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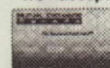
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YOGA

by Doug Bauer

The sound of my breath resounds through my body..... it ebbs and flows, softening tension and releasing each muscle as its subtle touch laps at away the intensity of the stretch. "Press the back heel down, as you lift the front of the foot up, stretching the skin of the arch between the heel and the ball of the foot".....As the teacher issues each instruction my monkey mind swings from one detail to another, not a single outside thought has room to squeeze past its one pointed focus. The instruction continues, "Fan out the toes as they drop down one by one, and feel the expansion of the galaxy of the metatarsal. The shin presses back evenly as the quadriceps draw the kneecaps up." In my mind's eye I allow my attention to flow back and forth between each of the points presented. Touching upon each one seems to trigger a spark which fuels and ignites an inner pilot light of awareness.

"Belly into the back, lengthen the spine upwards as if to draw it out of the pelvis. Feel the chest open, back broad, as the shoulders move away from the ears." The teacher weaves gracefully between the lines of students, a correction of alignment here, making a recommendation there, all the time keeping an eagle eye peeled, carefully observing the whole class, who have been carefully arranged to be under that watchful eye. "Now extending with the right arm forward, bending at the groin crease, feel the upper hip rise up and roll back as the front hand drops to the leg just to where it reaches, as the elbow crease turns away from the leg."

As I move into the pose my gaze strays across the smooth wood floors strewn with rubber mats, wood blocks, straps, and, chairs. Each of these "props" is used to train the students body and support and assist in the alignment and awareness of the pose. Oh,oh! the teacher's noticed my attention has waned"Reel the mind back to the body as it strays to all the thoughts and the worries of the day. Allow yourself to be present in the pose, in this moment let yourself *be*, so for a short time we may stroll the path of life together in this place" The above reflection is within a mirror image of what might be expected during a yoga class, particularly in the Iyengar Tradition. This method emphasizes detailed focus on the movement and positioning of the body, and awareness of the breath within the body.

A student is taught a strong foundation of poses to build upon, with adaptations for each individual need, using props including the floor and wall to enable all to experience the benefits, as time progresses diligent students will experience that the practice *spills over* into their daily lives. This realignment of the body and focus of awareness directly affects the mind. A person may experience a certain calm and perhaps even joy filtering out the unbalanced effects of a busy life. Strength and stability of body and mind and spirit draws the student deeper into the practice. Now you do not have to believe this Yogi, Yoga is a science and you can put it to the test yourself to find out indeed what it can do for you.

Iyengar Style Yoga is taught at the Clifton Road Studio in Kelowna—Call Deborah 769-6413 or Barbara 860-0500

In Penticton—Call Angèle at The Yoga Studio 492-5371 or check the Natural Yellow Pages in the back section.

Retreats Help You Advance

by Tanis Helliwell


Activity and reflection should ideally complement and support each other. Action by itself is blind, reflection impotent.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

This is the perfect time of year to take time out to reflect on your life—to see if you are in balance and spending time doing what you most value. This is done by becoming still and quiet and listening to what in Christianity is called,—the small inner voice. There are small retreats that we can make every day by meditating and there are longer retreats that are good to do once or twice a year for a weekend, a week or longer. Both are necessary for continuing well-being. The purpose of meditation is to eliminate and move beyond thought. St. John of the Cross, the great Christian mystic, said that the key to union with the soul is silence and work. Work we have; it's silence we lack.

Meditation: Through meditation you increase your ability to access the spiritual realm both of the soul and of the Creator. This process is cumulative and leads to a quantum change in understanding and consciousness. Most meditation techniques have one thing in common: they calm the mind. Like a good spring cleaning, they get rid of habitual clutter while restoring a harmonious vibration to all the bodies. Some meditation practices engage the body in the spiritual journey in order to create a strong physical vessel to house the soul. Examples of this practice are Tai Chi and Chi Gong. These more active kinds of meditations might be helpful either if you have difficulty sitting still or if you need to reestablish your connection to the earth under your feet and the energy moving through your body. Another kind of meditation is a sitting meditation, like Vipassana, where the goal is to see reality clearly. This involves sitting in silence in a state of open and choiceless awareness of the arising and passing away of experience. Another example of sitting meditation is Transcendental Meditation (TM), where you chant a mantra - a Sanskrit word - and allow thoughts to surface. Practicing these types of meditations for half an hour to an hour every morning before breakfast and/or before dinner helps many individuals hear the soul. Dr. Herbert Benson, author of *The Relaxation Response* and originally skeptical of TM, studied its benefits and found that it lowered blood pressure and heart beats per minute. As well, meditators entered a restful state that was deeper than sleep, in which their brain patterns were more coherent and integrated than during the waking state.

Retreats: Some of us need more meditation time than we can find in daily routines and find annual retreats helpful. Most retreats emphasize silence and prayer, although often a spiritual advisor assists us - either personally or through group talks - to focus our meditation. Retreats can be days, weeks or even years in duration, and could have a Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, or non-religious focus. Some retreats focus on the denial of the bodies and we might be deprived of sleep, food, interaction with others or any external stimulation that distracts us from higher consciousness. Buddha taught that our attachment to these things is the cause of our pain and misery and that letting go of our attachment is the path to enlightenment. Jesus also taught a path of non-attachment




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Tanis Helliwell, M.Ed., author of the best selling book *Take Your Soul to Work*, is the founder of the International Institute for Transformation. She had a private spiritual counselling practice for 16 years and leads retreats internationally. Clients include the Banff Centre for Management, IBM, Royal Bank, Alberta Medical Association, World Future in Washington, BC

as he said, *Be in the world but not of it*. Both Buddha and Jesus were active participants in the world. Their lives are examples of how we can use the three kinds of meditation practice as well as retreats on our journey to conscious life and work.

See ad above



An Old Saw Mill

The final issue of the year, the decade, the century and the millennium. What to write about.... the pressure is building, I can sense why so many need to talk/write about it. Not me. I think our calendars are a bit out. The Year of the Dragon starts in mid-February and since I was born in 1952 that makes it a monumental year for me. All in all I can feel the need to change and Jan's leaving has brought about many. I have found that once a void is created, either by cleaning my closets, my mind or my environment, nature fills it, so I expect the New Year to be as awesome as watching the changing colour of the leaves or listening to the big wind as all the leaves fall. I enjoy raking leaves especially when the morning sun is shining in all her glory. I like change and it is easy for me to let go and let it happen. Over the years I have learned to differentiate between my needs and feelings and what is guidance from a higher source. The difference is subtle.

The front cover photo shows an old portable saw mill that my parents found abandoned at Mile 13 on the Nass Road. They hauled it home to Rosswood behind our truck and used it to cut up logs so they could fit into our wood stove. It usually took two or three men to hoist the large logs up but it was well worth the effort for in those early years Dad didn't own a power saw so this sawmill came in handy. This photo shows Grandad in the forefront and Dad pushing the log into the saw blade. It took lots of time and manpower to keep our cabin heated and food on our table. For the entire first year after we moved into the wilderness, Grandad and his nephew Chuck plus Mom and Dad worked twelve hour days so that we could live. Nobody worked outside of the home until we got settled, then Chuck left and Dad went to work for Columbia Cellulose as a logger. Grandad and Dad continued to hunt, fish and spend time canning or smoking meat on the weekends.

Grandad was 72 years old when he came to live with us. He woke up at 4 am most mornings and got the wood stove and the pot belly heaters going. He kept busy till us kids woke up at around 7 am and then he went back to bed till we left for school. He worked slow and steady, taking three or four naps each day, and going to bed by 8 or 9 pm. He lived until he was 86 years old and died peacefully in his sleep. He was a kind man who didn't speak unless spoken to. He had a daily routine of one cup of coffee followed by one hand-rolled cigarette and a two mile walk.

What I remember of Rosswood was the cold floors. We all had slippers and I wore mine most of the time but still my feet were always cold. One day when I was ten years old. I got to sleep at a friend's house in town. I still have a vivid memory of putting my feet onto the carpet and with a great surprise saying, "Wow, a warm floor." It made getting out of bed so much nicer. As a child I would sometimes forget to keep myself warm, especially if I was having fun skating or playing in the snow. By the time I came inside, I would have to thaw my feet or hands and go through the pins and needles sensations as they got warm.

As a teenager I developed ways to stay warm such as tucking my toes into my knees whenever I sat to eat a meal. Eventually I learned to lie down and go to sleep in a half-lotus position. As an adult living in town we had electricity, I would warm my feet in hot water before jumping into bed. I tried an electric heating pad and even a waterbed for a few months, but soon got rid of them as I realized how they depleted my energy. Years later, I noticed how quickly I warmed up whenever I meditated, when I practised Reiki my hands got hot. I also began to notice how certain thoughts warmed my blood. I learned breathing exercises so I could feel my chi circulating and I eat hot foods most of the year.

During my latest session with Ken, as I breathed into my body and described how I was feeling, I could feel the lack of circulation to my toes. I breathed in deeper, letting go and softening my legs. As I did a deep ache throbbed, as if my legs were still frozen. I visualized the layers releasing the cold energy. When it got too intense I would allow thoughts to come back into my awareness and the pain would recede, but I have started to realize how much tension I still hold in my legs. During this last month I went deeper on my own, staying attentive for as long as I could, but this is not the same as having another person witness what is happening. When I am in Ken's presence I cry easily and that helps to release the old tension and blocks. As I did I started to hiccup and another memory came to the surface. I described to Ken how my Dad stopped my hiccups. He clasped his hand over my mouth and kept it there until I was kicking to get out of his grip. I remember feeling the panic in my chest as I tried to breathe. Finally he let go and my hiccups were gone, but scaring the daylights out of me seemed a bit harsh, so I didn't ask him to do it again. It was interesting to note the memory was still there.

Yesterday as I was doing my breath work, I noticed that my mind wandered as I started thinking of an impending business matter. In less than a minute I brought my mind back to focus on my body, but in that instant my right side tightened and felt colder. I breathed in and let go of the thought and asked my body to release, remembering how tight I used to be. Five years ago I would ask my body to relax and release every two or three minutes. Now when I notice my body tightening I tell myself all is okay and I slow down and breathe. Changing how I react unconsciously is taking time and my sessions with Ken are certainly helping.

