

A TASTE OF ART

www.blueknobgallery.com

a taste of art

blueknob hall gallery

Open Thursday to Sunday 10am - 4pm
719 Blue Knob Road, Lillian Rock Ph: 6689 7449
GALLERY • CAFE

Colour and Light at Blue knob

Colour and Light

The first exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery for 2017 investigates colour and light. For artists and artisans these two crucial elements can be one of the most challenging aspects of making art.

Whether it is a sculptural piece, photography, painting or fibre; colour, light and shadow gives shape to how the viewer sees and interprets an artwork.

Colour and light can have a more intangible expression in the human world. It can express an emotion or a feeling. Our moods are 'coloured', we feel a lightness of being; someone or something brings light or darkness to our world.

Opening night is on Friday 10th February at 6.30pm, with music provided by John Hosking, Rebekah and Simon of Blue Knob Café warmly invite you to the official opening of the Café on the same night.

A set menu will be available – \$15 mains, \$5 dessert. If you would like to come along and enjoy the evening please phone the Gallery to book a meal or for more information, on 6689-7449.

The exhibition continues until Saturday 1st April.

This is a great opportunity to have one of Paul's beautiful pieces in your home. Tickets are available at Blue Knob Gallery at \$5 each or three for \$12.

Artists & Friends lunch

The next Artists & Friends lunch will be held on Thursday 23rd February at 12.30pm. For more info, please contact the gallery on 6689-7449 if you would like to attend.

Ceramic studio

Classes are in full swing again at the studio. Spaces are pretty much booked out till the end of March. However, if you are interested in coming to a class, please contact Heather to see if there are any places available. The ceramic studio is open Thursday to Saturday 10-4pm. Cost is \$10 to join, \$5 for a two-hour session, and cost of materials and firings on top.

Blue Knob Cafe

Blue Knob Cafe is offering a menu that reflects the vibrant, diverse and yet very local lifestyle of this area. Gluten free and vegan options are available.

Come and enjoy the verandah with views of beautiful Blue Knob; have breakfast, brunch or lunch away from the hustle and bustle. Relax in the cafe, wander around the gallery, or check out the ceramic studio.

The Cafe and Gallery are open Thursdays 10am-4pm, Fridays 10am-2pm, Saturdays 8.30am-2pm, and Sundays 10am-4pm. Come out and see us, we're only a few minutes from Nimbin.



'Elephant Rock' by Gareth Deakin

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Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday & Sunday 10am – 4pm

Escarpment by Paul Roguszka

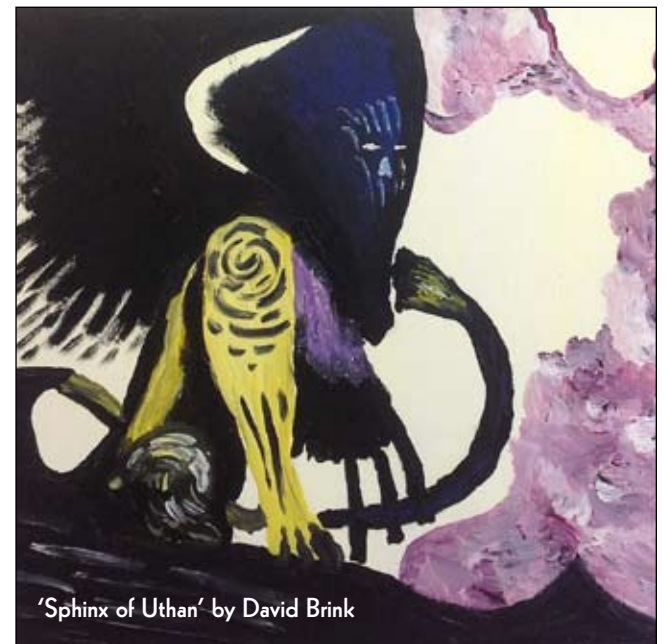
Paul Roguszka has very generously donated one of his beautiful cabinets 'Escarpment' (pictured) as a fundraiser for the Gallery. This is a beautiful piece from his Whiskey Cabinet series of work.



'Escarpment' by Paul Roguszka



'Crown Vulcan' by Leon Mahony



'Sphinx of Uthan' by David Brink

ROXY GALLERY

Roxy Gallery

143 Summerland Way Kyogle
Phone 6632-3518

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

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

Email: roxygallery@kyogle.nsw.gov.au Web: www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au

Artists explore paranormal thoughts

The first exhibition to start off the 2017 exhibition calendar at the Roxy Gallery promises to set the benchmark for what is to come throughout this year.

Araleighaia Aum'Wilderghenigh, also known as Leon Mahony, will be exhibiting a very interesting body of vector art works in 'Nomadic Transition'. Complex in motifs and interesting symbolism, these works form the developing creative stages for future animation works. Leon will be utilising the larger room of the Roxy Gallery for his show.

Installed in the smaller room of the

gallery, David Brink will be exhibiting his work for his second year of study at Southern Cross University undertaking a Degree in Fine Arts. Entitled 'Universal', this body of work reflects the journey of learning self-expression and experimentation of mediums.

The work of both these artists, although extremely different, have a commonality to them in that they are vehicles for true self-expression of their conscious minds. Both artists employ creative expression as a way of understanding and exploring complex thoughts on issues that are life-

reflecting and paranormal.

For both Leon and David, this is their second major exhibition in the region, and the Roxy Gallery is very excited to be supporting them both in developing their creative profile in this area along with establishing new directions within their creative development. Selections of works by Leon will be accompanied by poetry written by Ian Glynn Perkins. All of this is exactly what the Roxy Gallery has been established to undertake for local and regional artists.

The two exhibitions in the one place will be on show until 4th March.

Beyond the Rainbow

Available now at Perceptio's & Nimbin Enviro Centre

A group of S'cool artists

by Peter Warne
with input from Peter Ptschelinzew

Nimbin Artists Gallery is currently featuring the work of a group of artists from Nimbin Central School. We see the work of a number of student photographers and a selection of charcoal drawings displayed in the Gallery lobby.

Amongst the photographers, there are a series by four different photographers, each showing a very individual style.

Kalina Jorge presents a set of portrait photographs entitled 'Overemotional', (*Listless*, top right) where she offers multiple images using the same model in the almost the same pose. The eyes always look off to the subject's right, but the direction of the glance and the exact angle of the head differ subtly, as well as the camera angle.

The portraits also differ in the way they are treated after the shot, with each being given a background which is also partly laid across the figure, giving the impression that the subject is submerged in

her mood. Each picture is entitled with a word intended to describe the mood or emotion portrayed – disgust, isolation, rage and so on.

Tai Johnson offers a series of landscape photographs in high dynamic range (HDR), which combines a number of underexposed and overexposed images of the same scene. The effect is to bring out a very high level of detail.

The other two photographers work with the theme of miniaturisation. Michale Baton-Payne's series 'Peeking into My Small World' (*bottom right*) shows Lilliputian-sized models set in grass, walking a tight-rope over a teacup or ascending an ice-cream cone Mt Everest, creating novel and playful juxtapositions.

Tarquin Watt's digital images ('*Space Oddity – Tiny Planets*', *bottom left*) compress a 360 degree horizon to a two-dimensional image, making the scene look like a globe, a look at the world from space, viewed from not so high in the sky.

