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Beat the heat

Food matters
by Neil Amor

Watermelons were first domesticated in north-east Africa and cultivated in Egypt by 2000 BCE. These varieties were much different than the ones we are familiar with, and it was not until Roman times that the sweet variety spread across the Mediterranean.

Many countries used the fruit to symbolise various aspects of their culture. In Mexico, watermelons symbolised life and love, abundance and fertility, and are used during Day of the Dead celebrations.

For Palestinians, a longstanding love of watermelon became an unexpected symbol of independence in recent times.

The colours of Palestine's flag are red, black, white and green, the same colours as a watermelon, so artist Khaled Hourani seized on an idea for an art project of resistance.

He began painting watermelons to signify Palestine itself, and watermelons began making viral appearances in art and

graffiti, becoming part of popular culture.

In Japan, Watermelon Splitting is a traditional Japanese game that involves splitting a watermelon with a stick while blindfolded.

According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the heaviest watermelon grown to date was 159kg or 350.5lbs!

Watermelon is over 90% water. Most of what remains is sugar, along with the goodness of lycopene and citrulline, and a little potassium, Vitamin C, beta carotene, and copper.

In recent years, the food's potential contribution to virility has come to the scientific fore. The citrulline is an essential element in sexual health and circulation, though the reputation with fertility, abundance and life is much older.

Gazpacho is a cold soup made with blended vegetables and is widely eaten in Spain and Portugal, particularly in the summer.

There are as many varieties as there are vegetables, but this is a quick, easy and refreshing version. Chill



'Viva La Vida' by Frida Kahlo, Mexico 1954

overnight or serve with an ice cube in each bowl.

Watermelon Gazpacho
(serves four)

- Half a large watermelon, peeled and chopped, removing as many seeds as possible
- 1 small red onion, peeled
- 1 red capsicum, de-seeded
- 1 large cucumber, peeled
- 1 large red chilli, de-seeded, or not if you want hotter
- Olive oil
- Lime or lemon juice.
- Optional: 1 tomato or apple cider vinegar.

First, cut one quarter of the cucumber, onion and capsicum and put aside. Peel and roughly chop remaining vegetables, as well as chilli,

and place in a blender with the chopped watermelon. Blend till smooth. Chill.

Finely chop the remaining onion, capsicum and cucumber (and tomato if using) and place in a bowl for the table.

When serving, to each bowl add a generous amount of good olive oil, lemon/lime juice and a little apple cider vinegar if using. Season to taste.

And if you are thinking of starting the New Year differently, consider volunteering for the Nimbin Organic Food Co-op. Just drop in and ask for an application.

Until next month, eat well.

Whale-falls, lipid deposits and carbon sinks

by Thomas Culpepper

Paleo and near-time carbon re-deposition, at sea and on terrestrial domains, dead denizens harbour a plethora of feed advantage to many across the biome of pulsing life: mini, micro or stupendous in their apparition.

How important are large bio-political form to the nature of the new coming extinctions?

At the demise of local whaling, at Byron Bay, Gladstone North, Twofold Bay at Eden, the Derwent estuaries of Tasmania and on to the West Coast at Doubtful Bay, all whalers followed the whale migration patterns, these being the demands for the mating and calving routes of the whales to the warmer waters of the northern latitudes.

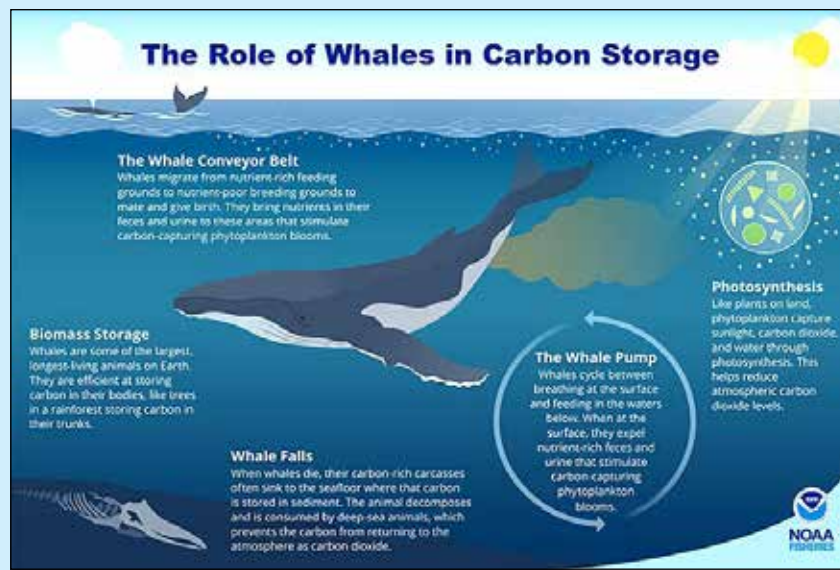
The two main species in the early hunts were the main Spermaceti (toothed) species, Right and Sperm whales, reason? Large oil yields, many more tons of rendered oil to the kill.

The Baleen (filter-feeder) whales were hunted much later, no doubt to the lowering of the population and increased commercial predation. By 1850, 4.2 million pounds pa were being culled from this industry, with hundreds of boats and thousands of men committed to it.

This predation bought into existence another deficit; as the whale populations were shrinking so too was the deposition of carbon and lipids to the denizens of the great-deep.

It has been estimated that the 'normal' demographics on the paleo history of whales by natural loss, old age, inter-species strife and maybe disease, amounted to the deposition of thousands of whale carcasses to 'very deep' waters, as a primary food source to the bottom.

Some have estimated that one whale carcass was distributed at the rate of 1:7.5 square miles bottom area over the whole of the migration pathway. This was, of course a 'contribution' over



millenniums of whale paleo-existence. Sea Paleo have suggested that these carcasses lasted as long as 100 years in place. Calcium for the colonial worms and lipids for the 'moving' populations of deep fauna.

No food could be generated at that depth due to the absence of light. No photosynthesis. All food had to come down from the light and oxygen-rich surface environment.

