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The not-so-humble spud

Food matters
by Neil Amor

While the potato has been known in Europe only since the 1500s, it was growing wild as early as 13,000 years ago on the coast of South America.

Archaeological findings suggest that domestication may have occurred in the humid lowlands of southern Chile, as well as in the cold high Andes.

One of the earliest archaeologically verified potato and sweet potato remains, dating to the end of the last ice age, were discovered in caverns at Chilca Canyon, in the south-central area of coastal Peru.

In Incan mythology, Axomamma is considered to be the Goddess of potatoes. Her name translates to 'potato mother.'

She is a neutral god whose responsibility is considered to be to help the Incan people with the cultivation of potatoes, which had slowly begun to replace maize as the primary source of nutrition, and most villages had an odd-shaped potato they worshipped to ask Axomamma for a good harvest.

She came into prominence after the Inca learned how to cultivate potatoes on their own without having to rely on the wild potatoes that grew on the Andean

mountains.

It is also believed that the dead were buried with a potato to symbolise the blessings of Axomamma in the afterlife as well.

Today there are over 5000 varieties of potatoes in all sizes, shapes and colours, and they can be found all over the world.

In 1995, the potato became the first vegetable to be grown in space.

Though George Lerner invented Mr Potato Head back in 1949, the toy is still popular in several households throughout the world.

The *Guinness Book of Records* states that the heaviest potato was grown by Peter Glazebrook (UK) in 2021, and weighed 4.98 kilograms.

Braised Potatoes

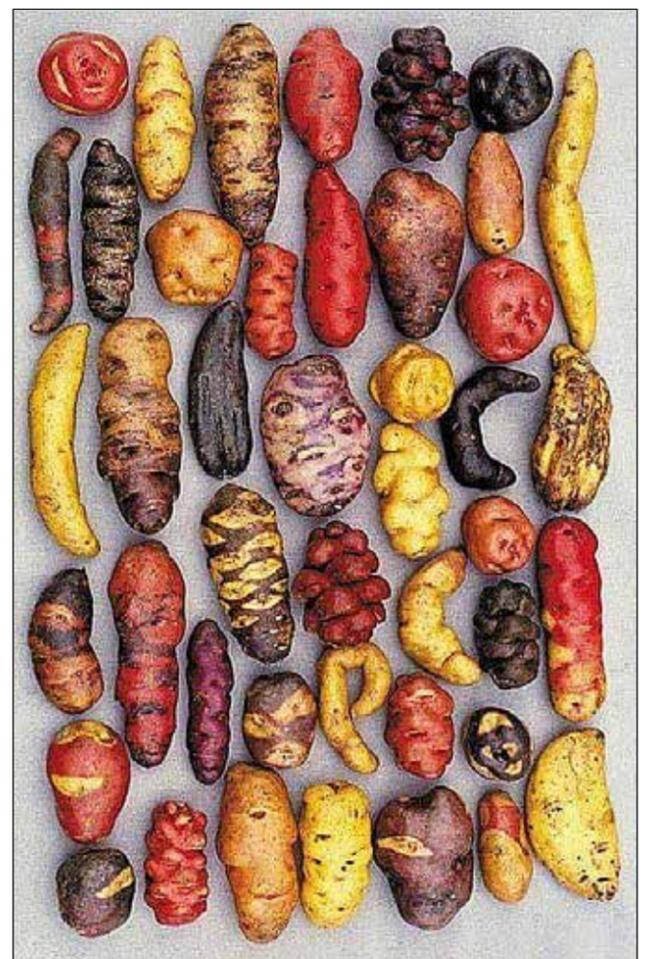
This colourful side-dish originates in Korea and is known as Gamja Jorim, with jorim referring to any dish made by simmering the main ingredient in sauce until it is reduced. Pairs well with kimchi and rice.

Ingredients

3 medium-large Dutch cream potatoes peeled and cut into bite size cubes
One medium carrot,
2-3 green chilli peppers
1/4 medium onion, all cut into chunks
tblsp of cooking oil.

Braising liquid

3 tbs soy sauce



2tbs sugar
1 tbs mirin
1 tsp minced garlic
black pepper
3/4 cup water
1 tsp sesame oil
1/2 tsp roasted sesame seeds.

Method

In a small bowl, combine all the braising liquid ingredients, except the sesame oil and seeds. Stir well.

In a non-stick pan or small pot, sauté the potatoes in cooking oil over medium heat for about 5 mins, stirring occasionally.

Add the sauce mix and bring to a boil over high heat. Drop the carrots in. Cover and reduce the heat to medium and cook until potatoes are almost cooked through (about 6 minutes). They should be firm, not mushy.

Stir in green peppers and onion and continue to boil un-covered until the sauce is reduced and slightly thickened (about 3 minutes). Stir in sesame oil and sprinkle with seeds.

Until next month, eat well.

The pain of ignorance

I feel sadness when someone loses their pet to tick bite, because usually it is unnecessary that the animal dies.

Over the years I have seen the miraculous return to life of three dogs and two cats, that were severely compromised from tick bite. They were all very ill and one of the cats was already paralysed.

Their return to good health was guaranteed by the administration of the homeopathic 'Ixodes'. There are those that will say that homeopathics don't work.

I am not a homeopath and only know the basics, but observation and personal experience have shown me that homeopathics, in this case Ixodes, work extremely well if used exactly as prescribed.

For this reason, it is imperative if one decides to purchase Ixodes that one ask for the accompanying instruction sheet for tick bite.

The Nimbin Apothecary carries both and parting with around ten or eleven dollars, rather than a thousand dollars at the vet makes sense.

Mind you, if it looks as though the vet is the only



by Tonia Haynes

option and one is short on dosh, a 'go fund me' will usually work in this community, where many people know the sadness of losing a good mate to the idiosyncrasies of nature.

Now, for the frowny bit. Ticks have definitely become more toxic in this area in the past years. I think it is because the poisons we use on our animals to keep them safe, either internally, or collar, have forced the ticks to have a serious get together on how to resolve the issue of their survival.

Quite frankly, it may be that we are damned if we do use chemical deterrents, and damned if we don't.

