



my neatly typed, two-page plan, trying to show him that I was conscientious. Mark took a very quick look at it, and he just turned it upside down and put it on the table. I thought to myself, 'Well, I guess that's not what he wants me to help with.'"

Mark wanted Al's help with a bigger idea. "He told me, 'Al, I've been thinking about 100 years from now. I've been thinking about what will happen when I'm gone. I want to make sure that in 100 years, someone like you, who has a child like Jack, will be able to get the same kind of help you're getting now. I need to write down who we are and what we stand for and what we believe in at BAYADA, so people will know what to do when I'm gone.'"

In his visionary way, Mark also talked about the legacies of Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Florence Nightingale. Like others who have been surprised by Mark's sudden leaps of thought, Al admits, "I remember thinking



to myself, 'This guy's a little crazy.' Then I reminded myself that I'm a psychologist. I'm trained for this kind of stuff. So I did a lot of listening. As I listened to Mark, I realized how deeply he cared about clients like my son and that he meant every word he said. I sensed very quickly that Mark wasn't kidding when he said he was thinking 100 years into the future."

Mark circled back to his point: "I want to write down what we believe in, like the founding fathers did with the Declaration of Independence. I think you can help me do this. Would you be willing to write this for me?"

Just before saying yes, Al confessed bluntly: "I've never done anything like this before." Mark's response was, "That's okay—neither have I." It was Al's first encounter with a classic BAYADA figure-it-out sea wall situation. "That neither of us has ever done anything like this before is a running joke with us now," laughs Al.

"I had the honor of being the emcee at our Awards Weekend in Atlantic City, a very special one because it's where we announced The BAYADA Way project. It was the first time everyone got to meet Al Freedman and hear his story. Al and his son Jack are such a profound part of the BAYADA family."

MARIE BLESSINGTON, RN, who started in 1985 and is Director of Clinical Leadership Development at the Clinical Standards and Quality office

TOP LEFT: Mark and Al Freedman in 2003.

TOP RIGHT: Participants at *The BAYADA Way* retreat, held at Pendle Hill in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, in 2004. This was the first of three retreats in which the actual writing of the document began.