Whaling interfered with this dynamic. Some have suggested about 30% of whales were taken out of this biological economy.

Transfer of fatty lipids from bone marrow was enabled by feed-harvesting to the bottom food chain from the mob above, where light was the prime generator of a biological reality.

Photosynthesis, using light wavelengths, being the prime generator the food chain, rounded out this dynamic.

Scavenging is more efficient than predation.

Paleo scavengers and modern vulture stocks and flocks have the same bio-economic purpose. When you are an obligate scavenger feeding off society's passive carcasses of the dedicated

creators, you have to input little energy to creation; poisoning the water well, so to speak. Work and you harvest the yield. Post-productive capitalism, no doubt.

On land, the paleo equivalent transpired. Very large herbivores, many weighing in at the equal to the giant sea fauna, post mortem, attracted the same attention of the cadavists. The vultures of the land, the obligate scavengers, the opportunist theropods, the apex carrion eaters, filled the site-clearing role of garbage utilisation.

Much the same role as the vulture species worldwide still fill, some are culturally utilised for ritual disposal of human remnants, though due to Big Pharma's opportunism in veterinary science, the scavengers have had to pay a heavy price for this chemi-fuck-up.

It seems their livers could not manage the vet-chemo applied to cattle, and this has all but made extinct this form of vulture. Which could suit Wall Street!

On the matters of the deep ones, think Moby Dick and Capitano Ahab. A better new year to you all. And to the Gazan children and their families. Pax!

thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Weed words

by Triny Roe

People move to the country for many reasons. For the peace and quiet? For nature? "We love the birds and the wildlife".

And then proceed to cut trees down, "for the view". And let dogs bark their heads off and roam, bothering neighbours, chasing stock and disturbing wildlife.

Not to mention the soft, sweet pussycats which collectively kill 390 million animals in Australia every year and have been heavily implicated in 34 mammal extinctions since colonisation.

Other people flee the cities for another way of life, to live in harmony with nature and work towards nurturing and restoring ecosystems, providing habitat and food for wildlife by planting native trees and shrubs and removing weeds.

Resilient and sustainable environments can be developed and maintained, enhancing lifestyles for wildlife as well as for humans.

Restoring landscapes can be done in different ways. Some go slow, allowing the wildlife and regenerating trees to adjust over time. Camphor laurel, *Cinnamomum camphora*, can act as a nursery tree and allow native species to germinate underneath but until the camphor is removed the natives won't achieve their peak.

During the growing season, camphors can be debarked by hammering off a wide strip with the back of a tomahawk or levering with a hori hori. Eye protection is essential as chips will fly.

Follow up with regular de-suckering, as it will sprout below the bare section. This method can take 5 - 7 years. In that time, the regenerating species underneath will get ahead and begin to take over.



If natural recruitment is limited, plant a strangler fig in the fork of targeted camphor laurels to increase biodiversity.

Some use machinery to achieve fast results. This can sometimes result in increased weed growth. Patches of giant devil fig and even lantana attacked with a tractor or forestry mulcher can come back worse, as stem and root fragments sprout under good conditions.

The mulchers also chew up any native seedlings struggling amongst the weeds. New weeds can be carried in on the machinery. Follow up is essential.

Jacaranda, *Jacaranda mimosifolia*, should not be first pick when choosing a tree. Southern Cross University should be ashamed for planting an avenue of this invasive species.

Blessed with a patch of rainforest on the Lismore campus, funds would be better spent reducing and removing jacarandas and some of the other invasive woody weeds, like the allergy-causing small leaf privet, *Ligustrum sinense*, which invade the rainforest and other areas on campus.

It's a missed opportunity to enhance the environment instead of degrading it. How great would an avenue of Pink

Euodia, *Melicope elleryana*, look?

It's a local fast-growing rainforest native and will be filled with a celebration of lorikeets and rosellas feeding on their dusky pink blossoms.

If you're looking to buy a rural block in the Northern Rivers and not familiar with local vegetation, get a survey and weed report, before you sign.

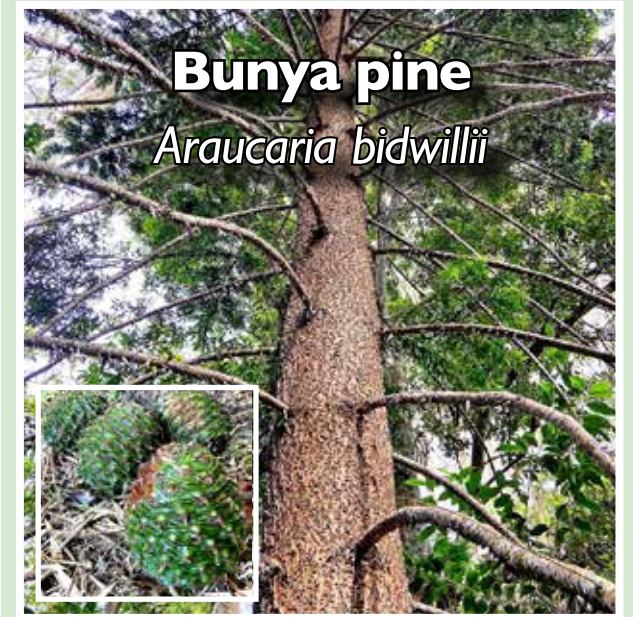
"Priced low for a quick sale" could mean there has been an extensive tidy up and they want to sell before the weeds grow back. Know what you will be dealing with or your rural dream could become a nightmare.

The rolling green paddock could be infested with Parramatta Grass, *Sporobolus spp* and unsuitable for stock. The gully could be harbouring Giant Devil Fig *Solanum chrysotrichum* which will regrow within a month or so, after settlement.

No, nature doesn't look after itself, due to the vast numbers of exotic plant species which can out-grow, over-grow and out-compete native vegetation. Without help, the weeds will win.