Along with these photographic works, there are some interesting

charcoal drawings on view, including 'Negative Space Still Life' by Alkria Finegan-Smith (*top left*). All of these pieces are on show in the Gallery lobby for viewing and for purchase.

This is also time to send a call out to artists near and far (but especially Nimbin artists). The Autumn Arts Extravaganza is coming up, which means it's time for us to ask artists to prepare some works to submit.

This is your opportunity to show your work before an enormous audience – usually we have about 6000 to 8,000 for the Extravaganza, so you will have a good chance of selling. The show opens on 1st April, and all submissions must be in by Friday 17th March.

Copies of the guidelines and application forms are now available from the Gallery: you can call in in person, or download copies from our website: nimbinartistsgallery.org or you can email us at: nimbinartistsgallery@gmail.com to receive the package by email.

You can submit a number of works depending on their size.



Serpentine hosts bipartite solo show

Throughout February, Lismore's Serpentine Community Gallery is pleased to host a two-part solo show presented by local artist Lindsay Hunt.

In Gallery 1, his latest body of work, 'Ich hab dich leib (platonic love for) Arnold Böcklin's *Isle of the Dead*' is inspired by the 19th century Swiss symbolist's influential series of paintings. Speaking of his first encounter with this work Lindsay commented, "Although I was very young at the time, I still retain an echoing impression, haunting and almost cinematic."

While in Gallery 2, *Celebrating 25 years as an exhibiting artist* will provide exhibition goers with a thoughtfully selected range of works created throughout this contemporary Australian artist's career.

Trained in his home city of Sydney and in London at the Royal College of Art, Lindsay Hunt creates works in a variety of media including oil, acrylic, ink, pastel, charcoal and pencil, as well as using print techniques including woodcut and drypoint etching. The content of his work is varied, with themes drawn from personal experience and perceptions of the world – and often strongly expressed in work that is satirical and darkly poetic.

Based in the Lismore region since the late 1990s, Lindsay has led a rich life that has seen training in both the visual arts and in architecture. His interests extend further however, with two threads that seem to dominate – ancient history, including written language, hieroglyphics and the cursive scripts of ancient civilisations, and injustice in all of its forms from backyard bullies to the subjugation by those in power, not least, 'The Establishment'.

He has taught extensively in the disciplines of art and design at a number of Australian tertiary institutions and has exhibited extensively in well-known galleries in Sydney, regional NSW, Brisbane and Melbourne. His work is held in private and corporate collections in Australia, and private collections in London.

On view until 27th February.

The Serpentine Gallery is located at 17 Bridge St, North Lismore. For more info call (02) 6621-6845 or go to: www.serpentinearts.org



'500 Years' mixed media by Lindsay Hunt

Calling all woman artists

In conjunction with the inaugural Lismore Women's Festival, the Serpentine Community Gallery is hosting an exhibition celebrating *Woman – in all her forms* which will run from 1st to 20th March.

If you are a local artist who identifies as a woman, you are invited to participate in this exhibition. Artworks in all mediums should be delivered to the gallery, ready to hang or install, between Saturday 25th February and Monday 27th February. A \$10 hanging fee per work will be charged, with concessions available. 10% of sales will be donated to the Lismore Women and Children's Refuge.

The exhibition will run from 1st to 20th March, with the official opening on Friday 10th March, 6-9pm. Gallery hours: Mon to Fri 10am-4pm, Sat-Sun 10am-2pm. Contact Rin for more info or logistics on 0403-613-898.



MOSAIC WORKSHOPS

Mosaics have fascinated people for centuries. Intricate designs created from many tiny gleaming pieces immediately capture the eye and give the viewer a dual pleasure – the image itself and the beauty of its constituent parts.

Mosaics are both a functional form and a decorative art, making them endlessly versatile and appealing.

When you begin to design and make your own mosaics, the pleasure of creating something out of something else is an intriguing process and quickly becomes addictive.

The craft of mosaic making is easy to start to learn, but can be taken to any level you want.

Suzanne McGauley will teach you how to make functional mosaic art objects for the garden and home. Mosaic advice, hints, pros and cons. How to make



original and long-lasting mosaic stepping stones, platters, garden pot planters, bird baths and more.

All techniques and materials will be covered, and you will take home a completed mosaic artwork.

The beginner course in basic mosaic making is suitable for students with no previous experience in mosaics.

By the end of the course, students will have the skills required to create a mosaic piece and see it through to completion.

They will have a basic understanding of the requirements for exterior and interior pieces and be able to choose materials accordingly as well as know how to cut materials, prepare bases and grout.

Next Classes (for all levels):

- Saturday 4th March, 9am-4pm – Coffee Camp Hall
- Saturday 20th May, 9am-4pm – Federal Hall

Cost: \$95 incl. morning tea and all materials. Reservations are being taken now. A \$30 deposit is required to secure your place. Group bookings available.

For enquiries and bookings, please send an email to Suzanne: suzannemcgauley@gmail.com or phone 02 6624-3227. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mosaiccraft/>

Fermenters set to converge

by Marie Cameron

The Blue Knob Market is proud to announce the 2017 Fermentation Festival. With each passing year, the festival gains in popularity as it attracts more fermenters from around Australia and beyond.

Jean Martinez

Under the big top, Jean Martinez will open as the first speaker at (9.30am). Jean Martinez lives in Upper Crystal Creek (NSW) and is a passionate fermenter.

"I really love empowering people with the knowledge it's safe to home ferment. I love to demystify fermented foods," she said.

With more than 20 years of experience as a chef, Jean lives her passion by teaching sustainable food skills. Two years ago she launched *Artisan Wholefoods*.

"I am converting my rainforest home into the Wholefoods

Cooking School. My dream is to facilitate a true paddock-to plate food experience. It's that full circle experience that is sorely lacking from our world and one that encourages a healthier relationship with food and respect for food production."

Jean's fascination peaks on the gut and how it interacts with fermented food. Her favourite ferments include sauerkraut, kim chi and pickled cucumber. Jean's talk will include a demonstration on her fermentation style for sauerkraut, sea vegetables, seasonal herbs and vegetables.

Deborah Perry

Deborah Perry is the 2017 Master of Ceremonies. This powerhouse fermenter has a background in environmental science and has taught fermentation for many years. Last year Deborah made Australia-wide history when she organised for the 2016 Lismore Agriculture Show

to include fermentation in their pickling section and then judged it! This year, her sights are firmly set on introducing fermentation at the Nimbin and Alstonville shows.

Deborah has participated in all of the previous Blue Knob Fermentation Festivals. In 2014 she saw the day unfold on how to make fermented food; 2015 welcomed fermentation guru Sandor Ellix Katz; and in 2016 gut health and recovery from illness using probiotics topped the list. 2017 will be about the probiotic community, both within our bodies and the Northern Rivers community.

Deborah is well known for her Saturday morning fermentation stall at the Lismore Showground Market. This year, she will have a full range of her fermented food and drinks for people to buy and sample at Blue Knob.

The festival will maintain a steady pace, with fermentation speakers,



Deborah Perry



Jean Martinez

fermentation stalls, fermentation demonstrations and taste testing. For the first time there will be a fermenter's competition. People are invited to enter their kim chi, kombucha, sauerkraut and kefir, to name some of the possible categories. A fermenter's raffle will be drawn at the close of the festival.

