

Café Blue Knob cooks political pumpkins

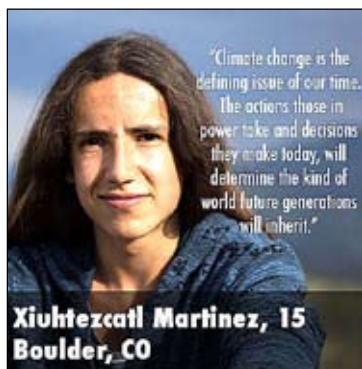
by Joline Shervey

"The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion." – Albert Camus

Inspired by the recent events in 2015 of a group of teenagers taking the American government to court regarding their failure to seriously deal with and act on climate change, we are rethinking our participation in this world and how we leave our mark.

We adults – both globally and locally – are seemingly not doing what we are supposed to be doing: thinking and acting revolution where revolution is screamed for. And by revolution we mean a peaceful passage of transformation that does not shy away from the pain of change. Real change.

The Earth Guardians, calling themselves Generation 'RYSE' (Rising Youth for a Sustainable Earth), are a tribe of young climate leaders, aged eight to twenty-one from all over the world. Fifteen year old Xiuhtezcatl Martinez (pronounced shoe-tez-cat), Youth Director of the non-profit organisation, is leading an army of teens in over 50 countries to demand sustainable policies from our world leaders. Through his work on the front lines of the climate change movement, he is assembling a teen army



to save the planet. Passionate about the future of our planet, their planet, he speaks as the 'Kid Warrior' at TEDx, climate rallies, goes to court and even addressed the 190 world leaders of the United Nations General Assembly, asking them to stand with #GenerationRYSE to make a difference and guarantee safe air, water and atmosphere for future generations. We call that jaw-dropping.

"The arrogance of age must submit to be taught by youth." – Edmund Burke.

Why does it take kids to do what most adults should be doing? In shame and awe while also commending these kids for doing what is right and fight for justice I truly hope that we adults, the older generation, are humble enough to follow the youth and its clarity and courage and stand next to them as one front.

Maybe we adults might need to claim our own youth and

emancipate ourselves from adult conditioning. As Samuel Ullman put it, "Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, quality of imagination, a vigour of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life."

Café Blue Knob, claiming back its youth, will hold a Political Pumpkin Fundraiser for #GenerationRYSE on Sunday 29th May, accompanied by a free talk by Jo Nemeth. See below for details.

Café Blue Knob May Schedule

- **Thursday 19th May, 12.30pm,** Artists & Friends Lunch with exclusive two course Gourmet Meal – meat \$24 / vegetarian \$19 – Bookings required.
- **Friday 27th May, 6.30pm,** Exhibition Opening Night – Fibre Show, bookings required for exclusive two course dinner: \$20 veg / \$25 meat – fabulous dessert included – vegan/GF available \$2 surcharge.
- **Sunday 29th May, 12pm,** Fundraiser: Political Pumpkin with locally-sourced and organic Soul Food Buffet to support the Earth Guardians! Bookings are required. (\$39/head, child \$18). At 1pm, free talk by local low-impact icon Jo Nemeth about her low impact and money-less lifestyle. Call for bookings (02) 6689-7449 or 0416-616-804.

Political Pumpkin pizza base

Ingredients

- 1 medium sized butternut or Hokkaido pumpkin, cut in cubes
- 4 tbsps psyllium husk (optional if using wheat flour)
- 1 tbsps oregano (optional)
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups flour – buckwheat, almond or wheat
- 50ml of water, approx.

Method

Cook the pumpkin in water until cubes are easily mashed with a fork, then drain the water and mash the pumpkin cubes until smooth but chunky.

Make the bases:

Preheat oven to 180°C. Pour

2 cups of pumpkin mash into a mixing bowl. Add the psyllium husk and salt, then stir with a fork until you think the psyllium husk is evenly distributed through the pumpkin. Wait five minutes, then add the baking powder, oregano and flour and stir with a fork until well combined.

Add water, little by little, stirring with the fork until the ingredients come together, then knead the dough into a ball either in the bowl or on a floured surface, and then divide into six - eight balls.

Brush two oven trays with olive oil and on a floured surface press each ball into a flat disk using the palm of your



hand. Flip it over and then using your fingertips (or a rolling pin), work the ball of dough into a roundish shape.

Place it on an oven tray; use your fingertips to press the dough into a thinner, larger round. When happy with it, flip it over. Now there will be a light amount of olive oil on both sides.

Repeat this process with each ball of dough and prick fork holes into the bases. Then place trays in the oven for 15 minutes. Remove the bases from the oven and top with desired ingredients. Bake again for 15 minutes.

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

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Gungas road and water works

Lismore City Council has received \$1 million from the NSW Government's Safer Roads Program to upgrade 1km of badly deteriorated roadway along Gungas Road, Nimbin, where many serious crashes have occurred.

The section runs for half a kilometre either side of the intersection with Tuntable Falls Road. The works are likely to cause short delays to local residents and visitors for around three or four months.

Council is also in the process of embarking on its Nimbin water supply upgrade, and has decided that as part of these roadworks, it will lay this section of new water main. This has been brought forward, so Council does not have to come back and dig up the road once it has been repaired.

The \$3.5 million upgrade to the water supply includes construction of a new pump station at DE Williams

Dam which can be shut off at the Mulgum Creek weir during high rainfall, preventing dirty water from entering the water supply, and a new water pipeline along Gungas Road to supply water from the dam.

This will improve water quality, and also prevent the need to flush this pipeline following lots of rain.

For many years, dirty water during high rainfall has led to residents drinking murky water and in some

cases, having to supply their own water to ensure it is clean.

As well as providing a safe and secure water supply to rural customers, the upgrade should lead to improvements in water quality for the residents and businesses in Nimbin village, by reducing the need for excessive water treatment,

The water supply infrastructure upgrade is likely to be completed by the end of 2017.



Plant of the month

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NIMBIN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE NEWS

by Stewart James, president

NEC AGM

At 6pm on Wednesday 18th May, the Nimbin Environment Centre (NEC) will be conducting its AGM at the Nimbin Community Centre. The main business of the AGM is for members to elect the committee, and everyone is encouraged to become a member and have their vote. Yearly NEC membership costs just \$10. This is an important event for our precious Northern Rivers environment, the NEC volunteers and committee, members and our friends and supporters.

What strikes me as the most outstanding feature of NEC is that it is run wholly by volunteers and exists financially on shop takings, donations and fundraising activities. I have massive admiration and gratitude to all those that regularly volunteer at NEC – without you, your reliability, knowledge, energy and drive, NEC would cease to exist. It surely is a special institution and I am proud to be a part of it.

I feel honoured to have been elected NEC President two years running. I have learnt a tremendous amount about our environment and the people who live in it – including myself. I will proudly put my hand up again for the position of President and, if elected, I will do my best to continue to work in a collaborative way with the committee, members, volunteers and our community to care for our precious NR environment. Thanks to all those who have supported me in my role as President over the past year.

Biodiversity campaign

In my March article I reported that the Baird government was aiming to scrap the *Native Vegetation Act* in favour of a

new biodiversity law, a move which the NEC opposes.

Recently all three Environment Centres collaborated in a campaign with the Nature Conservation Council and The Total Environment Centre to send out over 2,000 letters protesting the new law to state and federal politicians. This was a great example of collaboration and was really a massive effort by those volunteers who drove and executed the campaign. Thank you for your efforts!

