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Highway upgrade destroys koala habitat

by Sue Arnold,
AFA co-ordinator

The recent NSW Upper House Inquiry hearing at Ballina failed to hear critically important evidence relevant to the Ballina Pacific Highway upgrade.

Tragically there was no focus on the fact that the koala is an umbrella species for coastal forest ecosystems.

In destroying a nationally significant koala population at Wardell, the Roads & Maritime Services wiped out an important ecosystem, critical to the health of the Richmond River – an ecosystem containing major biodiversity which was all lost.

Australians for Animals Inc. (AFA) has had a long history of campaigning for koalas going back over 30 years.

When the RMS began the destruction of koala habitat at Wardell, representatives of AFA went to the sites almost every weekend for months filming the destruction.

We filmed the appalling heavy duty “belts” which were attached to hundreds



Pam and crew chanting in Ballina

of koala and glider feed trees, preventing the animals from climbing up to feed.

The use of these devices has never been allowed in Australia. No ethics committee ever supported the use.

Alongside the “belts”, absurd structures were set up along Old Bagotville Road- a primary koala habitat – which were basically planks.

Koalas and other wildlife

were supposed to clamber up the slippery planks and then leap over the fence to the bush, or the road.

Again, these structures had never been used before.

AFA spent months with EDO lawyers documenting breaches of the conditions of consent.

As the highway upgrade was designated a State Significant Infrastructure, (SSI) two sets of development approvals with

identical conditions were developed by the NSW and Federal governments.

SSI's are extremely difficult to challenge legally, but given the extent of violations, the EDO provided both governments with evidence, demanding action.

The Federal compliance section advised that the violations were “a partial breach” and no action would be taken.

Double whammy for koalas and wildlife

by Ros Irwin, FOK president

Drought and bushfires have been a double whammy for koalas and wildlife

The past weeks have been frantically busy trying to cope with not only the drought, which has had a terrible impact on koalas and wildlife in the region, but also the fires, which, as I write, have destroyed more than one million hectares of state forests, National Parks and bushland, all of which are habitat for koalas and other arboreal fauna. We are profoundly appreciative of the seemingly endless hours the Rural Fire Service, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry have put in, not only in saving people and homes, but also working with us trying to locate koalas caught in the fires. We frankly have no real idea of how many koalas and other wildlife have been killed in the fires, but across NSW we're sure it will be in the thousands.

Nevertheless, there are some pockets where koalas are still safe and we're hopeful that in the coming week we'll be able to get into several areas in the Bungawalbin National Park, which we think may be a refuge for them. Whilst some koalas may have escaped from the fires, smoke inhalation can lead to really poor health outcomes, so the sooner we get in and check koalas the better the chance of their survival. Whilst we have rescued 16 koalas since the Drake fire until now, a female and her joey have been released in the Mt Neville Nature Reserve and we have three juveniles that are still with us, but the remainder were unfortunately euthanised.

We're also incredibly grateful to the many people locally as well as from across the world who have donated to us and in doing so, provided us with much needed funds for koala care. We've also had an influx of new volunteers, which

is very heartening in an otherwise fairly dark time. However, you will enjoy the story of Tungsten, who came in in a poor condition and went out looking great.

Tungsten

by Susannah Keogh, care co-ordinator

Tungsten (pictured) was found sitting on the side of the road in Lyons National Park, Kyogle, NSW. A member of the public contacted the ranger who happened to be a member of Friends of the Koala Inc. and the koala was brought into our clinic in East Lismore.

On assessment, it was clear the koala, later named Tungsten, was suffering from severe conjunctivitis, a symptom of chlamydia. He also had puncture wounds on his right arm from a dog attack. As he was rescued at night, a vet was not available, so he was administered antibiotics and pain relief by our vet nurse to make him comfortable until morning. Dog bites on koalas get infected very quickly and the sooner the koala gets antibiotics, the better chance it has of a full recovery.

Early the next morning Tungsten was transported to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital. His wounds were cleaned and dressed and he was given more antibiotics and fluids. The antibiotics he was given would treat both his chlamydia and his dog bite wounds. He was returned for further rehabilitation and treatment at Friends of the Koala the following week.

