

Natural Living Journal

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

Vol. 7 Issue 6 **READ FREE ON-LINE** www.naturallivingjournal.com Dec. 2022- Jan. 2023

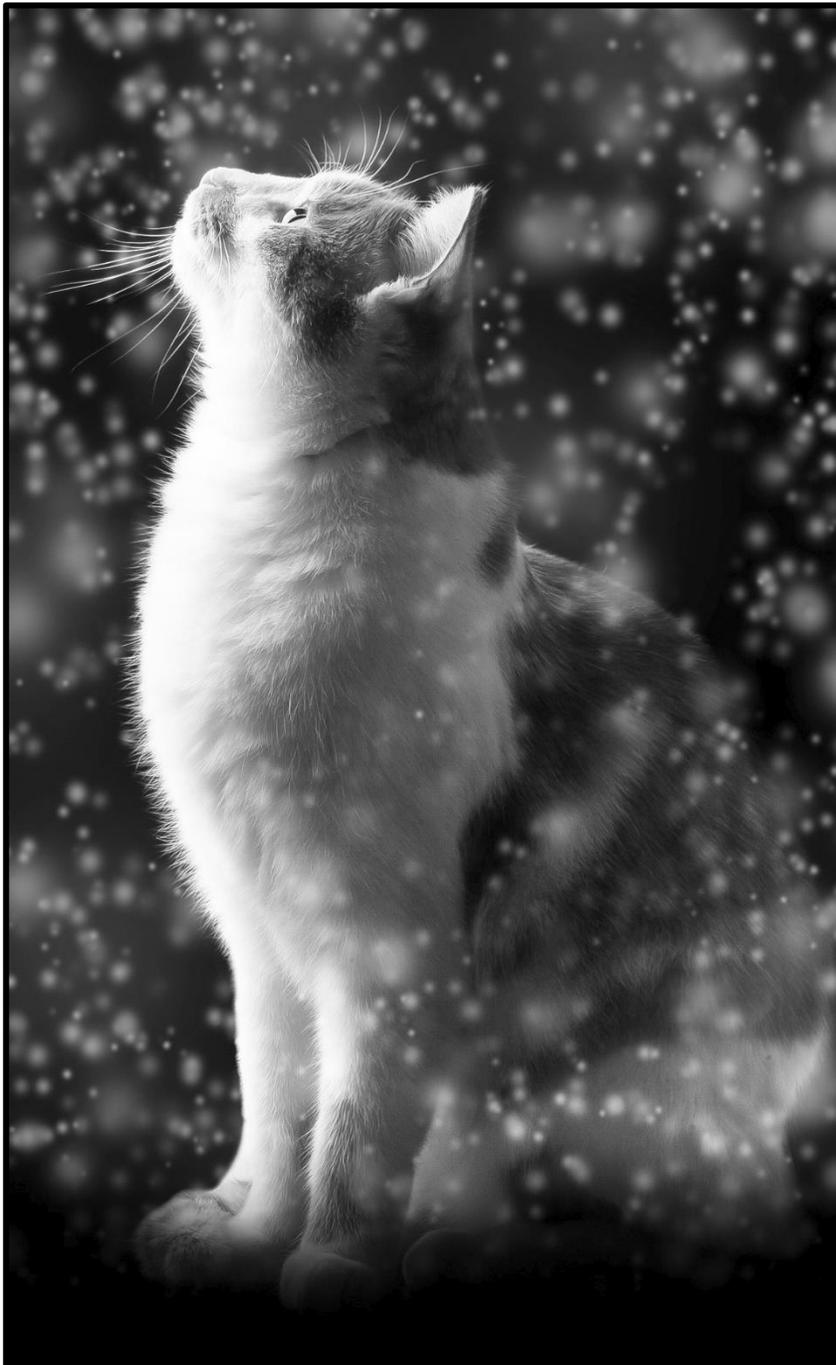


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**Accessing Higher
Consciousness & Next
Step of Soul Mission**

**Overcoming Fear with
Alateen**

**The Unfoldment:
Release, Renew, Rebirth**

**Staying More Youthful,
Active, and Alert**

Understanding Our Part

**The Exuberant Act of
Self Love**

**Oncology Massage as
Palliative Care**

**Huge Gentle Eastern
Pacific Gray Whales**

Spiritual Inertia

**Preparation for Surgery
& Lessening Possible
Side Effects from
Anesthesia**

Dawn Light, Poem

**Natural Foods Books
Recommendation**

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Mission Statement

Natural Living Journal encourages people to live in harmony with the wholeness of their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. We encourage all to live in harmony with each other, with our precious planet and all aspects of nature, and with the Divine. This journal is independent of any organization and is not affiliated with nor advocates any specific religion or political ideation. We support natural holistic health care practices, and we seek to work in harmony with the medical field. Our deep purpose is to foster wisdom, peace, joy, creativity, co-operation, love, ecology and sustainability, inclusiveness, wholesome adventure, stewardship, community service, natural abundance, and the arts.

