

Natural Living Journal

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

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Finding Joy, Present Moment

How to Move On in New Year

The Big Picture, A Reflection / Meditation

Plastic - Friend or Enemy?

We Are One Human Family

Stabilizing Our Self in Midst of Change

We Are That Creative Force of God. The Root of Life

Stress Relief? How?

As The Earth Turns

Quartz Crystal Bowls, Unique Sound Experience

Thriving in New Normal

Wholesome Easy Delicious High Protein Cookies

Flames of Renewal, Purity, and Goodwill to All for the New Year.
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**FINDING JOY. . PRESENT
MOMENT. . PRESENCE NOT
PRESENTS**

By Karen Schellinger, LPAT, LPCC

Lao Tzu says, "If you are depressed you are living in the past. If you are anxious you are living in the future. If you are at peace you are living in the present."

Lao Tzu is not speaking of actually living in the past, future or present - - it is the mind he speaks of...thoughts. How is this possible? Thoughts unobserved carry the mind far afield into the memories of the past or the what ifs of the future. How then do we observe our thoughts? Awareness is key and non-attachment is the practice.

Think of a time when you felt at peace, the awareness of your thoughts may bring you a teaching about presence. The presence of mind is having your thoughts be in the same location as your body. The agitation of the body is directly related to how far thoughts may have run off to the past or the future.

Yes, it takes practice, however I am confident you may already be experiencing moments of presence during your day. They may be found in the small things. Walking in the sunshine, eating a meal you enjoy, talking with a friend. Fully explore the feelings of what is felt when both the mind and body are in the same moment. Joy resides there.

Union of the mind and body while aware is where joy resides. It is where peace resides—stillness and joy follow. What distractions keep you from being fully engaged in the moment you are in, your thoughts and body in the same moment? A pattern of judgment or comparison will take the thoughts in one direction or another away from where the body resides. When this happens, it brings with it a reaction of agitation in the body. The feeling of anxiety or depression are two examples that may show up as a result.

The presence of mind takes practice. Find a glass of water. Is it cool or warm to the touch, is there flavor, what does it feel like as you take a sip? Be aware of the exact moment you swallow in present moment. How does your arm bend to bring the glass to your mouth, is the glass heavy, is it a cup, is it clear? This is one moment of awareness of taking a sip of water. It is teaching you how to engage the mind with the union of the body in peace.

Bringing this kind of awareness into each moment becomes a practice of peace and joy. Eckhart Tolle's book *The Power of Now* is a great resource for increasing the

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

practice of presence. We have endured a great deal of change in 2020. Rather than focus on the illusion of past or future, try practicing the presence of living in the moment with fullness of mind. Any opportunity the mind has to run off like a small child it will. We must be vigilant. To live in joy requires consistency of practicing the presence. This is the most important gift to bring ourselves as we move into the holiday season and the new year. Be joy, Be peace. Practice presence not presents.



BIO: Karen Schellinger is in Private Practice, accepting adults only. Karen is licensed as an Art Therapist and a Clinical Counselor. Her approach is non-judgmental and compassionate while practicing awareness of present moment. Karen provides her clients with real life practices to transmute suffering. Karen is a Veteran, Author and Fiber Artist. Contact: Schellingerkaren@gmail.com,



PHOTO: Scott Pokard / Pixabay

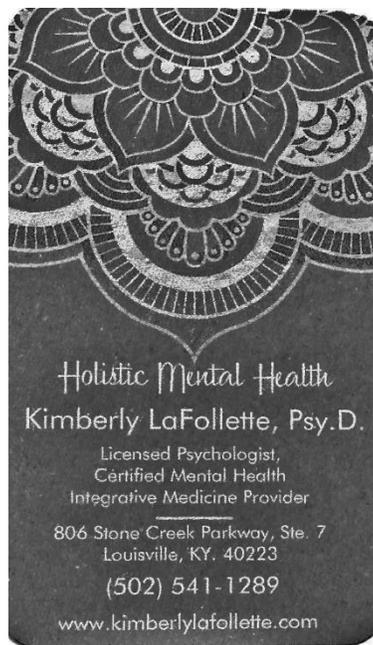
NOTE: Lao Tzu was great 6th C. BC Chinese Philosopher

HOW TO MOVE ON

Kimberly LaFollette, Psy.D.

There are moments in life when you know it's time to say goodbye. Sometimes you know it's the end by the way it feels, and other times life makes the ending for us. This year as December comes to a close, you finally get to bid this year adieu and look forward to a brighter 2021. How you choose to handle this transition can determine if this was a year of unnecessary suffering or if it was a much-needed catalyst for personal and societal growth.

When difficult circumstances end it's tempting to close the door and never look back. It would be easy to run wholeheartedly into the New Year with the determination to



forget the hardships you encountered in 2020. It feels good to believe that you can simply leave your past traumatic experiences behind. Unfortunately, the real truth about trauma is that the impact of the experience remains. You can walk away from bad experiences or even a bad year, but those experiences have changed you and you will never be the same. As a psychologist, I urge my clients who have

been traumatized to reflect on their experiences instead of trying to shut the door on what has happened. After all, real healing and growth only comes after processing and making meaning of what you have endured.

While it would be nice to believe that all of your problems will disappear on January first, the real truth is that some of the challenges you first encountered in 2020 will remain. Covid, political tension and racial injustice still exist. These are issues that still need to be resolved. Nonetheless, you will be starting this year with more knowledge than you have ever had before. In this New Year, you can address these issues in a way the 2020 version of you never could. Instead of being discouraged by what is yet to come, take a moment to reflect on what you have learned in the past year and consider how it will influence your future behavior and decisions.