Personally, I treat my pets with basic Nexguard for ticks

and fleas in order to keep them safe. But research is a must.

Giving one's animal a tablet that kills ticks, fleas, heart worm and worms in one fell swoop in order to have less to do, seems to me, a big dose of overload for the animal.

Conversely, instructions from an ambulance driver at a First Aid Conference have encouraged the storage of a poison in my bathroom cupboard. Rid, Aeroguard, Frontline, it doesn't matter the brand, as long as it kills ticks.

Using a cotton bud to dab one of these nasties on the bum of a tick, kills it in thirty seconds. And if one is not sure where the tick is located, spraying or rubbing the nasty all over the animal's body will more than likely find the culprit or culprits and kill them quickly.

I can hear the protests now "But poisoning them gives them time to shoot their load. Better to freeze them". Maybe. But from personal observation, a left alone tick's orgasm lasts much longer than thirty seconds.

The other thing I have heard from others, which will bring an animal back

to health, is a high dose of Vitamin C. I have never used it personally but apparently intravenous Vitamin C is available at agricultural stores.

I have the blessing of having *Homeopathic Treatments for Animals* by Tracey Morely in my care. She covers everything from bites and stings to injury. Its value for animals and humans is beyond repute.

I only have a hard copy, but if anyone is interested in this valuable information, phone me. I will happily print off a copy for you, free of charge.

I was reading on Facebook five exercises for tight, hip flexors. Good idea – very important muscles. But what if they are out of balance? For example, one is doing more work than the other, then it may be some time before the exercises can be done with grace and ease.

It is quite easy, usually to re-balance these muscles and all the other muscles in your body. I use a mix of Bowen Therapy, kinesiology, remedial massage and pranic healing, which will leave you feeling more liberated in body and mind.

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Early control of weeds is the key

Weed words

by Triny Roe

Nimbin is not just the town of Weed, the special ancient herb, it's also a valley of weeds – opportunistic, aggressively growing and exponentially replicating plants which can transform landscapes, reduce biodiversity, impact on agriculture and our health and alter our lifestyles.

The sub-tropical climate here is the Goldilocks zone – not too hot, not too dry, not too wet, not too cold. Everything thrives.

Exotic species, imported into Australia, usually arrive without the climatic factors or insect or other pathogens which keep their populations under control in their home territory. Here they run rampant, especially in disturbed areas.

Agriculture and forestry have taken their toll on the landscape. Land use in the Northern Rivers has changed over the decades. Farming has declined and the tree changers moved in. People fleeing the cities now live on 'lifestyle' properties.

50 years ago, many Northern Rivers valleys were covered in kikuyu grass for the cattle. There were hardly any trees, and the main weeds were groundsel and small leaf privet in the gullies and a bit of crofton weed on the southern slopes.

The farmers kept the camphor off the fence lines and generally managed the land to keep it free of weeds.

Now there are fewer cows (and farmers), lots more trees and you can't count the number of different weeds on one, or even two hands. Over the decades, more and more introduced plant species have gone rogue. Many are garden escapees, ornamentals lovingly planted by residents to beautify their homes.



Groundsel leaves are distinctive

Some of these plants now feature on weed lists and are banned from sale and distribution in NSW, but some aren't, even though they have the propensity to become problematic.

Night jasmine or jessamine, *Cestrum nocturnum*, is available in nurseries and on ebay even though it can aggressively invade forests and pastures. It has earned a reputation as a serious environmental weed in SE Qld and Northern NSW. A fast-growing shrub reaching four metres with multi-stems, it can form thickets.

Its cousins, green and red cestrum, *C. parqui* and *C. elegans*, are on the North Coast Priority Weeds list. All parts of these cestrums are toxic to humans and other mammals. Do not eat, wear gloves when handling and avoid touching with bare skin. Birds, however, can eat the fruit and are instrumental in spreading the seed.

Small leaf privet, *Ligustrum sinense*, is fruiting now. It has long been considered a weed. Frugivorous birds carry seed into nearby bush, proliferating this pesky plant. It colonises creek banks, roadsides, and ex farmland. So pretty when it's flowering, for that week, but it's

another species that can form thickets, outcompeting and excluding native vegetation, reducing biodiversity.

Privet can also cause severe allergic reactions in sensitive people. Cut them down quickly to reduce the spread.

Listed as a noxious weed for decades, groundsel bush, *Baccharis halimifolia* is still around. It can also cause allergic reactions and now is the time to get onto it. Easily recognised by its distinctive rhomboid wedge-shaped leaves with toothy margins, it will be flowering come May. One mother groundsel bush produces over a million light white fluffy seeds, some of which drift kilometres on the wind to find new homes.

Introduced to Australia in the 1880s, this woody shrub quickly became established. Abundant in previous years, strict controls reduced its numbers, but it still exists in pockets and continues to pop up anywhere. Groundsel bush can invade the understory of wetlands and forestry plots.

Biocontrol agents have been released, but they are not enough by themselves. Mechanical or chemical methods may be needed on large specimens.

Get them early.

Plant of the month



White beech
Gmelina leichhardtii

by Richard Burer

White beech is a semi-deciduous rainforest tree that grows to around 40m. It is a medium / fast growing tree that grows on rich volcanic and alluvial soils as an isolated remnant tree or in subtropical or dry rainforest remnants.

Common in the valleys around Nimbin and the Northern Rivers, it hasn't recovered well after extensive logging of the past 150 years despite being "common" in the area.

Friends who worked in saw mills in the 70s told me how west of Nimbin this species was almost always available.

Milling often resulted in more than half the tree going to the boiler room for burning to keep the mill running.

Along with other rainforest timbers at the time, the accepted thought of people in the industry is that timbers like this species were an endless resource, never ending.

Despite it being rare in more southern areas, in this area I usually find one in each paddock or in remnant and regrowth rainforest where it's quite common.

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

A graceful tree and being semi-deciduous, White Beech is an excellent parks and gardens tree, its form suitable in public places. In conservation plantings, it's an excellent mature phase tree in rainforest plantings, as it's quite hardy and almost always finds its way into most of our projects.

