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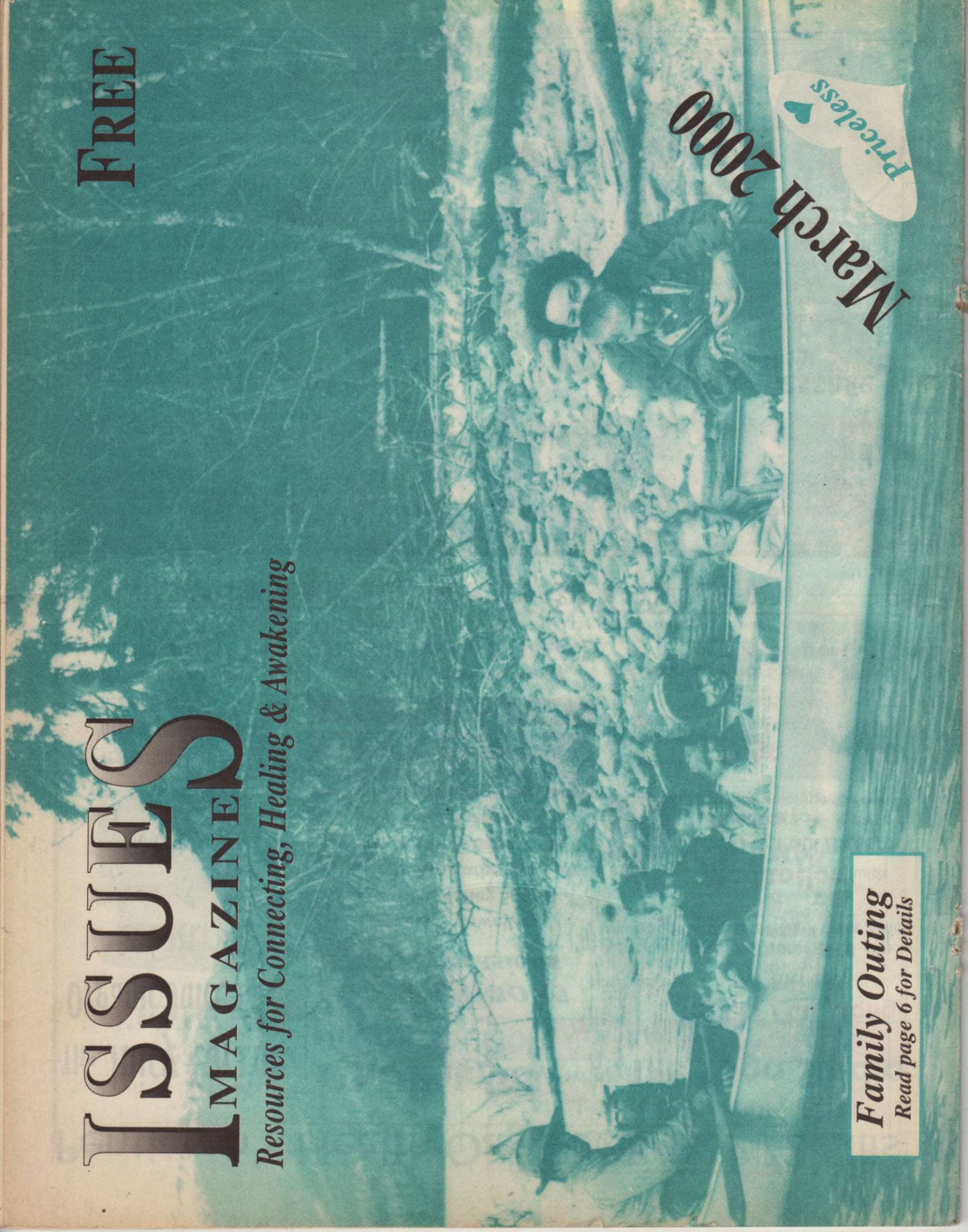
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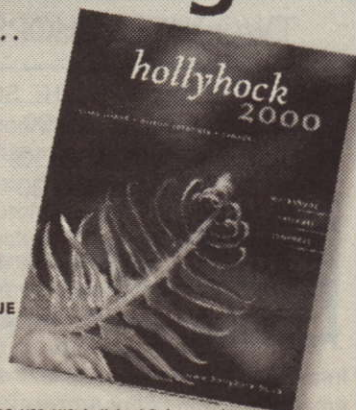
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Freedom of the Soul

by Sharon Smallenberg

A personal journey of self-discovery and wellness

I've often wondered when my own personal journey really began. For a long time, I thought it was only about five or six years ago, now I realize that was because I didn't understand what 'personal journey' truly meant. I was going through some pretty radical changes in my very mainstream life when I had, what I refer to as, my 'angel experience,' which was quite profound as far as I was concerned. I had asked for proof of my Guardian Angel's existence and was given an undeniable experience—one that quickly convinced me without any further doubt. Until this past couple of years I regarded that event as the beginning, however, I now realize that my journey began long ago and will most certainly continue until my soul decides to go home. The most important thing I discovered is that nothing at all would happen for me until I was ready to do the necessary inside work on myself. No amount of working extra hours to ignore and escape, it didn't matter how many massages or external 'treatments' of any kind I received, nothing was going to help me. I had to learn to look squarely and honestly inside myself and start from there.

I have been given so many, many gifts, or opportunities to, learn over the years. These gifts certainly didn't appear to be so at the time and have often appeared to be tragedies or, at the very least, traumatic and always challenging. Until the most recent gift of a car accident, I didn't even consider the possibility that there are no accidents, because I was so caught up in the trauma and chaos within me. My gifts have included marriage at a very young age to someone who would unknowingly support my total lack of self-esteem and self-worth, to at 23 years old stumbling blindly through the trauma resulting from the death of my two-week-old baby girl. The years brought more than one divorce and the accompanying feelings of worthlessness, failure at partnership and certainly at parenting, which of course goes hand in hand with guilt, blame, anger and grief - oh the grief! And all of that is what undoubtedly led to the painful Fibromyalgia I used to have. These gifts were what led me to reshape my life and begin a path of learning which has now become a path of service to others.

This path of learning and my personal journey has seemed long, arduous, frightening and at times, very painful. I know now that it need not be that way and one of my passions is to help simplify it for others who are ready. The trauma of feeling so alone was terrifying at times, thankfully there was one person I could talk to who understood what was going on and lovingly encouraged me to persevere. I certainly didn't understand it and at times thought I was really losing it, only to find out later that Carolyn Myss has a set of tapes actually called Spiritual Madness that addresses this very thing. The presence of my friend was an incredible gift to me and now it's time for me to pass on this gift to others. To teach what I have learned, the things that have come into my awareness that may serve others and lessen their struggle.

The more I continue to learn, the stronger is my knowing that it is all meant to be simple, yet the thing we are drawn to do the most is complicate everything. We continue to look externally for answers when the secret is so simple - all we need to do is go inside, look internally rather than externally. Simple? Yes. Easy? No. At least the perception is that it's not easy—when in reality all we need to do is let go and allow. My angel experience was a gift to teach me to trust and that has been the biggest learning of all. The minute I finally gave up my need to know, understand or control the process, things began to change and I began to feel different, yet I still needed to learn about 'simplicity'.

In response to a column I write on a weekly basis, comments come in from people saying such similar things and since we are all coming into a new conscious awareness en masse and very quickly, I am hearing words like 'I have this sense of urgency' or 'I don't know what's happening, I just know something isn't working for me anymore' or 'My throat has been bothering me and my ears feel funny and crackly' or 'I'm feeling kind of stuck or empty' or 'My life should be great but there's an emptiness in my heart and it hurts'.

My story is ongoing and my passion is to attend with others and to pass on to others this knowledge of ease and simplicity so our souls can all experience freedom: painlessly, quickly, easily and joyfully.

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Astrological Forecast

for March 2000 by Moreen Reed

Like February, people who lack personal humility will not fare well this month or next. Pluto, our evolutionary agenda and Saturn, reality testing, are holding court in the heavens throughout March. Their 150 degree aspect demands that if we wish others to participate in our individual agendas, those agendas must be relevant to them. Those shouting "Me, me, me," will be ignored!

Mercury joins these two at the start of the month and at the end too. Here the challenge to us is to state clearly what our agendas are. No hemming and hawing, sputtering and mumbling. Many may assume that other should automatically be on the same wave length. Not! This is a classic crisis in action, testing our faith in self/life. Those who see the big historical picture will move gracefully forward.

The Pisces New Moon on March 5th is at 9:17 pm PST. Planting spiritual seeds for the year and this next moon cycle is in order. The highlighted degree symbolism is "In a quiet moment, the flow of inspiration". The key word is Ingenuity. How well do you align with the flow of life? This is particularly important with those in need of healing and their support people. The exact Pluto/Saturn aspect is featured in this New Moon, if you find yourself out of the loop on the 5th or 6th, take a serious look at the relevance of your position.

The middle of the month we see a shift in energy. First Venus moves into Pisces taking us out of an objectified intellectual focus of relationship and into a compassionate platonic area. Sex, hmmm...intoxicating or not at all interested. We have relief from the effects of Mercury retrograde, on March 14th he stations and turns direct allowing forward motions on outstanding negotiations. The "All Systems Go" signal is on now. Dig your day timer out, life should get back to normal programming.

Following on the heels of Mercury's turn, Pluto stations and turns retrograde on March 15th. The flow of worldly events shifts in favour of the non status quo group for the next four months, until July the 20th, 2000.

The Full Moon in Pisces/Virgo on the 19th at 8:44 pm, shines the light of our awareness on the turning of the season. Both Sun and Moon are in the final degree of their signs. I'm imagining, that like 'All Hallow's Eve' the veil between the worlds will be very thin tonight. The highlighted degree symbolism* is "The great stone face," and the keyword is Discernment. Can you feel the great turnings of our orbit around the Sun? The Spring Equinox is at 11:35 pm PST on the 19th. The Sun's ingress into Aries sets the stage for the next three months. This shows that the needs of the public should hold centre stage. Our relationship to the members of the Global Village will be more important than we may realize. Jobs in the resource sector will be in focus. They need clear discussions and responsible attention.

For those who are physically or mentally challenged at this time, you will likely notice a stall in recovery when Chiron stations and turns retrograde on March 27th. Take time now to review your treatment path. Pay close attention to "Intuition" and challenging your core beliefs can be beneficial now.

