

Prescription for Reading

- Follow up on progress
- Baltimore
- Groups wanting to get involved?

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

Phone: (202)456-6266

Fax: (202)456-6244

TO:

Sen

PHONE:

62599

FAX:

69412

FROM:

Katy

COMMENTS:

Sen - we just got this last week + Melanne couldn't meet with them. They will be in town through Tuesday. Is there any way you could see them quickly?

Thanks -

Katy

**LifeSkills Press**

BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY LIBRARY

Ms. Melanne Verveer
Chief of Staff
Office of The First Lady

May 19, 1997

Dear Ms. Verveer:

I am writing to you concerning the First Lady's Literacy Initiative and a book that offers detailed guidance to families overcoming adversity entitled *Soaring Into the Storm*.

In 1996 my husband and I established a small publishing company dedicated to producing books for the family to share. In response to the horrible natural disasters the nation suffered this year, we contacted the American Red Cross to see if they would like some copies for disaster relief. As the Red Cross seldom accepts outside printed matter, we were pleased when they accepted our donation of 500 books and requested more copies on an on-going basis.

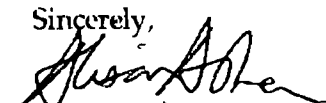
We are scheduled to meet with several Red Cross officials in Washington DC from May 20 through May 27 to discuss ways to supply books to each Red Cross in the nation. Just as we were packing our bags, we came across the article in *Publisher's Weekly* concerning the First Lady's Literacy Initiative. We are very excited about this project and would like to contribute to this cause as well. Since the parable in *Soaring Into The Storm* is designed to be read aloud to children, and the book as a whole provides life skills on overcoming adversity (including medical concerns) we feel it would be a perfect fit for distribution via participating physicians and health care providers as suggested in the article.

I will send the hard copy of this fax with along with *Soaring* within the next two days. I have enclosed the letter from the Red Cross and a bit of information about our publishing company for your interest. Also enclosed is a letter to the First Lady and Family which was to be hand delivered earlier this month along with a gift book.

Ollie Davidson (a new friend through our recent connection with the National Red Cross) participates in the "Teen Round Table" with the Clintons at church and offered to give the book to them following a Sunday meeting. Unfortunately, they did not connect during the last meeting and this communication is arriving prior to the one dated May 6. I trust the inscribed copy will find its way to them soon. In the meantime, however, I would be very appreciative if you could guide the enclosed letter to the First Lady.

I can be reached at the Hotel Sofitel on Connecticut Ave from May 20 through May 27, Phone (202) 797-2000 Fax 462-0944. We are registered under my husband's name Leonard Krause of Krause & Associates. After May 28, we will be home in Washington State (206) 842-8355 Fax 842-8355. Oh dear, on your faxed copy I gave you my phone # twice!

Sincerely,


Alison Asher



LifeSkills Press

BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY LIBRARY

May 6, 1997

To The Clinton Family:

My friend, Ollie Davidson, has offered to guide this copy of *Soaring Into The Storm* to you. This little book (that we created on the computer in our kitchen) has received several honors including an afterword by Dr. Joyce Brothers, and the only known endorsement by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. I want you to have it for several reasons. The first and foremost being that I simply want to share it with you as a gift from our family to yours.

This is a book about triumph over adversity. I have been so pleased with the compassionate way you have responded to the adversity we have faced over the past few years (the trouble in Haiti and Bosnia, the Oklahoma bombing, the devastating natural disasters this winter), that I have actually stood up in front of my television set and offered you a standing ovation on more than one occasion.

I had an opportunity to donate several hundred books to the National Red Cross in response to the horrible floods and tornadoes we suffered this winter. The officers found the book to be a comforting gift to the families they served. They would like to have copies for each Red Cross in each state on an on-going basis. Head Start programs and public school counselors are also finding the book very helpful. That is the second reason I wanted to contact you. Hopefully, with your help, we can get these books to more families who need them.

We created this series (*Soaring*, and three others) with the intention of contributing the proceeds to help care for our beautiful planet, and to assist families who were overcoming adversity. In an effort to support these goals we have structured our lives and our small publishing company accordingly. My husband, Lenny, and I have produced and funded this book entirely on our own, and have capped our own salaries at the level of public school teachers. This has allowed us to keep our operating costs to a minimum (no agent, no publicist, no middle-man of any nature) and contribute 100% of the proceeds. Additionally, we have accepted our President's challenge and employed a mother who is getting off Welfare.

