

From the *Crazy Wisdom Journal* Archive  
Originally published in Issue #16, September through December 2000

## A Conversation with Musician and Music Therapist Kathy Moore

Interview by Judy Stone

Photographs by Linda Lawson

*Interviewer's note: I have known Kathy Moore for over 20 years. Early in our friendship, in our twenties, we lived in a group household together. At the time, Kathy was very shy about singing publicly though she had an incredible voice. I could only enjoy it by either eavesdropping outside the bathroom door as she belted out tunes in the shower, or by catching her singing as she walked from her car to the house after work. Since then, of course, I have been privileged to hear her perform on many occasions, and have benefited from her skill as a music therapist. I have also enjoyed the richness of developing and facilitating a couple of workshops with her, combining Bioenergetic therapy, my profession at the time, with Kathy's work as a music therapist.*

*On a lazy June afternoon looking out on her lush backyard, (Kathy told me that she sings to the trees and flowers) we had a chance to chat about the development of Kathy's career as an artist, music therapist, and community builder, and her ideas of the place of music in each of our lives and the life of our community. Betraying my dual role as both journalist and friend, an animated conversation begins before the tape gets rolling. We've begun talking about the transition in Kathy's performing career, and specifically about the challenges of forming working partnerships with other performers.*

**Judy Stone:** I've known you for, what, about twenty years, from when you were just contemplating performing. You've performed with a variety of musicians—Stephanie Ozer, Tim Twiss, Drum Talk, What's Inside, The Riverside Big Band. And you've recorded a CD, "What's Inside". How are things changing for you now?

**Kathy Moore:** Thanks for that context, because, this relates to what we were talking about-- being in a relationship versus being alone, and what that process is like. For instance, Stephanie and I performed together for ten years but the intensity, when we were really ignited and developing together was probably half that. When music making relationships are tight, they have many qualities of intimate relationships.

**Judy Stone:** So what makes for a good performance relationship?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, music is an important way that I connect and communicate with people, as a performer with an audience, but also between the people that I do music with. So I want those people to be people who I can talk to, that I want to be around, who I am important to and to whom I'm important. Of course I want them to be fabulous musicians and to have shared goals about the kind of music we're making and where we want to go with it. It's a long list of criteria and it's hard to pull together. I've been through a lot of groups they've all been good and I and have no regrets about any of them, but for one reason or another, each has ended. It gets very tiring, all this turnover which is why I think I'm in transition now about it all. The last one that broke up, that was when I felt like I didn't want to do this anymore.

**Judy Stone:** It strikes me that for such a spiritual and creative process as music, you need to have a particular kind of synergy with the people you're performing with. Because it *is* so much like an intimate relationship, how many of those can you have in your life, and how much energy can you put into it? It's really a unique work relationship in that it takes so much more of you, and of everybody. How does that work? Is it harder for musicians then to do both – maintain personal relationships in their life and artistic relationships?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, I do think that, yes, it is hard. What you're saying is exactly true. I was talking with Carol Palms, who plays stand-up bass in the group "The Raisin Pickers". I heard her at one of the Top of the Park things a week or so ago, and her band sounds fabulous. This band has been in existence for at least ten years and they have come so far. She and her husband form the core of the band. I mean she's got everything working together-- her intimate primary relationship and her music relationship. Other members of the band had transitioned, but their relationship has remained stable and core, and so the group had continued.

And that's what Stephanie and I had for years. We were a stable core and things changed around us. We went through many, many variations on groups but we were core. I think I've been trying to seek that with somebody else, or with some other group. Maybe part of the place where I'm at, is that I'm coming to a place where I want to think of myself as the core. Then, if everything else changes around me, that's OK. I can manage that. And I guess the question is, do I want to manage that in the context of performance.

Performance is a tough business, very tough. I'm at a point in my life where I'm able to see it from a lot of different perspectives than when I first started on my own performance path. One of the ways is as a teacher, since a number of my students are performers. So I get their stories, and I'm counselor to their struggles. I was just talking to one of them in the last week about an experience where he was supposed to be part of a festival. They were expecting 1200 people, the band was totally psyched, and they traveled all this way to be there hoping this would be a foothold to expanding in this region of the country. Well, they got there, and it was a beautiful outdoor concert with a beautiful bay, but it was 95 degrees – It was too hot. The audience was sitting in the sun, and they didn't stay. Their band ended up playing for less than a hundred people. And it was through no fault of his own – they played well, they were ready, the gig was there, the sun was even out, but. . . And so he was so upset about this because he thought he had done everything to make this work.

I've done that over and over again – laid it all out: this is what I'm going to do, this is who I'm working with, this is our sound, our goal, the kind of music we're doing, how we're going to build it, who we're going to network with. When you're a performance musician, playing the music is in some ways the easy part.. What I said to him was, "Yeah, it takes talent, it takes perseverance, and it takes just plain dumb luck. And if dumb luck is not there, it doesn't work!" And his was the perfect example of that. I can't tell you how many times I've had that kind of experience.