Due to the severity of his conjunctivitis, he wasn't able to see well, therefore, in conjunction with his injury, he could not climb to perch in the tree stand provided, instead he remained sitting on the ground. As koalas are arboreal (tree dwellers),



Koala Kolumn

sitting on the ground is quite unnatural for them so we needed to make him feel safe by providing him with a small perch close to the ground. At first he would sit on the ground hugging the wooden frame and our vet nurse spent many hours hand feeding him leaf and encouraging him to get off the ground, but he was reluctant to move. To better accommodate him, we lowered the leaf pots, repositioned the logs and placed him on the lowest perch. Every morning, our vet nurse would head straight to his run, hoping he was still alive and had successfully perched. On the third day he had climbed up to the highest perch and was sitting eating a leaf.

Tungsten made a full recovery thanks to early rescue and treatment of his wounds. It took three months to ensure he was healthy and that he had full use of his affected leg. He was released into some of our best habitat near to his rescue location.

People can become members online at:
www.friendsofthekoala.org
and if they wish to volunteer, they need to contact our volunteer co-ordinator Lola on 0412-753-739.



Nimbin Garden Club notes

Photo: Peter Brooker

by Kerry Hagan

On Saturday 23rd November, Nimbin Garden Club held our annual Christmas party, attended by 40 members and guests. Great company, fantastic food and a wonderful way to end our year.

I would like to thank all the very generous businesses for their donations for

our raffle, as well as the community who supported us by buying tickets.

All the money that we raised is going to our fabulous fireys.

The next Garden Club meeting will be in February next year, details will be published in the February edition of the *GoodTimes*.

Thanks everyone for a great year in the gardens.



by Mandy Hunter

The Nimbin Garden Club raises funds throughout the year to donate to local causes.

The club has donated \$500 towards the Community Centre's efforts to improve the area around the Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Centre as well as general beautification of the site for all to enjoy.

The photo shows Mandy Hunter, treasurer of the Nimbin Garden Club presenting Teresa Biscoe, Co-ordinator of the Nimbin

Community Centre with the cheque.

The Garden Club meets monthly from February on the third Saturday of the month. All welcome to attend.

We are always looking for local gardens to visit. We don't just enjoy pretty gardens, we are also looking for interesting backyards, orchards and regeneration work.

We are aware that a garden is a constant work in progress, so if you have an area that you think we may enjoy but are not too sure please get in contact with Mandy Hunter on 6689-1253.

Plant of the month



Peanut Tree *Sterculia quadrifida*

by Richard Burer,
Bush Regenerator

Christmas cheer is here with this iconic northern NSW tree.

The Peanut tree is a semi-deciduous medium size tree to about 18 metres.

It is often found in drier rainforests closer to the coast.

This year the perfumed cream bell-shaped flowers are abundant

with the hot conditions.

Interestingly, the fruit is ripe as the tree flowers for the following season which is pictured here.

The large peanut fruit is enclosed in a black covering which is edible.

The red seed capsule is striking and sensationally attractive, and a must-have for the garden and farm.

This tree is very hardy and grows at reasonable rates. Easy to grow from seed.

Fate of valuable trees in doubt



Weed Words

by Triny Roe B.Ag.Sc

Very little or no Spring rain at all this year. The garden, paddocks and the bush is struggling but so, in many cases, are the weeds. Nothing much is growing, except in parts of the creeks where there is still a bit of moisture. Rain dances, drumming, singing and praying for rain is the order of the day.

The ongoing bushfire on Mt Nardi has burnt over 6000 hectares of Nightcap National Park, and more. The impact on birds and other wildlife is immense, so it is now critical to preserve every mature native tree.

On the edge of the Nimbin village, at the top of Tareeda Way, just off Alternative Way, stand two majestic gum trees. They have been there longer than most people alive today. Botanists estimate their age anywhere from 50 to 150 years old. They should be the crown jewels of this subdivision comprising 56 housing lots (DA2012/153).

One of the conditions of this housing development, interestingly being promoted as an 'Eco Village', was that an exclusion zone was fenced off five metre beyond the drip-line to protect these important trees. These two mature eucalypts have been identified



Staging plan showing location of trees

as being suitable for koala and bird habitat, having potential nesting hollows, and are an important part of the local wildlife corridors, linking vegetation on adjoining properties.

