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Opening The Door

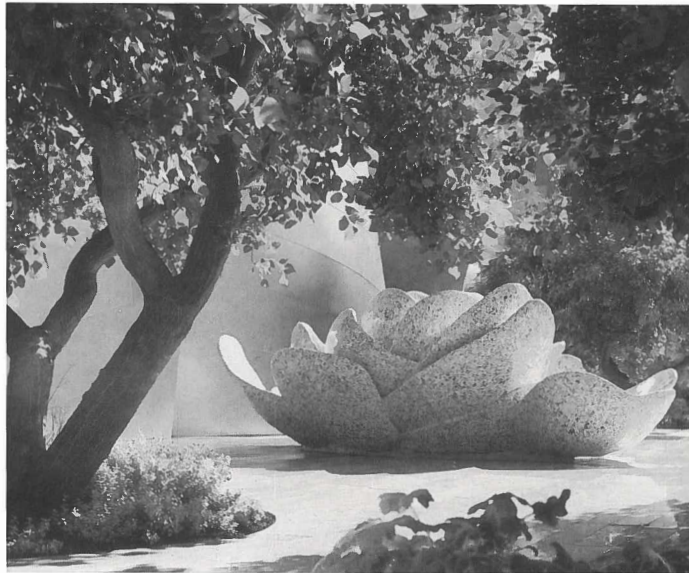
INGRID KIDD GOLDFARB

Recently, my husband and I had tickets for the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the new Walt Disney Concert Hall. About half way there, stuck in a traffic jam, we realized we were cutting it very close and might not make it on time. Those who know me understand that being on time is something I value and strive for. I grew up with parents who taught me: "If you arrive on time, you are five minutes late."

The last twenty minutes of our drive were tense and filled with comments such as "we should have left earlier . . . these terrible drivers . . . the parking garage will be full . . . we've wasted money spent on these tickets." We were frustrated and irritated as we ran up three sets of escalators, only to arrive one minute after they had closed the doors. The usher told us the first piece would last 22 minutes and we would not be seated until it was completed.

The circumstances were set for my husband and me to be angry, frustrated, irritated at each other, and ready to place blame on a variety of other people and situations.

My husband, in a high state of frustration, opened an exit door, stopped, then motioned for me to join him. We walked into a beautiful garden outside the third floor of the concert hall. The Los Angeles skyline was laid out before us; the soaring metal walls of this extraordinary Frank Gehry designed building were behind us. A 12-foot wide mosaic rose (a gift from the Disney children and grandchildren) was beside us. We had been in this garden before, but never alone. It was magical. In a few moments,



we had not only let go of the frustration of missing the first part of the concert, but were grateful for this special moment to ourselves in this exquisite place. By the time we were able to go into the concert, we were relaxed, delighted to be with each other, and ready for an uplifting musical experience. In retrospect, it reminded me of this quote from Alexander Graham Bell:

"When one door closes another opens. But we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we fail to see the one that has opened for us."

I read with great interest this month's article by Belle DuCharme. She provides excellent tips for asserting yourself effectively when stress arises in the dental practice. Her suggestions will truly reduce personal frustration at work and increase your effectiveness and satisfaction.

Stress will continue to invade your practice, and all of our lives. Therefore, it is how we look at stress and how we respond that builds our satisfaction, our outlook on life, and ultimately our effectiveness. Dr. Wayne Dyer said: "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." As I look back on our evening at Disney Hall, I loved the Mozart and Brahms that we heard, but what stands out in my memory are the quiet, peaceful moments I shared with my husband on a rooftop garden in downtown Los Angeles.

Here's wishing you the ability to turn from frustration to action and effective communication. May you each experience unexpected moments of peace and beauty. 