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Nimbin farmers market – it's official!

by Jason Grignon

The Nimbin Farmers Market first started back in April 2014, and how we began was rather unusual.

We never approached Lismore Council for approval for this market site and time, instead we decided to just go for it.

We had our doubts that the market would be well received, though very quickly those doubts were put aside and we have not looked back.

The market has enjoyed such amazing community support and loyalty, making it a real Wednesday feature in town.

With so much success, we began the task of applying for a development application with the Council last year.

We are very pleased to say that we have finally finished that process and have gotten approval to keep the market in town, between the post office and the Green Bank every Wednesday afternoon between 3pm and 6 pm.



Photo: Nikki J Long Photography

I would like to thank every one of the stall holders, volunteer committee members and customers who come week in and week out to make this fabulous market possible.

Kylie Cain at the Greenbank has been really supportive of the market, even when we probably

should have worn out our welcome, thanks Kylie.

The support from the NNIC crew of Natalie Meyer and Guy Stewart, as well as all the others working there, gave us so much help in the application process, enabling us to keep this market going, good on you guys, you're legends!

Thanks Mal Rothwell and Lesley Chong as well as Ross and Sharon Pentreath for the use of the space. And of course the Nimbin community for supporting us, and helping us create a really positive thriving space for our local foods.

Thanks everyone. So see you Wednesday!

Grow your own sub-tropical vegetables

by Jim Arachne

A workshop is being held in March to teach you about growing vegetables that flourish in hot, wet and humid conditions – a typical sub-tropical Lismore summer.

Most of the European vegetables brought over to Australia, such as carrots, broccoli, lettuce or french beans, just don't cope. Instead, why not try growing vegetables that love our summers?

They're generally unfamiliar to Western gardeners but in their countries of origin are eaten by millions of people as staple crops. Examples are tropical greens such as Egyptian and Brazilian spinach, climbers like snake gourd and winged beans (pictured), and underground vegetables such as yam and cassava.

As well as thorough information on a range of vegetables, workshop



participants will also receive cultivation notes and recipes for each vegetable, a tour through a productive Lismore garden to examine a range of tropical vegetables, a tropical vegetable seed catalogue plus some seedlings and sample tastings.

The workshop presenters, Jim and Mij, grew up on farms growing vegetables in cold areas with below freezing temperatures and occasional snow.

On moving to the Northern Rivers, neither could find any easily available information on growing vegetables especially suited to the wet summers. So both set out to learn as much as possible about this. Information in the workshop is drawn from their direct experiences of growing and cooking tropical vegetables on a local community.

Jim and Mij are convenors of the Nimbin Seed Exchange and Jim is a past organiser and secretary of the Blue Knob Farmer's Market and convenor of the Nimbin Biodynamic Group.

The workshop will be held on Saturday 19th March, 10am-1pm at a Lismore vegetable garden – details on Registration. The workshop fee is \$30/\$20 concession, payable on the day. Registration is essential, as numbers are limited to 15 to allow all participants to fully participate. To register, please send your name plus phone and email details to Jim at: uloborid8@gmail.com

Co-op powers forward

In 2016, the Nimbin Food Co-op is powering forward with an expanded team of volunteers, coordinators, and stock lines, with plenty of community support.

Many of you will have noticed the shiny new drinks fridge gracing our storefront. It's full of high quality, delicious, organic and local beverages. Local producers Red Dragon Organics, based in Goonellabah, provided an interest free loan to support the purchase. Red Dragon drinks are available front and centre in the new drinks fridge – grab one and experience food as medicine and medicine as food.

In the new year we have experienced a big increase

in stock turnover, between 200-500% on last year. This fantastic, positive feedback tells us the community is appreciating the quality foods, groceries and new products the Co-op is making available.

This increase also means plenty more work cleaning, restocking, and processing orders. We're calling out to members to sign up and volunteer in the shop. Drop in to find out more, or leave your contact details and our volunteer coordinator will be in touch.

It's a great time to become a volunteer – new volunteers receive a 20% discount, increasing to a 30% loyalty discount after three months.



Big thanks to Lisa Green, who has stepped back from the heroic task of volunteer co-ordinator.

Recently joining the Co-ordinators line up are Laurinda Harradine for admin, Anna King for quality control, Danielle

Sledge and James Creagh for bulk foods, Sarah Pretorius for cleaning, and Belinda Marsh taking over as volunteer co-ordinator.

Check out our Facebook page and website: nimbinfoodcoop.org for more info and updates.

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Café Blue Knob is eating outside the box at Easter

by Joline Shervey

Achieving long-lasting health is not a well-kept secret: commitment, self-love – and staying creative in the kitchen. In that spirit, Cafe Blue Knob dedicated March 2016 to creative food fermentation.

Of course, the speakers and stallholders at the Annual Blue Knob Farmers Market Fermentation Festival have had much more to say about the health benefits and how's and why's of probiotic food preparation. The cafe, on the other hand, has more to add about being creative with fermented foods.

We love new food combination ideas, to break the common eating rules; to eat outside the box. Rather than making a simple sauerkraut – and simple doesn't mean not delicious, we might spice it up with some lemon, garlic and dill? We all know food trends and spontaneous whiffs of "I am going to change my diet" intentions. And we also do know it takes discipline and real commitment to actually make such changes permanent and to not slip back to the old habits.

Our answer to that issue is simple: creativity, and having fun. Thinking outside the box when cooking is a great way to stay interested and curious about eating



healthy and remaining on course to provide healthy, often probiotic meals for your family and yourself.

Why buy the condiments with all the sugars and oils (and whatever else) added, when homemade is really fast, healthier and one can easily ferment them? How does a pear pecan nut chutney on your beef burger sound, or a kefir mango roasted macadamia ice cream?

Why not challenge yourself into discovering, testing and eating one new recipe a week that excites you and provides the benefits aligned with your personal health journey? Let us know what you discover! We are sooooo curious.

In general, the café is excited to make a fermented ketchup, mayonnaise and even a tomato basil mustard with some bite by

using whey, salt or kombucha to create foods with those healthy gut bacteria. The homemade kombucha is well sought after with fresh real raspberry or passionfruit flavours. Also, the café makes its own fermented sour cream to offer light sour cream pancakes. Doesn't that sound delicious?

And we are going to put these new dishes out there at our Easter Extravaganza 'Eating outside the box' Family Gourmet Buffet on the 27th March where all these delights are combined with international gourmet Easter cuisines. And you get a first-hand experience of how delicious and fun Easter and health can taste. It will start from 12.30pm and bookings are now welcome. Do not miss it!

Café Blue Knob Schedule March

- ♦ Saturday 5th March, 9am-2pm – Annual Blue Knob Farmers Market Fermentation Festival with talks, workshops, stalls and special fermentation menu.
- ♦ Sunday 27th March, 12.30pm – 'Easter Extravaganza Family Gourmet Buffet' (bookings required): \$39 per head (children \$18). RSVP by 23rd March.
- ♦ Thursday 31st March, 12.30pm – Artists & Friends Lunch with exclusive two course meal: meat \$24 /vegetarian \$19. Bookings required. Phone for bookings (02) 6689-7449 / 0416-616-804.

Fermented Tomato Sauce

Café Blue Knob shares a favourite fermentation recipe: a probiotic catch-up for pasta, fries, pizza etc

Ingredients

- 3 tins of organic strained tomatoes (each 400g)
- 1 organic tomato paste (140g)
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp organic onion powder
- 1/2 tsp organic mustard powder
- 1 tsp Celtic sea salt
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup organic maple syrup (and stevia if you like it sweeter)
- Dash cayenne pepper, optional

1/4 cup whey or kombucha (whey can be derived by draining probiotic yoghurt)

Method

Pour tomatoes and tomato paste in a large bowl. Add garlic, onion powder, powdered mustard, cloves, allspice, and salt. Whisk together.

Stir in vinegar, maple syrup and whey or kombucha. If you like thinner ketchup, add water to your desired consistency.

Pour into 3-pint jars, cap, and let sit at room temperature two days to ferment. Transfer to refrigerator when fermented. This lasts for months in the refrigerator.

For any questions or more info call Joline 0416-616-804 or (07) 6689-7449.



The Profound Arts of 'live' fermentation and preservation

by Thom Culpeper

Fermentation is the 'new' name of the food game and the 'old' art of 'living' food. Modern health demands tend to mitigate against the wisdom of the ancient food preservation arts, regulation for market, canning and bottling 'killing' the proven benefits of low energy, natural fermentation.

