

Natural Living Journal

Well-being for Body, Emotions, Mind, & Spirit

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Serendipity

**Nature's Awesome
Exuberance (Poem)**

**Why Organic Gardening
Matters**

**Black Culture in Regard
to Yoga in United States**

**Renew, Re youth,
Enhance Immunity**

Tuning Fork Therapy

The School of Life

**The Joy of Summer
Living**

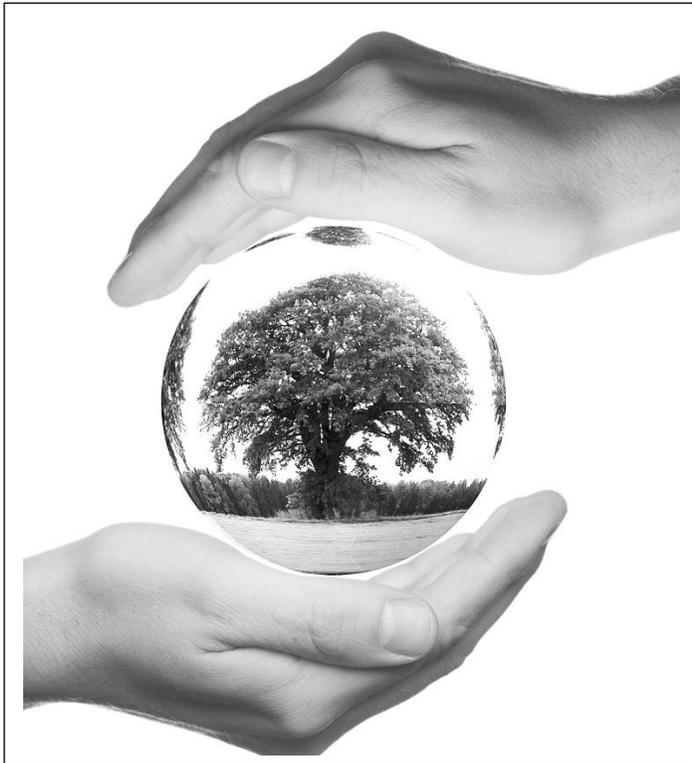
**Inflammation and Your
Body**

What Matters in the End

**Healing Ourselves Can
Support Healing Others**

**Chiropractic: Cleaning
Our Body's Windshield**

JUNE - AUGUST ISSUE 2025



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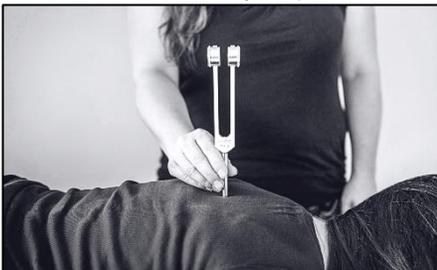
**VIBRATIONS OF HEALING:
Unlocking Balance and Flow with
Tuning Fork Therapy**
Christi Murphy, LMT, CLT, Reiki Master

Tuning forks are powerful tools used in sound therapy and vibrational healing to promote physical, emotional, and energetic well-being. Crafted to produce specific frequencies, tuning forks emit sound waves that can harmonize and balance the body's natural vibrations. When used in a healing session, tuning forks can help release tension, ease pain, and support the body's self-healing processes.

One of the primary physical benefits of tuning forks is muscle relaxation. When applied directly to the body or used near it, the vibrations penetrate deep into tissues, helping to release tight or contracted muscles. The sound waves help calm the nervous system and stimulate blood flow, which reduces inflammation and promotes cellular repair. This makes tuning forks particularly useful for people dealing with chronic pain, muscular tension, or injury recovery.

Tuning forks are also effective in addressing scar tissue. By placing the forks near or gently on scarred areas, the vibrational frequency helps break up adhesions and improve tissue pliability. This process encourages better circulation around the scar, which in turn may reduce discomfort, stiffness, and visible scarring over time. The forks essentially "remind" the tissue of its healthy frequency, thereby supporting regenerative healing. In addition, tuning forks aid in lymphatic drainage and flow. The lymphatic system plays a key role in immune health, detoxification, and fluid balance. Vibrational therapy can stimulate lymphatic movement without deep manual pressure, making it especially beneficial for individuals with sensitivity or inflammation. The rhythmic pulsing from the forks can help open lymph vessel pathways, encouraging the movement of lymph and the release of toxins from the body.

On an energetic level, chakra tuning forks are designed to resonate with the body's seven major energy centers. Each chakra corresponds to a different frequency and aspect of life—rootedness, creativity, willpower, love, communication,



intuition, and spiritual connection. When a chakra is out of balance or blocked, it can manifest as



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physical, emotional, or spiritual distress. Using chakra tuning forks helps recalibrate each energy center, allowing for a smoother and more balanced energy flow throughout the body.

These forks are often used alongside Reiki, massage therapy, or lymphatic sessions to deepen the healing experience. For example, while Reiki works on energy fields and massage addresses physical tension, the addition of sound bridges the gap between the two - harmonizing both the energetic and physical body. The vibrations support alignment, promote clarity, and help release stored emotions or trauma from the subtle body. Over time, consistent sessions with tuning forks can lead to increased vitality, emotional resilience, and a stronger connection between body, mind, and spirit.

