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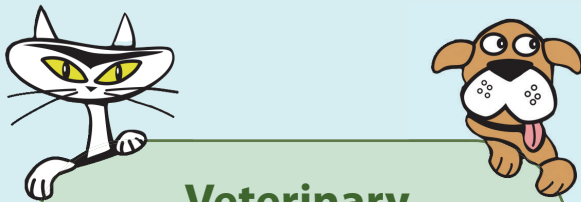
Interview: Shredie Mercury Shares The Stoke And Spiritual Side Of Skateboarding
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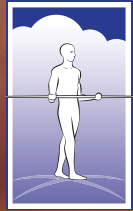
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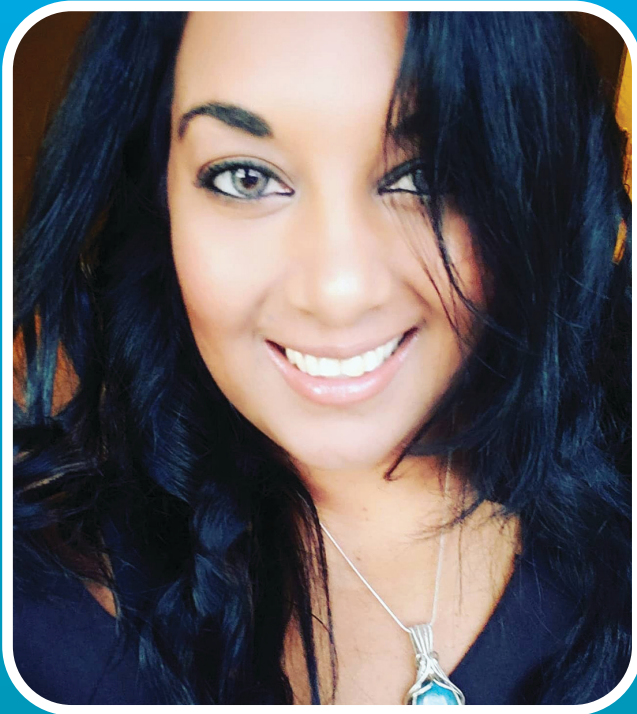
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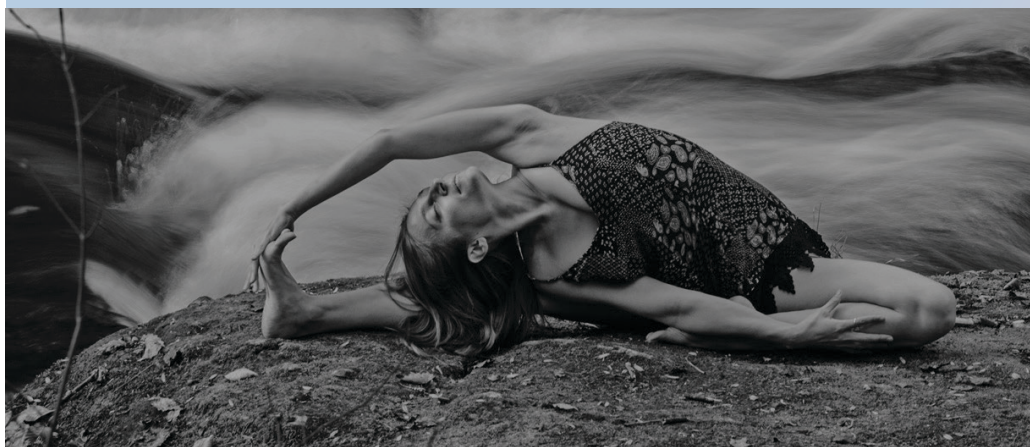
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Pathways Productions is a full-service advertising, marketing, event and publishing company serving the mind, body, spirit community since 1979. From the start, we have been a small, family-run business. Today, we have a women-led team dedicated to helping all businesses — local, small & independent — succeed and thrive. Over the years, we have expanded our offerings to include live events, most notably the widely successful and always popular Natural Living Expo.

The articles and resources offered by Pathways Magazine and its affiliated hosted events demonstrate a common belief on the part of local individuals, businesses and contributors that sharing ideas and expertise builds community and commerce in a spirit of unity, cooperation and understanding while maintaining a high level of integrity, responsibility and service. Our content embraces these ideals; we are a conduit — a pathway — for the most loving and dynamic insights and information that enable all of us to live more consciously.

The views and opinions expressed in Pathways Magazine, and by vendor materials for our hosted events, are those of the contributing writers, editors and merchants, and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Pathways ownership or any Pathways staff. Any content provided by our contributors is of their opinion and is not intended to malign any religious, ethnic, or cultural group, organization, company or individual. Furthermore, the products and services presented herein and at our hosted events do not necessarily constitute an endorsement of use or a recommendation on the part of Pathways and its staff, and are largely paid advertising and vending.

Making Connections

Join our Pathways Community! Through our quarterly and online publications, and our scheduled hosted events, we are committed to providing the public with free or affordable access to local resources focused on holistic health and wellness practices, spirituality and personal growth, community activism and outreach, and stewardship to the environment. We foster these opportunities through information, ideas, events, goods and services.

Our goal is to provide a platform for businesses to reach the public in a comprehensive and cost-effective way. Through advertising, packaged marketing, live events and retreats, and event planning support, we offer businesses opportunities to market themselves through a variety of channels, and use our expertise to facilitate this growing network. Pathways is your one-stop resource to make connections, nurture growth and achieve success.

Finding Pathways

Pathways Magazine print edition is distributed through dozens of outlets in Maryland, DC and Virginia. Visit our “Where To Find” page online for the nearest locations to pick up your print copy. More distribution outlets are being added with each issue. We also provide an online digital edition with interactive links to references, resources and businesses for each issue. Our website features our current issue, as well as a magazine archive, where you can view issues dating back to 2010.

Subscriptions for Pathways Magazine are available for \$16/year and direct-mailed. Order yours through our website: www.PathwaysProductions.com/magazine/subscriptions.

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Pathways advertising opportunities are available through all of our outreach channels: our free quarterly journal, Pathways Magazine, distributed in print and digitally; our hosted events; and our comprehensive website and growing social media presence. We offer ad rate discounts with custom packages for Expo exhibitors, and provide design services for low one-time fees. For more information, upcoming deadlines and our editorial calendar, visit us online.

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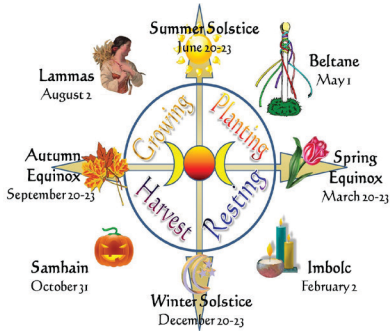
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Summer 2023 – What’s Inside



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Sharing the Stoke: The Spiritual Side of Skateboarding

Interview with Jonathan “Shreddie Mercury” Marino

INTERVIEW BY MICHELLE ALONSO

Skateboarding has been around for decades, born in California in the 1950s by the surfing community who needed something new to surf when the waves were flat. It has stereotypically been associated with a thrill-seeking, reckless, extreme, or rebellious community of young, mostly men. Thankfully, the perception has changed over the years as skate culture has evolved into many different styles, and gained greater legitimacy — for better or worse — with its introduction into professional sports and the Olympics, and the infusion of corporate sponsorships. And the skate community itself has become much more inclusive and diverse across genders, ethnicities, and age range, due in large part to the virality of social media and the ability to share skateboarding videos from all around the world. More recently, the pandemic has given skateboarding a reason for resurgence as a fun, solo, socially-distanced activity that could be done outdoors.

It was during the pandemic when Jonathan “Shreddie Mercury” Marino, a proud Marylander, and an even prouder skateboarder, opened his School of Shred (www.ShreddieMercury.com), a local business dedicated to skateboard instruction. He has been nurturing his passion for skateboarding since he was twelve, when he was first exposed to street-style skating in his Gaithersburg neighborhood. He felt an immediate connection that has only grown during the last twenty years, including several of those spent within the SoCal skate scene, to what is now a thriving livelihood teaching skateboarding.

Shreddie gets his moniker in part to his resemblance to the late, great Freddie Mercury, frontman of the iconic rock band, Queen, and to his amazing ability to “shred”, the slang term for skilled skating. For over two decades he has been honing his skills by learning the many different skating styles in the community, adapting his mindset to embrace continuous personal growth, and in turn, “sharing the stoke”, or excitement for all things skateboarding with his students. He is passionate about the many benefits — physical, mental, social and spiritual — skateboarding offers.

As it turns out, Shreddie is also stoked about Pathways! He first picked up a copy as a teenager trying to understand and relate to interests held by his father, who was “very into the mind-body-spirit world.” He credits reading those issues early on as what got him interested in spirituality, mindfulness, and meditation. And he recognizes the similarity in values and practices found in skateboarding.

Shreddie introduced himself to us when he attended a recent Natural Living Expo. This interview is a continuation of that first conversation about his love of skateboarding and how he feels about being part of both communities. Here, we delve deeper into where his interests got started, when he made the transition to teaching and how he approaches the discipline, where he finds the intersection of spirituality and skateboarding, and what he has learned along the way.

There’s the saying, “Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach”, but as a long-time skateboarder who now also teaches skateboarding for a living, this doesn’t apply to you at all! How did you first get introduced to skateboarding?

I think the first time I saw skating was on TV, maybe an X-Games on ESPN, or some kind of TV program about skating that caught my attention, and I thought it was really cool. But the main thing that really sparked my attention was when I was 12 years old and saw a kid

in my neighborhood skating. He was doing an “ollie”, which means you make the board jump, and he landed on top of a sidewalk. He went over the curb, onto the sidewalk, and then just kept going. It looked so magical and amazing. And so that was my first inspiration, how it hit home, because it wasn’t on TV, it was in my neighborhood, and he just made it look so easy. And I thought, “If anything, I just want to learn that, and I’ll be happy.”

I begged my mom for a skateboard, and I got one from Toys ‘R’ Us. It was a super cheapy style, but that was my beginning. I learned how to ollie, which is part of what’s called “street skating”, because you’re just in the street, free flowing, using whatever is in your neighborhood, or in the city, as obstacles, going onto the sidewalk, off the sidewalk, grinding a bench, that kind of thing. So that’s super relatable and something anyone can do if they don’t have a skatepark nearby.

It makes sense that you should start learning with a style that’s immediately accessible. What other skating styles have you learned over the years?



I did street skating throughout high school, and then a few years after high school, I moved from Gaithersburg, Maryland, to California. I worked at *411 Video Magazine*, which is a skateboarding video series, as a web publisher, and I also had a camera. I would go to different skateboarding contests and events, document them, and make edits as a kind of a freelance video guy, along with making pieces for the website. I became less compelled to flip my board or jump down stairs anymore, but that allowed me to stay in the scene.

Around 2014, I got really into transition skating, which is using bowls, ramps and backyard pools for doing tricks and maneuvers. Then, I was invited to be part of a contest called the OG Jam, which was for skaters over 30, thanks to Heidi Lemmon, one of the event organizers. I had no desire to do contests, but the environment was very welcoming, and it helped me progress and learn to skate under pressure. That was super fun, and introduced me to a whole new commu-

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When There Were No Yoga Mats: Before Yoga Was a ‘Thing’

BY CLAUDIA NEUMAN, MSW, E-RYT 500 YACEP

For the Yoga community, and for better or worse, it's fair to say that Santa Monica, CA, is considered the launching point for Yoga in the United States. As a Yoga student and instructor for over forty years, and a California native born in Los Angeles, I have a unique and deeply personal history with and perspective of this founding. Not only did I watch it unfold, I had a front-row seat... and remember when there were no Yoga mats.

Back in the day... we are always weary when something starts with this phrase, I understand, but... Back in the day... Yoga wasn't a thing.

Very early on Yoga was for the weirdo Hollywood types like Gloria Swanson and Marilyn Monroe. But I was born into a family that abided by the health fads of the era. There was Euell Gibbons (*Stalking the Wild Asparagus*), an early environmentalist and “back to the land” wild food forager, and later Adelle Davis (*Let's Eat Right to Keep Fit*), who made points about the disastrous state of health and nutrition in America. Then there was the couple, Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw, who pioneered the vitamin fad and extolled the virtues of vitamin therapy for anti-aging. I was impacted — by both my family's embrace of these fads, as well as the fads themselves (not all) — for a lifetime.

It started at age 8, when my amazing Mother took me to the local Yoga class held in the park on Wednesdays. We are talking about 1966, Los Angeles. Yoga was not a ‘thing’ — it was for off beat weirdos like my Mother and myself. I loved going, despite being the only kid there. From my point of view closer to the ground than the adults towering above me, I watched their strained faces; everyone looked really serious and stiff. I didn't understand. To me, it was the most natural thing in the world to do bends and twists and balancing poses. And we didn't have Yoga mats. You were supposed to bring a towel, specifically a beach towel, something large and thick.

We sat and did breath exercises and facial exercises, like sticking our tongues out until we could touch our chins. There were no standing poses. We did classic sun salutes, forward bends, back bends, twists and inversions. In between each pose, we did a resting pose. At the end, after a longer resting pose, we would sit up for meditation. The emphasis was clear: we do all this breathing and moving in order to have a clear mind for meditation at the end. Yoga is about having a balanced, *sattvic* (meaning *light* or *pure*) mind. The mind and its thoughts must be harnessed to move in the direction of truth.

When I was about 16 years old, I wanted to have a Vegetarian fast food chain. Yes, I was a vegetarian at that age. It was radical then. I grew sprouts in a jar and tried to make yogurt. I ate carob instead of chocolate. I had read books like *Be Here Now* by Ram Dass, while my Mother did Yoga in the backyard and meditated every day. She studied Metaphysics and taught me how to develop my psychic abilities. She would faithfully do Yoga on TV with Liliias Folan, *Yoga and You*; if she missed Liliias' broadcast, she'd make sure to get in her half hour with Jack LaLanne, the famed fitness and nutrition guru of the time.

I, on the other hand, was doing Yoga from a book, because, iron-

ically, there were no actual Yoga classes near me. Along with my Ram Dass studies, the only other thing going was *Richard Hittleman's Yoga: 28 Day Exercise Plan*. So, I copied the positions from the images of a skinny female model, who wore stirrup tights and had straight bangs across her forehead, for many rounds of 28-day segments.

When I was old enough to drive, I would take my Mother's car to Hollywood where I would do Yoga with the Integral Yoga Society. This was always offered at a private home, usually in the living room where there would be maybe 6 people at most. There were still no Yoga mats, just our beach towels, and classes were a \$1 donation.

The line up of practices was always the same: you sit and do breath of fire, then alternate nostril breathing, then you rest. Sun Salutes, then rest. Forward bends came next, and then, you guessed it, we'd rest. And so on, until the headstand and shoulder stand at the very end. After a long *Savasana* (resting pose) and a meditation, we

were invited to eat soup, which would be on the stove while we did our practices. If you were flush, you left a dollar; if not, no worries. What was important was just to come and practice. Why? Because the mind and body are one and the same — and Yoga is about devotion to something greater than chaos. The emphasis is always on meditation. We did the poses so we could have a peaceful mind and meditate. That was the point.

Studios on the Scene

In my twenties I was blessed to find a Yoga teacher named Ragavan with an actual studio. It's hard to imagine this now, but his was the only Yoga studio in Santa Monica, CA, where I was also living at the time. It was with Ragavan that I did my first serious study of Yoga. He emphasized quieting the mind through meditation, using the poses to balance the body and the nervous system, and building up strength through the practice of *pranayama* (breath retention). Yoga practice was offered at 6am and 6pm; it was always the same sequence of poses. And it was identical to the Yoga I had known — beach towels,

no mats, no standing poses, resting in between, and meditation at the end. Classes were still \$1.

Ragavan offered his students the opportunity to study to be teachers with him. His training was a year-long course during which you were expected to attend both morning and evening practices, go additionally on the weekends to learn the philosophy of Yoga, as well as learn about the lifestyle to adopt. He taught diet, fasting, reading the texts, practicing meditation and more. Ragavan called his studio “Scientific Yoga” because he taught us that Yoga was a precise science for living.

He and his wife eventually opened a health food restaurant. She was an amazing woman with fiery hair and clear, golden eyes, who would teach for him if he was too busy. Many afternoons were spent hanging out with them at their restaurant, sipping tea and listening while he talked about the Yoga Sutras or Tantric texts. She would cook and have a new menu daily. I remember talking with her once

continued on page 50



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Celebrate Summer with the Elements

BY LINDSEY HALDEMAN AND LINDSEY VAN WAGNER

Summer is a great time to reconnect with the elements of our natural world. We tend to spend more time outside and vacation in wide open spaces. Air, water, fire, earth, and ether are the building blocks of everything we are, everything we see, and everything we do. Schedule a time to play with these elemental practices or try them out intuitively as you feel drawn to explore nature's wonder.

Air

Our connection to the breath is sacred. If we fail to continuously inhale and exhale this magical substance we call air, we die. But, this ongoing and intimate relationship with the air around us has healing effects beyond basic survival. Air connects us to the natural kingdom — we inhale oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide that the plants need to manufacture their food, and they in turn release oxygen we need. It is a constant giving and receiving, a cyclical interaction that begins when we are born and ends when we die.

If we are fortunate, this intricate and miraculous process of the breath comes quite naturally. In fact, we hardly consider what's happening in our bodies until we make an attempt to notice. Many spiritual practices encourage us to focus on the breath, lengthen the breath, return to the breath because this is a powerful way to relieve stress and calm the nervous system, especially when in a state of fight or flight.

The summer season brings what Ayurvedic medicine calls *Pitta* energy, associated with heat, intensity, aggravation, and a fiery nature. When Pitta is elevated, it is best to cool that energy and restore our bodies to homeostasis. Slowing down the breath is beneficial in the heat especially because the less breath we take per minute, the less energy demand we put on our bodily systems, for example blood pressure and heart rate. Try this simple practice:

1. Sitting comfortably, set a timer for five minutes.
2. Inhale through the nose for four seconds.
3. Hold the breath for four seconds.
4. Exhale out the nose for four seconds
5. Hold the breath out for four seconds.

Breathing practices such as this one allows the body to operate with greater efficiency. Also, breathing in and out through the nose helps retain more moisture in the body than mouth breathing. Walk through summer with an airy lightness and give yourself the freedom to enjoy the season, create space, and expand your imagination.

Water

It might be shocking but taking a cold shower has many wonderful benefits. A cold rinse can improve circulation, bringing fresh oxygenated blood to muscles and organs. By causing blood vessels to restrict, a cold rinse reduces inflammation and can even relieve pain.

Taking a cold plunge has also been shown to lessen the symptoms of depression and anxiety, boosting your mood by activating your parasympathetic nervous system and pulling you out of fight or flight mode. As temperatures rise this summer, beat the heat with a cold shower! Here are some tips on how to get started:

1. Try breathing rapidly to gain control of your breath, as the initial chill of the water may seem like it is taking your breath away. When comfortable, move into a slower breathing pattern.
2. Start with just your hands and feet if having your whole body under is too much. Splash your face with water collected in your hands.
3. Play your favorite song. Listening to music or dancing while taking a cold shower gives your brain something to focus on other than just the temperature.



Photo by [Single.Earth](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Fire

Many people associate fire energy with action, but fire also has the amazing ability to cleanse and purify. Burning bowls are a great way to harness this cleansing property. Burning bowl rituals have been celebrated throughout many different traditions and continue to be practiced today. Releasing to the fire what is no longer serving you is a symbolic and energetic way to create space in your life for what you would like to create.

As you contemplate what you would like to release, think about something that is blocking your journey. This might be a habit, an object, a behavior; but please note, it is not traditional to burn a 'person.' If you would like to release a person from your life, consider writing something pertaining to your relationship or your attachment to that person you would like to change. A ritual might look like this:

1. Create a sacred space for the burning bowl by selecting a spot clear of debris and clutter.
2. Gather your materials: a small candle, matches or lighter, a dish with sand in the bottom, a small piece of paper, and writing utensil.
3. Light the candle and take a moment to reflect on what you would like to release to the flames. When you are clear about what you would like to liberate yourself from, write your thoughts on a small piece of paper. The release starts the moment you bring pen to paper so be mindful as you are writing.
4. Hold the paper gently and send gratitude to what you are about to release, though it is time to let this thing go, it did serve some purpose in your life's journey and it is important to recognize that.
5. Carefully put paper to flame and when ready, drop the paper into the dish filled with sand. Now that you have released this thing, take a moment to think about how you would like to fill this newly created space in your life.

Burning bowl rituals can be celebrated in a group setting or individually; consider creating a community burning bowl during a summer bonfire. For added effect, hold the ritual during a waning moon — this phase holds the energy of releasing and letting go.

Earth

Earth is the most solid and grounding of the elements, representing structure, foundation, consistency, and stability. As humans, we have separated ourselves from the earth by way of roads, concrete, and

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Wanda Lasseter Lundy

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To register: Please call Wanda at (812) 705-5135 or Email Laura at llilauraprice@gmail.com

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Time: June 24, 9:30 am–6:00 pm • June 25, 9:30 am–4:00 pm

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To register: Please call or text Wendy at (202) 549-7954 or Email wendy@radiantyou.com

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- How Etheric Surgeons can help you sleep and give pain relief.

