



# *Natural Living Journal*

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

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**Diabetes Can Often Be  
Prevented or Reversed  
With Nutritional Therapy**

**Spiritual Renewal**

**Protecting Beloved Mother  
Earth**

**Haven Where Kids Thrive**

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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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**5<sup>th</sup> day of the month prior to publication date. Journal is published every other month. Contact Editor for Details. Ad Design Service may be available through Natural Living Journal. Prices start at \$25. All ads and photos must be sent as digital jpeg attached to an email. Manuscripts need to be sent Microsoft Word or compatible with Microsoft Word & attached to email. Published 1<sup>st</sup> of Feb, April, June, Aug, Oct, Dec. Thanks**

# DIABETES CAN OFTEN BE PREVENTED OR REVERSED !

By Dr. Lisa Tostado, ND

Type 2 diabetes is the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the U.S. It is a condition where the body does not utilize the hormone insulin very well and is unable to maintain normal blood sugar levels. Blood sugar, or glucose, comes from the food we eat and is our body's major source of energy. Our blood carries glucose to all our body's cells to use for energy.

Diabetes typically develops over many years and later in life (with adult onset) causing higher-than-normal glucose blood sugar readings (pre-diabetes). In this stage the body is becoming resistant to the actions of insulin -- a hormone made by the pancreas which promotes and makes possible the use of glucose for energy by the cells. Insulin also regulates the storage of excess glucose as glycogen and the glucose uptake by muscle and fat cells. In more advanced stages, the pancreas may no longer produce insulin for the body (insulin-dependent diabetes). Then a person needs to receive insulin as medication.

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include:

- A close family member with type 2 diabetes
- An unhealthy diet
- Low physical activity
- Being overweight
- Being 45 or more years old

If not properly treated or managed, consistently high glucose levels can cause multiple organ and tissue damage including to the blood vessels, nerves, retina of the eye, and kidneys. High glucose levels are also a precursor to metabolic syndrome -- a condition that greatly increases your chance for a heart attack or stroke.

Although these conditions (type 2 diabetes & metabolic syndrome) are on the rise, the good news is that they are preventable and often reversible with a healthy diet, physical activity, and weight loss. There are also some key herbs that can also be utilized which will make insulin more effective in the body.

**Diet:** Aim for a whole food, nutrient dense diet mainly consisting of lean protein sources, healthy fats & fiber -- these foods will help prevent glucose spikes. Minimize added sugar (i.e., table sugar, high fructose corn syrup) -- it should not be more than 10% of your total caloric intake. Daily intake of vegetables should be 5 to 7 servings a day (1 serving = ½ cup). Although fruit is a natural source of sugar, it is best to stick to berries which have a lower impact on glucose levels. Drink about ½ your body weight in filtered water per day and start replacing any sugary beverages with a glass of water to help meet your daily goal.



Dr. Lisa Tostado, N.D.

Naturopathic Doctor

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**Exercise:** The American Diabetes Association suggests getting at least 150 minutes per week of physical activity of moderate intensity. This may include brisk walking, hiking, swimming, cycling, or dancing. You may need to start slowly and incorporate other strategies for movement such as parking further away from where you are going, taking the stairs instead of the elevators, or 3 ten-minute walks instead of a 30-minute walk.

**Healthy Weight:** There is a clear link between obesity and type 2 diabetes. One way to determine if you are at an unhealthy weight is by calculating your BMI (body mass index). BMI is a person's weight in kilograms (or pounds) divided by the square of height in meters (or feet). If your BMI is 25 or higher, you are considered overweight or obese (>30). You may need a health practitioner to help you determine that. In addition, your waist circumference should be 40 inches or less for men and 35 inches or less for women. Diet & exercise can help you meet your weight loss goals.

**Key Herbs:** One of my favorite herbs for helping insulin work better in the body is gymnema sylvestre. Gymnema can support insulin production and use in the body, as well as curb sugar cravings. Other botanicals that can be helpful in managing type 2 diabetes include cinnamon, fenugreek, bitter melon, berberine, black cumin seed and licorice.

Dr. Lisa Tostado helps identify the early stages of metabolic challenges such as type 2 diabetes and has successfully managed these conditions using a natural and holistic approach.

**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 8 years. Her office is at Louisville Lifestyle Medicine, 3012 Eastpoint Pkwy., Louisville, KY 40223.

**Note:** Please consult with your doctor before making any changes to your health regimen. **Photo:** Lawrence Crayton of Unsplash

# FLOWING, TRANSFORMATION, AND LETTING GO

By Nicole Bartlett

The practice of presence is most necessary in times of transition. So often, we want to jump ahead to what's next or maybe we get stuck in the grief of letting go - - but once that lever tips, transformation unfolds like a red carpet. Choosing to accept change is often more difficult than the change itself. We create stories and excuses as to why we should hang on to reality as we have known it. This period before transition of our power is where our ego resistance is strongest.

This is a great time for faith. How do we move away from a comfort we've felt grounded in for so long without trusting that we will still be held? Can we stand rooted in the idea that there's a power greater than us helping us through the unknown? Why do we fear change so much? May we soften ourselves to allow for transition rather than trying to control it?

Freedom is one of my core values and whenever I think of surrender, I see myself soaring with my arms open wide as if I could fly, my heart reaching to the sky completely uninhibited, and pouring love straight from my chest. But my life tells me that diving open-hearted doesn't come without consequence. Open hearted living can leave us vulnerable and exposed to potential suffering. We could turn inward and do whatever we can to prevent the pain and suffering that caused some of the deepest wounds to our delicate beings, or we can choose to fly.