Timber-wise, it's well known in cabinet making and boat building, and it is one of the finest carving timbers in the world.

In the timber industry, I have known it to be referred to as butter wood its lightly toned colour and grain equally stunning and subtle for furniture and art.

In cabinet timber plantings, I have found it to have reliable and strong growth, but it does need attention and pruning from multi stems when under stress from climate and grass.

Rainforest pigeons are delighted this March as they feast on the bright purple blue fruits of this amazing local rainforest tree.

Sometimes a bit tricky to propagate, but almost always available at your local rainforest nursery like local businesses Whalebone and Firewheel nurseries.

Freedom to choose

“So, live as if you were living already for the second time and as if you had acted the first time as wrongly as you are about to act now!” Viktor Frankl (1905-1977), *Man's Search for Meaning*.

I like this quote very much. It sings to me, especially after last year's brush with serious illness and near death. Live abundantly, drink deeply of the springs of existence, don't waste your time. Live and choose wisely.

We may or may not live again, who actually knows? Whether or not consciousness manifests in other bodies after our physical death, this is finally unknowable. Right now, this life we live is it.

Too much time in most lives is lived as though what is happening in this instance is just a preparation, a practice run, for a better life. But in this way, the experiences of now are somehow set aside, until we die, meaning lives are spent in anticipation, a dream for perfection, or heaven, or whatever.

Frankl's observation about living now is living in all its messiness. This doesn't mean just going along mindlessly

with whatever crops up. What it does mean is living life with purpose. We are, after all, given free will and a sense of determination for living meaningfully, for us individually and as a community. Enough research has found that when we give up a sense of a meaningful life we fall into despair and deep depression.

Neurologist, psychologist, and philosopher, Frankl was a holocaust survivor, spending four years in three concentration camps. He lost his family and his wife and, effectively, was forced into the realisation that the search for meaning matters to psychological health. After all, what was the point of all the suffering?

Several years ago, when my brother and I travelled to Estonia to catch up with our relatives there, I asked my Estonian aunt what it was like under Russian rule when it was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR didn't recognise Estonian independence until 1991). She said, "Remember you are always free in your mind." She was Estonia's first paediatric surgeon, trained in St Petersburg. She knew really tough times, but

difficulties didn't constrict her. Freedom to think, yes, but Frankl goes further: freedom to choose what you respond to.

It is hard not being reactive to everything, and this requires conscious effort. I was put to the test repeatedly while sick in bed in hospital. I had to practice equanimity (evenness of mind) on a minute-to-minute basis and sometimes I succeeded.

Sometimes, I really didn't. My temper flared in the face of what I perceived as the stupidity of others. It flared when things didn't go smoothly and without fuss. It flared when my breakfast wasn't the one I'd ordered. It flared when the nurse couldn't come and elevate my legs to relieve the pressure sores that were forming on my heels.

When I was cold and someone had taken away the extra blanket. When... this and that happened. Suffering is no different a time for practicing self-awareness and choosing one's responses than when everything is going well.

How can we achieve equanimity and respond to things that affect us with conscious awareness?



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

“Between stimulus and response there is a space.

In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom,” so said Frankl. This space is not somewhere where the mind is filled with conditioned responses, nor platitudes, but a short interlude in which a fairer response is possible.

In Buddhism, this space between is where compassion arises.

This is what I see the meaning of my life is: to know compassion and express it not just in times of comfort, but stress and awkwardness. We humans are beings of great potential. We can choose cruelty and greed or we can choose fairness and love.

Whatever we choose arises from our decisions, not the conditions in which we find ourselves.

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Work towards truth and ethics and away from rabbit hole obsessions

Life regularly challenges us as we walk on along its corridor and those challengers are all the more extreme if we are the kind of person who feels compelled to bring real and lasting change.

There are many impediments to change. Ironically, relatively few are placed in our way by the actually super privileged oligarchs. Even the insurance driven fear ordinances provided by the corporate bureaucracies, both public and private, don't fully explain the level of inertia we experience. It is not even the case that legislative restrictions keep us at heel. Look how affective the war on drugs was?

In my experience the first and greatest opponents of change are actually the most disadvantaged who are scared of losing the little they have. It doesn't take much to scare

us and it takes a whole lot to reassure us, particularly when we're living pay cheque to pay cheque or on welfare. This group makes up the great majority of us, indeed this third estate is the home and source of all power but getting us to change is fraught with difficulty.

It only takes a few sour grapes or a mildly competent agent provocateur to undermine the unity required to keep a movement moving.

The norms and behaviours of our society exist like a kind of school of fish with its own inherent inertia and momentum. Radical risk-taking fish swim off and are timidly followed by the school till they appear to fail; then the school turns to follow the next trending fish. This natural process has been co-opted, corrupted and deranged by marketing and its control of popular



Revenge of the Loon
by Laurie Axtens

media. The marketing department's focus is on winning the hearts and minds of the people and in this way regulate change, keep it headed toward their own enrichment and the enrichment of their bosses.

Marketing departments are employed across the globe to keep people tracking as required. In some parts of

the world people still have faith in the divine right of the kings, some hold religiously to the rights of money and purchasing power as the ultimate arbiter and some of us endeavour to keep the notion of truth and the greater good as our guide. Below it all the battle for hearts and minds remains the main game.

So, competing successfully against corporate marketing is what anyone desiring lasting change needs to get their heads around.

Each new form of media has bought about a surge of freedom followed by a surge in top-down control as the marketers have come to understand the new mechanism of communication and turn it to the profit of themselves and the employers. The printing press caused a widening of the political power base; radio and TV did the same,

and now the internet.

Interestingly the individualisation of communication that the internet has provided was initially very liberating, then the onset of AI and complex individual data manipulation by groups like Cambridge Analytica meant that we could be deceived on a very personal level. We were led down rabbit holes based on grains of truth and biases we held strongly and we were drawn into places and toward political positions we would have normally found abhorrent.

Our job more than anything now is working out how to get algorithm-based social media to work toward the truth and ethical practices and away from rabbit hole obsessions and urban myths.

