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Plenty of problem plants

by Triny Rowe

Good soaking October rain has stimulated the germination of another round of weeds.

They just keep coming. In all shapes and sizes, they range from creeping ground covers like tradescantia species or large trees like golden rain tree or jacaranda.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell what's a weed and what's not, as some of these plants have been with us a long time. We consider them friendlies as our parents and grandparents planted them in their gardens. Many of them are still in our gardens today.

It is easy to recognise if a tree has a propensity for going rogue. If you notice exotic species growing along a road side or on creek bank or coming up in the bush, chances are they are breaking bad! Sure they are pretty, and some spectacular when they flower, but these garden escapees are competing with native species and altering landscapes when they become entrenched.

If dozens of seedlings pop up around a mature parent tree in your garden, don't pot them up and give to friends and relatives. If you've inadvertently planted a



Golden Rain Tree seedlings germinating by the road

potential problem plant, you may need to wait more than 10 years for it to become an issue in your locality. Some tree species take many years to mature and start producing viable seed.

Just because you can eat it or make use of it doesn't mean it can't become a weed. Curry leaf tree, *Berbera koenigii*, previously known as *Murraya koenigii*, is a useful addition to the kitchen garden. It can tolerate a large range of soils and climatic conditions. Hardy with a deep taproot, it has become a pest plant invading bushland in SE Qld and Northern NSW.

Keep it in a pot, prune regularly and don't let it set seed for the birds to carry away. And make a lot of curries.

Ice-cream bean *Inga edulis*, is a legume and nitrogen producer that was promoted by permaculturists. This tropical tree can grow up to 30 metres with a huge spread of canopy. Keep them small with regular pruning. Cut the smaller leafy branches before flowers set and use them as mulch. No need to shred, the large leaves will shade the soil, suppress weed growth and add nutrient to the soil as they break down.

In South America, Inga alley cropping has been developed to replace traditional slash and burn agriculture, protecting and replenishing the soil for repetitive cropping.

Golden rain tree, *Koelreuteria elegans* ssp. *Formosana*, has a fantastic floral display, first with its

short-lived yellow blossoms followed by brick-pink papery pods which last for weeks. The seed attached to these light pods can blow in the wind to a new location. Water is another vector. Plenty of seedlings also germinate in and around the parent tree, so it will always be a problem.

Friends of the Koala are targeting this species in East Lismore with support from Lismore City Council to remove mature trees. This prolific tree has spread into bushland and nature reserves, impacting on koala habitat and competing with native species regeneration. Left alone for many years, golden rain tree has come to dominate the vegetation.

In the suburban garden it can also take over if not consistently managed. Planted as street trees, this species has naturalised, particularly in Brisbane, Noosa and Lismore. There are also a few pockets in and around Nimbin.

Golden rain tree seedlings can be mistaken for white cedar, *Melia azedarach*, and vice versa, so take care with identification.

Know your plants and manage them wisely to reduce your workload.

Happy weeding.

Nimbin Garden Club notes



by Pauline Ahern

35 Members of the Nimbin Garden Club visited the Certified Organic garden of Lani and Jake Shedden at Barkers Vale.

This 230 acre property called Hanging Rock Farm is on family land of natural bush with a small portion cleared for animals, farming and people.

Jake was born on the property and Lani, born in the area, were childhood sweethearts who are now raising their four young boys in the idyllic conditions of open spaces, good health and lots of family and community

support and interaction.

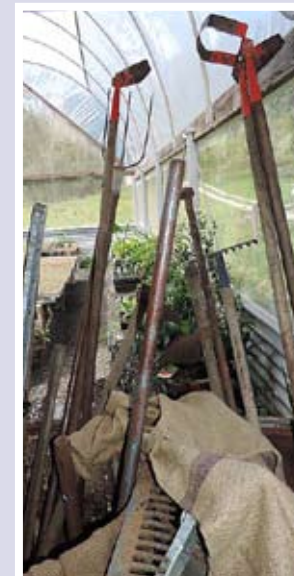
Lani and Jake started the move from a productive house garden to an income-producing two-acre certified organic vegetable and flower garden six years ago.

They have built their own house, a large shade house plus a large packing and storage shed, sourcing timber from the land, using some of the trees Jake planted as an adolescent. They derive their income and employ one other person part-time solely from the sale of their produce.

The Wednesday Farmers Market in Nimbin is their

main outlet. They grow their own seedlings and adhere to organic principles using green manure and certified green waste for compost and weed control. 40-50 different varieties of vegetables are grown in garden blocks either 40x40 metres square or 30x30 metres square. Blocks this size suit the lay of the land and the minimal use of farm machinery. Four dams on the property ensure a regular water supply.

A huge hail storm a few weeks ago came through in a narrow band, devastating the existing crops and causing a setback to the rhythm of crop production.



This extraordinary young couple set about putting things back in order with a total commitment to the health of the land and the produce it provides.

You will see Jake and Lani at the Wednesday Farmers Market and marvel at their produce. Be assured they grow it all with love and commitment.

The members of the Garden Club thank Lani and Jake for their hospitality and dedication to good food and good health, it was a delightful visit.



A rebate by any other name: breaking news on STC's

by Rebecca Ryall,
Rainbow Power Company

You or I might call it a rebate, but the government's Clean Energy Regulator prefers we don't use that term.