If you need help processing your experience this year, here are some questions you can ask yourself to promote healing and growth:

- How has this year changed you?
- What strengths have you discovered within yourself?
- What weaknesses were uncovered?
- Are you carrying emotions and thoughts that no longer serve you?
- What are you willing to let go of and not carry forward with you?
- What coping skills have you learned that you will continue to utilize in the New Year?

It may be a good idea for you to journal your responses to these questions so you can literally see your growth in front of you. After you respond to these questions, take a moment to set your intention for this New Year. Put out into the universe your greatest hopes and dreams and let that energy move you forward. Do not let this past year be one that you simply endured. Let it be the year that moved you toward a better version of yourself.

BIO: Kimberly LaFollette is a Licensed Psychologist and Certified Mental Health Integrative Medicine Provider. You can find out more about Dr. LaFollette and her practice by visiting kimberlylafollette.com.



PHOTO: Woman Thinking.
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THE BIG PICTURE, A Reflection / Meditation

By Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

Suppose that God is All. God is Everything. Suppose that God is Love, Be-ing, the Power of Creation. And suppose that the only and ultimate energy or movement of this Allness is to grow and evolve. (It was said of Jesus, as a child entering into young manhood, that he “grew in wisdom, age and grace,” and that is a material world metaphor.) Even though words are, by their very nature limiting, we are continuing to stretch to embrace the meaning behind the words.

Suppose that the way God has chosen to grow and to evolve is through all of the billions and perhaps even infinite faces all of His/Her creation. So that, for instance, here on planet Earth, from the tiniest subatomic particle to the most complex being, from the beginning and the end of that spectrum, from the Alpha to the Omega, every form has consciousness and every form experiences itself in its own unique way. And this is not just one experience, it is a continuum. What would it be like to realize that all experience, removing from it the stigma of judgment, of right or wrong, or good or bad— it's all experience that is moving and evolving?

How would that change your vision of life? Imagine the tiniest of subatomic particles, conscious on its own and yet also moving and evolving and then joining with others along the way, becoming more and more complex. Now, what is interesting here is that each subatomic particle still retains a sense of self and yet at the same time knows that it is contributing to more than it is.

Let's take that particle and observe it joining with others becoming more and more complex, doing more complex actions/responses here on planet Earth and finding similar patterns beyond the Earth. A complex being called a solar system and a sun and then each one of these suns and solar systems becoming more and part of a more complex being called the Galaxy containing billions of suns and then billions of galaxies becoming part of this known universe. And this is only a stretching our imagination to begin to encompass the material world.

What about the immaterial worlds? What about other dimensions? What about energy beyond matter, beings that would be impossible or 'ungraspable' by the intellectual mind and yet still being there beyond all reason. What would it be like to know that you sit in the midst of all of this? In addition, even on an Earthly level, all of the lifetimes you have lived you are living Right Now.

See something else as well. The world we have been taught to live in exists in linear time, one thing following the next. “That is the



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way it's supposed to be, that is the way it should be, and therefore that is the way it is,” the mind says. Yet we know intuitively or even instinctively that there is more than our linear thinking. Love goes beyond that, gratitude goes beyond that, our sense of self goes beyond that.

You see this thing called life, your life, your individual personal life, is such a minuscule piece of this entire tapestry woven of both visible and invisible threads. Now when we say “minuscule” that does not mean unimportant. What the grain of sand has to contribute to this Divine Evolution is valuable and important, what this blade of grass has to offer, as to what this dolphin has to offer, what this human being has to offer are all essential. There is no measurement or judgment in this realm. We are all participating in this continuing Act of Creation.

The only seeming difficulty is how often we forget, but let us take another leap here - - to know that even our forgetfulness is a chosen mode of operation by Spirit to allow us to learn on even a deeper level the truth of Who We Are. There are no mistakes or errors.

So here we all are, with billions of other beings participating in this marvelous dance - - this mad, marvelous dance with our own unique script in our hands. What would it be like to do this joyfully?

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

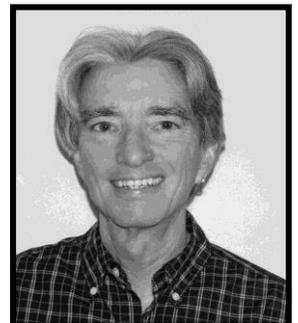


PHOTO: Man and Cosmos, © Foto Maximum_Canstock Photo

PLASTIC . . . FRIEND OR ENEMY?

Environmental Protection Series.

Joyce Freville, PhD.

We all see discarded plastic containers littering our highways. And most of us are guilty of throwing out empty plastic containers in our regular trash. But have you considered how much plastic is floating around in the world's oceans? Although it is hard to know exactly how much plastic is in the ocean, it is estimated that over eight million tons of plastic are dumped into the ocean each year. That equates to one dump truck full of plastic being dumped every minute of the day. Can you imagine how much plastic has accumulated over the years? Mind boggling! Five enormous areas of plastic have been found around the world so far. These huge concentrations of plastic debris cover large bands of the ocean. One huge concentration the size of Texas is between California and Hawaii (Jambeck, 2015). Yes, I said the size of Texas.

Plastic has been dumped in the ocean for over forty years, yet little progress has been made to stop the dumping and to begin cleaning it up. Sea vessels still dump garbage and plastic in the oceans even though it was banned. Not only does plastic break away and accumulate from garbage that is dumped in the ocean, but it also is estimated that 80% of the plastic in the ocean is dumped from land sources that come from individuals in addition to industrial sources.

