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Sandra Thurman, Director, Office of National AIDS Policy, The White House

'We are now in a unique position after 15 years of shared struggle to celebrate the indomitable strength of the human spirit, and the remarkable power of compassion and hope. The AIDS epidemic has given us the opportunity to define our own humanity.'

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Living Life To The Fullest Enterprises

**Publications
Seminars
Coaching/Consulting**

15 July, 1999

Ms. Sandra L. Thurman
Director
White House Office of National AIDS Policy
736 Jackson Place, NW
Washington DC, 20503

Dear Sandy,

Greetings and a long over due congratulations.

It has been about five or six years since we last spoke back in Atlanta. At that time, we knew each other through PALS (Pets Are Loving Support) when I served as Chairman. I remember your input and guidance as a Board member was of tremendous value in helping guide the organization and instrumental in securing a very comfortable home for us.

I have recently moved to Washington, DC from San Francisco after following an "inner calling." I am working on a project that I feel you will find of interest as the leading advocate for AIDS policy in the country. I have enclosed some background materials on the project as well as a bio that will update you a little on my work and interests since we last spoke.

I am working on a book called *Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!* which will be a collection of personal stories of people confronting HIV/AIDS who have discovered "gifts" that have somehow left them experiencing life more full, enriched and powerful. The stories will reflect how ordinary people have chosen to use their infection or encounter with HIV/AIDS to transform who they are and what they thought was possible to accomplish and experience. The publication will challenge us to look at how HIV has improved our lives and acts as a lightening rod for personal growth and transformation.

HIV has given us so much!

I believe it is time to bring a balancing element to the tragic focus of the disease. It is time to take stock of the deeper meaning and transformation that is available to everyone exposed to the disease. The power of AIDS is vast and deep. We have watched it decimate the lives of thousands. It has challenged us to examine and change ourselves, our families, our communities as well as our culture and society. HIV/AIDS has pushed us up against our greatest fears reflecting back to us who we really are. It demands that we take a personal inventory and then provides opportunities for specific action.

It is time to embrace the healing powers that lie inside the disease itself.

The idea for this publication has been germinating in me for many years and finally pushed itself out at the closing ceremony for the Washington AIDS Ride. During the ceremony there were speeches made

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Living Life To The Fullest Enterprises

Ms. Sandra L. Thurman
July 15, 1999
Page 2

by many people who naturally focused on the loss of life, dignity and the needs of all those infected. They spoke about the hardness and devastation of the illness. They shared stories of how their specific organizations have mobilized to combat the challenges of the disease and were all too eager to overly generalize the plight of all people with HIV as victims to this virus. Yes, it is all of those things, but it is so much more! It is time we begin to bring greater balance to the story called AIDS.

As AIDS Czar, you have tremendous influence in shaping and positioning the thinking around HIV in the United States. I would like to get your perspective on celebrating the gifts of HIV from many different levels. Would you be willing to spend a little time with me to discuss the following questions?

- ♦ How do you relate to the gifts of HIV/AIDS both from a personal perspective, from your experience as head of an AIDS service organization and as the chief U.S. policy maker?
- ♦ What have your personal gifts been from HIV/AIDS? How have you grown?
- ♦ Could this approach be a new way of dealing with the tremendous complacency building throughout the country? Could it be the next pathway in the evolutionary process of the disease?
- ♦ Could focusing on the gifts of HIV/AIDS take away or jeopardize current levels of funding, care and service that have all ready been put in place?
- ♦ What and where are the land mines that could explode as the focus begins to include the gifts of HIV/AIDS?

If you feel comfortable, I would also like to include a thought, idea or question from you in the initial press release. (See attached draft) This will help bring greater media attention making a bigger impact in generating personal stories and evoking greater discussion and thought. The release will be sent out the end of July to media all around the world.

Sandy, thank you so much for your commitment and passion in directing and leading the agenda on this issue. Your strength lies in your desire to serve while respecting and honoring the individual growth that is at the heart of every encounter with HIV/AIDS.

Thank you. I will call you to find a convenient time for us to meet.

