



Natural Living Journal

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

Vol. 2 Issue 3 **READ FREE ON-LINE** www.natural-living-journal.com June-July 2017



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True Weight Loss Key

Balancing Our Hormones

Summer: A Lush and Delicious Season

Creative Photography

Natural Foods: Easy Quick Cooking Ideas

Important Benefits of Massage Therapy

Freedom is Being the Truth of Who You Are

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Natural Living Journal

P.O. Box 1506, Louisville, KY 40201

www.natural-living-journal.com

Publisher and Editor, Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

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FREEDOM TO EXPLORE OUR MAGNIFICENCE

By Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

Let us explore our freedom to ever more fully claim our magnificence. Freedom is a precious gift beyond compare. Don't let anyone try to take away your freedom. We each have our natural style of how we wish to live our life. What is freedom? Freedom is the respect we hold for each other to not interfere in another person's natural growth and development. Each person is like a melody. This melody needs to be nurtured and given space. If it is seriously tampered with it can become flat and off key. Only each individual can sense for him or herself how the melody is meant to develop. How tragic if the melody is cut off and distorted and not allowed to evolve naturally in its own beauty and power. No one else can sing your unique melody; if they tried it would not ring true for them. Freedom supports each of us to be who we truly are.

In a melody there are periods of rest and periods of actively moving forward. The periods of pause are equally as important as the active soundings. The pauses in music could be compared to meditation, prayer, or other spiritual practices such as yoga or tai chi. These support realignment to the higher levels of one's consciousness and the Divine. They are crucial in order to refill one's being with higher spiritual energies and clarity and insight for the next step.

Living free is a skill that can be actively developed or enhanced. Some people take the path of least resistance or of least effort. They are opting out of dynamically creating their reality in a manner that truly expresses their inner melody. They are losing out on the precious opportunity to create something wonderful and unique with life. To live free requires a consciousness that is wide awake and very aware of choices.

There are people who are controlled by another person or by an organization which tries to tell them how to think and behave. Where there isn't a strong desire to express oneself, others will be eager to step in and control you to whatever extent you will allow them. Even if you live within a fairly free government, you still have to be constantly vigilant to not allow others to impinge on your individuality. Nice people are sometimes seen as an open invitation for someone else to mold according to their convenience. This is not to discourage you from being nice, it is to encourage you to be so clear on your melody that you instantly sense if someone has an agenda in their mind for you.

Having your livelihood involve doing something you truly enjoy is a blessing. If that is true for you -- how wonderful! May your inspired melody soar! It can take good fortune, real focus, and clarity to achieve that. If a person has a job he or she doesn't

really care for, it might be wise to stay with it for a while unless there is another job waiting. We can creatively follow our dream in whatever way possible in the time we have available outside our job. We might choose to take some additional training. Opportunities may well come along to make the shift seamlessly to a job that is closer to one's heart. Sometimes we can transform a job from within to become more what we would like it to be. Sometimes a position can take on a whole new approach when we have a creative mindset and with wise coordination with co-workers and related professionals and management. Transformation of a job from within can happen, and can be effective. Visualize it, work toward it, pray for it - - if that is something you seek.

What dream do you hold in your heart? Is there something that you would really like to manifest that has set your heart aflame in the past and that you perhaps set aside because you were distracted with other responsibilities? Maybe you tried to pursue that dream years ago and it didn't seem to work out and you sort of gave up on it and more or less forgot about it. This happens for many people. Dreams get dashed and the individual may have a sad place in the heart where he or she may hold a monument to that lost dream.

Maybe that dream resurfaces in your consciousness now and then like a gentle song refrain that you can't quite totally get out of your mind. Have you considered moving toward that vision with a different approach? Every idea can have multiple levels of possibilities and endless ways to apply it. It can be helpful to consider working with a coach, counselor, or support group in order to help bring one's dreams to life. Sometimes it is valid to replace an old dream with a new one more harmonious with your current life focus and at a higher



turn of the spiral.

Let's each embrace our creativity, joy, wisdom, and courage ever more fully in our life. Let's forget about the critics. Expressing ourselves creatively is part of our humanity. To live free, we need to trust ourselves, express ourselves, and live our truth. May we all live free for our highest good and for the highest good of all.

Note: On page 13, see journal writing questions, affirmations, and information for accessing a free online guided meditation to enhance your freedom to be your true magnificent self.

Bio: Joyce Gerrish has a Master's Degree in Human Development, and is a Graduate of National Institute of Whole Health. She has extensive training, experience, and decades of teaching numerous natural healing modalities including Reiki. She is author of the book "Secrets of Wisdom - - Awakening to the Miracle of You" and is publisher/editor of this "Natural Living Journal." She is a Holistic Life Coach, Counselor, and Energy Therapist. www.joycegerrish.com . 812-566-1799

IMPORTANT BENEFITS OF MASSAGE THERAPY THAT MAY SURPRISE YOU! Kimberly Curran, LMT

Being a massage therapist is such a rewarding profession. It means a lot to me to know that the services I provide help other people feel better in their bodies and be able to participate more fully in their daily activities, regardless of what symptoms and diagnosis they have. Also, because therapeutic massage is becoming more mainstream and available in places other than just spas, more people are experiencing its far reaching impact.

Many people are in pain and for all sorts of reasons, whether it be a car accident, an injury at work or a simple activity like moving a piece of furniture. When someone is in pain, it may affect their quality of life to the extent that they can't perform everyday activities, get a good night's rest, or go to work. Pain medications are sometimes prescribed but they can have unpleasant side effects, which is not the case with massage.

Massage therapy can lower pain with less medication & help avoid addiction issues.

Pain medications are becoming well known as a frequent pathway to serious addiction. This can have severe consequences, as we all know. The current opioid epidemic is widely considered to stem from the overuse of opioid pain killers. This is true in Kentucky and in the nation as a whole. In contrast to that, massage relaxes the muscle tissues, and that reduces painful contractions and spasms. It also reduces compression of the nerves that happens as a result of the contraction of the muscles that surround the nerves. Massage therapy triggers the release of your body's own natural pain killer (opioids) in the brain. The difference between a manufactured opioid and one that is naturally occurring in the body is the addiction component. When your body produces this chemical, it is used to benefit your body. When it is man-made, the opioid becomes something your body craves, and it can become addictive.

In regard to pain, massage therapy also speeds up the flow of oxytocin, which is a hormone that relaxes muscles and encourages feelings of calmness and contentment. Along with easing your pain, you just feel better at the end of the session.



Regular massage therapy is also beneficial for those with autoimmune disease. It helps with the secondary problems that happen to the body as a result of the pain, fatigue and dysfunction. When muscles are tight they put an increased load on the joints they cross and can aggravate already sore and inflamed joints. Massage relaxes those muscles so they don't pull. It increases circulation to the tissues when your body isn't able to do its job. The pressure of massage moving toward the heart helps pump fluid out of extremities and gets it moving so that fresh oxygenated blood will replace what was squeezed out of the area. Massage also calms the sympathetic nervous system which is the flight-or-flight/high stress part of your nervous system. That decreases the burden on organs like the adrenal glands that are pushed to overproduce adrenaline to force the body to stay in a high state of stressed trauma and readiness to deal with a real or feared emergency or potential danger. Sometimes the body is stuck in a state of chronic trauma that needs to be released.



One of the many other benefits of massage therapy is its helpful effect for people with cancer. While it doesn't treat the cancer itself, it helps reduce the side effects caused by conventional treatments and improves quality of life and well-being. It does require some specialized knowledge on the part of the therapist to work with a person until he or she has been in remission for a year, but studies show that the person can experience reduced pain, fatigue, nausea, anxiety and depression with massage therapy. It also improves sleep, range of movement, mental clarity and alertness, and affects the overall quality of life during treatment.

The power of massage is incredible. It really does do so much good for your whole being beyond just your body, without the side effects of medication or surgery, and at very little cost or commitment of time. And I get to be a part of that process! I feel so fortunate to have a profession that makes other people feel better and me, too. In my book, that's a win-win situation.