Be informed, look after the land, and do your weeds. Please!
Happy weeding

Plant of the month



by Richard Burer

Widely planted in the Northern Rivers, Bunya pine is a grand well-loved pine from the *Araucariaceae* family which is a genus to many other pines in this group, including Kauri pine from NZ.

Finding its home in botanical gardens throughout the world and on many farms and gardens in south-east Queensland and northern NSW, Bunya pine was recognised during colonisation as a cultural asset to the first Australians.

It was somewhat protected in its natural area of occurrence in the Bunya mountains in the Blackall range west of the Sunshine Coast in southeast Queensland.

It was only when Queensland was established as its own state that the new government repealed its protection and allowed clearing and logging of this sacred and highly regarded pine which was an important food source for Aboriginal people.

This pine, despite its abundant food options for indigenous people was also symbolic in cultural business, cultural lore, connection, celebration, a symbol of working together with the many clans that would come up for festivals every few years or more from as far away as Grafton to the south and Charleville to the north.

Family groups were offered and given permission to use their own tree to harvest during these events and the pine could be treated for climbing foot incisions, but it was so sacred they were never cut down.

This festival could possibly be regarded as the biggest Indigenous event in the country at this time, with over 1000 people attending.

Growing to 50 metres, Bunya pine has a male pollen cone flowering in late spring and fruit (cones) ready for harvest from about January

for a couple months or so.

From pollination to established cone with nuts is about 18 months. Fruits can weigh up to 10 kg and these football size cones can do some damage if you're standing underneath, so careful consideration is required if you plan on planting this on the farm, in the garden or your landscaped area.

In Nimbin we have planted Bunyas on fence lines. They are treasures hidden away behind this and that, and the reward is special when we take time to visit these bits of forest.

Unless I've never previously noticed, a tree will take over 20 years to produce fruit, currently a 30-year old tree has January fruit on the ground, littered in abundance.

While this species is stable in its habitat in the Blackall Range in the Bunya Mountains, its distribution is limited due to extinction of megafauna which would of been a likely mechanism of dispersal.

However cockatoo, possums and melomys act to help in distribution, but it's certainly distributed in that area by good conservation efforts in planting this tree in its right habitat.

This tree is also under pressure from climate change and the drying out of rainforest, added pressure now includes phytophthora dieback which is possibly caused by feral pigs.

This wonderful horticultural gift to the world can live up to a 1000 years, locally I have seen a few that are very old, including at Cawongla west of Nimbin, where planted trees around the old homestead look older than the homestead itself.

It's always a consideration that local Aboriginal clans planted this tree here and there with seed brought back from the regular gatherings up north, but with clearing and logging this pine's history of cultivation pre-colonialism is lost.

Richard Burer is a Nimbin-based natural area restoration contractor and consultant: richard.burer@gmail.com

Sleep and melatonin

We are governed by circadian rhythms, which are 24-hour cycles, part of our body's internal clock.

During sleep, the cells in our body undergo healing and replication and our mind works through the experiences and memories of our lives in dreams. Our psyche needs the stimulation of being awake and being asleep.

We need, integrally, a consistent routine for our good health. Our circadian rhythm causes us to sleep and, in the morning, as exposure to light increases, melatonin production stops and body temperature rises, promoting wakefulness.

Rhythm is the key. Light and dark, wakefulness and sleep, in harmony and balance giving rise to good bodily and psychological health.

Sleep is most likely to be refreshing and restorative when circadian rhythms, the natural cycle of daylight and darkness, and sleep patterns align.

Regularity of meal times, exercise, social interaction, and sleep times as well as exposure to sunlight and darkness help maintain our natural circadian rhythms.

Sometimes, though, our circadian rhythms are thrown out of kilter: shift work, travel across time zones, social or study habits that lead to

irregular bedtimes, illness, stress, bright lights, too much alcohol and other recreational drugs, all contribute to this.

Problems with sleep can give rise to insomnia, performance issues (memory problems, difficulty focusing and difficulty performing high precision tasks, emotional and social difficulties, accidents and errors, health problems (obesity, diabetes, heart attacks, high blood pressure, and cancer), and symptoms of low energy and grogginess.

A regular schedule for sleep, meals, exercise, exposure to a moderate amount of sunlight and not too much screen time, etc, helps good sleep.

If you are having problems getting to sleep, clinical hypnotherapy (which I do) combined with light therapy (controlled exposure to light, eg going outside in the morning after dawn for an hour or so and then at least 10 to 30 minutes in the afternoon of sunlight is beneficial) and, maybe, melatonin supplements and, if your doctor recommends it, medication. The latter can pose risks and have undesirable side effects.

So, melatonin. I've been thinking a lot about why melatonin was given to me in ICU when I was seriously ill a few months ago when sleep wasn't a problem.

Melatonin, as we know, is a hormone produced by



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

the pineal gland in the body in response to darkness and regulates day-night/waking-sleeping cycles by chemically causing drowsiness and lowering the body temperature.

Melatonin is also implicated in the regulation of mood, learning and memory, immune activity, dreaming, fertility and reproduction. Light decreases melatonin production creating wakefulness, darkness increases melatonin inducing sleep.

Sometimes some people do not produce enough melatonin and have insomnia. This is usually and usefully treated with melatonin tablets, drops, patches or gummies. So, why was it given to me in hospital – until I questioned its use and suggested that it really wasn't necessary for me to take it?

I've since discovered that it is quite often given to patients during acute illness within a particular age group as it has been discovered that such

illness sometimes interrupts the person's normal circadian rhythm and creates delirium.

Well, this might be true, but to give melatonin to everyone on the basis that sometimes the wakefulness/sleep cycle is interrupted seems a bit of an overkill. At no time was I suffering delirium. Blanket prescriptions cannot include all variables.

I often hear from clients that they have been prescribed melatonin and they've been using the stuff for years, without much useful result. This supplement is time-limited. The supplement is designed to reset the circadian cycle, not to replace it.

As a short-term solution to insomnia, it's useful, but it loses its effectiveness and can contribute to the body not restoring its own circadian rhythm (which is the whole point of taking it in the first place).

