

Who was Pellegrino Artusi?

The Imbibers Ark

by Thom Culpeper

Pellegrino Artusi is none other than the author of the magnificent *la Scienza in Cucina e l'arte di Mangiar Bene*, 1891 (*The Science of Cooking and the Art of Fine Dining*). The text was bought about by a unified Italy, and not then but after publication, it's now universally understood as the bible of regional Italian cuisines.

This is the most significant text on Italian unified cuisine and the promotion of the collective genius of the stoves and tables of Italian regional wimin. Artusi was not a misogynist, as some would have it, he was the publisher of wimin's culinary genius. Many of whom were of the coastal boon-docks and the rural peasantry.

Marcella Hazan doffs her cap to Pellegrino, as does Julia Child, but in her case, she also bows to Escoffier and of course to 700 editions, never out of print to this day. Though its publication in English had to wait until 1997, this tome is one of those material partakings, the outcome of many souls for all of humanity, who at core, wish to "break bread, share salt and eat together" for life and living and dear, dear love.

Now 800 pages in print and published together with another tome containing



3000 recipes, the 1904: *Ecco il libro di Cucina* ('Here is your Cookbook') is a practical kitchen manual. The first edition in English says, "What ought else than manga, manga, por favor!"

With Prosper's *Larousse* twinned with Pellegrino's *The Science of Cooking and the Art of Fine Dining*, and with a kiss to Julia Child and Escoffier, let us all give "flash" to our 'flesh' charges! For we have found the tome and the stoves to 'prove' it on!

Note: Culpeper is, from now on, to do a lunch for two at his table, each month before publication. Send us a unique thought on your experience of cooking! NGT will judge them and I will shout a pair of you to lunch. You contribute to the "culinary" and/or contribute your unique food insights, and we will cook! You will 'chill-out' and imbibe!

Send entries to Culpeper at: thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Pasta Amatrice (Spaghetti all'amatriciana)

A recipe from Pellegrino, in memory of Amatrice's people's losses this past month to that destructive Italian earthquake.

Ingredients

500g (1.1lb) spaghetti
30mls olive oil or pork lard
125g (5oz) guanciale di maiale (cured pig cheek). Unsmoked streaky bacon or pancetta is not a crime.
1 red chilli
400g peeled Roma tomatoes (canned is OK)
100g medium aged pecorino salt

Method

Cut the "pig" into thin strips (10x10x50mm). Oil the pan, cut the chilli in half, fry a minute or three, add the "pig", fry quickly, lower the heat and simmer to golden. Do not fry to dry, just enough to release some of the fat for the sauce. Add the pulped tomatoes, simmer 10 minutes. Remove chilli.

Do the pasta to 'al dente', drain, and add in the sauce, lower heat and add in half the grated pecorino, simmer a minute or two. Plate and dress with the balance of the pecorino. Serve with whatever the palate demands. *Bon appetito*.

Note: The Calderan Ginnery and world class restaurant formation seeks some brave purses.

Nimbin Garden Club notes

by Peter Brooker

In August, 18 intrepid Nimbin Garden Club members set off on an eight kilometre trek along the picturesque and winding Mountain Top Road to Gerard and Janna's home.

If they had made that trek early in 1984, when Gerard and Janna had, they would have found 40 acres of bush block covered with lantana. Most people would have continued driving, but Gerard and Janna could hear water tumbling across rocks at the bottom of the valley, so they followed cattle through the dense covering of lantana and found a spring fed creek. That creek, and of course the view, drew them in and they stayed.

Today, if you drive that eight kilometres along Mountain Top Road, you will find a sign at their gate written in a dialect found in the Netherlands that, roughly translated, reads "Exactly what we were looking for"; and when you reach the end of the driveway that curves out of sight of the road, you will find a flat cleared space, a ring of gardens and a stone house they built themselves with a sign on the wall, in the same language, that reads "The Jewel in the Crown".

It took some years to achieve this tranquil plateau carved from the hills. An access road had to be hewn from the bush, the lantana had to be cleared, timber and stone had to be brought along the narrow dirt road and a pool made to catch the water in the creek they had discovered on the valley floor so that it could be pumped up the valley side to the house site. At first using a diesel pump, but now an electric one, the water supplies the house and garden, making it possible for them to grow the kiwi fruit, jackfruit, persimmon, mangoes, bananas and pineapples you will find scattered about the property.

The huge vegetable gardens make this property virtually self-sufficient, and the solar system supplies almost all the power



they need. Amid the ring of flowers and elk-horns stands a Himalayan magnolia that on warm evenings sends its perfume across the lawns, while Gerard and Janna pick the Isabella grapes from a trellis running along the northern wall of the house.

In the hot summer months, the grapes shade the windows then, as autumn turns to winter and the colder winds sweep down the valleys, the leaves fall away allowing the winter sun to enter and warm the house. And somewhere unseen, their macadamia trees grow undisturbed.

Gerard and Janna came directly from Europe to the Northern Rivers in 1983, demonstrating amazing foresight. We thank them for their generosity in allowing the club to visit.

Our Garden Club meeting for September will be held at Mandie and Steve Hale's garden, 269 Upper Tuntable Falls Road, Nimbin on Saturday 17th September from 2 to 4pm. 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.

A bright September for Blue Knob Farmers Market

by Marie Cameron

The Blue Knob Trash & Treasure Extravaganza on Saturday 3rd September coincides with the release of the September edition of the *Nimbin GoodTimes*.

However, the Trash & Treasure day can be reviewed in glorious full colour on two Facebook sites: www.facebook.com/blueknobfarmersmarket.com and Nimbin Hookups. Find out who won the Lae Oldmeadow raffle, how much trash passed hands, what memorable treasures were unearthed and what good fun was had at the trash auction.

Nimbin Country Show weekend

On Saturday morning 24th September, the BKFM produce market will only operate from its Blue Knob home base. So please arrive at Blue Knob as usual and all your favourite food will be ready and waiting for you.

In addition to this, the market will pop the marquee at the Nimbin Country Show. We look forward to spending the weekend in Sustainability Alley, on 24th and 25th September. We are excited to be a part of such an impressive bio-region that is filled with future thinkers and sustainable practitioners.

For all who venture into our marquee we give fair warning... the BKFM heart will shine and any farmer who stands still long enough will be hugged! A welcoming space awaits all who take the time to sit down. Enjoy some home-baked Eric and Robin cookies and the famous Eric market bags will be available. Naturally, the conversation will centre on all things Blue Knob.



World record set at Backyarders Table

Eric Smith (*above*) set a Backyarders Table record (13.8.16) when he astounded all with his hand-stitched and matching wall and wearable signage. The world record was set when, from under the table, he produced a sewing machine and proceeded to sew market bags and sell produce all at the same time. Talk about a showstopper!

The wonders of organic seedlings

Greg and Vanessa James (*right*) have returned to the market and once again their organic seedlings are available. Having access to tomorrow's food is an essential element for all who love to grow and these seedlings most certainly excite. As always, the range depends on the season.

