

# **BJ MILLER – LEADING BY DESIGN (LBD) CASE STUDY**

April 29,  
2012

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The knowledge acquired in the four years of work with the Leading By Design (LBD) group under the stewardship of Wayne Ruga enhanced my understanding of health design, social interaction and systems theory. The culmination of this new understanding is developed in the story that follows. The continuation of my journey is valuing and optimizing relationships. This involves narrowing my reach and focusing on what I am attracting to my world vs. being in a place of pursuing. David passed on July 22, 2012 and I credit him with much of my illumination along this path in regard to health and the impact of the environment - both social and physical. David's lessons to me were often about "being" vs. "doing" as I work to create an environment for practicing my art around this life balance.

## **MY BACKGROUND**

At the age of 20, I stood at a crossroads between art and science. In the company of an entrepreneurial man (Mike) at a young age I was compelled to develop a business acumen. I had already studied business for two years when the impulse to express myself through an artistic medium led me to the world of design. I came to appreciate that interior design work involving a program of space needs and creating an environment for work, was an art and a science.

Perhaps my choices have always been driven by the passion of what stirs my soul. As much as I have tried to understand my father and my son's strong convictions...I must admit I have my own. Following my creative bent, I transferred from Business into the Interior Design Program at the University of Tennessee. My creative, drew me to the profession of interior design, however, the power to enhance people's lives through design, the science, has kept me engaged and has defined my life's work. Al DeLong, an eccentric yet revered architecture professor exposed me to the study of proxemics and ethnic culture, defined in great part through Edward T Hall's writings. This began a fascination with the impact of environments on human psyche, well-being and our transformative capacity as designers.

It was the fall of 1992, and another decision point, as I finalized a divorce and negotiated a joint custody arrangement of my five year old son. Within months, I bought my first house and within two weeks of closing, lost my design job. These are the times we dig deep into our emotional reserves, and benefit by our connection to the larger universe. The intensity of my determination to survive on my own was fierce. And so, I began my first business in 1992, Visions Design Group with a Design Build Developer specializing in Medical Office Space. My interest in Health Design seen through the filters of culture, empathy and sensory experience had begun. My infatuation with leadership and business began here also, organizing a staff of 8-10 within the first two years; my company was involved in the design of over 20 million square feet of opportunity in the next 20 years with about 60% directly related to health care. However, every space we designed; schools, office buildings and assembly spaces all were environments involved with health. A specialty evolved beyond our health care work in K-12 education, corporate office buildings and the integration of “high performance buildings” for humans.



*Graduation 1985, Mom, Dad and Mike*



*Visions Design Group Team 1994*

After having multiple offices in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina, The Vision Group Studios, (we rebranded in 2008 to be more inclusive of other specialties we represent) currently maintains a primary office based in Asheville, NC. Our work is involved in the development and design of health related and elder communities. Operating as a virtual company, my business partner, Suza and I employ several regular “cast members” in what we refer to as the Hollywood model, allowing the best cast to surface for each production.

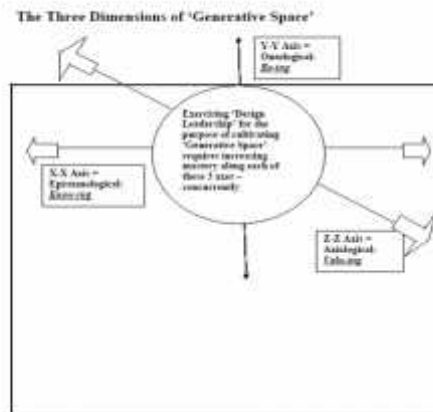
My early fascination with proxemics and culture, within the last five years, began to ask a deeper question. How can I create environments that potentiate the human being? Crabbe’s “epigenetics” studies, like Perks, “Molecules of Emotion”, further validated the connections between the environment and our well being. Epigenetics is the study of how our experiences change our gene operations without altering our DNA sequence. The space we create has a profound impact on us, even having the power to change genetic expression. Health is not just physical health but human potential, connected so delicately to “management” or “culture” of space. The latter is our social space or soup as I call it, and along with the physical environment it cues our primal senses in ways we can only begin to imagine. So, how do I materialize this concept? How can I create what we term in LBD as generative space?

An ability to simplify complexity or as my peers would say, the gift of dyslexia, has been both a blessing and a curse for me. My role in my own “reality creation” plays out like a movie, my teenage rebellion, a volatile marriage, two intense business

partnerships, twenty plus years of short term romantic relationships and my gypsy son who left home early to see the world. I was a founding member of the Knoxville, TN chapter of Entrepreneurs Organization (part of an international network) which led me to meet many like-minded souls who share my “neurological DNA,” like Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). As a serial / parallel entrepreneur, I have founded five companies in the last twenty years, selling my interest to partners in two of them. Corporate Interiors, a furniture dealership was started with a partner in 1999 and Urban Redevelopment Alliance (URA), was a company I founded in 2003 adding three partners to build a development team and property management service. Complexity has been my opiate. Heifetz describes transforming stress into adaptive change. Coercive relationships, the hallmark of technical leadership, temporarily suppress unwanted behaviors but this is not sustainable. In my many years in leadership roles, I’ve led many employees through a technical leadership style – priding myself with utilizing adaptive processes to grow the team. However, work today for me and I suspect many, requires more adaptive methods which have no known solution. These situations require mobilizing people’s hearts and minds to operate differently and create something bigger than themselves. Being, defined as “how we are with others”, Valuing as how we respect others (oneness) and Knowing as how we navigate the social space that creates mutuality. (See Diagram; Below) This describes much of my work in the last five years.



