



by Philippe Dupuy

## A David and Goliath battle

What a great and astonishing victory for the Greens in Ballina and more particularly in Lismore. Although Adam Guise is not across the line yet, reducing Thomas George's majority to a mere handful is a victory in itself. This is going to go down in the history of NSW politics as the battle between David and Goliath.

Adam and his team are beyond par indeed. However there is no doubt that it is the outstanding effort of the hundreds of individual activists who put aside their lives to get in on the act that this victory really belongs to. And it will be this kind of effort throughout this state that will finally bring representative and responsible government. We have shown that it can be done and, whether or not people believe that we can change the system, this election has proved that it can be done.

But what does this all mean to the Environment Centres? Firstly we can now genuinely approach the Greens and work with them to bring change



to environmental laws. We will have a voice in parliament to pressure the government into accepting that the environment must come first, and that the triple bottom line which gives equal value to the environment, social issues and industry (the latter being always a little more equal than others) is archaic and outdated thinking. Our scarce water resources must be protected from coal mining, CSG or fluoride. Our threatened species must be protected. Environmental vandalism such as the Mt Nardi fires and the return of cable clearing must be stopped.

Locally the Greens could work to support our campaigns of education and engagement for the general public. They could help facilitate better interaction between council, NGOs and activist groups and raise money to create and support social and environmental projects. This region has the expertise to create solar and other forms of renewable energy power units, free of government interference. Our community is organised enough and the Greens can help to back small scale trading, farming, building and other commercial activities, thus keeping the economy and money local. Opportunities are endless if we don't allow ourselves to stay trapped in an ever more irrational and psychotic economic system.

Adam may also be our voice in parliament raising issues of concern for us, presenting our petitions and supporting our submissions. He will be the voice of honesty and reason, things so lacking in today's world.

We must remember though, that this is no time to be resting on our laurels. We have stirred up and challenged the status quo and they will do everything they can to undermine the work that we have done. Adam Guise in his new job as our State representative will face an uphill battle to be heard. We must give him our full support and as a community stay solid with him. The Environment Centres can be a place for him to find support, and we will work closely with him in a spirit of camaraderie and affability.

In this election, many voters heard us and courageously chose Adam and The Greens and we thank them for that. For those who didn't follow that path, we want to say that you too are included. We must put an end to the adversarial system in existence with winners and losers. We all care about our environment, it is just that we have different approaches and this will be solved when we start to listen and hear each other.

For now the three Environment Centres in Nimbin, Lismore and Casino are powering away and doing their best to keep the public informed and engaged. Casino will soon be working closely with Rainbow Health Foods to sell their products for a small profit. We will use the money to help pay the rent and other costs. This will also give us an opportunity to become more engaged with the Casino crowd. Unfortunately Casino recently experienced some building problems and has had to close for safety reasons, but we will be back soon.

# The lang

Language is all around us. Curled in our mother's womb, it's the first thing that defines our world – and continues to do so, whether we speak English, sign, or Yoruba. Language also shapes our societies and cultures, our relationships with one another, and with the other 8.7 million species on the planet.

Consider the term "permaculture" – a new word coined by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970s to describe a form of perennial agriculture that sought to achieve sustainable farms, towns and cities, in harmony with nature. From "permanent" agriculture, it sought to capture the notion of true sustainability in the sense that unsustainable societies collapse and perish. (They are thus impermanent.) This was not an agricultural – or social – model that was static or unbending – rather one of extreme resilience in its flexibility and diversity.

Over the intervening years since the term's inception, people have different associations with permaculture. Today every backpacker doing the continental circuit is "passionate" about permaculture, so long as it provides them with an excellent 'Opportunity For Selfie With Gardens in Background'. Others see it as the only solution to all planetary ills. Still others might associate the term with the spread of weeds, or endless kale soup.

It's a battle against terminology fatigue, really. Some of the main tenets of permaculture have been adopted and reinvigorated via "regenerative agriculture", "wholistic environmental management" and "biotecture".

Its core theme, sustainability, has had a really rough ride. In the mid-1990s, sustainability emerged out of the environmental and scientific lexicon to find its place – at long last – in the centre of government and business models.

In biology, sustainability is defined as "the way biological systems remain diverse and productive." Herman Daly's definition of sustainability is threefold: "the rate of harvest should not exceed the rate of regeneration; the rate of waste regeneration should not exceed the assimilative capacity of the environment, and the depletion of renewable resources should



Permaculture Principles  
with Anastasia Guise

# Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

Just two days out from the election the NSW Government revealed its intentions to wind back environmental protection in NSW by adopting all 43 recommendations contained in the final report on the Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review.

While not unexpected, it was a disappointing policy shift encompassing reduction of regulation governing land clearance, moving the approval process for land clearance on farms from the state to the local government level, and committing more broadly and deeply to market-based solutions for conservation issues.

More specifically, the thorn in the side of some farmers, the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* and its requirement that clearing native vegetation can only be approved if it improves or maintains environmental outcomes at the site level will go. The new approach will include broadening the use of biodiversity offsets and to apply offsets at the regional level, i.e. a site could be cleared (or "degraded") if this degradation is offset by improvements elsewhere in the region.

