



Roxy Gallery

143 Summerland Way Kyogle
Phone 6632-3518

Opening Hours

Tues - Fri: 10am to 4pm
Saturday: 9.30am to noon

- Promoting local and regional arts;
- Providing emerging artists with opportunities to display and market their artworks in a professional exhibition space;
- Fostering cultural experiences for community and visitors to the area.

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Often our immediate response to the word 'Reflections' is the myriad reflections in water, in mirrors or glass and how difficult it can be to depict these types of reflections through painting, photography and other media. However, we also reflect on many things in the world: life and death, ideas, feelings and thoughts.

Often the two come together in a synchronicity, where meaning is reflected back to us. Whether we depict an object, or reflections in water, the process of creating an image can stir memory, connection and all the different aspects of being human in the landscape.

The artists and artisans who exhibit at Blue Knob Hall Gallery have been inspired to create works that explore this theme in all its complexity.

The Opening Night for

this exhibition is Friday 18th September from 6.30pm, with our guest Anthony Eden to open this exhibition. Anthony is a practising and exhibiting artist who will be setting up an interactive piece for the opening night only.

All are welcome, and a meal is available from Cafe Blue Knob at a set price for main meal and dessert, (\$20 vegetarian option, \$25 meat option). Please call the Gallery on 6689-7449 for more information and to book if you are planning to stay for dinner. The exhibition runs until Sunday 15th November.

Artists & Friends Lunch

The next Artists & Friends Lunch will be held on Thursday 24th September at 12.30pm with a main meal which includes dessert for \$18 (vegetarian) or \$23 (non-vegetarian meat dish).



'We Are All One (Tree)' by Suzy Maloney

Reflections



'Gaia Florabunda' by Sophie Newell



by Rebecca Davies



'Til 6 in the morn' by Miss Marley

Three artists from our tattoo studio

by Peter Warne

This month in the Nimbin Artists Gallery we are focussing on a group of three women artists from the Nimbin Tattoo Studio, who along with Markus Art, effectively form an artists' collective right here in Nimbin.

While having different styles and different backgrounds, these three women have formed a bond through their dedication to their art and the collaboration which arises from their common aims and their friendship. From 14th September we will be devoting this month's feature spot to them in Nimbin Artists Gallery. Beki Davies is a fully trained tattooist, who learned her craft the hard way - three years of 12-hour working days as an unpaid apprentice. Since then, she has had 11 years of professional experience, but she says that back in those days it was a very male-dominated trade, characterised by its roots in the bikie culture of the time.

She makes it clear that it is her work as an artist which motivates her most strongly now. She is working on a Diploma of Visual Arts at Lismore TAFE, and has an omnivorous desire to master various branches of art. Her artwork is naturally heavily influenced by her tattoo experience and the lowbrow culture that tattoo art is generally associated with, but it is this which determines the eclectic character of her work.

Her non-tattoo art is often inspired by the myths lying at the roots of our culture; stories of humans pitting their strength against the epic primal forces of giant beasts and nature. Her subject matter often involves nautical themes, sailing ships, giant octopuses and hugely

turbulent seas. This relates back to the earliest form of tattoo in our western culture, the tradition amongst sailors of carrying tattoos. Her work often teases the viewer and often presents evocative images which are capable of starting stories in the mind of the viewer.

Sophie Newell brings a different style again, and a different orientation to her work. Coming from a career in signwriting and a bohemian family background of fine art and creativity, she has spent her life painting and drawing, colouring her world and sharing it through murals, signs, sewing and beading. Her mentor was Gery Mews, with whom she studied for seven years and her work has been exhibited with Caldera Art Fusion. All this has led to her spending the last six years immersed in the culture and practice of tattooing.

On first acquaintance, it can be hard to grasp the overall direction of her product, a fact partly explained by the wide range of influences and experience driving the diversity and energy of her work. She is deeply inspired by nature, and many of her works reveal a merging and overlapping between the human form and natural phenomena - landscapes, trees, foliage and flowers. Birds, particularly crows and magpies, have a place of special affection in her work, and one feels that they represent a depth in the world, of which humans remain largely unaware even while they are participants in that world.

Overall, Sophie's work covers a range of media, of scale, may be in vivid colour or monotone, but with an underlying individuality of style. To quote Sophie's own words, 'all life is art, including myself.'

Miss Marley is an artist (though not a tattooist) who produces drawings that at first appear simple, but with

closer viewing surprise with unexpected depths. Her works are very often humorous, and whenever humour appears in art you have different levels, different values in collision. Those faces, delicate and cartoon like, seem almost cutesy at first, but then reveal a range of expressions which suggest a more nuanced quality in the work as a whole.

Apart from the surrounds and particularly the weather, which when denoted is dark and rainy, the women portrayed come across as variously poised, self-possessed, focussed, self-assured, and above all self-determining. Their limbs are fragile, stick-like, but in the mouth there is a determined, uncompromising strength. The mouths are slightly pursed and even prim, but it's the primness of someone who knows exactly what she wants and is not open to compromise. Full on, resolute, like the 'POW!' pendant Marley wore when I interviewed her.

Then there are the little accompanying creatures, dogs, ghosts, skulls. These are the representatives of that other world, where humans are no longer in control, the world of darkness, death, or just non-human creatures. Miss Marley's characters live with these entities, but they appear as cute little things. These forces are never far away in this world, but Miss Marley's women sashay on undeterred, always well presented and purposeful. There is a seriousness underneath, which is scrupulously denied by the glossy, facetious surface presentation, except for where the jokey little ghouls and skulls somehow find a place, as pets and friends of these delicate little warrior-women.

So call in over the next month and see the display of the works of these three inspired artists.

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September at Serpentine



'Atlantis' by Alana Grant

'Alstonville' by Shaun C Murphy

The current exhibition at the Serpentine Community Gallery comprises the work of two local artists, Alana Grant and Shaun C Murphy, in two separate shows.

Alana Grant's work is titled 'Words Form', which she describes as "a visual exploration of sculpture in response to poetry, and poetry in response to art. "I have a curiosity towards abstract narrative and abstraction of form, so within this show, words and form inform each other to create such a dialogue. My inspiration for the topics are of the personal, environmental and political in theme."

Shaun C Murphy is showing a retrospective of his work titled '28 Years through Time and Space', which covers subjects such as Lismore landmarks, psychological and social issues, and curved-space interiors.

Both shows run until 15th

September. Opening night is Friday 4th September 6-8pm.