The Small-scale Technology Certificate (STC) represents a reduction on the installation cost of solar (or other small-scale electricity generation system, such as wind or hydro), applied per kW hour (output deemed over a number of years), at a rate which fluctuates with the market.

It is a discount on system components which is applied at the point of sale, and usually negotiated on behalf of the consumer by the installation company. Market fluctuations of the value of an STC are driven by consumer demand. Simply, if the demand for rooftop solar increases, this will drive down the value of the STC.

In July, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission recommended axing the STC system. However, the Clean Energy Council has rejected this advice, with the Morrison government this week declaring that the current scheme will continue, as planned, until 2030, causing much relief to the solar industry, consumers and advocacy groups.

The Clean Energy Council (CEC) is the peak body for renewable energy

in Australia, responsible for ensuring the quality, safety and reliability of Australia's solar power industry.

As part of their policy and advocacy work, the CEC administer the Solar Installer Accreditation Scheme, the Solar Retailer Code of Conduct, the Battery Assurance Program and the Solar Panel Validation Initiative – through which it maintains a list of photovoltaic panels which comply with industry standards for safety and performance.

This validation scheme gives installers and consumers confidence that their (sometimes expensive) investment in PV panels meet Australian safety and performance standards and come with a valid Australian warranty and are approved for network connection.

Eligibility for participation in the STC program includes the use of solar components approved by the Clean Energy Council. In order to reap the financial benefits of the STC scheme, it is important that only components on the CEC approved product list are installed.

Importantly, several makes and models of PV panels face imminent deregulation, due to expiration of current approval.

For the average domestic solar consumer, there is not a lot of brand recognition and it can be difficult to judge the quality, safety or efficacy of the various components of a home solar system.

Rainbow Power Company has over 30 years of experience in the rapidly changing environment of the renewable energy industry. Not only are we industry leaders in sales and installation, but we are here to stay.

You can have confidence that Rainbow Power complies with all industry standards and we only deal with reputable manufacturers. We only deal in products tested and approved by the Clean Energy Council and our after sales service is second to none.

Should you experience any difficulties with the system or components installed by us, we are just a phone call away.

Should you have any questions regarding the STC scheme, or any worries about the safety and efficacy of your rooftop solar panels, please feel free to give us a call on (02) 6698-1430 and speak to one of our friendly staff.

Terry McGovern Scholarship 2019

Rainbow Power Company would like to announce that the Terry McGovern Scholarship for 2019 will be a full time Electrical Apprenticeship.

RPC is looking for a motivated school leaver to undertake a full-time Electrical Apprenticeship based in Nimbin.

If you are keen for a career in the electrical trade with an emphasis on renewable energy, please email your expression of interest to: hp@rpc.com.au



Guiding reunion

by Elaine Scanlon

Ladies from all aspects of Guiding attending the 19th annual reunion at Anne Biddulph's home in Banora on 24th October. 18 ladies attended and more were expected, but due to unforeseen circumstances could not attend.

Money collected from the entry and raffles is going to the Farmers Drought Relief.

The day started with a talk from Terry from Mobile AIDS showing the aids they sell for those in the advancing years. A very informative and interesting discussion, with many of us

not realising the help some of these aids perform.

Then Bev from Everlasting Wood Roses presented her lovely roses and told how they were made and displayed in their lovely containers. These were available to buy, and she kindly donated a portion of the sales to the farmers as well.

Afterwards a scrumptious and healthy lunch was served and enjoyed by all.

Many stories and renewed friendships were made over the day, and we have decided that this would be our final reunion as many of the ladies are moving on and out of the area and it is getting too difficult to attend.

Plant of the month



White Bottlebrush *Callistemon salignus*

by Richard Burer,
Bush regenerator

Flush with spring rain this old friend, the reliable White Bottlebrush is in glorious abundance, its cream flowers and pink new growth dominating the landscape.

It kind of does dominate in a sense, it really is one of those species, that if you take a look around, can survive the hard road that our precious native vegetation has endured.

Able to grow just about anywhere, White Bottlebrush is a small tree that can be regenerated simply by reducing stock in areas where it's in pasture, or freeing medium-sized trees from woody weeds in forest areas.

White Bottlebrush is a great tree to plant around the farm or for your environmental plantings, as it's hardy and useful, and it's also easy to propagate from seed.

Rewiring the brain for thriving



by Catherine Watt

Limiting beliefs, caused mainly from past traumas and 'negative' experiences are stored in the cells of our bodies and block us from experiencing life from our true potential. We also have beliefs passed down through generations in our DNA and perhaps we bring in issues from past lives.

Our body 'programming' causes disconnection from our own life force leading to depression, anxiety, anger,

overwhelm, feeling stuck and general dissatisfaction with life. When we clear out these negative beliefs and pain from past traumas it frees us up to experience more of peace, joy and love within.

Also, a little brain 'rewiring' doesn't go astray. If we focus on all that is wrong with ourselves, our lives, and the world, how can we bring about anything except more wrongness? Focusing on what is good and working in our lives allows for that to grow. It feels counter-instinctive, but we have to do something counter-instinctive to evolve otherwise we just get more of the same?