Today I can listen to my body as I speak my mind even though sometimes I would prefer to stay silent, especially if the subject is uncomfortable for either of us. It would be easier to agree and give them what they want but I am learning that it is not possible to help everyone, for people have to become responsible for their actions, and if I take away that opportunity, both of us lose. Unless they are ready to learn, they don't accept my input anyway. As I learn to speak my truth I feel lighter and stronger and my hips are shifting into alignment. My head feels more balanced over my spine, rather than my chin jutting forward and my back swaying.

I am looking forward to the year 2000, and by mid-February the Chinese community will be dancing in the streets honouring *The Dragon*. I expect to have lots of opportunity for growth both personally and in business.

May your New Year be as eventful as mine.

Angèle





SEASON'S GREETINGS

from

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We wish you a very Merry Christmas with many blessings and much joy in the New Millennium.

Maicol
Jenmi
Angele
Kyuyn



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10
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ISSUES welcomes articles by local writers. Please keep them to approx. 500-700 words. Advertisers and contributors assume responsibility and liability for the accuracy of their claims.

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A Gift Revealed

by Connie Brummet

People say to me that I have a gift. I think I have always had it - but I haven't always understood it. As a child I could sometimes 'see' things. I have always been a very 'visual' person. I was brought up in a Catholic home so my 'seeing' things wasn't acknowledged. Thank God though, the Catholic Church believed in 'guardian angels'!

I also had a direct link straight to what I call God. I didn't realize that the Bible's way was to talk to Jesus first, and then he would relay your message to God and the Holy Spirit would deliver. Thank-goodness children don't always understand *the way it is supposed to be!*

As I grew up I came to know that God, Buddha, Higher Consciousness and the cow down the street were all the same. The higher power is for the good of all and is helping us to give and receive love; it does not matter what it looks like - to me or to anyone else.

A few years ago I had a 'reality check' when I had to sell my industrial sewing store due to a back problem. A blessing in disguise. From there I took the paths of studying iridology, reflexology, kinesiology, massage and emotional polarity. During these travels I had some amazing, powerful and quite unbelievable experiences (but I'll leave those for another story, another day.....)

From there I stayed closely in touch with my beliefs, intuitive gifts and psychic abilities and I attended studies in psychic reading, seance, automatic writing etc. which gave me the confidence to know my gifts were not directing me to the 'looney bin'.

Now I learn from every person who walks through my door and I get to practice my gifts many times, every day. What I learn I in turn use daily with my clients. For me, if I have a personal issue, I will do automatic writing or meditation with the knowledge of the answer, then I know what needs to be done.

As much as I am a spiritual counsellor, I also make sure I utilize and work with other practitioners who can help me. To be holistically balanced is the key. When we work on each other, we help activate spiritual, emotional, religious, and family issues, etc. I have had to work on clearing my own energy so I could change my life for the better.

Now, when looking at my own weakest points, physically I know I have to change. Emotional, physical, spiritual and mental balance is the key. Focusing on changing the physical component for myself also triggers the emotional-mental balance. If, by using the tools, I have learned, I still can not help myself, then I am guided by spirit to a book, course or another practitioner that will shift my energy to succeed.

When I give, I receive back tenfold. Honesty is the best key and all energy starts with a thought. Make it a positive one since negative thoughts take major energy to change.

Remember that success is not a destination - it is a journey. It is easier flowing downstream than it is to be fighting upstream and if something isn't working for you, see it, feel it, sense it, then ask for guidance to change it.

Wow, life is wonderful!

See ad to the left.



From the Editor...

Chit Chat
with Marcel



What an exciting time to be alive! With the approach of the new millennium, I hear more and more talk about earth changes and the speeding up of the spiritual evolution of mankind. With the increase in the frequency of the earth's energy our lessons are coming to us faster and faster and people's lives are in a constant state of motion and change. In my daily work this is quite evident. Many of the people that I contact each month are commenting on how very busy they are and that they just can't keep up with all that they have to do.

Here at Issues we are also in a state of rapid change. With Jan leaving the end of September, Angèle and I have been sharing her duties with much appreciated help from volunteers. We advertised for a new business partner and had several inquiries. There is one very interested person who is now spending some time working with us so that we can all get to know each other. This relationship appears to hold great promise—a wonderful start for the new millennium.

The new millennium also brings us the tenth anniversary of Issues Magazine in February 2000. It will be ten years since Angèle published the first magazine from her home on McKenzie Street. We have come a long way since then and are very grateful for the success that has brought us to 272 Ellis Street. To celebrate this occasion we would like to hear from our readers. We would like to get to know you better. Please tell us about yourself. Your healing journey or story of personal growth would inspire and encourage others. We will choose three stories to be published in our February Issues and each will win a pass to the Spring Festival of Awareness in April.

In the spirit of more communication with our readers in the new millennium, I would like to hear your suggestions as to the kinds of articles you would like to read in Issues—What subjects interest you the most? We will endeavour to find the people who can supply us with the information you request, and publish their articles. We offer a free one-year subscription for any suggestions we use in the magazine.

With the approach of the Holiday Season, I would like to express a sincere Thank you to all our advertisers. Your valued business and support has been very much appreciated over the past ten years. And to our readers, Thank you for all your kind words and encouragement. Your faithful dedication to Issues makes our efforts feel so worthwhile. Appreciation also to our printers, distributors, contributors of articles and volunteers. Best wishes to all for a very Merry Christmas and may the New Millennium bring you many Blessings and Great Joy.

Marcel

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'A Legend in my own Video'

by Harold Hajime Naka

Living on the fringe has its rewards. For one thing, you are more likely to be accepted for who you are as a person. Try being real in our superficial, dysfunctional, uncompassionate society and you will be treated with indifference, ridiculed and laughed at (but that didn't stop me). People are noticing that I don't move or think like a normal person, (I'm sure QiGong - Tai Ji helped me) but what else would you expect from a Taoist Rebel, Zen Reject and Village Fool?

Another benefit of living on the edge is that you get to meet other nonconformists, eccentrics, Tai Chi Junkies, Born Again Taoists and some really wonderful people (although, I sometimes wonder what they are full of?).

So if you want to have the last laugh, be your selfless self. It's better than being a product of our culture, living in a cultural body, wearing countless layers of cultural strait jackets and masks, acting with cultural politeness and manners, trying to please others and suppressing your own feelings. No wonder so many people are feeling (or non-feeling) unhappy, lonely, depressed, unhealthy, angry and resentful (I know I was).

Now before you start to think that I'm just another angry, insensitive, new age jerk, out to lunch, in denial and in need of serious psycho-therapy. (Have you been reading my mind again?), remember there is a light at the end of the tunnel (and if it turns out to be a headlight from a train - jump off the tracks!).

Fortunately, there is a solution (No it's not Tae Bo). I have found QiGong (Chi Kung) & Tai Ji (Tai Chi) to be an effective self defence against our modern enemies: technology, chemical pollution, time saving gadgets, automobiles and boring repetitive unsatisfying clock based jobs with angry incompetent power hungry bosses (or not having a job).

QiGong - Tai Ji is a non stressful, rejuvenating, ultimate health system using energy Qi (pronounced Chee) to prevent and heal illnesses and injuries while deeply relaxing body and mind. Diligent practice can lead to vital energy, mental serenity, emotional stability and a spiritually enriched life

Over the years I have been asked, "Should I practice QiGong - Tai Ji at home?", "For how long?", "I can't make it to your classes or remember the exercises after I get home so why don't you make a video"? (I thought you'd never ask).

So with a video camera and tripod in hand, I set out to shoot myself. After many hours of shooting, reshooting and editing - I finally realized my fantasy—to be a legend in my own video!

Now you can take me home, plug me in and take off your cultural straight jacket and liberate your body, mind and spirit. I should warn you though, you could get addicted to QiGong - Tai Ji (inhaling Qi) but the side effects of these meditative exercises are vitality, happiness, inner peace and a tension free body (trust me). May the Qi be with you.... See ad ←

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Tension Relief for Computer Users

by Sandra Bradshaw

Ever feel like your fingers were going to permanently cramp up after a few hours of keyboarding or 'mousing'? Here is a short Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement (TM) lesson to loosen up those tense fingers. You will need a tennis ball or equivalent and a flat surface low enough to allow your shoulder to be relaxed when you roll the ball with your hand.

- With the ball on the flat surface, lay your palm on top of the tennis ball and let your hand lightly mould to its shape.
- Roll the ball a little towards your fingers and then back a little towards your wrist keeping the movement slow, gentle and light. Do this several times and let go of any tension in your shoulder or jaw.
- Roll the ball a little to the inside edge of your palm and then a little to the outside edge a few times.
- Roll the ball in a circle around the perimeter of your palm a few times in a clockwise direction and then in a counter-clockwise direction.
- Shake out your hand and repeat on the other side.

And on that note....I think I'll go and take my own good advice and do the lesson myself! See ad to the right

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Natural Herbal Vegetable Soaps

by Klaus Ferlow

Due to popular demand, we would like to introduce you to our program of 100% natural herbal soaps. They are hand-cut, hand-crafted and of the highest quality.

It was our aim from the beginning to create a premium hand-crafted, gentle, naturally pure, all herbal and vegetable based soap. Soap that would clean and moisturize without chemical and synthetic intrusion and leave your skin 'velvety-silky soft'!

Our hand-crafted soaps of Black Caraway, Hemp, Kinder (children's), Neem, Rosa Mosqueta and Tea Tree are made in small batches by a cold process to retain the soap's natural glycerine and its base of premium quality saponified vegetable oils.

MSM powder (an organic sulphur compound derived from the sea) has received much acclaim and was added to our soap for its beneficial effect on skin. MSM counteracts skin aging by supplying the raw materials needed for healthy collagen production. This nutrient feeds skin cells and helps repair damaged skin tissue. MSM also improves the general health of the skin and makes it softer, smoother and more youthful looking.

Soya lecithin, a natural product derived from soybeans is also part of our recipe to add lather and moisturizing abilities. Lecithin exhibits a strong hydrophilic (water absorbing) and lipophilic (fat absorbing) reaction introducing both moisture and fatty elements for your skin which will help prevent dryness and premature wrinkling or aging. Completing the recipe is an organic grapefruit seed extract, used as a natural preservative.

