

Natural Living Journal

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

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The Amazing World of Trees.

What is Long Covid? & What Can Be Done?

When We Come Together There are Unlimited Possibilities.

Easing Back into more Movement

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Starting Over: Re-entering the Post Pandemic World

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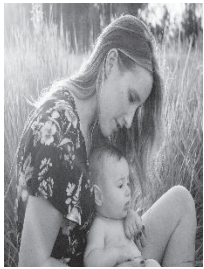
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THE PROPHET, Book Of Wisdom, By Kahilil Gibran

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My heart become a tree heavy laden with fruit that I may gather and give unto them? And shall my desires flow like a fountain that I may fill their cups? Am I a harp that the hand of the mighty may touch me, or a flute that his breath may pass through me? A seeker of silences am I, and what treasure have I found in silences that I may dispense with confidence? If this is my day of harvest, in what fields have I sowed the seed, and in what unremembered seasons? If this indeed be the hour in which I lift up my lantern, it is not my flame that shall burn therein. Empty and dark shall I raise my lantern, And the guardian - - Holy Spirit/God shall fill it with oil, and he shall light it also. These things he said in words. But much in his heart remained unsaid. For he himself could not speak his deeper secret. And when he entered into the city all the people came to meet him, and they were crying out to him as with one voice. And the elders of the city stood forth and said: Go not yet away from us. A noontide have



you been in our twilight, and your youth has given us dreams to dream. No stranger are you among us, nor a guest, but our son and our dearly beloved. Suffer not yet our eyes to hunger for your face. And the priests and the priestesses said unto him: Let not the waves of the sea separate us now,

And there came out of the sanctuary a woman whose name was Almitra. And she was a seeress. And he looked upon her with exceeding tenderness, for it was she who had first sought and believed in him when he had been but a day in their city. And she hailed him, saying: Prophet of God, in quest of the uttermost, long have you searched the distances for your ship. And now your ship has come, and you must needs go. Deep is your longing for the land of your memories and the dwelling place of your greater desires; and our love would not bind you nor our needs hold you. Yet this we ask ere you leave us, that you speak to us and give us of your truth. We will give it unto our children, and they unto their children, and it shall not perish. In your aloneness you have watched with our days, and in your wakefulness, you have listened to the weeping and the laughter of our sleep. Now therefore disclose us to ourselves and tell us all that has been shown you of that which is between birth and death.

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children. And he said: "Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house



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their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them but seek not to make them like you.

The path does not go backward nor carries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness, for even as he loves the arrow that flies, so He also loves the bow that is stable.



Kahilil Gibran was born on January 6, 1883, to a Maronite Christian family in Bsharri, Lebanon. A quiet sensitive young boy, he displayed an early artistic aptitude and a love for nature that became evident in later works. He was considered a Lebanese-American writer, poet, and visual artist. He was also considered a philosopher although he himself rejected that title. He died April 10, 1931 in New York, NY. Photo of mother & baby, Courtesy of Pixabay.

THE AMAZING WORLD OF TREES *Elsa Lichman, MSW, LICSW*

Many authors and naturalists are beginning to share new findings about forests and trees which completely turn our usual mindsets upside down. Suzanne Simard's family emigrated from France to British Columbia in Canada to become horse loggers in the early 1900's. In her book as an ecologist, The Secret Life of Trees, she describes growing up amongst forests and working with a logging company during summers in her college years. In an NPR interview, she talked about her unusual affinity for trees as she could intuitively sense many things about them.

Peter Wohlleben, originally a forester in Germany, wrote The Hidden Life of Trees. He became aware that traditional forestry, i.e., harvesting many trees, destroying different species, and planting new ones all of the same species, led to root disease which spread through the forest. Balance is required for a healthy ecosystem. He is of the belief that trees under attack from a variety of sources are capable of feeling fear and pain, a controversial premise.

Simard discovered a vast Micorrihzal network of fungi which colonize tree roots and sends nutrients and messages throughout the forest. She views trees as social beings, not competitive, as they share a common space, exchange nutrients, and communicate about insect pests and environmental threats. They recognize their own kin and share bounty with them, especially when saplings are most vulnerable. Diversity is fostered, as different species utilize more shade, light, nutrients, and water at different times of the year.

She also discovered Mother trees, the biggest and the oldest in the forest, which are necessary for the health of all; preservation of these trees is crucial. Mother trees are most highly linked to other trees; with young ones growing around them, roots connected, protected and nurtured. They are said to carry vast knowledge.

Forests need to sustain all of their members, and even dying trees may have stored memories to pass along. A stump, with dead heartwood, may have roots which are alive, where memories of droughts and other vicissitudes may be stored. We are all aware of tree rings, each keeping the memory of a past year, with its growth and challenges embedded in it.



The connection between tree roots and their huge fungal system contains patterns of networks similar to the brain, partly electrical, partly chemical, like our own neurotransmitters. They carry nutrients, warnings of insect infestations, other threats, and environmental disasters. Electrical signals pass through fiber to warn other trees of impending threats, and these trees begin a variety of amazing defense mechanisms, as defense

enzymes are produced. There may be a specific chemical for a specific threat. There is almost instant communication, and when alerted, trees synthesize compounds to repel insects, sometimes a specific chemical for a specific insect. Trees can have mutual relationships, for example, two trees with roots entwined making space for each other for light and air above. At my old apartment, the yard had two such trees, and I used to wonder at their tree canopies. Each grew to one side to allow for the health of the other, magical to watch in all seasons.

We need to change in order to sustain our earth and the blessing of trees. They stabilize the soil with their roots, take in carbon and release oxygen, protect underground waterflow in the watersheds, and provide a home for thousands of insect, animal, and avian species. A return to the olden days of lumber companies harvesting selected trees here and there in an area (thinning the area) and not taking all (clearcutting it) would return vibrancy and health to our forests. We humans would have to make more changes in our daily lifestyle to continue to protect our planet.

Douglas Tallamy, in The Nature of Oaks, gives us insight into one specific species. The root system is at least three times the size of the tree canopy, and white oaks can live for hundreds of years if not impeded by human obstructions. Actually, some other trees worldwide have been known to live thousands of years. They grow slowly; they have time.