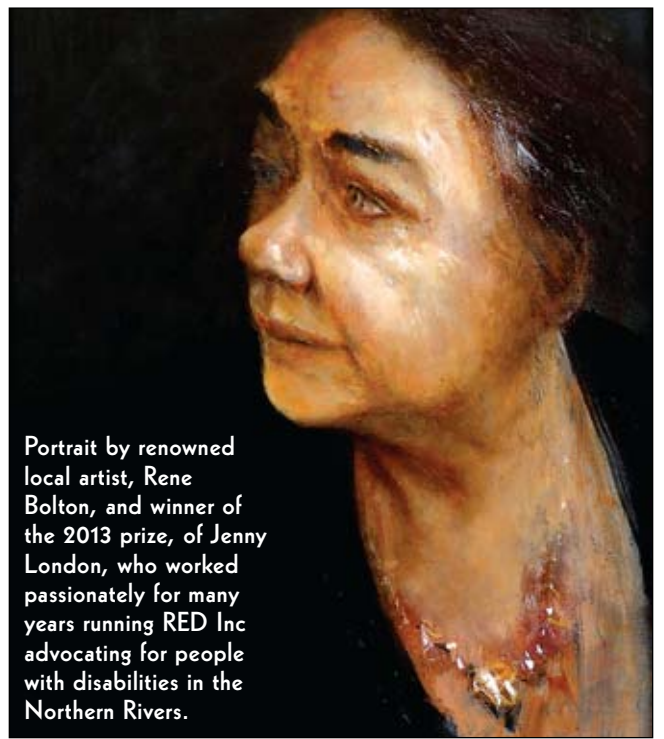
From 16th September, two more local artists will be holding separate exhibitions: 'Under Pressure', a collection of recent work by local artist Anna Dorrington; and a solo exhibition by Paulette Hayes, who won first prize in the Open section of the 2015 Serpentine Gallery Art Prize with her fabric/stitching 'Dreamtime Alice'.

Both these exhibitions are on show from 16th September to 13th October, with Opening Night on Friday 18th September, 6-8pm.

The gallery is located at 17a Bridge Street, North Lismore. See: www.serpentinearts.org



'Dreamtime Alice' fabric stitching by Paulette Hayes



Portrait by renowned local artist, Rene Bolton, and winner of the 2013 prize, of Jenny London, who worked passionately for many years running RED Inc advocating for people with disabilities in the Northern Rivers.

Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize

Artists are adding the final finishing touches to their entries for the Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize, with entries closing on Monday 7th September.

There are sure to be many local faces among them, and the final show, on display from 31st October – 28th November at Lismore Regional Gallery, will be a moving expression of the region and community.

Don't be shy to get your entries in. The prize provides an opportunity to exhibit publicly and create new works. There will be entries from a diverse range of artists, from professional to emerging, and those who quietly practise for themselves, not necessarily exhibiting their work.

We can expect to see some faces from outside the region too. The Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize is a biennial prize evolving from the Northern Rivers Portrait Prize. From 2015 the prize will include portraits of subjects Australia-wide, in any media exempting photography. By developing the prize beyond entries exclusively depicting subjects from the Northern Rivers, it will work to strengthen national connections with contemporary artists and

enhance the vitality and reach of the award.

The gallery still has a strong focus on supporting practices of local artists and have included an additional prize awarded for a work depicting someone from the Northern Rivers.

2015 Prizes are:

- Major Prize: \$10,000 Acquisitive (sponsor: Hurford Hardwood)
- Subject of the Northern Rivers: \$1,000 (sponsor: Walters Solicitors)
- People's Choice: \$1,000 (sponsor: Far North Coast Law Society)

The prize is shaping up to be an anticipated event with finalists showing at Lismore Regional Gallery, with the winners to be announced on Saturday 31st October.

The judge this year is acclaimed Australian artist Fiona Lowry, winner of the 2014 Archibald Prize with her stunning portrait of Penelope Seidler.

Lismore Regional Gallery director Brett Adlington said, "We are very excited to have Fiona Lowry judge the Prize this year. We are sure she will bring an expert eye, and commitment to the process."

Artists apply online via the online entry form at: www.lismoregallery.org

UN's International Year of Light - 2015

by Ruth Tsimbinis,
Roxy Gallery Director

Six small schools from the Kyogle area celebrate the UN's International Year of Light - 2015

The Roxy Gallery has been nurturing the creative development of young people in this area for many years and the small schools

are a perfect example of growth in the arts through support from the gallery, along with the teachers at these school.

Primary students from six small schools in the Kyogle area have been busy creating with brush and paint, paper and scissors, clay and found materials and much more. Their artworks are



The Risk - Collaborative Year 6

creative, colourful and of a high standard, in fact 'Light Years Ahead'!

This will be the eighth art exhibition of young creatives' work to be exhibited at the Roxy Art Gallery in Kyogle from September 1st till October 3rd 2015. Students from Afterlee, Barkers Vale, Collins Creek, Rukenvale, The Risk and Wiangaree Public Schools will proudly display their creative

responses to the theme of colour and light.

Opening night is Friday 4 September from 5.30pm. The show will be formally opened by Peter Campbell, the Director of Schools for the Northern Rivers area and entertainment will be provided by the children singing.

This project has been supported with funding from the Art Unit of the Department of Education.



Rukenvale - Collaborative K-6

Bentley Art Prize



Richmond Dairies Open Painting Prize went to Ken Mackay of Goonellabah with his painting 'Free Range Afternoon.'

Plant of the month

Small Bolwarra *Eupomatia bennettii*



by Richard Burer

From the ancient plant family *Eupomatiaceae*, this slender shrub up to 1.5 m high with its unbranched appearance is often overlooked in the understory of our local forests, where despite its rarity it can often be found.

With a single terminal creamy yellow flower, Small Bolwarra is confined to North East NSW and South East Queensland.

Locally, I have found it on the fringes of wet sclerophyll forests and in subtropical rainforest remnants throughout the Nimbin area.

The perfect flower (pictured) turns into an aromatic and edible berry, and the numerous small pale seeds are viable and easy to germinate if sown fresh.

A beautiful Spring plant, keep an eye out for this stunning display this September



NIMBIN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

NEWS

by Philippe Dupuy

The first birthday celebration for the Lismore Environment Centre was attended by about 30-40 people, with rainy weather unfortunately keeping a good number of people away.

However, the atmosphere was relaxed, supportive and friendly. Volunteers brought an amazing range of great foods and the musos were fantastic. Black Train's jazzy music kept the place vibrant. Delicious chai, brown rice balls, truffles of joy, pizzas, lasagnas and more, soap-box poems and stories, and lovely people all around, which gave me back my faith in humanity.

The Lismore Environment Centre, an affiliate of Nimbin Environment Centre, was born in early August last year, after almost four years of inactivity at the site. Dedicated volunteers from Nimbin saw an opportunity to once again put the environment in the limelight to fill the huge gap left by the demise of the Big Scrub Environment Centre, and the place has come alive again.

Our volunteers are full of energy and lots of good things have been happening. For a start, a recent survey carried out by the Northern Rivers Social Development Council clearly showed that Lismore users of public transport were relieved and enthused at our presence there



New committee: Stewart James, Naomi Tarrant (Secretary), Philippe Dupuy, George Pick (Treasurer), and Paul Reynolds (President)
Inset: Black Train performing



and assistance that comes with it. Anti-social activity has dropped significantly around the precincts.

We are a physical presence and as yet, a small voice for the environment. Our members are informed and always ready to answer questions about issues such as fluoride, Adani and Shenua project developments, and offer support on genuine concerns about pollution and environmental degradation.