Our soap is hand-cut and wrapped in environmentally friendly tree-free hemp paper. The subleness of natural color, shape, scent, texture and packaging reminds us that the simplest of pleasures are often the finest.

The appeal of this quiet useful art drew us in; the satisfaction of self-reliance keeps us involved; and the spirit of wonder drives us forward.

All soaps have the following ingredients - purified water, saponified oil, pomace olive oil, palm kernel, cocoa butter, soya lecithin, sweet almond and organic grapefruit seed extract.

In addition to the above:

Hemp Soap has coconut, MSM, and natural fragrance. (no essential oils added)

Neem Tree Soap has neem leaf powder, MSM, and essential oils of sweet orange, patchouli and vanilla.

Rosa Mosqueta Soap has MSM and essential oils of lavender, patchouli and sweet orange.

Black Caraway Soap has the essential oils of eucalyptus, fennel, peppermint and rosemary.

Tea Tree Soap carries the essential oils of the tea tree, lavender and patchouli.

Kinder(Children's) Soap is infused with calendula oil or baby fragrance oil or unscented as an alternative.

To keep the soaps from going mushy, always use a water draining soap dish. This will give the soap a long life. We also offer other Hemp, Neem, Rosa Mosqueta, Black Caraway and Tea Tree products in our program. See ad to the left.

The Disposable Habit

by Laura Plant

My friend Lisa opened her medicine cabinet and produced a strange-looking rubber thing. "It's a menstrual cup," she explained.

This five centimetre long brown cone was like an egg cup gone wrong. It had been developed over 40 years ago and was made of natural rubber, not bleached cotton, like commercial tampons.

"It can be worn longer than tampons. It's easily rinsed and re-used," Lisa explained. "there's no waste created, and I'm no longer contributing to the billions of sanitary pads disposed in landfills every year."

Lisa noted that by not buying tampons every month she was saving at least \$1,500 over a lifetime. Her argument was convincing, but to me, the idea of washing out a blood-filled cup several times a day was gross.

A few weeks went by and I thought about the idea of changing a disposable habit I have had since puberty. It is so easy to just flush away my period every month and not have to think about the ramifications. But I decided I was ready to put my environmental beliefs into action. I ordered a menstrual cup. It took a bit of practice and some getting used to, but after a few months I was converted.

Tampon Trash

Two years later I found myself in Massachusetts as a Master's student of a unique graduate school program. The Environmental Education program consisted of approximately 20 students who camped outdoors every night, studying ecosystems first hand. This program gave me the opportunity to educate myself and others about environmental issues, and I knew almost immediately what my cause would be. I initially felt uncomfortable talking about the menstrual cup to my school colleagues as I was worried they might react exactly the way I did when I was introduced to the idea.

One night my tent mate Suzanna and I talked about the needless garbage tampons created: the cardboard tampon box, the individually wrapped tampon applicators and the tampon it-

self. I convinced her of the merits of my favourite rubber cup: no packaging, no waste, 10-year life expectancy, a three-month money back guarantee. She ordered one the next day. I was relieved at her reaction--this encouraged us to educate our whole school groups.

We began to talk to other women about the idea of a reusable menstrual cup to reduce waste and avoid harmful chemicals, but not everyone bought our argument. We designed an informational display that would house research articles and information—our fellow students could examine the issue at their own speed.

We spent a lot of time researching tampons and we discovered some disturbing facts: for example, the US Food and Drug Administration required tampon makers to reduce absorbency levels due to an extreme number of Toxic Shock Syndrome cases. A study in 1980 found that tampon fibres can get embedded in the vaginal membrane and may be linked to increases in cervical cancer. Tampon applicators were washing up on local beaches, causing not only unsightly litter (known as beach whistles), but also creating havoc for wildlife. Objects were being swallowed by sea animals, who were mistaking the plastic for food.

As we walked along the ocean's edge, a Cape Cod National Seashore, we scanned the seaweed that clumped in piles on the sand. Scouring this one tiny stretch of coastline over a 15 minute period, we found 11 tampon applicators and stored them in a plastic sandwich bag. The first few finds were sporadic, almost exciting. But after finding so much waste on such a short stretch of deserted beach, we felt a real shock. Multiplying the 11 applicators by the thousands of kilometres of beach on the Atlantic coast painted a nightmare of plastic in our minds. We added the new evidence to the board.

Here was the proof. Thousands of acres of trees being wasted; a toxic chemical (chlorine) passing into the natural environment and then into our bodies before being reintroduced to our sewer systems, all of it eventually flush-

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ing into the oceans. Nearly every North American woman uses 10,000 chlorine bleached tampons or pads during her lifetime.

Slowly the word spread about the menstrual cup. The women began to want details. We had information sessions where we showed the cup and answered questions. Yes, it does take a while to learn to use it. Yes, you can wear it as long as it takes to fill the cup, but this varies per person. Yes, the initial cost is more than a box of tampons, but it has a life expectancy of 10 years, and you no longer have to spend money on tampons. It is even great for back country hiking trips if you have access to water to rinse it.

Laura J. Plant has her Masters degree in Environmental Education. Reprinted from Alive magazine #202, Aug. 99.



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The Healing Circle of Light

by Sue Peters

*We are all one, standing in your
Light, Great Spirit, your Light like the
golden Sun. I give thanks.*

Ruby Plenty Chiefs

I have had the wonderful experience
of working, playing and sharing with a
group of incredible healers. I met these
people several years ago when I worked
as a family support worker and alterna-
tive healer at a Women's Aboriginal
Healing Center, in Victoria. I was faci-
ilitating a healing circle and giving Reiki
treatments. One woman participating in
the circle expressed an interest in learn-
ing Reiki and she invited me to her home
to share in the healing.

This invitation opened the doors into
the greater community of the
Pauquachin Nation. I eventually began
teaching Reiki and some other healing
modalities to a group of healers from the
community. Within a short time, we
started weekly healing sessions for the
Pauquachin community. Soon, trust was
developed and the people were so re-
ceptive! It was becoming a social event
of the community!

We also created a powerful healing
circle. It combined prayer, long distant
healing in Reiki, Hawaiian Huna, tradi-
tional Native American healing, Shaker
and some healing methods from the
Mystery schools. It was so effective that
violence was successfully eliminated
from parts of the community. Whoever
we directed our healing too, felt the re-
lief and joy of the energy. There was a
pack of mean, snarling dogs that used
to terrorize the people, so we put them
in our circle and within a very short time,
peace returned to the hearts of the dogs
and all was well again for everyone. We
began to call ourselves the Inter-tribal
Healing Circle or sometimes (as one
zany elder suggested) the "Block
Busters", and we worked to assist in the
healing of individuals, families, commu-
nities and Nations. Our healing circle

started with smudging, prayers, a talk-
ing circle, the naming of those individu-
als that needed the healing and then the
healing ceremony itself.

Communities that we visited could
feel the warmth and the powerful energy
flowing from our hearts. Where ever we
had directed the energies, the combined
forces of Creator, Spirit, Intention and
Love brought about successful results.
Although the Healing Circle is located
on Vancouver Island, we are always ex-
panding, and we are looking for those
individuals who are sincere in their de-
sire to assist in the healing, the strength-
ening, the realigning of Spirit. If you are
interested in joining our circle, please let
me know, or if your community is desir-
ing change, listen to what one member
of our Circle said, "Should your Band or
Nation choose this direction, they will
also benefit as our band has. The
Pauquachin community was in a great
deal of turmoil and through prayer, Reiki,
Hawaiian Huna, healing circles and
counseling, there has been a great
turnaround. People are no longer
enemies, but friends and family again."

"The great Indian prophets of Na-
tive America all spoke of a time when
the people of the four races and the four
directions would join together at the Tree
of Life, at the center, to become as one
Nation. Many believe this period is be-
ginning now. The period of purification
is the final test of readiness for those
who do, and they will perform the work
necessary to bring the Nations together."

*Come join us as we make the Circle strong!
Every tiny spark of Light creates greater
Light. Every tiny spark of love creates
greater Love in the world. What you are
doing is far greater than you realize. You
are generating more Light, Love and
Power in the world by your right and posi-
tive attitude. Do it Constantly! Do it Con-
sciously! - Eileen Candy*

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*We are all one,
standing in your Light, Great Spirit*



Hold On To Your Hats!

by Marilyn Evans

Are your mental, physical, emotional and spiritual vehicles tuned up for the ride of your life? As you read these words, we are experiencing an unprecedented shift in planetary consciousness. Everything is in fast forward; and we need tools to adjust our vehicles in this incredible acceleration.

These are some tools that have been helpful to me in my journey. If you don't know how to apply them, there are many good self-help manuals or consciousness 'mechanics' who offer classes, seminars and healing techniques in this magazine and elsewhere.

- Inner Wisdom -- Take the time to quieten your mind and go inside. Learn to ask for inner guidance, trust that an answer will come, listen to what you receive and act on it. You are your own best teacher and healer. Give your power away to no one or nothing outside yourself.

- Grounding and Protection -- This exercise is helpful at many levels. It will keep you grounded and protected and will heal all that comes in contact with you. It consolidates your energy and allows you to be an 'eye' in the center of a hurricane...

... "Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Imagine a 3 inch root connecting from the bottom of your spine that moves down through the earth and attaches securely to the center of the earth. Now imagine a 1 inch root connecting from the bottom of the foot, that moves down through the earth and attaches securely to the center of the earth. Up through these roots comes loving Mother Earth energy that moves up through your body, filling your legs, hips, torso, chest, shoulders, into your arms to the end of your fingertips and into your neck and head. Connect now to a star about 4 feet above your head that shines golden-white God-Father light down through the top of your head filling your entire body and mixing in perfect balance with the Mother Earth energy. Your body is now entirely filled with a perfect balance of these two energies. This energy expands three feet around in every direction forming a protective cocoon around you. Now envision a 3-5 inch ring of radiant green light that surrounds the cocoon. Take a few deep breaths and when you are ready - open your eyes. Do this first thing in the morning. Replenish it whenever you feel ungrounded or shaky".