The more I play in this space the more I think knee jerk responses are

counterproductive. We have lost many to these rabbit holes and opposing them directly only locks them in to their mythic romances. It would be better to send them to Coventry on those topics, as social media battles are fought without care to logic or real data assessment; and the more emotive the responses - the greater the potency of that algorithm. All we are doing is making the rabbit hole larger and deeper. It's not a battle we can win, and to be honest they're just little bubbles like froth in bubble bath - just wipe them away.

This has been my lesson. Stop feeding the wolf of conflict and negativity, and start feeding the wolf of collective care and action; the wolf of positivity. Fatten up that Lupine and stop treading in the other one's poop and walking it into the carpet.

Natural Law

by Helene Collard

It's been a 'chunky' start to the year, with the winds of change and the currents of flow, bringing movement to what has been still.

With this new level of activity, our world can feel full. Life on this planet is rapidly changing and evolving, and it is not uncommon to feel swept up and overwhelmed.

Consciously slowing down is the key. Be present to the transformation occurring in your inner and outer landscape.

I recently bought a safe to house my children's technology devices when they are not in use. I deliberated about doing this for weeks, I wondered, "Am I going too far?"

Yet since we openly discussed the screen time issues I was feeling anxious about, the safe entered our world. The kids wrote their own daily schedule that included what they thought was a fair allocation of screen time.

Since the safe arrived, our home life has felt significantly more balanced and clear. Space is available to be 'present' with ourselves and each other. We play board games together, cook dinner, make lunches and wash up together. Have our own reading/quiet time. One of my sons comes on my morning walk with me.

The basis of trust comes from honest, respectful and open communication, particularly when there are issues to resolve. I was feeling anxious about the influence screen's were having in our home. I felt upset that the kids were finding it so hard to regulate and stick to the rules. I took some time to read

up on the effects of screen (see *The Teen Brain* by David Gillespie, 2019), this really helped to contextualise the issue, and learn my kids were doing their best, but needed more of my help.

I spoke to the kids openly and proactively about the feelings I was having, I supported their self-determination by allowing them to write their own schedules, and told them their devices were addictive products, so we would put them in the safe when not in use.

Honest, respectful and open communication requires presence - the cornerstone of Reiki philosophy, where each of the five Reiki principles begins with 'Just for today'. The Reiki principles are:

Do not anger
Do not worry
Be kind
Do your duties fully
Be grateful

The philosophy of Reiki is a lifelong contemplation and embodiment of these five principles. Over the 19 years I have walked with Reiki, these principles have guided me through the seasons of my life, and prompted me to grow in my faith of life itself.

When we align our heart with the universal life energy source, we align with a powerful and loving force that only acts for 'the highest good of all'. This can at times feel ambiguous and/or confronting, yet it is a power you can trust.

In times where it can feel safer to seek the comfort of 'group think' rather than risk entering new and uncertain terrain, making space to align with the universal life energy is a courageous move that only works for the highest good of all.

We need more and more of us to release from echo chambers of 'group think', conformity and false consensus that refuse to consider context and nuance, and thereby, increase social and political polarisation.

Nature is inherently contextual and nuanced. Nature is interconnected. We are nature.

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Helene is a Reiki Master teacher, an Indigenous trauma-aware practitioner and innovative learning designer

Medicinal mushrooms: Wolfiporia

by Trish Clough, herbalist

It makes me feel very old to realise I have been a practising herbalist for over 40 years. However, it does give me an interesting perspective on developments in the field of herbal medicine during this time. Some are positive, and others make me a little sad.

On the positive side, scientific research has given us an amazing understanding of the reason plant medicines are effective.

We now have knowledge and understanding of the active constituents in the herbs, and the physiological effects these have in the body. Repeatedly, modern research validates traditional use of the herbs that has passed down throughout history and in many different cultures.

I now incorporate in my dispensary over 100 herbal tinctures of plants that were not in my original Diploma course, and so I have made extensive studies as part of my continuing professional education. It is a requirement for maintaining accreditation that practitioners undertake a minimum number of hours annually of continuing education.

One of the sad things I find with modern practitioner education is that some of the 'old fashioned' remedies from my original training are no longer included in more recent courses of practitioner education.

As we learn more from different cultures, there is a tendency for certain herbs to become 'flavour of the month', and while I benefit from this expanding knowledge, some of the old favourites are dropped by the tincture manufacturers due to reduced demand.

In order to maintain these in my dispensary, I either source them as dried herbs, or where suitable I grow them in my garden so I can make tinctures for my dispensary.

Having said that, I am grateful for the knowledge and availability of some wonderful medicinal plants from other cultures. This especially includes therapeutic mushrooms. I have written previously about some, including Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) and Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*).

These mushrooms were not included in the materia medica (list of medicinal plants) in my original training with herbalist Dorothy Hall in the 1970s. They have however been used and revered in other cultures for hundreds of years, and probably longer.

One of the newest additions to my dispensary is the medicinal mushroom named Wolfiporia (*Poria cocos*). It was considered traditionally to restore and refresh both the body and the mind. It is nourishing in many ways, and is very calming.



Traditionally used in China (and throughout East Asia), it is highly revered and is present in a large percentage of Chinese medicinal formulations. This is because it has an astonishing range of benefits. Its key actions include nervous system, cardiovascular, immune and gastrointestinal support.

Additionally, it is beneficial in liver and kidney disease, blood sugar imbalances and some reproductive system issues.

It is traditionally used for chronic infections, cancer prevention, an adjunct to cancer treatment, depression, dizziness, headache, gout, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), poor concentration and memory, prostatitis and viral infections.

While there is no claim for it to be a total treatment, I see it as a useful supporting remedy for these conditions. While generally considered a safe remedy, there are some cautions with prescription medications, so it is best prescribed by a qualified practitioner.

I became interested in Wolfiporia when noticing it as a key ingredient in a new professional tablet formulation for stress. It contains Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*), Zizyphus (*Zizyphus jujuba*) and Magnolia (*Magnolia officinalis*) as well as Wolfiporia.

The combination is indicated for anxiety, fatigue, stress and insomnia. It is also useful for burn-out and associated depression.

