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Southern California's Guide to Conscious Living



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Shakti Gawain

Still Shining the Light

By Donna Strong

A living icon of consciousness expansion and creative transformation, Shakti Gawain has been kindling spiritual light and helping others discover the wisdom within since 1978. With more than six million readers worldwide, her message has found a deep resonance with a global audience. Two of her many works, *Creative Visualization* and *Living in the Light*, are among a handful of classics in the personal development field. The remarkable longevity of *Living in the Light* is now being celebrated with a special 25th anniversary edition.

Shakti's considerable contribution has been to empower multitudes of people to listen to their own guidance and make use of the inner knowing that already resides within. She is a seasoned practitioner of the protocols in her work, both through testing them in her own life and with others. One of the major insights she has shared is ancient in its knowing, to notice what brings more aliveness and continue moving in this direction.

Not only has Shakti been a seminal voice of personal transformation through both writing and speaking, she co-founded New World Library Publishing Company with Marc Allen. Now a publisher of books on transformation with some of the most highly-regarded thought leaders in the field, New World will reach its 35th anniversary in 2012. Shakti has been shedding light on timeless wisdom and bringing it to the forefront for more than three decades. Most assuredly, she is a sage with staying power.

Awareness: How did you see your book 25 years ago when it was first published?

Shakti: That is a great question. By the time I wrote *Living*

in the Light it was seven years since *Creative Visualization*, so I didn't just jump into writing a book after my first one. At that

way. I feel like I've been blessed with the opportunity to learn things myself, to pass them on and to see how helpful they can



point I had been learning a lot about listening to my intuition and inner guidance, so that's what I focused on. It gave me great joy to be able to share those ideas and tools because I knew how powerful they were in my own life. So I think I was just feeling really happy I finally got it done and it was going out in the world to do its thing.

Awareness: And now, how does it feel to have a living, creative, expression that's been shared for 25 years?

Shakti: It really feels wonderful. I never ever would have dreamed that I would do what I ended up doing here in life. It's just unfolded in such an amazing

be to people. It's very gratifying that the book is still around and doing well at 25 years. It's kind of like these books are my kids and I'm just watching them do what they do. These books have an energy of their own.

Awareness: Let me ask you about intuition. It is really important, but in some ways a very elusive quality in our lives.

Shakti: Well, to me I feel that we all have an inner intuitive sense that's connected to the deepest part of ourselves. And we need to learn to really pay attention to it and listen or feel it. We just have to practice using it and working with it.

Awareness: What would you

say is most important in developing a practice?

Shakti: The most important thing is that you feel light energy with aliveness when doing it. So it doesn't really matter particularly how often you do it or don't. That's a real individual thing. For some people it's really important to do it every day and in general we encourage people to do that. But if it begins to feel like a task or doesn't feel quite right for some reason, then I support people in finding a different way of working with it.

Awareness: I know you made a comment that you appreciate even more now how important it is to shine the light of consciousness into our disowned or shadowed aspects. Could you talk about that?

Shakti: Yes. A lot of my work these days focuses on getting in touch with and getting to know all the different selves within us, and I've included more about that in the new edition of the book. Basically there are certain parts of ourselves that we're comfortable with — that we've kind of identified with. Let's say I'm a very responsible person so that's one self that's big in my life.

There are also, as you mentioned, disowned selves. The primary selves are the ones we identify with. The disowned selves are the ones we're usually afraid of or don't feel okay about. It's been conveyed to us that it's not okay to be like this or we shouldn't have these kinds of feelings. And anytime you have that, you'll have what we call the shadow side or the disowned side — which we sometimes feel uncomfortable with or afraid of.

In fact, it's really just a necessary part of us — we aren't trying to get rid of anything. We're trying to embrace more and more of who we are, and as we do

that, things fall into place. So it is about learning to hold a balance between the parts of yourself that you're already identified with and the parts that may be more hidden. It doesn't have to be any big scary thing; we just have to learn to get more comfortable with our hidden parts. Because the point of all this is to be as fully complete as we can.

Awareness: *As kind of a segue from that, I'd ask you to say more about your statement that in being true to yourself and feeling more alive, you may also feel more uncomfortable in risking change...*

Shakti: As we become aware of something that we weren't conscious of before, which happens as we go through our life — it can be initially a little scary. The status quo is the safest. At least it feels like it's the safest. It probably isn't always. So we do have to be willing to take a little bit of risk.

It doesn't have to be a lot. I mean, it's fine to go step by small step. As people who are interested in developing and growing and making a contribution to our lives and our world, it's definitely a necessity to take steps.

Awareness: *I really do value what you're saying and I felt it really clearly in this reading of the book. An amazing alchemy can happen by just taking steps to become more aware and to take some action. I think you give a lot of really grounded but caring encouragement to do just that. In anybody's life, if they take one step and they keep going, they can realize major change over time.*

Shakti: Yes, life has a way of finding the exact way to push you on, and to help you get where you're going.

Awareness: *In terms of becoming more in our light, here I'm quoting you, "We create our own experience of reality and we need to learn how to take responsibility for doing so."*

Shakti: Yeah. I think it's important to understand what that really means. Of course my experience of reality is a little different than your experience of reality. Some people take it to feel sort of guilty — like, 'Oh, my gosh, I created my reality

and because I didn't create it perfectly, is there something wrong with me?' It's an ongoing process of co-creation between all of the beings on this planet. *So it is really learning to take responsibility for how we handle the experiences we have in life.* I think that is a better way to describe it.

Awareness: *Okay. I'll relate it to something else from your book. Often when we think about creating our own reality as you have made a reference to, it feels very heavy to many people. You had made a point at the beginning of the book about your experience that is on the other end of the spectrum, "that the universe wants me to have everything I truly want." So can you talk about how that's been for you?*

Shakti: Well, the process of discovering your own truth is really biased by how alive you feel in the moment when you are doing whatever you're doing. That's a wonderful thing. Sometimes people say, well, how do you know? And you don't. You have to learn how. Letting that guidance move you gives more of a sense of aliveness.

If what I'm doing right now makes me feel more alive, it may also be a little scary — I don't want to say scary because I want to tell people, it's really not scary, but it's a little challenging. That's a barometer you can use to know if you're kind of going in the right direction or things are right. If you feel kind of deadened by something then it's probably not quite where you need to be, so it's really kind of a call to find out what makes you truly alive.

What makes you feel that way on a daily basis? I do this by just checking into how I'm feeling, what I'm aware of, and what I need to do for myself right now. I have this real simple little technique; it's a little meditation to connect with your inner guidance that I teach people. It's so simple that anybody can use it.

Basically it's just having somebody get in a meditative space and then go deep inside and ask for whatever it is you have

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Shakti...

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a question about or a need for. Then you just listen to that, or feel into that, and you feel it guiding you to a sense of greater aliveness.

You just ask in the meditation for whatever it is you need to be more aware of or need in your life, and then you let go and go about your life. Then very often something comes up that's a reflection of what you got in the meditative space. It's sort of showing you the next step.

Awareness: Well, that leads me into another area. I really enjoyed your descriptions of both your awareness of spirit and the awareness of human form. In one chapter you describe how spirit tends to be more expansive versus form, which tends to be more about security for instance. Would you talk a about integrating these two forms of consciousness? I really love that.

Shakti: The main thing is you really need to include everything. Every part of us is important, valuable, and needed. So really we can spend our lives essentially developing the different aspects of ourselves as fully as possible. That for me is the greatest thing.

Awareness: What would you say if somebody is sacrificing one over the other in his or her lives? How to balance that out?

Shakti: Well, most of us are trying to do that. And that's why we have a lot of internal conflict. Everything that's in us is a part of who we are and a part of who we need to be. So we need to learn to embrace all of that. And each part of us has its own job to do. There's a part of me that I mentioned earlier that is very, very responsible. So I'll absolutely make sure to get everything done that can possibly get done in any given situation.

That's wonderful. It's a good quality that helps me be a successful person in my life, but

if it's too out of balance or I'm working too much or pushing too hard or being too responsible for things, then it won't work or it won't feel good. So we have to pay attention to that and sort of feel into what would be an opposite part of that. Well, for me, the opposite of super responsible is kind of carefree. Playful.

I used to be a super serious person. It felt like I had the whole weight of the world on my shoulders. But I've learned to embrace that more carefree, lighthearted part, because I need it for balance. I feel much better now that I have both sides. You don't give up anything, you just — develop more of it.

Awareness: Is there anything you would say about this universal creative element of light that you have found remarkable or would like to share? I mean you're a major spokesperson for the light in people's lives.

Shakti: And the dark. I say sort of half jokingly that I'm a spokesman for the light and the dark because I feel like my main message at this point is about being able to pause and to dialogue with the different parts of yourself until you really get to know them, until you really can appreciate all parts. So my main message these days is that all parts of us are valuable. Even the ones that don't seem like they are.

Awareness: I really get it. My last question is about the bigger transformation that's happening. I'll give you two examples that have been drawing my attention. For me, I feel like the real food movements and now Occupy Wall Street are showing that there's some incredible resonance happening with light sparking to light. Those are ex-

amples I would use, and I wanted to ask for your perspective on the big transformation that you have indicated is happening.

Shakti: I think all of us feel this sense that the world is getting shaken up. This is the sense I have, and it can be very difficult to cope with. Yet I feel like it's just in our own personal processes. If you want to grow and learn, you have to be open to finding new ways, and I feel like what's happening right now is all the stuff we've swept under the rug because we didn't know or want to deal with it, is coming out in these recent years.

It just feels like again, it's just a — I don't want to say really dark. It's just some things are coming forth — coming to light, and we're all looking at it going, oh, my gosh! These things have been functioning this way for a long time but nobody paid any attention. It's just how everybody did things, but now really we are looking at doing things in a new way and we don't know exactly what that is.

I do think it's a very powerful and important time. A lot is happening and it may look like it's wrong or bad to see things that are happening. Of course they do sometimes involve a certain amount of suffering for people, and that's hard. I do feel though that we're really on quite a journey. I don't know what's going to happen, but I do have a feeling that we really are changing and growing and we're going to be doing more and more of that.

Awareness: I like what you're saying about this on the bigger scale, that just as we know from our own personal process even if it feels hair raising and scary at times, that by doing what you need to do, amazing things can happen. So there's an opening in that.

Shakti: Very well said . . . put that in the article.

To find out more about Shakti's 25th anniversary edition of "Living in the Light" or her other books and events, go to www.newworldlibrary.com or www.shaktigawain.com

Donna Strong is a writer and author of "Coming Home to Calm, Awakening to Divine Intelligence." She works as a spiritual and creative catalyst to help people live in a soul-aligned manner. www.donnastrong.com

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Sojourns of the Soul

An Interview with Dana Micucci

By Randy Peyser

A few years ago, Elizabeth Gilbert became a sensation with her book, *Eat Pray Love*, in which she gorged herself on pasta in Italy, dipped a toe into the spiritual waters of an ashram in India and found love in Indonesia.

In a similar vein, Dana Micucci shares the gifts of her soul-searching adventures as she travels to seven ancient, sacred sites in her new book, *Sojourns of the Soul: One Woman's Journey around the World and into Her Truth*, published by Quest Books.

However, Dana delves much deeper into the rituals and customs of seven of the world's most ancient and sacred cultures as she encounters Anaconda snakes, Caymen crocodiles, poison-spiked trees, and hostile governments, while pursuing a multitude of fascinating mystical experiences that lead her to a great personal awakening.

Dana explored these seven sites over a 14-year period, traveling as a journalist on assignment writing about the art and customs of each ancient culture. But the lessons Dana culled at a soul level from each of her personal encounters were more meaningful and intriguing to her than the content of her magazine articles. When her insights and stories demanded to be written as a book, Dana complied.

In *Sojourns for the Soul*, Dana shares the fascinating details of her outer journey and the equally rewarding insights and lessons she learns as she embarks on her empowering and amazing adventures.

Dana's journeys took her to the Australian Outback, the pyramids of Machu Picchu, the tombs of Egypt, the heart of Tibet and more. She came to realize that

each of the seven sacred sites she explored held a deeper personal meaning than one might imagine — each correlated with one of the seven chakras in her body. As she moved from sacred

Aboriginal art, so I went to investigate the ancient rock art paintings throughout the Australian Outback.

Randy: What did you discover in Australia?



site to sacred site, she realized that each chakra was, in turn, being activated in a new way.

Randy Peyser: What prompted you to begin traveling?

Dana Micucci: I have always been a seeker. Early on, I decided to become a journalist. I had reckless ambition and a high tolerance for risk. I knew that I had to explore the world and to be as free as possible. Therefore, I decided that I didn't need to be confined to my apartment in order to write when I could be out experiencing the world.

Randy: Where did your first sacred journey take you?

Dana: I had been commissioned to write an article about

The Australian Outback took me into the root chakra where I learned how to experience a deep connection with Mother Earth. The Aborigines are the oldest continual living culture on earth. They are connected to the Spirit world, to the dreamtime myths and legends, and they have highly-sensitive energy bodies, which have become very well-honed because they live so close to the earth.

The Aborigines believe that during their dreamtime, their ancestors sang the world into existence. They know the land very intimately, and can travel what

they call, "song lines," or what we might call, "lei lines." These are the energetic, electro-magnetic fields of their landscape. They can travel without a map, compass, or GPS system just because they are so finely attuned to these earth energies.

They also sing their paintings into existence. Their art is rustic and primitive looking, yet imbued with spiritual power because the artists go into trance-like states when they are creating their art; they connect with the earth and with all of her sacred creatures.

Randy: Was there anything that surprised you about their culture?

Dana: The Aboriginal people don't have a word for "time." Time is not linear to them. That's why there are concentric circles in their paintings. After just a few days in the Outback, my watch broke. I took this as a message that while I was there, I would be outside of time.

Randy: How did it feel to be there?

Dana: The Australian landscape felt timeless and serene to me, and at the same time, it felt fluid and dynamic. I felt incredibly connected to the natural world in my body in a way that I never had before. I was awakened to my own divine essence and my own infinite connection with Mother Earth, nature, all creatures, and the cosmos.

Randy: What did you learn from the Aboriginal people?

Dana: I learned that we can go on shamanic journeys and vision quests and go floating out there and connect with the cosmos, but we need to bring those frequencies down through our bodies and root them into the earth. We are conduits and pillars. We are vessels connecting heaven and earth. Our mission is to create heaven on earth, so

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Sojourns...

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we need our bodies. We can't be spacing out and leaving our bodies to be spiritual.

Randy: Where did you go next?

Dana: I went to Angkor Wat, Cambodia. That's where I explored grief and despair, which are some of the emotions associated with the second chakra. This was a difficult journey, yet it was exhilarating. At the time, Angkor Wat was a dangerous place to travel. Landmines were still active, and when I arrived, some British anti-mine personnel had just been kidnapped.

Randy: What did you discover there?

Dana: I was continually confronted with my own shadow. Our country had bombed the heck out of Vietnam during the war, and here I was, a privileged journalist traveling through that region. I felt guilty. I also felt anxiety, fear and anger, as I talked

with some Cambodian students who had lost their families at the hands of the Khmer Rouge.

I asked these two beautiful girls in their twenties how they felt about all of this, particularly about the role of the Americans coming in and what had happened. I was amazed when they said, "What's done is done. We love the Americans. It's time to move on." These girls felt incredible hope for the future in spite of the trauma they'd gone through. They appeared to be in a state of forgiveness and acceptance.

Randy: What were the lessons in that for you?

Dana: These were lessons in surrendering my own anger, doubt, fears and my shadow, and to realize that in this world of duality, both the light and the dark exist. We need to move beyond this into the state of oneness, into the heart, into the place where the duality is dissolved. When we can turn off our worry, anxiety, depression, fears, judgments, and all that

constant chatter, we can step into the eternal Now and the synchronicities can flow.

Randy: Throughout all your seven journeys, were there any common themes?

Dana: Yes. The theme that linked all of my journeys together was that of transformation. It's the transformation of the self at the deepest level. All of my previous perceptions and limiting beliefs were challenged and anything that kept me from stepping into my true divine essence and power was blown away.

Randy: When did you actually start writing your book?

Dana: I began writing the book after my Peruvian journey during my adventure with the sacred plant, Ayahuasca. In one my sessions with this sacred plant, I heard the words, "Get it down." I felt a sense of urgency to get these wisdom teachings out there, to share them with people.

Randy: How did that particular adventure unfold?

Dana: I was in the Amazon with the Peruvian shamans. I was with a very experienced teacher in a sacred ceremonial space. I had never taken any drugs, but I knew that the shamans used sacred plant medicines, like Ayahuasca to amplify their psychic and healing powers and to open to other dimensions.

Ayahuasca is the mother of all plant medicines. In fact, it is often called "Mother Ayahuasca." It has similar chemical properties to LSD in that it can blow your consciousness into higher states. However, in addition to its spiritual appeal, it also wreaks havoc on the body and leads to excessive vomiting and a loss of coordination. It can also cause death if the dose is improper or if a person is not in good physical condition.

When I took it, I was nauseous and started seeing visions. Jungle creatures and the faces of people I knew came to me. Then much to my dismay, pieces of furniture came to me. I told my guide I was disappointed. He told me that shamans spend a lifetime engaging with this sacred plant medicine, and he encouraged me to speak to her, and to get to know her and the spirit of the

plant. He told me that I had to merge with her.

The next time I had the opportunity to try Ayahuasca, I asked her to be gentle with me, and she delivered. This was an extremely beautiful experience. The physical symptoms weren't as bad this time and they subsided quickly.

At one point, I saw a crystal goblet pouring golden light liquid into my crown chakra. In this liquid were the faces and bodies of people I knew. When they were altogether in this liquid, I said to myself: "This doesn't make sense. Why do they have separate bodies? Why should they be separate?" Then I heard a voice saying, "We are all one."

We've all heard that phrase before, but I really got it. I felt like I was floating in the cosmos. What we think of as outer space was happening inside me at a point of light. This was a huge expansion of consciousness for me, and I experienced a deep cellular understanding of unity consciousness. That's what the gift was for me from Mother Ayahuasca. That was my 7th chakra experience where we access the spiritual knowledge.

Then I had a final gift where a jaguar appeared to me in a vision. She was a formidable beast and I asked her why she had come to me. She said, "Don't be afraid of your power."

That is a message for all of us. Not one of us should be afraid of our power but we are at times.

Randy: I am curious about what adventure connected you to your heart chakra?

Dana: That was Tibet, which reflects the heart chakra of love and compassion. There is such oppression there. Of over 6,000 monasteries, only six remain. Most monks have left Tibet for asylum in Dharamsala in Northern India with the Dalai Lama or they are imprisoned.