The oaks rely on blue jays for propagation, as they carry seeds far from the tree. There are occasional mast years, in which the trees produce huge numbers of acorns, possibly to increase pollination, improve environmental conditions, or to prevent the loss of too many acorns by predators. Its leaf litter protects against invasive ground insects; decomposes and provides nutrients for the tree; and improves water infiltration. In spring, dozens of migrating warblers feed on insects in them. We can share brief

encounters with the warblers at that time. They look like a wide variety of tiny jeweled treasures!

The oak tree supports thousands of different species of insects and animals, more than any other tree, according to Tallamy. The white oak sprouts male and female flowers, however, the tree requires cross pollination from a nearby tree of the same species to produce acorns. It is recommended planting at least two trees in close proximity.

Suzanne Simard confided she occasionally ate dirt as a child! Of course, trees absorb nutrients from soil through their roots. When I, Elsa, was very little, I used to stroll alone down a tree-lined dirt road near home. I thought, "God is in the trees." We love our forests; we are now armed with new information to protect them.



BIO: Elsa Lichman, MSW, LICSW, retired from 43 years of social work, and began writing for the Waltham News Tribune and the Natural Living Journal. She has published poetry, prose and photographs in a variety of venues, and is a singer, performing with a duo and chorus and her voice studio. Contact her at elsalichman@comcast.net
PHOTOS OF TREES: Elsa Lichman

WHAT IS LONG COVID, AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Victoria Snelling, DC, DHM, DFM

I've been hearing from more and more people with "Long Covid" or post-covid-19 sequela. We don't yet know how common this is in those who have had the new virus, but it can be disabling or just an annoyance.

The Mayo Clinic suggests this diagnosis after symptoms occur or remain 4 weeks after a Covid-19 diagnosis. These symptoms are part of Long Covid: shortness of breath, chronic cough, joint pain, chest pain, memory problems, sleep disturbances, muscle pain, headache and fast or pounding heartbeat. In addition to the above, I would add that in my practice I've seen asthma, severe migraine headaches and chronic fatigue syndrome (all without personal or family history). We also see loss of sense of smell or taste, dizziness/vertigo, depression, or anxiety. The elderly are more at risk, as well as those with co-morbidities (having another disease, such as a chronic condition like asthma, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, etc.)

Covid-19 can damage the heart, lungs, and brain. I always question patients about any changes they or their loved ones have noticed about them and suggest lab testing when indicated. Is there any effective treatment? Patients often consult me after allopathic care doesn't resolve their complaints, and the same is true with Long Covid. The medical approach is to medicate the symptoms, which can be temporarily relieving, but often not curative.

In general, a few homeopathic remedies have been helpful. Influenzinum 200C taken 2 or 3 times a day. Reduce the frequency as improvement begins. Another useful remedy is Gelsemium 30c, every 3 to 4 hours, if flu-like symptoms are still present. Bryonia is good if a cough is lingering. Belladonna has been helpful for headache and migraine, Carbo-veg can be helpful with fatigue.

A few supplements are useful here: quercetin taken three times a day, and zinc 30 mg once a day along with a good, natural multivitamin/mineral can assure that nutritional deficiencies aren't delaying recovery. Make sure your multi contains C, D, magnesium, and B vitamins. We all need natural folate, not artificial folic acid. That's one way to tell a good supplement from a poor one.

Good health habits are important in healing in general, and include a well-balanced healthful diet (hopefully organic), adequate sleep and rest (check for sleep apnea if you snore or feel unrefreshed upon waking) - - and have a regular method of dealing with stress whether meditation, yoga, walking in nature, etc. There's no doubt that we all need an effective way to de-stress. Those have a great deal to offer in reversing chronic conditions and improving your health.

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BIO: Dr. Victoria Snelling has a varied practice in homeopathy, functional medicine, chiropractic, nutritional genetics, and CEASE detox therapy. She has been in practice in Louisville since 1988. Dr. Snelling leads the monthly Kent Society Homeopathy Study Group (you're invited!) and offers a quarterly schedule of one-day classes on natural health topics. She can be reached at 502-426-2033, or www.DrSnelling.com.



Consider professional care if these suggestions don't bring the results you want. There are important remedies that are not available to the public, and these are sometimes needed for full recovery. Individualized care is always best, and both constitutional Homeopathy and Functional Medicine have a great deal to offer.

NOTE: As always check with your primary care practitioner. If you are out in nature exposed to grasses beware to protect yourself from deer ticks which can cause Lyme Disease. Sit on a tarp. It doesn't hurt to spray with a little Tick Off. Nature and animals are very healing.

PHOTO : Pixabay , Thiemo Brand

WHEN WE COME TOGETHER THERE ARE UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES FOR THE NEW NORMAL

Rev. Valerie Mansfield

I think we're ready. Are you ready to live? Are you ready to march together to be together? Are you ready to make permanent lasting changes not only in your own life, but in our community? There's hardly a person that's too old, too young, or too tired to not do something. We're all here for a reason - - to make a difference and no longer live divided. Many of us have had a lot of alone time for a year. With the pandemic there's been a lot of death, a lot of sorrow, a lot of unrest - - not just in our families, but in the larger community. It is time for change. And I know that change is hard, but the only way we can move through and grow is to move into the challenges and move through them. I don't know about you, but I like to move through challenges with ease and grace. The only way I know how to do that is to follow spirit.

Do we want to get back to normal? I hear this a lot and I don't. I don't want to go backwards to what we were in the past. I want to go forward into something new and dynamic that works through love. How do we do that? I don't have all the answers, but I know that there are a lot of folks that collectively have answers. When we come together, we know that there are unlimited possibilities. We see that multiplied a hundred-fold with joy and enthusiasm because we all want that peace. The truth is love coming together as one - - one people - - humanity moving forward into those new possibilities. That's exciting, right?

Living in the flow is not always easy to do. You might have to stop really quick and shift and change without even thinking about it. How many of you have done that recently? I do this a lot. I'll have a vision, I'll have something set, and I'm like, "Okay, this is where this is going to go." spirit says, "Oh, no, we're going to do this." And I'm like, "Okay, got it." It's not easy because I tend to listen to spirit and don't always communicate really well out in humanity. - - And that's okay. It's growth, and that's good.

