



Natural Living Journal

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

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Transformation Journey

**Protecting Our
Environment**

Gratitude Enhances Joy

**We Can Be the Healing
Love**

**Inflammation: How to
Put out the Fire**

**Pain Vs Wellness: Why
Chiropractic?**

Manifestation

**The Nature of Loss:
What Can Help**

Mindfulness Bells

**Ida B. Wells, 19thC.
Crusader for Civil
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WE CAN BE THE HEALING LOVE

By Rev. Valerie Mansfield

For more than a year many of us have gone through some major uncertainties and unexpected crises. New solutions take time. I am not quite sure how it is all unfolding, but I believe that whatever the universe is guiding us to, it will get better and better with time as we allow ourselves to be aware and to more steadily center in the universal love that is potentially alive in each of us.

I don't know about you, but sometimes its difficult to stay spiritually attuned when you see chaos and challenges all around you in the world. How did we get here? How did we get to this place where people let go of peace and love - - in exchange for a desire for power and control and greed? I am rather taken back by all of that. May we remember that universal love is potentially alive in each of us. This is a potentially abundant universe for all of us to share.

When we are confronted with suffering, how do we feel and respond? Do we just go about our day-to-day business, or do we stop and pray and send love and sense if there is something we can realistically do to help? We may feel so very busy. Is there time to be of service somehow for the needy? Does it seem like there's not enough time in 24 hours to do everything that we think we need to accomplish? Is your to-do list longer than it used to be? Even if we are shocked by suffering or economic disaster, if we remember the truth of who we are we can stay more centered, and we will be better able to take action than if we allow ourselves to become weary and depleted. Prayer works! We can send prayer to people experiencing catastrophes, forest fires, tornadoes, trauma from this pandemic, people struggling with violence, and confused kids in the neighborhood. When we stay in that spiritual realm of nurturing love all things are possible.

When we take on the responsibility of our spiritual self, we become aligned with that spiritual source that is alive in us, and that is true nurturing love. Giving and receiving of love is healing, even for our own body and for our own selves. May we sit every day for a while with our body and praise it, love it, talk to it. Our body is alive. Hopefully, we also have relationships with people who are nurturing.

When we are in that space of pure love - - miracles happen. When we are focused in pure love and spiritual "knowing," nothing is impossible. As we share it from our hearts outward, it grows - - it is unstoppable. So, we "have" to do it. We have to become that. We already are that - - we just forget. How do we let go of what no longer serves us? How do we reduce the stress in our lives? How do we transform from the caterpillar to the butterfly or the seed to the flower so we can BE that love, BE that nurturer?



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Jesus was a master of love and of dealing with the unexpected. He stood as one with spirit and pure love. It didn't matter how many people needed to be healed. It didn't matter how many people came to be fed.

May we sometimes just stop all the outer activity for a while and go into prayer. We can ask that we be true to who we are regardless of what is outside or around us. We can close our eyes and put our feet flat on the floor. May we follow our breath as it gently flows in and out and listen to our heart beating. May we be the radiance of light and love and send loving thoughts to every cell in our body and know the truth that we are whole. Our life is filled with abundance. Each of us is a magnificent being, and the spirit of light fills us. We thank the Lord for this moment. May we remember "I am Love" and remember the miracles that come through love.

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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MANIFESTING IS AN ACT OF BELIEVING & RECEIVING, Not Just Wishing on a Star or Waving Magic Wand.

By Leah Bomar, LifeCoach

Manifesting is not just wishing on a star or waiving a magic wand. Manifesting is an act of believing and receiving. It is defining and asking for what you desire, then allowing the universe to arrange and present what you've decided you want in life in whatever clever manner it appears in.

The first step in manifesting is deciding what you desire. Journaling in detail not just the physical thing you want to attract into your life like a dream home, new job or perfect partner, but tapping into the emotions and feelings of what life would be like when you already obtain your desire. Really allow yourself to feel the emotions of life as if your dream has already come true. What do you wear to your new job, what kind of dates do you go on with your partner, what does it feel like watching the sunset from your new home? Write down in as much detail over and over, everyday what your desired life looks, smells, tastes and feels like?

Make a list of all the specifics you desire. Don't edit yourself! Don't let your logical mind talk you out of including an item on the list because it sounds silly or unrealistic. It doesn't matter if a detail sounds impossible or what others will think. Even if you don't know how you will obtain your dream, just trust the universe to take care of the details as you follow the signs... that is a start!

In this state of manifesting, all you have to do is dream big and let the future feelings of receiving flow in the present moment. This is how you attract and align with what you want. There must also always be a willingness for flexibility. I often will say 'this or something better' when asking the universe (or God) to bring dreams into reality. We often do not know the wonder that is in store for us.

What God or source has planned during this lifetime is often even greater than what we can imagine or visualize with our human minds and hearts. When manifesting, while it's important to be specific and detailed about what we are requesting, we must also allow for our manifestations to show up in ways other than we imagined... often better than we could have ever anticipated.



Have you ever wanted something really badly, maybe prayed for something specific, only to never have your prayer answered? Or it showed up in some alternative way other than what you were anticipating?



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Maybe even your dream never came to fruition at all, so you gave up believing you were worthy and stopped asking.

We are all deserving of receiving all our heart desires ...*if* it's in alignment with our greatest and highest good. Everything we experience or manifest into our life is in divine alignment with our soul's purpose here on Earth. So, if we do not receive what we are 'asking for' perhaps there is a greater reason at play we cannot see or understand at this time. We must trust everything that comes into our life (or not) is for our highest good.



The most important element of manifesting is trusting and believing we are worthy of receiving. Clearly state our dreams as if they've already come true in the present tense. Then allow the flow of the universe to deliver, while being open and aware every day that we are in a constant state of receiving and co-creating the life we desire. At the same time, I encourage you to move ahead in any training needed for your goal, apply yourself in action, and reach out in networking.