Bio: Kimberly Curran is a licensed massage therapist who works with clients of all ages and occupations who have back, shoulder or hip pain - - or conditions such as headaches, tennis elbow or plantar fasciitis. The goal is to help you feel better in your body so that you can live the life you want. To schedule a session, go to massageishealingforeveryone.com or call 502-494-6509.

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IS YOUR INDOOR CAT BORED?

Julia Gawley, DVM, CVSMT

Living indoors year round is a fact of life for many of our feline companions. There are simply too many risks to letting them outside, including being hit by a car, exposure to predators or getting lost. However, many cat owners recognize a cat's complex social behaviors and need for physical activity. Luckily, there are many things we can do to enrich our cat's environment, even in small living spaces.

One of the most important things to provide is a safe elevated space for cats. Many cats will seek this out, which is why we often find them on top of the fridge, couch or counter. A kitty condo is a great solution, and satisfies a cat's need to climb and sit up high to look out over their territory. These are four to six foot tall, carpeted, multi-tiered climbing towers, which can be found at pet stores and online. Place it by a window and your cat will be visually stimulated, feel safe, and have a chance to curl up in the sun for a cat nap.

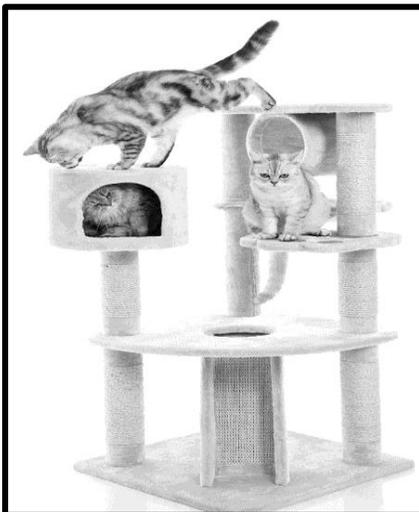
A laser pointer is a great toy that keeps cats chasing a light for exercise, and can be pointed up and down stairs or walls. There are battery operated options that can keep cats playing for hours. Pet stores have many innovative cat toys for sale that can keep cats thinking and interacting. Keep in mind a simple box with a hole in the top and some catnip or play mice inside will simulate hunting and provide enrichment.

We often think of cats as solitary. However, they are social creatures in nature. Households with only one cat may consider adding another cat as a friend. There are certainly many cats in shelters who would appreciate a loving home and could fulfill this role. Introduce the new cat slowly, keeping them in a closed bedroom for a few days so they can sniff under the door. Next, place the new cat in a cat carrier in the middle of a common room for fifteen minutes. Slowly extend the time until the both cats seem relaxed, and then let the new cat out. Expect some hissing the first couple weeks. This usually subsides in a month or so, and eventually the two may play and hopefully curl up together and sleep. Of course, make sure both cats are healthy, spayed or neutered, have been examined by a veterinarian, and have updated immunizations and flea preventative.



Cats in the wild are prolific hunters. Offering some canned cat food such as tuna or salmon from time to time will simulate this fresh meat experience. Cats with existing health conditions may need prescription food as prescribed by a veterinarian.

Many owners notice that their cat



Julia Gawley DVM, CVSMT
Small Animal & Equine Chiropractic Services

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likes to drink from a running faucet, rather than a bowl of water. Consider purchasing a continuous running kitty fountain, which filters the water, and provides a stream for drinking. The extra hydration will help keep kidneys and bladder in good health as well.

The rule of thumb for the number of litter boxes is the number of cats plus one. Make sure the boxes are large enough for the biggest cat to turn around in, contain high quality clumping cat litter, and are frequently cleaned. Avoid hoods and liners if possible. Studies have shown cats don't like these in their litter boxes.

Despite the fact that cats are obligate carnivores, some kitties enjoy munching on cat grass (also called sweet oats for cats) or catnip. Fresh cat grass can be found in pet stores, and catnip is usually purchased as a dried herb. Rub the catnip between the thumb and forefinger to activate the smell, and place a small amount on the kitty condo or on a rug. Cats go crazy! Catnip can also be placed in an old sock with both ends knotted, to provide hours of playing. Keep other plants, particularly lilies, up and out of cat's reach, as many plants are toxic for cats if ingested.

Regular brushing is good for cat's hair coat, circulation, and mimics grooming behavior which encourages bonding.

Remember, even if cats live strictly indoors, there are many simple things we can do to make their environment as "cat like" as possible.

Bio: Dr. Gawley is a veterinarian in Louisville, KY, specializing in veterinary spinal manipulative therapy. She has been practicing veterinary medicine for twelve years. An animal lover her whole life, Dr. Gawley has two dogs, five cats and two horses. Please visit her website at www.trailridgevet.com for information or email her at jfgawley@gmail.com to schedule an appointment.

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A SQUIRREL'S GRATITUDE -- A TREE CARETAKER'S STORY

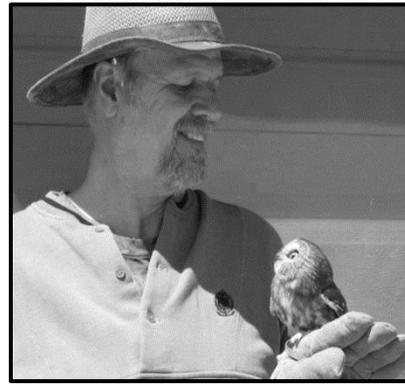
by Darrel Joy

I drove to my favorite Minnesota State Park with a chain saw in my backpack. A month or two prior to this, a big storm with incredibly destructive straight-line winds had blown down large trees and snapped off huge limbs like they were mere twigs. Some places on these trails were so obstructed and blocked by dense clumps of fallen trees that even an avid outdoors person like myself had trouble climbing over, under, around and thru the labyrinth of trunks and branches. Sometimes it was dangerous to proceed, because someone could easily get hurt.

I climbed up the steeper back end of the trail and took a short rest when I got to the top to catch my breath. Then I walked the trail in its reverse direction, stopping at each obstruction to clear it. Some of it could be removed with a small set of loppers that I had brought along. Then I came upon the main obstruction. A huge tree had been blown down, and its many branches made it impossible to walk around. The hillside was steep on both sides. There were three main trunks across the trail making any attempt to climb up and over them hazardous. I used my loppers to prune away the smaller branches so I could get closer to the main trunks. Then I started my chain saw and began cutting, making an effort to remove a section wide enough so that the trail wouldn't become a bottle neck. My saw's 21" blade was just long enough to get thru the biggest of the three trunks. Taking my time and being very careful, it took me about an hour to restore the trail at this one point.

As I proceeded along the trail, pruning and sawing as I went, I discovered that the damage from the storm was much worse than I expected. Not only were there many trees blown over and limbs broken off, but these had fallen onto other trees, sometimes bending these other trees double so that their tops were pointing down at the ground. Left alone, some of these would struggle to survive, while others would die from the excess weight and lack of sunlight as the fallen trees' leaves blanketed the smaller trees upon which they rested.

I decided that my task would now also include the rescuing of the still living, smaller trees which were being crushed. In some cases, I had to remove the tops of a fallen tree in several pieces in order to free a living tree that was trapped beneath it. Even with the oppressive weight removed, some of these freed trees were so bent that they couldn't right themselves without my help. In one case I had to use a forked limb to prop up a living tree. I knew that, given time, even this tree would recover, so long as I gave it this chance.



the dead. I rescued oaks and maples, and a couple nut bearing trees in the hickory family. (See above photo of Darrel and injured rescued Saw-whet Owl.)