They continue to be arrested, imprisoned and tortured while calling for Tibet's independence. There are surveillance cameras everywhere, including the monasteries, all to ensure that no one speaks the name of the Dalai Lama, or even carries a photograph of him. He is Public Enemy #1.



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Even as their culture is being exterminated, the Tibetans demonstrated such faith and hope. I saw Tibetans twirling their prayer wheels, which are filled with prayers on rolled up parchment papers. They're not only praying for themselves; they're praying for the world. That's what prayer flags do when they're blown by the wind — they scatter mantras of peace, love, wisdom and compassion throughout the world.

The Dalai Lama believes that anger is never justified. The Tibetan Buddhists say that anger arises from a misguided perception of separation. When I am challenged in my daily life, all I have to do is travel back there and see the Tibetans in their incredible demonstration of faith and hope. Then it inspires me to ask myself, "How is this conspiring on my behalf?"

Randy: These are amazing stories. Please share another.

Dana: I participated in a very powerful ritual on my journey to Mayan land. This is where I learned about the true knowledge of myself as being a spark

of the divine, knowing that I am divine, and that we are all God.

This ritual was led by Hunbatz Men, a Mayan elder, and it related to the phrase, "In Lak'ech, A Lak'en," which means, "I am you and you are me." In other words, there is no separation.

For this ritual, there were twenty of us gathered in a circle. Each person had to turn to the person next to them, one at a time as the rest of the circle looked on. We had to say to that person, "In Lak'ech." And the other person would look back into our eyes and say, "A Lak'en." That person would turn to the person on the other side of them and repeat this process.

One by one, we repeated these words for about an hour, going round and round the circle. By the end of that ritual, we were all weeping as we recognized the divinity in each other. That's what "Namaste" means; "I bow to the divinity in you."

Hunbatz Men, being the great teacher that he is, had his pouch of sacred stones and copal. He

would shake his fist at us as we were exploring the energy around the sacred pyramids and say, "People, do your work." By that he meant that the discipline in our work is something we all must do if we desire to raise our consciousness to continue our spiritual evolution. The Maya knew this. They believed that they could become gods if they raised their vibration.

When they believe they can become gods, they believe they can become "Kukulcan," which is the Feathered Serpent god, equating with the earth energy. The feathers equate with a bird, which represents heaven. The Feathered Serpent unites heaven and earth within itself. They believe that through their diligence, devotion and spiritual practices, and work, they could become Kukulcan, the divine being we already are. We have to remember. It is a process of stripping away what we've forgotten.

Randy: Since you've studied with a Mayan elder, what are your thoughts about 2012 and the end of the Mayan calendar?

Dana: 2012 is not about the end of the earth or about death and destruction; it is the end of life as we know it, as we all move collectively into a higher consciousness — hopefully, with a more peaceful, just and unified existence on this planet. My belief is that we can create heaven on earth. We all play a part in this in our own way.

Many people are being challenged to accept their gifts and step up to the plate. We're all mystics, magicians, lovers and ambassadors of life. We can all make a big difference. Every day brings us a remembrance of our divinity — the eternal presence in all beings — and to our eternal connection to each other. We are all on an infinite journey toward wholeness.

For more information about Dana Micucci's book and workshops, visit www.DanaMicucci.com

Randy Peyser is the author of "Crappy to Happy" as seen in the movie, "Eat Pray Love, www.CrappyToHappy.com She also helps people find publishers for their books. www.AuthorOneStop.com

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Choose to Live A Sacred, Balanced Life in 7 Easy Steps

By Susan Smith Jones, PhD

The beginning of the year is the time that most people give serious thought to making positive lifestyle changes for body, mind, and spirit. Yet, there is one major culprit that often undermines even the best of intentions. What is that culprit? It is STRESS. Stress is a fact of life, but we don't have to make it a way of life. If our goal is to live a sacred, balanced life, we must learn how to manage stress.

Why is reducing stress so important? Well, the American Association of Family Physicians reports that two-thirds of all doctor visits are due to stress-related ailments. It's also believed that 80 to 90 percent of all diseases are stress-related. If you are female, stress may be even more damaging to your health. Study after study has found that women suffer from both stress and depression more often than men.

For some of us, our biggest stressors might be weather-related situations such as tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, fires, and hurricanes. Similarly, most of us are stressed out by deadlines and work commitments, but stress has many other causes. It can be triggered by emotions such as anger, fear, worry, grief, depression, or even guilt.

Stress can actually lead to

ance back into your body and world.

1. Get moving! That's right — exercise is one of the best ways to reduce stress; it relaxes muscles and eases tension. Want proof? A study at the University of Southern California shows that patients who took a vigorous walk and raised their heart rates to more than 100 beats per minute reduced the tension in their bodies by 20 percent. A control group, given a tranquilizer, didn't get such good results!

Go for a walk, hit the gym and do some weight-bearing exercises, or give yoga a try. Studies have shown that those who practice yoga have lower levels of stress hormones than those who don't.

2. Meditate and Breathe Deeply (really, it's simple). Don't worry — you don't have to be a Buddhist monk to know how to meditate. Here's how: find a special, quiet space in your home. Spend at least 15 minutes here first thing in the morning and before going to bed. Sit and close your eyes, focus on your

tion to quell stress, look younger, heal your body, and achieve your goals, refer to my audio programs, *Choose to Live Peacefully* and *Wired to Meditate*, available on my website.)

3. Eat a stress-relieving diet. Can your food choices really help relieve stress? You bet. Take stress off your digestive system by eating a high-quality, organic, colorful diet with an emphasis on fresh produce, which is high in water content and, therefore, easily digestible. Especially beneficial are antioxidant-rich leafy greens, such as romaine lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, kale, collards and sprouts.

Also, choose from an array of rainbow-colored fruits and vegetables with every meal or snack, to benefit from a plethora of antioxidants. Just remember this: *Produce is the most important health care money can buy.* And vibrant health starts in the kitchen by choosing to eat foods in their natural, raw state.

In my motivational talks and seminars worldwide, I often say that you can sit down to a breakfast of bacon and eggs and butter, and then take your cholesterol-and blood-pressure lowering medications. That's your right. But if you choose to take charge of your body and eat better foods — a healing natural-foods diet — your body will thank you every day for the rest of your life.

Studies show that heart disease can be reversed by diet alone. Many diabetic patients can go off their medication by dietary changes. Kidney stones can be prevented as well as cancer and obesity. These studies demonstrate that a good diet is the most powerful weapon we

have against disease and sickness. And it comes down to four things: breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.

Look to nature for answers on what to eat. You don't find any ice cream trees, potato chip bushes or donut vines in Nature. The more natural a food is, the more likely it is to have an abundance of healthy nutrients that boost immunity, protect your body from disease, and promote youthful vitality. It's your choice and it's within your power to create a healthy body and life.

4. Keep your body hydrated. Our bodies are 70% water. Our cells are 70% water and planet Earth is 70% water. That's no coincidence. Each day we need to drink at least 8 glasses of water. At a cellular level, dehydration makes us just as droopy as a neglected violet. Lack of moisture in our faces causes wrinkles the way lack of moisture in plums causes prunes.

Drinking "liquids" won't do. Although herbal tea, freshly-extracted vegetable juice and diluted fruit juice can count in the water tally, coffee, tea, colas, and alcoholic beverages actually dehydrate the body. They are wet, but they are not water; in fact, they're "antiwater."

We need to maintain proper fluid balance for brain and kidney function, to rid the body of waste material and toxins, and to maintain radiant health. Water is also a safe, cheap, and effective appetite suppressant. Often when we think we are hungry, we are actually thirsty.

Get into the habit of carrying a reusable, earth-friendly bottle of water when you walk or drive. If it's there, you are more likely to drink it. You can refill them from your filtered or purified water source at home.

5. Catch plenty of zzz's. Lack of sleep undermines your body's ability to deal with stress. That's why it's important to get seven



A study . . . shows that patients who took a vigorous walk and raised their heart rates to more than 100 beats per minute reduced the tension in their bodies by 20 percent. A control group, given a tranquilizer, didn't get such good results! So go for a walk, hit the gym and do some weight-bearing exercises, or give yoga a try.

high blood pressure, heart problems, muscle and joint pain, fatigue, headaches, and chronic health conditions. If you want to avoid these problems, here are my favorite seven tips to reduce stress, promote relaxation, and bring a sacred bal-

breathing. Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply, focusing on the sound and rhythm of your breathing.

Mentally visualize peace and calmness. Your day will start and end on a stress-free note. (For an A-Z guide on how to use medita-

to eight hours of shut-eye per night. You can tell you are getting enough sleep if you wake at a regular time without an alarm. If you require a buzzer to get out of bed in the morning, you are not getting enough sleep.

6. Laugh a lot. Are you worried about something? Maybe you are stressed out about your relationship with a loved one, the monthly bills that are stacking up, or poor grades your son or daughter is bringing home from school. Whatever it is, one way to mollify this stress is to make sure your life is filled with laughter.

According to the researchers, laughter releases endorphins, 'feel-good' hormones that act as natural stress beaters. In fact, a good belly laugh gives your heart muscles a good workout,

improves circulation, fills your lungs with oxygen-rich air, clears your respiratory passages, stimulates alertness hormones, helps relieve pain, and counteracts fear, anger, and depression, all of which are linked to illness and stress.

Be sure to schedule time into your busy schedule to be with friends and family who make you smile and laugh, and go to movies or read a book that tickles your funny bone. Just make sure you are getting plenty of things to giggle about in your life.

7. Be thankful and reap the health benefits. Each and every day, take a moment to be grateful for all that you have in life. Gratitude is a great stress-buster. What you think about consistently brings more of the

same into your life. So focusing on the positive, even during difficult times, is the best way to alleviate stress and transform your life.

Incorporate these seven steps into your daily life starting today. Within no time, you will reap the benefits — joy will be your constant companion, your body will feel renewed, and it will seem like you are walking on air.

© Susan Smith Jones, PhD

For more than 35 years, Susan Smith Jones, PhD, has been one of the world's most recognizable names and faces in the fields of holistic health, anti-aging, human potential, and balanced living. She taught health and fitness at UCLA for 30 years, and now travels worldwide as an in-demand motivational speaker and frequent guest on radio and TV talk shows. Susan is the author of 27 books, including her latest bestsellers "The Joy

Factor: 10 Sacred Practices for Radiant Health," "Walking on Air: Your 30-Day Inside and Out Rejuvenation Makeover," and "Recipes for Health Bliss" (a full-color recipe book), as well as her popular digital seminar series Renew Your Life. To order her books or learn more about her work, please call: (800) 523-9971 ET or visit: www.SusanSmithJones.com

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Sacred Tattooing

By *Jen Schichi — Bird Medicine Woman & Tattoo Shaman, Artist*

The first tattoo artists were most certainly shamans. Tattoos served many purposes in tribal culture — status indicators and clan affiliation, seeking favor and protection from the Gods, embodiment of supernatural powers, trance states, and rites of passage. Tattooing has always spoken to a deeper part of the spirit, bringing meaning by making a permanent mark in living flesh, commemorating important memories and transitional events in our lives.

People often tell me, “I have been thinking about getting a tattoo for years.” When the date of our appointment arrives, often within a few short hours the tattoo is completed and that person is permanently changed for the rest of their life. Tattoos are one of the most powerful and rapid portals of transformation there is, which is why the practice has endured for centuries.

The current popularity of tattoos reflects the desire to have something we can “hold on to” when everything else may seem uncertain, and planetary change is affecting us whether or not we choose to acknowledge it.

When I did my first tattoo in 1992, an epiphany helped me to understand “this is what I want to do with my life.” I’ll never forget that pivotal moment which still guides me in this rich and challenging career. I always honored the responsibility involved. Because of the permanent nature of the tattoo, I needed to be offering my clients, not only my best artistically, but the best of myself as well.

I became involved in healing and yoga in 1996 to relieve my pain from a fairly severe scoliosis curvature, aggravated by long hours of tattooing. I developed my consciousness along with my art through massage school, Reiki, and Kundalini Yoga teacher training.

As I learned to touch people with clear intent, I witnessed how a physical body responds to touch. I experienced how en-

ergy moves in my own body and I could see and feel this energy in others. It was natural to bring this to my tattoo clients.

As my journey progressed, my relationship with the earth as the source of healing deepened, and I grew into my work as a shaman



naturally. I have worked directly with and received initiations from shamans in both North and South America. Through this, my awareness of the transformational nature of tattooing grew.

The possibilities for healing became more clear as I blended various healing techniques with my most adventurous tattoo clients. I developed “sacred tattooing” to bring the spiritual depth of this ancient rite of passage to modern-day seekers and to assist their integration of the new tattoo art. I believe this knowledge has been revealed to me through the Akashic records, by the ancestors of tattooing.

A “sacred tattoo” session is a collaborative ceremony. Some of my clients are already familiar with ceremony and we customize to their traditions. Others want to deepen their experience because of the significance the tattoo holds for them.

I begin by opening a sacred space, by calling in the four directions. This energetic container of protection concentrates our intention and clarifies transmission of the highest wisdom for

my client and myself. Each client builds a personal altar that brings their creative wisdom to the present and opens a vortex to their guides.

I do a clearing of their aura with sage, and an anointing blessing on their 3rd eye point to seal the intention they are holding for their tattoo. Prayers are offered before we begin the actual work. Typically, the tattoo itself is discussed and designed ahead of time, consulting with clients via emails or in person, by appointment.

Tattoos have a great deal of healing potential as well. A client’s intuition picks up on their body’s request for energetic stimulation where the tattoo is placed. It’s similar to how acupuncture works through the meridians, but more intense and concentrated.

I worked with a young man recently who wanted his tattoo on a very unusual part of his low back. Though uncommon, it looked fine aesthetically with his anatomy, so I trusted his intuition. He chose a bible verse, speaking of God’s unfailing support when you are in a weak place.

As our session progressed he shared more about himself. He revealed that he had been in recovery from alcohol for about a year, and this was how he wanted to commemorate his anniversary. His intention for the tattoo was to permanently anchor his lifestyle change. It wasn’t until I had finished the piece that I realized we had done the tattoo directly over his liver! This is an exciting new direction for tattooing to move in. What is needed is training for interested artists to expand their awareness, and open-minded adventurous clients.

The Law of Attraction works with tattoos as well. Tattoos comment on your core values, your emotional and mental state. What you ink in your skin will bring more of that into your life. It is very common for young people to get tattoos impulsive-

ly, expressing independence, individuality, and the intensity of their personal challenges. As we mature, people usually outgrow their early tattoo choices.

It is very important to choose life-affirming, universal themes to take you in a positive direction, and illustrate the qualities you wish to embody. I do a fair amount of “cover-up” work, creating new designs to completely cover the old design. This energetic “upgrade” overrides the energy of the old tattoo, clearing a space for growth and change.

I have created a sacred tattooing workshop for tattoo artists. It is for a growing number of artists who want to understand that being psychically sensitive is a gift instead of a weakness. Learning to work gracefully, with intent, one conducts the “energy dance” of a tattoo session, rather than being drained by it.

It is very intense... managing client comfort, communication, and focused concentration is a lot to ask of one person! If an artist is not connecting their mind to their heart, the session can feel very cold and impersonal, not to mention more uncomfortable for the artist and recipient.

Many clients come in to me because they feel that their artist seemed a bit disinterested, flaky, aloof, or even downright hostile. This is an unconscious defensive technique, when you don’t feel comfortable or safe in close proximity to people. It reflects a need for healing.

My intention is to teach artists how to navigate these challenges with energetic tools so they can enjoy their creation, attract the best clients and build a conscious thriving business through honoring the sacredness of this ancient art.

To schedule an appointment for a sacred tattoo, tattoo mentoring, or a healing session, Jen can be reached at jenschichi@yahoo.com, or (714) 418-0269. For more information about her work visit www.mermaidtale.net and www.shamanicsynergy.com For current workshops, events, and inspiring artwork “like” her Mermaids Tale fanpage, join the Shamanic Synergy group page on Facebook.



*In Inka Medicine Wheel tradition, these stones represent the kuyas, or healing stones, of a mesa, a shaman's altar. They carry her prayers, healing energy, and blessings.
Photo by Tomas Bostrom.*

Reclaiming the Sacred Feminine through Shifts in Perception

A Shamanic Perspective

By Carol Nicholson and Tomas Bostrom

For centuries westerners have lived in a society dominated by the masculine archetype — the power of thought, rationality, and the predominance of the material world. Our rational mindset is also rule-based: We believe that we must change legislation to change the world.

Indigenous people, however, believe in the power of perception — that by making perceptual shifts, we can change the nature of reality. They also honor the sacred feminine, beginning with our mother, the Earth, and continuing up through the first four chakras, which link us to the Earth and culminate in the

heart, the realm of feeling.

The Laika shamans of Peru teach that by cleansing our chakras — purifying our connection to both the Earth *and* the spiritual realms — we balance the feminine and masculine and achieve the power to dream a new world into being.

The feminine principle is the receptive, unmanifest aspect of being encompassing all that is manifest. The masculine principle is that which is manifest. Together, these two archetypes create the expansive radiance of consciousness and self-awareness.

As we un-hook the wagon

of our awareness from the little horse of the culture we grew up in, and step into the universe as co-creators, we naturally balance these.

Today humanity is in the midst of a perceptual shift of cosmic proportions. It is a shift indigenous people prophesied 500 years ago when the conquistadors drove their wisdom underground.

Awareness magazine itself is evidence of this shift: millions of individuals are awakening to our inherent oneness; our need to restore right relationship with the Earth; and our need to honor the sacred feminine and all that is creative, receptive, heart-felt, and sensual.

Fortunately, our indigenous ancestors perfected tools to assist us in making this transition. The Inka Medicine Wheel is one such tool — an ancient map of consciousness guiding us to the rediscovery of our personal and planetary soul.

Each direction of the Medicine Wheel focuses on a different healing perspective, or journey. By completing the journey through all four directions, we emerge with our masculine and feminine energies balanced and our relationship to both Heaven and Earth restored.

In the South, the Way of the Hero, we learn to shed our negative patterns. Our deepest wounds become sources of compassion, the basis of our power to heal ourselves and others. We learn to become receptive to things as they actually are, rather than “running our agenda” on them. We open up to the world around us.

In the West, the Way of the Luminous Warrior, we release karma and destructive patterns we may have carried for lifetimes. We learn the ways beyond death and perceive that no one is our enemy; everyone becomes our teacher.