Here are 10 potential benefits of tuning fork therapy:

1. Stress Reduction and Relaxation
2. Pain Relief
3. Improved Mental Clarity
4. Balancing the Nervous System
5. Enhanced Energy Flow (Chi or Prana)
6. Support for Emotional Release
7. Improved Sleep Quality
8. Accelerated Healing and Recovery
9. Alignment of Chakras and Biofield
10. Complementary Support for Other Therapies

BIO: Christi Murphy is dedicated to guiding women on their journey to find balance and well-being of the body, mind and spirit through bodywork, energy healing, mindfulness practices, and intuitive card readings. Christi has a Bachelors of Science in Natural Health, is a Reiki practitioner/instructor, meditation instructor, massage therapist, and spiritual coach. She works with oncology patients at Norton Healthcare and has a private practice.

PHOTO: Canva.com with copyright permission

**NATURE'S AWESOME
EXUBERANCE**
Elsa Lichman, MSW

My Norway maple, thick
with newly grown leaves,
sways wildly in nor'easter winds.

Rhododendron buds,
deep magenta in color
open out into lavender
puffs of blooms.

The wild and free lilac bush
exudes a heavenly scent,
lush flowers reaching up
to the heavens.

Dark purple irises
spring up from the ground,
each a sculpture
to admire.

The seemingly sad orange azalea
springs to life,
putting out small green leaves
and a plethora of brilliant blooms.

Willows by a pond
send leafy fronds flowing,
attracting Baltimore orioles
in bright orange and black.

A Great blue heron
stands motionless at the edge,
as an artist sits very close
creating bird's image.

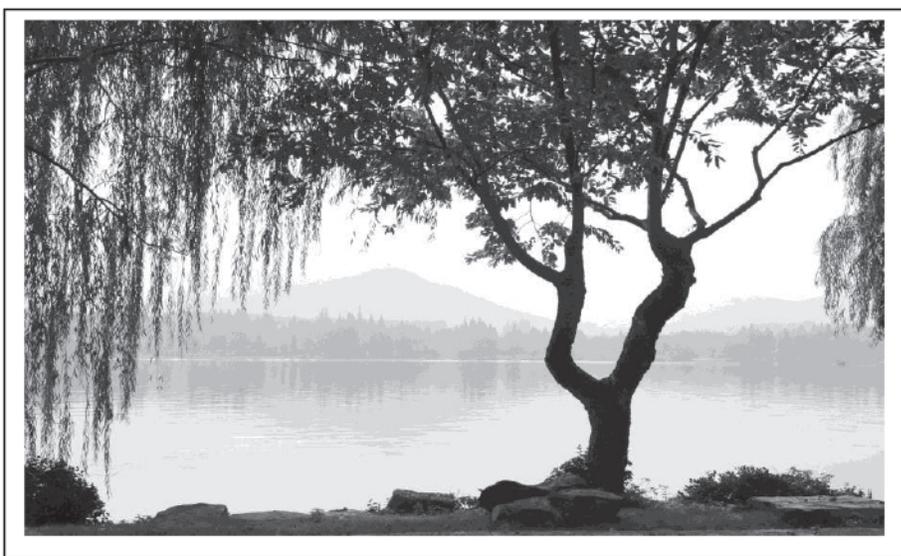
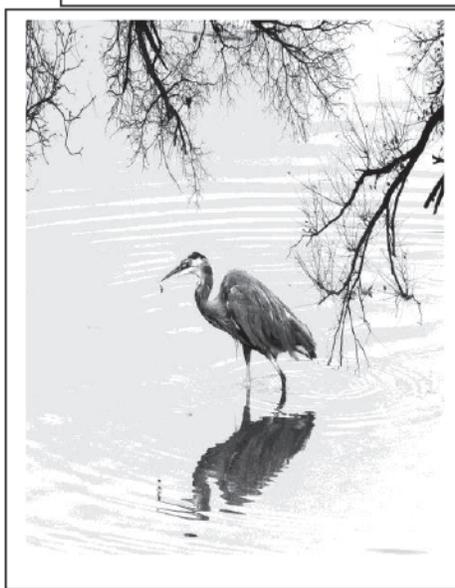
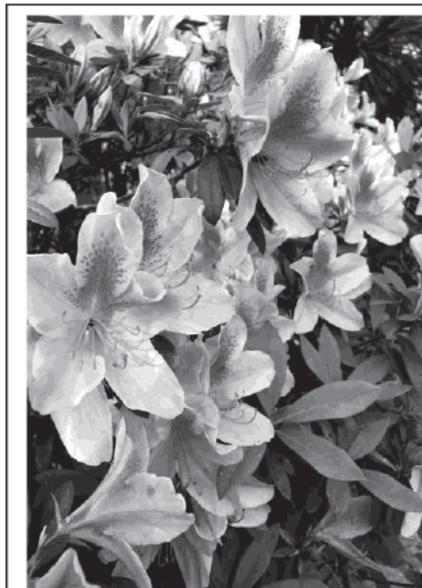
The powerful sounds of
a pileated woodpecker
drilling into a tree trunk
create curiosity and excitement.

Canada goose families abound:
recently hatched young ones
running after their mothers
as they graze, then drop to rest.

A pair of loons in a lake
call out eerie, haunting sounds,
echoing in the far distance.
Their black beaks and heads
are stunning, as they swim close.

A mourning dove coos softly
as I answer her tune.
We form a small duo,
calling back and forth.