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

PHOTOS: Dancers, Scott Broome_Unsplash. Community Action Committee, Christina@wocintechchat.com with Unsplash.

OUR OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT: BEAUTY AT A COST

Effects of Toxic Weed Killers, Chemical Pesticides & Conventional Non-Organic Fertilizers on Human Life

By Joyce Freville, Ph.D.

Most folks like their yards and gardens to be picture perfect. But at what price? People use conventional weed killers and pesticides to protect their farms, gardens, and yards from unwanted plants, insects, and small animals such as squirrels, and moles (and sometimes certain birds). The soil absorbs the weed killer and pesticides which kill or disable the growth of unwanted plants and organisms. However, it also kills millions of beneficial organisms that provide natural nutrients to the soil. Therefore, conventional pesticides reduce the nutrient level of the soil thereby reducing the quality of the soil. Often times, artificial fertilizer is added to the soil to replenish nutrients. Weed killer, pesticides, and artificial fertilizer stay in the soil for a very long time. When it rains, water from sprayed fields runs into streams and then rivers. Also, water that soaks into the ground on agricultural fields that are sprayed with conventional weed killers can contaminate the underground aquifers. Nitrates from conventional fertilizers can contaminate underground water sources.

So, what is ground water and how does it affect us? First, it may be helpful to understand what an aquifer is and its relationship to groundwater. An aquifer is a body of porous rock or sediment that holds groundwater. Groundwater is the precipitation that has infiltrated the ground below the surface and collected in empty spaces, porous rock, and/or sediment underground. Pollutants such as weed killers, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in agricultural fields, golf courses, and lawns of homes, etc. sink through the soil into the ground water. Much of the water we use for domestic, industrial, or agricultural purposes is groundwater. Most groundwater, including a significant amount of our drinking water, comes from aquifers.

Not only does polluted water kill bees and other beneficial insects needed to pollinate plants and loosen soil (such as worms), it also contributes to long term harm to society such as cancers and other diseases. Since chemicals that are sprayed on crops affect bees and other pollinators, it also affects the quality and amount of crops produced which in turn affects the economy. In addition, research has shown that using polluted water has increased fertility problems in women as well as increased the incidents of various kinds of disabilities in children such as childhood cancers and neuro-development issues.

What can we do to help? We need to be more concerned about the environment. As the saying goes "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." In other words, the actions taken to recover are harder than the actions needed to protect and prevent. **We need to reduce the use of harmful weed killers, pesticides**

and other harmful chemicals. Instead, we should use organic products that are equally effective, safe for children and pets, won't harm food, and won't pollute the ground water. The following are several suggestions to help you get started.

- Include insectary plants which are plants that attract beneficial insects to your garden such as mint, rosemary, thyme, and marigold -- and repel some harmful insects.
- Use diatomaceous earth. This is a very safe powder made from microscopic silica shells of fossilized algae. Sprinkle the powder anywhere on soil or plant leaves or stems where insects will encounter it.
- Install nesting boxes and bird feeders to attract birds to the garden. The birds will help get rid of caterpillars, snails, slugs and other pests that harm the crops. They also reduce ticks that harm the gardeners.
- Mulch! It helps reduce soil damage, prevents the growth of weeds, creates an environment that alters the growth and development of plants and also reduces the harmful effects of too much sunlight and rain.
- Get a cat! Cats are good squirrel and other small animal repellents! Make sure to feed and care for your cat. They cannot fend for themselves! Also, neuter or spay it.
 - Check your leaves regularly and remove all unhealthy or diseased plants or leaves as soon as possible.
 - Rotate your garden crops that require different nutrients and ensure those nutrients are replenished (from natural sources) since the new crop requires a different ratio of nutrients.
 - Compost your kitchen vegetable scraps (not meat scraps) along with your garden clippings that aren't diseased. Compost creates excellent organic fertilizer.



In conclusion, use of conventional weed killers and pesticides (which contain poisons), and unnatural artificial fertilizers has become the norm instead of the exception. This practice is causing harm to our environment, economy, and society. Natural organic gardening and farming products and advice are available at organic garden supply nurseries and stores. We must take immediate action to protect our environment and the health of our planet and society. We owe it to our each other, our children, and grandchildren.

BIO: Dr. Joyce Freville earned 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 has been in healthcare reimbursement, finance, and compliance for over 35 years. She is a retired Command Sergeant Major in the U.S. Army.



PHOTO: Josch13, Pixabay_Lily

TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

By Gerry Boylan, Ph.D

Editor's Note: Belief in reincarnation is part of the Hindu religion and is believed by a large segment of people within the Buddhist religion. A significant percentage of people in South America and in United States believe in reincarnation. For those who are not familiar with it, it is worth seeking to understand.

We are each a beloved child of God, unconditionally loved. Within our soul essence we are beings of Light created in God's image. How often we forget. How often today did I remind myself that I am light? How often today did I remind somebody else that they are light? This is not judgement. To me when I ask myself those questions, it just suggests to me how often I sleepwalk through life, how oblivious I am to what's going on around me and inside me as well. How far away my mind can be from the truth of who I am.

Let's use our imagination a little bit, along with our mind and our heart. I'd like to suggest that you imagine that you are in a rather ethereal space. Sometimes we call it heaven, but it's not an end-point - - it's really a space in consciousness. You are there getting ready to incarnate here on planet Earth which you've done before. This is not something new. It's a new trip. So what you do is you gather together your guides and your angels - - all those beings that are helpers in the world beyond. You focus with your guides and angels and map out what you are going to learn - - what you are going to do this particular lifetime. What lessons you are going to learn, what stuff you might need to clean up from other lifetimes. You work out kind of a blueprint. The events aren't chiseled in stone. What is crucial are the lessons you're going to learn. How they come about is going to happen in different ways for different people.