During the past 12 months Greg has faced some health challenges and for a while there the seedling stall had to take a back seat. With the recent closure of their Murwillumbah shop, their wholesale



seedling business has taken on new life. Budd's Mitre 10 in Murwillumbah has become the first in Australia to stock a stand of organic seedlings: theirs of course!

The BKF Market is proud to announce it's the only place where customers can meet and buy Farmers Choice Organic Foundation seedlings directly from Vanessa and Greg. There will be times when Greg's health will require stall changes and the market will do all it can to support two very special people.

Why have Greg and Vanessa returned to the BKFM? Greg quoted his friend and host from the popular ABC TV series *Gardening Australia*, Costa Georgiadis:

"There is something about Blue Knob Farmers Market that can only be explained by being there and taking the time to slowly walk, talk, observe and interact with the dialogue, the creativity and the genuine love behind the location and those who bring it to life."



To book your stall, or to talk about the market from any angle, phone 0448-685-925 or email: blueknobfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Touch is the key to the soul

Physical touch, if based on trust and recognition, is one of the most delightful and reassuring experiences we can have. When we feel safe in someone's company and allow the authentic self to emerge, the soul expands.



Similarly, when someone shows compassion, true feelings or profound sincerity we may be touched deeply.

I remember a time when I would cry at happy film endings only and keep a safe distance from anyone or anything that could touch me deeply. I had developed a fairly solid 'suit of armour' to protect me from painful stirrings.

It's a common strategy for human beings who have had painful experiences without happy endings. Growing a hard shell to disconnect from feelings is a highly intelligent survival response, especially for the vulnerable child. It offers refuge and is capable of protecting our innermost chamber from raging emotions.

The downside is that, while keeping us safe from authentic feelings, a fundamental connection is missing.

Remaining tight in a shell may result in suffocation of any real joy, trust and freedom.

A soul on permanent guard is likely to develop a tight body, constrictions around heart and guts and painful

"And the time came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to bloom." – Anais Nin

joint. Anxiety, distortion of reality, as well as reoccurring fights or accidents could turn out to be the only sincere companions on a journey of separation.

How to overcome separation and reclaim the full spectrum of human experience? For me, it took a major breakdown to realise that I hadn't been in touch with my true feelings at the age of forty. I had lived behind a flawed facade and thought that I was it!

A somatic therapist said to me: "Allow yourself to be touched." I remember these words well, because things started to shift increasingly after I allowed myself to feel more deeply, even though I was scared to do so.

I recall two live music events during which abundant tears seemed to wash away layers and layers of artificial crust. During those times I often

felt like I was disintegrating. Sometimes I'd get a glimpse of feeling connected to something greater. As if love was golden light and I'd be filled with it for a moment.

I wondered what had led me to that breakdown. Now, many years later and immeasurable experiences richer, I know that I had been afraid of feeling vulnerable and my armoring had kept me safe from the nourishment of love.

Touch is the first sense to emerge in utero. As embryos, mum is our universe and touch is total. We're held, cradled, and, at least sometimes, loved. A little later, we manage to work our way through that universe which has become highly dense in texture and sensual information. Birth is one of our first empowering experiences.

Nowadays, babies experience a lot of disempowering intervention. They often enter the new environment manipulated, catapulted, or pulled under great strain. The new 'universe' in comparison is vast, noisy, and cold. Touch is what keeps us connected, it's even crucial for survival.

Childhood is supposed to provide us with safe attachments and havens to return to after countless adventures. Unfortunately, lots of our caregivers were children of war, abusive families or



by Betti Wille

depression. We can't change the past – we can only change the present moment towards a better future.

Touch, trust and authenticity are crucial aspects of self-care (and community). As long as we keep up our defenses, we cannot have a satisfying intimate relationship. Wake up to your suit of armour if you feel inspired by these words. It can be hard at times to embrace remnants of old pain.

We can help each other. We can allow tears to flow when they visit to heal and soothe. We can practise active listening and be careful with clever advice. We can allow what is to emerge, even when it's a painful stirring. After all, it's just a visitor, reminding us of the chance to flourish.

Betti Wille has a history in midwifery and holds a diploma in Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy. Email her at biodynamic.touch@gmail.com

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Natural pest and weed eradication

by Robin Stein,
 Healer and homeopath

After spending a year in Vietnam through the worst part of the war in the late 60s, Agent Orange and all the other chemicals used to defoliate jungles almost destroyed my liver. If not for Doctor Godfrey, the physician and homeopath who saved my life, I would not have survived. Clearly, I could not have chemicals in my body ever again and this philosophy affected everything I did from that moment.

I created an organic garden to grow my food and slowly began giving advice on organics as the years passed. Educating people about the dangers of chemicals became equally as important. And finally, I realised it was necessary to give people an alternative to chemicals, or they would continue to use them, simply because they are easy.

The Herronswood organic demonstration garden on the Mornington Peninsula asked me if I could eradicate the bush rats that were attacking their seedlings. And while making the eradication remedy, I was 'given' a way to make that homeopathic remedy far stronger than anything known on Earth so far. I have worked very closely with spirit in all areas of healing, and they have spoken to me for as long as I can remember. Ever since that first time, when I was ten months of age.

We managed to eradicate the bush rats, or perhaps closer to the truth was that we repelled them into the valley from whence they had come. My next task for the garden was to eradicate



Juvenile Australian bush rat Photo courtesy Carlo Kopp

the European Cockroach. I made this remedy exactly the same way, and once again, it was extremely successful.

Word spread quickly and the biodynamic farmer asked me to make a remedy to eradicate blackberries. All my remedies should last a lifetime. Very little is required and they can be replenished. The farmer put five drops into his 40 gallon FormFlow and agitated the remedy with the water for 20 minutes. Then he loaded the FormFlow onto the back of his tractor with a fork lift and sprayed his large acreage.

By the time he drove his tractor back into the shed, it was pouring with rain and he seriously thought it would need to be redone the next day. But when he came outside before dawn to let his chickens out, the blackberries were already dying. And he was absolutely amazed.

Since then, my remedies have eradicated all kinds of weeds and

pests from the biodynamic farm and many organic farms, with all remedies working successfully. After being stung by a scorpion, I made the antidote the same way. After being bitten by jumping ants and taking the antidote, I could feel the relief throughout my body within minutes. Now I have a good range of pest and weed eradication remedies, as well as fantastic antidotes for stings and bites. My yellow bellied brown snake antidote saved the life of a friend's silky terrier, and my funnel-web spider antidote has saved countless lives. And if you are a surfer, I'm looking for somebody to test my bluebottle antidote.

Please email me at: robinstein@gmail.com if you require any remedies of this kind because I know they work brilliantly to remove pain, itching and burning from any bites or stings. And all the pest and weed remedies work with equal success.

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Weed Words with Triny Roe

No, not weed, weeds! These vigorous plants that grow anywhere and everywhere, most particularly where you don't want them. The Northern Rivers region is weed central. They grow bigger and faster here than anywhere else.