For example, with abundance, as well as needing to clear our learnt and inherited block to abundance, if we keep focusing on lack, that is what we get more of. Just a slight adjustment in our thinking can make a lot of difference – instead of "I don't have enough money/love/joy!" try asking yourself "How can I get even more money/joy/love?"

Also, having gratitude for what you do have, gives an openness to receiving more.

We also project limiting beliefs onto others and affect each other. Have you ever found yourself acting in certain ways around people that is not 'you'? Similarly, when we focus on each

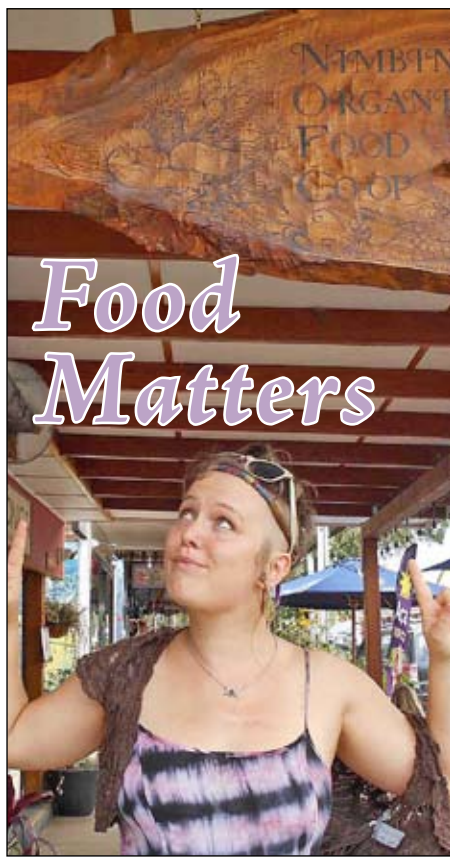
other's good qualities and strengths we draw them out too. We can then help each other to thrive.

As things are getting ever more crazy on this planet, it is ever more imperative for us all to clear out our blocks, empower ourselves and hold the vision we want for ourselves and for the world. When we get clear on what we want and become aware of, and clear out our silent saboteurs, we are well on the way to creating the life we want.

If you feel like you could use some processes, tools and on-going support to create the life you want, join us in the first Module of our six-session workshop, 'Connecting IN', to be held at Hanging Rock Hall on Tuesdays and at Murwillumbah on Thursdays, from 13th November to 19th December, 11am-2pm. Cost for the series is \$150 (payment plan available).

For enquiries and bookings, phone 0432-546-238, email: catherinewatt@hotmail.com or facebook "Vision Infinity Workshops".

Cat from Vision Infinity is a civil engineer who has been an accredited journey therapist for over 10 years, see: www.thejourney.com She is available for individual journey sessions and is facilitating group workshops, based on over 25 years of knowledge and experience in healing, health and wellbeing.



Food Matters

"Volunteers are not paid because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."
– United Nations statement on volunteering.

by Neil Amor

Nina (pictured) has nurtured Nimbin's Organic Food Co-Op volunteering program for the last few years and currently supports over 40 people.

Our program not only provides the team that runs the co-op, but also currently provides job-ready skills, promotes self confidence, links people with the community... and delivers a great social life.

Why wouldn't you volunteer? There are generous discounts involved as well.

After travelling the world for six years, Nina landed in Tunttable Falls Community three years ago. She was immediately drawn to the ethos of the Food Co-op with its beliefs in community support and engagement, not to mention the food.

Currently cutting a musical swathe through Nimbin, Nina can be contacted for volunteering on 0497-833-717.

In the meantime, here's one of Nina's fave dishes: "It's a traditional Chilean dish that some friends taught me while I was travelling. It's dinner and dessert in one, salty and sweet and yum."

Pastel de choclo

- 3 to 4 medium onions, chopped
- 3 tbsps oil
- 1 kg of beef mince
- 1 tbsp cumin/1 tbsp paprika/2 tsps salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 3-4 cans of creamed corn
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped basil
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/3 cup chopped black olives
- 3 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
- 1 cup chunky chopped roasted chicken

Method

Sauté the onions in the vegetable oil until soft and translucent, add the beef, cumin, paprika, one teaspoon salt, and pepper.

Cook, stirring, until the beef is crumbled and browned. Remove from heat, drain liquid, and set aside.

Preheat oven to 190°C.

Place the beef mixture in the bottom of a deepish oven dish. Sprinkle the raisins, olives, and chicken on top and arrange the egg slices.

Spread the corn mixture over the top of the casserole so that it covers the rest of the ingredients. Sprinkle the sugar on top.

Bake in the oven for 30 to 45 minutes, until the filling is bubbling hot and the corn mixture is golden brown.

Until next month, eat well.

The extraordinary life of Anandamayī Ma

by Cameron Storey

Sri Ma was one of India's greatest saints. She was at once a caring friend to everyone she met and also mysteriously aloof and filled with divine bliss. She travelled incessantly in India and was recognised as having divine qualities by numerous religious faiths.

She was born in 1896 into a Brahmin household. Her father was well known for his beautiful rendering of devotional songs, and her mother was totally dedicated to the welfare of her family.

At thirteen she was married to Ramani Mohan Chakravarty and catapulted into a demanding situation of considerable hard work in an atmosphere of restrictive discipline within the family.

Her serene and equable temper was never disrupted by the hard work or any unfair treatment.