The developer was supposed to protect the trees during construction of the subdivision with a fence. This did not happen. Bulldozing and earthworks have been carried out right up to the trunks. How was this allowed to happen? Where was the council compliance officer? Do we, the general public, have to be watching all the time to make sure the developers abide by the conditions laid down?

Now the developer has applied for a 'variation in consent' ie. they want to chop the trees down (and make two more house blocks!). While the decision is pending, the Council has required them to place appropriate fencing five metres beyond the drip line.

Have they done it? See the picture. "Could try harder" would read the report card. The fences are scarcely two metres from the trunk and, as such, are woefully inadequate and do not meet the requirements.

Nimbin can do better. I propose that not only should the trees remain, but an even wider exclusion zone be created, to avoid potential damage to future houses. There should be no construction on the six surrounding lots, and the roadworks deviated to accommodate the trees.

This area, planted up with other appropriate native species, would be a lovely park at the top of hill, enhancing the wildlife habitat, providing amenity for residents and a welcome nature break in the otherwise solid sea of houses proposed for this hilltop.

While there are other areas of vegetation being retained along the two waterways in this extensive subdivision, and bush restoration works in progress, these are possibly the oldest trees on the block and as such should be left.

Like pumpkins and watermelons?

The 2020 Summerland Giant Pumpkin and Watermelon Festival will be held on 11th January at the northern end of Stratheden Street, Kyogle. Judging and weighing of the giant pumpkins and watermelons will take place between 9.30am and 10.30am. Various divisions, cash prizes. From 3rd January, the giant pumpkin will be on show at the Country Store for all to eyeball and estimate. There will be a Cooking Competition: a plate of six

pumpkin scones or a closed family pumpkin pie. \$50 prize and a trophy. A Still Life Art Competition will be run with junior and senior entries displayed in the old IGA windows between 1st and 31st January. The Sugar Bowl will be offering free tastings of pumpkin beer on the day from 10am to 12pm. Novelty activities for the young and old. Try the 20m dash carrying a couple of large pumpkins or melons; also



pumpkin bowls and skittles. Businesses are invited to decorate their premises and be in the draw for a prize. Come along and enjoy a morning celebrating the humble pumpkin and watermelon.

The times are a'changing

Animal talk
by Donna Connolly

As Mother Earth is burning, the skies are saturated with perpetual smoke, seemingly with no end in sight. Dust and ash are a part of daily life. Grandfather Sun is bright red at the beginning and end of each day. Gaia has long suffered with our ignorance and societal greed. She needs to cleanse, purge and detox. Fire and water make sense at this time.

There is an overwhelming feeling of sadness as our innocent animals and humans lose their habitat and lives, a stark reminder that nothing lasts forever and we are on the brink of catastrophic disasters if we don't pull together and accept a new way of life. A simple, non-industrial way of life, respectful of all living things from the rivers, oceans, rainforest, deserts and mountains. Mother Earth and the Animals are insisting that it is time for change. We cannot continue living as we are now. It is not sustainable and we are complacently and actively participating in global genocide.

We need to create change on a practical level. Animals are already altering lifelong multi-generational habits, patterns and sounds, in order to embrace their new lives. It's time for us to step up too. The ants entered my kitchen two weeks ago, "normally" that means, it will rain that day! It didn't, it rained very briefly 13 days later. The other interesting thing is that there were three different genera of ants, with multiple subtribes in each group: like it was a gathering of sorts. The black Cockatoos showed up in huge numbers the day all of the fires in the Northern Rivers started. They flew in from all directions. Making an eerie siren-like sound.

I have never heard anything like this before. It made the hairs stand up on the back of my neck, and was an unmistakable call to action. Kookaburras have changed their tunes too, also more guttural and deeper, including more movement between the trees during their songs. Other birds too, calling throughout the day and night. It is like watching and listening to a beautifully haunted orchestrated play. Another prophecy worth noting, is that most native



indigenous peoples have spoken of the legends of the pure white animals coming to Earth to assist us in raising the vibration, as we transfer over to our new way. Well they are here and are being born on the ley lines of the planet. These aren't albino animals, with no colour pigment. These are pure white, usually with startling blue or golden eyes. Stunning. Magnificent creatures. So far this year alone, I have seen lions, tigers, emus, kangaroos, kiwi, pigeons, moose, elk, pythons and the amazing white eagle, spoken specifically about by first nations people from America.