When I was finally done, I was totally exhausted. I lugged my heavy chain saw back to a nice spot just off of and above the trail near a lovely lookout point. I put the chain saw into my pack and covered up the blade. It was still a long walk down to the lower trail and back to the parking lot, and I needed to rest before starting back. I took a swig of water to quench my thirst, sat down on a low outcropping of rock in a shady spot, and began to do a meditation. I knew that a deep meditation would relax my tense muscles and provide a more profound rest than anything else. Besides, a meditation here in the heart of the forest always felt so good.



I'd been meditating for only five to ten minutes and my mind was blank when I heard a disturbance up ahead of me and a bit to my right. I kept my eyes closed and listened intently without any thoughts. There was a sound of rustling leaves that came in short bursts between longer intervals of silence. It had to have been a Squirrel. Yet it kept coming my way. My curiosity got the best of me and I opened my eyes just a slit to take a peek. It was indeed a Gray Squirrel, and it was about 25 yards away, peering from behind a tree, looking right at me. It went around the tree and hopped a couple times in my direction and then stopped. Its head looked odd, so I opened my eyes a little wider to get a better look. It was carrying a huge nut in its mouth. The nut was still in its husk, and was as big as the Squirrel's head. It was amazing that a Squirrel could hold a nut that big in its mouth and still be able to see where it was going. It hopped to the next tree and peeked around it to look at me.

My meditation was now over because my mind was filled with all sorts of questions. Was I blocking its path on its way to its home? Was it planning to bury the nut? Was it actually seeing me? ... or did it just suspect that I was there and was looking for me? (I was wearing camo colored clothing at the time.)

Darrel Joy,"The Squirrel's Gratitude," Cont. from p. 6

The Squirrel bounded forward to the next tree and stopped again to look at me. I didn't move a muscle and kept relaxed. I ceased to have questioning thoughts by focusing my mind on my senses.

The Squirrel was now only about ten paces or so away and it hopped half way to the next tree that was only four feet from me. It stopped momentarily. Then the Squirrel bounded up to it and peered at me again from the protection of the tree. I thought for sure it would scamper up the tree, but instead, it slowly came around the tree and sat on its haunches with the nut still in its mouth.

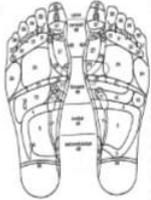
The Squirrel just sat there for nearly a minute, looking at me, looking so cute with that big nut covering most of its face. Then it did a most unusual thing. The Squirrel lowered its head slightly and dropped the nut at its feet, and looked back up at me. After another moment had passed, it turned and went behind the tree and looked at me again. After only a brief pause, the Squirrel bounded back up the hill the same way that it had come, with the usual hop hop, followed by a pause to look at me over its shoulder, and repeating this process over and over until it passed out of sight.

While I pondered this event, I leaned forward and picked up the nut, noting the dents in the husk where it must have been held by the Squirrel's teeth. "What was that all about?" I asked myself. Then it dawned on me that the nut was the Squirrel's gift to me. "But why give me a gift at all?" And the answer immediately came back, "For saving its nut trees, and the other trees, too. It was saying "Thank you" in the only way it knew how. It was sharing its food from one of those trees."

Gratitude? From a Squirrel? Had it been watching me rescuing the trees? My mind reeled with the ramifications of this possibility. Could a Squirrel comprehend what I had been doing? Could a Squirrel even comprehend the concept of Gratitude? The answer came back with a bit of a condescending tone to it, "Of course! Weren't you paying attention?"

I put the nut in a side pocket of my backpack and hoisted the pack onto my back. "Nobody's going to believe this, not even if I show them the nut," I thought to myself. "But I don't care. I saw it with my own eyes, and I 'felt' the gratitude in its gift." I walked back to my car with a smile on my face. I didn't expect any "Thank you" From the rangers or from those rare hikers who still used this trail. And it was O.K. with me if none of them ever knew what I had done. Yet my face and my heart were aglow in the gratitude from a Squirrel. (Photograph to the right is by Darrel Joy)

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CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

by Josh McNally

Creative Shadows. People are always lining up for portraits or for family photos or for weddings. The photographer often takes the people and puts them out in the direct sunlight. That's going to wash them out. If there is a nice little tree nearby with leaves dancing around casting shadows, that is going to add interesting aspects to the image. Use those shadows. There are so many shadows that nature provides in addition to the trees, such as the corner of a building, awnings, and umbrellas. There are many other ways to use your environment. Don't be afraid that the camera is not going to get a good image because you're not out in direct sunlight. Use shadows. They are there. They are your friend. I've known people who feel that if you get a shadow in there, it's going to cause too much contrast or be distracting. No, shadows are our friend. You see them all the time, even at night. Streetlights make awesome shadows. Even stop lights make good shadows on the ground. They are fun to play with. When I'm out and about with a model on a fashion photoshoot at night time, there are shadows that are being cast from a street light or a stop light or the moon. Those are good light sources. Right at the edge of where the shadows are, that's also a fun area to experiment and play with. Don't be afraid that you won't have your subject 100% lit. It's O.K. to have a little bit of shadow on the person's face. It's O.K. That increases the level of drama.

You know the pavilions in park picnic areas, you can do photos inside them. Have a model or friend inside the pavilion and leaning out into the light - - showing them coming out of the darkness and into the day light creates drama. They can be so excited- - so happy! It's like spring is happening. You can use shadows in really creative ways.

Lines lead the eye. I use lines in my city scapes, such as the lines of the sidewalk or the traffic lines, or any kind of line - - even fences. People are often afraid that the lines are going to cut up their image. But no, they are there - - use the lines. See where the lines in the natural environment are leading the eye. Let the lines lead the eye to the subject or the product. I've even used the lines of an old tree. The tree branches are maybe going over to the right, and there perhaps is the model up in the tree branches like some kind of cat or cougar. The model was up in the tree. It was kind of crazy. I had brought a ladder, but she climbed up in the tree by herself. You'd be surprised, models will do crazy stuff when you just suggest it a little bit. They're trying to create an unusual photograph, too.

Balance. People often think that you always have to keep everything balanced. No, you really don't. We tend to want to have

everything symmetrical and even. No, don't do that. Throw a little askew into your image. Try not to have everything in exactly dead center in every image. That's just boring. As an example, if you have one or more people down by the river on a bench - - don't show them straight on. Give them a little angle going away from you. Sometimes a portrait at an angle can be quite dramatic. That may mean actually slanting the camera.

Background. Let's say that it's a family portrait or you are taking a picture of your best friend. The people are lined up, they are in the image, everything seems just right, and you take the picture - - and then you notice - - oh my goodness, is that a trash can knocked over behind them? Or is that someone peeing off in the distance? Sometimes people think of the world as one flat thing, and they forget about all the stuff behind their subject. When you are deciding on your photo composition, be sure to look behind your subject. Is that going to be distracting? One time I took a picture for a photo shoot of a car. The model's head was placed so that it covered all but the last three letters of a sign behind her. Those three letters showing were "ass." It almost got published in the magazine. I had been focusing so much on the car and on the model that I forgot to look at the background.



Experiment. Try to get as many images in the camera as you can. If you aren't experimenting, you're wasting time. In the digital age you can keep on experimenting as many times as you want, and just have fun with it. Don't be nervous. The beauty is that you can delete it later. Enjoy yourself and be creative!

Bio: Joshua McNally is a local based photographer. He has been published in national & local magazines and newspapers. He enjoys working on motion picture movies, sporting events, and documentaries. He also does nature and architectural photography which have sold widely. He has been in many different galleries & art shows, and has taught photography in various schools over his career. His photographs can be purchased locally at Awesome Opossum Gifts. He currently trains photography videographers. 502-457-7724.

Photograph above by Joshua McNally



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SUMMER: A LUSH & DELICIOUS SEASON

by Elsa Lichman

Dark clouds shroud a cove in the river, as raindrops falling on water create the impression of a pointillist painting. The river takes on a dull blue hue, interspersed with gray-green lily pads, more reminiscent of Monet's artwork.