**Judy Stone:** And that's something I know being in business for myself because those same elements exist. Sometimes it's so important to have people who can remind you that success or lack of it isn't only about you and your efforts, someone who can say, "that's okay, pick yourself up and keep going forward".

**Kathy Moore:** And in addition to that, because music is so much about communication and connection for me and growth and evolution, I want to have a person who I'm doing that with in a very deep, ongoing way, sharing this process. Then when the gods are not smiling on us and it didn't matter that everything else was in place, you're at least going through it with someone to whom you're very connected in the music and in life. That's my ideal. I always say to my peers who have been in the same music group for years what an incredible thing this is. And they say, "Yeah, it sure is." We all know what a hard job it is to keep a band together.

**Judy Stone:** Well, Kathy, you touched on a couple of elements that I'd like to follow a bit – one of which is the idea of communion, of communicating with someone in a way that provides evolution or personal growth. I know that you do that in a number of ways – as a music therapist, you work with people one on one, and also as a voice teacher. Can you talk about communication and evolution in those contexts?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. Well it's just natural to make that my work, because that's what music is to me. As a performer I've always wanted that element of depth in the content so that I was a part of people's process of healing and growth. Then when I began teaching voice what started happening was that because of the music and because of the process of opening the voice, people would get into all kinds of things about their lives.

**JS:** We've had conversations about this, but can you talk about the process of opening the voice, and how that begins to connect people to deeper places?

**Kathy Moore:** The way I think about it is along the lines of Lowen's Bioenergetic work – that's how I describe it and explain its depth. The body is a template of the person's emotional, psychological life and through life, when you experience trauma, you clench and hold, and if that repeats, then those places become permanently closed and held until you enter into some sort of process to re-open those places. And in the process of re-opening them, you release memory, feeling, whatever, that has been held in that place in the body. The voice for people is an incredible holding place. I don't know that I've ever had anybody come into my voice studio - and that's over a thousand people - who has not had holding in his or her voice in some way or another.

The voice is the highway or the avenue between head and heart, between head and soul, between head and body. It's the main avenue – that throat and neck area – and the voice is the thing that connects us as does the breath. The voice rides on the breath, so we breathe, we take in life, and out comes our life, our voice, if we choose to make sound. And the expression of what's going on in the body, or in the soul, or in the emotional life, through the voice –opinions in a conversation, or a song – is our life. Music is a language of rhythm, melody and harmony. And it's a very complex and rich language beyond the spoken word because of those three elements. So if you combine this voice (which is such an individual expression of self that for all of us has been blocked and held, and holds feelings and memories) with music – I can't think of another language that communicates as well! The potential for self-expression, for learning to live, really live, is incredible.

**JS:** Do you find that people who come to you, say for a voice lesson, are prepared for what they're entering into? Because what you're talking about is the potential for a pretty profound transformation through using the voice. So if somebody comes in saying, "I want to learn to sing," how do you work to bridge the gap for them, to make it safe to enter that process?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, that's changed over the years, because, initially, I was "just" a voice teacher. I put that in quotes because, my perspective is that you're never "just" a voice teacher. But I did call myself that for a while, so people would come to me, I think, with less awareness of that kind of thing than what they do now. Now, because I'm a voice teacher and a certified music therapist, I advertise about that depth of connection so I get more people who do understand. They might not up front, identify why they're coming to me, the first few times they come in, but they're calling me for some reason.

**JS:** . . . with some level of consciousness of what they're entering into.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah.. And I work with people of all ages who come in for all kinds of reasons all across the spectrum in terms of their willingness to let it be that. And so for some, it doesn't happen at that same level of depth because they're not willing to do that. And I never push it. I think I always talk about the potential, the possibility in one way or another, but, of course, it's the person's choice, and sometimes it is more or less just a voice lesson – the mechanics, learning about the instrument. And yet, even with that, if a person comes in not singing, and they leave singing, something has happened. There's been a transformation. So from there, all the way to people who are coming because they know that this is going to be transformational for them and they want and hunger for it. And then there are people who come in, in a fog and don't really know what the music is doing, but as the years go by, they know it more and more, and they come to rely on it as part of their healing, or their growth. They're becoming more alive. I think singing is one of the most alive things that a person can do.

Imagine what the world would be like if we were all going around singing what we had to say to each other. Can you imagine? [Laughs]. And, in fact, there are cultures where they do that and it is different. In African communities, there's a lot more singing when somebody has something powerful to say; a powerfully felt something comes out in song. And I feel that in a larger sense, part of my work is to make that more part of the world culture – that we sing. That we sing to ourselves, and to each other more, because it is so much deeper, so much more expressive than just talk, talk, talking all the time.

This weekend, *The Sound of Music* was showing over at the Michigan Theater, and they were asking people to sing along with the movie. Have you been to one of these things where people are singing along with the movie? Anyway, as these things happen, one of my voice students came in and she wanted to work on the song, "The Sound of Music," so that brought the song to my awareness again. That was one of my favorite musicals, too. So, I found myself singing "The Sound of Music" in the shower, which, by the way, along with the automobile, is where most people do their singing. I found myself listening to the words in a different way than the last time I sang it, which was years and years and years ago, I'm sure. That song is about what I do, really. It talks about how the sound of music is in the world around us. What I'm always doing when I do therapeutic work with people is to emphasize, number one, that they have music in them, they are musical, that music is all around us. All you need to do is open your ears and begin to hear it and begin to use it to make your own music.