Offsets are a dubious solution

for biodiversity conservation at best. Their basis is an economic and ideological paradigm that favours market-based solutions. The NSW BioBanking Scheme, for example creates a price for the use of wildlife, plants and ecosystems. Developers, after first trying to avoid and then minimise impacts on wildlife, can offset the remaining impacts by purchasing credits on an open market. These credits have been created when someone else has preserved wildlife.

Think about that in the context of koalas: allowing the sacrifice of a population or sub-population on the assumption that another population's chances of survival, somewhere else, may be improved. Simply doesn't make any sense at all.

The Coalition Government, should it be returned to power will undoubtedly claim an electoral mandate to steam ahead with dismantling the heart of the State's environmental laws. The people, on the other hand, might have other ideas. I'm thinking of the community's response to the O'Farrell government's planning reforms in the Better Planning Network. Premier Baird might

just find himself under siege from a community intent on forging the next generation of laws to save the koala and other wildlife.

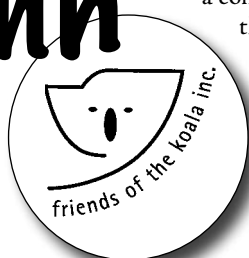
Meanwhile, the Environmental Trust has announced the successful 2014 Restoration and Rehabilitation grants.

95 applications requesting \$7.4 million were received from community organisations. 29 grants were approved with a value of \$2,345,804: around 30% of requests made and funds sought.

Unfortunately Friends of the Koala's application didn't get over the line but the one lodged by Ballina-based WetlandCare Australia, Northern Rivers Region, in which we are a major partner did, so all's well.

Over a three year period, funded by a grant of just under \$100,000, the WetlandCare Australia project will create 2ha of additional koala habitat in Cudgen Nature Reserve at Clothiers Creek Road, building on earlier work carried out under its Coastal 20 Wetlands Restoration Project. Friends of the Koala's contribution will be 3,000 koala food tree tube stock free of charge, 4,500 additional seedlings at a reduced rate, technical guidance and specialist advice on koala habitat rehabilitation and assistance with community education activities.

The parcels of land that comprise the Cudgen Nature Reserve are



Dot (l) and Leah (r) – two of eight orphaned koalas presently in home-care with Friends of the Koala.

recognised in the Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management as being pivotal for extending and enhancing koala habitat on the Tweed Coast. They are a significant component of the Cudgen Lake Koala Activity Precinct (KAP) supporting parts of the central koala meta-population and they form part of the Cudgen Koala Linkage Precinct (KLP).

Last year the Tweed-Byron Koala Connections Project planted 5,000 trees including 2,600 koala food trees on former banana-lease land adjacent to important koala habitat and in February, a \$200,000 project to plant a further 15,000 koala food trees and restore 23 ha of former banana land was launched. The current WetlandCare Australia

project will commence in August.

The partners involved in all this on-ground, cross-tenure work are the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Tweed Shire Council, Southern Cross University, the Subtropical Farm Forestry Association, WetlandCare Australia, Friends of Cudgen Nature Reserve and Friends of the Koala. Funding is coming from the Australian Government's Biodiversity Fund (Clean Energy Future Plan) and Caring for our Country program and the NSW Environmental Trust.

The investment of tax-payers' money and volunteers' time is huge and long-term, so how will we know if it has been worthwhile? No doubt there are a number of measurement considerations, but for Friends of the Koala the only one that counts has to be the survival of future koala generations – whether the animals are healthy and the population is increasing in numbers.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting (live or dead), please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline: (02) 6622-1233. For information about koalas, their food trees and how you can assist koala conservation, visit: [www.friendsofthekoala.org](http://www.friendsofthekoala.org) or email: [info@friendsofthekoala.org](mailto:info@friendsofthekoala.org) or phone 6622-1233.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.



# uage of change

Ecosystem *planet* species  
services DATA *love* earth garden  
*oceans* diversity *resilience* understand **cosmos** songbird  
*organic matter* ecology **millions hope** resources **essential** nutrient  
cycling atmosphere **carbon** HOME renewable *poetry* earthbound  
WHALES forest **user** *generations*  
resources  
carbon  
**capture**  
*footprints*

require comparable development of renewable substitutes for that resource." It is not a bad definition, being grounded in reality, but clearly very anthropocentric. Further, a contemporary economic model of sustainability sees sustainable "growth" as its main goal, when any growth on an overcrowded and depleted planet is in fact ecologically disastrous.

Sustainability is really about the fact that all energy transactions within the biosphere must work in relation to the whole, to ensure that energy requirements are met and wastes are absorbed, indefinitely.