Draft Regional Plan

As I reported last time, the draft North Coast Regional Plan talks about mapping coal and gas resources in the region when the local population has already expressed strong opposition to gas exploitation here.

I went to meet with the Tweed-based NSW Nationals representative Geoff Provest a few weeks ago to discuss the draft Plan and this issue. He assured me it was a bureaucratic mistake and that he and fellow Nationals Thomas George and Christopher Gulaptis hadn't read the document before it was printed, which seemed a bit odd to me – to say the least – since they're in the Government and it's all about the future of their electorates. At one point Provest did make a statement that the Northern Rivers gas licences can be reissued with a change of government and the stroke of a pen, so it seems we need to be forever vigilant and ready to say "no means no" if the industry looks like starting up again here.

CEC and its funding

Casino Environment Centre (CEC) continues to grow and evolve to be increasingly relevant to the Casino community. Although things are tight financially, the CEC's trusty volunteers

continue to keep the doors open and the Centre is now three years old. Happy Birthday CEC! The volunteers at CEC are working creatively and collaboratively to make CEC self sufficient and locally relevant.

For example, they've been developing a couple of exciting and innovative projects. The first is to become a co-operative. The second is to sell online bat boxes, and other endangered fauna rescue and shelter items plus cane toad traps that will be manufactured by community groups in Casino such as the Men's Shed. The project has involved collaboration and relationship building with Men's Shed members. This is impressive progress by CEC volunteers and demonstrates a different type and level of relationship building with the Casino community. Very exciting indeed.

When it started the CEC was regarded with some suspicion, if not indifference, by locals but over the years has developed considerable "social capital", made possible by the smart and hard work of many of our volunteers. Now is an important consolidation and integration phase for CEC. The Lismore and Nimbin Centres have been providing some financial support to CEC, and in my personal opinion I do believe this will be a worthwhile environmental investment.

Other recent CEC activities include facilitating community weed species education workshops; raising awareness of threats to our Great Barrier Reef; encouraging forest-product-free bio-hubs and compering three hours of global environment reportage on community radio Richmond River 88.9 FM 'The State of the Environment' each week (Mondays 10am to 1pm). Everyone is determined that CEC should be supported to become self sufficient.

Narcissism and humanness

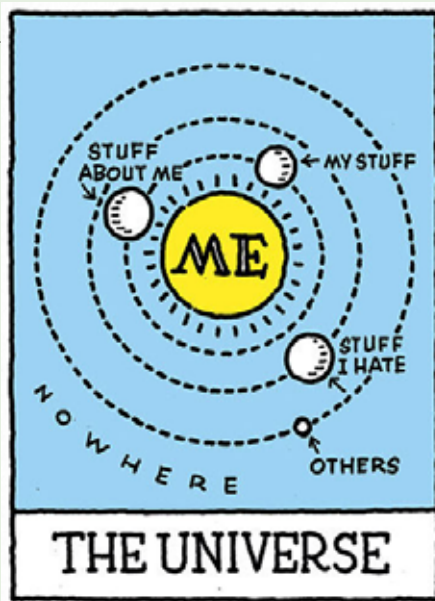
by Geoff Dawe

It is sometimes said that narcissism is currently overused as a description of behaviour. That's one view. The other is that it is insufficiently used, given its ubiquity.

Explanation is required for example, for why the West engages in economic megalomania far out of balance with the social and environmental situations. Grandiosity is one of the symptoms of narcissism. With narcissism there is also much bragging and hubris about one's achievements, with the real world showing these achievements aren't really occurring. The West brags of progress yet the fact that it is killing the planet through addiction to technologies is the real state of this condition it calls "progress". What is actually happening is "progress" to the death of a planet.

Narcissism also presents as a desire to fulfil the self or little "I" without consideration of the whole. In a more fully-grown human – a fully-grown human is a Buddha – consideration for the whole is automatic. For a human with a reasonable degree of humanness, rationality is in existence enough to reason that if the whole is functioning well, one's little "I" as well as the other little "I"s will tend to be looked after. Narcissists miss out on this uniquely human understanding.

Since narcissism is increasing in the West, enquiry needs to be made as to why humans are increasingly unable to consider the whole, and are essentially regressing to their hominid past; why do humans have the physiology to



be human, but fail in almost every case to achieve their birthright of Buddhahood. This birthright is achieved with an epiphany of total understanding that nothing is, or has ever been, separate from anything else. It's apparently a similar epiphany as a child of about three years of age has in the sudden understanding that it is separate from its mother and everything else.

Materialism is so abiding a condition in the West that industrialised humans have almost forgotten that it is not just the physical body that has needs, but the emotional body as well. The importance of infants securely attaching to their mothers and then familiar others, with civilisation relegated a back seat to the desire to have all the socially-regarded stuff.

Moreover, parents in this modern period find they are for most of the day not in the company of their children. Recognising with the vestige of instinct that this isn't quite right they often rush in to satiate all at once the attention deficit. In the social discussion of narcissism, helicopter parents – those who hover – get a mention. Anne Manne in her book *The Life Of I* writes that narcissism "is more likely to come from the combination of inattention and indulgence with grandiosity thrown into the mix."

Grandiosity appears in parents moving beyond hoping to have a "normal" child to what has been called an "entitled" child. Parental motivation is often so the child will have the ability to pick up one of the increasingly scarce jobs that guarantee the sort of material distractions that will increase potential for them, in turn, producing a narcissistic child!

The production of narcissistic humans works well for a consumerist culture. The culture narcissistically ignores the effect this has on the environment, and also ignores encouraging human, as opposed to hominid, social behaviour.

Economic megalomania; economic narcissism, is partly rebalanced by re-designing the society so it's agreed (a-greed – counter to greed) some technologies are not taken up. This is progress to a fuller humanness that inclines toward the voluntary suspension of gratification.

Seemingly contradictorily, the ability of humans to not attach to materialism; to suspend gratification, is dependent on them securely attaching as children to their mothers and significant others.

Pick your battles and know the enemy

Weed Words
with Triny Roe

The list of exotic weeds in Australia is long but not all weeds are the same. Some you can comfortably live with, they being only a minor nuisance. Some you can eat or have medicinal properties. Others are major pests and have the ability to take over in a short space of time if left alone. Learn to recognise and identify the variety of plants that inhabit your block and determine their various characteristics to help you manage them appropriately.

Lantana, *Lantana camara*, is a common pest species in the Northern Rivers and in many other parts of Australia, earning a place in the list of WONS – Weeds of National Significance.

Some people say that lantana is good for the soil. But how good? It is better than nothing but plenty of native plants will actually do a superior job, especially nitrogen fixing species such as wattles or acacias. As well as enriching the nutrient levels of the soil, wattles allow other plants to grow amongst them, creating a rich ecosystem with a diversity of species. On the other hand, lantana exudes an allelopathic chemical which prevents other vegetation from germinating. Look underneath a patch of



lantana. The soil is bare and devoid of any other plants.

Clearing lantana for bush regeneration can be done without herbicides. Some native birds use lantana for food and habitat so a gradual process of removal will allow the wildlife to adapt to the new conditions. In some areas lantana is associated with BMAD – bell miner associated die-back.

If lantana is climbing and choking mature trees, simply cut the stems at a comfortable height and dig out the roots. Lantana roots are fairly shallow and come out relatively easily. They don't normally reshoot from

root segments though woody stems will continue to grow if left in contact with the ground. Don't try to pull the lantana out of host trees. The intertwining branches criss cross and hold fast. The danger is you may damage the native tree you are trying to save. Stems and branches left high in the tree will soon die, rot and fall or blow out in the next big wind.