We take pleasure in observing wildlife, as the breeding season melds into the very beginnings of family life. A group of swans bathes near the shore. Water slithers over their backs, then they clamber onto the cool mud of the bank to preen. Droplets of water sparkle on gray and white feathers. It is a peaceful moment, with small up-curved feathers blown across the surface like toy boats.

Another swan family arrives to preen in the early evening at the water's edge. The lone cygnet lies down, tucks its head under a wing, white eyelid closed. One pale foot trails down its side, fragile and tender.

Canada geese abound. I watch young birds plop down to preen new wing and tail feathers. A pair of yellow, fluffy goslings act like twins, foraging together, almost sharing the same blade of grass. We see gawky adolescents. As they get older, their pale chin straps become more defined, like a movie gradually turning from black and white to color.

At dusk, clouds at the horizon scintillate with lines of light, as pink suffuses the air, already saturated with sweet floral perfumes. A line of geese floats in the river. They can swim on a moonlit night, or drift with the current. It is so peaceful that I wish I were one of them.



A friend has discovered a ruby-throated hummingbird nest, high in a tree near a raptor nest. Its camouflage is amazing, as it looks like a bump on a branch, completely covered with pale green lichens. It resembles Gaudi's creative architecture in Barcelona. The placement is not random, as hummingbirds often raise their young near the nests of large birds of prey. The raptors do not bother them, but the tiny birds have an aura of protection from other larger birds, which shun the area. Our hummer mother

is now feeding her chicks!

There are many young robins, each with its own coloration and pattern of dark spots on the breast, and white patches at the throat. They are so robinesque! A mother mourning dove and one chick forage at a roadside. The innocent young bird, with a wide-eyed expression, has its own variation of soft colors and facial markings. It coos and trills, enhancing our experience.



A red morph screech owl peeks out from her nesting site in a deep hole in a dead tree trunk. She is so small, just a handful of feathers, her coloration and patterns providing her protection, as she blends into the textures of the trunk. Another miracle just within our reach. (See little owl up in tree in photo with Elsa below left.)

A pair of bald eagles has chosen a cemetery by the river to build their nest in a white pine. We are at the thrilling stage when both parents take turns sitting on eggs, then fly off dipping and swooping - - experiencing freedom on glorious wide black wings, contrasting with the pure white head and tail. The bird may sit atop a dead tree limb high up, preening luxuriously, slowly - - a spa moment for a parent to be. It may then soar to a dead branch, break it off, and carry it in ferocious yellow talons back to the nest.

On a trip to a marsh, I marvel at great egrets fishing, becoming more and more active as the weather worsens to a downpour. This seems to spur them on: to fly up, land, fly up again, then down to skulk in the briny water, and come up with a fish in that dagger-beak. Their wings are so creamy when they catch the light in flight, they look angelic. As they take off, their black feet dangle in a graceful pose.

Trees are now in full leaf. Sweet bays are sparsely flowered, each waxy blossom emitting a pungent, almost overpowering fragrance. Pale pink, soft-scented roses climb up a trellis. They remind me of the flowers spilling over our back fence when I was young, their perfume the essence of summer. I remember plucking honeysuckle flowers and sipping their sweetness, a natural dessert!

As I walk along on a city sidewalk, in sweltering heat, I see a sign of hope. In the tiniest, driest crack, there are two plants which somehow manage to sprout green stalks and sturdy yellow flowers. I sit on a bench in a city park, enjoying a fresh breeze in the shade. I am soon joined by a 10 year old girl who watches the pigeons. I seem to have found a kindred spirit, as she asks me why some have purple at the neck, and others have different

(Continued on Page 19)

WEIGHT LOSS KEY IS A TRULY HEALTHY LIFE STYLE

Dr. Lisa Tostado

It seems as though we are on this never ending quest to discover the ultimate weight loss cure. There are an endless choice of diets and weight loss aids from drinks, powders, bars, to supplements that claim to melt away those pounds for good. However, it appears that we are still struggling to find a solution that works. The rates of obesity in America continue to rise. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease, two-thirds of American adults are obese or overweight. Additionally, one-third of American children are obese or overweight. These statistics come at a time when Americans are consuming sugar and processed foods at alarmingly higher rates. Currently the average American consumes upwards of 120-150 lbs. of sugar per person, per year. This equates to about 3 pounds or about 6 cups of sugar per person, per week. Two hundred years ago, the average American consumed about two pounds of sugar per year.

Most of the added sugar in the Western Diet, particularly fructose, comes from the consumption of sugary drinks like soda, and even energy and recovery drinks. Research shows that highly processed fructose, in the form of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), contributes far more to obesity and insulin resistance syndrome than simple table sugar. Fructose is sweeter than glucose and sucrose (table sugar), and interferes with the action of our satiety hormone, leptin. Leptin is what signals our body that we are full and have had enough food. When we become resistant to the effects of leptin, it becomes harder to burn fat. Furthermore, with increasing sugar in the diet, the pancreas produces more insulin, a hormone that promotes the storage of fat.

So what are the best ways to lose weight, even in a food environment where we are saturated with sugar and unhealthy foods? Here are five tips that can help you simplify the process and achieve effective results.

Cut out the Processed Foods: First and foremost, you should aim to eat whole, unprocessed foods. Prepare most of your meals at home when possible, and use ingredients that are close to their natural state. The more processed or packaged a food is, the less nutritious it will be and the more preservatives you will get and added ingredients like sugar. I recommend picking one day a week, like a Sunday, to plan your meals in advance. Create a shopping list and buy the necessary ingredients to prepare a few batches of meals for the coming week. The more prepared you are, the more successful you will be.



Count Nutrients and Chemicals: Most of the time we count calories as a way to determine the foods we should be eating. Although we do want to ultimately burn more calories than we are consuming, the nutrient count of our food is even more important. Our food should provide us with the fuel and raw materials our body needs to repair and renew itself on a cellular level. When our body is getting what it needs, it can more efficiently burn fat. You also want to avoid chemicals in your food. Chemicals cause us to gain more weight since our body will make more fat cells to store them. The Dirty Dozen is a list created yearly by the Environmental Working Group of the dirtiest (most pesticides on them) fruits and vegetables. You should buy these organic. The Dirty Dozen this year are peaches, apples, sweet bell peppers, celery, nectarines, strawberries, cherries, pears, grapes (imported), spinach, lettuce, and potatoes. It is also good to avoid artificial flavors that can lead to more cravings.

Eat Foods that Burn Fat: Did you know that food can also be our medicine? Yes it's true, we have been told to eat our vegetables for a reason, they help us achieve better health and maintain a normal weight. Some of these vegetables have low calories and can be eaten in unlimited amounts. These include arugula, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, dandelion greens, cauliflower, kale, spinach, carrots, beet greens, mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, cabbage and snap peas. Make your plate as colorful as possible. Aim for 5-9 servings of veggies a day, and 1-2 servings of low glycemic fruit like berries, apples and pears. A serving can be considered approximately one cup. The phytochemicals in the plant, which yield its color, also have anti-cancer properties and support the immune system. Additionally, lean protein and healthy

fats such as raw nuts, extra-virgin olive oil and avocados stabilize our blood sugar and turn on our fat burning hormone.

Support Healthy Digestion and Elimination: Vegetables and whole grains have fiber which help regulate digestion and the elimination of toxins from the body. Remember, toxins keep the fat on! Research is showing that the health of our gut terrain is a key to overall health. An imbalance in flora, such as an overgrowth of yeast, will often lead to sugar cravings and weight gain. There are prebiotic foods like Jerusalem artichoke and chicory that feed (Continued on next page)

Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D.

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friendly bacteria. Food sources include onions, garlic, leeks, asparagus, flaxseeds, and seaweed such as dulse.

Food sources of probiotics are different. They include: fermented foods such as cultured vegetables like kimchi, sauerkraut and beets kvass; fermented raw milk such as kefir and yogurt; and fermented soy like natto and tempeh. Additionally, vegetables of all kinds such as cabbage, carrots, kale, collards, and celery can be prepared as a fermented food when spiced with herbs like ginger and garlic. Those all provide probiotics and support healthy bacteria populations in our gut.