In the North, the Way of the Seer, we taste Infinity — experiencing our timeless essence and dropping our limiting roles and beliefs. We live from the perspective of the mythic and embrace the epic journey into our own becoming. And in the East, the Way of the Sage, we face death

and befriend it. We learn to see our world from the eagle's perspective: the whole picture. With this accomplishment we liberate enormous power, which we can use to dream a new world into being.

For centuries, the only way to experience the Inka Medicine Wheel was to apprentice with a shaman in Peru. With the creation of the Four Winds Society, it became possible to access this ancient wisdom in the U.S. Now, the Four Winds Society has certified instructors to offer this year-long training in Ojai, California, beginning February 2012.

Dr. Alberto Villoldo, founder of the Four Winds Society, has written, “Today, we're realizing that for all the counseling, workshops, and personal work we have done, we still feel drained by the endless battle against forces that appear to be outside of us. Collectively, we're seeing this too.”

We haven't discovered that the way to win the war is not through resistance, but through acceptance and higher-order consciousness. The shaman disassembles his hot buttons instead of trying to get the world to stop pushing them.”

In other words, a shaman shifts her awareness and changes the world. As many of us shift our awareness together, we dream a new world into being — a world that honors both the sacred feminine and masculine; a world in balance; creation restored.

Carol Nicholson and Tomas Bostrom are both full mesa carriers in the lineage of the Laika, graduates of the *Four Winds Society Light Body School*, and certified trainers in *The Medicine Wheel* tradition. They can be reached at www.inkamedicinewheel.com

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Natural Remedies for Female Hormonal Imbalance

By Dr. Juliet Tien (Dr. J), D.N. Sc.

This article addresses female hormonal imbalance. Let me ask you a few questions, and please answer honestly.

* Have you been plagued with itchy, foul-smelling, yellowish vaginal discharge?

* Do you experience pain during sexual intercourse?

* Are you avoiding sex because you are always tired?

* Are you lethargic no matter how much time you've stayed in bed?

* Are your menstrual cycles irregular and painful?

* Are you bothered by menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, sugar craving, weight gain, and loss of libido?

* Are you troubled by mood swings?

If any of the above symptoms apply to you, then you suffer from hormonal imbalance knowingly or unknowingly. In order to regain the long-lasting balance, the following are essential natural remedies for you to consider:

Yeast-Free Nutritional Program:

All human beings, regardless of gender and age, should adopt a yeast-free nutritional program to regain health and balance. A yeast-free nutritional program contains no sugar, no dairy, no wheat, no yeasts, no alcohol, no caffeine, no nicotine, nor chemicals.

You might ask, "What can I eat then?" To learn about the details in terms of what you can eat, and what you should avoid, read my two books, *Breaking the Yeast Curse: Food and Uncon-*

ditional Love for Magic Healing and *Healthy and Tasty: Dr. J's Anti-Yeast Cooking*. These books may be available in your local libraries in the U.S.

You may deviate from the principles of a yeast-free nutritional program from time to time. As long as you go for moderation, occasional deviation will not spoil your yeast-free nutritional program completely. Do whatever you can. If you could do 50%, you will get 50% of the benefits. If you could do 70%, you will get 70% of the benefits. Don't wait for the perfect time to start this life-changing nutritional program, because a perfect time may never come!

In addition to a yeast-free nutritional program, if your body is too toxic, you need to consider herbal therapy as well. The following types of herbal formulas are proven to be most effective in helping thousands of my clients regain their hormonal balance.

Herbal Detox:

In my previous articles and in my book, *Breaking the Yeast Curse: Food and Unconditional Love for Magic Healing*, I explain that yeasts and parasites are the "roots of all evil" so far as physical health is concerned. Therefore, you need to remove excess yeasts and parasites in your body if you wish to regain your hormonal balance.

Yeast and parasites are like "Siamese Twins." They go hand in hand. However, **in the herbal market today, you will find herbal formulas for removing yeasts or parasites, but not for both.** This is because of the manufacturers' lack of understanding about how the overgrowth of yeast and parasites occur.

In order to enjoy long-lasting health benefits, you must control the overgrowth of yeasts and parasites simultaneously.

Once you take effective herbal formulas for detoxification, you'll see the evidence in the toilet almost instantly.

The following are some examples:

Yeast Debris:

- Cotton- or hair-like stuff floating in the urine.
- Mucous in urine or stool.
- Cloudy urine.
- Dark-colored urine with foul odor.

Eggs of Parasites:

- Sesame seed-like stuff in the stool.
- Sunflower seed-like stuff in the stool.
- Broken corn-like stuff in the stool.
- White or colored specks in the stool.

Worms:

- Pin worms: Undigested fiber-like stuff sticking out from the stool, or tiny pin-like stuff floating in the toilet.
- Hook worms: Spaghetti-like stuff in the stool.
- Flat worms: Dark green colored, broken tree leaf-like stuff dancing in the water when the toilet is flushed.

There are more than 250,000 species of yeasts and parasites. I can not describe them all. The above are most commonly seen among the people in Northern America. In other words, you have been feeding an "extended family" involuntarily. **Not only do yeasts and parasites suck your energy, they also deposit toxins after they have a rock 'n roll party in your body. That's why you feel fatigued, and also**

suffer allergy symptoms.

After you take strong herbal formulas to remove yeasts and parasites and loosen up toxins, you need to take formulas to flush the debris and toxins. Here is an analogy: you need to scrub the toilet, and also flush it. A caffeine-free herbal tea with special function of cleansing the liver and kidneys is highly recommended.

Hormonal Regeneration:

In addition to a basic Herbal Detox program, you need hormonal regeneration herbal formulas to rebuild your hormonal balance! Many of my clients report that they experience marked improvement in mental clarity, energy, libido, menstrual regularity, and relief from menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, sugar craving, weight gain and mood swings after taking hormonal regeneration herbal formulas. In some cases, they were able to conceive and have a full-term pregnancy after several disappointing miscarriages.

The holistic approach combining a yeast-free nutritional program, and herbal detox and hormonal regeneration is proven to be most effective in helping you to eliminate hormonal imbalance symptoms and enjoy quality of life!

Dr. Juliet Tien (Dr. J) is a leading expert in treating female or male yeast and parasitic infections, and over-weight or under-weight conditions. She is also the best-selling author of *Breaking the Yeast Curse: Food and Unconditional Love for Magic Healing* and *Healthy and Tasty: Dr. J's Anti-Yeast Cooking*.

For more information, call (818) 472-2213, or e-mail drj@drjsbest.com. Website: www.drjsbest.com; Facebook fan page: <http://www.fb.com/drjsbest> (Become a fan to read updated articles regularly on alternative, holistic treatment for various health issues.)



You need chaos in your soul to give birth to a dancing star.

— Friedrich Nietzsche

Women, Know (NO) More

By Audrey Hope

I dedicate this story to Darby Davis, a shining light. Thank you for being an inspiration to me and all women. You matter so much and I hope you know that!

Women are the sacred push. She is the match to inner fire. With arms outstretched she gives the apple — a passionate invitation to ascend. Her gift is her ignition, her sacred fuse, and without it, the world sways too heavy in unbalanced darkness.

Everything has suffered from her robbery, the rape of the goddess. BUT NO (KNOW) MORE! The world is crying for light. Help begins and ends with her return.

Transformation can happen in a moment. The magic wand that we do possess is the power to correct learned mis-information about her — now and through the ages. And this has been my sacred mission that began long ago — A RE-EVOLUTION — to tell women the truth.

Her resurrection ignites with the question, "Do you know that you have been brainwashed, and that it has cost you your soul?"

Salvation rests in her knowing the real story — her story in history. Salvation rests in her knowing the spiritual path back to the "sovereignty of the self." Salvation rests upon her and that is why it is a celebration! To heal her, no one else needs to be present, there is nothing to believe in, and no one to wait for.

She must simply take back her seat on the throne, hear the truth and be restore(y)d. Like Dorothy in Oz, she already has the shoes.

A woman is a queen. She is the enlightening force of every civilization. As stated in Vedic Scriptures, "The degree to which a woman is respected is the degree to which a society prospers. Respect for women humanizes a society."

As Riane Eisler tells so beautifully in her life-altering book, *The Chalice and the Blade*, "There is a more hopeful story of

her cultural origins, where once upon a time society revered the female, and men and women lived in harmony and partnership and embraced a feminine ethos of love and compassion."

As Rolf Gompertz wrote in his ground-breaking book, *Abraham, The Dreamer*, "There was a time when goddess, priestess, woman had great power exceeding God, priest and man." But it goes much deeper than this...

The clarion call has been sounded! The trumpet has blown! Call it the Age of Aquarius, the end of a calendar, the prophesy of masters and saints. It is a time like no other, a potential golden age — a line-up in the sky, a set-up of the planets. We came back to earth for another chance. And we all came!

This is our spiritual opportunity to embrace the truth of who we really are . . . multidimensional light beings, more than our five senses. Our job now is to activate our sacred geometry, to raise our frequency and vibration and to "feel God" on our central nervous system.

As World Spiritual Leader and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee HH Shri Mataji has stated, it is a "blossom time" when we can solve the problem of the human being, through the collective awakening of humanity.

In other words, the spiritual activation of the self — self-realization. In other words, to turn on THE DIVINE FEMININE MOTHERING ENERGY WITHIN ALL OF US.

To think you could hide the goddess power throughout the world and the centuries! To think you could burn documents, burn women, and keep her silenced! To think you could weave a tale of history — about men through his conquests of war and blame

women for the fall from grace!

These horrific deceptions did more than ruin nations, and cause pain. These lies did more than incite pornography, incest, domestic violence, the selling of daughters into slavery, the rape of children, and female circumcision. The deadliest crime of all, the grandest trick of control, is to imprison women in a hateful battle against herself.

I've spent years as a spiritual healer investigating the soul at the "root of the root" for revolutionary ways to transform. There are simple profound truths about positive and negative energy. The secret of power is to clear, protect and align our energy daily, just as we shower.

The loss of power, what makes us weak, is the evil trick of distraction, confusion and separation of self. It is a weapon as old as time. It comes in disguise. Busy, and in its maze, our heads are bowed, and our days are spent trying to be worthy of the light. We never stay, still, long enough to align in the radiance. Self-doubt is a deadly weapon, our "Achilles heel."

Women have bought into the dangerous trickery, with their own harmful self-criticism that believes — I'm not skinny enough, I'm not pretty enough, or I'm not young enough. ENOUGH!!! Women must know the game and conquer it right now! It must stop! All healing at its core, is not what others do to us, but what we do to ourselves because of it.

If you can't see the Divine in everything, you can't see the Divine in anything.

— Yogi Bhaijan



She must do everything to get back to a strong "marriage of self." The greatest manifesting force we possess is self-love. She must stand in the light and know she is queen. With hand on heart, she can begin to decree... *I am now ready to transform. I am now commanding 100 percent of my own energy field, my life force, back, from those I gave it to and those who took it, now and throughout time. I will protect, clear and align my energy every day. And I will live by strong boundaries of self-love. I vow to never put myself down. I vow to never let anyone treat me badly again. I vow to honor my true heart and voice.*

A magnificent destiny awaits us when the goddess is enthroned. In her shining radiance, the healing of men and the world will follow. Herstory can be now be written in all its magic and splendor, as a victorious tale about a beautiful queen-dom that saved the world!

Audrey Hope is a spiritual counselor and host/producer of REAL WOMEN, an international award-winning talk show dedicated to life-altering perspectives. Visit: www.hopesrealwomen.com and audreyhope.com Her CD, The High Voltage Hope System, is available on amazon.com

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Saving Strategies for Any Economy

Four Tips for Building A Nest Egg

By Pamela Yellen, President, Bank On Yourself

Building a savings — not an easy task in the best of times — has become even more of a challenge during the recession. People who had their retirement savings invested in 401(k) plans saw 40 percent or more of their wealth evaporate in the melt-down.

Today, so many people have watched their retirement savings recover somewhat, only to lose ground again due to jittery, unstable markets. So how can people build a bigger nest egg when times are tough? Here are four tips to help people take control of their finances:

1. Know the Difference between "Saving" and "Investing"

Wall Street and the financial planning industry have led us to believe that "saving" and "investing" are the same. They are not. Money put in savings is money a person doesn't want to (or can't afford) to lose. Money invested is subject to loss. Most people today "invest to save," but they have no idea what their nest egg will be worth when they plan to tap into it.

This is not a financial plan. It's gambling. And it has led to

a nation of Americans wondering if they will ever be able to retire, and what they will have to give up in order to do that.

A typical equity mutual fund investor has actually been losing 1 percent per year for the past 20 years, after adjusting for inflation, according to the research firm DALBAR. The bottom line: Money a person cannot afford to lose shouldn't be invested in stocks, real estate or other traditional investments.

2. Don't Wait to Pay Down Debt Before Increasing Savings

Often people think they must pay down their credit card balances and other debts, before they can increase the amount they save. But that is not necessarily true.

Case in point: A woman in her fifties was paying \$600 to \$800 a month more than the minimum payment due on her credit cards. She discovered that by cutting back to the minimum payment and putting the

difference into a guaranteed savings vehicle, she could have a nest egg worth about \$50,000 more than she otherwise would when she retires at 65. I call this a "better than debt-free" way to manage money.

3. Look Beyond Traditional Saving and Investing Methods

Many people do not realize there are proven and time-tested ways to grow a substantial nest egg without the risk or volatility of stocks, mutual funds, real estate, and other investments. One asset class has increased in value during every period of economic boom and bust for more than a century: dividend-paying whole life insurance.

A dividend-paying whole life policy grows by a guaranteed and pre-set amount every year. *The growth is exponential*, meaning it gets more efficient every single year the policy is held. This gives some protection against inflation and provides peak growth at the time most people need it most — retirement.

Such policies can even include options that turbo-charge the growth of equity (cash value). Once credited to the policy, both guaranteed annual increases plus any dividends paid are locked in. They don't vanish due to a market correction. These policies also provide peace of mind for retirement planning, because they specify the minimum guaranteed income a person can draw in retirement.

4. Realize Saving Doesn't Have to Mean Sacrificing

Saving with this kind of specially-designed dividend-paying whole life policy allows the policy holder to borrow equity and use it for needed major purchases. Some companies offer policies that will continue to

grow as if no money had been withdrawn. This can open up all kinds of new possibilities for responsible savers.

A couple whom I know had not taken a vacation since their honeymoon eight years earlier. They could not justify taking a vacation because they felt they should save the money. They hated the idea of putting it on a credit card and having to pay all that interest. So they borrowed the money from their policy for a one-week vacation at a resort on the Mexican Riviera.

They set up a schedule to pay back the loan to their policy over a year, and made plans to use the same dollars to take a nice vacation every year. By using this powerful saving tool, they found a responsible way to do something for themselves they would not otherwise be able to do.

By saving instead of gambling, hardworking Americans can provide for their financial future. It takes know-how, and the willingness to try something that's time tested, but different from conventional, unpredictable investing strategies.

As a consultant to financial advisors, author and financial security expert, Pamela Yellen investigated more than 450 savings and retirement planning strategies before learning about Bank On Yourself. This approach uses specially-designed dividend-paying cash value whole life insurance policies to create secure savings plans for families who want to protect their financial future. Pamela spent five years investigating and implementing the Bank On Yourself method for her own family before offering it to others as a secure and proven alternative to the risk, volatility and unpredictability of other savings plans.

Pamela is the author of the New York Times best-selling book, "Bank on Yourself: The Life-Changing Secret to Growing and Protecting Your Financial Future." Learn more at www.BankOnYourself.com



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Moving into Mastery

Change Your Thoughts to Create the Life You've Imagined

By Kristie Reeves

We have all heard it, read about it, or learned it somewhere: our thoughts create our life. Whatever is in your life right now is there because of a thought you had in the past. Nothing in your life exists by pure chance, but only because of an act of creation. A creation through your thought processes, consciously or unconsciously.

Now you might ask "Well, if I am the one who is creating my life through my thoughts, then why am I creating negative things such as deprivation, lack, or loss? Why can't I just create love, joy and abundance?"

In order to answer this question it's important to understand how our mind works. Our conscious mind is only about 12%, our subconscious mind about 88%. You might not consciously attract lack or deprivation, but your subconscious mind might hold beliefs or emotions that do.

Our subconscious mind does not judge. It does not discern between negative or positive; things just are. It does not go through a selection process in order to decide what to create. It creates according to the beliefs and emotions it stores, which means that if we are holding beliefs of deprivation or lack it will create exactly that. But if our subconscious is filled with beliefs and emotions of love, joy, happiness and abundance exactly that will manifest in our life.

These beliefs or emotions can originate from different roots. We learn from the time we are conceived. The experiences we

have had and things we were taught shape our belief system. Many beliefs are also taken over from our ancestors. We are connected to our ancestors through our DNA, and the DNA carries the emotions and experiences of our ancestral lineage. Group consciousness of the society we live in, or the society our ancestors have lived in, plays an important factor as well. Past life experiences and karmic obligations are another one.

In order to change our life, we have to change our thoughts first. Nothing happens to us. It happens because of us. It happens because of our thoughts. If you feel like a victim of circumstances, then take a look at which thoughts created those circumstances in the first place.

If you feel like other people are not treating you the way you would like to be treated, ask yourself "Why am I obligating these people to behave

that way?" If you are dissatisfied with your financial situation, ask yourself "Which thoughts do I have that are creating this lack? And which thoughts would move me into an abundance and joy consciousness?"

If you feel life is hard and that you have to struggle through it, ask yourself "Where did I learn this? Who taught me that? Can I let go of the obligation to imitate other people's beliefs and live a life according to my highest truth?"

Whenever your life is not the way you would like it to be, take a moment, pause for a while and meditate on where these beliefs come from, where you learned them and how they have served you in your life so far. What kind of lessons were you able to learn with these beliefs?

Then change them to beliefs that are in accordance with what you would like your life to look

like. By changing your thoughts and releasing negative emotions you will move out of the victim position and instead manifest the life you would like to live.

Understanding that you, and you only, have the key and the power to determine your life, and experiences will move you into mastery.

Kristie Reeves comes from a family of healers. She is a Reiki Master and ThetaHealer® certified as a ThetaHealing® Instructor through the Think® (Theta Healing® Institute of Knowledge-Vianna Stibal). She teaches ThetaHealing® Certification Classes, The Artist Way in Theta as well as Prosperity Classes in the U.S. and Germany, and also holds the position as a Professor and Dean of the Department of Energetic Medicine at Barron University.

For more information visit: www.AvalonHealing.de, or call (310) 773-8656.