In Zymology, the science of fermentation, many of the insights into these metabolic processes were described by the French Microbiologist Louis Pasteur in his oft cited, 1857 paper, *Studies on Fermentation* after the three works in 1837 by Cagniard de la Tour, Kuetzing and Swan showed that fermentation was a 'live' process and that yeast's multiplying by budding, creating and resulting in by-products that altered the original families of inputs, i.e.

brewing and cheese-making, thus demonstrating that specific micro-organisms were responsible for specific *living* biological processes. Work then proceeded and lead to the great insight by Eduard Buechner (Nobel Laureate 1904) describing the existence of 'enzymic' action that is now applied to most fermentation.

The term fermentation is derived from the Latin verb 'fevere', to boil. It's documented history in the East includes China (7000-6500 BCE), Ancient Egypt (3200) Babylon (3000), Mexico (2000). One culture, the Balts, held one of their deities, Rugutis, worthy of worship as they held he was responsible for all fermentation.

The sky pilots, through their various Earth-bound rumour-mongers have claimed various agency and laws on the cultural notions of food and booze.

Modernity through mass communication has resulted in a cross-cultural melange of cuisines that are putting to flight some of these culturally isolated views on matters of food preparation.

The lactic acid bacterium *Lactobacillus 'Kimchii'* (Yoon et al, 2000) is the specific bacteriocin found in the Korean fermented vegetable Kimchiis. Other agents, enzymes etc., participate in this vegetable specific process, but this bacteria and its modern strains is the one that will concern us.

Most foods have as part of their ecology, a resident hosted family of micro-organisms that time has modified to suit the environment that the food is propagated in. The lacto-bacteria-brine ferment is an anaerobic-acid oxygen-free environment that mitigates against the toxins produced by the botulism-producing bacteria.

The brassica families, the cabbages etc. host, in symbiosis, species specific bacteria and yeasts. The European cabbage *Brassica oleracea 'Capita Group'* is utilised for the production of the sauerkrauts and has the lacto-bacteria needed on their surface, salt being all that is needed for the initial ferment.

Kimchiis are produced from the Chinese cabbage, *Brassica rapa 'Pekinensis Group'*, and specifically the

'Napa' selections which are fermented to make Bossam-kimchiis. Sea salt again is all that is used initially.

Here is a recipe for a basic Kimchii ferment.

Kimchii Yangbaechu

Ingredients

- 4 kilos (2 heads) of Napa cabbage
- 100gms sea salt (not table salt)

Remove outer leaves, cut the cabbage in half length ways, split these halves into quarters, leaving the quarters attached at the base, moisten the leaves with water and rub the salt between the leaves, roll the cabbage two or three times to allow the salt to penetrate for about 2-3 hours.

Rinse three times, removing the salt and any soil that may have been lodged in between the leaves. Drain well over a sink.

Kimchii sauce

Porridge:

- 75 gms glutinous rice flour
- 90 gms demerara, light muscovado, coconut, palm or light brown sugar
- 650 mls cold water

Add the flour to the water and cook and stir till it starts to bubble, add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Stand aside to cool completely.

Spices:

- 30 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 large onion (minced)
- 150 gms ginger (peeled and chopped)
- 250 gms pepper flakes



(Korean) 200 mls fish sauce. Some do not use this material due to diet requirements. Balacan thinned in water can be used. 15 gms shredded dried bonito (optional) 50 gms of salty shrimp with brine (fermented) (optional) Combine all of the spices of choice with the cooled rice porridge, blend with immersion beater until smooth.

Herbs and vegetables for addition:

- 200 gms of Daikon radish (julienned)
- 150 gms of carrot (julienned)
- 100 gms of garlic chives (cut to about 45mls)
- 8-10 shallots (cut to 30mls)
- 1 small thin leek (cut to 20mls)
- 250 gms of firm but ripe plums (optional)

Make up:

Blend ¼ of the pepper spice paste with the herb and vegetable mix. Add

the seeded plums. Coat the wilted cabbage leave with the remaining paste, roll and pack tightly into a ceramic crock, a lidded food grade plastic container with a brewer's air lock or a large glass jar. Gloves please!

Use fresh or allow to ferment for a week or so. This kimchii will keep for quite a long time (months) if kept cool (below 20c) or refrigerated. Press the mix below the level of the sauce to allow the ferment to proceed naturally; this keeps any oxygen from the ferment.

A white bloom may appear on the top of the kimchii, this is natural and generally harmless, should you not like this then scoop it off and hurl it.

There're many variants on this basic recipe – experiment and get to enjoy a very healthy, energy-saving, super food. thewholeearthveg@gardener.com



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Plant of the month

Creek Lilly Pilly
Acmena smithii var minor

by Richard Burer

A small bushy tree to 6m, Creek Lilly Pilly is the holder of our soils in the dynamic environment of our powerful water flowing creeks, rivers and streams.

Usually short and branching from the base, Creek Lilly Pilly can form guarding thickets along streams where its shrubby habit seems often impenetrable.

Common in the area, Narrow leaf Lilly Pilly can be found on most streams and watercourses in the Nimbin/Tweed/Websters Valleys.

Easy to grow – collect the purple fruits this coming Autumn.

ENVIRONMENT CENTRES NEWS

by Stewart James, president

There's often a natural tension between defenders of the environment and pro-business interests because commercial activities typically involve processes or outputs which, if not thoughtfully and conscientiously managed, can have adverse environmental outcomes. But, as pioneer environmentalist Lester Brown once observed, "The economy depends on the environment. If there is no environment, if everything is destroyed, there is no economy."

And so it is with the issue of native vegetation and animals and farming. Farmers need to clear land to farm but there's also a need to preserve biodiversity in flora and fauna, protect soils and vegetation, protect endangered species, and make farming practices ecologically sustainable for the long term.

And while probably most farmers have the best interests of the environment at heart and are guided by a moral code which aims to leave their land better than they found it, commercial pressures, ignorance about potential environmental impacts and a fiercely proud sense that "I know what's best for my land and I'll do whatever I like" can and sometimes does lead to bad practices and environmental harm.

Over many decades state legislation has been developed and enacted to regulate land clearing and tree-felling with sustainability as the goal. Whilst numerous Acts apply, the primary pieces of legislation in this space are the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*, *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, *Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001* and parts of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. This regulation has reached a point where some stakeholders feel it has gone too far.

For many years the NSW Farmers Association has put the view that environmental legislation has become so complex and restrictive that it stops farmers getting on and making a living, and that it needs to be wound back to strike a more sensible balance between commerce and conservation. And the Baird government played to this position just days before the last election by signing an MOU with NSW Farmers that they would scrap the *Native*

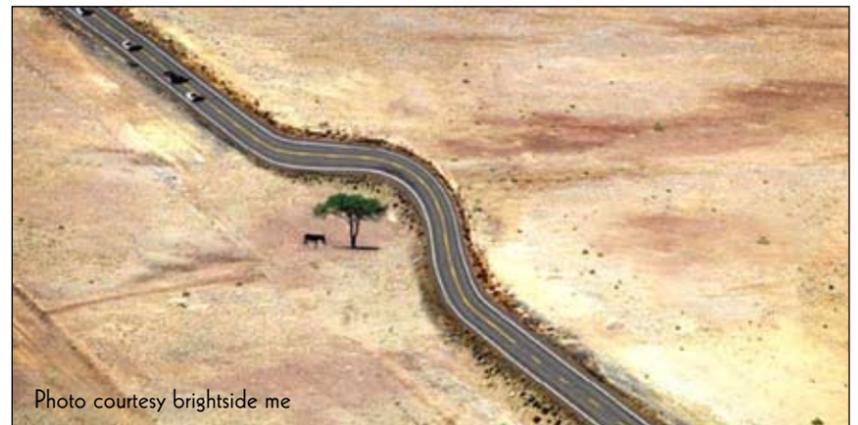


Photo courtesy brightside me

Vegetation Act.

In June 2014 the Baird government duly announced an "Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review". A review panel was convened, background papers published, consultations held, public submissions called and in December 2014 the review panel tabled a final report.

Quoting from the Department for the Environment website, "The panel made 43 recommendations, proposing an integrated package of reforms to deliver on the NSW Government's commitments to cut red tape, facilitate sustainable development and conserve biodiversity."

Since the review report was published the Government has been preparing responses to the recommendations, including new draft legislation, and that's causing a lot of concern in environmental circles. The key existing legislation is to be repealed and replaced with a new *Biodiversity Conservation Act*, a draft of which is due out for public comment next month.

Recently the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and a coalition of similar groups have been sounding the alarm that the proposed new legislation is expected to seriously weaken hard-won protections found in the current laws. A public forum was held recently in Lismore at which they publicised their concerns.