One important development has been a workshop held recently by volunteers to streamline and improve policy and procedures as well as day-to-day operations. From this, we have produced draft induction processes, job descriptions (there are more than one) and a mission statement.

At the workshop we were invited to write down our wildest dreams about the future of the centre, here is what came up, and of course it's only the beginning:

- ♦ A monthly event in Pride Square – a talk by traditional elders, Rainforest Day, soap-box day, weed day etc...
- ♦ Build a good relationship with other social groups such as community garden, sustainability groups and others.
- ♦ Work more closely with councils and other government and semi government groups.
- ♦ Have more tai chi and yoga morning groups
- ♦ Food and fun event once a month.

I would like to invite you to come and participate whenever you can. Thank you all.

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

Spring is in the air and the koalas around our place are grunting and bellowing their heads off. While we love hearing them we know that this time of year also means death and destruction for too many koalas.

Road kill is second to disease in the Northern Rivers' koala mortality stakes. During the 2014-2015 reporting year we lost 55 koalas to vehicle strikes; the year before accounted for 56.

Koalas are killed on our roads because so many of them bisect home ranges or the movement corridors for dispersing animals. Koalas won't change their ranging behaviour so it's the approach to road design and our road use behaviour in high risk areas that must change if road mortalities and injuries are to be reduced.

Let's take a minute to consider what running over a koala really means. Koalas can be on our roads at any time but most hits occur at night when the animals are more active and they are more difficult to see. A koala might already be on the road, crossing from one side to the other. Picked up by the car's headlights, the motorist has a chance of taking evasive action, unless speed is an issue. More often than not a koala can suddenly bound out of the bush without warning. The motorist may

or may not see it; sometimes may not even be aware that the animal has gone under the car or been clipped.

Those motorists who are aware that they've hit a koala are usually extremely distressed. Some roads and particularly our highways are too dangerous to stop. The best that can be done is to continue on to a lay-by and ring someone – maybe a wildlife rescue group; maybe a friend who's a wildlife carer, or a friend who has a friend who's one. A few people may use a wildlife rescue app but most don't even know of their existence.

If a motorist can stop, what can they do? Check the animal is alive? Check for a pouch? Check its content? Remove the animal off the road? The sad fact is that very few of us are equipped to respond to a road-hit with any confidence.

Instantaneous death is a blessing. It's the unattended injured koala suffering a slow, painful death, or even worse the koala that appears to be okay, measured by its capacity to run off into the night, but which succumbs over time only to be predated on in its weakened state.

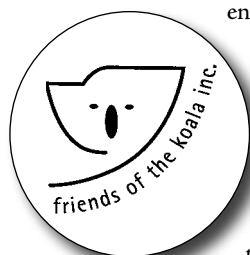
So, what can be done to get on top of road kill? Basically road design,

albeit existing roads, upgrades or new roads, and our driving behaviour need improvement.

The expectation of more environmentally appropriate roads and other linear infrastructure that will reduce the rate of road kill and allow wildlife to move throughout the landscape is getting more traction; certainly there is a growing literature but applying the research among stakeholders, particularly planners, engineers and regulators is much more tentative.

Organisations like the Australasian Network for Ecology and Transportation are doing a great job in promoting best practice in road ecology and linear infrastructure design. One of its guiding principles is that the most efficient and effective methods are considered and implemented early in the planning process. We agree of course but even more, we are concerned that the location of any new road does not compromise a wildlife population, particularly a koala population. Well-informed ecological assessments at the outset minimise the chances of understating the importance of some areas for koalas.

Here in the Northern Rivers Tweed Shire Council has installed innovative road signage aimed at changing driver behaviour on one of the highest-priority koala mortality black spots on the Tweed Coast. The electronic signs, with messages that can be changed to reflect koala activity at the site,



One of the variable message electronic signs and pavement treatment installed on Clothiers Creek Road, to raise awareness about the benefit for both koalas and road users of keeping to the speed limit.

are the latest addition on the three kilometre section of road from Bogangar to Tanglewood on Clothiers Creek Road, east of the Pacific Highway

While road users might not see koalas when using this section of road, it is known they are there from observations, reports from landholders and through incidents and mortalities that occur each year. Options like fencing or the creation of under and overpasses are not possible due to the low-lying nature of the site and the amount of habitat that would need to be removed.

The signs are located at each end of the area in which koalas are most commonly observed and are aligned with previously installed pavement treatments that mark the koala zone. The third and most critical stage of

this project is community education and engagement, so drivers actually take notice and change the way they drive. Ongoing speed and koala monitoring will tell whether the Council's investment is paying off.

Until next time, happy koala spotting.

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 or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org or phone 6622-1233. Please follow us on Facebook. To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 131 555.

Weed watch

by Triny Roe

Spring is officially here. We had some rain during Winter and numerous new seedlings are emerging in the balmy weather. Birds are singing and everything you planted in the garden is shooting up, along with a new batch of weeds which are on their way to test your patience and resilience. Persistence pays off as does adopting strategies to minimise the workload.

The Northern Rivers region is rich in biodiversity, with several national parks making the World Heritage list. Their value lies in the vast range of plant and animal species. Threats to this biodiversity include a number of exotic plant species which readily overgrow and out-compete the existing vegetation.

Plants which generate biomass are beneficial but not if it's at the expense of biodiversity. How much better condition would the creek banks be if the trees growing there were not festooned with balloon vine, madeira, morning glory or cats claw?

Tim Low reports 32 bird species use lantana in Queensland. That leaves 600 that don't. And of the 32 – none of them use lantana exclusively. Under a solid patch of lantana shrubs the soil is bare. The herbaceous species – grasses, sedges and forbs, which comprise the ground cover, are missing. If there is an over-story – ie trees – the lantana can grow up these, smother and eventually kill them.

Case study: In the hills of Nimbin, a solid patch of lantana was removed (without herbicides). The first colonising species to appear were crofton weed and giant devil fig. This is not because nature prefers the exotics.



This is because we, the humans, have introduced these species and have not managed them appropriately. We let these plants escape from our farms and gardens, creating the current environmental imbalance.

Not comprehending the danger, landholders, in many cases, ignored the new species when they first germinated. Not knowing what the plants were, or just not noticing, they let them flower and set seed, creating a dismal legacy for future owners and their neighbours. At first there's only a few, so no problem, but then suddenly a population explosion, perhaps after a particularly good season.

Back to the case study: removal of the crofton and GDF allowed the next round of vegetation to germinate. This included native bracken ferns, wild raspberry, native geranium, basket grass, wattle, bleeding heart, native peach, cedar, native tamarind, lillypilly and sandpaper fig to mention just a few. A greater range of plant species will provide habitat and food for a greater number of birds and animals.

Land management is an on-going process. There will always be new

weeds blowing in or carried in by birds, animals, vehicles or perhaps deliberately introduced, purchased from a market stall or gifted by a well meaning friend who potted up a bunch of seedlings and gave them away.