Nature is a balm, a time
for renewal, an awakening
of the senses.



Elsa Lichman is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social worker, who retired and pursued new activities. She joined her first chorus, began voice lessons, acquired her first computer, and started writing a nature column for her local newspaper. She has published her prose, poetry, & photos in a variety of print & online journals. She has also sung in choral concerts & in a duo. Her 43-year career was a gift, as is her current expression of her creativity.



Photos from Pixabay. Azalea angie1174; Heron 179366; Artist, long pong; Willow, Peggy Marco

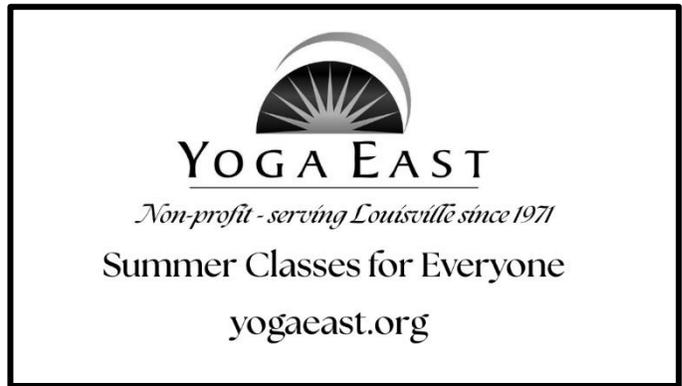
BLACK CULTURE IN REGARD TO YOGA IN UNITED STATES, Tamara Williams-Conaway

As an African American I stumbled upon yoga by attending a class one day at a local yoga studio. I had no bias about yoga and was as green as they come. My only foreknowledge was that many women I admired practiced yoga and appeared to have great bodies. I saw it like a dance where your partner was the mat, and it seemed cool. Later, after I had tried all the different types of yoga, I was ready to commit to a practice of my own., I was going to join a studio and become a yogi - - which I have done and it has greatly enriched my life. I am now trained to be a Yoga teacher.

According to the book Light on Yoga, yoga's practice in India dates back thousands of years. Many yoga practitioners only know the asanas (bodily positions) of Hatha Yoga as a form of exercise and toss the other seven limbs of yoga. These other forms can help meet special interests such as more difficult and advanced asanas, or more gentle forms of asanas for elders or people with physical limitations or for pregnant women.

Most U.S. yoga classes are predominantly white women: I rarely see women of color. Why is this the case? I started to dig for answers and the responses were surprising to me. According to Black Women's Yoga History written by Stephanie Y. Evans, many women of color do not see themselves represented in those spaces, so they do not feel like it's a safe place. Representation matters. I have asked women of color to come to a class with me, but most do not feel comfortable being the only person of color in a yoga class. They feel vulnerable and scared. Meanwhile, women of color would benefit from the mental health relief from a devoted practice. Evans claims that women of color have not participated in self care and are disproportionately underserved in emotional, physical and mental health.

Many women of color are not fully aware of the benefits of a devoted yoga practice. They have not been informed about how pranayama may help decrease anxiety and stress by aiding the parasympathetic nervous system when practiced properly. Quite a few modern day therapists are starting to integrate pranayama into their therapy or refer students to take a yoga class. The overall need of women of color is to practice more self-care. It can be hard to explain all the benefits of practicing yoga. They need to experience it to believe it. Since women of color have



some of the highest stress rates of any other cultural group in the U.S., they would benefit from yoga if the practice was made available to them in its purest form.

Rosa Parks was known as the mother of the Civil Rights movement. She practiced yoga as early as the 1970s. According to an article in Yogajournal.com, Rosa Parks had many health challenges and stress from being a target for her activism work. Parks taught that self-care is a part of resistance—she lived to the age of 92 because she began to center on her own health needs, even as she continued with lifelong activism in Detroit and beyond.

Yoga in the west has been mainstreamed by so many practitioners to be trendy. The original practitioners never intended for yoga to be mainstreamed into a trend. The awareness that yoga is a science and can help lower anxiety and stress would greatly benefit women of color especially people who need it therapeutically. I have seen a recent uptick in yoga as therapy. Many therapists have begun to use yoga in their practices or recommend it to their clients because the science backs it as a non-invasive treatment for anxiety and stress management. It is also included in most senior citizens centers and adult education centers

The stigmas surrounding yoga in Black culture need to be addressed through a clear understanding of its benefits for dedicated practitioners. Yoga is not a cultish religious practice. Yoga is not just a stretching exercise. Yoga is not a “European women only” club. According to B.K.S. Iyengar, yoga is the true union of our will with the will of God. According to Mahadev Desai in Gita According to Gandhi, “It is the yoking of all the powers of body, mind and soul to God.” It means the disciplining of the intellect, the mind, the emotions, and the will. It means a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly. **PHOTO** is of Tamara Williams-Conaway, the author.

SERENDIPITY

Nicole Bartlet, Certified Breathwork Facilitator, Reiki Master

I have a friend who creates magic simply by living true to her values. Once we were walking through Cave Hill Cemetery, admiring the bee houses and the giant trees that nourished them. We paused at Muhammad Ali's grave where a bee house hung with the sign *Ali's Bees* above the door. Curious about how the bees were cared for, we lingered near a quaint garden house that seemed to appear out of nowhere. Moments later the beekeeper stepped outside and invited us in to learn about the art of making honey—samples included! We both love learning and sweets. Suddenly it felt like we were back in fourth grade on a spontaneous field trip.