It's expected the new provisions will include potentially risky and damaging features such as a move away from actual site inspections to verify the flora and fauna at particular sites (for example, to verify whether and how many koalas are in trees) in favour of desk audits using maps and aerial/satellite imagery,

and an increasing use of biodiversity offsets which would allow clearing in one location if improvements are made in another, or money is paid into a conservation fund. In other words, paying a fee to do possibly irreparable environmental harm.

The NCC claims that land clearing controls in the *Native Vegetation Act* has succeeded in saving the lives of over one million native animals since being enacted in 2003, and that continuing strict controls on clearing are essential if Australia is to achieve its international commitments on greenhouse gas emission reductions.

With the consent of the NEC committee and membership, I'd like to see NEC join the NCC and its partner organisations to oppose a weakened regulatory framework. While a more efficient and easily understood legal framework is to be welcomed, weakened environmental protections are simply not acceptable.

Despite my opening comments, I don't want to characterise this matter as being a battle of farmers versus greenies. We at NEC welcome the input of eco-conscious local farmers who can help us appreciate the practical implications of the regulations as well as their environmental effects.

For more information and to get involved go online to: standupfornature.org.au You can find a lot of background info, sign a petition to Premier Baird and go on their mailing list to receive updates as the review of the new legislation progresses. Or drop into one of our three Centres to find out more and get involved in influencing this most important reform.

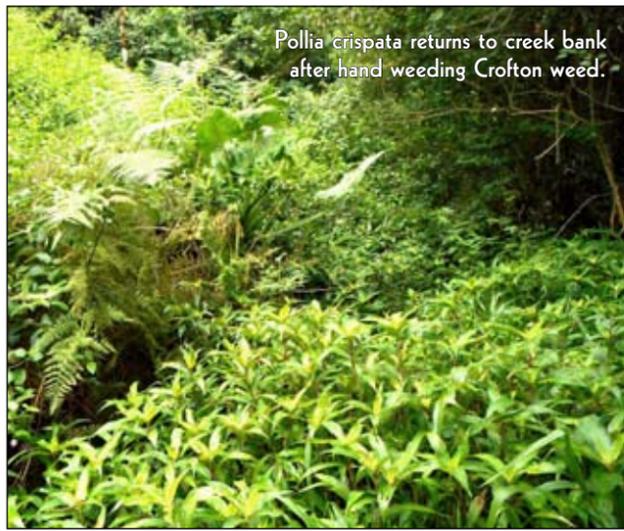
Dealing with crofton weed

Weed Words
with Triny Roe

Living in the Northern Rivers means living with weeds. There will always be weeds. Even if you manage to eliminate some species there will be others, blowing in, carried in by birds, bats or transported on footwear and vehicles. Not to mention the ones we inadvertently plant ourselves, not realising they could become problematic down the track.

So where do you start? First identify what you already have and your intentions. What is it you want to do with your property? Run some cattle or have a pony? Plant an orchard? Turn it back into rainforest? Or design a permaculture garden. Or a bit of everything? The purpose to which you put your place will inform your practice and where you prioritise your efforts.

Some weeds are worse than others and have been classified as 'noxious'. Based on extensive observation and experience these plants have been identified and listed as causing detrimental effect on agricultural production, native bushland and/or social amenity. It's best to get onto these weeds quickly when they first appear. Noxious weeds have an ability to grow fast, reproduce in



Pollia crispata returns to creek bank after hand weeding Crofton weed.

huge numbers and spread rapidly. Landholders have a responsibility to manage these species to reduce their further impact and distribution.

After generations of farming, when the land was heavily cleared, many landholders are now restoring native forest. Bush regeneration techniques include the Bradley Method, pioneered and described by Joan and Eileen Bradley in the 1960's. These sisters, who reclaimed many hectares of Sydney bushland, advocated minimal disturbance, allowing natural recruitment in a gradual process. Mindful that some native birds and animals use many of the weeds for habitat and food, too much at once could

have an adverse impact. Work from areas of least density towards the thicker patches. Search for outlying specimens and remove them first. Follow up is essential.

Crofton weed, *Ageratina adenophora*, can be strategically weeded. It has shallow loose roots and is easily hand-pulled. Flowering only once a year in Summer, target this plant in Winter for maximum effect. As well as displacing native ground covers in rain forests and riparian zones, crofton is toxic to horses, though it may take a few years to affect them.

Current threats to food production in the Northern Rivers includes Bunchy Top, a serious viral disease of bananas transmitted by

aphids. This disease was recently identified in an old overgrown banana farm near Dunoon and may have been spreading from there for some years. If you think you might have Bunchy Top in your bananas call the BT hotline: 1800 068 371.

The wild seeded banana, introduced from Thailand as an ornamental, can also harbour this disease and its vector agent. The seeded banana plants, found growing in this region's National Parks and along creek banks and roadsides, create an opportunity for bunchy top to spread to other commercial banana plantations as well as banana patches on hobby farms and in backyards. It could be coming to a garden near you!

There is also a risk the wild bananas will displace native species in the rainforest. Seeded bananas can mature and produce fruit from 12 to 18 months. Bats feed on the fruit and distribute the seed to new areas. Seed can remain viable for seven years, waiting to break dormancy at an opportune moment. Young plants can be easily dug out as their roots are shallow.

Regular inspections will ensure new species can be identified quickly and dealt with appropriately before they entrench, take over your land and spread to the neighbour's.

Culture of life

by Geoff Dawe

Unless philosophy accompanies science, science can lose track of necessity and be used only for the generation of technologies. Ensuring technologies are minimised in the development of a post-industrial society, requires education of technics subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics balanced with the humanities.

Nevertheless, Australia with paucity of manufacturing industry, apparently sees technology proficiency as a major support to its future economy. *The Daily Telegraph* (7/12/2015) reports that the federal government is poised to "lure the world's brightest technologists to establish start-up companies ..."

Scientific research currently implies that the side-effects of technologies at exponential rates lead to the death of a planet. The only way for this technological momentum to continue is with indoctrination of humans to consumerism, or the people need to go automatically into denial, or the issue needs to become "that which cannot be spoken", or the environment has to become a separate issue to technological innovation.

All four appear to be in operation.

The culture appears to be locking itself steadily into the illusion that economic sustainability is the only path to sustainability. It isn't. It has been well established that sustainability occurs with balance between the economic, the social and the environmental.

The major issue confronting humanity

is that excessive economic dependence currently experienced by the West, is highly addictive, unsustainable and that habits can be difficult to change.

The gap between an industrial culture creating a dead planet and a culture of life, requires humans noticing the way nature has been all-supplying, and that humans have made a mistake in insisting this is not true.

Nanotechnologies for example, are presently being implemented in medicine while there is limited enquiry into the possibility that what humans are eating, drinking and breathing in has deteriorated markedly since the beginnings of civilization and this will obviously affect human health.

Science cannot unassailably say that there are no deteriorating effects of running a nanotechnology, even if it is very small, through the body. No doubt its long-term harmful effects will be noticed in the long-term!

Scientists looking at nanotechnology are more willing to publicly broadcast now that medicines can be toxic presumably because a new technological "saviour" is on its way. *The Newcastle Herald* (7/12/15) reports a senior lecturer in the health and medical faculty at the University of Newcastle, Dr. Hua, says that presently medications 'go anywhere' in the body and they can be toxic.

Nanotechnologies, like pin-point bombing, potentially go straight to the source of the problem without, it is presumed, collateral damage. Like pin point bombing the enquiry is not into the causes of human dysfunction, just



Courtesy pics-about-space.com

bombing it when it occurs.

If enquiry is implemented into what human bodies are ingesting, that might make more relevant an economic base that is primarily fruit and nut trees, tubers and accompanying vegetable gardens. This is based on the knowledge that of the three economic needs of humans: food, clothing and shelter, food is the primary requirement.

It is entirely possible that what is on humanity's plate at this time is its second major experience after the first, of an animal becoming human. What is coming up for examination is humanity's constant tendency to engage in the animal passions rather than transcend them. An animal with amazing technological facility becomes a nuisance on the planet, unless it takes on a more human requirement to suspend gratification.

An economy of life has no efficacy in an industrialised system. The more people are willing to produce the culture of life, the more they impoverish themselves in their ability to procure manufactured goods, but there is no doubt soil, water and air all improve.

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Permaculture Principles with Anastasia Guise

When I get home it takes a little while to adjust. I've been out, amongst all those things promising me they provide the key to a better me, a better world.

All that brain-washing dream-squashing green-washing mania. All that tarmac and highway, all those people rushing past me full of self importance, without words or eye contact or any of those fundamental communicative functions social mammals evolved to get along.

Their car blinkers are my sole clue to the hopes, loves and dreams clanging in the hearts of these people, and even then plenty of them fail to signal.