One weed to watch out for this spring and summer is the woody shrub groundsel, *Baccharis halimifolia*. A couple of paddocks in the Nimbin valley, heavily infested with this noxious weed, had a spectacular flowering in Autumn. The multitudinous light fluffy seeds can float many kilometres on the breeze, wash downstream in nearby creeks or travel away on vehicle tyres. New groundsel bushes could spring up anywhere in the valley. Early identification and removal, particularly before flowering, will help check the spread.

Labour savers include the use of biological agents. CSIRO recently released a rust fungus, *Baeodromus eupatorii*, to combat crofton weed. Land custodians who would like to participate in the distribution program, which includes monitoring, can call 02 6246-4355 to get some spores.

Egalitarianism

by Geoff Dawe

The basis of the economy – food, clothing and shelter – are increasingly indirectly supplied by an entity humans have created, called a corporation.

The entity is amoral and has no interest in whether individual humans are looked after or even whether they live or die. The entity's interest in humans is only that humans are a source of money; a source of energy.

The people who benefit from the corporation, both shareholders and the mass of the people of the West, provide for themselves economically by subscribing to what can be seen as a pre-human philosophy. This philosophy is the law of the jungle: the strongest shall survive; thou shalt compete with each other; cutting your neighbour's arse out is just good business.

From this pre-human or non-human philosophy, humans have generated a non-human entity that has command of their economic means of production.

After Charles Darwin put forward his *Theory of Natural Selection* in the 1860's, the

philosophy of the strongest shall survive, was given a boost by social Darwinians. Without examining the ways humans are markedly different to the other animal species, especially in regard to their development of compassion, the social Darwinians nevertheless believed the philosophy applied to all of nature including humans. Without scientific validity, the West proceeded in the direction of thinking it was best organised as a competitive society.

Although there is no definite scientific information to say humans are bound or not to the law of the jungle, the evidence that is available from the ethnographic and archaeological records points to humans having engaged in a journey beyond the law of the jungle; beyond competitiveness to egalitarianism. There is every possibility that humans have been the mammal most involved in attempting a cooperative view of life.

The great majority of nomadic people studied by ethnographers worldwide except for Europe and the Middle East, were politically egalitarian. One could



assume therefore, that egalitarianism had its roots in antiquity.

Doron Shultziner in *From the Beginning of History* has suggested that the common belief that human history has mostly been one of hierarchical social structures, is not supported by the evidence, and that "...democratic practices and political egalitarian structures were dominant in the Paleolithic era."

It is not as though egalitarianism was chosen as the ideal political structure in a tribe. Instead it had to be continually generated.

When there were people in a tribe, who through dominance, sought to gain advantage over others, levelling mechanisms were constantly employed by the rest of the tribe to bring them to heel. A hunter who was very successful might be told his catch was worthless as a means of cooling his belief in his supremacy.

There was recognition at a primal level that a dominant individual would tend to prevent the natural selection of one's genetic material for continuation through offspring.

A tendency toward egalitarianism in early human societies is also suggested in the fossil record. Generally, species that show a pronounced difference in size between the sexes (sexual dimorphism), Doron suggests in *Struggling for Recognition*, have a greater tendency toward hierarchical organisation. This does not just occur in hominids but is found in many species.

The human fossil record shows a reduction in sexual dimorphism and canine teeth, both indicators of tendency toward egalitarianism.

The competitive idea for human organisation began with civilisations. All civilisations established hierarchical social structures, and did so to more efficiently manifest technologies.

Hierarchical structures regressed humans to the belief that within their society the strongest survive and the mass are subordinate. Humans continue disempowerment by giving economic needs over to the control of a corporate amoral entity.

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The FUKUSHIMA Project

Mookxamitosis

by Brendan (Mookx) Hanley

The FUKUSHIMA disaster happened on 11th March, 2011.

It is totally beyond my comprehension how 4.5 years later the situation has not only not been rectified in any way ... on the contrary, it continues to worsen at an exponential rate. The slow-death-dealing gases and radioactive particles are continually spreading through the ocean and the atmosphere unchecked and beginning to take their toll on all life forms already. That's around 1642 days that nothing has been done ... and counting!

It is beyond the scope of this column, and this writer indeed, to list the multitude of already-obvious negative effects of this unbelievable fuck-up! We have massive fish kills, whale and dolphin deaths, sea birds, algae ... all marine life ... bad stuff is happening. Mutations, abortions, birth defects, thyroid damage, drastic bird reproductive-performance changes, food crop irradiation, cancer and other radiation-caused illness heading towards epidemic levels ... I'm like a stranger looking in through a chink in the shutters getting a peep at how bad it really is, and getting worse by the second. It's way beyond freaky!

Despite this all-true, real-life, real-time horror, they're selling Japanese tourism by the tonne on the idiot-box and in the press, while blithely building momentum towards the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. By then of course, they'll save heaps on electricity during the games ... the whole friggin' city will be glowing in the dark.

It's utter madness! Instead of planning and carrying out Wars, Coups, Revolutions, Game Shows, Football Finals and Federal Elections over the last four years, the whole world should have been rallying and working together to fix this sci-fi fiasco. Meanwhile the waste just keeps mounting as the fuel-rods melt deeper into the Earth towards our precious, irreplaceable underground water. There are bags and bags of radioactive soil piled up in dumps, and millions of gallons of

<http://nimbinheart.com/fukushima.htm>

FUKUSHIMA WIND
The Project

This is about the creation of a clip for Youtube that will signal the start of a genuine Global FUKUSHIMA alert and cleanup. Donations received are listed below. Please email for details if you can help in any way!

email: mookx@mookx.com

deadly fluids getting pumped non-stop into the Pacific, already reeling under oil-spills, floating plastic continents and super-trawlers depleting the entire marine population with their obscene giant nets. The airborne drift involves Plutonium and many other unthinkables!

Surely people are wondering about still eating fish. Helen Caldicott has been warning people off it for years!

Anyway back to the plot! Part of getting to be an old bloke seems to mean getting dealt a fair serve of "The Inadequate Syndrome". It's an overpowering feeling of not having made enough of a positive impression on the world during one's life. Otherwise why would shit like this be happening? I've got it bad! Coming close to kicking the bucket a couple of times over the past year brought it on full tilt. I feel I've gotta make a last-gasp effort at getting a message up and out there that can help change things, or I'll go under feeling cheated of my life's purpose. So here's the thing! I have a website with the whole rave on it, so I won't go into it too fully here, but I will appeal to you to go have a look and see if you want to get involved ... and either way ... pass it on to someone who might.

Last year, around 2000 people managed to turn up on a Perth beach to protest the State shark cull that was happening at the time. So I thought we might be able to do the same thing with FUKUSHIMA as our theme. I have a song "Pennsylvania Wind"

which I wrote in 1979 re the 3 Mile Island nuclear disaster. It transformed gracefully into "FUKUSHIMA WIND" .. needed some new verses to include the Ocean and a hopeful outcome. The idea is to have 2000 people sing it on Byron Bay Main Beach and film it, drones, multi-cameras and all. A made-for-Youtube mission!

