

Natural Living Journal

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

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**Motherhood as a
Transformational
Journey**

**Healing With Divine
Love**

Journey to Self-Love

Radiation/EMT Toxicity

Touch Tree Connections

**Low Level Chronic
Inflammation in Body**

**Digestive Fire:
Ayurvedic Secret**

Garden of Life

Positive Aging Insights

**Resistance on One's
Spiritual Path**

**Awesome Beauty of
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Listen with Love

Amazing Sea Turtles

Photo by Gnapathyof Unsplash

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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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LISTEN WITH LOVE

Reverend Valerie Mansfield

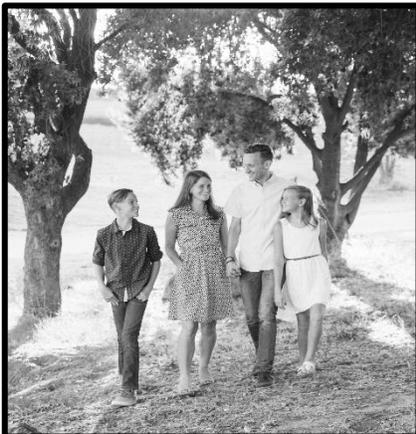
Living with others, raising children and creating harmony in the home or workplace takes intention, dedication, compassion and understanding. Over the past few years we have faced many changes in our homes, schools, and work lives. Communication is key to a healthy loving life filled with beauty and grace.

Communication is one of the most important elements in human development. As children we learn from the adults around us by listening and mimicking what is said or done. Brain Science has added to our knowledge. When children are in trauma situations as simple as the adults speaking loudly or in anger at other adults or at the children, it lowers working memory, cogitative abilities and flexibilities -- along with grades in school.

Listening is a learned skill and a gift you can give to your children. It is also a gift to the parent who is more effective and loving. Children learn good listening skills from the parent. Children who are taught to listen feel more secure and are more likely to talk with the parent when challenges occur. Both the parent and child or teen learn it feels good to be fully listened to. Compassionate communication builds lifelong healthy relationships. We feel heard and understood. Children and teens who are listened to are more likely to make good choices, take initiative, be accountable for their choices, be truthful and realistic, and be willing to share and be open to other's perspectives.

Communication can be non-verbal, which means it's not only what you say, it includes the expression on your face, your body stance, and your actions while listening.

The best way to start listening with compassion is to decide you are going to listen. Then you have to make time to listen. When communicating with compassion we focus on the speaker, by looking at them, repeating back what you heard, sit or stand with your arms and legs uncrossed. Remember to make eye contact and really give the person speaking your understanding and attention.



During those tough talks remember to listen completely before telling the other person what to do. Ask questions like what are your thoughts or how do you want to handle it? It helps to give solution options to younger children so they can begin to make good choices.

Sometimes it is better to make an appointment or schedule time to really listen to someone. This process can feel uncomfortable in the beginning, but the end result is so rewarding. If you are distracted, you are unable to listen in the moment. You and your loved ones deserve to be heard fully, lovingly, and compassionately.



Create a space where you or others in the home can ask for a one on one or group (family) discussion. Some options might be a chalkboard where any member of the household can call for a time to talk. Another way is to schedule regular family meetings where everyone can share what's heavy in their life and what's working great. Then schedule a fun activity for the family to share after the discussion: playing a game, going to the park, taking a hike, going for ice cream.

No matter what is happening in the lives of the individuals, working together to create solutions supports everyone in the home to live a life of harmony, joy and love.

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.



Photos: Above Linked in Solutions of unsplash. Lower, Allen Taylor of unsplash

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM RADIATION / EMF TOXICITY?

By Dr. Victoria Snelling

Most of us have become so used to our cell phones, laptops, and Wi-Fi that we don't want to live without the convenience. Our use may have increased with the lockdowns during the early days of Covid restrictions. We had telehealth instead of in-person appointments, our children were attending "computer school" instead of in-class learning, and business meetings were conducted online. Many of these events are still virtual instead of in-person. This may be seen as a convenient way to connect, but there may be a price to pay for that convenience.

We are bombarded by many various frequencies. To list a few: EMR- electromagnetic radiation, RF- high frequency radio frequency, ELF- extremely low frequency, and EMR- electromagnetic radiation.

Current research shows that exposure to these frequencies is not as harmless as we may think. Some early signs and symptoms can be fatigue, headache, decreased learning ability, and cognitive impairment.

Mobile phone use has been linked to myocardial oxidative stress. Radiofrequency emissions have health consequences, and many studies have focused on genetic changes and a higher risk of cancer. An animal study of RF exposure showed an increase of cancerous brain and heart tumors. Retroactive studies show a likely relationship between these forms of radiation and fertility issues and DNA damage. Studies in Sweden as far back as 1993 showed an increase in childhood cancers for those living near high-voltage power lines.

How can we mitigate EMF in our homes and businesses? Hardwire your work and home computer and avoid open Wi-Fi. If that's not possible, shutting off Wi-Fi before you go to bed will at least reduce your exposure for a good portion of your day. Use your computer on a desk or table and avoid using it in your lap. Turn off your cell phone's Wi-Fi whenever possible. There are some products on the market that claim to mitigate the effects of EMF from our wifi connected computers. A "defender pad" is being sold to block or limit exposure to heat and radiation from a laptop computer. You might have seen ads for cell phone EMF blocking devices made with Shungite or other materials. Some of those can even be worn as jewelry. I'd love to hear from anyone who has tried these with good effect. Another example is avoiding wireless head sets and going back to wired headphones, etc. This can greatly reduce your risk.



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A black and white photograph of various natural and medicinal items. It includes a mortar and pestle with herbs inside, a glass bottle with a stopper, and several dried herbs and leaves scattered around.

As with so many other things, a good diet goes a long way to protect our health. But with the continual presences of electromagnetic pollution, we need more help. Some nutritional helpers include good sources of antioxidants like berries and other fruits, green tea, walnuts and almonds, black beans and red kidney beans. Useful supplements include vitamin E, melatonin, essential fatty acids from fatty fish, and healthy oils such as olive oil.