Lenny and I will be in D.C. from May 21st through the 27th. I can't begin to imagine how busy you must be, but if you are pleased with the book, is there someone you would recommend we speak to while we are in town? We are hoping to arrange some kind of national coverage for the book: having a TV talk show host like Rosie O'Donnell mention what we are doing, arranging a story on the news, or something of that nature. Please keep in mind that there is no ulterior motive here. No matter how well the books do, our salaries remain the same, and all proceeds are contributed (as detailed on the following page).

Thank you for *It Takes A Village*, for turning your attention to the needs of our nation's families, for working hard to push aside the distractions of being "the First Family" and making your family first, for focusing on the last twenty wonderful things you have done rather than the things that may have happened twenty years ago. I want you to know how proud you make me feel. And (although I feel a bit like a school girl mentioning it), I want you to know that I am a proud member of the Hillary Rodham Clinton fan club and support network (the Southern Oregon chapter).

Sincerely Yours,



LifeSkills Press

BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY LIBRARY

100% OF PROFIT ABOVE OPERATING COSTS IS CONTRIBUTED

50% Contributed to Families Overcoming Adversity:

- 20% Contributed to mentorship programs and related programs benefiting America's youth as recommend by General Colin Powell's 1997 Presidential Summit.
- 20% Contributed to research on nerve sheathing regeneration to benefit people with MS, MD, and spinal chord injuries under the direction of Christopher Reeve.
- 10% Contributed to a scholarship account. This account will provide funds for youth who have demonstrated the ability to turn their lives around and need a second chance.

50% Contributed to Create and Maintain Wildlife Habitat:

- 20% Contributed to projects that create and maintain wildlife habitat under the guidance of The National Geographic Society, The Sierra Club, and The Earthstewards Network.
- 20% Contributed to the purchase of wildlife habitat acreage that will provide valuable educational programs for youth as recommend by The World Wildlife Association.
- 10% Contributed to a scholarship savings account. The interest from this account will provide funds for youth who want to enter a field relating to environmental stewardship.

Our Commitment To Our Beautiful Planet:

The LifeSkills Family Library Series will continue to produce books that actually reforest the earth. The series is printed on recycled, acid free paper. Proceeds from each book fund the disarming of a minimum of 500 landmines each year and the planting of trees in their place. This project is called *PeaceTrees* and is managed by *The Earthsteward's Network*. In 1996 the effort was honored with an award from "Physicians For Social Responsibility." Our goal is to disarm 100,000 landmines and reforest 100 acres within the next five years.

Our Commitment To The Children:

We will establish a Family category for books in the Library Of Congress. Additionally, we will establish a Family category for shelf-space in book stores and libraries (where books that cross age barriers and are specifically designed for the family can find a home). We will continue to publish books that teach life skills to children — books that will continue to be a welcome addition to the public and private school systems, and family libraries. Proceeds from LifeSkills Press will continue to fund mentorship programs, medical research, and provide scholarships to benefit children and teens.

Our Commitment To Minimal Operating Costs:

The publisher and authors receive the equivalent of elementary school teacher's salaries. Our staff includes one full-time employee, two part-time employees and several volunteers. We are committed to maintaining modest incomes even if sales exceed our expectations. We have accepted President's Clinton's challenge and employed a mother who is getting off welfare. We have also accepted General Colin Powell's challenge and dedicated one week each year for participation in community service. We have invited Goodwill Industries to manage our promotions. Our goal is to spend less than 1/2 of 1% on advertising. We intend to get the word out through television and radio talk shows. We are a small company with a large profit margin dedicated to the joy of contribution. We hope to inspire others to do the same.

MAY 01 1997 08:31AM ARCONHO DISASTER TECH SUPPORT

P.2

**American Red Cross**

National Headquarters
Jefferson Park
8111 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042-1203

May 1, 1997

Dear: Ms. Asher

Thank you so much for your donation of 500 copies of your book, "Soaring Into the Storm." These books were distributed to individuals and families affected by disasters as well as to response workers. The books were utilized in Arkansas, West Virginia, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee and Ohio. These states all experienced serious tornados and/or flooding during the early spring.

All of the officers were extremely enthusiastic about the book. They described how people would pick it up in the middle of the chaos of a shelter and just start reading. All can relate to the simple story and the educational sections are clear, nonthreatening and easily understood.