The Fermentation Festival will be held from 9am to 1pm, Saturday 4th March at the Blue Knob Hall Gallery, 719 Blue Knob Road, Blue Knob (10 mins north of Nimbin on the Uki to Nimbin Road).

Hosted by the Blue Knob Farmers : Fibre : Fermenters Market, which can be found on the market app. downloadable from: www.mrktapp.com.au

The exhibition showing in the Blue Knob Gallery is 'Colour & Light', and the Blue Knob Café is set to shine with a fermented menu and beautiful coffee.

For all enquiries, phone the market co-ordinator Marie Cameron on 0448-685-925, or see facebook pages: Blue Knob Farmers Market Fermentation Festival.



Refugeeism from the Fruit Thieves

The Imbibers Ark

by Thom Culpeper

Again the Shire droops with drupes. For now the gorgeous Mangoes plump fat and a succulence prevails. So the 'Aerial foxes' perceive, and one touch of colour and they trash 'em. A bit of this and a bit of that one.

War again for conservation and pleasure fud. Do not feed the feral bastards, do not give the robbers a skerrick of a chance, they have the whole of the Northern Rivers to plunder.

Myriads of them experience little or no predation on their avaricious mobs. 'Hendra' besides, let them grow their own! Leave the fruits of our labours alone and let us not have to endure their persistent roost-squabbling as they trash the drupes.

The one strategy is to beat the vandals to the crop. Pick 'em green. Leaving some top-most fruits for them just to show you are not as mean as they, the feral, fruit-sucking fuckers.

Something on the State of the Mango. Four species exist, and of all *M. Indica* is the major type, having dozens of forms, with about forty listed currently.

Nimbin shows many selections, among them 'Bowen Special' and 'Kingston Pride', most being quite marvellous. The turpentine types are probably *M. foetida* or *M. odorata*, not of much use in the classic Mango sense.

M. indica is the juicy, aromatic type, eaten fresh, made up as chutney, jams, pickles, sauces, wines, vinegars and used in curries, etc.

The grated, green flesh is used as a meat tenderiser, dried unripe fruit, amchoor is ground and used as a 'sour' in Indian cuisine and as a component of chat masala spice mix. The Jamaicans smoke pork and chicken sausages with the mango wood.

Mangoes appear to be excellent ferments, having 'wild' yeast in abundance.

Pre-fermenting the spiced, ripe fruit flesh prior to cooking makes for very interesting chutneys.

The 'Green Mango Pickle' is one of the most important preserves made in the Indian cuisine. Picked unripe and thereby denying the bats your fruit is an advantage. The following an example of this preserve.

Green mango pickle in paanch phoron (Indian 'five spices')

Ingredients

4-5 green mangoes. Dice into 20mm to 30mm pieces, with skin attached
8 dry red chillies
4 green chillies, chopped
80 gms of 'julienned' ginger
2 tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp Asafoetida powder (hing)
4 tbsp paanch phoron (Indian 'Five Spices')
3 tsp salt
2 tsp sugar (jagary or muscovado)
4 tsp vinegar
4 tbsp mustard oil

Method

First, the Five Spices, which you can buy or make. To make: 1 tsp cumin, (jeera), 1 tsp fennel (saunf), 1½ tsp black onion seed (kalongi), ½ tsp fenugreek (menthi), ½ tsp black or brown mustard seeds (rai). Dry roast in iron pan 'til it just smokes, cool and bottle. Do not grind.

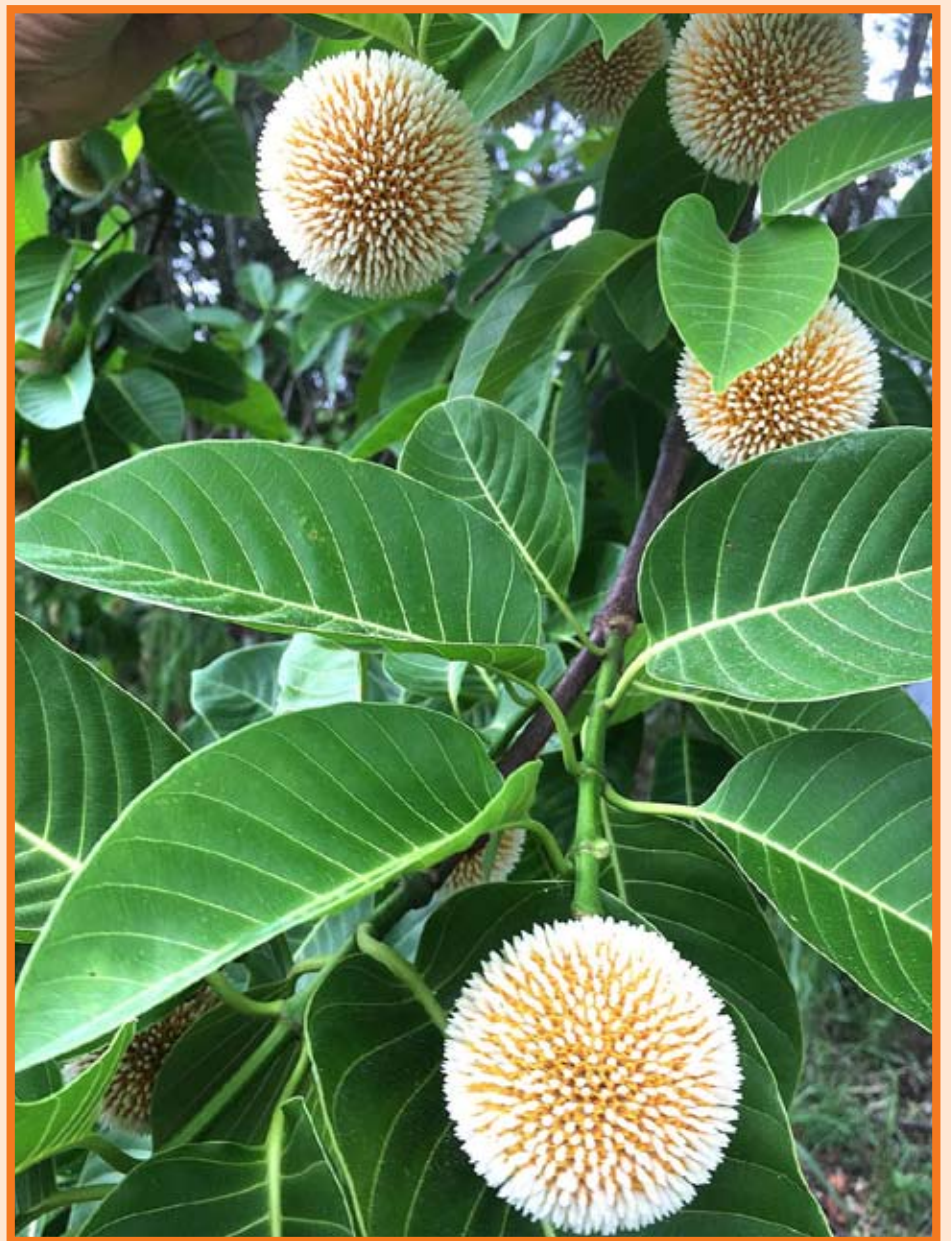
Coat the mango pieces and ginger with the salt and turmeric, sun dry these for about eight hours (to leach out the surplus moisture)

Heat the oil and lightly fry the mango/ginger mix for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add the asafoetida, vinegar and fresh chillies.