Thick patches of lantana can be rehabilitated by starting on the edges. Natural recruitment could already be occurring on the margins. Ensure any emerging seedlings are kept free of the far reaching

strangling arms of lantana. This process is a long term activity but eventually a canopy will form and reduce the vigour of the lantana. When the canopy is dense enough, such as under rainforest, lantana will be excluded.

Other strategies include creating holes in the patch and planting trees in them. As the trees grow keep the lantana at bay. Nibble away at the edges as new native seedlings emerge. Ensure exotic species are identified and removed.

Follow up is essential. Weeding is not a one-time forever fix. Strategic practices such as slashing or hand pulling before seed set could reduce the incidence in the next season. However new seed can blow in or be introduced by water, vehicles, birds and bats.

Mindful disposal of garden waste is important. In the good 'bad old days' one simply chucked everything down the gully or over the bank. While it's growing happily in your garden it might be OK. Unfettered and untended in the gully, it could grow rampantly and disperse further afield. There was a reason you needed to weed it in the first place. Chipping, composting or brewing weed tea reduce the risk of further spread.

Happy weeding.

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The Reef

Permaculture Principles

with Anastasia Guise

Yesterday I took my little bag of trail mix, and my big steel water bottle, and climbed high into the range that faces my home. In a kind of furious desperation I toiled upwards, my legs burning, sweat running down my flank in lieu of the tears I've locked up. I'm too angry to cry.

The Great Barrier Reef is as good as gone, and to believe anything else is to remain in denial of this, perhaps not the first, but surely the greatest indication of the unfolding tragedies of the coming decades. Incredibly biodiverse, visually stunning, and globally iconic, the Reef was an ecosystem held in trust for future generations, and necessary for the replenishment of perhaps up to 70% of Pacific fish species.

Its fate displays too, all the mammoth complexities which come into play when striving for concerted, effective action on trans-national ecological matters. Australia has always had a special role to play in protecting and advocating for the Reef. We've failed miserably. Right in the middle of the worst coral bleaching event ever recorded, the Queensland Government ticked off final approval for the Carmichael coalmine and its train link through the Galilee basin to Abbot Point. This is more than a matter of the tragedy of the commons: it's a failure of both sense and imagination.

So now they're playing re-runs of the Reef's brilliant living wonders just the way they play obituaries of just-fallen heroes. Never have we had such knowledge and access of the intricacies of the world's species and habitats, and never yet have we been so distracted

and overrun. In the comfort of our homes we can watch the world in vivid high-definition colour, up-close and personal, in time-lapse, infrared or underwater if we want. Never mind that outside in the real world, ecological desertification is looming, and we can never hit pause or replay. We've got our screens to compensate for the world we've fucked up.

And yet up on the mountain I feel like a fool. What was it all for?

Since the genesis of a global environment movement, every single environmentalist has worked hard to ensure it never came to this. Some have dedicated their lifetimes to it. In comparison, I can't claim I did much, but for eight years I've lived off the grid, and not taken a single flight. I made my own little life as small as it could be, to compensate in part for all the big ugly lives around me. The Clive Palmers and Gina Reinharts of the world, the Big Polluters and Cheaters. I know their names; they've never heard of me. I willingly sacrificed some things because I knew what was at stake. But while I tightened my belt, Clive and Gina just loosened theirs; while I decided not to fly, they and their friends ate caviar and drank \$3000 bottles of wine to seal coal deals with the skies to themselves.

So the gloves are off: there's no mistaking what will really be sacrificed here. Oh, there'll be court cases out of this, not just brought by the Australian people, but very likely from tourism operators, and the World Heritage Commission, against successive, maybe even retrospective, Australian governments. Legal precedents like the (successful) Dutch 88 vs the Netherlands Government, and the (pending) Kids vs the US Government, have indicated that citizen-led litigation when it comes to climate action is tenable and powerful. But it won't bring the Reef back.

I really wanted to write a fluffy little permaculture column this month: in fact, I promised to. I was going to write about companion planting and beneficial pollinators. I know we've all got doomsday fatigue, and cause fatigue, and information fatigue, and even just fatigue fatigue, enough to make anyone want to climb as far away from humanity as possible, to sit up on some mountain peak high above it all and never have to come down.

And that's what I did. I sat up there through the nausea, and the anger, and the soul-wracking grief. I sat through the understanding that things don't always work out the way we want. I sat through every imaginary chapter I would write in the book of our time on the planet right now that could replace the dying of the Reef. I sat through my frustration with social movements that Bob Hunter, that visionary hero, journalist and co-founder of Greenpeace encapsulated so well: "It is sickening, that a revolution can move no faster or further than humanity itself. In reality we spend so much time at each others' throats, egos clashing, turning resistance into a psychodrama..."

But somehow I found enough reasons to walk back down from the mountain. All I brought back with me is this: Maybe it takes something this big, and this tragic, for us to turn a corner. Maybe from our greatest shame and most painful regrets come the key cultural lessons which shall remake us. If there was ever a time for unity and action, that time is now.

Anastasia has just published 'Rapture', a collection of environmental essays, short stories and unsung folk songs. To order a copy of the book, or find out more about upcoming promotional events, you can contact her at: anastasia.de.guise@gmail.com or follow her writer page on Facebook: [Anastasia Guise Author](#)

Join the race for a better place



Some students in class 5 in a Mysore (India) school

Join the race to make the world a better place!

A World Environment Day Festival will be held on Sunday 5th June, 10am to 3pm at Knox Park, Murwillumbah.

The event is billed as a free environmental celebration and educational family fun day, organised by the Caldera Environment Centre.

Live music will be provided by Gabriel & Cecilia, The Andrea Kirwin Band and Broadfoot; and The Pitts Family Circus will perform.

There will also be tasty food, environmental and sustainable business stalls, kids' activities in the kids tent and a workshop with Hoopla Circus, EnviroQuest with prizes, an electric car demo, electric bicycles and solar trailer, and composting and fermenting demos.

In the Speakers Room will be: Steve Harris CEO of ENOVA, Australia's first community-owned renewable energy retailer; Kacey Clifford and Andrew Price from the Tyalgum Energy project; Nina Lucas from the Environmental Defenders Office speaking on Biodiversity Protection Legislation and Anti-Protester Legislation; Debbie Firestone on how you can make sustainable change happen; Michael Corke on Land for Wildlife; and Greg Reid, president of Tweed Climate Action Now, on renewable energy generation and storage.

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

At long last the NSW Scientific Committee has made a Final Determination to list the population of the koala *Phascolarctos cinereus* (Goldfuss, 1817) between the Tweed and Brunswick Rivers east of the Pacific Highway as an Endangered Population in Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*.

The Tweed Coast koala population is only the third population in NSW to be declared Endangered. The other two are the Pittwater Local Government Area population, gazetted in 1998 and the Hawks Nest and Tea Gardens population, gazetted in 1999.

What endangered means in the context of the Act is that the population is facing a very high risk of extinction in the near future due to either a large reduction in population size, its very low number of adult individuals, its highly restricted distribution and/or severely fragmented habitat.

Of course the listing is nothing to be proud of, but it does draw attention to the dire predicament of NSW's coastal koalas and the higher level of management responsibility that the Tweed Coast population requires. It also validates the recovery work Tweed Shire Council and its partners, including Friends of the Koala has committed to in recent years.