Although I think these precautions are important for all of us, I think they may be even more crucial for our children. Should you limit your child from using social media? I'm no longer surprised to learn just how much time my young patients spend on electronic devices and how that correlates with their physical and emotional ailments.

In my practice, I've been relieved to find new homeopathic remedies that have shown to be beneficial in clearing the negative effects of excess exposure to x-rays, ultrasound, computer emanations, wifi, cell phones towers and others sources of electromagnetic pollution. A few of these remedies are: x-ray, shungite, 5G,

Cadmium- sul, Radium-brom, and Sol. Feel free to contact me if you wish more information and guidance on utilizing those.

Each of us may need to weigh the conveniences of our electronics against the preservation of our health. Find a balance that works for you -- and take it a step at a time if that helps you make healthy modifications.

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.



Photo: Christina -wocintechchat.com of Unsplash

THE JUBILANT JOY OF FOLLOWING YOUR OWN JOURNEY TO SELF-LOVE.

By Leah Bomar, Author & Life Coach

I'm celebrating the completion of my first book, a memoir about overcoming a life of anxiety, depression and self-sabotage through food, alcohol, boys... anything to numb the pain or break through the nothingness. I'm celebrating.

The human soul has an innate ability to grow through darkness. Even if the circumstance or task at hand seems overwhelming, we have the fortitude to forge forward and change the outcome. We can change our attitudes as a prelude to better things coming. I believe in better things coming. I call them to me with my intentions and by taking inspired actions.

My book begins with a panic attack. Laying on the ground under the shade of a pine tree unable to drive as my young children play in the sun unaware of my deteriorating physical condition. Most people in my life at that time were just as unaware of my declining mental condition. The way worry gripped my heart and fear fastened down a choke hold on my decision-making process. My journey to self-love began that summer when I made the decision to stop suffering and change the way I was living my life- -or die.

I started my spiritual path! I chose life. I chose myself. I chose gentle grace, acceptance, and a willingness to live. I knew I needed more self-care, therapy, doctor check-ups and treatments. I needed friends. I needed fun. I needed *me*... but where was "she?" I didn't even know what I enjoyed doing for fun anymore. To get out of the very dark place I found myself in (again), it became vital to nourish and nurture myself whole.

One of the most important aspects of self-nurture is giving yourself permission to make healthful choices. Give yourself permission to live in a way that brings pleasure and joy. Permission to create a space of your own. The way you choose to explore and express self-love and nurture yourself will be unique to you! Tap into your intuition.

What brings you joy right now at this phase in your life? That might look different than it did when you were a child, teenager, ten years ago or even last week. What lights you up, gives you a little spark of adventure, a flicker of fun? Go do that! Get creative. Give yourself permission to play. Tapping into childlike energy also allows wounds from childhood or earlier versions of yourself to be healed. Inner child work or shadow work does not always have to be painful. Healing can be fun, free, joyous, and jubilant!

Maintaining a daily flow of self-nourishment as a source of replenishment and self-love can strengthen your energy and



Glitter Bomb
Upcoming Events:

- Creative Reprieve Sober Meet-ups
- #LeahWritingLab Accountability Group for Writers & Creatives
- Nashville Body Love Retreat @Dolly Parton Themed Hotel
- Body Empowerment Pool Party

"Glitter Bomb"
Author Leah Bomar

Learn more at LeahBomar.com

creativity. The practice of putting yourself first, honoring your wants and needs fuels peace and serenity. Put a voice to your desires. Share your story, it will inspire others and help you heal along the way. Below is an excerpt from the back of my book:

"Come out of the dark and play. Leah Bomar grew up a lonely, overweight child. Scarred by witnessing her grandfather's death, she escaped into books and her imagination. Searching for meaning beyond depression in her teens, she instead found more death and grief. To numb the pain and avoid the anxiety, she turned to drugs, alcohol, and food. Her life slid into a colorless version of the one she had dreamed of."

"As an adult, Leah struggled to cope with life, crushed by chronic panic, stress and the weight of her own body. Even motherhood could not fill the void of her own expectations."

"But she broke the repeating patterns of trauma and self-sabotage. Leah embraced self-love. She learned how to

overcome overwhelm by infusing joy, gratitude, and a conscious awareness of the magic inherent in everyday life. The desire to manifest her dreams left an energetic trail of glitter. A path she wants others to find, follow, and create for themselves."

Part memoir and part self-help text, my book offers hope that in accepting the past and appreciating the present, pathways open to a self-determined future.

BIO: Join the #GlitterBombYourself Challenge at LeahBomar.com and sign up for the newsletter for upcoming events, workshops, book release parties, and announcements. Leah 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

PHOTO: Roses photo from Pixabay.



LOW LEVEL CHRONIC INFLAMMATION IN OUR BODY.

By Dr. Lisa Tostado, ND

Inflammation is a natural part of the immune system's response to tissue injury from trauma, infection, or noxious substances. Without it, we would not be able to activate the healing process. Short-term (or acute) inflammation typically resolves in days to weeks. However, in some cases, the inflammation becomes chronic and unresolved for months to years, leading to a progression in tissue damage, symptoms, and disease.

Chronic inflammatory diseases are the most significant cause of death in the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the prevalence of diseases associated with chronic inflammation is anticipated to increase persistently for the next 30 years in the United States. Diseases associated with chronic inflammation include type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, arthritis & joint diseases, as well as allergies. Depression, anxiety, gastrointestinal complaints, body aches, fatigue and weight gain are also associated with chronic inflammation.

Risk factors for increasing an unhealthy inflammatory response in the body include increasing age, obesity, smoking cigarettes, a diet high in trans fats and refined sugars, as well as stress and poor sleep.

The good news is that there is a lot we can do to help our body produce a balanced inflammatory response. Nature offers a variety of anti-inflammatory compounds with foods, herbs, and spices.

Omega-3 fatty acids from fish and fish oils exert anti-inflammatory effects in the body. Their compounds, including EPA and DHA, partially inhibit inflammation and give rise to inflammation resolving mediators. Human trials have shown the benefit of Omega-3 fatty acids in rheumatoid arthritis and in stabilizing advanced atherosclerotic plaques. Since the body cannot produce these essential fatty acids, it is important to get sufficient levels through diet or with supplementation. You can also find Omega-3 fatty acids in flaxseeds, chia seeds and walnuts.