Somehow their spectacled faces and bulging wallets and giant cars linger in my mind like sad ghosts, ghosts who seem to silently implore me to join them.

Lonely ghosts.

This might be me or you some days; it's all of us. Basically blameless decent people in a bad movie.

It's why I don't go out much. So I don't feel like the mad

odd one out.

Here at home there is life everywhere. The grasshoppers have chewed through so much of my summer garden's remnants I may as well eat them instead. The lacewings hold on to the flowers shooting out of the red mizuna in a kind of daring game of charades. The birds dive-bomb a brown tree snake which clings precariously onto the end of a slender bamboo stalk. There is dirt and grass, and the weeds are popping up everywhere.

Hardly a trace of me.

It's like I have walked back into somebody else's life – some busy person who's just popped out, leaving soup simmering on the stove and basil on the windowsill. Their aromas have filled the house in my absence, and everyone has arrived for the party.

But while the whirling distractions of the world outside my house take their time to clear from my head, home feels kind of shabby. The paint job seems dull and unprofessional, and the dirt paths go against everything those home improvement magazines shout about.

My once-stalwart sanctuary is suddenly revealed as a

glorified box of dreams, its importance only the value I have placed upon it, its existence both precarious and exceedingly temporary.

Neither the dirt nor grass missed me. There are things I have built which are falling down but I guess here is where I fall down too.

It's what I love about what I do. With the dirt under my fingernails, I'm reminded of how inextricably linked we all are to the biosphere, the place to which we will all ultimately return. In fact, we never arrived and we'll never leave, really. We are here all along.

Admittedly there is not a lot of glamour here. It's a humbling experience, to be unimportant. There's no make-up, dress-up or even break-up. No-one's selling or buying, I might be lonely but I'm no ghost.

And there is grandeur, the grandeur I share but can't own. When I raise my eyes the sky is magnificent, the birds are wheeling overhead, and the breeze is blowing clear my mind.

It's as close to home as I can get.

www.communitypermaculture.com.au

Yoga for your injuries?

by Cameron Storey

By the time I was 26 years old, my body was broken in so many ways.

One cyst in each wrist from tennis, multiple tears in the ankle ligaments of both ankles from orienteering, back and knee injuries from running, a neck injury from judo, four dislocated shoulders from white-water kayaking and skiing, chronic fatigue and reoccurring tonsillitis from a deficient immune system due to over training.

I was recommended for three surgical procedures: removal of cysts, removal of tonsils and a shoulder pinning operation. "Ah, thanks but no thanks." Maybe yoga is worth a try?

When I walked into my first yoga class I was the stiffest and least capable student in the class and I would hold that title for quite a while. My yoga teacher Shandor Remete used to say, "You have the body of a 90 year old." He was right, so I decided to commit to a regular practice and cut back on other activities for a while and see what happened.

The yoga standing poses slowly strengthened my ankles which healed perfectly. The forward bends lengthened my super short hamstrings, which helped my knees, but over months not weeks like I had hoped. Patience: my new mantra.

The back and neck injuries went through waves of feeling good after class and then feeling stiff again the next morning and took around three months to come good. The return of my energy over the

next year was due to the supported inversions with props, which surprised me as they seemed so gentle. The cysts just evaporated, along with the tonsil infections, helped no doubt by resting in relaxation, which boosts the immune

system functioning. The shoulder injuries took the longest to heal, about three years, but considering the doctor had said, "Your shoulder will never be the same again without surgery," I didn't mind persevering.

Did yoga change my body and my life? Oh yeah. But more so it changed the way I thought. How I approached life, how I balanced life, how to not force the body but nurture it and help it adapt slowly over time to be able to do amazing things while maintaining a one-pointed focused mind or a broad non-reactive meditative mind. From casual classes to a comprehensive five-year teacher training, yoga has been my daily life for the last 26 years.

One thing that all these injuries have taught me is that each person must adapt their practice for their own needs and modify the yoga poses to enable the best healing to take place physically and mentally. So even in a class situation, one student is doing the pose, another is modifying to make it easier, another modifying to make it harder, another student just sitting meditating, while another just observing all the options. This way everyone moves forward at their own pace organically.

Recently my partner, Eliana, and I moved to Lillifield Community and opened Dharma Centre Yoga Space (15 minutes from Nimbin), which currently has two teachers and four weekly classes. I also still teach six classes a week on the coast, where I have been teaching for more than 20 years. Phone (02) 6689-7120 or Facebook: *Dharma Centre – Lillifield*



The backbend: Using a wooden brick to open shoulders and back muscles

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

In December 2015 the Office of Environment & Heritage quietly advertised for public comment on proposed amendments to the *NSW Threatened Species Priorities Action Statement*. The amendments included draft recovery and threat abatement plans for 47 species (four iconic species, 19 landscape-managed species and 24 site-managed species). Two submissions were received and are now being considered. Once reviewed, the approved amendments will be made and final changes entered into the *Saving our Species* database.

The missing iconic species was the koala. OEH decided not to exhibit the koala conservation project at the same time because of the extent and collaborative nature of the work it requires. With 90% of koala populations in NSW having plummeted over the last 20 years the need for multi-disciplinary collaboration is obvious however stakeholder consultation had barely started (local government being first cab off the rank) and appears to have stalled. Exhibition of a draft koala conservation plan sometime around March-April has been suggested.

While we don't know much about the NSW government's moves to address koala survival, the notion of a Great Koala National Park (GKNP) has been on several agendas (but regrettably not the government's), for about 18 months. Establishing a reserve system for koalas, including the Coffs Harbour-Guy Fawkes and the Bellinger-Nambucca-Macleay koala meta-populations was one of 13 priority reserve proposals listed in *Our Environment, Our Future*, NSW's lead environment groups'

policies for NSW's 2015 elections.

Labor and the Greens endorsed the proposal, the elections came and went, but the GKNP has not gone away; indeed the Park has become a tool in the on-going campaign to stop logging operations in northern state native forests known to be, or likely to be, koala habitat. It also represents a plausible future for state forests to take to the negotiating table when the Regional Forest Agreements expire from 2017-18.

Little wonder that work to test the potential for extending the proposal from the Queensland border to Hawks Nest on the Central Coast is continuing and that the GKNP concept is being taken up to prioritise lands for koala conservation within inland NSW.

Towards the end of 2015 a group known as the Western Woodlands Alliance announced plans to map koala populations and their habitats west of the Great Dividing Range as the first step towards creating a landscape-wide Western Woodlands Koala Park which could come from some 390 000 ha of the public estate in areas identified as being important for future koala survival.

The scope of the Alliance's proposal is vast, extending from the New England Tablelands and Nandewar bioregions to south-west of Kosciuszko National Park, including the Moree Plains, Gwydir River, Pilliga Forest, Liverpool Plains, Monaro Tablelands, Southern Highlands, the Darling floodplains, and along the Murray River. Rather

ambitiously, the mapping is planned to be completed by the end of this month.

The plight of NSW's inland koalas may be worse than that of our coastal koalas. In addition to the common threats of habitat removal, fragmentation and degradation of habitat remnants brought about by land clearing and rural development, koalas out west have to contend with mega-mines such as Whitehaven at Maules Creek and Shenhua Watermark near Breeza. They have already been impacted by climate change – ongoing drought and prolonged periods of excessive heat which have decimated koala numbers in the iconic Pilliga Forest and even the "Koala Capital" of Gunnedah.

It is climate change I want to talk about because for all our disease, mega-housing developments (an entire township in the case of Kings Forest and a suburb in the case of West Byron), escalating road-kill, cavalier logging operations and the Pacific Highway upgrades, managing koalas to survive in a changing climate (if that's possible) may well be the deciding factor in their long-term survival and where we may hold an edge.

While the impact of climate change on koala distribution is still poorly understood, bioclimatic modelling undertaken a few years ago showed a significant progressive eastward and southward contraction in its climate envelope limit in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, (not to mention the "novel" potentially suitable climate habitat in Tasmania and south Western Australia).

There is no doubt that the Northern Rivers and particularly those localities away from the coast are potentially important refugia for koala survival so it is imperative that koala conservation policies at all levels reflect that potential.