Melatonin is not innocuous and shouldn't be used if you operate heavy machinery, nor taken with alcohol or other sleeping pills as the combined effects may cause breathing problems.

Melatonin supplements interact with many medications, including birth control pills, blood pressure medicine, antiseizure medicine, medicine to weaken the immune system, and blood thinners.

People who take any of these medicines should speak to their doctor before trying melatonin supplements.

Fourth estate can fix things

Throughout modern history, when the apparatus of the state and the corporate sector fail to address a crisis, the slack is almost invariably taken up by the fourth estate.

So, when 300,000 troops, virtually the entire standing British army, were stuck on the beaches of Dunkirk and couldn't be saved by their own navy, the community mobilised to rescue them in their own private boats.

In the flood of 2022 in Lismore it was the fourth

estate, that jumped in their dinghies, onto their jet skis and kayaks and saved hundreds of people from drowning; when the formal apparatus of the state were overwhelmed.

Of course, since our big flood, state sponsored apparatchiks have done what they can to rewrite that history, to blame the people, to obfuscate any guilt they might feel, remove any responsibility for their failure and to discourage the community from readying

themselves to deal with the crisis directly next time.

Ironically repeating the one of the actual behaviours worthy of guilt... ie the initial discouragement of the tinny navy from directly intervening to save lives.

The people of this community, the fourth estate should be proud of how we responded to government and corporate failure in 2022.

Furthermore, we need to realise how much more we could do to fix other problems where the nation state and the

transnationals continue to fail. Particularly where they profess to be fixing the problem but it's just getting worse.

We know there are over a million empty houses in Australia, yet our governments seem unable to address home affordability and homelessness. We could just reclaim these properties.

The apparatus of the state has proved it can't fix the problem – they obviously need a hand and we should provide that help.

There are a host of areas

where the government just can't seem to fix the problem despite their efforts. Domestic violence, drug abuse, obesity... all areas where the fourth estate could and should intervene because these problems are too big for government and there is no money in it for the corporates – so we all have to help out.

Together we stopped this place from turning into an industrial gas field, together we can do so much more – make 2025 the year you stopped living in fear of the



Revenge of the Loon
by Laurie Axtens

failing state and started to fix the issues that beset us.



Consumerist Christmas tree on the Bruxner Highway, Goonellabah
Photo: Chibo Mertineit

Update on Covid and Long Covid: Part 1

Nature's pharmacy

by Trish Clough herbalist

Although Covid-19 infections are still incredibly common, there is very little media coverage and health system focus on the results of the pandemic. It feels like it was such a stressful and traumatic pandemic that the authorities prefer to act as though it is long gone.

However, digging deeper it seems the virus is still very active in the community. Also many people are dealing with the debilitating after-effects known as Long Covid, as well as a percentage of people having similar after-effects from Covid vaccines.

Further information from studies have been published since I last wrote about Long Covid six months ago. An article in *Cell Host and Microbe* journal published in December 2024 showed that the 'spike protein' of the virus persisted in the brains of Covid patients long after the active virus was cleared.

There were signs of widespread immune activation as a response to the spike proteins. It is believed this activation could be responsible for the neuroinflammation and long term neurodegeneration (nerve/brain damage).

The spike protein is not the entire live virus itself, but is a component on the outer membrane of the virus. The spike protein acts to enable the virus to attach itself to the cell membrane of the host (in this case, the patient), thereby causing infection.

Covid vaccines utilise the spike protein to activate the body's immune response to the protein, and therefore enable a reduced response when the whole virus is encountered in future.

Unfortunately this did not protect people from active infections, but studies show the vaccinations did provide a degree of protection against the more severe infections and hospitalisations. However, a small percentage of people have experienced adverse reactions to the vaccines, some of whom have ongoing symptoms similar to Long Covid.

The similarities are pointed out in a journal article 'Strategies for the Management of Spike Protein-Related Pathology' published in 2023.

Using imaging of the brains of Covid patients, the researchers of the *Cell Host and Microbe* article were able to observe the persistence of the Covid spike proteins. Imaging showed that signs of neurodegeneration were elevated in the cerebrospinal fluid of Long Covid patients.

It is likely that the persistent presence of the spike protein with the associated inflammation is the cause of the brain fog, fatigue and anxiety seen in these patients.

These findings were also confirmed in biopsies of people who had died. According to the researchers, "It is uncertain at this stage whether the brain fog, cognitive deficits and mood changes are a result of on-going neuro-



Anti-viral herb *Houttuynia cordata*

inflammation from an aberrant immune response or if there may be persistent virus in the brain.

"Damage to the blood brain barrier (BBB), commonly called 'leaky brain' is a frequent finding in people with Long Covid, which the virus can cause."

The spike protein was also found in other target organs, including the lungs, heart, liver and kidneys.

So it seems it's not still certain whether live virus persists in Long Covid patients, but it is certain that spike proteins do, and research is looking into possible treatments.

My previous literature searches into herbal medicine studies and Sars-coronaviruses enabled me to formulate a herbal antiviral combination that has shown helpful results in some patients.

Looking specifically at herbs that show effectiveness through their actions on the spike protein, I would consider using Chinese skullcap (*Scutellaria baicalensis*), Sweet wormwood (*Artemisia annua*) and Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*).

My current thinking for Long Covid would be to also include other anti-viral herbs as well as immune, neurological and blood vessel support. Additionally there are nutritional/dietary factors that have helped.

In next month's article, I will present more detail on therapeutic interventions that have shown to be beneficial in counteracting the adverse effects of Long Covid and post-Covid-vaccine injury.

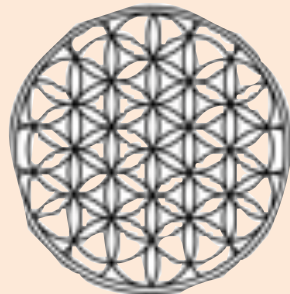
The herbs mentioned have some specific contraindications and herb/drug interactions, so any treatments need to be done with the help of a qualified natural health practitioner for safety reasons.