GANZ Leadership Theory



LBD Diagram Mastery of Three Dimensions

### LEADING BY DESIGN (LBD)

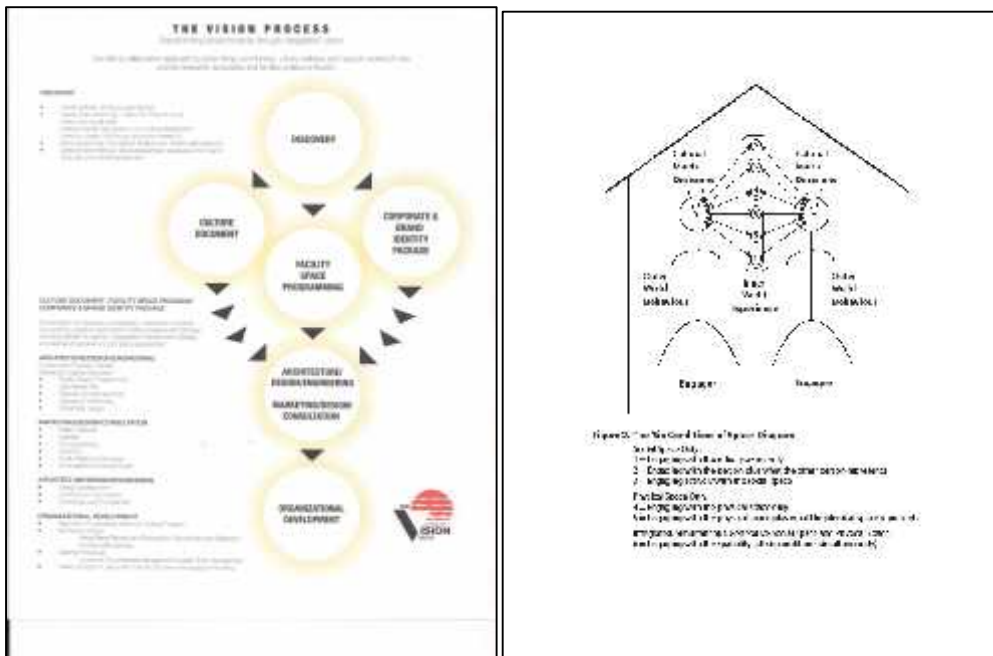
I first met Wayne Ruga at the 1997 Healthcare Symposium in San Diego. I loved the experiential learning that Wayne created and “A New Understanding of Health” (See Diagram: Pg 6) that ensued. The relationship between environment and the human continued to be illuminated for me, as I became an avid follower of healing environments, and carried this theory into my design work.

Admittedly, my understanding of our work together, as LBD participants in 2007 was limited. I had already embraced the concept of “generative space” as my design philosophy, celebrating the social space (culture, connections, and energy) held as equally important as physical space. (See Diagram: Pg 4) My clarity of the process of social and physical manifested in a design shift for my company. I created a studio

concept bringing in management coaching and marketing partners and together we created a process to conduct a program unlike the typical space and adjacency allocations. The leadership involved with my studio partners moved me into an adaptive (vs. a technical) work style. Together we branded, the Vision Process (See Diagram: Pg 4) and delivered the concept at several “Elder” related conferences as well as putting the document to work for us as a first step in our design projects.

This work involved a new understanding of leadership as well as creating another dimension or layer of our built environment which involves a new understanding of health. Health has been defined by multiple sources in a similar way, but I will use the World Health Organization definition here – Health is not just physical health “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” “Health can be defined as the ability of an individual to achieve her or his potential and to respond positively to the challenges of daily life.” Bistrup, 1991

In a society where ageism is pervasive and choice in elder housing is scarce – the burgeoning 77 million boomers coming of age in the next decade will create a demand that is unprecedented. Medical advances will allow us to live longer than ever and the “youth” culture we have created will insure we all look good while aging. Our city infrastructure, zoning regulations, building codes, financial subsidies and inefficient entitlement programs are all poised for a new Vision. A Vision I intend to help bring into reality.