As "sustainability" has embedded itself permanently into the economic paradigm, the way we talk about ecology is more and more like the way we talk about economics. Government and corporate reports now look at the ability for oceans or forests to absorb carbon or regulate global temperature as "ecosystem services." Perhaps the merging

of ecological and economic terminology makes sense, since they come from the same root word, meaning the "home" or house. The ecology is our home, and the economy is how we organise things inside the home. The danger in applying economic terms to the environment is that in economies, "wealth" appears out of thin air, but in ecology, it depends on it. If humanity had a credit card, we're so overdrawn we'd never be granted credit in our lifetimes.

And we won't be. We need to revolutionise the way we live and view the planet, and that includes the way we speak about it. What then about the term revolution itself? A Russian revolution and a Guevarian revolution are very different things. Revolution might mean the Bolivian farmers with their hoes, rakes and shovels in the air. I'm cautious to whom I admit revolutionary tendencies after getting heaps of messages from would-be extremist militants on the eHarmony dating site. "Hey baby! You wanna join my revolution?" Uh, I was hoping you'd be joining mine.

As we become more and more bombarded with language, it grows ever harder to decipher the Earth's true language, her language spelled out in species, rain, and cosmological dance. As we answer our text messages, follow our Nav directions and flick email after email, has language somehow become meaningless? Do we ache for new words, ones that mean what we mean, or will all our language, all this talk, simply never be enough?

[www.rightsofmotherearth.com](http://www.rightsofmotherearth.com)  
[www.communitypermaculture.com.au](http://www.communitypermaculture.com.au)

## Weed Words

by Triny Roe

The first was the ubiquitous stonebreaker – *Phyllanthus niruri*, a herb used in Ayurvedic and other traditional systems of medicine particularly to treat kidney and gall stones. A native of the Amazon basin, Southern India and China, this plant is found throughout the tropical world, particularly in moist rainforest environments.

The second plant was Colombian Wax weed, *Cuphea carthagenensis*. This small flowering plant, with its sticky hairy stems, is common in Nimbin and the Northern Rivers, growing along roadsides, in paddocks and lawns. Another plant that likes wet zones, it's used in Brazilian folk remedies.

The third plant was less familiar. Facebookers eagerly suggested lantana, native raspberry, blackberry and mulberry. It was eventually identified as *Fatoua villosa* – hairy crabweed, aka mulberry weed. This plant is another important traditional medicinal species. It is also edible, but generally considered a famine food. The leaves and fruits are fairly bland.

Mulberry weed is native to East Asia and has a reputation as a serious environmental weed in the USA. It was reported in Louisiana in 1950s. From there it has since spread to 20 other states. It loves wetlands and moist shady areas. Mulberry weed has been recorded as being a problem in greenhouses, gardens and agricultural fields.

With leaves similar to those of mulberry tree seedlings, *F. villosa* can be distinguished by its densely hairy stems. There is variation in leaf appearance, habit and the hirsute factor so not all plants look exactly the same. Growing up to a metre tall they can mature and set seed when only a few centimetres tall. The leaves are alternate and have long petioles. The unremarkable flowers are green dense clusters and without true petals. They



Mulberry weed

"It came in a pot plant,  
and now it's everywhere."  
Exhibit A: A pot plant which had been  
colonised by three 'weeds'.  
One was a mystery.

won't win prizes at a flower show.

This plant spreads prolifically as the flowers explosively eject numerous tiny seeds up to 4 metres. They can end up anywhere. Mulberry weed is known to travel to new locations via nursery stock and topsoil.

In Australia, mulberry weed is naturalised in numerous locations in Northern Territory, Northern Western Australia and Torres Strait Island. It has been introduced to other states possibly in contaminated nursery stock. So far there are occurrences near Brisbane of cultivated and escaped plants. Only one location in NSW is officially recorded in *Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants Edition 6*. The specimen was collected from a nursery north of Taree and recorded as naturalising there in open and partly shaded areas. Perhaps from there it spread to other NSW locations,

secreted in potted plants. Tyalgum and Lillian Rock have been recently identified as having this species. There could be more occurrences.

Commercial nurseries often use pre-emergent herbicides to prevent weed seed from contaminating their stock. Take care when purchasing plants from roadside, back-yarders or market stalls. It is not uncommon to find extra species lurking in the pots. To avoid introducing more weeds onto your property, quarantine new acquisitions before planting out. Keep them in a greenhouse and see what comes up in the pot over the next month. If it's necessary to plant immediately, keep an eye out for novel species germinating in the near vicinity.

The warm moist climate of Northern NSW creates ideal conditions for a huge range of plants to flourish. Some can take over if not carefully managed. Mulberry weed has potential to naturalise and spread widely in this region, competing with native and other desired species. Know your plants and their habits.

Happy weeding.

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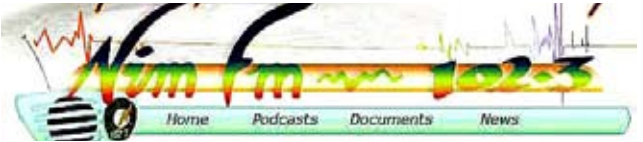


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**Nimbin World Naked Bike ride 2015**

# Byte me!

**Mookxamitosis**  
by Brendan (Mookx) Hanley

I have this new phone. If I want to take a picture of myself I turn it on, swipe the camera icon, touch the selfie icon, line up my head in the screen (was gonna say “my moosh” but I don’t reckon anyone will know what that means any more!). Then I say “cheese”, “whisky” or any one of a dozen other designated words, and whilst it plays the digital sound of a camera click... it takes my portrait... arguably better quality than lots of cameras out there hanging around people’s necks. That’s just one of its multi-functions.