How do we continue to move into that higher realm of consciousness? Many of you are probably familiar with spiral dynamics, right? [The Adult Stages Of Consciousness](#), a book by Kim Weber. The world right now is evolving at a different rate



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than it ever has before. We're continuing to shift from that integral self into that holistic self. What does that mean? The integral self started shifting about fifty years ago, which means that we were beginning to really use that heart and head moment and lead with our heart instead of our head. We are shifting out of that intellectual self into that heart land.

It's also the stage in which we begin integrating all the different stages of consciousness. We're looking for that spiral health, that oneness. We're addressing our inner clarity. A lot of times we're really clear about what we don't want. Are we really clear about what it is we do want? That's the key to the shift. What is it that your heart desires? Find it and follow it, it will lead you to magical places. It will lead

you to new possibilities. It will lead you to your new life, especially coming out of this last year and integrating back into society.

Some of us have continued to work. Some have continued to be part of our families. My family has been blessed by that, but others have not. We really have to begin to work and to move outward again into society because we're really pulled in. We can't let that stop us.

Look for that clarity of the vision for yourself. It changes as we age, as our families grow up and move away, jobs change, pandemics come in and go out, and they might come back in again. There are still many places that are going through the start and stop of life. We're just starting again. We don't know what tomorrow brings - - but whatever it is, it's going to be good because it's going to be a reminder of our need to follow our dreams and vision from spirit.

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The development of the holistic self really started about 30 years ago. That is the oneness and the unity where our collective individualism becomes our purpose. That deep experience of oneness is the yearning and the quest to restore joy to our lives. How many of you want to restore the joy in your lives? Some of you may have never lost it. There are moments when I don't see it and I want to thrive. We don't want to just exist. I don't know about you, but I don't want to just exist as an individual or as a community or as humanity. I don't want us just to exist. I want to thrive and know that God is our source and there are unlimited possibilities. We can and do have the power to create whatever it is that is our vision. If we have clarity and follow spirit through the process without fear, but with joy -- that's when we do our own deep inner work. We work with that intuition, knowing the paradox and power of radiance, and we dance with life! We've all done it!

We do this in a split second sometimes. Then we may go back down. The challenge is being able to keep in the higher self and that higher consciousness. That's our goal, to shift our own energy into that joyful, restorative life, allowing us to overflow the love and ripple the joy into the world. When we are in that spiral and we're coming upward, we carry others with us.

What this all means is that we are seeing past our cultures. We are seeing past the limitations in our vision. We are seeing a world united as one humanity, which brings new perspectives. The new technology that we've been able to utilize this last year in live streaming is going to take us to new dimensions without us even being aware of it. The potential is unlimited for us to grow, not only as individuals, but as a community. I get pretty excited about it because these perspectives are challenging all of our systems. That's why we have social unrest in the world. It's not only in the United States - but it's prevalent right now in the United States because of our culture that we were built on. We have to shift that and change it. We don't have a choice. It has to go. We have a new paradigm coming in and it's not going to be easy for any of us.

Okay, let's look at everything we do. We're going to look at it through that lens of equity, inclusion, and diversity. That's not easy, but it's good because it's going to make us grow. We're all going to be challenged by it. I've been challenged a few times



already, and we're just now coming back together. It'll come in and through this year -- fear and isolation, and social injustice around the world. We are opening to healing.

We may have old wounds keeping us from letting our inner child come out and play. Are you willing to let your inner child come out and play? That's really where we need to be. When we look at things through the eyes of a child, we see the magic. How many of you lost the magic of living? Let's get back into that magic through the eyes of our inner child and see God's paintbrush flowing all around us vibrantly, bringing color and life into our being and into our community.

We know that when we follow that paintbrush of life into the Good, there are no limits -- and we can draw to us whatever it is we choose to create. It's ours to do. Jesus said, "Our oneness will convince the world that God is with us and loves us. His community here on earth. I give you a new commandment that you love one another, just as I have loved you. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." John 13:34-35.

I'm going to leave you with one other verse. It's from Psalms 1:33, "How very good and pleasant it is when we live a kindred life together in unity." What are you willing to create for yourself and others as we come into this new dynamic of living? I love you. I bless you. I behold the living spirit as you.



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. Rev. Valerie is a Spiritual Consultant engaged in practical, positive life coaching for adults and youth. Rev. Valerie 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.

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EASING BACK INTO MOVEMENT

By Holly Kennedy, BA, CYT

The past year brought many things to a halt. For some, that included movement of the body. Routines were disrupted, and many people who had previously been active became sedentary. We were all forced to make a lot of changes abruptly. None of us had ever been through anything like this. It's understandable if we slacked regarding our yoga practice, or daily walk in the park, or whatever type of movement our body enjoys.

Lack of movement leads to lethargy. The cure is to move the body. The key to being functional and pain-free in our bodies - no matter what our age - is mobility and flexibility.

Our bodies were made to move, and that movement is actually required in order for the brain to function in a healthy way, hence the "mind/body connection." Movement triggers the release of chemicals such as serotonin, dopamine, endorphins, and others that stabilize our mood as well as give us feelings of happiness and wellbeing. So, the physical and the mental are inextricably connected which can be an extremely empowering fact. Moving our bodies can enhance our lives in positive ways. It can seem like a daunting task and as if we're already behind before we begin. The secret is to love ourselves and accept ourselves exactly as we are in this moment while we simultaneously empower ourselves to make movement a priority. We can ease into new habits gracefully and almost effortlessly if we embrace the process. It's important to take it slowly to avoid injury as well as to avoid burn out.

We can begin with small steps each week or every couple of weeks and gradually add more time and more challenge to our movement. It's important to listen to our bodies. They have immense wisdom and are uniquely designed one of a kind Earth suits. There is no "one perfect way" to move or stretch. The nice thing about yoga (or moving and stretching and breathing for those who want to keep it simple) is there are as many ways to do it as there are human beings on this planet.