Culture(social)First; Program second LBD Diagram Distinctions of Space

**MY WORK WITH LBD 2008-2012**

In 2002, I met Lauren Holmes, an anthropologist who builds on Systems Theory and the science of Emergence as her basis of the next human evolution. Lauren had just published a book, Peak Evolution, utilizing examples of nature’s advances through quantum leaps, as a metaphor to our own ability as humans to create emergence.....or potential. It is my belief that we can create through our thinking

and “mind messages” synergistic occurrences. As we train ourselves in our practice we create new habits, belief systems and neuropathways enabling us to create our reality faster and with more consistency. Praxis is a method of evolving through cognitive focus. Spiral Dynamics and Integral Theory suggest as we evolve from the sensory to the concrete mind, or the formal mind to the intuitive, the highest stages of being, begin to look spiritual. (See Diagram: Pg 4) I recently encouraged class debate among my students regarding the validity of integrated medicine, energy chakras and other “spiritual” healing modalities. I suppose I have evolved beyond the point of being neutral in this discussion as I encouraged them to find the evidence to support the esoteric within their research assignments.

My personal exposure to my healing power was as a Reiki practitioner, working in a “healing hands” clinic for over a year with patients ranging from emotional distress to cancer. This practice opened up a part of me that had been dark. My own body of evidence, aided by LBD continued to grow through the practice of action research. We can create a new paradigm that would elevate the quality of the total human experience by providing authentic expression through the use of programming “culture” into the environments we create as a start, before programming space size, flow and adjacencies.

One of the LBD processes to create “evidence” is journaling specific events, meetings and key conversations utilizing the following filters:

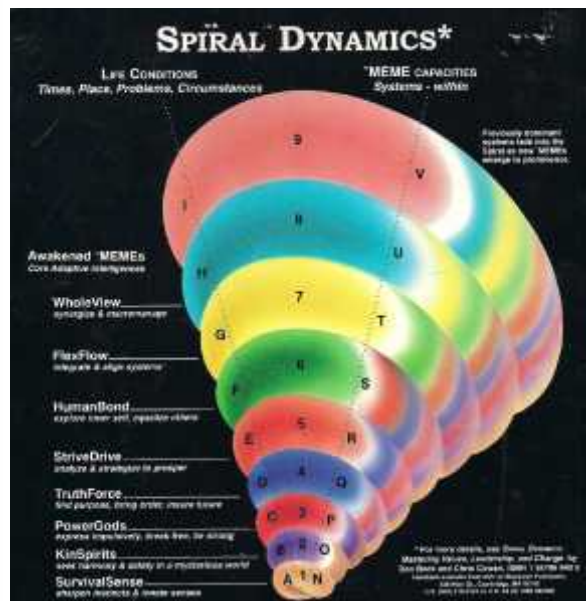
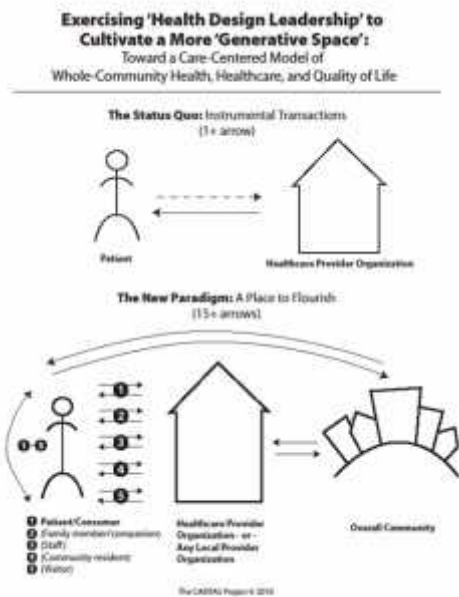
- Reflection: applying the review on life’s events through the mirror of “the facts”
- Reflexion: then the review of the event through the understanding of my “cultural values” vs. the others in the scenario are typically insightful.
- Receptive: Dismissing all logic and feeling what happened with the event or encounter.

With this praxis, our charge is to move from cognitive creation to habit or “unconscious competence”. The Learning LBD method enabled has led to many insights, both personally and professionally which include:

- Intentional improvement in my speaking engagements; my opening was the reflection that I often lead this work with my head, void of too much “emotion.” Allowing my heart to participate as much or more than my head creates authenticity and leads to greater connection with the audience.
- An OMG moment, I do not need a life partner, as society would dictate, was a shift. I realize I am best served to allow this part of my life to unfold vs. trying to control outcomes. Appreciating the lessons I gain from each partner in the moment.
- Appreciating my son for his strengths and accomplishments vs. the ones I may want to impose on him. Truly embracing the gifts that he can teach me. Among many lessons, Dylan has taught me to be grateful and trust that the universe will always provide.
- My ability to grow an academic program, create a downtown renaissance or change the paradigm of growing old are skills I possess and continue to hone as no Vision is too large to tackle or out of reach if my passion is aligned.
- Further, my process of creation (I’m a better creator than maintainer) can be scaled and replicated. Multiple golden eggs are achievable. There is no linear path.