Turmeric is a plant that has been used traditionally for hundreds of years in cooking, and as a medicine in China and India. It contains natural compounds, curcumin and curcuminoids, that have powerful anti-inflammatory effects on the body. These compounds can be helpful in reducing pain, lowering bad cholesterol (LDLs), and modulating inflammatory responses throughout the body. Turmeric is widely available as a root, powder, and as a dietary supplement.



Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D.

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Black seed oil is made from the seeds of the black cumin (*Nigella sativa*) plant. It is native to southwestern Asia, the Mediterranean and Africa and has long been used as a medicine. It is well known for its potent anti-inflammatory properties. It has been shown to improve glucose tolerance in diabetes, lower bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol. It may also help fight cancer and infection from superbugs.

Other herbs to consider for their anti-inflammatory properties are cat's claw, echinacea and ginger root.

Consuming an anti-inflammatory, whole foods diet can help the body resolve or minimize the impact of chronic inflammation. The consumption of processed foods including refined sugars and white flours, along with inflammatory oils (i.e., soybean and canola oils) can fuel the fire of inflammation. In contrast, a diet high in leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts), berries, and citrus fruits can lower inflammation in the body. The use of spices such as oregano, thyme, rosemary, and black pepper can help protect the body from ongoing inflammatory processes.

Along with what nature has to offer as nutrition, maintaining a healthy weight, exercise, proper hydration, and stress management can all help keep inflammation at bay. This is all of extraordinary importance for our health and wellbeing. Please consult with your doctor before making any changes to your health care 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: Canstock, monkeybusiness

**CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF
PLAYING IN THE AWESOME
BEAUTY OF MOTHER EARTH**
By *Elsa Lichmann, MSW, LICSW*

I remember being safely ensconced in my bed fast asleep when just at dawn my father ran through all the bedrooms calling out it was time to rush to the ocean to see a glorious sunrise. Groggy and a bit disoriented, I found myself in the car on the way to a hot pink blaze over that salty sea. School was still a long way off as we all carried that view with us to begin our usual day.

Once when I was quite small, I was alone walking down a short dirt lane lined with trees thinking to myself, "God is in the trees." To this day I consider some trees to be my best friends, offering up their spiritual beauty in all seasons.

On vacations we went to the White Mountains. One autumn my dad bought us Kodak box cameras to capture the brilliant foliage on the slopes. Swaths of reds, oranges, yellows covered the wide vistas, as we were enraptured by the scenes unfolding before us.

We went to the Flume, water trickling over granite stones, eroding them and creating a rushing stream. We saw the old man of the mountain, a perfect profile of an old New Englander with a beard carved naturally out of the rocks. Many years later, this icon fell off and was actually mourned by those who treasured him. A special sculpture was placed there to commemorate him.

My mom had chosen to raise us in Marblehead, which was about a 5-minute walk to the ocean. Every single day she would check the tides and walk all the way to the end of our long beach and swim the sidestroke all the way back! She remembered meeting her grandmother in Germany when small and being told that she had never seen the sea. Every day my mother experienced that joy for her, remembering her longing.



Around the corner from our house, there was a small conservation area with a pond which we also enjoyed in all seasons. We particularly liked skating over the rough, wind-blown ice, and as evening fell and a lonely streetlight came on, we imagined we

were in the Ice Capades, dancing to sweet music. My dad asked us if we preferred the rink or the pond, and we answered we loved the fresh air but missed the organ music in the rink. One day we were skating blissfully around and around, when suddenly the strains of the Skater's Waltz came wafting out over the pond. He had carried a turntable, records and cumbersome speakers to houses overlooking the pond, borrowed their electricity, and made this happen for us!



Also in winter, we would go out to our tiny yard to make snow angels and play games from my mother's childhood, laughing. We would walk around the neighborhood taking pictures of enormous drifts as our local landscape was so altered by a blizzard.

After hurricanes we would go to a high spot overlooking the crashing waves. As a teen this became my spirit spot where I found solace whenever troubled. In later years I spent a great deal of time with marine mammals in several countries. I often thought this was inspired by my proximity to the Atlantic.

We walked two miles home from school and played by the ocean. We hid items in crevices we call caches, and then made maps marked with an X to guide other kids to find them. My dad taught us this game as well.

Of course, we visited the city often and enjoyed its treasures and pleasures. But for me finding spirituality in nature was a primary gift of my childhood.

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: Rocky Sea Shore, by Elsa Lickman. Tree by Heiko Stein of Pixabay. Owl by Ronan Furuta of Unsplash



RESISTANCE ON ONE'S SPIRITUAL PATH

By Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

It is strange and somewhat disheartening that what we desire the most, what we pray for the most, we don't have— world peace, peace of mind, joy, freedom, compassion, non-judgment, and openness. Like smoke they are there one moment and gone the next. Just as one moment I am awake and a moment later I am in forgetfulness.

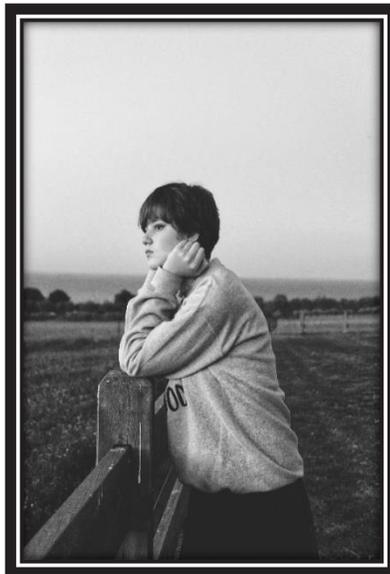
My ego, you see, and not just my personal ego but the collective ego or small consciousness of our race is like a spoiled child. It has been indulged and pampered, and I have identified with it and its needs for generation upon generation. And now in this present time, I decide that I am going to go in a different direction. I decide that my ego is not who I am, that I am a spiritual being, and I will now honor and listen to my spiritual self, attend to my spiritual needs, and develop practices to enhance this awareness.

Go back to that image or idea of a pampered child for a moment. That spoiled child has been led to believe that he or she is the center of the universe, and this idea is strengthened and reinforced time and time again. You can almost feel the tightness of that, the closed fist that holds onto this learning of many lifetimes, holds onto it as being the truth. Then without warning all of that which you said "Yes" to you now say "No" to!