Sri Ma's untroubled happy disposition caused both her parents and her new family some anxiety, and they believed that she was intellectually challenged.

Sri Ma worked during the day and at night engaged in sadhana like mantras and yoga. Ramani saw her becoming gradually absorbed in a world of inner bliss.

Eventually her and her husband's family realised that Sri Ma had divine realization and special siddhis (powers). Ecstatic states were frequent, as in her childhood, and through

her early marriage. They had not been understood and had been dismissed as some kind of fits that would pass away.

The couple lived the life of pilgrims on the spiritual path for years, and during this time Sri Ma initiated herself and then Ramani as her disciple. Nevertheless, Sri Ma never changed in her attitude of complete obedience and deference to Ramani's wishes. Although he attempted consummation of the marriage twice, each time he touched her he received an electric shock and so accepted the celibacy of their marriage.

Sri Ma said, "Sadhanas by which man endeavours to attain self-realisation are of endless variety, and each variety has innumerable aspects." She said, "I have not talked about one thousandth part of all that was revealed to me during my years of intensive sadhana."

Sri Ma's healing touch was sought by strangers from far and near. She was seen in ecstatic states of samadhi during kirtans. "At one moment Sri Ma was sitting like one of us. The next moment she had changed completely. Her eyes were closed and the entire body swayed to the rhythm of the kirtan. It looked as if Sri Ma had left her body, which had become an instrument in the hands of an invisible power."

Afterwards Sri Ma would lie in a samadhi for many hours. At such times her body emanated a radiance which was visible to

onlookers. In 1938 Ramani died and most of the devotees had thought that Sri Ma would be distraught but they were amazed to see that there were no signs of grief. She remained as serene as always.

Sri Ma's followers began to understand a little of the meaning of her total detachment and yet an overflowing compassion for others.

People learned from Sri Ma's lucid explanations of various complex spiritual queries put forward even by erudite scholars and contemporary authorities on those subjects. She seemed fully aware of all doctrinal differences.

She had never retired from the world to become a recluse, neither did she withdraw herself from her kith and kin. Wherever she travelled, it immediately became the centre for a gathering of thousands who often became life-long devotees.

The harmony of opposites was the underlying theme of her way of life. Amidst the splendour and magnificence which seemed inevitable wherever she was, she lived like an ascetic. Apart from the months of abstention from food, she for many years used to eat on alternate days.

When remonstrated with, Sri Ma would say, "It is not necessary to eat at all to preserve the body. I eat only because a semblance of



normal behaviour must be kept up so that you should not feel uncomfortable with me."

She was in perfect health when she was not eating anything and illnesses came and went following a rhythm of their own. Many times she had said, "Why do you feel so antagonistic to illnesses? They also come to this body like you do. She did not look ill but as beautiful and serene as ever.

Sri Ma always welcomed all faiths as true paths to God. Purity of speech, action and thoughts was ever the ideal, which she set forth for all travellers on the path of God-realisation. She said, "What I was before, I am now, and shall be hereafter. I am also whatever you or anybody may think I am."

The Dharma Centre and Medicinal Gardens is available for overnight accommodation on AirBnB. Call (02) 6689-7120 or Facebook Dharma Centre – Lillifield

How animals communicate with one another

I am writing this month's article from the paradise that is my backyard, awash with the many layers of sound and communication that are happening simultaneously around me. All are working in perfect harmony.

There are baby kookaburras learning their ancestral songs, black cockatoos demanding food, cows calling to one another across valleys, beautiful fruit doves making themselves heard, underpinned by cicadas, drumming their sound with the whip bird chiming in periodically, while mumma wallabies show their joeys what grasses to eat.

I am happiest and most content when in the company of animals. Their very presence soothes my soul. And I am well aware that I have to be vibrationally at peace in order to spend significant time with them. Which is highly beneficial to my wellbeing.

We are all complex organisms. Yet the key to our highest functionality, is simplicity. Breathing, meditating, and a still mind. Animals show us this all the time.

Animals are truly amazing. They communicate in a myriad of ways. With the same species and interspecies communication. Some are silent, telepathic,

verbal, guttural, vibrational and body language, to name a few.

The difference with animals is that every sound and communication has a purpose. (Have you ever sat with a human who just loves the sound of their own voice??)

Dolphins send holographic images to one another, so they reconnect and warn each other of danger. The ocean is a vast place, and this is how these guys stay in touch. And each pod has its own way of communicating.

Whales have familial language with one another and a subset of specific sounds that they share only with their young, so they can stay nearby.

Elephants connect intuitively with one another, and instinctively know where their extended family members are at all times. In fact, there have been documented cases of the herd grieving the loss of a family member thousands of kilometres away.

I also work at a pet resort, which allows me to meet so many different souls. I love watching everyone interact and the social networking and hierarchy that naturally exists, with up to 30 dogs at a time. All ages, breeds, shapes and sizes.

One who has always stood out is Big Bear (pictured), a



Animal Talk

by Donna Connolly

magnificent white shepherd. He is wonderful with the new ones, and he has always made a distinct howling sound at break time.

One day I asked him why he did it. His simple answer: "To soothe them!"

Then I realised he has been showing me the benefits of toning. Most people would call it howling, however I noticed that it has a particular pitch and tone. So I gave it a go. His eyes widened and he did a happy dance.