And now it's Spring. We've had a bit of rain and the days are warm. Up spring more weeds. As well as a new round of germinations there are lots of flowers everywhere. Flowers are pretty but they eventually produce seed. Time to get out into the garden or onto the block. There's the added benefit of the opportunity to soak up some phytoncides and improve your health.

Strategic weeding works well for plants that have a specific flowering time. Crofton weed, *Ageratina adenophora*, is one such species, and easy to bring under control. It only flowers once a year. If you hand-weed in July and August, it won't have the opportunity to set seed. No point in pulling it in January as more will regrow to replace it, ready to flower the following Spring.

Bindi-eyes, *Soliva sessilis*, is another seasonal weed now starting to appear in

the lawn and on the driveway. Simple remedy. Boil the kettle. Pour steaming hot water on them to effect a kill and you don't need carcinogenic herbicides. Some advocate using vinegar or salt solutions as a non-toxic herbicide, but you risk creating a sterile area where nothing else will grow for a long time. This might not be a problem on a driveway or parking zone. Mowing high and keeping lawns thick will reduce their incidence. Jerry Colby-William's grandfather recommends spraying with a strong iron sulphate solution. This will also give the surrounding grass a boost, helping it outcompete the dreaded prickles.

You can also ask, "Do I really need to get rid of it?" Maybe it is useful. Maybe you could eat it. Chickweed is delicious, fresh and crunchy. It makes a great addition to a salad or you can make pesto. Or feed it to stock. Goats enjoy munching on a crofton patch. Sheep will graze fireweed.

Note: Some weeds have been gazetted as 'noxious' which means you have an obligation to deal with them. These species have been identified as being especially invasive, and or a major threat to productivity. Woody weeds such as groundsel and giant devil fig are in this category. Keep a close eye on

land that has recently been cleared and along roadworks. Disturbed areas are particularly prone to invasion by these tough aggressive species.

Groundsel is one to keep a sharp eye out for. It could be a new weed on many properties over the next few years. A neglected paddock just outside the village looked very pretty in April and May. The mature groundsel bushes there flowered profusely with clouds of fluffy white blossoms. One bush can produce 1.5 million seeds a year. These seeds, with a tuft of silky hairs, can float kilometres on the wind. It can be expected anywhere in the valley, and beyond. Groundsel can invade dense bushland as well as pastures. Regular slashing of paddocks will discourage its growth in open areas.

Easily recognised by the distinctive spade-shaped leaf with a toothed margin, groundsel bush can be pulled up when still small, before the root system becomes fully developed. Like many other large woody weeds, it has a deep tap-root and is hard to eradicate when mature, even with herbicides. The tough shrubs appear to die off, only to regrow the following year. Identify new incursions early to reduce your workload.

Happy weeding.



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Landing the landless

by Geoff Dawe

The basis of the economy for any society is the land. It is a principle of natural law that people are due free land at birth that is sufficient for them to hunt/gather or farm for their living. Free land is as much a human right as free water and air.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Those rights necessarily involve being born onto, or being given, land on which to make one's living without having to pay for it, as an inalienable birthright.

Wars in the past have been fought over issues of land ownership. The introduction of communism in Russia in the modern period suffered from Russian landowners rebelling from collectivisation or the sharing of the land.

The issue of land ownership is not something that can be easily overcome with enforced sharing of the land. Enforced sharing is violence. As the means are the end result, it can be reasonably expected that enforced sharing of land by a society will generate increased violence within the society. The attempts at communism in the modern period appear to have demonstrated this.

Landowners feel that they have a right to their land. To suddenly say the approval of the society is withdrawn, is to say that the confusion of the society in not having provisioned all people with land as

a matter of course, is to become the burden of landowners.

It is suggested it is better that the burden of the division between landowners and the landless is shared.

The landless could understand and accept that for whatever reason they now have an advantage over the landless and this is counter to the human need for egalitarianism; for equality in human resourcing; for a fundamental reduction in wealth gaps; for equality of human rights.

Nevertheless, in honouring landowners' rights of ownership, no attempt need be made to remove their rights of land possession. Instead it is suggested there is an attempt at land sharing where landless occupants of an owner's land gain greater economic advantage (in terms of the industrial system) than landowners have previously enjoyed. In effect this is rolling back the idea of tenancy.

Landowners invite onto their land the landless. The landowner, along with the landless, continue the work of implementing an agricultural system that is low industrial energy, comparatively higher human energy, increasingly polycultural, and designed to increase soil organic matter on the landowner's land. The end aimed for is an attempt to feed and clothe the people on the land. This is carried out in synchronicity with neighbours. It does not have to do with the economic enrichment (in terms of the industrial system) of the landowner.

The work of the landless is on the



Photo courtesy United Nations

landowner's land as well as their normal outside work to gain an industrial dollar to eventually buy their own land. The amount of work on the landowner's land and outside work is something determined by both the landowner and the landless, but as a general principle, it could economically advantage the landless more than the landed by providing accommodation for the landless free of rent. Willing Workers on Organic Farms has already pioneered the means of much of this direction.

The ideal of the landless on the landed property is to gain as much economic sanctuary as will see them leave the landowner's land for their own. The landowner's property not only is able to supply economic sanctuary, but provides knowledge for the landless of the method of polycultural farming that is able to duplicate the system, and then, like fingerprints, add completely different information to the sum total of polyculture.

Plant of the month

Long-leaved Tuckeroo *Cupaniopsis newmanii*



The new growth of this pleasant species deserves the world stage, it's simply stunning! This attractive species, Long-leaved Tuckeroo has particularly nice pink / red new growth through the month of September.

From the Sapindaceae family, along with other stars like Green Tamarind, these great species fit nicely in your garden, on the farm

and in your regeneration area.

Found in sub-tropical rainforest, *Cupaniopsis newmanii* is fairly restricted in habitat, and is often found and recorded north from Mullumbimby, growing to 6 metres.

Locally, I have recorded it in the Nightcap, Mebbin, Stony Chute and Nimbin Rocks areas.



Climate Angels at Lismore Railway Station

NIMBIN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE NEWS

by Stewart James

Nimbin Environment Centre (NEC) is supporting the campaign by Northern Rivers Railway Action Group (NRRAG) to establish a regular commuter passenger service on the disused rail corridor between Casino and Murwillumbah.

We've joined forces to ask candidates in the upcoming local government elections what their policy is in response to the proposal. While rail transport is clearly a State not local government responsibility, we believe Lismore City Council should pass a motion giving in-principle support to the proposal, just as it did with the decision not to cooperate with gas mining activities in the LGA, and take it the Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (NOROC) for endorsement by its member councils.

Contrary to some people's view, community consultation shows the train is definitely not dead and certain to be a vote-winner. Council support will be critical to publicising the issue with the community and putting the State Government on notice that this is a key political issue in the region.

Using funding from NEC, NRRAG has provided candidates with info packs that set out some facts and dispel some myths. At the time of writing we are in discussions with the various candidate groupings asking for their policy positions, which in most cases are yet to

be decided.