The present moment is all we have to work with, yet I'm grateful I lived through my twenties when youth's beautiful, blind confidence didn't prioritize calculated risk. Those years are truly a gift to behold in the time we're given. While responsibility has moved in more recently, that spontaneous belief that anything is possible still drives my faith.

Because transitions involve mixed emotions, it's important that we learn to be with all aspects of our feelings. I've gone through periods of change over and over. Each time allowed for a different aspect of myself to transform. In building resilience, like any successful athlete, restoration and time away from 'the work' have been as critical as conditioning. Digestion works most effectively with small bites and lots of chewing.

I've grown in faith and trust during these times, which allows me to stay more present in the process. Just as a butterfly starts as a very hungry caterpillar, what we put in significantly contributes to what we get out.



I've dedicated myself to practicing presence for the sake of peace. Living fully means experiencing not only joy, laughter, love, and peace, but also pain, sorrow, and suffering. I say this with an understanding that the awakening process and healing are a lifelong journey. If I can be present with my grief, I will be gifted with paradox and better understand the journey of wholeness. If I can be present through the discomfort of change and my fear (not allowing that energy to get stuck), then I'm more open to flow, allowing energy to shift and for me to step assuredly into what's next.

Through this gift of presence, I am open to receiving more gifts. A message through tarot recently told me to find magic in everything. The guaranteed way to miss magic is not to look. The likely side-effect of finding magic in everything is that you'll surround yourself with beauty.

Practicing presence will help ensure that what is on the other side of this great transition is something we want to create. When the going gets tough, remember to take an intentional breath, say a prayer for grace, and allow yourself to be washed in the presence of something greater than you.



**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 Earth's whispers.



**PHOTO:** Mor-shani of Unsplash

## WHO IS GOD TO ME?

By Gerry Boylan, Ph.D.

"The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me.." Meister Eckhart

A few lifetimes ago I was teaching sophomore religion classes in a local high school. What began as a simple assignment turned into a life lesson. I had a few minutes left in my first period class, so I asked my students to take out a half piece of paper and write an answer the question "Who is God to me?" I noticed some of the kids were still writing as the bell rang so I asked them to bring the assignment to class the next day. I had four more classes that day, so I decided to have each class respond to the question, "Who is God to me?"

The classes I was teaching were significantly different in many ways. There was the top sophomore class who were taking courses like advanced algebra and other AP (advanced placement) subjects. I also had the lowest ranking sophomore class who called themselves the "sweat hogs," a term taken from the TV show Welcome Back Kotter. I felt the students in this lower class were perfect examples of negative conditioning. They were told for years that they were stupid and so they eventually believed it. I found these young men to be neither slow nor stupid, they simply fit themselves into the mold that the educational system created for them. When I did not buy into the dumb or stupid routine and gently demanded quality work, they responded in kind.

I collected the assignment the next day. My top sophomore classes papers stacked up like index cards. My lower classes papers were not as neat. There were all sorts of sizes and shapes, names in different places, and some with stains and footprints.

That evening I began reading over the answers - - my top group first. Some of their answers were: "God is like a great computer in the sky," and "God created the world and is just waiting for things to play out." I was struck by the distance and seeming depersonalization that the answers implied, but I did not think much further on this. I did not seem to find anything startling or significant until I came to my bottom class, the "sweat hogs." They had answers like "God is my best friend." (I believe the exact spelling was God is my best "fiend," but I knew what he meant). Another student stated, "God is someone I can talk to when there's no one else around." The answer that struck me the most was "I think God is like a big clown who is just waiting for us to start laughing."

I was impressed by the overall tone of their answers which seemed so different from my top class. I was not sure what I was

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sensing, but it felt I was on to something, so I decided to take some time and observe these two distinct groups of students.

My top class would come in each day with their heads down and very limited eye contact. Some would wave and say 'hello,' but most would be talking to one another about the latest tests they had taken or were going to take. There was always resistance whenever the class was focused on feelings or anything that did not depend on the intellect. Their attitude toward me, the class, and one another appeared to be cold and impersonal.



On the other hand, my bottom class would come tumbling in the room like a whirlwind. The kids would be hanging all over me. They would be talking a mile a minute, writing stuff on the blackboard, trying to tell me a "new" joke that I had already heard in the fifth grade and generally having a grand time being themselves. It would take about five minutes to get them all in their seats. At the same time, however, they might say to me, "Please don't get on Joe if he falls asleep. His father was drunk last night and there was a lot of trouble at home." These

kids cared and did not seem to be afraid of their feelings or of expressing them.

It was not until years later I heard that quote from Eckhart. The kids had taught me that lesson years ago. When we are plagued with guilt and fear, God seems vengeful and judgmental. When we are seeing ourselves as nit picking, God is the "score keeper" or accountant. When we are perceiving ourselves as open hearted and compassionate, God is love.

I realize I am all of these and more sometimes. But quite often I will reflect "What kind a God am I believing in today, and how does that reflect how I am thinking of myself today?"

**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: Man with Mirror, Shibu7213, Canstock Photos



## **DOCTOR, WHY ARE YOU TREATING MY GUT WHEN MY SKIN IS THE PROBLEM?**

**By Dr. Victoria Snelling,**

I'm dismayed by the number of television and print media commercials for pharmaceutical drugs. They paint a rosy picture and almost always promise quick relief of whatever ails you. Just purchase their product or ask your MD to write a prescription. In our society, most medical practices follow the line of thought that focusses on treating the symptoms without treating the cause.