Taken nationally, koala distribution is definitely complex: apparent over-abundance in parts of Victoria and South Australia; declining numbers and local extinctions in much of NSW and Queensland. I wish I had a dollar for every time I've been asked why a few koalas that are eating themselves out of house and home in the Otways or Kangaroo Island can't be brought up here to increase our populations. Why indeed; translocation – such a simple solution.

Translocation has been defined as the human-mediated movement of living organisms from one area with release in another, either to sites where the particular species may already be present, to new sites, or to sites where the animal or plant has become locally extinct.

There are two types: conservation translocation which is motivated by objectives aimed at maintaining or re-introducing a species or community and usually guided by a formal recovery plan, and salvage or mitigation translocation which aims to relocate animals or plants from an area adversely affected by development to an area reserved or protected from ongoing impacts.

Both are risky propositions. In a review of vertebrate translocations in Australia carried out in 2009 which included the koala, only 32% were identified as successful, 28% unsuccessful, and 40% unknown or uncertain. Further, there was no clear trend of improvement in success over time from 1970-2009.

NSW has had a policy for the translocation of threatened fauna in place since 2001, and a position statement on koala translocation since 2008 (Appendix 7 of the Recovery plan for the koala). The statement clearly spells out that for numerous reasons including koala genetics, social structure, suitable food trees and habitat, climate, impact on existing environment and disease, translocation of koalas from Victoria and South Australia to NSW is not on, although there may be appropriate circumstances for translocating koalas within NSW.

Translocation is conspicuously on the table



at present. In the agreed statements of the two meetings of Commonwealth, State and Territories Environment Ministers held in 2015, priority was given to preparing national koala translocation guidelines. The Commonwealth and Victoria are co-leading the work, which is to be consistent with the national koala recovery plan presently being drafted. The driver appears to be the management of koala over-abundance in southern jurisdictions, particularly Victoria, where all too often, starving koalas hit the headlines.

At the end of March, Sydney University's Koala Health Hub hosted a national workshop on translocation and koala release which attracted 60 delegates from Queensland, NSW and Victoria. They included expert koala veterinarians, scientists, koala carers and campaigners. It was a full-on day with 16 presentations and three discussion sessions, drawing out very disparate experiences and attitudes to the practice and consequences of past and current translocation programs.

Queensland delegates in particular are champing at the bit to change current policy. In that State, translocation is only approved under a Scientific Purposes Permit, i.e. it has to be supported by science and monitoring which has been the case with the two largest koala translocation projects in recent times at

Coomera and at Moreton Bay in South East Queensland.

The unanimous view of the Queenslanders in the room was that the government policy is leading to significant koala mortality in local populations where habitat is being impacted by development. They are looking for immediate change which will ensure proactive management of koalas that are likely to be displaced or at risk during development. This could include consideration of translocation with appropriate safeguards of course.

Should Minister Hunt give the green light to the Ballina Koala Plan and consequent route for Section 10 of the Pacific Highway Upgrade, there is every chance that the NSW Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) will be proposing salvage translocation for those koalas which will be directly at risk from vegetation clearance and construction. I have attended two meetings in which RMS has expressed interest in the Moreton Bay Rail Project, lauding its innovative management strategies, despite the death of some 150 koalas.

We don't know which koalas might be considered for translocation should Section 10 proceed as is; their number, or where they might be relocated to. What we can anticipate is the likelihood of disoriented, displaced koalas under extreme stress. Having lived their life in their home range where they know their environment, too many will not survive in the long term, unless they can make it back to where they came from and can learn to adapt to what is left.

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. Follow us on Facebook.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat, phone the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-1555.

Predator/Prey



by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

The majority of animals fall clearly into being a predator or a prey animal. Cats, eagles, sharks etc. are predators while rabbits, horses, gazelles etc. are prey animals. Obviously there's cross-over, such as when a shark becomes prey to humans, but the majority of the time we have no problem categorising animals. So what about humans? Which category do we fit into?

We are clearly top predators that kill other animals and eat their flesh, so that makes us predators. But if you take away our guns and place us in the savannah in Africa, we are prey animals. Humans can survive on a diet entirely meat based, e.g. Eskimos, making

us predators, or on a vegan diet containing no animals at all, making us prey animals. Humans have eyes in the front of the head and incisors – predators, but don't have claws or fangs or poisonous barbs or any other killing method – prey. Obviously we are hard to categorise, making us possibly a combination of both.

When with a prey animal, such as the horse, this means we can choose whether to behave as a predator or as a fellow prey animal. If we behave as predators we trigger the self-protection devices that all prey animals have in the vicinity of a predator. This includes the flight and fight responses. Problem behaviours that humans have with horses include bolting (flight), bucking (fight),

rearing (fight), hard to catch (flight) and many others. When horses exhibit such behaviours humans often become predatory and use tools such as whips, spurs and bits, thus increasing the trigger for the horse, not reducing it.

So what might happen if we approached the horse with the prey persona? Without triggering the flight and fight responses we have a chance to communicate with the horse. Instead of inflicting our will upon it, we ask if it is willing to do something. In my experience, most horses most of the time say yes when asked instead of being told.

If you ask a horse to do something and receive a clear no (hopefully you're listening) then instead of behaving like a predator and making them do it, you have other options. Perhaps the horse doesn't want to do it today. Yes, you heard right, horses have emotions, physical pain, tiredness and just plain off days – the same as us. If you are open to that and know your horse you'll know when this is the case. On such a day, instead of working your horse you might just have quality time together while they graze, enjoying the sunshine together, or groom and then

let them go.

Another option is you didn't explain it clearly enough. If you look at how you asked, perhaps the message was confusing and you can find a clearer way to let the horse know what you want. Experiment, try out different ways of explaining it and listen to your horse, they'll let you know when you find a way that they understand.

Perhaps what you asked for is too hard for the horse. In your enthusiasm you may not have fully solidified the previous step and moved on too quickly. It's always a good idea to go back a step when you have problems and make sure the foundations are solid before progressing further. Many, many problems in advanced training stem from things missed in foundation training.

So next time you go to your horse, try tuning in to your prey side. Imagine what it feels like to be 'meat on feet' and how the world would then appear. We're the big-brained ones; it's our job to move toward understanding the horse, not the other way around.

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Nimbin Garden Club notes

by Peter Brooker

On Saturday 16th April, approximately 30 members and guests visited Tutti Frutti Farm on Kyogle Road.

James Creagh and his partner have owned the property for 14 years, their intention: to create a 'Garden of Eden'. To achieve this, they needed to produce as much food for themselves as possible, with excess going to local markets. Being raw food eaters, they have established a huge number of fruit and nut trees, with permaculture playing some part in their food production. Organic methods are practised, although the property is not yet "certified" organic.

About five years ago, a local group formed a movement about food sustainability. Out of this came the Blue Knob Farmers Market, the Nimbin Seed Savers, Food Equipment Library, the Nimbin Natural Bee Keepers and the weekly Nimbin Market – great places for locals to obtain locally grown fresh organic foods.

James talks about the importance of farmers' markets in developing food security for our area, supporting local people growing and making food, providing seasonally fresh fruit and veggies and creating a strong sense of community.

There are literally hundreds of fruit and nut trees planted on the property. They have experimented with planting out different areas with the same plants which has led to an extended harvesting time.