Dry roast the dry chillies add the fives spices, fry a minute or so, add the sugar, mix well, cool and bottle.

Plant of the month

Kadamba *Neolamarckia cadamba*



by Richard Burer, Bush regeneration specialist

Well, I like to throw in a surprise tree once a year, and I think this follows on from last February.

Kadamba is a tropical evergreen tree from south and Southeast Asia. It has orange scented flowers in dense globe clusters.

It is a beautiful and unique tree and it's no surprise that it features in Indian religion and mythologies. A favourite tree of Lord Krishna, Kadamba is also known as Favourite Tree of God.

Kadamba is a tree that brings good luck (we have two planted) and is often planted in avenues and in villages in east India.

An ornamental tree, Kadamba has medicinal uses, used in making paper, timber and environmental restoration.

This tree has grown well locally, and pretty much seems to lose most of its leaves in the cooler and dryer months. It tends to thrive in seasons like this, from bone dry and hot, to wet and hot!

To contact Richard, email: richard.burer@gmail.com or phone 0402-746-146.

Nigella seeds: A cure for all ills?

Nature's Pharmacy

by Trish Clough, Herbalist

Various known as nigella sativa, black cumin and kalonji, these aromatic black seeds are used in curries and sprinkled on breads before baking.

They are also revered as a medicine in the Middle East. My friend Mohamed, an Egyptian perfume merchant, tells me there is an Arabic belief that "in the black seed is the medicine for every disease except death."

He tells me the traditional way of using the seeds as medicine is to take some in a teaspoon of honey every morning. I have tried this, and can report they have a bitter astringency that I find challenging.

I have since learnt that the main active constituent of nigella seeds is an essential oil component called thymoquinone. The taste is somewhat like very strong fresh thyme. There are many other active constituents, mostly with unpronounceable names. The thymoquinone makes up 30-48% of the actives and my guess is that is the overwhelming taste. I also suspect that the stronger the flavor, the more potent it is as a medicine. 'No pain, no gain'.

I have tried seeds from several local shops, and they vary enormously in taste intensity, and probably in medicinal effectiveness too. I have also bought some that were wrongly labelled and were actually black sesame seeds. They look similar but the taste is very different. The really good ones give a definite feeling of clearing out the sinuses and opening up breathing after chewing them.

Since nigella is recommended as a medicine for every disease, there are countless claims to its therapeutic use, including indigestion, fatigue, chest



congestion, diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis and asthma.

As a practising herbalist, I like to look at the scientific research to see whether it validates traditional uses of herbal medicines. A controlled study published in 2006 showed effectiveness in reducing symptoms of allergic rhinitis (hay fever). It showed similar benefit to a pharmaceutical anti-histamine. A further study showed significant improvement in immune function as measured in white cell activity.

A meta-analysis of over 100 research papers published in 2013 showed nigella to have anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-oxidant, anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory and anti-diabetic properties. It even showed effectiveness against golden staph and candida. In addition, it protects the liver, kidneys, heart, stomach, lungs, and nervous system.

No surprises it is so revered in the Middle East as a traditional remedy. Toxicity studies show it to be safe.

It may possibly interfere with some prescription medicines through inhibiting a liver enzyme pathway, so

caution is needed here.

One study showed a 39% reduction in blood sugar levels in Type 2 Diabetics, with improvement in insulin levels. In addition, research showed a significantly decreased body weight and waist circumference in men with central obesity. Preliminary research also showed improvement in cholesterol and triglycerides with a tiny dose of 0.7g of powdered seed per day (less than 1/4 teaspoon).

In the clinic, I have found wonderful results with nigella tincture in a herbal mix when treating chronic and acute sinus problems. I combine it with other herbs to obtain the best results. Most of my herbal antibiotic mixtures these days contain tincture of nigella. I also include it in weight loss mixtures.

Nigella has only recently been manufactured in a liquid tincture form. This is a non-traditional form of an ancient medicine. Tinctures are extracted in alcohol and water to get the maximum active ingredients from the plant. Alcohol is not used in the Middle East, even in perfumes, because of cultural beliefs. However, I love the benefit of the liquid tincture in combining it with herbs of my choice to get the best therapeutic outcome.

Trish Clough is a Lismore herbalist who has been practising for more than 30 years.

She now conducts her own clinic practice in Club Lane in Lismore after owning 'Traditional Medicinals' for 20 years.

Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough@internode.net.au

The information in the column is meant for general interest only and should not be considered as medical advice.

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What happens when we die? – Part 2

by Robin Stein
 Healer/Homeopath

When my kids were little, Tom, the man who lived next door to us was involved in a horrific motor accident where he was decapitated. His poor wife was so distraught, she needed help to care for their four-year old son.

The next day was cloudy when I walked my dog. I felt a gust of wind hit my face and suddenly, everything changed. The sky looked bright blue, and the grass and trees looked super green. Then we saw Tom walking towards us. He looked happy and healthy and he definitely had a head... He was smiling as he approached and my dog saw him too because she greeted him as she always did. He said, "Tell Jan I love her and I'm quite okay." And just as suddenly, the sky became cloudy again and he was gone.

This is how it is! It truly doesn't matter how we die, or even how mangled our body becomes. The soul always leaves the body a nanosecond before we die, before pain or impact. As a psychic medium, I've had many experiences of this kind. And mediumistic friends have similar experiences.



This photo is one of many I've taken of my son's soul and it has specific markings. I feel him with me as I write this, which is very comforting for me.

One such friend was on a flight circling New York, waiting to land on the day of 9/11. While passengers on her flight watched in horror, they saw another aircraft aiming at one of the twin towers of the New York Trade Centre.

Passengers on her flight began to scream as the nose of the plane they were watching edged closer and closer. And a nanosecond 'before' impact, my friend watched hundreds of orbs

rise above the building and disappear into the air.

The orbs were the souls of all the people on the top floors of the Trade Centre leaving their body a nanosecond before impact.

The soul is pure electromagnetic energy and it remains intact, no matter what tragedy befalls the body. Einstein told us we are 'pure energy.' He also told us that energy cannot be created or destroyed. It can only be transformed. And

the electromagnetic soul, which I see as an orb when it leaves the body, is now 'free' to fly wherever it desires.

The domain of spirit is 'not' up there in the sky somewhere. It is part of our living world and many spirits mingle with us at all times by choice. Those of us who photograph orbs are seeing disembodied souls of people and animals and the orbs of each family are quite different.

My 27-year old son passed 14 years ago and his soul stays close to me and his son through the powerful bond of love we shared in life, as well as 'before' we were born into this life.

When we grieve, we lose our ability to tune into those we love, but they are still with us. I had a telepathic relationship with my son through life, but the tragedy devastated me and prevented me from tuning in to him for many years until the shock and terrible feeling of loss slowly dissipated.

We are told that heaven is up there in the sky and hell is down below 'somewhere!' Yet both are here on earth and we ourselves 'create' both many times throughout our lives. Personally, I prefer to create heaven in my life, but we are all different.