I have recorded a demo with Julie doing a guide vocal. It needs a big choir added to beef it up. Any takers?

I bunged all this up on the web a while back and intended to get it happening then, but along came Bentley, followed by a year in and out of hospitals etc. However I'm back again! Here's the idea. People download this song with the chords and lyrics and learn to sing it ... or at least the "Chorus" bits. We organise a few Regional rehearsals down the line a piece and then go do it.

If 2000 participants go home and get 20 friends to check it out on Youtube, and they then tell 20 of their friends to do the same ... it'll go viral immediately. It needs financing and lots of expertise of course. If you can help or wish to contribute in any way, on any level, please email me at mookx@mookx.com

Simple eh? All we gotta do is do it!
P.S. I always put FUKUSHIMA in capitals. It's the same as shouting!

Song, chords and lyrics: <https://www.reverbnation.com/mookxhanley/song/22043484-fukushima-wind>
Rave: <http://nimbinheart.com/fukushima.htm>

Music therapy comes to Nimbin

by Arne

It probably doesn't come as a surprise that music has long been used to promote wellbeing on spiritual, mental and physical levels. However, it wasn't until medical staff working with burned and shell shocked soldiers during WW1, that music therapy could be seen to have started to emerge as a member of the Western health profession. They found that with the aid of music, soldiers with burns were better able to manage their pain and traumatised non-respondent individuals started to become more present and engage with their recovery.

Today music therapy is an allied health profession and registered music therapists (RMTs) are members of the Australian music therapy association. RMTs work with people across the lifespan, from premature babies to palliative care and anywhere in between. Music therapy with neonates for example could use music to sooth, reduce stress and promote the growth of neurological structures without the use of verbal language. In palliative care a music therapist may play familiar or original compositions and verbally reflect on the lyrics, feelings and thoughts that emerge. Music therapy is also used with people with acquired brain injuries, showing some positive outcomes for music's capacity to retrain the brain to facilitate speech and movement. It is not uncommon for stroke sufferers who have lost the ability to speak to still be able to sing. Similarly individuals living with dementia often respond and are heard singing lyrics to songs familiar to them despite their otherwise deeply withdrawn states.

Music is also used to promote and strengthen mental health and recovery from addictive behaviours. Music releases natural opiates (dopamine) and mood altering hormones (endorphins), which tend to make us feel good. Music therapy research has also found that music has the capacity to reduce cortisol

levels, which are activated during a stress response, thus making one more relaxed. Neurologically, music is processed in both brain hemispheres and research findings suggest that different musical elements such as tones, rhythm and melody are processed in different hemispheres and actually strengthen the corpus callosum (the nerve fibre bridge that connects and enables communication between the two hemispheres). A strong connection between the two hemispheres unifies the brain and supports a healthy mind.

Contrary perhaps to expectations, one does not need to be musically minded, have experience in playing music or be "a (good) musician". Music therapy works with music as a therapeutic medium and is suitable for most people seeking support through therapy. As noted above it is applied across the lifespan, but in the area of mental health, research suggests that where the more established verbal therapies don't appear to work, music therapy may be beneficial.

You can access a RMT run program through the Buttery outreach service B.well, which is a wellbeing service for people whose mental health and substance use affect their desired way of life and wellbeing. They run a free music therapy program called "bin tune" and offer individual music therapy as well as peer support, counselling, and a number of other programs throughout the northern rivers.

B.in tune is an integrative music therapy and mindfulness program open to a limited number of participants, and will start in Nimbin on Wednesday 23rd September. The program will be run three hours per week, 10am-1pm at the Nimbin Community Centre over a period of eight weeks, in an atmosphere of acceptance and open-mindedness. Each week, participants experience guided listening, breathing techniques, meditation, reflection and "musicking" built around a specific theme.

To register your interest or for more info contact Arne (RMT) on, 0427-875-884 or email: arne@buttery.org.au

Restoration from desk sitting through Feldenkrais

Part Two

Typical sitting jobs involve daily use of a computer. Using computers involves using mouses. A good mouse can do wonders to reduce fatigue in the fingers, thumb, wrist, elbow and shoulders.

The moveable kind that slide around the desk, are ubiquitous though very hard on the user. These mouses require the most physical activity from the arm.

Adding weight to this kind of mouse is something to avoid, so the base of support for the arm becomes the shoulder. Pain is often felt between the shoulder blades (base of shoulder joint) or at the elbow (one joint along the chain).

Touchpads are the most difficult for long-term use,

although their convenience when travelling with a laptop is unsurpassed. Touchpads require medially rotating the arm all the way to midline, then interacting with a device that doesn't move; your position needs to conform to it. Movements often require several stripes to transverse the screen (Start button to close application).

Logitech did a great job with their Trackman mouse. It's the shape of my right hand – sorry for lefties as it's only for the right-handed – has a solid base and trackball by the thumb. Index, middle and ring fingers line up with the left button, scrollwheel and right button respectively.

The mouse itself doesn't move to move the pointer, that's the job of the thumb-

steered trackball. The human digit with the most mobility is the one doing the movement within the computer.

Last is the pen mouse. It also comes with a touch-sensitive pad. This tool need not be only for artists who draw, in fact, it was introduced to me by someone who found it as a solution to the chronic pain she felt from traditional mouses. For artists, there's a significant benefit in using a familiar method to communicate with the computer.

One mental difference with pens is the use of absolute positioning: touching down teleports the cursor to that location. All other mouses use relative positioning; moving the mouse begins with where the pointer currently is. It's good



for the mind to have the ability to think in different ways.

Comfort can be gained by having how one wants to move be how one is to move.

A final point about mouses in general is that more and more are being designed for use with either hand.



by Bent Shaub

Using one of these mice has the potential to develop ambidexterity.

Balanced left and right sides of the body lead to a balanced

nervous system (as well as considering things from different points of view).

Part Three of this series on desk sitting will continue to explore ways to reduce effort through better equipment and its use. There are many options starting with chairs, rollers, keyboards, monitors and the positioning of these essentials.

The September Feldenkrais class schedule for Embody Wisdom is: 4.30pm Tuesdays, 1.30pm Wednesdays, 4pm Thursdays, 9.30am Saturdays. Cost is \$15 for an hour class during September. Taught by Brent Shaub, Feldenkrais Practitioner since 2013, and mostly seated software programmer since 2000. Phone 0404-429 271.

Natural law

by Helene Collard

Last month I mentioned three philosophical points for your consideration: interconnectedness, interdependence and initiation.

I described initiation as 'appropriate ceremonies, rituals, tests or periods of instruction that impart knowledge and support the embodiment of wisdom'.

Most of us think of initiation as something that occurs in indigenous, spiritual or other groups. However, I suggest that everyone can experience initiation at least through major life tests. The key is to identify your major test and name it as an initiation. This then respects the experience and then importantly, opens the door for you to learn and heal. Alternatively, when we view our life tests, only as something terrible that we want to forget, we create a sense of separation from the experience, including with the associated feelings. This leads me to the next point on interconnectedness.