Microplastics are very small pieces of plastic that pollute the environment. Microplastics are so small they cannot always be traced, so it is difficult to remove them from the water. Therefore, it is important to stop them from getting in the water in the first place. They enter natural ecosystems from a variety of sources including cosmetics, clothing, and industrial processes. Plastic from these sources, in addition to plastic that has broken down from dumped garbage, is eaten by small marine animals and fish. Fish and animals who eat plastic often starve because they can't digest the plastic and it fills their stomachs preventing them from eating real food. It also gets tangled around them. Plastic in the water affects their health, development, and reproduction. For example, microplastic fiber pollution in the ocean affects larval lobsters at each stage of their development. A study done by the U.S. National Science Foundation found the fibers affect the lobster's feeding and respiration and prevent some larvae from reaching adulthood.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, our oceans are in distress. Pollution in the oceans is a public health risk because it affects our health. One sign of an ocean in distress is an increase in beach or shellfish harvesting closures across the nation. Intensive use of our oceans and runoff from land-based pollution sources stress our ecosystems, and more and more lead to human health concerns. Waterborne infectious diseases, harmful algal bloom toxins, contaminated seafood, and chemical pollutants are other signals.

Unless waste management practices are improved, the flux of plastics to the oceans could increase by an order of magnitude within the next decade. At the rate we are going, the amount of plastic in

the ocean will increase by tenfold by 2025, and by 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish. The time to reverse this is now.

So, what can you do to help save our oceans? Recycle. Seventy five percent of waste is recyclable, but only about 30% is recycled. The recycle rate in the U.S. is 34%. Recycling makes a big difference. One recycled plastic bottle saves enough energy to run a 100-watt bulb for four hours. It also creates 20% less air pollution and 50% less water pollution than would be created when making a new bottle. Recycling plastic saves twice as much energy as it takes to burn it. The U. S. throws away \$11.4 billion worth of recyclable containers and packaging every year. If there is a charge for recycling where you live, it only costs about \$16 a quarter (that's \$1 a week) to recycle. If cost is a concern for you, share the recycling service with a neighbor and split the cost. In Louisville in addition to free curbside pickup for recycling, there are free recycling locations with very large bins where recycling can be dropped off. Call 311 for recycling information.

Another thing you can do to reduce the use of plastic is to become aware of how many plastic things you use. Commit to changing your habits to reduce your use of disposable and single-use plastic items. Reuse or recycle them. Small habits can have big effects over time.

Finally, participate in cleaning up the oceans or support organizations that do. Organizations that are dedicated to cleaning up the oceans include but are not limited to Passport Ocean, Ocean Conservancy, Oceanic Society, The Ocean Cleanup North Pacific Foundation, Gulf Coast Preservation Society, and Gyres N. Atlantic Ocean Cleanup. With just a few changes we can make a tremendous impact on our environment.

BIO: Dr. Joyce Freville holds a doctorate in Human Services with a specialization in Health Care Administration from Capella University. In addition, she earned an MBA from Webster University, a BS in Accounting from Arizona State University, and is certified in Health Care Compliance and Health Privacy Compliance. She is a retired Command Sergeant Major in the U.S. Army.



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PHOTO: PassportOcean.com. Turtle caught in plastic mesh.



WE ARE ONE HUMAN FAMILY

By Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

These are complicated times with many challenges for almost all of us. This is a time where we are being brought to re-examine how we relate to each other and particularly how we relate to people who may seem to be different from us. Otherness is an unfortunate concept. May we think of the Shakespearean love story tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. Those two young people loved each other. All they knew was that they loved each other. Their extended families had been rivals for centuries and hated each other. Did it make any sense? No. Did those families gain anything from that rivalry and hatred? No. Did they lose out on something with that rivalry? Yes. They lost out on the richness of the potential friendships and co-operation they could have shared with each other. They lost out on the precious lives of their beloved family members Romeo and Juliette, respectively. Sad tears were wept instead of joyful celebration for the love of their young people.

Co-operation is always more helpful than bitter competition and rejection. One group of people may be more skilled in some ways, another group of people may be more experienced in other ways. That's the way it is. We can learn from each other and share. We can take joy in celebrating and supporting the welfare of each other. We are all human beings on this tiny planet Earth. It used to seem like a huge planet Earth but now with transatlantic jets, instant communication, and socializing and business meetings and education on Zoom we begin to realize that our planet isn't so huge after all. We are all one big planetary family - - and there is no room here for disliking people just because they may SEEM like the "OTHERS." As the saying goes, "We are all much more alike than we are different."

We don't gain anything from putting each other in

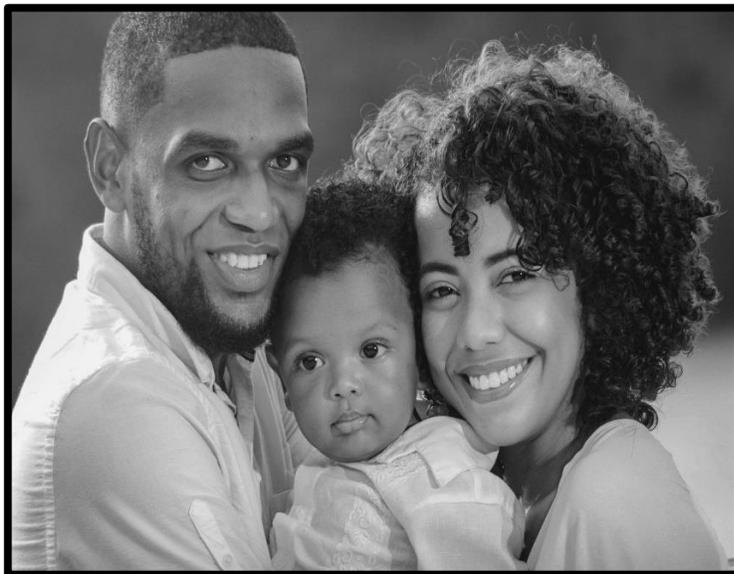


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categories and judging each other. It just hardens our hearts. When our heart gets hardened to others, there is a tendency to harden our heart to life and even to ourselves. This is sad. Let's all open to listening to each other and taking steps for greater understanding and truly expanded fairness. We can all work together peacefully for the good of everyone. In truth, we are one human family.