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Time: August 5, 9:30 am–6:00 pm • August 6, 9:30 am–4:00 pm

Tuition: \$350

To register: Please call or text Wendy at (202) 549-7954 or Email wendy@radiantyou.com

*Class delivers online or In Person at 3615 Madison LA, Falls Church VA

For more information and to see more on our upcoming classes, please visit our Website and Facebook Page:

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Breaking Down Digestion and Misconceptions of GI Disorders

BY HELENA AMOS, M.AC. L.AC., EURO. PHYSICIAN

One of the most mysterious and varied health concerns relates to gastrointestinal (GI) problems. What parent can relate to the situation of their child's vague but nonetheless urgent moan of "my tummy hurts"? Who among us can say they haven't had some kind of "stomach issue" but the source of the symptoms is unknown?

As an acupuncturist, natural medicine doctor, and health care professional, I treat patients who are presenting with a wide range of symptoms that seem to be linked to GI issues, but are wondering if they could also be related to Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), pancreatic insufficiency, mental health concerns, or something else entirely. There are many misconceptions about intestinal disorders, and even more misinformation about symptoms, that need to be addressed to help people deal with their own GI complaints.

If you have, or have had (but are not sure why):

- Gas and bloating
- Pain and spasm in the stomach
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Pain or sensitivity under the right ribs
- Pain on the back of waistline
- Reflux issues
- Nausea and indigestion

... then read on.

How Digestion Works

Very often, Western medicine doctors don't discuss everyday lifestyle changes, diet adjustments, natural approaches, and generally how digestion works. Let's examine the three major components of digestion.

1. Digestion in the stomach: The role of pepsin and HCl (hydrochloric acid) in the digestive system is to help break down proteins, which happens in the stomach. Pepsin is an enzyme activated by the presence of HCl in the stomach. It works the peptide bonds of protein, breaking them down into smaller peptide fragments. HCl, on the other hand, provides the optimal acidic environment for pepsin activation and also helps sterilize the stomach by killing bacteria and other harmful microorganisms that may be ingested with food. Together, pepsin and HCl play a crucial role for the digestion of proteins in the stomach before they are further broken down in the small intestine into amino acids with the help of digestive enzymes.

2. Digestive enzymes from the pancreas enter the digestive tract into the duodenum, the first part of the small intestine. Digestive enzymes are essential for the breakdown of food molecules into nutrients that can be absorbed and used by the body. Each enzyme is specific for a particular type of food and helps to break it down to simpler components. Examples: *amylase* breaks down carbohydrates into glucose; *protease* breaks down protein into amino acids; and *lipase* breaks down fat into fatty acids and glycerol.

Without digestive enzymes the body would not be able to properly digest and absorb food, which could lead to malnutrition, deficiencies, and other health problems. Digestive enzymes also help to prevent gastrointestinal discomfort such as bloating, gas, and diarrhea. Overall, digestive enzymes play a critical role in ensuring the body can efficiently extract nutrients from food, maintain digestive health, and support overall wellness.

3. Bile is a third important component of digestion. It is important for the digestion and absorption of fats in the small intestine. It breaks down large fat globules into smaller droplets (a process known as *emulsification*), making it easier for lipase to digest it. Fat

soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K require fat to be absorbed. Bile helps to digest and absorb those vitamins. Bile also helps to eliminate waste products from the body, such as bilirubin, a waste product of red blood cells, as well as other toxins.

Identifying Underlying Causes

With a better understanding of the digestive process, it's easy to see how complex a system it is, and why identifying any problems can be difficult. But the shortcoming in a Western medicine approach to healthcare is the focus placed on chasing the symptoms, when more attention needs to be given to the causative factors of those symptoms.

Here are a few underlying issues that could be causing confusion or complication for identifying and treating a range of GI problems.

HCl Insufficiency

This condition, also known *achlorhydria*, is one in which there is a low production of stomach acid. It can cause a number of digestive problems such as:

- heartburn or acid reflux
- bloating and gas after meals
- feeling full quickly
- nausea and vomiting
- undigested food particles in the stool
- nutritional deficiency, especially in iron, calcium and vitamin B12.



Photo by [VD Photography](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Because stomach acid acts as a barrier against harmful bacteria, having an HCl insufficiency can cause bacterial infections in the gut, causing these associated symptoms to develop. There are several reasons why achlorhydria occurs, but the most common are due to aging, usage of certain medications, and as a complication of autoimmune diseases.

Pancreatic Insufficiency

Digestive enzyme insufficiency, also known as pancreatic insufficiency, occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough digestive enzymes to break down and absorb food properly. It occurs as a result of pancreatitis, stress, some medications, and aging. The symptoms commonly associated include:

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Wheel of the Year, Summer Quarter: Toil and Play!

BY LISA ADAMS

The Wheel is ever turning and time marches onward, based on the movement of our Sun and its patterns of waxing and waning. We align ourselves to the rhythm of nature when we follow its cues. If ever we aren't sure about our next steps in life, look to nature for answers.

The Sun is at the peak of its power on Summer Solstice (June 21) after which the days begin to get a little shorter. Summer is time to fill our reserves, preparing ahead for harvest and winter. It shines light on life and brightens our outlook.

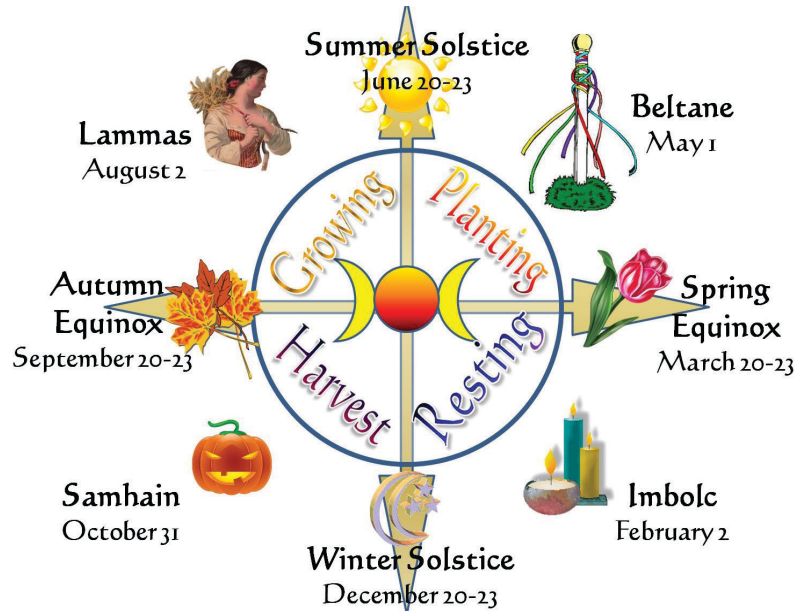
During Summer months our agrarian ancestors would spend time daily observing and tending to their gardens and livestock. This was the time they work each day, maintaining or changing the plan according to the conditions they encountered. Many would work alongside their neighbors, helping with big projects, borrowing and lending tools to one another. On Solstice the tradition was to work in the fields during the day followed by a large community celebration to honor the longest day and celebrate their ongoing effort.

Summer sees the Sun at its fullest — long hours of daylight and warmth imbuing nature with vital lifeforce energy. Photosynthesis peaks, vibrant green is everywhere, nature teems with life. How can we glean from these cues?

At this point in the Sun cycle, we have planted our seeds — those things we wish to grow — literally and metaphorically. This includes our intentions. Now comes the toil of summertime.

The Importance of Toil

Toil is crucial to our wellbeing. It's the work we do day-in and day-



out to live our lives, take care of responsibilities, move our agendas forward, and tend to those things we cherish. The things we do, the actions we take daily, are how Divine/Universal Energies (fill in with your preferred cosmology) recognize what is important to us. Every mundane task demonstrates our dedication to life — it's the gritty, grounded, embodied living necessary to being a human in this 3D time-space continuum.

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Each dawn is a new opportunity!

The Goal:

To view life & this journey with gratitude. As we continue to heal within, we are able to view each day with more love & light & extend that same kindness to others. By embracing holistic healing modalities, one's overall quality of life may be enhanced, achieving this goal.

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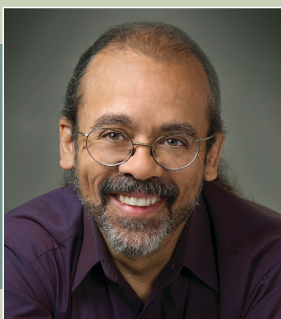
About Jennie:

Jennie provides healing modalities that enhance quality of life at any stage of one's journey, including End-of-Life. She is certified in Usui Reiki, Transpersonal Hypnotherapy (C.Ht), Empath, Natural Intuitive, and Spiritual Coach. Additionally, Jennie is a Career Coach who helps others with resume writing, interview techniques, and landing the best-matched career opportunities.



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Eric Weinstein
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I'm not a therapist, but I always have therapists among my clients. They come to me for:

- the most ancient healing modality (shamanic healing)
- proven, but less conventional modalities (hypnosis/ NLP and Eye Movement Integration [similar to EMDR, but gentler])
- the most exciting new energy modalities (Energy Psychology, such as EFT or "tapping" on meridian points, biofield work, and chakra manipulation)
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And they come for all the same problems they've seen one of their more conventional colleagues for – as well as problems of a spiritual/energetic nature.

So, whether you're struggling with the newer stresses of the pandemic or with older issues that keep you from being who you want to be, call to find out how I can help.



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Wheel of the Year...

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All our toils are acts of devotion. We act upon and do things we prioritize and value. There's a spectrum at play here that could look like everything from blatant disregard and indulging in self-sabotaging behaviors, to executing conscious, determined actions all day, every day. When we take care (notice the language here — care, caring) of the day-to-day, we demonstrate to ourselves, others, and to Divine/Universal Energy what we are devoted to. And Divine/Universal Energy responds in kind with Its support, informed by our decisive action and unwavering devotion.

Power of Paradox

Society often thinks in terms of duality — good/bad, right/wrong, light/dark, mundane/spiritual, work/play, etc. — when in reality these things are not separate. People tend to value one thing while devaluing the other, not taking the whole into account.

For instance, the mundane and the spiritual are two sides of one coin — each could not exist without the other. Magical, spiritual-based thinking isn't going to get you far if you don't act and follow through in the "real world." Conversely, action absent intention and devotion, feels void, unfulfilling — "What's it all for?" When we marry the spiritual and mundane aspects of life we experience fullness, balance, and meaning. We tap into the full spectrum of powerful energy available to us when we embrace this paradox — we evolve and grow into wholeness and explore our potential.

These concepts become important as we nurture and care for the seeds and intentions planted in our actual and/or metaphorical gardens. If we intend to harvest the fruits of our labor, we must tend these — watering, weeding, fertilizing, assessing, tweaking our plans, and taking informed action.

In summer, we coast a bit because much of the work is being done via the Sun, but we still need to support our gardens. The same is true of the goals and intentions we set — this is where daily actions become crucial. When we go too many days in a row without toil, things become more challenging. We lose ground. Weeds get out of hand, plants become parched, animals or insects might've eaten your veggies, dishes pile up, etc.

A Foot in Both Worlds

As you tend to your day-to-day tasks, how can you do so with spiritual intention? For example, when you sweep or vacuum, in what ways can you sweep or vacuum negativity from your thoughts or life? When you weed and prune in the garden, what areas of your life could use the same? Are there places in your life that feel parched, like the desert? Or conversely, drowning?

I realize all this may sound rather dry, but toil can be joyful! The joy of watching things grow and fruit; the labor that feels good in your body helps you sleep well. Our tech-based society robs us of the "tired in your body from physical work" feeling and makes it difficult to see the fruits of our labor. This kind of work is simple and gratifying.

Another paradox: toil includes play! Work can also be playful.

Most of us associate summer with vacation, school being out of session, a lighter mood, time outdoors. Play restores our creative senses and is a crucial way to nurture ourselves. It's part of "this is what makes life good." Nature itself is playful and infinitely creative, so we must follow suit if we desire to live in close communion with it.

Fresh inspiration, new approaches, and solutions to life are unlocked during play. We are flexing the left hemisphere of the brain, gaining access to creative outcomes we hadn't considered. Playing

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Summer 2023: Reflection and Retrograde

BY MISTY KUCERIS

There are times in one's life when stepping back to reflect can be a healing experience. It helps you assess your path; maybe make changes, or maybe realize you're living just the way you want to live. It takes you out of the stream of rushing energy that can be overwhelming, even stressful. It gives you the opportunity to breathe...relax. During the summer months of 2023 you'll experience a slowing down as a parade of planets (and one asteroid) change direction and go retrograde. By the time the summer quarter draws to a close, there will be six planets (Pluto, Saturn, Neptune, Venus, Mercury, and Uranus) and one asteroid (Chiron) in retrograde motion. Additionally, there will be a shift of energy as the Moon's Nodal Axis changes signs.

When a planet turns retrograde it means the energy of that planet turns inward. You find you need to understand everything about that planet before you can act on it. You also realize at times you may not have all the information you need. There is a tendency when a planet is retrograde for information regarding that planet either to go missing or be withheld. It's almost as if the universe is telling you to do more research, gain more knowledge, make certain of your facts and emotions. Once the planet turns direct, you discover the missing information, and with your new knowledge you make better choices.

Retrograde planets can also represent the need to reflect on past events indicated by that planet. Sometimes, no matter how hard you tried, you believe you could have done better, or you erred in judgment. So, sometimes you just want to go back and "fix it." During the time period when a planet is retrograde you may be able to correct an error, or release a negative energy, from the past.



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Pluto in Retrograde

It seems so spiritually synchronistic that the first retrograde planet of the summer quarter is Pluto. It actually went retrograde in the sign of Aquarius on May 1, 2023, so it's in retrograde motion at the start of this summer quarter.

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Summer 2023...

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Pluto is a planet that moves slowly, remaining in a sign anywhere from 12 to 30 years due to its erratic orbit. As a matter of fact, it moves so slowly it takes 248 years before it returns to the same sign. In your chart, Pluto represents how you deal with power, whether it's your own personal power, or power others try to hold over you in an attempt to manipulate you. Pluto also represents the gestation period between your desire to create and the actual presence of your physical creation. This can be an actual child or a product of your creativity. In a lot of ways, Pluto is a planet of magic and manifestation.

Because Pluto is so slow moving, every entrance into a new sign represents major paradigm shifts on a global level. You see upheavals within governments and ruling bodies; conflicts between different power factions; struggles between different social and economic classes; changes within financial systems; and developments in both science and medicine. In your personal life, when these mundane shifts occur, you try to maintain your own balance and grounding while understanding how these changes impact your ethical and spiritual choices. You also try to maintain your identity and sense of personal power in all your relationships.

When Pluto went retrograde on May 1st, it was still in the early stages of a new sign; it just entered the sign of Aquarius on March 23, 2023, and was still at 0 degrees when it turned retrograde. So, all you got from this major paradigm shift into a new sign were hints of what's to come, not the total picture. And with Pluto now in retrograde motion, you're about to leave the path to a major paradigm shift and re-enter the energy of Pluto past. This means on June 11th, Pluto re-enters the sign of Capricorn in retrograde motion and will remain in the sign of Capricorn until January 21, 2024. Basically, you're stepping back in time and re-evaluating events and lessons (both learned and avoided) from early 2008 until March 23, 2023.

On a psychological level many people wanted to break free from authority figures who didn't have their interest at heart. They wanted to find their place in society. They wanted respect. So, here in the United States you saw many changes in laws where the disenfranchised attempted to gain their rightful place of equity. You also saw movements where people demanded equal rights. Internationally many countries found themselves in various revolutions that either gave rise to increased equity, or increased dictatorship. But, with rules changing, and people uncertain of what those changes would bring, there was also pushback against some of those various changes. The underlying polarization emerged into the public consciousness. So, as Pluto retrograde returns to Capricorn, you want to make certain your place in society is secure. You don't want to be left out.

Saturn in Retrograde

When Saturn in Pisces turns retrograde on June 17th, you find yourself tired of being pulled in too many directions. Saturn represents the need to build foundations while Pisces represents the need to dissolve boundaries that interfere with reality. Saturn also represents where you need to have structure in your life to feel grounded, which can be a little difficult as Pisces is symbolized by two fish tied together yet each trying to swim in different directions. So, during the time period Saturn is retrograde — between June 17 and November 4, 2023 — take time to prioritize what's important in your life and create a foundation that gives you more focus. Also, because Pisces is one of the "magical" signs and Saturn represents reality, this is a great time to use your creative abilities to invent new approaches, or even new products, that can be implemented.

Neptune in Retrograde

The sign of Pisces continues to exert its influence, but on a more subtle level when Neptune in Pisces turns retrograde on June 30th.

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Gender Parity is Essential for Economic Recovery: These five investments will quicken the pace

BY SAADIA ZAHIDI AND SILJA BALLER

- Progress towards gender parity has seen major setbacks in recent years and the risk of further regression is intensifying.
- We are living through a time of poly-crisis, economic chasms have opened up with a disproportionate impact on women, people of colour, LGBTQI individuals and individuals with disabilities.
- According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap Report, the two largest gaps remain in the realms of economic opportunity and political empowerment.

Progress towards gender parity has seen major setbacks in recent years and the risk of further regression is intensifying. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a generational loss, increasing the projected time to reach global gender parity from 100 to 132 years between 2020 and 2022. Women’s rights are under pressure around the world.

Not only are millions of women and girls losing out on access and opportunity, these reversals also have wide-ranging consequences for the global economy. At the same time, women continue to pioneer new firsts, rising to positions of power never previously held by a woman in public and private sector leadership. For the first time, there is at least one woman in every parliament in the world and new research shows that diversity among women MPs is at its highest level ever.

We are living through a time of poly-crisis, marked by high volatility and unprecedented uncertainty. Economic chasms have opened up

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“We don’t want to recover to where we were before, we want to transform the system where we are all at the table, valuing all identities and creating societies that thrive not just because it’s right, but because it makes economic sense.”

— Gabriela Bucher, Oxfam, Annual Meeting 2023

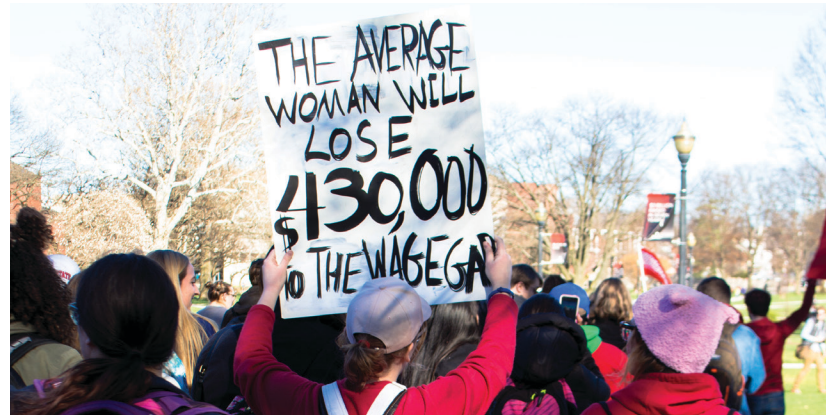


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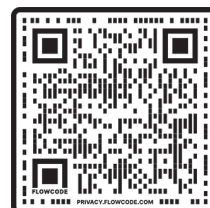
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Gender Parity...

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with a disproportionate impact on women, people of colour, LGBTQI individuals and individuals with disabilities. For intersecting identities across these dimensions, disadvantages are often compounded. At the start of 2023, we see continued and, in some cases, widening exclusion of women from full economic participation as employees, leaders, consumers and suppliers; long-term trends, including technological change and climate change, look set to deepen gender gaps; and a lack of recognition of the value of unpaid work, as well as a highly unequal distribution of care work persist. While technology has seen breakthroughs at unprecedented speed in recent years, access remains highly uneven and innovation is not targeted to resolve today's biggest challenges or serve all individuals.

Achieving gender parity remains a formidable, multi-dimensional challenge. According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap Report, the two largest gaps remain in the realms of economic opportunity (with 60% of the global gender gap closed) and political empowerment (with only 22% of the gap closed). Where should we concentrate our collective efforts?

Labour Force Participation

The pandemic years saw significant drops in women's labour force participation in every region of the world. In particular, women with care responsibilities were among those leaving the labour force and not returning. Global gender parity for labour force participation had been slowly declining since 2009. In 2022, it stood at 62.9%, the lowest level registered since the Global Gender Gap index was first compiled in 2006. Yet, the IMF estimates that increased female labour

force participation alone could boost some countries' economic output by as much as 35%.

Senior Leadership

In 2022, women held 33.4% of global senior leadership roles across public and private sectors, marking a steady improvement on previous years and a silver lining for gender parity. The global share of women ministers nearly doubled from 2006 to 2022 and the global share of women in parliament rose from 14.9% in 2006 to 22.9% in 2022.

Some industries where women have been historically underrepresented have been hiring women into leadership roles at an accelerated pace since 2016, including technology, energy and supply chain and transportation; however, this positive change is looking precarious as gains are being reversed in recent months with early data suggesting that tech lay-offs are affecting women disproportionately.

In addition, women are leaving leadership positions at increasing rates, both in industry and politics. The challenge remains to not only create conditions in which women can advance into senior leadership roles, but where they can thrive in such roles. More diverse leadership across stakeholders is key to tackling the current crisis, as the diversity of perspectives has been shown to lead to more fact-based and, therefore, higher-quality decision-making.

Pay Equity

Gender pay gaps remain one of the starkest markers of inequity in the current system. According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap Report, the global gender gap for estimated earned income was approximately 49%, while it was 35% for wage equality for similar work. Across OECD countries, the pay gap stands at 13% for the median earnings of



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full-time workers. Pay gap reporting and/or auditing by private sector firms, still relatively new measures, are by now mandatory in almost half of OECD countries, yet evidence to date has found small effects at best. More promising examples for scaling are emerging from the forefront of industry action, with individual companies designing ambitious global governance frameworks and automated analytics to close gender pay gaps.