The dawn of this new civilization, which we might call an Age of Oneness, is the single most explosive fact of our life times.

— Sri Bhagavan

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How to Tell If You've Gotten M.A.D. (Money Anxiety Disorder)

By Hollis Colquhoun

After the holiday cheer fades and reality sets in, financial issues usually take center stage. As the economy continues to struggle with high unemployment, tight credit, declining home values and high foreclosure rates, husbands and wives are finding it harder than ever to cope with their financial problems.

In 2008 an American Psychological Association survey found that 80% of the respondents said the financial crisis was causing them a significant amount of stress. With all of this anxiety over money, particularly in women, psychology professionals are officially recognizing a new affliction: **Money Anxiety Disorder**. Unfortunately, this condition doesn't appear suddenly or without warning, but can fester beneath the surface for years if it isn't addressed.

When a relationship begins, most couples don't share their credit scores, feelings about money or their financial goals. Even though they may each have a job and personal income, once the two of them get married and decide to start a family, the wife usually leaves or suspends her career to have and care for the children.

Then a disconnect develops between the wife, husband and the household income, and often, an open financial dialogue doesn't take place. Combine this lack of communication with today's overall financial uncertainty, and Money Anxiety Disorder attacks with a vengeance.

Women are getting M.A.D. because they are not the major breadwinners in the marriage and don't feel financially educated or empowered. An old saying, "He who makes the gold makes the rules," is often the mantra that defines a financial relationship between husband and wife.

Since the husband is bringing home a paycheck he feels an ownership of the money and takes charge of the finances. Even though the wife is managing the household and the children, she loses sight of her worth in monetary terms.

The Money Anxiety Disorder occurs when a combination of confusion and fear permeates a woman's thoughts about her financial life and future. If a close financial partnership wasn't set up at the beginning of the marriage, it is hard to establish one years down the road. So, how can the wife recognize and alleviate her M.A.D symptoms?

These are five tell-tale signs indicating you've gotten M.A.D.:

1. You have an overall sense of fear or dread thinking about money.
2. You are in a panic about your husband's or your own job security and income.
3. You have a constant fear that your financial safety net (retirement and emergency savings) will disappear forever.
4. There's a feeling of confusion, anxiety and shame about your lack of financial knowledge and awareness.
5. You feel upset at the lack of communication between you and your partner regarding your personal finances, and most discussions about money quickly turn to arguments.

How to Cure M.A.D. Mania:

1. Realize that money and money matters are not scary, they are just math.

Not knowing anything is scary. Tell your husband you are concerned about your health (because you are anxious all the time) and afraid of how you would handle the finances if something happened to him.

Explain that you would like to sit down with him to go over the numbers together so he could "teach" you. Set a day and time for a "money date." Gather together (ideally with his help) all of the household statements and bills so you can create a monthly budget and "cash-flow statement" during your date.

The "cash-flow statement" is just what it sounds like, a calculation of the money or income coming into the household measured against money going out or expenses. If more money is coming in than going out there's a positive balance which can be turned into savings, but if the balance is negative then either income has to go up or expenses have to go down.

Remember... knowledge is power. Once you learn the facts and numbers you can develop open communication and build a strategy together. Following a clear financial plan with your husband will eliminate a lot of your anxiety and fear.

2. Contact a NON-PROFIT credit counseling agency if you need help. If you're faced with a large amount of debt and not enough income to support basic expenses plus monthly loan payments, a counselor will review your budget, income, assets (what you own) and liabilities (what you owe) then offer possible solutions and resources.



To locate a legitimate non-profit agency in your area go to NFCC.org (National Foundation for Credit Counseling) or AICCCA.org (Association of Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies). You can also call any of the listed agencies for a phone consultation.

3. Understand that the market goes up and down, continuously, every day, but over the long-term should go up. Certainly investments can lose value on paper but it isn't a realized loss until they're actually sold. Focus on what you can control in your financial life and take a longer view of the market. If you have one, speak to your financial advisor or retirement plan manager about your concerns. To get a wide range of information on finance-related topics and available resources go to MyMoney.gov.

4. De-stress by exercising. Anxiety can take a physical toll on your heart, head, neck, back and shoulder muscles. The temptation is to sit and stew but that won't help either your mind or your body. Pick a form of exercise you like — jogging, pilates, tennis, yoga, kick-boxing — and take an hour or two per week away from it all. Meditation and hypnosis are also good ways to reduce stress and anxiety.

Money Anxiety Disorder is real but not fatal. There are steps you can take to overcome it — get educated on personal finance basics, start a money dialogue with your partner, create a financial plan together and seek help if you need it.

Financial expert Hollis Colquhoun has more than thirty years of experience in the financial industry. She is co-author of the award-winning book, "Women Empowering Themselves: A Financial Survival Guide" and holds black belts in Karate and Tae Kwon Do. Hollis is passionate about teaching women in particular, and adults in general, good personal and financial self-defense moves. Contact Hollis at HollisC.com or WomenEmpoweringThemselves@gmail.com

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From Annoyed to Enjoyed

By Arielle Ford

(Excerpted from *Wabi Sabi Love*)

While some experts might tell us not to sweat the small stuff, we all know it is the little things that can chisel away at even the best of relationships. Before those granular irks lead to the Big Bang in our partnerships, we need to develop relational safety nets to catch us before we fall.

You can consider these strategies to be a quirk-turned-perk energy shift, if you will. A key aspect of Wabi Sabi is learning to move our focus from what makes our partners so annoying to what makes our partners so unique.

At its heart, this transition is about gratitude. Gratitude can be a marriage-saving emotion, especially if you tend to easily slide into feelings of annoyance about your partner's daily habits. Little rituals of thankfulness can sustain you as you struggle with the thing he or she did — again.

For many years I began each day with a prayer as a way to center myself and receive divine guidance. I would make a gratitude list that often looked like this: "Today I am grateful that I have fresh air to breathe, clean water to drink, and for the many friends and family members who love me."

So far so good. Then I got married and my prayers changed.

Dear God,

Help me . . . I have married a man who refuses to answer the phone, but he will walk across a room to hand me the phone so I can answer it.

Okay. I'm stretching the truth just a bit here, but like all couples, Brian and I each had quirks and odd behaviors that we had to learn to love and appreciate. A daily practice of offering prayers of gratitude (whether you believe in a higher being or not) for your beloved mate — flaws and all — will keep your mind open and your heart re-

ceptive to remembering how much you love him or her. For it's really the *cracks* in our partners that we will miss the most.

Mrs. Lee's Story¹

The cool, quiet room was overflowing with the grieving faces of friends and family as the funeral director invited Mrs. Lee to the podium to speak. The petite, elegant widow walked slowly to the front of the small chapel and calmly began her eulogy.

"I am not going to sing praises for my late husband. Not today. Neither am I going to talk about how good he was." Mrs. Lee's eyes flashed. "Enough people have done that here." She took a deep breath, allowing the air to fill her lungs before she continued. "Instead, I want to talk about things that may make some of you feel a bit uncomfortable.

Several people stopped fanning themselves and sat up a little straighter. "First off, I want to talk about what happened in bed." She paused dramatically, shifting her weight from side to side. "Have you ever had difficulty starting your car engine in the morning?" She carefully studied the faces in the room. With a loud, grinding sound, she snorted and rumbled, violently shaking her tiny frame.

"Well, that is exactly what David's snoring sounded like." A cough rose up from the center of the audience. "But wait," she continued. "Snoring wasn't the only thing." There was also this rear-end wind action as well. Some nights it was so forceful, it would wake him up." A child giggled into her hand while her red-faced mother stifled a grin.

"What was that?" he'd ask.

"Oh, it's the dog," I would say. Patting his back and smoothing the covers, I would urge him to go back to sleep." She touched her hair as if remembering the way her hands felt as they placed themselves on her husband's gasping body. "Oh, you might find this very funny," Mrs. Lee offered the whisper of a smile... "But when his illness was at its worst, these sounds provided comfort and proof that my David was still alive."

Silence washed over the room. Even the birds outside seemed to be listening. Mrs. Lee looked heavenward as her voice began to crack.

"What I'd give just to hear those sounds one more time before I sleep." A single tear wandered down her face, landing noiselessly on her lapel.

"In the end, it's these small things that you remember, the little imperfections that make them perfect for you.

"So, to my beautiful children," Mrs. Lee swept one hand toward the front row, "I hope that one day you, too, will find yourselves life partners who are as beautifully imperfect as your father was to me."

Mrs. Lee's eloquent tribute to

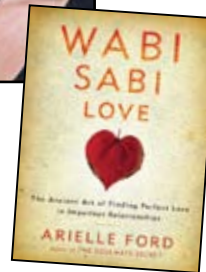
her husband left the entire audience in tears. With just a few heartfelt words she summed up the mystery and magic of a life-long marriage built on a foundation of love, imperfection, and acceptance that knows no bounds.

Wabi Sabi Love is ... the practice of accepting the flaws, imperfections, and limitations — as well as the gifts and the blessings — that form your shared history as a couple. This is sacred love, not infatuation, or love that is convenient. Can you imagine what the world would look like, feel like, be like if the foundational premise of romantic love and deep intimacy were based on the art of loving one's imperfections rather than the illusionary fantasy that your relationship is fabulous only when each person is acting perfectly? Imagine a world in which imperfection is the accepted norm and is actually cherished.

Anyone who has found this highest level of Wabi Sabi Love knows that it comes in one way and one way only: through exploring, embracing, and actually falling in love with the cracks in each other and ourselves.

Wabi Sabi Love is published by HarperOne and is available at your local bookstores.

¹This story is based on a YouTube video that can be viewed at www.wabisabilove.com/video. It could not be determined whether this is based on a true character or not. The truthfulness of Mrs. Lee's words, however, overshadows the detail of fact or fiction.



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Vulnerability and Dating

By Kathryn Alice, RScP, ALSP

During this time of New Year's resolutions and Valentine's Day, it's a good time to turn over a new leaf regarding dating and finding the love you want. One of the hot topics — one I have seen over and over — that keeps people alone is the vulnerability issue.

At one of my recent workshops, several people expressed the thought that they couldn't bear to date again. "I just can't take any more hurt," lamented one woman. A man complained, "Putting myself out there only to get shot down another time is too much heartache." Letting yourself be vulnerable is risky. Yet, it is the only path to love. If you don't open your heart and allow yourself to be vulnerable, you close yourself off. There are ways to make vulnerability easier in dating. Here are some tips on how.

1. Understand that guarding your heart doesn't work. As people date, they can experience heartache and vow not to be vulnerable again. Some put up walls to try and protect their hearts. This sets them up for failure. When Mary picked

Jack to marry, because he loved her more than she loved him, not only did she "settle" but she falsely assumed that this was a guarantee against heartbreak. Unfortunately, this assumption didn't hold up.

Jack divorced her after three years of marriage, and Mary was devastated. Those with guarded hearts get hurt worse than those with open hearts. In an attempt to avoid the pain, they have chosen the wrong person, not their soulmate. Making a decision based on fear, in this case the fear of getting hurt, is not supported in the universe.

2. Quit getting hurt by changing your beliefs. If you alter your thoughts about rejection, you can save yourself a truckload of grief. The truth is that *there is no rejection*, only the wrong fit. So when your boyfriend breaks up with you saying that he is not feeling it, instead of being devastated and assuming something is wrong with you, un-

derstand you simply were not right together. A door was being closed for you, so you can be available when your soulmate comes along.

No need to examine ad nauseam what you did wrong, or dwell on what you are lacking. You did nothing wrong, and you are not lacking. It would never have worked out, because he is not your soulmate. Trust that you get a soulmate who can't see past you and in whose eyes you can do no wrong.

3. Give each date a chance. It is not honoring of another to drag old wounds or insecurities into a date. Just because every woman you have dated has cheated on you doesn't mean that this woman will behave in the same way. You owe it to her to go in with no assumptions and see her for who she is. Clean the screen of your vision from past dirt so that you can give each date a proper, unbiased chance. Also, leave behind stereotypes when you date.

I have heard many men written off as "womanizers." In the past year, I have been to the weddings of at least three womanizers, who are now faithful and settled down. Labels are not valid — no one can be reduced to a one word judgment. No matter what you have heard about a person or what your initial perception may be, open to what you can be to each other. If you are his soulmate, he will leave his womanizing ways behind.

4. Trust the Universe to guard your heart. One compelling reason not to guard your heart (which as discussed, fails anyway) is that you can trust the Divine to guard your heart for you. How? Every time fear about dating comes up, take the time to find faith within you, the part

of you that knows you are protected. Envision yourself putting your heart right into the hands of the Universe for safekeeping. Then, look for signs of support that happen. You will see them, and feel reassured.

5. Don't make anyone your source. One mistake we make, a mistake that will never be rewarded, is making another being our Source. When someone becomes your life and you lose a sense of yourself in a relationship, when you give away your power to another, you are making them your Source, and this doesn't serve.

Love is powerful and can sweep us away. This is fine, as long as you continue to have good self-esteem and a life outside of your love. There is only one Source, and while this person may mirror part of this Source to you by opening you to love, don't mistake them for the Source itself.

6. Let hope spring eternal. Go into dating knowing you can get over anything if necessary. If you have ever been in love and gotten over it when it didn't work out, you know that you can recover again. Be willing to go through any grieving necessary if things don't work out. As long as you know you can release, you know it's okay to love freely. Yes, you must go through the pain of release if it doesn't work out, but don't lose the faith that you ultimately get love. We all get love, and you are no exception.

The soulmate you long for is out there somewhere right now. By being willing to stay open and vulnerable, you expedite the process of calling forth your love.

Kathryn Alice, RScP, ALSP author of the bestseller "Love Will Find You," is the U.S.'s foremost expert on soulmates and spiritual dating. Her new book on dating will be released in 2012. Based in Southern California, Kathryn directed Agape's Crisis Support Team for 6 years and teaches in the U.S., Australia and South Africa. To find out more about her work, visit www.KathrynAlice.com



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The Four Vedanta Yoga Pathways

By Dave DeLuca

The four ancient yoga pathways to spiritual union taught in the Bhagavad Gita are built on the profound recognition, made by yoga masters thousands of years ago, that human beings have four faculties through which they can learn to purify the heart, discipline the mind, restrain the senses, and unite with the Self within: the intellect, love, psychic control, and work. Swami Vivekananda describes the four yogas as such:

"Each soul is potentially divine, and the goal of yoga is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal.

We can do this either by work (Karma yoga), or worship (Bhakti yoga), or psychic control (Raja yoga), or knowledge (Jnana yoga) — by one, or more, or all of these, and when we do, we shall be free.

Always remember that the bringing forth of the Divinity within us is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books are but secondary details."

JNANA YOGA

Jnana yoga is the path of intellectual discrimination between the real and the unreal. It is the path to union through knowledge, not the mere knowledge of things, but the direct apprehension of the One Infinite Reality behind all temporal things. The renunciation of the jnani is the renunciation of all illusions of two-ness. The aim of the jnani is to develop the superconscious ability to see the Divine One everywhere, expressing itself through and as everyone and everything.

To know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, that is to have succeeded.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Jnana is considered the most difficult of the four yoga pathways, for it calls not only for the rejection of all illusions of duality outside ourselves, but also for the rejection of every mental or emotional state within us that hides the truth of Oneness from us. Swami Vivekananda offers us a taste of this in one of my favorite passages of his in *Sacred Jewels of Yoga*:

As long as you see the many, you are under delusion. "In this world of many, he who sees the One, in this ever-changing world, he who sees Him who never changes as the Soul of his own soul, as his own Self, he is free, he is blessed, he has reached the goal." Therefore, know that you are He; you are one with the God of this universe.

All these small ideas that I am a man or a woman, sick or healthy, strong or weak, or that I hate or love or have little power, are but hallucinations.

Stand up then. Know that every thought and word that weakens you in this world is the only evil that exists. Whatever makes you weak and fearful is the only evil that should be shunned.

Stand as a rock; you are the Infinite Spirit. Say, "I am Existence Absolute, Bliss Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, I am He," and like a lion breaking its cage, break your chains and be free forever.

KARMA YOGA

Karma yoga is the path of selfless service, the path to union through work offered in the spirit of worship. It is the aim of karma yoga to sacralize each of our actions through the conscious, constant, and loving offering of our work and the fruits of our work to God. When we work in this way, detached from outcome and in the spirit of service, the bonds of ego-attachment fall away, and our identification with the highest within us grows

stronger. Acts of selfless service in devotion to the higher purifies our hearts, destroys our selfishness, and spiritualizes our ego.



Renunciation of the Karma yogi is the renunciation of all selfishness and attachment in thought or deed. In this passage from the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna's emphasis on the spiritual power and significance of selfless service is unambiguous:

Every selfless act, Arjuna, is born from Brahman, the eternal, infinite Godhead. He is present in every act of service. All life turns on this law, O Arjuna. Whoever violates it, indulging his senses for his own pleasure and ignoring the needs of others, has wasted his life.

BHAKTI YOGA

Bhakti yoga is the path of love and devotion to a personal God. It is the unceasing adoration of God in any of God's Divine forms: Heavenly Father, Holy Mother, the Beloved, Christ, Krishna, Shiva, the Lord of Love within, or any embodiment of God that the bhakta can love with all of his or her heart. Through a constant and unbroken flow of adoration directed to God, the bhakta disintegrates all selfishness through the fervor of divine love.

Renunciation of the bhakta is the renunciation of all that is unloving within and all unloving feelings outward into the world. The bhakta sees the whole universe as God's and therefore offers unswerving love to all of God's creation. It is through the power of this intense and blissful relationship with God that all of the petty desires of the little ego fade away naturally and without struggle, until nothing is left to experience but the Lord of Love Himself. Swami Vivekananda, in another passage from the book, explains:

Bhakti Yoga is the science of higher love. It shows us how to direct love: how to manage it, how to use it, how to give it a new aim; and from it, it shows us how to obtain the highest and most glorious results; that is, how to make it lead us to spiritual blessedness.

Bhakti Yoga does not say, "Give up"; it only says, "Love the Highest!" and everything low will naturally fall away from those, the object of whose love is this Highest.

RAJA YOGA

Raja yoga is the path to union through meditation, concentration, and psychic control. It is for the devotee who is contemplative in nature and who enjoys mining the depths of the soul for the supreme treasure within. Renunciation of the Raja yogi is the renunciation all of the mental and emotional states within that hide the glory of the Supreme Soul. Through mastery of Raja yoga comes the complete command of the mind, intellect, and senses, culminating in samadhi, the perfect internal stillness and clarity that reveals the Atman in all of its glory. According to the Gita:

Closing their eyes, steadying their breathing, and focusing their attention on the center of spiritual consciousness, the wise master their senses, mind, and intellect through meditation. Self-realization is their only goal. Freed from selfish desire, fear, and anger, they live in freedom always.