Things are not always as they seem. It might be that someone's chronic sinus infection doesn't really need yet another antibiotic cocktail and maybe someone's eczema doesn't need topical steroids, yet again. Maybe it's time to take a deeper look at how and why these conditions develop. The question above, regarding the gut and skin, may seem like quite a jump. How are they related? Sometimes a rash is from purely an external cause, for instance contact with poison ivy in a sensitive individual. That acute situation makes sense, cause and effect, and hopefully resolves quickly. Conditions that are chronic and long lasting, most often have a deeper reason and require a thoughtful solution.

The question above came from a new patient (I'll call her Susan) who had eczema for a number of years. She'd had treatment from her primary care doctor and wasn't happy with the lack of results. She wanted to a non-drug alternative and hoped I had one for her. As we spoke about her medical history, I explained that often the body's visual symptom is coming from another place altogether. We spoke about how the body is an integrative whole with each system working in concert with the others.

Susan had several other complaints apart from the eczema including acid reflux, migraine headaches, a long history of antibiotic use, and a few things she thought "just run in the family."

We spoke about the beneficial effects of probiotics for our healthy gut flora and how important that was to our immunity. Susan produced the food diary I ask of my patients, and I encouraged her to try a few changes with the suggestion that her skin would be the better for it. She agreed to take a very good probiotic to replace the healthy flora lost due to her history of antibiotic use.

I recognize that antibiotics have their place in the world of healing, but they have a cost to the body. These drugs kill

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bacteria indiscriminately- - the bad and the good. They should be followed up with a well-balanced probiotic to replenish the healthy bacteria that is lost. We each have, or should have, about 46 trillion bacteria in our bodies, and most of that number would be found in the gastrointestinal system. A healthy gut microbiome protects us from viruses, unhealthy bacteria, parasites and so much more. Without a healthy gut and intestinal lining, we'd be in very poor shape.

At Susan's first follow up, her skin was 80% better and we were both thrilled. With the digestive enzymes I'd recommended, the acid reflux was gone. The probiotics are working their charm and the homeopathic remedies I suggested have helped to resolve the other symptoms she thought she'd be living with forever.

Our history tells us the answer if we look back and trace the timeline of our health. When we're ready to stop suppressing our symptoms, and when we are ready to look for the cause of our dis-ease, we can chart a clear path to finally assist the body in healing. The body knows just what to do if we get out

of its way. Sometimes all it needs is a very gentle nudge.

**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](http://www.DrSnelling.com).



Editor's Note: As always, consult your primary care practitioner before making changes to your health practices.

Photo: Effin Fox of Pixabay Photos

## ***SPIRITUAL RENEWAL***

***By Rev. Valerie Mansfield***

Every day is a time for spiritual renewal. When we take time to slow down and connect with our high self our life is enriched through universal wisdom. This practice of “being” is a gift of life. Through the practice of silence, we are guided to finding the right and perfect path for the unfoldment of now.

The silence reduces stress in our body and minds. Noise affects us physically, mentally, and spiritually. We can be more creative in the silence as our brain rests and restores itself. We can flow into our own stream of consciousness. This allows us to engage with our self in a deep peaceful way.

Healing occurs in the silence. Healthy cells are regenerated through our resting mind which occurs when we allow ourselves time to be. This occurs all throughout our body. Studies show us periods of silence can enhance our sleep and lessen fatigue and depression. Any mindfulness experience can shift us from an unhealthy state of consciousness into a healthy state of consciousness.

The fall is a great time for a walk in nature which adds to the benefits of the silence and can help with cognitive challenges. The crisp air is cleansing, the fresh smell, mild temperatures, beautiful colors, and exercise are great for the soul. Even visualizing yourself walking in a beautiful fall setting is beneficial.

As you prepare to practice moving into the silence, find a comfortable quiet space, take a moment to stretch and gently move your body. Allow your thoughts to pass through like a moving cloud or as though flowing down the river. Remember to let go of attachment to any thought. The thought will be there if needed later. Take a couple of deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Then just follow your breath, allowing the peacefulness of your breath to relax you. If you have challenges starting to clear your mind, repeat a mantra like the word “peace” in your mind or aloud.

Feel your energy and your body and just rest in the silence. Start out with 1 minute then gradually increase

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until you are comfortable. A daily 10 – 20 minutes in the silence can shift your entire life. Allow spirit to renew and heal you one breath at a time.

Remember there is no right or wrong way to be - - and there is no right or wrong way to be in the silence. Give yourself the gift of the silence, enjoy the peace and joy.

Take a moment to journal your experience of the silence, your feelings, and emotions. Enjoy the benefits of the silence.

**Rev. 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:** Elias-mauer of Unsplash:

## ***A MINDFUL HEART***

***By Barbara Vasiloff***

Agnes was 93 and mostly sat in her wheelchair. But sometimes she ambulated very slowly around the halls of the nursing home.

On her good days she would volunteer to lead table prayer and always said spontaneous words that brought a smile to those listening. She would talk about the pleasant weather or comment on the clothing someone was wearing. On her bad days she would tell everyone there were snakes under her table and spiders on her arms. She had children, but they rarely visited her.

It was a policy of the nursing home to provide everyone with an opportunity to walk each day, even if the walk wasn't very long. Aggie walked too, but barely made three or four steps. Mostly, she sat. She loved when the minister would pass by and greet her using the nickname he assigned to her, "How is 'Agnes of God' today?"

On this day, Aggie attended a musical concert in the Solarium along with twenty to twenty-five other residents. A friendly accordion player, adept at playing all types of music, was the featured musician. He played 'All My Loving,' 'Can't Smile Without You,' 'My Cherie Amour,' 'Ramblin' Rose' and 'Take Me Home Country Road.' Aggie was in her usual stance. She sat motionless, head and shoulders tilted forward and appeared to be dosing.

