessions with all kinds of people: one-on-one meaning somebody is going through a difficulty of some kind [and I work with that individual]. ... [I guide them through the process]: "Do this," and, "Let's try this," and, "Let's try that." Two particular students stand out. ... One was a young lady who was in the writing workshop many years ago. I passed her in the hall one day, and she looked very down and very upset. I said to her, "Is something wrong?" She said, "Yes." I said, "What?" She said, "I ran into a very bad incident on campus last night. It was terrifying." I said, "Can I help you?" And she said, "No, you can't, but my journal can."

When I started asking the students to do journals, I did it not having any idea of what would happen — what could happen. I did it because I wanted them to practice writing, and I did it



because I wanted them to have an account of themselves at this point in their 20-year-old lives. I did not realize at all what could come out of it. Admittedly, for some of them it is just a chore. But for many of them, it has been a very revealing experience, and they [continue to journal after leaving] ... Temple University and my class. So I saw that.

In fact, it was that [journaling] ... that ... [motivated] me to ask my doctor ... [to] get me in touch with a place where I could [offer] journaling-and-writing workshops. ... It didn't have to be women with breast cancer, at that time, but that's where the first opening came up. I got connected and have been doing that ever since, both [as workshops at] hospitals and [as a] ... trainer, so that they could [offer more journaling workshops] ... in the area. [Another experience I drew on was] ... my experience with ... cancer and how writing about it has helped and still helps me cope.

One more thing, just to go back: I said there were two examples of a student [who really benefited from the journaling workshops]. This one I remember very, very vividly. A student came to me before a test in my advertising class, not in my writing class. ... [she said,] "I know we've got a test today, but I've got to tell you I'm really, really hurting. I'm upset. I wonder if I could postpone the test. My grandmother died." And I said to her, "I'll tell you what. ... I'll make this deal with you. The deal is that I want you to take the test. If you get a good grade, we'll count it, but if you get a bad grade, we won't. But the deal is that you have to write about your feelings about your grandmother ... dying."

I have found something interesting in teaching, that so often the students are closer to their grandparents than they are to their own parents. When the grandparent dies, it's the moment of truth for them — [their realization] that life doesn't go on forever. ... [my student experienced just] that, and she [journalled] it beautifully. [Writing it down] got a lot out of her system. Then she and I went on a wonderful journey together [doing] six, seven, eight, [or] nine more writings.

All of those [experiences] came together to bring me here today, which is a place I feel very grateful to be, because I believe in this. I believe in this process wholeheartedly. Let me read this to you. This is from *A Healing Journey*:

"During this passage from pain into possibility, from wounding into healing, the joy of writing

takes hold, and we take pleasure in telling the stories of our lives. There is healing, and in the healing there is laughter and joyousness: first loves, first dates, first bicycles, chocolates, memories of parents, relatives, schoolteachers, nature, love, children, life. Live lives fully experienced and lived ... Having a life, as Susan Sontag said, is about tragedy and [sorrow] as much as it is about joy and contentment. Writing honors the human experience as perhaps nothing else can do."

This is from a woman who was in a writing workshop in a group, a cancer survivor writing workshop in a group in the Midwest.

Just as a quick aside ... about six months into my first writing group with women who had had breast cancer, I said, "We're never again going to use the word 'survivor.' You guys are more than survivors. If you were survivors, you might be curled up on a couch feeling sorry for yourself. But you're here, and you're doing other things, because you're fighting back. So let's not ever use the word survivor." They agreed, and we don't. I don't like the word survivor. I like the word — what you guys are doing, by the very nature of the fact that you're here, you're not just surviving. You're fighting and you're standing up — [and for that] I give you tremendous credit.

This is what [one] woman said in *I Write Because*. She [at one point] had breast cancer:

"I write because it makes sense of my experience. I write because I love words, languages, images and expression. I write because it is not enough just to live life. I write to relive the joy and sorrow, sometimes making sense of the senseless. Sometimes I write just to say, I was here, and that happened to me. And this is who I was, who I am, who I am becoming, witness, yes, to my own truth, and to the experience of others. I write because the multicolored passion, the fire and ice, rage and joy cannot be silences within the life of one woman, one frightened girl-child, one shining warrior."

What I'm doing today is different from what I've done before. I may repeat some things inadvertently, because I added a good bit to a workshop that I did at the [Pennsylvania] Convention Center in Philadelphia, a similar workshop. And a point I want to make, based on what she just said, is this: There's a tendency to think that when you write in a journal, you're writing only about what ails you and what you feel bad about. But that need not ... be the case. The one thing and the only thing I knew when I started

my first workshop with the women at this hospital, Lankenau in Near Philadelphia, was that I didn't want them to identify themselves only as cancer survivors, people who had cancers. [I didn't want that to] be how they thought of themselves. I wanted them to get an understanding of themselves as whole human beings.

What she was saying there, and what I will say to you often today, is that [when you are] writing in a journal, you can sometimes write about ... things [that] have nothing to do with your cancer. ... [Things that have] to do with you as a person, as a woman, as a human being, [that] say, "This is what I am. This is what I feel as a whole person." ... You're not to be identified by your cancer. That's what she was saying. That's what I will tell you ... several times today.