Beware of fermented foods sold at your grocery store, many of the commercialized versions do not typically have live cultures as they often undergo pasteurization and are loaded with sugar that feeds pathogenic bacteria. The best way to purchase these foods is by buying them at your trusted local natural food market usually sold in glass jars and refrigerated. Another relatively inexpensive and probably best option is making your own at home with a culture starter. You can readily find recipes online and in books on fermentation. In addition to this, I often recommend that everyone over the age of 30 take a digestive enzyme with possible HCL support to ensure the proper digestion of food.

Stay Hydrated: We should be drinking half of our body weight in ounces of water per day. This is about 8-12 cups of water a day per person. When we are dehydrated, we can confuse our thirst signal for hunger. Our water should be filtered. One tip is to drink 8-12 ounces of water first thing in the morning with some fresh squeezed lemon juice. The nutrients in lemon supports detoxification and helps the body rid itself of toxins. A key to weight loss is cleaning out the "gunk" in our cells. Additionally, it replaces our sugary drinks and helps cut down on calories and sugar.

Following these tips will help you build a foundation for supporting your weight loss goals. If you hit a wall, there are other considerations, like the health of your thyroid, stress levels, and addressing food sensitivities. There are no real short cuts or quick fixes that will be the solution. Achieving optimal health evolves through a healthy lifestyle, and entails adopting new healthy habits. It's worth it! It can open doors to a new life of greater energy, joy, health, and the attractiveness of the true you.

Bio: Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D. graduated from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, in Tempe, Arizona; one of the leading accredited naturopathic medical schools in the U.S. Inspired by the early pioneers in whole food nutrition, Dr. Tostado decided to complete the CCWFN program in 2016 with the International Foundation for Nutrition and Health. She has been a resident of Louisville, KY for the past 8 years. Currently she has two office spaces, one at the Rainbow Blossom Wellness Center at Springhurst, and one at Whole Health Associates, 3834 Taylorsville Rd., Ste. B1.

Editor's Note: Buy all your foods organically grown if possible, to help lower toxins in your body. Also enjoy some type of exercise regularly.



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ENCOURAGING EACH OTHER

by Joyce C. Gerrish

Let's encourage ourselves and each other to be all that we can be. It's so easy to doubt ourselves and others. Doubt lowers your potentials. It is like lowering the shade on your window. It is hard for the sunlight to shine through. Raise the window shade. Open the curtains. Unlock the window and lift the sash. Let in fresh air. Believe in yourself. As you begin to more fully believe in yourself and your fantastic potential - - that will change how

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you feel about others. We're in this world to encourage each other, not to put each other down or doubt each other.

Every day visualize and affirm that you are surrounded and filled with light and joy and love. Do the same for the people you love and who are important to you. As we all do this we can create a network of powerful mutual support around the planet. We can be "midwives" for each other to help birth us all into our higher good. In seeking to help others grow in truly beneficial ways, the ideal focus is first of all demonstrating in our own life the real benefits of harmonious effective wholesome living.



FINDING THEIR WAY

Short Story by Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

(Ongoing story of five friend's intertwining life journeys: Crystal, Vic, Janis, Nathaniel, and Nallie)

Nallie is noticing her thirteen year-old son Ethan looking out the window quietly. His expression looks more serious than usual. She isn't sure whether to ask him how he is, or to just let him be. She decides to wait and give him space for now. Thirty minutes later she walks through the living room where he is sitting, and he doesn't seem to have moved a muscle - - he appears almost inert. "Honey, how are you doing? How was school today?" He mutters quietly, "Oh, Mom, I'm fine. Can't I just look out the window? I'm watching a bird feed it babies, or at least I was. It must be off hunting for food right now." Nallie responds, "Ethan, I know there's a nest somewhere over in that tree, but can you really see it from here?" He sighs, "No-o-o-o-o, not really. But it sounds good. I'm really just depressed."



Nallie says concerned, "Tell me about what's troubling you, O.K.? You know how deeply I care." He replies, "Yeah, Mom, I know you care, you just wouldn't understand. I'm not really sure I understand. But I'll work this out, trust me." With that he disappears into his room in a flash before Nallie can get another word in. Later Nallie calls Ethan and his fifteen-year old brother Leon for dinner.

The three of them get settled around the table, and Leon says, "Where's Dad? Is he working late again?" "Yes," replies Nallie, "He's got to complete some emergency plans for dealing with damage in one of the parks from the heavy thunderstorm yesterday." Nallie's heart skips a beat. She thinks, "Is he at work, or is he with that woman again? I've got to trust him, or it's just too stressful for me." She says to her sons, "He's really concerned about how the recent storms affected the plantings in Anderson Park. He says he's working with the men to try to restore things as best they can. A lot of branches and some limbs got knocked down, too." Leon adds, "He loves those parks passionately. I hope I love my job that much some day when I finish school." Nallie adds, "Following your passion in your career really helps make your work meaningful to you rather than just something you've got to do to earn money to survive." Leon gets a serious look on his face, "Yeah, Mom, I'm really starting to get that. Some of my friends talk about wanting to quit school, or being really bored in the classes. I don't say too much to them. I don't want to seem to be too 'goodie-goodie,' but I enjoy some of my classes and

teachers. I particularly like science, it helps me understand things." "Me too," adds Ethan, "I like soccer and chorus, too - - and there's a debate club I want to check out. I figure debate club could help me express my opinions better. But with some kids it isn't popular to talk about liking school too much. Recently I've just been joining in with whatever my buddies are excited about, like cars or talking about things they think they might be able to get away with - like smoking in certain parts of the school grounds. Puffing cigarettes just makes me cough!"

Nallie looks concerned, "Ethan, are your friends smoking now? Are you smoking?" Ethan looks glum and responds, "Mom, you might not believe what some of the kids are into. Sometimes

I hardly believe it or really understand it. I just keep my mouth closed and try to seem to go along with the guys in order to be a part of them. I want to be part of the 'in group,' Mom. You don't know how it is. If a guy's not 'in,' they really give him a hard time." Nallie looks concerned. She glances at Leon as if to ask his opinion. Leon looks back blankly and looks down. She says a quick silent prayer asking for help to know what to say and how to

respond. She's grateful that Ethan for some reason is willing to talk for the moment. She speaks quietly and gently to Ethan, "Who are these guys that you're hanging out with, do I know them? Are they good friends of yours?" He stammers, "Mom, they've been my best friends for several years now. We've been buddies since fifth grade. Now since we've been at this different school they're gradually just not the same. The older kids come around and stir things up. I've been needing to talk to someone." Leon looks around, clears his throat, gets up quickly - - and heads for the door, "See you later, I've got to study. It's not me, Mom, believe me. I just keep as low a profile as possible." Nallie says in a carefully contained quiet voice, "Please stay, Leon, this is important." As he leaves the room he adds, "Count me out, sorry." (Cont. Page 13)

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Nallie feels shaken, but holds her composure as best she can and says with compassionate concern to Ethan, "So your friends have been changing recently?" Ethan looks at Nallie with very serious eyes, "You just don't know what's going on with some of the kids. Sometimes I don't really understand or totally believe what they say. Some of the guys seem to be trying to impress us with what they're into. My best friends seem to be going along with this stuff and these older kids. I'm being kind of drawn into it somewhat because of my friends. But I don't feel good about it. Today at school, our home room teacher pulled me and my two best buddies aside and said 'you three are riding high and heading for trouble.' I couldn't believe it! I hadn't done anything. The other guys did it, and I was just there." Nallie whispers, "What did they do?" Ethan blurts out with tears welling up in his eyes, "They started fist fights on the playground. I was drawn in a little when I was just trying to protect myself. The girls were screaming. The teachers pulled us into the office. I told them I was just trying to protect myself. I don't think they believed me. If they haven't called you yet, they will. It's kind of scary. I'm being drawn into stuff I don't want anything to do with. There are older kids who have drugs on the playground, and some of the guys talk about drinking on the weekends. They talk about things that they do with the girls. I don't know what to believe or to think."