When the accordion player began to play a polka, Aggie became agitated. She began pushing herself up out of the wheelchair. Her chair alarm buzzed as she struggled to stand. Heidi, the nurse's aide went quickly to her side.

To everyone's amazement, Heidi did not hasten to have Aggie sit back down in her chair. Instead, she asked her to dance. Aggie outstretched her arms, took hold of Heidi, and with a smile on her face, she and Heidi moved around the floor swaying to the music. When the song was over Heidi bowed and thanked her for the dance as she helped Aggie back into her seat.

Each day is a new adventure in this journey of life. We try to live it from our radiant center, observing our thoughts about self and others. One mindful heart can bring joy, peace, and loving kindness to individuals and to all who witness their actions. The mindful heart sees what is often invisible to the naked eye.

And so we give thanks for those who see with a mindful heart and reflect on our own opportunities to bring joy, peace and loving kindness to others.

(Story witnessed and re-told by Barbara Vasiloff)

**Editor's Note:** Some researchers have found that when people are experiencing something particularly creative and pleasing to them, behaviors can sometimes rise above the usual level of ability. This may be related to the theory that some abilities may be facilitated by functioning from the right more intuitive and/or emotional side of the brain rather than from the left more intellectual



side of the brain. This can sometimes be observed in people with serious stuttering issues who can happily sing beautifully without hesitation. Somewhat related, I once observed a young woman with walking and cognitive challenges enter a short race at her day center. She normally walked slowly depending fairly heavily on her walker. In the race she rushed enthusiastically without the walker across the approximately thirty-five-foot room! When a trumpet was placed in the hands of a trumpet player who had lost the ability to speak and other functions, he was able to play beautifully.

**BIO: BARBARA VASILOFF, MARE**, Founder of "Discipline With Purpose" and author of, "Nurturing a Child's Self Discipline." [dwpbv@aol.com](mailto:dwpbv@aol.com). This book for educators and parents describes self-discipline in simple terms so that independent skill practice can begin as early as age five. The suggestions for teaching 15 self-discipline skills include factual information, experiential exercises, poetry, songs and stories that illustrate the skills in action. Available on Amazon and at [www.selfdisciplinedwp.com](http://www.selfdisciplinedwp.com).

**PHOTO:** Aletia of Can Stock Photos

# ***THE MAGNIFICENT OSPREY*** ***An Endangered Species Success Story***

***By Elsa Lichman, MSW, LICSW***

The osprey is one of our success stories, not unlike the bald eagle. After the banning of the pesticide DDT, they were taken off the endangered species list and have made a comeback.

At a local cove a huge black and white osprey lands on a tree overlooking the water. Its head is bobbing, searching for fish. Suddenly it dives down talons first with a wild splash, enters the water completely, and comes up with a large fish. It flies low, as its prey is too heavy, and lands on a small outcrop in the water nearer the opposite edge to devour its prey. It is the only fish-eating bird of prey which can submerge head to talons and still fly up with its catch. Its wingspan is smaller than that of our bald eagle which only grazes the surface with its talons to catch fish.

This glorious bird sports bold black and white markings and the adult eye has a black pupil surrounded by a bright yellow ring. These large, rangy hawks do well around humans. In fact, a pair created a huge, untidy stick nest on the flat top of a lamppost in a mall in New England, in which two chicks thrived to maturity. The parents went about their business fishing in a river behind the buildings and feeding their offspring. I went to view this phenomenon and was amazed at the conjunction of two worlds.

Some birds fitted with satellite transmitters have been known to travel great distances when they migrate south.

Ospreys are unusual in that there is a reversible outer toe which allows them to grasp fish with two toes in front and two behind. Barbed pads on the soles of the feet allow them to hold

onto slippery fish which they angle headfirst to cut down on wind resistance. (See photo) They are excellent at fishing, often catching prey in one in four attempts, a very good ratio.



Their eggs hatch in a staggered manner, the eldest hatching five days before the youngest. Four chicks are the maximum, and the oldest may be dominant. In good times when food is plenty they may share in relative harmony. When newly hatched, the female stays on the nest and relies on the male to bring in fish to feed the family.

The oldest known osprey in the wild was at least 25 years old. It was discovered in Virginia and had been banded. When it was young an "anklet" had been placed on its ankle by a professional wildlife bander so its age could be determined. Often this requires climbing tall structures (using protective wires or ropes to aid climbing) to gently capture a young bird and bag it. Then the wildlife bander carries or sends it slowly to the ground to weigh it, place the band, check to see if the crop is full of food, and check for parasites.

In flight, the underwings often look pale when backlit by the sun. These soaring extraordinary birds can appear otherworldly and angelic. They are one of

God's creations which yet again remind us of the wide universe filled with miracles so greatly needed in these difficult times for humanity.

**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:**

Osprey in nest, by Frank Peace  
Osprey With Wings Spread Flying, Jeremy Hynes of Unsplash.  
Osprey Carrying Fish, Keith Luke of Unsplash.



## CONNECTION CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALING, By Leah Bomar, Author & Life Coach

Humans need connection like we need sustenance. We are not meant to go it alone. Since we live in a digital era where the world is within reach at our fingertips, being intentional about the kinds of connection we are fostering in our real life is vital. People often feel divided or separated by politics or differing world views, so it's important to focus on the shared commonalities. We often have more in common with each other than we have differences. Sometimes the differences are just blasted louder and placed boldly front and center with the intention to divide. To experience more peace, I encourage you to intentionally seek and create genuine connections in harmony, resonance, and understanding.