The resistance that you are experiencing is natural. It is not your ego or your small consciousness being bad or evil. The resistance is a predictable outcome from an aspect of self that is being moved aside. If I put restrictions on anything that is used to "running free" there will be struggle. It would be very easy to forget that this is a natural part of your learning and to think that what you must do is to beat the ego into submission. But violence is not a winning situation for me.

Recall the imagery of the Prodigal Son. The overindulgent ego, which you have become identified with, is let loose and travels this path that it thinks will bring it peace, joy, happiness and freedom, and yet it does not experience those results. I realize that the ego, the limited mind and small consciousness does not know how to be satisfied. Presently it seems our racial consciousness is experiencing a similar kind of awakening and reaching an awareness, as the prodigal did that even the "servants in my father's house are treated better than I am." That all of which I have tried and experimented with to gain freedom, joy, peace, and happiness do not work. I must or I need to choose differently.

The material works can never satisfy my spiritual hunger. And so here is the beginning of this surrender, "the calamity and collapse"



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

Sunday Service: 11:00 AM

The logo for Unity of Louisville, featuring the word "unity" in a lowercase, sans-serif font with a registered trademark symbol, and "of Louisville" in a smaller font below it. To the left of the text is a circular icon containing a stylized globe or sphere.

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of ego consciousness and the openness to divine spirit. We all know that even though surrender takes place and the spirit moves into deeper consciousness and awareness, that the spoiled, pampered ego does not die or disappear. In fact, many times it comes back with a vengeance. Again, we are offered a choice to be angry with ourselves, to condemn ourselves for the spoiled child coming back, and to focus on this limited awareness that seems to be getting in the way of our spiritual growth - - or we can recognize what we are calling resistance as simply being an extended part of our learning.

When I choose love over fear or light over darkness, it is not simply that I am making the same choice over and over and over again, but that each time I make that choice, I am expanding my awareness and my consciousness of that divine self and the truth of who I am. Because, you see, there is another aspect here that is not explored very much. You have your divine consciousness, you have your limited ego consciousness, and then there is an aspect of you that we will call awareness. This awareness can continually stretch so that you are more and more aware of your essence as a divine being, a divine consciousness. At some point in your evolution when you are fully aware of the self as a divine consciousness then awareness has served its purpose. Yes, there will be something beyond that which words or mind cannot explain at this moment.

Think of Jesus/Buddha (pick your favorite enlightened Being) who became fully embodied as the Christ consciousness, and in some ways then, on a human level, there was nowhere else to go, nothing else to accomplish, nothing else to achieve. He moved on to a higher level of existence, but lovingly keeps in touch with all of us. No resistance, just being.

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



Photo: Reflective Woman Gryffyn m, on Unsplash

DIGESTIVE FIRE – The Ayurvedic Secret to Gut Health and Optimal Metabolism, by Sarah Teeple, Certified Ayurvedic Health & Nutritional Counselor

Ayurveda is a 5000-year-old system of medicine that is indigenous to the country of India. It is the sister science to yoga, with yoga being the poses (asana) and breathing (pranayama), and Ayurveda being the lifestyle, nutrition, and herbs that create optimal health by **restoring balance** in the mind, body, and spirit.

Ayurveda asserts that all diseases start in the digestive tract. Therefore, it should be your top priority to maintain healthy “Agni,” which is the Sanskrit word for digestive fire. Like many Sanskrit words and concepts, Agni has a rich and multi-faceted meaning, encompassing many aspects of our physiology and even our psychology. Agni shows up as:

1. Appetite -- in the stomach, mouth, and mind
2. Digestive processes in the stomach, and
3. Absorption and assimilation of micronutrients in the small intestine.

Western medicine now acknowledges the importance of gut health but tends to oversimplify it to “take your probiotics and call it a day.” In reality, gut health is so much more than probiotics! Here is a new yet very ancient approach to “tending your digestive fire.” Spoiler alert, it’s not the “pills you pop,” but your daily habits that create more energy, boost your metabolism, and allow you to age gracefully and vibrantly.

But Agni has a *nemesis* that is far too common in our culture of processed foods and a sedentary yet overly-stressed lifestyle. “Ama” is another important Sanskrit term, and it may be standing in your way of good energy, mental clarity, or reaching your ideal weight.

Ama is undigested metabolic waste or toxins. *Ama is the opposite of agni.* Ama causes a slow sluggish metabolism and is the result of:

1. Too much, too little, or poor-quality food
2. Eating at wrong times
3. Bad food combining
4. Drugs, alcohol, pharmaceutical meds
5. Physical, mental, or emotional stress.

To restore health and balance, we ideally want to kindle your Agni and burn Ama.

Here are 4 simple steps to help you do that starting today:

1. Choose more cooked than raw foods. Yes, this may seem counterintuitive, as we have been told for decades by the “wellness zeitgeist” that raw is best. But according to Ayurveda it is rough, cold, and eating much of it



requires more digestive power than most humans have. So, choose *cooked*, easy to digest foods like whole grains, cooked veggies, soups, and stews.

2. Choose warm over cold foods. Example --pick eggs and veggies or oatmeal over a smoothie for breakfast, soups over salads, etc. Our body must heat up food and drinks to body-temperature before it will be able to pass from the stomach to the small intestine to be digested. So, warm foods and drinks are metabolized more quickly, whereas cold things metabolize more slowly. They sit longer in the stomach, setting the stage for fermentation (think bloating!), and cause constriction and tension in the gut (think of the *constriction* your body feels when you’re outside on a cold day without a coat). Your stomach feels the same way, shocked and appalled, when you chug your ice-cold smoothie for breakfast!

3. Choose warm or room temperature drinks. This rule is similar to #2. Warmth relaxes and soothes tissues of the digestive tract. Cold constricts and restricts optimal flow. Put this one into play tomorrow.

Ideally begin each day with 10-20oz of warm or room temp water, with the option to add a squeeze of fresh lemon juice (a little goes a long way) to burn that ama (toxins). But avoid lemon if you are prone to heartburn or reflux.