On Saturday 2nd April, Friends of the Koala, in collaboration with Rosebank Community Inc. is hosting a Hinterland Koala Forum at the Repentance Creek Hall from



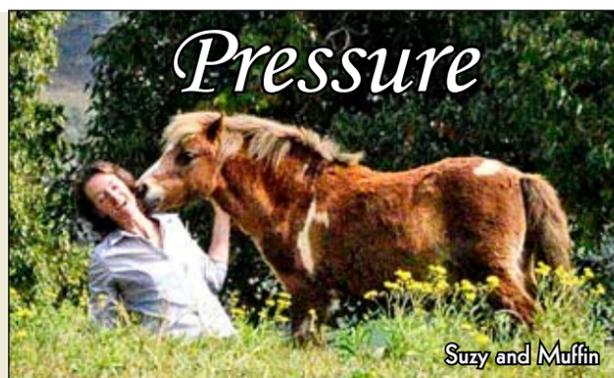
During these hot months the deep shade provided by macadamia trees is much sought after by koalas

2pm to 5pm. We acknowledge the existence of a well-established koala-friendly cohort doing excellent work to assist koala survival in the region, however, more is needed so creating an opportunity to learn from each other and perhaps from experiences elsewhere seems like a good place to start.

If you're interested in finding out more about the koalas with which you share your lives – their social structure, their health, how they're doing, the particular challenges they face in the Hinterland and how you can work with like-minded people to assist their survival, watch out for booking information closer to the date. 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.



by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

When asking a horse to do something pressure is applied. The moment the horse offers a response, the pressure is released. This is termed 'pressure release' training. It's also known as 'negative reinforcement' because the stimulus is a negative sensation and the release reinforces the behaviour. Sometimes instead of applying a pressure, humans will force a horse to do something. Mostly this type of force involves pain, fear, stress and confusion for the horse. Horses don't need to be forced. When asked in a way they understand they are more than willing to comply with most requests.

Pressure can be applied with the seat, weight, legs, or hands. Our focus and energy is also a pressure. Sometimes I see riders staring at the back of the horses head

while riding. This means they're not looking where they're going and it affects their position, it is also a massive pressure for the horse. Imagine sitting in a room with someone behind you staring intensely at the back of your neck. It would make you uncomfortable. The same goes for the horse. Sometimes I don't use my focused eyes at all but maintain soft eyes, using my peripheral vision to see. I don't actually look at them but am totally aware of everything. For a prey animal this allows room to relax and a chance to think calmly about what you are asking. We are not working with the horses' body, we are working with the brain and heart.

There are three components – the pressure, the response and the release. When applying pressure, apply the amount of pressure you would like your horse to respond to first; usually

this will be the tiniest aid, the whisper. If there is no response you can add on to it or increase the strength or rhythm. For example, if you would like your horse to move forward to a leg aid you could apply a soft pressure with your calf muscles. Give your horse a moment to respond; if they don't you could increase the pressure or use a pulse or click your tongue. The moment the horse responds, the pressure is removed immediately. With repetition, the horse will learn to move off from the very first soft leg aid as they will understand that it escalates and that the pressure will be removed when they respond. But the key is that every single time you always start with the smallest pressure first.

The second component is the response. When teaching something new don't expect the horse to get the whole behaviour in one go. If you are only willing to release when the horse gets it perfect, then you will never release and your horse will never get it. If your horse makes the smallest try, release so they know they're on the right track. Sometimes a horse may try a few different responses while they try and work out what you're after. Don't give your horse a hard time for this; it's great, they are trying. When

they hit on the right answer immediately relieve the pressure. They will quickly progress in learning the behaviour, plus do it without stress on their part or yours.

The third aspect is the release. If the requested behaviour is new, the release needs to be total, all pressure removed. As they progress you can do a half-release. When the horse has shown improvement, change sides, do something different or stop for the day – the ultimate release from all pressure. If a horse is really struggling to learn something and then shows signs of understanding, don't be tempted to do more and more of it, stop immediately and lavish praise on them.

Using these principles and being consistent and therefore predictable to your horse, everyone can have a relationship with their horse that is pure magic. To an onlooker you will be doing nothing, and yet you and your horse can do amazing things together. The aids are so small they can barely be seen and your horse's responses are smooth because you are listening to their smallest messages. This is horse and human connecting and communicating with ease.

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Endings and beginnings



by Marilyn Scott

The months come around quickly... yet they pass by moment by moment. January was one for the books, literally; ah Lilith. And February, well, lots of rumbling, moving, shifting, clearing moments to be reviewed and taken in.

And, most excitingly, flashes of newly discovered strength, transformation, things do change! Well, we knew that didn't we? But easy to lose sight, those times when you slip and fall into the mud. Maybe we needed those minerals on our skin, craving to be covered in Mother Earth.

There's no way forward but through: no escape, avoiding, covering over. Everything has to be faced sometime, it doesn't disappear, it carries on. Fascinating how our DNA works. Nothing is finished, dissolved, until it is. '2016: The Year of Purification, to free from foreign, extraneous or objectionable elements, to free from guilt or evil, to clear or purge, to make clear for ceremonial or ritual use' from that cutie Kaypacha at New Paradigm Astrology. Well, as I finished last month... better out than in, I say.

But it's those moments of seeing

that sparkling rebirth, if only for a second... pure gold. Old thoughts linger, attempting to lure you to places so familiar. Then up you pop, all shiny and new, "get lost", "forget it"... spoken with such strength; ah, worth all their weight in gold. This evolving thing is good.

I spent two days in bed; my large bedroom window looks out to a glorious panoramic view of the NSW/Qld border mountain range. Ah, the new caretakers are going to luv this place, I murmured to myself. My body wasn't feeling good, and also, I think I needed to remove myself, opt out of everything for a while; the doing, the thinking, the goals, the intentions... the mammoth pile of problems weighing heavily on our sacred Mother Earth.

I grabbed my book, pulled the covers close, piled the patterned cushions behind my head. I felt safe and secure. I travelled back to ancient times when medicine women held high status in their communities. And customs and rituals, the very core of living honoured the mother. Ah, I felt so at home there... luv Jean M Auel's *Earth's Children* series.

"How did I lose myself?" I'd jot down thoughts and images as they came. Then back to my book, walking through this sacred Earth... the bounty, the blessings

of the mother. The living focused on her giving. Ah feels so at home there.

What happened? Where did we take the wrong turn, to end up here, at the end of the road? Yes, evolution, choice... the cycles. We can get through this. Can we bring our focus back to the solutions? I don't want the load of problems breaking my spirit form. We're human after all. I go to the edge, too close at times. I see the flames, the black, the dark, the end of life. Then poof, in a second it's all transformed; must be all that Scorpio.

I breathe in deeply; I'm really looking forward to the next chapter. I know it's near... the ending of my time at this sacred healing place. I've seen a lot and I know I'll see a lot more. The purpose, reason I was called here.

Ah the magical days of revering the mother... medicine women held in high esteem, living focused on the blessings, the awesome abundance that just keeps on giving... the memories go back a long way, we remember in the quiet moments, deep inside they breathe. They form a part of who we are now. It's time to manifest, we can begin with our vision held firm.

Crossword Solution From Page 31



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Diabetes stigma

by Luke Verhelst BSc., MRACI

Diabetes stigma is the most demanding aspect of the disease. Rather than telling people I was diabetic, I would tell them I was vegan, as it seems veganism is more socially acceptable than diabetes, which has become the new smoking.

Misconceptions surround the disease, making life harder for those who live with it. The most common of these being that people with diabetes have brought the disease onto themselves by eating too much sugar or being overweight. This is not just restricted to the media, as many health professionals still push the obesity barrow, insinuating that diabetics are lazy, uneducated, bingers and a burden on healthcare.

A side effect of diabetes is that it can cause obesity rather than the obesity directly causing the

diabetes. Without insulin to process glucose in the bloodstream, your body has no option but to eliminate the glucose by conversion into fatty tissue, the alternative is ketosis, coma and eventual death.

People with diabetes are often tasked not just with the burden of managing their diabetes but also educating both the people and health care providers around them about the condition. The sense of shame that comes from others' misconceptions, the social isolation and my own feelings of guilt have taken a terrible toll and have been, and still are the most difficult aspects of the disease to deal with.

Infighting occurs among people with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes to the point where even education and support groups are segregated in a form of medical apartheid.

People with Type 1 do not wish to be associated with Type 2 as they did not "cause" their disease.



Truthfully the Type 2 did not ask to be diabetic either.

Lifestyle factors can contribute to the onset of the disease, but these are simply triggers. If you are predisposed to being diabetic you will become diabetic, the only question is when. How diabetes comes about and how it is treated may differ for each person, but the desire for a world without diabetes is universal.

A catch-22 is the only way to describe exercise and diabetes was the findings presented by Judith G. Regensteiner, Ph.D., on practical ways to achieve targets in diabetes

care, at the conference sponsored by the University of Colorado and the Children's Diabetes Foundation at Denver.

With an inability to produce sufficient insulin to respond to the liver producing glucose in "flight-or-fight" situations, diabetics need to exert more effort, both physically and mentally, in order to achieve the same goals as non-diabetics. Add to this the need to play pancreas by juggling a potentially lethal highball of sugar and insulin, and you begin to appreciate the dilemma I found myself in.