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



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Family Outtings

This month's photo is of my family in our canoe. Dad is at the back, beside the motor and sitting in the front is Aunt Cathy. You met her last month when she hiked up Mount Goaty with Mom. I am the only girl, sitting near the front and behind me are my five brothers, the sixth and youngest is being held by Aunt Cathy. The canoe was painted bright yellow to match our home-on-wheels, a refurbished school bus. It was a Grumman, which were famous because they never sink. They had air tanks built in the bow and stern and if it capsized everyone was to hang on and kick to shore. I don't remember ever wearing a life jacket. If we had them they were used for sitting on, for the canoe bottom was always cold and hard. Every so often the whole family went for a canoe ride and that was fun, but usually the canoe was used for hunting or fishing. Grandpa didn't like fishing with us in the canoe: he said we were too noisy and we scared the fish away. The boys loved fishing and Billy was the best: he caught the first, the biggest and usually the most fish.

The canoe was parked down at the lake and when Mom was making bread she would take the boys fishing while the bread was rising. She usually drove Grandad's car even though it was only a short distance. The older boys stayed fishing while Mom and the younger ones went home and punched down the bread, then they would race back and catch some more. Not me. I didn't like fishing, I tried it a few times and even learned to put fish eggs on my hook, but if I had a choice, I stayed home and read or went berry picking.

This picture reminded me that Spring is almost here, a time for lighter coats and longer walks. I went to Vancouver one weekend to do the distribution of the Spring Festival edition of Issues and to visit my son Gordon. A friend drove my car, which made the trip so much more relaxing. Gordon's wife had arranged a family dinner Saturday night and then on Sunday Gordon and I went to the Chinese New Year's parade.

I am always grateful to be doing whatever it is that needs doing. Completing projects and getting my 'To Do' list done gives me great satisfaction. It doesn't matter to me if my time is spent visiting or completing my taxes as long as I get to go for a long hike once in awhile. I seldom take holidays, as I don't consider what I do work. I play all day and when I need time off, I take it. When it gets dark, I slow down a little and then go to bed. Stress is not a word I understand, even though I own and operate four businesses that are interlinked. There is always something to do, and I have realized that I will never get caught up so I don't worry about it. Every so often I make an attempt to clear one of my desks or clean my kitchen, as I prefer things tidy, but first things first, and I trust it will get done when it needs to.

I do make time for my breathwork sessions with Ken and I am starting another series of Roling with Jeff, plus I get a massage once a month from Nywyn or Urmi. Now that Joanne has joined our staff, getting regular foot massages will also be nice. The body awareness and breathwork helps me to go

deeper inside myself for answers and helps me to let go of stuck energy. The last three sessions have felt like conversations with God. My most often asked question is... why? Sometimes I get an understanding but most of the time it is just feeling my feelings as a three-year-old, releasing old pain and patterns of holding that my child-self does not understand. It hurts, and that is all there is to it. My adult-self can understand *why* but finds it difficult to explain why people do what they do—so she holds the child-within and supports her, allowing the feelings to come to the surface, knowing they will fade once expressed.

Ken is helping me put words to my feelings, something I didn't learn as a child. Knowing my Dad loved me deeply didn't make the hurt any less. They say tears melt the ice around the heart, and I am getting to know and love myself better as I react less and less to the emotions of others. I don't know if my child-self will ever understand these love/hate relationships that I create, but I am getting another chance to understand them better. I believe that as a relationship reaches a certain level of comfort, the heart opens so that it can be healed. My relationship with Gerry is at the stage where he is repeating similar patterns to what my Dad used to do. My adult-self finds it easy to detach and let him be, for I also like to have my own space. But sometimes he lives in his own little world for days or weeks and I feel left out, for he has nothing to share with me and I feel sad. I have given up thinking that I have done something wrong and am learning to just feel the hurt and express it the best I can. Each time this happens I become less attached to the outcome.

As a child I enjoyed time by myself, or helping my Mom with the little ones. Doing the laundry was preferred to doing the dishes. Some days I would hide in the barn and read, pretending I couldn't hear my name being called. Time hasn't changed me very much. I still enjoy getting my work done and when I need time off, I go for a walk. As far as my relationships go, I believe that God gives me the people I need to help my soul heal and to keep my agreements about what I came here to do. I feel He did a good job choosing Gerry, so we'll learn what we need to from each other and when that is complete, we will separate effortlessly. Till then, I will enjoy the times when he does wish to share, for he is a wise soul.

The Roling sessions are helping my body go through the physical shifts as old holding patterns release. My latest photographs shows some solid progress—my shoulders have moved back over my hips. This adjustment caused my neck to kink so I had some deep massage done so that the steel bands in my shoulders could loosen a little. My right shoulder still needs to drop some more, but for it to do that, my hips need to rotate a bit more, so I will keep stretching.

I had a fever and the flu over the Christmas holidays and that slowed my pace a little and made me appreciative of the energy I usually do have. Teaching yoga gives me lots of opportunity to observe myself and other people and some days I am amazed at my own intuitive understanding of how the body works. I don't have all the answers, but I leave my mind open and I am amazed at the words that come out of my mouth. I seldom think about what I am going to say as I find spontaneity the easiest and most honest approach.

I am so glad that most of the people I hang around with appreciate this trait.

Angèle





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by Richard Ortega

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From the Editor...

Chit Chat
with Marcel



It has taken me a long time to realize the value of participating in a spiritual practice. I think this is likely because I was raised with a mainstream church background—one that taught the outer religious teachings. The ones that have been watered down and manipulated through the centuries, either by unscrupulous church hierarchy who wanted to control the masses or due to the threat of persecution if the truth was not hidden in some way. It was always difficult for me to derive any inner spiritual meaning from them. As a child and young woman I couldn't understand how to apply these teachings to my life. To me, there were a lot of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" that were supposed to be obeyed without knowing why, other than that God and Jesus would love you and smile favourably upon you. I was never taught the benefits that could be gained by my spirit or energetic being by complying with these principles. I never knew the inner spiritual truth of these teachings and the importance of keeping the sacred in my life and my environment. Due to these unsatisfactory early experiences I found that, until recent years, I shied away from any spiritual devotion or praying to God.

The true value of the New Age, for me, has been that the old dogmas of religion are being discarded by many in favour of the new teachings (actually in most cases revived ancient teachings) which are bringing forth a more understandable perspective of having a relationship with the Divine. Teachings that are free from the dogma and manipulation that the centuries can bring, teachings that give us understandable explanations. Fortunately, there are many new teachers each with a slightly different perspective—someone for each of our slightly different modes of understanding. By reading many of them I was drawn to the ones who spoke most clearly to me. Thanks to the more 'down to earth' explanations from teachers like Deepak Chopra and Caroline Myss, I now understand how my life, my health and my spirit or energy being can be healed and improved by learning these spiritual principles. To me, a spiritual practice is a system of meditation and/or prayer and specific principles that can be used to guide and direct my spiritual growth. For the most part I don't think it really matters what your spiritual practice is as long as it is a process that will keep the sacred in and around you.

In my life the value of a spiritual practice has been to begin to create a pathway to the sacred where I find caring, guidance, inspiration and opportunities that I previously sought outside myself—in my life, my relationships and environment. With the support of this gradually expanding contact, I am now learning to release the hold that physical reality has on me and to maintain a growing strength within myself.

Marcel



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What is a HOLISTIC BUSINESS CONSULTANCY?

by Victoria Fabling

Debbie says she can now enter the house "feeling that a weight has been lifted". The method which I describe as Earth Acupuncture definitely works. The copper carries the unhelpful energy into the ground to be transmuted, and that simple action coupled with the intent to help the building enables the shift of energy from stuck (negative) to free-flowing (positive).

Buildings do develop a consciousness. They absorb the vibrations of those who spend most time there and reflect it into the living and working space. Many of our buildings have a concrete foundation. What happens when you place a car battery on concrete? It goes flat within minutes. What happens when you spend too long in a shopping mall? Your energy drops and you need to leave or have something to eat or drink (more profit!) Getting back to our concrete basements where many of us spend time—we get tired and can attract energies, in the form of challenges, that drain us further. Taking this issue to a holistic level now, how could we heighten the vibration of the foundation? By feeding it with a living substance. This is wisdom that was given to me, it made sense, so I fed my concrete with rock salt and saliva, in each corner; I also did my form of an energizing ceremony by singing and lighting candles as I worked. So far I have noticed that I no longer attract the negative challenges, and I am instead attracting clients whose company also benefits me.

Pets and children feel a responsibility to take on our hurt, to save their owners or parents from pain—I believe out of unconditional love. I mentioned to Kerry-Lynn that her dog's back pain probably developed when her Mother, who had chronic back pain, came to live with the family. Having established that this was the case, I asked Kerry to do this simple exercise before putting the dog on medication - I asked her to sit and explain to the dog that he was not to feel responsible for the Mother, and that it was OK to be well and happy and live his own life. I met Kerry this week, and she confirmed that the dog is moving around just fine now, no more whimpering and limping.

If you have any issue for which you would prefer to take a holistic approach as the first option, I encourage you to call me and we can find that simple win/win solution together.



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What is the Wesak Festival?

by Ashleigh K. Ryane

Soon it will be the full moon of Taurus and time for the annual Okanagan Wesak Festival. Wesak is the name of a special valley in Tibet, which has been home to a sacred ceremony for thousands of years. Through the united effort of Christ, who came to bring light to the West, and the Buddha, who came to bring light to the East, working together in close cooperation, a channel of communication opens between humanity and God, in which the love and wisdom of God flows to a waiting and needy world. Today with this legend, or relating of a true and vital spiritual happening, the time has come when humanity can gather together spiritually in one great Festival and communion of souls. Under the guidance of Buddha and Christ, an awakened humanity in union with each other, can demand and evoke such a blessing and spiritual revelation that the immediate future will demonstrate what is so sorely needed, "Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men". The Christ and the Buddha are working together to bring about a receptivity on the part of humanity, to the inflow of the spiritual force (divine intervention) which may turn the tide of present distress, depression and uncertainty. Wesak is a highly auspicious time from a spiritual point of view, by which those with the 'Will-to-do Good' can receive and anchor the love and wisdom of God through their open hearts. This will inaugurate an era of peace wherein humankind may have the leisure and opportunity to nurture contact with spiritual realities. Will you serve in this way? Attend a festival, or alternatively, consciously dedicate some time during the three main days of Wesak for receptive contemplation. Become like an empty vessel. Then on the night of the full moon let Christ and Buddha fill you with God's love and peace, assisting you and the healing of earth and humanity.

Using ritual, music, movement, prayer, and laughter, the Okanagan Wesak Festival has been deeply appreciated by participants as a great heart opening, a surrender and gentle release. Many share a realization of being deeply loved by God, of a regained sense of di-

vinity and inner peace.