"The opposite of addiction is connection," Johann Hari famously quotes in his 2015 TED Talk. Since the isolation of the pandemic, suicide rates, drug overdoses and the need for mental health services have risen in numbers never seen before according to reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The American Medical Association has reported there were 107,000 deaths from overdose between December 2020 and December 2021. The suicide rate has increased 30%.

This October marks the one-year anniversary of my longtime friend's death from an overdose. When we were 15 years old, she was the only surviving passenger in a fatal car accident that took the lives of our very close mutual friend and another teenage driver. The lives of an entire community were altered forever. Neither of us ever fully recovered emotionally, but as the lone survivor, her inability to process her pain led to a lifetime of suffering and drug addiction that ended in death.

So many people are struggling with internal pain. Hurting hearts are turning to drugs, alcohol, or other self-harming habits and behaviors to cope. Connection can be a way out.

After years of isolation, overwhelm and burnout as a young mother, following decades battling bouts of my own depression and experiencing extreme anxiety, I decided I wanted more joy in my life. Less fear. In 2018, I quit my teaching career in the classroom and began hosting retreats to bring women together to reconnect to themselves and each other. Relaxation. Creativity. Connection.

Resources such as 12-step support groups are available online and in person for whatever vice or difficult person is wreaking havoc in your life. Social media can be used for good when you seek out communities with common interests. Facebook groups like Louisville Women Connect and Ladies of Louisville provide local, real-life meetups to foster friendships and combat loneliness.

Denise Metzger of SurpriseInvite.com started doing 'Wacky Wednesday' when her daughter had leukemia as a way to cheer her up during treatments. Decades later, she still dresses in her



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*Leah Bomar*  
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brightest of colors and wacky wardrobe every Wednesday to honor her daughter who has since passed. The activity brings smiles to strangers faces and is developing a following of people who come together to participate in the fun. "Wacky Wednesday is a diversion of silliness and smiles in a world wrought with stress, sadness, seriousness and sickness," explains Denise. Her work also helps people heal their relationships and shift their views of death. Join in the fun of @WackyWednesday at Logan Street Market the last Wednesday of each month! Wear what makes you smile. There are plenty of hats, headbands and glasses available to join in the fun! (See photo courtesy of Holly Hartman.)



In my book "GlitterBomb," I address themes of dealing with through self-love. A deeper, genuine connection to self and others can save lives. Come out of the dark and play. Enjoy the following excerpt from my book which is now available for pre-order on Amazon.com

"I've entered the realm of 'before and after.' And what comes after cannot be the same as what came before... I choose healing; to change the trajectory of the trauma which binds generations. I want to stop, if I can, the handing down of harmful patterns of familial behavior, addiction, generational pain. I chose for my scars to be seen and widely known, with the hope the exposure of my most shameful behaviors, choices and experiences can reach the very dark place of someone else's depression, addiction, abuse or self-loathing. I cannot alter the past, but maybe as I heal myself, the future is changed for the better. Not starting tomorrow, but today. In lighting my own way, maybe a spark jumps and spreads, so our shared experience of being human won't be so lonely. My wish is for us to arrive in a new reality filled with glittering gardens of healing, self-love, and acceptance; the barren vastness of silent suffering long behind us."

**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](http://LeahBomar.com) or email [AuthorLeahBomar@gmail.com](mailto:AuthorLeahBomar@gmail.com). **Photo**, Holly Hartman.

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## WONDERFUL AUTUMN TASTE OF BUTTERNUT SQUASH, by Staff Writer

Butternut squash is a delicious nutritious vegetable. Like all orange fruits and veggies, it is a great source of beta-carotene which our bodies convert into vitamin A, needed for a healthy immune system, good digestive-tract function, and an optimum respiratory system. It offers nutrients of B1, B3, B6, C, E, K, folic acid, calcium, copper, iron, phosphorus, selenium, and zinc. It is a great provider of energy-sustaining carbohydrates and also contains high levels of the minerals potassium and magnesium which help to maintain efficient energy production. The smaller butternut squashes are usually the tastiest. You can tell if it is ripe by tapping it. If ripe it will sound hollow. Organically grown is best.

### OPTIONS FOR GETTING BUTTERNUT INTO PIECES TO COOK

Cutting up butternut squash can be a challenge. Here are several options which you may or may not already be utilizing. (1) In a grocery store you can frequently find precut butternut with seeds already removed. That might be fresh or frozen. Some sources feel that there is some loss of fresh taste that way. (2) Some people may be strong enough to cut the squash into pieces from the whole raw fresh form. That probably requires a sharp knife and being VERY careful. (3) Another method is to put the whole raw butternut into a pan big enough to hold it with the butternut on its side) with water about 2/3 way up in the pan. Then simmer it on stove top that way on medium-low heat until it is soft enough to make cutting much easier. That may be an unconventional way to cut up a butternut squash, but it can work well and is safe. (You might want to do the softening prior to the meal when you plan to cook and eat it.)

### TYPES OF WINTER SQUASH

In the photo above right, you see numerous types of winter squash. They can all be cooked somewhat similarly. The butternut squash is, of course, the light colored one near the top right which has a bulbous base and thinner top part. The rounded dark ones are acorn squash. The striped ones are delicata squash which have their own distinctive delicious taste. The largest light colored one is spaghetti squash which when cooked resembles spaghetti in strands and can be enjoyed with spaghetti sauce. The larger tan shaped ones in top right and bottom left seem to be small pumpkins or closely related. Pumpkins can be cooked and eaten a vegetable.