I’m told by a friend that today’s phones have more technology on board than was taken to the moon.

A million times more than that room full of junk called ENIAC (#1 in the picture). Beyond mechanical cash registers, accounting machines and calculators (used by comptometrists), the first computer to come to public attention was ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator And Computer), which was the first electronic general-purpose computer. It was digital, and capable of being reprogrammed to solve “a large class of numerical problems”. ENIAC was initially designed to calculate artillery firing tables for the United States Army Ballistic Research Laboratories... and study the feasibility of the hydrogen bomb.

ENIAC contained 17,468 vacuum tubes, 7,200 crystal diodes, 1,500 relays, 70,000 resistors, 10,000 capacitors and around 5 million hand-soldered joints. It weighed more than 30 short tons (27 t), was roughly 8 x 3 x 100 feet (2.4 m x 0.9 m x 30 m), took up 1800 square feet (167 m2), and consumed 150 kW of power. This led to the rumour that whenever the computer was switched on, lights in Philadelphia dimmed. Input was possible from an IBM card reader, and an IBM card punch was used for output. These cards could be used to produce printed output offline using an IBM accounting machine. Now that’s

what you call clunky.

One day in Nimbin 1978, I was approached by Barney, holding in his hand what looked like a long scientific calculator. It was a Tandy pocket computer. (#2) He asked me to type in my name, which duly appeared on the LCD screen. I hit enter as instructed. This message appeared in the window.

“Get fucked BeBop!” (Bebop was the nom-de-plume I used for my weekly music column in the *Byron News*... and it kinda stuck to me!) Barney’s programming skills to the fore.

I soon bought one. So did Rainbow Power Company founder, Peter Pedals. There were no programs and the operating system size was 2k. Like Barney, we had to make up own programs. I mucked around with some fun number-crunching, dunno what Barney went on to do ... but somehow Peter Pedals came up with an algorithm on 2k of memory that was able to calculate the planetary movements of our solar system, apply them to a place and time on Earth, and print out accurate astrology chart information on that little paper toilet roll you can see in the pic. We may never know how.

It wasn’t very long after this that we bought Australian Microbee Computers (#3), with a massive 32k on-board-power and orange text in the monitor. There were a handful of programs available and a book of Microworld Basic that we studied and made our own programs. We saved stuff onto cassette in real time.

Then we got the Apple 2C. (#4) 128k of sheer green-text-on-screen grunt. A big step up from the Microbee, but basically nothing madly new. IBM came on the PC scene with more of the same and were instantly cloned by a million copy-cats, all relying on Bill Gates to make the things work. Birth of the Windows PC. (#6)

Around about here Apple invented the Macintosh and with it, the mouse.



Mice were soon taken up by IBM and the massive clone industry. Prior to this you had to memorise code and type it in every time you wanted the computer to do something. Talk about tedious.

Digital midi-recording became possible in the 80s with Steinberg Pro 24 on the massive 1Mb Atari (#5), which was already famous as a games machine. It had no memory and we saved data onto big, vulnerable, 5.25” cardboard-encased floppy discs. One megabyte was beyond our wildest dreams. Steinberg went digital audio with Cubase and Nuendo on Windows... so a leap over to big fat PCs became the go. Smaller, rigid 3.5” plastic floppies came with the change. Then Zip-drive discs, CD and DVD burning and now the ubiquitous USB stick. Not to mention the laptop. (#7)

RAM and operating systems got bigger and fatter as the actual components got smaller and smaller. That Terabyte hard drive there on your desk and that phone in your pocket (#8) are millions and millions of times bigger than that roomful of ENIAC clutter in the picture above... not to mention the little pocket gizmo that printed out our first astrology chart info. The mind boggles at what lies ahead in the coming time of the yottabyte!

1000 kB	kilobyte
10002 MB	megabyte
10003 GB	gigabyte
10004 TB	terabyte
10005 PB	petabyte
10006 EB	exabyte
10007 ZB	zettabyte
10008 YB	yottabyte



# Nimbin muso meets guerilla troubador

by Warwick Fry

On his first trip overseas, former Nimbin identity Will Grier landed in Nicaragua with his usual cool. I met him at the airport on a muggy Managua night. Back at our 'economy' hotel (with air conditioning an essential for newbies), Will was soon de-jetlagged and oriented. Within a couple of days he was 'learning Spanish' from one of the hotel staff who was intrigued with the efforts of the young Aussie traveller, ten years her junior, to seduce her.