Every year has its own special moments but my most precious memory is from Wesak 1997. Prior to commencing the closing ceremony, everyone had been instructed to leave the building after completing the Angel Walk, holding the silence and the sacredness for others still behind them. Soft music was playing, one of God's love songs. I was the last to ceremoniously honour each one as they left. A slight sense of tiredness allowed an opening for doubts to creep into my joy. Had I heard "upstairs" correctly? Was the agenda in perfect order? Did the people recognize that it was their love, their energy that would make it all happen? Were they touched by the love waiting to pour down into their open hearts? The last one came through to me, a beloved, close friend and I fell into her hug with relief and a big question. How is it? She turned me around and to my amazement, there were two long lines of people, smiling, arms around each other's waists, quietly swaying to the music. I was astounded! Not one had left the building. I had no idea they were there silently holding the energy for each other and for me. We were all in the love vibration! What a gift! Thank you God! Thanks for the memory, friends! *See ad below*

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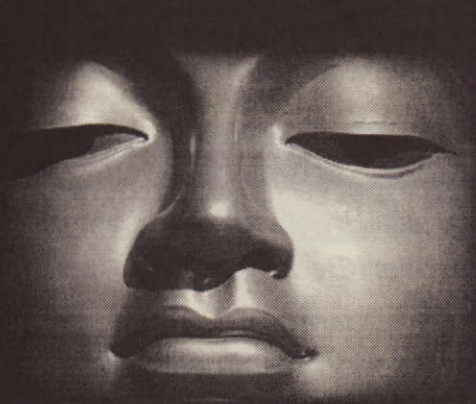


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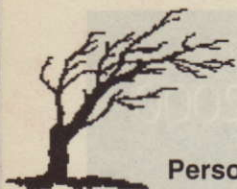
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Life in a Vipassana Retreat

by Brian Hughes

A Vipassana Meditation Retreat underscores the saying "You get out what you put into life." I have had the pleasure of going to several retreats in my life, all different but all serving to deepen my meditative practice.

Last spring I went to a Mindfulness Vipassana Retreat at Hollyhock on Cortes Island. Robert Beatty, therapist and skilled meditation leader from Oregon, led the retreat. The experience was powerful and has had a lasting effect on the way I live my life.

Vipassana means "to see things as they are." The meditative technique is a simple, practical way to achieve real peace of mind, which can lead to a happy, useful life. The technique has been used for over 3000 years and is not attached to any one specific religion (non-secular). In 500 BC, Buddha rediscovered the technique and taught it during his 45 year ministry.

The first thing that impacts one at a retreat is that they are conducted in 'noble silence.' The silence allows one to flow with the meditative process and deepen the practice. The silence can be unnerving at first but soon you learn to love the peace that comes with it. If you have problems or questions, you can meet privately with Robert.

Like many, I have been dabbling in meditation for years. It was not until I attended my first six day retreat twelve years ago that I really understood the power of meditation. Like a language, it is best to immerse oneself into the practice to understand its potential. It takes a couple of days to slow the brain down enough to get into a deeper level of practice. After this point it becomes easier to sit and savour the process.

My first teacher, Alan Clements, used to say, "In the first two days you will want to swim off of the island, by the end we will have to drag you off," and he was right. Not only do you develop a strong meditative practice but you also develop a strong bond with your fellow meditators (sangha).

The leader of the retreat is a key element to the experience. Robert Beatty is a therapist in his work life and he applies his skills to provide a deep and invigorating experience. He tailors the retreat to suit a North American mindset. There is the usual sitting and walking meditations throughout the day, but Robert also incorporates some dance, chanting, speaking from the heart and humour. Not only do you get the inner peace from the meditation but also your spirit is enlivened with the other activities.

Naramata Centre is where the Mindfulness Vipassana Retreat will be held. This will be the first retreat of this type held here and it will be a wonderful setting in which to meditate. The Centre has the Quiet Place Chapel, which is one of the most sacred spaces in the province. We will be doing some sittings in the chapel and hold the dharma talks there. There is also a labyrinth where we can do walking meditations.

Of course there is the wonderful Naramata Centre food, all vegetarian with vegan and gluten free options. Accommodations are available right at the Centre. People are coming from all over North America and the retreat is half full already.

See ad to the left

Healthy Home

by Darcy Drobená

This is the beginning of year two for my home cleaning business. I started cleaning homes when a friend needed someone to hand over her clients to as she had found another job. I enjoyed the work, but found that when I used chlorine bleach I would experience quickened heartbeat and edginess. After using other conventional cleaning products I also would feel unwell and get circles under my eyes. She had circles under her eyes, stringy hair and dry looking skin. She also had cancer. Was this a coincidence? Or had she been experiencing similar symptoms over a twenty year period? I needed to find other cleaning alternatives if I was going to continue in the business and still feel well.

Chlorine bleach, toilet bowl cleaner, window cleaners, floor cleaners, as well as other home care products can all be toxic, as the warning labels on them clearly show. I personally have experienced strong reactions to the use of these chemicals. We live in an increasingly toxic world. Modern civilization exposes us to thousands of toxins. We can all handle a certain level of toxins but once that level is reached, it becomes increasingly more difficult for the natural systems to purify our air and water effectively.

Some use of chemicals in the home, however, may be appropriate. For example, chlorine bleach may be the only way to get out a particular stain, after trying first lemon juice and then hydrogen peroxide, two less toxic alternatives. One way we can reduce the impact of helpful but dangerous products is by rethinking their use in our home cleaning and maintenance. By saving them for the special jobs that can really benefit from their use and finding alternatives for the routine cleaning chores, we can improve our home and natural environment significantly.

I have found the health food store has some alternative cleaners that work just as well as the leading brands, but you have to experiment to find what works for you. One example is citrus-based floor-cleaner, which does the job well and is free of harsh solvents so it is safer for use around young children. Grandma's traditional cleaners such as vinegar, baking soda and soap are effective for some jobs as well. There is a whole world of options and it is a learning adventure to find what works best! Now I can clean all day and still feel great!!

When we take control over what substances we are putting into our home we can make it more as we would choose. We can create a restful haven from the stresses of the world or a dynamic site where we have the energy to handle an active life or even a home-based business. Ideally our home will become a place where our body can restore itself with its own natural processes. Where we can come to renew our connection to ourselves and our families, a place that is more truly a Healthy Home. Healthier for me, for you, your family, children, pets as well as for your community and the planet.

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by Annie Stack

I initially discovered the benefits of homeopathy when my first child was teething and couldn't sleep. I used a combination remedy made for this purpose and it worked—much to my delight. My second son benefited from the same combination remedy and I found I was recommending it to friends. As the boys grew up the cycle of winter colds intensified. A friend recommended the "Kid's Kit," a basic homeopathic starter box with six remedies and Calendula oil for chafing etc. After learning the process of ensuring I had picked the right remedy for each ailment, I had excellent results. Now I treat all our various ailments with homeopathy. After all homeopathy has been around for over two hundred years and is simple to use, safe and economical.

When a friend told me that there was a homeopathic patch, to assist in weight management I was very excited for two reasons: Firstly, this was a new product containing natural ingredients that could assist people with their weight management challenges and it was created by Dolisos—a reputable producer of excellent homeopathic products. Secondly, this was a network marketing company and I am a natural networker. When I find anything that I feel good about (I'm talking anything from a movie to a potato peeler!) I want to tell everyone.

As soon as Natural Bodylines launched in Canada on October 3rd of 1999, I signed up. I have to know and believe in something before I can tell anyone else, so I used the patch for one month. I found that I felt fuller quicker when eating a meal, stopped snacking, drank lots more water and sugar cravings subsided. I lost about eight pounds effortlessly. My self esteem increased and my energy level increased plus I dropped from a size twelve to a size nine/ten. I felt great! I wanted to tell the world! I then discovered that there were people with testimonials about losing 18 pounds in six weeks and another of losing 68 pounds in a year. What especially impressed me was that I had no internal battle with depriving myself of something I wanted or liked. I just ate less—a lot less! Any weight management program requires a commitment to take personal responsibility for what we eat, combining this with a patch increases the possibilities of losing weight.

The spoken word can carry great power. In conversation with friends, family and even people you don't know, start talking about something you believe in and you will notice how much influence that carries. However, this requires integrity. Be careful what you invoke because what you put out will come back, that's the law of the Universe. Did you know that the principles of network marketing are taught at Harvard University? This type of marketing has had a bad reputation over the years. There is an excellent video available entitled "Brilliant Compensation" and a website of the same name (www.brilliantcompensation.com). This material explains, this is a bonafide way to make a living. See ad to the left.

A Journey With "Abraham"

by Barbara-Ann Kazinoff

The journey my husband Mel and myself took 4 years ago from Toronto to Seattle, via the USA and then back through Canada, proved to be profound and enlightening helping us leap to a new level of awareness of "I am the absolute creator of my Environment."

Months prior to this odyssey a friend, Malka, tried in every way she could to get me to listen to some audio tapes by Abraham. Abraham is a group of approximately 100 non-physical beings who are channelled by Esther Hicks, a woman living in Texas with her husband Gerry.

Abraham, in their introduction tape states that they are simply beings with a broader understanding than ours and they are here to help us comprehend the roles that the universal laws play in our lives, for "even if we are ignorant of the existence of these laws they still affect our lives."

We took the tapes with us and listened as we drove. I am very skeptical of channelled material, putting it aside years ago, as I find most of it fluffy and not something I can use in my everyday life. Abraham was and still is different. I remember telling Mel of my faith in angelic beings and my very strong belief that one visited me on the streets of Toronto, speaking to me of changes and the importance of one's attitude towards them. This happened just prior to my being diagnosed with cancer. My feelings for this being are ones of complete joy. I've never seen him/her since, but I remember. While telling Mel of this event I glanced up at the clouds as they rapidly moved across the sky and I saw one shaped like a small angel with wings and a lamb. This cloud stayed before us for about 10 minutes while all the others dissipated quickly. We gave thanks and acknowledged the sign given to us; someone else was listening.

The laws of the Universe are: Attraction, (Deliberate) Creation and Allowance with Segment Intending, not a law but a close contender. Abraham says "What I think and what I feel is what I get." I cannot get thin if I think fat and I cannot get rich if I think poor. But the transition of thinking takes time and if we take small steps initially, we can attain quantum leaps later. Our journey through Canada led us through Osoyoos in the Okanagan valley. I turned to Mel and said, "This is where I want to retire." Four years later and an unexpected, but very welcome, retirement package, and here we are.

When we finally arrived home from our cross-country trip

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I sat down and did an Abraham exercise, drawing out what I wanted while putting out my desire, verbally and feeling the excitement of getting it. I wanted a used champion juicer, in good condition, and was willing to pay \$150. Within 10 minutes a friend called saying she was at a Health food store and they had 2 champion juicers for sale, the better one was \$150. Did I want her to buy it for me? Of course I did, and I still use it. I was so excited by this immediate response. I recognized that as I had drawn the picture, verbalized and felt how much I would like to have it, I had no resistance, and that was a big part in getting what I wanted.