Before you incarnate, guess what you do. You pick out your parents because they're going to be your first teachers. You inherit from your parents not only a huge gene pool of physical attributes, but also strengths and weaknesses such as difficulty with anger or fear, being lighthearted, being curious or serious, and also nationality and all that carries with it, financial circumstances, religion of origin, how one expresses love, how one takes in other emotions, how one expresses emotions and feelings, what's right and what's wrong. All those things are wrapped up in that package. You know what happens? One tends to start thinking those are who one is. Because the moment one takes physical form, one tends to fall into forgetfulness.

Have you ever looked in a little baby's eyes and seen that infinity shinning back at you? Sometimes it's difficult to recall that we were like that once. Because what happens is we go into "people training." All of these people are telling us who we are, but they don't know who they are. Most of us don't have any other recourse but to accept what they say is true. We tend to forget what we need so deeply and spend the rest of our life trying to rediscover what we think we have lost. It's not really unfair because the forgetfulness is also part of the journey. Hide and seek would be no fun at all if you knew all the hiding places. Charades would be no fun if you knew all the costumes. How are you going to learn and grow as a soul if you don't take the curriculum? How are you going to find out what you don't know until you discover what you do? How do you discover what you do know until you realize what you don't?

God and the universe are not careless or senseless. The soul always knows that it is being stretched. It's capacity to give and receive love is being expanded each moment. It's like Scott Peck's definition of love, "Love is the ability to stretch oneself for

one's own Spiritual growth and the growth of another." It's not about repeating the same lesson. It's about moving into a higher more conscious way of doing things. When we become conscious of the path we are on, we begin to realize that all of the situations that show up in our life whether it is a spilled cup of coffee or a sickness or an injury, whatever end of the spectrum we happen to be in, are in some way planned by the soul to work on and be able to learn from and to grow.

Nothing is by chance. Again, it's not chiseled in stone, but anything that shows up in my life, I know exactly why it is there. It's for me to learn, it is for me to stretch with and for me to grow with. And I might refuse to do that - - for a while. I may enjoy being angry. I might enjoy being judgmental because this other person deserves it. I may enjoy every lower vibrational thought I am hanging on to because I get some "juice" out of it. That's O.K., that is part of our free will. Eventually what's going to happen though is I'm going to begin to ask myself, "what does this event, this person, this relationship have to teach me?"

These are the circumstances in my life that I have created, what am I supposed to learn from them? For me, and I can only speak for myself here, a central piece of my learning is to heal a huge chunk of insecurity along with the sort of blank spot where my identity should be. I was always trying to discover who I was. And I was always kind of afraid like the Wizard of Oz that someone was going to pull open the curtains and see this little old man with all these levers and gears trying to manipulate all



that was going on and he didn't have a clue. I've kind of gotten past that one, but it took me many years in this lifetime to get over being afraid that someone was going to open the curtains and say "Ah, I've got you!"

You know, for each one of us there is an event or set of circumstances that wakes us up to this journey of consciousness and transformation. It could be an illness, or an injury, or a divorce. It could be an addiction. It could be something less dramatic. It could be beginning to discover that my life from 9:00 to 5:00 has nothing to do with my life from 5:00 to 9:00. Or maybe asking the age-old question, "Is that all there is? What else is there?" So here we all are, and you know there are times of forgetfulness for me as well as for you. There are times when I forget that I am a beloved child of God unconditionally loved. I'll remember, and I'll forget, I'll remember, and I'll forget, again and again.

From my limited personality self, it sometimes seems so senseless - - why am I forgetting just so I can remember? We often describe that as being stuck or being lost. But when that happens it is only true for the personality limited self. The soul is never stuck, is never lost. It reminds me that everything that comes along has a purpose and a meaning. In fact, everything that comes along is of God. The personality may be upset, because many of the learnings we have to do are not particularly comfortable. You might even be a little bit angry. Stretching doesn't always feel good. But sometimes when you begin to stretch you notice, "Ah, I really needed to do that even though I felt a little uncomfortable in the beginning. Let me see if I can just work this other tight place a little bit freer."

What would it be like if I open my heart a little bit more? We've all had this experience where we've gone through something difficult in life and we've worked our way through it and somehow gotten to the other side, then all of a sudden somebody in our life is going through the same thing. Then unbelievably what we have now is the gift of compassion. You may say, "I'm not going to tell you what to do, but I'm going to be here to help guide you through this because I've walked through that fire myself. When I say, "I know how you're feeling, you can believe me because I DO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE FEELING." People will know the difference between you just saying that and you having experienced it. If someone comes up to me who is struggling with darkness or depression, and I say "I know how you feel" - - they believe me. They know I know. Can you imagine the thousands of encounters we have in our lives - - people who have touched us and who we have been touched by? And all those people who we have touched have touched many others.

When seeking to understand the "big picture," in addition to things making sense to our mind there is over in a corner a thing called mystery which we can't explain. It goes beyond our intellect and beyond our human mind. The essence of truth of who you are and who I am as an unconditionally loved innocent

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child of God surpasses all understanding. It can never be proven; it can simply be known.

You know there is really only one sermon. It goes by a lot of different names. It is **remember who you are**. Everything else is just commentary. Beyond our personality self and all the roles we've decided to play and the costumes we've worn, each of us is unique because each one of us is the sum total of all our life experiences. That is the lens through which the light of God shines. Some people's lenses are clearer than other people's. In some highly spiritual people like Gandhi and Mother Theresa, the veil between their personality and spirit is so thin one can see right through it. There are others in life who are more challenging, and we have a difficult time seeing the truth of who they are. Yet that is where the lessons are, where it is difficult to see the truth of who someone is. My personality can get ensnared in their personality.