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Regrowing from root fragments

Weed Words

by Triny Roe

The summer rains have come and the hot sun brings forth new germinations and growth flushes in all the vegetation – the ‘good’ plants and the ‘bad’. While the soil is still moist is a good time to go weeding. When the weeds are yet small and manageable, particularly persistent perennial woody weeds like giant devil fig and groundsel, is also an opportune time.

Technique can pay off as it's important to get all the roots. Many species regrow from root fragments left behind. Some weeds easily snap their roots or stems when you tug at them, happily sacrificing their tops and a bit of root for long term survival. Do it once, do it well. You don't want to be coming back again and again for the same plant.

For smaller weeds a hand weeding tool will loosen the soil around the deeper tap roots and tough fibrous roots ensuring they are free to exit the earth. For larger specimens a garden fork can be efficacious. Make your way around the plant inserting the tines at intervals and working the fork back and forth and side to side. When the soil structure is broken up, grasp the weed as low as you can. Take a deep breath in. Visualise the roots. As you breathe out, give the roots a little wiggle and imagine them releasing their hold as the plant slips out, roots and all.

New pest plant species can be introduced on mowing and slashing machinery. Ride-ons and tractors can easily collect plant material from the last job and carry it to the next property. (pictured) Ensure your contractor practises an adequate level of hygiene and decontamination.



Bulldozers, graders and other earth moving equipment can also carry clods of dirt that actually have weeds growing in them. Weeds will spring up anyway as a result of earth disturbance but can you be sure the machinery didn't bring new weed seeds with it?

Groundsel, *Baccharis halimifolia*, continues to appear in the Nimbin Valley. This declared species, is spreading far and wide following a profuse flowering of a heavily infested local paddock last year. With masses of feathery floaty seeds, 500,000 to 1 million per plant, which can blow kilometres on the wind, this hardy, drought resistant shrub is likely to pop up anywhere. About half of the seeds will fall in the vicinity of the parent plant, leading it to readily establishing a thicket if further neglected and left to mature.

Get it while it's young. Groundsel is easily recognised by its distinctive wedge shaped leaves with toothy margin. Keep an eye out and attend to

new seedlings promptly to reduce your workload and limit its spread.

Giant Devil's Fig (GDF), *Solanum chrysotrichum*, is another persistent woody weed common in the Nimbin Valley. Carried by birds and bats to new locations it is also hard to control if it is let establish. GDF has a characteristic kink in its tap root (pictured left) so it's easy to cut through if trying to hack out with a mattock. The roots go deep and reshoot if bits left behind.

Hand weeding is beneficial. Exposure to soil and its microbiota and plant exudates boost our immune systems and promote good health. Physical activity also contributes to healthy living. Trials comparing the effects of exercise to taking glucosamine supplements found the exercise contributed more to relief of painful joints.

So get outside and do some gardening. But don't forget thick gloves when handling GDF. The thorns on the stems and leaves are nasty.

Happy Weeding.

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toleration and the club of life

by Geoff Dawe

Many of the left wing appear to be convinced of the need for struggle.

The idea of "struggle" comes primarily from a communism that was attempted violently in the modern period. The use of violence to bring about change is out-dated. In a post-Gandhian world, the only means for change lies in non-violence, not struggle.

Struggle is connected to the idea of difficulty. Part of the definition of struggle is making "violent physical efforts". Co-operation, on the other hand, is more the idea of merging with the other. It occurs with maximum effect with the development of empathy.

In regard to struggle too, it has been said by others that the only real enemy we have is ourselves. The use of the word "struggle" by socialists and communists is the indicator of their belief in their inherent powerlessness. When this "struggle" becomes too much to bear, they have traditionally reverted to another symptom of powerlessness: violent revolution.

This is a great shame: the philosophy, as part of their creed, of "From each according to ability, to each according to need", is potentially a powerful aspect of movement toward a more complete humanness.

The reason why violent revolution or indeed war, are signs of powerlessness, is because hatred of anything doesn't take humans anywhere positive. It



is reaction rather than enquiry into the depths of what the hated entity is. When there is enough enquiry the hated entity is discovered to have more similarities with oneself than differences. Alternatively, it is discovered to have attributes that aid one's survival.

In regard to these similarities, negative emotions arising in oneself and directed toward another, can be seen as the same disturbing attributes seen in another existing unconsciously in oneself. These attributes are driven from threatening to break into consciousness by negative emotions being directed to the entity on the outside of the body.

This issue of similarities with a hated entity and oneself, is raised to make the point that humans will have to be cleverer than considering that any sort of worthwhile change can occur with the often repeated violent revolutions, war, or even, opposing another class or species. All the former are immersed in the attempt to dominate.

Insistence on forcing another to one's will, or reticence in living one's own will can both occur as acts of violence: the former as violence to others, the

latter as violence to oneself.

Yet, there are times when it is important to influence other wills. There are also times to allow other wills that are not in accord with one's own.

This latter point appears to be emphasised by many sages including Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. Nisargadatta says, "Whatever natural experiences you encounter, just accept them as they come. Just be with them. Don't try to alter anything."

It is also known by the Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner, Tim Soutphommasane. The Australian (28/10/2016) reports Tim saying: "...we can't always come to agreement. Often when there is unavoidable disagreement, the best we can do is exercise the virtue of tolerance. To put it plainly, we have to put up with things we might find repugnant. We have to tolerate the intolerable."

Tolerating something is not the same as doing nothing about its occurrence. If one finds a manifestation intolerable, there are things one can do in one's own life to ensure the manifestation does not occur again. One can act to prevent the cause of future intolerable manifestations.

However, current intolerable manifestations have less intolerable effects the more they are tolerated. This is because when they are tolerated they are admitted to the club of life, rather than there is pretence that they do not belong.

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Jams & Chutneys

by Stewart James

Sometimes these days I find myself just shaking my head at the madness and denial in certain sections of the population and government about the mountains of scientific evidence which indicates we are facing a climate emergency in relation to burning fossil fuels and the CO₂ load they inject into our atmosphere.

Basic primary science tells us that if you put a glass dome over a small site that includes soil, plants and water, the sunlight and heat will drive the atmosphere in that environment like a glasshouse. In our present case the dome is the CO₂ in our atmosphere that risks irreparably changing climate on Earth as we know it.

So my question is, how is it going to work if we continue to dig up 500 million year old sunlight buried deep in the ground and burn it: choking the Earth's atmosphere with CO₂; mucking up the balance of the Earth's climate and making it hotter, warmer, drier and wetter? Why can't we transition from burning



yesterday's fossil fuels to capturing today's sunlight and using that to power our energy needs where possible?

A transition to renewable energy seems to be not an option, but a necessity.

Fortunately, most Australians are waking out of their slumber and taking the threat of man-made climate change more seriously. A recently published study by the Climate Institute based on a poll of 2,000 people

shows that 82% of people in rural and regional Australia believe climate change is contributing to more droughts, flooding and the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef.

More than 50% of respondents feel solar energy is the preferred future energy source with less than 5% voting for each of coal and gas. Three in four believe ignoring climate change would make matters worse. This just underlines the

fact that the great bulk of regional people want climate action, support renewables and do not support new coal.

Yet, unbelievably, the Qld and Federal governments are spruiking and supporting Indian conglomerate Adani's proposal to open Australia's biggest ever coal mine in the Galilee Basin in Qld.