Nallie sits quietly with Ethan for a while. She looks in his eyes and puts her arm around his shoulders and holds him steadily. Ethan's head is lowered. He shakes slightly. Nallie kisses his cheek and says softly, "I love you, Ethan. I believe in you, you know that. I'm here for you. You can move through this, I know you can. I'll go in with you to talk with the school counselor. We'll get some kind of support for you. I went through some hard times when I was your age. Friends can shift suddenly sometimes in unexpected ways, and one may need to find different friends more compatible with who one is. Sometimes we need to let go and move on. That's what I had to do when I was your age. It was hard, really hard. I adored those friends, but we had just moved in different directions. You're going to be O.K." Ethan raises his head a little and whispers in a hoarse voice Nallie can barely hear, "Yeah, I can't go where my buddies seem to be going. It hurts me inside, but I've got to let go. I needed to talk with somebody." They sit together silently and time flows. Nallie holds her son close to her, and prays silently as she listens to the birds singing outside. Eventually she says quietly, "We'll see if we can get your Dad and Leon to go hike with us Saturday at your favorite state park, O.K.?"

TO LIVE FREE, TRUST YOURSELF! YOU ARE WORTHY! by Joyce Gerrish

To live free, one needs to trust oneself. Many people feel that anything of value will have to come from someone else. A person with this mindset may copy what someone else creates or does. The very act of copying tends to shut down one's sense of confidence in oneself and one's sense of worthiness. It is saying that whoever made what one is copying is more worthy than oneself.

You are worthy! What you have to say and communicate is of value and importance. As you express what is in your heart and in your mind, it clarifies your perceptions for yourself. Sometimes you may not know precisely how you feel until you attempt to express it. Can you imagine the truth of that? Have you ever tried to express your opinion on something, and found that when you put it in words or gave it form in some way - - it became much clearer for you or even came out somewhat differently than you expected? That is important to be aware of. The very act of expressing oneself freely from the heart is healing.

Questions For Reflection, Discussion, Journaling

1. When do you generally feel the most free in your life? When do you feel the most free to be yourself and express yourself? Being out in nature? Dancing? Running? Exploring new places? Creating something? Sharing stimulating conversation? Achieving success or a breakthrough in your work? Describe how that feeling of freedom feels in your body and in your consciousness. How does that carry over into the rest of your life (if it does)?
2. What was an event that was one of the most freeing experiences in your life? What made it so special for you? How did it affect your life after that?
3. How can you support some of the people in your life to enjoy more fully their freedom to be who they truly are?

Action Suggestions To Enhance Freedom

1. How often do you give yourself the opportunity to enjoy your favorite ways of expressing your freedom? Are you craving more time to pursue them? Can you plan that in? Such as boating, learning to swim, hiking.
2. Have you even been made to feel that you don't have sufficient skill to do something harmless that you enjoy, such as singing? Give yourself permission, - - and do it.

Free Audio Meditation: Enhancing Your Freedom

Visit my website www.joycegerrish.com. Click on "Songs, Meditations, and Designs." Next click on "Chapter 14, Freedom to Explore Your Magnificence." Then click on "Audio Meditation."

Affirmations: (1) I am free to be who I truly am.

(2) I am free to pursue my vision of my highest good.

BALANCING OUR HORMONES

by Carrie Thonen APRN, WHNP-BC

I'd like to start with defining the word hormone. A hormone is a "regulatory substance produced in an organism and transported in tissue fluids such as blood to stimulate specific cells or tissues into action". I think the word regulatory is the word that rings the strongest in this definition. Very basically speaking our hormones regulate most bodily function. In this brief article, I'd like to touch on what happens as women lose some of their regulation and how it can be managed. This article is addressing hormone care for women because that is the focus of my health care practice, but men can also seek consult and care for their hormones.

As women age, our ovaries become less responsive to the hormones coming from our pituitary gland. Because of this our estrogen and progesterone levels begin to fluctuate. The rhythm



of hormones we experienced for most of our lives starts to get out of rhythm and we can feel it. This process often begins in our 30s! We may initially notice some subtle changes. Maybe we're a little more forgetful, maybe our periods are a little different than they used to be, maybe our skin just seems more sensitive. As time goes on though,

hormonal symptoms typically begin to worsen and accumulate. We're not sleeping as well, maybe we can't seem to regulate temperature, we may be gaining weight, and we're often having lots of irregular bleeding before the bleeding stops. There are also shifts in our body that are happening that we're not always aware of such as our bones not being as strong and our cardiovascular system becoming more vulnerable to disease.

These are just a few of the changes women experience and every woman is different. Some of us can plow through these symptoms swiftly and with little thought. For others, these changes can be extreme and they are unmanageable and life altering. For the rest of us, well maybe we're dealing with these shifts, but we'd just like to feel more like we used to. The way our hormones impact us is very much affected by our overall health and by external stressors. During the middle of our lives, there seems to be a lot of added stress... our partners are also aging and coping with health issues of their own, our children are growing and dealing with life/family and that often falls back on us, our parents are elderly and they are in need of extra care. Sometimes it's hard to

make heads or tails with what's going on because there is just so much going on!



I think every woman could benefit from a periodic discussion about what she is experiencing and how she is coping with her changing body. There are so many approaches to improving our hormonal health. It is important to share an in-depth health history with your provider so you can work together to formulate a plan to

maximize well-being. Sometimes a woman may just need some advice on nutrition and vitamin/mineral supplements to support her natural hormones. Some women may be in need of rhythmic hormonal supplementation to cope with cyclical fluctuations. Some of us may need a short burst of hormones to get us through the toughest years and some take full advantage of hormone replacement for the long term. Bioidentical hormone replacement is my preference. Current data shows that administering the right type of bioidentical hormone at the right time in life has fewer side effects and risks as compared to non-bioidentical hormones. You can also get bioidentical hormones from most pharmacies now! There are numerous options out there to help us feel our best and I don't believe accepting a compromised life is one of them. So if it's been awhile since you discussed your hormones with your provider, it's probably time you give them a call!

BIO: CARRIE THONEN received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Western Kentucky University. She received her Masters of Science in Nursing with a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Specialty from the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in 2003. Carrie has a wealth of experience and training in managing hormones, treating vulvar skin conditions, and performing advanced in-office GYN procedures. Wellness is her focus though and to Carrie your annual exam entails so much more than just a Pap smear and breast exam. She puts a lot of emphasis on the body as a whole and discussing diet, activity, and vitamins are always part of her patient consultations. Carrie is a listener and each patient interaction is special to her. She truly wants you to lead the healthiest, happiest, and most fulfilled life as a woman and she is there to help guide you in the right direction.

Carrie Thonen, APRN, WHNP-BC
Women's Health NP
Athena Health & Wellness
907 Lyndon Lane
Louisville, KY 40222



The mission of Athena Health & Wellness is to provide comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and personalized care to women of all ages.
carrie@athenahealthandwellness.com
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FREEDOM IS BEING THE TRUTH OF WHO YOU ARE

by Gerry Boylan, PhD.

I've grown to love that line from the song *Me and Bobbie McGee*, "Freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose." When I first encountered it all I heard was pessimism. I missed the wisdom. As life unfolded I realized Kristofferson was singing about the ultimate freedom, the freedom from the bondage of any and all attachments.



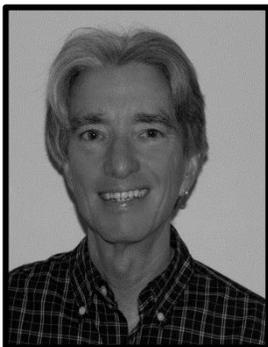
I am not always free- - I can still be a hostage to old ideas, old concerns, such as "I'm not doing it right" or "How could anybody love me?" I am sometimes trapped by fears of what other people think or even what I think they think. The list is pretty endless. So as I reflect on writing a piece on freedom, I feel as I did when I was single and never in a relationship - - doing couples counseling.

