



INSPIRATION

# Collaborative in Spirit

A seasoned practitioner of Art and Movement Therapy, Zurich based Kurt Bartholet uses martial arts, art, meditation, and traditional talk therapy to help everyone from traumatized refugees to overworked businessmen get in touch *and...get better*.

**I**n Kurt Bartholet's estimation, a holistic, multifaceted approach to therapy can open, assess and heal in ways that a unilateral treatment plan cannot. As he puts it, "The modern medical solution, often based on a pharmaceutical approach, is not enough." Over the years he has conducted Art and Movement Therapy workshops in Jordan, where he has imparted his unique, interdisciplinary methods to local professionals in the field. A strong component of his therapies, and Kurt's true passion, is Aikido, a martial arts technique that is uniquely collaborative in spirit. "There is an attacker, but in the end it is not blocking, it is absorbing—Aikido is not competitive,

so if you cannot win and lose, what is left? Contact. The focus is completely different," he explains. The meditative and non-confrontational spirit of the sport makes it a very useful tool for getting in touch with individuals who have gone through serious hardship and are, in many cases, not yet ready to vocally express or consciously confront their experiences and feelings. Kurt recalls that in Switzerland he worked with a boy from Afghanistan "who was heavily traumatized, he lost his family and his therapists couldn't get through to him. They asked if I would work with him...and after three months his behaviour started to change, and he began to improve a great deal." Kurt, who holds an M.A. in expressive

therapies from Lesley College and an M.A in Social Work from the College of Education and Social Work in Zurich, frequently utilizes art in his therapies as well and comments that through painting and drawing the participant becomes aware of "his own inner process and the therapist becomes only a guiding tool helping the participant go through this personal growth." It is through art, he adds, that "people are able to express and communicate non verbal feelings and hidden experiences." In this pill-popping, one-size-fits-all generation of medicine we all have a lot to learn from experts like Kurt who understand that sometimes the most obvious approach to healing is not always the wisest path. ■