The high point of our week in Managua was a day spent with Mariposa. Mariposa is a living legend in revolutionary circles. As a fiery young 15-year old high-school activist, she soon came to the attention of the authorities and fled to the mountains to join the guerillas. Her experience with the megaphone gained in the student street marches and distinctive voice earned her a place on the Radio Venceremos team and her voice echoed around the mountains. In the nineties after the civil war had ended, she was still targeted. First her brother, then a few years later, her parents were assassinated and she narrowly escaped an assassination attempt herself. Now she lives in self-imposed exile in Nicaragua.

As soon as Mariposa learned that Will had an interest in music she called up a neighbor. He was a jazz musician and a walking gig guide to Nicaragua. A blissful afternoon resulted, soaking up Latin jazz in a bohemian beer garden with musical friends. Will developed a taste for Nicaraguan rum while I indulged mine.

A few days later we were on the bus to Esteli, a large country town in the northern mountains of Nicaragua. It is much cooler than Managua, and the bus trip was an opportunity for Will to exercise his cool. The young student in the seat in front of us was learning English, so Will let her practice on him. The lesson seemed to involve an exchange of phone numbers.

Esteli is within striking distance of the northern border of Nicaragua on the way to El Salvador, which suited me, because I was on a mission. Five years before, I had met another living legend of the revolution, Felipe Torogoz. Felipe was the founder and lead singer/guitarist/songwriter of the guerilla band, Los Torogozes de Morazan. They were of necessity 'unplugged', the official music makers of guerilla Radio Venceremos and entertainers for the guerilla dances and social gatherings in the mountains, with an old violin, bass, guitar, and occasionally an accordion.

Felipe could still belt out a tune on his battered acoustic guitar with his 70-year old voice, and still does gigs at campaigns and rallies for the FMLN, now a political party. As I was leaving, he mentioned wistfully that he wouldn't mind having one of those new-fangled guitars with an electrical pickup.

So I was glad to have Will with me on this trip when we went shopping in Esteli. We were staying at a co-operative that also ran a music school. One of the young music teachers knew the music shops in Esteli (all three of them) and Will had the musician's ear and experience with electrically enhanced instruments to pick the dream machine with the optimal balance between the acoustic and the electronic.

A week later (after Will had met the family of the girl on the bus and had



Top: Will Grier at the Perquin war museum with a captured M16 (decommissioned).

Top right: Felipe Torogoz with his new guitar. Listen to Felipe play Casas Quemadas: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=e81\\_bAuUUQo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e81_bAuUUQo)

Above: The Torogozes band in 1989.

Left: Picture of Padre Rogelio Ponceles and the Venceremos production team, given to the author by Mariposa (her nom de guerre, meaning 'butterfly').

a crash course in bilingual texting) we were driving along the winding mountain road to Perquin in the mountains of El Salvador.

Perquin is another celebratory name in the revolutionary canon. Nestled in a bowl among some of El Salvador's highest and most rugged mountains, it is redolent with the sometimes buoyant, often melancholy history of the region and the civil war. First captured in 1983, it became the guerilla headquarters for the eastern front.

Here was where the regional commandante planned the strategies that had the US backed Salvadoran military tied in knots for the next nine years. Here is where Mariposa and the Venceremos team planned their programs and rested up from moving the transmitter around when US warships in the Gulf of Fonseca were trying to triangulate their transmissions. At the back of the town, we paid a visit to the war museum and a reconstruction of the guerilla camp with its camouflaged humpies, air raid shelters and escape tunnels.

We found Felipe a few miles down the road at a new settlement called Segundo Montes, named after one of the six Jesuit priests assassinated in 1989 (a case now being prosecuted by the Spanish government as a war crime). He was still growing a subsistence crop of maize and beans on his small plot, had had his teeth fixed and no longer suffered from back pain, as he had in 2009. He welcomed his unexpected

visitors with the gracious courtesy typical of the Salvadoran campesino. The look on his face when we handed it to him was worth the weight of the guitar in gold.

He baptised it with a performance of one of his first and best known songs; Las Casas Quemadas, the story of a peasant returning to his patch of land to find his crops and his house burnt to ashes by napalm dropped from aircraft with provenance from Washington. Then he and his son Melvin performed together. Before we left he rounded off the day with the signature tune of the Torogozes.

Will and Melvin wandered off to the 'shed' where Melvin's metal band Sangre de Guerra ("Blood of War") have their rehearsals and talked music in their respective languages. Felipe and I talked about politics, old times, and the incomprehensibility of heavy metal music.

It was refreshing and sobering after the muggy heat of Managua. I stayed on to spend Easter in Perquin and to talk with the local Bishop. Bishop Rogelio Poncele survived death threats and the civil war, staying with the guerillas, preaching 'Liberation Theology', running literacy workshops, and doing births, deaths and marriages for the guerilla forces.

Will headed back to Nicaragua on the 4am bus, fully confident now that he could travel solo. I understand that he made quite an impression on the backpacker camps there.



## Natural law

by Helene Collard

Last month's article was about how to create and maintain authentic relationships and the importance of clear connection lines. Being true to who you are is imperative now. This will help to dissolve relationships that hinder your happiness, which in turn, will create space and energy for positive relationships to flourish.

