



Process Sketch: Spine, Skull and Heart



Final Model: View of site looking North



Final Model: View of roof plan looking South

When my Father died suddenly a week after my mother, they said it was a broken heart. Soothing words that pierced my heart. He had not loved me, his only daughter, enough to go on. One day I came across a crimped photo of Mom and Dad, arms linked, smiling. In it, my father's palm is lifted to his face, inches from his pursed lips. He is throwing a kiss to the photographer. He gave me that camera. That was my first photo.³

Philosophy of Holistic Care

I have called this building a "Holistic Center" because, while it incorporates the ideals and philosophy of Hospice Care, it is a new building type. This Holistic Center will combine the programmatic function of an assisted living facility with that of a hospice facility. Residents will live in the Center for longer periods of time than in the typical hospice. They would lease an apartment for the duration of their stay and as they need help would hire a nurse's care for several hours a day. As their ailments progress they can be moved to the top floor of the Center for 24 hour care, while still maintaining their Apartment for visiting family and friends. Like the Hospice Alliance, the Holistic Center would be a private, non-profit, healthcare organization.

Many cities are now requiring specialized facilities where physicians are trained to treat a specific ailment and a specific demographic. As a specialized facility, the Holistic Center will require new buildings with specific design requirements for the treatment of: children, the mentally ill, the elderly, persons with heart disease, cancer and finally AIDS. Most hospice centers are adaptive re-use facilities, having once been small hospitals, schools, mental institutions and even private homes. Hospice care workers often note that the programmatic requirements of most hospice facilities do not fit properly into the undersized spaces of these existing building types. I have designed a terminal care facility that would act as a new building type.

Hospitals and hospices are in dire need of a re-assessment of their design philosophy. A changing health care system requires an evolution of the health care environment. There needs to be a change in focus from the needs of doctors, staff and service providers to the patient and their family. This shift in focus may even be extended to the local



Process Sketch: Additive and Subtractive Form



Final Model: View of Residence Wing at West of site

One of the mysteries of aging is trying to remember our younger selves. I look at an old picture of myself and wonder, "Who was that man?" He is wearing a West Point dress uniform and in his eyes is a question about whether he is brave. As it turned out, maybe he was, but not in any way the man in the picture would have understood. Nor would he have guessed that the most important thing about him at the moment the picture was snapped was that he was just in the process of becoming someone else.⁸

community. Health care centers should open their doors to the larger community by providing meeting spaces, creating open health care seminars, and actively recruiting neighborhood volunteers.

Yesterday's health care centers were intimidating, cold, and sterile. Contemporary health care centers should be infused with daylight, color, and natural building materials. An attractive, warm, and healthy space is key to combating deadly disease. Attractive architecture also attracts the best doctors, nurses and patients. If we see the possibilities of Architecture as a healing art we can help extend the lives of terminally ill patients by placing them in nurturing and supportive environments that work toward the health of mind, body and soul.

Health care centers should begin to focus on a sharing of the balance of needs between the "Server" and the "Served." The doctors, nurses, and health care providers are the "Servers". The residents are the "Served". Currently, many hospitals and hospice centers focus on the needs of the servers. These buildings are made to accommodate the physician, his assistants and researchers. The Holistic Center focuses on the needs of the residents, while still providing ample space for the health care provider and their needs. The Holistic Center combines research and treatment with residential living and sacred space. In this way, the Center works toward the health of mind, body, and soul.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, a founder of the hospice movement, identified the 5 stages of grief. She once stated, "Death is a transition between life and the after life ... Death is a part of the wonderful cosmic drama." I believe that preparation for death is in fact a celebration of life, and death is indeed a transition between this world and the next. My design for the Holistic Center is a literal expression of movement through a series of transitional spaces and therefore a figurative celebration of life as transition.