But how much action would they – that's you – be willing to take? Based on the Bentley experience a lot of locals are willing to take concerted action even if that strays into the realm of civil disobedience. According to recently published newspaper reports (*The Guardian*, 14 Jan) locals may be called on to act again soon. Organising activists are allegedly planning a huge national campaign of civil disobedience to block the Carmichael mine. Referred to as "the Galilee Blockade" the campaign will recruit activists all over the country to take action locally to protest the mine and target groups and businesses which support the mine; such as banks.

The talk is the campaign will "dwarf the Franklin campaign", the celebrated

More Bentley screenings



Photo: Marie Cameron

Have you seen *The Bentley Effect* yet? Don't worry, you haven't missed out.

Two more screenings of this insightful documentary are scheduled for the Northern Rivers in early February.

The Bentley Effect will screen at Casino RSM on the 10th and Kyogle Bowlo on 11th February, both at 6pm.

Spread the word, tell your friends, don't miss out.

Book online at: www.trybooking.com

More about the film: www.thebentleyeffect.com/

successful campaign to save Tasmania's wild river in the 80s. Reportedly more than 11,000 people have signed up to the campaign already and 8,000 of those have pledged to take direct action if necessary. The organisers specifically cite the successful campaign against coal seam gas in NSW as an inspiration and a tactical model. Watch this space for further news in coming months.

Next month I'll return

to the important topic of local rail transport options and present a review of who supports and who opposes the re-opening of the Casino to Murwillumbah rail corridor for regular passenger train services. You'd think this would be a no-brainer, but opposition comes from unlikely quarters.

Until next month, think green and do your bit to help sustain the natural environment.

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

Friends of the Koala has long contended that it exists, in large part, to deal with the consequences of government policies on koala survival. But while we look to the three levels of government to commit to protecting koalas we also believe that it is everybody's responsibility and especially those of us who are privileged to live with wild koalas, to reduce the risk that exists of local population extinctions.

From time to time I've written about the strong tradition of koala stewardship that has developed in some parts of the Northern Rivers, but I have to concede that while there might be a generalised acknowledgement that koalas persist in our region and we quite like having them around, relatively few people want to involve themselves in their conservation; still others appear to be totally oblivious to the koala's presence, much less the challenges associated with hanging on to them.

So, some good news! Last year we won a [Community] Environmental Education grant from the NSW Environmental Trust to implement a three-year project we titled *Koala Watch – community-led koala recovery – Northern Rivers*. The project is due to commence this month.

Koala Watch is about empowering individuals in communities across the region who live with koalas to gain the knowledge and skills to proactively engage in the early detection of the major threats facing local koala populations and to undertake actions that will reduce or eliminate them. The project will focus on five threats: disease (Chlamydia and Retrovirus), dog attacks (domestic and wild), road vehicle collisions, catastrophic fire events, and severe storms.

The project will be large, with nineteen initial partners, including the five Northern Rivers councils of Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, and Richmond Valley, the Rural

Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, Local Land Services, Office of Environment and Heritage, Landcare (North Coast Regional Landcare, Border Ranges-Richmond Valley Landcare Network, Richmond Landcare, Brunswick Valley Landcare, Tweed Landcare), the Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, wildlife care groups (Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers, Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers, Northern Rivers WIRES), the Dorrroughby Environment Education Centre, plus participating schools.

Over the next three years Koala Watch will deliver the following workshops in various locations:

- *Identifying and Supporting Koalas in Distress, Sick or Injured* (addressing koala behaviour, detecting chlamydia, car collisions, responsible dog ownership, dehydration, starvation, car-dog-storm injuries);
- *Understanding and Managing Habitat for Koalas across the Landscape* (addressing koala food and shelter trees and habitat, importance of connectivity in the landscape, tree and habitat planting, weed control);
- *Fire Management and Planning for Koalas* (addressing why fire is a risk to koalas, approaches to hazard reduction, managing fire, planning hazard reduction burns);
- *Helping Vulnerable Koalas: being part of a wild dog control program* (addressing why koalas are vulnerable to wild dogs, when wild dogs pose the greatest threat, what wild dog control options there are, being part of a locally coordinated program, getting trained); and
- *Being Koala Alert During Storm Clean-Ups* (this workshop will be delivered to the Richmond Tweed SES staff and volunteers to provide information and training that will enable them to assist koalas encountered during storm clean-ups that



To report a koala sighting

(02) 6622-1233

For information about koalas and conservation, or to book a tour, please visit

www.friendsofthekoala.org

or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org

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Report removal of koala habitat 24/7

Enviro Line 131-555



have been injured or trapped by trees).

Koala Watch will also involve the development and dissemination of a range of educational materials to enable local communities to identify visual, audible, and behavioural distress signs in koalas.

The educational materials will include the production and distribution of two short digital videos, and a pilot school package, as well as pamphlets, a glovebox and fridge guide and possibly a mobile phone app.

Koala Watch will target rural landholders and residents, urban residents, school students, and industry (dairy, beef, orchardists, floodplain croppers, lifestyle landholders) as well as the broader community. By the end of the project, there should be at least 200 koala guardians across the Northern Rivers, armed with the relevant knowledge, skills and tools to: monitor their local koalas and be proactive in assisting koalas in need of help; manage domestic dogs with koalas in mind; make their properties koala-friendly; partake in wild dog control programs; slow down koala hotspot areas; plan for appropriate fire management; and be proactive following severe storms.

For the expedited risk of local population extinctions, as a result of premature death of wild koalas, brought about by untreated disease, injury or orphaning, to be reduced, we need much more community awareness and interest in the wellbeing of our koalas.

Koala Watch will build on and extend Friends of the Koala's core community education activities as well as the

community engagement actions of the various comprehensive koala plans of management that have been developed by local councils in recent years. It will also articulate with the regional Koala Communication Plan that we've developed from a previous Environmental Trust grant and will undoubtedly cross over with the social elements of a research project already underway aimed at developing an integrated socio-ecological approach for connecting landscapes and communities for the recovery of threatened koala populations in the region.

Of course our new admin and education building at the Koala Care Centre will, when completed, improve our capacity for delivering and reinforcing the community engagement activities that we believe are such an important element in successful koala recovery.

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 or use our new online sighting tool at: www.friendsofthekoala.org

The website also provides information about koalas, their food trees, how you can assist koala conservation, and a whole lot more. We can also be emailed: info@friendsofthekoala.org or phoned: (02) 6622-1233.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 131-555.

Painful memories and Bowen therapy

The other day I was looking at a new photo of a long gone ex on the 'net'. Forty years on, the proud, swift and graceful stag I remember is now overweight and puffy of face.

I was furious. How dare the man rain on my parade of sweet memories! And then, just for a few moments, the grief crept back. The feelings of loss for something, that at the time I thought was extremely precious.

Nevertheless it was a relief and a pleasant surprise that the misery only lasted a few moments. After all I had processed that man out of my hair on more than one occasion and there had been a time when the misery bubbled quietly for years, until I chose to let it go.

The subconscious is a weird and wonderful thing and if we allow it to, it can run our lives in a manner that is often detrimental to our physical, emotional and mental well being.