It is one thing to agree that our physical and spiritual world is an interconnected web of multifaceted relationships. In the words of David Suzuki, 'Everything is relational and nothing exists in isolation'. It is however, another thing entirely, to consistently conduct yourself in a manner that embodies this philosophy. In order to do such a thing, we would need to dependably behave and respond in ways that create, invite and maintain interconnections.

Therefore, if we consider the example mentioned



"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."

earlier, when we embrace life tests that feel horrible, we allow connection to our feelings, which leads to awareness and healing. However if we disassociate from difficult life experiences, we effectively create and maintain separation.

Furthermore, if we bring this pattern of disconnecting, into other areas of our multifaceted lives, we only increase our feelings of estrangement which in turn decreases our feelings of security, in our inner and outer worlds. Then, from a place of fragmentation and fear, we seek to fill the voids of separation through co-dependency in the form of: drugs, alcohol, sex, dysfunctional helping relationships, exploitative relationships, improper use of power, not speaking our truth, and the list goes on. Therefore, disassociation

negatively impacts on our ability to be healthily interdependent.

Personally expressing interconnectedness, interdependence and initiation will bring deep-meaning to our world and is essential for your growth and the flourishing of our collective community. From these solid foundations, we can begin to re-build law, life, community service and governance to resonate with the heart.

Helene Collard has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and is a Reiki Master-Teacher. She lives in the NSW Northern Rivers area with her partner and two young children. Helene is currently offering Reiki courses & treatments, and also workshops for professionals and carers in the area of Secondary Trauma & Self-care. For more information, email: hmcollard@gmail.com



Purebred black-headed Dorper sheep

The old adage "you are what you eat" is grossly underestimated in its simplicity. This short phrase encapsulates the idea that how we feed ourselves has widespread implications not only for our health, but on our environment, and society as a whole.

The way modern industrialised agriculture produces food, for example, locks millions of people out of the food-production process, and while its proponents argue for the "efficiency inherent in large scale production", it is in fact a process ridden with wasted resources and squandered opportunities.

I stood in line at a supermarket the other day. (Yes! Don't tell. I swear I just needed toilet paper.) While in the queue I gazed reflectively out the window. What happened next was something akin to an epiphany crossed with a panic attack. Through the window, across the outline of the township, were beautiful hills, the colour of straw, and the sun was shining. But every paddock was fenced off as private property, and the river water was undrinkable, and unfishable (recently I learned the Richmond is the most toxic river in NSW).

All the food now surrounding me in cans and packets had been produced out of sight, in some cases on the other side of the world, and then locked inside air-conditioned buildings with prices and trademarks attached. If I were to take any of that food without paying for it I would be subject to prosecution. And yet the very lands used to produce such food had more often than not been grabbed unapologetically, nay, violently, with a thousand additional small violences inflicted on people and the planet on its journey to me.

I had read Marx, and campaigned with La Via Campesina, but for some reason it was just at this moment that my intellectual understanding about a separation from the means of production, the disenfranchisement of peoples moved from their hunting, gathering and farming grounds, and the true poverty of modern culture became palpable to me. I looked back at the soft, dull-faced people in line behind me, and tears welled up in me for their impoverishment. We have become so rich, and so poor.

If "we are what we eat" then we're an ex-

Permaculture Principles

with Anastasia Guise

Amazon rainforest grown GM soybean feed-lot beef-burger with the lot. The sauce oozing out of us is closer to paint-stripper than food.

The answer lies, of course, in every version of radically localised, small-scale organic farming and regional inter-reliance we can create.

And, to get back to the beef-burger analogy, one of the most difficult decisions homesteaders make when they take back the power over their food is about the meat. Growing veggies is one thing, but when you start to raise anything bigger than a chicken, you cross the invisible threshold of being a true farmer. You also seem to spend a lot of time fencing. Be it building fencing, mending fencing, or moving fencing, you're always doing it.

The greatest hurdle though is the moral one. I introduced animals into my domestic permaculture system primarily to harness the incredible nutrient translation system that is the ruminant herbivore. I also wanted to maintain a grazed firebreak, and obtain meat. A year later, and the idea of killing and eating last year's lambs isn't exactly compelling.

But this is just the point. When people are in touch with their food – and especially their meat – they are much more likely to appreciate the time and energy spent to obtain it, and the life cycling through it – and us. I remember a home butchering workshop where outraged vegans accused the organisers of promoting one of the most environmentally destructive systems of food production on earth, when the aim was in fact the opposite. Home-raised meat in integrated permaculture systems and feed-lot or factory farming are worlds apart.

When people confront the reality which is meat, they often ultimately choose vegetarianism or veganism. For those who choose to continue eating meat, the way forward is in finding a way with which they feel environmentally and morally comfortable. Either way, the environment wins. If this is what we aspire to as "modern consumer choice", the world would be a much better place.

www.communitypermaculture.com.au

Birth and Beyond



by Kirrah Holborn
'Traditional Wisdom'

Placenta variations

Placentas are like snow flakes – each one completely unique! I've heard so many stories of women not even seeing their placenta after birth. All the attention is on their new baby (and rightly so!) but it can be amazing to have a glance at your baby's 'first room-mate'. Each time I hold a placenta in my hands I am in awe at the incredible organ that the mother grew to nourish her baby.

I recently used water-colours to paint some of the variations that placentas can have. It delighted many mothers, midwives, doulas and placenta lovers around the world, and was viewed by thousands and shared hundreds of times. I want to

share with you what some of these variations look like and what it means.

Normally a human placenta is round like a plate, with a diameter of about 22cm and is about 2-2.5cm thick. It typically weighs about 500 grams (and is usually heavier with bigger babies). It has two very distinct sides.

The maternal side (the side attached to the mother's uterus) is usually deep red/maroon and is made up of lobes (called cotyledons). The foetal side looks like a tree, with veins and arteries running over the surface. The umbilical cord is usually 50-60cm long and has two arteries and a vein. It normally inserts into the middle of the placenta. Just like each baby is unique, each placenta has its own characteristics, and some have variations listed below.

Velamentous insertion

This is when some of the umbilical vessels run through the membranes (rather than attaching directly into the placenta). Although most babies are born fine, this kind of placenta does come with more risks. Because the vessels are unprotected, if the membranes (the bag of waters) is broken, it can puncture the vessels

and cause hemorrhaging. Luckily, all the placentas that I have seen with this variation have all had happy endings.

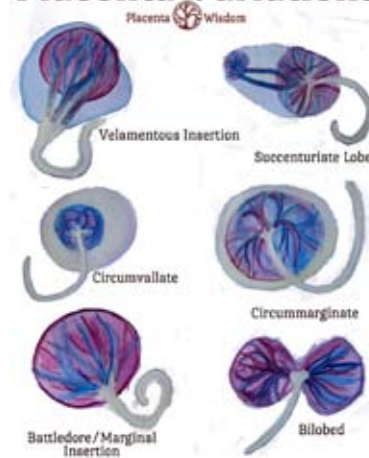
Succentrate lobe

This is an extra lobe that is embedded in the membranes and connected to the main disc of the placenta via arteries/veins. According to radiopaedia.org this occurs in around 2/1000 pregnancies. It's not really known what causes these accessory lobes. One theory put forth by babyworld.co.uk is that a slight irregularity or tiny scar on the uterine wall makes a small area inhospitable to the growing placenta, forcing a lobe to 'move over' and grow elsewhere. Some lobes are attached directly to the placenta via a 'parenchymal bridge', this is called a digitate lobe.