My awareness is that there is no end to all of this. You don't get "there." The journey and the growth and the transformation are continual. God and love and truth and life are always evolving and growing in ways that are mysterious. Yet they are evolving in ways that we can be aware of every moment every day. Remember who you are, and by remembering who you are remember the truth of who other beings are as well, no matter what other beings may look or appear like. Beyond thought, beyond judgment, beyond healing - - remember who you are. Know that this transformational journey is not something we've done many times before. The journey this time is going deeper and deeper into the truth of who you are and into who everyone else is. We are all united in life, love, grace, and truth. May all beings be at peace, may all beings be free of suffering, and may all beings remember who they are.

PHOTO: Canstock Photos_ Aniszewski



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.

INFLAMMATION: HOW TO PUT OUT THE FIRE

Victoria Snelling, DC, DHM, DFM

If you've ever sprained an ankle, you've experienced acute inflammation. Believe it or not, inflammation has a useful purpose in the body and the immune system sets it in motion. Inflammation comes with heat, redness, and swelling. Infection and injury will both result in inflammation. If you've had a sinus infection, or if you've ever sprained an ankle, you've experienced inflammation. A healthy immune system will produce symptoms to contain the damage and start the healing process.



Chronic inflammation is a different thing altogether. It can develop when infections or injuries fail to completely resolve. Chronic inflammation tends to lead to disease such as in the joints and the gastrointestinal tract. The following are ways to lower inflammation in your body.

- **STRESS.** Balancing your work time with recreation and rest can help pull the plug on stress. Seek out a coach or other professional to assist you in lowering the stress, if needed.
- **CHRONIC PHYSICAL STRESS OR OLD INJURIES** can leave behind weak tissue. Consider chiropractic, massage or physical therapy, and stretching and strengthening the tissues with pilates, yoga, etc.
- **DIGESTIVE ISSUES** such as indigestion, cramping, diarrhea, constipation, and flora imbalance can cause chronic inflammation. It is crucial to get your gut in order to reduce inflammation.

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- **AVOID HIGH GLUCOSE LEVELS.** Check your blood sugar and A1C. Avoid too much grain (especially refined grains such as white bread, pasta, or rice). Keep sugar and alcohol low. Go easy on fructose (fruit sugar).
- **POOR QUALITY FOODS.** Avoid hydrogenated oils, seed oils, and refined foods. Choose organic whenever possible. Avoid anything genetically modified.
- **FOOD ALLERGIES AND INTOLERANCES.** Consider a food allergy (blood) test or at least a 4- day rotation of the foods you eat.
- **HORMONES.** Check thyroid, male hormones, female hormones, cortisol, and insulin. Balancing these important hormones can make a big difference in how well you feel. C-reactive protein is a great marker for inflammation.
- **CHEMICALS AND TOXINS.** Avoid plastics and plasticizers, lawn and garden chemicals, solvents, air fresheners, many cosmetics, some additives to municipal water, and mold
- **HIDDEN INFECTIONS.** Test for Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses, Epstein-Barr virus, herpes, etc. These are treatable!
- **AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES** always carry the burden of chronic inflammation.

Seek out the type of care that can help reverse your symptoms. The body is wonderfully powerful, and it can handle more than we give it credit for!

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

Note: As always, consult your health care practitioner before any changes.

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IDA BEA WELLS 1862-1931

Awesome Author, Public Speaker, and Leader of Civil Rights Groups and Women's Crusade for the Vote.

Ida was born just when slavery was abolished, but abuse was still rampant. She did receive a basic education. At the age of fourteen she started her teaching career, then two years later her parents died of yellow fever. Then she continued to teach in order to support her brothers and sisters. She started actively writing to express her views of the cruel abuses and inequalities against the blacks. Her writings were published in various magazines and publications at the time, and she later became co-owner and editor of the Memphis Newspaper "Free Speech."

She was one of the founders of NAACP (National Association of Colored People) at the turn of the 20th Century. She traveled across the United States as well as to Europe public speaking to expose the injustices against the African Americans throughout the South.

She married *Ferdinand Barnett* who was a lawyer. They raised four children. *Ida often was nursing a baby as she traveled on her lecture tours.* One day when Ida was traveling by train, she bought a first-class ticket. When she boarded the train, the conductor told her she had to move because the first-class section was for white people only. Ida refused to move but was forced to leave her seat. She sued the train company and won \$500 (a very large amount of money at the time). Unfortunately, the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned the decision later.

Ida's powerful writings and speaking against the lynchings of African Americans had a great impact in lowering the number of lynchings that were occurring throughout the South. She worked with Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois to fight discrimination and segregation laws.

She founded the first black women's suffrage association in 1913 called the Alpha Suffrage Club. In 1910 she founded and was the first president of the Negro Fellowship League which aided newly arrived migrants from the South. She was an active leader in the National Afro-American Council. She clearly was an impressive leader and an important part of our history. Photo from Public Domain.



THE NATURE OF LOSS, What Can Help?

By Elsa Lichman, Waltham, Mass., MSW, LICSW

There has been massive loss of life in our country and beyond during the past year and a half because of Covid 19 and from other diseases. This has left many people mourning. Maybe you have experienced this. How can we support ourselves or the people we care about during times of deep grieving when a loved one dies? I want to share with you about my recent experience of profound loss and then explore with you what has been providing me some comfort in my time of deep grief. Perhaps some of things that have been helping to support me would be helpful to you if you are experiencing loss, or to help you support a friend who may be in deep mourning over the loss of a loved one.

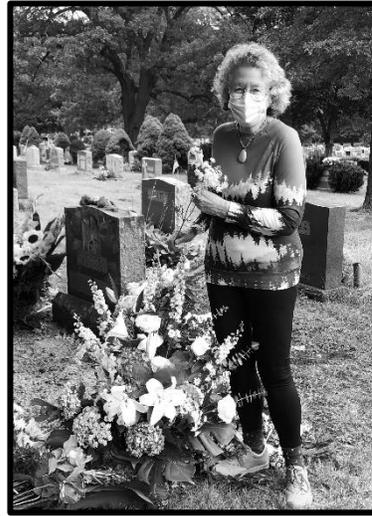
I have lost both parents, my sister, my beloved pet of 23 years, my special aunt, my family home, and at times my health, but never a loss like this. A day-to-day companion is gone, rather suddenly, taken by heart disease at 76. It seems young. He struggled to stay alive at the end. The Welsh poet Dylan Thomas wrote: "Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

Everything has his name on it: the fountain in the new playground, my apple tree loaded with thousands of fruits, the chair in the kitchen, the empty driveway, the front porch steps, the old cantilevered rocker in the yard, the Adirondack chair, Hannaford's Market, CVS.