First stop, the "Citrus Orchard" – lemons, limes, mandarins and oranges. Also some small mulberry and apricot trees. One interesting tree planted is a Rollenia – a member of the custard apple family. Apparently its taste is reminiscent of a lemon meringue pie.

Windbreaks of wattle have been planted to protect the most recent sowing of carob, black sapote and yellow sapote, along with different types of



citrus and close by sweet tamarind, white sapote and cherry guava. Wattle is used as it adds nitrogen to the soil.

Further along and we find an amazing clumping bamboo and of course yet more fruit trees – greengage, plum, starfruit, pear, yellow mangosteen etc.

There are also olive trees which are not so easy to grow as they need sandy soil and a low rainfall. James preserves the olives by picking when ripe and sealing them in jars for about three months; nothing else is added. As they age, they ferment.

As we walked James pointed out a Kia apple tree, which has huge thorns and can be handy for containing livestock; jackfruit trees, the wood of which has the same properties as teak; a mulberry called Shahtoot, which tastes like a sweet wine; an Atherton Oak which produces a hard-shelled nut similar to an almond; Lau Lau trees similar to Lillipilli. Also kiwi fruit which require one happy male to about nine females, a wine palm which

produces a beautiful fruit, red and yellow dragonfruit growing on a trellis, and on and on it went.

There are scattered avocado trees, some do well some do not, some have been replaced with persimmons which are easy to grow and not affected by many pests with the exception of birds, so they really need to be netted. Tamarillo trees grow between some of the larger fruit trees – the Tamarillo trees only last for a couple of years.

James also gave us a very interesting talk on beekeeping. He has about 25 hives, although not all on the property.

James sells his produce at the Blue Knob Farmers Market every Saturday morning.

Our thanks to James for a most interesting and informative afternoon.

Our Garden Club meeting for May will be held at Nola McDougall's property at 476 Boyle Road, Goolmangar on Saturday 21st May from 2 to 4 pm. Don't forget your cup, a chair and a plate to share, and any plants, cuttings or seedlings for the plant table. New members are always welcome

nimbingardens@gmail.com

Crossword Solution

From Page 31

	H	E	M	P		A	X	I	O	M		
S			A	C	I	D	N	E	E	L		
I	H	P	V				G	D				
N	E	E	D	L	E	P	H	O	E	N	I	X
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Chinese medicine and birthing

by Kirrah Holborn
Traditional wisdom

Growing and birthing a baby is hard work and can take a significant toll on the mother. Jaime from 'Santosh mama' says "childbirth depletes the wei chi, which is the body's protective immune capacity". Labour and birth creates a yin or 'cold condition' in a woman's body and this can leave her vulnerable.

According to Debra Betts (an acupuncturist specializing in women's health), "There is a long documented history in Traditional Chinese Medicine of women using diet to encourage lactation and recovery from childbirth".

TCM world foundation states that the 30 days after birth is called "zuo yue zi" which translates to "sit this month". The mother usually provides the primary source of nourishment for the child so it's vitally important that she is nurtured so she can do this to the best of her ability.

A lot of importance is placed on the postpartum time with a great focus on helping the mother to recover, be nourished with healing foods and to spend time resting.

For proper postpartum healing, the mother needs to be warmed. This can be achieved by eating warm soups, drinking warm teas, being massaged with warm oils and being wrapped in warmth. Warm baths and heat packs feel very nurturing and aid the mother in restoring balance.

Traditional method of preparing the placenta

Humans have been consuming placentas for hundreds of years. In China it is known as "Zi He Che" and has been used medicinally for over 2000 years. According to many Traditional Chinese Medicine doctors it is seen as a "tonic to fortify the 'qi' and enrich the blood".

Raven Lang, a TCM midwife recommends women consume



their placenta to aid in recovery from birth and prevent postpartum depression. Lang is considered to have popularized the encapsulation of the placenta with warming herbs.

The traditional method of placenta preparation involves gently rinsing the placenta, removing clots and emptying blood from the vessels. The umbilical cord is also removed at this time. The placenta is then gently steamed with warming herbs. It is then dehydrated, ground into a powder and encapsulated.

According to *Turning Tides Midwifery*, this method is the oldest-known and most commonly-used recipe for postpartum placenta preparation. The placenta capsules are an easy-to-take remedy that can be safely taken for weeks and months after birth.

A mother's placenta is a rich source of hormones and nutrients and can help ease her transition to parenthood. Commonly reported benefits of placenta capsules are: more energy, good milk supply and balanced hormones.

Advantages of traditionally prepared placenta

Steaming the placenta with

warming herbs/foods/spices such as lemon, chilli and ginger helps the placenta to become a warming, nourishing and tonifying supplement. This is highly desired in TCM theory. The heating 'yang' qualities of the traditionally prepared placenta can help balance the new mother. It is also thought that this method better preserves the placenta and is more suited to long-term use after birth. Some theories suggest that the nutrients in steamed/dried placenta are more bioavailable.

Steaming also kills off any surface bacteria that the placenta may have been exposed to during the birth process.

Another advantage of steaming the placenta first, is that it dehydrates quicker so there is a faster turn around and capsules can be started usually within 24 hours of birth.

Kirrah Holborn provides pregnancy, birth and postpartum support in the Northern Rivers. She facilitates Birthing From Within antenatal classes, gives nurturing pregnancy massages and provides placenta encapsulation services. For the chance to win a pregnancy massage text your name and email to 0429 308 851 or visit www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

Natural law

by Helene Collard

Many a deep thinker has contemplated the question, "why are we here?" Each and every person is special and important and holds a unique expression of divinity within their heart. Therefore, through our physical existence on earth, our 'job' is to live fully and freely from the heart. It sounds a bit simple, but in reality, living from the heart is a lifelong journey.

The reason for this is because life on earth, particularly in more recent times, has a tendency to be dense and complex. The long legacy of trauma inflicted on humans, by humans, has created extended lines of trans- and intergenerational trauma, that become embedded in the family line. Therefore most people today, whether they recognise it or not, carry the wounds of their ancestors.

Subsequently, many people replay (often unconsciously), their ancestral scars in various ways, throughout their own lives. As a result many struggle through life and continue to carry the family pain...

Back to living in the heart...now we can begin to understand why this is a lifelong journey. Another facet that is worthy of mention is that our heart essence, is spiritual in nature. We live in a mainstream society where our inherent spirituality is largely denied. It is left up to the individual to accept and nourish their spiritual nature. In addition, many feel distrustful and/or fearful of connecting with religious groups due to the unconscionable actions of some. Therefore, we live in a material world that does not promote nor reflect our spiritual nature.

So the odds for living in the heart are against us. Or are they?

There are a growing number of people who know that our unfolding self-improvement and spirituality is inevitable. They understand that every person's unique heart expression, resonates with the One Heart that is the Source of all.

We are here to evolve. We are here



*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*

to mature and develop over time in a positive way. We are here to heal our ancestral pain and express our divine nature – these go hand-in-hand.

May marks the beginning of a new monthly event in Lismore called 'Evolve'. Evolve events are intended to support our ongoing evolution, by being the platform for the sharing of tools and offerings, that cover the many facets of human development and experience. So join me in growing together. Visit: www.helenecollard.com for enquiries and bookings. Tickets are limited.

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 since 2008. Her qualifications include, Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and Reiki Master. For more about Helene and her services visit: www.helenecollard.com or connect with her on 0405-656-797.

Acupuncture

by Brigid Beckett

"How does acupuncture work?" is a common question. It is not easy to give a short answer, but a good start is understanding some basic concepts. I have already written on yin and yang which is very important. Another central concept is Qi.