PHOTOS: Family, Martin Alfonso Sierra Ospino, Pixabay.
Hands in Circle. Barbara Bonanno_ Pixabay

STABILIZING OURSELVES IN MIDST OF CHANGE AND CHALLENGE.

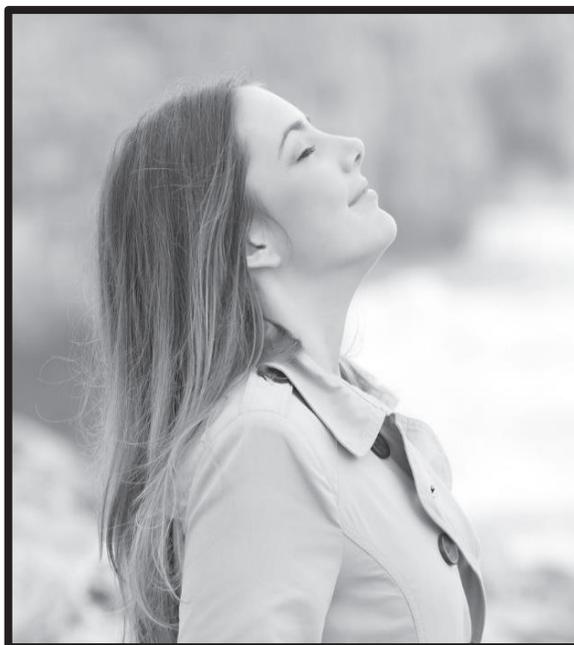
By Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

Almost everyone's emotions are being stressed during this very unusual period of history. People everywhere are trying to stay as steady as possible and rise to be a stabilizing source for loved ones and friends. This is asking a lot, right? What if one doesn't feel very steady? What if one feels as though a rug has been pulled out from beneath oneself? There are a lot of frayed nerves in our country and beyond. The question on everyone's lips may be "Is all this disruption of our more familiar lives going to be over soon and we'll get back to our old normal?" It doesn't seem likely to be very soon, according to the medical experts, business analysts, and weather forecasters, and so many other "pundits." So where can one turn to get a sense of stability and clarity?

To start with, we all have a right to have feelings about what is going on. These simply are not normal times. We'll feel calmer and sleep better if we give ourselves permission to have emotional reactions to the rollercoaster events going on all around us. That can help us avoid trying to stuff down our feelings and pretend we are "just fine." Our nervous system and our emotions need recognition and loving attention that they are not just being ignored. We need to give ourselves special "me" time to acknowledge and sort through our feelings - - and calm ourselves down as well as possible. Sometimes soaking in a hot tub can feel good.

The children and teens in our lives need special time and help dealing with their feelings and deep concerns, too. We all do. This is natural at abnormal times like this. It is crucial that we all somehow express our feelings in harmless ways. This could be as simple as talking heart to heart with some of the people we are close to, and really hearing each other's concerns. Perhaps write about your feelings. You don't need to keep whatever is written. Just expressing those thoughts and emotions can be a relief. Drawing our feelings can also be helpful. Children and teens really need to be encouraged to express their feelings - - and to be reassured in whatever ways seem most helpful that this won't last forever

We all need to think creatively and try to be as flexible as possible as to new ways to do things that don't seem possible to do in the old more familiar way. This can help enhance our creativity. It is important to not be hard on ourselves and assume that we can plow ahead as quickly as we may imagine we should. These days we are often trying to do things in different ways than usual, and it takes



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time to adjust and get efficient at revised skills. First and foremost, love yourself and those around you - - be patient as much as possible. Look for things to appreciate and be thankful for. Tell the people around you how much you appreciate them - - tell your loved ones how much you love and care about them.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES TO HELP RELAX YOUR BODY, EMOTIONS, CLEAR YOUR MIND, AND LIFT YOUR SPIRITS.

In this set of five gentle ways of breathing, don't breathe forcefully or extra deeply. Just be AWARE of your breath as it gently flows in and out. As you breathe in, imagine you are breathing in light into your being. As you breathe out, feel as though you are letting go of any stress or worry, and imagine those being dissolved into the light. While you do each breath for about three minutes, gently hold together the thumb of each hand with the tip of one of your fingers as indicated in the description below. Exert no pressure at all. Relax your hands on your knees or some other comfortable place. You may find that these ways of breathing combined with these hand positions feel very beneficial to you, each in its own way. You can do all five together, or just do one or two that feel most helpful at a particular time.

RELAX YOUR BODY: Gently breathe in and out your nose. Simultaneously gently place tip of your little finger to tip of your thumb on each hand. This will tend to relax and stabilize your physical body.

CALM YOUR EMOTIONS: Gently breathe in your nose and out your mouth. Simultaneously gently place the tip of your ring fingers to the tip of your thumb on the same hand. This will tend to calm your emotions.

RENEW YOUR ENERGY: Gently breathe in your mouth and out your nose. Simultaneously gently place tip of your (Continued p.9)

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(Continued from previous page) middle finger to the tip of your thumb on same hand. This tends to help you energize.