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THE UNFOLDMENT .. Release, Renew, Rebirth

By Valerie Mansfield

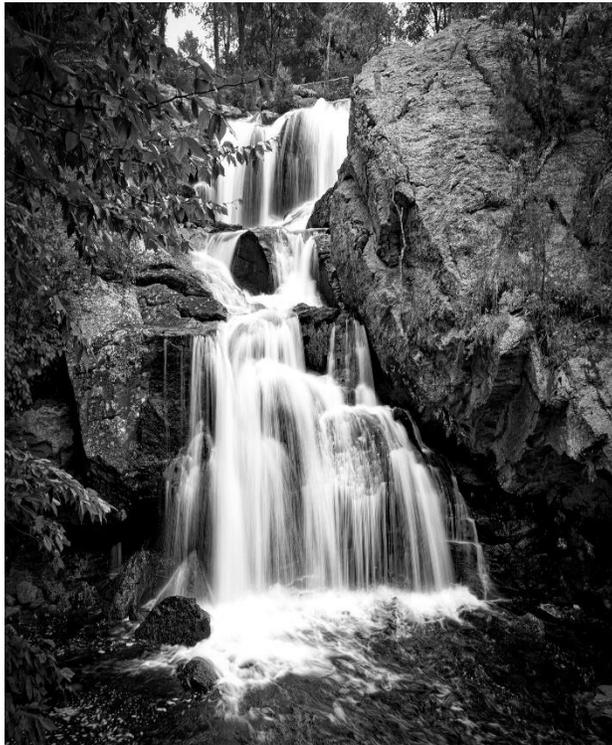
Every choice we make shifts our direction. Our choices close one door and open another. These single decisions in the now create impact in our future. Sometimes without even realizing, we are stepping in the right direction.

These redirections keep us in a life of unfoldment. I know for me I must trust in my higher self to lead the way into the unlimited potential that life offers. These last few years have been a great adventure, a paradigm shift in my life. I had to look and reach deep within to understand the stress I had been experiencing without even knowing it.

Self-care is something I have actively participated in and value. And yet it was not enough to release the accumulated stress I had manifested. It took a pandemic, a huge release and shift in my daily living, and time to release the accumulated stress.

I know meditation can eradicate the physical and mental effects of stress. I am enjoying finding new ways to be still while listening to my body or feeling my emotions. Yoga is one of my favorite ways to actively participate in my healing process. I love to dance so moving to the beat of music is therapeutic. Journaling my thoughts is another way I can release the chaotic thoughts stirring in my mind. I love to doodle and create simple black and white patterns. Those are great ways to allow my mind to release the stress of the day.

There are moments when I sit still in the silence. There is magic in the room when I am one with all. Unplugging from the constant waves of sound, light and chaos of daily living brings me the greatest insight to understanding my way through the unfoldment of the ever-changing aspects of life. Each moment brings a vast awareness of the true meaning of life. This time of year, when the days are shorter and darkness moves in -- finding the light within heals the mind, body, and soul. There is an opportunity to



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understand where you are, what is no longer serving in your life and allowing for release, renewal, and rebirth. Knowing when one door closes another opens, and the unfoldment of you continues in little and big ways along the path of life.

What is unfolding for you in this New Year? Go within...find what is no longer serving you...Let Go...and allow the unfoldment to carry you to new heights of living.

BIO: Reverend Valerie Mansfield is Senior Minister at Unity of East Louisville Church and is the Treasurer of Unity Worldwide Ministry. She is also a Life Coach & Holistic Healer. She is manifesting a new enterprise "Pathways to Harmony" which is a twofold operation. (1) It's an opportunity for individuals to bring harmony, clarity and understanding to their daily life. Families work together to bring harmony, peace, and love to the forefront of the family dynamics through Conscious Connections. (2) Consulting for non-profits and small businesses focusing on harmony, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Her mission in life is to create a harmonious, loving, conscious experience daily. She is a lifelong Unity Truth Student and welcomes you to join her on a spiritual journey of harmony, love, and transformation. She lives with her husband Bruce of 40 years & loves time with her children & grandchildren



Photo: David Mark of Pixabay

STAYING MORE YOUTHFUL, ACTIVE & ALERT

By Dr. Lisa Tostado, ND

Aging is a natural part of life. We are fortunate to live at a time where life expectancy is at one of its highest. However, with increasing age, comes a greater risk for developing chronic health issues, including hearing loss, cataracts, osteoarthritis, heart disease, diabetes, depression, stroke, and dementia.

So how can we help ensure that we stay healthy during all parts of our lives? The good news is that we are not at the whim of our genetics or our biological age. There are other factors that influence our longevity and health outcomes. Here is a list of recommendations you can follow to help you live your best life and enjoy your senior years.

Eat an anti-inflammatory, whole foods diet – although aging is inevitable, the quality of your years largely depends on the fuel you feed your body. A whole foods diet low in added sugar with minimally processed ingredients provides a good foundation for health. Furthermore, a diet rich in plant antioxidants can protect your cells from the damaging effects of toxins, radiation, and free radicals. These foods include cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, bok choy, arugula, Brussels sprouts, collards, etc.) , leafy greens, berries, citrus fruits, and seeds. Support your brain and memory with healthy fats such as avocados, raw nuts, olive oil, and coconut oil. Be sure to incorporate lean sources of protein like legumes, beans, and wild caught fish to help maintain muscle mass. Incorporate herbs and spices such as turmeric, oregano, rosemary, and thyme into your meals. They also provide antioxidants and can enhance your well-being.

Get enough sleep – as we age, it can become more difficult to get the sleep we need. Sleep affects many aspects of health including our brain function, mood balance and immune system. If you are getting less than optimal sleep (7-8 hrs. of uninterrupted sleep), then you may want to work with a health care practitioner to identify any underlying issues. You can also start with making some simple changes to your bedtime routine. Turn off all screens at least 1 hour before bed and make your bedtime a ritual. Be sure to keep your room dark and cool. You can also consult with a natural health care practitioner to see if you can benefit from taking sleep promoting herbs such as valerian, skullcap, passionflower, and kava. Minerals such as calcium and magnesium can have positive impacts on sleep as well.

Stay active – it is important that you keep moving throughout your life. Regular movement helps maintain healthy muscles, bones, and joints. Adults 65 years and older need at least 150 minutes a



Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D.

Naturopathic Doctor

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week of moderate intensity activity. An example would be 30 minutes of brisk walking 5 days a week. It is also important to incorporate stretching exercises. As you age, it is natural to lose some elasticity in your tendons, and ligaments, as well as

experience some joint restriction. However, a regular stretching routine will improve mobility, balance, and keep the body more limber.