Interestingly, some relationships currently perceived as limiting, are only so, because you are not being authentic. That is, you are not being true. Pay close attention to a problematic relationship and consciously focus on communicating your true thoughts and feelings, in a raw and real way. This may be the trick to shift a dysfunctional dynamic, into something workable and even enjoyable. On a soul level, these difficult dynamics actually represent karmic patterns from this and other lifetimes, and the opportunity is here to 'restore factory settings' and clear the slate for everyone.

In April, expect significant movement – in particular, activity that is focused in a specific area. It is time to shine your inner light outwards, share your passion with others and most importantly, on a day-to-day basis and in general conversation, to share your true thoughts and feelings.

This requires you to know and accept yourself as you truly are. This is about 'owning' or taking responsibility for where you are inside. For example, if you are depressed – own it. If you are gay – own it. If you have a political view – own it. If you have an opinion or feeling – own it. If you are angry – own it. If you said 'yes' but now you want to say 'no' – own it. If you cannot



*"I am self-sovereign as are you. I acknowledge the ancestors, mine and yours, past and present. You are all my relations. All is One."*

let go of something – own it, and the list goes on.

When we neglect to 'own it', we send out vibes that are confusing and frustrating to those around us. Others sense we are not being true. So be clear and 'own' whatever you need to.

Far from being perfect, 'owning it' and being 'authentic' frees us from communicating (to ourselves and others) where we think we should be and finally invites us to accept exactly where we are. There is huge support this month to simply be you. Allow the walls of protection and the hesitation-for-fear-of-judgment, to dissolve. This will leave you in a beautiful and sacred space of vulnerability.

Vulnerability is often construed as a weak and unsafe state of being and it is true that many of us grew up in environments where it wasn't safe to speak our minds and feel our true feelings. So this will be a difficult turnaround for many of us. The supports are there – stay focused and let the shackles fall away. The supports are there – let the fear wash away.

Celebrate you!

*Helene Collard has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and is a Reiki Master-teacher.*



# What helps a baby in, can help a baby out



## Birth and Beyond

by Kirrah Holborn  
'Traditional Wisdom'

Think dim lights, warm room, quietness or soothing music, private, intimate and relaxing... These are the things that help the love hormone flow! Oxytocin (aka 'the love hormone') is a shy hormone that needs privacy in order to be released efficiently. Oxytocin is involved with love-making and birthing.

### Why is it important to be warm?

A warm environment means the mother is more likely to relax. We tend to clench up when we are cold. Being cold also releases adrenalin and this can slow down labour. Warmth is very important after the baby is born as well. It helps oxytocin to be released so the placenta can be safely birthed.

Loving touch and massage is also wonderful for helping the labouring woman to relax, let go of tension and release oxytocin. Practise in pregnancy to find out what you like. Usually massage on the lower back and also the shoulders feels great and helps you focus on positive sensations.

### Dim lighting helps the birth progress

Low lighting encourages the hormone's oxytocin and endorphins to be released. These hormones are very important in natural birth. Being in a dimly lit room allows you to focus inwards and go within during contractions. It creates a relaxing space that isn't too over stimulating.

### Make your space smell lovely

Aromatherapy can really enhance the labour environment. Good smells can be relaxing and some oils like clary sage can actually help your uterus to contract. Aromatherapy used in a diffuser or in a massage oil can really transform your



head space and the birthing environment. Citrus oils sprayed around the room can act as a 'pick-me-up' and can be refreshing and give you energy.

### Soothing music gives a focus

Try to find some music like what you may listen to in a yoga class or when having a massage. Some of the artists that are on my birthing playlist are: Deva Premal, Aes Dana, Ayla Nereo, Chillosophy, Cool and Nina Lee. Other music like belly dance music can be good if you feel like moving and dancing in labour (this is great for helping the baby into a good position too!).

### Birth support people

Some women like to have many people to support them during labour. Whereas other women may prefer just their partner/doula/midwife to be present. It's good that the people that have been invited to your birth know about honouring the birthing space and know their role. The last thing a labouring woman wants is to feel 'watched'. People that are positive and helpful can make all the difference.

### Feeling safe is super important

Labour is more effective and is usually shorter when women feel safe. This has to do with the hormones again. If we feel fearful or worried, then we release adrenalin (the fight or flight hormone) and this sends blood to the arms and legs so we can run away from danger or fight. This means blood is transported away from the uterus. The uterus is a muscle and it needs

a good supply of oxygen and blood in order to be able to contract effectively during labour. If there is fear, this can't happen. Fear creates tension in the body and this tension can create unnecessary pain (this in turn can create more fear and so the cycle continues in a negative feedback loop). Labour is more likely to progress smoothly if a woman feels safe and undisturbed. Adrenalin will slow or stop labour until the danger passes or the woman feels safe again.