CLEAR YOUR MIND: Exceedingly gently breathe in and out your mouth. Exert no force with your breath at all. Simultaneously gently place tip of your index fingers to the tip of your thumb on the same hand. This will tend to help you feel more free, uplifted, and clear.

Perhaps put on some relaxing nonverbal music while you try what I just described. I hope that you find those techniques as helpful as I do. Perhaps let them become a regular part of your life to help you feel more peaceful. I hope that you and your loved ones are well. I wish you abundant blessings.

BIO: Joyce offers two Zoom Groups Weekly on donation basis. Sundays 7:30-8:15pm Transformational Healing Meditation - - Wednesdays, 7:30-8:15 pm. Self-Healing Skills. Joyce is active as a



Holistic Life Coach, Emotional Therapist, and Transformational Energy Healer (on Zoom or with telephone during pandemic). Sliding scale fee. She has a Master's Degree in Human Development, and is a Graduate of National Institute of Whole Health. She is a highly attuned and sensitive guide for Higher Meditation and Spiritual Awareness. She has extensive training and decades of experience as a practitioner and teacher of numerous

natural healing modalities including Reiki, Reflexology, and Chakra Healing. She is author of the book "Secrets of Wisdom - - Awaken to the Miracle of You" and is Publisher- Editor of the Natural Living Journal. Louisville Office. 812-566-1799. www.joycegerrish.com



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PHOTOS: Woman on Opposite Page. Canstock Photos_Antonio Guillem. Snow Scene: Free Photos, Pixabay

WE ARE THAT CREATIVE FORCE OF GOD: THE ROOT OF LIFE.

By Rev. Valerie Mansfield

We are truly blessed and walking in the love that makes us free. Spirit calls us all, and that is the truth. That's where we are today. We are all being called. We are all being called to stand tall and to stand in our beliefs that walking in love makes us free - - not only as individuals but collectively as humanity. That is the root of our life. We are born to collectively be free.

We are filled with the creative force of God that allows us to be free and to consciously be aware of what our thoughts are creating in the outer world. Our thoughts are creative within us first. Our thoughts really start within each and every one of us, but then they flow outward into the outer world of humanity. Humanity is the expression of God. Most humanity is asleep. So many of us are asleep to the truth. So many are focused on their physical beings and spend a lifetime seeking to fill an emptiness and the feeling of being incomplete and unloved. Our consciousness is also seeking for truth, and yet at times is struggling with the day to day life. We think that's the truth that we're here to struggle because that's what we see outside of us.

Our young children today are seeing a lot of struggle in our cities. Our children need healing. Also, the inner child within each of us needs healing - - our inner being of spirit. So many people are hurting from the lack of love, the lack of understanding, and that creates within us the sense of loss. We may live in that survival mode from that reptilian part of our brain (in the brain stem and basal ganglia). Much of humanity is still living in that in many instances - - that fight or flight syndrome, the rage, the violence, the darkness, because we don't understand that the seed of the source is within us. God is alive within us and guiding us into that higher vibrational consciousness. We call it Christ consciousness, which is when we as individuals make decisions and live from that frontal cortex of our brain, the front part of who we are, where our transformational experiences occur.

What I know is that we have to heal ourselves first. We have to have that understanding of self-love and to be in the practice of self-love in order for peace to reside within us. We not only have to do it

Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

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as individuals, but we have to do it collectively. We have to love everyone. I say this a lot, and I say it a lot for a reason - - because no matter what distortion someone shows on the outside, it doesn't mean that they're not an expression of God. What it means is that they're asleep to the fact that they are an expression of God. They're living in that ego world of duality, which creates the darkness, the hatred, the rage, and the violence.



When we begin to understand and go to our inner wisdom, we go from that physical Root chakra of life, and we move upward in our physical being to our Crown chakra, which is the representation of spirit. In the Heart chakra is where the physical and spiritual meet and continue to rise.

That's the root of life, the flow of life, that propels humanity to a higher path of consciousness, prosperity, and bliss. The root of life is that energetic flow, just like a river. It clears and changes as it moves through. In the Bible, Revelations 22 talks

about the river of life. I'm going to quote it here. "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystals flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its 12 kinds of fruit. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

So what am I talking about here? What does this mean to us as individuals in this world that we're living in today? What I gather from it is that the trees are the nerves, which represent our expression of thoughts, of oneness, of unity. They connect to the centers or our



faculties. So how many of you have experienced Kundalini in your meditations? It's an energy that starts at the Root chakra and it moves all the way up and around to the Third Eye. That's the fluid, that's the river, the energy - - and that is the root of our life.

What happens is that our ego is a branch upon the tree, and it can separate itself from the source. The ego may believe that it is the source and that can create our error of thinking within ourselves and within humanity. That's what this journey of life is really all about. The root of our life is not only an expression within ourselves but outside of us. The 12 kinds of fruit are those 12 faculties or powers from within that each of us can tap into and use along with the creative force to shift and transform ourselves. We can also use those faculties to inform our

thinking so that the outside world is changed for the good. Humanity as a whole has little understanding of that fruit and even less understanding that when utilized it sets us free from that sense consciousness in the lower vibration of our being.

It's up to each of us as individuals to activate that higher power of consciousness within us, that Christ consciousness. We do so by



using those 12 faculties or powers of faith, strength, wisdom, love, power, imagination, will, understanding, order, zeal, release, and life itself. They all flow from within us and allow us to make those conscious choices that are good not only within us but also outside of us. Then we must continue to hold that high consciousness for ourselves and send good energy as a fluid stream

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of life into the world. That's what we're being called to do right now, shifting and transforming the world through the love that flows from the root of life.