There's a question posed that I think about oftentimes with people, "What is the song, what is the music between where the person is now and their most alive voice, their most alive, singing, musical self?" The process of that music that's in between, that is my work in therapy, it's helping them to write that song, their true song. In *Women who Run with the Wolves*, Clarissa Pinkola Estes talks about the true song, everybody's true song. I mean, this idea is not my unique creation. So anyway, the words to "The Sound of Music"—"[singing] The hills are alive with the sound of music, with songs they have heard for a thousand years. The hills fill my heart with the sound of music. My heart wants to sing every song it hears." And then the whole part about the brook that's skipping along the stones and the birds' wings . . . and that is the music all around us. I mean, if we were really open to it, we wouldn't be able to help but break out into song. People would be breaking out into song down Main Street all the time. But we're not, we're not breaking out into song. If we were really alive, we would be singing all the time. And it wouldn't always be a joyous song. It would be a dirge, and very sad, and very hard to listen to and hard to be in, too, because that's part of life also. But, you know, just imagine what that would be like [laughing].

**JS:** I'm reading Jean Houston's *Passion for the Possible* and she speaks about it in a different language, but she talks about opening the senses and basically being attuned to all of that music, whether it's color or sound or smell. It's all vibration. It's all about being alive to those vibrations and to our own, and music is certainly one powerful way to wake up the vibration within.

**Kathy Moore:** Yes. And speaking of vibration, we can talk about the mechanics of voice, since you asked me about, the process of this opening of the voice. One of my goals with everyone I work with is to get them to be able to move through a fuller, if not the fullest range of their voices with ease, flexibility, and evenness of sound. We don't use much of the range potential of this instrument. I think when somebody's calling for voice lessons, saying, "I want to sing" or "I want more voice," it can't help but be a subconscious heralding back to childhood when they used their voice with so much more ease and expression and so much more joy and self-discovery -- we lose track of that as adults.

**JS:** Well, and it strikes me that children, before they have motor skills, before they have language, all they have to get their needs met, is their voice and we lose that progressively as we grow older.

**Kathy Moore:** Mm-hmm. And culture influences that and directs that. Western culture is very left-brained. It's very analytical, and even looking at the evolution of western music versus music in other parts of the world it's a statement of that left-brained orientation here. In the history of western music, it was a voice-centered music until a certain point, and then it became an instrument-centered music, which, when you think about it, is quite a statement about the progress of a culture.

**JS:** How did that happen? Do you know?

**Kathy Moore:** Well part of it had to do with technological development. The technology was developed to create instruments that could do more range and had more flexibility and volume. The piano was one of those instruments that was developed and that changed the course of western music.

**JS:** Interesting, because that's such a story of western civilization, the fact that we're always looking for machines to supplant human functions, and sometimes that's to our betterment and, clearly, sometimes it's to our demise.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. Well, it's an interesting question that you can have quite a debate about. There certainly are those who feel strongly that we can do it better than what we were given, not just in the humans but that we can do better than this natural world. And then there's the other side, which says all the wisdom is in the natural world, but the only way that we can truly achieve our best is by integrating the two. I think we're at a real turning point again in human history in terms of what's happening. We talk about having capacity to create something better than you're born with. You know, all the stuff that's going on with genetics and re-engineering body parts, the "bionic man" kind of thing. The question of do we follow the path of the cleverness of human beings—and if we do, because obviously we do, how do we evaluate our choices? Western culture seems to lead the world in terms of the measurements we use to make choices and I have real questions about those measurements. The gross national product for instance, this number we use to tell us whether or not we're successful in the world—but this number doesn't say anything about whether it's environmentally sane or whether people are happy, What part does the natural world play in that? Does it play any part at all? Is it even important? Sometimes the way we act, it's as if it's not even important.

**JS:** When you talked about whether we follow "human cleverness," it's really a question of do we follow the brain with the heart attached or without the heart attached?

**Kathy Moore:** And there we are, back to the voice. Do we have the brain connected through the voice, through the throat, to the body and the heart, or do we cut it off? Do we cut off the head and carry it around in a box? A head with a voice, a mechanical voice, and it doesn't sing. [Laughing] It doesn't sing. Except as a gymnastic exercise. There are singers who are gymnasts. There isn't a lot of emotional content in their voice. They're very popular, some of them, very big in pop music. I can't stand them. I want emotional content.

**JS:** You want a whole ...

**Kathy Moore:** I want a person in the voice that I hear. I want the person to be present in that voice.

**JS:** So from this masculine technological emphasis, this seems like a good place to segue into the work that I know you've done with adolescent boys; some rites-of passage work. I'm really curious about that.

**Kathy Moore:** Boys and girls, actually. I'm really interested and would love to do a dissertation on what happens in adolescence in boys versus girls in terms of singing, and why. But I have a son, so my interest in what happens to boys, is influenced by that.