Bi-lobed

This is when the placenta has two near equal-sized lobes. It may form if the uterus is an unusual shape. It can also be caused by one part of the placenta implanting in the front of the uterus and another part of the placenta attaching to the back of the uterus. It is NOT caused by a twin pregnancy (even though this is a common myth). According to radiopaedia.org it is estimated to occur in around 4% of pregnancies.

Placenta Variations



Circumvallate

This is when the fetal membranes create an edge of double folded membranes. It creates a thickened ring that makes a smaller circle (inwards from the edge of the placenta). The exact cause is unknown but midwife Patricia Edmonds says it can be caused by abnormal implantation of the placenta and the placenta and uterine wall growing at different rates.

Circummarginate

On this placenta, the point where the membranes attach is inside the edge of the placenta. The margin is thin and flat (whereas the circumvallate placenta has a thick ridge).

Battledore/marginal insertion

This is when the umbilical cord inserts into the rim of the placenta (rather than in the middle). It is called 'battledore' because the placenta looks like a racket used in the game battledore (similar to badminton). If the umbilical cord inserts not quite centrally and not quite on the margin, it is called an eccentric insertion.

So, next time you have the chance to look at a placenta (maybe your own!), ask your midwife to explain all the different parts and see if you can pick any variations. If you aren't really up for looking at it straight after birth, get someone to take photos so you can look when you're ready.

I've had clients not want to look at afterbirth, but become curious later, and are glad to have photos! If you've already birthed, do you remember what your placenta looked like?

Kirrah Holborn provides pregnancy and postpartum support in the Northern Rivers. She runs monthly holistic antenatal classes, gives nurturing pregnancy massages and provides safe and reliable placenta services. For the chance to win a pregnancy massage text your name and email to 0429 308 851 or visit: www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

Healing crisis vs suppression

by Leannrah, Naturopath

Suppressive medicine is any treatment that masks symptoms of illness and temporarily silences the discomfort felt by altering and often blocking, physiological mechanisms... weakening the subject's vital response to external insults and toxins.

In contrast, medicine nudges the subject's vital force into action in order to allow the vital force and nature to take its own course.

Long term effects of suppressive medicine and treatment are serious. Building one layer of disease upon the other – transmuting annoying health issues into life threatening disease.

For example, a skin rash can be suppressed with prescription creams and medication and may be silenced for awhile, leading you to believe there was a 'cure'... when in fact it may have been suppressed, coming back again, unaffected by the same medicine and now expressed in the more vital organs of respiration, instead of just the surface skin. Please, never stop or change the taking of your prescribed medications before consulting your doctor.

If you are no longer responding to prescribed medications or modified lifestyle factors and you are still sick or getting sicker? One option is some form of detox.

Detoxification is not recommended to the very young, old or those low in vitality, e.g. post serious illness, and those with life threatening diseases such as heart and kidney disease. Maybe it is in order to rebuild and nutritify before a deeper detox is going to benefit the vitality of the subject? Or they may be better off being palliated for better quality life 'til death.

The art of detoxification is the speciality of the naturopath. They will need to know all the medications,



supplements and recent pathology tests taken, in order to treat you as a whole. Naturopathic treatment programs given to you should be presented to your doctor at your usual visit, so they know the health and natural medicine program you are already following. A naturopathic prescription will often include: lifestyle modifications, body treatments, dietary changes, herbs, homoeopathics, flower essences and supplements. Detoxification programs can be simple and easy to comply with. A program may include removal of one or more: supplement, food, liquid, self prescribed medication, recreational substance, and/or adding: pure water, fresh food, herbs, homoeopathics, flower essences, body treatment and supplements.

Detoxification symptoms and signs may include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, bad breath, wind and heart burn, flatulence, coughing up mucous, smelly sweat, night sweats, palpitations and anxiety, increased urination, bouts of anger and sadness, easily stressed, strongly reactive within relationships, increased sleeping, and lack of confidence in the healing process.

A healing crisis is usually in the form of detoxification as a stage in the process of healing, before things get better. The rubbish has to come out before the correct nutrients can get in and support the vital force to do its work. This stage should not usually last more than a few days and afterwards the subject should be feeling better than ever – responding to medications, supplements and lifestyle factors in a vital way. It is important to remember you are not yourself during a detox and the rubbish will pass. The naturopathic advice is important to follow through with, or you run the risk of staying in a toxic state without receiving its benefit. Touch base with the naturopath during this phase to see if it is safe to continue.

Leannrah has been in private practice as a naturopath for almost 13 years.

She is available for appointment in Wiangaree at the Turquoise House all days. Wiangaree is a 10 minute drive north of Kyogle, where you'll find a medicine garden, colour healing studio and a well-stocked natural medicines dispensary. Phone for appointment: 6636-2356 or 0439-198-977.

True sustainability

If you want to talk about sustainability, let's start by going deep within, and accessing those extremely subtle yet powerful, naturally occurring elements, the components of true wellbeing.

These elements are freely available to all of us, whatever our status, and come with no harmful side effects and that in many cases are what our addictive substances are attempting to mimic.

Freedom from addiction means being rewarded with this wonderful state of balance and harmony: a place where there is no more need for the compensation of foreign substances, a place of total self-reliance. The only way to count on these "magic" neurotransmitters being there when you need them is to release all those overpowering, extraneous chemicals completely.

Addictive substances work by depleting and overriding our natural systems, creating all manner of problems in the process, a completely unsustainable situation, one which is stretching things to the limit, and beyond. To manage today's world, convenience is the word, feelings and physical needs have to be dealt with right there and then as they arise, we can reward or compensate ourselves straight from the packet, or the bottle. This approach can cost us everything in the long term.

As convenience increases to unsustainable levels, there is a corresponding decline in the quality of life, leading to an impossible state of unmanageable inconvenience. Using powerful substances like alcohol, cannabis, tobacco,



by David Ward
Life action coach

caffeine and refined sugar to run our bodies, is akin to using a sledge-hammer to crack a walnut. The subtlety of what we were originally endowed with can easily be lost when we're saturated with the full range of overpowering essential substitutes.

Having fully adjusted and calibrated to running on my body's own personal range of chemicals, I can truly say that for me the level of satisfaction they provide outweighs all those once-craved substances put together.

Sitting in meditation and feeling that pleasant, slightly dizzying sensation as one neurotransmitter or another is released in my brain; or following a yoga session, experiencing that powerful energy coursing throughout my body as it propels me, almost floating along: these are just some of the many things that make this sustainable life so completely satisfying.