Trish Clough is a herbalist of 30 years in Lismore, now with a clinic practice in Iluka. She is available for consultations by appointment. Phone 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough2@gmail.com

Natural law



by Helene Collard



The care we take with others is weakened. We cut corners with our words and actions. We can make a mess and do great harm. A teacher once said, "It is okay to muck up, just make sure you clean up".

It's true, no matter how good our intentions, or how solid our self-care, we will muck up. It's inevitable. We are human. What really matters, is how we clean up. It is never too late to clean up.

We live in a kaleidoscopic world of many shapes and colours. Unique cultural groups, languages and stories. No one individual is the same.

There are many constructs of identity, that divide us – religion, race, gender and others... Yet, beyond our identities, our differences, we all belong to the one Earth, the one Universe.

We are all human. Our hearts beat, our cuts bleed and our hands can work together towards a shared story of belonging and flourishing.

David Suzuki said, "Everything is relational, nothing exists in separation" and we must, must, go beyond systems and labels that divide us, and nourish and flourish what binds us together.

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- Helene Collard: www.yemayacentre.com.au
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Coming up

- Reiki Treatments: weekly
- Reiki Circle: 2nd January, 2025 at 4.15pm
- Reiki First Degree: 3rd-4th January, 2025
- Reiki Second Degree: 4th-5th April, 2025
- Reiki Master Practitioner: 12th-13th September, 2025

Helene is a Reiki Master teacher, an Indigenous Trauma-aware Practitioner and Innovative Learning Designer

A moment

by S Sorrensen

One day, not that many days ago, I woke up in a different world. It looked the same, but it wasn't.

I lay on my bed, my sarong uncomfortably bunched under my lower back. That was the same; there had been a lot of suffering in the old world: children being bombed, refugees drowning, forests burning. And, though not to the same degree of course, my sarong bunching.

I rose up from the bed, wrapped the sarong around me, swung my arms from side to side (quick 'n' easy yoga lite) and stepped outside in a series of movements that were both unconsciously habitual and startlingly novel. It felt different.

Around the fire pit were chairs. What? My mother's chairs?

You inherited them years ago, my brain told me. Oh, yes, I knew that.

I knew that I knew I once had a mother. Like, my brain was telling me I had had parents and lovers and friends, even flashing up human-generated images of an old woman dying, of a young woman undressing, of a man wrapping his arm around my shoulders.

This was a life apparently, but I felt separate from it, as actual as social media. The old world was gone.

In its stead, there were four metal chairs, each painted in a different bright colour, the red chair bathed in the first shaft of sunlight to pierce the tree-line on the eastern ridge. I'd never really seen this chair before. I leaned closer.

The iron was worked beautifully in swirls curling back into themselves, no beginning, no end, a universe of spinning galaxies, eternal motion with no destination.

What was happening? I was an alien



in this new world, despite knowing where the coffee beans were, how the grinder and the stove worked, where the thermos hid.

Warm coffee cup in hand, I tried to regain my composure.

A lover gave you this cup, my brain reassured me, popping up an image of her: eyes sparkling like a sailor's sky, smile flashing safe harbour. It was a memory – she's gone now – but I didn't recognise it. Or her. And, really, that was me?

I ran my thumb around the lip of the cup, over its gumleaf pattern, across its roughly-thrown elegance. It was a perfect copy of a cup I never knew.

Adrift in this new world, not anchored by habit, not moored by memory, I was disappearing. The familiar currents of the old world were stilled. It looked the same, sure, but real change is always camouflaged.

The known had become the unknown. In the old world, life was a journey with direction; it implied purpose.

Okay, it was a cruel place, death everywhere, and that made me sad, and the sadness overwhelmed me and became me.

But then, one day, my own death looming ever closer, I woke up in a different world.

The coffee tasted good. In the panic of disorientation, in the excitement, coffee reached out to me and told me to sit down for a moment.

Alright. The old world was gone. And with it went a life dulled by its habits, tortured by the universal cruelty and, though buoyed occasionally by love, sustained only by hope in a future that never comes.

In the new world, each day curled back into itself, no beginning, no end, eternal motion with no destination. Like my mother's chair. Like a universe.

And at its centre was a life, barely aware of itself, giddy with spin, hardly able to lift the coffee cup. With no memory there was only love. With no endings, there was no pain. I was free.

And then I woke up.

Compensation and Jurisdiction

An occasional allegation in parenting disputes is that a child has been sexually assaulted by a parent or one of their relatives or friends.

Lately, since children have been exposed to screens, other children have also been doing the assaulting.

Previously, when it was an adult who sexually assaulted a child, parents often remained unaware. Either the victim was too scared to tell anyone or, if they did, parents didn't often believe them.

But children grow up and remember what happened and one day they tell. Then we're in a different jurisdiction. In New South Wales in 2016 the *Limitation Act 1969* was finally amended to allow actions for damages for child sexual assault long after the fact.

Churches and schools where it had happened went into damage control. I haven't heard the term lately, but it used to be said that child sexual assault caused a life to be 'destroyed'. What's that worth in dollars?

After assisting a client to access the redress scheme

of the school he attended decades ago, getting him a payout of over a hundred thousand dollars, I've now been contacted to advise another on a draft Deed of Settlement and Release.

The school has sensibly admitted liability rather than let the matter go to court.

I mention this to a friend who then tells me his own story. He was seven and alone in a two-berth cabin on the first liner to be diverted around the Cape when the Suez Canal was closed in 1956, his seasick younger brother staying above in the big cabin with the rest of the family.

His parents asked a nice man at their table, on his way to the Vatican to take Orders, to keep an eye on him, to protect him from the stewards. The distinction between homosexuals and paedophiles at the time was blurred.

He told me he had blocked all memory of what happened during those weeks at sea but worked it out in his fifties on discovering that the nice man, a Dr Bertram Adderley, listed on Broken Rites, the Catholic

paedophile site, was a serial offender.