We wanted a new car and decided on a Toyota Rav4 before coming to Osoyoos. Lo and behold within a week we had a brand new, all silver, fully loaded Rav4 at our fingertips, for a price to jump at. We, however, decided that there were aspects of this creation that did not fully meet our desires, so we thanked the God/Goddess/Universe for bringing forth the Rav4 so quickly but we also acknowledged the right to change our minds. After all we were and are the creators.

The joy of creating what we want by actively using the laws of attraction, creation (deliberate) and allowance are boundless. Once we understand how it works and can set aside our resistance to abundance the universe is truly ours. Wanting 'stuff' is simply a way of creating. If material goods are not what are desired but instead we want to write, travel or help otherwise on their journeys, we can have this too. It is simply a matter of learning all over again. Abraham says, "Their words don't teach, they stimulate thought, awareness, and wanting." (desire) So, what do you want? See ad below

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Spiritual Journeys • Medman Facilitators

by Paul Richard

My family and I recently moved to Summerland and I would like to introduce myself to all who read these words. I am a work in progress like most people I meet in this journey called 'My Life.' Healing is my life's work so far and it comes in so many different forms. Firstly, I have had to heal myself; de-program, work on my patterns passed on from parents and be a husband and father to our children. I was born in rural Manitoba to parents of aboriginal ancestry. Growing up was both a joy and very painful at times. All these things have helped to teach me. My grandmother was a special midwife/healer, I am told even though I never met her. On the other side of the family I had a grandfather who was well respected and sought out for his own gifts. My grandparents' special abilities to heal and help people came from the knowledge of plants, nature, life and peoples' belief in their power to heal. I spent as much time with my grandfather as I could while growing up, even though we lived in the city and he in the country. Ever since I was a little boy, I remember picking plants for some medicine my mother would be brewing on the stove. Some of them sure smelled funny but they sure worked for people. Being in this environment really helped me discover my path in this life. Ever since I can remember I thought this world should be better in some ways for my time in it. Being born with native blood has taught me much. At times I have not felt part of the white world or the red one and I see that I had to feel one with myself before the oneness of all could be my experience.

Today I see how skin colour, language, country of birth, region of country (like Quebec) and many other things only serve to separate, define, categorize, limit, and sometimes prejudice and judge ourselves or others. I try not to be any of those things and just be free. We are the sum total of our lives and the perfectness of it all should be seen. My process, life's lessons and joy have expanded much in the time I have spent in this physical reality.

Please connect with us if you would like to be on a mailing list for healing circles or seminars. Drop by the Juicy Carrot on Tuesday night and join us for meditation and sharing. A favourite saying of mine is "Love, laughter and remember who loves you."

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The Benefits of Eckankar

by James P. Bauman

Eckankar is literally the best thing that's ever happened to me—and it keeps on getting better. Has it gotten me rich? Power over others? A beautiful wife? No, no, and no.

Here are some things that Eckankar has done for me. They are just the tip of the iceberg: It has put my life in order • It's given me a greater capacity for love • It's brought peace, stability and detachment • Freedom from the chronic anger that once dogged me • Expanding awareness • Soul travel, experiences in other worlds • An understanding of dreams • Glimpses into past lives • Synchronicity of events • Miracles • Adventure • Freedom • Overwhelmingly self-validation • Many chances to be a secret vehicle of Eck, the Holy Spirit • It's given me a measure of mastery over myself. And I'm only just a beginner of a few year's experience.

Just before I found Eckankar my life was an emotional shipwreck. I'd lost my job, my children, my marriage and most of my possessions. Nearly everything except my life. And I didn't know if I even wanted to keep that. There was nothing left to lose. At that lowest point of my life, Eckankar made itself known to me through a powerful desire to learn Soul travel. I wanted to get out of the trap of physical consciousness and gain freedom.

Soon after I joined and put my trust in the Eck, the Holy Spirit, my life turned around dramatically. I settled into a simple way of life more suited to my needs. I began writing, a career I'd long dreamed of. I regained a close relationship with my children and a friendly relationship with my ex-wife. Best of all, I, as a Soul, finally found rest after a lifetime of searching.

I awakened spiritually into a whole new consciousness. I was like a newborn baby, gazing around in amazement. Other Eckists helped me. I learned to understand my dreams. Some were of past lives, showing me why I was myself now. Some were prophetic and came true. Others provided spiritual insights. Waking dreams, outer signs from Spirit, also came to guide me in my decisions and understanding.

Eckankar has balanced out my life between the spiritual and the physical, between the inner life and the outer. This balance has brought me immense peace of mind. I can now set aside outer concerns at will and put my heart at rest. This doesn't mean I walk away from my responsibilities. It just means I can look upon them with detachment I never had before. This gives me a great sense of freedom. I can now deal with problems in a much more objective, expeditious way.

How did this all come about? Through my practice of the Spiritual Exercises of Eck, which I do for around a half-hour every day. These exercises usually involve the singing of the word HU (pronounced "hue"), an ancient name for God. Try singing "Hu-u-u-u" out loud or to yourself with each outgo-



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ing breath. Focus your attention on your Third Eye as you do so, the area between your eyes. Keep relaxed and smooth. You can do this under any circumstance, no matter how stressful. Observe how it eases your mental and emotional burdens. Anyone can do this.

As an Eckist, God-Realization is my goal. This is complete Mastery in this lifetime. Along the way will come Self-Realization—a complete knowing of Who I am. All I have to do to become Self-Realized is to let go of all lust, anger, greed, attachment, and vanity, the five passions of the mind. Sounds simple, but you try it. I have discovered that this is possible, but only with the aid of the Mahanta, the Inner Master.

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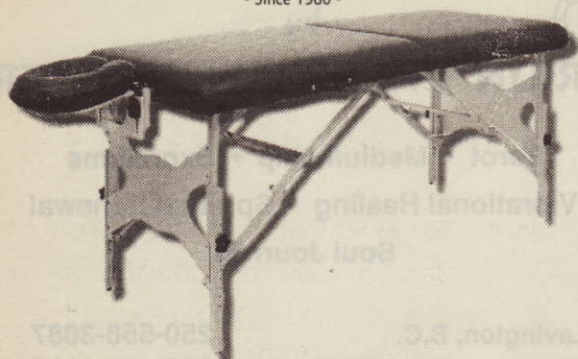
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Healing the

After healing our physical bodies, our souls, the inner child and former lives, there is still one more aspect left that has been sadly neglected and disconnected in these times. We have forgotten that we all have genetic ancestors and that our connection to them is as important as every other aspect!

Most of us are descendents of immigrants who crossed oceans to start a new life. This also includes indigenous people, as well as ancestors from Scotland, Germany or anywhere else. In any case the connection to at least some of our ancestors has been cut off with more or less disastrous finality. Like it or not, we all are the result of our ancestors in some way and the lack of connection to them leaves an emptiness that is indeed, in many cases, the cause of illness and depression. This is especially true for adopted (even unadopted) children who spend a lifetime searching and wondering where their genetic roots might be. Or how about descendants of people from Africa, who were abducted in their homeland and brought across the Atlantic in chains and then sold like livestock. What a horrible loss of ancestral connection here! I remember crying when I watched the mini-series "Roots", in fact, it makes me cry even thinking about it. But it sure hammered home how important our connection to the ancestors is!

Not all the problems we are having and which are in some way ancestor related, are the lack of connection. As the Bible says, "The sins of the fathers....". I guess we've all heard the line. But have you ever thought about it? There is some awful family karma around alcoholism, all sorts of violence, crime, murder and suicides. Or less disastrous but every bit as painful: fighting among siblings, cheating on spouses, overeating, lingering feelings of guilt or uneasiness and genetically passed on diseases. Well, where does it all come from? It must have started somewhere and some time for some reason!

I have been doing ancestor work for a few years now and in my drumming circle we did countless shamanic wounds that could only start healing after I had journeyed back in time and helped heal the wounds of an ancestor. Now how can this be done? Well, you either need a shaman to do the work for you, or else you need a shaman to help journey back in time to do it yourself. In either case, the results are not immediately obvious, but sooner or later a healing will occur.

There have been some very spectacular journeys and pretty horrible stories related to me by members of the drumming circle and also by clients. But needless to say, those are privileged information. As an example, I can only tell my own story, which is interesting enough, I believe. And to be sure, it didn't all come out in one journey, in fact, it took months to get the whole story.

So, here's my story: I put out the intent to meet an ancestor who needed healing and whose acts have been affecting my life. Then I relaxed, got my spirit crew to stand by and help if needed and I journeyed out into the unknown past.

At first I saw nothing. Then that nothingness turned dark blue and then the blue formed into the purple-blue coat of a king sitting on a throne, wearing a crown and holding a sceptre. Wow, I thought, I have a king for an ancestor!! But this King didn't notice me at all. I went to the upper world to fetch

Ancestors

by Gisela Ko

my mother, who had died a few years back. She was waiting and we went together to look at the king. He looked into space as before and didn't see us at all. But mother and I stood below the throne, giggling and looking at each other; what do you know, we are of royal ancestry!!! Turns out this wasn't the issue at all!

No matter what we tried we couldn't get his attention. Mother finally had enough of this and left. And then I offered him a large luminous ball. The result was quite amazing. I did get his attention, but not in the way I had expected! He took one look at me and with an expression of total horror moved backwards until he almost fell off his throne. That's when I saw a very agitated man screaming and yelling at him. And this time I even got a name, Per Svenson...and he was not my ancestor.

Per was a farmer and a soldier in the 1400's in Sweden. He was sent to fight in a war for (naturally) a good cause of some sort. While he was away, his beautiful wife caught the king's eye. And the king of course was not out there fighting, after all he had to rule the country. But when Per came back, there was a child that didn't quite look as if it could possibly be Per's. I didn't find out, whether there were other children, but the fact remained Per was not happy about this to say the least. An enormous chasm of discord opened in this family, and guilty, guilty, guilty! was the verdict for wife and child from then on, even though apparently more legitimate children arrived afterwards and the family stayed together.

It was time for a healing. I found Per and thanked him profusely for having raised my ancestor. I also told him that he was a good man and that I basically considered HIM my ancestor and that probably thanks to him we all turned out good people as far as I know. We hugged and we both cried a lot of healing tears. Then SHE appeared. She was very petite, very blonde and indeed very beautiful. I got the two of them to hold hands and to forgive each other. It was also time to make peace with the king who apparently had almost lost his throne over this matter. We all held hands, we hugged and we cried. It had taken a long time, but now there was peace and forgiveness at last.