It all started for me ... on a cold November day, a raw day. I was waiting outside the meeting room, and I was to be introduced [to these women]. There were these 18 women, and they were sitting around the table, and they introduced me. They said, "This is Howard Rice. This is what he wants to do." [Then] we began. We began something that has turned out to be as rewarding, satisfying and enlightening as anything I've done in my life. I believe it's been good for them, because we're [now] going on ... six years with one group and five years with another.

It was interesting. When I started, I was tiptoeing ... around a bit for a couple of reasons. One, I had never done anything like that; and two, let's face it — I'm a man and I was talking to these women about breast cancer experiences. After about the third session, when I was hesitant to give them a certain assignment that made them dig deep, one of the women said, "Let's stop right here, Howard. Let's understand something. You push us. You don't tread carefully. You push us, because you've got to take us to places we might not go ourselves." I said, "I will try." That just opened the floodgates, and we've never had a glitch since. I do push them. ... Many of the things we do are very light. [But] I did push them to look in [to some] dark places, [and] they responded. ... All the people I've worked [with] did beautifully. They never flinched. They never backed away [from an uncomfortable assignment]. ... They said, "We need this. We want this." And I said, "Okay. Let's go for it"

I want to read this to you. It's a woman who did the journaling a little bit differently. She wrote herself a letter, which is perfectly fine. [The



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assignment was] just “writing to myself about how I feel.” She said:

“Somehow, a big thorn has been extracted from my heart. I don’t have all the answers. But I don’t have as many questions, either. My writing now allows me to laugh, and sing and cry. My spiritual awareness is growing, and I’m [beginning] to feel abundance of some sort.

“Writing is magic. When I reread my letter to myself, the biggest change I noticed was how much more peaceful I feel now. There was some strong anger in my life, and I felt scattered. Now, I am feeling much more focused.”

And here’s the kicker line:

“I feel like I have befriended myself again.”

I feel like I have befriended myself again. Writing lets you do that. Writing lets you befriend yourself.

When I started this business with journaling — not so much at Temple [University] but with the women [in my workshops] — I did not realize how much research had been done on the power of journaling. [And I’m not just talking about] . . . a woo-woo, warm-and-fuzzy [kind of journaling], but . . . there is increasing evidence that [journaling] really does work. There have been increasing studies as to what happens when people with not just cancer but other traumatic experiences write down their feelings. And what it is showing over and over and over again is that these people deal with that trauma, that problem, and life in general much better than those people who don’t [journal their experiences].

I cannot begin to tell you all the reasons for that, because some of them are still unknown. But one of the things that does happen, [researchers have found], is that when you write about a bad experience — [and] I mean write about it, [not talking or thinking about it] — a chemical of some kind is released in your brain. [It is] as if it’s an antibiotic, as if it’s a defense, as if [that chemical is] going out there to fight the bad feelings. Something happens physiologically when you begin to [write] stuff down. They’re seeing that more and more, in fact, to the point where I read a study [by an] . . . oncologist who believes in [journaling] so much that he has put pencil and pad in his waiting room. [He leaves those items there so that] women [can] write down their feelings in as little as 20 minutes while they’re waiting to see the doctor. He has seen a difference between those women who do that, and those women who don’t. So this isn’t just some magical, as they say, New Age woo-woo stuff. [Laughter] It isn’t. It’s easy to dismiss it as

that, but it is something that [is effective] . . . if you give it a chance.

Not only [does] a journal [act as] a therapist to get us through dark times, but a journal also revels in the originality of our life, our dreams, accomplishments and hopes for the future. [It also] remind[s] us of the pleasures of life. This is one of my favorite sayings. I think each of us should have the opportunity to reduce to objectivity that object of our hearts that we see in the summer, that we are alive and the way the light played upon that cornice. As a writer, one has the opportunity to get down to the page that which is his essence, so that he can feel he has entered himself and given himself away utterly before his death.

One of the women in one of my journal groups has said this. She said, “I am writing and saying things I’ve never said to anybody. And I am telling them [to get my journal out] when I die — I’m putting this [journal] aside, putting it in a locked place. [And] when I die . . . they can read it, and they will know me. My husband and my children and my friends [will know me] for the very first time.” *They will know me for the very first time.*

This is a poem — by the way, I just — I apologize for skipping over something just to give you a guidepost as where we’re going in this. We’re going to be talking generally for a few more moments. Then I’m going to give you some specifics about journaling that . . . can help you make it more productive. Then we’re going to have a speedwriting assignment, where I’ll . . . ask you to write [the assignment] within ten minutes. I’ll give you a choice of [subjects]. So that’s where we’re heading. But we’re going to do a little more of this general preamble first, and then we’ll go into the specifics.

This is a poem called *Storms* [by Margie DeMerrell]: . . .

There will be storms, child
There will be storms
And with each tempest
You will seem to stand alone
Against cruel winds

But with time, the rage and fury
Shall subside
And when the sky clears
You will find yourself
Clinging to someone
You would have never known
But for the storms.