- My work requires much discipline and focus. Focus has not been my strength but is required for the level of change I desire to manifest in life.
- An LBD Gap has been to live more in the unknown space – comfortably. As an entrepreneur I felt I was in this experience. However, to walk on the knife’s edge both personally and in my career has reached new heights in the last few years for me. Perhaps the unknown is more challenging when you have felt the blade at your throat.
- I create power imbalance in relationship both holding myself above others as well as holding others above me. Power of purpose empowers and as I reduce the separation between myself and others, there is no power imbalance, leading to mutuality and shared understandings.
- The work I have done in changing my beliefs is ongoing and requires daily mind mapping of positive affirmations involving my value in the skills I possess and my work in organizing synergy among groups to align them with a shared Vision.



LBD Diagram New Understanding of Health Spiral Dynamics

## MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Approaching 50, I felt a certain resolve and satisfaction for my accomplishments in the world, my son was launched, and though swimming against the current in the “Great Recession”, my business was still afloat and positioned for the next wave. I had met David in the winter of 2009. I think we bonded over red wine and our similar stories of real estate losses which we both had suffered. While my losses were becoming a painful memory, David’s was just beginning. Most illnesses and cures contain emotional, mental and spiritual components. Stress levels produce metabolic changes and endocrine reactions that must be considered in all environments that are “generative”. What occurred was not something one could see in the moment but apparent in hindsight.

Over the next 12 months I watched helplessly as David went through heart surgery and a subsequent cancer diagnosis – Melanoma, Stage 3. Having nearly lost my mother to cancer less than a year earlier I was prepared for some of the emotions, however, my mother was a model patient. David was a warrior, refusing surgery and

scientific medicine, he chose eastern medicine and traveled out of the country for his "healing" with a plant based Shaman ritual in the Amazon region. My work in supporting a decision I didn't believe in was difficult. His belief structure was very different than my own, but it was his body. The Cancer reappeared in the spring of 2011 and David, finally agreed to western medicine advisement, a lymphadenectomy, consciously choosing life and hoping too much time had not passed. My work with relationship was a conscious decision to be in the moment with David and make relationship decisions day to day vs. my typical pattern. My pattern had been to impose a "One Year Rule" on relationships to see if they were capable of a "future." This habit had persisted for twenty years of singledom and was reinforced by many girlfriends who sought a similar long term relationship with a "life partner". My Reflexions of this "pattern of behavior" was that at 50 my needs were very different than those I desired when raising a son and looking for the potential of more children – both of which had a time limit. David's forced present moment awareness created in me a changed perspective of relationship in the moment. A new focus on "being" vs. "doing." A paradigm shift occurred for me and as "actions speak louder than words", I embraced this new space without expectations.

### **MY LEARNING ABOUT HEALING**

Applying theories of Generative Space Design, David and I continue to evolve a project we began in the summer of 2010, our backyard garden. This became our work together over the next 5 months, as David underwent multiple surgeries and a six week, daily radiation treatment. David and I both used the garden as an outlet to release stress; having a purpose to create growth and beauty and to nurture both socially and physically. Our garden was designed to evolve but much like the Japanese gardens different vantage points allow surprises and perspectives that enhance the experience.

- The fire pit we created as a circle to bring friends and family to gather in a generative space created by a 15' diameter stone pit. Utilized with chairs for small groups 6-8 and for larger gatherings we remove the chairs and people utilize the stone seat – abundant with throw cushions as we build the fire in the middle iron pit and create interaction and conversation. The area has become a study in the proxemic principles of social, personal and intimate space. David's brother laid all the stone allowing the craftsman's energy to remain a special part of the enjoyment of the space. A tumbled flagstone was used for the seat which provides a tactile, sculptural experience for the users.
- A second conversation area was designed for more "personal" space conversations that came to be called "the living room." My son laid the pavers in this 10'x10' space, backed by a white picket fence with grape arbor behind and bordered by sculptural tomato plants on one side and butterfly bushes on the other. A small mobile fire pit used here provides another level of sensory experience and the intimacy of a "room" in an outdoor garden. Need I emphasize the use of family craftsman that we love and gave their love in their creations.
- The bounty of harvest, a salsa garden, summer squash, cucumbers, watermelon, spinach, several berries beyond strawberries and blueberries and fruit trees kept our attention focused on good organic nutrition which we coupled with a new juicer. The variety of tomatoes and peppers we grew became a new ritual of canning salsas, pepper rings and canisters of dried red pepper flakes.
- David would describe the "instant gratification" he got from planting something and watching it grow and the metaphor enabling control of his own positive health trajectory. "When you don't know how long you are going to live, being able to make a tangible difference quickly is very gratifying."



**The Garden**



**David and his Dad**



**Salsa makings**

**My son Dylan making the "Living Room"**



### **Personal Journey**

#### **Action Research Summary of Outcomes:**

Our gardening experience heightened my sensitivity to the importance of nature and how a compact active urban garden could be incorporated into projects. Many healing gardens reside as "symbols" of nature, something to look at, be in. Adding an element of engaging with nature creates more generative space, allowing systemic change to occur within a population or user group of the space.