4. Eat on a schedule. Eat 3 meals a day around the same time daily. Favor meals over snacks - - prioritizing real, cooked, savory foods (see #1). Snack only if you are truly hungry, not for entertainment or out of boredom or to numb stress.

I hope these Ayurvedic tips have been insightful and helpful! Do you have questions about your Agni? Are you concerned you may have high levels of Ama, making you sluggish, low energy, or overweight and ready for a change? Feel free to hop on my website www.sarahteeple.com and click the green button at the top to book a “Free Holistic Chat.” I’d love to hear from you and support you in treating digestive, hormonal and mood issues naturally.

Bio: National Ayurvedic Medical Board Certified Health & Nutrition Counselor.

Photo: Frank F of Canstock

COME HOME

by Carrie Meurer
Founder of Touch Tree Connections

My childhood was lived on the edge of Jefferson Memorial Forest. I spent most of my free time under the lush canopy of the forest. Exploring. Imagining. Making friends with the birds and the bugs. Touching. Breathing in. Connecting with nature. Being immersed in nature allowed me to feel safe, free, fully me. Of course, I didn't recognize that at the time. I was just moving intuitively. Listening. Feeling. Reflecting. Playing. This felt like HOME. Being wholly connected and nurtured by Mother Nature.

In my teenage years I moved away from the forest into an urban area. This brought a different level of excitement and connection with people. Life became busier with age. Responsibilities mounted and distractions and disconnections from myself were plenty, yet nature continues to call me Home. Being amongst the trees, feeling the spongy moss below my feet, entertained by the dance of the leaves and sways of the wheatgrass, and hearing the birds' hopeful songs brings me back to a state of alignment swifter than anything else.

Being with the trees has especially been a healing model and transformative reflection of my true Essence. As I have gained emotional wisdom, I now recognize the beautiful state of flow and whimsical intuition I feel in nature is my own Touch Tree. What is a Touch Tree? A Touch Tree is used in wilderness survival techniques. A Touch Tree is a marker that helps us know where to return to and reminds us where we are. If you are lost in the forest, experts suggest that you very swiftly find yourself a 'Touch Tree' or a home base to keep coming back to.



Glennon Doyle, in her incredible book *Untamed*, calls to our inner connection guide. "Every time I have been lost, it is because I made something outside of myself my Touch Tree--an institution, a relationship, tribal belonging, an old version of myself, ideals, expectations, other people's definitions of success, approval. So now, when I find myself feeling lost, I remember that I am my own Touch Tree, and everything that I need is inside of me. You are your own Touch Tree. Everything you need is inside you. Everything we've ever done or been or lost is beneath us feeding us. We are our own Touch Trees."

While we reacquaint ourselves with our own inner compass, we need to seek out moments, spaces, places, and people that help connect us to our inner Touch Tree. Moments where we remember and learn to trust the same whimsical intuition that guided us as a child.



Mother Earth, our living sanctuary, is always that space. She nurtures us, sustains us, counsels us, and cleanses us. Spending intentional time in her warm dew-covered arms draws us close to our own Touch Tree. Each step we take into her cathedral of trees allows us to drop what weighs us, pains us, worries us, holds us back. Our body knows how to heal itself and Mother Nature is the best place to do so. She will always welcome us tenderly. In honor and appreciation for her unconditional warmth and acceptance, we then joyfully hold her in protection and care.

Home can feel like many things. Nature. Yoga. Body movement. Meditation. Forest bathing. Sacred community. An invitation to practice many of these and more will be offered during The Earth Day Retreat, hosted by Touch Tree Connections and held in the nourishing Jefferson Memorial Forest.

As Spring is sprouting and Mother Earth is bursting awake from a long winter's nap, soak her in. Feel her breathe. Lay hands upon her healing offerings. Allow her to absorb what is no longer

yours to carry. Draw in her healing, renewing energy. Feel her heartbeat against your own and know that you are one. Welcome HOME.

Bio: Carrie Meurer is radiantly passionate about cultivating sacred spaces that allow connection, healing, and embodiment to flourish. TOUCH TREE CONNECTIONS was born in 2021 and offers life-giving spaces that can look like small intentional gatherings, large wellness retreats, meditation, group Reiki classes, plus individual Reiki energy healing sessions. Discover more at Touch Tree Connections FB/ IG and find upcoming events at Touchtreeevents.com.

Photo: Unsplash



GARDEN OF LIFE *by Dee Patterson*

Gardens can be a good metaphor for life, including what we harvest and the problems we encounter in that effort. Gardens, like life, require a lot of hard work. Here are the basic principles both for a Garden and for your Life.

A Good Foundation: The first thing you do to prepare a garden bed is to get it plowed or turn the earth over. The soil has to have nutrients added and prepared for seeds. How was your foundation? Are you still carrying a lot of baggage from your childhood? When the soil in a garden no longer produces, things need to be added to and/or removed to amend the soil, making it fertile again.

Planting Seeds: You have to have quality seeds for a good harvest, whether vegetables or flowers. Try planting something new and allow yourself to expand. Plant some different seeds, you might find something you truly enjoy but were afraid to try.

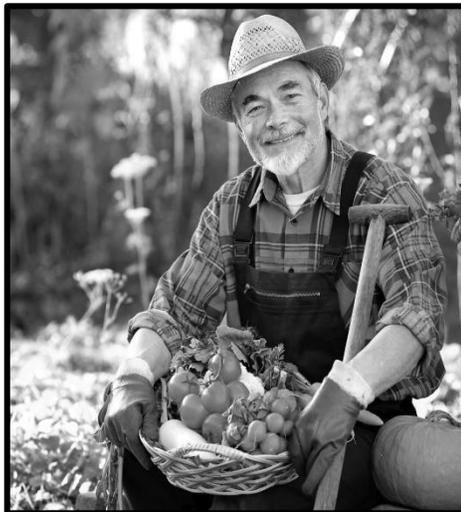
Fertilizing: To get a good harvest a garden needs to be nourished with fertilizer. How do you nourish yourself? What are you putting in your body? Do you take care of yourself by eating the right foods? Do you give your body the right nutrients to support the stress of everyday life. Taking care of yourself can keep you out of the medical system and away from high priced, often toxic drugs.