Supplementing for good health: as you get older, it may become more difficult to chew and/or digest your foods. Bitter herbs and digestive enzymes can help ensure you are breaking down your food more sufficiently. It is a good rule of thumb to take a multivitamin and mineral complex to help fill in any gaps lacking from the diet or due to any malabsorption issues. In addition to these, supplementing with omega-3 fatty acids from cod liver oil, fish oil, and flax seed oil helps to support brain health and memory.

In addition to the above, it is good to get regular check-ups and have annual blood work done. Be sure to get your vitamin D levels checked regularly, as well as B12, folic acid and iron. As you get older you are more prone to deficiencies. You should also be getting regular health screenings such as eye exams, skin checks and bone scans.

Note: Please be sure to consult with your doctor before making any changes to your health regimen.

Bio: Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D. graduated from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, in Tempe, Arizona; one of the leading accredited naturopathic medical schools in the U.S. Inspired by the early pioneers in whole food nutrition, Dr. Tostado decided to complete the CCWFN program in 2016 with the International Foundation for Nutrition and Health. She has been a resident of Louisville, KY for the past 14 years. Her office is at Louisville Lifestyle Medicine, 3012 Eastpoint Pkwy., Louisville, KY 40223.

Photo: DANCING AS EXERCISE. Andrey Popov of Canstock.



NATURAL LIVING JOURNAL SEEKS MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND ANGEL VOLUNTEERS

- *The current Owner /Publisher (Joyce Gerrish) seeks likeminded compatible people to handle parts of the process of creating/maintaining/distributing the Natural Living Journal.*
- *The intention is for the Journal to continue in the same philosophy and outlook of encouraging natural well-being physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and encouraging environmental protection. (Please see p.2 Mission Statement.)*
- *Currently ALL money from the ads and donations goes directly to pay for printing the Journal, which is about \$740 for each issue every other month. It is possible that the Journal could turn a profit with more vigorous advertising outreach. (See p.2 current ad rates.)*
- *Publishing the Natural Living Journal has been and continues to be a tremendous privilege and joy to me as the current Publisher/Owner/Editor. I and many others feel that it is performing an important service for the holistic community in Louisville and beyond. I feel that our whole country and the entire planet Earth is going through massive change and transformation. The goal of Natural Living Journal is to help provide positive support, guidance, and inspiration for moving through this very unusual period wisely and for the highest good of all. We each have an important role to perform within our extended family and community for stabilizing and uplifting.*
- *If you feel called to be a part of this endeavor, please reach out and let me know. There are numerous important roles that need help. I can't attempt to continue doing as much as I have been for seven years. It needs to be a shared "labor of love." We are blessed to have some wonderful people helping with distribution, proofreading, checking grammar/punctuation, and helping to bring in excellent articles. I will keep doing the editing and layout.*

What we need now are:

- 1. Outreach for Ads and Donations***
- 2. Continuing Outreach for Awesome Articles***
- 3. Bookkeeping and Billing for Accounts Receivable (about 19 bills due every other month)***
- 4. Communication Person to Gently Update Authors & Advertisers on Crucial Timelines, Orient Those New to This Journal About Our Publishing Procedures, & Be Volunteer Co-ordinator. Keep Everything Humming Along Harmoniously.***

***HELP KEEP NATURAL LIVING
JOURNAL ALIVE AND FULFILLING
ITS MISSION!*** Thank you, Joyce Gerrish, natural.living.journal@gmail.com

DAWN-LIGHT

By Michael Reitz

Dawn

When the power, the energy, the light rays, the Sun

You pierce the darkness,

flood the heavens,

burn off the haze, the fog, the blurred vision

of dew wet clouds.

Pierce me, flow over me, enlighten me

to the way of Dawn,

the way of life,

the path beneath the trees,

the over the mountain pass,

the path that circles globe earth,

the path into the universe,

the path into my mind – the head beyond the skull

where dawn-light and I area one.

Beyond hurried, beyond cluttered,

beyond jammed, crammed,

beyond beeping, honking, chatting,

beyond the noise, the clashing, the thrashing of cement
and steel,

yapping mouths fighting and arguing, beating nerves
to death.

Dawn, pierce me, flow over me, enlighten me

where dawn-light and I are one.



Bio: Michael authored eight books, fathered five grown children, retired from the city of Cleveland, taught in inner-city, suburban and Native American schools, had been an Officer in the United States Coast Guard, volunteered in India, Haiti and traveled through Indonesia. (michael@mcreitz.com)

THE EXUBERANT ACT OF SELF LOVE

By Leah Bomar, Author & Life Coach

As the season of holiday celebrations comes and goes, how can we sprinkle in the kind of self-love that carries us into a new year experiencing more peace, love and acceptance? Life is full of pleasure! How can we tap more into that feel good stream of abundance during a season that often afflicts many with sadness?

Perhaps it's practicing letting go of the very human tendency to



Leah Bomar Exuberant

always want and need to know 'what's wrong?' When we are constantly trying to figure out what's *wrong* in the world, what's *wrong* with our kids, what's *wrong* with our physical health or mental state, this indicates a lack of trust. Every experience that comes into our life is full of purpose and the possibility for expansion and growth.

Energetic laws dictate that what we focus on expands. So, if we are always lost in the habit of listing all the failing ailments of our health or only see the many problems in the world, *problems* are what expand in our realm of awareness and continue to manifest in real life. What we give our attention to less, becomes *less*.