How free are you? Really? If you were to stop for a minute during a day and ask yourself, "Am I doing this because I choose to or because I have to? Is my primary motivation fear of the consequences or am I doing this out of love, caring, and compassion?"

Too often I will come to the awareness that I have been sleepwalking. I've been in "robot mode." I've been in a fugue of unawareness, doing most of the tasks life was assigning to me, but never really being conscious or present. Sleepwalking through

life sucks a lot of energy from the soul, even if we are not aware of it. It is spiritually exhausting, and it drains energy from all aspects of life.

Let us examine a day in our life, or even a part of that day. All of us probably follow a well-established routine. Nothing wrong with that, but how conscious



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are we? I'm going to suggest that it is only when we are conscious, when we are aware, that we are truly free. Showing up at work, did you want to be here? Did you want to dress up? Have there been times when you have been sitting there bored to death or thinking to yourself - - I could be playing golf? That internal dialogue could be applied to any area of our life.

So how free are we?

Freedom and non-attachment go hand in hand. I am only free when I am aware, when I am choosing to acknowledge my freedom, and I am only truly aware when I am unattached and in the present moment. Simply put, as long as there is attachment, old baggage, or expectations, we will not be free: we will be living in fear and 'stuckness.'

There is nothing left to lose because there never was anything to lose. You already have it All, but you have to be present to win, you have to be aware to claim the prize that is already here. And what is the prize you might ask? Simple, the Truth of Who You Are.

Bio: Gerry Boylan 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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THE HEALING POWER OF ART: ART PSYCHOTHERAPY

Karen Schellinger, ATR-BC, LPAT, LPCA

After all we are human, each of us on a journey and yet our destinations unique. Most likely at some point we all get derailed and find it difficult to readjust or jump back on track. Others may join us on our journey; providing companionship that brings happiness, suffering or a simple understanding. When we are suffering it can bring sadness, hurt, and pain to our lives. These changes may appear in different forms: anger, living in the past, or worry regarding the future. Addictions may also show up with many shadows too painful to talk about...

An early pioneer in Art Therapy, Margaret Naumburg believed "Art therapy is psychoanalytically oriented" and that free art expressions "become a form of symbolic speech which... leads to an increase in verbalization in the course of therapy." The psychoanalytic approach is one of the earliest forms of art psychotherapy. The therapist with the client interprets the client's symbolic self-expression communicated through the art and elicits real-time interpretations of the life lived.

Case in point: Her father died when she was 10 years old. I asked her to paint with watercolors reminiscent of that period in her life. Three vignettes appeared on her paper each with their own story. Color blocks of red, orange and yellow symbolic of the colors she has "always been drawn to." The next vignette appears



to be raindrops symbolic of the sparks present in her eyes and that appeared so frequently her mother took her to the doctor to be checked. The last block of dark blue and black colors symbolic of how alone she felt sitting in dark corners, without help to unravel her grief. I asked, "What did your father do for work when he was alive?" She replied, "He was a welder!" Tears began to flow down her face as she realized. I said, "When looking at a

welder what do you see, sparks flying, vibrant colors red, orange and yellow from the flame and the welder protected by a dark coat and hood." This client's free expression of art and communication allowed for a greater sense of compassion for herself and her inner child feeling that her father's presence had been with her all along.

As defined by the American Art Therapy Association, "Art therapy is a mental health profession that uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages This belief suggests that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight. Art therapy integrates the fields of human development, visual art

(drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art forms) and the creative process with models of counseling and psychotherapy."

Case in point: I asked. "Please use colors and symbols not words in the 4-inch circle on the paper to reflect a feeling". The man began his drawing using colored pencils. When finished he had drawn a cartoon character named Sponge Bob, I asked if he would mind sharing what Sponge Bob meant to him. He said, "Sponge Bob reminds me of being happy." I then asked, "How old were you when your addiction began?" Chronologically being 33 years of age, he replied "Age 7." At a very young age physical and emotional suffering joined this man's journey. His art strongly suggests his emotional development lagged due to addiction. Through sharing his art this client's awareness about that may help lead to sobriety. He made a tentative connection to his inner self and disease. He identified that healing may require emotional growth as his child's joy was cut off by the addiction.



According to the British Association of Art Therapy: "Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art media as its primary mode of communication. It is practiced by qualified, registered Art Therapists who

work with children, young people, adults and the elderly. Clients who can use art therapy may have a wide range of difficulties, disabilities or diagnoses. These include, for example, emotional, behavioral or mental health problems, learning or physical disabilities, life-limiting conditions, brain-injury or neurological conditions and physical illness. Art therapy may be provided for groups, or for individuals, depending on clients' needs. It is not a recreational activity or an art lesson, although the sessions can be enjoyable. **Clients do not need to have any previous experience or expertise in art.**

The Guest House by Rumi is a poem I often use in Art Therapy. It speaks to emotional regulation. Rumi likens being human and greeting daily emotions to that of a guesthouse full of guests. Rumi asks that we humans treat all emotions the same as a guesthouse would treat all guests the same. In being human we awake to greet emotions that come without advanced knowledge; Rumi asks we "treat each guest (emotion) honorably...and invite them in...Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond." (Continued on next page)

Karen Schellinger, LPAT, LPCA, LLC

**Licensed Professional Art Therapist and
Counseling Professional**

**schellingerkaren@gmail.com
502-383-4812**

**If you are at peace, you are living in the present.
Lao Tzu**

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(Continued from previous page)

Case in Point: I gave a copy of Rumi's poem to the man and asked that he draw himself symbolic of a guest house. He drew a beautiful log cabin each window on the main floor outlined with a different color. There was a porch, a tin roof, and trees with lumber stacked behind the cabin. When asked, he shared that the lumber behind the cabin was to add rooms onto the cabin. He continued sharing that three emotions; sad, shame and guilt moved in permanently leaving no room for other emotions. This client's art helped him to see he had neglected emotions such as joy, happiness or calm - - and though depressed he may begin to practice treating all emotions the same, honorably, and with gratitude for the lesson. He said he might use the lumber behind the cabin to add rooms which could hold new emotions.

Art therapy focuses on the creative art-making process itself, as therapy, or on the analysis of expression gained through an exchange of patient and therapist interaction. In KY the practice of Art Therapy requires a license in the form of a License Professional Art Therapist Associate, LPATA or License Professional Art Therapist, LPAT.

AUTHOR'S NOTES/BIO for KAREN SCHELLINGER, ATR-BC, LPAT, LPCA:

As an Art Therapist Registered-Board Certified, ATR-BC, LPAT and Professional Counselor LPCA. Karen began her unique journey as a fiber artist and author, *Dyeing Wool*, Schiffer Publishing, living the stress reducing benefits of art. With life experiences as a veteran, cancer survivor and passion for helping others, she returned to the University of Louisville for a Master degree in Counseling and Personal Services with a concentration in Art Therapy. Karen also holds a Master Degree in Health Promotion with a concentration in Individual Fitness and Wellness, U of L. In addition to her work in local Psychiatric Hospitals Karen is in Private Practice accepting clients beginning age fourteen into adulthood. Karen uses compassion with integrative techniques to transform suffering, thereby balancing emotions; art may offer awareness into healing by releasing that which no longer serves you.

POEM BY RUMI

**Poet in the Thirteenth Century.
Not Intrigued With Evening**

What the material world values
Does not shine the same in the
Truth of the Soul.
You have been interested
In your shadow.
Look instead directly at the sun.
What can we know by just
watching the time-and-space
Shapes of each other?
Someone half-awake in the night
Sees imaginary dangers.
The morning star rises;
The horizon grows defined;
People become friends
In a morning caravan.
Night birds may think
Daybreak a kind of darkness,
Because that's all they know
It's a fortunate bird who's not
Intrigued with evening,
Who flies in the Sun.