Responses will be included in a press release to be sent out next Sunday. Watch your other local newspapers for their responses to this critical issue.

There are so many positive aspects of rail, including strong healthy interconnected communities, social mobility, social equity, sustainability, safety, environmental benefits including reduced carbon emissions, tourist appeal and cultural history.

Unfortunately, there are also a few prevailing myths around, such as that the cost of restoring the line to service would be prohibitive, and that operating it would be uneconomic. The service that was discontinued in 2004 was primarily a long distance once-daily service from Sydney, whereas the NRRAG proposal is for a frequent commuter service operating as many as 16 times a day in each direction between Casino and Murwillumbah. We firmly believe this service will be an essential item of infrastructure to support the expected growth in our region.

Before you vote on 10th September, familiarise yourself with the candidates' positions (look in the local press for our summary of their policies) and if you support the NRRAG proposal, make your feelings known to the candidates you are inclined to support. Also consider joining NRRAG; the easiest way to make contact is by liking their Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/nrrag

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

On 22nd August, the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) posted to its website a media release heralding the Federal Government's approval of the Ballina Koala Plan and the Koala Management Plan for the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade.

For Friends of the Koala it was an ignominious conclusion to our decade-plus fight to keep the Upgrade Project away from the Lower Richmond koala population. The new Environment Minister, Josh Frydenberg, had approved the Ballina Koala Plan on 19th July, the very day he was sworn in to office. The Koala Management Plan for Sections 9 and 10 was approved under delegation on 11th August.

Neither the Minister nor his department had the common decency to give the 'heads up' despite repeated attempts by Save Ballina's Koalas campaigners to winkle out news. Consequently, the underhanded way in which the approvals were announced has created even stronger anger, suspicion and cynicism.

Of course we anticipated that the Koala Management Plan was being revised with a view to achieving consistency with the Ballina Koala Plan but to read that it had been submitted for approval on the day following Minister Frydenberg's sign-off suggests to us a highly orchestrated exchange between the NSW and Federal bureaucracies. Seventeen working days later and the koalas' fate was sealed, but it was a further seven working days before the news dribbled out on the RMS website.

To make matters worse the RMS had hosted a pop-up information meeting at the Meerscham Vale Hall earlier in the day.

The meeting was hastily arranged in response to community concern that exhibition of the draft urban design and landscape management plan and proposed design refinements for the Upgrade had been poorly promoted. While the deadline for submissions was extended by a week, no mention was made of the approvals to the residents and stakeholders who attended although it must have been known to the RMS Communications team members.

How can we have any faith at all that the 546-page Koala Management Plan is not just another box ticked or that there will ever be any change to the RMS culture of arrogance, deceit and environmental vandalism?

Upgrading the Pacific Highway has been a 20-year project. Our region's wildlife, including koalas has been impacted for 12 of those 20 years. We already have one koala population declared an endangered population by the NSW Scientific Committee. It is no coincidence that the western border of the Tweed-Brunswick Coast endangered population is the Pacific Motorway.

In the Interim Report of the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Pacific Highway Upgrades carried out during 2005, the chair, Jenny Gardiner wrote in her foreword, "The Committee was moved by the evidence of these participants [hundreds of local residents] who told the Committee that they feel powerless to influence the (then) RTA in its decisions about the future of their homes and communities."



Remember Thumbelina? Look how much she's grown in a month. Unsure of how her geriatric Mum, 13 year old Lucinda would cope with her back in the wild, we thought it prudent to keep them in care for a little while longer

Koala or human, nothing has changed for residents of the Blackwall Range. Extinction is not an acceptable impact. Despite the Federal listing of the koala in 2012 it is clear that the *Environmental Protection and Conservation Biodiversity Act* has failed to protect the Lower Richmond koala population. Putting this to rights will be a focus of the continuing campaign, as will the new Minister's cavalier action, not to mention RMS's overbearing and secretive methods.

You may remember that I mentioned in last month's Kolumn the koala habitat and threatened ecological community mapping projects being developed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) as part of the Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOA) remake.

Several North Coast environment groups including Friends of the Koala recently attended briefings to bring us up to date on both projects. While the presentations

on the threatened ecological communities mapping gave rise to guarded encouragement, the report on the koala habitat mapping was quite disturbing for several reasons, not least of which was the absence of logging history/intensity and forest structure from the numerous variables that had been modelled. Perhaps the most shocking revelation was that the veracity of the project, which purports to map koala habitat across millions of hectares, rests on 65 small verification plots.

The EPA and Forest Corporation have had three years to get the koala habitat mapping right and clearly it isn't anywhere near right. How much more public money will be spent over how much time and what will the Minister do to stop logging in Koala High Use Areas in the meantime?

The groups have written to Minister Speakman spelling out our concerns and frustration. The modelling as it's been developed will absolutely fail to identify where koalas are located in the NSW forest estate. I repeat, extinction is not an acceptable impact.

In light of the failure of the current approach and the foreshadowed failure of the modelling approach the groups are advocating regional on-ground surveys for koalas undertaken by independent experts using the full suite of data and methods available to them. All that's lacking is the political will to get on with it.

Speaking of political will, please remember to vote for koala-friendly candidates in the local government elections on 10 September (excepting Tweed Shire which will now be held on 29th October).

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. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Taking responsibility for our own wellbeing

by David Ward Life Action coach

The nutritional elements, basic pure food and water activated by physical motion and charged through mental stillness can be infinitely more rewarding than our chosen substances.

These elements can be taken for their effects, just like our non-nutritional choices, comparatively subtle effects at the outset, but wonderfully supportive and satisfying in the long run.

There is nothing to give up really, other than our old identities, just a replacement process in return for a better high and a new super identity, in keeping with our age, in coming to our senses with regards to sustainability.

Substance dependence can achieve a relatively convincing means of activating and releasing the required neurochemicals, but it does this in an unnatural way.

The resultant, lethargic and over relaxed state of constant recovery sacrifices adequate activation of our systems, where stagnation sets in. This is the pure and simple reason why substance dependence is harmful.

There is no mystery, nothing to be overwhelmed about, no requirement to be an expert at anything, only a brief, if not intense transition period while we convert to the only sustainable addictive element, prana or pure life force. The sooner we make this choice, the sooner we can get on with our original course of progress.

The power of our everyday substances is underestimated. Once they become a daily habit, they integrate fully into our systems, largely dictating the scene. We are like altered beings, as the substances infiltrate our deepest levels.

For freedom to be achievable, it will be very helpful to reconnect with our true selves, as opposed to the altered states that have become our new default settings.

These substances are like entities expressing their spirits through us, it's as if they have a lot to lose when threatened with eviction. They have a persistent and persuasive voice of their own which exists and communicates within our subconsciousness. This is what dependence is all about. They promise us



everything but in reality demand so much more than they offer, using us up in the process.

To reclaim our selves and expose these foreign inner voices, get them out in the open where they can be heard for what they are. Sometimes fully audibly in their final throes, it will be necessary for us to evoke the age old methods provided for this purpose.