Seek and celebrate people, places and things that light you up! Don't look too much in the 'wrong' direction. The past is a place of non-existence because it's over, and though we may still suffer the ramifications of our own decisions or experiences, we have the power in the present moment to look towards a new way of being. When we release pain and trauma to reclaim our energy, we can allow in the waves of change. Our inner world is reflected in the outer world around us.



anxiety, fear or worry. I allow myself to experience lots of gratitude,

We can retrain our brains to not panic, resist, or add emotion and further ruminating thoughts to every single person or experience we encounter. I use affirmations all day long to bring me back to the present moment and out of



WOW, and wonder. When I realize my own expectations are sabotaging my happiness, I try to simply accept what is. Sometimes we resist change and constantly think things are going 'wrong' with our life but really, often they are just going *differently* than what we planned or envisioned in our heads. When life goes differently than what we expected or contrasts with what was normal before, sometimes we freak out and go into 'fix-it' mode. Or we freeze and become stagnant in growth, unable to expand into the lesson life is presenting because of resistance.

What is self-love for you and how can you experience more of that on a regular basis? What your friend shares on social media as her self-care practice might not match what you need for your own personal deepening connection to self, spirit or others. You get to decide and design what self-love looks like for you. Take the down time away from your busy schedule to figure out what you really desire out of life. It may look different than anything you've ever done before or different than what everyone else is doing around you. Trust and follow those intuitive nudges. Take inspired action. Enjoy the ride! Master the art of feeling good.

Figure out ways to express exuberance in your life. The opposite of being depressed, disappointed, down, dull, heavy with grief, woe or anxiety is exuberance. The definition of exuberance is "the quality of being full of energy, excitement, and cheerfulness... the quality of growing profusely." Exuberance is classified as a noun, not just a feeling or descriptive adjective, it's a *thing*. Affirm 'I am an exuberant person.' Seek out people and places that fill you with hope, pleasure, positivity, empowerment and FUN. Come play.

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, taught elementary art and worked 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: Stock Snap of Pixabay. Guitarist: agness atalalaevo of Pixabay. Self Portrait, Leah Bomar

SPIRITUAL INERTIA

We Can Free Ourselves.

By Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

Inertia is a concept used in material world physics to express a sense of stuckness or more specifically “a state of rest, inaction, or straight-line motion that can only be changed by an external force.”

Inertia can be spiritual as well. Here I am with a deep willingness to change, and yet after a short time of concentrated effort, I find myself back in the old energy field of thinking and acting just as I did before. Probably one of the most recognizable examples is what you call New Year’s resolutions. After a short period of time of good intentions and even positive action, you may find yourself giving up and falling back into the old ways. That is a striking example of what we might call spiritual inertia.

You must be aware that these patterns of thought and behavior are invented and created by the small self/the ego consciousness which by its nature already lives in fear and separateness. What is being protected is actually fear and limitation and so there is no limit to the protection that aspect of you needs. The small self can become very dominant in your thinking and your identification.

If you were to imagine a smooth hillside and you were to release a ball and let it roll down the hill, it could take anyone of almost infinite pathways. Suppose you decided on a particular pathway for that ball to follow. By guiding the ball down a particular pathway, you create a groove that will now be an easier path to follow. This might be a useful metaphor for picturing the neural pathways in your mind.

After a pathway, or a reaction, has been agreed upon and practiced a number of times, then whenever a similar external trigger prompts a response, it will most likely be that the practiced response will be the one that is chosen.

So have you lived carving out these behaviors, attitudes, and thought patterns that you have identified with? Since most of these are involved with fear, protection, and being safe -- then any time that you experience yourself being threatened, you respond with one of these preconceived or preplanned reactions. As long as you remain in the limited awareness of fear, scarcity, and separateness then your responses will continue in this way and become more and more ingrained and reflexive.

But here you are today in a new awareness, an awareness that emphasizes truth, the truth of peace, the truth of oneness, the truth of who you are as a divine being. Even though you continually work to reinforce this truth, to affirm it for yourself, you may find yourself so often responding to life situations with the old reactions of fear and separateness. This is what we are today calling spiritual inertia.



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The outside force of change or transformation that is needed is actually your own awareness of the truth of who you are. Continually recognizing this and affirming this, no matter what the external situations might be, begins to create new pathways, new patterns of thought and behavior. During the initial stages of transformation, which might take some time, there will be, as we have spoken of before, periods of awakening and awareness and periods of sleep and unawareness.

When you are in unawareness you will be following your instinctive reflexive responses that have been created out of fear and scarcity, and you will do this without thought. In times of awareness, at least initially, you will find that you still have the instinctive reflexive response of fear and protectiveness, but there will be a bit of space between the thought and the action. In this space between, you will have the ability to choose. You can choose the old way, and that might be fairly easy because it is a pattern that has already been well established. You can also choose the way of oneness, love,

compassion, and the way of spirit.

You do not need to make this into a struggle. You do not need to label it as bad or even inconvenient. It is simply the natural result of having created a pathway or set of choices away from limited thinking. If you hold onto the idea of struggle, then you will be reinforcing the old pattern as being true. You will also find yourself falling into self-judgment at those times that you have been unaware. That judgment will also deplete energy that could be much better used in positive ways.

Embrace where you are at this moment, without attempting to judge or measure. The fact that you are doing this work is a powerful indication that you are in a state of awakened awareness.

BIO: 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: Dorota Kudyba of Pixabay

HUGE GENTLE EASTERN PACIFIC GRAY WHALES, Story of a Close Encounter.

By Elsa Lichman, MSW, LICSW

The Eastern Pacific gray whale has particularly captured the interest of two wildlife protection agencies, the NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration) in the U.S., and the international WWF (World Wildlife Fund) as the species is threatened by a variety of human behaviors affecting our oceans.

There are only two groups of gray whales, one of which is practically depleted, the Western Pacific gray whale. The other is the Eastern Pacific gray whale which is surviving a variety of vicissitudes. Initially commercial whaling wiped out large numbers until conservation measures were taken in the 1930's and 1940's. In the 1980's a no kill ban was put into effect.