And when you make the same sound, (he loves it when you join in) you can feel it working on the throat and heart chakras. Exactly the same way the master symbol of reiki sounds when it is chanted in Japanese.

What a revelation. I'm going to be exploring this further, as we awaken and the animals reveal their magic to us. We realise we are all interconnected.

I love what the animals teach me. I am forever grateful. White animals have an amazing energy and special purpose, a healing quality to them which is comforting and nurturing.

They say that "music soothes the savage beast". I know if I'm listening to music, chanting, singing or playing Tibetan bowls, bells or crystals, the animals come closer to the house and look like they are meditating. It is amazing to watch.

It is safe to say that Spring has sprung! What a magical time of the year. I encourage you to get outside, sit with nature and hear her beautiful messages and sounds.

It is very therapeutic and healing. One of the best retreats on the planet.

*Email: rivergem88@gmail.com
Web: www.rivergem.com.au*

Transition exercises for bitless bridles

Recently when doing a bitless presentation at a horse expo I discovered that the main thing people wanted to know was how to transition to a bitless bridle.

Over the 10 years I've been using cross-under bitless bridles, I've developed exercises that make the transition from riding with a bit to without a bit seamless.

Below I will describe step-by-step how to do this easily with any horse.

1. Ensure correct fitting

A badly fitting bridle can distract the horse and/or reduce communication. The noseband needs to be about an inch above the corners of the mouth, if lower, it puts pressure on the cartilage, and if higher there is reduced control.

The noseband is used to communicate with the horse so if it's tight the pressure/release is not clear. Have it as loose as possible but without the cheek pieces popping outwards when you use the reins.

Ensure the poll piece is not putting pressure on the back of the ears. This is extremely uncomfortable for the horse. If it is, use a larger browband.

2. Groundwork yielding

Put the reins over the horse's neck as if you were about to ride and stand beside the girth. Ask the horse to yield their head toward you. Use a squeezing rein aid and release immediately when you feel the horse give, praise them.

Don't worry about how big a yield they do. If you release on a small give you can ask again and you will usually get a bigger one the next time. You're after quality first. Quantity is easy



by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

once you have quality. When you see improvement, repeat on the other side.

Next, ask them to yield away from you. Stand half way along the neck and taking your hand underneath the neck use the rein to ask the horse to yield the head away. Repeat on other side.

Using both reins ask your horse to drop the head. Ensure your feel on the reins is down and not backwards or forwards.

Again using both reins ask for backwards. Start with one step then increase. Next take the reins over the head and ask your horse to stand still as you back away to the end of the reins. Ask them to come towards you using forward rein pressure.

Now do some hindquarter yields. Stand at the girth and using the nearest rein ask for the head yield (already established) then, keeping a squeezing feel on the rein, walk toward the hinds. The hinds should move as

you approach, if not wave your hand, tap with your finger, click tongue etc. Repeat other side.

Finally do shoulder yields. Stand half way along the neck, flex the head away (already established) then use your hand on the shoulder to ask the shoulder to move over. With both the hind and forequarter yields start with one step. We don't want the horse moving forward or backwards, just around. Don't increase the number of steps until you have achieved this.

If you need to, use add-ons like alternate squeezes, tongue clicking, increasing the strength and using fingers etc., try different things then when you get a response release immediately. Do as many yielding sessions as you need to until you feel the horse is giving and softening to the bridle in all the yields.

3. Riding

If your horse is doing all these yields well, then riding will be a breeze. Start off in an enclosed area and don't collect the reins up short to start with. Use a long open rein and have fun. Later you can take up more rein contact, but make it easy for the horse to start with. Do the yields from the saddle. Everything you've been doing on the ground transfers to the saddle. And above all enjoy yourself. This is fun, not work, and your horse will enjoy this as much as you.

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The complexity of diagnosing lameness in horses

by Les Rees,
Equine naturopath

Diagnosing lameness in horses can be difficult to pin down as there are so many possible reasons for lameness ranging from structural issues to saddle fit or rider imbalance.

Vets can usually spot the origins of true lameness fairly easily but there are a number of vague issues associated with performance limiting lameness that can be missed through a simple physical examination. It may be that the horse is experiencing temporary soreness or it could be the beginning of more serious issues so it pays to identify them quickly. Many owners fail to seek advice during the early stages and as a consequence the horse suffers.

Most gait irregularities are defined by bad performance meaning the horse doesn't seem to be able to perform as well as it used to and this is often further exacerbated by fluctuating issues ranging from soundness to lameness. This can be caused by a change of equipment like a new bit or saddle, a change in rider, farrier or trainer. It can even be caused by a change in terrain where the horse is ridden.

A physical examination



will include examination of the feet, palpation of the body to check for signs of pain and flexing tests to establish the range of movement.

Following a physical examination, the horse will be trotted in a straight line viewed both front and rear and then lunged to detect any differences in the way the horse moves in each direction. Conclusions are drawn from assessment of irregularities of foot placement and the way the horse bends to the arc of the circle.

Finally, flexion tests are done by flexing and releasing the leg joints to establish if the horse can walk away correctly after a prolonged flexion.

After all this, if the horse seems sound the horse should be examined again, lunging with tack to establish if there are

associated issues and if not, an assessment of the horse being ridden to establish if the rider is causing the problem.