I kept several of the books here at our National Headquarters and discussed it several times in staff meetings. My co-workers are career disaster professionals and coordinate disaster relief to those affected by large disasters on a daily basis. They do not easily sit down and discuss their feelings or reactions to stress and/or trauma. Several of them asked to read the book and some asked if they could have a copy for family members or friends.

The Disaster Mental Health Officers (all licensed mental health professionals) on each operation determined the best method for distribution on their individual relief operation. Some of these methods included:

- Mailing or personally delivering to families who had suffered fatalities.
- Making the book available to clients when they came in to receive assistance.
- Making books available to shelter residents.
- Giving books to community libraries.
- Giving books to local mental health providers who would be providing long term recovery assistance in their communities.
- Giving books to local schools.
- Discussing the book in ARC staff meetings and making them available to our workers.

Help Can't Wait

MAY 01 '97 09:32AM ARO/HQ DISASTER TECH SUPPORT

P.3

There is no way to accurately measure the number of people across the country who have or will benefit from "Soaring Into The Storm." I would very much like to be able to have this book available for use on future disasters. Again, thank you for your donation and through the American Red Cross, making this valuable resource available to those affected by disaster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Morgan".

Jane Morgan
Associate, Disaster
Mental Health Services

Soaring Into The Storm

A Book About Those Who Triumph Over Adversity

By Alison Asher

Points of Interest Concerning the Content of the Book:

- Received the only known endorsement by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. (She previewed the manuscript shortly before her death, was personally moved, and sent a letter signed in her own hand.)
- Contains an afterword and additional insights on overcoming adversity by Dr. Joyce Brothers.
- The only book in recent history to successfully cross age barriers from preschool programs (Head Start) to use at the university level (Harvard). Please see the endorsements on the back cover.
- The only trade book distributed to families recovering from disasters by the National Red Cross.
- The only book of its kind designed specifically for the family to share combining fiction, non-fiction, poetry, gallery-quality photography, specific "how to" guidance, and scientific research.
- The story's imagery and symbolism facilitate a variety of interpretations. These abstract factors combine to keep adults involved, while young children simply enjoy the concrete aspects of the tale.
- The wisdom the "Old Swan" character offers readers is the result of hundreds of interviews the author conducted with people around the globe who had not only triumphed over adversity, but emerged with an unmistakable radiance and a deeper capacity to enjoy life. Thus, the readers not only enjoy an inspiring story, they come away from the experience with some valuable life-skills.
- *Soaring Into The Storm* is in its second printing (20,000) and is rapidly becoming a national best seller with sales now extending to Australia (no formal advertising, most sales from word-of-mouth alone).
- The author has voluntarily capped her own income at the level of a public school teacher and contributes 100% of remaining proceeds to environmental concerns and families overcoming adversity.
- This is the author's first published work. It is the first in a series of four related works with very similar formats. Each of these books is designed to cross age barriers and benefit the whole family.
- The *Reference Section* provides specific "how-to" information on overcoming adversity under a variety of circumstances and includes additional research from ten noted psychologists and scientists.

Points of Interest Concerning the Cover and Internal Art:

- The front cover was created by Alison Asher utilizing a mosaic of natural objects layered into honeycomb bees wax on plexiglass and softly lit from behind to create a stained glass window effect. Some of the articles used in the mosaic include: Paper from a North American Paper Wasp's nest, hair-like strands of down feathers gathered from an abandon Trumpeter Swan's nest, single strands from a China pheasant's feathers, Japanese rice paper, and Czechoslovakian glass beads.
- The artist used a jeweler's magnifying lens and surgical tools as she created the cover-art over a period of more than three-hundred hours. For more details please see *About The Cover Illustration*, page IV.
- The photography of the trumpeter swans is by Richard A. Brown, Director of the Bloedel Reserve.

To: L. Krause, Editor LifeSkills Press

Dear Mr. Krause:

Thank you so much for *Soaring Into the Storm* by Alison Asher. I have been showing it to people in the *Queensland Association for Family Therapists* and they are literally selling like hotcakes. Almost everyone I have shown it to would like to buy one, and I even receive phone calls and letters telling me what a wonderful book it is. How can we maintain a continuous supply here? I am not personally interested in becoming a book distributor, but I believe this book is relevant to anyone who is a family member - not just family therapists. It would be excellent to be able to recommend *Soaring into the Storm* to families (clients) and have it readily available here.

I have just written a book review for the May issue of the *Queensland Association for Family Therapists' Newsletter* (300-400 members). Also, the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy* is considering publication of a review. I think it would be most helpful if there was some way to indicate where the book could be obtained in Australia/New Zealand.