Dave DeLuca is one of the West's most acclaimed teachers of India's ancient Vedanta wisdom and the editor of "Sacred Jewels of Yoga" and "Pathways to Joy." He has spoken and presented workshops on spiritual growth at temples, churches, conferences and learning centers all over the United States, and is currently teaching an ongoing class on Vedanta Yoga at Common Ground in Tustin, CA. For further information, visit www.davedeluca.com or email dave@datedeluca.com

Excerpt from Sacred Jewels of Yoga ©2011. Printed with permission from New World Library.

How Your Energy Can Affect Your Child

By Melissa Kay, MFT

I can still remember when I was a child caught up in my internal play world where all was well. In an instant happiness could be drawn out of me when my parents entered the room. Depending on their mood, mine would change. If they were angry, I would feel scared, and if they were sad, I would want to make them happy. I spent much of my years trying to figure out what would please them, and along the way I forgot one person, myself.

Working with children and teens, I realize that most parents unconsciously spiral their emotions out of control, looking outside for what would soothe them and bring them the peace and happiness for which they are searching. In a parent's disconnected state they see their children not as they truly are, but as the projections they put on them.

When we work on our inner world to create peace, kindness, and love from the inside, we see the world differently and our world responds to what we project out. This is especially true for children. They reflect what we put out emotionally and energetically. When we are disconnected we cannot see the good in another or guide them back to their connection.

This contributes to much of the chaos and drama children experience and react to growing up. Parents forget that their job is not to condemn and correct, but to hold a space of unconditional love, support, peace and acceptance for themselves first, and then whomever is present including their children.

Children are more tuned into their natural state of joy. If we could see them as knowing and thriving more often, this is what they would project. Just like us,

children meet challenges that take them away from their good feelings. When a child exhibits anger, frustration, anxiety, fear, or any other negative emotion, our calm energy and kindness can guide them back to a better place.

Children will respond very well to this. If we react negatively to their pain, we create more. If we let their experiences and pain become ours, we have no way to soothe and inspire them to a better place. Much of the time they reflect how we feel.

We can only change ourselves, and then watch the miraculous changes exhibited in the people around us, including our children. Be authentic with them about your feelings, and show them how you soothe yourself to a better place when negative emotions come up. Children learn how to respond to life by watching their parents. The challenges are only there to

help us decide what we truly want in our life and to turn in that direction.

We would benefit from practicing good feeling thoughts, peace, joy, and balance daily through meditation, affirmations, exercise, therapy, or anything else that helps us connect with who we really are. Then are we truly able to help our children keep their joyful connection. Seeing ourselves as worthy, uniquely beautiful individuals helps us see this in our children, for we can only see in others what we see in ourselves! We knew our worthiness coming into this world, and although we may have forgotten, our children may still remember!

Children want parents to understand that although they are smaller, they are wise, knowing and capable beings. They came into this world as bright souls choosing to create wonderful lives. When we get angry with a child for not doing what we deem they "should" do, they may act out, rebel, or in some cases lose their spirit! Children are not here to do what we think is "right" and "wrong." They are

here to be the divine creators they are. When we approach them with this knowing, and stay connected to who we are, they will thrive.

The key to helping children grow and thrive and be who they truly are is to love the child in ourselves. The child who gets scared, lonely, sad, angry and disappointed.

The child who took on our parent's pain and anger. The child who wants life to work out, to make good decisions, and have good relationships. The child who wants to be loved and accepted for who they truly are. The child who wants to be heard, seen and encouraged. Hold that child close and see how precious and courageous they are. Then we can do the same for our children.

Melissa Kay is a Marriage Family Therapist specializing in counseling children and teens in Playa Vista, CA. She helps children, teens and parents lead joyful, healthy, balanced lives. She believes that each child is a unique emanation of God. She also runs the Los Angeles Positive Parenting Group (www.meetup.com/The-Los-Angeles-Positive-Parenting-Meetup-Group). Please visit: www.melissakaycounseling.com



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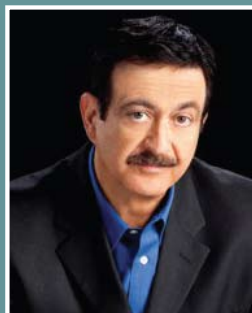
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The GMO Labeling Initiative Panel—Meet the heroes who have spearheaded the GMO labeling initiative by calling for a “ban” on foods containing them. The truth is, most consumers will not buy genetically engineered ingredients once they know what they are and the health risks involved. GMOs are continuing to be grown and sold today because consumers have been prevented from knowing about the GMO ingredients in their foods.

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GATE Encourages Conscious Transformation of Entertainment, Media and the Arts

By Michael Jeffreys

"For the first time, we humans hold in our hands – and in our minds — the most immediate power to either destroy life on Earth as we've known it ... or transform our relationship with ourselves, each other and the planet so that life for us all can not only continue, but revivify, blossom, and thrive."

— John Raatz

For 2½ hours on a rainy Sunday afternoon at the Urth Café in Santa Monica, CA, I sat across from John Raatz, the Founder, Board Chairman, and CEO of GATE. I was there to interview him about GATE 2, which will be held February 4, 2012 at the Saban Theatre in Los Angeles.

After we settled into our little metal table and chairs, he with a bowl of oatmeal and me with a fancy vanilla latte with the foam artfully poured to resemble a kitty cat's face, I asked John what exactly is GATE?

"Global Alliance for Transformational Entertainment" he began, "is an evolving community of creative, business and technical professionals in entertainment, media, and the arts, who realize the vital and expanding role media and entertainment play in creating our lives, and who aspire to consciously transform those domains for the benefit of all."

What John was saying, as I heard it, is that when we aim higher, and we do so from a place of consciousness, *everyone* benefits. And when you consider the impact the entertainment and media industry has on all of our lives on a daily basis, I can't think of a better place to start to aim higher.

This is especially true when you consider the global infrastructure for reaching people is already in place via movie theaters, cable and broadcast TV, radio, and the internet. So, we have the ability to reach billions

of people around the globe, the question is can we provide them with content that inspires people to grow, thrive, be successful

seat venue they would be doing well; especially if the naysayers were to be believed.

However, no one had antici-



GATE Founder John Raatz, author Eckhart Tolle and actor/activist Jim Carrey

and, dare I say it, nurtures their soul.

When I asked John, who is also the Founder and CEO of The Visioneering Group, a pioneering transformational marketing firm in Los Angeles, how he came up with the idea for GATE, he said looking back, the seed was planted in the late-1960s when, as a teenager, he was captivated by the Beatles. At the time they were learning meditation while riding the crest of global fame. In his bedroom, he played his guitar for hours on end everyday, immersed in the Beatles' reality.

Suddenly, while playing, the John he had always thought he was vanished, and all that was left was a feeling of bliss and oneness. "Oh, this is what I want to do," he remembers saying to himself. "I want to bring this music and consciousness more into the world."

Still, life moves at its own pace and it wasn't until more than 40 years later that initial seed blossomed into something tangible: the first GATE event took place in June of 2009. To say it was a success would be an understatement. Since it was their very first event, the consensus was that if they filled the 500

pated how many people were quietly going through their own inner-spiritual transformation and were waiting for an organization like GATE to come along.

This was reflected by the fact that not only did the 500 seats go quickly, but as word of mouth spread of this inaugural event almost 1,600 more people requested to attend, but had to be turned away as there simply were no more seats.

For those who were fortunate enough to be able to attend, the evening by all accounts exceeded expectations. GATE founder John Raatz welcomed everyone and spoke passionately about the goal of raising consciousness through media.

Keynote speaker for the four-hour-plus session was world-renowned author and spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle, who was given a heartfelt introduction by actor Jim Carrey (both of whom are Honorary Co-founders of GATE).

Eckhart spoke about how the entertainment community can reach out to the public and how humanity is captive to the mind and obsessive thinking patterns. He also shared how there are films that have transformative moments in them that can help

people break free of their mental conditioning. These movies include: *The Horse Whisperer*, *Groundhog Day*, *Titanic* and *American Beauty*.

Prior to Eckhart, several industry leaders gave powerful and inspiring presentations. Scott Carlin, then President of domestic TV Distribution for HBO said that, "Audiences are yearning to be nourished deeply." Will Arntz, creator of *What the BLEEP Do We Know?!*, by all accounts one of the most groundbreaking transformational films of recent years, said, "Tonight is about putting a name on a movement that is already happening."

Melissa Etheridge and Donovan provided the evening's musical entertainment to the delight of the audience, which included Garry Shandling, Billy Zane, Jackson Browne, Virginia Madsen, Alanis Morissette, Roseanne Barr, and many others.

The presenters and audience members enthusiastically endorsed and applauded the birth of the GATE movement, recognizing the role that entertainment and media plays in creating our reality, and supporting the transformation of these industries in order to make the resulting content more positive and life enhancing.

"The only actions that don't cause opposing reactions are those aimed at the good of all. Inclusive, not exclusive. They join; they don't separate. They are not for "my" country but for all of humanity, not for "my" religion but the emergence of consciousness in all human beings, not for "my" species but for all sentient beings and all of nature."

— Eckhart Tolle

While the program was outstanding, the real magic happened before and after the event as people came together, exchanged ideas, and connected.

When I asked John what segment of the population was most likely to get involved in GATE's vision, he replied, "Cultural Creatives." According to Wikipedia, there are over 50 million (during our interview, John said the current figure is closer to 65 million) Cultural Creatives in the United States and 80-90 million in Europe. And, of course, many millions more in other parts of the world.

***When we aim higher,
and we do so from a
place of consciousness,
everyone benefits.***

What makes a Cultural Creative? There are actually 18 characteristics. For instance, if you care about nature, other people, the planet, value relationships, are optimistic by nature, are concerned for the well-being of women and children, and are interested in spiritual and psychological development, then YOU, even if you didn't know it, may be a Cultural Creative!

GLOBAL REACH

"Our Family is the World"

— Chris Hebard,

GATE Leadership Circle Member

"We are the *Global Alliance* for Transformational Entertainment," says John. "The personal and social transformation underway is occurring worldwide. Word about GATE has reached every corner of the earth, and we have received interested inquiries about GATE from professionals in over 70 countries. There is a widespread intention to launch GATE chapters, not only in major U.S. cities, but worldwide.

GATE EVENTS

Saturday, February 4, 2012

GATE 2 and

**GATE Transformational
Story Conference**

Saban Theatre
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9:00am to 5:00pm

**GATE Transformational
Story Conference**

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The GATE Transformational Story Conference is a working session focused on transformational storytelling and the transformational arc, for producers, directors, authors, screenwriters, — anyone interested in the transformational genre. Featured presenters include writer/teacher/story consultant James Bonnet; writer Catherine Ann Jones; author/social visionary Duane Elgin; script consultant Dara Marks; film editor Kurt Engfehr; filmmakers Louie Schwartzberg and Norman Seeff; and others.

6:30pm to 11:00pm

GATE 2

*Only a New Seed Will Yield
a New Crop*

GATE 2 is a gala celebration of transformational entertainment and media, with presenters, performers and special surprises to entertain, inspire and inform. Featured are Eckhart Tolle, Jean Houston, Jim Carrey, Don Miguel Ruiz, Marianne Williamson, Edward James Olmos, Fred Alan Wolf, Barbara Marx Hubbard and many others.

To learn more about GATE's vision/mission, programs and initiatives, event tickets, and how you can become involved, visit: www.gatecommunity.org



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Visiting San Diego on A Shoestring

By Ann Nelson

San Diego is blessed with natural beauty, a near-perfect climate and a limitless amount of outdoor activities. If you are on a budget, finding a reasonably-priced and classy place to stay can be a challenge. That's why I decided to do a little homework and develop a list of great places to stay for under \$120.00 a night. I've also put together a list of free activities to keep you busy during your visit.

The Balboa Park Inn, built in 1915, was originally a guesthouse for visiting dignitaries who were opening the first World's Fair in Balboa Park. The inn is a two-minute walk to the zoo and Balboa Park. Several of the 26 suites have fireplaces, kitchens and Jacuzzis. A continental breakfast is served. Call: (800) 938-8181, or www.balboaparkinn.com. Prices start at \$99.00

The Lafayette Hotel & Swim Club, a 131-room historic hotel, is located in North Park and close to downtown. Bob Hope, Betty Grable and Ava Gardner have all stayed here. Florence Chadwick trained in the 50-meter hotel pool for her record-breaking swim across the English Channel. The Lafayette has recently embarked on a 4-million dollar renovation and has the look of a classy Southern plantation with huge white columns gracing the front of the red brick building. Call: (800) 468-3531, or www.lafayettehotelsd.com. Prices start at \$69.00

Park Manor Suites, consisting of 75 suites, is ideally situated on the west edge of Balboa Park and offers sweeping views of San Diego Bay and downtown. Built in 1926, The Park Manor was a popular stopping off point for the "Hollywood Set," commuting from Rosarito Beach and Del Mar. Call: (800) 874-2649, or www.parkmanorsuites.com. Prices start at \$119.00

The Pearl Hotel, a small bou-

tique hotel close to downtown and Shelter Island is intimate, authentic and cool. The Pearl is featured in Sunset Magazine's "Top 50 Hotels Under \$150.00." Once a week, free movies are

beaches, all free to the public. Play in the sand, swim, or just bask in the sun.

2. Visit La Jolla Cove and see the magnificent sunset on the ocean. La Jolla Cove is one of

7. Visit Old Town and witness the living legacy of San Diego history. Guests are invited to wander free through Old Town's historic buildings, including the blacksmith shop, Seeley Stables, Stewart House, Estudillo House and the oldest schoolhouse in San Diego.

8. Bike or jog along Mission Bay Park's many trails. Joggers and walkers share more than 20 miles of scenic running paths that wind through sunlight and shade near the shoreline and feature some workout courses at planned stations along the route.

9. Visit the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista for a free tour of the 150-acre facility, including training fields and tracks, athlete dorms and the Otay Lake Reservoir. Guided tours are offered every Saturday from the Copley Visitor Center at 11am. Self guided tours are available daily between 9am and 4pm.

10. Stargaze outside the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park on the first Wednesday of every month. The San Diego Astronomy Association sets up huge telescopes to offer guests a great view of all the stars in the night sky.

11. Roller blade, skateboard or bicycle along Mission Beach Boardwalk, a very scenic 3-mile boardwalk along picturesque Mission and Pacific Beaches.

12. Visit Mission Trails Regional Park to explore the cultural, historical and recreational aspects of San Diego. Stop at the Visitor's Center and learn about the wonders of nature and the people who once lived on the land. Roam through the park's 40 miles of natural and developed hiking and biking trails.

13. Go scuba diving or snorkeling off San Diego's shores and see spectacular creatures of the sea. La Jolla Cove offers some of the clearest waters on the California coast, and miles of pro-



Lily Pond at Balboa Park. Photo courtesy of Joanne Dibona.

featured at the "Dive-In-Theatre" by the poolside lounge and theater. Call: (877) 732-7573, or www.thepearl.com. Prices start at \$99.00.

The Keating House is a graceful turn-of-the-century home located in Banker's Hill. Banker's Hill, established in the late 1800's, consists of several magnificently restored Victorian homes located in an elevated area with downtown views. The Keating House, consisting of 9 guest rooms is within walking distance to several restaurants, pubs and coffeehouses. A full breakfast is served. Call: (800) 995-8644, or www.inn@keatinghouse.com. Prices start at \$119.00

After you select a great place to stay, read the ideas below and decide how to fill your days. I have put together a list of 18 FREE things to do during your visit to San Diego.

1. Head to San Diego's many

the most spectacular natural settings in the world.

3. Visit Seaport Village during the weekends for free entertainment and hours of leisurely strolling and window-shopping. Sit on the grass and gaze at passing yachts and ships on picturesque San Diego Bay.

4. Stroll through the 16½-block historic Gaslamp Quarter in downtown San Diego and view the renovated turn-of-the-century Victorian architecture.

5. Fly a kite along the grassy field in the Tecolote Shores of Mission Bay Park, a 4,600-acre aquatic park.

6. Enjoy free organ concerts at 2pm on Sundays at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park. The Organ Pavilion features one of the world's largest outdoor pipe organs, a San Diego landmark since 1914, where organists play traditional favorites, waltzes and show tunes on enormous 32-foot pipes.

tected underwater preserves.

14. Go Bird Watching at the Torrey Pines State Reserve. Located high above Torrey Pines State Beach, the area is the home of the rare and ancient Torrey Pine as well as a beautiful protected habitat for swifts, thrashers, woodpeckers and wrentits.

15. Stroll through Balboa Park and marvel at its beautiful Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. While there, take advantage of the park's variety of offerings, including 15 museums. Select museums are free on Tuesdays.

16. Explore the tide pools in Point Loma at low tide and get up close and personal with flowery anemones, scampering shore crabs, elusive octopus, spongy dead man's fingers and many other magnificent sea creatures.

17. Drive to the top of Mt. Soledad in La Jolla for breathtaking, 360-degree views of San Diego, including the gently curving La Jolla coastline and Mission Bay. Spectacular views of San Diego's East County communities also await guests at the top of Mt. Helix.

18. Take a scenic walk along The Big Bay, San Diego's "largest attraction." There are 27 miles of waterfront featuring bayside parks, marinas, hundreds of restaurants and shops, and miles of promenades and bikeways. The Big Bay appeals to everyone.

Have a wonderful time — for FREE!

Ann Nelson is a freelance writer residing in San Diego, CA.



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"BE REALISTIC, EXPECT A MIRACLE"

The Possibility of 2012

By Robert Quicksilver

One of my sons thinks that when we die nothing happens. That there is no afterlife, no spirit world, no rebirth. Nothing. We die and that's it. I don't think of it that way. I think there's a huge panorama of reality systems infused into the very fabric of consciousness, living and dying included. We are souls exploring, creating, experiencing, witnessing, and transforming the Creation as we pass through it.

He insists that the most important thing is not all my new age ideas (he calls it mumbo jumbo) but how we act in the moment now, how we maintain a conscious continuity of presence throughout the day. OK. But I really like all the stories we create about these things. They're fun.

What story are we living in now? What story do we want to live going forward? What story do I want to tell my grandchildren? I want to tell them the 2012 Story.