I particularly like the combination of Poria with Passionflower as a restorative and calming combination.

Trish Clough is a herbalist who has been practising for more than 40 years. She now conducts her practice in Iluka after relocating from Lismore.

Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough2@gmail.com

A moment

by S Sorrensen

I'm anxious. The first rays are lancing through the mist and eastern tree line to sparkle up the valley here, and there with diamond clusters of sunlight.

Awful, empty. I'm not actually having a panic attack, but panic is lurking. It hasn't shown itself, but I feel it leaning against my spine and pulling at my lungs.

Another gig I didn't get. Oh no. I mean, who am I without gigs?

A finger of sunlight touches my neck. That's comforting. Like the coffee I have in my hand, and the Valium I have in my bedroom.

I suppose, these days, I don't really put in the effort.

Last night it rained. Again. Fire and floods and earthquakes lay siege to other parts of this spinning planet, while here it rains just when it needs to. Sun and rain in a perfect dance. The garden, the forest – the whole damn valley I'm staring into – is verdant, the wetness from last night's rain enhancing the glittering welcome to the day.

It's beautiful. But I'm anxious.

How can that be? How can I be sitting here on the deck of my shack under the cliffs with a half-full cup of organic coffee, a secure home behind me, a healthy valley in front and feel anxious?

I mean, there are people struggling to survive in Ukraine and Sudan and the USA. There are hungry polar bears wandering aimlessly, wondering where the ice went, wondering what it means to be a meme. California and Tasmania are burning as the climate changes and governments fiddle with submarines. And here's me, sitting in a prism of sunshine, coffee in hand, mortgage paid, citrus fruiting – feeling



anxious. That's just, um, indulgent, right?

I know I'm lucky. My life has been an easy one. Born in a post-war economic boom, upskilled in a free education system, art and love explored in an Aquarian dream, growing older with income generated by those earlier lucky experiences – all leading up to now, when, strangely, my coffee cup feels half empty, the luxury around me as shallow as a Netflix series, my achievements as meaningless as waterproof swimmers.

I have two things to do today: my washing and write a column.

Writing is hard. But I am a writer, right? I need other people's attention, always have: my parents, God, my teachers, my lover, my audience. I see myself through others' eyes. Hmm. That means I am their creation. But is that really me?

I put on the washing. I like washing, even though no-one sees. Maybe I have relied too much on what others think. Maybe a sense of self generated by seeing me through others, is ultimately

inauthentic. Maybe I am not that.

Like Descartes said 300 years ago, we cannot trust others to create us. And, let's face it, encounters with others are random.

If I'd had a different English teacher; if I hadn't stopped in Nimbin 40 years ago; if I hadn't smiled at her at that birthday party, would I be a different person? Yes. Is there a me who exists beyond all that? I hope so.

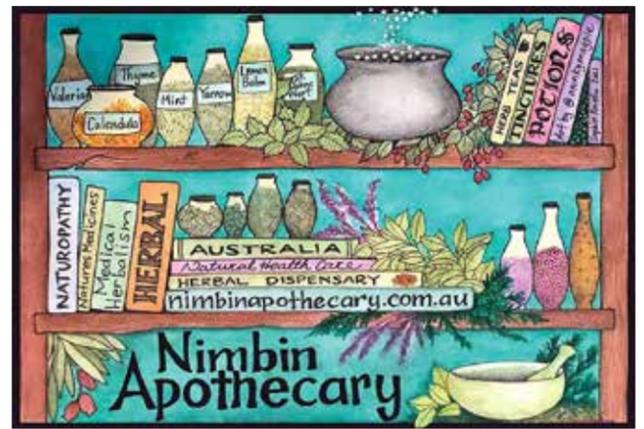
Now I'm older, facing my mortality and loading shirts and socks into a washing machine, I wonder: who am I?

Despite all that I have, I'm restless. Now there's only one journey to take: away from the audience, away from the other, away from whom I thought I was.

Leaning against the washing machine, I vibrate. It's nice. Panic scampers away, all shook up. Anxiety settles down to the rhythm, beating like a heart.

Who am I? I think I am the washing bloke. Therefore I am.

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Legal writes

by John 'Sindhu' Adams

Decades ago, my best friend picked up a hitchhiker. He was about ten. After a few days, he was gone. Some years later he found me at the farm where I was recovering from ten years of being an employed solicitor. He stayed two nights then disappeared.

We caught up again, years later, at the pre-flood office. He needed a lawyer. For the last few years, he's been paying off small loans by helping me on labouring jobs.

Last week police served a banning notice on his 14-year-old daughter. For

A banning notice

the next 12 months she's banned from a local major supermarket. Since she's never shoplifted or caused any trouble, it appears unwarranted. Her father's employed there. They're close, these two. I've seen them work together.

She had faced the Local Court two weeks before, on serious charges after a theatrical home invasion. We'd advised her, given the police evidence, to plead guilty to everything. Her mother objected. We explained; provocation is only a partial defence to murder.

What my young friend did, after months of racist and violent bullying from a group of other young people, was give them some of their own back. She's interestingly neurodiverse. Selective mutism doesn't help. Schooling has not been fun for her. Like her father she's functionally illiterate.

She decided to scare them shitless. In black hoodie, black scarf around her face, black gloves, heavy boots, armed with a couple of knives, one a 'zombie knife', and pepper spray, she'd smashed a window then the

front door opened, and she entered, had an altercation with the victim and left. Superhero.

At sentencing, I waited for the magistrate to finish reading the Juvenile Justice report and my written submissions, then handed up a reference from the man who created our office-in-a-church. It read:

"As a licenced, non-structural builder/carpenter and water proofer, I have had the privilege of training many young people in basic carpentry techniques. But rarely have I seen someone progress so far, so quickly as you did."

"Throughout the two weeks, working alongside your dad and you, I saw things in your character that you should be very proud of."

"To see someone go from not having read a measuring tape before, to repeatedly marking out, millimetre perfect and painting with such a steady hand, was exceptional."

"Also, your focus in marking out all the nail fixings and your hard work in keeping the floor clear and clean, so we had a safer place to work in, is to be commended."