Qi is central to Chinese philosophy. It is often likened to energy, but an exact translation is difficult as it has a very versatile nature. It has similarities to energy as seen in quantum physics, with all matter being made of this energy. It is the basis of all phenomena in the universe. "Every birth is a condensation, every death a dispersal. Birth is not a gain, death is not a loss. When qi condenses it becomes a living being, when it is dispersed it is the substratum of mutations". This is different from many Western philosophical traditions, which tend to be dualistic and try to define a distinction between body and mind.



In terms of Chinese medicine, again the body is qi existing in different densities. Dense forms include the organs, bones and blood. Mind and emotions are a subtle non material form of qi.

Original qi or original essence is what we receive from our parents, it is the basis of kidney qi. Throughout our life it is needed to power the other processes. Original qi, usable qi, and also blood, is produced from food. "If no food is eaten for half a day qi is weakened, if no food is eaten for a whole day qi is depleted". In turn this food qi also replenishes the all important original qi, as does adequate sleep. Food qi also interacts with qi from the lungs, creating a more refined qi assisting heart and lungs in breathing and in blood circulation. Further refinement produces nutritive qi to nourish the organs and defensive qi to protect from exterior pathogens. The mind (shen) and emotions are a rarified form of qi, arising from and dependent on original qi.

The smooth flow of qi is essential to health. If it does not flow freely, it can coagulate, forming masses or tumours.

As there is a difference between Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy, so

there is a difference between the medical traditions.

Chinese medicine is about bringing the different energies that exist both inside & outside the body into balance. A single symptom is rarely looked at in isolation. It is about looking at the varying and interacting states of qi and using treatments such as tonifying, dispersing, subduing or moving to get what is a dynamic process back to a healthy position.

Depending on each situation, this may happen quickly, or may take some time. This is generally in contrast to the Western approach. Usually one symptom or condition is treated (especially seen in the case of Specialists). Many Western medications are targeted at the symptom which they treat quickly and often successfully. But they are not without deleterious effects to the patient as a whole. This is not to say that these medications are not necessary, they are often life saving, particularly in very serious illness. Examples are heart disease, cancer, acute anaphylactic reactions, acute infections, snake bite. But in other situations it is taking a sledge hammer to a walnut. Or sometimes these medicines are just not that effective, especially in chronic situations.

The situation is the same with surgery. Again it can be life saving, but in other

elective surgeries the localised problem is cut out without addressing the pattern that caused it. In these cases the patient is unlikely to remain problem free.

I see many parallels in permaculture as well as other world views where people integrate the natural world into their lives. Permaculture takes time to observe, respect and work with natural systems, replenishing rather than depleting, recycling nutrients and energy, and not polluting with harmful chemicals. Compared with a situation where there is a chemical herbicide or pesticide for every pest, this is wasteful and energy intensive, draining rather than replenishing. As with medicine, there may be times when chemicals are needed, such as if there was an invasion of something such as fire ants or an aggressive disease that could spread to the wider region. But the big guns need to be used judiciously.

We are an interconnected part of the wider universe and the universe is reflected in us as individuals. Both for the wider ecosystems and ourselves, keeping energy or qi balanced and replenished leads to longterm health and stability.

Brigid Beckett is a qualified acupuncturist working at Community Acupuncture Lismore & Nimbin, phone 0431-702-560..

Growing young: yoga and growth hormones

by Cameron Storey

Inside your body, often below conscious level, is the functioning of your pituitary gland and the production of growth hormone (GH). This is a vast topic with many unknowns, but some things we do know.

GH generally decreases with increasing age, dropping to around 10% of our pubescent levels by the time we are around 75 years old. As GH decreases, generally our bodies change in a number of unwanted ways: lean muscle mass decreases, fat percentage increases, increased cellular wear and tear, less efficient heart and lungs, slower cellular regeneration, reduced memory, decreasing bone mineral density and decreasing sexual function.

Many of these measurements are biomarkers of ageing, which means as they change people naturally assume, "I'm getting old," and at least one third of the aging population has little or no GH and just accepts the changes as ageing. But the decline of GH is NOT a given, there are several ways to increase GH naturally.

The process of renewal of youthfulness or vigour is called rejuvenescence, and there are many aspects to be understood and applied. Dr Ronald Klatz, author of *Grow Young with HGH* writes, "The lower the percentage of fat, the higher the level of GH and the higher the fat percentage the lower the GH level."

Exercise and yoga especially sends a



wake-up call to your pituitary due to the high intensity of the poses which are held for short durations of 10 to 30 seconds. Make sure you warm up before (sun salutes) and cool down after (shoulderstand and plough) for a few minutes each.

Yoga poses which are regarded as strengthening, like: dips, up dog, bird poses, backbends, handstand, forearm balance and headstand, all stimulate the muscles, which in turn stimulate the production of GH from the pituitary. Sometimes I may supplement my weekly yoga training with some HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training), a set of eight reps of 20 seconds duration of kayaking or sprinting or boxing bag work. (Fast Exercise by Dr Michael Mosley is full of good information on the latest HIIT research). You should feel your heart rate and breath rate increase.

As most GH is produced during sleep, it is important not to miss sleep. Another way to increase GH levels is to increase the time between meals. I eat around

7pm and my next meal (Break-Fast) is around 11am, which naturally raises GH levels in the blood due to low blood sugar, and makes yoga training much easier.

As your training stimulates GH there is a corresponding increase in lean muscle mass, a decrease in fat percentage, an increase in cellular division and repair, strengthened heart and lung function, an increase in vision and memory function, a strengthening of the immune system, an increase in sexual functioning and an increase in mineral bone density. Basically almost every aspect we think of as ageing starts to reverse, and the effects of stimulating GH over time are compounded.

Years of stimulating GH naturally with diet and yoga have led me to believe that most of ageing is preventable. In *Light on Yoga*, master yogi BKS Iyengar writes: "It (headstand) ensures a proper blood supply to the pituitary and pineal glands in the brain. Our growth, health and vitality depend on the proper functioning of these two glands," and he should know: he practised daily for 80 years.

While a headstand may seem too difficult for many, there are numerous other yoga poses where the torso is inverted and benefits are obtained.

Yoga classes are held at Dharma Centre Yoga Space, Lillifield Community (15 minutes from Nimbin). For more yoga info, phone (02) 6689-7120 or Facebook Dharma Centre - Lillifield

Being for oneself, being for others

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M. Couns., PhD

I'm interested in the problem of those who live with the consequences of feeling they have to fulfil the needs of others because of parental expectation. I've listened to the accounts of clients who've expressed a certain resentment of this in their own lives, or know someone who has been very damaged by such expectations. I've also been reminded of rather extreme forms of this vicariousness in literature.