Innovation Systems

Women continue to be overlooked in critical parts of the innovation ecosystem. An intention to create more gender-equal innovation systems brings into focus a number of levers to advance gender equality. These include ensuring equitable access to education and training for in-demand STEM skills, equitable access to jobs and leadership opportunities in the industries of the future, fair access to venture capital and, at a more basic level, closing the digital gender divide. Tackling these dimensions is critical to ensuring a fair transition to the green and digital economy, creating products that are gender responsive and serve a wider market, as well as increasing the talent pool, leading to more creative and faster progress in solving the tremendous challenges humanity faces today.

Care Systems

In many countries, care jobs are characterised by low pay and low social mobility and are predominantly filled by women, people of colour and migrant workers. When it comes to unpaid care work, 76% globally is performed by women, often preventing them from taking up paid employment. In economies that measure the value of unpaid care, the sector has been valued to represent a critical share of GDP –

ranging between 10 and 39% according to the ILO and this number is set to grow as shifting demographics will increase the demand for care services. Thus, building a well-functioning care economy will positively impact women's ability to participate in the economy on equal terms and, therefore, contribute to closing gender gaps in workforce participation, pay and leadership.

In 2023, gender parity will need to become a central goal of economic policy-making and business strategies. Focusing efforts on these five dimensions will not only create fairer societies but will be a high-return investment into the future of the global economy and a pre-condition to solving the current crisis.

Saadia Zahidi is the Managing Director at the World Economic Forum. Silja Baller is the Head of Mission, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice, at the World Economic Forum. www.weforum.org/

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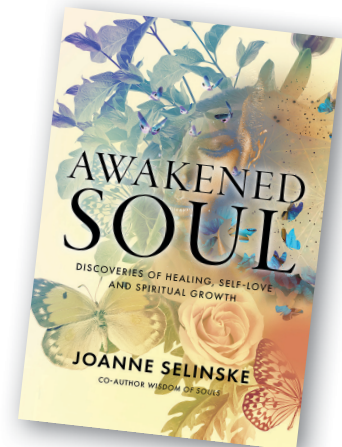
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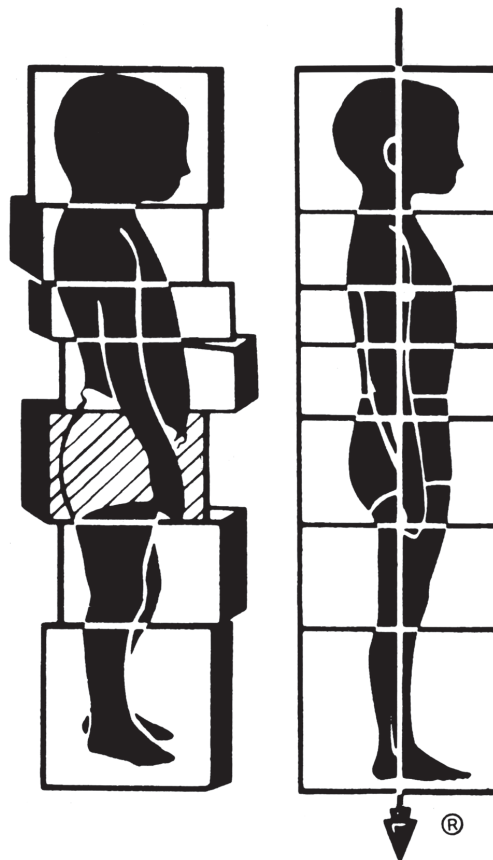
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Balancing Through Ayurveda in the Dog Days of Summer

BY ANJALI SUNITA

When working or playing outside in the hot sun, a heat radiates from the core outward to the pores. Digestive power lessens. Bodies sweat and skin feels oilier. Summer time is pitta season.

A deep breath of hot humid air can feel like breathing in liquid lava. There is an increase of aggression as pitta emotions, like anger, boil over. People want to have fun. Hard working people, itching to leave the office, desire to cool off their hyper-focused minds, take a break from the hot electronic screens, and relax with a drink, (though so frequently that drink of choice is a toxin for the season, like liquor). Without awareness of the true joy that comes from balance, from dancing with Nature's rhythms, so often we reach for relationships and substances that further tip the scales.

Pitta constitution individuals tend to possess some or all of the following traits throughout their lives:

- sharp facial features
- medium bones and frame
- light, bright eyes
- oily or combination skin with a rosy undertone
- a tendency toward pitta disorders, acidic, inflammatory, bleeding conditions
- a personality of high intelligence and charisma and/or tendency to anger and jealousy
- high hairline, with possibility of early greying or baldness.



Lukewarm baths with rose petals cool Pitta energy.
Photo © Springdt313 | Dreamstime.com

Pitta is oily, hot, sharp, fermenting, spreading, liquid, that is light and bright in quality. Like red blood, a quick computing brain, warm skin pigments and radiant heat, acidic digestive enzymes and bile, we all contain pitta dosha in our body-mind constitutions. However, excess of spicy, salty, and sour food, coupled with a lifestyle which contains these pitta qualities, leads to illnesses that also express in similar ways.

To name a few:

- itchy red burns, rashes, and red pimples
- bleeding conditions of all kinds
- inflammation of gums, intestinal linings, joints, and so on
- acid indigestion and reflux
- obsessive compulsion, anger, judgement, criticism, and jealousy
- weakened eyesight
- yellow eyes & jaundice

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Farinaz Amirsehi, RN, LPC
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Farinaz Amirsehi is a Registered Nurse, Licensed Professional Counselor, and a Nationally Certified Counselor practicing at the Healing Light Center, LLC in McLean, VA.

Trained as an EMDR Therapist, Emotional Transformation Therapist, Clinical Hypnotherapist, Deep Memory Process/Regression Therapist, Reiki Practitioner, Somatic Integration Therapist, and Ancestral Family Constellation Therapist, Farinaz combines the principles of Eastern philosophies, Transpersonal Psychology, Body Psychotherapy, Subtle Energy Fields, and cutting edge technology in facilitating the healing process of her clients.

Additionally, Farinaz has extensive experience with severely traumatized populations such as survivors of politically motivated torture as well as a wide range of somatic, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual issues. Farinaz is also an established presenter at national and regional conferences. She has provided trainings for professionals of different disciplines on the impact of trauma on body, mind, and spirit.

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Balancing Through Ayurveda...

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- diarrhea
 - fevers
 - some types of migraines and headaches
 - infections and blisters
 - foul smelling sweat
- ... and the list can go on, but you get the picture.

Do you experience some of these symptoms cropping up mid summer? It is possible that you do not, but you feel a slew of other symptoms. Ayurvedic doctors and practitioners always treat “what is”, the patient or client’s *vikruti* (current imbalance); and there is far more to affect the body-mind than simply season alone. However, a relatively healthy individual, especially with strong pitta in the constitution, will tend toward pitta type of reactions to this weather. If this is true for you, remember: **Ayurveda says to treat with opposites; opposites heal.**

To counteract the oily, hot, sharp, fermenting, spreading, sparkly light fire and water qualities, we need substances which are dry, cool, dull/slow acting, fresh, congealing, soothing and grounding. Think a cooling cucumber or sandalwood paste mask on red, irritated skin or a bowl of watermelon with mint after a hard day of sweating outside. **Note that in some rare cases, like in some fevers, we would treat heat with heat, as to spark the body’s internal reaction, to make the body cool with sweat.*

Below you will find some recommendations and recipes to enjoy which balance the qualities of pitta dosha through application of healing opposites:

BATHTIME

Warm or lukewarm water baths with rose petals, cool water on the head. Even find a cool river and take an outdoor swim. Bask in the light of the moon.

Use lighter oils like sunflower or cooling like coconut for abhyanga (self oil massage), depending upon your prakruti/vikruti paradigm. (Consider a consultation to learn more about your unique constitution).

YOGA

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FOODS

Favor fresh, cooling, and hydrating foods with sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes like plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, cucumbers, melons, dark leafy greens, fresh berries, mint, rose water, aloe, coconut, light cooling grains like amaranth and quinoa, a little salt to replenish the sweat but not excess salt (as that is heating). Fresh juices and homemade limeade with just a pinch of salt for electrolytes. Reduce excess salty, sour, and pungent tastes.

RECIPE GIVEAWAY

A good liver cleansing cooling tea to stay hydrated all day could be a benefit in pitta season. It can be drunk at room temperature, not around meals. This liver cleanse tea is from Rosemary Gladstone’s

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Las 21 Divisiones: Dominican Voodoo

BY CINDY CARRASQUILLO

Preface: I write this article as a brief snapshot of my experience with Dominican Voodoo. In no way is it meant to generalize the extensive and complex religion of 21 Divisiones. If this material resonates, I would encourage readers to do the proper research and find mentors that can guide them on this path. And as with everything else in spirituality, use your discernment.

I was sitting in my grandparent's living room listening to the rosary being prayed to wrap up the novena (9 days of prayer) after my grandmother's passing. In Dominican culture, it's common to hold novenas and respect *luto* (mourning) for our deceased. As I listened, I felt a wave of anxiety come over me. I was 22 years old at the time and felt something happening to my body I couldn't control. I was there in person, but I felt like something was taking over my body. I heard, "estas monta", literally meaning I was "mounted"; but in Dominican Voodoo, *Las 21 Divisiones* (21 Divisions), I was possessed by a spirit.

21 Divisiones, or Dominican Voodoo, is a derivative of Haitian voodoo. It consists of different groups and subgroups of deities. Prior to colonization, the island of Hispaniola, which the Dominican Republic shares with Haiti, was inhabited by *Tainos* — the historic indigenous people of the Caribbean. With colonization came the importation of slaves from Africa. The Dominican Republic was colonized by Spain, which also brought Catholicism. *Tainos* were virtually wiped out due

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Saint Anne, or Anaisa, of the 21 Divisions (Source: Wikipedia)

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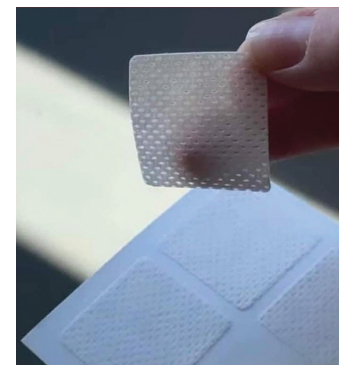
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Las 21 Divisiones...

...continued from page 27

to diseases brought by the colonizers. Slaves were forced to practice Catholicism, but they became creative in finding ways to continue their own traditions. African deities were masked behind Catholic saints and figures so that slaves could practice their religion without fear of retribution. For example, Saint Michael is referred to as “Belie Belcan”, and Saint Anne as “Anaisa”. Dominican voodoo consists of the practices of African slaves, Taino practices, and Catholicism.

I grew up in a Catholic household in the NYC neighborhood of Washington Heights. My parents both immigrated from the Dominican Republic. As a child, I recall my father’s extensive altar with images and statues of saints, flowers, tobacco, coffee, etc. Occasionally, we would go to church; but for the most part, there were the voodoo practitioners both my parents would consult to help with any afflictions. We would visit the *botanicas* (a religious goods store) to purchase items needed to help improve our situation. A coconut was usually stationed by the front door of our apartment so that it picks up any negativity before entering the apartment.

Upon having this experience at my grandmother’s novena, I was both scared and confused. I wasn’t sure what to expect, and suddenly I had family members looking at me in a different light. I also wasn’t sure if this would be something I could control. I recall as a child playing the Ouija board and communicating with spirits and feeling their presence near me, but not telling anyone.

Shortly after this initial mounting, a *mani* (spiritual ceremony) was held, both in gratitude and to find out what my next steps would be within 21 Divisiones. My parents also consulted their voodoo practitioner at a local botanica and as well as with a practitioner who would then become my priest. The next step in this journey was for me to get baptized within 21 Divisiones to protect *mi cabeza* (my head). I had

to complete certain rituals prior to the baptism; I worked closely with the consulting priest within the religion about the ceremonies and instructions for how to set my altar and perform rituals. There were also articles of clothing I needed to wear and amulets I had to carry with me at all times. Once my baptism was done, I could then continue to reinforce the protection with *refrescos de cabezas* (refreshments of the head). This was necessary to strengthen “my head” and protect me from maleficent spirits.

I would go on to serve as a practitioner. Initially, the spirits came on spontaneously around my friends and family. In the beginning, I struggled to deliver the messages. I recall my mother talking to my consulting priest who stated the reason I could not talk during this mounting session was because I kept fighting it and was too scared to talk. Eventually, with coaching from my priest, I became more open. Looking back now, I realize I probably had a lot of throat chakra work to do. Messages also started to come in dreams or on random occasions via daydreaming, where I would get certain visions.

I practiced Dominican Voodoo for many years until one day when I stopped for various reasons. I started to feel restricted by it. For example, I recall wanting to cut my hair and being told I needed to ask for permission before I could do that. As I also started visiting other practitioners, it became very apparent that it was becoming a crutch. I was solely relying on other people for solutions to problems instead of accepting my sovereignty. I also saw how having this ability created animosity among family members who were against it. I felt like an outcast within my own immediate family, and it took a toll on me emotionally.

A few years ago I decided to go back to my roots and my practice after receiving a message. I re-established my altar in honor of my ancestors; however, I now practice on my own terms. I still perform certain rituals, as I have learned them. I call in spirits or read Tarot for very specific people in my family and others that request it. I allow myself to receive messages and deliver them to those in need. I am no

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longer limited by my fears and thoughts of what others may think of me. I've also established firm boundaries around my practice and tend to stick to them.

Although the priest who baptized me in the religion still practices, I no longer go to him as I felt the whole process was punitive and very fear-based. So now, I'm learning more about rituals and practices through my father, who has been affectionately described by a family friend as a *brujo* (witch doctor) in his own right. And I listen to Palo music (literally meaning stick music) — the drums and the singing are a reminder of my ancestors and practices passed down to us.

While there is information about Dominican Voodoo available, I would encourage anyone interested in learning more to do their own research. Much of what I have learned has been through oral transmission from my priest, other practitioners, and certain family members. I've also established relationships in certain botanicas in NYC and will ask questions about oils, baths, and candles. More recently I have found a local botanica in Manassas, VA, where I purchase items for my practice.

Dominican Voodoo is plagued with misconceptions, such as it is only black magic and those who seek out this practice are only doing it to hurt others. I'm sure, like anything else in life, there may be those cases. But I have seen this practice do a lot of good for my loved ones. I've seen people be healed from sickness and find solutions to legal problems. But for me, like most spiritual practices, Dominican voodoo can help a person heal and serve their highest good when used correctly.

Cindy Carrasquillo, RN, BSN, HNB-BC, is a board-certified Holistic Registered Nurse, and Reiki practitioner, who really enjoys helping others heal. She practices Dominican voodoo along with reading Tarot, and enjoys being in nature, reading, and spending time with her kids and loved ones.

Balancing Through Ayurveda...

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book, *Herbal Healing for Women*, though this tea is good for all genders.

1 part yellow dock root
2 parts wild yam root
1 part dandelion root
1 part oregon grape root
2 parts burdock root
1 part vitex (chaste berry)
Cinnamon, ginger, saffras, and orange peel to taste.

Visit your local herb store or herbalist, get creative with these proportions, and enjoy!

Anjali Sunita, ERYT-500, YACEP, is a Hatha Yoga Instructor, Ayurvedic practitioner, former founder of Baltimore Yoga Village, and creator of Village Life Wellness. Free resource for Ayurveda on Instagram @accessible_ayurveda; and courses and consultations at www.villagelifewellness.com.

This article originally appeared on her blog (villagelifewellness.medium.com) on Medium, and is reprinted here with permission.

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TO YOUR HEALTH

Breaking Down Digestion...

...continued from page 15

- abdominal bloating
- cramping and pain
- diarrhea or loose stools, foul smelling (more than usual) stools
- malnutrition.

Pancreatic insufficiency can lead to poor absorption of nutrients, especially fat and protein. The treatment for pancreatic insufficiency includes taking digestive enzymes to break down food and absorb nutrients.

Bile Insufficiency

Also known as bile acid deficiency or bile salt deficiency, bile insufficiency occurs when the gallbladder does not produce enough bile, or when the small intestine is unable to absorb bile properly. Symptoms of bile insufficiency include:

- fatigue
- abdominal pain or discomfort
- diarrhea or constipation
- light or discolored stools
- weight loss.

Bile insufficiency can be caused by liver disease, gallbladder disease, Crohn's disease, celiac disease or gluten sensitivities. Supplementing with fat soluble vitamins A, E, D, and K may be necessary. Replacing bile with bile salts supplements may also be necessary.

Supporting Digestion and Gut Health

There are many ways to support healthy digestion and good balance within the gut, which is just as important as the process that gets your food there. A natural approach involves supporting the digestive system by ensuring adequate production and availability of bile salts, enzymes, HCl, and more. Here are some tips to enhance digestion naturally:

1. Consume a variety of nutrient-dense whole foods, like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein sources, all of which provide the necessary nutrients for digestive enzymes and good bacteria to function optimally.
2. Eat slowly and mindfully, chewing food thoroughly to ensure it breaks down into smaller, more easily digestible pieces. We don't give our digestive system enough time to release the necessary juices to break our food down when we are distracted or eat too quickly.
3. Drink plenty of water to help hydrate the body and prevent constipation.
4. Consume food high in natural digestive enzymes, like papaya, pineapple, and kiwi, all of which help break food down.
5. Supplement with digestive enzymes and/or bile salts. If you realize certain foods are difficult to digest, or digestive issues occur, these supplements can help.
6. Support the production of stomach acid, and thereby the digestion of protein and certain minerals, with Betaine HCl supplements.

Good gut health also benefits from many of these steps, but you can take it further by following these additional recommendations:

continued on page 64

Eco-Staycation! Touring Our Local Public Gardens

BY KATHY JENTZ

The best kind of Eco-tourism is the “staycation.” What could be better than exploring the many wonderful local offerings in our own region? Using public transit to get to them will make the trips even more eco-friendly! Here are several local public gardens in the Washington, DC, area that are fascinating to explore and easy to access — and most all of these are FREE or very low-cost!

Smithsonian Gardens

The easiest to access are the Smithsonian Gardens (www.gardens.si.edu/). Yes, there is green space on the National Mall and it is *not* all a turfgrass lawn! The Smithsonian Gardens are made up of 12 distinct spaces — from a re-creation of a World War II vegetable and flower garden at the Victory Garden at the National Museum of American History to the contemporary, sunken Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. All are free to all visitors. Many of these gardens host educational programming and docents give regular tours. One of the most informative tours is hosted by Horticulturist Janet Draper at the Mary Livingston Ripley Garden every Tuesday at 2 p.m. throughout October.

Getting There: Take Metro to the Smithsonian station or any of the surrounding metro stops near the Mall. You can also take the Circulator, 70 metrobus lines, and 30 metrobus lines.

U.S. Botanic Garden

Also on the National Mall and easily accessible is the U.S. Botanic Garden (<http://usbg.gov/>). Along with the adjoining National Garden, Bartholdi Park, and U.S. Capitol Grounds, it is administered through the Architect of the Capitol and is not part of the Smithsonian as is commonly assumed. It is also one of the few tourist sites open on both Christmas and New Year’s Day. That means it is getting more and more crowded on those dates as the secret has spread, so go early and be prepared to stand in line to view the annual holiday garden railroad display.

Getting There: Take Metro to the L’Enfant station or any of the surrounding stops near the Mall. You can also take the Circulator and 30 metrobus lines, which stop in back of the Botanic Garden.

Franciscan Monastery

If you are avoiding crowds, try the Franciscan Monastery in the Brookland neighborhood of NE, WDC (www.myfranciscan.org/). The Monastery grounds are free and open to all. They are known for their fantastic bulb displays timed around Easter, but come back in late May/early June for stunning roses and later in the summer for cooling off in the catacombs and grotto.

Getting There: I usually take the Metro to Brookland and walk up the steep hill along Quincy Street to get to it, but there are a few buses that get you closer (the H6 and the 80).

U. S. National Arboretum

Not far from the Monastery is the U. S. National Arboretum (www.usna.usda.gov). The Arboretum is under the US Department of Agriculture and its mission has been more one of research than of public outreach and education, but there are many plant collections and display areas to explore. The grounds are large and it would take several visits to see it all. Start with the Herb Garden and the Bonsai Museum. Plan to visit often and in all seasons to see how the gardens change throughout the year.

Getting There: The best way to go is to take the B2 bus and walk in from the R Street entrance.

Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens

Just across the Anacostia River from the Arboretum is the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens (www.nps.gov/keaq/index.htm). If you go



Franciscan Monastery in Spring (Photo by Michelle Alonso)

on a weekday, you pretty much have the whole place to yourself. This is the true hidden oasis of the city — a former waterlily nursery now a national park. It is also a wildlife haven. Both photographers and birders frequent the gardens in the early mornings, leaving before the heat of the day. They are missing out, though, as the hundreds of water lilies and lotuses open up in the direct sun and are best viewed in mid-day during their peak period of July-August.

Getting There: You can get there by canoe on the Anacostia River easier than by transit. I usually take the Metro to Deanwood and hoof it over. It is not a bad half-mile walk, except for having to take an elevated pedestrian bridge over Kenilworth Avenue.