Whereas others could drop the

paper and kick the ball around with the kids, for me the activity would require planning, analysis and mitigation plans. It makes filling out the forms for a school excursion child's play, literally.

Eventually the requests to play stopped and with it came the spiral into darkness of a fear of food and exercise, making the management of diabetes only the more difficult as stress and anxiety can quickly change a normal blood glucose reading to the high 20's (mmol/L), ketosis, coma and eventual death.

The support of a close family network and friends is essential in dealing with progressive diseases and, because of this, I found yoga to be an excellent exercise regime as it promotes both physical activity and mental well being as well as non-competitive social interaction.

This is an extract from my e-book 'The Vegan Diabetic'. To find out more, and to get some delicious diabetic-friendly vegan recipes, go to the website: www.vegandiabetic.org or go to the facebook page: [Vegan Diabetic](https://www.facebook.com/Vegan-Diabetic).

Natural law

by Helene Collard

We are well into the solar year now, and life keeps rolling along. Sometimes we pause and wonder how we got through certain things, but we did, and now that challenge is behind us... and life goes on.

Slow your life down a little. Give yourself some quality space. Stargaze at night, watch the sunrise, sit in a park, or take a daytime nap. These nourishing moments can be markedly restorative.

If each person on Earth was posed the question "What has deep value?" – I bet the range of answers would be huge. Something is important to me, only because I attribute meaning to it. We need more people in this world to speak up for the things in which they see deep value. Keep that in mind – doing this will help to restore integrity in our society, simply because we are articulating ourselves more from the heart.

And speaking about matters of the heart, many of us know the heart is more than an organ that keeps us alive. Now, there is more research emerging to confirm the heart is central in finding true meaning in life. It is beginning to be accepted that the heart is, in fact, our other brain. Doc Childre, Founder of HeartMath states, "The intelligence of the human heart is a powerful force...that can restore peace and harmony on Earth".

I wonder what life would be like if more and more people started using their heart-brain... my guess would be an increase in compassion and clearer access to intuitive guidance.

Most information on the heart concerns its anatomy and physiological functions. However its non-physical aspects remain somewhat a mystery, although most of us know the heart is special.



*We are all self-governing.
Let us call upon our ancestors and teachers – past and present,
to guide us in the way of the Heart.
You are all my relations.
All is One*

This month, try focusing in your heart. Place your hand on your heart and breathe into it for as long as you feel. Do a heart meditation. Rest your awareness in your heart. It is time to start 'thinking' more from our heart-brain. With this practice, I bet (and I'm not a gambler), depression, anxiety and stress would decrease.

Helene has been practicing Reiki for 10 years and recently opened the Yemaya Centre for Reiki & Wellbeing in Lismore. Helene has a special interest in personal growth and wellbeing and offers a number of services. Helene works with individuals and groups, and has delivered a variety of wellbeing workshops publically and privately since 2008. Her qualifications include, Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and Reiki Master. For more about Helene and her services visit: www.helenecollard.com or reach her on 0405-656-797

Bowen therapy for dogs

by Tonia Haynes

I don't know about you, but my life can be pretty well described by the old song: "Somedays are diamonds, some days are stones."

Recently we were given a big rock to handle in that Polly, our miniature terrier princess lost her tiara to a diagnosis of Cushings disease.

Cushings is a disease where the adrenal glands and liver no longer work properly. It is incurable, and one of nature's ways of keeping the dog population in check.

The symptoms began about 18 months ago when our Nimbin Show high jumper extraordinaire began putting on weight.

We put her on a paleo type diet of half mashed veges, half raw mince and no carbs because it seemed to work well with her friend Pluto the Dachsund. In a very short time Pluto had gone from being rather solid to very svelte.

Made no difference to the princess. She just kept packing on the fat and her belly felt and looked like a blown up balloon.

I thought maybe it was menopause because Polly isn't spayed and being that I'm not spayed either, I well remember the goddess of expansion making an unwelcome visit to me when I was in my late 50s.

The eventual visit to the vet had a gloomy and potentially very expensive outcome: tablets \$35 per week and probable CT scans three to four times a year at \$200 a pop.

Some would say "big needle in the sky for her", but I come from that part of the human race who are of the opinion that dogs are one of the best inventions ever created to keep human company.

Unconditional love for their boss is part of the package and if you don't agree with that, look to yourself. Generally, a dog is as good as the people they hang with. Rescue dogs need patience. It takes them a while to release bad habits they learnt from



their other people. But love and understanding can work miracles.

I used to know a Western Australian Cooli pup who appeared to have a brain made from soggy rice bubbles. He was even too much for me to handle, and that's saying something.

Eventually he went to a very wise farmer. Twelve months later, the right environment, the right type of love and a bit of maturity has turned him into one of the smartest dogs in the area.

So what to do with the princess if a premature death wasn't an option?

I heard about an animal acupuncturist based in Lismore called Ben Walder. He mainly works on horses and I'd received glowing reports about the effect he'd had on a once-upon-a-time very difficult horse I know. One treatment from Ben and apparently Lucy has morphed from being a very dysfunctional girl to well behaved horse. Would suit her far better. She's very pretty.

So off we go to Lismore to meet Ben Walder. All I can say about this man is that when it comes to animals, he is a diamond in a potentially stony world.

Polly, who never normally speaks to strangers until the third visit, happily sat on my lap while he turned her into a pin-cushion with acupuncture pins decorated with vivid pink tops (easy to see when they fall out onto the floor). In fact, she looked quite cute with a crown of pink thorns decorating her head. Hopefully the tiara will

return to take their place.

After the first treatment, much of the swelling had left her belly and she seemed brighter. Ben suggested we call Alina Jeffrey, an animal herbalist who is based in Evans Head in order to back up Polly's treatment with herbal support.

Another diamond in the rocky world of animals, Alina made a home visit and once again Polly immediately melted into an attitude of friendship.

Since then Polly has had another visit to Ben and she is also on a herbal tea that she happily scoffs, mixed in with her dinner.

As I said Cushings at this point in time is incurable, but it cost us \$30 for the acupuncture and a very agreeable visit with a man who has excellent healing talent.

And it cost a meagre \$50 for at least one year of herbs and a home visit from a very knowledgeable, very pleasant herbalist who obviously also has great healing talent.

It saddens me a little that my skills of Bowen therapy, remedial massage, and pranic healing can't fix our Polly. But I guess like all of us I need to bite the bullet of humility, be grateful for what I am good at and also be eternally grateful that I live in an area where people like Ben Walder and Alina Jeffrey are available and very good at what they do.

Ben Walder can be reached at 0429-369-530. Alina Jeffreys at 0422-665-744.

Note: Alina also sells a herbal meat mix for dogs with arthritis at a very good price and if you are truly into your dog there is a great movie on Youtube, *Accupressure for Arthritic Dogs* that may take up five to ten minutes of your time each day.

"Til next time, I wish you all a daily gift of diamonds.

I'm in clinic in Nimbin to treat back, shoulder, neck and limb issues on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Phone (02) 6689-0240 or mobile: 0439-794-420.

Head & neck pain

by Brigid Beckett

Head and neck pain and disorders, either with an acute onset, or recurrent and progressing over years, are common and unpleasant experiences. They are well addressed with acupuncture and Chinese medicine.

The neck is the bridge between the head and body. All the yang meridians begin or end on the head, making it a very yang area, where qi is moving close to the surface and can be easily influenced by acupuncture.

At the back of the neck which is the most important area for neck pain and tightness, the main meridians are the gallbladder and bladder. Their elements are wood and water respectively.

Wood is associated with anger. The liver and gallbladder meridians are affected by anger and resentment and these type of emotions can tighten neck and shoulders and cause many other symptoms in the head. For example headaches, teeth grinding, and jaw tightness. The emotion of the water element, associated with bladder and kidney, is fear. The neck automatically tightens when there is fear or danger, in our distant past maybe from being struck from behind with a club. Today the threat may not be physical, but still threatens to wellbeing and safety tighten the

neck muscles. If this is happening often there will be chronic shortening of the neck muscles. This fear may have its roots in a childhood experience.

Emotional issues also cause tightness on the bladder meridian in the upper thoracic, also leading to neck tightness. Treating the affected point on the bladder meridian will relax the muscles and move or tonify the qi of the associated organ.

Wind is the wood element. Wind can invade the channels of the neck, especially if the neck is exposed to cold and draughts, causing an acute stiff neck. When wind invades there can be other symptoms as well as neck stiffness, such as facial numbness as occurs in Bell's Palsy. The more quickly the wind is expelled, the better the result.