### RECIPE FOR DELICIOUS BAKED BUTTERNUT SQUASH

You may wish to follow this recipe after preparing the squash to be cut into pieces using one of the methods described above. Cut squash into 2 inch cubes (or other size). Peeling is optional.  
7 oz. button mushrooms.  
1 red sweet pepper (not hot pepper), seeds removed & sliced.  
Place in an oven proof dish  
Add about 3 Tablespoons olive oil - mix well  
Add your favorite seasoning or herbs. Salt is optional.  
Bake in 375 oven for 30 minutes May take longer, stirring occasionally. (If you used the simmer method above to prepare the squash for cutting, you may wish to set the oven a little less hot and bake a little less long.  
Remove from oven when squash is tender

It's good in soups or stews, or enjoy it as a side dish along with your major protein source for the meal, such as beans or lentils, fish, etc. Another wonderful way to enjoy butternut squash, of course, is to slice it lengthwise and bake it in the oven until very tender - - both halves facing up and in the peel/shell.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR BLENDED BUTTERNUT SOUP

Once the squash is cut into pieces (using one of the methods described above), simmer pieces in filtered water until tender. Then place in blender along with about 2 tablespoon of olive oil. You may wish to add some chopped onion and perhaps one or two chopped clove of garlic. Add seasonings and herbs as desired. Blend until smooth. Enjoy.

## ***THE MANY BENEFITS OF STRENGTH TRAINING, Such As Enhanced Health And Confidence***

***By Jennifer Castellano, MS, OTR/L, CPT***

Isaac Newton's First Law of Motion states, "A body at rest will remain at rest, and a body in motion will remain in motion unless it is acted upon by an external force." You may be wondering why I am bringing this up in an article that relates to health and fitness, but abstractly Newton's law pops in my head whenever I think about motivating new clients to lead a healthier lifestyle. When you think about it, being still is what we do when unwell. Barring severe illness, the human body is meant to move.

Your "external force" may be a health-related goal such as weight loss or rehab after an injury. It may be wanting to excel at your favorite sport like tennis or cycling - - or wanting to be stronger for your job. Maybe it is a fitness-related goal such as running a marathon or competing in a bodybuilding contest. You can't achieve these goals without exercise and a healthy diet. To those with a passion for fitness, exercise is as important to sustaining life as is food and water. Strength training, aka weight training, is my favorite mode of exercise.

The host of benefits of strength training include boosting your metabolism through muscle building. Muscles are metabolically more efficient than fat mass, meaning you'll burn more calories even when you're at rest if you build up muscle mass. You don't need to be a bodybuilder for this to happen. Quite frankly, most people doing strength training don't need to worry about "getting bulky" or "too big." This is a common myth. A poor diet will get you "bulky" and that actually happens without lifting weights.

The rest of the many benefits include decreased fat around the abdomen. Excess abdominal fat increases your risk for heart disease, diabetes and certain types of cancer. Then there's decreased risk for injury and falls, improved sleep patterns and stress relief. My favorite benefit of strength training, however, is the increased sense of confidence and well-being that happens when you're strong and fit! The confidence my clients gain once they feel and see results is invaluable.

For those of us that love to lift weights, a gym full of free weights and fitness machines is a playground. If you're doing it right you will feel energized and strong after a work-out, even if a little tired. While I've taken a hiatus from bodybuilding competitions, I continue train and eat in a way that allows me to maintain a strong, healthy physique. While we all have body fat, an excess is detrimental to overall health. Strength training is a way to change and maintain a healthy body composition that keeps excess body fat at bay.

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No matter your goal for strength training, having a plan for which parts of your body you train as well as how much cardio you do weekly is key for progress. If you do decide to start a strength training program, be sure you have a plan for the days you train. If you don't know how to do so, hire a trainer that can help you meet whatever goals you have or set up a plan you can do on your own. Your trainer's job is to come up with a training split that works for not only your goals but fits within your lifestyle. I can't tell you how many times I hear, "I just don't have time for that." Working out is a privilege. So if you're healthy enough to get up and move, take full advantage of the many ways you are able to get your body in motion and experience the benefits. Strength training can include using free weights, fitness machines, resistance bands and your own body weight. Find a couple of modes you enjoy and stick with them.

I personally love being strong, looking strong and knowing I'm eating in such a way that fuels my workouts and my health. I definitely "eat to live" vs. "live to eat." In a society where every happy, sad, or celebratory occasion centers around food, it's a tough mindset to grasp. But as they say, "being fit is a lifestyle." Once you adopt this lifestyle, you realize that feeling strong and healthy cannot be achieved without following a solid meal plan that incorporates the right nutrients.

In summary, my many years of experience have shown me you can only give someone the tools they need to be successful in changing their lifestyle. The desire to make that change has to come from within you. For some it takes a health crisis but for others, it's just a matter of getting accommodated to a training program that is enjoyable so that it becomes a routine.

**BIO:** Jennifer is co-owner and managing partner of Pro Fitness Training Studio in Middletown, Louisville, Kentucky. She has run her own personal training business for over 20 years as well as run a medical billing business for 12 years. She earned a Masters in Exercise Physiology from UL and Masters in Occupational Therapy from Spalding. Born and raised in Louisville, KY with a passion for fitness, nutrition, as well as providing medical billing for private practice providers.