There are ways to ease back into movement even while laying down or sitting. There once was a truly wise and complex man who never attended a yoga class in his life but was as inspiring to many as a devout yogi might be. This man, a World War II veteran, stood six feet and two inches tall and maintained near perfect posture until the day he died at age 92. Many people begin to look down and slump forward as they grow older, but there are other options. This man began every day by moving and stretching his body before stepping out of bed. His routine began by simply clenching his fists tightly and then spreading the fingers of both hands wide and repeating that several times. Then he would bend his arms in and out several times, lubricating the elbow joints. Next were shoulder rolls, and then came the legs...bringing the knees toward the chest and then extending the feet towards the ceiling and flexing the toes.

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He even did his own version of face yoga! It was an honor to witness such gratitude and zest for life. He consistently projected an air of positivity which brings us back to the whole "mind/body connection." Perhaps part of his joy and gratitude was because he made movement a priority.



When we stretch, we increase the blood flow to our muscles, and we lengthen our muscles. When we don't stretch, our muscles shorten and become tight which can lead to an increase in the likelihood of straining the muscles in our back. However, don't be discouraged. Anyone can begin to stretch and lengthen and strengthen their muscles no matter what age they are or where they are in their process. Small movements can make a large difference and can help us feel more comfortable in our bodies. Becoming a beginner all over again and getting to know what our body needs can be a rewarding adventure. The important thing to remember as we begin again is to be kind and loving towards our SELF.



BIO: Holly Kennedy is a Certified Yoga Teacher with a Bachelor's Degree in Interpersonal Communication. She is available for private and group yoga classes and is dedicated to helping find the best style of yoga or movement for each individual regardless of injuries or mobility issues. She also offers Holistic Wellness Sessions that are catered to individual needs and can include

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Despite the Past – Present Choices: Frederick Douglass, By Barbara Vasiloff & Michael Reitz

Historically, we live on the backs of countless ancestors: inventors, artisans, skilled craftsmen, farmers, statesmen, spiritual teachers, money handlers and many more who preceded us from so many racial and ethnic origins. To recognize history is to recognize who we are and make decisions in the present moment for the good of all life. Each of us has been molded by history which either destroys or creates future health and well-being.

His mother was of Native American ancestry.

His father was of African and European descent.

He taught himself to read and write.

Word spread of his efforts to educate fellow enslaved people; teaching them to read using the Bible.

At 16 He was sent to a farmer who regularly whipped and beat him.

He made several failed attempts to escape.

In 1838 he finally left Covey's farm, arriving in New York and the safe house of abolitionist David Ruggles.

The past is tricky! Our history can determine who we are. It can stick us into an unchangeable state of mind or it can educate us to make better choices in the future.

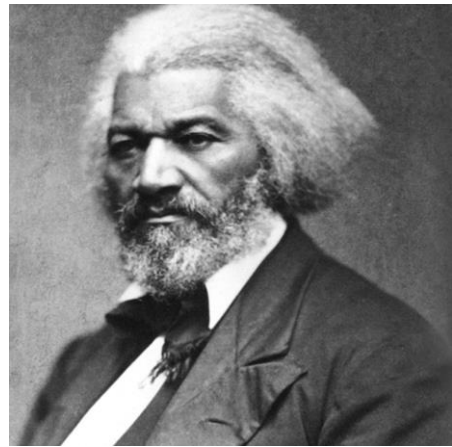
While overseas, he was impressed by the relative freedom he had as a man of color. In the London Reception speech he said, "What is to be thought of a nation boasting of its liberty, boasting of its humanity, boasting of its Christianity, boasting of its love of justice and purity, and yet having within its own borders three millions of persons denied by law the right of marriage?...I need not lift up the veil by giving you any experience of my own. Every one that can put two ideas together, must see the most fearful results from such a state of things..."

If one understands history, one understands themselves as well as the great many ancestors from all races and ethnicities who contributed so much to the well-being of the present.

By 1843, He had become part of the American Anti-Slavery Society's "Hundred Conventions" project, a six-month tour through the United States.

He was physically assaulted several times during the tour by those opposed to the abolitionist movement.

He was the only African American to attend a gathering of women's rights activists in New York, in 1848.



"Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, Frederick Douglass (1818?-1895) became a prominent activist, author and public speaker in the abolitionist movement. His work served as an inspiration to the civil rights movement of the 1960's and beyond."

(History.com Editors Jan 21, 2021)

PHOTO: from Public Domain Photos

He spoke forcefully during the meeting and said, "In this denial of the right to participate in government not merely the degradation of woman and the perpetuation of a great injustice happens, but the maiming and repudiation of one-half of the moral and intellectual power of the government of the world."

As humanity spread over the earth and shared its knowledge and hard work, we have very often forgotten that those we dislike most are those who contributed so much to what we have now.

In 1877, He met with Thomas Auld, the man who once "owned" him, and the two reportedly reconciled.

With all the history of their lives shouting at them to hate one another, the two of them saw the truth in the present and chose to create a new future.

Is there choice beyond living in the moment? I would guess not. It is the moment that gives rise to the future, if there be one. Was there a choice to be slave or master? Slaves and their descendants contributed to the economy and wealth of the South and then went on to become doctors, lawyers, writers, businessmen, spiritual teachers, educators and more. Yet there are those among us who see them as people less valuable and threatening to their way of life. How can this be?

Publications by Michael@mcreitz.com

Dawn Light – Poetry

Penumbra Smiles – Essay's

Falling Leaves – Short Stories

Nurturing a Child's Self-Discipline

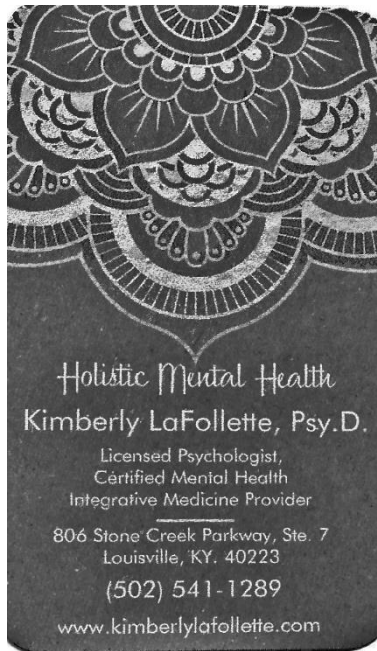
– Vasiloff - www.selfdisciplinedwp.com

STARTING OVER: Re-entering the Post Pandemic World

Kimberly LaFollette, Psy.D.