We spent hours of delightful birding and watching wildlife at the Mt. Feake cemetery and met a lot of birder friends there, including some good friends who stayed the course. I can hardly bear to go back there to his grave, yet the day after the burial I muster a small group of friends and perform my own ceremony amongst a sumptuous array of flowers. I read him my long personal eulogy, and say Kaddish, my traditional prayer for the deceased. This prayer never mentions death, just the glory of God, and its ancient rhythms sound out like a deep connection to past centuries, past generations. Everyone at the cemetery, especially the Assistant Superintendent of Parks and Cemeteries, is helpful. No stranger to loss himself, he is very kind.

My partner was particularly outgoing, friendly, and vigorous, known to so many people. He was a Walthamite (lived in the town of Waltham) since birth and had buddies to be hailed on their porches all over town. He was a generous birder, sharing information and showing respectful newcomers the bounty and richness of our wildlife. I keep hearing from people of all ages how he opened their world to the wonders all around them, if only they looked. He spent much of his life in the deep woods, fishing, hunting, ice fishing, trekking, skiing, snowshoeing, maple sugaring, walking for miles with that particular stride.

I open my prayer book and find a poetic revelation, The Pond in Winter: " Standing on the snow covered plain, as if in a pasture amid the hills, I cut my way first through a foot of snow, and then a



over our heads."

Many others have suffered this particular kind of loss, but I don't think I really got it until now. The familiar pattern of day-to-day life is shattered, everything is changed in that instant of passing. Broken shards of a life remain to be sorted out, somehow a new path created, and yet one wonders how.



A Few Suggestions for a Person in Mourning

Stay in close touch with friends and loved ones. Spend time in nature. Listen to peaceful uplifting music, meditate. Read comforting uplifting inspirational books. Get a massage. Join a bereavement group, go to church

A Few Suggestions for Supporting a Person in Mourning

Keep in regular contact with the person in mourning with phone calls and visits. Listen to them express their feelings, be there for them. Listen to them even if they say some of the same things over and over. Let the person know that people care, and don't leave them alone too much. Know that the person may be hesitant to ask for help, so do some things for them even if they haven't asked. Take walks with the person. Bring over some food. Acknowledge what the person says, so they know you really hear and understand their words. Take them to sit by a peaceful lake or river. Bring a flowing plant that will continue to give joy over time.

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: Center photo is of Elsa with Frank Peace. Upper right photo is Elsa at Frank's funeral.

MINDFULNESS BELLS

By Barb Vasiloff and Michael Reitz

A wealthy businessman invited his secretary and her family to his country home for the weekend. One evening the businessman treated the family to a local restaurant. As they walked along, the man spotted something on the pavement and bent down to pick it up. The secretary noticed. It looked like a dirty coin to her. She wondered why such a wealthy man would bother to pick up money from the street. While they waited for their order to be served, she casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection and asked if the coin he had found had been of some value. A smile crept across the man's face. He reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. "What does it say?" he asked. "United States of America" she replied. "What else?" "One cent". "Anything else?" "In God we trust." "And that is why I picked up the penny. Every time I find one, I stop for just a moment and ask myself if I trust that I am right where God wants me to be. "You know," he said, "ever since I started doing this, I seem to find pennies in the most unusual places." (Unknown author) This businessman found his mindfulness bell.

In Buddhist monasteries, the mindfulness bell serves to remind people to begin their mindfulness practice. It is rung at the beginning of formal meditation sessions and throughout the day to encourage people to be present no matter what they're doing, whether chopping wood or fetching water. Church bells have been used for centuries to call devotees to stop for a moment and think of their God. Muslims have their call to prayer several times a day from the top of their mosque. It can be heard throughout the city. The question is, what do we practitioners of meditation have to call us to our breath and ground us in the present moment so we become fully aware, fully awake, fully active?

Thich Nhat Hanh recommends that we find objects, sounds and activities from our daily life to become our mindfulness bells. When our phone rings instead of answering immediately, we can condition ourselves to take a few mindful breaths before answering. The traffic light that turns red, the sound of a car horn, or the siren's ring can all make us pause. Each time we pass by a lit candle or oil lamp in our home, the flame can remind us to stop and breathe.

It is easy to find triggers or bells in nature and beauty. But, how about that annoying bird that wakes us with an unpleasant sound? Or those dandelions that pop up in our freshly mowed lawn? Or that person that irks us before they even speak because we know how they express themselves and their thoughts differ from ours? These too can serve as mindfulness bells if we recognize them as past responses that we can change. Our



reaction to what disturbs us can become positive each time we stop and breathe. This practice is a conditioning, a discipline at first that later becomes a habit.

Stopping to encounter beauty - - a bird, a feather on the ground, unexpected and beautiful music - - may lead to another step in meditation called contemplation. The activist poet Wendell Berry and poets for centuries have turned their meditation to contemplation of life. The beautiful book written by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *Gifts From The Sea*, is a result of her contemplation on sea shells.

May all of us remember to stop, breathe, and ground ourselves in the present moment and be in the spacious reality of all that is. To extend the practice into daily life, we create mindfulness bells. What do you look, see or listen for to extend the practice in your daily life?

BREATH IS PRAYER & BREATH IS HEALING

Author: Michael Reitz – Michael@mcreizt.com

Companion books with simple practices for the healing of the mind, body and spirit.