The story of human consciousness is the story of life, and then



the awakening of our energetic spiritual being collectively to the truth. Awakening to the truth that we are one, there is no difference in any of us. We are one expression of God. We can heal from the concept of duality of good versus evil when only good God the Omnipresence is our Truth. We stand together as the soul of humanity to heal the old wounds of error of thinking of separation and begin to live as one humanity. We are one - - the yin and the yang, the dark, and the light, the masculine and the feminine. We are one with each other, no matter what the outer appearance looks like. We are universal life.

BIO: Rev. Valerie Mansfield serves as the Senior Minister at Unity of Louisville and as the Minister Consultant at Unity of

East Louisville. Valerie is a Holistic Healer and Spiritual Life Coach. She is a Spiritual Consultant engaged in practical, positive life coaching for adults and youth. She leads classes and workshops based on Universal Truth Principles as well as peacemaking, conscious parenting, personal transformation, and healing for adults and youth. Valerie's passion is to create a safe loving atmosphere where all ages can explore and manifest a life filled with love, peace, and joy. 502-583-5559.

PHOTOS: Dove of Peace Blessing Planet Earth © CanstockPhoto LgOrZh a.

Man Praying. © CanstockPhoto_ U Fabizphoto

**DEEP APPRECIATION TO UNITY OF LOUISVILLE
FOR GENEROUSLY PRINTING 200 JOURNALS
FOR THE NATURAL LIVING JOURNAL.**

STRESS RELIEF? HOW?

Kay Jones, PMHNP Nurse Practitioner

The global pandemic has many people with decreased resources and increased stress. Many parents with children are now schooling at home. Large numbers of businesses are shut down to decrease exposure risk, and countless workers are without steady income. Some of our loved ones are in assisted living or nursing home settings where visits are not allowed. In the midst of all of this, how does one relieve the buildup of extra stress? Many readers have a stress relief



method that worked before the pandemic, but it may not be as effective currently. Now is the time to seek balance and calm.

Live in the now and take thirty seconds to close your eyes, breathe deeply, and focus on your body. Listen to what your body is telling you. Upset stomach could possibly be anxiety; headache or dull pressure in the sinuses could be increased allergy sensitivities from stress; aches in neck and shoulders could be muscle stiffness from ongoing adrenaline response. These are physical expressions of energy and emotional imbalances. Once you find these symptoms – treat them! Anxiety can be decreased with a cup of chamomile tea, or with hot chocolate. Sinus sensitivities can be decreased with nasal/sinus rinses. Increased muscle stress in neck and shoulders can be eased with simple focused exercises of neck rolling, shoulder rotation, stretching, or massage. It can be very relaxing to call someone on the phone to hear their voice and tell them how your day has gone.

Many know about aromatherapy, music therapy, color therapy, and even energy healing (acupressure, Reiki, and Jin Shin Jyutsu to name only a few). Perhaps holistic methods were used before with some success, but maybe you left them aside during the current pandemic due to in-person classes and resources seeming less available. Now is the time to go back to daily basics. Listen to your body, breathe, and treat

your symptoms. Remember that emotions about not seeing or having contact with a loved one can cause physical symptoms. Be creative - - but treat your energy imbalances! Draw on everyday stress relieving activities. Search and find what works now to help you relax. Using that activity on a daily basis is holistic self-care. Teach it to others. If you are not sure of what healing modalities are available in your area, search on the internet and ask others. Find possibilities in journals like this one.



If you feel that your stress level is increased in the current pandemic, but feel that you cannot treat it, please reach out and contact others for possible resources. Call your medical provider, psychiatric services, and look into holistic providers in your area. Stress can cause physical discomfort, so do not let it go untreated.

BIO: Kay Jones, PMHNP (Nurse Practitioner), current KHNA (Kentucky Holistic Nurses Association) Co-leader, and Louisville, KY resident. Reiki Master and Healing Touch practitioner.

PHOTOS: Meditation: Pexels of Pixabay. Walking: © Canstock, Andersonrise. Yoga, Keifit of Pixabay.

AS THE EARTH TURNS **By Elsa Lichman, MSM LICSW**

The days have turned chill and gray. We hear of a dusting of snow which will arrive overnight, but we are in for a surprise. That dusting turns into snow falling for hours, collecting on every surface deep and heavy. Even though it is a hindrance in practical ways, it is magical with thick white snow covering branches, trees, shrubs, and flower stalks - - and bending my tall privet hedge down with its weight. Some boughs curve almost to the ground. Wild winds blow snow off rooftops at a rakish angle creating blizzard-like views.

This storm is reminiscent of a Robert Frost poem, "Birches." Here is a quote: 'When I see birches bend to left and right across the lines of straighter, darker trees, I like to think some boy's been swinging them. But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay as ice storms do. Often you must have seen them loaded with ice a sunny winter morning after a rain. They click upon themselves as the breeze rises, and turn many-colored as the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.'

Local deer are gathering in groups of does and fawns, foraging to fatten up for the cold season. It is just prior to the rut when large bucks roam afar to mate. They mark their territory by scraping bark and leaving scents from special glands, announcing their presence. They also make scrapes in the ground and 'perfume' these as well. We see one young male on his own foraging. His coloration is changing from reddish to a dull gray, his winter camouflage and warmer coat. His almond shaped eye is ringed in white, giving him an air of innocence.

In Massachusetts we are accustomed to fast changes in weather, but even we are amazed at the turn to sunny warmer days. We bask and soak up this gift of sun and balmy breezes. Light glints off the river which is running high after rains which



followed the snow.

We have turned the clocks back and are suddenly immersed in afternoon darkness, following an early sunset of soft pastels or perhaps fiery reds and oranges. Soon our landscape is a black and white photo of bare trees against steely skies. We turn inward as usual, but this year the pandemic has already isolated us and changed our way of life. Human contact is limited; we are blessed and cursed with the technology which connects us, as we long for the comfort of real togetherness.