The meridians affecting the front of the neck are the large intestine, small intestine and stomach.

These meridians, along with bladder and gallbladder, are often involved locally in jaw tightness and dysfunction such as temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction, sinusitis, and facial pain such as trigeminal neuralgia. These symptoms respond to qi being moved



in the interconnecting collateral meridians on the face.

In TMJ dysfunction, which includes pain and reduced jaw movement, the muscles need to be relaxed to allow the jaw to function normally. There are specific acupuncture points that address this very effectively. Teeth grinding and jaw clenching are commonly a cause for tmj and in these

cases the emotional factors described above are often the underlying problem.

Neck pain often becomes a chronic and frustrating problem, sometimes causing years of discomfort. In many chronic cases, again there are often underlying emotional issues associated with the water and wood elements. Also deficiency of yin and blood can cause the muscles to be malnourished, causing chronic muscle tightness and propensity to injury. Dietary factors, overwork, lack of sleep and aging can all contribute to blood or yin deficiency. Acupuncture and blood or yin tonifying herbs will help overcome longstanding patterns. As always in Chinese medicine, problems that feel localised in the head and neck are part of a bigger picture and successful treatment is one which addresses this.

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

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Anxiety – that internal voice

I've just realized this is the last Wednesday of the month, the deadline date for contributing articles to the *Nimbin GoodTimes*. To say I'm a bit stressed and anxious, is an understatement. I've contributed to this fine paper every month since March 2009 and really don't want to miss an issue, if at all possible.

Anxiety is my topic, appropriately. What a better way of working than working with material currently experienced.

At the moment I am participating in an online international conference on the use of hypnosis in the treatment of anxiety. The tools we are adding to our repertoire are extremely useful and are available to any client wishing to work with me. So the matter of anxiety is close to me at other levels too.

Anxiety has a structure that is pretty well universal. There is an internal voice that repeats messages of fear, danger, maybe lack of ability, that manifest alongside the mental reiterations, a physical component of tightness in the chest, perhaps some breathlessness, palpitations, dry mouth, and the like. The internal voice is quite high pitched, strained, and rapid. The message is not really rational and it repeats itself.

Anxiety distorts and intensifies normal interaction

in the world and with other people, so that our whole selves can feel overwhelmed with emotion and a sense of being out of control. The art then is to change those perceptions.

For me, at the moment, my stress at needing to get this article written is being accompanied by fear of losing income. Ridiculous, isn't it. These articles are one of my sources of income, so I have to write them (or at least so I think). At the forefront of my inner chatter are the words, "hurry, hurry, hurry". There is, though, another voice that is taking the micky out of this and the "hurry, hurry, hurry" is acquiring a sort of sing song chant, "hari rama, rama rama, hari krisna, hari krisna" – and thus the tension is lessened. And here is a key to losing anxious feelings.

It is impossible to maintain anxiety when other processes are introduced. There is a technique where the therapist suggests the client writes down the words of stress in very small script. Then the client reads what she/he has written in a normal voice, and then re-reads the script in a very slow, bored voice. Such a technique changes the non-verbal qualities of the inner talk, and even changes how the body feels as the exercise is carried out.

Neurological research is showing how this is possible. Changing a person's experience of inner talk



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M. Couns., PhD

actually changes how the body-mind operates. Inner talk is iterative, that is, it has a quality of rumination, where stuff is thought of repeatedly. In terms of neural activity in the brain, the same pathways become entrenched and sometimes pretty difficult to get out of. Worry occupies us, occupies us more and more, unless we can break the looping that occurs. Breaking the pattern, as for instance, taking the micky out of the inner story (my "hurry" changed to "hari rama"), or slowing the words of worry down, or singing the story, or speaking the words in an ordinary voice, have the power to actually disempower the rumination and the looping and thus forge new neural pathways. Breaking the pattern changes the body's response to what used to be plain old anxiety and increases a relaxed state. The tightness goes, leaving a softness and a sense of being more fluid and easy.

Other techniques are useful too. One technique

is remembering the tools we used to use to relax ourselves and learning to incorporate these tools when feeling stressed. For me, writing has this power. As I write this article, I feel more settled. Swimming is another means for me.

A year or two ago, I had a client with a particular form of anxiety. I won't say what it was about, but I discovered she had a great love of running, down by the sea. In the hypnosis sessions, I "ran" with her in the wind, for in invoking such a scenario, she was able to enter into a deeply relaxed and yet aware state (which is what hypnosis is anyway); a state she was able to evoke whenever she needed to. The inner iterative voice lost its power and her whole demeanour changed in an enduring way. From week one to week three, her face was no longer pinched, her breathing was easy, and her skin glowed. Along with these changes was a shift in how she worked with the people in her world and how she saw herself. She lost her belief that she was a weak/bad/anxious person. She became confident and looked it. Really fundamental changes occurred.

Anxiety has a lot of energy connected to it. Unlocking that energy in a creative and helpful way can release and relieve a person very deeply so that they can live more fully and more easily in the world.

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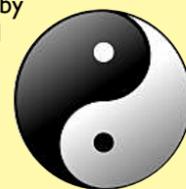
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Nia comes to Nimbin



by Christine Chouquet

Nia is a fun, expressive, sensory based movement practice that invites people to come home to their body via awareness and sensation.

With fabulous, soul stirring music from around the world, each class offers a unique blend of 52 moves from dance, martial arts and healing modalities to satisfy every muscle, stimulate the brain and celebrate both our uniqueness and our connectedness.

Combining carefully selected movements and concepts from yoga, tai chi, tae kwon do, aikido, jazz, modern dance and other movement forms, Nia classes foster creativity and self-expression while conditioning the body.

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are offered in more than 45 countries.

Nia is liberating, removes physical and emotional tensions, and gives a sense of freedom and self-confidence. All Nia movements are adaptable and can be personalised for any level of fitness and agility.

The practice of Nia brings with it amazing tools for navigating transformation in our bodies and our lives. Embedded in its philosophy, it teaches us that through movement we find health.

It inspires us to alter our perceptions to create something that is pleasing to us, and it empowers us to choose what we are bringing to each moment.

It asks us to seek relaxation, become alert and wait to receive, and most distinctly, it invites us to choose joy.

Everyone is welcome and no prior training is required.

Nia classes are commencing on Saturday 5th March, 11am at Nimbin Community Centre. Christine Chouquet is a certified Blue Belt Nia instructor and passionate about sharing the Joy of Movement that Nia brings. Join her this Saturday, and take advantage of the special 3 classes for \$25, OR the first class for free. For more information, contact Christine on 0414-844-230 or (02) 6689-7579.

What is OSHO rebalancing bodywork?

by Peter Tebbutt

Rebalancing was developed in the 1980's by a group of long-time bodywork practitioners at the Osho ashram in Poona, India.

The idea was essentially to create a new form of bodywork that would take the best of the presently existing modalities and imbue them with a deeper perspective than was currently available. The main component of this new approach was to make awareness and meditative-ness as a central feature of the work.

OSHO Rebalancing is a form of body-oriented awareness work, which brings people back into harmony with themselves, so they can live their essential unity of body, mind and heart. It works with a unique synthesis of body reading, joint release, connective tissue manipulation, energy and breath work, body awareness training. As the body releases muscular rigidities and relaxes, energy is set free.

At the same time old and unconscious emotional and mental attitudes, and patterns which imprison us, can come into our awareness.

This helps us to a better understanding of ourselves and of our hidden potentials. Hereby we come closer to our innermost core, which enables us to live life more spontaneously and meaningfully.

The essence of Rebalancing is a loving, sensitive touch. Rebalancing sees the body as a priceless gift and not as a mechanism that needs to be "repaired". In this sense Rebalancing meets the uniqueness of each human being.

The treatment usually includes a series of ten sessions, though each session is complete in itself and one session is perfectly OK. Each session is one and a half hours in length. A series of sessions has a powerful synergetic effect and allows the whole body to be systematically included. In this way it is



suited to the individual history of the person, to their needs and to the challenges of their actual life situation.

Pete Tebbutt received his training at the Kootenay School of Rebalancing in Costa Rica in 2007/2008, is a certified Rebalancing bodyworker and has practiced in Canada, Costa Rica and Australia. This modality of bodywork is available at the Nimbin Apothecary on Tuesdays, Uki on Thursdays or at your home most days. For appointments, call Pete at 0406-159-439 or the Nimbin Apothecary at 6689-1529.

Positive effects of sitting with cushions

by Brent Shaub, certified Feldenkrais practitioner

Most chairs are designed for stacking, and sitting on them for a prolonged period often leads to discomfort. Sitting with ease is an art; with a little knowledge and the right tools, one can enjoy consistently pleasurable experiences.