What began as a simple walk grounded in presence, turned into a magical experience. This kind of moment isn't unusual when we're together. It beautifully reflects Caroline Myss's idea: *what is big is small, and what is small is big*. Looking back, we realized how easily we slip into flow when we're beyond our ego selves, allowing the present moment to work its quiet magic. It's a gift of our friendship - - this natural alignment with wonder.

Not long ago, I gave a sermon at Unity of Louisville on being held by God's grace. A concept related to serendipity is that when we're in our deepest suffering, we are often closest to God. But accessing that presence requires slowing down, connecting with Source, and staying open to what unfolds - - especially in paradox.

The same presence can be found in joy. When I asked my friend how she regularly encounters such serendipity, she said she simply lives with curiosity and stays true to herself. I can attest to that. Through my work with *Breath of the Wild*, I help others discern what aligns with their soul. *Breath of the Wild* is a private practice where I offer energy healing and breathwork facilitation. Breathwork is conscious, controlled breathing that often induces altered states requiring intentional integration and reverence.

Each of us is unique and honoring that uniqueness is what makes life rich. It serves no one to chase after something out of alignment.

I spent a decade climbing the global corporate ladder - - not because I was trying to, but because I was self-sacrificing and disconnected from healthy boundaries. I



showed up with my ego-driven uniqueness, giving too much of myself away. It's taken another decade, in a new career devoted to growth and healing, to learn the value of softening.

My friend and I experience these magical moments because we soften in each other's presence. We drift into dreamy conversations - - about ancient worlds or present curiosities - - and stumble into the quiet joy of being alive. Usually, these

moments are born from our intention to connect. We carve out time to be together, agenda-free, setting aside daily demands to open the door to something sacred. I've heard it said: you miss all the magic you don't look for. I choose to live in *Lila* - - Divine Play. In this Buddhist view, the world is created not from necessity, but from freedom and joy. So, what can you do today to set down the weight of life, even for a moment, and step into *Lila*? Let yourself be surprised. You might just find the magic in the smallest, most unexpected places.



BIO: Nicole Bartlett is a Reiki Master and Breathwork Facilitator. She has been a certified breathwork facilitator since 2018, and incorporates her practices of multifaith traditions and Reiki into her sessions. She founded the Louisville Salt Cave in 2015. She is a devout meditator, and student of spiritual understanding. She enjoys the small gifts in life like greeting the day, watching her children grow, and listening to Earth's whispers.

PHOTO: Woman Joyfully Peaceful, Vika Glitter, Pixabay; Man in Nature, Hubert Rams, Pixabay



WHAT MATTERS IN THE END

Kimberly LaFollette, Psy.D.

As a clinical psychologist, I have the opportunity to gain experience working with a wide array of individuals. Most recently, I started providing therapy to patients in nursing homes. Doing this work is an honor and a privilege. Just like all my work, I learn so much.

In this role, I've gained a new appreciation for what truly matters. When I began writing this article, I wanted to discuss aging successfully. I aimed to emphasize how important it is to take care of both your mind and body. I wanted to urge you to stay strong to maintain your independence for as long as possible. However, after some reflection, I believe you already understand that. Therefore, what I've decided to share with you is what matters in the end.

As I have held space for individuals to process their thoughts and emotions at the end of their lives, I have noticed a theme.



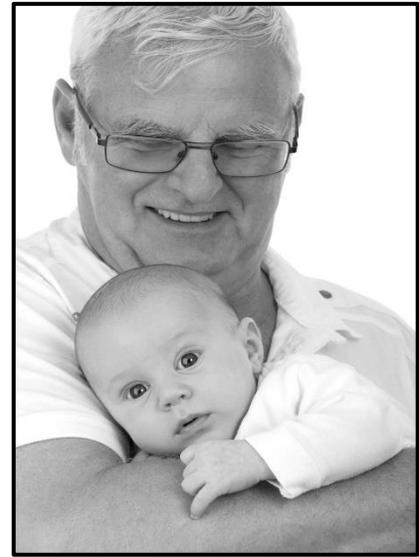
Despite our culture's obsession with thinness and wealth, no one ever brings up their finances or how much they weighed in their youth. These factors hold little

significance as people reflect on their lives. What I consistently hear are themes of gratitude and regret focused on love, faith, and purpose.

Through my conversations with patients, I've learned how vital it is to love and be loved. In the end, connection is all that truly matters. People want to know that they were loved and valued. Don't get me wrong; no one has perfect relationships. It's not that people have enjoyed flawless relationships throughout their lives, but they have had relationships nonetheless. They have experienced love, grief, and the complexities of family and connections, resulting in a rich tapestry of relationships. Furthermore, the individuals who experience the most despair at the end of life are those who feel lonely, unloved, and disconnected from others.

Another important pillar of a good life is believing in something. I am not here to peddle religion, but I do know that having faith in something is important. People find profound

comfort in coming to some sort of understanding of their meaning and purpose in the universe. It's important to create meaning in your life. It doesn't matter what it is; believing that there is more to this world than just yourself can be incredibly comforting.