The dance with life is a delicate one. In a role as observer with David's health I was forced to witness my behavior patterns (cultural matrix) allowing a paradigm shift in my approach to relationships. Powerful, charismatic women often get labeled as "exhibitionist, "tough babe". No one expects these high achievers to love. Passionate devotion to work has always heightened my awareness of the importance of love. Gloria Steinem remarked that for much of her romantic life she sought in male lovers forms of power she had not actualized in herself. The time spent with David allowed movement from my head to my heart. My time with David allowed more expression for my emotional, feminine self which are qualities he displays. This contrasted with the role I had played for years running companies and raising a son on my own in the rural south. This place where being a single mother was a perceived weakness in one's ability to run a business. Much of this insight unfolded from the attention to the process of reflection utilized in my LBD work.



## **MY COMMUNITY JOURNEY**

I was asked to co-chair the University of Tennessee Knoxville, College of Architecture and Design (UT CoAD) Board of Advisors (BOA) in 2007 as the first interior designer to represent the board since ID was brought under the College umbrella in 2000. Although, the board itself presented many leadership challenges and opportunities, my case study will focus on an initiative that came out of the initial meetings with the BOA.

These meetings and discussions led to the formation of a committee to study the opportunities for a Health Design graduate program. I agreed to champion the cause and by 2009, I had developed a course and public lecture series "Designing Environments for Health". In 2010, I expanded the initiative to create the Nashville Seminar Series as a stand alone event. We added the subtitle "Whole Community Wellness" and video streamed the conference back to our spring lecture series in Knoxville. I involved the Nashville Civic Design Center (NCDC) a UT CoAD partner, in a larger role in the series, and I began organizing the "Communities of Interest" including the design, health care, MPO and urban community advocates, as well as Vanderbilt, Belmont and Lipscomb Universities in Nashville.

I have conducted over 40 "one on one" meetings during my twelve trips to Nashville in the last three years, each year building on my reflection and learning from the previous year. The primary purpose of the meetings was to build a relationship for further involvement. I noted interests of participants in each meeting and potential resources I could bring to the situation. I kept one large sponsor design firm engaged after a polite turn down to "give". I listened to their interest of giving to their "clients" and suggested we involve their client by allowing them to sponsor their client's "keynote, lecture and facility." Instead of writing a check to the series, they were sponsoring their client's initiative. They were delighted to participate actively in this manner while meeting their internal criteria of "giving" to their client base. Success is defined as coming out of the meeting with action items. If none exist the relationship is likely not resonating to the degree that others might. Energy best spent elsewhere.

A component of the Nashville Seminar series was the panel discussion that followed two weeks after each keynote. These panels were sponsored by local architecture firms who followed the boundaries of creating a diverse panel composition. Panelists were required to come to the keynote lecture and attend a post session dinner typically composed of the speaker and 10-12 people. The sponsor firm and the 4-5 panelists would begin to organically formulate how their session might be delivered. Organizing vs. Leadership, created tremendous buy-in from the large multidisciplinary groups that had involvement. Lectures and follow-up panel discussions averaged 40-50 in attendance and engaged active participation from many of those involved.

Beyond planting seeds of interest, future endowment and grant potential, the objective from the BOA was to create a multi-disciplined certificate degree / graduate minor. Beginning in 2010, I conducted meetings with related academic partners include the College of Nursing, Gerontology, Department of Public Health, Institute for Obesity and the Center for Public Policy. This certificate has been developed in draft form as a synchronous/ asynchronous program, combining courses from each college. The plan calls for a nationally marketed program, bringing the classmates in at both the beginning and end of the semester to connect on a personal level, with the bulk of the course delivered on-line. Group projects would culminate in a body

of knowledge as a public accessible resource and grant potential. Transdisciplinarity is a research strategy that crosses many disciplinary boundaries to create a holistic approach. I am hopeful the new administration within the CoAD will support the project, to allow research efforts to be focused on problems that cross the boundaries multiple disciplines.



UT Prospectus for Health/Wellness initiative



A Healthcare Roundtable in Nashville

## DESIGNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR HEALTH

lecture series on how built environment influences health - physical, mental, social

"There is a definite close coupling, a strong link between the built environment and poor outcomes and a renewed focus on the urban design and public health" - Mike Sorensen, co-author and editor of the book

The series will be conducted February, March and April on Wednesday's from 4:30-6:00 or the NCDC unless otherwise noted.