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- Emotional Clearing -- Emotions have been given to us as a precious gift on our earth journey. However, most of us have been taught to repress our feelings; so they remain in our subconscious mind ruling our reactions and choices. If they are not released, the acceleration of energy will not move through these blocks; and this will cause depression, anxiety,

disillusionment, physical illness and spiritual crises (often referred to as 'Dark Night of the Soul'.) A book that offers incredibly effective methods to release emotions is "The Twelve Stages of Healing - A Network Approach to Wholeness" by Donald M. Epstein. Rebirthing, rolfing, Feldenkrais and other forms of body work that release emotions on a physical and cellular level are also very helpful.

- Live in the Moment -- This is where our power lies. We have free will in each moment to choose where we will focus our attention; and consequently, what we will create in our lives. If we focus our attention on worry and fear we will draw experiences to us that reflect that.

- Love and Compassion -- This is the key to everything. Ask spirit to fill you up with unconditional love for even 15 seconds, then open to the energy of this love. Continue to invite more and more of this into your energy field and share it with others. However you must accept it for yourself first.

As a humanity, we are embarking on the journey of a lifetime - a Grand Adventure - and as the Boy Scouts say, "Be Prepared". I will leave you with these words that speak for themselves...

*The flowers and stars will dance in celebration
of your Majesty.*

*When you, my child, return to your eternal
home with Me.*

Less than a whisper away!

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Conscious Spirituality

by Yvonne Davidson

"I didn't know there was a group of people who feel the same way I do!" This is the most common remark we, at the Kelowna Centre for Positive Living, hear from newcomers. We are all seekers and know that sharing our journey with like-minded people is truly a joy and an acceleration of our own growth. The vision statement of Religious Science is: "Awakening Humanity to its Spiritual Magnificence"

I was asked to write an article on Religious Science as I am a Licensed Religious Scientist Practitioner and have been involved in the organization for twenty years. Walking in the door of the Vancouver Religious Science Centre for the first time definitely had the feeling of 'coming home'. Here were people who talked, laughed and were obviously practicing their spiritual beliefs right here and right now. After attending classes I realized that here was the operator's manual for my life. The thing I had been seeking all the years before. Every day in conversation, I am asked about my beliefs and my 'religion/philosophy,' so in the space I have perhaps I can briefly touch on some of the most frequently asked questions.

Q. Is this a cult and are you connected with Scientology?

A. No, neither are we Christian Science. Religious Science was founded in 1926 by Dr. Ernest Holmes. The Teachings are called the Science of Mind. Religious Science exists to facilitate the reawakening of each individual's awareness of the higher Self.

Q. Do you consider yourselves Christians?

A. We believe that the teacher Jesus came to show us each the way of the Christ [enlightenment], but in the traditional sense we do not consider ourselves Christian because we do not claim the man Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

Q. Do you believe in God and the Devil?

A. We believe God is the One Power [Energy] for Good in the Universe. Duality is a belief in two separate and opposing powers, therefore the 'devil', evil and hell do not exist except as conditions of our thinking. Anything unlike goodness is an experience of the soul on its journey towards awakening to the Ultimate Reality. God is all that we see and all that we do not see.

Q. Do you believe in Doctors and Medicine?

A. We believe that God is omnipresent and can therefore do its healing work in many ways. As dis-ease is simply an effect of wrong thinking, to the degree we become more aware of the true presence of God at the very center of our being, inner peace will be the result and perfect health our natural condition. Our Ministers, Rev. Kenn and Rev. Deborah Gordon both grew up in Kelowna and are respected members of the community. We also have Licensed Practitioners who work with Treatment [Affirmative Prayer] in order to assist clients who are experiencing challenges in their lives.

See ad in the Ongoing Events, page 27

North Eastern Winds

by Lorna Richard

My spiritual journey began the day I was born, just like everyone else on this planet. As my friend Bernice recently reminded me: "We are all spiritual beings having a human experience and we are born into this experience". I grew up in a small town called Houston, B.C. Even as a small child I was very much in tune with nature and found beauty all around me and appreciated this beauty. It was because of my parents that my spirit was able to flow freely. Even though they brought me up going to church, they were both very open minded and raised me to have a positive attitude towards myself and others. My mother shared with me that which her father shared with her which is: "Religious Orientation is like a house with many windows, and the house is God, yet each window that you look into you get a slightly different view." We need to stop labelling the windows and see into all the windows from all perspectives and see the wholeness of GOD and the wholeness of who we are. I was always a very curious child, intrigued by churches, and throughout my childhood I eventually went to almost all of the churches in Houston. I was searching, trying to see why the United Church was called "The United Church," and why the Anglican Church was called "The Anglican Church." My observation was that they were all very similar with one main view: Live in Jesus, follow God, love yourself and love others. As I grew older I found that I didn't have to go to a church to have a connection with God. I eventually stopped going to church. In my early teens my mother introduced me to Transcendental Meditation, and I found much peace in it. Yet, there were guidelines that one was to follow in this meditation and I eventually let it go. I see now that the meditation I was instructed in was not what Maharishi Yogi had intended. *There is only freedom in Meditation.*

I met my husband Paul and was immediately drawn to him, it was "Love at First Sight." I see now that our spiritual paths were parallel and we were to help each other. Since meeting B.J. and going to the workshops and having channelling sessions, my journey's path has opened up, and "my blinders have come off and I can see clearly now." I can see now, how I am to help people on their life's path. Paul has shared with me: *"Life is like a puzzle and each of our experiences is a piece to this puzzle."* I am so very thankful that the pieces of my puzzle, "my life," have come together with such grace and I can see the picture emerging. With the help of *Maye*, B.J. and Paul, I have come into the knowing of what and who I am. I see now what it is that I am to share with people. I am now fully exposed to the feminine energy, the time is right, and with the help of my family I am now able to begin my life's work. I have been instructed by spirit "*Maye*" to share "The Freedom of Love" with people and to help me do this I will be sharing a meditation which I shall call "The Connection of Love."



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My husband, Paul Richard was born in Manitoba to a family with an Ojibwa background of healing. Grandparents on both sides of Paul's family were Medicine People. Paul was told at a very young age that he would be doing "Medicine Work." In his grandparents' day, the ways of traditional medicine work were shrouded in secrecy and mysticism. Rather than use the old ways Paul prefers to share with the participants - for the more knowledge he shares, the more knowledge expands and comes back to him. He was always aware of his inner voice. When he was in his mid-twenties he began exploring his spiritual journey and working with himself. After meeting B.J., their journey's path cemented and the two of them began working together. Paul channels information relevant to each participant, this information could be based on the physical, emotional or spiritual, and depends on each individual and what they want to hear reflected back to them.

Bjorn (B.J.) Mosebye is clairvoyant and a spiritual medium. A medium is a person who can communicate with the Spirit World and has direct contact with those who have passed into Spirit. He was born in Norway to a family with a history of mediumship; one of his aunts was a medium for the royal family. When he was just a boy, it was this aunt that foretold that he would one day go to Canada and meet "a brother" - a native with whom he would walk on a spiritual path. B.J. met Maharishi Yogi when he was about six years old. He then became aware of Universal Energy when he was around 10 years old. This over all energy, he called *Maye*. A feeling of joy and calmness would be the best way to describe how it feels to watch him channel. During the workshops, *Maye* presents a topic that is absolutely fascinating for the group. As a participant you can expect a wide scope of incredible experiences spanning from joy and laughter to being able to feel yourself traveling through different realities. You will feel at one with yourself and everything around you.

B.J. and Paul grew up on different sides of the world, in different cultures - but they were destined to work together. B.J. had been channelling and doing workshops for many years and Paul was already seeing and helping people on an individual basis in his home. In their coming together "THE NORTH EASTERN WINDS INNER GROWTH WORKSHOP" emerged. Their spiritual gifts complement each other. In combining their energy they create an atmosphere of love and integrity beneficial for all.

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Healing Journey Takes Us from Despair to Hope to Joy

by Cathy Fenwick

A few weeks ago I got the following message on my website from a young man in Philadelphia; his remarks are legitimate and I responded. *"I recently had the painful experience of watching my mother die from cancer. I do not think there is anything funny about that. I found your website and can't really figure out where you are coming from with this positive attitude perspective."*

I am very sorry for your loss. You are understandably distressed and perhaps angry at the thought that someone could laugh at such a time. Of course dying from cancer is not something to laugh about and watching someone we love die is very painful. What you have described is something I've thought about a lot because there is some danger in the 'healing with humour' model. Healing humour and positive attitude is about timing; there is a time for tears and a time for laughter. When we focus on the pain, loss and sadness, we can miss out on the gifts.

Life is a series of beginnings and endings, comings and goings, losses and gains. How we handle these inevitable changes affects our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Life does not cease to be funny when something bad happens any more than it ceases to be serious when we are laughing. Positive attitude does not guarantee survival, although there is some evidence that it facilitates healing. Most certainly a positive attitude will affect the quality of your life. People who feel positive and hopeful are happier than those who feel hopeless. In living our lives to the fullest we do not go directly from tragedy to joy. There is a healing process that we go through. This healing process isn't just about joy and laughter, it is also about grieving with lots of anger, sadness and tears. Sadness and joy are two sides of the coin of life, both are methods of externalizing our emotions.

People have many different perspectives on the notion of positive attitude. I have heard everything from, 'positive attitude is naive' to 'positive attitude is everything.' Most of us have felt like this at different times in our lives, depending on what's happening. Life is a process, we never really get to perfection. Bad things happen in life and when they do our responses range from despair, anger, hope, acceptance, joy and back again. Healing is complex; positive attitude helps us to heal. The healing journey takes us from despair to hope to joy. If laughter is the currency of hope, then a healthy humour attitude is necessary for the journey. A study done by Dacher Keltner, a psychologist at the University of California, Berkley, analysed 40 adults whose spouses had recently died. Those who were able to express some joy and laughter as they grieved, functioned better two years after their loss. Showing signs of happiness during grief is not necessarily a form of denial.

There are dangers in the positive attitude, healing with humour, model I so often speak and write about. Sometimes people translate this into not allowing themselves, or others, to feel the full range of emotions or they may blame themselves if it 'doesn't work.' Denial and blame are not helpful to the healing process. When we experience great loss we must allow ourselves to feel sad, anxious, angry and uncer-

tain. We do not help ourselves by putting on the brave face of denial. Of course, the numbness of denial is good in the beginning, but it is not to our benefit to get stuck in a state of denial. What's worse is when people want to block our feelings and not allow us to show our grief. This is an unfortunate game of, 'I'll pretend everything is OK and get on with my life', before we have a chance to fully grieve our loss. When we do not acknowledge and deal with these emotions, they interfere with our ability to heal. We feel more in control of our lives when we are hopeful and positive while acknowledging the full range of emotions. True joy and humour comes out of facing our grief with all of its components. First we cry, then we laugh.