Her Honour, going

through the charges, asked the prosecutor whether she'd added up the maximum penalties for adults. I interrupted. "67 years, your Honour."

The sentence was a year of weekly chats with an old and trusted friend of mine. Now she has the professional support she needed all along. We were about to close the file when her father rang me about the banning notice, "When she was on bail she couldn't go anywhere without me. Now..."

The victim of the home invasion works at the supermarket as well. She's white. So, I imagine, is the manager. I await the reply to my letter.

When her father stayed with me at the farm, I was a sole practitioner with a few files from old clients and friends. Since then, the firm's grown too fast. Now I'm paying two wages and still have no website, let alone business plan. I need the time to update our system.

Staff say we need another solicitor. As the system collapses, maybe someone in the city knows about three meals from chaos and is ready to escape.

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So they say...

Do the test, send it off, and get that shit behind you

I am now in the age group that they send out bowel kits for you to do at home and send off. I don't want anything to do with that shit, but my wife is insistent. I have been putting it off for six months but am running out of excuses. I'm hoping Norm might be able to help me.

– Mark Skid, Stony Chute



with Uncle Norm & Auntie Maj

It's the process we're not keen on. Only a coprophiliac would enjoy digging around in the chodbin after laying a cable. Yes mate, that's what they want you to do.

Inside the envelope is a paper sheet, a little plastic scraper like the ones you used to eat sherbet with as a kid, a couple of plastic vials, instructions and forms to fill out.

You're supposed to lay the sheet in the jobby pan so it lies above the water line. This is so when you release the hounds, they lie on the paper and don't get wet. Very important, apparently. Then you take the sherbet spoon and scrape some of the filth up and pop it in a vial and send it off. That's it. Done. Thank fuck for that.

A word of advice, do not do the test after a big night out on the beer and kebabs like I did. I dropped such a heavy load, the paper sheet and its precious cargo sunk without a trace and the mission was aborted.

If it all sounds a bit much, the letter in the mail telling you it's all clear makes it worthwhile. Although why can't we just send in our underpants?

Spare a thought for the poor schmucks at the other end who have to process and test our shit every day.

Bombs away, mate!

Bernard, the hypnotist, was booked to perform at the Senior Citizens Centre. The excitement was electric as Bernard withdrew a beautiful antique watch. It's a very special watch. It's been in my family for 10 generations.

He swung the watch gently back and forth while quietly changing "Watch the watch, watch the watch..."

A hundred pairs of eyes followed the swaying watch until, suddenly, the chain broke; it slipped from the hypnotist's fingers and fell to the floor, breaking into a hundred pieces.

SHIT! said the hypnotist. It took three days to clean up the Senior Citizens Centre.

Send your relationship problems to:
magentaappelpye@gmail.com

Magenta says...

I'm sure Norm will be your huckleberry as he is also a poo test poltroon. He procrastinated so long that the first kit went out of date and they had to send him another one, which, of course, I organised. The problem with you guys is that you think these things are here to punish and humiliate you.

Men turn all health checks into dramas and resist them like your grandma trying to kiss you without her teeth in. Women, on the other hand, happily accept the amazing help that is being offered and feel grateful to live in a country where much of it is freely available.

The tests are actually there to help you, believe it or not, and have saved thousands of people's lives. If there is a problem, you will probably have to get a colonoscopy. They are free in the public system but you have to wait a long time, so it is best to catch things early. The worst part is the preparation. The rest is easy.

My friend, Maree, loves getting them. She gets to have a snooze in the daytime, which, for a tired mother with a hectic life, is a real treat. And afterwards they give her a warm blanket, a cup of tea and a sandwich. Lovely.

So, if you want my advice, and obviously you don't, but being the voice of reason, I'm going to give it to you anyway, just toughen the fuck up, snap one off, do the test and get that shit behind you. March is a great time to do it because it is Colorectal Awareness Month.

Norm says...

Dear Mark, am I supposed to be flattered that you regard me as some sort of authority on bowels, toilets and shite? Absolutely, bro, I'm The Shitemeister. I've got your back(side), and we'll get through this together.

I'm like you, the first few kits I got in the mail ended up in the bin. One mistakenly got sent as a present for a newborn baby. It came back negative. No doubt your wife – and mine – have lectured you on the importance of doing the test. Blah blah, yeah, yeah, we know.

A kinesiologist in Nimbin

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Heart – the house of the mind

In Chinese medicine, the primary functions of the heart are to regulate blood and blood vessels and to serve as the residence for the mind (shen).

Regarded as the most important of the internal organs, the heart is often referred to as the 'ruler,' 'emperor,' or 'monarch.'

The ancient text, the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic*, asserts: "The heart is like the monarch; it governs the mind and is the monarch of the five yin organs and the six yang organs."

The term 'shen' encompasses various interpretations. In a specific sense, it refers to the mental faculties believed to reside within the heart, synonymous with the mind.

In a broader context, shen encompasses the entirety of a person's mental and spiritual dimensions, linking not only to the heart but also to other organs.

It is believed that mental activity and consciousness are housed in the heart, suggesting that its condition and that of the blood significantly influence mental functions, including



by Chi Fung Lee

emotional wellbeing.

Five key functions affected by the state of the heart include mental activity, consciousness, memory, thinking and sleep.

When the heart is robust and blood is plentiful, mental activity remains normal, emotions are balanced, consciousness is clear, memory is sound, thinking is sharp, and sleep is restful.

Conversely, a weakened heart and deficient blood may lead to mental and emotional challenges, such as depression, poor memory, dull thinking, insomnia, or, in severe cases, unconsciousness.

The heart governs all mental activities and is responsible for insight and cognition, which is why it

is often referred to as the 'emperor' of the internal organs and the 'root of life.'

Its capacity to house the mind relies on adequate nourishment from the blood, while its role in governing blood is contingent upon the mind, creating a mutual dependence between these functions.

Heart-blood anchors and supports the mind, ensuring it remains peaceful and content. A deficiency in heart-blood can result in mental restlessness, anxiety, and insomnia, while emotional difficulties may lead to a deficiency of heart-blood, manifesting as symptoms such as palpitations and a weak pulse.