BREATH IS PRAYER. Reflection Booklet. **Overview:** At your birth, everyone waited in anticipation for your first breath. Your breath connects you to this life from birth till death. We take this connection of breathing for granted. Mindful breathing grounds us in the here and now. Mindful breathing is health giving for yourself and all around you. Breathe in and breathe out with intention. (42-page 7½ x 3 in).

BREATH IS HEALING. Focusing on our breath is a way of becoming aware of life. We make breath a vehicle of prayer, inspiration, love, compassion and healing. Awareness of our breathing helps us focus on our responses to life's pain. We embrace the healing response for the good of ourselves and other people in our lives. In *Breath Is Healing*, (43 pages, 7½ x 3 in.) you will walk through many situations where healing is required and attention to your breath will help you heal.

DISCIPLINE WITH PURPOSE: Nurturing a

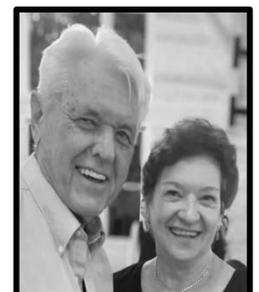
Child's Self-Discipline, **Author:** Barbara Vasiloff, MARE, Founder

of "Discipline With Purpose" and author of,

"*Nurturing a Child's Self Discipline*."

dwpbv@aol.com. This book for educators and parents describes self-discipline in simple terms so that independent skill practice can begin as early as age five. The suggestions for teaching 15 self-discipline skills include factual information, experiential exercises, poetry, songs and stories that illustrate the skills in action. Available on Amazon and at www.selfdisciplinedwp.com.

PHOTO: Canstock Photo_Kirillvasilevcom



GRATITUDE CAN ENHANCE OUR JOY & HAPPINESS

Kimberly LaFollette, Psy.D.

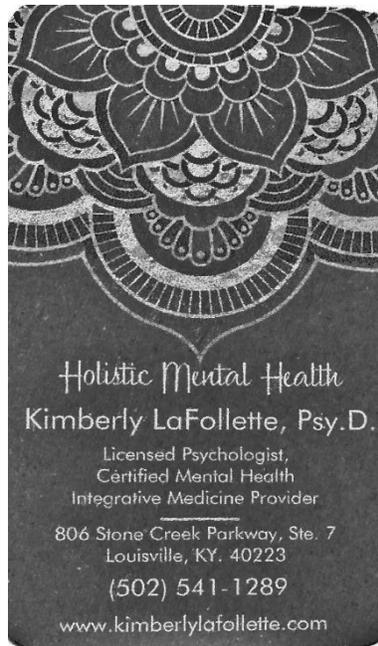
Over the past month I have found myself overwhelmed with gratitude. Even in the most mundane moments, I have found myself in awe of the beauty of ordinary things. The moments that were out of reach last year have been slowly finding their way back into my life. My extended family sitting around my dining room table, sharing laughs with good friends, seeing the actual faces of others as I pass them on the street. All of the things that I took for granted in the past have suddenly been made precious.

The joy I am now experiencing reminds me that beautiful things can be born from trauma and hardship. Of course, as a psychologist, I know this. However, as a human being, I sometimes forget. In the midst of trying times, it is difficult to remember that good things are brewing. Sometimes it is the actual hardship that forces positive change upon us and at other times, the hardship itself causes us to pay attention to blessings that already exist. Either way, hard times have a way of shaking things up and providing new perspectives.

In therapy, I often have clients ask me the secret to happiness. My answer is always the same. Practice gratitude. Numerous studies prove that people who engage in a daily gratitude practice are happier. In fact, it is possible to rewire your brain and become happier in just 30 days by keeping a gratitude journal. It seems that by paying attention to what makes you happy, you get happier. What you focus on grows.



So how do you practice gratitude? A simple way is to keep a journal. The most effective gratitude practice is to write down 5 things that you are grateful for at the end of each day. This can be done in a simple bulleted list, or it could be written out more formally. The important thing is that you note 5 different experiences every day. They do not have to be monumental events; it can be as simple as a delicious piece of fruit you ate or a text from a friend. The most important thing is that you are paying attention to the blessings in your life. What you will find is the more you practice gratitude, the more you will notice these enjoyable moments.



By paying attention to each precious moment in my life, I am filled with gratitude. My hope is that you will be too. Even now, with many stressors and unknowns in our future, if you just pause and be mindful of the events taking place around you, you will find

there are blessings all around. Once you train your brain to notice them, they are not hard to find. After the year we have endured and all of the uncertainty ahead, we all deserve some joy.



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.



PHOTOS: Friends Walking, Unsplash, Priscilla DuPreez. Family Dinner, Canstock, Monkey Business.

Note: As Dr. LaFollette mentions, there is uncertainty ahead. The Delta variant of the Coronavirus is spreading and is more contagious than the form we have had.

WHY CHIROPRACTIC? PAIN VS. WELLNESS, Dr. Richard Reul

Why do most people turn to chiropractic care? The simple answer is Pain! Typically, it is musculoskeletal pain that limits someone's ability to perform normal activities. Neck pain, low back pain, thoracic pain, headaches and sciatica are the general reasons people "resort" to chiropractic. In this article, I hope to expand your horizons on why you might want to seek out chiropractic care. I have been in practice for 27 years.... Wow!... how time flies! I am passionate about chiropractic and about educating people about the hidden gem that chiropractic is! The true essence of chiropractic is unknown to 99 percent of the population. It has been frustrating to know that most people will never experience the benefits of chiropractic care because of their limited knowledge of what it is.

