

Remembrances of Elise Boulding

By Virginia Swain

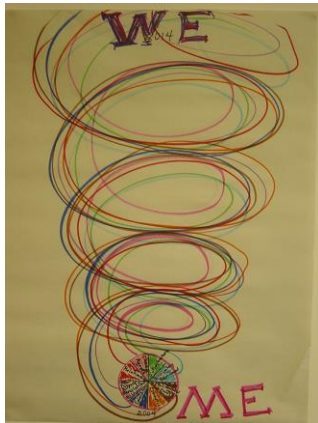
We met in 1993 just after the death Elise's husband, Kenneth, when she moved to Wayland to live with her daughter. Soon afterwards, she invited me to join her on the Friends Peace Teams she coordinated for NEYM as well as participate and write a commentary in a several-month seminar at the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century where the proceeding were published in the book, *Abolishing War: Dialogue with Peace Scholars Elise Boulding and Randall Forsberg*.

Elise always encouraged me to write and speak about the Reconciliation Leadership Certificate Program (RLCP) and the Global Mediation and Reconciliation Service (GMRS) which arose out of my life journey at the United Nations since 1992. She and Mary Lee Morrison of Hartford Monthly Meeting led me in a clearness process where we discerned my next steps—it was through this clearness process that I accepted an invitation to speak at the Hague Appeal for Peace on the RLCP and the GMRS and attend the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University with 75 peacebuilders from all over the world, both in 1999. When I wrote my memoir, *A Mantle of Roses: A Woman's Journey Home to Peace* in 2004, it was Elise who read it and wrote an endorsement for the back cover.

Elise continued to support me when I started teaching the Reconciliation Leadership courses at the UN in 2001. She wrote a welcome letter to my students in place of her being able to join us—urging the application of global citizenship being local and national. Elise encouraged me to start my television show, *Imagine Worcester and the World* on channel 13, wccatv.com/imagine.

Perhaps the most important part of her teaching for me came when I helped her organize a train the trainer workshop for the Imaging Process she developed with Warren Ziegler. For me, the philosophy and practice of Imaging is essential in all my work-- from 3rd graders who want to reverse climate change at Worcester's Nelson Place School, to Reconciliation Leaders working with climate change, poverty and other global issues like the Millennium Development Goals. It is rare for me not to image daily.

The theory behind imaging is no solution to a local or global challenge will be resolved unless we envisioned or "see it". As people imagine a positive future, they then can work back into present time to achieve a positive present with a timeline and concrete action steps. Elise believed that if we can image a solution to a challenge, the solution will happen after we get practical with a timeline and action steps. For examples, here is an image that one of my UN classes "saw" to end poverty. Everyone left the course knowing what they would do that day and following to end global poverty.



Participants did a timeline backwards followed by an action plan to make the end of poverty part of each participant's life. Here is the timeline:



This fall I will be holding an imaging process in Elise's honor for Haiti's future at Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center in Worcester on Saturday, November 6 from 9:30-4:30 pm Call me at 508-245-6843 if you're interested in attending the November 6 Haiti workshop honoring Elise's work in imaging the solution to challenges. The tuition is \$50 including lunch.

Following is a picture of our last visit on April 15, 2010, the week before her final illness. It was a joyful visit in spite of the fact she had misplaced her hearing aids and we had to write notes to one another.