**JS:** And what do you think?

**Kathy Moore:** I think even under the best of circumstances, navigating the transition from boy to man is very difficult. Boys reach for their manhood via this low, adult voice that becomes possible. The process will vary—some go below and never come up again, other voices crack and it's embarrassing to the boy for this higher, feminine sound to be bleeding through. I have adult men who come to see me for voice lessons and the higher range is always an issue. I have older adolescent boys come in too, but the young ones don't come.

**JS:** And what about adolescent girls?

**Kathy Moore:** Adolescent girls do. They are singing, and they want to sing, and they want to sing with full openness, and they're capable of it.

**JS:** Do you think the changing voice is the only reason you're not seeing adolescent boys?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, I think part of it is the same thing that we were just talking about a few seconds ago, this head versus heart, this machine versus live being.

**JS:** That boys somehow feel that being successful in the world means being a brain without a body or a brain without a heart?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah, yeah. And that's our culture. I mean, our culture perpetrates that, and we don't give boys, as they age, we don't give them very much room to be human, really, and I find that very sad. Not that there aren't

very positive, powerful components of maleness, because there are. I think they're manifested all over the place, in the bridges across great rivers that we build and ... you know, there are a lot of positive aspects of maleness. The trouble is that the positive aspects of the femaleness are really behind, trying to catch up. But it's the same conflict between the natural world and the technological, you know, and the boys are into the technological.

**JS:** So what have you been doing for adolescents in terms of music?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, as I say, I work a lot with girls in voice lessons, adolescent girls who just come to me, and we work on their voices and singing. And I've done some rites of passage work. It was a mixed group of boys and girls.

**JS:** So you were actually working with them musically?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah, yeah.

**JS:** And how did you work with them, or what form did that take?

**Kathy Moore:** Well here's a couple of examples of things that I've done with groups that have had both boys and girls, or guys and girls, at different ages. One was a songwriting experience where the group wrote lyric ideas about their process of going through a transition, crossing a bridge in their lives in terms of growing up and how they felt about that, the pluses and minuses. It turned out to be a terrific song. Writing a song, the music, provided everybody with an opportunity to talk about their feelings, to express them in some way, and some of those feelings that were expressed were sad, alone kinds of feelings, feeling unsure, feeling scared, and I know a number of those came from boys. Now those kinds of feelings for boys, especially as they age, become men, get harder and harder to keep expressing, to keep connected to them, to keep valuing them in any way, and the music provides a way for those things to come out. I mean, writing lyrics is in some ways a much more conscious way.

Another example that comes to mind in working with a group of boys and girls was improvisation. I had a bunch of instruments out, the kinds of instruments that people can pick up and just play, you know, usually they're percussion-type instruments or some non-tuned melodic instruments. So you don't have to worry about whether you're playing in key or if you even know what "in key" means, you know, you can just pick the thing up and hear it and play it. And then I always incorporate voice. I always try to give permission for voice being an instrument and including that in these improvisations.

**JS:** And do you find that boys are more self-conscious about including their voices?

**Kathy Moore:** Oh no, no. I think that the music provides a way for the boys to have those feelings and to express them and to be validated for them.

**JS:** So even when you invite them to begin to put the words or feeling into voice, that was relatively easy?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. I mean, I think they welcome it. I think they hunger for it, really. Which is why I think it's so great when I see anybody, male or female, involved in music, because it's allowing that fuller expression of the self. It's interesting though, if you go to a choir in junior high school, it's either all girls or just a couple of guys. Mostly young adolescent boys aren't singing. As they're becoming men, it's kind of an awkward process in terms of the kinds of sounds that are coming out as the voice is changing.

**JS:** As a little aside—do you think that keeping the voice open through singing would help that voice change be a smoother transition?

**Kathy Moore:** I do. Yeah, I do. I do believe that. With a lot of adult males that I see, I end up helping them bridge that gap that was made so many years ago, so that they've got their voice intact again, their full range. There's an incredible—and this just isn't with men, it's with women too—there's an incredible fear, almost, of that high, head voice that we have, we all have a capacity for, but everybody, or most everybody, is so weirded out about.

**JS:** About the higher pitched sound?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah.

**JS:** I know in Bioenergetic work it's that high-pitched voice that often opens the holding and brings you into contact with a much deeper place in yourself. Do you see that as being behind the fear?

**Kathy Moore:** Mm hmm. I mean, simple physics, when you're making a high-pitched sound, you're vibrating at a very rapid frequency. When you're making a low-pitched sound, the frequency is much slower. So it makes sense that to unlock or unleash, you'd need that fast vibration, which is the high voice.

**JS:** Yeah. It rattles the cage.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. It does. It rattles the cage. Not that the low voice doesn't, cause it does, but it's a different way, and most people have quicker access to it, although that's not completely true either. Actually, what I think is a truer statement is that people have trouble with both extremes of the range.

**JS:** The high and the low.

**Kathy Moore:** The very lows and the very highs, and that's why we relegate ourselves to a limited version of our range and walk around that way. That's how we live, and that's what we show, when really this expanse is possible. But yeah, to go to either end rattles the cage.