A number of lameness issues have been found to be linked to immaturity through horses being ridden too early during their growth development, causing a number of associated problems linked with bone maturation and muscle development. The development of the muscles enables the horse to perform without injury, and improves balance and proprioception (an awareness of where their feet should be). Bad training can cause gait irregularity and therefore be an important part of any assessment of lameness issues.

I once watched a horse being ridden that wasn't moving forward properly, having been assessed for a

reluctance to move forward into the trot. Having seen the horse ridden it was obvious that it was due to the rider attempting to ride the horse on the bit. When I suggested that she release the rein a little she told me that her trainer had told her to ride like this. I asked her just to try and humour me by releasing the rein more. This resulted in the horse moving forward into a beautiful elastic trot. The rein restriction had been causing the head to over bend, blocking the muscles of the neck from working efficiently and setting up a chain of events that restricted the horse's mobility! To me this is a demonstration of how a lack of knowledge can lead our horses on a downward trajectory causing pain and suffering.

If you have concerns about any of these issues, it is important to get them checked out sooner rather than later down the track. For me I'd rather know what I'm dealing with so that I can equip myself with the knowledge I need to help any of my horses live a happy, stress-free life.

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An uncommon therapy

Uncommon Therapy, the Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, is the title of a book by Jay Haley on the strategies and practices of Erickson, the father of modern hypnotherapy.

Fundamental to how Erickson worked was just getting to know how the patient thought and interacted in their world, their potential, the things that mattered to them and then utilising this knowledge in therapy. For him, the patient was unique, first and foremost. He said that the therapist needs to be flexible conceptually and behaviourally to respect, respond, or redirect the patient's potential to the full benefit of themselves.

A lot of therapeutic practices are driven by theory and preconceived classifications and notions of what good therapy should be so the perspectives of the therapist tends to dominate where the therapy goes. I'm thinking here of certain aspects of psychoanalysis, or the medical model and increasingly the health insurance model that utilises psychiatric classifications of mood and behavioural problems as set entities, or the idea that mere symptom control is sufficient in every situation, or that therapy needs to be swift

and superficial all the times, etc. For some practitioners of these one-size-fits-all therapies, an alternative model based on the fact that each case, each person, is unique tends to be seen as bizarre.

Erickson (1901-1980), an American psychiatrist and psychotherapist, went elsewhere. He chose a therapeutic approach particular to the individuality of the person before him and worked that way. Unique people require unique therapeutic approaches that utilise their uniqueness and we are all unique. This took the form of traditional sessions in his consulting room, or he insisted a client climb a particular Arizonan peak or visit a botanic garden, or he invited his patient to watch television at a set time each day with his family (shock, horror), or to work in his garden, or home visits, and so on.

This was very much uncommon therapy. It was flexible, it listened to the hang-ups, the foibles, the strengths, the frailties, the needs as well as the non-needs of each person and utilised them. But before doing therapy of this kind, Erickson needed to be with the person's experience, to listen, to question, to get a feel for the person.



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
 M. Couns., PhD

It is interesting that, in a desire to practically bottle Erickson's presence and approach, numerous of his followers tried to pin what he did down to a formulation of his style and personality to be imitated by others, as though this was even possible. Erickson, like you, like me, was unique. He lived according to himself. He could not hear tonality in speech and music was dead to him, he was colour blind (able to see only the colour purple), he had been crippled by polio and post-polio syndrome in his 50s, he was talented, flawed, obstinate, highly intelligent, dogged, frail, methodical, practical, scientific even.

What he did was listen to what people said and how they said it, he interacted with them (and the therapeutic

relationship is critical to effective work), he supported, he created safety, he held back from getting in the way of good therapy and he did what was required. But not always. He sometimes missed the mark, just like all therapists.

His was an uncommon therapy. He used a more traditional hypnotic induction techniques in his work, but not always. Sometimes he just did an ordinary act differently in order to get a person out of their conditioned, trance-like way of thinking. Sometimes he just talked of ordinary things a patient loved to do, like growing tomatoes that had the effect of reconnecting the person to other parts of their lives and thus initiating their psychological healing. In other words, Erickson played with the known and the unknown and thus stimulated change.

I like Erickson's thinking and the freedom he has brought to me through his writing and my contact with therapists trained by him to work according to the meanness of me, and not as a tired imitation of him, or anybody else. This is what drives me: to meet with my patients where they are and where I am in these uncharted waters of an uncommon therapy and work there effectively.

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Why a postpartum doula should be in your birth plan

I am excited to be a part of the postpartum revolution. I am an advocate for postnatal education and I encourage you to take time to plan your postpartum as much as possible. Learn what you will need help with and what remedies can ease your transition to motherhood because your needs are just as important as your baby's.

Postpartum can be an incredible time for healing and rejuvenation. Many cultures believe that the first forty days after birth effects a woman for the next forty years of her life and a lot of reverence should be given to the mother and her needs.

The modern village

The saying that it takes a village to raise a child resonates so deeply with me. Hundreds of years ago, we would have had the help of other mothers, aunts and grandmothers. The intensive demands of parenting used to be shared by many adults. Today, with nuclear families living separately, the raising of children usually falls on one or two people. This responsibility can feel exhausting and overwhelming.