	<b>Feb. 3</b> Dr. Richard Jackson: "Health — Spanning Disciplines" SPONSORED BY TAMI SWENSON ASSOCIATES, INC. (TSA) Location: First Lecture Hall or the Gordon L. Inman Center at Belmont University Respect: 3:30 Lecture 4:30-6:00
	<b>Feb. 17</b> Panel Discussion: "A Blueprint for a Healthier Nashville" Applying Dr. Jackson's insights to repair the health of Nashville's citizens
	<b>March 17</b> Wayne Ruga, author and presenter: "A New Paradigm in Healthcare." SPONSORED BY ADRIAN LARSEN AND MARK HILLIARD ROBERTS PARTNERS ARCHITECTS Location: First Lecture Hall at the Goodson L. Inman Center of Belmont University
	<b>March 31</b> Panel Discussion: Led by Gretchen Smith and Patricia (GSP) Applying Dr. Ruga's insights to the new Paradigm in Healthcare
	<b>April 14</b> Annette Robinson, Architect, Inc.: "Transforming Healthcare through the Arts." Integrating leading edge programs into the design of healthcare facilities

These lectures will be brought to the NCDC via video conference live from the UT campus:

- March 28, Alan Saxe: "The Future of Healthcare in America"  
SPONSORED BY CHELSEA MARK & PARTNERS (CPM)
- April 7, Roderic Goma, CIMA Incorporated: "Civitas-Based Healthcare Design"
- April 21, Joe Polak, EPA Architecture: "Four Dimensions - Creating Sustainable Senior Living"

**Feb. 3 Dr. Richard Jackson: "Health — Spanning Disciplines"**  
Agriculture to Architecture, Housing to Transportation

How can we best ensure that the systems to get the 6 billion by 2050 million out of our planet into better? Using the public health model of creating healthy conditions, we must span disciplines to create coherent efforts to build healthy, efficient, dense, diverse, healthy, safe and green buildings, neighborhoods, towns, and cities. Jackson will outline the need for and offer suggestions for design solutions that create multiple benefits rather than mono-disciplinary



Designing their room if they had 6 months to live.

2010 Nashville Seminar Series Poster

## Community Journey

### Action Research Summary of Outcomes:

My work with U of T was a concise example in a 2-3 year time frame of my ability to create. Utilizing the principals of Health Design Leadership to create a program / initiative evolved by many minds. The program has created a New Understanding of Health for many, in a systemic and sustainable way.

### Systemic Sustainable Outcomes:

- Over 75 students have now taken the course, developed research papers around health and the built environment and began to look at a new understanding of health. These are seeds of which, many will find fertile ground.
- Fall semester 2010, we will welcome our first MArch student with a study concentration in Healthcare Design. Michael Creasy, an architect with the Air Force, Two other students joined Michael declaring thesis study in health related topics.
- The class initially struggled to get 12 students the first two years, the program has been embraced is sought after now with an average of 20 students in the course, 25% who are now gerontology minors.
- Christine Kreyling, the author of , "The Plan of Nashville" is currently writing, 'The Healthy Plan of Nashville" due for an early 2013 publication by Vanderbilt Press.
- A video documentary was developed by the NCDC that tied into the Shaping Healthy Cities project, conducted by the Nashville MPO, airing on PBS Nashville Public Television

## **MY CAREER JOURNEY**

My growing disillusion with the interior design "profession" fueled my search for broader methods of expression. The value we brought to the human in every environment we touched held an unappreciated Return on Investment (ROI). Creating "fantasy" building with no relevance to the cultural values of the inhabitants or the geography was unconscionable to me. I desired and was deserving of a larger role in order to impact outcomes. Delivering a total environmental experience intrigued me, not just in a building but in the context of a district or small city. My work in development began with the purchase of a 30,000sf building, in downtown Johnson City in 2003, The London Building. Somehow this level of work seemed to enable a tangible ROI for me. Other purchases followed with a group of investors I engaged, including the Hamilton building penthouse, the King Centre and a block of buildings assembled to become the Tipton Street development. History defined by men's names. Leaders of a small rural city in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, connected by railroads as the economic "engines" of the day. These were the remnants of culture that still lived in this blighted downtown, and my company embraced the history and with city leadership and activist citizens we built a new "brand" around these values. Amending Chris Alexander's work to add "culture" as the first component to his process of: pedestrian space first, buildings second, roads third.

Engaging in Public /Private Partnership work is a mine field that can become a journey of years as my work in downtown became. Renovation of one building – my original intent, quickly gave way to a renaissance of a downtown. In a larger urban

area it would have been a district. But in this 55,000 person community it was the "centre" former hub of commerce, lost to the automobile and uncontrolled sprawl. Working through my influence on two city boards, with the impassioned assistance of my business partners we moved mountains between 2003-2008. Our group was referenced as the authority in downtown development and we had moved forward with the city and a group of stakeholders in physically master planning the connection of downtown to the economic engines of the University and the Hospital corridors.



My penthouse perch overlooking downtown Tipton Street-URA Development Project 2007

My work with LBD furthered my capacity to deliver on complex projects with multiple public/private interests involved. In 2008, I secured a real estate contract from Asbury, LLC to reposition a 3 acre tract of land in the core downtown once the former hospital but adaptively repositioned as a senior facility for the last twenty years. Through my conscious efforts of "organizing" I conducted over 30 meetings with owners, potential buyers and many city representatives. With this synergy, I negotiated an agreement to use the demolition metal salvage revenue to begin an asbestos removal of the 50% of the property (100,000sf), that had been vacant for a decade. I also negotiated on the owner's behalf a land swap agreement with the city for alley space and a public bid on adjacent city parcels that had heretofore not been available for purchase through the efforts of my clients. This was in part achieved through my use of urban planners that graphically represented the potential of what the block could generate in density of development and tax revenues and jobs for the betterment of both the city and private interests. Working in a tertiary market, during the Great Recession, owner financing became the final tool in the kit, with the property currently under contract and scheduled for a closing this summer.