All this gave me a lot to think about. I thought about the discord among siblings and parents in my mother's family, that had always been a mystery to me. There was also an ever so slight touch of arrogance in this family, along with a bit of noble air. And guilt feelings? Well that isn't strange to me at all!! Having grown up in post war Germany with "guilty, guilty, guilty!" rubbed in all my life, without really having done anything to anyone, yes, guilt-feelings come easy to me. But after this ancestor healing I am now free to drop those feelings of unfounded guilt. I can at last refuse to take blame for other people's deeds and live my own life, mistakes and all.

We are all related. We have kings and beggars for ancestors who deserve our respect regardless. All of them helped make us become the people we are now. They affect us more than we realize and we affect them in some ways too. In fact, our own actions now will surely affect our descendants in the future! We are not alone! We are part of the whole picture, affecting each other back and forth in more ways than we can ever imagine. See ad in the NYP - Shamanism

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How the Spring Festival of Awareness Ca

by Angèle Rowe

Human beings have gathered together in celebration and worship since the beginning of time. Even in the age of

super highways and sophisticated electronic communication, the impulse to gather has not faded. There is nothing quite like being in the presence of others of like spirit and mind.

In 1978, two men in the Kootenays decided they wanted to provide an opportunity for like-minded souls to experience the regenerative powers of holistic health. Sid Tayal and Harry Jukes created the first Spring Festival and after seven years of tending to its needs they released it to a group in Vernon. It survived for another three years and then became dormant.

In 1988, Peter Morris, who had enjoyed being an instructor at the Festival, wished to repeat the experience and began looking for someone to revive it. After a meditation weekend he said to me, "Angèle would you revive the Spring Festival? I said, "I don't know many metaphysical people but I would like to give it a try." We drove to Vernon and spoke with the previous organizers. We were warned of the long hours and dangers of stress from organizing such a large event and that any changes needed to be approved by the originators. A month later Harry and Nora Jukes (he met Nora at the first Spring Festival and she coordinated it



Art Therapy
with Patrick
Yesh

for the next six years) came to interview me. We held hands in a small circle around my kitchen table; when the silence broke Nora announced it was official. She had seen energy swirling up into the heavens and the devas had agreed, I would be the new organizer.

I started by calling instructors from previous festivals to see if they would like to be a presenter and after every Meta-

physical Club meeting I would ask people if they wanted to help. Most of the people weren't interested but sometimes one would step forward. First was Urmi, then Laurel, then David and the meetings started. We asked the Spirit of the Festival for guidance and were given seed money—enough for a deposit on Naramata Centre and some printing costs. I put together a schedule, had it printed and did a mail out to everyone who had ever attended. My home telephone got so busy my teenage kids disowned me and I had a second line installed. Then a letter came in the mail, she had tried several times to call me—a retired lady willing to help with registration. A few more volunteers and a few meetings finalized the details and the eleventh annual Spring Festival of Awareness was held in May of 1988 in Naramata, B.C.

My original intention was to do it once and get on with my life. That changed during the course of organizing the Festival and I wanted a second chance—for now I knew what to expect and I had lots of ideas on how to do it better. The crew agreed to help, and plans started for the next year, which fell on the April Fools weekend. The jester and the rainbow logos that resulted from that weekend became more than logos for me. I grew to love the spirit of the festival and listened for its guidance.

The Festival prospered for there is nothing else quite like it and the fees are

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Some happy participants

Do y



Came to Be

most reasonable. Instructors loved the venue and the good turnout of participants. People could sense the energy and each year they returned bringing family and friends. The crew remained fairly consistent and we created systems that made organizing easier—being in the flow allows spontaneity to create the changes as needed. The rewards I get from organizing the Spring Festival are on many levels and I appreciate them all for I am now a different person than the one who said, "Yes, I will give it a try."

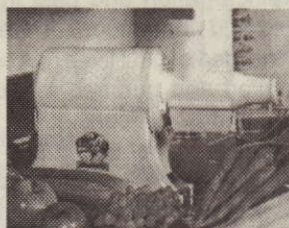
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Do you know these faces? See last month's ISSUES for write-ups & week-end schedule.



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YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE (OR DO YOU?)

by Therese Dorer

You only live once! How often have we all heard this? In some cultures and religions, reincarnation and past lives are accepted and understood. In western culture the idea of past lives has only been discussed and pursued in more recent years and is still considered an 'away-out-there' concept by many.

I have always been fascinated with the idea that I may have walked this earth in another body at another time and place. To understand and then believe I had walked the earth before was a very exciting revelation. In my work as a spiritual consultant I have had the opportunity to see past lives for my clients. Their stories unfold for me like a dream sequence and I am given details like the "feel" of the sun, or the dust on the streets, vivid pictures of the clothes and look of the people. These past life memories for clients are always given for a reason. The memories are to explain present lives and relationships, or to help to understand an unexplained fear, likes or dislikes in our present life.

Many of us have had the experience of a longing to travel to a foreign country, or we may be very attracted to a certain type of art, or music and wonder why? It just feels like you are at home when you see or hear it. Or the unexplainable "deja vu"—were we here before? Haven't I had this conversion before? It has been my experience that many of these unexplained things in our lives are from past life experiences.

Some of the interesting things I

have seen are the lives where the people who are connected with us now: relatives, friends and co-workers, have been with us before in other lives. As our journey on earth is one of learning and understanding, many of the people we encounter are able to help us grow and learn. The day-to-day interactions we have with people we live with and meet every day on the street, all help us to learn and grow. Life situations can be our biggest teacher.

For some of my clients the lives I have seen extend back to Egyptian and Roman times. I have seen the struggles they have gone through dealing with poverty, working as simple farmers. The recurring theme of all the lives, rich or poor, is the importance of the relationship they had and the way in which they dealt with the challenges in each life. Whatever suit of clothes they chose to wear, the most important message is for us to learn from our experiences and allow our spirit to guide us on our way.

Our life on earth is a huge learning experience. Earth is a great school house allowing us to learn and grow and accept one another. There is no judgement from spirit as to how we choose to learn or how long it takes us to learn the lessons we came for. We create our own judgement for ourselves and others right here on the earth plane. We may live more than once but it is important to enjoy and get the most out of the life we are experiencing right here and NOW.

See ad to the left

Catch the Cosmic Qi Wave

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Transcendental Meditation

by Elizabeth Innes, BSc. Pharm, MA. Ed.

The Transcendental Meditation Technique (TM) as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, is practised by millions worldwide. Here are the stories of three of them in our Okanagan community, how and why they learned TM and what the technique has done for them.

Patricia is a beautiful young woman who had just battled and conquered a life-threatening illness when she decided to learn the TM technique. She says, "During the healing process, my doctor told me about TM. That was in 1992. Being a slow learner, I finally wanted the experience for myself at the end of 1999. There I was at the health food store where I picked up an Issues magazine, with the name and phone number of a TM teacher here in Penticton.

"TM is an easy-to-learn meditation technique," she said. It's taught in a systematic way that is available for everybody. I really appreciated the teacher's one-on-one guidance, so now my TM is comfortable, enjoyable, even heavenly. Because I'm more peaceful within my body, the inside then proceeds outward, so I experience the world as more peaceful. It helps me to think more clearly and as a result it helps to keep the important things foremost in my life. My life has more depth and richness.

Wendy and David are a couple who both practice the TM technique, often together. If you spend even a few minutes with them, you'll notice their mutual love and respect. They have widely differing interests; David is an administrator with Legal Services in Penticton, who loves sports and visiting the pub with friends. Wendy prefers gardening

and Art History. David says, "TM is common ground for us. I come from a small town in Saskatchewan and heard about TM when I came to the Okanagan in 1992. I appreciate what TM has done for my mental functioning; it helps you make the right decisions. It's as if you get in line with the Universe. Even my Myers Briggs psychological test that they give me at work has changed. I test as being more intuitive now."

Wendy started TM in 1969, in Vancouver. How has it helped her relationship with David? "We can communicate more about our inner lives. It's a funny thing to say these days. We have a life. We talk about things we want to do in life. He understands about spiritual goals and a whole inner intuitive world. We share our insights in a deeper way than if we didn't have TM in common." What about day-to-day problems? Wendy responds, "We know each others' nature quite well. It's not something we think about; we just sense how to live together. It's an intuitive thing.

"My favourite thing about my TM technique is the peaceful experience. It's available to me every day, twice a day. I really look forward to my TM time...to go back inside."

The Transcendental Meditation technique dates back 5000 years, but is profoundly useful in our modern lives, as Patricia, Wendy and David have mentioned. It requires no change of lifestyle, and conflicts with no religion. It is easy to learn from a trained teacher, and with regular practice benefits grow in all areas of life. *See ad below*

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Hakalau

by Sue Peters

In 1979 in the U.S., the Native American Religious Freedoms Act was passed. This meant that the First Nation community within the United States, could now freely practice those spiritual/religious teachings that were quietly and secretly hidden within their hearts, or so it seemed. But it wasn't until 1989 that the final law against the practice of the ancient ways was repealed.

Finally, it was time to breathe again and inhale some wonderful and powerful teachings that have been sorely missed over those past and lost years. "And now today, you can see the entire planet is experiencing a revival of the old teachings, where once again we will experience the return of the balanced systems of teaching." Tad James

Because of the passing of this Act, I was able to receive the teachings and training of the Huna, Ho'omana Loa. Although I am still a student, (and I perceive that I will be a student for eternity...there never seems to be an end to the flow of knowledge and wisdom to be learned.) I feel that I have gained much from the Hawaiian Native community and I feel blessed by their warmth and continual openness to share their teachings.

"Any teaching or training in esoteric studies should increase positive character traits in the student. Above all, it should bring increasing balance of body, mind and spirit. The result of any esoteric study should then bring into balance physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects to produce the stability that comes from having symmetry and harmony in life." Huna and in my case Ho'omana Loa, offers several teachings and techniques to assist and guide the initiate.

"Throughout the world, the ancient teachings agree, any Kahuna, Shamanistic or magical discipline requires that the Kahuna be able to enter an altered state rapidly at will. In Hawaiian, the word Na means: quiet, calm, centered. This ability is necessary, but it is just the first step."

Tad James

The Kahuna lived in a state of active meditation called Hakalau, entering a rapid trance state at will. Another meaning of Hakalau is "to stare at, as in meditation and

to allow to spread out (to develop your peripheral vision)." I have found that by actively going into this state, I can be relaxed during all kinds of turmoil and better yet, it is impossible to hold a negative state in consciousness when I am in peripheral vision. There are many positives to practicing this system of rapid trance state. You can easily communicate with animals, plants, and minerals...the worlds of nature open up to you, and you begin to see the multi worlds of Creation, not just in our linear space but everywhere! It also aids in developing your mental telepathy skills. Because Hakalau is a waking meditation, you will find that it will stop thought (you can still function, not to worry!), open your heart center, awaken your spirit and reconnect you to the Source Energy / the Creator. What is so great, is that you can be in this state as you go from place to place, in all of your activities and still be totally aware, but with an added spark of Light from the Creator.