Celebrating all of life,



Steven A. Anderson
202.491.4653

*looking forward to talking
with you!*
SA

Press Release

Contact Info:

Steve Anderson

202.491.4653

202.462.1286

530.690.9655 Fax

stevenanderson@mindspring.com

For Immediate Release

Release Date: July 28, 1999

Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!

- A Call for Personal Stories of Growth and Triumph -

Washington, DC: Steven Anderson, Life Coach and writer, has issued a worldwide call for personal stories to anyone whose life has been positively impacted by HIV/AIDS. These stories will be accumulated and edited into an upcoming book entitled, *Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!* The intent of the project is to bring attention, focus and discussion to the tremendous gifts we as individuals, families, communities and society are receiving by facing the challenge of HIV/AIDS. Mr. Anderson asserts, "In the center of all tragedy, challenge or set-back lies a gift waiting to be discovered and received. It is time we turn our attention toward the discovery of the awesome gifts of HIV/AIDS. The powers of these gifts are instrumental in the healing of our lives, our hearts and our world.

No other illness in modern history has given us so much.

Every person, who has had the transformative privilege of facing some aspect of HIV/AIDS in his life, has been confronted at some point with the conflicting and sometimes painful awareness that his life is somehow better off because of this illness. Some people might have found themselves somehow stronger, more enriched, experiencing a greater quality of life or able to feel love and express love more deeply. Others might have taken actions that they never thought humanly possible. Still others have been forced to confront and reflect on who they really are and what is really important to them. And for many, they have discovered their true heart and humanity."

The personal stories in *Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!* will challenge us to include the tremendous gifts of the epidemic while honoring the tragic loss our society has endured. It's stories will inspire us to fully celebrate the personal triumphs, healing and growth of those on the front lines of HIV/AIDS. It will challenge us to look at the bigger picture of how we can use the formidable challenge of HIV/AIDS to transform our own experience of life and our world. *Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!* will encourage, empower and awaken readers to reflect on their own personal challenges from HIV/AIDS or any other challenge they face and see the awesome gifts that await them if they are only willing to look.

Mr. Anderson states, "We want to challenge people to reflect right now and look to see what gifts they have received from this illness. We want them to write it down and if they feel comfortable, to contribute their personal story to be a part of this worldwide collection of healing, love and celebration.

So much in our world has changed because of this illness and it is time to celebrate!

Living Life To The Fullest Publications

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Press Release

Celebrate the Gifts of HIV! - A Call for Personal Stories

Release Date: July 28, 1999

Page 2 of 3

Yes, what HIV/AIDS has taken from us has been immense and the horrible way in which it has stricken the quality and dignity of one's life is unfathomable. We have spent the last 18 years in pain, agony, confusion, chaos and loss due to this virus. It is now time to discover and accept the gifts which have been hidden inside the devastation. It is time to celebrate how we have changed. It is time to close the circle on this tremendous growth opportunity by being willing to accept and receive the many blessings of HIV/AIDS."

A Worldwide Invitation:

Everyone is invited to tell their personal stories of how this tragedy has left their lives more enriched, powerful, peaceful, expanded, joyful or full. They are invited to share how they have used HIV/AIDS to transform the quality of their lives, to change their communities, to discover their families, to achieve things they never thought possible and to become someone who they never knew they were. For more information check out www.giftsofhiv.com.

"True heroes are ordinary people who discovered and used the gifts of their personal tragedies to transform their lives and the lives of those in their community. It is time we celebrate the true heroes of this global crisis called HIV/AIDS." This is the mission of *Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!*

Submission Guidelines:

- 1) Stories can be submitted in any length.
- 2) It would be helpful, but not necessary, to type the story.
- 3) Please include your phone number, email or address with each story.
- 4) Confidentiality will be held for those who do not want their actual names used.
- 5) There are three ways to submit a story:
 - a) Mail them to: Celebrate the Gifts of HIV!
Living Life To The Fullest Publications
P.O. Box 21153
Washington, DC 20009
 - b) E-mail them to: stevenanderson@mindspring.com
 - c) Submit them online at www.giftsofhiv.com.
- 6) For more information check the web site www.giftsofhiv.com or call 202.462.1286.