I went into a store yesterday and quickly realized that some of the employees and customers were not wearing masks. I had the realization that I could remove my mask if I wanted. This was the moment I had waited for! I had dreamt of the time when I no longer had to wear a mask. For the past year I declared that as soon as this Covid nightmare was over, I was going to run and hug everyone I saw. That is not what happened. Instead of feeling joy, I felt confusion and fear.

I realize I am not alone. In my work as a psychologist, I am having many discussions with clients regarding the fear of returning to pre-pandemic life. As much as you and I have wanted this, it feels unsettling. We have been told for an entire



year exactly what to do and how to behave and now there are mixed messages regarding re-entry. If I know anything at all about humans, it's that we do not like ambiguity.

Then there is this question: do we really want to return to life as it was before? Do we want the busyness, the rushed days and sitting in traffic? As much as we grieved our routines when Covid hit, we have become comfortable working from home. Is it really

worth the gas money and lost time now that we know we can complete all of our tasks from the comfort of home? Do we really want to give up our sweatpants and dust off those suits and dresses? These are all valid questions we should examine as we decide what our post-pandemic life should look like.

Before rushing headfirst into our pre-pandemic life, perhaps we need to take a moment to reflect. Instead of viewing this as a time to return to the life we lived before Covid, we can be intentional about building a post-pandemic world of our own design. We have the ability to be the creators of our life. Below are 3 things to consider as you start your journey into the post-pandemic world:

1. Listen to your true self and honor your feelings. If you are feeling anxious about taking off those masks and returning to pre-pandemic life, allow yourself to feel those feelings and recognize that the fear is normal.



Allow yourself the time you need to feel comfortable and examine what is causing your unease. If you have fears that are overwhelming and keeping you from engaging in

activities you used to enjoy, find a therapist and allow yourself the space to process and work through your emotions. Know that you are not alone. Most people are struggling right now.

2. Take a moment to reflect on the lessons you learned over the past year. Did you learn that you like working from home? Did you learn that you desperately need to be around others to feel motivated? Maybe you learned how precious and valuable family time can be. Whatever you learned about yourself, use that information to build a better life for yourself as you re-enter the world.
3. Be intentional. Take the lessons you learned and be purposeful as you move forward. Pre-pandemic you did things because that is how they were done. You ran yourself ragged trying to meet life's demands. Take a moment to reflect on what you want to invite back into your life. Are there things you can let go? Are there things that no longer seem important? Move forward and only invite those things that seem important and purposeful back into your life.

I am hopeful as we move forward into post-pandemic life that we can come out better as individuals and communities. I am confident that we have learned valuable lessons that will help us become improved versions of ourselves. So, let's not waste this opportunity. Let's take advantage of this time to reflect on our experiences over the past year. And only after careful reflection, let us be intentional about the kind of lives we rebuild. Don't absentmindedly return to how it used to be, instead build a more self-nurturing and purposeful post-pandemic life.



Editor: (This article is particularly focused for those who were able to work at home during the Pandemic. We honor all our citizens however they served. We are all needed. Thank you Profoundly.)

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 her website kimberlylafollette.com Photo: Thimo Brand , Pixabay

WHAT STORY ARE YOU TELLING YOURSELF ?

Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

Have you ever stopped to listen to the chatter that's going on in your mind? So much of this "story" we're telling ourselves is stories that we've been told about ourselves, such as what we look like. We grow up being imprinted with all sorts of stories from parents, from friends, from church, etc. Most of the time, without even thinking about it, we're living out those stories as being the truth and they're not even close. "You're Irish and here's what that means. You're this -- you're that." The problem is, we may be acting as if everything we hear is true and we may make it the "truth" without even thinking about it. By the time we're adolescents, we're covered with all these bumper stickers of labels and stories that we had been told by other people and we thought were true. I didn't know there was a way out of that. It took me another 50 years to figure out there was a way out -- that they weren't my stories to begin with.


One of the most important things to remember about these stories we may be living is that the solution to the problems that we may be creating for ourselves always seem to be "out there" someplace. As long as the solutions to our problems always seem to be "out there," there's never going to be a solution. It's never going to work. In every story we've ever told ourselves, the solution may seem to be some sort of magical thing that has to happen "out there," not in here inside ourselves. We may not be able to love ourselves where we are because where we are may never seem to be enough.

There's such a huge difference between the stories we may be telling ourselves and the truth of the divine power of who we truly are. Let's look for a minute to the healing miracles of Jesus. I always thought the miracles he did were kind of like magic tricks. He could look at someone and suddenly their leprosy was gone. I really sat with that for a while. The conclusion that I came to was that it wasn't a magic trick at all. Jesus saw the perfection in those people, not the illusion of illness, not the illusion of sickness, not the illusion of anything being wrong. As example, "I see the perfection in you. And because my image of the perfection of who you are may be so strong and so powerful, it can help you overcome your perception or your illusion of sickness or disease or unwellness." It isn't about a story anybody is telling; it is about the truth.

The strength of unconditional love. The power of light over darkness. The power of love over fear. There's no story that can encompass those realities. It's too big. If I could get out of whatever story I'm telling myself and be open to the grace and transformation of surrender to the Light of God, maybe I could recognize that what is causing my pain and my distress is holding onto a story that's just not true.



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What would it be like if, instead of trying to beat my self-centeredness into submission - which only gives it more energy - if I just became aware of the areas in my life that are already working? Spirit spoke to me one day and said, "Why don't you start working with what's already working instead of trying to change all those things that are not working?" All the things that didn't work in my life, they're still not working. All of the energy I expended trying to make them work kind of went down the drain. Why don't you start working with what's already working? As you do that, the negativity seems to begin to disappear, because

you're not giving it any more energy. The negative energy that I'm producing in my life will just fall off. If I focus on the positive energy in my life, the negative dies by attrition. I don't have to do anything, just stop giving my energy to that anger, stop giving it my negativity.

You are the maker of your life. You are the one who puts values on things. You are the one who creates the value. What are you telling yourself this morning that's not true? What script are you writing that is holding you in limitation? Is it a story you're telling yourself or is it the reality of who you are?