Which leads me to my final observation: purpose. I have found that individuals who believe they have lived purposeful lives tend to be the most content. There is nothing more despairing than looking back and thinking your life lacked purpose. People find purpose in many ways. Some are great parents, some are wonderful gardeners, and some discover purpose in their careers. Whatever it is, it's crucial to understand your gift and use it to ensure there are no regrets in the end.

After learning these lessons, I am struck by how much our culture downplays the importance of each. We live in a world that values all the wrong things, and we wonder why so many of us are so unhappy. Little time is spent teaching our children the importance of love, connection and purpose. So much time is wasted trying to acquire wealth. So much energy is wasted in the relentless pursuit of youth and thinness.

What my experience has taught me, and what all the research backs up, is that connection and purpose are what sustain us and bring us the greatest joy right up until the very end of our lives. So today I urge you to be mindful of how you invest your time and energy. Focus on what will matter in the end.

BIO: Kimberly LaFollette, PsyD. is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Certified Integrative Mental Health Professional. You can find out more about Dr. LaFollette and her practice by visiting her website kimberlylafollette.com , 502-541-1289.



PHOTOS: Couple, Megha Valanke of Pixabay.. Grandfather and Grandchild, Public Domain Pictures through Pixabay.

THE SCHOOL OF LIFE ***Dee Patterson, Intuitive Healer***

Many of the spiritual philosophers of our time, such as Wayne Dyer, Marianne Williamson and Deepak Chopra all reference our time here as being in Earth School. What this term is referring to is that every soul incarnates into a physical body. The soul is forever, while the body will only occupy space temporarily until death. Once we inhabit the body through birth we are in Earth School

Before we are born into a body, we decide what lessons we wish to learn in the coming lifetime. Often these are lessons we have failed to learn in prior lifetimes. There are usually several lessons we wish to learn, but often there is one thing that is very important to our soul's growth. Sometimes we progress by accomplishing our goals, and at other times we fail miserably and are destined to repeat the lessons. They become part of our Karma.

As hard as it may be to believe, many of the people we encounter in this life we have been with us in prior lives. These relationships can be both good and bad to help us learn and grow. Unfortunately, sometimes we learn and progress the most in difficult encounters. For instance, that brother you have always detested may have a significant role to play in your soul growth. Figuring out exactly what you are trying to learn is not easy. You might ask if the lesson is to love him no matter how awful his behavior is, or maybe it is to walk away and never look back, even though he is your family. That's the hard part, figuring out what your soul intended, because once you are in the body you forget what you came here to learn.

One of my earliest thoughts was of the nature of "why am I here?" What was the purpose of my life? Most people believe we are born, we live, and then we die to go off to the mythical place of either heaven or hell. I always felt there was something more. At a very young age I was searching for answers. I have no recollection of why I thought astrology worked; I just did. I was interested in all the mysteries of life, the ones that are so accessible today, but back in the 1950's and 60's were not well known. Magical Societies, psychics, mediums - - all those things appealed to me.

The thought that I might be affecting the outcome of my life remained a foreign thought throughout my earlier years. I saw life as unfair and unkind. I was born into a poor family with limited resources and opportunities. More than once, I asked why life was so unfair to me. Why me? I used to say often, "God got it wrong, this is not the life I'm supposed to have." I really believed that. Everything was Gods fault.

My journey toward awareness arrived slowly. I already knew that there were "mysteries" about life, I'd read about them. But



Dee Patterson

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I never thought I'd get to know them myself. My understanding of Earth School began when I discovered meditation and joined a group. It didn't hurt that one of the members was a psychologist who helped me to see the errors of my own behavior. By gently pointing out some of my own "negative" thinking, she guided me in understanding that it wasn't God making these decisions about my life, it was me. At the same time, I was opening up to my own intuition and awareness of the other realms of being. In the group we discussed many facets of the metaphysical and shared books from spiritual and metaphysical teachers.



I was beginning to learn that as a child, I had very little control over what happened to me. But as an adult, nearly everything that happened I could control. For me, it was a profound thought. What if I made different choices? Could life be better? The answer is a resounding **YES**, once you embrace the principle that we are here to learn and to grow. This is indeed a school that we are attending every day of our lives. When you begin to live your life this way with these thoughts, then real changes begin to take place. Suddenly, it is not what is

happening to you outside of yourself, but you become the star of your own play. Bad things will always happen to us as long as we are in a human body. But how you react to those things can certainly change, as they have for me. In both good and difficult situations, it is important to ask, "what am I learning from this experience?"

BIO: Dee Patterson is a professional psychic. She reads the past, present and future, is a medium, medical intuitive, past life regressions, spiritual counseling and emotional release. She also has a wide variety of Crystals and Stones for sale. Call 502-426-2220 or text 502-295-0788. deepatt@bellsouth.net and www.deepatterson.com.



Photo: Fotografle Link of Pixbay, Empowerment

Why Organic Gardening Matters: Protecting the Earth, One Backyard at a Time ***By Madison Gooch***

Gardening is more than just growing pretty flowers or juicy tomatoes. It's about building a little ecosystem right in our backyards. And how we choose to care for that space makes a big impact. That's why I believe gardening and farming organically is one of the most important things we can do—not just for our health, but for the earth and the beautiful creatures we share it with.