Thank you for sending a few copies - especially as they were signed copies - people were especially pleased with this added bonus.

Yours Sincerely,
Janet Roth

Book Review by Janet Roth;
Soaring into the Storm: A book about those who Triumph over Adversity
by Alison Asher (1996), Seattle: LifeSkills Press.

Soaring into the Storm by Alison Asher supports the whole family in supporting each other through the process of emotional healing in such a way as to "emerge with a deeper sense of trust in ourselves and others." It begins with a short parable which has appeal for all ages from grandchildren to grandparents. It is noteworthy that the opening parable was released to 300 families as a trial prior to publication. At a follow-up two years later, the tale had positively influenced the way most children perceived themselves and significant others, as well as becoming part of the internal framework of most of the families involved.

Soaring into the Storm was written as a parable, because people tend to remember metaphors and stories so much better than lectures and advice. Asher's poetic writing style paints pictures for the reader to take away, for easy access at a time of emotional turmoil. She offers a delightful mixing of the senses in a vivid manner, as she speaks of such things as 'swooping clouds of tiny laughter,' the difficulty of 'climbing into a smile,' and 'hot, soft tears.' Although expression of emotions is encouraged, this is balanced with a strong emphasis on respect for the timing of each individual's healing process. Asher had the foresight to create genderless archetypes through Young Swan and old Gray Swan, in the context of "something . . . terrible has happened . . .", which allows the reader to identify in whatever way and with whichever character is appropriate.

Following the story of the swans, *Soaring into the Storm* also offers a comprehensive, yet easy to read, reference section designed for navigating through one's personal storms. Much of the material is integrated from stories and advice of people who have themselves overcome extreme adversity, as well as professionals in the field. Their wisdom is distilled into a clear, easily read format. In the reference section, Asher has included anecdotal stories of resilience (no, she hasn't colluded with Moshe Lang), from a diverse range of people such as an 8-year-old dealing with divorce, and a Japanese

photojournalist recovering from torture by Serbian secret police. The stories are moving, sometimes uncomfortable, sometimes inspiring.

Soaring can be used in counseling sessions as well as within family networks. It has become popular with school counselors and teachers in the United States. The parable takes only 20 minutes to read aloud, or can be read in stages to very young children, and serves as an entree to significant points of discussion.

The reference section in the second half of the book is useful to individuals and families who are searching for how to support each other through the dark times of life. The information contained in the reference section comes from a diverse range of interviews and research from over 40 countries. However, it does not have the stilted style of research. Instead the words are simple and gentle, reaching into our hearts with their powerful, universal truths.

It seems that one can get something new from this book each time it is picked up. It's not a 'read-it-from-cover-to-cover' type of book. Asher presents physical (the nature and function of tears), emotional (emotional needs are as basic as physical needs), psychological (two-dimensional vs. three-dimensional thinkers), and spiritual (replenishing our hopes and dreams) perspectives on the theme of triumph over adversity. It is a book for families to learn how to help each other heal both individually and collectively from life's inevitable traumas. It is realistic, hopeful, and compassionate.

----- Headers -----

From d9611290@helios.usq.edu.au Mon Apr 28 19:47:57 1997

Return-Path: <d9611290@helios.usq.edu.au>

Received: from zeus.usq.edu.au (zeus.usq.edu.au [139.86.128.2])

by emin24.mail.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-1.0.1)

with ESMTP id TAA11665 for <SoaringSwn@aol.com>;

Mon, 28 Apr 1997 19:47:52 -0400 (EDT)

Received: from LOCALNAME ([139.86.235.240]) by zeus.usq.edu.au (8.7.5/8.7) with SMTP id JAA00543 for <SoaringSwn@aol.com>; Tue, 29 Apr 1997 09:47:33 +1000 (EST)

Message-ID: <336610EA.700E@mail.connect.usq.edu.au>

Date: Tue, 29 Apr 1997 08:16:58 -0700

From: Janet Roth <d9611290@helios.usq.edu.au>

Reply-To: d9611290@helios.usq.edu.au

Organization: University of Southern Queensland

X-Mailer: Mozilla 3.01C-KIT (Win16; I)

MIME-Version: 1.0

To: SoaringSwn@aol.com

Subject: Soaring into the Storm

Content-Type: text/plain; charset=iso-8859-1

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SOARING INTO THE STORM

BY ALISON ASHER

AFTERWORD BY DR. JOYCE BROTHERS