Pests: Every garden has its share of pests that left uncontrolled can decimate the garden. Do you show up for everyone else but yourself? Are you so over extended and exhausted that you can't take care of yourself? Sometimes pests are the people in our lives who take too much and give too little. It might be time to examine all relationships.

Weeds: It's amazing how quickly weeds can take over a garden. Left unchecked they will crowd out the desirable plants, ruining your garden. Do you constantly have negative thoughts? Have you let other people's opinions mean more than your own sense of self? Pull those negative thoughts, like weeds, out as soon as you get them.



Harvest: If you have successfully tended your garden, you are now ready for the harvest. The old saying "you reap what you sow" is mostly true. We do have things happen that are beyond





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our control, just as high winds, too much water or not enough, can wreck a garden. How have you weathered the storms in your life? If you've gotten a good harvest, then congratulate yourself on living well and taking care of yourself.

Sharing: Most gardens give much more than can be consumed. Plants grow and multiply and need to be divided. The yield on one vegetable plant can produce more than can be used before they go bad. If you are blessed with a lot, then share it.

Balance: A garden actually does put you closer to God. Working in the garden makes you appreciate nature and all its creatures. The Japanese have a practice called Forest Bathing, which is spending time in nature and taking in the atmosphere. It is good for both physical and mental wellbeing. It is proven to reduce stress hormone production, improve happiness, free up creativity, lower heart rate and blood pressure, boost the immune system and accelerate recovery from illness.

Surprises: Our gardens often offer up a surprise or two with unexpected plants. Life is never 100% consistent. Every now and then we get some surprises. Sometimes the unexpected is good and other times not so good. It's all part of living and what you do with the experiences is what matters.

Death: All things eventually leave this earth. Our gardens are no different. A favorite plant dies, just as we lose those we love. While we can't replicate that plant, we can put a new plant in its place. Keep yourself involved. No one needs to be lonely if they seek out others. The rewards for tending your Garden of Life are to look back and feel that your life was worthwhile - - filled with love and respect.

Bio: Dee Patterson is a professional psychic. She reads the past, present and future, is a medium and medical intuitive. She also does past life regressions, spiritual counseling and emotional release. Call 502-426-2220 or text 502-295-0788. deepatt@bellsouth.net and www.deepatterson.com.



Photos: Photo center and photo left by Gajdamak of Canstock Photos.

EXPLORING EVOLVING INSIGHTS ON POSITIVE AGING

By Lynne Cochran, M.A.

As I began to consider aging, I found that I agreed with columnist Andy Rooney who wrote, "It seems that everyone would like to live a long life but no one wants to grow old." As I join my fellow Americans in a rising tide of "Senior Citizens" at 82 years young, I am enjoying life in spite of tip -to-toe reminders that actually I am no longer young by any usual measurement.

I am trying to understand and cope with changes to my body and mind in these "Golden Years." The aging process affects every part of me. From my once brunette hair turning white to my toenails turning hard. As Bob Dylan sings, "The times they are a-changing." I must admit that I am experiencing an equal number of changes that I welcome, such as having time for myself, as well as other changes that I would just as soon skip, such as grief and loss of people I love. For some seniors, isolation and depression are very real struggles that are faced daily.

As a lifelong eager reader, as I consider any large problem, I want to read about how others have dealt with late life issues and written about their experiences. There are three writers I have found to have ideas for aging and coping that have comforted me. The first is "From Strength To Strength" by Arthur C. Brooks. Brooks' front cover states his purpose is finding success, happiness, and deep purpose in the second half of life. He offers ideas for "releasing old habits" and "forming life practices."

The second writer, Anne Lamott, in her book "Dusk, Night, Dawn," refers to aging as being in 'the third third of my life.' Her book is full of humor and encourages us to enjoy 'small moments of joy.'

The third writer is Steve Lopez, a columnist for the Los Angeles Times, who decided instead of retiring to begin a new column on aging which he has named Golden State. The column examines what he calls 'the blessings and burdens of advancing age.' He offers the examples of Ben Franklin and presidential medical advisor Anthony Fauci, who both made valuable contributions in their 80's. He quoted Mike Hodin, chief executive of the Global Initiative on Aging, who feels that due to the world's aging population, there will not be enough young people to sustain society. People in their 70's and 80's will be needed for their wisdom, experience, and expertise!

According to the information provided by the US Census and the Social Security Administration, there are "actuarial tables" (sometimes called "mortality tables" or "life expectancy tables") that are tables or spread sheets that show the probability of a person at a certain age dying before their next birthday. Almost 2/3s of 70-year-old men and almost 3/4 of 70-year-old women will live at least another 10 years. Over 1/5 of men will make it to 90, as will 1/3 of women. This seems encouraging although George Bernard Shaw said, "Do not try to live forever. You will not succeed."

While retirement for many people is a long-awaited dream come true, according to the Wall Street



Journal there has been a rise in people over 65 working or seeking work over the past 20 years. While there are continuing problems faced by seniors in areas of health, housing, isolation, and mobility, The Wall Street Journal recently published an article stating that more seniors are filling labor gaps in Elder Care. There has been an increase in home and personal care providers meeting the needs of aging patients. A few examples of the growth in home services for needy seniors by seniors are Seniors Helping Seniors, Right at Home, and Naborforce which offer help to older adults and those with disabilities. The Labor Department projects participation of older workers to keep growing over the next decade.

For the benefit for all seniors, may we keep in mind the advice of Deb Haaland, "We must defend Medicare and Social Security and provide for families who care for their elders and loved ones with disabilities."

In closing, I wish to include two last quotations. From Mark Twain, "Age is a matter of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." And finally, from the actress Sophia Loren, "There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of the people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age."

Editor's Note: Crucial for active enjoyable senior years is excellent nutrition. You may wish to consider reading one or more of the books by Dr. Daniel Amen. Lots of fresh organic vegetables and fruit and natural foods can help keep the physical body renewing and healthier. Keep the sugar, saturated fat, salt, and processed foods low. Getting outside in nature and moving helps one stay more youthful (or exercise inside). Physical therapy can be fantastic. Once learned, the exercises can then be done at home.