My other concern about positive attitude and laughter is that if it 'doesn't work' then what? People who believe that a positive attitude is sufficient for recovery may blame themselves if their disease gets worse. They might say things like, 'If only I had a Better attitude' or 'I just didn't have enough faith or courage.' A healthy humour attitude is necessary, but it is not necessarily sufficient for physical healing. Those who think positively, while still dealing with their natural anxieties about an uncertain future, are often happier people and have a better quality of life.

I do not say that laughter cures cancer or anything else, but the work of Norman Cousins, Bernie Siegel, Lawrence LeShan and many others suggests that positive attitude and laughter can influence our health by helping to reduce stress and boost our body's internal healing mechanisms. Positive attitude and humour do not guarantee survival, but they do facilitate emotional, spiritual and physical healing. I am a nine-year survivor of cancer. If my cancer comes back I will not blame myself by saying that I didn't laugh enough or that my attitude was not right. I want my positive attitude and my sense of humour to help me through the pain and grief, to give me courage to face the loss and to experience life to the full, today. I want my attitude to help me find inner peace.

Someone said to me the other day, 'Hope is everything.' I believe that where there's laughter, there's hope, and when we have hope we meet life with courage, dignity and joy. When we heal emotionally and spiritually, we are able to find our joy and laughter amidst the sorrow.

Do you believe that hope and humour are essential to healing? Please write to Cathy at ISSUES Magazine and share an experience or a story about hope, humour and healing.

Cathy Fenwick is an author, educator, consultant and cancer survivor. She develops and delivers workshops and keynotes on how to get more healthy humour into your life and your work. Her books include: *Healing with Humour*, *Telling My Sister's Story*, *Workscapes* and *Building Bridges*. You can check out Cathy's website at www.2saskweb.com/healinghumour/



We Sleep with Llamas!

by Kathleen Allen

What do you do with 500 pounds of llama wool harvested every year? That was the question facing my husband and me almost three years ago, after we sheared our llamas in the spring. We operate Crescent Moon Ranch in the Joe Rich Valley, east of Kelowna and have about 130 of the spoiled critters.

The wool from llamas and alpacas is traditionally used to make yarn, fabrics for coats and suits, rugs, blankets and rope. Their wool is remarkably strong, light and warm, sheds rain and snow, and comes in an array of natural colors. Knowing the benefits of wool, we wondered if we could make it into duvets.

We had the fiber carded into batts at a small woolen mill. Then we began making duvets with our batts and all the relatives got one, then all the friends, and so on. The positive feedback we were getting about our duvets made us stop and think that this was a product that many people would be interested in. Thus, Crescent Moon Duvets was born.

We have been manufacturing alpaca/llama wool duvets, mattress overlays and pillows in the Okanagan for almost two years. Our wool is produced by our own herd of llamas and by other Canadian breeders. The alpaca and llama wool used in our products is organically grown and processed without chemicals, dyes or bleaches. We take pride in producing a natural, environmentally friendly product, using 100% renewable resources. Unlike the source of down, the source of alpaca and llama wool lives on.

Alpaca and llama wool gives you a dry, comfortable night's sleep. Each single fiber of wool has a hollow core and looks like a hair whose surface is covered with overlapping scales, like the shingles of a house. This creates millions of air pockets to trap warmth and allows the fiber to absorb body moisture and then diffuse it into the air. Synthetic bedding will only absorb 4% (or less) of its weight in moisture while wool will absorb up to 30% without feeling clammy. That's how wool creates a natural comfort zone of dry, warm air around your body. And unlike down, which will shift into corners and bunch when wet, wool fill stays fluffy and evenly plump without uneven cold spots.

There is nothing more frustrating than having a good night's sleep ruined by sneezing, coughing, and wheezing caused by bedroom allergies. According to the latest research, the dust mite has been found to be one of the most common causes of asthma and allergies in the bedroom. The alpaca and llama wool doesn't provide dust mites a place to live. Its dry, porous nature prevents dust mites and other allergens from settling in.

How many times have you stopped to think about the bed you sleep in and how it can affect your health? Our clients are telling us that breathing difficulties, asthma, allergies, bronchitis, rhinitis are all alleviated when synthetic fibers, molds and mites are removed.

Do you suffer from arthritis pain, diabetes, pain of lower limbs, or fibromyalgia? An alpaca wool mattress overlay would help you sleep through the night by relieving pressure on painful muscles and joints.

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want to give an alpaca wool sleep set a try. We have seen a definite trend towards this type of product. More and more people are now seeing the benefits of sleeping with wool and are choosing it over down or synthetics. We have found that sleeping with our alpaca/llama wool duvet, mattress overlay and pillows gives us a warm, comfortable, uninterrupted night's sleep. Try it, you won't want to get out of bed!! See ad below.

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Astrological

for December

The December picture is focused primarily on finding a healing path into a new paradigm. We must acknowledge the abundance of gifts we possess and the ability to change the course of human history. Jupiter in Aries over amps the agendas! This is probably a good thing but look out for excesses. In particular people with a mission that can not tolerate anyone interfering with their objectives.

The Sagittarius New Moon is at 2:32 pm on December 7th. The Moon cycle starting today places emphasis on our social contract. The world you live in is a 'story'. The story is arrived at through consensus, the moral imperative of a society. Once a year each one of us has an opportunity to change that story. The highlighted degree symbolism is 'Sea Gulls watching a ship'. The keyword is Alertness. Pick the right boat and don't be afraid of jumping ship!

The second week of December the pace of life picks up. Mercury leaves Scorpio for the fresh new horizons of Sagittarius, while Mars, the symbol of intentional self, will gain on Uranus, the symbol of revolutionary change. I would expect as we come to the conjunction of Mars to Uranus (December 14) we may feel like the pedal controlling the speed of life is jammed to the floor! There is great potential for evolutionary change, otherwise we head into wasteful action/violence.

Jupiter stations on the 20th and will dominate the third week of December. Our social contract comes out of review and forward momentum resumes. The review began in August with societies handling of resources. How well are we managing our resources so that our collective survival is assured? The focus shifted in October to 'intention'. What is the intention behind our social contract? The current shift in the social contract will set the tone for the next century! The 21st is the winter solstice. I would recommend meditating on the degree symbolism highlighted by Jupiter, on December 20th, 'A man/woman possessed with more gifts than he/she can hold'. What social contract do you want to sign up for????

The Full Moon in Cancer/Capricorn on the 22th is at 9:31 am. We shed the light of awareness on our ability to act in disciplined and concentrated ways, thus harnessing the passion of our vision. The danger here lies in excesses. The highlighted degree symbolism* 'An indigenous chief claims power from the assembled tribe', and the keyword is Inflexibility. Relationships that operate counter to this agenda can be terminated with the awareness brought about at this time.

In the days leading up to Xmas, excesses can be expected. Christmas itself has Neptune overtones bringing in some spiritual dimension, but the fervour of the millennium takes hold on Boxing Day. The mood shifts with the exact conjunction between Pluto our evolutionary challenges and Chiron the wounded healer. The symbolism for this conjunction speaks to the power of the collective will. 'A flag turns into an eagle which crows' Our ideals turn into the spiritual will and power to raise us all to new heights, then the eagle crows to announce the dawn of a new era! The conjunction calls for a healing of separating world views, so we are united in one story/belief that can take us into the future.

* taken from 'The Sabian Symbols' by Marc Edmund Jones

Forecast

by
Moreen Reed
for January

The dawn of a new era... hmmm, I predict the biggest and most widespread hangover on the planet. Y2K will probably demonstrate just how big the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' has become. Astrologically, the symbolism reflected in the heavens on January 1 2000 highlights the following themes: Saturn in Taurus, stewardship as the leading edge of our maturity, Uranus in Aquarius is demanding we affirm our personal truth as the best agent of change, Neptune in Aquarius is reminding us of ageless spiritual awareness like 'everything changes yet nothing changes.' Pluto's message of evolution in Sagittarius is 'can we embrace new paradigms?'

The month of January itself will be heady for those who are able to indulge in play; winter vacations are very favoured. This is a month for bold action, don't wait for assurances, guarantees or you'll miss the boat. People who lack personal humility will not fare well this month or next. Those shouting, "Me, me, me," will be ignored!

The Capricorn New Moon is at 10:14 am on January 6th. The first new moon cycle of the year is looking to establish balance between the mental and physical aspects of life. Social agendas set in motion today carry the stamp of sound common sense and creative flare. The highlighted degree symbolism is 'Boys and girls in gymnasium suits.*' The keyword is Animation. Saturn brings us all back to reality with his station on January 11. Saturn turns direct bringing the current cycle of reality in for its final test. Issues of maturity you faced in May to August of 1999 will be back. You can expect closure by mid April. The need for action will dominate the middle of the month. Communicate intention or make announcements by January 15th. Set the wheels in motion no later than January 17th. The fearful will feel run over by the 18th and be in full crisis by the 19th. Trust that if you make the first step the second step will reveal itself.

The Full Moon in Leo/Aquarius on the 20th at 8:40 pm is the first eclipse of the new year. The Eclipse picture holds sway for the next 6 months. The transcendent nature of life is highlighted as well as any fears that drive our social intentions. Courageous action symbolized by the fool's card in the Tarot is also there. We need to shed the light of our awareness on social structure, and personally on our position in society. What is the goal of social structure? What is the potential inherent in the archetype of humanity? What is your position/gift to the collective? The highlighted degree symbolism* 'An old adobe mission', and the keyword is Durability. Can you tap into the spirit of life energy to bring healing hope to those caught in our collective karmic shadows?

Relationships will dominate the last 10 days of the month. Venus will move into Capricorn on the 24th and while here will put focus on interaction in structured relationships, parent/child, boss/employee, government agency/the people etc... Boundaries and responsibility are the main themes. Mercury will bring much needed objectivity and creative genius to all areas of life as he makes his way through Aquarius. The month ends on a sober note, Saturn's concern for stewardship is brought sharply into focus on the 30th.