It is only with the heart that one sees rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye. Spirit of God, let me release my false perceptions and limited thinking. may I see myself and all other people as whole, as your child, as a being of light, a being of love. Let me see that always, no matter what words might be spoken, or actions taken. May the truth of who I am always shine through. That's the whole message. That's what the whole thing is all about. You don't have to live in limitation. You don't have to be stuck in the stories of limited possibilities you may be telling yourself, or that other people told you. You are never alone. You never have to live in fear, shame or guilt. None of that is who you are. You are a divine child of God.



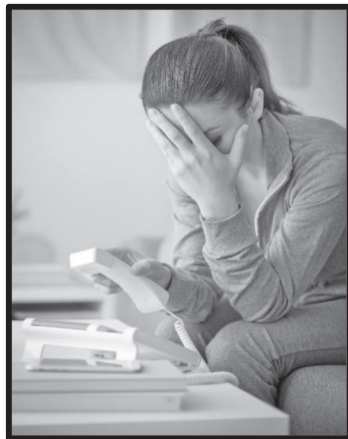
BIO FOR GERRY BOLAN, Ph.D. Gerry began his career as a teacher and retreat leader at Xavier High School where he taught Biology, Chemistry, and Religion. His undergraduate degree is from Catholic University and he has graduate degrees in Biology and Transpersonal Psychology, and a Ph.D. in Comparative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

SUPPORT IS A PHONE CALL AWAY.

By Leah Bomar, Life Coach

Now more than ever support is available. Like many people across the world, if you are struggling with a serious mental health issue, addiction or abusive situation, there are endless websites and free hotlines devoted to specific problems and support. Reach out! Be brave and take the first step towards recovery and healing.

As a mother of three middle school aged children, all quarantined at home over the past year, I've experienced firsthand how mental health has declined in children, teens and adults. Parenting through puberty in a pandemic has taken the need for additional love and support to the next level. People of all ages are suffering, shifting, needing connection and solidarity to stand in their pain and heal through it.



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I have recently discovered there are a multitude of free resources available such as toll-free hotlines to call at any hour to speak with a trained professional or counselor who can in turn guide you towards even more local support and valuable

resources. Everything from suicide prevention hotlines to domestic abuse, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, drug and alcohol abuse, parental support... so much help is available online! Just start Googling and researching key words for what you are looking for.

Now is the time to love and care for yourself deeply. Take the first steps towards more self-love by addressing issues and situations in your life that are causing you pain, then create an action plan to move forward towards healing and brighter days. Encourage your loved ones. There are many people



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BIO: Leah Bomar is an author, speaker & 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



LIMITATIONS OF MATTER: AN IMPORTANT CHIROPRACTIC CONCEPT. Clear Stress Regularly so It Doesn't Build Up Stuck Blockages in Your Body. Dr. Richard Reul

When patients seek out chiropractic care, they typically are experiencing significant pain or discomfort or an inability to do their normal activities. It is rare that people present themselves without symptoms seeking "wellness care." Regardless, everyone has had a life journey filled with personal stresses (physical, chemical, emotional). On the physical side, there have been falls, car accidents, repetitive use injuries, lifting too much or incorrectly, traumatic birth, foot pronation, etc. Emotionally, we have experienced stress with family, adolescence, work, finances, abuse of some form, etc. Chemically, we may not have had the best diet, & there are drugs and alcohol. What medications are being taken?

Our bodies and our nervous systems can usually handle stress. We can generally respond to and recover from stresses that we experience. Our nervous systems can reset or reboot letting go of responses to any traumas that were appropriate at the time, but no longer apply. But sometimes we don't fully reset and our responses, like tightening of muscles, can get stuck in our systems. We become less flexible for the next stress that comes our way. People who haven't fully recovered from stressful episodes are compromised. During my patient orientation class, I point out that everyone who seeks out help presents with their own "bag of bones." Everyone has had their own history of stress and responses to stress. We all have different physical, chemical and emotional make-ups. Some people have had a tougher road in life. Some people have had extreme emotional stress, poor diets, lack of exercise, etc. Some people have had less to deal with.

We have an innate intelligence within us that is constantly working to keep us alive and at an optimal level of performance. Our nervous system is the main conduit through which innate intelligence expresses itself. We have millions of chemical reactions occurring in our bodies at any given time. Cells are reproducing, digestion,

eliminating, respiring, etc. Neurons are firing. When our innate intelligence is able to express itself fully, we express the best health possible. If there is interference with the normal pathways (the nervous system) through which innate intelligence expresses itself, our bodies are in a state of "dis-ease." We are like a car that is out of tune, we are not getting the best gas mileage, or we are not running smoothly. For a chiropractor, subluxations are the equivalent of blockages or interference in the normal flow of innate intelligence.



So now to limitations of matter. Your innate intelligence is limited by the matter which is your body (your "bag of bones"). If someone presents to me with an arm that is amputated, I can't make it grow back. If someone has a ruptured or severely herniated disc, they

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may be a surgical candidate. Many people have advanced spinal stenosis where the openings where the nerves come out are severely narrowed due to spurring, bony overgrowth, or degenerated disc. These conditions can limit how much better a person can get. It doesn't mean that chiropractic doesn't work. I have seen many people with very compromised spines (scoliosis, degenerative discs, bulging discs, spinal stenosis) who have responded extremely well to chiropractic care. Some people actually get to a place where they are pain free.

I can never promise anyone that chiropractic can make them pain free. My job is to locate the subluxations (blockages in the nerve flow). If I can adjust the spine to help your body remove these blockages, you body will have the best chance to heal and express your potential within chiropractic care. With chiropractic care, most people do much better in general. But if things have degenerated too far, there may be limited improvements. Many people find their conditions getting progressively worse over time. They adapt to the next level of discomfort or limited functions, which becomes their new "normal." I had a 92-year-old patient start care with me a couple of months ago. He has a severe scoliosis and advanced degenerative changes in his spine. I told him that I could not promise that I could help him due to the extent of the degeneration - - but if we could reduce his pain by 25% it would be worth it. He responded, "if you can stop it from getting any worse, it would be worth it." What a great response! He in fact is doing much better than when he first came in but understood the limited matter this body presented with.