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Celebrate the Gifts of HIV! - A Call for Personal Stories

Release Date: July 28, 1999

Page 3 of 3

Mr. Anderson is available for interviews

202.462.1286

202.491.4653

About the Author: Steven Anderson:

For the last two-and-one-half years Steven has been working as a Life Coach and Visionary Activist where he challenges people to awaken to their true selves, their true desires and dreams. He then provides instrumental support and structure as his clients courageously take the personal steps necessary to begin experiencing and living the life they were "called" to live. "It has been a blast and extraordinarily humbling to be so privileged to work with individuals in such an intimate relationship as they explore and begin to take the actions necessary to live their lives fully. What they discover is breathtaking!" says Anderson.

Mr. Anderson has used his own HIV positive status to radically transform who he is and the quality of his experience of life over the last 14 years. In 1985 Steven was infected with the HIV virus and discovered it in 1988 after being miraculously lead to the information after experiencing the emptiness, loneliness and futility of "success" in publishing in New York City. Mr. Anderson says, "The day I tested HIV positive is the day my life really began. I was among the walking dead up until that point. It was the day I began to look inside myself for the first time and take inventory of what I really wanted. I began to form my own opinions and make decisions based on what I wanted rather than what would please my partner, family, boss, friends and clients. It started an extraordinary journey of awareness and discovery that has taken me to a myriad of places inside myself. It has left me with a quality of life and an experience of deep, personal relationships that were unthinkable to me at that time. I never knew life could be so extraordinary and filled with so much magic. Who knew life could be so good, but I had to train my mind to look for the gifts that I was being offered in what looked like certain death with HIV."

Steven, making sure he continues to live his life fully, spent last summer bicycling across the country from Seattle to Washington, DC. He also spent three months this winter in seclusion in the San Bernardino mountains in California working on another book, *"Redefining Success for the 21st Century: Moving from the Era of Accomplishment to the Era of Fulfillment."*

Mr. Anderson recently relocated to Washington, DC after four years in San Francisco. He continues his work as a Visionary Activist and Life Coach and is a business consultant with a number of progressive companies.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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OFFICE OF NATIONAL AIDS POLICY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2000

CONTACT: (202) 456-2959

**WHITE HOUSE AIDS CZAR CALLS FOR
CONTINUED BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST AIDS**

Washington, D.C. - The US has been a strong leader in responding to the global AIDS pandemic and is the largest contributor to AIDS efforts around the world and to UNAIDS (the United Nations Joint Program on AIDS). The US contributed \$225 million in FY2000 for prevention and treatment programs worldwide. This enabled us to more than double our funding for AIDS programs in Africa. The President has requested an additional \$100 million in the FY2001 budget to further expand these essential efforts.

With the AIDS pandemic clearly outpacing all earlier projections, there is a growing understanding of the magnitude of this crisis. AIDS is not just a health issue, but a fundamental development issue, an economic issue, and a security and stability issue. When the Vice President addressed the UN Security Council in January, he clearly stated that AIDS is a national security crisis and encouraged all leaders around the world to treat it as such.

"In just a few short years, AIDS in Africa has wiped out decades of hard work and steady progress in development and will soon double infant mortality, triple child mortality, and slash life expectancy by 20 years or more," stated Sandra Thurman, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy. "Clearly, as this crisis unfolds, it will have a terribly destabilizing effect, with untold economic, social and political consequences. As the National Intelligence Council's recent report warns as goes Africa, so will go India, Southeast Asia and the former Soviet Union. At the end of the day, this global pandemic will make the bubonic plague of the middle ages pale in comparison unless our response is finally commensurate with the magnitude of this emergency. Just as democrats and republicans have come together on issues of national security in the past, I am pleased that there is a growing bi-partisan consensus

on the need to dramatically expand US leadership in the battle against AIDS worldwide.”

This broader focus now enables us to move forward with the two key components necessary to win the war on AIDS: leadership and resources.

This effort will require billions of dollars and a sustained commitment if it is going to be effective. The United States Government clearly cannot, and should not, chart this course alone. It will require a major new investment from other donors in the developed world and the reprioritization of funds from nations hardest hit by the epidemic. It will also require increased engagement of the private sector and multilateral institutions.