Attempting this alone, or with inappropriate and insufficient means is the main reason why

there are so many myths about the near-impossibility of escape from real addiction and why people are told that addiction is for life.

Yoga and meditation are very accessible methods of reconnecting with our true natures, the only state in which we can regain our consciousness and see and feel what is really going on, to fully re-awaken. These two priceless supports are little use in theory. They must be employed, and the reality is that they will be most effective when practised daily under our own drive.

There are no half measures here, we are either ready or we are not, we either love what we do or we do not, we are either surviving or we are not. Substances are so attractive and convenient: beyond procuring and imbibing them they require no input, we can simply just lay back and indulge ourselves, forgetting everything for now.

Building our conscious daily yoga, meditation and nutrition practice is a gradual process of re-adjustment, which allows us to see reality for what it is. As we retrace our steps, we regain our senses one by one, breathing in our true power, filling our bodies and minds with that beautifully intoxicating prana.

Displacing all foreign entities in its path, this wondrous energy is the revitalising factor that will return us to our original settings, where health, vitality and agelessness becomes our natural state.

All this can be yours through personal responsibility for these simple daily practices that are available to all of us. It's an obvious choice, when the time is right.

David Ward, *Freedom from Addiction and Yoga Coach*, 0447-820-510 or go to: www.vitalchoices.com.au

Community Centre News

The Healing Arts Collective is one of the services that operate from the Nimbin Community Centre.

It was established in February 2015, and currently consists of five practitioners offering massage, cranio-sacral therapy, aromatherapy, holistic counselling, nutrition and herbal medicine.

Every eight weeks on a Thursday, they hold a community open clinic offering free and by donation treatments to people on low income. Open clinic gives people a chance to receive treatment or talk to an alternative health practitioner about their health matters.

The next open clinic will be held in early October. Keep your eyes open for information closer to the date. Anne, Betti, Melanie, Sarah and Spiral look forward to seeing you there.

Building work

Work on Casuarina Building continues. The roof over the stairwell has now been removed, and construction of the new roof area will commence soon.

An application has been submitted for NSW Community Building Partnerships funding to help with the cost of repainting the Bottlebrush Studio, home of Nimbin Aged Care and Respite



Services (NACRS). The balance of the funds will be covered by the Community Centre and NACRS.

Recently representatives from NCC attended a breakfast in Lismore hosted by Lismore City Council to hear about the work that has been undertaken to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the council. This has led to increased levels of employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and training for staff to develop improved cultural competencies.

Lismore City Council is encouraging other organisations to develop their own RAP. We will be attending a workshop to learn more on Thursday 8th September.

Room hire and membership

Are you thinking of running a class or workshop? Do you need a meeting space? The Nimbin Community Centre Dance Studio and the Birth and Beyond room are available for hire at \$11 per hour or \$33 per day, with a \$20 key deposit. Please phone the co-ordinator on 6689-0000.

If you would like to get involved and take part in the future of Nimbin Community Centre, why don't you become a member? Membership fees: \$15 (adult), \$10 (seniors over 60) and \$5 (youth). Your membership assists to guarantee the success of the organisation as an effective vehicle for current and future community initiatives.



Plant intelligence



Permaculture Principles

by Anastasia Guise

I'm down on my elbows in the field, knees prickling, my face streaked with dirt where I have wiped away beads of sweat and stray strands of hair. Even though the creek is gurgling happily, and the soil is rich, silty and full of loam, all I can think of is my aching body.

My vision momentarily blurs. The thin green line of carrots I'm weeding is a delicate, frustrating, back-breaking task. Not least because there's so much carrot-weed amongst the carrot, making

the task of discerning weeds from crop that much harder. There's no carrot weed a couple of rows over in the onions, nor over in the mustard patch where I had earlier found myself instead second-guessing a type of wild brassica which had skilfully inserted itself amongst the mustard, along with some young milk thistles.

It's like these little guys knew where to turn up, right in with the good stuff they resemble, right where they're least likely to be pulled out. These are not simply the descendants of past carrot or mustard crops previously grown here in this field. A strict rotation, and regular cover-cropping means that no crop is ever followed by one of its own family, nor left to indiscriminately go to seed. There's something else going on here: a kind of intelligence. Plant intelligence.

The idea that plants are intelligent is not a new one. In the 1970s, Tompkins & Bird's *The Secret Life of Plants* made a provocative case for plant intelligence, claiming carrots screamed when picked. Earlier, in 1966, Cleve Backster had hooked



"Why would a plant care about Mozart? Why should that impress us? They can eat light. Isn't that enough?" – Tim Plowman

up a polygraph to his houseplant, claiming that mere violent thoughts provoked a discernible reaction in the plant's energy field. More recently, Monica Gagliano's "sensitive plant" experiment seemed to demonstrate that plants might have the ability to retain a memory of events.

Mounting evidence suggests that plants are more intelligent than we've ever given them credit for. Michael Pollan (*Plant Intelligence New Yorker*, 2016) writes that plants have evolved between fifteen and twenty distinct senses; they can detect gravity, moisture, light, pressure, and hardness, as well as volume, nitrogen, phosphorous, salt, toxins, microbes, and chemical signals from neighbouring plants.

Their roots seek out the sound of water in pipes, and plants played audio of caterpillars chewing produce more of their caterpillar-defending alkaloids. Their electrical and chemical signaling systems are not unlike those found in the nervous systems of animals. Neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, and glutamate have been found in plants, though their role remains unclear. They even recruit animals to perform certain functions for them.

Additionally, plants' modular structures mean they are able to regenerate ninety per cent of their bodies. These underestimated – and understudied – set of intelligences may be in part driven by a plant's unique need to meet their energy requirements, defend themselves from predators, sexually reproduce, and disperse, all from a static position. They can't simply get up and walk away; instead they must be endlessly responsive and adaptive to survive.

Scientists in the field of plant intelligence are at pains to point out that plant intelligence and plant consciousness are two different things – plants lack the cerebral cortex and neurology we associate with consciousness – but clearly demonstrate intelligence in other

ways. This throws into confusion the notion that consciousness and intelligence must necessarily be linked. Furthermore, an acknowledgement of plant intelligence has major ethical implications, potentially expanding an animal-ethics framework to trees, grasses, forests and vegetables.

The concept of an intelligent earth, some complex orchestra of interconnected organisms in an endless, self-regulating symphony, must surely have plants at its centre. Not only that, plants may be the "shadow-side" of animal, and our own, intelligence. After all, we evolved over thousands of years through key relationships with the web of planetary plant life. How many of our adaptations, behaviours, our very physiology, are responses to our historic and continuing relationships with plants?

There is absolutely no research on whether carrot weed or wild mustard turn up in fields of their commercial namesakes with any greater frequency than elsewhere, but the observation stays with me. I've hugged trees, and talked to vegetables, but never with quite as much abandon as I do now. Having said that, picking the salad for dinner has never been quite the same again, either.