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It's All About Resonance

by Cassie Williams, Ph.D.

Resonance is a type of vibration, where items/tissues of different densities will exhibit different vibrational patterns.

After talking to my friend and colleague June Hope, about how we as beings seemed to be responding to resonances reaching us from the cosmos, we both realized that many of our clients were experiencing similar things, in particular irritations of different nerves. June got ambitious and put information on the net, and she has received some interesting feedback (see June's article this issue).

The night after talking to June, I had a very vivid dream which provided information regarding all this. In the dream I found myself where there were ancient, possibly Incan designs engraved onto flat stones. My body seemed to be in tune with its surroundings, I laid on the ground, sensing the internal vibrations of the earth; I heard wondrous music and felt it resonate within me. I could feel the earth's heartbeat.

"RESONANCE! That's the key," I exclaimed to June (who was in the dream). "That's it!" And within the outline of the man engraved on the stone, there was a glowing, a resonance coming from it to confirm my new found insight. This seems to be the key to how we are all now trying to readjust our bodies to the frequencies of the new millennium.

Prophecies about our present time from the native traditions (Incan, Hopi, etc.), from Nostradamus and more recently from Michaelle Small Wright and Greg Braden, all describe the end of the old millennium and the start of the new one as times when those resonances of the Mother Earth and around us change considerably. In the past few months people have experienced all sorts of discomfort and flu-like symptoms, aggravated nerves, etc.

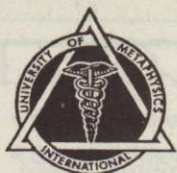
Both June and I noticed an increase of clients with the same symptoms, especially nerve irritation. At first it was sciatica, inflammation of the sciatic nerve going down the back of the leg. Next, it was irritation at the solar plexus, manifesting as stomach ulcers, hiatal hernias and the like. The vagus nerve, which exits the head at the cranial base, has two major branches down the front and back of the esophagus within the thoracic rib cage. This nerve was labeled the wanderer or the vine, because of its numerous branches to the voice box, windpipe, esophagus, heart, lungs, stomach, small intestine, duodenum, liver, gall bladder, pancreas, ascending

colon, cecum, and appendix. When irritated, it can affect the voice, sense of taste, can cause heart palpitations, baby colic, indigestion, and lung irritation, to name a few effects. This nerve in Esoteric Healing (at the soul level) is called 'our antenna to the cosmos'.

From this perspective, the lower three chakras below the diaphragm represent our ego development and our healthy grounding to Mother Earth. Above the diaphragm the upper chakras, representing the soul and spiritual development, are more difficult for some of us to open; most people now are working to do so, hence the 'epidemics' of heart disease, lung diseases, and breast cancer.

Sciatica, so common among clients in late summer/early fall, relates to our grounding to the Mother Earth. The new resonances are forcing us to be grounded, or be in a lot of pain. Others have difficulties making the esoteric leap from the lower chakras (i.e. the ego) to the upper ones (the soul) above the diaphragm, and exhibit stomach and/or esophageal problems, heart palpitations and/or restricted lungs. When releasing these nerves and organs of the body, people feel much better.

It's not only people that are feeling this. So is Mother Earth. We are but microcosms mirroring and reflecting Her, the macrocosm. Animals also are feeling the change, and plants too. These times are challenging for all beings, and that includes the being of Mother Earth or Gaia. In order to live during times of changing vibrations, our bodies must adjust to those increased frequencies. Likewise animals and plants are undergoing similar transitions. Have you noticed how different tree colours are this fall? Even trees of the same species have dropped their leaves at different times and of different colours. Michaelle Small Wright mentions how we need to have cranial work done to assist our bodies with these changes; I think we need to add visceral work to this. Now we need to heed the new resonances that the cosmos is sending us, so that we can respond with joy. Indeed we are all changing! See ad below.



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Cassie travels to Penticton's Holistic Health Centre once a month. If you would like an appointment phone 492-5371

Earth Energy Changes are Affecting our Bodies

by June Hope

Hasn't this been some summer?????!!!!!! In June I began to notice that many of the people that came to me were going through a lot of dramas; old stuff that they thought they had resolved. I did too. I got stuck back in blame, scarcity, and regret and that was depressing. I'm a Reiki Master, I know better. Hah, I still have things to work on just like everyone else. I decided to get busy on "the net" and see what I could find out. I arrived at the information about the energy shift in alignment of all the planets on August 11th, and that was just the beginning. Once I started asking I began to find information everywhere. The magnetic grid of the earth is changing, the earth is evolving and we are all expected to keep up. We are to hold ourselves and others with LOVE. We are to clear up old issues and let go of our fears. We are to TRUST.

So that information helped me and I got through the rest of the summer quite well, and then we moved into another phase. Body aches and pains appeared for no obvious reason. Cassie Williams and I work together once a month here in Princeton and we began to compare notes on recurring themes. Nerves feel jangled, sciatic nerve pain, vagus nerve problems, (which can affect heart, lungs, intestines etc.), depression. A lot of cranial base work needs to be done. Lungs are tight causing shoulder pain. I had shoulder pain, then sciatic pain and then I started having heart flutters. The heart flutters were the strongest on the night of the full moon which caused me to believe that it was energy related, but just to be on the safe side I went to a doctor and, yes, my heart is fine. Some people came with problems that I can usually handle easily, I cleared it and they felt good for a day and then it came back. So I decided to start an email loop describing the symptoms I was seeing and asking people to send me their experiences. WOW it fits, I got back the full range, including depression so bad that suicide was contemplated, (this from a motivational speaker!). Another person described hot flashes that would feel like a flu was coming on, yet the cold or flu would never manifest. Difficulty staying grounded was another symptom. I have had a couple of close accidents because I wasn't paying attention. So now when I drive I make sure I am grounded before I start.

There seems to be a 'collective breath holding' concerning Y2K. It is like there is a mental virus going around and we have to decide if we are going to have it or not. So everyone take a deep breath! It's OK. The planet is evolving, we are evolving. When things get tough for you, ask your angels to please adjust the vibration so it is more comfortable for you (they can't help if you don't ask) and take care of yourself. Have some energy work done and have your practitioner ask for your energy to be adjusted. Laugh! Get some good belly laughs in, it is good for your whole lymph system. This is an amazing time we live in, it is the journey that is to be enjoyed, not the destination. Live in the Present Moment. Practice Peace in Every Step. Resonate.

See Cassie Williams ad and story on the opposite page

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STOP SMOKING

by Tracy Lambeth

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What Shocking Ingredients are Lurking in Your Home?

by Laurie Chubb

Every day you take care of them, love them and pray they stay out of harm's way.....Yet, like most parents, you probably don't know that every day you douse them (and yourself) with the same harmful, corrosive ingredients found in brake fluid, engine degreasers and anti-freeze. Soaps, shampoos, tooth pastes, bubble baths, lotions and cosmetics are loaded with such chemicals.

The alarming fact is that in 1938, when the FDA grandfathered these ingredients as safe, no studies were done on long term use of products with so-called acceptable amounts of these ingredients. It is NOW known that these ingredients do get into our bodies through intended use.

Which ingredients are we talking about? Sodium Lauryl (or Laureth) Sulfate (SLF), Propylene Glycol, DEA or Cocamide/Lauramide DEA, to mention a few.

Dr. Samuel Epstein, M.D., Professor of Environmental Medicine at the University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health and co-author of the "Safe Shoppers Bible" and the "Breast Cancer Prevention Program" stated "There is recent evidence that DEA is a potent carcinogen. For over 2 decades, it has been well-known by regulatory agencies and the cosmetics industry that DEA reacts with nitrates in cosmetics to form another potent carcinogen, nitroso/DEA (NDELA). Nevertheless, no action has been taken, even though European governments and industries have phased out use of DEA since the 1980's. It is high time that the mainstream cosmetics industry cleaned up it's act belatedly and removed DEA from its products."

Like DEA the harmful effects of these other ingredients have been known for years. Take SLS for instance. The Journal of American Toxicology, 1983, states carcinogenic nitrates can form when SLS interacts with other nitrogen bearing ingredients. SLS enters and maintains residual levels in the heart, liver, lungs and brain from skin contact. SLS denatures protein and im-

pairs proper structural formation of young eyes - damage permanent. Another study shows SLS is a mutagen. It is capable of changing the information to genetic material found in cells. SLS has been used in studies to induce mutations in bacteria.

Propylene Glycol is used in anti-freeze, hydraulic fluids and as a solvent. The material safety data sheets on this ingredient warn to avoid skin contact. Implicated in contact dermatitis, kidney damage and liver abnormalities; can inhibit skin cell growth in human tests and can damage cell membranes causing rashes, dry skin and surface damage. Is this in your moisturizer? You can find it in cosmetics, toothpastes, shampoos and conditioners, lotions, deodorants, baby wipes, processed foods and many more personal care items. Studies have shown *systemic* retention (residue throughout).

Don't let retailers tell you it is only in small amounts. Have a look. These ingredients are usually listed in the first few ingredients. I now know that, for myself, I was being hit with these ingredients more than 10 times a day. If you start your day by shampooing, using a conditioner, brushing your teeth, using a deodorant, and moisturizing, you've likely been hit 6 times without counting how often you wash your hands etc. Then you do more of it again before bed. I thought I was being a good parent by having my children wash their hands every time they walked in the door and figured the longer they were brushing their teeth the better.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. How about fluoride, talc, aluminium and alcohol. No wonder cancer rates are soaring. Could this be a contributing factor? We are being bombarded!

We as Canadians have a right to know. As Dr. Epstein states "we are being denied information which could cause us death". The Canadian government does not enforce labelling on personal care products so it is hard to be a wise consumer. See ad to the right.

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THE MILLENNIAL BLUES-AGAIN!

by Arnold Porter

About a thousand years ago people were preparing themselves for the end of the world as the first millennium approached. It seemed to them that time was coming to an end. Now, as we approach the second millennium after Christ it is important to remember that we have really survived hundreds of millennia: that we have only started counting recently. The apocalyptic vision that comes to us through Christianity is deeply rooted in our psyche. As our millennial fears begin to play themselves out in "millennial fever," there is certainly a lot to attach them to: breaking ice shelves, global warming, rising sea levels, another ice age, economic collapse, the Y2K bug, you name it! Sometimes its hard to believe that the tender little shoots of the new world we are creating will be able to grow and keep thriving in the midst of the old world apparently crashing down around our ears! I wonder how the people going through the third millennium will look back upon this time, and upon ourselves—the people who lived it. Here is a Sufi story, loosely retold from Idries Shah:

A king is riding at the head of his weary army through a devastated landscape. The air is full of smoke. In every direction one can only see scorched fields and the smouldering ruins of houses. In the midst of all this he spots a man, out across the fields, peacefully planting grapes. He halts his column and tells his guards to bring the man to him.