To that end, the US is working on a four-point strategy which includes:

- **Increased bilateral assistance -**
Our direct contribution to AIDS efforts in other countries.
- **Multilateral coordination -**
Our ongoing commitment to UNAIDS and other multilateral institutions to support better coordination and support of global AIDS efforts.
- **Debt forgiveness -**
Support for the use of funds supplied by forgiveness of debt in the world's poorest nations for use in social and health programming including HIV/AIDS programs.
- **Engaging the private sector -**
Working with business and labor to increase their involvement in the fight against AIDS.

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FOX MORNING NEWS
MAY 23, 2000

SPEAKERS: SANDRA THURMAN, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL AIDS POLICY OFFICE
LARK MCCARTHY, HOST

MCCARTHY: Well, what should the role of the United States be in helping developing nations fight the AIDS epidemic? Sandra Thurman is the director of the National AIDS Policy Office, better known as the AIDS czar. She joins us now from the White House.

Good morning.

THURMAN: Good morning, Lark.

MCCARTHY: Let's talk about the visit this week of President Thabo Mbeki. Is this an important opportunity for progress?

THURMAN: It's a great opportunity for progress. The president--President Clinton and President Mbeki met yesterday. They talked about the importance of leadership in the fight against AIDS, both here at home and in Africa. So I think we have a great opportunity to set examples of how much leadership can make a difference in the fight against AIDS.

MCCARTHY: Now President Mbeki himself yesterday said it was pure invention that, he said, that AZT wasn't helpful in making progress. Yet this morning, The Washington Post is saying he continues to express doubts that HIV causes AIDS. Can you clarify that for us about what President Mbeki said yesterday?

THURMAN: Well, I think that President Mbeki has certainly wanted to look at all of the scientific evidence around HIV and AIDS, to look at what the disparities are of AIDS in Africa versus AIDS here in the United States. There's certainly great opportunity for us to have intellectual discourse around that.

The important thing, I think, is that President Mbeki is clearly dedicated to fighting HIV and AIDS in South Africa and on the rest of the continent. He's certainly been a great supporter of prevention programs. So we've spent a lot of energy talking about what he said and didn't say.

My sense of President Mbeki is that he understands that we need to look at the science, that HIV and AIDS certainly might have a causal relationship. We certainly think it does.

But he's very interested in hearing the opinions of all sides.

MCCARTHY: Talk about the U.S. role now. Did President Mbeki ask for anything in particular? And where do you see the most pressing needs of the U.S. in helping these developing nations?

THURMAN: I don't think he asked for anything in particular. I think that he's very glad that the United States has stepped up, actually doubled our efforts, in the fight against AIDS in Africa. We've asked--the president has asked for another \$100 million this year from the United States Congress to expand our efforts even further.

So I think we are looking forward to a great mutual relationship in the fight against AIDS. We have a great opportunity to learn lessons from one another. In fact, people don't know this: Some of our greatest success stories in the fight against AIDS are in fact in Africa, probably Uganda being the best example, where they have...

MCCARTHY: Yes, give us an example of what's happening there.

THURMAN: Well, in Uganda, due to the great leadership of President Museveni and wonderful nongovernmental organizations on the ground, with 10 years of sustained effort, Uganda has been able to cut their rate of infection in half. Uganda was the center, epicenter, of the epidemic 10 years ago, and now their rates are declining.

So we need to look at what they've done that's made them successful and then replicate that in other parts of the world.

MCCARTHY: What were some factors, do you believe, that worked in Uganda?

THURMAN: Well, I think there are two things that we know that make the difference. The first is sustained leadership at all levels, from the presidential level to the cabinet level down to the community level. And Uganda certainly has had that.

The second is a sustained influx of resources. And the United States and other donors around the world have supported Uganda's efforts over the past 10 years, and that's what led to their success.

MCCARTHY: Talk about it as a national security threat. We've talked about this before, but it's one of the reasons why this fight is so important, this concern about destabilizing countries there and around the world.

THURMAN: That's right. Well, it's interesting, when we look at many countries in Africa that now have almost one in four or one in five adults infected with HIV, understanding that they don't have any access to treatment or drugs and that those people are going to die, you can see if you lose a fourth of your adult population that it's certainly going to have a dramatic impact, both on the stability of economies and the stability of nations.

MCCARTHY: I do want to ask you about Tracy Neal's (ph) package, an issue raised there. This natural conversion issue: How much study has been done on that and how much hope should we put into that?