Ariel View of the old hospital/New SNF



My Vision for the site

In my yoga practice I am often reminded to carry lessons I learn “on the mat” to my life. Often focused on breathing defined as vinyasa in Sanskrit, allowing the same intensity in every inhale and exhale allows one to get beyond the mind with eventually the practice becoming automatic. As in yoga, my development projects, have taken much hard work to show real improvement. On the level of Mastery I have many times felt the plateau, frustrated with baby steps and little material improvement. My study of praxis reminds me to embrace this time as growth – the time when creating “competence” takes cognitive attention in forming a habit. This new pattern will eventually take place in “unconscious competence”. The time on the plateau is an important part of growth. As we become more aligned with the practice of our natural art, we draw events, people and occurrences into our lives in a synergistic way. We create neural pathways, well documented in MRI studies that create the beliefs and habits defined as our individual “cultural matrix.” Everyone has their own view of the world and through our growth we become more cognizant and accepting of the oneness that we also share with humanity.

In 2008 I transformed the structure of my core design business to incorporate a transdisciplinary mix of design, real estate, marketing and business management into a “studio concept”. Together we created a model of developing an organization’s core values and extrapolating those values into their behaviors and policies with employees as well as their physical space. My objective became to find other developers, partners land owners with a similar interest to create a “new understanding” of Elder Living. I met Susan in 2009, just this way as we were both on a long haul flight from Charlotte to San Diego. Seat mates that struck up a conversation with hardly a breath taken in the three hours we talked. Ironically, she was from Johnson City but currently she held a position as the director of a large luxury Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) on the west coast. As Susan and I moved forward in our relationship, we formed both a development and a management company (C&M), around our shared passion for the creation of senior communities. Susan, a PhD and registered RN was particularly interested in hospice and the last stages of life. Our work together led us on many adventures during the tumultuous years of the recession where finding banks to loan money on projects was as likely as the proverbial needle in the haystack. But often these are the plateaus that call for our move beyond just “knowing” into the realm of valuing and being. Valuing for me became a conscious practice of how I engaged with others. Strategic movement, in addition to listening for interests and resource cues. “Being” is a state that calls for utilizing the intelligence beyond just your own – but tapping into the universe’s gifts or the larger intelligence. At the third dimension of being, we intuitively read another’s words, actions and behaviors, a condition called “affective blind sight” this ability to register a feeling evoked by someone’s actions and mimic that emotion in our own bodies is a documented phenomenon known as

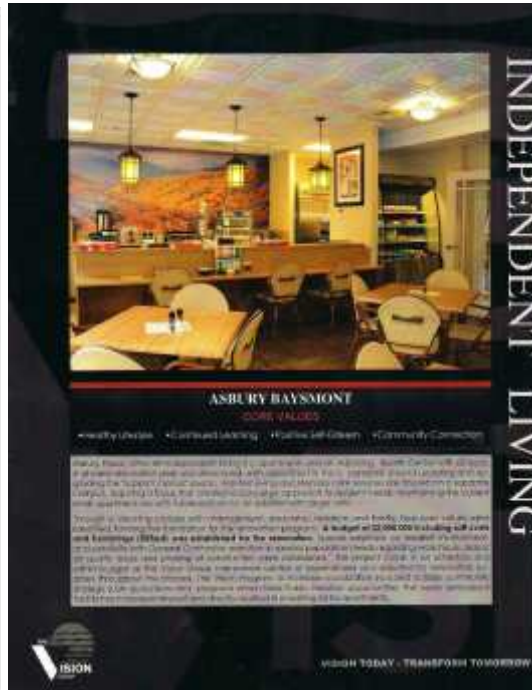


emotional contagion, explored in Daniel Goleman's work Social Intelligence. Gaining an understanding of this "low road" of neural activity enables our work with others and the experience creation of physical space. Heifetz writes, "To differentiate logic from feeling and provide an expression for both of these in our relationships and the delivery of environments will provide for a "shared understanding".

My association with Susan brought me to Bluffton, SC in the fall of 2010. (ILL: PG15) Furthering the planning and development for a 25 acre mixed used community (River Oaks) anchored with delta venues and nature trails I find myself once again using the principals of "organizing" (vs.leadership) reflection, and being, with a new development group as we continue to seek investment partners. Susan and I continue to work on consulting engagements involving CCRC development on the east coast.