These days, it's easy to reach for a bottle of weed killer or a pest spray and think we're solving a problem. But the truth is, these chemicals do a lot more harm than good. The chemicals in conventional weed killers have been linked to cancer and can have lasting effects on our soil, water, and all the wildlife that come into contact with it. When we treat our gardens like battlefields, we forget that most of the creatures we're fighting against are actually part of a much larger, beneficial system.

Take worms and moles, for example. I know moles can be frustrating when they leave little tunnels across your lawn, but they're doing important work beneath the surface. Moles help control grubs and insects that damage roots, and their digging aerates the soil, allowing water and nutrients to reach plant roots more easily. Earthworms do something similar—they break down organic matter and enrich the soil with nutrients plants need to grow strong and healthy!



Of course we can't forget the bees. These tiny workers are responsible for pollinating 75% of the fruits and vegetables we eat. Without bees, we wouldn't have tomatoes, blueberries, apples, cucumbers, strawberries, almonds, or even coffee! Yet, pesticides used in conventional farming and gardening have been shown to kill and disorient bees. If we want to keep enjoying fresh produce, we have to protect the creatures that make it possible.

So what's the alternative? It starts with choosing natural, chemical-free methods for weed and pest control. One of my favorite "hacks" is a homemade weed killer that works better than anything I've ever bought in a store. All you need is:

1 gallon of 30% vinegar (you can find this higher-strength vinegar at places like Tractor Supply or Amazon— it is not your standard kitchen vinegar.)

1 cup of table salt, and

4 tablespoons of dish soap (Dawn works great.)

Mix those three ingredients in a sprayer and apply directly to your weeds. The vinegar dries out the plants, the salt helps prevent regrowth, and the dish soap helps the mixture stick to the leaves. It's very strong, so be careful not to spray it near plants you want to keep! It works great for driveways, fence lines, and other weed-prone areas—and you don't have to worry about harmful residues.

For pests, consider natural options like neem oil, insecticidal soap, or companion planting (putting certain plants next to each other to deter bugs). Marigolds, for example, repel aphids and nematodes, while basil can keep mosquitoes and flies away. These methods support the overall health of your garden without damaging the helpful organisms that keep everything in balance!

Another great way to support your garden naturally is by composting. Compost adds nutrients to your soil, encourages microbial life, and helps retain moisture—especially important during dry summer months. Plus, it keeps food scraps and yard waste out of the landfill.

When we choose organic methods, we're positively impacting our future. One where the soil stays fertile, innocent creatures go unharmed, and our families can enjoy fresh fruits and veggies without worrying about harmful chemicals.

Organic gardening invites us to slow down, pay attention, and be a part of the natural world instead of fighting against it. Every backyard can be a meditative sanctuary. Every garden can make a difference.

If you're thinking about growing your green thumb, Louisville is full of amazing free resources to help you garden organically and connect with nature. Whether you're looking for expert advice, native seeds, or hands-on workshops, these local groups will help with everything you need:

Jefferson County Master Gardeners (jcmgaky.org)

Louisville Nature Center (louisvillenaturecenter.org)

The Pineal Community (pinealgarden.com)

Louisville Seedbank (facebook.com/LouisvilleSeedbank)

Louisville Free Public Seed Library (louisville-library.org)

Fairdale Seed Library (fairdaleseedlibrary.godaddysites.com)

Jefferson County Conservation District (jeffcd.org)

Bernheim Arboretum Preserve (bernheim.org)

Bio: Madison Gooch is the sole gardener at River Valley Club, an experienced wildlife rehabilitator, and sustainable clothing designer. Passionate about living in harmony with nature, Madison also creates handmade herbal tinctures. To inquire about tinctures, you can reach her at madison3gooch@gmail.com.

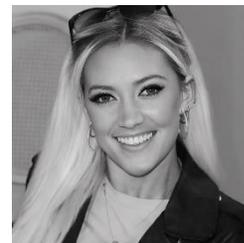


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THE JOY OF SUMMER LIVING

By Rev. Valerie Mansfield

The summer is a wonderful time to create new patterns of living. We are creatures of habits and patterns. We evolve consciously, starting with our physical intelligence, moving into our intellectual intelligence, as we continue to mature in our emotional intelligence, and continue to spiritual intelligence. These intelligences are interrelated and evolve as we grow consciously. Here are basic understandings of each level.

Physical intelligence is where we treat our physical bodies well with exercise and good food. During the summer, we can get outside and walk in the neighborhood or local parks. We can go canoeing on a local stream. We have access to more and more community gardens and farmers' markets all around Louisville. Working out in a garden is an excellent way to get exercise and eat healthfully.

Our intellectual intelligence is our understanding of knowledge and wisdom combined. What we learn and what we innately know. Many of us have libraries within walking distance or a bus ride from our homes. Learning is a never-ending opportunity to collect wisdom and integrate it within. Taking a book to the park and finding a shady or sunny spot to rest and read with the background of nature and humanity ... gives a new perspective on the world. If reading is not your thing, then go out and observe the neighborhood and world in a new light. Or if you like hands-on learning, take up a new activity, activating the creative processing of your left brain.