As you practice this technique, use it inside and outside all the time, until it becomes automatic. But, above all, have fun and relax into this wonderful state!

Hakalau technique:

1. Pick a spot on the wall just above eye level.
2. As you stare at this spot, just let your mind go loose and focus all of your attention on that spot.
3. Notice that within a matter of moments, your vision begins to spread out and you see more in the peripheral than you do in the central part of your vision.
4. Now, pay attention to the peripheral. Pay more attention to the peripheral than to the central part of your vision.
5. Stay in this state for as long as you can. Notice how it feels and the ecstatic feelings that begin to come to you as you deepen the state. (If you are a student of Yoga, you may notice some similarity.) See ad to the left

Sue will be a
presenter at the
Spring Festival of Awareness
in Naramata.
April 28, 29 & 30.

See pages 20 & 21 for details.





Calendar of Events



March 4 & 5

Avatar Canada, Introductory evenings in Kelowna. p. 27

March 7

How to Manage Your Stress, with Sandra Bradshaw in Kelowna. p. 29

March 12

Freedom of the Soul, a workshop with Sharon Smalberg in Kelowna. p. 4

March 14 - 17

Johnson's Landing Retreat Centre, Info evenings in the Okanagan Valley. p. 8

March 16

The Breath of Anger, with Jamie Rosanna Dorig in Kelowna. p. 19

March 17

The Orca Institute, Certification Training in Chase, B.C. p. 18

Adventures for the Mind, with Donalíe Caldwell in Kelowna. p. 14

March 17 - 19

Sacred Alchemy of Illumination, presented by Soul Journey in Kelowna. p. 5

March 18 - 19

Integrated Body Therapy, with Cassie Caroline Williams in Kamloops. p.13

North Eastern Winds, Spiritual Journeys in Sechelt with Paul, Lorna & B.J. p. 16

March 24

Canadian Acupressure Institute, Jin Shin Do training starts in Vancouver. p. 11

March 24 - 26

Body Electronics, An 'Abraham' Weekend with Barbara & Mel Kazinoff, Osoyoos. p. 15

March 27 - 30

Transcendental Meditation, Free Intros, Vernon, Nelson, Kelowna, Penticton. p. 23

March 31

Eckankar, presents a Free Video, 'The Journey Home' in Penticton, 7:30pm. p. 17

March 31 & April 1

Eros, Kundalini and Consciousness, Fri. eve. & Sat. Workshop in Vancouver with Staurt Sovatsky; author, Director of Kundalini Clinic in California & teacher of Kundalini Yoga. Contact Cathy Woods, 604-688-1712. Tickets Banyen Books 604-737-8858. www.cit-sakti.com

April 1 - 2

Orthobionomy, with Baeleay Callister in Kamloops. p. 7

April 1 - May 7

Holistic Massage, 4 one-day sessions with Sharon Strang - Focus Bodywork in Kelowna, 250-860-4985, see article p. 28

April 8

World Tai Chi & Qigong Day, in Kelowna with Harold Naka. p. 22

April 14, 15 & 16

Reiki Level 1 Workshop, with Loro Tylor in Penticton. p. 9

April 20 - 24

Touch for Health, with Yvette Eastman in Vancouver. p. 7

April 27 - May 1

Take Your Soul to Work, a retreat with Tanis Helliwell in Victoria. p. 3

April 28, 29 & 30

The Spring Festival of Awareness, in Naramata, B.C. p. 20 & 21

ONGOING EVENTS

Reiki Classes - Usui Method, All levels, for info call Margaret 250-868-2177

NIA - Mind, Body, Spirit Fitness. Ongoing classes. Call Michelle 492-2186, Penticton

SUPPORT GROUP FOR HERPES

EVERY SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
Outreach Health 250-868-2230, Kelowna

WEDNESDAYS

MEDITATION at Dare to Dream, 7pm
168 Asher Rd., Kelowna ... 491-2111

SUNDAY CELEBRATION

Kelowna: Sunday 10:30am. Kelowna Centre for Positive Living, Science of Mind, French Cultural Centre, 702 Bernard Ave • 250-860-3500

Vernon: Sundays at the Okanagan Centre for Positive Living, Science of Mind. Meditation 10:30am, Service 11am, Funday School 11am at the Powerhouse Theatre 2901-35 Ave. Call 250-549-4399 **WEDNESDAY**: Meditation at Falcon Nest 5620 Neil Road, 6pm, 549-4399

The Juicy Carrot & Yoga Studio

in Penticton presents

March 10, 11 & 12

Soap Making

3 hr. classes - \$30

Friday 6:30 -9:30,

Sat 1-4, Sun 9-12 & 1-4

for details call: 250-376-4554

March 17 • 7 pm

Informational Evening
about summer workshops at
Johnson's Landing Retreat Ctr.

FREE

details: 1-877-366-4402

March 18

Spring Celebration

*Let us make merry and
shake off winter's slumber
with a potluck feast and
dance • Cost \$5*

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Equinox Ceremony: 7:15 pm

Dance at 8 pm

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March 24 • 7 pm

Dreaming Techniques

with Ian Wilson..... \$5

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and dream control.

for details call: 770-1920

Quiet Mind: Finding Your Way Home

by Harry Palmer

Consciousness has abilities that allow us to process and deal with the physical universe. Everyone is more or less aware of these abilities. Broadly they are imagining, thinking, and remembering. These are the aspects of mind.

Only a few people are aware that consciousness has a much broader, intrinsic nature behind mind. This intrinsic nature is the realm of the Being. When it is entered, what was previously held to be important by imagining, thinking, and remembering is likely to become totally irrelevant. From this fathomless realm, all of the events and experiences of normal waking consciousness are satisfactorily encompassed by the curiously wise expression, "That's something." Assuming that people survive birth and fall within the normal parameters of genetic mutation, they are congenitally equipped with the thinking, imagining and remembering type of consciousness—a mind. In truth, they are hardly equipped with anything else. The result is that the Being grows up with its attention focused on the rewards and difficul-

ties of surviving in a defined physical reality, celebration and struggle. Any hints that other realities exist (or could be created) that might offer a more interesting paradigm are relegated to fantasy or science fiction. For most Beings the first real suit of clothing is a hastily constructed conscious definition: "I'm the baby." That is an anchoring affirmation. The sad part is that the Being spends the rest of its life at anchor. Its energy is spent patching and layering the original birthday affirmation with conclusions and experiences fashioned after physical reality. It is unwise to confuse the realm of Being with the physical universe.

Finally, the Being arrives at the end of its physical-life days still anchored in the definitions of mind. You could call mind the shallows of consciousness. What did the Being miss? The wonder of life? The awe of creation? The ecstasy of the divine? Essentially, it missed any experience of truth. Its only real experience is a sense of having been unhappily identified with a complex defini-

tion that required endless maintenance. This is what passes for a sane life in physical reality. The Being departs the body and shakes off the amnesia of definitions. "Well," it says, "that's something," referring to the fading mental and decaying physical definitions that it dreamed was self. There is a belated recognition that thinking-imagining-remembering consciousness is severely limiting. It anchors life in one spot. So the Being gets the first lesson of Avatar, but without getting any of the tools. But it took a lifetime! That's way too slow. Can you imagine how many lifetimes it will take it to recognize that what it is experiencing may have something to do with what it is creating?

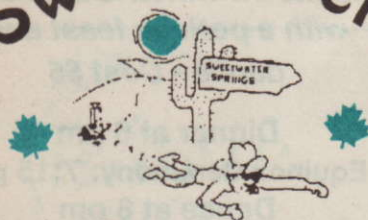
Slow! What is needed is a way for the Being to raise the anchor of self-definitions, without dying, and set sail into the eternal realms beyond mind. Getting back, going home. Exactly how to teach someone to do this has been the challenge of every spiritual practice. You see, the harder the Being works (imagines, thinks, remembers) to raise this anchor, the heavier the anchor grows. The mind can be an imprisoning paradox. But wait. Now the Being sees all these Avatars sailing around having fantastic life adventures and still in touch with something more permanent than a paycheck. Intuitively the Being knows that the right to happiness is more than an accident of birth. The Being knows that there must be a way to slip the anchor of the mind. And of course there is—Avatar. How does it lift the anchor? The secret is: do nothing deliberately. How does a Being do nothing deliberately? That's a key world lesson. Without the Avatar tools, doing nothing deliberately is not easy to learn. It is a difficult skill to acquire.

There are occasional moments in life when thinking stops, and among other things, a Being becomes fully aware of the circumstances of its own existence without any reactions to them. At least there ought to be such moments—periods of time when attention moves beyond the scope of daily concerns. The common self falls asleep and an extraordinary self awakens.

This extraordinary self, a higher self, has a quality not found in the common

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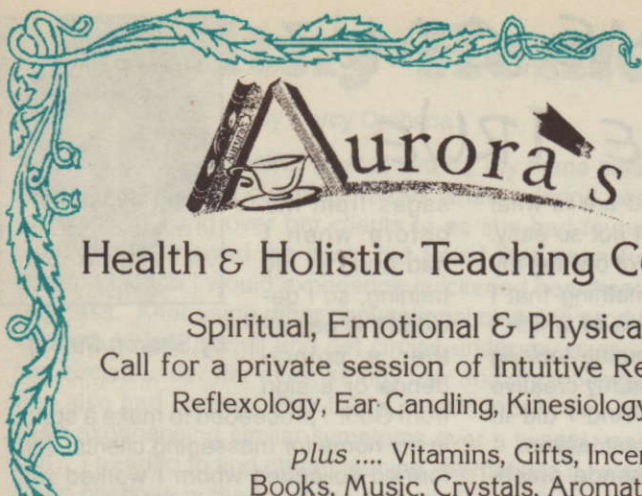
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Aurora's March Course Schedule

Phone for details **250-491-0642**

Mondays

March 6, 13, 20 & 27

Meditation, 6:45 pm \$3

Tuesdays

March 14- **Celestial Light Ray Meeting, 7pm, \$2**

21- **Symptoms of Menopause, 7 pm, \$5**

Thursdays

March 16

Johnson's Landing Info Evening, 7pm

Retreats, Workshops, Programs, No charge

Fridays

March 10

10 week Intuitive Training Course

9:00am, \$275 & GST

Sundays

March 5

12 Week Certified

Aromatherapy Course

8 am - 5:00pm - \$1500 & GST

April

Wednesdays

April 12 **10 week Intuitive Training Course**

6:30pm, \$275 & GST

*Connie will be a presenter at the
Spring Festival, April 28, 29 & 30
in Naramata.*



self - quiet mind. Quiet mind is independent of time and does not react or create non-deliberately. The anchor of "I am this-not-that" disappears. An awareness awakens that is beyond any defining construction. This is a moment of enlightenment. Achieving this state of quiet mind, even for a moment, is a great accomplishment. An even greater accomplishment is maintaining this state. It is such an unusual accomplishment that when you tell a Being that the quiet mind state is an expected result of the Avatar training, you are usually met with disbelief. The thinking-imagining-remembering mind is a restless creator. It rummages in the past for motives like a hungry bear on a pile of garbage. It projects intentions onto other people. It projects happiness and danger into the future. It creates imaginary scenarios, calculates and strategizes plans, vicariously predicts and suffers consequences that never occur. It writes imaginary dialogues that are never spoken. It worries. It sings the same song over and over. It analyzes itself, scolding and praising according to some invisible script. It frantically analyzes for hidden meaning in even the most innocent comment, ever explaining itself to itself.