Finding the Present Moment with horses

by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

It has been suggested that one of the things that sets humans apart from other animals is our ability to think of the past and of the future. It is certainly true that we do spend an enormous amount of time doing this. Animals appear to live more in the present moment.

A horse will respond to something that triggers a memory from the past, so their present behaviour is affected by past events. But they are having their response and their thought process in the present. Unlike us they don't stop and dwell on the past experience. Similarly, a horse is aware of possible future events, e.g. if I stand here at the gate in the evening there's a good chance food will arrive, but again they're not thinking about all the possible future outcomes, just the one they know from experience. Once again they're in the present moment having that thought, not lost in some musings of possible future happenings while being oblivious to their surroundings. This is where most humans are most of the time. We become so involved with our interior thoughts that most of the time we're missing the moment we're actually in. We remember what has happened and wonder about what it all means and we think and plan and worry about the future. Both these activities keep our minds so busy there's no room left to be here. Now this can be a big problem when we are around horses. If they are in the present and we aren't it becomes very difficult to communicate, as we're literally in different worlds.

There's an old saying, "Leave everything at the paddock gate". What this means is



that from the moment we open the gate to go to our horse we need to leave all our thoughts about our lives right there. If we can allow ourselves to be in the present moment with the horse then it's possible to have open communication. Now for many of us it's not quite this easy. With busy lives and the constant need to stay on top of everything we often don't know how to find the off switch. Meditation and yoga and other mindfulness practices are wonderful ways to learn how to do this. But also out there in the paddock is one of the most amazing Zen masters ever, your horse. This is definitely one area where the horse can become the teacher and us humans the students. Spending 'being' moments with your horse will change the way your horse views you and bring you into the same world as your horse, the present. This can be as simple or as complicated as you want. I like being near my horses, either standing or sitting still and then I tune into my body.

The constant motion of the breath is wonderful to follow and brings you into your body. Feeling the earth beneath you and the breeze on your skin does the same. Listening to the sounds from the outside world, the birds, wind or any sound that's in the environment brings you into the place. As with meditation, if thoughts arise just watch them but don't engage, and they will soon pass. Even five minutes spent doing this near your horse will be of enormous benefit and the more you do it the easier it becomes. A state of non-mind when working with horses allows you to receive the messages from your horse without all the clutter. Being present also calms you and calms your horse, making your time together even more enjoyable and fulfilling.

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Managing anxiety and stress in horses – Part 2

by Les Rees,
Equine naturopath

Last month I discussed anxiety and stress in horses and I would like to expand on this subject having seen many horses showing stress linked disorders.

Anxiety and stress are created by a set of circumstances that disrupt the physiological processes involved in the functioning of the body. When the mind is in an anxious state it's capable of causing some devastating effects that can quickly manifest into behavioural issues and subsequent physiological problems.

When the horse is confronted with a situation that evokes a fear response, it responds with a set of physiological reactions that prepares it to meet the threat with fight or flight. These reactions are controlled by the secretion of adrenalin. The presence of adrenalin in the body causes respiration to deepen, speeding up the heart rate and raising arterial pressure. Blood is moved away from the stomach and intestines, stopping digestive function, and is redirected to the heart, central nervous system and muscles. The secreted adrenalin cooperates with sympathetic nerve impulses which send a message to the liver to release stored



glycogen to enable the blood to be flooded with sugar which will be directed to the muscles, heart and limbs for the preparation of intense physical activity needed for flight. The blood sugars invigorate tired muscles preparing the horse for action.

Under normal circumstances the increased respiration, redistributed blood and the red corpuscles provides essential oxygen for the removal of waste products. However in extreme circumstances, when the horse is subjected to stress over long periods, the body becomes over adrenalized; as a result the digestive system is unable to take in enough nutrients and the animal becomes thin and wasted, whilst other excretory organs are overloaded and weakened. Even though this is an extreme example it's important to remember that

there can be varying levels of these physiological symptoms present in the body and, given that equine digestive systems require continuous trickle feeding, it's easy to see the dangers of anxiety and stress in causing potential damage in an animal with a small stomach that accounts for only 8 – 10% of the digestive system and has to cope with small amounts of food travelling through it. Unlike us, the horse produces hydrochloric acid continually so one of the effects of adrenalin in the body is that it shuts down the blood supply to the digestive system, potentially causing acidic conditions and other complications.

Considering the interconnectedness of the various systems within the body, it's easier to understand the viewpoint of natural medicine in treating the whole

body in order to regain the balance of its function.

When making decisions on medications, it's important to remember that the individuality of horses is no different from that of humans. Each of us has a unique set of requirements to maintain our health depending on factors ranging from genetic predisposition to acquired physical and psychological symptoms that influence the development of characteristics, behaviour, conformation and general demeanour. These are important factors when formulating treatments and the selection of herbs used for any individual medication should take this into consideration. It's important to know exactly how each horse reacts under stressful circumstances because that can give me some idea of the medications needed. Some horses react with digestive issues, some with high heart rate, whilst others have a combination of reactions. Natural Therapies work exceedingly well when all these aspects are taken into consideration and can bring about some astounding results in restoring balance in all aspects of physical and mental health.

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Helping birth to flow

by Kirrah Holborn
Traditional wisdom

I've been attending births for nine years now. It's a nice feeling to know that I have a big tool-kit and wealth of knowledge to support pregnant and birthing women. Being book-smart is helpful, but real life experience is priceless. I've learnt a few things along the way and thought I'd share seven tips this month.

1. We know that an average pregnancy lasts between 37-42 weeks. Some women have pre-labour sensations for weeks before they actually birth. Some mothers wait, wait, wait for their sweet cherubs to arrive in their own time at 43+ weeks. If birthing in the hospital, many women get pressure after 41 weeks to start thinking about induction. Take comfort that no-one has ever stayed pregnant forever. If you and your baby are healthy, it's ideal to wait for labour to start on its own. "When the fruit is ready, it will fall from the tree."

2. Each birth is different. The journey to bring a baby into the world is different for each woman and also differs with each pregnancy. Some women have long labours and some women have short ones. Each baby is different and they play a big role in the experience of birthing them. It's good to remember to be open to all possibilities. If a labour was short last time, it doesn't mean it will be short the next time (and vice versa). Usually births get a bit quicker with subsequent babies, but not always. Don't place any pressure on the mama (and encourage her to not place high expectations on herself either).

3. Oxytocin, 'the love hormone' is shy. When women feel observed, labour often slows and can even stop. For the right concoction of birthing hormones to be released,



Kirrah supporting Tahnee

women need to feel safe and have privacy. Loving touch, massage, warmth, dim lights and caring support will assist oxytocin to be released and the labour to progress. Sometimes this just takes time. Telling a birthing woman she needs to 'hurry up' or that she needs to progress faster, usually has the opposite effect of slowing things down.

4. There are alternatives to syntocinon (the synthetic hormone). I've lost count of the number of times my clients have effectively used homeopathic caulophyllum and avoided the use of synthetic hormones. Homeopathic caulophyllum encourages stronger contractions without the side effects that syntocinon can have.