He says to the frightened man: "What kind of fool or idiot are you to be planting grapes in the middle of all this?" He indicates the devastated landscape with a sweep of his arm and eyes. "Nonetheless," he continues, "should these plants bear fruit please bring me some at the palace if I'm still alive."

Years later, miraculously, the king and the man are still alive. The man picks bunches of his best grapes, puts them in a basket, and carries them to the king. The king remembers him, thoughtfully tastes the grapes and rewards him by filling his basket with gold.

Farmers from miles around hear that the king has traded grapes for gold and rush to the palace with baskets and cart loads of grapes. The king has his vizier send them away with the following words: "Those grapes were worth their weight in gold because they were planted at a time when no one believed it was possible to grow grapes anymore. He opened the way for the rest of us. Now go back to your farms." *see ad above*

La Stone Therapy by Janet Taylor

In the middle of September I took a trip to Saltspring Island to learn La Stone Therapy, also known as "The Original Hot Stone Massage." My instructor was Mary Hannigan who developed this technique. Mary teaches her students more than massage movements and where to place the stones, she does energy work as well. A treatment goes something like this: stretching, stones laid out on the table for the client to lie upon, open energy work, oil the body, massage with stones using alternating temperatures, closing energy work, sit client up and turn her over and then work on the other side. La Stone Therapy must be experienced to answer questions.

The boundless inspiration I felt from Mary Hannigan while I learned from her is irreplaceable. Her answers to many of my questions only sparked more inquiries in my mind. Her faith that this can help people in physical and emotional pain is moving. During a treatment, the therapist receives as much as she gives. The giving between the client and therapist goes beyond limits. Sometimes people cry on my table and I can feel their sadness but by the end of the treatment clients feel relaxed, balanced and sometimes tired. I learned from Mary that it doesn't matter what a person's beliefs are about their spirituality or religion as long as they can go to a safe and happy place while they relax on the table. It doesn't matter whether you thank your god, higher power or the stones as long as you're aware of being open for healing.

To describe the stones that I use in my treatment is simple and difficult. The simple part is to describe their look, texture and temperature. The black to grey stones are smooth and rough. These are called basalt stones that are harvested along river beds. Each stone has a partner that they are paired with to perform a specific function. These stones are heated to temperatures between 120° F and 140° F. The white stones are smooth and are hand made out of marble. The marble stones are kept on ice for minus heat. This gives the massage alternating temperatures for thermotherapy. The difficult explanation is the energy work using the stones. The heated stones on some clients may be too heavy for their energy centers. Using a different weight but another heated stone may still be too heavy. Trying to use the same weight as the first stone but a cold marble one instead will more than likely satisfy the client. There isn't any clear cut reasoning to this part of the treatment - it just is.

There have been many write-ups about "The Original Hot Stone Massage" but it still isn't common. I travel to clients' homes to give treatments so they can relax, enjoy their session and not worry about driving home after an intense treatment. *See ad in the NYP under Bodyworkers*

Calendar of Events



December 1

Pre Christmas QiGong & Tai Ji starts with Harold Naka in Kelowna, p. 10

December 21

Winter Solstice Gathering, vegetarian dinner at the Juicy Carrot, Penticton, p. 4

January 5 & 6

Awareness Through Movement with Sandra Bradshaw, Kelowna & Vernon, p. 11

January 12

"Spiritual Fitness" starts with Loro Tylor at Naramata Centre in Naramata, p. 20

January 13 - 17

Tigh Na Mara, a retreat with Tanis Helliwell in Parksville, BC, p. 5

January 15

Learn How to be Psychic, 30 hour training starts with Connie Brummet in Kelowna, p. 8

January 15 & 16

Advanced Meditation Retreat with Cheryl Grismer in Westbank, p. 2

January 17

Finding Paradise Within starts with Marilyn Evans in Vernon, p. 15

January 21 - 23

Reiki 1st & 2nd Degree, with Yvette Eastman in Vancouver, p. 9

January 29 & 30

North Eastern Winds Wkshp. with Paul Richard & B.J. Mosebye, Penticton, p. 17

February 16

Spiritual Awareness & Meditation - Learn to manage your personal energy system: centering, the aura, chakras, etc. 8 weeks, 7-9pm, at Aurora's in Kelowna with Duncan Harte M.A., preregistration required call 250-860-5686

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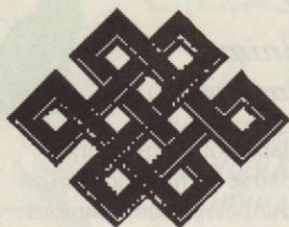
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Your Right Side?

It's your Liver!

by Joel Whitehead



There is rarely a time when a patient comes in that some part of their ongoing problem is not involved with the Liver, or should I say the Liver/Gallbladder complex. For example, do you have problems in the right shoulder? Does it get really tight and crawl down the inside of your right scapular? Do you get headache or migraine pains over your right eye? Do you get pains in the right hip that go down your leg? How about cramps in the calves or pain in the groin area? Do you get tightness in the ribs like you feel you can't breathe? The list of complaints can go on but if it's on the right side then it may be the liver.

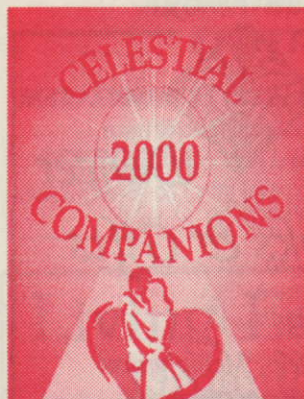
I have treated a few patients with tennis elbow. They felt that was their problem, because they were right handed and did a lot, including racquet sports, with their right hand. The problem is... that you just can't fix the elbow without regard for the true source of where it gets its energy from. In those cases, we started the procedure much further up the arm and into the shoulder as well as other places along the Liver/Gallbladder meridians.

There is a type of insomniac that will invariably wake up in the middle of the night with lots of pain in the right scapula area. If it were just a pain, like that of an injury or strain, they could probably reposition themselves and go back to sleep, but when it is a deepset tightening of the muscles especially under the right scapula, shoulder, neck and possibly even hip that just cannot be relaxed then it gives me a clue that more than just muscles are involved. Often the pain will relent around four o'clock in the morning and they get a few hours of sleep before the alarm finally goes off. Later in the day they become irritable and start snapping at people and wonder why. In some ways it is the Liver or Gallbladder that is to blame.

So how did we get this way? Well, I'm sure you won't be surprised when we hearken back to stress and diet. There is an instinctual mentality that is locked in our fore-brains and running rife through our subconscious. In simple cultures the struggle to survive and stay alive depended on our instinctual responses and attitudes. Finding food or avoiding freezing to death was a day to day stress that was real.

In our culture, because the absolute threat of starving is less real, other more subtle forces take hold. Fear perhaps of losing our jobs or our standard of living, since we cannot rage out in to the forest and kill a wild beast for an immediate solution, as is our original instinct. Instead we may rage out within our society but there is no real foe out there. There is a void instead, called a lack of employment, or manipulators in the job place. So, in a sense, we turn on ourselves and put stress on the internal organs.

Since every patient's situation is different so is the solution. It is rare that just changing the approach to the stress is enough to extricate us from our pain. Few of us can deal with the outer stress when it is so closely tied to our psycho-emotional selves. But if we can change our attitude and our diet to support the liver, a new life with new choices and certainly less right side pain, can possibly begin. *See ad to left.*



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TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MILLENNIUM

by Donalie Caldwell

The last two hundred years have seen tremendous technological development and change. What awaits us in the new millennium is anybody's guess. Some technology rising to the surface is actually old technology in refined form, that went basically unrecognized for many years. An example of this is the mind machine, or audio-visual entrainment (AVE) device. It was actually first developed back in the 1950's. Some research was done but it never really "took off" until recent years. Still, most people have never heard of it.

These AVE devices send flashes of lights through a pair of eyesets and pulses of tones through a pair of headphones to gently guide the brain into altered states of consciousness. Brainwaves change frequencies based on neural activity within the brain. Each of our senses responds to activity from the environment and transmits that information to the brain. The senses of sight and hearing provide a favorable mechanism to influence brainwaves. By presenting this pulsed audio and visual stimulation to the brain, after a short period of time, the brain begins to resonate or entrain at the same frequency as the stimulus. Because of this, we can slow down the brainwaves for: meditation; stress reduction and deep relaxation; providing pain relief; inducing dream states and improving sleep. The DAVID, (digital audio/visual integration device) can also be used to speed brainwaves up, making it an ideal tool to treat slow brainwave disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder, closed-head brain injury, fibromyalgia, PMS, chronic fatigue, depression, Seasonal Affective Disorder, weight gain, and insomnia and for non-clinical applications such as for enhancing mental performance and boosting creativity.

In addition to entrainment, the imagery created by the visual and auditory stimulation provides a focus for the mind and quiets internal dialogue or chatter. The various areas of the brain begin to integrate into one whole functioning unit—like the masters of meditation. With the DAVID, it is possible to experience that same peace of a meditator with only a half hour of use. Hypnoidal states can also be achieved.

Studies have shown brain stimulation has resulted in an increase of dendrite growth, connecting the brain cells. Increase in IQ, learning and memory have been noted. After only 20 minutes of stimulation, there has also been observed an increase in levels of neurochemicals and hormones such as human growth hormone, serotonin, beta-endorphins and luteinizing hormones.

Early this spring, after much research, I purchased a DAVID AVE device to augment my herbal program for fibromyalgia. This incredible machine came preprogrammed with sessions that perk up the mind, increase energy, relieve pain, promote relaxation and improve sleep. Results were notable immediately. I now rarely have pain and no longer require supplements to sleep. My energy has improved markedly, as well as stamina. And as an added bonus, I use the DAVID to enhance my meditations.