It is true that in the past many of us have experienced behaviour and events served up by others that make the wicked witch of the west seem like Mary Poppins, but often those people and events are long gone. So why do we continue on a journey of self punishment that affects ourselves and therefore the



by Tonia Haynes

world around us?

Personally, I call it, 'I'd rather die than be wrong,' and every war ever fought needs to sing that off key anthem.

We think we have a right to hold on to anger, sadness, frustration etc. because we were abused, rejected, abandoned, lost a loved one, or the best of all. "After all, I did for you!"

Well I'm no psychologist, but I have decided due to observation of myself and others that self-flagellation is *not* the path to paradise. It seems to me that whipping oneself and therefore others in all the clever ways we have the ability to imagine is a

convoluted path towards victim and disempowerment.

I'm pretty good at it and the old saying fits perfectly. We teach that which we need to learn the most. Still, I have attempted over the years to bring the subconscious into line and I've learned a few tricks along the way.

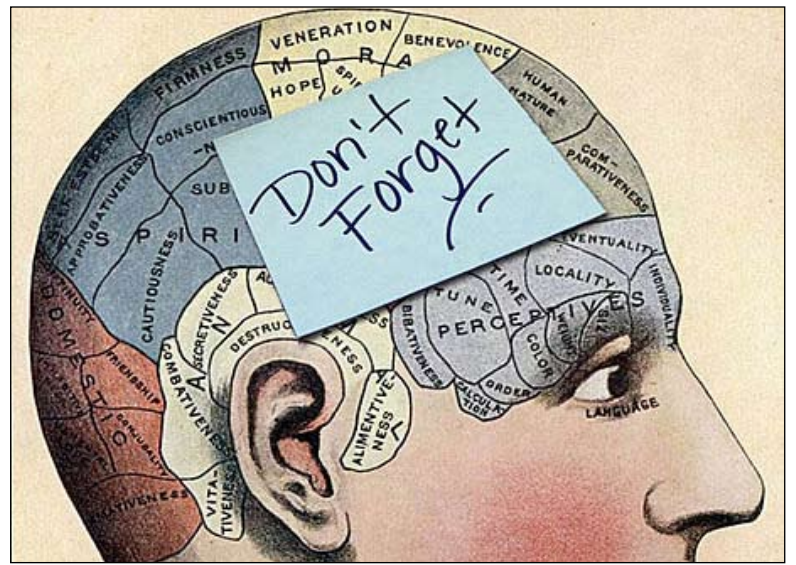
During a brief look at the therapy of applied kinesiology in the 80s I discovered that stress and emotional pain can live in in every cell in the body. The theory being that every cell is a tiny brain that acts and reacts in a particular way to its physical, emotional and mental environment.

This was proven when on releasing the trauma from a long time painful scar on a woman's abdomen we could smell the anaesthetic as it left her body. The pain went away and never returned.

My experience was the release of some painful memories that I had thought were with me forever.

Since then I have treated others and been treated in turn with different types of body work in order to remove emotional and physical stress caused by old memories.

Mostly the memories don't actually disappear altogether but they seem to lose their charge.



In other words when one remembers an event, one is no longer faced with the feelings of an electric prod tuned to full amps spearing another hole in one's heart.

And magically, certain physical pains and symptoms also disappear.

Generally people come to me for back, neck, shoulder and limb pain. Often after a couple of treatments the emotional issues that were weighing them down on the first visit seem to have lost the effect to send them into a spin of painful

confusion and frustration. As a result they find better ways of dealing with the issue.

Good. Every individual is different, but whatever works for them that I can encourage is a win for me as well.

I am in clinic in Nimbin Wednesdays and Saturdays. Phone 0439-794-420 for an appointment. (Please ignore the message that suggests you phone my landline. Telstra and myself are having issues with that one, but I refuse to rattle.)

Love, Light and Giggles.

100% freedom – No cravings

In my tenth year of freedom from addiction, with never a hint of a single craving, I sometimes forget myself, seeing this achievement as ordinary or normal, nothing special or sought after, something that just happened.

It's helpful to remember how things used to be, that agitation that would come over me if I was deprived of a dose of cannabis for more than a few hours.

That moment of choice each morning after waking, what should I do today? Oh yes that's right, it's all mapped out for me really, I'll just have a joint and a coffee and see how the day unfolds from there.

To stop and think and just acknowledge that, wow, I don't have to do that thing with the tobacco and dope, the coffee and the sugar and the alcohol anymore for as long as I choose and that I can conserve and build my vital energy, rather than using it all up in one go. All those years of searching for the way out, not understanding that the choice was mine, that all the available external sources of help out there were powerless to free me.

Remembering that that success wasn't something that just happened to me, that it wasn't simply a matter of growing out of something, it was me following my intuition and discovering that I had the knowledge all along and had found something that was worth striving for.

Understanding that success was never going to be achieved through a concern for what bad may occur by continuing to use but only



Vital Choices

by David Ward

through a taste of what good may come through ceasing to use.

And so, through my yoga as one pose at a time displaced one habit at a time, I was rewarded with the rediscovery of and reconnection with my former self. My youthful body and mind of 35 years earlier had been returned to me. This was real magic, a miracle happening to me, softening all those losses that had been sustained throughout the journey.

Recounting the past, acknowledging my achievements, appreciating where I am today and that I have something to share are important aspects of the ongoing process of recovery.

The Vital Choices Program offers alternative drug and alcohol support with proven strategies to end all addictions. For anyone serious about fast-tracking their recovery for a return to self-reliance and all that that brings, call David on 0447-820-510.

An inner-body experience

Our experience of the world is primarily an inner-body experience. Every moment of life, whether we're aware of it or not, is perceived by way of body sensations.

Body sensations are essentially physical or chemical reactions within tissues and textures of the body. Our physique responds to every event, sensory perception or thought. While most of these phenomena are fleeting, they create whole sensual landscapes inside of us.

We tend to live more in our minds than inside of the body but these landscapes within our bodies are the root cause for all our feelings and reactions. We all know that two or more people can be present in exactly the same situation and still have a different experience. Our external reality is only partially responsible for the way we perceive things to be.

It's within the framework of the body where past conditioning meets the freshness of the present moment. This makes it a potent space for profound changes to take place.

"When You Feel the Body from the Inside, There is a Door" – Eugene Gendlin

Intimately connected with our body sensations, as in a therapeutic session for example, we encounter a chance to let go of 'the story' and the incessant thought stream that feeds it. Turning towards the fundamental intelligence beyond intellect may open a door - and present choices we've never thought we'd have.

This door is called felt sense. Gut feelings emerge from here. In general one can say that a felt sense experience is subtle, somehow weird or murky and



by Betti Wille

hard to express in words. Try to describe a gut feeling - this kind of intuitive knowledge doesn't comply well with the linearity of language or logic of the frontal lobes of our brains.

Felt sense is the embodiment (bringing awareness inside the body) of one's ever-changing sensory/energetic/emotional landscape. It moves our focus from actions and things happening outside to qualities of our present, internal experience

We experience felt sense in every moment but know little about it. As the door to our own uniqueness it can assist us in many ways:

- It's here where we find authenticity in its purest expression. The body never lies;
- Dealing with body sensations can be much easier than dealing with our stories at times. It's direct and simple;
- In the landscape of the body, trauma can be met without the terror;
- Connecting with felt sense enhances a nurturing

relationship with ourselves; • It's a foundational tool of intuitive wisdom.