We need to raise awareness around the actual needs of new parents. Visits from friends and family need to move beyond 'seeing the baby' and instead shift focus to nourishing the new mother and actually being helpful around the house.

For many people, the thought of asking for help with meal preparation or laundry may feel uncomfortable but this kind of help is really meaningful for your family and contributes to you having time to be able to rest and recuperate fully.



Birth and Beyond

by Kirrah Stewart, Doula wisdom

We can learn from traditional cultures
 In societies where the traditional culture is still intact, there is a reverence and respect for the postpartum time. They acknowledge that the first forty days after birth is to be treated as a time of recuperation.

There are many traditions that focus on helping the mother to heal and bond with her baby. Anthropological studies show that postpartum disorders such as 'the baby blues' are virtually non-existent in traditional cultures.

However, in our 'modern culture' we see the baby blues affecting up to 85% of women with up to a quarter of women experiencing postpartum depression. More and more people are feeling isolated and overwhelmed with little support.

Ask a postpartum doula to help

Postpartum is a huge transition for the mother and her family. Having guidance and support helps everyone to feel

calmer and happier.

Postpartum doulas are experienced in helping families navigate the transitions that happen after birth. Care focuses primarily on nourishing the mother so that she can heal from birth and nurture her newborn. Postpartum doulas often bring in traditional practices like massage and belly binding so that the mother can physically relax and heal. They may cook delicious and nourishing foods like soups and stews as they are particularly suited for a new mother's digestion.

Some doulas have experience with breastfeeding support to assist you to get off to a good start. Other things that you can ask your doula to help with are looking after your baby while you sleep, helping around the house and providing emotional support.

Remember that the most important job for the new mother is to fall in love and learn to breastfeed her baby. Take time during your pregnancy to organise to have help with house work, child-minding, cooking and cleaning. And start to view 'luxuries' like massage, nourishing food and belly binding as an essential part of your recovery. We know that a happy mother will be able to nurture her newborn more deeply. Your future self will thank you for the time you took to properly heal during postpartum.

If you want to feel more confident about birth and postpartum, please get in contact to receive your natural birth checklist which will help you feel more prepared. Visit: www.doulawisdom.com/natural-birth-checklist or contact Kirrah on 0429-308-851 or: kirrah@doulawisdom.com

Emotional trauma can lead to serious repercussions, both mental and physical.

This type of trauma is caused by serious, usually unexpected, incidents such as physical

by Brigid Beckett



attacks, being caught up in war or natural disasters, serious childhood trauma as well as traumatic life events such as divorce, bereavement or sudden bad news. Also less serious events may trigger a reaction to a more serious past event.

In terms of Chinese medicine this type of trauma or shock disrupts and depletes jing, our deepest energy and life force, scatters and exhausts qi and causes the shen (spirit) to be uprooted and not tied to the body. "When one is frightened, then the heart has nothing to lean on, the spirit has nowhere to return, and one's deliberations have nowhere to settle. Hence, the qi is in disorder."

Unsurprisingly this has serious

Treating emotional trauma

consequences. Emotional and physical symptoms include fear, anger, depression, grief, worry, mood swings, insomnia, panic attacks, fatigue, pain, poor concentration, foggy headedness and cold. In the face this shows up as dull eyes, a pale or muddy complexion, a look of disengagement or confusion.

For a long time, Chinese medicine has noted that not all individuals who suffered similar events had the same outcomes, with some having crippling symptoms and others showing very little distress. Variations are due to either constitution, intensity of the trauma, previous traumas, appropriateness of treatment and support. Reliving the event can cause qi blockages to become more severe.

Treatment in Chinese medicine starts with gathering the scattered qi. This involves a treatment that cares for the earth element and calms, also releasing the tightness of the pericardium or heart protector. A change should be seen on the facial complexion and expression after the treatment.

The next step is soothing the traumatic memory to enable the person to move forward. This uses points on the governing channel which are influential on the brain, as well as points used to connect channels and calm agitation.

After these initial treatments of stabilising the qi and shen, further treatments will depend on the person's symptoms and constitution.

For example, if the pattern is depletion of the water element or kidney the picture is likely to include fearfulness, resistance to the flow, spending a lot of time in bed or lying down with possible urinary problems.

If the constitution tends to disruption of the wood element there is likely to be anger, irritability, sometimes timidity, indigestion, eye problems, dizziness, and weak immunity.

On the face there may be discolourations or lines on the third eye or temples.

A fire constitution is predisposed to becoming overly excited, scattered and anxious, they may have palpitations,

nightmares, insomnia and blood pressure irregularities.

With depletion of the earth element there is often worry, confusion, poor concentration and indecision. Physical symptoms are usually digestive weakness and disturbance, fatigue and fluid retention.

When the metal element is affected, grief is the predominant emotion. There may be low self-esteem, sadness, feeling of lack, feeling that the air has been taken out. Physically there are likely to be respiratory symptoms also skin conditions, low immunity or constipation.

Although both the situation that has caused the traumatic incident and the resulting symptoms can be very serious, it is an acute situation therefore amenable to treatment before the changes become deep and habitual.

Brigid Beckett is a registered acupuncturist working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. She can be contacted on 0431-702-560.