If heart-blood becomes overheated, the individual may experience restlessness and disturbed sleep.

Beyond influencing mental activity, the mind also affects emotional wellbeing. A strong heart fosters a robust mind, resulting in happiness, whereas a weak heart diminishes the mind's vitality, leading to sadness or depression.

In cases of energy excess, the heart can negatively

impact the mind, potentially causing mental health issues such as manic depression.

However, this is a simplification, as emotional states are also linked to the health of other organs.

Emotionally, the state of the heart is vital for forming meaningful relationships. A healthy heart and mind enhance our ability to connect with others, while emotional difficulties arising from strained relationships can weaken both the heart and the mind.

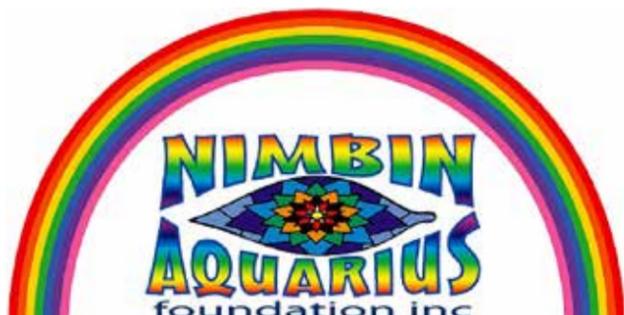
Ways to maintain a healthy heart

Regular exercises such as Yoga, Tai Chi, and Qigong are essential for maintaining a healthy heart. Daily practices like meditation, gratitude, and prayer also offer significant benefits.

The heart is associated with the element of fire, corresponding to the colour red and the season of summer.

Foods that are red resonate with the heart, enhancing its vitality and overall wellbeing.

Chi Fung Lee is an AHPRA & AACMA registered acupuncturist, phone 0478-239-298.



HELP REWILDING UNVIABLE CATTLE FARMS

Shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

The Centre of the Cyclone is a counterculture masterpiece written by John C Lilly about directing the inner life. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Center_of_the_Cyclone

It may also show readers that one of the elephants in the room could be... you.

Sure, we should protest injustices, destruction of forests and wildlife habitat. But be aware that this mismanagement is possibly co-paid by ourselves.

It makes one read labels. Have serious conversations with self if we eat or buy wrongly.

Lilly sharpened his awareness by carrying heavy rocks through deserts. Tiring. And when he accomplished the feat, he had to carry a heavier one. Training for mind and body. An old remedy.

Athletes may do the same to strengthen brain and muscle. Set goals. Take it to the limit. Tax yourself. Reject the siren songs of snake oil sales; comfort for self by pissing on others.



There is something wrong with a world that has too many farm animals, domestic pets, people and stimulated consumption. We should not do what our parents clearly could: exploit nature.

Treat flora and fauna with respect. Enjoy, but do not destroy!

The problems of overpopulation and resource scarcity had been flagged by Malthus over 200 years ago, and seven decades ago by the Club of Rome in their important *Limits to Growth* report, then Ehrlich's *Population Bomb*, and many scholars, journalists and activists since.

For those who do not relate to academic doomsday thinking and want action, perhaps it is best expressed recently in 'the cow in

the room', see: <https://sagemagazine.org/the-cow-in-the-room>

There certainly is need for heroic protesting the deadly abuse of trees and wildlife, but also look at what your other hand is doing. Do you eat wholesome plant-based foods or dead animals?

Livestock farming is a major part of Greenhouse. Are you fanning the flames of bushfires?

There are billions of cows, 570 million farms. Environments are exhausted.

A new vaccine is in the making that makes cows fart less to reduce methane. But by far the best way is to stop eating them. Goodbye middleman.

Why still treat animals as dumb, inferior, to be abused?

Much of Earth is now 'civilised', tamed. Clearing

land removes wildernesses. Hunting wildlife was normal when there was plenty of it. But it is almost gone now.

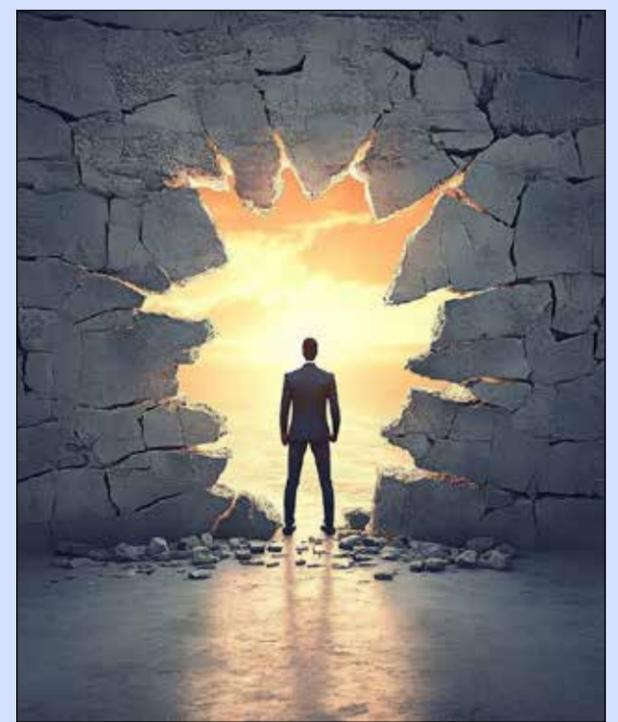
Why cash in on war and destruction: bombing a bustling city of refugees, and make a 'Gazalago' out of it to sell condos to cruelly selfish materialists?

Money is not everything it is cracked up to be. Happiness is inner glow. Get there as John C Lilly did: hard work and training.

Learn compassion with protest and self-disciplines from Zoroaster, Krishna, Lao Tzu, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Singh, Rumi, Da Vinci, Tolstoy, Gurdjieff, Einstein, Goodall, McCartney or others.

It takes 20 years for a sapling to grow to a big tree, for wildlife to return with lots of land care, but rewilding has its own rewards: co-create a sustainable world, house the homeless, expand flora and fauna. Why space for cows, not people?