In the awareness of emotional intelligence, we are exploring our own and others' social and relationship needs. Meeting up with friends and practicing the art of listening and becoming aware of what is happening in someone else's life can open up your inner ability to create lasting relationships. Or instead of multitasking, you can really focus on one thing at a time. Take a class in non-violent communication. You can add in some



daily journaling about how you are coping with the demands and pressures currently showing up in your life. Once you recognize



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the patterns, you can expand and look at ways to shift the thoughts and circumstances into something less stressful and more joyful. Spiritual Intelligence is a relatively new concept in conscious development. This involves looking at the deeper meaning of life. Creating a purpose in life can give you direction and allow you to focus on your values and live from your greater good. Meditation is a wonderful tool to expand spiritual intelligence. Meditation is a simple process of slowing

the mind and relaxing the body... allowing the worries and stress to take a back seat in your life, and breathing and being in the moment. After meditation, writing your reflection in a journal can assist you in knowing more about your values and inner life. The goal in spiritual intelligence is to solve problems and experiences from a higher state of consciousness instead of impulse reactions.

We are always evolving, and with awareness, insight, and purpose-filled activity, we can create a summer of joy-filled living. Have a summer filled with wholeness, love and joy

BIO: Reverend Valerie Mansfield is the Minister at Unity of East Louisville Church and a Spiritual Director serving to unlock the individual's pathway to living an abundant life in harmony, peace, and love. Valerie assists families in working together to create balance, bringing harmony into the daily family consciousness. Her mission is to move forward in life with ease and grace, illuminating her way and those around her with integrity, compassion, and bliss. She is a lifelong Unity Truth Student living life through conscious thought and practices. Valerie lives with her husband Bruce and loves spending time with her family, and friends.



PHOTOS: Couple Walking in Woods, 35195-02-1280 of Pixabay, Two Friends, Thought Catalog of Pixabay

HEALING OURSELF CAN ALSO SUPPORT HEALING OTHERS

By Rev. Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

The healing of another is your healing as well. As you hold, as you bring another to the light, so also you bring yourself. Quite often, we look at healing as removing something or restoring health that has been lost or the lessening or elimination of symptoms. True healing is the embracing of the wholeness of who you are no matter what the manifestation in the material world might appear to be. We might use the term "acceptance" here, but that is such a bland description of this deep truth. "surrender" is a cleaner concept, but it still carries the connotation of victimhood.

Before each incarnation there is an agenda, an agreed upon set of tasks that the soul agrees with and takes on which are the methods and means for its growth and evolution. In overly simplistic terms, it would be like creating a diet and exercise plan for your body to reach its highest potential.

Certainly not all the soul's tasks are painful or overtly difficult. There are also expressions of joy, creativity, and companionship. All life experiences are essential elements to growth. The essence of growth is not the tasks themselves or even how and when they show up; the essence of growth is how we choose to handle them.

It is so easy to fall into what we might term "New Age" blame, shame, and guilt even as we think about all this. When something befalls us that we do not expect or do not overtly want, we say, "I must have created this." Then we experience shame and guilt because we perceive ourselves as creating an illness or dysfunction that makes no sense to the thinking mind. Then we focus all our attention on getting rid of this thing. What we do not realize is that our attempts to get rid of an illness or dysfunction is a flight into the past. It is what might be referred to as "getting things back the way they were." If we could realize this, we could also know that we are attempting the impossible because in the material world things will never go back to the way they were.

To focus on my learning again, I have a perfect example of a positive aspect of this process of the manifestation for our soul's growth, with my inner and outer work with addictions. There is no need to transcribe my entire autobiography here, but a few highlights and insights would be helpful.

Even at an early age, there was a continuing quest for the experience of God in my life along with getting lost in the realm of personality, prestige, craving and getting attention, the burning desire to excel and be recognized - - and all this time the continual struggle with "not enoughness." Then the discovery of drugs and alcohol that seemed to smother that voice of self-doubt and allow the unbound ego full rein, but I was not conscious of this. I really did think I was finally living life the way it

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should be. I did realize to some extent that God had moved to the periphery and that the "me of me" was becoming the center of my universe.

Then it all came crashing down with what my program calls the "calamity and collapse of the ego." All was lost, I thought, but the light had not gone out. In fact, it was just beginning to burn more brightly and my yearning for Spirit not only became more real, but I also began to discover tools and capacities to work with the desires of my heart, and then this new life of healing began to unfold.



Did I create this? Yes. Could I have learned these lessons a different way? Perhaps. But it is not just a personal me that is involved with this process. There are so many souls I have touched with my own recovery - - and their souls have touched others as well. That great chain of being would never have occurred if the lessons learned and the process chosen had been easier or more gentle. Do you get a sense of the magnitude of all of this? On one level I am setting an agenda for my own soul's growth, but on the other levels and dimensions my work and my experience travel way beyond even the scope of my imagination. The healing I continue to experience did not remove something such as a disease or dysfunction so much as the energy of God and grace lifted and

raised me up from the limited consciousness of the ego to the loving energy of Spirit.

Editor's Note: Some people are able to grow through and overcome addictions with the support of Alcoholic's Anonymous 12-Step Program and other programs. Some people, unfortunately, are not able to do so. Supporting the healing of drug, alcohol, and other addictions is of major importance in today's culture.

BIO: Gerry began his career as a teacher and retreat leader at St. Xavier High School where he taught Biology, Chemistry and Religion. His undergraduate degree is from Catholic University and he holds graduate degrees in Biology and Transpersonal Psychology, and a PhD in Comparative Religions. He teaches classes at Unity of Louisville along with guest speaking at Sunday services.