It is a time when spiritual practice becomes essential, connecting us to our own higher selves, and to the power of unseen yet known forces of truth and healing and good. We are in a period of upheaval, and we hope that a long-

buried dark history will surface to be washed in the light.

BIO: Elsa Lichman MSM LICSW is a retired social worker who writes regularly for her local newspaper in Waltham, Mass., and for the Natural Living Journal. Her poetry and photography have been published in a variety of venues. She studies voice remotely during the pandemic, and has a duo and chorus which are on hold until it is safe to gather again. She can be contacted at elsalichman@comcast.net



PHOTOS: "Jack Frost on Window Pane," and "Misty Day by the River" by Elsa Lichman. "Young Deer Eating," by Frank Peace



QUARTZ CRYSTAL BOWLS. A Most Unique Sound Experience

Tom Isaacs, Holistic Health Coach & Foot Reflexologist

About the bowls...Crystal Bowls are unique vibrational instruments whose pure tones produce a vibrational energy field of sound which attunes and aligns the human etheric as well as the physical body. The bowls themselves are 98.9% silicon quartz crystal and each bowl is attuned to a specific note and to a specific octave dependent on its contour, shape and its size. Each bowl is likewise attuned to a specific etheric energy center (chakra) as well as to a corresponding color. These bowls, in particular, instill a sense of deep relaxation and an energy movement which is sometimes referred to as 'inner space opening up.' By working with the chakras and corresponding physical areas, the bowls' pure crystal tones facilitate a re-balancing of the entire human bio-energetic field to a state of optimal health and well-being. A bowl is played by moving a wand along the lip of the bowl. There are three different types of wands.

About the sound...Sound, the vibration existing in all things, is the primal "stuff" of which creation is composed. In creation myths the world over, sound is recognized as the source of all "things." It's all physics. Sound creates and sound organizes. After all, the three properties of sound are pulse, wave and form - - and form is the property of sound which organizes matter. Matter is not solid; a form that appears solid is actually create and sustained by an underlying vibration. That which appears to be form is also a wave, and both are being simultaneously organized by the principle of pulse. Thus, every phenomenon (audible or non-audible) on whatever scale in whatever world, whether molecular or cosmic, is a result of the meeting of these three properties; organizing principle of three: trinity; "... in the beginning was the word sound)..." Because sound can move and reorganize energy, it is a wonderful therapeutic modality for rebalancing the human energy system. The pure tones of the crystal bowls, because of their precision and natural affinity with the human body, produce a vibrational sound field which optimally attunes each chakra as well as its physical counterpart(s) and facilitates the rebalancing of each receiver into an elevated level of etheric resonance.

About the human body...The human body is an energy field of vibration which, when in a state of health, resonates in harmony (resonance) and when sick (dis-eased) vibrates in various disturbed patterns (dissonance). Every organ, bone, tissue, gland, etc. has its own healthy resonant frequency. Disease is the dis-harmony in the vibrational pattern of one of these parts or systems of the body. A healthy frequency is referred to as a sound signature and these "signatures" combine with one another as well as with mental and emotional tones and overtones to make up a person's "pitch." It is possible to use externally created sound, such as the pure tones of the quartz crystal bowls, to rebalance a dis-eased



area or system of the body. This is accomplished by the penetration of sound into the very cells of the body causing them to harmonically reorganize themselves through a phenomenon called entrainment. As sound waves "touch" peripheral cells, these cells in turn touch adjoining cells creating harmonic resonance within a particular area or system of the body. This is made possible by the high water content of the body's tissues as well as the crystalline structure of human bones, blood, DNA, and the liquid crystal-colloidal structure of the human brain. Even on a molecular level, our cells contain silica (quartz) which enables the body to maintain its electrical (electro-magnetic) balance.



About the meditation...The Crystal Bowl Meditation is a sound meditation designed to promote a rebalancing of our innate bio-energetic system. The wonderful thing about sound is that it is visceral; it helps us feel. The secret to its power is its ability to bypass our intellect and touch our emotions, where true healing can occur. In addition to physical healing, the sound harmonics of the crystal

bowls provide a "sanctuary of sound" where deep relaxation, meditation, and an awakening of one's creative process can occur. The sound waves of the crystal bowls are the equivalent of alpha brainwave patterns, which are associated with the state of deep sleep and lucid dreaming. They facilitate our access to the right side of the brain allowing us to tap into our own intuition, imagination, and unique creativity.

The actual meditation consists of 11 to 13 bowls played harmonically to enhance relaxation and a broad spectrum of energetic balancing and movement. The meditation, itself, (sound only) lasts about 55 minutes. Participants are encouraged to bring their own "nest" (pillows and blankets).

BIO: Tom Isaacs has been a practicing Foot Reflexologist in Louisville since 1996 and has developed a unique nutritional approach based on his experience and wellness acumen. He has been involved in wellness and fitness programs since the mid 1980's and also uses sound therapy as a tool to balance and relax various systems of the human bio-energetic field. 502-417-3710, tom@LivingpHure.com, www.LivingpHure.com

PHOTO: © Courtesy of Tom Isaacs

THRIVING IN NEW NORMAL

by Leah Bomar, Life Coach

Whether you're reading this article as the epic year 2020 inches towards completion or within the month of January when the shiny promise of 2021 is still fresh and new, here are some ways to remain in a state of peace no matter what chaos is swirling around you.