You will find yourself clinging to someone you would have never known but for the storms. . . . Women I’ve worked with have told me repeatedly that they have found, through their experience, that there are certain people they didn’t think would come forward who did; and certain people they wished would have [come forward] but didn’t. But the people who did come forward . . . have given them some of the most precious times of their life.

One very, very, very funny story . . . one of the women in one of the groups told me of a “friend” who, upon hearing that this woman had cancer, said that she was very upset and she was going to send her a very, very delicious chicken stew, a casserole. She was going to send it to her. Time went on and she didn’t do it. Finally she wrote [a letter instead of sending a casserole]. She said, “I’m sorry I didn’t send you the casserole. I didn’t have time to do it, but here’s the recipe for it.” [Laughter] which really angered that woman a great, great deal.

As I said, writing in your journals can be so much more than a woe-is-me [experience]. It’s also a place where you can reaffirm yourself and validate all that you are. When I gave the women in one of the groups an assignment to say, “I am a ‘blank,’” and then fill in as many of those as you could. “I am a ‘blank.’” Go as deep as you can. “I am a this.” “I am a that.” “I am a this.” “I am a that.” Write down in ten minutes as many “I am a” as you can. Only one of them, and she picked it as number ten, used the word cancer. They were beginning to see, and that was so important to me, that they are so much more than “cancer survivors” or “people dealing with cancer.”

With that note, I want to tell you something. I was going to say this at the beginning, [but now] I’m almost glad I waited. I’m going to tell you something, and the reason I’m glad I waited [is] because [if I would have] . . . told you at the beginning, it could have cast doubt on everything I have said since. . . . It’s going to sound so impossible to believe. I debated myself whether I should even bring it up, but I’m going to, because it’s the truth as it was told to me. I’m going to use this as a preamble to what I want to tell you, [which is expressed in] . . . this quote . . . “A sacred illness is one that educates and alters us from the inside out, provides experiences and therefore knowledge that we could not possibly achieve in any other way.” And this: “It took the worst thing you ever faced to give you the best gift you ever received.” [Editor’s Note: We were unable to track down the originator of these two well-known quotes.]



It took the worst thing you ever faced to give you the best gift you ever received. This is what I know some of you will have a hard time believing. I did [have trouble believing it], to the point where I had to ask [for it to be] repeat[ed]. This is not just a random sampling of a couple of women. This is every woman I asked. It may not be the same for you, but I want you to hear this. In one of the sessions, I said to them, "If you could turn back the clock to the time before you had your cancer and you wouldn't have it, would you? . . ." Every one of them said "no." Every one of them said, "No, we would not." Their reasons are varied, and we're going to touch on some of the reasons. But . . . all of them in different ways have found things that they feel they would never, never have [learned] without [their experiences with cancer]. As difficult as their experiences may have been, they said, "No, I would not turn back the clock and say, 'Let's not have it.'"

Next, there's another thing about the journaling that I want to tell you. And that is this: The very act of writing and creating something — whether you do it every day for two minutes or five minutes or once a week — the very act of creating something and putting it down can be very, very empowering, empowering. [In that writing experience] . . . you say, "Look what I did. Look what I did. Look what I created." The world is crazy out there, and not just because of what you guys are going through, but because [of] the economy and the Madoffs of the world, and all the nonsense going on that is making us feel so helpless. But writing can empower you and make you feel better about yourself as a human being, whether it's about your situation with your breast cancer or remembering your first love or whatever. Writing can do that. I know it because I see it, and I see people tell me that all the time.

Specifically, some things that writing in a journal will help you do, besides empowering you: clarify your thoughts and feelings, know yourself better. By writing routinely you will get to know what makes you feel happy and confident. You will also become clear about situations and people who are toxic for you, important information for your emotional well-being. That seems to be a biggie. That seems to come through with every woman I have talked to. They tell me that because of their cancer and their experience, they are now much less willing to put up with things they would have put up with before, and much more eager to look at the things that are more important to them.

There are two short poems on that subject [that] I want to read to you. . . . This is called *The Art of Disappearing*.
When they say Don't I know you?
say no.

When they invite you to the party
remember what parties are like
before answering.
Someone telling you in a loud voice
they once wrote a poem.
Greasy sausage balls on a paper plate.
Then reply.

If they say We should get together
say why?
It's not that you don't love them anymore.
You're trying to remember something
too important to forget.
Trees. The monastery bell at twilight.
Tell them you have a new project.
It will never be finished.

When someone recognizes you in a grocery store
nod briefly and become a cabbage.
When someone you haven't seen in ten years
appears at the door,
don't start singing him all your new songs.
You will never catch up.

Walk around feeling like a leaf.
Know you could tumble any second.
Then decide what to do with your time.

Then decide what to do with your time. And this [next poem is] called *Instructions*.
Give up the world; give up self.
Find god in the rhododendrons and rocks,
passers-by, your cat.
Pare your beliefs, your absolutes.
Make it simple; make it clean.
No carry-on luggage allowed.
Examine all you have
with a loving and critical eye, then
throw away some more.
Repeat. Repeat.
Keep this and only this:
what your heart beats loudly for
what feels heavy and full in your gut.
There will only be one or two
things you will keep,
and they will fit lightly
in your pocket.