This population feeds in summer in the far north, then migrates along the western US coast to Mexican lagoons in Baja, where they find warm waters and safety from orcas to breed and calve in peace. Orcas are called killer whales and are the largest of the dolphins and one of the world's most powerful predators.

The Eastern Pacific gray whales' migration of up to 10,000 miles or more is one of the longest worldwide. These mammals feed in shallow waters close to shore, skimming the bottom for invertebrates. They have many elongated bristly structures in the mouth called baleen, which filter out the prey to swallow, and allow the animal to expel massive amounts of water. They have no dorsal fin on their back, and weigh between 60,000 and 90,000 pounds. They are 39 feet in length and have a 12-to-13-month gestation period. The calf weighs about a ton and is 14 to 16 feet at birth. A known whale lived to age 75 or 80 in the wild.

The WWF has helped to restrict seismic surveys which cause noise pollution and has urged the establishment of a gray whale sanctuary. Other agencies have launched a campaign to stop offshore drilling entirely. There was a moratorium until 2018. Oil and gas development create damaging underwater booms. Entanglement in fishing gear and ship collisions also harm these peaceful creatures. Climate change affects the quality of the ocean habitat, which can challenge their ability to locate appropriate prey to eat.



A number of years ago I had the opportunity to fly into a barren area in Baja to join a group living in tents for short periods of time close to the San Ignacio Lagoon. The purpose of the group was to view these whales from small local



Head of Gray Whale Calf Showing Eye

pangas, ie, fishing boats. My first night in a shared tent, water seeped into my area and drenched everything I had. The second night I was moved to a dry tent. Winds of 50 mph swept across the encampment, blowing my tent flap open as dirt flew in. The directors of the project were digging down deeper around all the tent poles at 3 AM to be sure they would hold, as we were on a cliff overlooking the wild sea.

We were there to meet the 'friendlies', which are whales attracted to humans. In the morning we set off in the small brightly painted wooden vessels. We were about 10 to a boat, fully clothed, with life preservers. After waiting quite some time, a large female approached our vessel, looking at us with that enormous, seemingly all-knowing eye, and allowed herself to be touched!

My own special encounter came when a seemingly proud mother brought her newborn calf to us. As it swam under us, I leaned far down to touch that beautiful creature, bubbles blowing from my mouth

as I became halfway submerged! An unforgettable, once in a lifetime experience.

The people on this adventure were also very special, kind folks who were good to each other. They held a common bond of appreciation for our magnificent earth, its creatures, and their need for our vigilance to protect them.

Editor's Note: Gray whales can communicate over long distances with very low-pitched sounds and moans. They also can store large amounts of oxygen and stay underwater for 20-30 minutes.

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



PHOTOS: Top: Head of Whale Calf, by Dexterous of Canstock
Middle Design: Dzoko Stach of Pixabay (Humpback Whale)
Bottom Left: Tom Cravens of Unsplash (Humpback Whale)

ACCESSING HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS, Moving Into Next Step of Your Soul Mission.

By Joyce Gerrish, M.A.

Many people today are waking up to feeling that there is more to their life than they had perhaps been aware of or were paying attention to. When things are going as expected and one is busy getting from day to day, one may not be giving much attention to subtle spiritual longings or dreams. What they are already coping with may be looming too large. It may seem unrealistic to deal with when life is quite busy. But when things slow down somewhat as during our recent pandemic, it may seem a degree different. Maybe there is a little time to listen to the quiet feelings and “knowings” within. When there is always “busy-ness” and media going on, our “inner essence” tends to get drowned out. A person may think that he or she is just a physical body that eats, sleeps, hopefully learns enough to be efficient at a job and/or raise a family and take care of a home.

Many people feel that they aren't important or don't really matter - that they are just following others' lead. The truth is that each of us is a precious spiritual being created by God. A Divine spark is within our soul patiently waiting to be awakened to our magnificent potential. Each of us is unique, there is none other just like us. We aren't just cookie cutter figures marching to the tune of some “mega leaders.” In order to get to know who we really are, we need to spend at least some quality time in this exploration. This is the greatest adventure of all. This is discovered through Higher Consciousness.

What is greatly needed in today's complicated world is for more and more people to learn how to focus in their Higher Consciousness and experience their oneness with their soul on an ongoing basis. Our personality can sometimes mislead us and get swayed by the loudest voice or glamorous people dressed in the latest styles or by super wealthy celebrity figures. So many people are enraptured by the slick accomplishments of others and neglect their own capacities. It may be very good to admire and listen to the singing of the pop stars, but even more important is to sing oneself. It is fine to enjoy watching sports, but it is extremely important to get out and be physically active ourselves. It is very good to read the opinions and thoughts of others. It is equally valuable for us to write not only our feelings, but also our thoughts about what is going on in our life and around us in our city, state, country, and world. The more we write, the more we develop our own thoughts and capacity to think on a deeper level. Daily journal writing is an awesome practice. It helps us think through our opinions and why we feel that way - - not just accepting an idea because a famous person says it is true. We need to look beneath the surface, research the facts, and think for ourselves. Let's discuss ideas for how to improve our neighborhoods and cities for the highest good of everyone. Let's think about how can the basic needs of EVERYONE be met? We can't be leaving some people suffering and starving and being subjected to violence.

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There are solutions, believe it or not. Where are those solutions going to come from, one may ask? We don't live in a world of limitation to the extent that it may seem. Each of us as a soul came to Earth with a purpose that we can contribute to life around us. This is our Soul Mission. It is why we are here on planet Earth. We are not here just to walk around keeping busy for a certain number of years and then disintegrate with the atoms of our body. We have a valuable “gift” to share for helping to heal and uplift our planet and humanity. How can we become aware of our true essence and Soul Mission? It is through Higher Consciousness !!! How do we come into Higher Consciousness? One might say, “Do I have to go live in a cave on a mountain top and meditate for twenty years to reach Higher Consciousness?” Some may think that doesn't sound very interesting or like much fun !!!” The answer is that we can reach Higher Consciousness where we are. It is a matter of remembering who we are in our soul essence beneath all the outer distractions and noise. In the Bible in the first chapter of Genesis, verse 27 it says, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.” I feel this isn't talking about our physical body (though I believe that our physical body is a miraculous creation) but rather our consciousness.