5. Counter pressure is amazing. Women's hips are very flexible, especially in labour. It can feel incredible to have counter pressure like sacral acupressure and hip squeezing. It can also assist the mother's pelvis to open even more.

6. Positions matter. The baby's position in the pelvis makes a big difference to how smoothly birth can unfold. If the baby is having trouble getting into an ideal position, then the mother's movements can make all the difference. Being active

helps the hips to make different shapes and this helps the baby to get into the best position for birth. I highly recommend that every birthing woman know about 'Spinning Babies' so they can learn different movements in pregnancy and know what positions are helpful in birth.

7. Vocalising is helpful. Society tells us a lot about what women 'should' do. It's interesting that many people correlate being 'in-control' with being quiet. Yet, birth workers know, making sounds can be very helpful. Vocalising can give a focus and help dissipate pain. Deep sounds help soften and open the body (versus high pitched sounds that tend to tighten and clench the perineum). When it comes time to push, try sending that sound down and out or internalize it and use that focus and energy to breathe the baby out. It makes a big difference.

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 professional 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

Last month we received a burst of new energy with the Mayan New Year, and this month the renewal continues with the end and beginning of a new Galactic Spin (Sept 6). The latter is a 260-day cycle, which is an exact fractal of the galactic 26,000-year cycle that completed on 21st December, 2012.

The synchronicity between the Mayan year and the Galactic Spin is an ever-changing pattern, thus it is significant to identify the strong energy of rebirth and renewal that is here for us now.

Recently, you may have felt 'pushed up against the wall' or perhaps you've regularly felt depressed or stressed. These are signs of imbalance, and that something is at the point of unsustainability. It is nature's way of helping us know, that 'something has to give' and that to remain well, we must summon the courage for change.

Indigenous cultures are the oldest continuing cultures because they maintained the sacred balance within all their affairs. These dealings included both the human and non-human world – people, land, waterways, skyways, animals, plants, climate/seasons and the ancestors. All relationships were active and none were under or over exploited. In addition, there was a code of conduct that governed activity within these relationships that ensured the sacred balance was maintained.

Sacred balance is the natural state of our world. When situations get to the point where 'something has to give' it is simply an urgent call to restore balance. With courage and gusto we can make the required changes; sometimes we actively need to involve others in this process.

Our world will not be well, if we are not well. Therefore, each person must restore balance for themselves, whilst maintaining the collective balance. Sometimes abrupt and drastic change is required. In addition, others may not appreciate your restoring balance, as it means they are unable to continue over-exploiting your relationship.

Once the required changes are made, people often feel a sense of relief and lightness, increased optimism, and a



*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*

general sense of ease and flow with life – a welcome change from the previous depressed and constricted feelings.

Be brave and restore balance for yourself, for this is true wellbeing. Remember, in the process, do no harm and enjoy the feelings of ease that come after.

What's On at the Yemaya Centre
 • Saturday 3rd September: Aboriginal Weaving Gestalt Workshop
 • Mondays 19th & 26th September: Reiki First Degree Course
 • Evolve Event – Wednesday 21st September. Topic: 'Overcoming Addiction through Yoga, Nutrition and other Holistic Supports' with guest speaker David Ward.
 Visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au for more information.

Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing, is a reiki teacher and the founder of the Yemaya Centre and Evolve Events in Lismore. Helene's approach to wellbeing is founded in personal growth. Helene offers regular reiki courses and reiki circles, and enjoys making a range of wellbeing topics accessible to the community through Evolve Events. Helene has been writing Natural Law and delivering wellbeing workshops since 2008.

For information, enquiries and bookings, visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-79.

Cupping

by Brigid Beckett

The purple circles seen on some Olympic swimmers have drawn attention to the therapy of cupping.

Cupping has long been used in Chinese medicine. The first implements known to have been used in the practise were animal horns, and the treatment was known as the horn method. Since production of cups improved bamboo, glass or plastic are more modern versions. The cups are attached to the skin to cause local congestion from negative pressure. Cups can be left on one spot or used in a sliding motion to cover a wider area. The method is simple and the therapeutic effect good.

The underlying principle is to move qi and blood. Good flow of qi and blood is essential for all aspects of health and well being; pain being an obvious indicator that flow is impeded. Trigger points indicate stagnation



in myofascial tissue. Often a wide area around a musculoskeletal injury will experience stagnation and need treatment.

Neck, shoulders and lower back are the most common areas treated with cupping.

The red or purple marks left are from stagnant blood being moved. These marks do feel like bruises and disappear much more quickly than a regular bruise would. The marks are not always as dramatic as those on the Olympic swimmers. That sort of

colour usually indicates a lot of cold being present, maybe due to other treatments such as cold packs, or external cold and damp from other sources, possibly from spending so much time in the water. Very chronic stagnation also gives more pronounced cupping marks.

Cupping is also used for other types of pain including rheumatism and arthritis. It can also be used in respiratory conditions such as cough and asthma or chest tightness, where moving blood and qi is beneficial. Cupping also relieves wind damp conditions such as

colds or flu.

Another treatment often used with acupuncture treatments is moxibustion. Moxa is made from *artemisia vulgaris*, a type of chrysanthemum. Another name is mugwort. The one produced in Qizhou is known as the best kind for moxa treatments.

Again moxa treatment is used to move qi and blood. It is a very pleasant warming treatment. There are many ways moxa can be used, either attached to an acupuncture needle, used in a cigar shaped roll for warming an area, in small sticky cones attached to the skin, or in moxa boxes.. The nature of the heat produced moves into the meridians and deeply into the muscles. Anyone who has experienced it would know that the warmth has a different nature to heat from other sources.

Moxa is often used in the same situations as cupping, that is to relieve pain. It is very useful in cold, damp situations which often describe chronic pain such as arthritis. And even though it may seem that heat is not needed in inflamed areas, the moxa also works in these situations by moving the stagnant blood. Other very good uses of moxa is to use on points that stimulate immunity and also in situations where tonification is needed (ie where the

patient is tired or exhausted). In significant deficiencies moxa is extremely useful. Moxa has been found to increase the white cell count, normalise peristalsis, increase the lungs' qi production and the smoke has an antibacterial affect. Moxa treatment can dramatically increase wound healing.

There is more to traditional Chinese medicine than needles, and increased awareness of TCM, be it through sports people or other avenues, is always welcome.

Brigid Beckett is a qualified Chinese Medicine Practitioner working at Lismore Community Acupuncture, phone 0431-702-560..