Wherever you are in your life journey, you can enhance your possibilities for better health and better response to chiropractic care by living in harmony with natural wellness guidelines such as appropriate exercise (according to your age and condition), good nutrition, and maintaining your emotional balance and peace as much as possible.



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

health care practitioner before making any significant changes in your health care. **PHOTO:** Andres Carlo_Pixabay.

MOVING OUT OLD PERSONALITY FRAGMENTS OF LIMITATION, Joyce Gerrish, MA

We all live our lives as well as we can -- sometimes enduring exceedingly difficult experiences and other times enjoying quite peaceful enjoyable periods. Times may weave back and forth between those two and many gradients of life experiences between. When things seem to be going well, we may luxuriate in our days and feel them as fully as possible in order to drink in the elixir of joy. We may really embrace the experiences, and count on being able to remember them in as much detail as possible later. We may take numerous photos! On the other hand, remembering painful experiences is a totally different thing. Who really wants to dwell on deeply painful events? Not many of us. Some of those events may be repressed and "forgotten," and some of those events may linger in our awareness and cause us to doubt ourselves and perhaps live in a certain amount of fear or anger.

As mentioned, sometimes events can be so traumatic that our consciousness may not be able to deal well with those memories at the time (maybe as a child), so those feelings and what happened may get submerged into the subconscious (repressed) and seem to be forgotten. Therapy at that time would be helpful, but frequently it isn't provided if the person is a child, or desired or considered affordable if the person is an adult. At the very least, it is helpful to talk about the situation with a relative or trusted adult and not feel alone. Repressed memories may possibly not be remembered for the remainder of that person's life -- or those memories may begin to filter back into a person's awareness 10, 20, 40 or more years later when the person's psyche feels it can more adequately begin to process and heal them without feeling overwhelmed.

The truth is that repressed and seemingly forgotten feelings are likely to be affecting that person's life and behavior anyway, as the feelings (without specific memories) can radiate up from the subconscious. Those memories aren't gone, we just aren't conscious of them. We may be acting in certain ways and making certain choices which may not always seem logical or for our highest good. For some people that may include some bouts of depression, a degree of fear of intimacy, some self-depreciation and self-doubt, a need to overcompensate, possibly some type of addiction in an attempt to drown out the feelings, or in other ways. Of course, these behaviors can occur for other reasons, too, but it may be helpful to know they may be influenced from subconscious "forgotten" memories.

This occurred in my life. Things happened when I was a child which my consciousness totally repressed until I was in my forties. One evening after I had led a meditation group and all the students had left except for one friend -- my consciousness was quite relaxed and clear. Unexpectedly I felt weak, so I had to sit back down -- and I stated weeping intensely. I very seldom cry, so this was extremely unusual. The class had gone

well and my life in general and health were good. This weeping was something deeper and unknown. I was glad my friend was there. From that moment memories and feelings began coming back into my awareness. It gradually brought me into a deepening of my life experience and compassion for myself and others. Things about myself I had never really understood then began to make more sense. I did therapy on and off for years. In addition to being a meditation teacher, Reiki master energy healer, and holistic therapist -- I am an avid painter and writer. I expressed my emerging feelings in my art and writing. I felt as though my whole life until then had been intense exploration for trying to understand what life was all about -- but I had seemed to just be scratching the surface. I had read many volumes of the "great books of the world" -- searching, searching. All those wise minds had seemed to also be searching in their own ways. I studied ancient cultures and the major religions of the world. I pondered on it all.



With my unconscious memories beginning to surface -- life changed, expanded, and opened in unexpected ways. That is not to say it was easy, but it was manageable and never a boring journey. By more and more fully accepting and feeling the wholeness of my being, I was able to help others more deeply and compassionately in moving ahead in their life journey. My intuition and understanding were expanding, and I was gently able to guide people to gradually let go of old "frozen personality fragments" that may not have been serving that person well.

Personality fragments of limitation can also come from difficult experiences earlier in one's life (or currently) that one remembers very vividly and uncomfortably or painfully. Not everything really difficult gets repressed for everyone, particularly as a person moves beyond childhood. Whatever the source of trauma, whether it is repressed or conscious, it can limit the effectiveness of one's life if it doesn't receive a degree healing.

Some people may desire so deeply to avoid difficult traumatic experiences, that they may not take on even reasonable challenges which might help them move ahead in life to something that they really desire. It may just seem too scary to them to take the chance of not succeeding, so they may stay in the background even though they may deeply crave opportunities for which they have a good chance of succeeding.

In truth, the process of seeking to succeed in life can have its tradeoffs. Some people may feel fully ready to take those chances in order to move toward their goals and dreams. They may take it all in their stride. If they win, they rejoice. If they lose, they may well try again later with a slightly different approach. They keep a fairly optimistic outlook and expect things to not always go the way they prefer, but they figure that with perseverance they can create a good life for themselves.

People who are less confident but equally capable or talented may struggle more with pursuing their life path. Maybe they didn't succeed at something they wanted earlier in their life. They may have taken that experience deeply into their self-image. They may have dwelled deeply on that feeling of failure. Maybe they didn't keep in mind that in order to move ahead on our life path and utilize our talents and skills - - we have to take chances now and then. If we don't attain our total desire, maybe we can win part of it, and secure more of it later. That person may be hard on themselves and really internalize a feeling of failure, rather than rejoicing about what they did accomplish and what they did learn in the process. When we reach out toward our goals, we may gain valuable contacts that may be helpful later. Someone we want to date or marry may become a treasured friend. Life doesn't need to be strictly win or lose. There can be many gradations in between which can become steppingstones later.

Whatever their source, how do we begin to heal these personality fragments of limitation? Certainly, there are many possible approaches. As mentioned, simply being able to talk about the feelings with a therapist or a trusted friend is a good place to start so that one can feel "heard" and not alone. That is major. It can also be a matter of gradually learning to more fully believe in ourselves. If we deeply believe in ourselves and our capabilities, other people are likely to sense that and believe in us and trust us. We are more likely to be able to manifest the life we want to live. Believing in ourselves can be developed and enhanced. Maybe not overnight, but steadily and gradually. Love yourself and forgive yourself if you occasionally stumble. Accept it all as part of the journey and keep going and learning.