Meditation is not just sitting quietly with our eyes closed, though that can be a start. Meditation is an extraordinary skill, art, and adventure that can be learned. With practice and wise guidance, one can learn fairly rapidly how to focus the mind and then raise one's awareness into Higher Consciousness. It doesn't take a financial investment or becoming reclusive. It takes compassionate love for all people, not just for “some.” It requires purity of motive. It takes wisdom to know the difference between right and wrong. It takes learning how to expand one's consciousness beyond the physical plane, through and beyond the emotional astral level, up through the energy of one's thoughts on the mental plane, and up into the spiritual levels of awareness where there is great clarity and peace. On this spiritual level we can feel one with our Higher Consciousness and God energy as we perceive it.

Each of these levels of consciousness (physical, emotional astral, mental, and spiritual levels) is a distinctly different energy frequency which one can learn to recognize. Each of these levels of energy and consciousness need to be regularly cleared of heavy stress energy and thought-forms from our own day-to-day processes and picked up from others (Continued on Page 11)



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Accessing Higher Consciousness, Continued from Page 10.

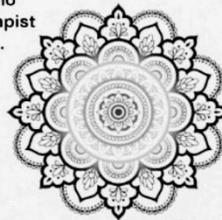
and from the mass-mind. Maintaining that clarity is a part of achieving and maintaining Higher Consciousness. Guiding all this is a very real and tangible process for an experienced spiritual teacher. Along the way our physical body needs to be purified as the "temple" of our Higher Consciousness. This is so that the physical body can comfortably handle the higher energy frequencies of this process. I will write much more on this process in futures issues of this journal and in my website blog. I pray for your peace and bountiful blessings.

BIO: Zoom Transformational Healing Meditations Wednesdays 6:00 pm. Lift to your Higher Consciousness. By donation. Joyce is a Transformational Energy & Emotional Healer providing individual sessions on Zoom or in person. Reiki Master, Master's Degree in Human Development. She's a highly attuned & sensitive guide for Higher Meditation & Spiritual Awareness. Extensive training & decades of experience as a practitioner & teacher of numerous natural healing modalities including Reiki, Spiritual Healing, Chakra Healing, Reflexology. She offers Past lives readings and Akashic Readings. She's author of book "Secrets of Wisdom - Awaken to the Miracle of You," & Publisher- Editor of Natural Living Journal. Louisville Office. 502-572-4871 www.joycegerrish.com



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PREPARATION FOR SURGERY & Lessening Possible Undesirable Side Effects From Anesthesia

By Dr. Victoria Snelling

Several of my patients have required surgery lately and most have asked me about the consequences of anesthesia. Sometimes surgery is unavoidable and sometimes it's better than any available alternatives. I wanted to focus on the post-surgical healing and the consequences of anesthesia since that's how I can best support my patients after the fact. Even before a surgery date, there are steps that can be taken to help ensure a better outcome.

About twenty million Americans have general anesthesia every year. Anesthetic drugs are a godsend in many ways. No one wants surgery without the benefit of anesthesia, but there often is a price to pay. Research shows the known after effects of these drugs. It appears that an inflammatory reaction in the body produced by these drugs can possibly lead or contribute to heart attack or other heart damage, lung damage and cancer. The list also included the onset of Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, kidney issues, increased risk of death, and the list goes on. What can be done to minimize the risk? Can we "have our cake, and eat it too?"

With as much time as you have before a surgical appointment, it's a good idea to take the opportunity to really clean up your diet. Support your immune and detox systems beforehand with a clean diet, more vegetables and colorful fruits, organic foods whenever possible, while reducing or hopefully eliminating foods that can be inflammatory or outright nutrition robbers. These are foods like trans fats, genetically modified foods, pesticide laden foods, sugars and alcohol. These can put an unneeded burden on your body when you need that the least. Make sure to get enough rest leading up to the event. Prepare your environment and plan for help with your usual needs such as meals, housekeeping, care for your pets, etc., so you won't have those things on your mind to worry about.

Always ask for a list of any and all pharmaceutical drugs you will be given before, during and after your surgery. You can give that task to your spouse, other relative, or friend who will be escorting you. They can keep a list for you and this will prove to be important as you recuperate.

Is there anything that can give us a better chance of avoiding the downside of these drugs? I've counseled my patients on diet, rest, etc. I've recommended a few supplements to take after surgery for at least two months, such as a good multi with vitamin C, vitamin E, B vitamins, zinc, and others, with my usual recommendation to avoid artificial B vitamins like "folic acid" and instead look for



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natural "methyl folate." Also add quercetin and NAC (n-acetyl cysteine).

The real gems come from homeopathy. I've recommended Arnica 200C as soon as my patients can easily take it, and repeat every hour or few hours depending on discomfort. If there is a great deal of swelling, and if Arnica didn't resolve that, I recommend Apis-mel 30C or 200C. One difference between a 30C potency and a 200C potency is the depth of action and the length of time one dose can stay with you. If you can only find 30C potencies, they're fine. You just may need to repeat them, for example every hour or two at first, and less often as you are recovering. If a patient experiences any trouble breathing or continued fatigue longer than expected, I would mention Carbo-veg 30C or 200C, as needed, and I would advise phoning their surgeon's office for their recommendations. The list of drugs you have can tell us what steps can be taken to help your body eliminate the compounds that are no longer needed by your body. There are valuable specific homeopathic remedies that can target what my patient had so we can hopefully clear the slate of the residues, give a better chance of better health and diminish the risk of the side effects mentioned above.