Since chairs vary in height, depth, have armrests/no armrests, a flat back/rounded back/no back, leather/wood/plastic, thin padding/thick/none, I've found it best to travel with my own cushions. They fit in my backpack, are lightweight and transform the seat so well that I am rarely without them.

The confidence of being self-sufficient and able to adapt to whatever chairs await me at cafes, transport or offices well overcomes the initial awkwardness I once felt toting them around, as I'm often the only one.

Prior, I was in severe pain from breaking my sitting bone which would flare up pelvic pain in just a few minutes should I get stuck with a seat I couldn't manage. These cushions have greatly reduced my anxiety when leaving the home and office for any event that requires sitting.

The many benefits of portable seat cushions include:

- less leg tension, notably in the groin, thighs and hamstrings;
- freer ankles which help with getting up and walking;
- less neck, shoulder and back pain; and
- a more spacious pelvic floor.

Sitting on chairs can exacerbate existing tension. The continual contractions in the pelvic region to keep upright can strain both the back and the legs. Rounding one's back tilts the hips back, bringing the shoulders down, restricting breathing. A rounded back often leads to the heels coming off the floor, which raises the knees, usually tilting the hips further back. To keep from falling, the hamstrings engage



(hamstrings move the legs backwards, or towards the floor when seated). A tugging between the rocked hip and hamstrings ensues, often resulting in tension in the pelvic floor which lies between them.

The way out is to become aware of the four points on contact when sitting: two sitting bones (ischiums) and two feet. Bearing weight on the sitting bones greatly facilitates moving the feet, so placing appropriate cushions under both ischiums is my

starting point. From here, having the entire length of the feet on the ground creates a stable base of support that distributes the load more effectively and for longer than having any part of the feet continually raised.

With one cushion under each sitting bone, each can articulate independently. Subtle differences in the rotation and height of the hips have less effect on the muscles between. Clear somatic messages from firm pads under weight-bearing bones clarify kinesthetically how to position the body for optimal stability and thus mobility.

Much like shoes, the size of the padded helpers depends on the person using them. Too small and it feels like perching which consumes energy to balance; too big and there's a loss of lateral movement reducing the benefits. I am making different sizes with washable covers for sale.

In the works are free classes outside the Mullum Neighborhood Centre which will focus on sitting, taught by local practitioners including me. For indoor classes specifically for the pelvic floor, I'm leading a nine-week series throughout the months of March and April (\$15/week) on Wednesdays at 5.30pm in Mullum.

For more information, call or text 0404-429-271, write to: Brent@EmbodyWisdom. Today or on facebook, search for: EmbodyWisdom.Today

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How long can you go without oxygen?

by Edward Kent

Breath animates life, and where oxygen delivery is compromised within the body so is optimal function. Correction of posture is a key goal of Fundamental Mat Pilates, which means optimising breathing mechanics and oxygen delivery.

If we understand posture to mean the position from which movement begins, then correction of posture leads to optimal physical function through optimal physical mechanics in addition to optimal oxygen delivery. Thus a simple set

of exercises that require no machines or external equipment can produce incredible results for those needing physical rehabilitation and those looking to enhance their performance in life, work, or sport.

Tempo and rhythm are very important in Fundamental Mat Pilates. The exercises are more effective if performed slowly under detailed control, as opposed to hastily in an aggressive fashion. Fundamental Mat Pilates is a modality accessible to anyone. By using slow tempos and steady

rhythms, it is possible for the practitioner to develop detailed awareness of movement within their body, and of imbalance and limitation within the body. Because there is no artificial manipulation through technical means, by working just with the body on the mat, the practitioner is invited to develop their body in a balanced and constructive manner.

Fundamental Mat Pilates is not so much about flexibility as mobility and stability. There is no encouragement to achieve unnatural movements or extremities of position or

load. There is no quick fix on offer. Fundamental Mat Pilates as a regular practice will deliver real and sustainable results and lay the foundation within the body for lasting control of movement, strength, balance and optimal performance.

Edward Kent is a certified Fundamental Mat Pilates Instructor. Classes are held Tuesdays (9.30am & 5.15pm), and Fridays (9.30am & 12.00pm) in Lismore at Level 2, Strand Arcade, 74-78 Molesworth Street. Bookings can be arranged on 0435-118-146. www.humanbodysshop.com.au

The origins of addiction

by David Ward
Life action coach

Substances as an aid to and enhancement of social situations have long been a part of life. To celebrate Christmas, Easter, birthdays and other events sugar in its various forms is usually an essential ingredient.

Many of us were conditioned to this substance-based lifestyle through our earliest experiences. The trouble with these generally non-nutritional substances is that they tend to take on a life of their own. Why save the fun for those special occasions when every day can be a celebration?

Dealing with issues of grief and disappointment even as children, sugar often provided a welcome relief. The relatively brief effects of a sugar hit demand continued intake to maintain the desired result. Caffeine is introduced surprisingly early in the form of soft-drinks, both

complimenting and counteracting aspects of sugar use. Patterns laid down so early in life can become deeply entrenched on a subconscious level.

The concept of a substance-based meal replacement for when you're having too much fun or are simply too pre-occupied to eat, lies at the heart of much of society's current imbalance. To rectify the situation we could try going beyond the current approach of looking outside ourselves for someone or something to put things right for us. The myth that it is somehow unrealistic for us to take responsibility needs to be questioned.

An effective use of available resources would be as a personal support in this process, rather than being totally dependent on them. From my experience it is possible to turn things around completely as far as mental, physical and social health goes, but only by getting fully involved. And also by understanding that it is an on going



maintaining and evolving rather than an arriving at being fixed.

The good news, which really excites me, is that there are some very basic and usable strategies to facilitate this journey, which deliver some amazing added benefits at the same time. I look forward to sharing these findings with the community through my business Vital Choices.

David Ward is a freedom from addiction specialist and wellbeing consultant. He can be contacted on 0447-820-510, or visit: www.vitalchoiceslifecoaching.com

The importance of pelvic floor health



by Betti Wille

Thanks to Brent Shaub (Feldenkrais practitioner) for last month's well-written article on the pelvic floor.

Generally, the seat of our trunk is not a favorite subject for a public conversation, it's rather taboo. But this is not the only reason I want to write about it.

I feel indeed grateful and fortunate, having learned how to feel, befriend and exercise my pelvic floor. It's taken me a step further towards wholeness. And during the years of instructing pelvic floor classes I've seen other

women also transforming their appearance: growing in height, balance and 'roots'.

Our posture presents how we place ourselves in life. Feeling well grounded and confident, our movements and posture will be relatively "uplifted" and balanced. The dynamics of body/mind functioning work in both directions, meaning that working towards an upright posture and energetic stride alters the way we feel. To touch base and strengthen the root of the spine with pelvic floor exercises changes our dynamics.

Issues held in the seat of the trunk are likely to determine our ability to stand strongly, meet challenges with confidence and flexibility as well as letting go of unnecessary loads. These issues need a respectful environment as they may be connected to shame, fear or violence.

By working with the body we can bring light into dense, unlit areas. If we're able to conduct this with loving kindness towards ourselves, we may be able to free energy

blockages from the lower chakras. When working with the body in a gentle and respectful way we always find a wonderful ally, which is the body's inherent intelligence itself!

Women might learn about their pelvic 'powerhouse' when experiencing pregnancy and childbirth. Men are likely to think it's not for them. But this is worth a second thought. I remember a conversation I had with a leader of a prostate self-help group in Germany. How enthusiastic he was about the good results he saw through pelvic floor exercises.

He also told me about a survey regarding erectile dysfunctions where the effect of pelvic floor exercises was compared to a control group of men who took Viagra. I never forget his big smile when he asked me to guess which group had shown better results.

Our pelvic floor plays an important role for the body's balance. It lies in continuity with the spinal column. They support each other and stand united for flexibility and

freedom to move.

Continence depends on a healthy pelvic floor, as all pelvic organs do. Exercising the pelvic floor improves muscular balance and circulation. It may involve letting go of unnecessary tightness which in turn fosters increased consciousness and sensitivity for our 'roots'.

The only classes for men I am aware of are held in Mullumbimby by Feldenkrais practitioner Brent Shaub (Wednesdays 5.30-6.30pm) through the weeks of March and April. Joining late is fine, although a practice gives space for lasting improvements. Visit his website: www.EmbodyWisdom.Today or phone 0404-429-271.

I am offering classes for women through the Open Learning Centre in Nimbin. New enrolments are welcome at the beginning of next term. Watch for notices in the paper, a flyer in your post office box or join us on facebook. I am best contacted by email: biodynamic.touch@gmail.com or call/text 0490-292-138.

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