**JS:** We were talking a minute ago about the defacto sex segregation in junior high choirs. I want to go back for a minute to your work with adolescents and ask you about whether you noticed any kind of change in the quality of relating between young men and young women who participated in these groups?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. I mean, I think it provides the potential bridge for people to be able to share in a more human way, more real and with more depth. With the improvisation, I told them that they could bring somebody into the group that was a support person to them in their lives and to choose an instrument to represent that and play that.

**JS:** In a figurative way, to bring a friend in?

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah, in a figurative way.. And then what happens in an improvisation is that initially, and this is usually the way I instruct it, too, is you start with your own sound. You start by focusing on what it is that you're feeling, thinking, whatever, choose an instrument that helps you voice that, including of course, the voice. Which most people, by the way, do not choose. Then I ask them to play it and to discover how to play it, what kinds of sounds can you make and what resonates with what you want to experience. So it's a very alone, self kind of thing initially.

As the improvisation goes on, the next stage is to start to open to including the sounds around you and to how your sound sounds with those. At first it's sort of a black and white kind of thing, and then it moves to more immersion or integration and allowing your sound to be affected by and changed in interacting *with*. Sometimes the interactions are more between two or three or four people in a larger group and sometimes they're whole groups. And it is incredible what happens in these improvisations with people, the stories that are told in the music. Of course, music therapy is music, but it's also talking, so we do a lot of talking, in processing these experiences afterwards. We talk about what happened for people, where they went, what they thought of, what they felt, what somebody else was doing and how that affected them.

**JS:** It really is about relationship-building with yourself and then with yourself and with the world, and that really takes people through the developmental process from infancy to adulthood and learning to be in a relationship. And learning to bridge our differences.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. It's an incredible thing. What a gift for us to have music. You know, my God, what would we do without it? [Laughing] I don't know what I'd do without it. I know that I wouldn't be here the way I am without it, that's for sure, but neither would the rest of us. You know, there are so many topics that we've started talking about, Judy, that I feel like we've just kind of glazed the surface, and there's so much more to say, I keep going back in my mind to them, it all feels so related. The archetypal stories and images that so much of life seems to come back to, like the natural world versus the—what did we call it? I was calling it “human cleverness,” but it's the mechanical mind, technological science face, “there's an explanation for everything,” mindset. The female-based religions, they're earth, the womb-as-mother earth connection, so the female is the natural world, more or less, and the male is the other. But the bottom line is that it's neither the natural or technological, masculine or feminine, that's right, it's the integration of them. And that's the thing about each one of us, whether we walk around in a male or a female body, we need both aspects of ourselves to be whole persons. That's my goal for myself, and it's my hope for the world and the people and the beasts in it. I see music as being a very unique and powerful process for encouraging that. So that's how it fits, in a nutshell, that's how it fits into the rites of passage.

**JS:** Kathy, for a number of years you were primarily a voice teacher and then you made a decision to go back to school and become a certified music therapist. I know that that's really changed the focus and depth of your work. Could talk about that a little, what the difference is between the two and how you made the shift?

**Kathy Moore:** [Laughing] I'll sure try. In my teaching, I was noticing that as people developed more range and ease with their voice, and as they could bring more emotional expression into a piece of music, often there would be a release of emotions and memory. I think again about Bioenergetics and the fact that a place of holding seemed to open and I have people sobbing and unable to complete a song. So my role shifted. I already had a degree in psychology, so I had an orientation towards this kind of thing anyway, and seeing what happened and having an understanding of it, I would work with the person and whatever came up. So that was good, and it made sense to me, and I felt comfortable with it, but I didn't feel calling myself a voice teacher really said everything about what I was capable of doing, nor did it legitimize enough. I wanted to go back to school and do something, and I looked at advanced degrees in psychology and an MSW and all these different options, but what I really wanted to do was therapeutic work through music, through voice specifically. I ended up going to music school and becoming a certified music therapist, which entailed, for me, mostly, continued study in music, since I already had the psychology degree. I had placements, working in a public school, working with developmentally delayed and autistic children and working in a psychiatric hospital, all of which gave me an expanded idea of what the possibilities were as a music therapist. I finally ended up getting my certification through the American Music Therapy Association. That was about five years ago.

**JS:** One of the things that you've done since becoming a certified music therapist is to work with survivors of incest and other sexual abuse and using music as an integral part of the healing process. Could you talk a little bit about that?

**Kathy Moore:** Mm-hmm. Let's see. Well, this in-and-of-itself is an example of how my practice has evolved and changed since I became a certified music therapist. What I found was that I was getting people who needed help working with their voices, and that was, again and again, survivors of incest, because that situation affects people so that they lose their voices. They're told to keep it quiet, don't tell, and so they started to come to me for help with that. When I saw that there was a pattern, I put it together with the idea of women's circles of sound that I wanted to start doing, which are music therapy groups.