I will start with the biggest misconception about chiropractic. Chiropractors do not treat pain! Chiropractors do not treat anything! Now those seem like radical statements! But let me explain. Chiropractors are trained to locate what are called subluxations. Very simply put, subluxations are blockages that cause interference with the normal messages that are transmitted from the brain, through to spinal cord and through nerves that come out of the spinal column. The nervous system is the main controlling system of the body. If there is interference within the spinal system, your body is compromised on some level. You are not firing on all cylinders! People's nervous systems are compromised to varying degrees. I often describe it as someone having "cobwebs" in their nervous system. If subluxations are removed, interference in the nervous system is reduced and the body becomes more in tune! True chiropractic is focused on reducing tension in the nervous system. This enhances the tone of your nervous system and improves your body's performance on all levels. Nerves not only go to your muscles. Every organ, tissue and cell are affected by nervous system flow. So, along with a reduction in pain, there can be significant improvement in organic complaints.

Subluxations are caused by three forms of stress.... physical, emotional and chemical. Many times, there is a direct correlation between an event and subsequent pain. Physical stress is the easiest to relate to. Falls, lifting, bending, twisting, car accidents are often direct causes of nerve interference and pain. In my experience, it is emotional and chemical stress that have a greater impact on the nervous system. Our nervous system is designed to respond to stress and reset once the stressor has passed. Take, for instance, the fight or flight response. When danger is sensed, your nervous system goes into defensive mode. Your muscles tense up, heart rate and blood pressure increase, pupils dilate, etc. When the danger passes, your body relaxes and returns to homeostasis. But if a stressor is overwhelming {physical, chemical,



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or emotional}, sometimes you don't fully recover or reset. Some of the response that was appropriate at the time gets stuck in your system. Layers of muscle tension can accrue leaving you less flexible to deal with future stresses. If your nervous system is stuck in a pattern of response, your body is compromised. It becomes like a computer feedback loop. Unless you reboot the computer, the messages stay the same. Chiropractic adjustments help your nervous system reboot, letting go of responses that may have been appropriate in the past, but are not applicable to your current situation. Chemical stressors include diet, drugs and alcohol, medications and pollution in the environment. Again, we have a whole history of stress which can have a cumulative effect.

So, chiropractic is not about pain primarily. It is about wellness. It is about reducing interference in the nervous system so that your body can function at its peak performance on all levels. It is a back door approach. Although chiropractic does not treat symptoms, it taps into your body's own ability to heal itself. If subluxations are removed, your body is able to heal from the inside out! People's presenting complaints of pain improve along with general health. I am excited when chiropractic helps reduce pain. But I am more excited when people report better sleep, breathing, digestion, less anxiety, less depression, better focus, less general tension, etc. In short, my goal is to help people reach optimal health & well-being.

You do not have to be in pain to benefit from chiropractic care. Typically, symptoms appear after years of tension and stress building up. People adapt to the next level of "dis-ease" or discomfort. As long as their activities are not greatly affected, they are content to roll with it. Most people do not realize how bad they actually feel. By reducing tension and stress in the nervous system, chiropractic care can help people find a new normal, enhancing the quality of their lives. Pain is what brings people to my door. Chiropractic care can certainly help reduce pain. But, the ultimate goal is to facilitate wellness on all levels. If you are interested in learning more, go to reulchiropractic.com or torquerelease.com.

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.

Profound Connection and Wonderment

Bill Kannen

I walk out onto the balcony,
look around, notice a visitor.
He sits there
perfectly centered,
perfectly still,
patiently waiting.



I approach to take a closer look;
am awestruck by his creation.
How does he do it?
Where does intelligence come from?

I contemplate the work before me.
I study his art and engineering.
Tethered at four equidistant coordinates,
an upper and lower support structure that is reminiscent
of a suspension bridge, with its
characteristic support lines perfectly spaced.
How does he know those support lines are crucial to the
integrity of the structure?

I studied the center by counting how many times he
replicated the pattern.
There were around 40.
I marvel at the perfection of it all.
Again, I wonder "Where does intelligence reside?"

Everything originates from a thought.
Is it totally within him?
Or somehow outside of him?
Or a combination of the two?
If outside, who is directing the project?
Who has the blueprints?
Where are they stored?
Who designed the mechanism for manufacturing the
building material in real time?

The next day, I go out to check on my new friend.
He has relocated his device,
anchored the lower support lines to new locations.
One to a patio chair. The other to my portable grill.

Why did he take the time and energy to do this?
I am amazed at how sturdy it is.
The whole structure from what I could tell,
compared to his previous setup,
a much more difficult and complicated job,
the new distances substantially greater and harder to get
to. Impervious to the wind, it was at times violently
whipped back and forth.
How does it not fly apart?

Then it dawns on me.
The new structure is at a better angle,

wind does not affect it as much! Remarkable!

I marvel at his ability to improvise and adapt.
However, there is one major problem with this new
design.
He did not factor in the human element.
Me, of course.
If anyone were to accidentally (or deliberately) move the
chair, or worse walk in between him and the grill, his
world would be ripped apart in an instant.

This is not good.
He certainly did not plan on this!
I did not plan on this!
I secretly wonder if he's messing with me.
I tell myself that I have to be mindful.
I do not want to disturb his masterpiece.

Another day goes by.
I go outside.
He's still there.
Perfectly centered.
Perfectly still.
Patiently waiting.

The next day I go out again to check on things.
I am happy because I see all is in perfect order.
He seems to be thriving.
I sit down to read a book on the patio chair.
The book consumes my attention.
An hour goes by.
Nature calls.
I need to go in.
I get up and a few steps later.....
.....Oh NO!
The damage is done!
DESTROYED!!!

I feel horrible.
Is he pissed at me for destroying his world?
I apologize to him.
I wonder if he hears me.
I go back inside,
head hanging low.

Later that day, I venture out to assess the damage.
Amazed again!
Completely rebuilt from scratch!
How did he do that so quickly?
I am happy he is back to normal.

Another week goes by,
we get ready to go back home from our vacation world.
One last check.
He's still there!
Perfectly centered.
Perfectly still.
Patiently waiting.