As the current conditions of the world have changed, we must be creative in the ways we show up for others and generate joy for ourselves. Happiness is all really an inside job anyway! Make a list of things that bring you joy, like a checklist for when you are feeling down, angry, afraid, frustrated, anxious or unsure about the future. Keep it handy so when the discouraged or down mood strikes, you have a shopping list of high vibe activities to choose from.

Start by grounding yourself right back in the here and now. Now is ok. Right now, you are safe. You are reading this journal, enjoying a cup of coffee or tea, spending time with a beloved pet. No matter what false signals your fight or flight mode might be indicating, taking a few deep breaths can center you back in the present moment and signal your brain and body to recognize the present moment for what it is.... safe, alive, and free from danger. Then you can choose something off your pre-made list that feels fun in the moment.

Some ways to stay calm include keeping up with your spiritual or grounding practices more often throughout the day. What gives you a feeling of connectedness to self or a higher consciousness? Is it being out in nature, even bundled up on a cold day? Or simply enjoying the view out your window? Try searching up a video on YouTube filled with nature scenes or following a guided meditation set to calming music. Do you enjoy creating music or playing around with a musical instrument? Escape into a good book you've been wanting to read or listen to an audible version while moving your body around the house completing chores. Clearing out old, stagnant energy from your surroundings is an instant mood booster! Maybe getting your hands involved in creating a craft or making messy art can instantly transport you to a place of present peace -- and away from worrying about the future or from obsessing about the past that is over and done.

Take a nap. Meditate yourself to sleep to restore your weary heart and mind. Phone a friend... go old school! Pick up the phone and dial the number to someone whose laugh warms your heart. They will most likely be as lifted up as you are to hear your voice.

We may not be able to meet in person as much as we'd like or are used to right now, but with so much technology literally at our fingertips, the avenues in which we can connect with others are bountiful unlike any other previous era in human history. If you are feeling lonely, now is the time to sign up for an online class of



December-January Class Schedule

- **Money Manifesting Masterclass**
-Tap into the overflow of abundance
- **Virtual Vision Board Parties!**
- Design the life of your dreams
- **Journaling w/ #LeahsWritingLab**
- Art journaling, gratitude & affirmation writing, future-casting for fun, manifestation tracker, historical documenting & more!

Join the journey to self-love by learning to flip feelings of fear, anxiety, and overwhelm into sources of peace & JOY!

LeahBomar.com

interest, seek out a new community to support your current needs, or find a whole new friend group online.

In my book "GlitterBomb: A Journey to Self-Love" one of the techniques I teach to help people purge unhealthy habits or cut cords to self-limiting beliefs is to create new meaningful connections. We



Leah's Family Enjoys Walking Pet

can do that by replacing unhealthy or unsatisfying behaviors with new routines and relationships. This means if you are extremely sensitive to other people's energy and can't stand to be on social media as of late because of all the political, negative, or collective fear-based posts -- switch up your social media feed! Unfollow or de-friend anyone who upsets you and seek out groups, pages, and people online more in alignment with how you want to feel. During this pandemic I've become more connected to people all around the world by joining online groups of interest to me and making new friends that way.

Another way to feel better is to do something kind for others. Random acts of kindness take the focus off our internalized dialogue. Send a card or pen a handwritten

letter and mail it, color a page in an adult color book and hang it up where you can see it to feel inspired daily or send it to someone you love. Intentionally cook more food than you need and package up leftovers to drop off to a friend or family in need. Paint brightly colored rocks and randomly strew them around on a walk for strangers to find. Sharing your kindness and grateful heart often costs little to no additional money to you and spreads everlasting love like energetic glitter.

BIO: Leah Bomar is an author, speaker and certified Life Coach specializing in Therapeutic Art. She graduated from University of Louisville with a degree in English, teaching elementary art and working as a substitute teacher for JCPS. As a Super Mom of three children, she started a local Creative Co-op for Homeschoolers and taught middle school & electives at a local cottage program. More info at LeahBomar.com or email AuthorLeahBomar@gmail.com

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**WHOLE SOME EASY DELICIOUS
HIGH PROTEIN COOKIES**

By Barbara Bosler

These wholesome easy to make high protein (no processed sugar) cookies will be welcome as treats this holiday season and throughout the year. They can make a wonderful gift on a platter for loved ones. They are also perfect as an energy pick up when around town on errands or when enjoying an outing in nature.

These cookies provide protein sources of oatmeal and sunflower seed, and truly offer a whole host of nutrients. Sunflower seeds provide B vitamins, calcium, and potassium. The oats are magnesium rich. The ground flax seeds provides omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acid.

- 1 cup rolled oats (old fashioned or quick)
- 2/3 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 2 beaten eggs
- 1/4 cup agave natural sweetener (or honey)
- 2/3 cup sunflower seeds
- 1/2 cup pumpkin purée
- 1/4 cup ground flax seed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- Use organic ingredients when possible

Line your sheet with parchment paper (or grease the baking sheet). Cookies come up easily with parchment. Put coconut oil & agave or honey in a small bowl and place on stove while oven heats to 350 degrees. If oil is not liquid by time to add to dry ingredients, place in warmed oven just until liquified. Combine dry ingredients in a bowl and add pumpkin, beaten eggs, coconut oil, and honey or agave. Mix well. You can use your clean or gloved hands to mix really well. Spoon little mounds for each cookie of about 1/4 cup each unto baking pan. Flatten each

PHOTOS: Christmas Candle, Jhenning_Pixabay
 Mother & Daughter. © Canstock Photos_fizkes

round slightly. Bake at 350 for 15 - 20 minutes. Cool. Store covered. Makes 8-10 large cookies.



Whatever good food you prep for you and your loved ones, enjoy your time in the kitchen. Happy cooking! Barbara