Bishop’s Close - DC’s National Cathedral

The Bishop’s Close at the National Cathedral is accessible and open to all. The secluded, walled garden is on the south-facing side of the Cathedral and is downhill from it as well, giving it a great perspective on the building. The garden itself is sunny and bright to support the roses and English-style perennial borders, but there are some shady quiet spots for contemplation, quiet reading, and reflection.

Getting There: Take one of the many 30 buses that go up and down Wisconsin Avenue and get off when you see the looming spires.

Hillwood Museum and Gardens

Hillwood Museum and Gardens (<https://hillwoodmuseum.org/>) in NW, WDC, is the estate of the late Marjorie Merriweather Post. She designed the gardens to look best in the spring and fall, so those are the prime times to visit; though in the summer, the cutting garden is particularly spectacular. There is a suggested entry donation of \$18 per adult. The garden is closed on Mondays, some holidays, and for several weeks in January.

Getting There: Take the Metro to Van Ness/UDC and walk downhill on Upton Street to Linnean Avenue.

County-Run Gardens

Farther afield, both Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, MD (<http://montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/brookside-gardens/>), and Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria, VA (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/)

continued on page 33

PATHWAYS & Retreats

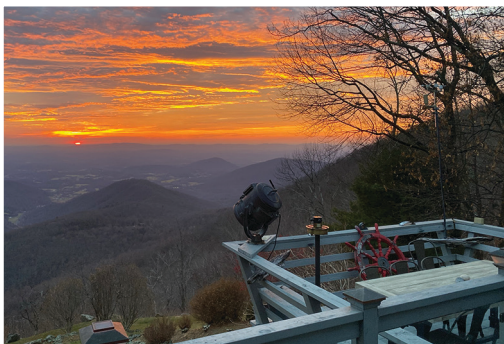
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More information on the RETREATS page at:

www.PathwaysProductions.com/retreats

For details, rates and booking inquiries:

pathwaysads@gmail.com or 240-247-0393

Eco-Staycation...

...continued from page 31

parks/green-spring), are free and run by their respective local county parks systems. They both have terrific plant collections and walking paths. Both take an effort to be accessed by a combination of Metro and local bus systems, but are worth it for an afternoon outside of the city.

Getting There: Go to Brookside by taking the Metro red line to Glenmont and walking one mile along Glen Allen Road. To get to Green Spring, take the Metro yellow or blue line to King Street and then transfer to the 29N bus towards Vienna. Get off at Little River Turnpike and Green Spring Road.

Kathy is editor/publisher of Washington Gardener magazine. She is also the host of the popular GardenDC Podcast. An earlier version of this story appeared on the Greater Greater Washington website, ggwash.org.

Washington Gardener magazine is the gardening publication published specifically for the local metro area — zones 6-7 — Washington DC and its suburbs. The magazine is written entirely by local area gardeners. They have real-world knowledge and practical advice. They share their thoughts on what to plant in deep shade, how to cover bare spots, which annuals work best throughout the humid DC summers, and much more.

The magazine is published monthly online and includes timely information such as a local garden events calendar and gardening to-do list for that month. A year-long digital subscription is \$20.00. To subscribe to the magazine: Send a check/money order for \$20.00 payable to "Washington Gardener" magazine to: Washington Gardener, 826 Philadelphia Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910 OR to pay via Paypal/credit card click on the "subscribe" link at www.WashingtonGardener.com.



Kenilworth Aquatic Garden (Photo by Kathy Jentz)

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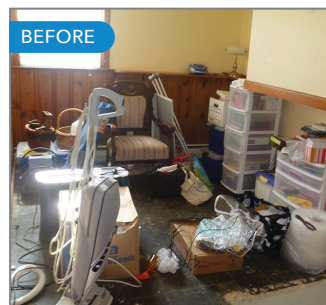


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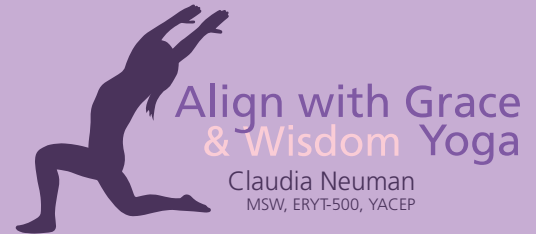
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Full Kitchen & Dining Room
Living Room w/ Gas Fireplace
Wraparound Deck w/ Outdoor Seating
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www.PathwaysProductions.com/retreats



Stay educated, enlightened and engaged all season long with these offerings from the Pathways Community. To see these events and more, visit our interactive ONLINE CALENDAR updated regularly throughout the quarter. **Be sure to tell them you saw them in Pathways!**

Have an event to promote? Calendar listings are just \$5 per listing, and accepted any time to run online. Submit listings online at: www.pathwaysproductions.com/calendar/.

JUNE

— 3 —

Angel Tarot Workshop: Learn to Read the Tarot!
www.meetup.com/thelotusandthelight/events/291724302/

— 7 —

Women's Reiki Healing Circle, 7pm - 8:30pm. Come and join our sacred space to honor who we are as women! Receive a group reiki healing and a sound bath! \$25 per session. Elizabeth Bava, elizabethbava@rocketmail.com; 703-624-7286. www.sanctuaryberryville.com/events-and-workshops

— 8 —

6/8-13 **The Embodiment Project Retreat**, at the Pathways Retreat Center, presented by Blue Nyle Therapy and Pathways Productions. A 5-day program blending trauma-informed mental wellness + energy healing + bodywork. Explore the 7 Embodiment Codes and the physical restrictions and karmic holding patterns within your own body. More info and to register: www.pathwaysmagazine.com/retreats.

— 9 —

Spirit Chat with Uma and Free Readings! www.meetup.com/thelotusandthelight/events/291724349/

— 10 —

Mediumship 101: Intro to Channeling. www.meetup.com/thelotusandthelight/events/284455164/

— 11 —

Illuminate Baltimore, 10am - 5pm. Join us for a wonder-filled day of arts and wellness! Exhibitors may include aura photography, bodywork, energy work including Reiki, original art, vetted intuitive readers, crystals, essential oils, handmade jewelry and gift items, luxurious spa products, and more! Free admission, free workshops, low-cost services. Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. connect@illuminatefestivals.com; 575-519-5883. www.illuminatefestivals.com

— 14 —

Online Spiritual Video Night, 7pm - 8pm. Please join us for an uplifting online 30-minute video talk and fol-

low-on discussion that can help unravel some of the mysteries of life. Every 2nd Wednesday. RSVP to spiritualdiscussions12@gmail.com for the Zoom invite. Eckankar of Northern Virginia: 703-916-0515. www.eck-va.org

— 17 —

Healing Through Your Akashic Records, 1pm - 5pm. What if you could access the energetic lessons of your past – the distant past of cellular memories and previous lives? Imagine how having this knowledge could change your life: provide clues to answer your dilemmas; resolve recurring issues; heal long-standing challenges in your relationships; and empower future growth! You can access this healing energy through the Akashic Records. Please join Bill for a powerful afternoon as he explores the healing and clearing power of the Akashic Records. Bill will offer mini-healing sessions for those in attendance

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Soul Shine One-Day Retreat, 9:30am - 3pm. Take a journey through the elements and re-connect with the natural world. Restore balance and vitality with breathwork and Yoga. Release what is no longer serving you and ground yourself in community. Reignite your passion for life and realign with your true nature through meditation and sound healing. Hosted by Lindsey & Lindsey. Spirit Vigilante, lindsay.vanwagner@gmail.com; 301-525-6364. www.thespiritvigilante.com/soulshine

— 18 —

Sacred Rhythms New Moon Drum Circle, 6:30pm - 8pm. Drop-Ins Welcome, Berryville Wellness Sanctuary, michellejoy.tsb@gmail.com. https://lovenotesmusictherapy.com/sacred-rhythms-full-and-new-moon-community-drum-circles.html

— 21 —

Dynamic Dental Wellness Introduction Zoom, 11am - 11:45am. An opportunity to get to know Dr. Sheri and her work in Holistic Dentistry with Dynamic Dental Wellness. Contact for Zoom link: care@dynamicdentalwellness.com; 703-775-0002. www.dynamicdentalwellness.com

— 23 —

6/23-25 Women of Color Art Expo (WOCAX). Join us June 23-25 for a weekend of: live painting, activities for the kids, live music, food, vendors, and more at The 3rd in downtown Columbia lakefront. This 3-day expo brings together WOC artists from across the DMV to display and sell their work — an immersive experience for the entire community that you don't want to miss! Attend the Expo FREE on Saturday and Sunday, OR support The 3rd by purchasing tickets for our VIP Reception/Fundraiser on Friday (featuring music by the Walker Redds Project and wine from Boyd Cru Wines) and our artist panel and networking event on Sunday morning. www.eventbrite.com/e/wocax-women-of-color-art-expo-tickets-62967762177

— 24 —

Healing Through Your Akashic Records, 1pm - 5pm. What if you could access the energetic lessons of your past – the distant past of cellular memories and previous lives? Imagine how having this knowledge could change your life: provide clues to answer your dilemmas; resolve recurring issues; heal long-standing challenges in your relationships; and empower future growth! You can access this healing energy through the Akashic Records. Please join Bill for a powerful afternoon as he explores the healing and clearing power of the Akashic Records. Bill will offer mini-healing sessions for those in attendance and close with a group clearing. www.myakashichealing.com Hosted by Teal Center, feelbetter@tealcenter.com; 703-522-7637. www.tealcenter.com/

6/24-25 Love Letters to Our Bodies for Black Women with Cancer, 2pm - 6pm. A 2-day FREE Workshop for Black Women with cancer exploring the mind/body/spirit connection and how women relate to their bodies pre- and post-diagnosis.

Moyo Institute, Inc., leads with the Smith Center for Healing & the Arts in DC and Charlotte Maxwell Clinic for Integrative Cancer Care in Oakland. Special guests: Erin “Bionic” Brown, Para triathlete from The Bahamas, an above the knee amputee due to Osteosarcoma; and Dee Manuel Cloud, Breast Cancer Recovery Strategist and author of *Beauty in the Breakdown: Finding Peace in the Midst of Life's Disruptions*. info@moyo-institute.org; 1-510-518-6576; www.moyo-institute.org. https://buytickets.at/gwengwendolyn-mitchellcom/919387

— 28 —

Women's Reiki Healing Circle, 7pm - 8:30pm. Come and join our sacred space to honor who we are as women! Receive a group reiki healing and a sound bath! \$25 per session. Elizabeth Bava, elizabethbava@rocketmail.com; 703-624-7286. www.sanctuaryberryville.com/events-and-workshops

6/28-7/2 Drum 'N' Splash 2023 — one of Four Quarters best kept secrets! Drum and Splash is simply a very good

Our 2023 Calendar of Events



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- Illuminate Richmond (VA)**.....**June 4**
- Illuminate Baltimore (MD)**.....**June 11**
- Illuminate Gettysburg (PA)**.....**July 1**
- Illuminate Columbia (MD)**.....**July 8**
- Illuminate Annapolis (MD)**.....**July 15**
- Illuminate Ocean City (MD)**.....**July 29**
- Illuminate Rehoboth Beach (DE)**.....**July 30**
- Illuminate Wesley Chapel (FL)**.....**August 5**
- Illuminate Clearwater Beach (FL)**.....**August 13**
- Illuminate Nashville (TN)**.....**September 17**
- Illuminate Naperville (IL)**.....**September 24**
- Illuminate Bloomington-Normal (IL)**.....**September 30**
- Illuminate Frederick (MD)**.....**October 22**

visit www.illuminatefestivals.com for details

time, and a great way to celebrate an Alternative Nation's birthday with family, friends and tribe, sharing a working vision of the possible through Community, Sustainability, and Personal Responsibility. Weekend includes: Workshops with Masters of Drum and Dance; the Middle Eastern Casbah, Open Mic Coffee House, Fireworks & Fire Spinning, Sweat Lodge, Community Feast and Ice Cream Social, All Night Fire, Dance, and Drum! Four Quarters Interfaith Sanctuary, office@4qf.org; 814-784-3080. <https://4qf.org/drummandsplash>

JULY

— 3 —

Sacred Rhythms New Moon Drum Circle, 6:30pm - 8pm. Drop-Ins Welcome, Berryville Wellness Sanctuary, michellejoy.tsb@gmail.com. <https://lovenotesmusictherapy.com/sacred-rhythms-full-and-new-moon-community-drum-circles.html>

— 5 —

Psychic Development Program, Online 4-week Mentorship Program, Wednesdays. The Lotus and The Light Metaphysical Center. Information and to register: www.bit.ly/JulyPsychic1

— 8 —

Foundations of Herbalism: Cardiovascular System Herbs & Nutrition, 10am - 3:30pm, presented ONLINE by Smile Herb Shop. Tuition: \$199. More info and to register: www.eventbrite.com/e/foundations-of-herbalism-cardiovascular-system-herbs-nutrition-tickets-617892231297

Healing Through Your Akashic Records, 1pm - 5pm. What if you could access the energetic lessons of your past – the distant past of cellular memories and previous lives? Imagine how having this knowledge

could change your life: provide clues to answer your dilemmas; resolve recurring issues; heal long-standing challenges in your relationships; and empower future growth! You can access this healing energy through the Akashic Records. Please join Bill for a powerful afternoon as he explores the healing and clearing power of the Akashic Records. Bill will offer mini-healing sessions for those in attendance and close with a group clearing. bill@myakashichealing.com; 301-448-0388; www.myakashichealing.com. Hosted by Rising Phoenix Holistic Center.

Illuminate Columbia, 10am - 4pm. Join us for a wonder-filled day of arts and wellness! Exhibitors may include aura photography, bodywork, energy work including Reiki, original art, vetted intuitive readers, crystals, essential oils, handmade jewelry and gift items, luxurious spa products, and more! Free admission, free workshops, low-cost services. Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. connect@illuminatefestivals.com; 575-519-5883. www.illuminatefestivals.com

— 11 —

The Vision of Hermes Online Discussion, 7pm - 8:30pm (Zoom). This two-part class series, on July 11th & 18th, will explore the path of initiation and the extraordinary experience of Hermes as he converses with The Divine Being. An allegorical exposition of philosophic and mystic truths, the depth of insight and understanding presented will engage the mind and stimulate the Higher Self. Institute for Spiritual Development, revfranwright@gmail.com; www.isd-dc.org.

— 15 —

Illuminate Annapolis, 10am - 5pm. Join us for a wonder-filled day of arts and wellness! Exhibitors may include aura photography, bodywork, energy work including Reiki, original art,



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Working with Color Bands, 12pm - 6pm. Learn to: Distinguish bands of color, vibrate with the color, provide that color to yourself or someone else and heal with the bands. Taught by Wanda Lasseter Lundy, Founder and Principal of Lasseter Lundy Institute). Tuition: \$150 if paid by July 1st, \$180 if later. To register: Call Wanda at (812) 705-5135; or email Laura at llilauraprice@gmail.com. www.lasseterlundy.com

AUGUST

— 12 —

One Day Healing Event, 12pm - 6pm. A powerful day of healing provided by Wanda Lasseter Lundy. The healing includes your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects. The healing will profoundly effect your life path and bring important insights. Tuition: \$150. To register: Call Wanda at (812) 705-5135; or email Laura at llilauraprice@gmail.com. www.lasseterlundy.com

— 16 —

Sacred Rhythms New Moon Drum Circle, 6:30pm - 8pm. Drop-Ins Welcome, Berryville Wellness Sanctuary, michellejoy.tsb@gmail.com. <https://lovenotesmusictherapy.com/sacred-rhythms-full-and-new-moon-community-drum-circles.html>

— 18 —

8/18-21 Vibrate: Ayurveda & Yoga Nourishment Retreat, at the Pathways Retreat Center. This Ayurveda and Yoga Wellness Retreat — suitable for all

levels of practice — will include nourishment through each of our senses: touch (pranayama, movement, and massage), sound (singing and sound bowls), smell (making bath products and spice blends) and taste (mindful eating and cooking). We will replenish through the natural beauty all around, and in each one of us. Space is limited ~ Register early to secure your spot! www.PathwaysProductions.com/retreats

SEPTEMBER

— 6 —

Psychic Development Program, Online 4-week Mentorship Program, Wednesdays. The Lotus and The Light Metaphysical Center. Information and to register: www.bit.ly/JulyPsychic1

— 14 —

Sacred Rhythms New Moon Drum Circle, 6:30pm - 8pm. Drop-Ins Welcome, Berryville Wellness Sanctuary, michellejoy.tsb@gmail.com. <https://lovenotesmusictherapy.com/sacred-rhythms-full-and-new-moon-community-drum-circles.html>

— 15 —

9/15-18 Enlightened Rest 108: Yoga for Serenity, Strength & Resilience Retreat, at the Pathways Retreat Center. Enjoy a long weekend fortifying our bodies and spirits and learning to rest in sublime serenity. This retreat is suitable for all levels of Yogi. The retreat will include asana sessions (all levels), meditation instruction, prana yama (breath work), Para® Yoga Nidra (The Yoga of Sleep), and a special practice to harness the power of our subconscious minds. Space is limited ~ Register early to secure your spot! www.PathwaysProductions.com/retreats

UPCOMING

8/30-9/4 Stones Rising XXIX. The heart of Four Quarters is the Circle of Standing Stones. 29 years ago we raised a single stone to inspire those that would come after. Follow in their footsteps, gather, labor together, build a circle for yourselves and those not yet born. A six-day intentional community, where all actions are done with the purpose of furthering the growth of the Stone Circle, our Interfaith Sanctuary, and the far-flung greater community of Members and Guests. Registration includes camping fees and meal plan. Four Quarters Interfaith Sanctuary, office@4qf.org; 814-784-3080. <https://4qf.org/stonesrising>

10/8 Pathways Fall Natural Living Expo, 10am-6pm, College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Hyattsville, MD. Join 120+ exhibitors and 40+ workshops for exploration, enlightenment, education and engagement at the premiere mind-body-spirit-eco event of the DMV. \$10 advance purchase online, and \$10 day of event. Free parking and food trucks on site. Exhibitor inquiries: naturallivingexpo@gmail.com. www.pathwaysproductions.com

10/13-16 Inner Wisdom Intuitive and Psychic Development Retreat, led by Medium Annie Larson in Partnership with Pathways Productions at the Pathways Retreat Center outside Charlottesville, VA. Develop your psychic senses to tap into the energy of another person, place, or thing. Through lessons, observations, and hands-on practice, you will learn how to start the flow of information. More information and to register: www.pathwaysproductions.com/retreats.

11/4 The Spiritual Awakening Holistic Expo, 10am - 7pm presented by Remnants of Mag-

ic, Loudoun County's premiere crystal and metaphysical store. This yearly event combines over 30 local artisans who are hand selected as the best-of-the-best in their craft. Join this magical event full of crystals, jewelry, mediums, reiki healing, and so much more! www.thespiritualawakeningholisticexpo.com

ONGOING

2023 Drum Circles! 6:30pm - 8pm, live event. Join us in a year of intentional drumming for harnessing the new moon energy; tap into the power to manifest your best life! Circles are every month, check the website for dates! lovenotesmusictherapy@gmail.com; <https://lovenotesmusictherapy.com/sacred-rhythms-full-and-new-moon-community-drum-circles.html>

A Meditation To Help The World, 7:30pm online. Transmission Meditation is both a world service and the most potent technique of personal development available today. During transmission, the Masters of Wisdom direct energies from the spiritual planes through the energy centers (chakras) of the members in a highly scientific manner. It is free and enhances other spiritual practices. For an Introductory Talk with the Meditation, inquire at: info-se@share-international.us. 770-302-2208. www.transmissionmeditation.org

Adams Morgan Farmers Market, Saturdays, 8am-1pm, Washington, DC. Saturdays starting May 6 through December 23, 8am - 1pm, at Unity Plaza (across from The Line Hotel, Columbia Rd and Euclid St, WDC). Sustainably grown, affordably priced fruits, veggies & more. RAIN OR SHINE. CSA Memberships pick up at this location. Email Licking Creek Bend Farm to join, for more info, or to volunteer: info@lickingcreekbendfarm.com, 301-587-1739. www.lickingcreekbendfarm.com

A.R.E. Study Group (Edgar Cayce): "A Search for God", FREE, monthly on the third Wednesdays, 6pm-7pm, via ZOOM. Accessed through Akashic records/psychic readings, "A Search for God" is Edgar Cayce's historical, bio-psycho-social Soul Work. Led by Denise Horton, Ph.D., Director, PILGRIMAGE: A Center for Spiritual Healing. drdenisehorton@icloud.com.

Brookland Farmer's Market, Tuesdays, May 2 to October 31, 2023 (CSA also available) Brookland Metro, 10th and Otis, under the bridgeMarket hours: 4pm-7pm. Sustainably grown, affordably priced fruits, veggies & more. RAIN OR SHINE. CSA Memberships pick up at this location. Email Licking Creek Bend Farm to join, for more info, or to volunteer: info@lickingcreekbendfarm.com, 301-587-1739. www.lickingcreekbendfarm.com

Cannabis 101 FREE Workshop, 2pm - 4pm, monthly on every 3rd Saturday, presented by Cannabis Karma & Lifeluxe.. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn about Cannabis therapy and CBD as an alternative medicine. Learn about your Endocannabinoid system. Ask questions? We promote #plantbased healing ideas. Hempstress onsite for sampling. Hemp kettle tea provided onsite. Cannabis Karma; eventcoordinator@cannabiskarma.org; www.Cannabiskarma.org.