Holistic yoga practice as asthma treatment

by Cameron Storey

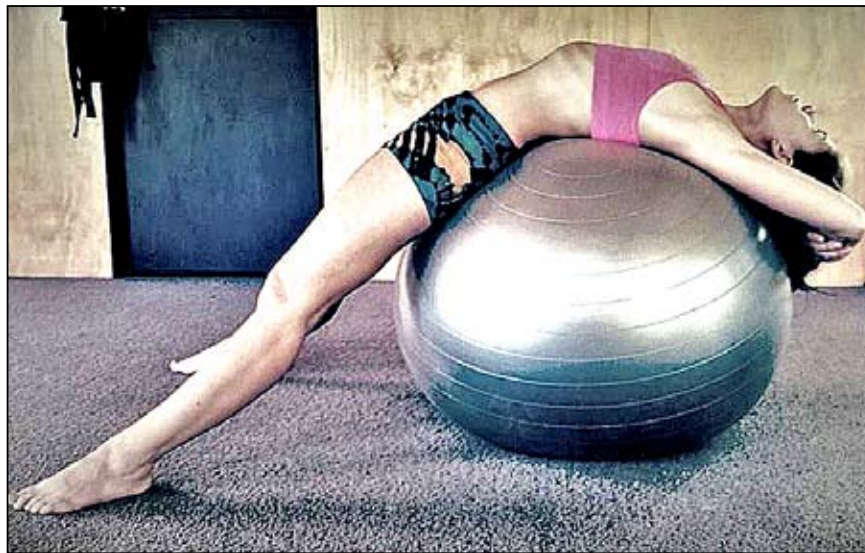
Several scientific research studies have suggested that a holistic yoga practice inclusive of all the traditional aspects of yoga which include: pranayama, meditation and relaxation as well as asanas/postures provide many benefits to asthma sufferers.

The airway constriction process in asthma is often complex and multifaceted with regards to causal triggers. Contributing factors may include: stress, exercise, air pollution, allergic and emotional reactions as well as a genetic contribution. For this reason, not surprisingly, a multifaceted approach to prevention and treatment has yielded the most promising results in previous studies.

Asthma may be characterised by a combination of increased mucous production, a thickening of the airway tissue and hyperventilation of the lungs. Asthmatics may experience a decreased ability for exhalation and residual air may remain in the lungs post exhalation which decreases the vital capacity or the ability of the lungs for air exchange. The symptoms may be triggered or exacerbated by emotional reactions or stress.

Chronic asthma may lead to inflammation and loss of lung tissue flexibility. As an asthmatic's breathing becomes more desperate, there may be several survival breathing adaptations which increase breathing inefficiency for the musculature associated with the respiratory system and thus detrimental to the oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange specifically.

A combination of yoga postures and conscious breathing (pranayama) can be utilised to address many of the breathing difficulties associated with asthma, with the focus on asthma prevention especially. Some postures



concentrate on bringing awareness by lengthening the breathing exhalations, while some postures concentrate on bringing awareness by lengthening breathing inhalations.

Both are performed in a calm and controlled manner, utilising a subtle grip in the glottis to create barely audible sound (ujjayi pranayama) on which to concentrate the mind which becomes tranquil due to the improved concentration ability. As the shape of the posture is changed in the yoga practice, the pattern of resistance within the lungs likewise changes and all the areas around the lung musculature are stimulated and the breath is directed to lower, middle or upper lung sections accordingly.

Guided relaxation and meditation have been shown to decrease oxygen consumption by between 10% and 20% within the first three minutes, while during sleep an 8% oxygen consumption took four to five hours! (Benson 1975) As oxygen consumption decreases, the efficiency of the tidal volume increases (or in English) the

volume of air efficiently exchanged in the lungs increases, (Telles S, 2000).

Meditation and pranayama have been proven to reduce airway reactivity (Singh V, 1990). A combination of yoga postures, slow breathing techniques and meditation have been proven to reduce the weekly frequency of asthma attacks, reduce medication use and improve peak expiratory flow rate (Nagarathna R, 1985 & 1986). Relaxation and controlled breathing reduce stress-associated conditions which may help prevent or aid recovery from asthma attacks, (Vempati RP, 2002).

Students beginning or renewing yoga practice should concentrate on easy postures and relaxation/meditation first, resting when needed, and working well within individual physical and emotional limits. Consistent practice is advised by all the sages throughout time for optimal results.

Yoga classes are available at Dharma Centre Yoga Space, Lillifield Community, (15 minutes from Nimbin). Facebook: Dharma Centre Lillifield or phone 02 6689-7120.

Playing and working at coming clean

In this article I write about working at coming clean as part of a life's individuation process. It comes in two parts: The first written around 2pm, and the second part, composed at 8pm. My reason is that the first expresses an exuberance untempered by useful critique and the latter with its bit of reality check. Neither exuberance nor reality check are any better than the other, for both get change going and maintaining it.

2pm

I have taken up the cello again after a six-year break. I'm revisiting the music I knew so well for the decades of music making and it is exhilarating.

The cello sings my soul and I love it dearly and deeply. I hear the music in my dreams, I hear it on the wind, I hear it among trees, in the ocean, on the streets, I hear it even in engines.

I was sixteen when I first sat down with a cello. It was exquisite. I'd played the violin for six years and, while quite nice, it didn't fill me with joy. I asked my father if I could learn to play this instrument and he, dear

man, found a cello and a teacher and so it began, this love affair of mine.

Hearing and playing the music that sets one alight is part of a celebration of integration of being who I am. Many people can identify with that, I know. Runners, cyclists, dancers, shelf stackers, writers, even hypnotherapists and their clients, all know "the zone". This flow is the state of relaxed focus that energizes us and it is something that has the power to change us fundamentally as we let go of old restrictive mind games.

8pm

I drove to my cello lesson today in a town an hour from home, met my new teacher, took my beloved instrument from its case, tuned it up, and started playing. I played like a person only half awake, only partly conscious: old bad habits and weak hands mingled with passion, as well as a sneaky awareness that for a long time I was not using all of my brain. There was a passage I could not get right and I was mortified that I couldn't do it. I felt such a fool. My teacher pointed out what I was not doing right



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M.Couns. PhD

and how I could make it better, and he wouldn't let up. I had to do it. I took over from his insistence and made myself do it. I had become aware of my own muddled confusion and wanted clarity.

This has given me an acute awareness of what my clients feel as they begin the process of detaching from old, damaging patterns and habits in their lives. First there may be an exuberance for the new work, but then the realisation that strategies are needed to maintain and extend new insights. Both exuberance and plain old work are part of the transformative process of individuation. Individuation, as the Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung (1875 - 1961) described it, is the

bringing and integrating into consciousness the personal and collective unconscious. It is integral to the development of a sense of selfhood. It is also a process that continues throughout life.

Music-making is a wonderful metaphor for this individuation process. There is passion and desire for making music, for hearing it from the mountain tops, in the wind, and under the sea (I sometimes sing trumpet voluntaries while snorkelling), and then there is the work: the adherence to making the making of music as clear as can be. It is as much a discipline as a passion. We want to live cleanly because we want to be understood, heard for who we are, and we want to speak clearly our truth without muddled confusion, and we seek uncluttered being. Both making music and therapy are neat ways of learning to do that, because the disciplined flow takes us there, without losing the passion. The soul sings.

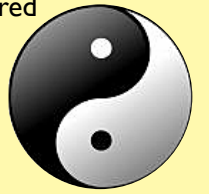
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