Want to contribute to rewilding the Earth? A healthier planet and self? Simple, eat less or no animals. Adjust diets.



REMOVING ENERGETIC BLOCKS

Crystalline clarity

by Daryl Spilberg

Ever felt struck, blocked or seemingly unable to move forward in a particular area of your life, or life in general?

Life can present us with many challenges to work through, and these barriers are often obstacles for us to get past to take vital steps forward on our long journey of growth.

However, ever pondered further on the question of what causes these blocks? Situations and circumstances may seem obvious and presented clearly, but often it is unseen energetic blocks that are hidden in the background, impeding us the most. Once these blocks are resolved and removed, flow can return to your life in an instant.

I recently had a client come to me, Paul, an energy practitioner who has been operating for decades and whose work I have always respected highly. Paul had been having issues for about five months, when after a difficult situation with a client, his business enquiry and bookings abruptly stopped. Being a long-time practitioner with regular clients, he knew something was awry but couldn't quite put his finger on what it was and how to resolve it.

As the months passed by, Paul visited a few practitioners who did some clearing and claimed to have dealt with the issue, yet the problem persisted. He reached out to me for a Crystal Dreaming session with the hope of resolution, worrying that he may have to take a break from his healing work as nothing was working and business was so slow.

After an intensive

session with many other things to clear, right at the end we came to the issue at hand. An entity had been sent by the problematic client five months earlier, with direct orders to block his business and do anything it could to make it fail.

We called in the client on a soul level to negotiate with, who arrived sheepishly, knowing full well the damage they had done. We then released the entity and cleared up any ill feelings between the practitioner and the client, bringing resolution to the whole issue on a soul level.

Once the session ended, Paul turned his phone on and received a voicemail from someone who had called mid-session to book in with him. Two hours later, someone else called to book in. With the energetic block removed, the floodgates were now well and truly open for Paul's business to thrive again.

This client case is an example of how shifting the energy behind a block can instantly manifest flow and momentum in your life, filtering the energetic work and movement down onto a 3D level instantly.

It's best not to overthink what the block may be, as it can often be something completely unexpected or an issue you didn't even know existed.

Once in an expanded state and accessing your superconscious through Crystal Dreaming, the truth can be revealed and clarity can be reached.

Do you have a block in your life that you seem unable to move past and are wanting to bring resolution to? To book in a session with me, visit my website or call for a chat. Phone 0422-717-905, www.crystallineclarity.com.au

The somatic experience: Your body is the vessel of your mind

My morning exercise consists of walking the dog. Mostly on these walks, I don't pay much attention to my body unless, of course, the body aches which is, literally, a pain in the neck.

Is it that we take notice of our body only when something is wrong? Otherwise it seems the mind takes over, thoughts rambling through the head, cognitive annoyances that hold sway and let the body take the back seat. Reading the body, listening to the body, feeling the body, these are the moments when you create awareness of the sensations of your body.

Soma is your body space. Interestingly, soma also translates to an intoxicating elixir of immortality as part of the Vedic ritual to appease the gods. Vedic meditation based on the Vedas, the ancient Indian texts that inspired the body-centred practices of yoga, were special mantras to calm the mind. Here you have a classic example of the body-mind experience held in high regard for thousands of years while contemporary therapies stretch their imagination to reach into the sacred realm of the somatic practice to bring back peace to our minds and healing to our bodies.

What do you do for morning exercise? If you are dedicated to yoga and meditation you probably are acquainted with your body. How the body feels before and after exercise and stillness. The full routine engages your body from head to toe and gives you the mapping of your body. Where it hurts, where it feels good, and where the body feels stiff or extra bendy. You register these sensations and know your body.

It is not just the deliberate movements that awaken us to the body. If you are a sensitive type like me, your body would replicate every item of information that the mind sends it. The incoming tide of



by Antionette Ensbej

things-to-do, the noisy whipper-snapper next door, the rattling of the fly screen door, the beep of the washing machine at the end of the cycle, all are registered 'within'.

Listen and feel into your body when something alerts you. That can be your environment as well as your thoughts. A sudden thought unawares may send a tingling down your spine or set off swarming butterflies inside your tummy. It is said that the body holds memories; in fact I think the body is a true hoarder of memories.

When something, a thought, a sight, a noise, enters your mind, it triggers inexplicable sensations in the body. Sometimes they are only slightly perceptible. Other times there is an uproar and agitation you can hardly ignore, like burning sensations of outrage. Or you have heart-warming sensations of love and affection. Or feel giddy with excitement. Whatever the trigger, our mind experiences seem to activate the body as if a real physical contact takes place.

Often you recognise that feeling, the resonance in your body as familiar because you have experienced it many times before. That's when we talk about the body's ability to remember. Memory

storage of the body has an enormous capacity and reaches far back in time beyond the immediate experience. A simple gut reaction that you have in specific moments may have roots in childhood experiences that are stored as actual embodiment of memory.

Somatic therapies look at these tangible representations in your body as a method to accessing the unconscious issues that impress on your mind and stir your emotions. When you think of embodiment as externalization, you grow aware of your body as a messenger, a courier of true feelings. The body speaks the truth, even to others. In our posture for example we reveal quite a lot about ourselves. The way we hold ourselves mirrors the way we feel about ourselves.

In somatic therapeutic intervention you reconnect with your body, which is called grounding. You revisit your body as your private universe, your physical self as your resource for safety and security. You pay attention to your body's signals through movement or by concentrating your thoughts on certain body parts. With the support of the therapist the tapping into your body sensations enables you to process anxiety, sadness, even trauma by association and awareness.

Expressive therapies can assist with the process of purging. Problems expressed in action feel less abstract and overwhelming. Art, music, dance and drama bring you in touch with the vehicle that carries your emotions, your body. The good and the bad, the joyful and the sad. Nothing gets lost in between the molecules of our amazing energy bodies.

What an organiser nature is! It's time to walk the dog. Let's go and get a dose of warming sun and cooling breeze for a shared somatic mind-unblock experience.

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