In-Person Spiritual Discussion, 11am - 12pm. Lively in-person spiritual discussion exploring our relationship with the Eternal. How can you embrace your true destiny as Soul? Please join us every 2nd Sunday at the Northern Virginia ECK Center for stimulating spiritual conversation! Eckankar of Northern Virginia: 703-916-0515; spiritualdiscussions12@gmail.com. www.eck-va.org

Intuition & Healing Development. This monthly video development group is an exciting blend of study and practice in the fields of metaphysics, healing and intuition. The participants select the topic for each meeting.. Discover what you are great at doing! Tuition: \$50 per class. To register: call Wanda at 812-705-5135; or email Katie, katielynn3492@gmail.com. All classes are online until further notice. www.laseterlundy.com

Learn to Skateboard! 7am - 8pm. All ages and abilities are welcome. If you can walk, you can roll! School of Shred, jmgfilms@gmail.com; 323-408-9831. www.shreddiemercury.com

Meditation for Peace and Well-being, every Monday and Thursday, 7:30pm - 8:30pm. Meditation for peace and well-being. A portion of each session is specifically designed

for healing. Join us on Zoom. For beginners and experienced meditators. For reservations: 301-452-7780 or savitri@newfuturesocietycenter.com. For more information visit: <https://newfuturesocietycenter.com/offerings-events/#meditation>; 301-452-7780.

Mindful Meditations and Musings, every Friday, 10:30am - 11:30am. Meditation classes with a focus on mindfulness. Tailored for beginners, all levels welcome. Typical classes consist of 30-35 minute, lightly guided meditations, followed by brief and spirited discussions. Wear and bring whatever you need to sit comfortably (cushion, chair, zafu, zabuton) *yoga mats and chairs available to borrow. RSVP: tmgeorge126@gmail.com. The Sanctuary Wellness Center. www.sanctuaryberryville.com/practitioners/ertnp3rii2g5vw-mxmkazqgtas9kriz

Be Blessed with Peace Sri Karunamayi Visits DC Thursday, Aug. 31 – Sunday, Sept. 3, 2023

Amma Sri Karunamayi is the embodiment of compassion and unconditional love. Her words and presence bestow limitless peace and spiritual illumination. During the Individual Blessing Day, Amma Sri Karunamayi will offer Sri Saraswati Mantra Diksha initiation to students ages 4 to 24. People of all faiths are invited. All programs are open to all and free, except the retreat.

All programs held at:
Murugan Temple of North America
6300 Princess Garden Parkway
Lanham, MD 20706

Individual Blessings Day
Thursday, Aug. 31 • 10:30 am – 4:00 pm
A special opportunity to privately share your joys and pains with Amma Sri Karunamayi, who will offer Sri Saraswati Mantra Diksha initiation to students ages 4 to 24.

Individual Blessings Day
Friday, Sept. 1 • Noon – 4:00 pm
A special opportunity to privately share your joys and pains with Amma.

One Day Meditation Retreat
Saturday, Sept. 2 • 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
See information to the right.

Homa/Sacred Fire Ceremony
Sunday, Sept. 3 • 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Amma will perform a homa for world peace, which will benefit all who attend.



REALIZE YOUR TRUE SELF: A Special One-Day Meditation Retreat Saturday, Sept. 2, 2023

Time: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Place: Murugan Temple
6300 Princess Garden Parkway
Lanham, MD 20706

Join us for a unique opportunity to explore and deepen your own spiritual practice under the loving guidance of Amma Sri Karunamayi. People of all spiritual backgrounds and faiths are invited to enjoy the motherly grace of one of India's most revered masters during this special day of meditation and fellowship. A vegetarian lunch will be provided.

Fee: Register by August 7
Full Day — \$102 / Half Day — \$62
Register after August 7
Full Day — \$122 / Half Day — \$77

To Register and For More Information:

www.karunamayi.org • WashingtonDC@karunamayi.org • 240-285-0187

Donations to the SMVA Trust support Amma Sri Karunamayi's charitable activities, including free health care and schools in India. The SMVA Trust is a 501(c) 3 charitable organization.

Online Spiritual Video

Night, 7pm - 8pm. Please join us for an uplifting online 30-minute video talk and follow-on discussion that can help unravel some of the mysteries of life. Every 2nd Wednesday. RSVP to spiritualdiscussions12@gmail.com for the Zoom invite. Eckankar of Northern Virginia: 703-916-0515. www.eck-va.org

Singing Bowls, 6:30pm Sundays. To sign up (free) and get the location: www.SingingBowl-Meditation.eventbrite.com. Center for Spiritual Living Metro, https://cslmetro.org/.

Spirit Vigilante Club, 6pm -7pm monthly on the first Wednesday. Become a Spirit Vigilante and attend monthly virtual mind/body group check-ins and access to our online community. Weekly emails including a wellness lesson, meditation, and mantra to keep you healthy and focused. Monthly one-on-one sessions to develop personalized suggestions and plans of action, and set intentions to meet your goals, and track your progress. 11% off all Spirit Vigilante offerings — retreats, workshops, online programs, etc. Bonus surprises. To join: www.thesp-

itvigilante.com/join.

The Awakening Soul, 11am - 12pm. In-person spiritual discussion of *The Awakening Soul*. How can you embrace your true destiny as Soul? Please join us every 2nd Sunday at the Northern Virginia ECK Center for stimulating spiritual conversation! All guests will receive a free book while supplies last. Contact: Jan Whiteley, spiritualdiscussions12@gmail.com. Eckankar of Northern Virginia: 703-916-0515. www.eck-va.org

WANTED: All people of goodwill. To aid in the rescue of the human family, join the network of light around the world: Pray/meditate for peace, justice, and freedom; Support peace, economic and social justice and freedom for all by any means possible; Spread this message to inspire right action to do the required work for peace, justice, and right human relations so they can step forward without infringing our free will. Share International USA, www.share-international.us/EndAllWar/.



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- 1st Sunday – 12:30 pm (In-Person & Zoom)
 - The Palisades Hub
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- 2nd - 5th Sundays – 11:00 am (Zoom)

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- Guided Meditation – 1st Wednesday of each month
- Summer Solstice Service – Wednesday, June 21
- Vision of Hermes – Tuesdays, July 11 & 18
- A Course in Miracles – Thursdays, July 13, 20 & 27
- Numerology – Thursdays, Aug 17, 24, 31 & Sept 7, 14 & 21
- Healing Thru the Eyes of the Shaman – Saturday, Sept 9

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Our November intensive is titled *Healing Your Mind Begins with the Heart and Soul*. It will be November 12, 13 and 14. For more information go to Facebook or my website.

Our Personal Growth program continues. "Faith and Feeling Will Bring You Home to Self" is being well received. We have had a great response. Call or email Molly to sign up.

Check our website for more info on all activities.

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Led by Medium Annie Larson
in Partnership with Pathways Productions

October 13-16, 2023

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- ... Suspect they have abilities but don't know how to use them
- ... Want a supportive environment to develop
- ... Wish to go beyond their intuition
- ... Look to enhance their energy healing practice, or
- ... Desire ultimately to develop skills to offer sessions as a professional psychic. You will practice doing readings on others all weekend long.

Topics Include:

- Setting the Foundations for Information to Flow
- Working With Energy
- Developing "Clair" Senses
- Using Tools of a Psychic

Annie and the Pathways team have created a safe, comfortable, and gentle space to connect a community of other like-minded people in attendance. **Join us!**



RETREAT REGISTRATION

Space is limited!

Register early to secure your spot.

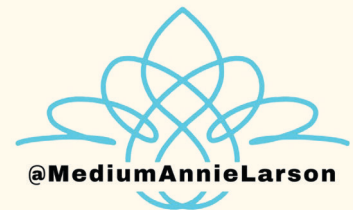
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pathwaysads@gmail.com



Annie Larson is a celebrated clairvoyant and medium, who provides evidence of the survival of consciousness and messages from loved ones on the other side. She has been featured on television, radio, podcasts, magazines, and newspapers, including *The Washington Post*.

As an experienced professional medium, Annie has been tested, vetted, and certified by schools of mediumship, universities, metaphysical and Spiritualist churches, and professional forums.

Annie is a Reiki Master Teacher, published astrologer, past life regression therapist, and advanced yoga teacher who, for decades, has been helping clients with her insightful guidance, direction, clarity, and healing. Her extensive development and mentoring classes help others hone their intuitive voice.

With hundreds of glowing client reviews from live appearances, classes, and phone sessions, Annie has achieved recognition in the psychic and mediumship community.

www.mediumannielarson.com

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Hi-Speed WiFi

www.PathwaysProductions.com/retreats



Celebrate Summer...

...continued from page 13

buildings. These trappings are necessary for a practical life in these times, but we suffer the consequences. A popular philosophy called “earthing,” (sometimes referred to as “grounding”) recognizes that even the rubber in our tennis shoes disconnects us from the healing properties of contact with the ground below.

The National Institutes of Health found that grounding improves sleep, normalizes cortisol rhythms, reduces pain and stress, increases heart rate variability, speeds wound healing, and reduces blood viscosity. Here’s how you can get grounded:

1. While the weather is nice, make an effort to walk outside barefoot and feel your root system becoming integrated with the earth surrounding you. Make contact with plants and trees, feel the subtle stability their rootedness creates.
2. Notice how this sensation fosters a oneness with nature and our planet, which promotes unity and interconnectedness, ultimately leading us toward more love, compassion, and appreciation for all life.
3. Feel the qualities of Earth that keep you grounded — permanence, trust, reliability, safety, security — and with this strong foundation, you will have more energy and freedom to explore the miraculous world around you.

Ether

Finally, ether is arguably the most elusive and mysterious of the elements. It has been described as the Spirit or celestial energy that fills all spaces, “the glue of the gods.”

To embody ether, we attempt to withdraw our senses from the four other elements. This is called *pratyahara* in the teachings of the Yoga Sutras. This practice involves the following:

1. Direct your mind inward by reframing the urge to react to sensations or intrusive thoughts and feelings.
2. Build in times of the day you are able to sit in pure silence.
3. Meditate in a way that focuses on observing only your own mind, rather than any outward distractions or present-body awareness.

From this state of inward focus, we are able to cultivate our connection to all that is.

As you experiment with these practices, notice if one resonates with you over the others. Perhaps certain occasions call for a specific technique, so remain open-minded to learning more and getting to know your body’s rhythms. When we are feeling down and slow, re-cruiting the element of fire will reignite our energy and power. When we are feeling overwhelmed and overstimulated, tapping into the element of earth will help us to remain grounded. Remember all of these elements exist both within and around us. Lean into their energies to embrace the summer season.

Lindsey Haldeman is an avid yogi and aspiring entrepreneur. Having completed her degree in Psychology, she strives to be an ongoing student of life continuing to study human development and spiritual philosophies. Lindsey views the psyche as a treasure map and sees the Gold in every experience. Her candid illumination of visionary ideals brings passion to the everyday. <https://lindseyhaldeman.com/>

Lindsey Van Wagner is a writer, speaker, teacher, and lifestyle guide known for empowering clients to live with more intention, higher energy, and peace. She is passionate about behavior change and instructs graduate courses at American University. Her knowledge of health psychology and her own personal experience contribute to her passion to help others transform. www.thespiritvigilante.com/

Expand upon these themes as you journey through these elements with Lindsey and Lindsey at their one-day Soul Shine retreat on Saturday June 17th! See www.thespiritvigilante.com/soulshine.

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- **REGISTER** for a certified Reiki Class.
- **REGISTER** for A Course In Miracles study group meeting.

Get Guidance

- **BOOK** a Spiritual, Past Life, or Mediumship Reading.
- **JOIN** a Facebook or YouTube Live session every Friday @ 1pm ET.

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- **BOOK** a Reiki Session.
- **ATTEND** a monthly healing service at Rays of Healing Church, where Alice is the Lead Minister.
- **JOIN** a weekly virtual Reiki Exchange (for Reiki practitioners of all lineages).



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S. Alice (Alicja) Jones is a psychic, medium, and intuitive healer who gives spiritual and past life readings. These messages many times include Past

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What is Citizen Science?

BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Citizen science is science for everyone!

Specifically, citizen science is when the public voluntarily helps conduct scientific research. Citizen scientists may design experiments, collect data, analyze results, and solve problems. In national parks, most citizen scientists collect data with tools provided by project directors. These data help professional scientists and resource managers answer scientific questions and solve important problems. And the activity helps participants build meaningful connections to science.

Anyone can be a citizen scientist, regardless of where they're from. It doesn't matter how old you are or what your background is. All it takes is some time, curiosity, and a sense of wonder.

Why Does the National Park Service Support Citizen Science?

For two reasons — good management of parks, and good experiences for visitors.

To manage national parks, the National Park Service (NPS) uses the best available scientific information. Sometimes the best way to get that information is through citizen science projects. For example, managers might need to know when certain kinds of plants bloom during the spring. Data on flower timing can help them know which butterflies need special protection, or when to mow a field. They might not have enough time to count all those flowers across the park. But hundreds of visitors hiking in the park can use a mobile app to record when and where flowers bloom.

Citizen science is also a great way for visitors to enjoy and learn



Identifying the contents in a net. Source: NPS/S. Muether

about science and their parks. In a recent law, Congress affirmed that the NPS has a public education role and responsibility. Citizen science helps the NPS fill that role. One of the best ways to learn science is to do science. And by doing science, people can appreciate their parks in new ways.

Why Use the Term "Citizen Science?"

There is healthy debate worldwide about what to call public involvement in scientific research. Some people prefer the term "community science" out of concern that "citizen science" implies that only legal citizens of a country can participate. You may wonder why this

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Citizen Science...

...continued from page 43

site uses the term “citizen science.” There are several reasons.

For starters, the law that authorizes federal agencies like the NPS to support public involvement in research uses the term “citizen science.” Furthermore, the term is widely used around the world, including in the titles of scientific journals and the names of scientific societies. Most people and organizations in this field — including the NPS — intend “citizen” to mean a general citizen of the world, not a legally-defined citizen of a country. When someone mentions “citizen science,” there tends to be an immediate understanding of what they’re talking about.

But perhaps most importantly, community science is one particular type of citizen science — one in which a community drives the project. In community science, a community may pose the research question, decide what type of data to collect, or use the results to inform some action. There is typically a professional scientist or scientific organization that collaborates with the community but does not control the research project.

For most projects in national parks, the NPS or a partner (like a university) controls the project. It’s the professional scientists and managers who decide what topic is important (like flowering times), how to study it, and how to use the results. The public — which may range from park visitors to student groups or local community members — is invited, encouraged, and enabled to participate. They typically do so by collecting data. That type of project is not driven by a community, so it’s not community science.

There are some community science projects that involve parks and NPS programs, and there will be more in the future. This site specifically refers to them as community science but uses the broader term citizen science to refer to the wide range of volunteer-based scientific activities that the NPS supports.

Terminology aside, the underlying fact is that science is for everyone, no matter if you know a lot about science or a little, have participated in science before, or not. The NPS is dedicated to making science inclusive to all and ensuring that every person has the right and the opportunity to participate in scientific research. National parks, which are open to everyone, are great places to realize that opportunity.

Amid the grand vistas of a national park sometimes it’s nice to stop, focus on a small patch of ground, and count the flowers.

Reprinted with permission from the National Park Service website (www.nps.gov/subjects/citizenscience/citizen-science.htm).

Let’s Get Started - Join A Project!

Coast to coast, there’s a project out there for you. There are many opportunities to become a citizen scientist in national parks — and a summer vacation is the perfect time to dive in with a project as a perfect family activity.

Here are some resources to help get you started:

- www.nps.gov/subjects/citizenscience/be-a-citizen-scientist.htm — visit the NPS list of current projects.
- Find additional projects on sites like SciStarter.com and CitizenScience.gov. They also include searchable databases of projects, and provide toolkits to help get you involved and organized.
- If you already use programs like [eBird*](http://eBird.org) or [iNaturalist*](http://iNaturalist.org), you can continue to do so in any national park, even on your own.

Current Projects in the DMV:

• **George Washington Memorial Parkway (DC/MD/VA) All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory, aka, the GWMP Bug Lab**

Purpose: Document all species found at George Washington Memorial Parkway so park managers understand what lives there.

Activities: Use laboratory facilities to sort insects captured in traps along the parkway.

Location & Timing: Participate in the park, year-round.

Requirements: Must be a teen or adult to participate; training is provided.

To Participate: Email to express interest. More information at: www.nps.gov/articles/citizen-science-and-entomology-at-george-washington-memorial-parkway.htm

• **Shenandoah National Park Citizen Science Timelapses** — Help document how the landscapes change during the seasons over time from various designated locations. All you need is a cell phone! Details at: www.nps.gov/shen/learn/photosmultimedia/timelapses.htm

• **The Dragonfly Mercury Project (DMP)** — A nationwide study that works with citizen scientists and community volunteers to collect dragonfly larvae for mercury analysis. Many parks in Maryland, DC and Virginia are included and open for participation. Learn more at: www.nps.gov/subjects/citizenscience/dragonfly-mercury-project.htm

• **Billy Goat Trail Steward** — While not a strictly scientific venture, this is an opportunity to volunteer to protect the unique ecology and sustain the long-term viability of Bear Island by educating visitors using Leave No Trace (LNT) principles. Assist in promoting the safety, enjoyment, and appreciation of the Billy Goat Trail by its visitors. This position is in the Great Falls area of C&O Canal National Historical Park. To learn more and apply online: www.volunteer.gov/s/volunteer-opportunity/a093d00000lXxpAAE/billy-goat-trail-steward.

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Turning Point: When the Sun Stands Still

BY CAROL BURBANK

Yesterday, I filled my porch with flats of annuals and perennials, welcoming the spring into my yard. With luck and some water, in a few months these narrow plants will sprawl and bloom in the hot summer days. A few months more, and they'll seed themselves, fading for a time before they spark next spring. It's always a surprise to me, a hopeful rediscovery. When my roses raise red-tipped buds, or the passion flowers in my window garden unfold their complicated, indulgent purple heads, I'm reminded it's time for me to blossom, too.

It's always worth acknowledging the seasons that remind us where we stand in the passing year. These turning points are more gentle than the human-centered rites of passage (graduations, weddings, and funerals, to name a few). The equinoxes and solstices of the year are just as important, though, because they are nature's reminders of the constancy and promise of change.

On June 21, the earth tilts fully towards the sun, and the noon light appears to stand still for a few days. It is the longest day of the year, a breath before the days shorten towards fall. The summer solstice is a day where we celebrate the height of the sun, the fire that fuels all of the creatures on earth.

However you celebrate, this sacred pause, brief but palpable, can bring you into a new phase of your life. You might take the moment for a physical tune-up, an energetic reboot, a moment of personal assessment, or a commitment to creative revival. It is a space to ask yourself, "What fuels me as I rise and fall in the rhythms of the seasons?"

Is it Time for a Physical Tune-Up? *Your Body Moves Naturally Through the Seasons*

Indigenous people celebrate the summer solstice with attention to the cycles of planting and regeneration, preparing for the fall harvest. Our bodies move through that subtle shift as well, so it's time to plant

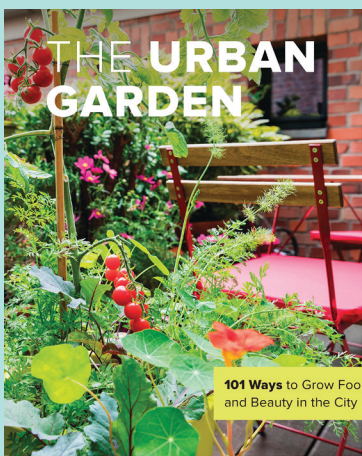
the seeds for a healthier fall and winter, when we move inward with the resources we've gathered in the growing season.

Growing season begins with a long day where the sun seems to stand still above us. Time is suspended, and anything is possible. This is the perfect moment to listen to your body, always awake to the turning point of the earth. What do you need, physically, to build your storehouse of strength, stamina, and resilience?

The summer solstice is a much better time for those challenging resolutions we claim in January. The world invites us to eat fresh, local food, to step into the bright, warm day and move/dance/run/explore. And the sun itself, a healing force,



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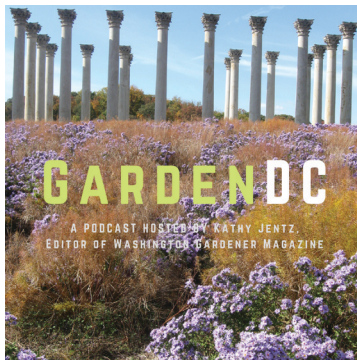
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Turning Point...

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will support our commitment to being strong.

The summer sun asks, "What are you ready to do to love and lighten your body in this infinite, brief moment of turning?" Answer, and fuel a season of health.

Is it Time for an Energetic Reboot? Your Spirit Naturally Rises to Meet the Sun's Warmth

Remember when summer was a vacation from schoolwork, a time of playing outside or making new friends at camp, or spending hours in the local pool, floating in the shimmering light? Play has the power to re-energize us to learn, to rest, and to grow. When was the last time you let yourself "indulge" in the vitality of playful exploration?

It's a shame that most adults let work and responsibility become our dominant activity as we age. No wonder we sag as the sun sets. Why not make the longest day of the year a day to rediscover the power of play? Give yourself a break — explore, or better yet, fall into your hammock or a nearby pool and float in the revitalizing sun.

The summer solstice is perfect for gathering energy for life, because everything you need is at your fingertips: light, warmth, fertility, and pause. No matter how old we are, these essential elements of play combine to recharge us and prepare us for the next cycle, whatever it might bring.

The summer sun invites you: "Listen to your spirit and embrace what delights you; play and fill yourself with abundant energy!" Embrace the moment, and fuel a season of joy.