Bio: Master Degree in Speech Pathology from Cal State, Long Beach. Worked as Speech Pathologist 22 years. Was honored to represent her school district as one of Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year. Upon retiring, she became a Supervisor of student teachers and graduate students. Deacon at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Lomita, CA. Student of Tai Chi and Senior Yoga. A major part of her life has been involved with her 2 daughters, Grace and Laura and her grand-daughters, Lydia and Ruby.

Photos: Woman Gardening. By Canstock, gajdamak.. Family Walking, People Images of Canstock



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INSIGHTS ON POSITIVE AGING

Ann Hemdahl Owen, Art Therapist, Hypnotherapist

Good aging for me is a balancing act. I don't want my body to outlive my mind, and I don't want my mind to outlive my body. I go to the YMCA three days a week for water aerobics and the other days I do "Classical Stretch" on PBS TV. In the evenings I continue to do my exercises from Physical Therapy. I will never outgrow them. Actually, my muscles are stronger than years ago when I didn't have time to work out. In the early mornings I do Wordle and practice my piano for about one hour. This balance is working well. Recently, I have become involved with Plant Prana.org which has workshops using essential oil essences. They are making a big difference in my life! I believe that I am never too old to begin a new project!

More Insights on Positive Aging

Joyce Gerrish, Editor Natural Living Journal, Energy Therapist & Healing Meditation Teacher

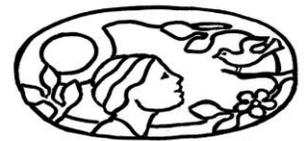
I feel that energy healing support and meditation can be tremendously helpful as one ages. Keeping the physical body, aura, and mind as clear as possible of energy blockages can be a significant benefit as a person ages (and at all periods of one's life). Also, enjoying getting out in nature (as illustrated in the photos on this page and the opposite page) is of great benefit in keeping the physical body and mind renewing. It is so much fun and inspiring to observe the beauty of Mother Nature, see the birds and little creatures, and watch all the details of the changing seasons.

I also believe that one's spiritual faith can deepen ever more fully as one ages. For those people who believe in Heaven, that can be a tremendous comfort and support in many ways. I also believe in reincarnation, which is taught in numerous religions and cultures. With reincarnation the soul can return to earth life after life to keep growing in wisdom and purity - and learning to live in ever greater harmony

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with one's fellow human beings. Attending a church can be a tremendous emotional as well as spiritual support for an aging person, and for people of all ages.

Chiropractic care and massage therapy can be helpful to lessen aches or pains and stay aligned. Yoga and tai chi and chi gong & other modalities are all of huge potential support for keeping the body feeling limber over the years. This brings us back to the food and drink that we put in our mouths. Enjoy fresh vegetables, fruits, natural whole grains, lean protein, and healthy oils like olive oil. Keep any frying at a very low temp.

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MOTHERHOOD, A Transformational Journey. Nicole Bartlett, Founder of Salt Cave

Motherhood has been a lesson in tolerance. We're constantly walking that line of how far our nerves can be pushed; carrying the guilt that we have sorely ruined our children while releasing the woman we left behind in search of the one we are now.

In 2014 I was at my second appointment for my second baby needing ear tubes, and the ENT told me that working mothers were the cause of antibiotic resistance. He was unaware, obviously, that I'd spent the past ten years working in animal nutrition to promote alternatives to antibiotics in livestock. Let's say it hit a nerve. I left his office seeing red and never looked back.

There are gifts we're given that allow the course of our lives to radically shift if we listen. Despite his insensitive and archaic



Photo Pixabay Ratna Fitry

comment, I did take a closer look at the choices I was making, such as dosing up on Zoloft because I had to catch a flight for a sales meeting. A forgotten pump accessory left me hand-expressing my baby's hard-earned milk supply down the drain in the Atlanta airport bathroom stall.

Another example was calling my in-laws again, begging them to help with the kids because my husband and I had exhausted all other resources, and our jobs were on the line for missing so much work. Or driving my 8-week-old and mom to Chicago to make the mandatory sales meeting. It was insanity and I couldn't keep doing that. I was so out of alignment with where my focus needed to be, I could do nothing other than stop.

This came with the possibility of losing our home. I never said I didn't fear the risk, but my faith is more substantial. My faith says that life easily falls into place if I work in alignment. When we become mothers, we give up who we've been and slowly have to rediscover ourselves through trial and error. I can say from my experience so far, faith has been my greatest asset along the way.

My faith means trusting myself to do the next right thing, trusting the Universe to support these choices, and finding grace when I mess up (which is often). I firmly believe that I'm being held, that there is a power greater than me in charge, and that I have access to that whenever I need it -- whether it feels close or not.

This is important because we can so quickly lose ourselves as parents. There is the constant responsibility for another person who you would give your life for. Mothers now that like to tell me, 'Your job as a mom is never over.' When my babies were little, people would pass our chaos out in public and offer with great



sentimentality, 'It all goes so fast.' I needed to hear at that time, 'It gets easier.' And it does. I'm starting to watch it fly by.

I experienced a conscious awareness of transition when my oldest graduated 5th grade and would no longer ride the bus with his brother and sister. He was getting older. The emotions available to me in that experience were deep. I honored them fully. It was also the same time as the Uvalde shooting. We cannot allow ourselves to be desensitized to the atrocities and must work locally to create the change we wish to see.

I don't believe there's a secret to being a good parent. There are excellent resources, and I encourage all parents to seek out what resonates. I also think we're karmically connected and came into this world to learn from our relationships, those with our parents and children being the most outstanding teachers. This is why parenting is a lesson in tolerance and unconditional love. How do we take responsibility for our projections to cause less harm? What does a safe and kind boundary look like? How do we listen and share the role of the teacher with our children? They have so much to contribute.

One of my favorite gifts in parenting came from a psychologist friend who told me that we all mess up our kids. If we can find acceptance in that, it allows us the freedom to ask ourselves how and to lessen the load of shame and blame. Removing these blocks allows us the flexibility to learn from our karmic lessons, so we stop repeating them.

After my second son got his tubes, I left the corporate world, had a third child, and built the Louisville Salt Cave all within a year.

Relaxing in the Salt Cave is a form of Halotherapy which thins the mucus, relieves sinus congestion, and relieves sinus congestion. For me it was novel, preventive, and it created a beautiful place to meditate. This mama needed peace at that time. Either way, my third child has only had one ear infection her entire life. She's now eight and our family has never been healthier.