### Why do I have to know this stuff? (Won't the hospital take care of this?)

Actually no. Hospital birthing rooms are usually brightly lit so that midwives and doctors can see what they are doing. They are air conditioned which can cause chills and they can often be noisy or have unfamiliar people and smells. Some midwives are sensitive to creating a conducive environment for birth so they will dim the lights and push the bed aside and encourage you to be active if that's what you want.

It's OK to ask for what you want. Creating a birthing space that is private, dimly lit and warm helps the birthing hormones to be released effectively so that labour and birth can be safer for both you and your baby.

*Kirrah is a doula, pregnancy masseuse, childbirth educator and placenta encapsulator helping women and families in the northern rivers area. For more information visit [www.traditionalwisdom.com.au](http://www.traditionalwisdom.com.au)*

# What makes Feldenkrais a method?

by Brent Shaub

A methodology is a consistent way to approach learning about the world. The Scientific Method studies the effect of one variable in a rigorous framework to draw conclusions of cause and effect. Water boils at 100 degrees C; it freezes at 0. In itself, this is useful information. In the context of daily life, this knowledge changes the quality of life: refrigeration, stoves, cooking, gourmet meals, guests, enjoyment.

Touching your toes is a specific action. Benefits of doing so include: clipping your nails, painting them, donning socks and shoes. Each of these actions increase the quality of life. Learning how to touch your toes can be broken down into specific steps: find a place to sit down, get there, sit, shift your weight to one side, bend the other knee and slide the foot towards your pelvis, lean forward while reaching with your arms, then place your hands on your foot. This focus on the details is one key aspect of the Feldenkrais Method. It's a process-based approach to learning about movement and your current capacity to move, while it simultaneously allows you to become a closer embodiment of your full potential.

Also included in the Feldenkrais Method is the process of creating a suitable environment in which to learn: a secure space; emotional support, safety and reassurance in one's ability to sense how far is enough. Pause between each movement to allow integration of each one, listening to your body's feedback. Find ways to reduce effort through finer and finer distinctions of proprioception. Imagining a movement happening in detail—the angle, the distance, what else can be felt moving—has benefit, especially in regions affected by pain. Changes in speed, timing with other limbs or the breath cycle, and the position of the body all affect ease. Self-care is encouraged throughout.

These are principles which get applied in each lesson and are repeated throughout the four-year, 960-hour training



program to be a Practitioner. This long-term study often changes participants' approach to finding solutions, in movement and other areas of life.

### Underlying tenets of the Feldenkrais Method

Weber law: the just-noticeable difference between two stimuli is proportional to the magnitude of the stimuli. Application: to better sense how movements affect the body, lie down and move slowly. Quick movements in standing are difficult to learn much from due to the muscular engagement to stand and length of time to get to know.

Quality of movement is paramount; distance unimportant; quantity is based on believing that one has learnt the material sufficiently. Muscles build in relation to their use in daily life. Knowing how they move will lead the nervous system to include them naturally.

Reducing effort gives way to better clarity. Extra effort and its wear on the body become obvious, being spontaneously replaced with better habits of greater ease.

Optimal movement is available in six directions—forward, backward, left, right, up and down—and reversible from initiation to completion.

The Feldenkrais Method applies to movement and its effects on an individual, like the Scientific Method applies to finding patterns in the natural world. When you know what you're doing, you can do what you want. Case studies are forming in Mullumbimby and online.

This is an opportunity for those interested in the effects of a series of Feldenkrais classes relevant to their situation. For more information, please see: <http://moveEasier.com.au/case-studies>

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# The pain of being shunned

Being rejected by your group is literally painful. Studies have shown that the same part of the brain that indicates physical pain, lights up when a person is shunned. It hurts.

Being ostracized, which is an extreme form of bullying, discrimination, stigmatization, betrayal, and interpersonal rejection, means your connection and communication with the group of people you were formerly a member of has been broken. You are actually excommunicated.

We are social animals, like other primates, wolves, and lions, and belonging to a group really matters. In the group, we receive affirmation and support and feelings of being trusted, and through these, come to know who we are. The surge of interest in social media and the taking of "selfies" highlights this most clearly.

Just as we are acutely responsive to how other people perceive, evaluate, and feel about us, so we respond accordingly. If we feel others are disinterested, disapproving, or rejecting, we feel acute pain (physical and emotional), vulnerable, wanting to be cared for, angry and dejected. Long term ostracism can result in feelings of total alienation, depression, and helplessness, and sometimes the person seeks refuge in drugs, alcohol, and occasionally sexual promiscuity.

I've had clients who have known the pain of exclusion

so intensely that they have never been able to "enter" society at all: forever standing on the outside looking in. Some have been at the point of giving up.

These feelings attracted negative reactions from other people in various forms: disinterest, criticism, prejudice, avoidance, rejection, betrayal, stigmatization, ostracism, neglect, abandonment, abuse, bullying, and a variety of minor slights and snubs, which perpetuates the cycle of separation and alienation.

People react differently to being ostracized.