Is it Time for Self-Assessment? Your Life Choices are Illuminated in the Sunlight

The summer solstice offers a pause in the swiftly turning days of our busy lives, if we are willing to take advantage of the opportunity.

We can use the earth's turning points to remind ourselves that we are always shifting, too, and it's time to quietly, lovingly, look at ourselves in a new light.

In the map of the year, the solstice is a crossroads. What we decide to do now determines whether we have what we need to thrive through to the next spring. Remembering that the goal is never perfection, we can take a moment to honor the changes that have brought us somewhere new, and choose the next best step that will take us where we want to go.

There are many ways to see what's really going on. You could go through your journal, if you keep one. You could review your planner and notice which activities are in alignment with your goals and dreams. Dust off your favorite Tarot deck, or call a friend for a long talk about your lives. Create a mind map or a collage that intuitively shows you where you are. Whatever you do, be gentle with yourself. A turning point is a gift, not an obligation.

The clear light of the longest day puts a pin in the map of your life: "You are here; is it where you want to be?" Be honest with yourself, and the next right step will bring resources to fuel a season of discovery.

Is it Time for Creative Revival? Your Creativity Shines in the Solstice Sun

Not everyone chooses the artist's or writer's path, but everyone is creative in their own way. Turning points are an opportunity to let that creativity spark and grow, wherever we claim our imaginative and innovative gifts. The summer solstice, when the sun pauses in its miraculous, scientific, mysterious journey, opens a door to inspiration in our daily lives.

In the extra hours of daylight given to us at June's solstice, we have the opportunity to give ourselves the time to be fully alive as creative beings. How will you know what to do? Ask yourself what you love to do, and you'll find your ingenuity, passion, and pleasure. For a few hours, get into the flow.

If you are an artist or writer, the solstice can become your day to renew your deepest creative goals. Jump start that project you've parked for too long. Take the first steps towards an idea that's been following you around for too long, begging to be turned into a painting, a novel, a sculpture, or anything you can share with the world. It's your time, and the here and now has never been more bright.

The summer sun stretches and so can you! "What calls you, again and again, asking to be made new and whole, unexpected and beautiful?" Answer, and fuel a season of magic.

Stretch with the Sun on June 21

The solstice is a transition in time and light, vibrating through our bodies and spirits, our habits and hopes, with the potential of connecting the soul to the seasons in a deeper way. Whether you celebrate this annual turning point through ritual, prayer, self-assessment, or exploration, your choices on the longest day of the year could welcome something wonderful in the months to come.

It is the perfect time to put down roots that will grow into the riches that fuel an abundant, joyful year.

*Carol Burbank is a writing coach and life coach, and founder of Storyweaving (www.storyweaving.com), celebrating creative exploration through writing, teaching and change management support with individuals and organizations since 2004. She offers retreats and workshops at the Storyweaving Retreat Center, online, and in organizations/centers across the country. Her book, *Where the Light Gets In: Essays on Leadership and Spirit*, will be published by CSL Press in 2024. Photo by Carol Burbank.*



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Creating a Culture of Connection

BY TRISH HALL

What is your “worldview”? What do you hold dear? The answers to these questions are both the composite and the creator of your attitudes, values, stories, and expectations about your world and the world around you. They inform your every thought and action. Your worldview manifests as your ethics, religion, philosophy, and beliefs.

We arise from our cultures of origin, so we are a product of that culture, and we have everything necessary to be the producers of new cultures. Humans have been creating cultures since we first walked the earth.

Are you a “glass-half-full” person — an optimist that sees the positive in everything, or a “glass-half-empty” pessimist that goes to the darker side, thinking the worst of any situation? Most of us vacillate between the two depending on context.

If you had magical powers (which, of course, you do), what culture would you create? Would it be utopian? Would everyone get along without challenges or disagreements? Would it be so peaceful that terminal stasis might set in? Or would it be a world in which citizens are truly free to think independently, to share the breadth of their creativity, to debate respectfully, challenge other’s opinions without fear, collectively focusing on solutions and constructive evolution? Could a world of health, harmony, and unconditional high regard that supports everyone in living their best yet to be, prevail?

Thousands of people gathering in small groups are responding to the heart-call to create a world that works. In the interfaith world, we are creating a culture of connection that begins with compassionate curiosity. We are concerned about others’ experiences and encourage everyone to learn with and from one another. Kindness, stemming from mutual respect, is blossoming.

Curiosity, which plays a huge role in how we relate to our world, is the strong desire to learn something more, something new. Our willingness to reach beyond the culture in which we were raised depends on our internal sense of safety blended with the divine urge to experience the unknown. Our culture of origin instilled acceptable and customary beliefs and social forms and formulas in us. We unconsciously embraced the material traits of our racial, religious and social groups. This worldview has out-pictured as our everyday existence — our way of life and the people with whom we share our lives. It is how we relate to all creation, our chosen diversions, the places we reside and our




Photo by Valiant Mode on Unsplash

travels. As years have passed, some have stayed deeply linked to those original perspectives. Most of us have evolved, some more than others.

Some people look at the world and see it fractured, fragmented into myriad separate pieces. All they see are differences: different skin color, different size, shape, ethnicity, religion ... different climates, different architecture. Different everything. There is a world of “me and us” versus “other” — constantly contrasting what they believe to be known and safe with all that is different. The leap to an assumption

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BUILDING COMMUNITY

Creating a Culture...

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that “different is dangerous” is all too easy. Gripped in fear, “fight, flight or freeze” instinctive, defensive reactions take over. Resourcefulness disappears.

Others, drawn by our common human desire to connect, may be challenged to find ways to relate to those individuals and groups that don’t align with our worldview. When confronted with personalities and appearances unlike ours, we may fumble and experience a jumble of emotions, yet continue to pursue connection. We experiment. Some of our tries turn out to be life-affirming and others quite opposite, and we don’t give up. We look around and note in awe and wonder, the myriad distinction of creation in expression. We drink in commonalities and celebrate all the differences. We recognize we are looking at the same world through different subjective filters.

Commonalities prevail throughout nature. We are all made of the same stuff. For the most part, it is only when personality, rather than physicality, is brought into the equation that concerns about “different” crop up. Distinctions within commonalities are what make Life rich. Innate distinctions are what are expressed as myriad appearances, gifts, talents, and desires.

The tension of opposites — the pull and push of life — stirs creativity. New solutions, new ways of being together are revealed. The Divine Urge within each of us desires to resolve conflict and harmonize our world.

Coming together across myriad cultures and faith traditions, contemplating co-existence, I hear within me, Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s “How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.” What if we were to ask, “What do we have in common? Let me count the ways.” I am sure we would discover ways to love one another. And, what if in love, we were to ask, “Tell me how it is to be you, your life, and those you love.”

Ernest Holmes shared what won’t work: “You cannot draw love into your consciousness through hate. You cannot draw peace from confusion. You cannot see beauty through ugliness, nor hear harmony while your ears are filled with discord.” So what will work?

We must develop a Culture of Connection! It may be easier than you think, here are some simple steps:

1. Embrace your desire to create a Culture of Connection and commit to doing your part.
2. Set your intention to consistently be present in your conversations.
3. Silence our fear-mongering self-talk to the best of your ability.
4. Enter a consciousness of Love, because it is contagious.
5. Express genuine, compassionate curiosity.
6. Initiate conversations — talk to strangers even though your mother told you not to.

Trish Hall is an international best-selling author and acclaimed speaker. She is the Spiritual Leader of Center for Spiritual Living Metro where you are empowered to live the fullest expression of you. We come together in Oneness, celebrate the uniqueness of each person, and invite you to “be you with us!” www.cslmetro.org



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Do Animals Feel Things More Intensely Than We Do?

BY MICHAEL JAWER

If you're a pet owner — especially if your companion is a dog or cat — then you know without question that these animals have feelings. They can exhibit surprise, jealousy, happiness (consider a dog who hasn't seen you for a while), affection, contentment (think of a cat purring on one's lap), fear, agitation, annoyance (cats particularly), perhaps even guilt or shame (dogs at least).

While animals don't have language akin to humans, with words and symbols infused with particular meanings, they can certainly gather what's going on at a feeling level. Here's an illustration, courtesy of *Washington Post* columnist Gene Weingarten, concerning his late dog Harry:

My wife... acts in community theater. One day, she was in the house rehearsing a monologue for an upcoming audition. The lines were from Marsha Norman's two-person play "Night, Mother," about a housewife who is attempting to talk her adult daughter out of suicide. Thelma is a weak and bewildered woman trying to change her daughter's mind while coming to terms with her own failings as a mother and with her paralyzing fear of being left alone. Her lines are excruciating.

My wife had to stop in mid-monologue. Harry was too distraught. He could understand not one word she was saying, but he figured out that Mom was as sad as he'd ever seen her. He was whimpering, pawing at her knee, licking her hand, trying as best he could to make things better.

"You don't need a brain to have a heart," Weingarten concludes.

Neurologically speaking, Weingarten was selling Harry short. The parts of the human brain that process feeling — collectively known as the limbic system — have their counterparts in other animals' craniums and nervous systems. The late, esteemed neuroscientist Jaak Panksepp, best known for his research into emotion, declared that "the evidence is now inescapable: at the basic emotional level, all mammals are remarkably similar."

One might even argue that other mammals are more aware of feelings than are human beings, because they possess a "primary" form of consciousness. They are aware of themselves and their environment but less burdened by complexities such as reflection and rumination that typify human consciousness. They live closer to the bone, one might say, than we do.

One animal behaviouralist, Jeffrey Masson, has remarked that animals possess feelings of "undiluted purity and clarity" — at least at times — compared to the "seeming opacity and inaccessibility of human feelings." A former psychoanalyst, he wonders if the human ego doesn't get in the way of our experiencing feelings as directly and undistilled as other creatures do. Masson draws attention, for instance, to the capacity of some animals to express pure, unbridled joy.

Take birdsong. Anyone who has awoken to hear birds twittering on a spring day catches a sense of what feeling might be present in them beyond any fundamental communications function or territorial pronouncement. Naturalist Joseph Wood Krutch conjectured that "Perhaps certain animals can be both more joyful and more utterly desolate than any man ever was." He also opined that "Whoever listens to a bird song and says, 'I do not believe there is any joy in it,'

has not proved anything about birds. But he has revealed a good deal about himself."

With regard to the "desolation" to which Krutch referred, I clearly recall a lion my daughter and I once saw confined within a rather small chain-link fence: it was pacing back and forth monotonously and with an evident degree of frustration. An animal denied the use of its natural abilities — to hunt, to soar, to climb, to dash — is almost surely forced into a pathos made worse by its inability, through language, to explain its predicament to itself.

The flip side, as Masson provocatively suggests, is that "language sets [feeling] at a distance...the very act of saying 'I am sad' with all the connotations that the words have, pushes the feeling away a little, perhaps making it less searing and less personal." For all these reasons, he concludes that animals may well feel things more intensely than we do.

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When There Were No Yoga Mats...

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about feeling anxious. She shook her head and looked at me as if she was seeing through me. With the most loving voice she simply said, "You think too much."

By the time I was struggling in graduate school at USC, I found Sivananda Yoga Society. This was also an actual studio, and, I might add, the only Sivananda Yoga studio in LA in the mid-1980s. Located in West LA, off the beaten path in the industrial section, where there was only street parking and the studio was located on the building's second floor. Classes were \$5 each! This was a bit of a stretch for me, but I bit the bullet and forged ahead. The protocol of the practices was exactly like the other Yoga experiences I had had. We did the same series of breathwork, poses, resting and meditation I was used to. There were never any standing poses. And still... no Yoga mats.

Yoga Gains in Stature

The mid-1980s were a stressful time, but also a turning point. I was completing my work for graduate school and raising two step children while struggling to get to Sivananda's to find parking and practice. Although Yoga was the only place I found peace in the midst of life's stress, I realized it would be easier to just start teaching on my own. But this was a time when no expensive Yoga Teacher Training programs existed. So I started teaching Yoga from what I knew.

I approached the newly built YMCA in Santa Monica and offered to teach Yoga there. They didn't know what it was, so I had to explain it to them! In the end, I was the first person to ever teach Yoga there, and soon had several regulars who came to my classes.

During this time, I was happily teaching, practicing and finding a balance. I was invited to teach at the home of one of my students, and I even taught my first Yoga retreat in Death Valley at a small hot springs town. I also taught on campus at USC in between graduate seminars. And it was somewhere in this haze of my life responsibilities that I first learned about "YogaWorks."

I recall being in an office somewhere doing my work as a social worker when a colleague of mine asked, "Have you heard about this place called 'YogaWorks'? It just opened in Santa Monica." Apparently the owners were getting all these world famous teachers to come and give workshops. One such teacher was Donna Holleman, and she taught Iyengar Yoga. Without really understanding why, I just knew immediately I needed to be there, and contacted this brand new space. The woman who answered the phone was Maty Ezraty. This is how the conversation went:

Me: Hello, I heard you were going to have a teacher there and I am interested in coming.

Her: *(in a very nasal sounding voice)* Yes, Donna Holleman is coming.

Me: May I be a part of that workshop?

Her: What's your practice like?

Me: *(who has never done a standing pose)* I practice every day.

Her: Ok, well, why don't you come and do my Ashtanga class tomorrow, and I will let you know if we can get you into that workshop.

Me: Okay, what time and how much is it?

Her: 6am, and our regular classes are \$12.

Me: *(falling off my chair at the staggering price)* Okay, I'll be there.

For those who don't know, Maty Ezraty, along with her partner

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Chuck Miller, was one of the co-founders of YogaWorks — the business that would become a model for Yoga studios across the country. She also co-founded with Miller and Lisa Walford, who added Iyengar Yoga to Ezraty's Ashtanga practice, what is considered the first formal teacher-training program that would eventually spread through legions of students trained to go forth and instruct. For me, it was the best \$12 I'd ever spent.

That phone call unlocked decades of training and teaching and perfecting — becoming discouraged, inspired, and tossed around until I wasn't recognizable anymore. The world of standing poses opened to me through the vigor of Ashtanga Yoga, and the alignment and stability of Iyengar Yoga. And it was shortly after this initial encounter in the mid-1980s that the "green sticky mat" became available for professionals like myself. Yup, I was seriously in the loop among serious yogis, doing high profile, high cost Yoga on green sticky mats.

Those first stick mats proved to be made of the stuff that would unravel and disappear with too much love — like much of the Yoga industry itself as it has evolved. Many times we would all walk away from 6am Ashtanga (Mysore style) with Chuck Miller and our green sticky mats, with flecks of green Yoga mat in our hair. These mats would wear out with continued practice, flaking all over the place and disintegrating over time. There would be a big hole where you stood at the front.

Soon thereafter, everything Yoga-related got its seemingly fancy, innovative, super cool upgrade. The Yoga I knew was no longer about the meditation; it became about the poses, the celebrity athleticism, and the new "stuff" you could get to make your Yoga experience all that much more... [insert whatever need here...].

As we barrel forward with this phenomenon in the post pandemic world, the Yoga that was once upon a time cutting edge has changed

face, again, and perhaps forever. The Yoga mats are definitely better quality now, and any practicing yogi has one. But I can't help but wonder about the quality of the practice. Is Yoga still 'a Thing'? Or, are we starting to move back to the place where those who do it are no longer the norm?

Claudia Neuman, MSW, E-RYT 500, YACEP, Certified Para® Yoga Instructor, Certified Para® Yoga Nidra Instructor, has been a student and a teacher for over 4 decades. She currently offers group classes (virtual and in-person) and retreats in Yoga and Enlightened Rest 108 through Grace Yoga Studio in Silver Spring, MD (see "Workshops" at www.graceyops.com/), as well as through her own website: www.alignwithgrace.com.

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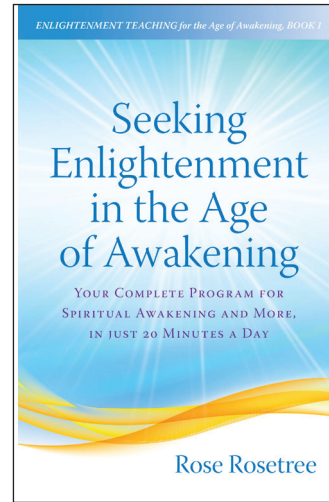
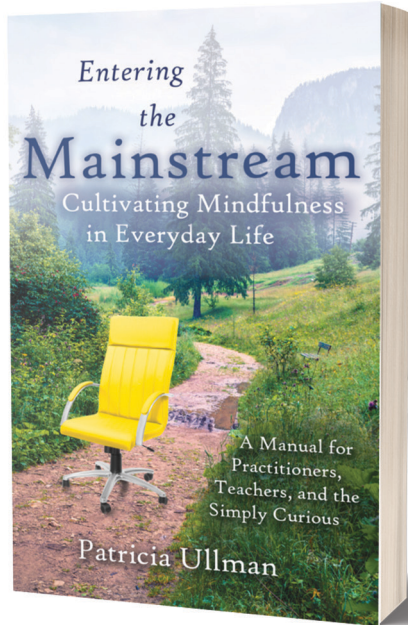
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Lauded by critics as “brave,” “authoritative,” and “highly readable,” *Entering the Mainstream* features stories and guided meditations that are as stimulating to the seasoned practitioner as they are accessible to the novice. It is equally valuable for mindfulness teachers, offering guidance and a range of tools to help lead individuals and groups in urban settings.

This new book and Patricia’s first book, *Eight Steps to an Authentic Life: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Times*, are available on amazon.com.



Seeking Enlightenment in the Age of Awakening: Your Complete Program for Spiritual Awakening and More, In Just Twenty Minutes a Day

ENLIGHTENMENT TEACHING for the Age of Awakening, BOOK 1

By Rose Rosetree, founder of Energy Spirituality
2022; Women’s Intuition Worldwide
370 pp (PB)
ISBN-13: |978-1935214519



Calling this path to Enlightenment “some hills and valleys”? That doesn’t do you justice. Yes, you, the climber with a lion’s heart, an angel’s crown, and sometimes awkward feet.

So starts the most powerful, personally transformative, and innovative book I’ve ever read on Spiritual Enlightenment, with a laser beam of heart, encoded in poetry that is woven throughout (and a few excerpts of which are included here).

This poetic dedication is addressed to “Smart Spiritual Seekers,” and it reveals some of Rosetree’s who-you-be through her art: an extremely talented, witty, real lover-of-God who, most importantly, actually knows how to teach. (And, as it turns out, actually has something — many somethings — to teach.) After decades of teaching private students and helping dozens of them to reach Enlightenment, Rosetree finally publishes the first practical guide to seeking Enlightenment now.

Rosetree’s background includes teaching Transcendental Meditation (TM) for decades. After leaving TM in the early nineties, she founded Energy Spirituality, eventually becoming an Enlightenment Teacher.

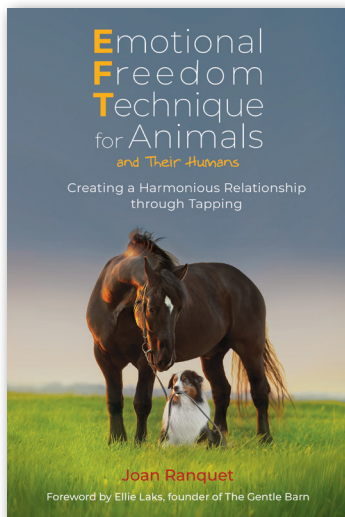
Rosetree demonstrates, through this book, that she knows not only how to help someone reach Enlightenment (she and many of her students have been living in Enlightenment for years), but that she knows how to transmit highly truthful knowledge to others — knowledge that transforms consciousness in the most beautiful direction.

So, Genuine spiritual seekers, take note. This book can get you where you want to go, given you do your part. Personally, no book on Spiritual Enlightenment has whisked me further, faster, or more joyfully down my own path.

Written in three parts (each of which could be its own standalone book), the spine of this paperback is the interconnected, interwoven, practical and practically glowing information set forth in Parts One and Two, then culminates in Part Three as a **Personal Program for Spiritual Enlightenment**.

Part One of *Seeking Enlightenment in the Age of Awakening* helps the Smart Spiritual Seeker to understand the landscape of his or her path — whatever that path may be — and where that path

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could lead. Is it a “Spiritual Side Trip”? Or a trail to the mountain-top?

*Inwardly more-than-ready but outwardly unprepared,
that’s how you set out on this path;
maybe giving no thought to all the hills and valleys you’d face.
No mere scenery for you - these would require your active climb,
your relentless climb.*

Rosetree is clear that the Program for Spiritual Enlightenment outlined in later pages is not a path itself but is instead a sort of guide to making your own personal path work for you rather than against you — given how Earth works now. It’s true (I’m convinced) there are some major, underlying rules to how Earth works now, which are very different from 15 years ago. This has to do with humanity’s passage from the **Age of Faith** into the **Age of Awakening** in 2012.

Rosetree posits that Living in the Age of Awakening presents incredible opportunities for growth, largely related to a new “superpower” we all possess — our Consciousness Positioning Superpower; but we’re having such growing pains. People are misusing the superpower, sometimes pursuing a life high on energy, rather than a life of growthful humanity. To me, this is a refreshing and extremely empowering perspective.

*Equally unknowable,
How could anyone foretell all the mysterious grace?
Because sometimes that path of yours will suddenly open up
more-more-more,
Like revealing a valley of wildflowers,
blooming and shining and rare,*

Wildflower-ablaze, Part Two of *Seeking Enlightenment* teaches us more about how to use our new Consciousness Positioning Superpower wisely, through real-life examples Rosetree calls **Snapshots of Consciousness**, and they are just about the most interesting thing I have ever read.