The Mayan Calendar, the Galactic Alignment, the Ascension, the Shift, the descent of Aurobindo's Supermind. These and other reality-shifting stories from around the world are compelling and fascinating. But what if they are actually true? On a physical molecular level, what if 2012 does represent a turning point on the evolutionary wheel, that moment when human consciousness, super saturated with light, breaks through the boundaries that have defined us as human since we came down from the trees?

I like this story. It's the main story we tell at Conscious Life Expo and will be telling on the Mayan Galactic Cruise this next December solstice. It's the 2012 Activation story: the radical and reality-shifting story about individual and planetary consciousness moving permanently into another state of being.

All other "Expo" subjects fold into, are aspects of, this larger story — health and wellness, spiritual traditions, alternative science, alternative history, re-

lationship, even social networking and business practice morph into the story of the transformation of human and planetary consciousness.

These are the movies we show at the annual Conscious Life Film Festival. This is what Gregg Braden, Barbara Marx Hubbard, David Wilcock, Dannon Brinkley and other Keynote



Barbara Marx Hubbard



Gregg Braden

Speakers at the Conscious Life Expo talk about. What they've been talking about for years. All of it pointing to this seminal moment in human history.

This is the story we will be living on the Mayan Galactic Cruise. On the days before the auspicious solstice moment on December 21, 2012, when the exact alignment occurs, when the Mayan Calendar ends, we will be participating in a once-in-a-lifetime ritual bearing witness to the shift of ages, acknowledging the great cycle of human destiny that has brought us to this moment. With seminars, rituals, and pulsed light communication into the galactic center we will be present as witnesses to this shift of ages.

I like the story of how we are developing an alternative and parallel society. We can watch the old world slowly wither and self-destruct while we stay busy creating the foundations for an evolved society, a global society where we, as planetary citizens, assume the dignified and powerful role of conscious co-creators. This is what awaits us on the other side of the 2012 solstice.

This is the story I want to tell my grandchildren — that I was there, when the new world was

born and the possibility of peace and love and truth and justice became the actual reality of our daily mundane lives, and not some mumbo jumbo feel-good self-serving aphrodisiac. We are in the midst of this powerful and transformative moment in human and galactic history. This is the story of our time.

Come to the Expo and then come with us on the 2012 Solstice Cruise. Be part of it. Tell your grandchildren "I was there. Maybe we missed Woodstock but I was there when we eblasted the galactic center, and told them that we were ready to become galactic citizens. I was there." Tell them that story.

The Conscious Life Visionary Expo will be held on February 10-13, 2012.

An illuminating 3-day event featuring over 100 transformational lectures, panels and workshops. Keynotes include Barbara Marx Hubbard, Lisa Williams, Gregg Braden, Eric Pearl, iconic 'Catwoman' Julie Newmar, George Noory, astrologer Susan Miller, Laura Eisenhower, cowboy nutritionist Don Tolman, David Wilcock, Dannon Brinkley, John Major Jenkins, Stephen Halpern, Sean David Morton, Humbatz Men, plus more.

The Healthy Living Exhibit Hall features the latest and most innovative products to promote healthy living and longevity. The program includes a special Latino program, 3-day Music Fest plus the Conscious Life Film Festival. General Admission: \$20 Advance/\$25 Door. LAX Hilton Hotel is located at 5711 Century Blvd., Los Angeles 90045.

For more information visit: www.consciouslifeexpo.com or call (800) 367-5777. For information regarding the cruise, visit: www.mayanecruise2012.com

Those who fail to work
for the Truth have missed
the purpose of living.

— Buddha



Sedona Mago Summit House.

Sedona's Most Extensive Retreat

Open for Individuals and Groups

By Suzette Bruhn

After being closed to outside groups for two years, Sedona Mago Retreat now welcomes workshop groups and individuals to enjoy Sedona's most comprehensive full-service retreat facility to rejuvenate and heal the body, mind and spirit. Sedona Mago Retreat is operated by Tao Fellowship, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization established in 1998 to promote the spirit of Tao as a principle of harmony and peace.

Nestled among 160 acres of vast and awe-inspiring land, powerful vortexes and dramatic red rock formations lies idyllic Sedona Mago Retreat. The staff lives, practices, and teaches the ways of Tao. We offer the peace, serenity and a Zen-like atmosphere of a spiritual retreat, combined with the comfort of 126 tastefully decorated rooms, 10 different meeting/yoga rooms and a dining hall with 4-course buffet-style meals daily.

Accommodations include 126

rooms and 6 suites, designed Frank Lloyd style, perfectly blending with the red rock environment. Rooms have two double beds, full bathrooms, vanity, and a small refrigerator. There are no TVs or phones in the rooms for the benefit of our guests. Each suite features 2 queen size beds, Jacuzzi-bath, bar/kitchenette, large living room to entertain guests, as well as a patio carved into the red rocks.

We offer the most extensive meeting space in Sedona, with 10 different-size meeting rooms, varying from 15 to 500 people. All meeting rooms are equipped with advance audio-visual equipment. Rooms have a soft, wooden floor, ideal for yoga groups and workshops.

Our dining room staff prepares health-conscious, pesco-vegetarian meals. Our food is naturally prepared and features seasonal fruits and vegetables that come straight from our organic garden. We support the

surrounding community by using locally-grown produce as much as possible. The dining room accommodates up to 150 people. Meals are served in an elaborate 4-course buffet style.

The Welcome Center serves as our registration desk, as well as the nearby gift shop featuring meditation/yoga items, books, tapes, toiletries, clothing, necessities and snacks. It also hosts our lounge, open 24 hours for guests' enjoyment.

The outdoor pool and Jacuzzi has a capacity for 60 people and is surrounded by dramatic vistas of majestic red rock formations and stunning starlight panoramic views at night.

The Meditation Lake is the "heart" of Sedona Mago Retreat, directly below one of the major vortexes surrounding our facility. A Zen-like garden, with colorful flowers, surrounding a gentle, peaceful lake, with a mellow fountain, waterfall and willow trees — the perfect setting for yoga, or to meditate with nature, or simply sit and enjoy the scenery, listening to the peace all around. As you walk into the adjacent herb garden, your entire body and mind is cleansed by the scents and sounds that surround you.

There are 12 vortexes that are surrounding our facility, creating

one major vortex. A vortex is a place on Earth through which unusual amounts of subtle electromagnetic energy flows. Of the Earth's 21 known vortexes, five of them are in Sedona. Sedona Mago Retreat's vortexes are ideal places for meditation, relaxation and healing.

Our activities include: vortex tours, walking meditation trails, stargazing, outdoor yoga, horse-back riding, medicine Wheel, team building, and meditation.

The Teachings and Healings available at Sedona Mago include Tao Yoga, Tao Meditation, Qigong, Tao Lectures, Natural Health Workshop for Tao Living and advanced Asian healings by trained masters. To see the teachings and healings offered, please visit: www.taofellowship.org/programs-services/

Sedona Mago Retreat is where Heaven Meets Earth! Come to Sedona Mago Retreat for your next workshop, seminar or private retreat. Give yourself the gift of spirit! Relax your mind, replenish your body, and invigorate your spirit while you attend your meetings, retreats or our healing programs.

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- Daniel Nahmod Live: Wednesdays, January 4 & 18 ~ 7:30 pm
- Daniel Nahmod ~ Music as Message: Sunday, January 1 ~ 10:30 am Inspirational Service
- Reverend Leo Booth: Sunday, January 29 ~ 10:30 am Inspirational Service
- Spirituality & Recovery Celebration with Reverend Leo Booth: Sunday, January 29 ~ 7 pm
- The Enneagram of Transformation

~ Setting Ourselves Free: January 19 & 26 ~ 7:00 to 9:00 pm

- Vedanta with Dave DeLuca: Every Friday in January ~ 7:00 pm

FEBRUARY

- Daniel Nahmod Live: Wednesdays, February 1 & 15 ~ 7:30 pm
- Reverend Leo Booth: Sunday, February 26 ~ 10:30 am Inspirational Service
- Spirituality & Recovery Celebration with Reverend Leo Booth: Sunday, February 26 ~ 7 pm

- The Enneagram of Transformation ~ Setting Ourselves Free: February 2, 9, 16 & 23 ~ 7:00 to 9:00 pm
- Vedanta with Dave DeLuca: Every Friday in February ~ 7:00 pm

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the entire transpersonal spectrum. Includes questions and discussion with Stan Grof. Emphasis on integration of the breathwork experience in a supportive atmosphere.

February 10, evening, through February 12, 2012, 12:30 pm, Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel. Workshop fee of \$295 through January 2, \$345 after, includes Friday lecture, Saturday lunch and snack. Workshop preregistration preferred. Lecture only is \$15, registration begins 6 pm, lecture 6:30. To register, contact HOLOTROPICS.

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She has a full range of clients from multicultural backgrounds and professions and has worked with the local police departments to assist with their investigations.

Presently, Susana is instructing classes on deep meditation and awareness of the third eye, and is an active lecturer in psychic fairs.

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MUSIC Reviews

By Michael Diamond



AUDREY HOPE

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Awareness Magazine readers may recognize Audrey's name from her "Voices Of Hope" column, which appears regularly in the publication, offering uplifting passages and transformational poetry. She may also be familiar to some for her work in the entertainment industry as an actress, producer, and talk show host. Her award-winning internationally-syndicated cable TV show "Real Women," featured interviews with some of the best-known luminaries in the field of women's issues and spirituality.

Audrey's latest production is a CD entitled "The High Voltage Hope System" which draws upon many years as an intuitive spiritual healer and addiction specialist at a prestigious celebrity rehab center in Malibu, and shares ancient wisdom along with the modern techniques for healing, manifesting, activating higher awareness, working with energy fields, and achieving inner peace in our daily lives.

Although this is not a "music review" per se, there is a lovely

keyboard soundtrack by Paul Armitage that plays in the background behind her narration and guided meditations. Audrey has a wonderful speaking voice that is a pleasure to listen to, and is a natural talent for explaining metaphysical concepts in understandable terms that can be translated into easy-to-follow action steps.

Subtitled, "Crack the Code of Your Life," the secret of change as she sees it, is to go deep and heal at the "root of the root." Drawing from her own experience and supplemented with quotes from well-known authors such as Joseph Campbell, Dr. Judith Orloff, Victor Frankel, and others, Audrey offers a powerful tool for self empowerment and alchemical transformation.

CANDICE NIGHT

Reflections
www.candicenight.com

As the "Night" in the Renaissance-influenced band *Blackmore's Night*, lead vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Candice Night shares the spotlight with her husband Richie Blackmore, the former guitarist of Deep Pur-

ple and Rainbow. On "Reflections," her first solo album, she ventures forth to explore diverse new musical territory that showcases her remarkable voice and stylistic range.

While the music does exhibit the aforementioned diversity with elements of folk, rock, pop, country, Celtic, and more, there are some common threads to be found on a thematic level. Relationships, love, or loss of love are subjects that Candice waxes poetically and soulfully about on a number of the songs.

When asked to define this album in three words, the words she chose were: "haunted, romantic, and escape." These words do indeed go a long way in describing the overall feel of the music.

Although written descriptions about a recording can only provide a rough sketch of the artistry contained within, they can hopefully share a glimpse at the incredible talent and scope of this gifted songstress. Being a fan of *Blackmore's Night*, as well as having reviewed their excellent "Autumn Sky" CD, it is gratifying to see Candice Night step out and create a solo project that is truly a "reflection" of her impressive abilities.

This album is lavishly produced and takes the listener on a journey where what's around the next corner is sure to be as unexpected as it is delightful.

DEVA PREMAL

Password
www.DevaPremalMiten.com

The latest CD from Deva Premal, "Password," opens a door to a fresh perspective on an ancient art form of devotional singing. Accompanying her soul-stirring voice, Deva's long-time musical and life partner Miten makes an appearance on guitar and vocals, as does frequent collaborator Manose, who plays Nepalese bansuri flute.

Adding to the mix and helping to provide a somewhat new direction to the music is a long list of talented jazz musicians from Copenhagen. This direction integrates her Indian mantra chanting into a context that has more pop and smooth jazz influences than many of her previous and more traditional recordings.

While Deva Premal and Miten's classical chant albums have sold over one million units, they are always open to expanding their healing music and message to a wider audience, and "Password" provides a more accessible entry to those who may not be attuned to the more exotic flavors of Indian music and mantras. In Deva's words: "Mantras are passwords that transform the mundane into the sacred."

While the album is indeed a blending of East and West, she describes it as "a fusion of sound and silence" as well. The music, which is noted as having "a lyrical spacious atmosphere," also features an interesting variety of percussive and rhythmic elements. The combination is often entrancing and hypnotic. Although mantra chanting can be traced back through the midsts of time, contemporary artists like Deva Premal are bringing its much-needed soothing influence to today's fast-paced world.

SHERRY FINZER

Sanctuary II: Earth
www.sherryfinzer.com

"Sanctuary II: Earth" marks the second in Sherry Finzer's series of new age relaxation music. I had the pleasure of reviewing the first release, "Sanctuary," and I'm happy to spread the word about her latest offering. Sherry,

(Continued on page 42)

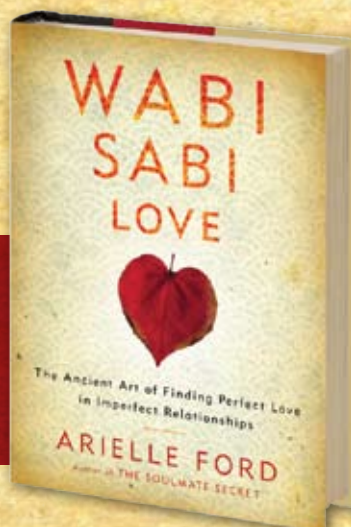
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BOOK Reviews

By **Sonia von Matt Stoddard**



REVEALING YOUR EXTRAORDINARY ESSENCE

Practical Tools for Empowered Living
By Cynthia James

With much enthusiasm and positive direction, author Cynthia James teaches us how to move from the ordinary to the extraordinary by "busting the myth" of ordinary existence. Her inspiration and motivation are contagious; you will come away with renewed passion to succeed in whatever your heart may desire.

We live in a culture placing a lot of attention on possessions, other than the important connection to self. The extraordinary person is able to rise above the tangible asset to a place about not only being clear on our behavior and our environment, but thoroughly conscious of exactly how we are living and expressing ourselves.

Each title explores one area of personal development, such as love, trust, power and self-care, plus many others. The subsections explore each area with specificity. Then, we are given exercises that are not complicated.

The author gives us suggestions for using the book in ways that are more practical to us, such as taking one chapter at a time, versus trying to consume the entire book in one sitting. Included throughout are several affirmations that can provide a burst of action if your time is limited.

People can be remarkable when believing in themselves. By actively placing focus on appreciating ourselves and our strengths, and by using the exercises in this book, every day we will get closer to achieving our highest purpose.

Published by Thornton Publishing, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.CynthiaJames.net

MOONRISE

The Power of Women Leading from the Heart
Edited By Nina Simons with Anneke Campbell

An anthology with more than thirty essays from eminent female trailblazers. If you ever needed inspiration and advice for cultivating your leadership skills as a woman, you will find examples of how to find strength, re-examine priorities, nurture collaboration and find the best path to social, progressive and environmental change.

Compiled by members of Bi-ones, a nonprofit educational organization that highlights breakthrough solutions for restoring people and planet, with articles by well-known authors such as Alice Walker, psychiatrist Jean Shinoda Bolen, playwright Eve Ensler, holistic doctor Rachel Naomi Remen and hip-hop performer Rha Goddess, as well as a social entrepreneur, a philanthropic activist, an ethnobiologist, and media educators, this collection is an extremely well-rounded bundle of wisdom from several age groups and walks of life.

Through discussions about knowing ourselves and our inner landscape, to developing our sense of purpose, the masculine style of leadership is first distinguished from the feminine. Then, we are taught how to recognize, pursue and nurture this feminine style.

Sustainability, social change, mentoring, cultural diversity, and the building of respectful relationships are all suggested, with a sometimes introspective, and always thoughtful view on how to reclaim preferred strategies, institutions and cultures by reconnecting with nature and living our life as if it is truly valuable and will make a distinguishing difference in the lives of ourselves, others, and our planet.

Published by Inner Traditions, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.InnerTraditions.com

THE WAY OF THE HAPPY WOMAN

Living the Best Year of Your Life
By Sara Avant Stover

If you are ready to be healed, to thrive rather than just survive, to restore your sacred balance, both within yourself and with respect to the planet, this book will help you find the deeper connection with yourself, and those with whom you share your life, so you will find what is truly important.

After the author, founder of

the Way of the Happy Woman and a pioneer of teaching Yoga in Thailand, learns of a serious medical issue, she completely changes, reluctantly and painfully, her first and only "plan" for life.

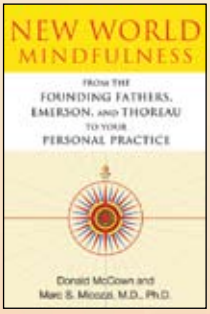
What she finds is an entirely new approach to living, based on the four seasons of the year. She calls her path a more feminine one — one that brings forth a woman's natural qualities of compassion, sensuality, nurturance, creativity and receptivity — all of which the world needs right now.

After an introductory chapter on the basics and encouragement to let go and change old debilitating habits, we are challenged to replace these with more empowering ones based on nature. Each chapter covers a season, beginning with Spring.

From yoga and nutrition to revitalization, transformation and celebration, to going back to basics, like composting, growing vegetables and creating fresh wholesome meals, the ideas we see are wonderful in the very simplicity and ease with which they can be substituted in order to enhance all areas of our life.

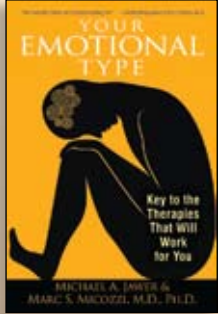
Published by New World Library, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.newworldlibrary.com


(Continued on page 42)



New World Mindfulness
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Mindfulness is not an "exotic" activity nor does it require you to "slow down and find more time."
This book presents a history of mindfulness in the West, from the Founders, through Thoreau, to present-day leaders such as Jon Kabat-Zinn.
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This book reveals that chronic conditions are linked to certain emotional types and that the best treatment is a therapy in line with your type. Includes a survey that allows you to identify your emotional type and the ailments to which you are susceptible.
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MUSIC Reviews

(Continued from page 40)

who is based in Phoenix, Arizona, is well known for her talent and versatility on the flute and she plays a variety of them, both in her live performances with a number of different ensembles, as well as on her recordings.