I do not council my patients on prescription pharmaceutical drugs and I assume they will be taking what their surgeon prescribes in all cases. I think we need all of our branches of health care, and we will all be much healthier if we can combine the best of all disciplines. Best of health to you!

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.
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OVERCOMING FEAR

With Alateen That Supports Teens

Anonymous

Looking back on my childhood, one of my wishes would have been to receive an introduction to the Alateen program. The youth who walk into the rooms of Alateen receive emotional and even physical support in the program. They walk into these rooms fearful, lost, and damaged by the effects of alcohol or drugs. We give them the opportunity to talk with other teens. They share about how their lives have become unmanageable because of what this disease presented. It gives them hope. Alateen members are in charge of their meetings. After over fifteen years of being blessed by coming to the rooms of Al-anon, I became an Alateen sponsor. Now twenty years later I am still sponsoring and sharing my time in Alateen, which is also a beautiful blessing in my life.

Al-anon is the program for those who have found their lives unmanageable due to alcohol use by family members. Alcoholics Anonymous is a program for those who have no control over alcohol, causing pain in the lives of themselves and others. Please, if there is problem drinking in your family, friends or neighbors and your life is affected, consider looking into Alateen for your children and teens. It is available for ages ten through eighteen and some meetings will allow children as young as eight.

These meetings are life changing for the youth. Look back on your life and think "what were my most fearful times?" I am just guessing, but I bet someone's drinking played a part in that. I remember when I was about seven, we needed photos for a religious function. As I was sitting in the room to have my picture taken, fear came over me. The photographer smelled of alcohol. We owned a tavern, and I definitely knew that smell. My Mom was upset because the expression on my face was that of total fear. Even to this day when I see that picture I think of that smell.

After my twenty plus years as an Alateen sponsor, I still realize benefits from the program as much as the youth I am there for. These young people live in fear and confusion. Alcoholism and drug abuse are affecting the lives of many young people that we love and care for. In the meetings we use the steps, traditions, and slogans to educate for a healthier way of life. There are books written for the Alateen members. Many of the effects of alcoholism cause us to have secrets in our family life that are carried into our adult lives. Those secrets can be poison to us.

Meetings give young people a place to share their stories, experiences, and feelings, without the fear of those leaving the room. "What you hear here, When you leave here, Let it stay here." That is a placard found in each meeting all over the country. During those meetings only sponsors who have been carefully screened are allowed in the rooms of Alateen. We want to keep all children safe and comfortable in every way.

I, myself, have been involved with running after-school care programs, working in schools, while having eight grandchildren. So much of the knowledge I learn in the recovery programs I am involved with is passed on to my grandchildren. They live in a sober home, but the effect of this disease is

passed on from generation to generation. Some of the sayings in these programs come up in my grandchildren's experiences. We use the saying "doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results is called insanity." In dealing with alcohol and drug abuse, many of today's youth with parents or siblings affected by those continue to act and hope that the addicted person will get responsible. This disease does not work that way. The more we do, the more we feel insane.

One day my 16-year-old grandson and I were at a softball game. I said, "what are they doing? They aren't getting any hits."

My grandson said "They're making the same batting mistakes over and over again. You know what that is called? Insanity is doing the same things over and over again expecting different results." Staying in our alcohol-affected lives, we stay on the merry-go-round of denial, doing the same things and expecting different results. The rooms of recovery show us healthy ways to live. We use these to become aware of the dysfunction in our lives.

So many times when my grandchildren get in the other's business, I touch my nose and say, "if it is past your nose, it is not your business." These examples passed on from our programs are very beneficial to the other lives I am involved with. Alateen is a very good program that gives young people healthy ways to deal with what alcohol has damaged in their lives. Embarrassment needs to be ignored, and instead place the importance of our children ahead of it.

In the words of an Alateen member, "When I can admit that fear is the culprit in my life, I can work on it with vengeance. Alateen gives me the tools to mend the fences that alcoholism has broken. With the help of the sponsors and my new friends in Alateen I gain the courage to take on new challenges in a very healthy way." Let me invite you, my friend, to a beautiful way of life. Most Alateen meetings are funded by self-donation only. They are also supported by the Al-anon group they are sponsored by. The meetings are usually held in churches, halls, or community centers and some schools. The meetings are approximately one hour. It is a simple program, but not an easy one. Now, you are not ALONE!

Contact Info: Toll free # for group meetings only 1-888-425-5666, Al-anon.org, and wso@al-anon.org
Photo: Flavio Jose Pantera of Pixabay



UNDERSTANDING OUR PART

by Nicole Bartlett

We tend to resist discomfort and deny our contribution to oppression. We say things like we don't see color, that all people are created equal, or that hard work equals success. This resistance shows up by removing responsibility from ourselves and putting it on outside circumstances or other people. It's critically important for us to become aware of our impulse to respond instead of absorbing so we better understand our role..

I recently made it a priority to attend "Listen, Learn, Act" through the Earth and Spirit Center. This class was established from The Path Forward, an initiative developed by the Louisville Urban League following Breonna Taylor's death. In its third semester, the Earth and Spirit Center has organized this class primarily for their white majority followers to have a chance to listen and learn from Black Louisville leaders. They then come together to see what actions can be taken to help close the deeply segregated gap within our community.

As a white person who grew up relatively unaware of racial division, it has taken me a lot of listening and learning to understand that using terms like white, black, racist, colonialism, and individualism help to clarify and honestly speak to the systems of oppression we are a part of. As a white woman, when I refer to we in this article, I'm referring to the white majority.

I learned much about the importance of shared ancestry and affirmation in class. We might not consider the critical importance of seeing oneself as good, whole, and beautiful. We have this automatically affirmed through our media, our teachers, day to day interactions, and in recognizing ourselves in most people in power.