In order to have a sense of being your own person, you need to have an independence of thought, feeling and action. Being your own person is having a sense of authenticity, a willingness to stand your ground, self confidence, and a willingness to experiment with new ways of doing things, tasting new things, going where you've never been before, and playing with wonder. You need an independence that isn't heavily dependent on other people's direction. Obviously, when we are born we are dependent on the physical, emotional and communicative support, nurturance, and, hopefully, love of our caregivers. We need an education into the cultural ideas and practices of our community and the development of knowledge and the associated skills, as well as knowing the boundaries of self and others. These are necessary. Conformity, to a degree, is helpful, but when this dominates, then a sense of self is compromised, so a

balance between independence and mutuality is really useful. It's interesting that when people are brought up to be heavily dependent on others, they often have a feeling of being out of control, confused, clingy, devalued and easily manipulated. One of the most common emotions for these people is anger, depression and psychic collapse. Many find themselves in the mental health system, being moved from psychiatrist to psychiatrist and medication to medication. Where is happiness in this; where is a sense of self? Parents who bring up children to be so needy tend to have children because they themselves haven't known much love and nurturance, for reasons as complex as war, abuse, abandonment, or lack of consistent parenting of their own. They have the children to "fill a hole" in themselves. Their experienced absence of love gets transferred to the unborn child and the child is taught that independence is bad and wrong, but these children feel the inner turbulence, as described above. If the mapped life, the vicarious life of the parent, is adopted (and many children find it practically impossible to resist), their accomplishments are not sensed as their own, and underneath it all, they can believe that the lie that they are living will soon be discovered and they will be exposed as the fraud they feel themselves to be. The doctor, the lawyer, the actor, the musician, the football player, the academic (I met many when I was at university) can all feel these

feelings of inauthenticity, because they trained in these professions to fulfil the dreams of parents. The need to have a child to fill "the gap" can take certain parents to extreme places. I'm not talking about adoption here, but biotechnological means whereby natural processes are bypassed. Now I'm not saying this is wrong in itself, but I am keen to ask some difficult questions, like, for instance, what level of sensed independence will the much-longed for child have? Will their sense of self be skewed to being dependent on the existence of the other person? Will they know their separateness? It does, naturally, depend on how the child is brought up and the values translated to them. Let me be clear here, I'm not saying wanting a child by whatever means is always a consequence of a parent not feeling loved; I am merely wondering about the child who came into the world to fulfil someone else's perceived need. We live in strange times. Biotechnological intervention in the design of children is reaching bizarre levels. In the late 1990s the first child was conceived for the purpose of harvesting cells in order to save the life of his sibling. There have been several other cases of this "saviour sibling" phenomenon. A novel has been written (*My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult) and a movie made of this semi-fictional account of such a situation. The "saviour sibling" is a child conceived in order to provide an organ or cell transplant to

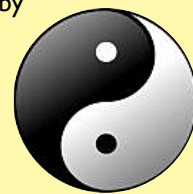
a sibling who is affected with a fatal disease, such as cancer or a fatal form of anaemia. So, in other words, the healthy human being is there for the benefit of their brother or sister, and is supposed to willingly undergo medical procedures and surgeries, whether they like it or not. This is an ethical mine field that is still poorly understood. I've been reading as much of the literature I can get my hands on, including the accounts of the donor's themselves. Many papers quote a single account of an interview with a child, who when asked what they thought about being alive just because their sibling needed saving, said they were glad to help. Another account is less forgiving: this saviour sibling "donated" (not voluntarily) spinal material to his brother who later died. Their parents disowned the "saviour" and he grew up without the love of parents. So how to love a child for themselves, without them being there to fulfil our own expectations? I guess much of this comes down to allowing, and playing with, our own desires and ambitions to manifest in our own lives the things we haven't yet fulfilled, and to not attempt to transplant those desires into the lives of others. It becomes a question of owning what belongs to us and what doesn't. Counselling has a huge part to play in the articulation and realization of our own ambitions. In the end, we are responsible for our own lives and for creating the space for other lives to be lived well.

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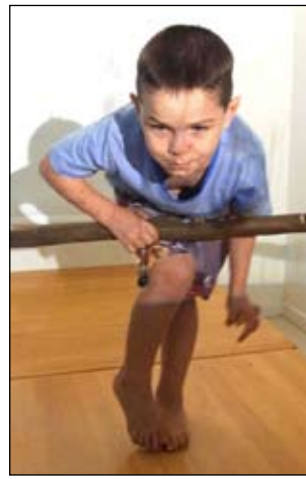
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Dance at Nimbin Preschool



"Dance is the hidden language of the soul of the body."

The body says what words cannot."

– Martha Graham, Choreographer

Pictured in the moment (left to right): youthful dancers Alyse, Kiyan and Eden.



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Learning about colours

by Elissa and the team at Nimbin Childcare Centre

This month we have been learning about colours.

Colours are everywhere and it is a fantastic experience for children to see how colours mix and form other colours.

We have been mixing primary colours and exploring colour mixing and watching how different colours blend to form other colours. The children have all been embracing this and

especially our preschoolers can now tell us which two colours will make another colour.

Have you ever thought about your child coming to a centre based child care and education? Well drop in and see us at Nimbin Early Learning centre in the Community Centre complex for a booked orientation morning to get to know us and the group.

Please feel free to call the Centre on 6689-0142 to



book in for our Wednesday Mornings Orientation which is from 10-11. We currently have vacancies on Monday,

Tuesday and Wednesday, with waiting lists on other days. Thank you and hope to see you soon.

Meaningful learning

by Richard Finch, Educator

Here at Tuntable Preschool, we believe that meaningful learning can come from real work.

Lately the children have been excited by a resupply of our woodwork supplies and tools. The addition of hinges and pulleys, wheels and brackets has led to the children engaging in real building and learning some real lessons on the way.

Comments such as: "This is going to take forever!" (Tahne) and "This is so hard!" (Haan) reflect the nature of the children's undertakings. Solving problems such as how to make a crane spin, and how to attach a rescue rocket's wings, are part of the design and learning process. Not only learning how to use tools and build, but learning life skills of persistence and patience!

Indiana knew all about screwdrivers. "My dad has flat-head screw drivers, but this is a star screwdriver. I want to screw all these down 'til they're flat, like my dad does."

For some, the experience is just beginning, with trusty staff member Silvia helping them to drill holes and use screwdrivers to screw in screws or hammer in nails. Then there is a moment of realisation, of learning: "Hey Silvia, look, if I turn it this way it goes in and if I turn it this way I can make it come out again!" (Lorien)

Indiana showing her screwdriver skills



by Tracey Gardiner

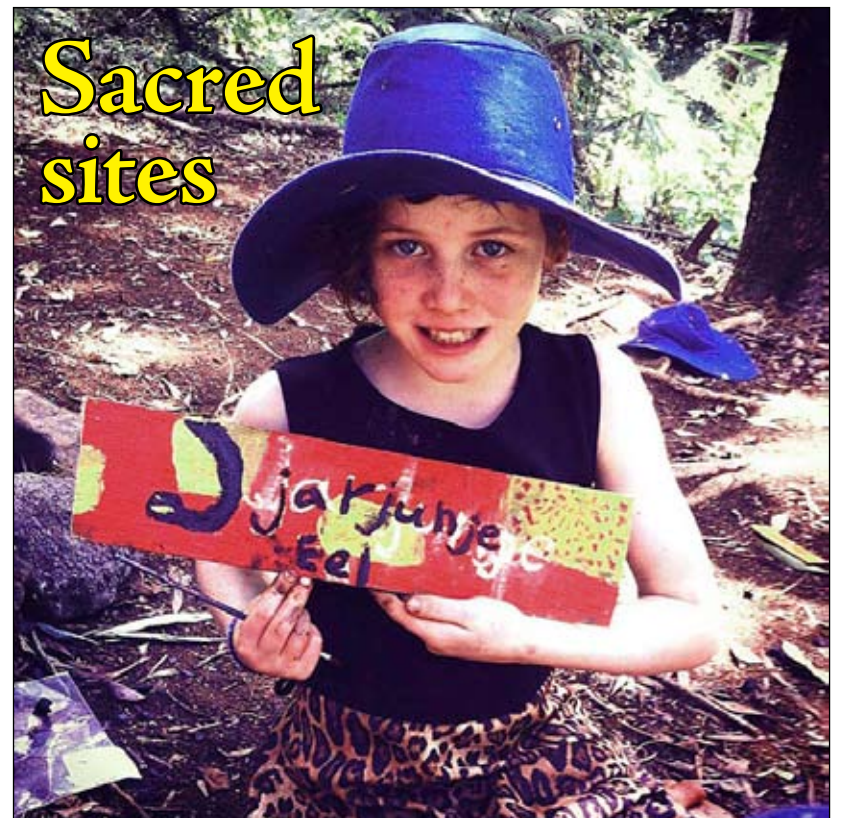
Over the course of term one, the lower primary students at Tuntable Falls Community School have been learning about sacred sites from around the world, such as Machu Pichu, Stonehenge and Angkor Wat.