THURMAN: Well, a lot of work has been done on that. We've certainly been working on that in the United States for a long time, in fact, in the U.S. using the drug AZT, we've been able to reduce the rate of infections from mother to child in the United States by over 70 percent over the last decade.

So we are looking at ongoing research and AZT and a new drug called Nevirapine, which is very inexpensive and easy to administer, that we think has great promise in preventing the transmission of the virus from mother to child.

MCCARTHY: Do you think that in this country that we have--many have just turned their eyes to what's happening in Africa, seeing it as unrelated? And is that a mistake?

THURMAN: Well, I think it's certainly a mistake. I think it's true. I think that not only have we turned our back on what's happening in Africa, we've turned our back on what's happening here in the United States. You know, we had great news in the past few years about reductions in the rates of AIDS cases and the reductions in the rates of AIDS deaths. What we forget to tell people is that in the last decade in the United States, we have not seen a reduction in new infections per year in this country. We're holding steady at about 40,000 new infections a year.

Certainly the epidemic is escalating in Africa. But when we look at Africa, we have to understand that the epicenter of the epidemic in 15 years will be in India and the rest of Asia and then going on around to the former Soviet Union.

So what we have here is an epidemic, the likes of which we have not seen since the bubonic plague of the Middle Ages, sweeping the globe. And today what we're seeing in Africa is simply the tip of the iceberg. With no vaccine and no cure in sight, we're looking at an epidemic at the end of the day like the world has never seen.

MCCARTHY: I think that puts it in perspective.

Sandra Thurman, the White House AIDS czar.

THURMAN: Thank you, Lark.

MCCARTHY: We appreciate your time this morning.

END

Atlanta

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COMMENTS: THIS IS WHAT I "TOOK AWAY" FROM GENEVA. ALSO
IN THE WASHINGTON BLADE TODAY, I THINK. YOUR THOUGHTS?

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First Person / Mark King

Changing the rules

At the World AIDS Conference in Geneva, attendees were fascinated by the city and by the conference itself. But something frightening was defying the charm of the international exhibits and sense of global community. You could see it on our faces, just beneath hopeful smiles. It was as if any good news about research advances could not keep our minds off the fact that new infections rage on and cocktail drugs are beginning to fail.

I found the news so grim, in fact, that I believe AIDS prevention groups should be ready to cut a deal with people at risk — and here I speak to gay men — and throw away some principles that are more politically correct than truly effective.

For instance, prevention education has always been geared toward getting you to stop high risk behavior and use condoms "every time." Reality check: If you are having anal sex with more than one partner, then Geneva data show that less than half of you have been 100 percent safe in the last six months. I encourage those of you who maintain this level of safety to continue, but have only one request of those of you who don't. Be safe a little more. If you never use condoms, promise yourself you will use spermicidal lubricant every time. If you sometimes use rubbers, use them a little more often. If you only do it bare-back with spit, promise yourself to start pulling out ... a little more often. If you take this frank advice as permission to be less safe, you're missing the point. But if we could all raise the bar on our risk behavior, countless infections could be prevented.

Another rule has failed us miserably: The notion that we should not rely on disclosing our HIV status to sexual partners, and instead behave as if "everyone is positive." has had an effect opposite of what was intended. Everyone is behaving as if their partners are negative. Tonight, in a queer bedroom near you, anal sex will begin with no one grabbing a rubber. Bachelor Number One will think his partner must also be negative, while Bachelor Number Two will figure his partner is also positive. The virus will take advantage.

The "everyone is positive" concept is based on distrust — why bother asking when they'll probably lie to you? That's incredibly cynical. We should abandon this strategy and start sharing our HIV status with tricks. Whether you are positive or negative, say it. Whatever the status combo, behavior will probably change for the better when partners know HIV status. Yes, some positive guys may get rejected as a result — so will some negatives — but getting turned down by some stranger is hardly the crucial issue here.

There has been a lot of emphasis on

understanding self-esteem issues among gay men, and what leads them to engage in anonymous encounters. This scrutiny should be left to social anthropologists and has only complicated prevention efforts, especially since prevention programs have never been properly equipped to deal with such issues. If you've had a bad childhood, or aren't comfortable with your sexuality, then I sincerely hope you come to terms with it in your lifetime, but I want you to start having safer sex now. We are confusing empathy with permission.