Bill is a retired resident of Oberlin, Ohio. He and his wife Jody have 3 grown children. He enjoys reading, music, biking, and contemplating the mysteries of the universe.

IMPORTANT ROLE OF ENERGY HEALING IN THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF THE SOUL

Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

The purpose of our being on Earth is to grow and learn the Spiritual lessons of compassion, peace, being of service for the higher good of our fellow humanity, and being excellent caretakers for our precious planet. This is true whether a person feels that he or she as a soul comes into physical form only once -- or has a series of lifetimes experiencing the "schoolhouse" of planet Earth. It is intended that we enjoy our life, but also that we learn how to be more and more loving and wise. The people that we have around us are there for a reason for us to interact with in learning our Soul lessons. It may be pleasant, or it may be stressful. Either way we need to be as conscious as possible in handling every situation that comes up. It is important to not just immediately assume we have nothing to learn in the situation. Let's be reflective to try to clarify for ourselves what really are the dynamics of what is happening. Can we make it better by adjusting our behavior? Maybe if we act more assertive in a polite way with an individual, he or she will be more respectful. Or maybe if we act more compassionate that will bring a better response. It can be a subtle matter to improve relations with someone and it may require some Soul searching. It helps to remember that we are learning valuable lessons as we go through this process, and to not immediately run away from the situation and reject it before we give it a chance to resolve itself peacefully if possible. Of course, if the interaction is dangerous, then immediately take appropriate action to protect yourself and your loved ones.

You may ask yourself, what does this have to do with energy healing? It has a great deal to do with energy healing. Often, what causes difficult interactions with another person is emotional energy blocks within oneself, or within the other person, or both. Is that a surprise to you, or does it make sense? Often when there are unpleasant or challenging snags in the flow of our day, they may be activated because some old stuck emotion is being triggered. One may think, what a drag! Those old emotions should just stay out of my current life and let me be. It would be nice if they would, but they have a way of resurfacing whenever a somewhat similar situation triggers them. They are really just looking to be healed and released -- and to leave you with enhanced peaceful clarity.

How do we do that? How can we let go of our old emotional blocks, so they won't keep re-manifesting situations that cause us to get emotionally off balance? We may think, "I don't want to do that anymore." When we are ready to let go of some old emotional trauma, we can begin to explore those feelings associated with it. It may help to journal write about the feelings. As you breathe in your nose, imagine you are breathing into the area of your body where you feel stuck or tight. That can help to begin to loosen up the stuck feelings somewhat. This may begin to intensify the feelings held there. Really feel the feelings that come up, having the intention to let them go. It is not a matter of letting the old feelings pull us down



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or to get depressed with them, but rather to explore them as described earlier in this article. What can we learn from the situation? Did we contribute to the situation, even if only in a small way? What were the characteristics of the other people in the situation? What was your relationship like with that person or persons? What did they do that traumatized you? Do you want to avoid people like that in the future or at least try to avoid a situation like that with people similar to them?

Those are all questions that it's important that we explore for ourselves and perhaps with a therapist or healer. Exploring these questions and really feeling our insights prepares the stuck energy blockages to heal and move. When working with an energy healer, he or she can be channeling in fresh healing energy while you are talking about the feelings. This can be a very powerful combination and speeds up the process immeasurably. For many years I have been providing this type of energy healing combined with emotional exploration of the issues. Bringing in the energy healing such as Reiki along with the emotional soul searching for life lessons learned, a person can go to the heart of the matter more readily without experiencing as much heart ache. The purpose of the session becomes rather to understand and learn possible soul lessons held encapsulated in the frozen energy. Working with one's own enhanced intuition within the energy healing session and with the healer's intuition, one may realize that the person/s or situation involved in the current traumatic memory may also symbolize someone who traumatized oneself earlier in life -- even childhood. It can be a matter of following the thread of feelings back to an earlier experience that may have been sort of forgotten but may be triggering current interactions with some people that remind one of that old event. Energy healing can greatly facilitate this healing process and help release oneself to a freer life path forward on one's soul journey.

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 numerous natural healing modalities including Reiki. She is author of the book "Secrets of Wisdom -- Awakening to the Miracle of You" and is publisher/editor of the Natural Living Journal. She is a Holistic Life Coach, Counselor, and Energy Therapist. Weekly Zoom meditation available. Louisville office or Zoom individual sessions, see ad. . www.joycegerrish.com



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DELICIOUS GREEK CREAMY SAUCE WITH PITA BREAD OR FRESH RAW VEGGIES *by Barbara Bosler*

While traveling recently I was introduced to a delicious sauce...tzatziki. It is a creamy garlicky Greek sauce to be served alongside fresh veggies or pita bread. It is an excellent sandwich dressing. I love it on my homemade veggie burgers. You can use less garlic if you prefer. Try it as a substitute for mayonnaise in egg salad or top your baked potato with it. Get creative.

- 3/4 English cucumber peeled and sliced
 - 1 tsp kosher salt
 - 4 to 5 (or less) garlic cloves peeled and minced or use a press.
 - 1 tsp white vinegar
 - 1 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 cups Greek yogurt (you can use fat free, 2% or full fat.
 - 1/4 tsp fresh ground pepper (preferably white)
- Do your family, yourself & our planet a favor & use organic.

In a food processor (worth the money) grate the cucumber. Toss with salt.... transfer to a fine mesh strainer to drain...you can squeeze dry in a paper towel too. Set aside in a mixing bowl, place garlic with the remaining 1/2 tsp salt, white vinegar, and olive oil. Mix to combine. Add grated cucumber with garlic mixture, stir in yogurt and pepper. Cover and place in the refrigerator for a couple hours. When time to serve, stir the Tzatziki sauce and place in a serving bowl. Drizzle a little olive oil on it, and serve with warm pita bread and/or fresh crisp veggies. A delicious stir in is a TBSP or so of fresh dill or fresh mint. However creative you are cookingenjoy your time in the kitchen.

Happy cooking
Barbara



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