



### SRI LANKA AT THE BEDSIDE *By Lisa Rapple M.Ed, RRT*

Every day when I boot up my laptop I am taken to Sri Lanka via my desktop. It is a relaxing scene and I find myself periodically pausing in my work and studying the picture. In my mind I have created an alligator just below the surface of the still waters in the picture. And I wait for him to surface and burst my tranquil bubble. I have gotten numerous comments on my desktop scene. I don't know if people believe me when I say it is Sri Lanka. That sounds like a place that doesn't exist in reality. I downloaded the desktop scene on a visit to a website called Healing Healthcare Systems about a month ago. ([www.healinghealth.com](http://www.healinghealth.com))

"Healing Healthcare Systems – Creating Environments that Heal" was created by a husband and wife team, Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith. They are classically trained musicians who began their careers as performing and recording artists. After being approached by hospitals and health professionals about the need for television programming that would specifically address the needs of patients and staff, in 1984 they turned their talents

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towards the healthcare environment. They focused on expanding their expertise in creating healing environments in hospitals and health care facilities. Their philosophy includes this statement: "We believe that music, in its highest form, transforms the perception of time and place, which affect how patients experience their illness."

Using music and environmental elements in a practical sense they further state: "the focus of our work at Healing HealthCare Systems (HHS) is on developing tools that use music as environmental design in the healthcare setting, and providing technical and educational support based on its implications for the patient experience." The products and services that have been developed by HHS include; the C.A.R.E. Channel®, 24-hour music & nature programming for hospital television that provides stress relief, accredited staff development workshops and seminars for nurse education, including online webinars, and noise assessment and sound system design.

The website itself provides many resources for professionals and family members. Susan Mazer's blog is posted monthly. You can read the blog and contribute insightful comments. Or you can subscribe to a monthly e-newsletter. Topics range from aging, end-of-life, politics, and hospital environmental effects on various conditions (dementia, for example).

Under resources you will find an extensive research bibliography that is presented by topic. These include: Behavior & Environmental Preferences, Healing Environments, Humor, Imagery,

Long-Term Care, Music Therapy, Noise, Pain Management, Patient Perception, Sleep, and Treatment. There is also a list of recommended websites related to creating healing environments. Continuing under "resources" you will find a list of articles written by Susan Mazer & Dallas Smith, but also several other authors including Dr. Harvey Zarren who has spoken extensively at past Focus Conferences.

The desktop images are in the resource area and they are well worth sampling. Sri Lanka, Yosemite, Lake Tahoe, and more. You may want to bookmark this site just for these beautiful images that will relax your working environment. If you would like to listen to samples of the gorgeous healing music that Mazer and Smith produce, plus other artists that have contributed you would follow these steps: Click on "CARE Channel Music and DVD's" in the drop down menu of "Patient's and Families". Go to the bottom of the page and click on "Go here to download a brochure or contact Domo". In the right-hand column click on "Click here for current list of CD titles and sample music clips". Or you can go directly there typing in your web browser: <http://www.domo.com/healingenvironments/roster.html>.

In the "About Us" menu you can review the members of the Advisory Board and visit the websites of contributing artists for a sampling of their music. HHS currently serves clients in 46 states and you can view their list of clients here as well. Under "Products and Services" each program is described. The workshops are listed with a synopsis. Workshop topics include: Designing Environments that Heal, Beyond Silence: Orchestrating the Patient Experience, Curing the Noise Epidemic, and Florence Nightingale: In Her Own Words. Testimonials from clients (health care professionals, patients, families, and support staff) can be read here too.

Lastly, in the "Contact us" section you are given the opportunity to fill out an online form submission or contact them by mail, fax, or telephone. I could NOT get the online form to work after numerous tries, so I would discourage you from trying. The company is home-based in Reno, Nevada. See you in Sri Lanka!

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