Some will try harder to be included, by mimicking, complying, obeying orders, and cooperating with prevailing groups. I have a friend who was badly bullied throughout his school years and to cope with this, he became an avid football groupie in a way few of his contemporaries did.

Some people who were ostracized as children, now engage in hero worship and imitation of sportsman, film stars, and pop singers; some even having radical plastic surgery to look like them.

Some respond with extreme aggression and so extremist groups begin to look very attractive. I fully expect, by the way, that some of the asylum-seeking children interred in detention centres who are feeling cut-off from society, alienated, and ostracized, will, on their release, join extremist groups and release

their rage against us (and I can't blame them).

Some who are rejected by groups, feel the pain, for sure, but they are much less affected. Being excluded and reacting depends on pre-existing levels of self esteem and perceived self worth and this is contributed to by the level of support a person has received from infancy onwards. Low self esteem is associated with inconsistent or absent support from primary caregivers (mothers, fathers, and others), as attachment theory suggests. How this manifests is complex and embraces the cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioral.

If we believe in ourselves, then being ejected from a group isn't going to have enduring effects.

Group membership, and this is a membership of any kind of group (official and non-official) is something we social animals need. Having a sense of belonging means, to a degree, conformity to a group's ethic; an ethic that few in the group will break, or even question.

Questioning and awareness about how the group operates is valuable. It is surely better to understand how something works than be a mere cog in its working. Such knowledge can bring greater flexibility to the group and allow a greater diversity among its members.

Groups need to communicate. The greater the level of communication within the group, the more



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

responsibility, caring and camaraderie group members feel for one another.

When there is little actual communication between members, and where the members are largely anonymous, the so-called group becomes a hotbed of rudeness, crudeness, and cruelty (as many internet message boards illustrate).

So, what can a person who feels rejected by a group/society do? How can they re-enter community? Support groups of the ostracized really help. Such groups build group identity and provide wonderful individual and interpersonal support. They can be initiated by anyone.

Support from friends, counsellors and other people, can also help build a person's damaged self esteem and self worth. I'm finding that using clinical hypnotherapy is a powerful tool in re-establishing a patient as a person that matters. When someone feels worthy they can more easily form relationships and gather friends around them, sharing, laughing, caring, and this is what a group has the capacity to be.

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# Blood

by Brigid Beckett

Blood is recognised across medical systems, time and cultures to be essential to life, and sufficient and healthy blood to be essential to good health.

In Chinese medicine, blood is a dense form of qi, qi puts life into blood.

Blood production relies on the kidneys, which store essence and produce marrow. Also good digestion and diet is needed to produce blood from the nutritive qi from spleen and stomach. And the liver is involved in storing and moving blood.

An expected deficiency of blood causes tiredness. This can be just fatigue but can also have elements of unhappiness, restlessness or anxiety, generally feeling frazzled. Sometimes also insomnia which makes everything worse, or excessive dreaming preventing a restorative sleep. This is because of heart blood providing a material foundation for the mind or shen.

The eyes are often affected by deficient liver blood or liver yin deficiency. This may cause blurred



vision or dry, sore or scratchy eyes.

Dryness is a sign of blood deficiency, whether it is dry eyes, skin, hair, or constipation. Insufficient blood will fail to nourish muscles, joints and sinews. This can cause spasms, tremors or numbness.

Commonly tight shoulders and neck problems are caused by blood deficiency.

Liver blood needs sleep to be restored, and then movement to get it around the body. "so the eyes can see, the hands can hold and the feet can walk."

Also common are blood deficiency headaches. These are often dull background headaches that can become more severe on occasions if other liver patterns are involved. They are often worse at the end of the day and may be associated with childbirth, menstruation or breastfeeding (milk is a form of blood). They may be brought on by overuse of the eyes.

The liver and liver blood are important to the uterus, deficiency can cause either painful or scanty periods.

Another blood dysfunction is blood failing to clot. This causes bleeding problems such as nose bleeds, easy bruising, blood in bowel motions or urine, or excessive menstrual bleeding.

Obviously some bleeding may be caused by something functional like a tumour which needs to be ruled out. But often there are cases of non-painful bleeding that are unexplained.

The most common cause is heat in the blood causing the blood to spill from the vessels. Heat may be external as in heatstroke, fever from infection or toxins.

Or it can be internal, either damp heat, or heat from liver fire or constraint, or from yin deficiency.

Damp heat can be caused by diet, too much rich greasy food or alcohol.

Stress or emotional turmoil causes liver constraint or fire, in severe cases this can heat the blood enough to cause it to escape from the vessels.

Yin is the cooling energy of the body. Kidney yin can decrease with aging, insufficient sleep or shift work for example, or it can be burnt up by other types of heat.

Bleeding can also be caused by spleen deficiency. As well as producing blood the spleen holds blood in the vessels. In this case there will be significant fatigue, also possibly dizziness insomnia and anxiety.

There are specific herbal preparations that are very effective at stopping bleeding.

Also very effective, are acupuncture or herbal treatments to treat any of the underlying patterns of bleeding or blood deficiency.

Contact Brigid on 0431-702-560