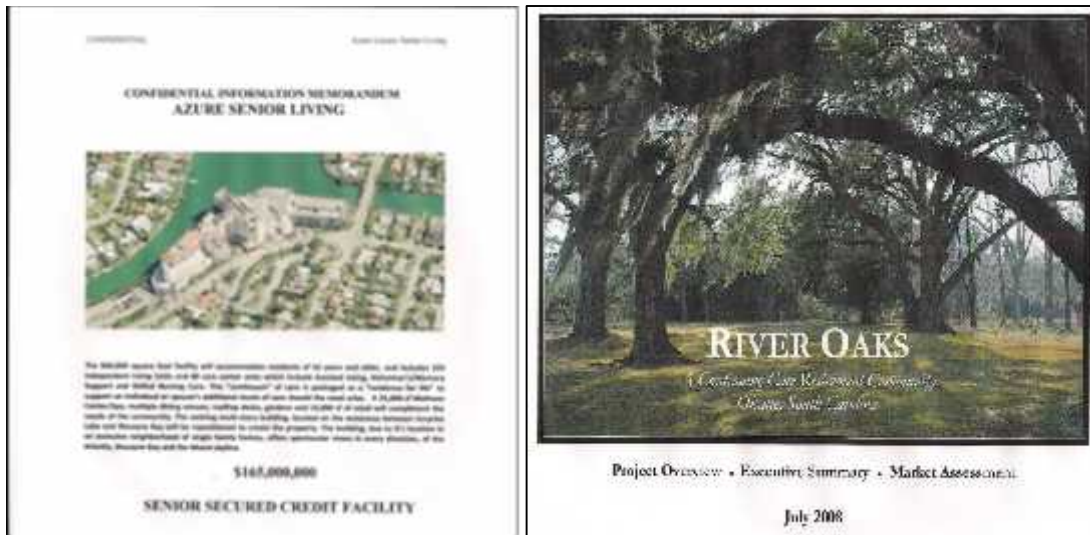
White Paper Research-Culture



Asbury Project (Note Core Values)



Corporate Work indicating Culture – Alpha Natural Resources (L) Husquvarna(R)



C&M Development Projects

## Career Journey

### Action Research Summary of Outcomes:

Working in three of the knowledge domains Culture, Space/Environment, and Generative Space, the transitioning of my core commercial design business and urban development company into a development and design powerhouse for ageless living is a process that continues to evolve. Understanding the Culture Domain consisting of the role of evidence, structure, cultural values and others “actions” (born of their thoughts) becomes critical knowledge. My shift to an integrative collaborative involving public / private interests and multiple constituencies demands attention to the pluralistic nature of people. (See Diagram: Page 16) This work does not allow rigidity but demands appreciation of people’s interests and perceptions. It is a living laboratory in constant flux – not different from the growth state in praxis of continual improvement.

Utilizing the knowledge domain of Space/Environment to create more authentic development projects both in the process and in space creation that allows the “users” an optimal social engagement. The “Hollywood Model” has become our process, casting the optimal ensemble for each project. Our new delivery of space creation with this process brings culture, organizational management together to inform the physical space programming. The experience for the elder resident allows a deeper interaction with their peers, family, friends and other generations. Engaging with the physical space in not just a “two dimensional’ way, but in what the space represents such as solo computer stations transformed to a space with three chairs around one computer to better achieve the the desired “continued learning’ culture. Our measurements with our elder communities include quantitative and qualitative analysis over a period of three years that captures family visits, computer usage, meals taken in rooms vs. public space and wellness visits. Our data shows continuous increase in these numbers. We consider these metrics of generative space that create systemic change in these communities resulting in sustainable outcomes. Striving to develop holistic criteria as we create elder communities will build on these knowledge domains. By its very nature this is how we ‘design’ generative space and utilize the 22 themes (See Diagram: Page 16) in the three domains.

**MY GAP**

Fundamental beliefs take much focus, mindtalk and positive feedback to create a desired paradigm shift. Allowing the belief that I can create a life enhancing new model for how we live, die and “elder” in our later years is a focus for me. This belief must permeate my system in such a way, that I create the synergy within the universe that I attract the people and events into my world.

**MY VISION**

Increasingly, I am interested to analyze the “culture of place” in the geography where my development projects are located. Technology and the phenomena of data mining have produced amazing analytic tools in psychographics referred to as Tapestry Segmentation. (See Diagram: Page 16) This deep knowledge of behavior and buying patterns in addition to age, income and migration patterns creates a more complete model. Designing for ageless living requires a full understanding of one’s culture matrix beyond just general geography and what generation label applies.

In addition, recognition for the impact the built environment has on the holistic health of people is paramount. We, as the creative class, must continue to develop our industry which I will term, Environment Creation, with this new understanding of health. We also must continue to elevate our value as the “creative class.” Potentiating the human animal by creating experiences in physical space that transcend what we currently know as factual will allow more opportunities for action research and “being” to replicate and scale this new frontier of generative space where people “flourish”.



Future Models for ElderCare Tapestry Segmentation (culture) LBD Diagram - 22 Themes