To know it you have to experience it. For a conscious dip into felt sense I suggest that you imagine yourself in a blissful or peaceful situation of your choice. It can be a vibrant nature experience or being held by a person you trust ... take your time here... see if you can imagine a situation of true comfort.

Simultaneously be aware of your body. Ground yourself by feeling the soles of your feet on the earth and maybe become aware of your breathing. Go right into the details of your chosen image/memory and sense into the space that is your body. What does bliss feel like, or peace? What happens to the texture of the body?

Branches of philosophy, psychology, trauma therapy and body work make use of felt sense as a tool to deal with all sorts of issues. Applied wisely, it's a fabulous resource for well being and enables body tissues to re-organize.

I wish we could allow more authenticity and honesty in human relations. Imagine if we could express feelings of grief or sadness more openly without someone trying to stop us (You'll be right, mate!) but instead lending an ear or two, because:

"In most of our human relationships we spend much of our time reassuring each other that our costumes of identity are on straight."

– Ram Dass

Betti Wille practices Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy in Nimbin. Contact: BIODYNAMIC.TOUCH@gmail.com or phone 0490-292-138.

Bribery or reward?

by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

The use of food in training horses is a controversial topic. Many 'horse people' are against using food treats. With all other species of animal, food is used in training, so why not horses? In many European countries food is used extensively in horse training. Circus and trick horses are also trained this way.

I started questioning people and found an interesting thing. A lot of people don't understand basic training theory and don't know the difference between bribery and reward.

When training, a cue is used to indicate a desire for a particular behaviour, and when this behaviour is expressed, a reward is given. In this way the animal is more likely to repeat the behaviour next time the cue is given.

For example, if you want your horse to move forward you apply the leg (the cue) the horse moves forward (the response) and you remove the leg (reward). Horses learn in other ways as well, but this is the form of training used most frequently.

Bribery is when a food treat is given before the behaviour is expressed in order to try and make or encourage the horse to perform the behaviour. Because the horse receives the reward before it performs the behaviour, it has no effect on future behaviour.

Reward is when the food treat is given after the behaviour has been performed,

and is called 'positive reinforcement'. It is called this because it reinforces the behaviour, making it more likely that it will be repeated in the future.

A good example is with hard-to-catch horses. Using bribery, a carrot is held out to the horse and when it takes a bite the person quickly slips the halter on. The carrot always has to be used to catch the horse, and no progress is made in teaching the horse to be caught normally. Sometimes it even results in the horse quickly snatching the carrot and running away before the halter arrives.

Doing it the other way, the person uses body language and advance/retreat techniques to initially catch the horse (this can take time, but it's worth it). Using a small area at first is advised, and then when they understand move to a large area. After the horse has allowed itself to be caught and the halter is on, the carrot is given.

It's a good idea to then take the halter off and call it end of lesson, especially if the horse is particularly difficult to catch. This results in a very positive experience for the horse and they're much easier next time. Repeat, repeat, repeat. Every time it will take less to catch the horse until after a while the horse will approach you and wait to be halted.

Once the behaviour is established the reward is given intermittently, perhaps every second time the horse performs the behaviour, then every third time, then randomly, until the reward is



phased out completely. This is where you judge your horse and how well the new behaviour is established. Reducing the frequency of reward quickly may be necessary with some horses that are food obsessed and actually increases the likelihood of the behaviour being performed, as the horse never knows which time it will receive the reward.

The effect of using positive reinforcement is that it speeds up training. Something that might normally take months to train can rapidly be established with the correct use of food treats.

The difference in the effect on the horse between bribery and reward is almost black and white. Bribery causes a pushy, rude, and difficult to handle horse and reward results in a willing and easy to handle friend. So perhaps the use of food treats with horses is not so bad after all, it all depends on the way it is used.

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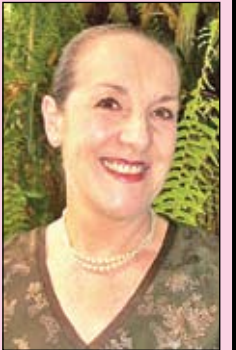
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Keeping horses healthy – overweight horses

by Les Rees, Equine naturopath

Keeping horses healthy during the season of prolific growth can be a very demanding time for horse owners especially when they are prone to putting on huge reserves of fat. Over time it can lead to many problems and subsequent damage that can have devastating and long lasting consequences causing hormonal aberrations particularly relating to Equine Metabolic Syndrome.

It's common for people to think that the horse is a bit plump without acknowledging exactly how much weight the horse is carrying because fat gain is a gradual process and you get used to what you're seeing.

How to gauge an overweight horse

- If you can't feel the ribs beneath the flesh;
- A channel along the top of the horses back (often referred to as a rain channel);
- A fat crested neck;
- Girth sinking into the flesh when tightened;
- Lack of definition of the bony landmarks;
- Fat accumulation around the tops of the hind legs;
- Use a weight tape to assess the condition score of your horse.

Dietary management

A lot of people think that it's OK to take their obese horses and put them into a yard and leave them all day without anything to eat. NEVER DO THIS. Horses are trickle feeders and as such need to eat on a continual basis. The trick to diet is to ensure that the horse only gets access to the foods that are good for them. High roughage based hay and chaff is useful but you need to choose forage that



is suitable for the feeding of a fat horse. It is important to understand that starvation through severe calorie restriction is a metabolic stressor, especially in cases where a fat horse develops elevated levels of triglycerides or storage fats (hyperlipemia syndrome), leading to liver failure and slow metabolic rates.

Feed horses separately to avoid dominant horses from stealing feed.

Put a Himalayan salt lick into the feed bowl to slow down the speed of eating.

Use grazing muzzles and slow feeder hay nets.

Restrict calorie intake.

Use high roughage feed.

Remove grain based mixes from diet to reduce starch and sugar intake.

Avoid concentrate feeds that are carbohydrate rich, they elicit surges in blood glucose causing insulin levels to peak. Obese horses are often insulin-resistant as surges in blood glucose have associated risks of developing laminitis.

Restrict grazing time in paddocks.

Having abundant pasture is not necessarily a good thing particularly for fat horses. Pasture grasses can

be high in sugar, starch and fructans (nonstructural carbohydrates) especially during high/rapid growth periods and also when the grasses are stressed from frost, drought or having been overgrazed. The safest times to graze are between pre-dawn and 1-2 hours after the sun has risen. After that they can be moved to a shaded area and given access to low sugar hay, a salt lick and fresh water.

Exercise plays an important factor in reducing and keeping the weight down. If you can't ride, you can play with your horse either at liberty or by inventing games to play that involves exercise. Lunging, trotting over poles and small jumps, ride one and lead the other or even taking a horse for a walk helps.

It's important that we change things around to keep the horse interested and not isolated in a small yard all day feeling lonely and miserable. Just like us, equines are social beings and as such we need company and something to relieve boredom.

On our property we have set up a Jenny Craig paddock for our ponies allowing them limited access to the main paddocks during the high growth period. We also have some good hills that help keep them fit and we deliberately have their water in the yard so that they have to wander down several times a day for a drink. We also feed our Laminitis Mix to help them through this period.

It takes time and commitment but if you care about their welfare, you'll get back far more than you put in!

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