One of the things I have found to be universal with the women I've worked with who have gone through this is this: They have done a lot of cleaning out of baggage in their lives. They've done a lot of cleaning out of stuff, because it's been a catharsis. They have done a lot of cleaning out of people, because there are people that have dragged them down. They are trying to get their lives down to the simplest and most important things. And they would have never done that without having gone through the cancer.

Journal writing is a voyage to the interior. This voyage contains the same elements as our lives, thoughts and feelings. The journals will be brilliant and boring. They will be superficial and profound. They will be humorous and hazardous. If we are in a state of open exploration and self acceptance with our lives in general, it will become apparent in our journal writing. But if we are closed down and frightened, confused, that, too, will be apparent in the writing.

There are times in our lives when we temporarily lose confidence and perspective. The journal will not prevent such occurrences, but it will make a difference to the extent of the loss, and it will shorten the length of time it takes to figure out what is happening and put ourselves back on track.

In the work I do, in these journaling groups . . . we zigzag. A lot of it is very light. A lot of it is not deep, [not] about cancer or anything. Then we do some deep and difficult things. Then we move off. This little poem gives you an example of some of the lightness brought in [by the act of journaling. It] is, called *Why I Have a Crush on You, UPS Man* [by Alice N. Persons]. [Laughter] This is a wonderful little poem. Listen to this one:

You bring me all the things I order,
Are never in a bad mood,
Always have a jaunty wave as you drive away,
Look good in your brown shorts.
We have an ideal and complicated relationship.
You're like a cute boyfriend with great legs
Who always brings the perfect present,
Why, it's just what I've always wanted,
And then is considerate enough to go away.

Oh, UPS man, let's hop in your clean
brown truck
And elope.
You ditch your job, I'll ditch mine.
Let's hit the road for Brownsville
And tempt each other with all the luscious



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brown foods:

Roast beef, dark chocolate, brownies, Guinness,

Homemade pumpernickel, molasses cookies.

I'll make you my mama's bourbon pecan pie.

We'll give all the packages to kind-looking strangers,

Live in a cozy wood cabin with a brown dog or two,

And a black and brown tabby.

I'm serious, UPS man.

Let's do it.

Where do I sign?

[Laughter] Now we're going to look at some pointers about things that can help you with your journals. One ... your journals should be 8-and-1/2 [inches] by 11 [inches], or at least large enough to let your thoughts expand. This is important. Some people write in these small ... notebooks. The problem with that is that your writing is constricted. Therefore, your thoughts are constricted. It's perfectly okay to have fragments ... you then put into a larger context. But I think you will find yourself doing a lot better if you have a larger space to work with.

[Two]: Set your journal where you'll see it every day. Don't make it something that is difficult, where you have to hunt for it. [Three], date and number each page. By the way, at the end of all this ... I'm going to have a slide up there that's going to give you my e-mail [addresses], ... so that if there's anything I can do beyond today — including sending you some of this [information on journaling] — I will do it. So don't worry about taking things down right now. They'll be accessible to you. I promise.

[Step four is to] find a quiet place to write, and write without interruptions, if possible. Having said that, it's also perfectly okay to write something ... [as soon as] you get up in the morning, or when you've just cleaned up your breakfast dishes. Just get a thought down. That thought may lead to something else.

[For step five, the direction is]: "Work on a regular schedule, or whenever the mood strikes you." It's up to you. One of the beauties of this [practice] is that you can do it in little pieces, or you can do it in large blocks.

[Onto step six]: You don't have to limit your journal to words on paper. The thing that I had here for the cover is something I don't expect any

of you to ever try. But a number of people who do journals — this one was published — do visual journals. Visual journals ... have all kinds of stuff in them: writing and pictures and artwork, original and collected. ... The journal [doesn't have to be] ... you writing, [and then writing] between the lines. It doesn't. ... This was a 22-year-old girl who wrote for three years, and she said:

"We are all facing changes that define us. No choice, however messy, is without importance in the overall picture of our lives. We are all at our own age. All of us claim something, even if it's only our own confusion.

"I am in the middle of growing up and into myself. This book is my life and progress, a growing expedition through the tangled and unfulfilled parts of understanding. My life, my truth and myself — I want to share it. Welcome. Come inside."

So, your journal can be pictures; it can be drawings. You can certainly write outside the lines, [or] you can draw outside the lines.

Write what's on your mind, not just a list of the day's events. That's very, very important. The more willing you are ... to [write] down your feelings, the more likely you are to get value out of your journaling. Not just, "The weather was 15 degrees today," but, "The weather was 15 [degrees today], and it made me feel especially bad, because I was going through some hell in my chemotherapy" — whatever. The more you're honest on the page, the more valuable the experience will be for you.

[The next piece of advice]: I said go outside the lines. There can be some pages where you can have only three or four words on the whole page. But you can [write] them [as] big, big words. ... Consider using ... colored pencils, [each one specified] for [a] different [emotion]. ... If you're feeling really bad about something, you might want to use red. If you're feeling very good, you might want to use green. But don't worry about doing that. Worry about getting the words down in your own way — in the way that's easiest for you to [express]. ... People who have done a lot of journaling have found [these bits of advice] can be helpful, and I wanted to share them with you.