Bio: Nicole Bartlett founded the Louisville Salt Cave in 2015. The Cave is a community space for spiritual and self-discovery and has eased allergy symptoms for thousands in the Ohio Valley over the past 7 years. She 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 the Earth's whispers.

HEALING WITH DIVINE LOVE

By Joyce C. Gerrish, M.A.

Divine love is an aspect of God. It is a very powerful energy and yet at the same time a very loving gentle energy. Divine love is actually somewhat misunderstood by many people. It has little connection to romantic love or even personal love. It is a universal love when fully understood and utilized. Universal divine love expands to embrace all people and all aspects of God's creation. It doesn't discriminate. It embraces even the people who may seem despicable. That doesn't mean that one exposes oneself to dangerous people and situations that may cause harm. From a safe distance divine love may help lift the consciousness of a difficult individual to behave somewhat more kindly. Sending hate or anger may cause the person to behave more cruelly.

Divine love can travel over vast distances to bless a person and/or situation. It is something we can all do at any time to help heal people we care about, humanity as a whole, and our precious planet. The people of earth are starving for more love. At the same time, to complicate the matter, humanity on earth has free will. People can consciously or unconsciously block out the blessings they most need. This free will should never be forgotten. It is crucial to not blame God for events that happen on Earth. People can consciously or unconsciously block out divine love and divine blessings, curious as that may sound. With that person's permission other people are sometimes able to intercede through prayer, divine love, and invocation. That is one reason that praying for humanity and the earth as a whole is very important – along with whatever other prayers one may choose. Powerful prayers for the earth and humanity that come up from embodied humans can at least somewhat open a door and create an invitation for divine love and blessings to enter the planet more fully. This free will endowed in humanity on earth is a unique gift -- yet it can complicate, slow, and be a mixed blessing for the spiritual progress of some souls.

People may bring a great deal of karma from previous incarnations on earth. That is one reason that sometimes a person's behavior may seem to be incomprehensible to others and perhaps even incomprehensible to oneself. The person may feel "unworthy" of his highest good and letting in divine love or human love, or even loving himself. Past life memories tend to be unconscious in most people. This is to give the person a somewhat fresh start in making more positive choices, if there were some less than optimum choices in the prior life. Alternatively, sometimes the previous life was very pure, yet had overwhelming difficulties that were endured. Having those overwhelming difficulties be held in the unconscious (rather than the conscious) mind can be a relief in the succeeding lifetime, even though there may be some minimal remembrance and effect anyway. Sometimes childhood itself in this life had some abuse or serious trauma. Childhood trauma from this current life is sometimes repressed so deeply that the individual doesn't remember it even in the same lifetime, but those unconscious feelings may nonetheless unknowingly affect the person's behavior as a teenager and adult. The person may feel



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unworthy of pure love and block it out. These conditions can be eased with various kinds of therapy.

Divine love can help heal and melt old scars and blocked energy in our situations with others and within oneself. We can invoke divine love to flow into our being and flood our whole physical body and all levels of our aura and consciousness. Invoking divine love is powerful, it's not wimpy and "just for sissies." It is one of the most powerful energies available on earth.

Divine love helps create harmony and cohesion within a group. It likewise helps enhance cohesion and harmony within an individual's body and consciousness and supports health.

Maybe you already know that there is wonderful joy and internal satisfaction in sharing divine love. This joy and satisfaction can help lift one's life up out of possible boredom or struggle into divine bliss. There is a natural subtle intoxication to helping other people in a way they may need and may be willing to accept. This can release endorphins into our nervous system and moderate stress. Volunteering or working for a cause we care about and sharing divine love with other people and/ or with an aspect of mother earth can be a

blessing for ourselves as well as for the people, plants, animals, water, soil, and air that we share it with. We can be a "love billionaire." We don't need to win the lottery to be this kind of billionaire. It is available to all of us for free – and it can help heal us and our planet. God bless you.

Bio: Zoom Transformational Meditations Weekly Wednesdays. In-person class 1st Saturday monthly. See website events page.. 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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AMAZING SEA TURTLES
by Patti Carpenter, M.D.

When I was a small child, I had a pet turtle with whom I often played outside on the porch. One day while playing my turtle fell off. I looked high and low for my turtle to no avail. The next spring, I found him. We were all amazed. Little did I know that certain turtles can bury themselves in the thickets and into the soil during winter. They don't hibernate, but instead brumate. This allows them to cool down in winter months. They enter into a period of sluggishness and inactivity.

As I grew older, I started thinking about how small and how large turtles get and where the largest of these beautiful turtles are located. It came as no surprise to find that the largest of these beautiful reptiles were located in the sea. Of those in the sea, there is the Leatherback turtle. This animal is the most migratory of all the turtles on earth. He weighs between 500 and 1,000 kilograms (1 kilogram is equal to about 2.2 pounds). His length is between 7 to 10 feet high. It takes him at least 50 years to reach his full growth. This magnificent turtle is unfortunately on the endangered list from humans inadvertently killing them in nets or killing them for their meat.

They are also killed by the 19 billion plastic bags thrown away each year by us. That's right, at least 19 billion plastic bags. That does not include all the other plastic they eat or that gets wrapped around their necks or legs.

There is one turtle named Johnathan who many think is the oldest living turtle in the world. Scientists think he may be at least 190 years old. He lives on St. Helena Island, a British colony located halfway between South America and Africa in the South Atlantic. He was brought to St. Helena after he had reached his adult life of at least 50 years of age. Johnathan is lucky in that the men who brought him knew he was exceptional. His brothers, sisters, and cousins are not as lucky though. All of the sea turtles are vulnerable or are on the severely endangered list. If they were lost, then the ecosystem of the sea would be lopsided. All species of sea turtles contribute (as do all other

animals in the sea) to the ecosystem not only of the sea, but also for humans and other animals. The next time you throw away your plastic bags and other plastic materials, please recycle so that our seas can again become clean.
 Photos: Canoe, Canstock Photos Eric. Sea Turtle, Rudy and Peter Skitterians of Pixabay. The sea turtle in photo isn't a leatherback sea turtle.