Gay men over 30 have witnessed the most gruesome deaths of our generation and yet are still having sex in dark rooms and at bathhouses. Again, I don't care to waste time trying to understand why, I just want them to lower their risk while they're there.

Finally, if you're an HIV-negative, sexually active gay man, you deserve a medal. Chances are, you're more than just lucky; you have had sex carefully and have lowered the risks. You should be proud. Do not allow yourself to believe that

HIV-positive men deserve more attention from our community than you do. And let's face facts: If you become infected tomorrow, it isn't likely that the condom broke or you had bleeding gums at the wrong time. You probably screwed up.

Fortunately, services and sympathies will always be there for HIV-positive men. What's missing is our taking every opportunity — as friends, lovers, service providers — to lift up negative men who have struggled to remain that way.

Geneva demonstrated that the treatment advances of the last few years are losing their luster. Drug failure rates are piling up, and new infection rates are rising among gay men again. The scariest news of all — that a viral strain that is resistant to all known drugs is being transmitted — is the most ominous sign of the future. Partly because patients have had trouble taking their drugs regularly, their virus has become resistant to everything they were prescribed. As Anthony Fauci said in Geneva, the spread of this strain could set back research to 1985. Anybody want to see that horror show again?

AIDS is playing a joke on those who stupidly believe that catching HIV only means having to take a bunch of pills every day. If someone with a resistant strain infects you, you won't benefit from those drugs that you thought were making life simply fabulous for people living with AIDS.

You'll just get really, really sick and then die.

Mark King is an AIDS educator and writer.

TALK ABOUT
INFECTION RATES
16,000/day
2070 IN 2000
COUNTIES
AND AMOUNT WOMEN
RISE IN INFECTION RATES
AMONG YOUTH
ESPECIALLY OF COLOR
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World First:

CELL THERAPY AT HADASSAH MAY TURN BACK CLOCK FOR AIDS PATIENTS
Innovative Treatment – First Time Used For AIDS – Has Cured Dozens With Other Diseases

Jerusalem – Doctors at Hadassah-University Hospital have received permission from Israel's Health Ministry to be the first in the world to try a cutting-edge AIDS treatment.

Using an innovative cell therapy, AIDS patients will be infused with immunologically active lymphocytes following transplantation of bone-marrow stem cells taken from a healthy sibling's blood. This procedure, pioneered by Prof. Shimon Slavin at Hadassah, has already cured dozens around the world suffering from non-cancerous genetic diseases. This is the first time in the world the treatment will be used for AIDS patients.

According to Dr. Slavin, the Donor Lymphocyte Infusion (DLI) is "likely to reduce the amount of available HIV-1 in the patient's blood by eliminating the stores of the virus concentrated mostly in bone marrow-derived cells – turning the clock back and restoring his condition of several years before."

The DLI procedure will be performed by Slavin's Bone Marrow Transplantation Department and Cancer Immunotherapy and Immunobiology Research Center at Hadassah-University Hospital in cooperation with the Hospital's AIDS Clinic, led by its Director Dr. Shlomo Ma'ayan. Slavin was the first to use a modified version of DLI eleven years ago on a baby suffering from a terminal case of leukemia, who is today alive and well.

Because DLI is regarded as experimental, its high costs – comparable to conventional bone-marrow therapy, but far less risky – may not be covered by Israeli health funds. "The best solution would be for a philanthropist to finance the cost of the first few patients so we can show that it works," Slavin said. "It could prove of great benefit to mankind."

Prof. Shimon Slavin, MD, is Chairman of the Department of the Sidney Weisner Department of Bone Marrow Transplantation and Director of the Baxter Research Center at Hadassah-University Hospital. A pioneer in research and clinical activity to develop new therapies for cancer, autoimmunity and AIDS, he has been the recipient of numerous awards, including a Fulbright Scholarship and the Foundation for the Advancement of Humanity Award. The Bone Marrow Transplantation Center at Hadassah, which he launched in 1978 as Israel's first, is today recognized internationally, attracting patients and medical teams from around the world.

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