However on "Sanctuary II" it is the alto flute in particular that is heard on all the tracks. Throughout the album I was aware of how delicate and supportive the accompanying nature sounds, acoustic guitar or keyboards were, never drawing your attention away from the flute's sweet song.

CATHERINE MARIE CHARLTON

Red Leaf, Grey Sky
www.catherinemariecharlton.com

Catherine is a very talented recording artist, composer, and improviser who has performed in Europe, South America, and throughout the U.S., and even received an accolade from the Grammy-winning pianist George Winston who said of her: "Charlton has a unique and beautiful dedication to composing for the piano."

I think the concept of "quality over quantity" is appropriate to mention in that, while the six songs on this recording clock in at just under 25 minutes, it is so rich in content that it doesn't feel like an abbreviated work by the time you are finished listening to it. Perhaps it would be best classified as an EP (extended play).

Catherine has an interesting style on the piano that draws equally from new age, jazz, and classical. Not surprising since her influences include: George Winston, Liz Story, Keith Jarrett, Chick Corea, Cecil Taylor, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, and Debussy. But the way in which she integrates these influences is what makes her special.

Overall, her compositions are quite sensitive and lovely, however, once in a while you hear something in them that makes you aware that she is not afraid

to tread closer to the edge musically and let her more left-of-center jazz inclinations show.

Some solo piano recordings can work well as background music to set a mood, while others like this one inspire more active listening and ask more of the listener. Those looking for an evocative and eclectic musical journey, will certainly find it in the piano portraits of "Red Leaf, Grey Sky."

Michael Diamond is a music producer, recording artist, and music journalist in the San Francisco Bay area with over 30 years of experience writing for nationally-published magazines and more recently worldwide on the internet. He currently has five CD's including two with new age music pioneer Steven Halpern. For additional reviews of CD's, DVD's, and more, please visit: www.michaeldiamondmusic.com

BOOK Reviews

(Continued from page 41)

WABI SABI LOVE

The Ancient Art of Finding Perfect Love in Imperfect Relationships
By Arielle Ford

Based on the Japanese aesthetic of finding beauty in imperfection, we are introduced to the art of learning to illuminate the hidden beauty within a person that makes him or her your soulmate. Known as "Wabi Sabi" it honors all that is imperfect, impermanent and incomplete, finding value in things that are modest, humble and imperfect. How we look at things and develop the emotional maturity to see beyond the surface shifts our focus to what is truly real, deep and profound.

Quirks and idiosyncrasies of our partners can grow from a simple annoyance to a problem that will destroy a relationship. The art of learning to love your partner's imperfections is key to people acting and behaving in ways that are acceptable to the other. The author, an acclaimed leader in the personal growth and contemporary spirituality movement, believes imperfec-

tion is actually more valuable than perfection in the creation of a long-term committed relationship.

Ford offers us discussion first on the principles and choices of Wabi Sabi, starting with getting rid of our assumptions of the right and wrong ways of things. She asks us to question our beliefs and arrive at choice based on a fresh look. How to grow a generous heart, using humor and humility, as well as the personal art of happiness are all discussed here, along with wonderful exercises to reinforce this old-new approach.

Published by Harper One, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.HarperCollins.com

ANIMALS AND THE KIDS WHO LOVE THEM

Extraordinary True Stories of Hope, Healing and Compassion
By Allen and Linda Anderson

When we hear stories about animals and children, they most likely are a story about a boy and his dog. Here we are reminded that relationships with animals of all kinds can be special.

This compilation of stories features children and parents who face seemingly insurmountable obstacles in life. With the help of their animals, they receive the love and motivation needed to overcome those difficulties. Some of the characters in this book could be labeled as shattered or damaged; however, the blessings of having a relationship with pets help them to overcome and succeed.

Animals can be beacons of hope, healing and compassion, as well as examples of extraordinary loyalty. The stories are arranged in three sections dealing specifically with these three ideals. We learn about the kindness of horses, llamas and chickens. Apparently, llamas are remarkable therapists, with an extraordinary sensitivity to humans. A special horse can bring you out of a desperate situation; a rabbit helps a young child with development problems communicate when other methods have failed. Each story illustrates the direct and positive correlation between animal and human.

Authors Allen and Linda Anderson are speakers and authors of thirteen books about spiritual relationships between people and animals. They co-founded the Angel Animals Network in 1996 to increase love and respect for all life through power of story.

Published by New World Library, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.newworldlibrary.com

RESONANCE

Nine Practices for Harmonious Health and Vitality
By Joyce Whiteley Hawkes, PhD

A master healing facilitator who has worked for more than two decades, Joyce Hawkes' newest book mixes practical methods with sentient wisdom. Originally a research scientist, Joyce shares how her life changed dramatically after a near-death experience opened her to begin merging science with spirituality.

Already an energy-healing pioneer revealing how the intelligent operating system within our body's cells is key to health, this book explores how to heal through cultivating the quality of resonance using nine paired practices.

Joyce has distilled the most important qualities necessary for healing to occur; becoming heart centered, clear-minded and compassionate. *Resonance* includes many stories that enliven her points of reference while skillfully weaving esoteric experience with cutting-edge research. One of the most interesting ideas shared in the book indicates that compassion actually stimulates us to take helpful action.

Joyce is an expert guide and this book provides many useful practices for professional healers to explore and bring to their own work, as well as anyone interested in personal healing. Throughout, the book sounds a note to deepen awareness and discover more coherence, leading us to realize that healing is very much about finding the chord of truth that resonates within.

Published by Hay House, this book is available at your local bookstores or www.hayhouse.com

Reviewed by Donna Strong

KID'S Reviews

By Lyda Whiting

CURIOUS CRITTERS

Written and photographed
By David FitzSimmons

How can you tell a bullfrog and a toad apart? What does a blue jay do for fun? Why does the Ohio crawfish wave his claws? What do goldfish *really* like to eat? What color is a bush katydid? No, not green! How does a gray treefrog climb straight up a tree? And what other trick can she do? Can a flying squirrel really fly? What does a jumping spider use to jump since he doesn't have any muscles? Which insect uses the red flat bark beetle as a bus?

Children will be enthralled by this amazing look into the lives of some common and not-so-common creatures from the animal kingdom. After reading this book, children and adults alike will find themselves looking at the natural world in a whole new way.

This beautiful book invites children into the lives of these lively creatures and many more. Each page is filled a large amazing photograph of an animal and a fun message from the animal herself. At the back, there is more information, life-size silhouettes of the animals, and a glossary of terms.

Who wouldn't want to meet these curious critters? Even the youngest child will enjoy this book over and over, and probably end up knowing more about these animals than you do. This is a wonderful book for all ages.

Highly recommended for ages 2 to 10.

Published by Wild Iris Publishing, this book is available at your local bookstore.

CHIPPY CHIPMUNK BABIES IN THE GARDEN

Written and photographed
By Kathy M. Miller

There are some new residents in the garden — four baby chipmunks! Lily and Chippy could not be more proud, or more protective of their babies. While

butterflies and hummingbirds flit from flower to flower, the little ones explore the garden for the first time. They tasted flowers and seeds, chased each other, and smelled everything. They listened to the songbirds, and met a rabbit and a red squirrel.

Wait, what's that? Oh no, it's Chester the cat! Lily calls the alarm, and the babies run for the safety of the burrow. Chippy stands his ground and bravely faces down the cat to protect his family. It's okay, Chippy; Chester is just looking through the window. He's as curious as your babies are.

Children will love these playful newcomers to the garden, and will learn a lot about them. Early readers will be able to read most of the text on their own, and younger children will enjoy looking at the bright pages and hearing the story read to them.

These lively chipmunks invite young readers to take a closer look at the world around them. Charming close-up photographs capture the explorations of the baby chipmunks in a welcome sequel to "Chippy Chipmunk Parties in the Garden" (previously reviewed in this column) which won fifteen national awards.

Highly recommended for ages 2 and up.

Published by Celtic Sunrise, this book is available at your local bookstore.

TARA AND HER TALKING KITTEN MEET A UNICORN

Written by Diana Cooper,
Illustrated by Kate Shannon

Daddy tells her unicorns are make-believe. But Tara knows they are real — and her talking kitten Ash-ting agrees and helps her find one. Tara goes on a wonderful ride to see the world the way that the unicorn does.

Knowing the unicorn brings love and peace to others, Tara decides to help others too. She faces down a bully, and helps a little boy have hope. She even helps her teacher raise money

for the community swimming pool. Along the way, Tara learns compassion for others, even bullies. And before long, she learns how to help someone stop being a bully and become a friend.

Children will become involved in the story about Tara and her kitten, and will be eager to see what happens. Does the swimming pool gets built? Why do unicorns love all children? And why does someone

become a bully anyway?

This book has lessons about community building, inclusiveness, and taking responsibility for yourself. This chapter book has short chapters and simple words that a young reader can master. This is the third in a series about Tara and her talking kitten.

For ages 6 and up.

Published by Findhorn Press, this book is available at your local bookstore.

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REFLEXIONS BELFEXION12

By Robert Ross



2012

A Most Interesting Year

2012 is setting-up to be a . . . ah . . . let's see, how can I state this reasonably . . . *a most interesting year*. Pick your subject: personal goals and dreams, economics, geopolitics, the nation, the Arab spring, or even the "occupy" phenomena, events seem to be converging on 2012. Translation: it's going to be one heck of a year.

So let's take a look-see:

PERSONAL REFLEXIONS 2012

At this point in time, my life feels a bit like a race to the finish line. The years seem to pass at an accelerated pace. So, 2012 will come and go faster than 2011, which came and went faster than 2010. It was just a few years ago that we were all in a tizzy over the new millennium, and here we are, in a blink of an eye, from a new millennium to 2012.

In the early 1970's I was doing my duty as a young idealist, working to improve lives of migrant farm workers in the Willamette Valley in Oregon.

One day, I attended a community meeting of migrants, a fight broke out, the meeting ended. I ended up in a bar, having a beer with some friends and one of the community organizers. We were all a bit shaken up over the fight, to say the least.

As fate would have it, the organizer (who had this knack of peering into people's souls) looked in my direction, sensing I was off guard due to the fight, and asked quizzically "*what do you want out of life?*" I hesitated for a moment, still riled, then managed to come up with an answer that would quickly get the attention off of me. I can't remember what I said, but as a young man in my twenties, I really didn't have a clue what I wanted out of life.

The question has stayed with me to this day. What do I want out of life? The answer that keeps coming up is: I want my life to be an adventure, in whatever form that takes. So, 2012 will, hopefully, be an adventure, with countries to see, slopes to ski on, oceans to swim in (usually La Jolla Cove), and challenges to be met. As in years past, these adventures will keep me looking forward, and take me out of my comfort zone.

NATIONAL REFLEXIONS 2012

Presidential elections will be held in 2012. With trillions of dollars of new debt created in the last three years, high unemployment ("U6" figures, which include discouraged workers, is lingering at around 16%), riots by the "occupy" crowd, a dysfunctional Congress, the housing market an absolute mess, and Europe in a fiscal turmoil, chances are, we're going to see "change" again in the oval office in 2012.

Whatever the outcome of the elections though, expect "austerity" to be the new buzz word for many years to come. And I suspect, as a nation, there will be a move toward isolationism — too many wars will do that. Not only are we war weary, but we just don't have the money to be Santa Claus to the world anymore.

GEOPOLITICAL REFLEXIONS 2012

2011 saw dramatic shifts in power in the Middle East. Countries that were under strong dictatorships for generations — and strong religious dictates for more than a thousand years — have been set adrift. The west is expecting these nations, in a matter of months, to set up political institutions that resemble western models. This may (or may not) happen over time, but in the near term, uncertainty and political volatility will trump stability. One might want to avoid travel to the "Arab spring" countries during 2012.

"OCCUPY" REFLEXIONS 2012

If they made a tent with a shower, fireplace and room for a flat screen T.V., I just might join the occupy movement. My issue would be the banks and the "too big to fail" institutions. In the last couple of years, due to reckless behavior on their part, financial institutions, insurance companies, car companies, etc., were bailed out to the tune of trillions of dollars.

The banks in particular, were quite pleased, giving the top execs millions of dollars in bonuses at the end of the year. Un-

fortunately, this was all paid for by the taxpayer, who is suffering from high unemployment, a stagnate economy and a lousy housing market. *Somethin' ain't right here!*

I'm not sure where the occupy movement is going in the coming months, nor what they are trying to accomplish (neither do the occupiers), however, I suspect the cold damp weather of the winter months will quell their enthusiasm, at least until spring. Come spring, I wouldn't be surprised to see their numbers increase substantially.

EUROPE REFLEXIONS 2012

The party in Europe, and reckless spending by some EU countries, has come to an end. The more responsible countries have been mandated to bail out the less responsible countries. This sounds like the U.S., where responsible tax payers bailed out irresponsible financial institutions. 2012 will be a continuation of a major move toward fiscal discipline in Europe. This financial belt tightening will last for years.

And then there's Greece. If Greece is going to drop out of the EU, disrupting an economic system that is struggling to stay afloat, it'll happen in 2012, with potentially drastic consequences. Stay tuned!

As you can see, 2012 is going to be a *most interesting year*. When you add all the issues that are in play, from "occupy" to the Arab spring, and mix in the unknown event or events — the rogue wave, it's fair to say that we will not be wanting for stories on the nightly news.

In the meantime, I'll be making my plans for my own little adventures . . . perhaps shopping around for a luxury tent, and keeping my fingers crossed that these issues, nationally and internationally, work themselves out in an orderly manner in the coming year.

To the Awareness reader . . . **Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!**

Robert Ross can be reached by e-mail at: SanDiegoRoss@Yahoo.com

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Feng Shui Concepts

By Jenny T. Liu, M.A.

2012 Global Forecast

There is a lot of buzz about 2012 being a climactic year of change. I believe that there is a higher purpose to the chaos and suffering is happening in the world. The current crises mark the end of archaic ways and make way for new consciousness.

The great evolutionary teacher, Barbara Marx Hubbard, describes crisis as birthing. At the juncture of birth, mother and child are at a critical point of survival. Similarly, earth and its inhabitants are at this same critical point. The crises we experience are essential to growth and evolution. This brings to mind a meaningful story my sister shared with me.

*A man found the cocoon of a butterfly.
One day a small opening appeared.
He sat and watched the butterfly
for several hours as it struggled to
squeeze its body through the tiny
hole.
Then it stopped, as if it couldn't go
further.*

*So the man decided to help the
butterfly.
He took a pair of scissors and
snipped off the remaining bits of
cocoon.*

*The butterfly emerged easily but
it had a swollen body and
shriveled wings.
The man continued to watch it,
expecting that any minute the
wings would enlarge and expand
enough to support the body*

*Neither happened!
In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of
its life crawling.
It was never able to fly.*

*What the man in his kindness
and haste did not understand:*

*The restricting cocoon and the
struggle required by the butterfly
to get through the opening was
a way of forcing the fluid from*

*the body into the wings so that it
would be ready for flight once that
was achieved.*

Sometimes struggle is exact-



ly what we need to "fly" in our lives. When we view crises not as nature's punishment, but instead as exercises for becoming stronger and smarter, our whole being shifts gear, we rise to the test, and evolution takes place.

Because everything is connected, we are integrated into the cause-and-effect cycles of nature. Thus, the clues for activating positive growth and evolution can be found in the encoded laws of nature. This makes us co-creators of our future. Every choice we make and action we take manifests what we have in our lives.

Every year, my father and I decipher the Flying Nine Star and Zi Wei Do Shu astrology charts, as well as the Chinese Almanac, and Yi-Jing to forecast the energies of the new year on global and personal levels.

These oracle systems are gifts from our ancestors that will help guide us in our evolution. Based on the laws and cycles of nature, the systems increase

Feel gratitude towards everything and you will be showered.
— Paramahansa Nithyananda

our awareness of the cause and effect governing our environment, allowing us to make good decisions and reminding us that the truth of nature prevails on every level.

OVERVIEW - CENTER STARS 2, 1, 6

The center stars represent the energy of the centers of all nations and provide an overview of the global energy for 2012.

Base Star 6 is associated with academia, political leaders, government, and patriarchy. During Periods 6 and 7 (1964-2003), Star 6 represented Western dominance. This forty-year period has passed and we are in Period 8 (2004-2023), Star 6 is out of cycle, which means the West will lose its footing as the world's role model. Western modern science and governing systems will be questioned and new research will reveal its limitations and misconceptions.

The aim for long-term benefits along with new strategies created through academia results in improved methods for boosting global economy. Worldwide, governments strategize to improve their nation's economy. Enterprises and affluent people increase. New niche businesses and freelancers invent unique services and new daily-use products.

Star 2 represents the matron and ethnic communities. Star 1 is associated with alternative

methods and spirituality. This combination shows that female leaders and ethnic societies will influence spiritual leaders with a viral impact.

Out-of-cycle Star 2 has energies associated with theft and therefore has a negative influence on water Star 1, which is associated with transportation and technology. This indicates computer hacking, fraud, scandal, and theft among civilians that increases illegal movement of money. Nonetheless, new modes of technology, energy, transportation, and communication drive the economy. Internet security is a growing field.

Star 6 is associated with trade, Star 2 is an ailment star, and Star 1 relates to the reproductive system and the brain. This combination indicates that bacteria or ocean parasites can contaminate goods on commercial sea freights causing problems related to the brain, nervous system, or the uterus. It can also foreshadow questionable masterminds in the stock market that corrupt or embezzle from the system.

Earth Star 2 and water Star 1 can also bring storms and flooding that destroy crops and increase food prices. New farming methods are developed.

Please visit Liu-fengshui.com for the complete forecasts.

Master Jenny Liu holds a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Design from UC Berkeley and a Masters Degree in Architecture from UCLA. She is an expert in Feng Shui who shares her knowledge through consultations, seminars, periodicals, and the internet. For more information, see Liu-fengshui.com

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Musings

By Mystic Trish®

Welcome to the Renaissance

Women of the Baby Boomer Generation, it is time to start our Renaissance. I'm done with the dark Middle Ages; I'm ready for the Renaissance of my life as I am sure many of you are.

If 50 is the youth of our old age and 40 is the old age of our youth we need to start planning for the future now. The medical world just announced that most of us are going to live to be about 90 and it is time we get our second wind. If we look at our progression of years like European history we will see how we move through time as women.

First comes the Dark ages, (around 35-40) when we are no longer so young and now must work at maintenance. Then comes the Middle Ages (around 40-49) we are now well into parenthood and careers and peri-menopause. Ah! So much drudgery and work. Then comes the Renaissance (around 50 and beyond).