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# **A COURSE IN MIRACLES: INSIGHTS**

**By William Evans, M.D.**

**Miracles Occur Naturally as Expressions of Love.  
The Real Miracle is the Love That Inspires Them.**

“Your immortal reality” and “God, being love, has forgotten no one” are reflections of truth that can be found recorded in teachings by many of the past great Spiritual Masters and their disciples who chronicled their teachings. Through the last 50 years I have found no one book or body of information containing a more exhaustive, more reasoned, and consistently unified focus on the Divine Truth that incorporates the teachings on “your immortal reality” and that “God has forgotten no one” than A Course in Miracles. I shall frequently refer to it in this article, as it is commonly known, simply as the Course.

The Course summarizes “the journey back to God, a shared journey we all are on” by labeling it “the journey without distance to a goal that has never changed.”\* The Course’s profound explanations, clarifications, and teachings make it very clear that our seeming journey back to God is indeed “a journey without distance” with the following: “You are at home in God, dreaming of exile but perfectly capable of awakening to reality. Spirit is immortal, and immortality is a constant state. Why wait for Heaven? Those who seek the light are merely covering their eyes. The light is in them now. Enlightenment is but a recognition, not a change at all.”\*

The Natural Living Journal clearly is devoted to playing its role in this great awakening by focusing on a cornucopia of helpful ideas for removing the personal obstacles to the great awakening both personally and collectively. A Course in Miracles contains 333,250 words on 1,333 pages and has been translated into sixteen different languages. Over 7 years ago in May of 2015, according to Wikipedia, A Course in Miracles had already sold over 2 million copies. In fact, sales have grown rapidly and steadily over the 7 years since this number was recorded. The words and ideas in the Course come directly from the “Holy Spirit” and in turn the “Holy Spirit” in the Course is labeled in a very direct manner as both your inner “Voice for God” \* and our remaining internal “Communication Link” \* to God.

Perception of both our personal daily internal experience and awareness of the world around us is mostly the result of what the Course defines as “choosing the ego as our inner teacher.” However, our daily ego-determined perceptions can be “chosen against,” changed and purified by allowing what the Course defines as a Correction process for perception. With practice and the persistent application of the means, this Correction process becomes inherently reinforcing by steadily producing the personal rewards of increased peace, happiness, and well-being.



As the Course teaches over and over, and with great patience, persistence, and repetition, “The whole purpose of this Course is to teach you that the ego is unbelievable and will forever be unbelievable ... Your wholeness has no limits because ‘being’ is infinity.”\* Explained within the Course is also how unlikely it would be that God would not have a plan for our awakening to awareness of “Divine Love and the peace that surpasseth all peace,” and how unlikely God’s plan would not work.

Following are some inspirational and favorite quotes about the plan of God found word for word within the Course.

“Have faith in only this one thing, and it will be sufficient: God wills you be in Heaven, and nothing can keep you from it or it from you.”\*

“Your wildest misperceptions, your weird imaginings, your blackest nightmares all mean nothing. They will not prevail against the peace God wills for you.”\*

“The truth in you remains as radiant as a star, as pure as light, as innocent as love itself.”\*

“Heaven is here. There is nowhere else. Heaven is now. There is no other time.”\*

“Child of God. You were created to create the good, the beautiful, and the Holy.”\*

“When you want only love, you will see nothing else.”\*

j “With love in you, you have no need except to extend it.”\*

\* All quotes in article are from the book, A Course in Miracles by Helen Schucman

PHOTOS: Flowers by Ellen Chan of Pixabay Photos,  
Man Meditating, Antonio Guillem of Canstock



# PROTECTING BELOVED MOTHER EARTH

By Joyce Gerrish, M.A.

Planet Earth is at a great crossroads into the future. The people of Earth now have the opportunity to create a peaceful bountiful reality for all – or possibly sink into seemingly endless struggles and into the experience of scarcity because of the abuse of Mother Earth. This might be accompanied by some people trying to prove that they deserve luxury and others here and around the globe somehow deserve less - - much less.

The truth is that we can all learn to share and to live ever so gently and lightly on beloved Mother Earth. It is an adjustment in how we think. It isn't choosing to live in discomfort and lack. It is learning to enjoy the essence of a simple peaceful lifestyle. What really is important to you or to me or to someone else? Only each of us can really speak for ourself, of course. But how much of what we think we need may just be conditioning and training from those around us and perhaps from the media.

Our real needs probably start with feeling loved and appreciated by those we are close to and interact with regularly. Of course, love and appreciation don't cost money. These are feelings that we earn through treating people well. Pure love and goodwill are powerful beyond many people's comprehension. These are "food" for our psyche and soul, and we need a steady diet of this "food." We don't earn it through expensive clothes in the latest style and awesome cars. We earn it through being steadily kind, honest, dependable, and reasonably cheerful. We earn this "food" by deeply caring about other people and their well-being.

Expanding this concept, Mother Earth needs our massive love, respect, compassionate gentle care, and extraordinary stewardship. We need to honor our precious Mother Earth and not allow her to be harmed and depleted recklessly or thoughtlessly.

How can we help our precious planet? It is crucial that we once again remember how to slow down and prepare whole natural food, not fast food on the run, or mostly opening cans and boxes and frozen packages. Natural foods aren't more costly; it is simply a shift of willingness to remember or learn natural ways of preparing food. Food isn't meant to be entertainment. It is nourishment for our body and soul. The more that food is processed, the less healthy it is for a person to eat. Ideal foods are fresh vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, herbs, and pure raw vegetable oils all grown without pesticides.