This is called the five-minute sprint. Write as much as you can for five minutes, non-stop. Write as much as you can for five minutes. When you're through, underline key words and phrases. If you pick the one that has the most juice, you can then use it as the title for another piece of writing.

[The] next [step, and one that is] absolutely critical — absolutely critical — [is] the thing that will be tough for some of you to start with. And that is: No critics allowed. As you write in your journal, keep reminding yourself that this is not the time or the place to worry about things like spelling or punctuation or grammar. Write freely in your journal without stopping, censoring or judging. Welcome the words that come in.

Talk to yourself in your journal. Get to know yourself. Go slowly. Go gently. Journal writing is overall a gentle process, because it is self-guided. Still, when you're ready, write through the tough stuff, the pain, because if you don't it can always control you.

I had a friend who was going through a tough time with a difficult divorce. I convinced her that she should start writing about it. It was a very messy divorce. She started to [write about it], and then one day we had lunch. I asked her, "How's this going?" She said, "I stopped." I said, "Why did you stop?" She said, "Because it started getting too painful." I said, "That's the very time you should have kept going. The very time you should have kept going was when you were blocked because there was pain. You should have kept going then."

The level at which you ask yourself questions, and the responses [that] come to you, are determined by what you are currently ready to know and deal with. That does not mean you're always going to be comfortable. Writing for self-awareness implies the ability to increase awareness. That means living on the edge of your current insight, [and still] choosing to ask for more insight. Asking is a risk, but it is how human beings grow. There will be times in life when outside events cause you to grow with uncomfortable and dramatic swiftness. To have already developed a root of gentleness in your own writing will help you get through these times with as little trauma as possible, and still enable you to learn what you need to from them. The respect for the process is a gift you give yourself; the safety you provide yourself.

Own your feelings. Speak for yourself. [Use the word] "I." Give yourself permission to own your feelings. I sometimes do something that is just instinctive. I meet somebody — it could be somebody at Starbucks, it could be somebody at the gym, it could be somebody at the farmers' market I go to. There is a woman [at the market] who I buy flowers from. I had the feeling a year



ago that there was something special about her. It was just a feeling. I asked her, "Blah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. Would you like to go on a writing/reading journey?" Most people I ask say "yes," because they want to get things out. Nobody's ever asked them that. So she started to [journal], and she has done some powerful, powerful writing. She's not a really educated woman. She never went to college. She had a terrible childhood.

... [When she was] about seven months into it ... she said [to me], "Howard, I never knew I had permission to write about these things." *I never knew I had permission to write about these things.* She has permission, and she's doing a beautiful job of it.

Use your journal as a garbage can. Take out your angers, your fears, your doubts, your frustrations, and write them in your journal. Writing about them will lessen their power over you. ... You'll feel better. Journals give us the chance to safely shake our fist towards heaven, shriek and yell and say awful things about ourselves and others ... and ... trace our progress [during] life's transitions. Try it. You'll be amazed at how much emotional steam you can vent through the pen or the keyboard.

[And I repeat], ... no critics. I said that twice, because it's so important.

[And here are a few more tips]: You do not know where the process will take you. Be like a child playing in the garden, building in the garage, rummaging in the attic. Stay open. Expect the unexpected. Do not try to write answers or the big truth. Small truths, little insights will be more helpful. Avoid making judgments. Don't put things and people into neat, little boxes and categories. You are not writing to be done with it. You are writing to keep your mind open. There is always more to be learned.

The process is more circular than linear. Let things repeat themselves. Something is probably being worked out beyond your full understanding. [Let] ideas and feelings and images come back.

[In the later stages of the process], stand back, in your mind, [and] observe yourself. Listen to yourself. ... Write about yourself and your feelings in the third person — it gives you some distance. Write, "She feels," "She said." When you do that, when you look at yourself in the third person, and sometimes it's safer for you because you're not so uptight [as you are] when you say "I." So that's an alternative to what we said before, [about using the word "I"]. ...

Another thing to try is writing a dialogue. ... The purpose [of] a dialogue is to gain insight, to get at material [that] is buried beneath the layer of monologue. It's interesting. About six months after I started working with the first group of women who had breast cancer, I wrote a play. I've written a lot of plays. I enjoy playwriting. I wrote this play about how I perceived what they were feeling and thinking. It was a very hard play, a very angry play, a very bitter play between a woman and her cancer.

Three years later, I wrote another play, which these women performed at the hospital. It was totally different, because I learned so much from them. I was so wrong in thinking [I understood and knew] what they were thinking. They taught me, "No, Howard. That's not the play that's us. This is the play that's us." It was a much softer, gentler, much more accepting play of where they were in their lives.

This is something that people do ask a lot, and it stops people in their tracks. And that is [the thought]: What if someone reads your journal? Listen to me. Please listen to me. If you've written things in your journal you don't want others to discover because you think someone will be hurt, [and] if you [don't] have a safe place to put it aside ... [then] it's okay to tear [those pages] out. But write about [those more private issues] first, then you can tear them out. One woman in one of the groups does something very interesting. When she comes upon a page [that includes] some thoughts that are very difficult, that she doesn't want anybody to ... see, she takes them out, ... tears them up into little pieces, and buries them in her garden. Just think about that. ... She buries them in her garden. But they're there. They're out of her system. ...