It explained my friend's lifelong difficulty with sexual relationships and drug addiction, and the painful bowel cramps he'd suffered in his twenties and thirties.

He was relaxed about there being no chance of compensation as the crime had occurred on the high seas and the perpetrator had not yet become a priest, and was dead.

Curious, I google the name and find a 2021 article about another of Dr Adderley's many victims. The lawyer who won this case against the Catholic church got his client \$2.45 million. The difference between that and the redress scheme offer of fifty thousand was, one presumes, worth the trauma of facing cross-examination.

The article said he'd taught at a Catholic private boys' school, and I wondered whether he might have been on long service leave when he was on the ship, in which case vicarious liability might come into play.

I emailed my question to the lawyer and a reply came the next day. No,



Legal writes

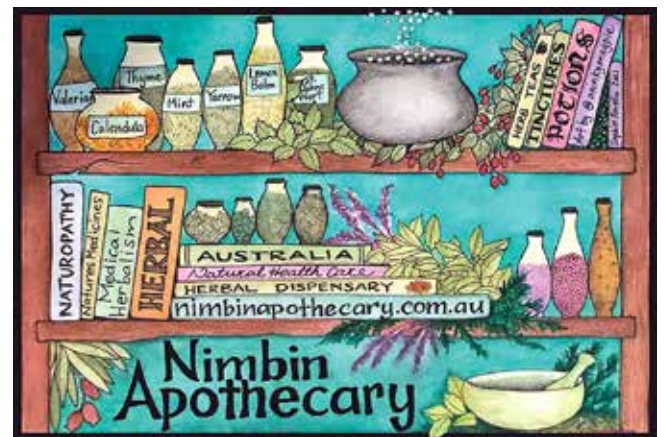
by John 'Sindhu' Adams

he'd resigned from running the prep school but at an Anglican, not a Catholic school.

The article did not, of course, describe what happened to that victim, but I wonder how it compared in horror to the weeks my friend's childhood mind had quarantined from memory and for which there was no compensation at all.

The law and justice can be a long way apart.

Correction: the offer of Shiva's Garden II – November edition – is not subject to terms and conditions.



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So They Say

by Uncle Norm & Aunty Maj

Clutterbug

My wife reckons my office and workshop are too cluttered and is threatening to clean it up herself if I don't do it SOON. She looks after the rest of the house so I think it's only fair to claim my man space and not face the risk of losing precious memorabilia. I'm right, aren't I?

— Don Yadaire. Kunghur



Norm says:

Dear Don, you are 100% darn tootin' inextricably, irrefutably right. This existential threat from your wife is nothing short of outrageous. My God, the gaul, the cheek, the audacity. How very dare she!

You can't take this lying down man, you must fight for what's yours, even if it is garbage. It's your garbage, it's the garbage of your life. Today's garbage is tomorrow's archaeological treasures.

Look at all the cool stuff that gets dug up at ancient ruins and in caves. Scientists go ga-ga over these trinkets. Bibs and bobs, pots and pans, tchotchkes most likely tossed out 2,000 years ago by some poor bastard's partner.

Your wife no doubt has mentioned the 'h' word, and I say don't buy into it. My brother and I were considered hoarders years ago. But whenever our neighbours needed to borrow some obscure tool or object, we were always able to oblige. The difference between simply collecting and hoarding, is when your stuff develops its own living ecosystem. That's hoarding.

Still we had nothing on the greatest hoarders of all time, the Colyer brothers. They lived in a four story building in New York during the first half of the 20th century. When one of them died the police went on a nationwide manhunt to find the other. Weeks later they found him metres from where his brother died. He was buried under 40 tons of junk. The Colyer Brothers' incredible story is worth googling if you're a connoisseur of crap.

Now, if you do have an extra ecosystem evolving from your man cave with an accompanying organic miasma, then maybe your wife has a small point. If you can safely say that there's no dead rats, faeces, vomit or other 'natural ingredients' in there, then fight fiercely for your rights. And settle in because this could be a long fight. And perhaps put a lock on your office door.

"Every increased possession loads us with new weariness" — John Ruskin 1819-1900

Send your relationship problems to:
magentaappelpye@gmail.com

Magenta says:

We all have gewgaw, ugly, valueless mementos that remind us of a person, place, or condition. And as you get older, the souvenirs keep adding up.

It's only a matter of time and space before you will have to let go of some of those old penthouses and hockey sticks you stole from school in the 1970's. Such happy memories, so much unused paraphernalia.

I like space on my desk; otherwise it feels like my mind is cluttered. I can certainly see the appeal of Marie Kondo reminding us of the life-changing magic of tidying.

However, I think people went too far and now many interiors are tediously fawn, white and grey with no knick knacks to make the place feel warm and homely.

There must be a balance. And what is the rubicon that tips you over from being a collector to a hoarder? I guess one is just more organised than the other. And has more space.

From the *Hoarders* TV show we saw first-hand people whose possessions had become piles of crap, preventing rooms from being used for their intended purpose. It made us feel a lot better about our own untidy house.

Don, you are obviously invested in being right but, in intimate relationships, when one person is right and the other is wrong, both lose. The only proper answer to who is right and who is wrong is 'who cares?'

It sounds to me like you are just a messy bastard. I advise that you go hard and do some cleaning. If you don't know where to start, there are videos on YouTube teaching you how to declutter. So stop lollygagging and get in there before your wife does. Trust me, she will be brutal.

"Clutter is not just the stuff on your floor — it's anything that stands between you and the life you want to be living." — Peter Walsh

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The story of the Apricot Forest

Happy New Year 2025! May you enjoy good health and prosperity, and may this year be truly fantastic. As we begin this new journey, I would like to share a legendary Chinese story known as the Apricot Forest.

The tale of the Apricot Forest dates back to the Three Kingdoms period (220 to 280 AD).

During this time, there was a renowned doctor named Dong Feng, celebrated for his compassionate heart. He often treated the poor free of charge and even cared for nearby animals when they fell ill, earning the friendship of all the creatures in the vicinity.