Dr. Rashad and students of the Men of Quality at Breckinridge High School taught us the history of our national anthem, our community, and how the work they do allows Black youth to experience themselves as whole, beautiful beings. You can donate to their organization by sending a check to Men of Quality, Breckinridge High School, 1128 E Broadway, Louisville, KY 40204.

Did you know that Black youth face up to six microaggressions daily? Microaggression is a term used for daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights, intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups. We need to learn how we participate in these, as well as recognize the need to change measurements around educational testing, punishment policies, and support for achievement.

I learned about the scientific impact of racial trauma over generations. Dr. Steven Kniffley of Spalding shared a study done on generations of birth weight showing continual reductions in weight over



multiple generations despite better access to medical technology due to the mother's experience of compounded racial trauma. There are areas in our city with higher infant mortality rates than some developing nations.

I learned about the population of neighborhoods in my city and how the lack of affordable housing impacts the ability to thrive. Dr. Karen Krigger of UL Health shared that the West End of Louisville, an area specifically affected by redlining, would be the third largest city in the state if separated from Louisville. Redlining in our city, as well as others in the nation, prevented generational wealth from accumulating and allowed industry to move in, creating poverty and compounding health issues over time. Generational wealth refers

to assets inherited from one generation to another in the form of property, a business, and/or financial assets, etc.

We understand that basic needs like nutrition, housing, mental health, one's ability to pay bills, and fresh air create a positive outcome for health. Stachelle Bussey of the Hope Bus shared 60,000 people in the West End share two Kroger grocery stores. We must dig deeper into the compounding effects of our racist systems like jailing and microaggressions to change policies so that

they will support our community more justly.

Knowledge is power, and when we know better, we can do better. We must get involved in the work individually for healing to occur. This all comes with grace. Understanding our active place in systemic racism can bring up discomfort that needs to be sat with. Go slowly. Take breaks. Start again. The change begins with us building resilience to our discomfort in order to enjoy the beauty of agape - - which is unselfish, unconditional love that seeks the highest good for all.

BIO: Nicole Bartlett founded the Louisville Salt Cave in 2015, is a Reiki Master and Breathwork Practitioner. She enjoys the small gifts in life, like greeting the day, watching her children grow, and listening to Earth's whispers.



Photo: Canstock Photos/bds

ONCOLOGY MASSAGE AS PALLIATIVE CARE. This is For People With Serious or Potentially Terminal Illness. **By Tronda Graham, LMT**

I have a passion to support women diagnosed with cancer. I acknowledge that it is a calling and an assignment from God to serve them on their journey from cancer treatment, those in recovery or survivorship and those at the end-of-life.

My name is Tronda Graham. I am the Owner of Align Total Wellness and I am a Licensed Massage Therapist. My wellness approach is nurturing, holistic and totally focused on wellness for women whether preventative, restorative or palliative. My business mission is supporting all women through healing touch, nurturing products, and holistic practices.

I believe that the alignment of the spirit, soul and body is a route to total wellness. Providing a whole person approach to wellness by way of support, encouragement and comfort is commonly known as holistic.

I'd like to share with you about palliative care. Palliative care is specialized care for people living with a serious or potentially terminal illness, such as cancer. The ultimate goal of palliative care is to improve the quality of life of the client regardless of diagnosis. Thankfully the cure rate is steadily improving for some types of cancer.

Oncology massage is massage therapy based in both compassion and specialized massage treatments to help people manage their experience with cancer. Studies have demonstrated that massage can offer so many wonderful health benefits for people diagnosed with cancer. To name a few, oncology massage can be helpful for: alleviating stress, reducing pain, relieving nausea and fatigue, boosting immunity and the body's production of endorphins, reducing swelling, loosening aching tense muscles, and improving mood, confidence, and sleep.

Massage can give clients the time to breathe and relax, which can be the key to feeling relief through a difficult time. Incorporating positive touch is so valuable because typically cancer treatments are not pleasing. The gentle, caring touch of massage therapy adds positivity amid what might feel like the prodding and poking of cancer treatment.

I volunteered for Hospirus as a licensed massage therapist when I moved to Louisville in 2009 and took the Eleventh-Hour Training. At that time, I was made aware that there are people who die alone. That was not something that I had ever realized, and I was unsettled at the thought of it. I have been a Personal Care Assistant for many elderly women in the last months of their lives, including my Mother. It gives me great pleasure to serve them.



So, I am excited to announce that Align Total Wellness will be offering an End-of-Life Doula service in 2023. An End-of-Life Doula is a non-medical professional who provides holistic support for the dying before, during, and after death. There are various end-of-life stages a doula can assist with during the natural processes while providing comfort and support. A sacred, compassionate, holistic, and peaceful transition is something I want to provide. No one should die scared or alone. As an End-of-Life Doula, I want to

create for her a beautiful environment with sound therapy, aroma therapy, soothing touch with essential oils, prayer, and companionship. I want to assist these women in relaxing and to release when the time is right.

I am a member of NEDA (National End of Life Doula Alliance). You can find me listed at the NEDA website <https://www.nedalliance.org> in the directory under Louisville, Kentucky. I volunteer and my business is an annual sponsor for the Susan G. Komen More Than Pink Walk. I also have volunteered and collaborated with KAAAC (Kentucky African

Americans Against Cancer) a local organization as well as Gilda's Club. Both of these organizations provide support for people living with cancer.

I travel locally. I have traveled to many women who desire my services that cannot come to my studio, some of which have been diagnosed with cancer. I have been going to the Nazareth Nursing Home every Friday for 2 1/2 years to provide massage to a



bedridden woman. I provide her with a weekly massage that includes range of motion and skin attention. Companionship also plays a role during her service.

Please feel free to contact me for further information or to set up an appointment at my contact information above. Be well.

Photos: Tronda Graham

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