In our journal, we can go back and pick up those parts of ourselves that got lost along the way, [in order] to claim and celebrate them. When we reclaim those parts of ourselves we have been trained to throw away or deny, we experience a rush of self-confidence and power. This is the experience of our wholeness returning. There's often a rush of doubt and indecision, too, because we are breaking internal rules we once adopted to feel safe and accepted within our families and communities. The journal is a place to tremble and experiment, to build confidence in your individuality without having to seek constant approval from others. We may go through periods of imbalance, when we withdraw from intimacy with others to reestablish intimacy with ourselves,

when we use the journal for a hiding place, for all the terror, or [for] redefining our once-solid lives [that have been upended by cancer].

What I want to do now is to go onto the speedwriting assignment. I want to tell you why I'm going to give you the choice [in assignments]. I want to be very cognizant of the time. It's going to be a little tighter than I had hoped, but that's okay. The choice of the topics are these: [First choice] ... write about the music [or] ... musical event or the piece of music that you remember the most. ... The piece of music or the musical event, concert or whatever, that had the most meaning for you. Second choice: Write about the time in your life that you felt best about yourself. And the third choice — and the reason I'm giving you these three is because the third choice is [one] ... I give to a group I work with. [I give this assignment] only four, five or six weeks into our meeting, because I don't just say, "Let's jump into the deep water." But I'm going to give it to you [right away]. Even if you don't do it today, I would like you to do it sometime. And certainly, again, you don't have to read [it aloud] today. The third choice is this: If your cancer walked into the room right now, what would it look like and what would you say to it? ... So you've got that choice [of what to write about].

Please write, even if you don't [intend to] read. I just want you to get stuff down on paper: the time you felt best about yourself, the musical event or the concert or the song that had the most meaning to you, and then, if your cancer walked into the room, what would you say to it. We'll take ten minutes and then we'll see where you guys have come out. ...

... Do your writing [assignments], and this [information] will be up here. Let me tell you what this is. There are two e-mail [addresses], because sometimes my e-mail doesn't get through to one, your e-mails don't come through to one. As I have an alternate, the howie2 is at Temple University. Sometimes they don't come through to either. ... For anything where I can be helpful, I will try. So I want you to have that. But I'd like you to do the writing if you would, please, see where you come out on these.

STACY LEWIS, CHES:

I'll just quickly say that, again, the session is being recorded, so you will also have continued access to this information.



HOWARD M. RICE:

Oh, great.

STACY LEWIS, CHES:

Is it howdr at comcat or Comcast?

HOWARD M. RICE:

Yeah, that's why I underlined it, because people think it's Comcast. It's [howdr at] comcat. In fact, when I give somebody my business card, they say, "Ha, ha, this is funny. You misspelled your business card. You have an error." I say, "No, it's an organization called Comcat, which is a whole other issue. But C-O-M-C-A-T. And then there's howie2 at temple.edu. ...

[Writing assignment began.]

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay. Take about two more minutes, please. Then I will ask if any of you would like to read [aloud]. If you do, I guess you could read from where you are or just come up to the front. You certainly don't have to ...

[Writing assignment ended.]

HOWARD M. RICE:

Before I see if any of you would like to read, I want to tell you that before I left for this trip, the last speedwriting assignments I gave ... were to write a note to you guys, because [my other students] been through [cancer too]. I wanted them to write a note to you ... for two reasons. One, I wanted to have some of them with me, because to a large extent they are the reason I'm here — these women who I have learned so much from. The other reason: I wanted you to hear their thoughts, because as much as I can stand up here and talk to you about this, they have been in your shoes. ...

When they handed them to me, one of them said, "You're not going to be able to get through this without crying. You know that, don't you?" I said, "Well, I think I can, but I'm not sure." What I did this morning to be sure that I could [read them without crying was to read this one] ... downstairs in the lobby. I started to cry. But I felt that it was okay, because the women ... cleaning up [said], "Are you okay, mister? Are you okay?" "Yeah, I'm fine," you know. I didn't want to tell her what was going on. So I read it two more times, cried twice more, and I think I can get through it now without [crying]. [Laughter] It's not so much that it's sad. It's not. It's beautiful. But I know these people. I know where they've come from. I know this came from their heart.

This woman ... is a former teacher. And she says this:

"A few words from a five-year survivor, for those who are beginning the journey: Look for a blessing each day as you go. It might be a phone call or a stranger's smile, or a wren warbling in the tree outside your window.

"Keep your eyes on the bright North Star as you go. Don't worry about the potholes in the road. Let your family and friends walk with you on the journey. You'll be giving them an opportunity to love, to serve, to grow, and you'll also welcome the comfort they can offer you.

"Laugh and sing as you go. Smell the roses, and pick a few along the way. Trust, hope, believe. Walk confidently and dare to dream. Know that you are loved by God and by many others."

Would somebody here like to read? Okay, I see a lot. I hope we can get through. I'm going to watch the [time]. ... So the lady there ... why don't you just give her the mic from there? It will be easier. Just stand up, and tell us which piece you're going to read, please.