Occasionally, somewhere between glee and despair, the Being wonders, "What is life all about?" And then it cautions itself to be realistic. It wonders about being quiet. "Quiet mind? Oh yes, I know quite a bit about that state.

"When I was in India..." The quiet mind experience is so extraordinarily beautiful that many of the people who have momentarily experienced it spend the rest of their lives talking about it. This is how religions are born - trying to describe an experience whose fundamental quality is that it is without description. The moment of experience becomes a sacred memory-shrine in the mind. Graven mental images! Still, it is a beneficial memory in terms of coping with the stress and discouragement of life. It is a mental amulet of hope. It is widely considered that the quiet mind experience can be reached only after long and hard practice (or perhaps temporarily induced by a shaman's magic). It is considered so fragile an experience that even a non-deliberate breath can shatter it. So it is quite a surprise that Avatar can teach a person how to deliberately produce this state in a matter of days. A pleasant surprise! What is even more incredible, but nonetheless true, is to re-

alize that since Avatar's introduction in 1987, more Beings have stably achieved the state of quiet mind than before. Remind the Being that it is no longer necessary to withdraw from the world, or live a life of self-denial, or risk its mental health to achieve a state of quiet mind. Remind the Being to do Avatar.



The next training is

March 7th in Kelowna,

and will be presented by

Avatar Master Russel Monsurate

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DREAMS CAN COME TRUE



by Sharon Strang

What you believe you are is what you become. Simple, but not so easy. My story is about a dream of owning my own business, doing something that I really enjoyed—a business in which I could wake up in the morning looking forward to the day and use my creative energy to help people. And I did it! Being grateful is my greatest lesson.

I am a wholistic massage practitioner and my business is Focus Bodywork. About nine years ago, I found myself in a rut. I was taking a wonderful training as a personal growth consultant, however, I was almost finished and I had discovered that it was just not lucrative enough to support me and my two children. I was a single Mom, so there was a great amount of practicality that goes with that job. I needed to be bringing in a decent income on a regular basis. I decided to drop out of my training and go back to getting a 'real' job. I had been a certified dental assistant for several years, so I sent out resumé's to every office in town hoping to start making a good wage soon. Well, it was two or three years and many episodes later before my life became stable again. I was forced to apply for income assistance (welfare) because nobody would hire me. I was applying for many different types of jobs, but could only get part-time work waitressing, doing door-to-door surveys or working for government elections. It was a very discouraging time and I did not feel I had much value at all. I even got fired from my waitressing job! Now I see it as being pushed in a certain direction (kicking and screaming!) but at the time I felt like a total loser.

Finally, I got this *message*—just an idea that popped into my head—that said, 'Why don't you start doing massages professionally?' I had tried to bring in massage with my personal growth business before, but was not successful. Within the week, I got a phone call from a good friend whom I had not seen for about six months, asking me if I would be willing to give her a massage. She said her massage therapist was too busy and she needed one badly and would pay me!! She had received mas-

sages from me before when I had been in my training, so I decided this was either a coincidence or a sign from God! I proceeded to make a space in my home for massaging clients. I informed colleagues whom I worked with in the personal growth field, and they started coming to me. Soon they were referring friends to me. I decided to put an ad in *Issues*, which helped generate more business. And within a month, I was offered two dental assisting jobs! I decided to take the part-time one and do my massage part-time. Within two years, I had a thriving part-time business and was now getting a *message* to quit my dental assisting job and do massage part-time. But I was afraid. So within about 6 months of receiving this message, I was laid off.

One month later, we discovered my son had Type I Juvenile Diabetes and the following month was a blur. I was distraught. It was all I could do to take care of my daughter as well. Somehow I got through that month - the bills all got paid, we dealt with the trauma of my son's lifetime disease, and I got to see that if I could make it through that month, I could make it through any month. I have many stories to tell you how I expanded my business, each step of the way a learning, growing experience that I will never forget.

Now my dreams have expanded into starting a Wholistic Massage School. I already teach workshops and courses and am registered with the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission of B.C. Also, a dream of a Healing Arts Association has just been born—to support professionals and educate the public about their health choices. I have learned to be so grateful for my Spirit that is always guiding me. I am so grateful that I learned to listen. It's hard sometimes to differentiate between God's voice and the ego. But I was determined. Don't you quit! Dreams can come true!

See Calendar listing • April 1 for workshop.

Find your inner twin flame with Celestial Companions 2000

by Khoji Lang

Eight years ago in Switzerland, Roshani and I were lucky enough to meet each other. From the very first moment we both felt a totally new quality entering into our lives—something magical, a synchronicity, effortless and easy. Not only romantic, with one another we shared a rare feeling of deep comfort and mutual nourishment, which has been present ever since. Certainly we both had ripened through difficult relationships and were able to esteem this new quality. Now even conflict has become inspiring and often turns into fun. Seriousness has disappeared, giving space to sincerity and a profound commitment to mutually support each other. We are very different, hence we compliment one another on many different levels. Still the mystery prevails and our togetherness is full of surprises. Certainly, there are seasons, ups and downs - but strangely enough - they only seem to deepen our mutual understanding and love.

Educated in music and science I started my astrological studies when I was eighteen. The book "Harmonies of the Spheres" by Kepler (1571-1630) was my first love. Kepler's discovery of the laws of planetary motion is what history remembers about him. But similar to Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, astrology was his true love. "Harmonies of the Spheres" reveals perfect order within the macrocosm of our Solar system. Extending Pythagoras' approach he detected exact numerical proportions - musical harmonies - as the constituent factors of the entire creation - celestial music everywhere. Mystics have called this the primordial sound Aum. The whole existence is in perfect balance and harmony - except man! Why is this so? Is there a remedy?

A few things have to be understood. We are born into traditions and brought up with all kinds of conditionings. We were expelled from paradise, we have lost our innocence and wholeness (holiness)—spoiled by society, we have lost our true self. Reclaiming our own power starts with understanding the reason for our suffering—that we are allowing others to abuse us. Moving through the painful stage of recognizing our full responsibility for the situation we are in, leads towards more awareness. But we have accumulated many layers of conditioning, which pull us back into old habits and painful behavior patterns. Especially when choosing partners we keep falling into the same ditches over and over again.

Inspired by our exquisite compatibility, Roshani and I decided to establish a public service for scientific guidance to meet one's soulmate. Also being a counselor I know about the dynamics of relationships. So the idea was born: to design a computer program for creating magic links—to ignite harmonious and beneficial relationships in accord with the ever present celestial music of the spheres. Imagine if you were loved and respected in your totality, exactly the way you are. Then you were capable of appreciating and accepting your partner in the same way. Each of us holds godliness within, let us connect to that part of each other. There is no need to cultivate any negativity—be it blame, jealousy or resentment. With these feelings we just hurt ourselves the most! Out of old

Sandra Bradshaw

Certified Feldenkrais® Practitioner

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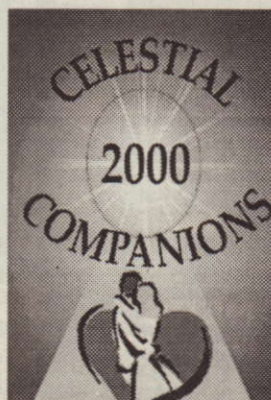
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habits once in a while negativity still might come up. But now you will recognize your own shadow. Fights will turn out to be fun. Hassle will end up in laughter. In the beginning you might feel embarrassed or confused and out of old habits you might even wish to be back in hell! But be a little patient. Soon you will learn to appreciate the great benefits of giving each other love, freedom and mutual support.

Celestial Companions 2000 is applying the laws of celestial harmony. These relationships have the potential to be your magic mirror. In your beloved's eyes you will see the reflection of your unconscious inner twin flame. This partner will be your best friend—an ideal role model animating you to realize your hidden treasures and supporting you to become a responsible and fully integrated human. *See ad below*



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Dr. Brenda Gill, ND, Rossland, Tel. (250) 362-5035

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The Healing Herbs

by Klaus Ferlow

Calendula

Calendula is known as the "herb of the sun." Its more common name is Pot Marigold, Mary Gowles and Gold. Since ancient times, the East Indians, Arabs, Romans, and Greeks all noted how Calendula's flowers open in the morning and close in the evening and how the flowering season extends for many months. It also has a noteworthy place among our native herbs, for it grows wild, as well as in our gardens. Calendula reaches a height of 30-40 cm. Its flowerheads are bright yellow to orange and the stems and leaves are fleshy and sticky to touch. It is said that if the flowerhead stays closed after 7 am, it will rain that day. Gathering of the flower heads should occur in bright sunshine and can they be picked late in fall as long as they are free from mildew. My grandmother and mother made their own Calendula cream and it is one of the most common healing herbs (besides Comfrey) known to mankind. Calendula strongly resembles Arnica and can be used as a blood cleanser as it stimulates the circulation, improving the healing of wounds.

The constituents of Calendula are essential oils, carotenoid, flavonoids, sterol, mucilage, saponins and bitters. Calendula is a popular cream ingredient because it decreases the inflammation of sprains, stings, varicose veins, and other swellings. It soothes burns, sunburns, rashes and skin irritations, pulled muscles, sores, boils, eczema, acne, and chapped skin. Laboratory studies show it kills bacteria and fungus. Some anti-tumor activities have been observed in scientific studies. It can also be drunk as a tea. There are wonderful testimonies in Maria Treben's book, *Health through God's Pharmacy*. Many famous natural doctors use the fresh pressed juices for malignant growth and to help pigment spots on the skin to disappear.

Hawthorn

This ancient hedge-thorn has been a well-loved tree throughout the ages. In England it is called the Maybush so as to be synonymous with the month that it blooms. In France it is used in religious connotation: Norman peasants for years put sprigs in their caps to reflect the belief that Christ's crown was made of hawthorn. Although hawthorn berries were well known to the Greeks, they apparently went out of fashion as a medicine until the 19th century, when an Irish physician included them in a secret remedy for heart disease.