A friend of mine has also been using the DAVID for chronic pain from degenerative disc disease. She has been able to

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decrease the amount of pain killers needed and feels like a new person. Her stress is significantly lower and she is able to sleep through the night. To her, it is miracle.

Having fibromyalgia has presented me with many opportunities for learning and growth. From expanding my knowledge on herbal nutrition to emotional release and now technology for the mind. Every time I make a new discovery something else seems to open up and propel me along. After obtaining my certification this fall as a brainwave entrainment therapist and distributor of DAVID devices, I look forward to continuing my journey down this new path of tremendous potential and possibility.

See ad above

Getting Physical in a Spiritual Life

by Maureen Connor

I have had most of my spiritual beliefs as far back as I can remember. The only real religious upbringing that I had was the knowledge that my mother believed in God. For about thirty years I picked up little tidbits of information on different religions. I kept a little of what I learned and tossed the rest because it just didn't feel right. I rarely spoke of my own beliefs because they were so far from the norm.

As my entire family has always shown great signs of psychic ability, I was continually drawn to the occult. So it was only normal that I found myself in that section of a local book store when I ran out of novels to read. This particular day I picked out Sylvia Browne's book, "Adventures of a Psychic". What a revelation! There was somebody else out there whose beliefs were very close to my own. She openly spoke of these things like they were fact. It was then that I realized that the thoughts I had all this time were not so much beliefs as they were a knowing. It was all knowledge that had drizzled down from my higher self to my conscious being. At this point there was no stopping me. I wanted to shout it from the roof tops. The joy and love I felt was overwhelming. I wanted the whole world to know how easy real happiness really was.

The more I learned, the more I talked. I saw the world in a whole new way and all I wanted to do was share it. My hus-

band and teenage daughter were very patient. They tried to listen as best they could without telling me that I was a blabbering idiot. My daughter did an excellent job of exiting the room as quickly as possible when I started talking and my husband seemed very unsettled and nervous. He was very quick to point out that I still had this physical life to live and that maybe I should consider spending some time down here on earth. I knew he was right but it seemed almost impossible for me to get grounded.

All I wanted to do was share my happiness and I came off like I wanted to convert the world. When I finally realized that my family and friends were not ready to join me, I felt more alone than I ever could have dreamed. Even though I had constant communication with my guides I had never felt so cut off from the world. My entire life had changed in such a short period and as I changed, my relationships changed.

My biggest concern was my marriage. We had worked long and hard with many ups and downs to develop the close and loving relationship we had. Suddenly I felt so far away from him. A huge rift was created between us. It was difficult to see the relationship as a partnership when suddenly it seemed we had nothing in common. I was losing him and I knew it. Yet I didn't know how to get that closeness back.

I started seeking out people with my own beliefs and he spent more and more time with his boat. My sexual interest was pretty much nil and he showed very little interest in joining me in my spiritual journey. One day while browsing a metaphysical book store I met a wonderfully gifted psychic lady. We got together soon after and she did some chakra work with me and talked about whatever she picked up on. The one thing that really stuck with me was when she asked why I was neglecting my sex life. She went on to point out how sex can be a very spiritual act. This conversation really got me thinking. Sex is such a physical thing and yet can be such a spiritual experience. How many other spiritual experiences was I missing out on by neglecting the physical world? Was it possible to get back on the physical plane without losing my spirituality? At this point I knew that my relationships depended on it. I went home, made love to my husband and vowed to make our marriage work.

As time passed and I began to see, enjoy and share all the wonderfully spiritual experiences available here in the physical world, I realized that it is impossible to share your spirituality with others if you insist on separating yourself from them. As I learn to love all people unconditionally and accept that they have their own paths to follow, I am rewarded with more and more people being drawn to me for answers. I have found that expressing your spirituality with love, happiness and appreciation for this world is a guarantee that you will never be lonely again.

My relationship with my husband is better than ever and this physical world has helped me to grow spiritually in leaps and bounds. When I look back, I know that the only rift between us was one that I created in my own mind. Nothing can change the fact that we are one just as the world is one.

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Expression Through Art

by Jessica Diskant

As a child, coloring was a friend of mine. I could spend hours alone enjoying drawing, painting and doodling. Somewhere, I lost my friend for many years, but I have found it again. Expressing myself through art was a simple way to move emotions out of myself, without even realizing it. Color gave joy, moving a brush around gave me peace and sometimes laughter. Sharing creative ideas with playmates was so much fun.

In the last few years, I have rediscovered painting. I have to tell my critical eye to be silent and just enjoy the

process, see what comes out of the experience. As much as I want to improve as an artist, enjoying painting just for the sake of painting is fulfilling. It's been delightful taking classes with numerous artists here in the valley, Beth Sellers, Nel Witteman and Alex Fong. Each share something special in their style and their approach to painting. These classes have been healing.

On my own journey to healing issues from the past, art was used as a form of therapy. Allowing our spirit and inner child to express through painting or other mediums have been very useful. One doesn't have to be experienced in art expression to benefit from it. It is a wonderful way to heal. *See ad to the left.*

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Interesting People

THE TAIWAN ADVENTURE

by Urmi



Last month I had the incredible experience of being immersed in another culture while living in my own. The adventure started at Kelowna airport where I met ten women and one man from Taiwan. They were coming to participate in Ramakanta's Energy School. The translator relayed my welcome to Canada, and we proceeded to Weeping Willow retreat Centre nestled in the Monashee Mountains. Weeping Willow was home for a month and I got to experience living with people of a different culture and language.

The Taiwanese are basically Chinese people without the years of day-to-day Communism. They hold some of the lost traditions of ancient China as well as being a progressive young Nation. Certain things are just facts for them like meridian pressure points, food combinations and Tai Chi. They also have a great desire for new things completely outside of their known culture. The group that journeyed half way round the world to join in Ramakanta's adventure was an exceptional mix of seekers.

I wanted to know more of the details — what their culture, their day to day life is really like. How do they relate to their husbands, what role do the women play at work, as mothers. I wanted to know the small unnoticed differences between their culture and mine—the unsaid understandings that pass from generation to generation and can only be felt on subtle levels but impact thinking and behaviours immensely.

Not having the distraction of language (most spoke very little English) I got to know these people on a different level. Working in the kitchen offered an environment in which we could be together. It is one thing to share cooking techniques and have help in the kitchen, quite another to do it all without words. Luckily my travels have helped me to be able to communicate very simply with a lot of sign language. One very obvious cultural difference was what I call the distance comfort zone. This is the agreed distance that we keep between ourselves and others so as to not be in each others space. If the other person stands too close it will generate feelings of impingement and can make you feel uncomfortable or as if someone is "on your back." In Canada we are used to having more space than those in Taiwan. Sometimes, in the small kitchen I was cooking in, there would be up to eight people investigating what I was doing. Usually I would not be able to do all the things necessary in the kitchen with so many people in the way but they were so comfortable in the small space that it made it possible for me to move freely around them.

There also seemed to be much less problematic thinking going on amongst them. The main difference I observed was that when they did have a conflict with another it was usually directed inward to themselves as opposed to the Western way



of throwing everything onto the other and then determining who's "right." The need to doubt and blame was replaced with innocence and honesty. I was amazed by the openness that would come forth in the group sessions once the door was pried open by Ramakanta.

Another major event of the month was finding out about the earthquake in Taiwan. Since we were in retreat we knew nothing

about it until an email arrived from one of the spouses three days later. The news hit everyone very hard and there were deep emotions and fears felt for the circumstances of their families and country. Rama used the opportunity to go even deeper into the unknown by discouraging any phone calls. The one spouse who emailed was given the task of contacting all the families and relaying back if there were any major concerns. This they knew was the right way to respond in a disaster but it left all of us in the gap of possibilities. We felt the suffering deeply, and we continued to look inward and meditate. Eventually we learned that there were no major problems amongst the families of our participants. Two days after the news of the quake we had our own power outage for about ten hours. A tree had blown over a line somewhere around Cherryville. It was already dark when it happened so we used flashlights to dig out candles. Suddenly we were in our own very minor disaster. No water, no stove, no toilet. I felt myself panic and imagined how it must be in the earthquake zone with everything devastated. My first thought was that we should all just go to bed and sleep through the blackout. Instead I went upstairs away from the group who were all just finishing supper. I picked up the guitar and started playing very quietly, trying to remember a few tunes. One of the Taiwanese women, Himani, passed by and asked me to come downstairs. I told her I wasn't feeling strong enough to play in front of people. She very quietly sat down and just listened. I felt such support from her that after a few minutes I gave up my mode of misery and said "Lets' go." When I walked into the candlelit room with guitar in hand they all started cheering. Percussion instruments were passed around so everyone could join in. I proceeded to play the two songs I know and they danced ecstatically. Their enthusiasm fueled my efforts and I let go of my limitations and felt the power of communion. We danced and sang and took turns playing the instruments. Celebrating in the face of adversity.

When I saw them off at Kelowna airport I knew I would miss the sing song sound of Mandarin and the squeals of delight they expressed over seeing a lake or an eagle. I also knew that apart from a few abstract glimpses, I still knew very little about these wonderful people from a tiny island on the other side of the world.

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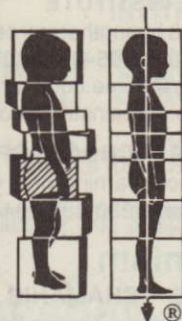
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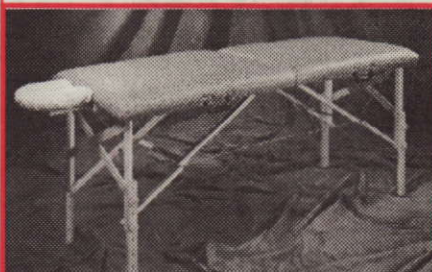
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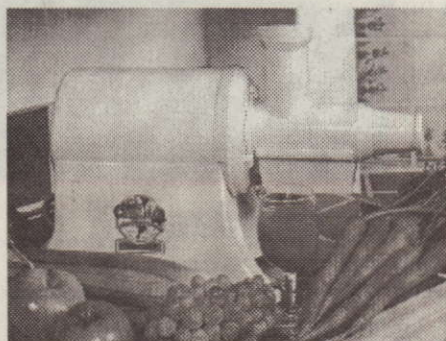
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