It was the flowering of Europe after everyone decided not to sit around feeling sorry for themselves in the Middle Ages. After all, the entire world didn't

come to an end in 1000 C.E. as was predicted. It was just another paradigm shift in our perceptions of how this world would keep on going.

As women we go through different phases in our life. We are all born knowing who we are and what we came here to do. You can still see the light of heaven in babies' eyes; they are still connected to the source. By the time we start school other forces are shaping us including parents and religion. This is when we start to forget who we are and what we have come to do. We start losing our authentic self. But there is another phase that starts a few years later when we girls are about 15.

This is when we get hi-jacked by our hormones, and for the next thirty years or so we will have this as our driving force. We are hard-wired this way; it is our biology, and this is how we make sure we keep our species going. We have just gotten diverted by our hormones, from what was our personal spiritual path for the bigger human species path. Our spiritual path, the path we chose before we were

born is now set aside. We have spiritual amnesia.

So what do we do when the hormones calm down? We start getting restless. We start having these sometimes not so vague notions that something is missing and where is the rest of my life? Yes; "MY LIFE!" not the part of you that is a wife or mother or daughter. Your personal path in this life. That thing you came here to do this time around on planet Earth.

Your hormones just returned you from where ever that place is that they hi-jacked you from 30 to 40 years ago.

Yes, this is called menopause or middle age.

I prefer to call it "THE RENAISSANCE," a time of revival or renewed interest in your life. It is neither a midlife crisis nor menopausal histrionics needing to be quietly ignored or sedated. It is a "Renaissance." One of the best ways to find your authentic self again is to imagine what your perfect 5-year-old self would want to do. She knows, she remembers.

Most of us are outliving our grandmothers' generation by decades. Our grandmothers were considered middle aged at 30. At the turn of the 19th century the average life span was fifty years. So we must adjust our thinking, our new middle age is 50. We have so much more time now to have our "Renaissance" and find

our path of true fulfillment once again. It's time to bring your authentic self back to you.

We have to Renaissance our middle age! If 50 is the new 30 then retirement can't be at 65.

We have several more decades to go. As middle-aged women we are a driving force that is changing the world. We now have enough time to make it into something we want to leave to our grandchildren. We may even live long enough to see the changes.

So be the Renaissance, be the flower and grow into your beautiful true, authentic self. It is time to replant your garden and make it grow into what you want it to be.

This article is dedicated to a very dear friend of mine who passed away in October. Tammy Sims, a true Renaissance Woman, age 51 when she went to the Summer Country. She grew her garden, painted her pictures, raised her children, and loved her husband. She was also an Engineer, an Aquarian and had to have all the new electronic gadgets that came on the market. She was always taking photos and took the photo you all see of me.

Trisha Howe is a born intuitive who started psychic training at age 15. She has over 30 years' experience in Intuitive Counseling, Crystal Healing, Tarot, Mediumship and Clairvoyance. Contact her at Mystictrish@cox.net or at (949)-493-0705.

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By Jesse Anson Dawn

Tips on Keeping Mind & Body Young

Jesse Anson Dawn (accurately photographed at age 67), author of the national award-winning book **Never "Old,"** plus **The Rejuvenator's Bible**, speaks out about a most stirring subject: how to personally control the unwanted effects of "aging."

Presently answering the question: "How is Creativity Rejuvenating?"

In response to that timeless question, I begin by offering this quote from the legendary artist, Michelangelo, a man who was still making marvelous paintings and sculpture at the age of 88 — a very active period in his life, during which he wrote this revealing statement:

"I grow more intensely creative every year."

And as a steadily dedicated, creative-energy researcher, I can certainly relate to that ((self-renewing)) frame of mind.

But of course, this planet's ultimate creativity stems from way back when the Creator began piecing together this Nature-based, wondrous work of art that we have come to call Earth. And by realizing that life on this intricate creation was originally induced by ((**sunlight merging with water**))), we are gifted with this delightful fact:

This planet's original spark of creativity was a sunbeam. And yet perhaps, on a metaphysical level, we creative-energy-formed human beings are **ALL** sunbeams — radiating our perpetually dawning, ((**Internal Sun Energy**))) — **The Source** that evokes our ongoing regeneration...

However, depending on the roots of our beliefs, there are many fascinating theories about

what activates the potent energies of creativity. For example, while in Australia, where I spent several months studying the Nature-inspired, Aborigine theories of Original Creation, a tribal leader there told me that their ancient belief is this:

"All of life begins by **SINGING** it into being." And to verify that proclamation, he pointed out the fact that, every time a human baby is born, amid his or her first deep breath, the infant unfurls a wailing song of newborn arrival.

And speaking of beliefs inspired by newly-born arrivals, whenever I walk through my garden, upon seeing the recently created food and flowers there, I'm compelled to hum a tune. But to me, this urge involves much more than just uttering musical sounds, because I know that tuneful vocalizing oxygenates brain cells, and thereby activates immunoglobulin — an important secretion that strengthens our immunity and healing systems.

And so maybe a song a day **DOES** keep the doctor away, and that's why I highly recommend daily sessions of tuning-up your vocal chords, perhaps simply done by chiming-in with a song on your stereo, which is also a creative way to cheer yourself up. All while realizing that, initially, health and happiness is

an ((**INSIDE JOB**))) — and singing is much more than just a fun thing to do at birthday parties.

Ah yes, the good "old" birthday celebration. But via our scientifically proven, inborn ability to perpetually renew every cell of our bodies, even while sleeping, we **STAY** busily re-creating ourselves — ((willfully)) sparking-up the **transcend-DANCE** of physical renewal. And so I will now wish all of my readers a **HAPPY EVERYDAY REBIRTHDAY!** And also, let me wish you all **HAPPY EVERYDAY Be-EARTHday!**

Anyway, it all comes down to "age" [numbers] being perceived in one of two ways: we can either be a **D.O.W.N.** — a [**Dumped On With Numbers**] victim, or an **U.P.** — a **creatively Unnumbered Person.** And as **free-at-last, Un-numbered People**, perhaps we can view the future of our bodies in a more positive light, whereby it's not about our "age," or medical insurance policies, but about the self-improving, step-by-step, **happier** person that we are ((hopefully)) **BECOMING.**

And as to the ongoing benefits of singing, studies show that it deeply influences our behavior patterns, effectively quelling any violence or anger (that may fester inside us). Also, singing helps develop **self-love** — the **ULTIMATE** mind-over-body healer.

Thus due to its therapeutic, tension-relieving and pacifying effects, perhaps singing (along with music appreciation) sessions should be a required part of the personal agenda of politicians, especially those who support the waging of war.

Or as the great singer/songwriter/activist John Lennon put it:

"To prevent undue wreckage, peacefully philosophical, creative people should move from the ivory tower to the CONTROL TOWER of society, because the truly good-hearted are those who SHOULD inherit the Earth."

And I'm another one who believes that, all while realizing that a major reason why wars get steadily continued, is due to combat-hooked, corporate-fed "news" broadcasters and mainstream movies — both of which are institutions [habitually] prone to glorify warfare. Although there **IS** still hope that these powerful forces can somehow **wake-UP** to the effects of their blatantly unconscious, dangerous *lack* of peacemaking.

But as for my (hopefully) evolving, **Waking Up to the REAL Me** life, I try to encourage peacefully human progress by writing books, magazine articles and songs about the realities of creatively-healing energy. And it's amid that uplifting ((frame-of-mind)) that I wrote this verse, part of a recently recorded song-poem that I call:

REAL CREATIVITY CHOOSES PEACE

Surely **everyone** is creative, regardless of age or "race" — And re-creating **ourselves** is truly a saving **grace** — And as for **my** "race," I'm part of the **HUMAN Family** — A realm that helps me increase the peace by creating **UNITY** — But the **ultimate** creation is of course **HAPPINESS** — wherein we find **peace of mind** that duly keeps us **BLESSED...**

"Youthman Ranger" Jesse will answer any questions (about real rejuvenation and ((protection-energy))) by emailing him at jesseisforreal@yahoo.com

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A Woman, A Dog, A Wedding, A Honeymoon

By Allen and Linda Anderson



It's often said that a woman's wedding is the happiest day of her life. Of course, that's not true for every woman. But for many, the day she declares her love for someone with whom she intends to share her love ranks right up there on the happiness scale. Even though weddings frequently take place in churches, it is easy to forget that they are actually spiritual events. Two souls have come together to help each other reach a greater level of understanding, compassion, and love.

At a higher level than choosing the right flowers or having the most amazing dress, they have chosen to serve as players on each other's karmic stages. Their relationship becomes the catalyst for some of life's most important and memorable lessons. Added to that mix are the animals who are already part of or at some point will join that relationship.

Love me, love my dog is not a comic command, even though it may sound lighthearted. For many

women, the dog is part of the package or there is no package. We heard from a young woman who experienced the spiritual connection a dog can have with a woman as she moves from one phase of her life to another.

JEN AND HATTIE, OUR WEDDING WAY

Jennifer Hampton says that her furry companion Hattie was trained by Dogs For The Deaf, Inc. Together, they have fought for legislation in Pennsylvania pertaining to the rights and protection of assistance and service dog teams. They are Dogs For The Deaf Ambassadors and run Hearing Dog demonstrations for local school districts and organizations to educate the public about the importance of service animals and their jobs.

Here is their story in Jennifer's own words.

I often say that, Friday, September 14, 2007 was the day I was reborn. A milestone date for me, my world completely changed in a way for which I'm forever grateful and will never forget. On that date I took my first steps into the world feeling no longer isolated from sound.

Thanks to Dogs For The Deaf, this was the day I was placed with a chocolate Lab named Hattie. Hattie is one of Dogs For The Deaf's highly-trained Hearing Dogs, who would become not only my ears but also my best friend.

Hattie is trained to alert me to the oven timer, microwave, telephone, alarm clock, doorbell, door knock, smoke detector, and someone calling my name. Without her highly trained skills, I would continue to live

in a very lonely, silent, and isolating world.

After placement was complete, Hattie and I took our first steps together as a team and never looked back. She's been at my side ever since, and I wouldn't want to face each day any other way. By working together so closely and through complete and utter trust, we have formed a bond that is like none other, with no words necessary.

Our most recent event together was on April 30, 2011. This was the second most life-altering date for me, and Hattie was at my side for the entire occasion from the very beginning.

April 30th was my wedding day, and Hattie was included in the ceremony. She happily and proudly posed for our pre-wedding photos. She was at my side every step of the way — from set up, rehearsal, pictures, meal, and teardown. Hattie greeted our guests as they arrived. She wouldn't have had it any other way. I wouldn't have my wedding day without my best friend present.

My father and Hattie walked me proudly down the aisle and gave me away. Dressed in a lavender vest that matched the wedding party, Hattie stood with us during the ceremony and gave her blessing. As only she can do, Hattie celebrated with us and took care of me at the same time.

Hattie also went on our honeymoon with my husband and me to Myrtle Beach, SC. This was my first experience seeing the ocean, and it seemed only fitting that she would be with us. After all, Hattie has filled my life with many firsts and then some. Side-by-side, Hattie

and I soaked in all there was to see and enjoyed from the first moment when our footprints hit sand. We enjoyed the most beautiful sunrise together our first morning there.

As I stood with tears in my eyes at the beautiful sight before me, I discovered I could indeed hear the continuous whoosh of the breaking waves. I looked down at my best friend with a smile only to discover that she too was standing there in awe of the beauty before us. No words between us were necessary. Hattie knew my emotions at that time and shared in the moment with me. Together we dipped our feet in the ocean, chased the waves in celebration, and dug for seashells.

Life for me couldn't get any better. I had my best friend at my side, and we took our first steps together toward a bright new future. Hattie was at my side when I said, "I do." And she was with me yet again to witness another of our many firsts on our honeymoon.

No matter what lies before me, I know we will triumph and always face it together. We are one, and Hattie completes me.

What pets have been by your side through the important transitions of your life?

*Allen and Linda Anderson are authors of a series of books published by New World Library about the spiritual connection between people and animals. They have designed a new course to help others learn from their fifteen years of publication about animals. Visit: www.allenandlindaanderson.com to check out *Woof, Meow, Write, Publish: Writing about Animals for Love and Money*. Subscribe to the Andersons' free, online newsletter at www.angelsandanimals.net and follow them on Facebook and Twitter@angelanimals.*

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As daughter and disciple of Master Liu Chi-Jen, Jenny has first-hand experience in Feng Shui.

Please see her article in this issue.

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Calendars are \$1.00 per word, minimum \$15.00. Phone numbers with area code, websites, and e-mails are considered as one word; hyphenated words are considered as two words. Please e-mail your listing to: info@awarenessmag.com

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Sunday Celebration Service 10:30am. Wednesday Spiritual Circle 7:30pm. Experience Meditations, Inspirational Uplifting & Guidance. **Teaching of the Inner Christ**, 1775 Bellflower Blvd, Long Beach 90815. (562) 498-9211 teachingoftheinnerchrist.com

Monday Night Meditation hosted by www.Meditations2Go.com. Every Monday night 7:30-8:45pm. Akashic Bookshop, Thousand Oaks. (805) 495-5824. Visit: www.meditations2go.com/classes/.

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Daily Soul Healing Blessings for Humanity Teleconference. 9-9:15am. Free. Join a global gathering led by Master Sha and his Worldwide Representatives to chant for humanity and offer Divine Healing Hands Blessings. www.DrSha.com (888) 339-6815.

JANUARY

January 3 — Intuitive Tarot Class. Tuesday, 6:30 to 8:30pm, \$20 Fee. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 7 — The Passion Test - Live Your Calling Workshop. Presented by Kent Saylor. 1-4pm. Discover the secret to permanently transform setbacks, self-doubt, and unfulfilled dreams

into confidence, purpose and a renewed sense of success for your life. *Get jazzed each day you wake up!* Vision Pulse & Creative Center, 5945 Pacific Center Blvd., Suite 510, San Diego, CA 92121. Register through website: www.ThePassionTestNow.com

January 10 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday, 7-8:30pm. Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 11 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday, 7-8:30pm, \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 11-14 Visceral Biodynamics - The Peritoneal Organs. www.LifeShapes.org. Continuing Education - Nurses, Acupuncturists, NCBTMB. (951) 677-0652, lifeshape@aol.com

January 17 — Intuitive Tarot Class. Tuesday, 6:30-8:30pm, \$20 Fee. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 21 — Angelic Healing Keys for Transformation Workshop. 11am-4pm in La Verne, CA. Learn and engage with new Angelic Healing frequencies assisting with elevation of consciousness and bringing in the essences of love, joy, health and happiness! You will learn about the history and inception, and we will work with 15 Angelic Healing Keys in a group format. Each participant will receive a manual and energetic activations. Investment: \$250/person. Registration and info at www.soundbodyarts.com

January 24 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday, 7-8:30pm, Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 25 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday, 7-8:30pm, \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

January 27-29 — Learn Integrated Energy Therapy® in Sedona, AZ. Learn how to help facilitate self-healing at the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels. Learn how to give sessions in person or via distance. This intensive offers the Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. www.sedonaheartwalk.com or (928) 204-5589.

January 31 — Intuitive Tarot Class. Tuesday, 6:30-8:30pm, \$20 Fee. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

FEBRUARY

February 8 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday, 7-8:30pm, \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

February 8-11 — Healing With Ease - Biodynamic Craniosacral Intro class. Continuing Education - Nurses, Acupuncturists, NCBTMB. www.LifeShapes.org. (951) 677-0652, lifeshape@aol.com

February 10-12 — Learn Awakening the Illuminated Heart® in Sedona, AZ. Learn how to live daily from the space of the heart. Create a heart-based merkaba and learn how to manifest your heart's desires. www.sedonaheartwalk.com or (928) 274-0246.

February 10-13 — The Conscious Life Visionary Expo. 3 day event featuring over 100 transformational lectures, panels and workshops. Keynotes include Barbara Marx Hubbard, Eric Pearl, Gregg Braden, British psychic Lisa Williams, Lynne Andrews, George Noory, cowboy nutritionist, David Wilcock, John Major Jenkins, Sean David Morton, Stephen Halpern, Humbatz Men and more. The Healthy living Exhibit Hall features the latest and most innovative products to promote healthy living and longevity. Program includes a special Latino program, 3 day Music Fest plus the Conscious Life Film Festival. LAX Hilton Ho-

tel. www.consciouslifeexpo.com or (800) 367-5777.

February 12 — The Aka Dua Experience. 11am-4pm in La Verne, CA. Learn about the Aka Dua energies and how they can benefit and expand your life for healing, transformation, heightened and expanded spiritual awareness, and more! Includes discussion, experimentation and direct experience with the Aka Dua. Level 1 and Level 2 Transmissions and Attunements will be available! Investment: \$20/person. Registration and info at www.soundbodyarts.com

February 14 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday, 7-8:30pm, Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

February 22 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday, 7-8:30 pm, \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

February 28 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday, 7-8:30pm, Love Offering. 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

MARCH

March 2-4 — Learn Integrated Energy Therapy® in Sedona, AZ. Learn how to help facilitate self-healing at the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels. Learn how to give sessions in person or via distance. This intensive offers the Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. www.sedonaheartwalk.com or (928) 204-5589.

March 15-23 — Peru Sacred Adventure Equinox in Machu Picchu. Ausangate Lodge extension March 23-27. For more information please visit www.staressence.com, email bliss@staressence.com or call (888) 277-4955.

March 30-April 1 — Divine Healing Hands Training Program. Master Sha, Master Peggy and Master Ximena will transmit Divine Healing Hands power to you, instantly enabling you to help others transform their health, relationships and finances. 10:00am-10:00pm, San Francisco. www.DrSha.com (888) 339-6815, Mary (415) 971-7373.

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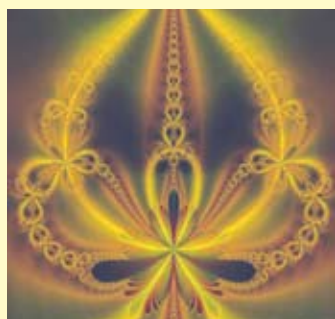
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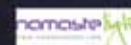
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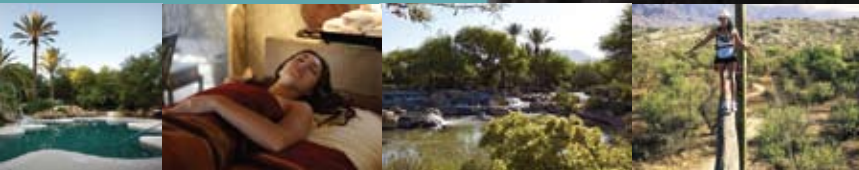
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