When pesticides are used on food while it is growing, that pesticide enters the interior of the plant and also lands on and sinks into the soil. From there the pesticides are carried by rain runoff to streams and then to rivers and the ocean. It also sinks with rainwater into the earth and wells and into natural underground



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water reservoirs. Those pesticides can make small animals, birds, creatures of all types, and beneficial insects like bees, butterflies and earth worms sick. It weakens trees. Farm workers are seriously exposed. Eventually all nature is weakened. There is no place to hide. All nature and we human beings are profoundly interconnected. We are one. Cement and steel are not somehow a separate reality with us. We are part of a living planet.

Our planet depends heavily on trees to create the oxygen we need to breathe. As we know, the trees are the lungs of our planet by taking in large amounts of carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Trees create cooling shade and are home to myriads of animals and birds and creatures. Their roots hold the soil from being washed away. Trees are extremely rapidly diminishing. The rain forests in South America are being steadily sold to private developers and cut down. The trees are our precious friends.

What can we do to help save the trees?? As individuals one thing we can do is to recycle our used paper and buy recycled papers: toilet paper, towel paper, tissues, writing paper, computer printer paper, and more. If it costs somewhat more, perhaps it is time that we prioritize the importance of the forests of our planet and how massively we are dependent on them and love them. Also, it is very important to know that there are plants such as bamboo that can be used for creating paper products rather than using trees. Bamboo plants can grow much more rapidly than trees and replenish themselves more readily. Trees grow slowly. We can ask stores for bamboo paper.

Let us do what we can to help save our planet and ourselves from further increases in the exaggerated and changing weather patterns we see all around us. People are suffering from floods, fires, droughts, extreme heat, drinking water shortages, major tornados, and more. Let's do our part, whatever we can. Blessings.

**Bio:** Joyce is a Transformational Energy & Emotional Healer. Individual Sessions and Classes. Reiki Master, Master's Degree in Human Development. She's author of book "Secrets of Wisdom - Awaken to the Miracle of You," & Publisher- Editor of Natural Living Journal. (See ad above for more information)

Photo: Pixabay, martin araegusci

## **HAVEN WHERE KIDS THRIVE, “Creative Learning Solutions” By Hannah Allen, MME**

Nestled off of Evergreen Road in Anchorage, Kentucky sits the McNally-Coleman House, a quaint, charming residence with owners that can be traced back to Dublin, Ireland. The home now serves as the host for Whet Your Palette, Anchorage’s Art House. The cautious creatives, art aficionados, and everyone in between can come to Whet Your Palette to paint whatever their mind and heart desire. The Art House rests on a large piece of property complete with an enclosed porch, a shaded outdoor space, and six-foot tall paintbrushes. There are even two dogs that visit on a regular basis!

In addition to serving Louisville’s creative community, Whet Your Palette also serves Louisville’s homeschool community in a new innovative way.

I’m a former public-school teacher who left the traditional schooling system to serve children in a more authentic way. When I saw Whet Your Palette in June 2022, I immediately recognized its potential to serve as the location for my homeschool learning pod programming. The lived-in, artistic home was so welcoming and cozy that I knew it would be an ideal place for children to learn and create without the fear of making a mess. After trying and failing to find the perfect name for my new adventure, I finally settled on a name that honored the Art House and my intentions for the pod programming: Creative Learning Solutions.

Creative Learning Solutions provides inclusive, creative, and flexible instruction for Louisville’s homeschool community. Students are divided by age: one pod is for K-5 students, and the other is for students ages twelve and up. Each day students receive individual instruction, small group collaborative challenges, and social-emotional learning. Creative Learning Solutions is authentically inclusive and works with young adults who identify as LGBTQIA+, those on the gifted spectrum, and children with disabilities. Because I and my co-teacher, Brittany Akin, have a combined total of four education degrees and fifteen years of teaching experience, all students are able to get the quality instruction they need to be set up for lifelong success.

Students in the K-5 learning pod complete fun, engaging, and hands-on reading, writing, and phonics activities during their individual instruction time. To stay true to the “creative” part of Creative Learning Solutions, I teach an hour of art and music for each learning pod. The K-5 pod is completing a unit centered around International Dot Day, an unofficial, educational holiday based on a book about self-empowerment and the importance of



taking the first step to try something new by Peter H. Reynolds. The older students complete collaborative group projects and get

the opportunity to explore individual expression through their paintings.

The mother of one of the participants named Ava (not the real name) shared the following insights. “Ava is thirteen years old, and we are doing home schooling. The thing I like most about this program is the supportive, creative environment. Ava gets to go there and create art, music, and take nature walks. They have an outdoor classroom, The whole environment is filled with light and loving teachers who support the kid’s individual learning needs. Ava has never been happier or felt more comfortable in school and is excited each time to go.”

The mother continues, “The students are able to express their creativity and also work on individual projects such as creating their own business. Ava has created the curriculum for a teen baking club. This is a cooking course where kids and teens can come to learn how to bake and decorate cookies, cakes, and cupcakes for themes such as holidays. At the center the students are designing their fliers for marketing their business and are being helped to write out a business plan. It’s awesome. Ava has become so much more confident, and this has helped a process of moving beyond ADHD and trouble keeping up in the classroom. Being in public school wasn’t a good fit and that affected the willingness to learn. I’m excited and really pleased. Being in this program gives Ava hope for the future.”

Creative Learning Solutions is still accepting students for their inaugural pod program, titled The Learning Pod. Slots are available for both pods, and K-5 students are able to come just for the art and music portion of the day. For more information, please visit [www.creativelearningsolutions.llc](http://www.creativelearningsolutions.llc). To get your questions answered and for registration, email [hannah@creativelearningsolutions.lls](mailto:hannah@creativelearningsolutions.lls)



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