Every time you see yourself in a mirror, silently say something like, "I love myself. I am moving toward my goals step by step." Radiate goodwill to everyone you meet. This can help them to respond positively to you. If you find you are getting down on yourself, be your best friend and tell yourself this is a new day, and the past is over.

If you sense old feelings of discouragement - - where in your body do they seem to be held? Do you sense what seems to be an old heaviness in your chest or in your gut or someplace else? If you sometimes feel an old heaviness in your body and you doubt yourself or feel discouraged, focus your awareness into that area. As you breathe in your nose, imagine you are

breathing light and love into that area and that you are waking it up and dispersing the heaviness. Breathe it out and silently say something like, "The past is over. I did the best I could at the time. I love myself. I learn from each event in my life, and I keep going. I am getting better and better at handling my challenges, succeeding, and feeling joy." Do that each time a heavy feeling may come up.

Don't give up on yourself, keep encouraging yourself. Remember to be your own best friend. Be willing to work diligently to succeed on what you enjoy and that you are seeking to accomplish. Be as trustworthy as humanly possible so others know they can count on you. Choose only goals that will benefit not only you, but those you love and the business you work for or with which you volunteer. Allow the process of being of service to give you joy! That is one of the greatest secrets of joy and success in life! You can do it, old doubts will gradually dissolve into confidence. Working with an energy healer or therapist is highly likely to facilitate the process.

As an energy healer of forty years' experience, I have found that emotions are stored as energy in the physical body and the various levels of the aura energy field of a person. This could be compared in some manner to how words and music are recorded and stored in various manners to be played back with our digital devices. Please think about that a moment. So the emotional content of those old repressed emotions (held in our body tissues and energy field aura) can be steadily making themselves felt and heard by our consciousness. That is one major reason among others that it is of great importance to heal them and free ourselves from them. I offer energy healing therapy to help with this process. I also teach energy healing to support people in learning to clear their own energy blockages. I have been writing articles on energy healing techniques in past issues of this journal and will continue to do so in the future. These articles will also be appearing on my website blog at www.joycegerrish.com I wrote extensively about this in my book "Secrets of Wisdom" which is available on Amazon. Clearing the aura of old "personality fragments of limitation" (or "energy blockages") helps one feel more peaceful, think more clearly, feel better physically, and be more in touch with their higher consciousness and the Divine Source. It is truly a "Healing Journey of Remembrance of One's Wholeness." It can facilitate our stepping into our Soul Purpose/Mission and how we can contribute to healing our precious planet Earth and help create more peace and understanding among the people of our planet. ZOOM MEDITATION Sun. Eves, Check website/

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 and decades of experience teaching higher meditation and numerous natural healing modalities including Reiki. She is author of the book "Secrets of Wisdom - - Awaken to the Miracle of You" and is publisher/editor of the Natural Living Journal. She is a Holistic Life Coach, Counselor, and Transformational Energy Therapist. Louisville Office. www.joycegerrish.com. 812-566-1799 **PHOTOS:** Leap, Pixabay Stefan Keller, Arms up, Pixabay, Anastasia Borisova



HOMEMADE DELICIOUS, EASY, HEALTHY SALAD DRESSINGS

By Barbara Bosler

Have you ever read the ingredients of processed bottled dressings? Well, I have, and I decided no more for me. Even the proclaimed “healthy” one’s aren’t as wholesome as the homemade using minimal ingredients. Here are three you should try. They’re quick, easy, and delicious. Do yourself, your family and our planet a favor and use organic ingredients.

FRESH TOMATO DRESSING

1 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup Balsamic vinegar (or organic apple cider vinegar)
1 TBS agave or honey (less according to your likes)
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper (fresh ground is best)
2 large fresh tomatoes peeled & diced.
or grape tomatoes work well, too, unpeeled diced 3/4 to 1 cup.
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves (or if you prefer basil) chopped fine.
Mix and let set 1 hour at room temperature, then cover and chill.
This dressing is delightful poured over a bed of crispy romaine lettuce and red onion.

FRUIT SALAD DRESSING

1/2 cup vanilla yogurt
1 tsp orange zest (see Editor’s Note about orange zest at close of this article.)
1/4 tsp ground nutmeg or cinnamon
3 or 4 TBSpoons slivered almonds (chopped pecans are good too)
Combine and toss with your favorite cubed fruit.

BUTTER MILK DRESSING

Mix well 1/4 cup buttermilk with 1/2 cup mayonnaise (add more milk if too thick)
1/2 tsp each basil, dill, garlic powder 1 tsp each dried parsley and onion powder
Or you can use Penzey’s “Sunny Paris” seasonings blend. You can use 2 teaspoons or more of it in place of the above listed herbs. If you’ve not checked out Penzey’s store, do your tastebuds a favor and do so! Enjoy this Butter Milk Dressing on salads like raw veggies or pasta salad. It is also excellent for veggie trays.



I hope you’ll try homemade in place of processed dressings. Get creative. Try different seasonings and fresh herbs. Whatever you decide to prepare, enjoy the time in your kitchen.

Happy Cooking !
Barbara

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EDITOR’S NOTE: ORANGE ZEST can be purchased readymade in the Seasonings, Herbs, & Spices Section of a grocery store. Look for “Natural.” Or you can make it yourself. It is the orange colored outside layer of the peel of an orange. It gives a delightful citrus flavor to a dressing or other food. You can grate the outer portion of the orange peel using the “fine” section of your grater that has the smaller holes. Be careful to not grate into the white part of the orange peel as it can have a bitter flavor. ALSO, a favorite way that I like to eat a salad is with one tablespoon of organic olive oil on each salad, with about a teaspoon or more of apple cider vinegar, and a little seasoning as desired. Processed dressings tend to have a lot of artificial ingredients & chemicals. I encourage you to read the labels.



PHOTOS: Family, Canstock_evgenyatamanenko. Gardener, Canstockphoto_photography 33.



I LOVE TO GARDEN,
Ann Hemdahl Owen
When I garden, I feel the plants respond so joyously. Life can get complicated. With plants the response is so pure. When I feel anxiety or stress, I go to the plants and they renew my spirits.