These “Snapshots” — specialized aura readings of real people — introduce a new and easy way to really, truly understand the difference between Astral Vibrational Frequencies and Divine Vibrational Frequencies. Being able to tell the difference between astral energies (like those a person might notice when having visions or daydreaming) and the Divine (the Vibrational Frequency of God) has long been understood to be foundational, essential, existential when it comes to Enlightenment, to true spiritual understanding. In a few short chapters, Rosetree’s Snapshots of Consciousness innovation makes this previously elusive concept humanly grabbable, easily learnable.

Snapshots of Consciousness are not only absolutely fascinating to read and helpful for understanding the confusing/confounding/delightful people around you, they help move you forward on your path to Enlightenment. They help you be a *Knower of Reality*. (Credit to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, via Rose Rosetree, for that powerful moniker.) Being a Knower of Reality is perhaps not such an easy feat in 2023, when - for instance - the Merriam-Webster Word of the Year is “gaslighting.”

There are four different Snapshots of Consciousness addressed:

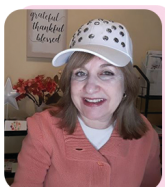
1. What is really happening with someone’s consciousness after drinking beer? (*Something, I always knew it was something!*)
2. What is really happening with someone’s consciousness after smoking pot? (*Something, I knew it was something!*)

continued on page 54



Are you a Midlife Woman (45 years+) who has been struggling with:

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- ✓ Feeling fatigued, stressed and down on yourself - Day after Day
- ✓ Feeling confused and overwhelmed with all the diets out there and not knowing, the RIGHT ONE FOR YOU
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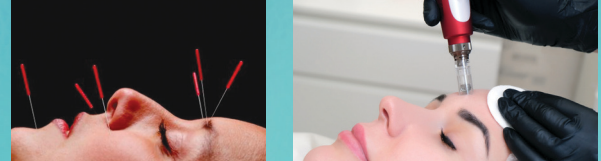
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Seeking Enlightenment...

...continued from page 53

3. What is really happening with someone's consciousness when collaborating with astral beings? (*Wow. So important for anyone considering spiritual or psychic services these days.*)

And, best of all:

4. What is really happening with someone's consciousness when they're living in Spiritual Enlightenment?

Until you find yourself breathing a delectable sweetness, Never-forgettable to your eternal soul.

Part Three is where that promise of delectable sweetness meets the truth of our ever-present human reality. It turns out it is surprisingly, blessedly easy to pursue Age of Awakening Enlightenment — once you know what to do, and what to avoid.

The **Personal Program for Spiritual Enlightenment** featured in Part Three emphasizes personal choice and individuality without dodging questions like, "But what do I DO? And when do I do it? And how do I know it's working?"

For instance, two extremely useful lists are included:

1. 10 EXCELLENT Choices for Your Technique Time
2. 10 TERRIBLE Choices for Your Technique Time

Inclusions might surprise you.

Personally, I found "Be Your Own Therapist" a very illuminating

inclusion. After reading about it, I realized that so many people I know are doing this, not realizing the consequences.

And meditation, long revered as the path to Enlightenment... well, which list do you guess that it lands on?

And how much time do you think is wise to spend each day, pursuing Enlightenment via dedicated Technique Time? Three hours? One? Would just twenty minutes — no more, no less — surprise you? Well, that's what Rosetree recommends.

*Sometimes you'll be given the tiniest moments,
and they will fill you up,
since any moment with strong God presence can change you forever
due to being so very familiar
more familiar than all you've encountered
since this lifetime began.*

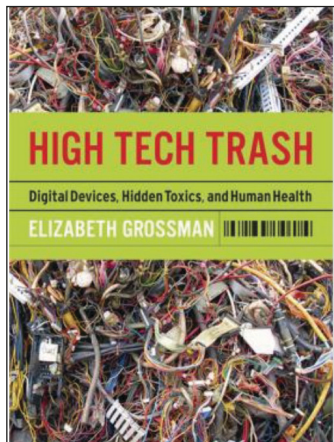
I think many other readers, like me, will find many nuggets of helpful wisdom in this book. Despite so many of the ideas being so very different from what I've read from other Enlightenment Teachers, much of it rang true. If I have one complaint, it's that I would have liked to read more about how the kind of Enlightenment that she describes in this book compares to the kind of Enlightenment taught by traditional gurus. Still, I feel I got more than I bargained for in the 300+ pages.

In the very first chapter, Rosetree writes about a common affliction of spiritual seekers: feeling **Homesick for Heaven**. By the time I finished this book, I realized that feeling of homesickness — one I thought would never leave me, until I was back There — was gone. Now, God is enough in my life... life is enough in my life... that here is where I want to be.

*Take heart, Smart Spiritual Seeker.
When you look back, you will finally be able to see it:
how every single step you've taken, joyful or not,
has left footprints of gold.*

Isabella Cates is an Energy Spirituality Practitioner, NGH certified hypnotist, and award-winning project coach. She has been living in Age of Awakening Enlightenment since 2014 thanks to the knowledge in this book.

REVIEW BY ALYCE ORTUZAR



High Tech Trash: Digital Devices, Hidden Toxics, and Human Health

By Elizabeth Grossman
2006; Island Press
334 pp. (HB); \$47.00
ISBN: 9781559635547

The rapidity of change and the speed with which new situations are created follow the impetus and heedless pace of man rather than the deliberate pace of nature.

— Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 1962

If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than with sorrow, we must achieve more than just the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as God really made it, not just as it looked as we got through with it.

— Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965

The production of high-tech electronics involves many toxic and hazardous materials and takes place on a global scale. The environmental impacts are now being felt by communities from the Arctic to Australia, with poorer countries and communities receiving a disproportionate share of the burden. If not addressed comprehensively with solutions that show we have learned from past mistakes, these problems risk undermining the ecological and economic sustainability of affected communities worldwide — whether in Silicon Valley, the American Rust Belt, or Southern China.

— Excerpted from *High Tech Trash*

These cautionary warnings are in Chapter One, “The Underside of High Tech,” of this engaging and informative book. Readers learn that a San Francisco Bay harbor seal, herring swimming off the coast of Holland, a polar bear settling down in a den on the Arctic ice, a whale cruising the depths of the North Sea, a Chinook salmon heading into the Columbia River “on her way home to spawn,” a bottlenose dolphin leaping above the waves in the Gulf of Mexico, a seagoing tern laying an egg, and a mother nursing her baby in Sweden and another mother nursing her infant in Oakland (California), all have tissue samples that contain synthetic chemicals used to make fire-resistant plastics. These are the plastics found in “computers, televisions, cell phones, and other electronics.” Among the wide range of people tested for these chemicals, “Americans have the highest levels of these compounds in their blood.”

Elizabeth Grossman is a terrific writer and researcher. She impresses upon her readers that “how we choose to manufacture our high-tech products and how we remove our high-tech trash will have worldwide effects lasting decades, if not longer.” Even though we can replace cell phones and computers when needed, she reminds us that “watersheds and humans cannot have their hard drives wiped and their operating systems reinstalled if something goes wrong.”

The Willamette River flows “very close” to Grossman’s front door. When she realized that high-tech manufacturing processes were compromising the quality of the river, she “set out to explore what other

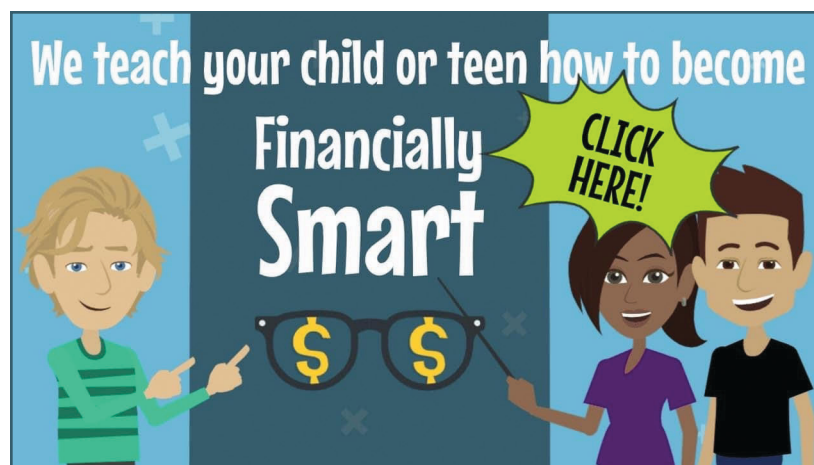
effects Information Age technology might be having on human health and on the environment.” She also wanted to know “what is being done to solve these problems and improve past practices to ensure a safer, cleaner, and healthier future.”

Grossman takes readers to Superfund sites, visits with people whose homes are contaminated from toxic vapors, sites with “tons of discarded and dismantled computer equipment,” and conversations with “dozens of scientists who are trying to discover how chemicals embedded in and used to manufacture computers have wound up in people and in the food we eat.” She highlights problems caused by the manufacture of semi-conductors, which requires huge amounts of water and entails the exposure to dark black smoke when removing and recycling the metals.

National Science Foundation scientists “have found that at least 1600 grams of fossil fuels and chemicals are needed to produce one two-gram microchip.” Some batteries and circuit boards contain cadmium, a “known carcinogen.” Mercury, a potent neurotoxin, is also used in electronics to supposedly make the products more energy efficient. The chapter titles draw attention to many of the problems we should all be concerned about: “Producing High Tech: The Environmental Impact,” “Flame Retardants: A Tale of Toxics,” and “Not In Our Backyard: Exporting Electronic Waste.”

This book is a good read with very important messages. In addition to instructions on how to recycle digital devices, her last chapter sets forth “A Land Ethic for the Digital Age.”

Alyce Ortuzar is a freelance medical and social science researcher, writer, and editor living in Montgomery County, Maryland. She runs the Well Mind Association of Greater Washington, a holistic medicine information clearinghouse that focuses on environmental and nutritional influences on our mental and physical well-being. For five years, she edited the U.S. Surgeon General’s smoking and health reports. She can be reached at (301) 774-6617 and by email at alyceortuzar@gmail.com.



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Summer 2023...

...continued from page 20

Neptune is the ruler of Pisces so it increases the harmony of Pisces. During this retrograde time period, which continues until December 6, 2023, you'll find you want to understand your creative nature. You'll also try to understand what drives your spiritual desire to help others.

Shift of the Moon's Nodal Axis

Pluto retrograde isn't the only astrological energy point that changes signs during this summer quarter. On July 17th, the Moon's Nodal Axis changes signs. This means the Moon's North Node moves into the sign of Aries while the Moon's South Node moves into the sign of Libra. You find that balancing your personal needs with your relationship needs is more important than ever before. This shifting of signs with the Moon's Nodal Axis occurs about every 1.5 years with the Nodes returning back to the same sign every 19 years. So, the Moon's Nodes will remain in Aries and Libra until January 11, 2025.

Whether you analyze the Moon's Nodal Axis from a mundane or personal perspective, there is a strong emotional component in its interpretation. In mundane astrology, the Moon's North Node represents where the population of a country wants to go and the type of leader the country wants (but not necessarily needs). The South Node indicates the concerns of the country and also how the leader will manipulate the public, or at least attempt to manipulate the public.

When the Moon's North Node is in Aries, the public wants a leader who takes charge. They aren't looking for a peacemaker as much as a warrior. They want a leader who exudes confidence and isn't constrained by convention. In astrology the ram is the symbolic representation of Aries. With this being the case, many people expect their leader to just ram into situations. Act first, think later. But what the Moon's North Node in Aries also indicates is the public is willing to stand up for its belief systems. If they feel others are standing in their

way, they will take charge. They want more say in their governance.

The Moon's South Node is in Libra indicating that if a leader tries to manipulate the public, the messaging will be simple: "Us against them," or, "Unite or be divided." Often when the Moon's South Node is in Libra it indicates people have a fear of being alone. They want to be part of a group and are willing to find other like-minded individuals to work together as a coalition. There's a possibility the public may find more common ground over the next year-and-a-half than it has over the past 19 years.

In personal astrology, the Moon's North Node represents what you want in life and some of the best ways to overcome obstacles in order to create a foundation that leads to your success. The Moon's South Node represents mistakes you've made that need to be forgiven or released so you can move on.

With the Moon's North Node in Aries, your lesson is you need to love yourself if you want to understand how to love others. Supporting people in your life is important; but, the lesson from the Moon's South Node in Libra is you don't need to lose who you are when you are involved with others. Instead, create healthy relationships that celebrate each other's individuality.

Venus in Retrograde

There's a spiritual synergy with Venus in Leo turning retrograde on July 22nd. Venus rules both self-worth and finances. It also indicates just how important love and relationships are in your life. Meanwhile, Leo represents romance as well as risk-taking. If you think about it, you do take risks when you get romantically involved with an individual.

When Venus is retrograde it's so important to understand what you value in life. You review your relationships determining whether or not those individuals are important. You need to know they support you on an emotional basis.

Usually when Venus is in Leo, you find you want to take risks, to have adventures. Sometimes you act without thinking. But, when Venus is retrograde in Leo, you're more cautious. You don't want others to take advantage of you.

Financially, you need to be careful when Venus is retrograde, especially when you sign contracts. There are always hidden costs involved. Plus, you tend to spend impulsively. You purchase something because it appeals to your sense of glamour rather than because you need it. When Venus is retrograde it's always a good idea to review your finances and budget. If necessary, conduct a financial audit, perhaps even create a new budget. This period of personal and financial review will go on until September 3, 2023, when Venus turns direct.

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Chiron in Retrograde

Chiron turns retrograde on July 23rd, one day after Venus turns retrograde. Chiron deals with self-inflicted wounds that tend to occur when you are going through fear or pushing yourself too hard. Yet, there is a blessing when Chiron is retrograde, as it will be until December 26, 2023. During this time period you can think back on those areas of your life where you felt pain. You may even be holding on to some anger that can best be released by forgiving either the situation or person who sparked the anger. Or, maybe you can best let go of the pain by forgiving yourself. If the injury is of a physical nature, this is a good time to start a new health regime or find a new health care individual.

Mercury in Retrograde

On August 23rd, Mercury in Virgo turns retrograde and remains so until September 14, 2023. Usually when Mercury is in the sign of Virgo, you want to pay attention to details; but sometimes you don't feel like concentrating on the details at all. Instead you let things slip. Sometimes things that were missing are suddenly found. Basically, try to remain as vigilant as possible. Don't take anything for granted.

Uranus in Retrograde

Uranus is the final planet that goes retrograde during this summer quarter. This occurs on August 28, 2023, and lasts until January 27, 2024. Because Uranus moves so slowly and isn't changing signs at this time, you won't see much impact on a mundane or global level. The shift will also be very subtle in your life.

When Uranus is direct, it represents your desire to rush out into the world and experience what life has to offer. You're willing to take risks. You also find you question authority, not willing to take things at face value. But, when Uranus is retrograde, you're tired of rushing out into life and want to just let things be. You want to be left alone, and don't want anyone telling you what to do. Rather, you just want to relax.

Relaxing is a good way to step back and reflect on your life. As you move through these summer months, take advantage of all these retrograde planets and asteroid. Take time to understand the changing of signs for the Moon's Nodal Axis. The world is changing rapidly and it's too easy getting caught up in the rapids of uncertainty and change. Use this opportunity to just slow down...breathe...and reflect on your life.

© 2023 Misty Kuceris | Misty Kuceris is a Certified Astrological Professional, a Reiki Master, and Co-founder of the NOVA Astrology Group. She has contributed to Pathways for over 30 years. See her website for monthly astrological reflections: www.EnhanceOneself.com. Contact her at: misty@EnhanceOneself.com.

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THINK HEALTH... THINK PREVENTION, YOUR BODY WILL THANK YOU !

Sharing the Stoke...

...continued from page 9

nity of older guys in skateboarding. If you're over 30, that's considered old! Actually, more than old because it used to be, back in the '90s, if you were 20, you were almost on the way out, because the career used to be 16 to 18. Fortunately, nowadays, it's different.

I still do bowl skating, but around 2017 I got into downhill skating, which is just like it sounds. You are riding a longboard down a steep hill at high speeds while maintaining control of your board. That was super awesome, and was a perfect lead-in to downhill slalom skating, where you're now adding in the element of weaving through cones at different distances while maintaining high speed and control.

I started getting into slalom in 2020, pretty much right before the pandemic hit, which really helped me out because that's when things were super uncertain in the whole quarantine. You go around the cones, and then you try to go fast if you are racing. If not, then it's just precision, going left, going right, left, right... it's very hypnotic, free flowing, but still having these goals. And you really get into this Zen state of, "Let me do this." And so for me, it's super addictive, because it's like a shortcut into getting into that meditative zone.

During this time a lot of people actually picked up skateboarding, because it's something you could do solo, have your social distance, and be able to leave the house and do something active. I got into slalom because of my friend, Scott Hostert (on Instagram @imrealgone), who I met through the OG Jam. This guy is way older than me — I think he just turned 60, so at the time he was late fifties. He was competing in slalom, here and in Europe, coming back with medals, and he introduced me to it at the perfect time. I remember thinking, "This is so cool, and he's way older, and I've been just trying to figure out how can I just stick with this, and adapt, and do different types of skateboarding," which is pretty amazing now that I teach skateboarding. Scott continues to inspire me, since he plays in a rock band, skates all the time, and still even competes. And I'm still adapting, and currently really focused on long distance skating.

So teaching skateboarding is a relatively new undertaking for you, but it seems like you've been training for the role naturally by learning so many different styles. How did you first make the leap into teaching?



Bowl skating in SoCal (Photo: Chris Hooten)

I've worked with kids since high school. I used to work at Bar-T, which is an afterschool kids club, and I also worked with Kids After Hours, so I have the patience and I find it very rewarding to work with little kids, even though it is tough. Living in SoCal I kind of fell into it working at skateparks, where they would have retail skate shops and skate camps, and I was forced to do it as part of the job. But the whole teaching skating wasn't even my idea. It was actually my girlfriend Jenna's idea.

We met in 2020, right before the pandemic, and I taught her how to skateboard. She would say, "Oh, you're the best teacher ever," because I was very patient and attentive. When the quarantine happened and everything shut down, I was missing that social aspect of working in the shop, meeting people, and being face-to-face. Jenna suggested we move back to Maryland, since it's my home state and I have family here, and I could reconnect with my old scene, and could start coaching or instructing skateboarders on my own. That's what we did, and in 2021 I started the School of Shred, teaching in open parking lots for beginners and moving into public skateparks if they wanted to learn how to ride ramps.

Now I feel like teaching is a perfect match, because I have a lot of experience with skating and different disciplines. I've been there and done that. I've tapped into the street scene, to the bowl skating scene, to the downhill scene, to slalom, and now long distance. I've delved into each little pocket, have met and made so many friends, and like to keep it diverse. Skateboarding nowadays is also more inclusive, which is amazing, especially for a skateboard teacher that's just trying to educate a skater in all facets of what there is to offer.

It's great how you've adapted personally over time, and to hear the skateboarding scene continues to evolve and become more inclusive. Who do you teach?

It might sound corny, but my little saying is, "If you can walk, you can roll." It's a load to understand when you propose teaching skate-



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boarding because the first thing that comes to a lot of people's minds would be tricks, and these dangerous maneuvers, and other misconceptions like that. And it's not all about the tricks. I teach anyone who wants to learn.

I get the question "Oh, am I too old?" or, "Are they too young?", because I've had parents with toddlers wanting to sign up as young as three years old. And I just tell them if they have a desire to learn, they could just mimic my movements. And I even teach people older than me that don't want to do tricks. They just want to go from A to B, and they want to feel the wind in their face, their hair blowing, and feel the control it brings. Because once you get to the point where you can go down a mellow hill and not die, that does bring you a lot of self-fulfillment.

Skateboarding can also bring you a sense of power. Once you learn how to use the board, how to turn, etc., it's very empowering and a natural high — an *individual* natural high. No one is passing you the ball, no one is relying on you to win, except yourself. You think, "Wow, I alone managed to control this thing." There's a power that comes — a self-powered gratification instead of trying to impress someone on Instagram.

And it's almost like meditation, where you finish and it's like, "Wow, I feel better. I was stressed out earlier, and now I don't even know what I was stressed out about because I got into this Zen, 'don't die' place, where all that matters is focusing on what I need to do, looking ahead, and I did it." And then you want to do it again, and again, and start looking forward to it. Learning to skateboard is ongoing and can be really fulfilling.

The pursuit of personal fulfillment is always a great reason to learn something new, and you are passionate about skateboarding being that reason. How would you describe your teaching philosophy?

A lot of people are turned away from skating because they think it's so dangerous, and it's rebellious or extreme. For me, it's all about what you want to do with it. So I always check in with my students first and ask, "What is your goal? What is your vision of where you want to be at the end of these lessons? Or after a year? Do you want to be at the skatepark, cruising on the ramps? Do you want to fly off ramps or drop into a vert ramp? Do you want to go down a big hill? Do you want to be healthy? What exactly do you want to do?" I have the experience to teach pretty much all disciplines of skating. Once I have an understanding of their vision, their goals, then I can guide them, support them on their path, and help them succeed.

Next, my philosophy for what I teach is safety. The big catchy slogan is skateboarding is all about fun. And I do agree with that to a certain degree. But if you don't know what you're doing, meaning you're not prepared, it can become very not fun super quick. It's very common to hear, "I used to skate," and it comes from a lack of preparation.