WOMAN:

You want me to stand?

HOWARD M. RICE:

Oh, you don't have to. Whatever you're comfortable doing, whatever you're comfortable —

WOMAN:

I'm more comfortable sitting.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay, then.

WOMAN:

My voice is a little raspy. I'm losing it, so —

HOWARD M. RICE:

That's okay.

WOMAN:

I chose the music one. ... The song *I Run for Life*, by Melissa Etheridge, is a huge, powerful, meaningful song for me. I have always enjoyed her music, and then once I learned of her breast cancer I admired her and her courage even more. After I was diagnosed back in '06, [about two years] after [her diagnosis], her music and survivorship took on a whole new meaning in my life [http://www.melissaetheridge.com/pink]. Music is a huge part of my life. I sing. I'm a performer. [Singing is] my creative outlet. I feel good when I do it. Having artists like Melissa Etheridge available

in the spotlight gives me more inspiration to continue to rock on.

This past year, a good friend brought me to a concert to see her. I stood on my chair and sang every word of *I Run for Life*. I got in trouble from the bouncers, but it was worth it. That song gives me chills. I lived those words. I have felt those words.

I also used that song when I was a keynote speaker for a breast cancer fundraiser this year for Longaberger. Speaking made me nervous, because it was new. I opened with that song a cappella. It relaxed me, and it was so powerful, and I got through it. So I will continue to run for life, because I'm worth it.

HOWARD M. RICE:

... Good for you. [Applause] There were some ... other hands up there. ... Back there — just tell us which piece you're going to read, please.

WOMAN:

About the cancer.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Please read it as clearly as you can. I want to hear it.

WOMAN:

What I did: I wrote a letter to the cancer. ... Dear cancer. Hi. How've you been? It's been a good four years since you and I met. At first, I did not want you. I hated you with all of my being. How dare you come into my life unannounced and disrupt it? I wanted you taken out, and out fast, so that I could resume my normal life. But like a bad coin, you kept on appearing and asserting your place in my life.

Then, with time, I came to accept you. I began to look at you and how you've changed my life. You made me go deep into places in my life that I would never have gone. You made me realize that I was living a lie. When I embraced you, you showed me the best of grace. You made me go back and get my master's of education, something that I've always wanted to do. You made me love my children more. You made me dump a relationship that was not working. You made me realize just how special and talented I was.

I'm having the time of my life. I'm taking life with a big spoon. Thank you for teaching me all these things. I love you. [Applause]

HOWARD M. RICE:

... There's a lady still in the back there, please. These are just — remember, this is ten minutes you had to do these [writings]. Go ahead.



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WOMAN:

I chose to write about what my cancer looks like. ... My cancer is ugly and in many pieces, large and small. Some of you are dead. Ha, ha. [Laughter] I beat you and I killed you. Your friends are still hanging around, and they are not dead yet. But neither am I. I still have a lot of fight left, and my arsenal is still loaded. My army has not retreated.

You are horrible, mean and destructive, and yet I don't hate you. You made me realize that I am a super-warrior and will fight to the end. My soul and spirit are strong and intact. My legacy will live on forever, but not you.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Mm. My goodness gracious. These are just wonderful. [Applause] I wish — I've got good news and bad news. The good news is you guys are doing really great. The bad news is: Cancel all your flights back. [Laughter] We're staying here until Monday. This is wonderful stuff. Go.

WOMAN:

I'm feeling a little emotional now. I should mention, before I start, that I started blogging and journaling three years ago when I was first diagnosed. I write a blog called Not Just About Cancer [<http://notjustaboutcancer.blogspot.com>]. It's recently been turned into a book, which is coming out in [March]. It's called *Not Done Yet: Living Through Breast Cancer*. ...

Here's my little — and my writing's a little angrier. I have mets. My cancer looms large, [with] ill-defined edges and features. She seeks to overwhelm me, and I can feel its malevolence even when I can't see it.

We can't find — then I start talking to my cancer. We can't find signs of you now, cancer. But still you lurk, seeking to destroy my happiness, to destroy me. You attacked once, cancer, and we fought back. You attacked twice, and again we fought back, and sent you to that place called remission. I know you still hover, but I will not let you, nor my fear of you, consume me.

I appreciate the gifts you have given me, though not willingly, I'm sure. I am strong and confident, and I write. I write. But you, cancer, are no gift, and I will always hate you.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Mm. [Applause] ... These are good. Go ahead. Which piece are you going to read, please?

WOMAN:

I'm talking to the cancer —

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay.

WOMAN:

— actually describing what the cancer looks like.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Go ahead, right ahead, please.

WOMAN:

Swirling colors, rapid swishing, reds, blacks, whipping ribbons, inside out, lashing, encompassing, shrinking, expanding, Medusa's head. Waving, slowing, gently flowing, greens, blues, bubbles of light.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Hmm.

[Speaking simultaneously]

WOMAN:

— where that came from. [Laughter]

HOWARD M. RICE:

It's fine. [Laughter] [Applause] It's a start. It's words. It's doing great, all of you. Lady up there, and over there, and then there's one lady up in the front we'll get to. So that lady over to my right, and then the lady up here in the green. ...