For guidance and support in achieving this conversion, contact David at Vital Choices on 0447-820-510,

Depression and treatment

Depression is diagnosed as feeling sad or blue for two or more weeks. It is characterised by two things: self blame and rumination (thoughts that go round and round and round your head). Both paralyse decision making skills, feelings of well being, and the ability to move on in one's life.



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

Depression, which is essentially a fear-based response to events, relationships and psychophysiological conditions, can lead to dropping out of society, losing one's job, ceasing to create, developing heart disease, over-eating, under-eating, smoking, chronic resentment against self and world, smoking and other addictive habits. Major depression is a growing concern, world-wide. The World Health Organization identifies it as the fourth most significant cause of disability in the world.

So what is depression? There are many views on this, many perspectives and it rather depends on how you see the world. Contributing factors include biology: genetics (though no depressed gene has been located), biochemical contributions (serotonin, a breakdown in the auto-immune response, etc), health, exercise, and diet. There are the psychological factors: your individual temperament, coping style, attributional style (that is, how you view what happens to you in different circumstances), your personal history, and so on.

And the social factors: the quality of your relationships, the culture in which you live, isolation, and so on. Depression is contextual in the sense that it arises in response to something. Interestingly, it seems to have a capacity to be spread (witness the proliferation of deeply depressed adolescents through online sharing of gothic thoughts and cutting). In other words, there are many contributors to whether a person becomes depressed or not.

Childhood experiences, including the quality of support you've experienced from your care givers, modeling and what you've learned from your family as to how they cope with loss and adversity may contribute to the likelihood of having depression, but not necessarily. What's more important is how a person responds to ongoing processes, how they use information, how they form relationships, and how they interpret the meaning of things that happen to them. Socialization continues throughout life and our

coping skills are also being developed throughout life. This means we can learn not to follow a pattern that we used in previous times to manage life's situations.

Treatment of depression ranges from medication, electroconvulsive therapy, diet, exercise and psychotherapy. A single-pronged approach is not likely to work, and doesn't in many cases. Treating those diagnosed with depression with anti-depressants such as serotonin-reuptake inhibitors is often believed by patients to be sufficient, but, one, anti-depressants don't work for everybody (they just don't work in the way researchers thought they would) and the problems that exacerbated the condition in the first place are still there.

Some interesting research is going on in Leiden, The Netherlands, on the thesis that depression is an inflammatory problem and the use of probiotics seems to have the effect of lessening the inflammation in the body. Probiotics have been found to cut down the propensity for rumination.

Exercise fills the body-mind with good endorphine hormones and feeling good clears the depression away. It's hard getting oneself motivated, however. The use of hypnotherapy at this level is very useful, as it is on other levels as well.

Psychotherapies that concentrate on present issues are found to be more effective than those that go back over

old stuff. This is because certain psychodynamic therapies work using rumination, and rumination, as I've indicated, is a characteristic of depression. So a therapy (eg cognitive behavioral, interpersonal and hypnotherapy) that refocuses on what takes a person out of their problem story is more likely to be successful here in changing things.

A metaphor might help. Imagine someone walking through the bush for the first time. This is like thinking about something in a novel way. If, for whatever reason, the person goes that exact same way the next day, and the day after that and the day after that, the pathway gets worn down: old patterns are repeated, negative thought patterns are reiterated, neural circuits become circular, and it's really difficult to leave the pathway because it has created such a crevasse in the landscape that getting out is now really hard. The walker has sort of forgotten how to walk innovatively. Hypnotherapy can change that, using – possibly – this, or another tailor-made visualization. The creation of a means out of depression needs to be as individual as the person suffering depression. The reason for their depression is as unique to them as their remedy. The remedy, I think, should be holistic, but first and foremost, supported by a therapist who understands the interconnection of all these processes.

Blood stagnation

by Brigid Beckett

Stagnant blood is a concept in Chinese medicine describing a disruption to the healthy circulation of qi and blood that, as the name would suggest, can have serious consequences. Good blood and qi flow is essential to all aspects of health and wellbeing.

It can have a sudden onset as in the case of trauma, but more often comes on slowly as a result of other imbalances.

Blood and qi flow together, qi moves blood and blood nourishes qi. Flow of qi and blood determines the health of the whole body. Moving qi and blood can address a wide range of problems.

Pain is the most common sign of blood stagnation. In the case of acute trauma and inflammation blood stagnates locally. The stagnation will usually affect an area rather than just the diagnosed local anatomical structure. Trigger points indicate stagnation in myofascial tissue.

More chronically degenerative changes can cause stagnation. But this is not inevitable. Degenerative changes seen on x-rays for example may or may not cause pain. Moving blood can relieve symptoms without having to reverse these processes, which is why acupuncture works well in many cases that have quite severe radiological changes.

While external causes such as trauma can cause pain, the internal organs will

also affect qi and blood flow. Liver, kidney or spleen disorders can be detrimental to qi and blood flow, predisposing to injury. In these cases injury can result from even normal activity.

Cold constricts blood vessels and will often make pain worse. Damp also slows circulation, it can be external or from spleen dysfunction. The heat of inflammation will condense and stagnate blood.

Tumours and solid masses are the result of long standing blood stagnation. While some can be treated by moving blood and treating the underlying cause of stagnation, it is obviously better to address the stagnation before it reaches this stage. Other indications of severe blood stagnation are purplish or blue lips and tongue and distended veins.

As well as musculoskeletal pain, stagnation can cause pain anywhere. For example stomach, intestines, uterus. Whenever there is pain or discomfort there is qi and blood stagnation. Stagnation primarily affecting the liver causes menstrual pain or abdominal pain generally. If in the heart, stabbing chest pain and restlessness will occur. In the lungs, symptoms are a tight chest and chronic cough. Stagnant blood in the stomach causes epigastric pain, in the intestine, severe abdominal pain.

All parts of the body depend on healthy qi and blood flow. Aside from



pain, other examples of situations involved in blood stagnation are:

- Insomnia – either from blood stagnating from head trauma or from chronic illness;
- Cough of chronic lung disease;
- Head injury symptoms such as headaches, deafness, seizures;
- Urinary obstruction;
- Tingling or numbness of extremities; and
- Non-healing ulcers.

Many Western medicines, particularly those that treat pain, but also many others, have a blood moving element, which is why many of them decrease blood clotting to an extent, either as an intended effect or side effect. Aspirin is a well-known example. This again points to the fact that if stagnation exists, moving blood will be beneficial in many ways.

If on long term blood moving medication, either herbal or pharmaceutical, a blood and qi tonic treatment should be added, as long-term blood moving alone will deplete qi further, as well as treatment to address the pattern that caused stagnation in the first place.

Acupuncture treatments for blood stagnation will often include warming moxa to further move blood, or cupping. The purplish marks sometimes left by cupping occur when stagnant blood has moved. Moving blood and qi is necessary and effective for many conditions.

Brigid Beckett is a qualified acupuncturist working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. She can be contacted on 0431-702-560

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