Little squirrels would sometimes climb onto his shoulders to play, while birds would eat from his hands.

One night, while Dong Feng was reading, he suddenly heard a whimpering sound outside his window. He stepped outside and called out, "Is anyone there?" To his surprise, a little tiger emerged, sitting on the ground and looking at Dong Feng with pleading eyes.

Dong Feng gently patted the little tiger's head and said, "Little tiger, is someone in



by Chi Fung Lee

your family sick? Please take me to see!"

The little tiger happily turned around and led Dong Feng to a cave. Inside, Dong Feng found a mother tiger lying down with an injured foot, while a smaller tiger whimpered beside her.

Dong Feng quickly approached and reassured them, saying, "Don't worry, I will help you." After bandaging the mother tiger's wound, she and her two cubs saw Dong Feng off at the entrance of the cave.

One day, while passing through a place called Zhongli, Dong Feng noticed

that the local people were suffering from poverty and illness, a consequence of the ongoing wars of the Three Kingdoms period.

Deeply moved by their plight, he decided to settle on a small, impoverished hillside, dedicating himself to the care of the local villagers.

Dong Feng never charged fees for his medical services. Instead, he asked his patients to plant five apricot trees on the hillside for severe illnesses and one tree for minor ailments.

This unique arrangement attracted patients from surrounding areas, and soon the planting of apricot trees became his form of compensation. Over the years, the apricot forest flourished, expanding to over one hundred thousand trees.

When the apricots ripened, Dong Feng sold them to acquire grain, which he generously distributed to the impoverished residents and travellers in need. It was said that a tiger guarded the apricot forest to deter thieves, allowing only those who exchanged rice for apricots to partake in the harvest.

As the story of Dong Feng and his apricot forest spread, the term 'Apricot Forest'

evolved into an honorific title for doctors, symbolising the deep respect and reverence for practitioners who dedicate their lives to healing and well-being.

Thus, the legacy of Dong Feng lived on, a testament to the power of kindness and the healing spirit.

I trust you will appreciate this beloved tale. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my patients and friends who have placed their confidence in acupuncture, allowing me to be part of their healing journeys. Your support inspires me daily.

I also want to thank those who generously provide us with vegetable seeds, seedlings, and local produce. We feel fortunate to live in such a beautiful natural setting and to receive invaluable guidance on land stewardship and vegetable cultivation.

My wish is that one day this land will thrive like the Apricot Forest, overflowing with fruits and vegetables to share with my patients and friends.

Chi Fung Lee is an AHPRA and AACMA registered acupuncturist. Email: chibiz@xs4all.nl or 0478-239-298.



Happy self-awareness to carry you through a year of mental stability

Hello, New Year! Currently in your infancy, I guess you will mature slowly like a Camembert on the kitchen shelf.

I see new beginnings equivalent to a child's early life when her faculties develop and possibilities unfold.

Purpose, curiosity and prevailing high spirits present not unlike that of the wondrous black cockatoos careening in the trees. Unhampered optimism that seems to belong only to the young and wild.

How do you feel about self-awareness, New Year? Feeling competent and assured, or just a little bit stifled? I'd like to know what could potentially erect a barrier to the self-awareness process, the cognitive process to bond with oneself.

By birth, humans, like the New Year, should be as confident as a duckling in the pond.

Nature is not setting new life out in the world without being prepared for the challenges ahead. Sometimes it seems people vastly distance themselves from the laws of nature and, especially when raising children, ignore the finely-tuned and powerful skills that so aptly and dependably work in favour of their little minds.

Not only does an overload of early education take away self-awareness. There is the danger of losing personal autonomy and thwarting self-reliance by the futile attempts at assisting the learning progress, which in turn blocks the path to self-awareness.

Children have natural self-awareness, meaning they are aware of themselves as an independent person distinctively different from the other person. If there is no unwelcome disturbance children remain free of struggle, which enables them to preserve their wonderful awareness that carries them safely through life.

What's more, such self-awareness safeguarded by thoughtful parenting and



by Antionette Ensbey

gentle guidance leads to a mentally stable person with a well-rounded character; and the owner of such reassurance of self is likely a giving person.

I say this, New Year, because I feel you are giving the world nurturing empathy for you and me to be loving and compassionate, dependable and generous – as long as your self-awareness is preserved, for if it is lost you may be in search of it and that search takes up all of your energy and time. And you would not have much time for us.

Mental well-being traces its roots to inner emotional stability. In sustaining stability, all sentient beings go through the formative stage of self-awareness. To be aware of oneself is gaining an insight into who you are. It is appreciating the uniqueness of your individual character. It is knowing the core of your being and knowing how to sustain the connection to your inner nucleus under all circumstances.

Experiencing the undoing of your inner self-awareness in the years when it should have been formed during your infant and childhood years can create obstacles in your ongoing character development in adult years. Let-It-Unfold Parenting as opposed to Interference Parenting can prevent the loss of self-awareness in the young child.

Back to you, New Year. You know something about self-reliant play and how it creates self-awareness. You play your role by getting playful and 'silly'. That's why you are so inventive. Playing with children in a manner that leaves the play to the child to be owned by and facilitated by the child opens endless creative possibilities.

As an adult, show off your inner child until rolling on the floor with laughter. That's when you let go of influencing and directing, in particular children's play. Exploring the inner world rich with imagination. Free of instruction.

Oh, to see the rosy cheeks, the animated smile, the sparkling eyes reflecting inner satisfaction by plunging into the abandon of restraint! It is most gratifying to observe a child's excitement, wanting to move, wanting to experience 'more of themselves' once they get going. It is called being alive. The whole physical and mental being rolls in complete wellness.

Dear New Year, would you agree that suppressed free play is doing the opposite? That if you lived by a scheduled timetable and back-to-back appointments, your freedom to explore would be curbed? And as a young year would not be able to unfold your unique personality? Similar to children's programmed play that creates energetic blockages, causes muddled confusion and impedes on a healthy maturation process.