Your first day of skating does not happen at the skatepark. That's not where you learn. You don't learn with ramps. You learn on flat ground. You learn maybe not even on pavement. You put the board on a rug or on the grass, somewhere where the wheels don't roll. Before fun is safety, so that you're able to have fun.

And I go back to the question of wanting to be healthy. It seems counterintuitive if someone thinks skateboarding is dangerous, "What do you mean healthy when you're telling me to do something dangerous?" But once you know all the foundational things of how to stay safe, and be resilient, and have this forward-looking vision and preparing, then it can give you so much health, physically, mentally, and then ultimately tapping into the spiritual side, and the natural high, even if you don't initially grasp what's going on.

It sounds like there are many mind-body-spirit parallels between skateboarding and mindfulness practices.

Many people only feel really alive by being close to death. Skateboarding isn't necessarily putting you close to death, but you have to be present, focused, and it wakes you up in a way, much like Yoga. And this is something that's super humbling, especially for example, when skating in the elements. I know how to skate, but once you have wet pavement, and leaves, and little twigs, and loose gravel, then all of a

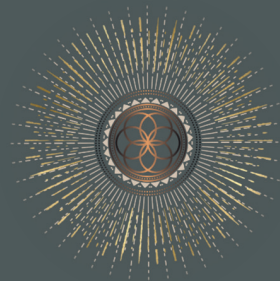
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Shreddie at Lansdowne, "The Downer," located in Baltimore, MD, and one of the oldest skateparks, built in 1978. Photo by Geoff Graham, courtesy of Skate School (NM).

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Sharing the Stoke...

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sudden there are things bigger than me. They're smaller than me, but bigger than me, because they're underneath my wheels, making me slip out, and that's when I'm like, "Oh my God, okay. I have to ground myself, and *literally* ground myself, get lower to the ground, and just be one with where I'm trying to go." I can't be looking back too much, more so just looking at what's immediately in front of me. It kind of gets away from being in the now, but it is about being connected both to yourself and to what's around you. It's pretty awesome. It makes me feel alive.

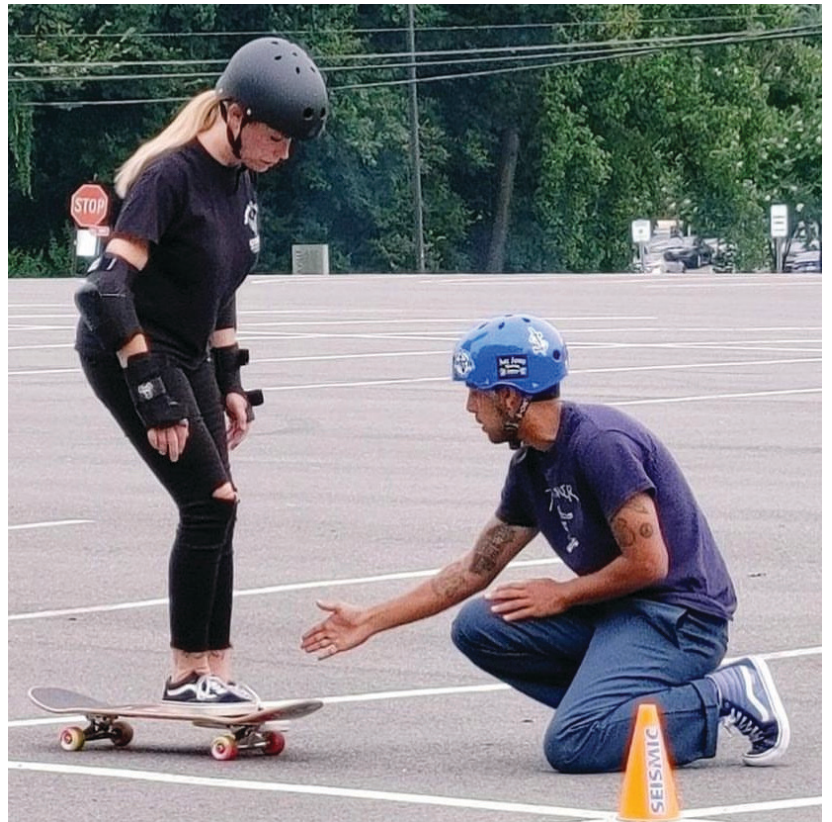
I was listening to Wayne Dyer, and once he talked about inspiration and a basic definition of being "in spirit". If you're inspired, that means you're "in spirit". And that's what skateboarding does to me. So in a sense, it is very spiritual. I looked up the definition of what spirituality means — because before religion comes just being — and it comes from Latin meaning "breath of life". Inspiration also comes from Latin, "to breathe into". I think it all relates to skating, because if I'm not inspired, then I feel lost.

It also forces you to be okay with failure. If you fall, you have to get back up, literally, before you can go. You have to earn it. There are no shortcuts. It takes dedication and consistency, first to get comfortable, then to get and stay good. It's not like riding a bike. It's a different dynamic, and way more challenging, but super rewarding when you master it.

Dedication and consistency are definitely key when it comes to any kind of practice, including a spiritual practice.

When I lived in California, every Sunday morning we would do this eight-mile trek on a bike path, and we would call it "church". That was our church, our religion. I'm the kind of person that needs a routine, because if I just go with the flow, then I could end up off. When there's no end goal, that's when you can get off track and you don't know what you're doing.

Long distance skating is my next level challenge, because it involves creating a distance goal, for me 250 miles per month, and then breaking it down into daily goals, roughly 10 miles of skateboarding a day I work into my schedule. Skateboarding brings discipline and also that routine, which is really nice.



Before fun is safety, so you have fun. Teaching starts on flat ground.

Clearly your involvement with skateboarding, and now teaching, has in fact taught you much and added richness to your life. Any parting thoughts, or lessons you've learned that you would want to share with our readers?

If you want to live a long life, you have to have a community, that social interaction. Being involved with skateboarding makes me have something bigger than myself. It's not just the skateboarding, it's the community, it's the places I can go, the things I can do. And that's what gives me the motivation to proceed, and to teach.

Getting back to the purity and fun of skateboarding, and how it can promote a healthier lifestyle, and also promote self-reliance, being at peace with oneself, getting into a flow state with yourself, is all that matters at the end of the day. It's just me and the skateboard, becom-



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ing self actualized, and teaching this to others. When you're young, it's very easy to get influenced by what is "cool" so I'm happy to represent skateboarding in a positive way that's healthy and outgoing. I wish I had had a skateboard guide growing up, so I would like to be a guide for other people, to get them on this path, foster a spirit of creativity and growth, from the beginning.

Everything in my life revolves around skating. Skateboarding gave me more than something to do in my free time — it gave me a sense of identity and also a voice. It gives me power, where I'm controlling my life because I have this vision of what I want to do, and I'm not just letting life happen to me. I found this thing that gives me inspiration, my kind of spirituality, my tribe, my everything.

It's hard to feel fulfilled all the time, but having something to look forward to puts everything into perspective. For me, I am "skating for life," meaning for as long as I can and because I've found something I'm passionate about and inspires me. Passion leads to a purpose, and in turn makes you become more prepared. I feel this is very common with a lot of people who are super into skating, or into whatever passion they find. They're just grateful for it and the things that come with it. So find something you are passionate about. It motivates you to keep going, and to stay humble, and then try to share that stoke.


Learn more about Skateboarding Instruction and Coaching at the School of Shred, www.ShreddieMercury.com. See Shreddie's skateboarding and teaching videos on Instagram @shreddie_mercury_; on YouTube @ShreddieMercury; and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Shreddiemercury04. All photos courtesy of Shreddie Mercury.

To learn more about Long Distance (Push) Skating, or LDP, check out the Skate International Distance and Supercross Association, <https://theidsa.org/>.

Michelle Alonso is the Editor of Pathways Magazine, and a freelance writer, editor and events producer. A proud Washingtonian, she was born in DC, and grew up in the DMV, where she still works and lives with her family. She has embarrassing photos of her teenage self attempting to skateboard, but thankfully, this was before digital cameras, cell phones, and social media.



In the slalom zone (Photo: Susan Snopek)



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Summer Solstice Medicine

BY JAZMINE JENNÉ WILLIAMS

We have moved into the spirit of summer, and so we have moved into the medicine of the heart. Summer Solstice begins June 21st in the northern hemisphere and December 22nd in the Southern hemisphere. During this time, the sun reaches its highest point as the day expands and the night contracts. Summer Solstice embodies the yang force while housing the element of fire. It moves us from the subtle embrace of springs unraveling and illuminates the desires of our hearts.

Summer is a time to lean into that which nourishes your spirit and body while also being rooted in the earth's energetic signature. It is a time to allow yourself to open and intertwine with the forces of nature as they ease you back into alignment. Immersing myself in natural elements often gives space for this to occur. For example, hiking a trail in the woods, swimming in the ocean, or lighting a fire pit in your backyard. Healing through nature is always very subtle and does not require grand gestures to receive it.

During hibernation season (and generally), we spend so much time in our heads. With the magic of summer, it reminds us of the power and force within the body. It invites us to awaken the dormant passions and water them into manifestation. Now is the time to put intentional action toward those desires so as to create a new timeline for your life. You collected concepts and ideas in the fall, marinated on those ideas in the winter, planted hopeful seeds in spring, and now bring forth movement to actualize those concepts in the summer.

Let us not forget summer is also a season for celebration. Take a moment to acknowledge how far you have come and send love to all you are in this moment. Celebrate the love in your life and the friendships surrounding you. Have a potluck in the park with those who make you laugh, your child, or your pet. What matters is not how you celebrate but that you pause and enjoy life, even if it is just for a moment.



Lastly, remember to honor yourself. Honoring yourself is the highest form of self-love. Doing this can look as simple as being kind to yourself, adorning yourself, or even reading love poems aloud. The seasons reflect our internal equilibriums. Maintaining a sense of balance empowers us to be on the same frequency as the earth itself. This ecosystem thrives in a balanced state.

Inhale. Exhale.

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Summer Solstice Medicine

Breathwork: Breathwork ignites the body and stimulates the spirit. It moves you into a space of primal human potential, which is where the soul speaks clearest. Breathwork involves a series of breathing exercises. These exercises move you from shallow chest breathing to deeper breaths within the diaphragm.

Movement: Find a home in moving your vessel. Allow your body to sweat and detoxify, clearing space for new medicine. Try Hatha Yoga for a more vigorous Yoga flow, or biking during the summer evenings.

Herbal Sun Tea: Herb medicine, such as rose hips, holy basil, and hibiscus are perfect herbs to drink during the season. They help with opening the heart and regulating blood pressure within the body. Let your herbs sit on a window sill, or outside while steeping. This allows the herbs to infuse with the sun while bringing in the solstice energy.

Journal Prompts for Summer Solstice: When responding to these prompts, leave your heart space open to receive whatever comes up. Invite any self-judgments and criticism to take a back seat during this time of reflection.

- What winter challenges may have caused my heart to close?
- What has my heart called in during the winter months? How can I answer this call?
- In what way can I bring energy back into my body?
- How will I adorn myself during this season? Examples may include thrifted for a new outfit, massaging your skin with almond oil and yang-lang for a nightly routine, or cooking a nutritious meal with produce that is in season.

Summer is here, and this is the season to radiate your brightest.

Jazmine Jenné Williams is an Illustrator, Herbalist, Writer, and Mother based in Washington, D.C. She received her bachelor's degree in Complementary and Alternative Health from her studies at San Diego State University and Ashford University in San Diego, California. She writes and creates art pieces that focus on the natural world around us and the complexities of our internal realm. You can find more of her written medicines on Substack at: <https://jazminejenne.substack.com/>. Find her artwork currently on Instagram @Nubianwatersart. Photo by Jazmine.

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As the Script Unfolds

BY SCOTT THOMAS OUTLAR

One hundred days into a juicing habit
with the intention of detoxifying
chemicals from the food, air, and water
out of my system
while purifying the blood
and alkalinizing at a cellular level

but it hasn't been my body alone
that I've sought to cleanse
while going through this process

My main motivation, rather, to a more subtle degree
has been to bring about a state of mindfulness
to combat the poison of hysteria
sweeping across a culture
that's become consumed by propaganda and fear
from the trauma-based mind control
unleashed on the globe as a plague

To steady my heart and soul
with present moment awareness
and steel my spine
for what is still to come

because anyone who's been paying attention
to the New World Order agenda
knows we're still in the early phases
of what has been planned for decades

Apples, pears, lemons, ginger,
cucumbers, celery, beets, carrots,
cilantro, and parsley
may not be a one-stop shop
in halting the onslaught
of tyranny that's on the rise

but at least it can help cultivate a healthy environment
that puts me in a better position
to live in alignment with courage and love
so peace can be reflected from within
as this war plays out in the streets

Scott Thomas Outlar is originally from Atlanta, Georgia. He now lives and writes in Frederick, Maryland. His work has been nominated multiple times for both the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He guest-edited the Hope Anthology of Poetry from Culture-Cult Press as well as the 2019-2023 Western Voices editions of Setu Mag. He is the author of seven books, including Songs of a Dissident (2015), Abstract Visions of Light (2018), Of Sand and Sugar (2019), and Evermore (2021 - written with co-author Mihaela Melnic). He has been a weekly contributor at Dissident Voice for the past eight and a half years. More about Outlar's work can be found at ww.17Numa.com.

Wheel of the Year...

...continued from page 18

connects us to those we love, nature, ourselves, and to the primal life force energy existing in all living things. Reveling in the beauty of nature and enjoying it through all our senses is a wonderful way to experience more joy and have fun. Nature knows exactly how to make work playful.

Here are some grounded ways to observe the Wheel of the Year this summer:

- Whatever you're doing in each moment, can you metaphorically apply that activity to your spiritual intentions? (There were examples above such as weeding and pruning.) What if every time you accomplished a mundane task, you were also creating spiritual wellbeing?
- Take time to assess how your intentions are progressing. What would make them better? Do you need to change your plan a bit or a lot? What ongoing activities are bringing your intention to fruition? Are more or different ones needed?
- Embrace paradox and find the sweet spot in the middle of two worlds. For example: how can you make work more like play? Seems a great way to work smarter, not harder.
- Focus on your five senses. Close your eyes and notice what you hear, smell, taste, feel. Does Summer have its own "feel"?
- Watch the sun rise and set.
- Spend time outside allowing the sun to shine directly on your belly and back to charge your "solar (plexus) battery." (Be mindful of overexposure – know your limits.)
- Sit or lie on the earth. Get your hands dirty.
- Engage in physical labor such as gardening or yard work, then celebrate your toil with dear ones through dancing, music, sharing a meal together.
- Eat fresh, local summer fruits and veggies.
- Take time to consider all the living beings that made it possible for you to eat. The plants, animals (if you eat them), insects, humans... this Collective Toil feeds you every day.
- Look up at the night sky and gaze at the moon and stars.
- Go for a hike, swim in a natural body of water – notice how it feels in your body.
- Listen to birdsong, watch bees do their dance as they collect pollen. What are nature's creatures doing?
- Light a ceremonial bonfire in honor of the Sun on Solstice (June 21.)

All these principles can be applied at any time during the year. The Wheel of the Year is a cycle that rules the natural world. Knowing where you and your projects are within the cycle informs how and when to act for the highest and best outcomes. When we live in accordance with nature's cycles, we are closer to our own true essence, the world around us makes more intuitive sense, and life takes on deeper meaning.

Lisa Adams is a Spiritual Teacher, Wise Woman, Ritual Artist, and Transformation Mentor. She excels at guiding people through transitional periods of life with compassion and wisdom. You can find her sitting by a bonfire, gazing up at the stars with loved ones, or drumming to her ancestors. www.therenegademystic.com

Breaking Down Digestion...

...continued from page 30

1. Eat anti-inflammatory herbs and spices to reduce inflammation that damages the intestinal lining, or mucosa. Foods include garlic, ginger, turmeric and those rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, avocados, and nuts and seeds.
2. Consume bone broth, a type of protein rich in collagen.
3. Supplement with L-glutamine, a type of amino acid that repairs and maintains the intestinal mucosa.
4. Increase your consumption of probiotics, which introduce healthy bacteria in the digestive tract, and prebiotics, which are food sources for the bacteria to help them thrive and support the gut ecosystem.
5. Work to manage your stress! Chronic stress can disrupt the brain-gut connection that has shown to lead to inflammation in the digestive tract. Practice stress-reducing activities, such as Yoga, meditation and breathwork.

The body's digestive system is multilayered, so it should come as no surprise that treatments for any number of the symptoms that can arise may not be straightforward or discernable right away. In my clinic, for example, we use a Bioscan to analyze meridians and organs to determine the source of digestive dysfunction (stomach, small intestine, colon, pancreas, or gallbladder), and then create both short- and long-term treatment plans for a client's specific issue(s); often such a plan will include acupuncture. It's important to treat the whole person – body-mind-spirit.

A natural medicine practitioner can also run a comprehensive GI test, evaluate for SIBO (small intestinal bacterial overgrowth), and more, all to develop a complete picture. But understanding how the system works, knowing all the components involved, and exploring underlying causes goes a long way both to tackling GI issues when they occur, or promoting good habits from the start so misunderstanding and misdiagnosis are kept to a minimum.

Helena Amos, M.Ac., L.Ac., is a licensed acupuncturist, European physician and Functional Medicine practitioner with 30+ years of clinical experience combining modern Functional Medicine with the ancient wisdom of Traditional Oriental Medicine. She is Founder/Owner of the Acupuncture and Natural Medicine Clinic in Rockville, MD, and is available for free 20-minute in-office and telehealth consultations. Visit rockvilleacupuncturemd.com for appointments and to see her list of services offered and conditions treated.

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SOUL'S RAINBOW

BY BRIANNA PIPPENS

About *Soul's Rainbow*...

Repetition can be good for calming the mind. Through my artwork, I use repetition to emphasize emotions, thoughts and ideas. I work in different mediums, and love the journey of experimentation, but I believe that all of my pieces are all connected in their mission to exude a sense of belonging and affirmation. Langston Hughes said "Perhaps the mission of an artist is to interpret beauty to people—the beauty within themselves." That quote informs a lot of what I am trying to achieve in my work. I often say that my work is like a love letter to black people, more specially black women. My work is also very inspired by music and nostalgia. With that in mind, I have room to be as expansive and multifaceted in each drawing, painting and everything in between, that I create.

Brianna Pippens is a Visual and Performing Artist based in Silver Spring, MD. Artistically known as "Banana Peppers", she creates illustrations, paintings, pencil drawings, animations, and other creative works that focus on race, nostalgia, and the nuances of black identity and experiences. Self expression and self exploration are at the heart of why she creates and experiments with everything from thought provoking portraits to abstract works riddled with repetition.

Brianna is a self-taught visual artist that began sharing her artwork publicly in 2010. From a young age Brianna's creative expression was deeply rooted in her love for her heritage and her observations spending time in spaces where Black art and experiences were highlighted and celebrated, thanks to her parents.

Brianna has displayed her art at pop-up events and in local galleries in the DMV area as well as providing visuals for many small and large organizations. Her work has made its way into the homes of many and she is thrilled that as she continues to grow artistically she is able to challenge herself and reach people in new ways. She creates from the heart and aims to share artwork that impacts others positively and intentionally.

Website: www.bananapeppersart.com

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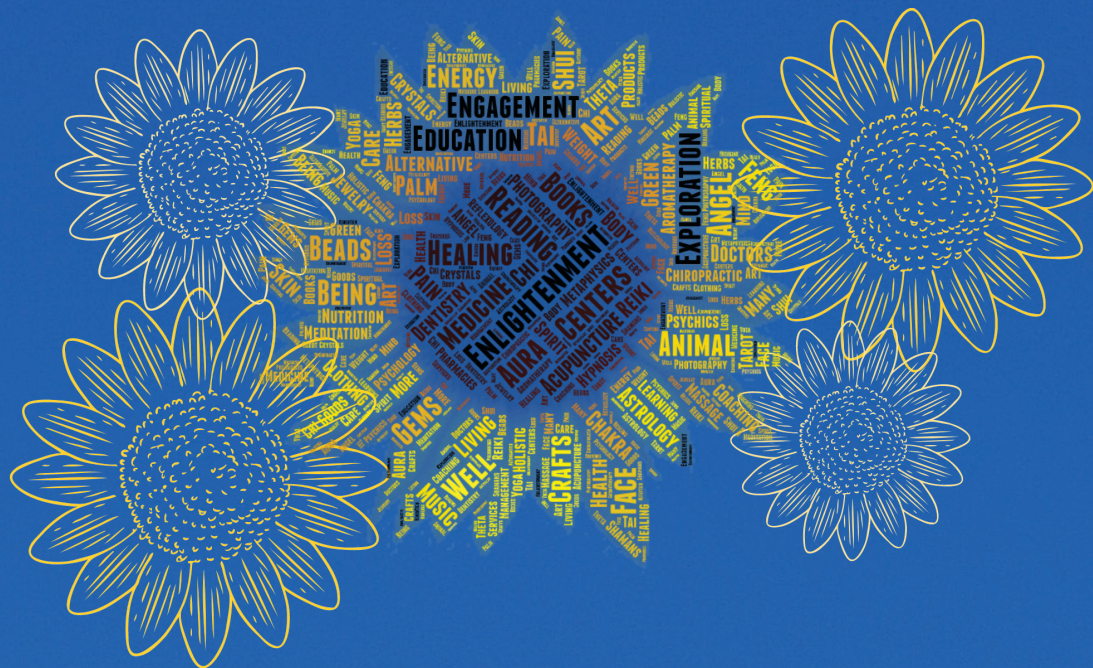
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