I've been doing those now for about five years, probably done about five different groups lasting anywhere from six months to ... one lasted longer than two years. They're small groups of about five or six women. I always prepare the agendas for the groups, and there is focused music voice therapy towards the particular goals and objectives that the clients in the circle have, working together as a group. We'll do things like, people will bring in examples of music that we listen to that helps them process and express and feel their anger. Or people will bring in recorded music or sometimes actually sing or play music, if they're singers or musicians, and then we'll share that with each other --maybe just talk about it, or maybe use that music to do some further work. Like, if it's a piece of recorded music, we might drum with it, or we might do some movement with it, and then always talk afterwards about what that was like for people and what happened.

Another thing that I do is a lot of music improvisation, and when you're using music in improvisation, as a music therapist, I'm doing a lot of the same kinds of things that any therapist does in a group therapy situation. I'm listening, I'm supporting, I'm mirroring, I'm feeding back, I'm challenging, sometimes pushing, but I'm doing all that with music rather than verbally. And so because it's a language that's more right-brain than left-brain, because it's music, it moves the person physically as well as emotionally and psychologically. I think music, which includes rhythm, harmony, melody and lyrics expand the possibilities within a group situation.

Let's see, other examples of what we do in the circle of sound. Well, the voice is really a reflection of a person's inner landscape. Everybody has an inner landscape, okay, of sound or songs or things that go around in your head that you don't say out loud but that are circling around in your mind. So part of the work is, for people for whom their inner landscape is getting in the way of being in their lives in a full and healthy way, is to get that inner landscape out in some way.

**JS:** So when you talk about inner landscape, are you talking about things like the messages or the tapes that play in our brain, maybe critical messages or self-defeating messages and things like that?

**Kathy Moore:** Mm-hmm. Yeah, yeah, getting those out. It's like putting the shadow self out there in front of you, and sometimes I do that by directly connecting it to the body. I'll set up imagery; I use imagery in music a lot in my practice. I'll ask somebody to focus on a place in their body that feels tense or they're holding, and then I'll ask them, using the breath, to focus on that place. Is there a sound that they associate with that place? Can they hear it in their inner ear? If they're comfortable, can they voice the sound? A lot of times people won't, especially the first time around, voice it out loud, but they might voice it in their inner landscape and then continue to work with the breathing and the voicing. We see what that builds toward. Are there images, actual visual images? Are there further body images that start to happen? Emotional stuff, did that begin to come up? After the imagery experience, and that's the preferred word in music therapy, to call these things our experiences, because they really are experiences, we come back as a whole and process and talk about what happened.

A lot of times I use drawing as a way of processing because in a lot of ways it's, well, it's certainly a different language than verbalizing all the time. And sometimes people can say something in a picture that they couldn't possibly put words to. I think that's the other thing about music therapy for people who have experienced situations like incest where there really are not words to adequately describe what the person's experience has been, what their feelings are about it. The words just are not enough, so music, the art, offer a much broader canvas for a person to begin to try to explore such a complex and confusing and awful tapestry that they've inherited, and voice that.

**JS:** Shifting focus, I know you've done a lot of things at the community level to use music as a tool in community building. You've done the Sacred Song circles at the holidays. I've been to a couple of those and they're wonderful and I know you're active in the community in other ways. Could you talk about some of those?

**Kathy Moore:** Sure, yeah. The Sacred Song, we might as well start there. That was something that I was actively involved in the beginnings of, back a few years ago now. Elise Bryant was at the head of that initially, and Elise and I used to get together for lunch and kick around ideas. One of our thoughts was, wouldn't it be great to get a group of people together and have each person bring a song that feels sacred to them, share it with the group, teach it to the group and then do a show performing those pieces. And so that's what we finally did around the Christmas-

Hanukkah time, and we called it Sacred Song, and it was very successful. It's continued to be successful as a traditional, annual thing that happens. That group, the Sacred Song group, has really gone beyond just that annual holiday thing. They do concerts all the time, usually in connection with one political endeavor or another, so that's definitely a community building kind of thing.

I do community building with the women's circles of sound. I've done, as I said before, about five of them so that's about twenty-five or thirty women. I do community building in that group in a number of ways. For instance, sometimes we'll do songwriting together. There was one situation in particular that I'm thinking about where we started a song in one group and we didn't complete it. We had, I believe, a verse-chorus section of a song, so then in another group, I brought in that same song, and we wrote another section in the second group. And then in another group, we took the completed song and I sang it, and people used it for their own personal work because it was such a powerful song to them. It was something that we used a number of times in the course of the group. In the group where people first heard the completed song, it was more than they could take in initially, but as we went through the group, people started to be able to sing this song that came from, that was written by, other survivors. So that's a real community building example. Someday I'd like to get all these groups together, do some kind of big day-long thing. I think that would be fabulous. That would definitely be a way to build community.

In my teaching practice, I do recitals. They're really recital workshops because I always start off with us doing warm-ups and some technical voice stuff together and then move to singing together so that it creates community. Then from that, people get up and do their thing. Sometimes people in my practice have gotten to know each other through these recitals, and maybe next year they do something together, they sing a duet together, or somebody accompanies, plays, backs somebody up in bass. And the other thing about this community building is that people hear each other year after year and can see each other's progress as well as experience their own, and it's kind of a neat thing.