Yes, New Year, you were saying? "Pare down on an over-scheduled and stringent agenda. Trim back on mentally exhaustive learning programs for your kids so you don't run into the risk of overlaying uniqueness with preconceived ideas that do not belong to you or your children. Navigating by the laws of nature, playfully and in earnest creates conscious awareness, builds clarity and lasting stability." Skip along, New Year!

For parent and relationship counselling, email: newpacificpublishing@gmail.com



Your Auric field

Crystalline Clarity

by Daryl Spilberg

As expansive multidimensional beings, we are extremely complex on many levels with many layers to our existence.

The physical human body itself is constructed extremely intricately and if just one part or function goes out of balance enough, it can cause illness and even death.

This is also true of our energy bodies, as it only takes one aspect to go out of balance to cause problems and associated symptoms.

There are many different layers to our complex energy centres and bodies but today I am going to write about our Auric field, also known as our Aura.

The Auric field is not to be confused with our Chakra system. Both are important energetic systems, with the main difference being that the Auric field is an energy field external to our physical body that envelops an individual, while the Chakras are internal energy systems.

The two work together though and the Aura has 7 layers to it which correspond with the 7 main Chakras.

The Aura is a large energetic field that encapsulates individuals – indeed every living thing has an Aura too.

They can vary in size, depending on how much energy one is radiating and how they are feeling in themselves and within their energy.

Size can also depend on how earthy and/or spiritually advanced one is – for example, if one has a higher baseline vibration and frequency, they can encompass a greater Aura.

Maintaining a strong and healthy Aura is pivotal to overall wellbeing. There are many ways to damage and weaken an Auric field – here are a few common ones:

- **Drugs and psychedelic substances:** These harsh substances can cause significant cracks, holes and other damage within one's field, allowing other energies, entities and other beings to be able to enter, attach and influence at will.

- **Stress, anxiety, fear:** When constantly perpetuating these lower-level emotions, it can strain one's Aura and weaken it, thinning the protective layer and compounding the effect of the emotions.

- **Trauma:** When a particularly traumatic experience takes place, it can weaken the Aura and cling to the field until properly healed, processed and released.

Along with living a healthy lifestyle, here are some ways to strengthen your Aura:

- **Healing sessions:** Working with healing modalities such as Crystal Dreaming that I offer or other modalities from trusted practitioners, one can help clear blockages and repair damage to the Auric field. Some can ideally get you in touch with your spirit guides, who can work on and repair any damages to your Aura, energy centres and energy bodies.

- **Aura cleansing meditation:** Various meditations to strengthen, repair and fortify one's Auric field can be of great benefit and should be practiced regularly. These can be easily found online or done alone, through self-visualization and intention.

- **Smudging:** Smudging oneself with sage or other purifying herbs can help to cleanse one's Aura.

For more information about your Auric field, energy bodies and centres, or to book in a Crystal Dreaming session to help clear and repair yours, please visit my website: www.crystallineclarity.com.au or call for a chat on 0422-717-905.

PLANETARY BENEFITS OF THE FLEXITARIAN LIFE

By 2027, a flexitarian diet may be the norm, a plant-based lifestyle in Generation Z's life. (See: <https://plantbasednews.org/news/tech/ai-predicts-world-vegan>)

Why? Flexitarian diets pace animal food. Animal use and abuse has skyrocketed, driving ecological destruction.

Strange as it may sound, many protesters in Newcastle port added to global warming. Sure, protesting coal use is heroic, but animal farming/consumption is over 35% of pollution.

There is a better way: "Walk the Earth, but leave only footprints" – Aquarian ideology.

Neither we, nor communities, are truly 'wild and free' What we do impacts on life.

Billions of years ago, life on Earth formed in single cells. Early on tasks were divided: cell specialisation and multicellular organisms came over the last 10% of evolution.

People are organisations of many complex cells, CEOs of huge organisations: our bodies.

Mammals, and therefore humans, a comparatively recent development;

Shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

biologists think we may have evolved from reptiles: inside our craniums we have small lizard-like brains, a larger primate centre, and enveloping all: the sizeable humanoid one.

These three brains are distinct structures within our head and give inborn reactions, like fleeing when sensing danger, seeking soulmates or avoiding poisonous foods.

Overseeing cell co-ordination is controlled by a captain, you, conducting with big picture awareness. Much control is sub-conscious, but with concentration, some chemicals or resonances your consciousness can reach deep within, wake up a superman or superwoman.

People have a set of rules how to survive harsh nature, called 'Jungle Law' by Kipling, but social rules glue societies together and operate the communities and worlds we belong to.



Just like individuals function as one awareness over many cells and organs, societies too are highly specialised organisations, with people as single units.

Communities are self-organising multi-cellular organisms of individuals, not dissimilar to beehives and ant nests.

No matter what communities offer, the highest goods are viability for society and self-reliance for the individual. Best advice: neither be overly headstrong, nor a doormat.

While greater individual effort is encouraged, social regulations hold societies and constituent communities together.

Due to population growth and out-of-control consumption our societies head for the end of the evolutionary road: Mutually Assured Destruction in all-out warfare between cultures, or climatic death due to too many grabbing one-sided nutrition... or we adapt.

Earth now has to feed over

30 billion people, cows and pets. Too much.

A person can live a flexitarian or fully plant-based lifestyle: footprints with over 300% less land and water.

Overshoot, loss of wilderness and land degradation are big challenges to human life.

In February this year, an SCU conference will debate how to solve growing homelessness.

Simple, convert animal farms into people land. Why isn't it done? Consumer demand.

Rural economies thrive on feeding population centres by using nature, but how changes. At present 1/3 of this shire's economic activities still depends on exploiting 'livestock'.

Research shows it is ignorance: a small slice of the population (12%), consumes half the animals. They have a right to do what they want, but fuel problems like climate change, land clearing, health cost, extinctions, floods.

If consuming dead animals is important to you, please reduce dependency.

Earth is straining.