You are what you think you are



by Tonia Haynes
Bowen therapist, masseuse,
pranic healer

I am becoming convinced that my physical issues are supposed to be a gift of information that I can pass on to others. Thanks ever so. A Lamborghini (with hydraulic lift to counteract our diabolical roads) in which to transport others to wonderful places, might have been a more attractive present. And the information received would surely have been more fun.

Louise Hay (for those of you who remember that psychically, insightful soul), states that arthritis is caused by feeling criticised and unloved, which in turn creates resentment.

The affirmation she suggests is: "I am love. I now choose to love and approve of myself. I see others with love."

The girl states that we need to restrain ourselves to think in positive affirmations. ie. "I hate my job," needs to be changed to thoughts of, "I love my new job."

Quantum physicists would agree that thought changes our environment. And way back in the 1940s Jose Silva, parapsychologist and the guru of mind power proved that when we relax and think creatively, it changes our brain waves and



the body and mind respond accordingly.

An example of the power of thought is the boy who lost a leg and grew it back. He kept salamanders, which regrew their tails and therefore thought he could do the same with his leg.

It has also been said that wishing it so, only works if one makes a physical effort to make it so. Therefore, if one hates one's job, one needs to physically look for another, whilst also thinking that it is possible to find one you like.

So, for arthritis sufferers, while you are retraining your brain to 'love', keep your head, feet and hands warm in biometric weather changes. Long johns are fantastic, and if you don't think they're sexy, remember the old film *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. Those ladies of the night looked very sexy in their long johns.

Eat alkaline as much as possible; green veges and fruit. Note: oranges stay acidic, but lemons and grapefruit morph to alkaline in the body.

Stay away from preservatives and sugar.

Get your teeth and gums checked. Diseased teeth and gums can exacerbate arthritis, due to a jaw that moves every time we breathe and contains nerves that reach every part of the body.

Do some research on turmeric, colloidal minerals, hemp seed oil and glucosamine chondroitin powder (the tablets don't digest very well) to see if they are of benefit to you. Remember, these nutritional supplements are not drugs, so they may take a few months before one notices a positive difference.

Lastly: get your iron and Vitamin B12 levels checked.

As for Carpel Tunnel Syndrome, pain in the wrist, arm and hand, before you run off to the doctor for an operation (and believe me, the pain can be so debilitating one would do anything to stop it), visit an osteopath who knows something about nerves.

The pain may not be coming from your wrist, but from the median nerve, which begins in the upper spine, or else may be coming from the bones in the lower neck, where the nerves run down the arm. The job of

the osteopath is to realign the spine and associated nerves back to a pain-free existence.

Good luck with the pain killers. When one is internally yelling in agony, one is inclined to ignore the fact that the pain killers, which give you relief, are bad for the gut and liver. A Catch 22 that at this point in time I have no answer for.

There are homeopathic remedies that will decrease arthritic pain. Contrary to the opinions of the less aware, homeopathics can work extremely well if they are taken as prescribed and one's been given the correct remedy for their individual symptoms.

Bowen Therapy also brings relief, and over time with regular treatments, decreases the symptoms of arthritis.

Finally, keep reprogramming the mind. Similar to the muscles of the body, it needs training and exercise if you have decided to run a mental marathon, that may well bring you freedom from pain and stiffness.

Phone for an appointment in Nimbin: 0439-794-420.

NATURAL LAW

by Helene Collard

The last week of October saw us enter a 'New Galactic Spin' which marks the completion of a cycle through the Mayan Dreamspell Calendar (25/10/18), and the beginning of a new one (26/10/18).

Inner alignment continues to be a strong theme in November. Deepening our spiritual connection is essential for our complete wellbeing, and most importantly, for the wellbeing of all life. There are myriad ways to connect spiritually. If you already have a practice, you may find it deepens during this time, otherwise make time to introduce and/or explore ways of connecting to Source. Affirmations, meditation, music, dance, prayer, ceremony and ritual are but a few ideas. Your intention is the key.

During the second half of November, we will be called to look deeply at the inner dynamics of our relationships – both current and past. The themes of love, partnerships, indeed all interactions with people, balance and equity are the strongest.

The key during this period of review is to become clear about where you end and the other begins. What issues are yours to iron out and what issues belong to the other? When we feel clarity around these boundaries, we increase our ability to navigate through relationship issues in a way that strengthens our integrity, and our ability to show compassion.

Reiki is a gentle, yet powerful healing modality that can provide support during times of acute dis-ease, life transition and recovery. Reiki is not a religion, however it does invoke a space of stillness and allows recipients to access

deeper aspects of themselves, whilst being deeply restful. In addition, I have a Level 1 and Level 2 Reiki Course coming up, and many feel this can be likened to a spiritual path.

If you are after a Reiki treatment or thinking about learning Reiki, I'd love to hear from you. Contact Helene on 0405-656-797 or email: yemayacentre@gmail.com

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Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing (Law & Justice), is a Reiki Master and the Founder of the Yemaya Centre for Reiki & Wellbeing in Lismore. Helene has been practicing Reiki for over a decade and currently practices and teaches Reiki in Lismore.

Helene is also employed as a Facilitator with We Al-li, delivering their Culturally Informed Trauma Integrated Healing Approach (CITIHA) around Australia. Helene's approach to wellbeing is focused in personal growth, and she has been writing Natural Law and delivering wellbeing workshops since 2008. For information, enquiries and bookings visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-797.