WOMAN:

So, I'm a crier. I'll see if I get through this, because you did a lot better than I expected. But, all right, it's about the cancer.

Black and disfigured, cloaked in red, slinking in so swiftly, trying to sneak, trying to hide. Make yourself shown — you coward! I stand up and fight. I attack you at your very core, and yet you persist with your evil vigor.

This is not a battle of wills. If it is, be assured I will win. I have babies, you foolish snake. Go back to your cave, your dark, soulless hole, and relinquish yourself to my strength. [Applause]

HOWARD M. RICE:

Well, I got through reading [her writing] ... without crying, but I'm not sure I can take many more of these. [Laughter] They're going to say — okay. I think there's a lady in — over there, and then ... right here, this lady, please. Which piece are you going to read?

WOMAN:

About cancer.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay.

WOMAN:

There you are. I've been looking for you a lot, for you. I have a lot to say to you. You look so strange. You have everybody fooled. Triple negative, they say. No one seems to know what to do with you. You affect many women, but primarily African-American women. I guess that's why we know so little about you.

Well, I know a group of women and men determined to figure out who you are. I am committed to spending the rest of my life raising money, heightening awareness and seeking out ways from preventing you [from] ever, ever showing your ugly face again.

You came to me while I was sleeping, I guess, not having any reason to vigilantly be looking for you — no family history, so young, a nurse, a mother, a friend. However, now you have awakened ... a warrior, someone looking to seek to kill you before you kill me.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Hmm. [Applause] ... The lady right behind you there would like to read.

WOMAN:

Hello. I dedicate this to the many women in Kenya who are dying of cancer.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay.

WOMAN:

... It's a very sad story. Well, original, the music. The music is called *Heal the World* [by Michael Jackson]. The music actually gives me inspiration. It shows me I'm the hero within myself. The song is very touching with very sweet words [that] are very comforting. [It] gives me a meaning to life, removes ... the pain ... gives me courage [and] hope to go on; tells me it's only me who can [make] the difference, [and] gives me courage when hope is all gone.

We are the people with cancer. We are the problem, and we are the solution. I finish with: [singing] "Heal the world. Make it a better place for you and for me." Da da da da da da. [Laughter] [Applause] Thank you.

HOWARD M. RICE:

Okay. I just want to — this will just take about four more minutes to wrap up. Before I get to this brief little close, the women actually — here's one who wrote about music. To tell you just a funny



story about that, I had mentioned to you that one of the things I'd done and continue to do is these writing workshops for children who have lost a parent or a sibling. In our first meeting of all the volunteers, there were about 50 of us, and most of them were in their 20s. I'm sitting over to the side there, and as an icebreaker ... they asked us to go around the room and tell about the concert or the music that meant the most to us.

These young people are coming up with these names that I never heard of, [such as] ... Rotten Armpits [Laughter], the Sneaky Sneakers or something. Everyone's going, "Wow, that's really great stuff." I'm sitting over here, and everyone's doing that. I know that when it comes to me, and the thing I'm thinking of is an all-Beethoven concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra, I'm going to look like the biggest wimp. [Laughter] I can't do it. I don't know what to do. I never considered myself cool, but I don't want to be so uncool with all these young people.

I remember — I went back — a thought came. When I gave that assignment to some of my students years ago, one of the young women talked about a group. I don't know if it's still popular or not. She talked about a group called Phish, P-H-I-S-H. When she did, the class went utterly wild. "Oh, man, that's great." I remembered Phish. I'm sitting here thinking, "Do I have the courage to say it?" Okay. Now they're done through 41 of the people. "Howard, what was your favorite?" "Phish concert, Phish." "Really? Really?" "Yeah." Then afterwards, people came up and said, "Man, that is great. Which one did you like best?" "Oh, there are so many of them, I can't begin to tell you." [Laughter] "Hey, Howard likes Phish. That is really something." I went way up in their eyes. I don't know Phish from — to me, Phish is like a mackerel, something you have on your plate.

I just want to read these things to you very briefly as a wrap-up. They go like this.

"We must allow our journey and ourselves to be transformed, to be open to the questions which await us beyond self-awareness. Even though we may not have known this was where we were headed in our journal writing, it's the most private and important work the journal will ever accomplish. It is home."

And then this:

"Through my writing, I found myself again after a long time of being lost. I learned who I was in the past, who I was then, and who I wanted to be in the future. There, I finally found freedom in writing. I flew in the sky with my pencil and notebook."

And lastly, from T.S. Eliot:

"We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know that place for the first time."

I will just tell you this: If I were able to give you just a little bit of what you gave me last night, I'll leave here a happy man. Thank you very much for your time. [Applause]

STACY LEWIS, CHES:

Thank you very much, Mr. Rice. We certainly appreciate your time and sharing your expertise with us. It was a wonderful, wonderful workshop. I remind you all to complete your evaluations. ... Thank you so much for coming to our 9th Annual Conference for Young Women Affected by Breast Cancer. Feel free to thank Mr. Rice personally. Get home safely.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]