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CHIROPRACTIC: CLEANING YOUR BODY'S WINDSHIELD

Richard T. Reul, DC

Chiropractors are trained to locate blockages in your nervous system called subluxations. When our nervous system is free of any interference our body is in a state of ease. Our innate ability to heal ourselves and stay in homeostasis is intact.

When there are blockages or nerve interference your body is in a state of "dis-ease." Your body is not expressing 100% health.

A great analogy is to think about the windshield of your car. When it is clean your driving experience is greatly enhanced. When it starts to accumulate dirt and bugs it becomes gradually less enjoyable.

Subluxations are like dirt and bugs on your windshield. If you never clean your windshield your vision doesn't get better. At some point it can become dangerous to drive. If you accumulate layers of subluxations in your nervous system it can affect the quality of your life.

What causes subluxations? The answer is stress. All of us must deal with the stresses of life.

There are a few of the major sources of stress. The first one, which most people think of when going to the chiropractor, is physical stress. Car accidents, twisting the wrong way, falling, lifting, bending, computer work, bad posture, etc. fall into this category. Then there are emotional stress and chemical stress which are often overlooked when it comes to chiropractic. Emotional stress can include any stress related to worry, fear, guilt, anger, etc. Chemical stress can be related to bad foods, toxins in the environment, or medications.

In the fight or flight response, our sympathetic nervous system responds to perceived danger by releasing adrenaline and cortisol. Muscles tighten, blood pressure increases, digestion is inhibited, pupils dilate, and heart rate increases. Normally our nervous systems are resilient. There is an appropriate response to danger. When the danger passes we reset. We return to an at ease state.

But if our nervous systems are overwhelmed due to physical, emotional or chemical trauma, we don't fully reset. Muscles



that tighten don't fully relax. We get stuck in a pattern of response. Then we become compromised in our ability to deal with the next stress that comes along. We start accumulating layers of tension in our nervous system.

As unreleased stress responses accumulate our body becomes less flexible. We get stuck in patterns of response that are no longer helping us. Our windshields are accumulating more dirt and bugs. Eventually, it translates to a decrease in the quality of our lives.

Chiropractic adjustments help our nervous system reboot. They help remove old responses that no longer apply. Removing subluxations is like cleaning the

windshield. A body that is free of subluxations has a smoother, more enjoyable drive through life. Chiropractic can promote healing on physical, emotional and chemical levels!

BIO: Dr. Reul has been in practice in Louisville since 1993. He holds a BA in psychology from St. John's University (Jamaica, NY), a Master of Theological studies from Catholic Theological Union (Chicago, IL), and a Doctor of Chiropractic Degree from Life College School of Chiropractic. He participates in health fairs doing posture, stress and headache screenings. For more information on Dr. Reul's practice, visit www.reulchiropractic.com.



NOTE: As always, consult your health care practitioner before making any significant changes in your health care.
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Stay As Calm As Possible. Focus in your breath awareness if you start to feel stress. The physical body only functions well when our autonomic nervous system is relaxed. **The autonomic nervous system is what controls those aspects of our body functioning that we don't consciously control or have to think about.** If we have an emergency and feel stress activating, take care of the emergency if it just takes a few minutes or so, then calm down as soon as the emergency is past or being handled. Then CALM DOWN and focus in the breath again. The emergency can be handled better in a calm state than in a stressed state where one is more likely to make mistakes or even accidentally hurt oneself.

When the autonomic nervous system is stressed, the stomach can't digest well, the heart overworks, the whole nervous system gets over stimulated and agitated, the colon doesn't function normally, a person can't sleep well. These are the aspects of our body functioning that we normally don't consciously control. We need to stay relaxed in order for them to function healthfully. This is very important, right?

When Tired During Day, Rest For 10 Or 20 Minutes (Set A Timer) And Breathe. Don't grab another cup of coffee or caffeine tea or sugar snack to jerk you revved up again. The caffeine or sugar or snack are forcing the body into an agitated autonomic nervous system. Another option would be to walk for a while if that would feel relaxing.

Eat Food That Is Natural the way your great grandparents ate it, without chemicals when it was growing or being prepared as processed foods (boxed, canned, packaged). Buy organically grown, natural foods.that you prepare gently yourself by simmering or steaming on stove top, baking, using a slow cooker, or eating raw as a salad. Avoid frying.

Exercise In Some Way You Enjoy: Walk, yoga, dance, play with children or grandchildren, physical therapy exercises, walk a dog.

Spend Time In Nature. Love nature, do gardening.

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Do Something Each Day That Gives You Gentle Joy. Life should be a pleasure, right?

BIO: Zoom Meditations for Healing & Higher Consciousness Weekly Wednesdays 6:00-6:45 pm. In-person class 1st Sunday monthly at Unity of Louisville at 12:15-1:00.. Call for information. By donation. Joyce is a Transformational Energy & Emotional Healer providing individual sessions on Zoom, telephone, or in person. She's a highly attuned & sensitive guide for Higher Meditation & Spiritual Awareness. Master's Degree in Human Development, Reiki Master, extensive training & decades of experience as a practitioner & teacher of Spiritual Healing, Chakra Healing. Reflexology, Meridians, & Zone Therapy. She offers Past lives readings/healings. She's author of book "Secrets of Wisdom - Awaken to the Miracle of You," & Publisher- Editor of Natural Living Journal. 502-572-4871 www.joycegerrish.com



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