

FOREWORD

*A Tribute to Elizabeth Moore Erickson. Colleague Extraordinaire,
Wife, Mother and Companion*

What a delight to participate in this tribute to our mother, Elizabeth Erickson!

Members of our family have long been questioned by countless individuals, by professionals as well as those who were intrigued by Milton Erickson's revolutionary and unique approaches to hypnosis and psychotherapy. Although his life ended over 20 years ago, interest in him and his work has been sustained, and the many questions have persisted. Some times the questioners are humble and gracious, others are fascinatingly intrusive. All of our family members have learned to respond, while protecting whatever privacy we wish to hold, and to take real pleasure in this interest.

Marilia Baker has been exquisitely delicate in her inquiries and discovery of details about our family. We have all been pleased that she has taken a specific interest in our mother whose contributions were central and

integral to our father's work. The family has long been aware of the importance of our mother's thinking, which was so different than our father's, her often-contrasting perspectives, and the influence that she made on his personal and professional accomplishments.

Our mother was fully supportive of our father. She believed that part of her role was to free him from some of the burdens of daily life, to broaden his thinking, to enhance his creativity with her own unique outlooks, and to work as a partner with him in the family unit. She did this with little fanfare and great influence. He responded with tremendous respect for her individuality and her ideas and frequently modified his positions. Her independent thinking, wrapped in total commitment allowed his genius to fully emerge.

There are always many transitions in family life. A few of ours included Dad's move from working outside the home to a home-office with the waiting room in the front room and the secretary in the dining room. The dining room table was usurped by our parents' massive efforts in beginning, writing for, and editing for a decade, a professional journal. Later, they began traveling as Dad's teaching assumed larger dimensions

and then patients were partially replaced by an entourage of students, some of whom stayed in our home for extended periods. Dad's increasing physical disabilities eventually necessitated a move to different home, which could accommodate both his wheelchair and the growing numbers of students. We all saw these events as parts of perfectly normal and routine family life.

As adults, we now realize we were extraordinarily privileged to have had all the experiences and opportunities we had, but especially to have had Mom and Dad as our parents. We witnessed the rapport, cooperation, adaptation, focus, pleasures, and enjoyment of life that the two of them experienced and modeled.

We also know Mom provided all the children with much more than most people can ever know. We, more than anybody, know that Dad could not have done what he did without Mom. How nice it is that Marilia too sees that.

Thank you, Marilia, for doing this, for telling the tale in your own language, in your own words and your own style. And thank you for letting

us have the enjoyment of remembering and reflecting on some of the small aspects of everyday life that, actually, mean everything.

Teresa, thank you for the encouragement and the means that you provided. Your suggestions and invitations to both Marilia and ourselves have given us an opportunity to get to know one another, to listen to the music of different voices that tell a beautiful story.

Roxanna Erickson Klein and Betty Alice Erickson

Dallas, Texas 2004