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NATURAL FOODS: EASY QUICK COOKING IDEAS.

Also, Guidance When Choosing Packaged or Restaurant Foods. by Joyce C. Gerrish

I want to share with you heart to heart that what is going on in our country regarding food and beverages is confusing and misleading. Most processed foods and fast foods are much too high in salt/sodium or harmful fats or sweeteners or artificial ingredients. Over time, an inadequate diet can contribute to serious imbalances in our body chemistry which can predispose us to develop health problems in the aspects of our body which are genetically our weakest links.

Our best protection when it comes to food is to procure it in the form as close as possible to how it grew out of the earth. Take a stand for your health. Eat lots of fresh vegetables and fruit - - organically grown, if possible. I can't emphasize that enough. Shop the farmer's markets in season and/or grow some vegetables in the back yard or at a community garden plot. Enjoy the simple wholesome taste of how foods really taste as they come directly from Mother Nature. A big salad is easy and quick to put together: just rinse the vegetables well and do a little chopping while you chat or enjoy peaceful music - - and soon it is ready. Put on a little organic olive oil, apple cider vinegar, and a few shakes of an organic herbal blend. You'll be doing your body and taste buds a big favor.

Another quick nutritious option is, of course, to steam or simmer the vegetables after chopping. Serve the veggies with a little butter and light sprinkle of salt or your favorite herbal blend. This is easy and quick and delicious and doesn't even need a recipe. I'll tell you a secret, I almost never use a recipe - - I keep it simple but delicious. Many excellent cooks look at recipe books to get ideas, and then to improvise from there. Other experienced cooks may follow a particular recipe a few times to get a feeling for



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it, and then adapt it to their own preferences and tastes. You can, of course, adapt a recipe to what foods you have on hand in your fridge and cupboards on any given day.

When you have cooked some mixed vegetables (such as green beans, onions, potatoes, carrots, or other favorites) you can easily turn them into a soup or stew. Add a little water and you create stew, add more water and you have soup. Then add leftover meat, and seasonings, and herbs. I love to sometimes put in some frozen peas when it is almost all cooked. You might wish to include a low sodium herbal bouillon cube that you dissolve in hot water before adding. Include some fresh minced or pressed garlic to the soup or stew after cooking. Also add a tablespoon of organic olive oil for each person who will be served. I encourage you to have fun with cooking and be creative with combining tastes you like.

For vegetarians or vegans, instead of adding pieces of leftover meat to the soup or stew, add in precooked dried beans. You're probably very familiar with cooking dried beans in a crock pot. It's so convenient. I cook enough beans for several meals so they can be on hand in a large covered container in the fridge. One can even freeze some of the cooked beans in cup sized containers for easy use in the future. Make it all easy on yourself, right? I truly feel that natural cooking from whole foods can be just as quick as opening a box or a can, and one hundred times healthier! - - And you can enjoy the real taste of fresh food! That's what our great grandmothers would say, don't you think?

I'm writing heart to heart to all the folks who are extremely busy and feel that they don't have time to cook from whole foods. My encouragement is to keep it simple and let the natural fresh taste

(Continued on next page)

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Natural Foods, Joyce Gerrish. (Continued from P.18)

of the foods speak for themselves. But when you do buy packaged foods, it is still crucial to know what is in your food. There are food manufacturers that do provide fairly healthy nutritious food. The Nutrition Facts label on the side of packaged foods is extremely important. You probably consult it often. One tricky thing about reading these labels is to remember to note the serving size they have in mind for their food facts. If you or a family member eats a cup and a half of a food and the serving size stated on the package is ½ cup, multiply the nutritional information by three! On package labels you don't need to look at the milligrams or grams listed, just look at the column that gives the % that food contains of the recommended daily amount of that particular nutrient. If half cup of a food contains 30% of the day's quota of saturated fat, then one and a half cups contains almost 100% of the day's quota. That is clearly not healthy for one serving of food when one will eat numerous servings of other foods in a day.

Let's look at salt/sodium. We can be healthy with about 2000 to 2500 milligrams of sodium a day, and usually not much more. A very popular macaroni and cheese product found on all grocery store shelves contains almost 100% of a day's salt quota in a 1 ½ cup serving. This is a cause for concern. Plenty of popular processed foods contain this much in one meal. This can also be true at fast food restaurants and at upscale expensive restaurants. Add to that the sodium from the two additional meals of the day plus snacks, and there can be serious overload!

In addition to carefully reading the labels on packaged foods - we can buy a Food Facts book that gives the amounts of calories, carbohydrates, sodium, cholesterol, saturated fat, trans fat, and protein in every food you can imagine. These are all given in easy to understand form. The Food Facts books include most of the major franchised restaurant chains as well as packaged and fresh foods in grocery stores. These books are a gold mine of valuable information. This information is also available on line or on a mobile phone app. Most big restaurants these days have a website where they list the nutritional contents of the different meals that they serve. Please check out your favorites, you may be surprised.

The human body is a miracle! Our body is our loyal friend and does everything it possibly can to make the most of what we give it in order to keep us healthy and happy. But there is a limit to what it can transmute. Let's enjoy really nutritious foods and drinks to give our body a good chance to be as fit as possible. We have choices as to how we take care of our body. Let's make the right choices to help keep us healthy and happy for a lifetime. Let's eat to live, not live to eat.



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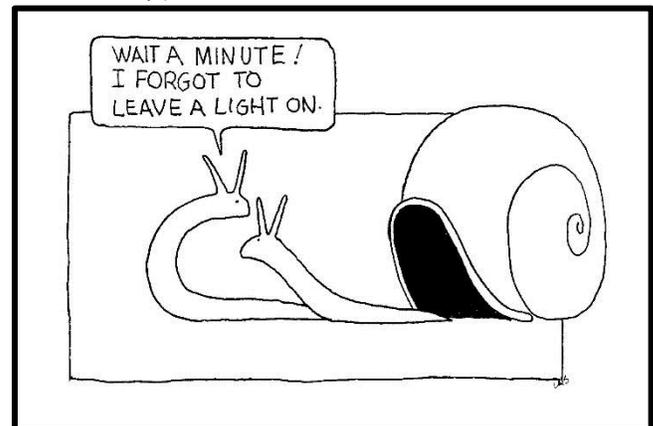
Summer: A Lush and Delicious Season, Elsa Lichman
(Continued from P. 9)

colors. She notes that one bird is slightly larger than the next. Another is mottled black and white, which she thinks may be a young bird. I ask her how long she has been such a detailed observer of nature, and she replies, since she was little!

In our technological age, we are rushed and harried, staring at screens, iPhones, iPads, tuned in to our music, talking to distant friends, even as we walk down the street. We are cut off from each another and the natural beauty which surrounds us. I long for the days of our youth, when time stretched to eternity as we walked along, attuned to all the nuances of nature.

Bio: Elsa Lichman is a nature writer and educator for the Waltham News Tribune in Massachusetts, as well as a published poet and adventure writer. Please contact her at elsalichman@comcast.net if you are seeking submissions to newspapers, journals, or books.

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I OPEN MY HEART

I OPEN MY HEART TO LOVE THOSE AROUND ME.

I OPEN MY EYES TO SEE THE GOOD.

I OPEN MY MOUTH TO SPEAK KIND WORDS.

I OPEN MY ARMS TO LIFE.

YES, I OPEN MY ARMS TO LIFE

These are the words to a song by Joyce C. Gerrish. You can listen free to the song at:
[www.joycegerrish.com/Songs,Meditations,Designs/Follow Your Heart and Soul/ Song "I Open My Heart"](http://www.joycegerrish.com/Songs,Meditations,Designs/Follow%20Your%20Heart%20and%20Soul/Song%20%E2%01%E2%80%9CI%20Open%20My%20Heart%E2%01%E2%80%9C)