One other community building thing I feel really good about was the concert that I did after the ordinance in Ypsilanti was passed a couple of years ago for gay and lesbian rights. That was such a hard battle and struggle, and when it was won, I really wanted to do something that was a community celebration. My band at the time, "What's Inside" along with Jeanne Mackey and Don and Matthew Alled were the primary entertainment for the night. Elise Bryant, who had moved to D. C., came in and did some stuff with us. It was a great night musically and in a lot of ways, but I really wanted to make sure that it was a celebration that went beyond the gay and lesbian community to include a larger, focused community. So we made sure that the money that we made that night went to a gay and lesbian organization, Ozone House, which gave it an inter-generational focus, and the NAACP chapter in that area, so that we were crossing the lines of race. We also asked a spokesperson from each group to get up and talk about what their group was doing. It was very exciting for me to see this vision come to fruition and to feel like I was an integral part of making the bond between different sub-communities so that we could become a fuller community together. It was truly wonderful.

**JS:** Music is such a great way for people to get together and share something with each other that is in some ways an intimate sharing and in other ways a safe way to get to know somebody that you don't really know.

**Kathy Moore:** Right. That is so true, Judy. For myself, I'm not a big party person in that I'm not big on going into groups of people and trying to make small talk. But I love going to a party where there's music and a jam session; I'll just launch into that. And that is exactly what you're saying. It's fun, it's social, so it's more accessible but it's not just icing or something. There's always a depth and an unexpectedness about it, and it's really wonderful that way.

**JS:** I know that you've had your studio down at the Performance Network for a long time and that some things are changing down there, and I wonder if you'd say a little about that.

**Kathy Moore:** The Performance Network actually is the theater over there, and they're having to move also because of the changes that are happening in the building. When I first moved into that building, about fifteen years ago, it was called the Artist's Network. Briefly, the history of that was that somebody said "Hey, if you offered these studio spaces to artists, I'm sure it would fill up." And sure enough it did because, of course, there are a lot of artists in this area, and they all needed studio space, and it was affordable at the Network. And then I believe the building changed ownership, and they took the Artist's Network sign down, and it became the Technology Center, which is what it has been called now for quite a while. So it hasn't been called the Artist's Network for a long time, but it is still filled primarily with artists, painters, dancers, graphic artists and musicians. There are other businesses there too, but it's really a meeting place of so much of the arts community here in Ann Arbor. And when it goes, which it looks like it's just a matter of time here, that's it-- when it's gone, it's gone. I don't think that building and what it has been and what it has housed will ever be replaced.

**JS:** What do you think that will mean for this community to lose that congregation of art, spirit, and community?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, of course, it won't be entirely lost. It'll be spread around more. I've been looking for a new studio space for about a year and a half now and what keeps cropping up is that when I leave the Network, I'm going to be possibly off by myself someplace. And I love working in this building. The neighbors on one side of me paint, the neighbor on the other side of me sculpts. Across the hall is another painter. Down the hall is a violinist and a trombone teacher. Downstairs is a printing press. On the other side of the building are dance studios. I love being where everybody is and being a part of it.

**JS:** There's so much life in that building.

**Kathy Moore:** I've often thought of that. It's this dumpy looking building there on 410 West Washington, but I've often thought of it as the heartbeat of the city. I'll never forget one night I came out from work and it was dark out. It was probably around ten p.m., and I came out into the parking lot, and the parking lot lights were on, and there was a group of about ten or twelve people who were dancing out in the parking lot. It was some kind of rehearsal for something that was going to go on, I think at the Performance Network, or possibly one of the dance studios. But I just thought, "[laughing] Where else would you walk out of your workplace into the parking lot and find people dancing under the streetlights just kind of as a matter of an everyday work kind of thing?" And it's that kind of life that's in that building. It's a sad statement that it's probably going to turn over and disappear and that even while it lives, it lives in this, as I say, pretty dumpy building. It's just like that bumper sticker says, "You gotta have art." And it's the truth. Can you think of what life would be like without music and art and dance; it would be pretty pale in comparison. It's not just an alternative or something that's icing on the cake. It really is the cake itself [laughing]. It's even the main course, you know?

**JS:** This is a community that I think of as supporting arts. I mean, the university is here, and we bring in all kinds of cultural events, and there are tons of performing artists in this town. But this is the only "multi-arts institution" we have here.

**Kathy Moore:** In terms of the community outside of the university, yeah. There's the Civic Theater, which is also having trouble maintaining its space. All the civic art groups are kind of limping along, barely making it. I hope to be able to coalesce with at least a small group of other artists. I'm talking to Kay Yourist, a local potter and I just performed in a benefit for Suzanne Willets-Brooks, who's moved from the Network over to the new Riverside Arts Center in Depot Town. I'm hoping to connect with some other artists, art groups, art therapy kinds of people, and buy a building together, so that we still have something like this, even though it won't be as extensive, I doubt, unless we find a corporate sponsor [laughing], somebody who's got money.

**JS:** Right. Well, how do you think this community that's not the university community, but the town community, could support the arts more than...?