They have used the information gathered to create their own sacred site within the school grounds. They selected a lovely, sunny location where the vibrations felt just right, cleared the space and built a fire, over which they they cooked potatoes and damper to have as a celebratory feast.

Each of the children said a beautiful blessing into the fire, for example, "I hope this space is full of joy" and "I hope this space is peaceful."

They then performed a group welcome to country and the New Zealand Haka. They have also started creating Bundjalung language flora and fauna signs to place around the site which they have named "Our Bora Ring." It is truly a beautiful, peaceful space that the whole school can make use of and enjoy.

Congratulations on a fabulous job, kids.



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The truth about

by Robin Stein,
Healer and homeopath

Is chronic fatigue a myth? And if not, why can't doctors diagnose it? Recently I was asked to see a young man who had been ill for five years. He had an enormous pile of test results, X-rays and ultrasounds etc. but no doctor had been able to diagnose him, in spite of seeing plenty of them. Why do you imagine this diagnosis is so difficult?

I took a saliva sample and went to work, asked a few pointed questions from the remedies to which his saliva pointed, and told him in a very short time that he had chronic fatigue. He was amazed and he asked why not even the most gifted physicians had been able to tell him what the problem was over five years.

Personally, I believe this is because doctors are not schooled in the way they once were. Presently, doctors are taught to match a pharmaceutical to the symptoms of a patient. And if they are unable to do this, they have no idea how to help that patient other than to run every expensive test in the book. That's how my patient happened to have a pile of tests a foot high.

What most doctors don't know is that three specific problems must be present for chronic fatigue to develop in the human body. There must have been chronic stress continuing for a long time (such as many years). There has to be a viral or bacterial infection. And the patient must have experienced a tragedy, like an emotional break-up or the loss of a person the patient loved.

These three questions were the key questions I asked my patient, who told me he had remained in a very stressful job for some years. He had broken a relationship which was extremely emotional for him, and he had been to Bali where he contracted Bali Belly.



Image courtesy Gizmodo Australia

When did the relationship end, I asked. Exactly five years ago, and he'd left the stressful job and travelled to Bali for a break a short time later. So the three specific problems were exact for this patient to be feeling the incredible loss of energy and strength that chronic fatigue patients suffer. My patient also suffered with a constantly upset stomach, aches and pains in all his muscles and limbs, and a dramatic loss of weight.

Once a diagnosis has been made, how does the patient recover and how long will it take? I change the diet of all patients who eat high amounts of cane sugar, refined food and take-away food that is devoid of nutrients. What is equally important, is that refined and take-away food is also devoid of enzymes. Enzymes are of vital importance because we need them to digest our food, to turn our food into energy and also for us to heal. We begin with 55,000 of them but they decline through bad eating habits or illness.

So I recommend hacho miso to be used as a daily broth, and also on toast or on food because of the rich enzymes it contains. I also recommend for patients to take Vitamin D if they don't spend time

with the sun on their skin; vitamin E; vitamin C taken as a powder with hesperidin, as well as a teaspoon of echinacea liquid daily. All of these recommendations will boost immunity. Some daily exercise is also important to bring oxygen to the tissues, and hence a bit more energy. And I recommend two litres of water daily, to which a pebble of Celtic sea salt has been added.

It will take several years for the patient to gradually improve. If they smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol, it will take much longer. Recovery is really a good time to take stock, to change bad habits and to eat a more natural diet. A weekly massage is a great idea, as is nurturing self. And my wonderful remedies also make a great difference.

I see illness as a gift. An opportunity to make positive changes to our lives, to learn to meditate, take up yoga or to begin a daily walk or a swim. There is an idea that we all learn from our mistakes, but if the person makes the same mistakes over and over, how can they possibly believe they will have a different outcome? Seeing the mistakes we make clearly is always very helpful. And then the patient will recover fairly fast.



by Betti Wille

"If light is in your heart, you will find your way home." – Rumi

When I think about the rather small teaching institute for Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy in Bielefeld, Germany, this is accompanied by a body sensation of softness and slow expansion.

The interior of 'Cranioschule Bielefeld' presented a warm and welcoming atmosphere. We would sit in a circle of chairs with a fire-place between us and a large wooden sliding door leading to next door's treatment space with comfortable, wide tables and heaps of cushions and blankets. One of the teachers, Konrad Alverdes, has a strong passion for the embryonic heart and its significance for biodynamic bodywork. He guided us to explore our individual heart space, relating to the embryonic heart which once took up a lot of space as first 'organ' of the developing body.

Exploring heart space

During the second month of pregnancy, the embryo curls around a bulge consisting of heart and navel. Little hands develop while resting on a relatively huge heart, continually touching and moving with every beat (... more pleasant sensations). The hands start off as little plates and arms are rather short at that stage. Short sequences of film can be found here: www.ehd.org/movies

Each individual's (embryonic) heart space consists of a massive bulge on the front part of the body between face and navel. The palms of our hands might start to tingle with excitement when we feel ourselves into this scenario. They once were very intimate with our heart (and still are) as well as the inside of our arms.

Back in Bielefeld, when practising with a partner in supine position on the treatment table I was almost stunned by the effect it had on both of us. Very slowly and respectfully narrowing the space above each other with the palms of our hands and – there it was – its margin clearly palpable and instantly recognised. I can't think of words to describe the actual experience, but we had touched something that feels very individual and universal at the same time. I could have related to the term *heart space* before but this experience had joyfully shattered any given concept of the mind. What remained was an expanded landscape of felt sense, modesty of thoughts and humbleness.

The heart is a site of perception and conversation. Any received stimulus is immediately converted into action. Information about flow conditions and volume is directly met with a muscular impulse which in turn is carried into the periphery. Our heart activity is an ongoing conversation between inner and outer spaces.

It can be an enormous resource to connect with. Heartbeat is present in us as long as we're alive. There is a recognition that the key to our purpose of life can be found through connecting with our heart. In being present with this, call it faith, intelligence or intuition, we may be able to surrender to life's movements without fear. Whenever feeling lost or confused we can ask our heart to get back on track. And even though there can be great pain involved, deep inside the heart we know that we can flow through and re-emerge on the other side.

The embryonic heart space, as described above, can be used as a tool to help ourselves as well as others. It's a space from where empathy can flow unlimited without ever feeling drained. When truly listening from this place we become aware of heart related movements, in ourselves as well as in others.

Betti has many years of experience as an independent midwife and holds a diploma in Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy. She can be contacted via email: biodynamic.touch@gmail.com

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