Hawthorn berries provide us with one of the best tonics for the heart and circulatory system. They move the heart to function normally, in a gentle way, lowering or raising blood pressure according to need. They are found in most herbal preparations for heart weakness, irregular heartbeat, hardening of the arteries, artery spasm, and angina.

Originally only the berries were used, but higher concentrations of active flavonoids have been discovered in the flowers and leaves when hawthorn is in full blossom. One study found spring shoots to be the most active of all. To cover all the bases, many herbalists now use the flowers, young stems, and berries together. The berries are collected in September and October when they are ripe.

See ad to the left

Creating Mandalas

by Judy Ellis

If I were asked to produce, on paper, the likeness of something—perhaps a chair or a particular flower, or maybe an animal of some sort, especially from my imagination, I'm afraid my response would have to be, 'Sorry, but I can't draw'. Sure I can produce child-like sketches—anyone can—but definitely nothing realistic looking.

No, the fact of the matter is I really can't draw. But for the past four years now I've been thoroughly enjoying the art of creating Mandalas—circular, symmetrical designs filled with detail, with colour and with life!

The outer reflects the inner. The inner reflects the outer. And what's absolutely wonderful is that more often than not, this reflection reveals itself as being surprisingly beautiful! Having been buried for so long, the Diamond appears and I'm privy to its splendour and its radiance.

Mandala translates simply as circle. So I pick up my trusty little compass, you know, the circle maker from a geometry set. I spin several concentric circles onto a big sturdy sheet of poster paper, like this:



Now the adventure begins. At this point all I know is that I've chosen to start this journey in the centre, the smallest circle. I listen, I stare at the paper awhile, I gaze off into space awhile, then return to the paper. No rush...I'm patient. I think about what designs might be incorporated into this mandala—perhaps a few stars this time? Maybe a triangle? How about hearts?

Sometimes for inspiration I flip through the incredible Mandala book I own, written by Jose and Miriam Arguelles. And once in a while I search for a picture of a specific object I want to draw, most recently a butterfly, then see if I can copy it somehow...

Yes, I'll definitely choose golds and deep blues and crimson this time 'round. But you just never know. These mandalas have a mind of their own. On two different occasions, I remember deciding beforehand to create in predominantly forest green, one of my favourite colours, but what ended up on paper were shades of turquoise and blue - no green at all!

Most of the mandalas that have come into existence through me have been given away as gifts. Donna received one shortly before she succumbed to cancer last year. Aleila's came to her because she'd adopted a new name. Shanti, Aleil, Shanti. Peter returned to his home in Australia with one of my mandalas after charming Canadians with his gentle spirit, through music and song. And just yesterday I completed a mandala for Marlene, in appreciation of her thoughtful Christmas gifts.

Lots to think about before placing pencil in hand and com-

mitting to the initial squiggle. Mind you, I do own an eraser and use it liberally, so there's no need to worry about changing my mind at this point or, God-forbid, making a mistake! There have been times though, after investing colour and ink and needless to say many hours in a day, when I am totally at odds with a mandala-in-the-making. Maybe the colour combinations don't resonate well with me, or something's noticeably off balance. Then I have no choice but to throw it away.

Strange that discarding a piece of artwork requires courage on my part. Perhaps it's because I'm such a novice at expressing myself artistically and want so very much to feel successful in every one of these endeavours. But I follow my intuition, my gut feeling, remembering not to become discouraged about something I've deemed unworthy of completing.

The person for whom this mandala is intended drifts in and out of my consciousness, as images position themselves on the mandala before me. Always, utmost attention and importance is given to balance. A certain shape in the north, for instance, is mirrored in the south. Red in the east finds its mate in the west, and so forth.

On a scrap of paper, one colour is often tested up against another and then another before it becomes part of the 'big picture'. It either feels right or it doesn't. In my experience, mandala-creating has a whole lot to do with feeling, with intuition, and with stilling the mind. Thoughts have a way of ceasing altogether during the process, and I'm rewarded with a much appreciated respite from all this mental activity. In fact, the intellect many-a-time gets in the way of the creation. Then there are the colours! Oh, the colours...how beneficial they are to my spirit, and how they fill me with joy. It may take all of twelve hours for me to complete a mandala but I gladly confess half the time is spent gazing intently into it. I just can't help myself! Perhaps I'm getting to know a part of myself I'd no idea of before this particular design came into being.

Now it's your turn! Won't you join me? You'll be pleasantly surprised at how easily all your cares and worries disappear into thin air while you're involved in this magic circle you're filling with colour and harmony. It really happens!

So hunt down one of those compasses I mentioned, find a sheet of blank paper—any kind will do to begin with. Sharpen your pencils and crayons, or dust off that ancient set of paints you've kept for some reason. Whichever medium you feel most comfortable with is the right one for you. Then plunge right in! An incredible world of self-discovery awaits you!

Whether we realize it or not, the truth of the matter is we're all, each and every one of us, totally unique and so very talented. Creating mandalas, I've found out, is definitely a way of experiencing this great truth.

Interesting People

by Urmi

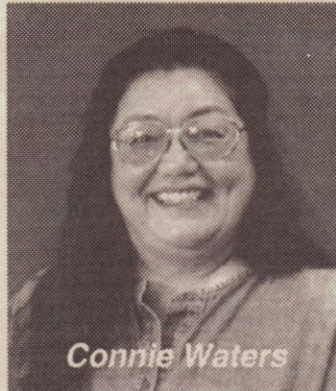


Still Waters Run Deep

I have often pondered the meaning of that expression. Where Connie Waters is concerned the still waters are warm, enveloping, deep, dark and intriguing. When I first asked her for an interview she declined. I could sense a humbleness. She returned to me a week later and after some consideration had decided she would grant me an interview. She explained that she felt that when things are offered, there is a need to be accepting. Connie had come to me for massage a few times and every so often would offer some picturesque information about her childhood. Connie spoke of running freely from dawn to dusk in the hills of Inkaneep, the Oliver Reserve. There were lots of kids around to play and fight with. Those early experiences of freedom created a profound connection with nature and an understanding of a higher power. Those days were short-lived, for all the children ages seven to sixteen were sent on a passenger train from Penticton to Residential school in Cranbrook. When I asked if the children were upset by this, Connie jokingly replied, "We all stopped crying by the time we arrived." She felt fortunate to have had some older cousins with her to help her understand her new life in a Catholic environment. The rigors of the school and the indoctrination of the Catholic religion made her feel serious and lonely; she longed for home. Although Connie did not take up the Catholic religion she did gain some foundational understanding about education which she applies to her present role as a teacher. She explained that the nuns had very high academic expectations of the students and because of this her basic education was to "learn how to learn". The students resided in dormitory rooms and attended school every day. They were allowed to return home once a year. Food was scarce and rules were plenty. Connie only had to stay for two years at the school as her family moved to the US. Connie recalls that moving from the reserve created a feeling of being rootless and caught between two worlds. She began to see and experience the reality of racial bias. Her family continued to move around for a number of years, giving her a varied experience of schools and living situations.

After graduating she won a scholarship for business school but found the secretarial profession was not to her liking. For a few years Connie did what was familiar to her; as many young persons do she worked at jobs that were available, such as cook, waitress and packing house labourer. After marrying and having a son she began to see that the hard work that she was doing was not challenging enough. A career change might be necessary, as she grew older. She kept upgrading her education by taking courses and at age thirty-five she went to university to get her teaching degree. The Heritage University was multicultural with wonderful instructors who honoured the greatness of each individual. "It was affirmed that I am a great human being and I can be appreciated for who I am and what I have to offer," recalls Connie.

Then a situation occurred which caused Connie to delve



Connie Waters

deeper into her self for spiritual strength. She had separated from her husband but his death sent a shock wave through her. "When my husband committed suicide I just felt there was something I had to figure out. For four days and nights I didn't eat or sleep. Then suddenly I entered a state of openness. My consciousness expanded and I accessed a higher understanding. There were instant answers to all the questions and I felt at one with everything. It was as if a light went on inside my head and I was seeing differently with love and

caring. People, kids and dogs; everyone wanted to be near me when I was in that state of openness. A situation like that creates life altering thinking," says Connie, "You have to review your whole spiritual basis. A spiritual awakening can happen through trauma. It can force you to evaluate yourself. I really did have to ask myself if I was meant to do something with that understanding. Healing? I don't think so but I have never been the same since that experience. It is impossible for me to doubt that there are powers at work. We may not understand them but there is an order to things." Connie sees life as service. She has studied several religions and particularly upholds Buddhism.

Connie had many profound spiritual experiences all of which she says indicated that the creator is a caring, loving source that does not seek punishment. She has met many spiritual mentors. One experience came first in the form of a dream. Connie dreamed of the person she would meet and what they would do. She also saw her future working with young people.

Today Connie has a Master's in Education and is the Head Teacher at the Circle of Strength Alternate School, situated on the Penticton Reserve. The school's mandate focuses on developing life skills, encouraging values and of course academics. The motivation for the school came out of necessity. Some students were struggling in the school system, some had never been in public school and wanted other options. When I asked Connie if she was teaching culture she replied, "Culture is what happens every day, but we do have a cultural resource teacher who teaches drumming singing and dancing. The school advocates the basics: reading (Native authors), journal writing, math, and computers as well as life skills, cooking, sewing and sports." When I implied that it all sounded exciting, Connie in her very practical and down to earth manner replied, "It can't all be exciting because a lot of what we do is just work"

Today Connie's biggest challenge is to maintain good health. Finding the time for spiritual and physical self care and she strives to work smarter not harder. In conclusion she says, "Every day I wake up wondering what exciting things will happen today. Nothing really exciting happens but each day brings such wonderful lessons."

Don't ask for any advice though. Connie is wise enough not to offer any solutions, just a gentle understanding.

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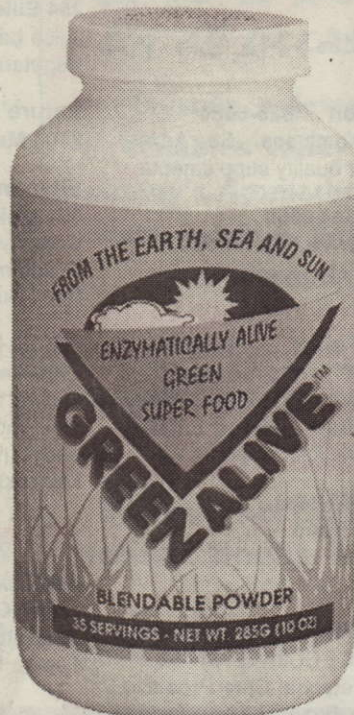
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