**Kathy Moore:** Hmm. I don't know that I have an answer for that right off the top of my head. Um, I think recognizing its value, just recognizing the value of it, and not being afraid to make those things an integral part of your life—dancing yourself, singing yourself, participating in it. It would be great if property owners or people with money would have the vision to create an affordable space to keep something like the Network going.

**JS:** Individually bringing it into your life.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah. Cause it really is a basic need, I think, to be involved.

**JS:** I think there's a need for expression. Probably the most important thing that art is (whether it's music, visual arts, dance, whatever) is that it's a vehicle for expression.

**Kathy Moore:** Well, and there's all kinds of arts. There's the art of gardening, landscaping. There's the art of being a good sound technician or interested in electronics or something. I mean, everybody's calling and love is in a way their art, and so putting it all together is a wonderful thing to do. It would be great to have an art center that had a wonderful garden [laughing] and terrific electronic equipment and a wonderful stage and lights and that everybody's art was expressed through it. That would be truly, truly wonderful.

**JS:** So what's in the future? What are you looking ahead towards? Any new projects or...?

**Kathy Moore:** Well, last year at this time, I was in three different bands. I'm not doing any of those things—well, a little bit of Riverside, the Big Band, still—I'm kind of in a "wait and see" period. I'm going out and about a lot, listening to live music and seeing live productions. I want to feed myself that way, and I've got some ideas germinating. One favorite idea that I'd love to do at some point is put a band together, maybe head the band myself, which is something that I've not done by myself, and I'd love to call it Trance Trio. This is a name that came out of one of the other groups that I was getting together with for a while. We joked around about calling ourselves the Trance Trio, which I think is a hilarious name, and the way that I would be using it now is in terms of the trance potential of music, which is really a trio of elements, that being harmony, melody, and rhythm. And Trio is not necessarily that there are three members in the band, but that there are these three elements of music. . And it's kind of a nice mix of something that's thoughtful and humorous too. So I like that name.

I'd like to do a project that uses some jazz. That's been a big part of my background, but I've never been a jazz purist, so I'd like to have some of that be included in what we do. But I love improvisation that doesn't have to be limited to what are considered jazz chords and jazz structures and so forth. I love lots of rhythm, lots of different kinds of percussion going on, and I love what happens when you set up a repeating kind of thing, an ostinato in the music. It creates an environment through repetition and how it builds and develops, that allows people to enter into kind of a trance or a different state. And then putting words to it that are words that need to be said and sung out loud, you know, words about love, words about empowerment. I think these are things that people need to be saying to themselves and to each other more, rather than what a lot of the words are in music — you know, the typical love lost kind of thing, not that there's anything wrong with that, but there's plenty of that already done.

**JS:** And there's lots more to be said than those things

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah, there's lots more to be said. And so to get people to hear those words while they're hearing this cool tune that's going through their mind, that's also a phrase of meaning--it's something that's very healing in and of itself. When you've heard something to music, it's easier to take it with you when you leave. You keep thinking about it, and you might even take the rhythm and the tempo of it, so you're moving to it as you leave it, and that's a wonderful way to help people in their healing. I try to use that concept in music therapy groups too. Once in a circle of sound group I put the serenity prayer to music. That's such a powerful—

**JS:** From the twelve-step groups.

**Kathy Moore:** Yeah, from the twelve-step program. And people use that serenity prayer way beyond just the twelve-step program, too. So I put that to music, and, you know, it's got a rhythm, and it's got some different vocal parts, and people can sing that now and take it with them.

**JS:** And I know you have an idea for doing some work with cancer patients.

**Kathy Moore:** Well, what happened—I was talking to Elaine Simms over at the Gifts of Art program at the University of Michigan hospital, and she's got connections with a couple of coordinators and directors of programs. One is the cancer program, another is—there's a lot of attention recently being paid to complimentary and alternative medicine, which includes music therapy, so there's a coordinator of that program. And there's talk about what direction these things are going to go in, and maybe even setting up a building that would be separate from the hospital for these kinds of programs. I'm going to be getting together with them at some point and talking about music therapy in connection with what they're doing. I don't know how far my involvement will get, but certainly if they're [laughing] setting up a building, and they might have a studio space for me...you know, you never know how this is going to happen. But that's a potential thing there that I would be interested in.

I'm very interested in working with things that are directly involved with helping people with brain or mind disorders or dysfunction—closed head injury, ADD, different kinds of things like that. I have a number of clients in my private practice now because music can really impact what's going on in the brain, and I enjoy doing that. But my primary focus is in helping people to cultivate health and live more alive. That's where my greatest interest lies and where I see myself.

**JS:** Well thanks, Kathy. This has been great. Talking with you has certainly given me a fuller appreciation of music and all the ways music can be used. And it's a reminder for me, the importance of bringing music into my life and the importance to the community for each of us to bring music into our lives.

**Kathy Moore:** Well, you know, music moves. Music's a container for experience. Nothing works better to remember something than to put on a song that you used to listen to when you were an adolescent or something and boom, it all comes back. It's incredible. So, I'm very happy to do the work that I do and really am glad to have a chance to talk about it.

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