When asking my guides for some answers, I received them in the form of very vivid dreams of an Octagonal medicine drum. Her name is Meraki, she revealed her name the next morning after her creation. When I googled the meaning it was incredibly apt. Meraki has been showing up in my dreams for quite some time, I knew her shape, purpose and role in my life. She is to assist me with the animals and harmonising the weather patterns. I had the privilege of birthing myself, under the guidance and wisdom of a wonderful drum Doula. As the Red American tradition suggests, when an Animal is chosen for a drum their spirit gets to live on forever. She is still drying, so I am being very gentle and respectful.

Obviously at the moment rain is of huge importance. There have been these amazing frogs sitting at each corner of the house, creating their own deep percussion and guttural throat chant, not unlike the Tibetan monks. Taking turns in the downpipes. Sending vibrations through the house. I've been lightly finger tapping on Meraki to the

tunes they are teaching me. When one stops I continue until the other calls me in. I am looking forward to other animals showing me the healing rhythms I need to remember.

I'd love to send a huge shout out to all the amazing men, women and animals that have pulled together and volunteered their time to help save the habitats of our regions, those in Australia and worldwide. Incredible effort. I still think we have a chance to turn things around. If we meditate with the intention to manifest rain.

If we keep our vibrations high, by laughing, playing, indulging our inner child, the animals will help us with this.

If we hold the frequency of fear, we will manifest more of the same. Our thoughts should be solution focused and full of unconditional love.

And most importantly remember we are all on the same team, One Tribe, One Earth, One Source. We've got this.

As it is the end of the year, I would love to send out a massive Mahalo to everyone I have had the privilege and pleasure of meeting, in private and distance consultations, Healing Treatments, Animal Communication sessions and Workshops.

It's been a huge honour to learn so much from each and every one of you, Animals and People alike.

Look forward to connecting in the New Year, when we will all have 20/20 vision.

Give all your animals a big hug from me. A safe and prosperous holiday season to all.

Donna Connolly is a professional Animal Communicator psychic, medium and Reiki Master facilitating courses and workshops throughout the year www.rivergem.com.au rivergem88@gmail.com or text 0490-156-038.

Archetypal elements



by Christobelle

Archetypes possess a reality that is both objective and subjective, one that informs both outer cosmos and inner human psyche, "As above, so below." The ancients believed that every single thing that happened on earth is guided by the motions of the stars and planets so that all accounts of real historical events must inevitably mirror astronomical events. Isaac Newton revealed that Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece, for example, like the 12 labours of Hercules, follows the progress of the sun through the signs of the zodiac. "It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation." – Joseph Campbell. Between the lion paws of the Sphinx at Giza, gazing eastwards, is a large stone that carries the inscription "This is the splendid place of the First Time." The First Time or 'Zep Tepi' was a phrase used in their mythology to indicate the beginning of time, marked by the rising of the primordial mound out of the waters and the alighting on it of the Phoenix (Bennu bird). This bird always marked the beginning of a new age. It is the symbol of the Sothic cycle of 1460 years – which is the time it took the Egyptian civil year of 365 days to resynchronise with the Julian calendar of 365¼ days and the beginning of the yearly cycle marked by the heliacal rising of Sirius to the night sky, heralding the annual flooding of the Nile. The Great Pyramids of Giza date to c.2500BC, but the Sphinx has long been considered to predate them and is believed to be "the most ancient monument in Egypt and possibly the world's largest and oldest existing statue." A stela was unearthed in the mid-19th century with an account of a pharaoh of the Fourth dynasty, Khafre, having been

responsible for excavating it from the sand, rather than constructing it. The pyramids there were built of different stone and adjoined to the limestone Sphinx. In 11451 BC, the coinciding of the Sothic and yearly cycles also synchronised with a third cycle, the Great Year – the 25920-year long great cycle of the zodiac as our solar system makes a complete journey around the Milky Way galaxy. At that time, the Milky Way, or 'river of souls', which had immense significance to ancient cultures around the world, was lying directly over the course of the Nile, so that they mirrored each other. On that date, the lion-bodied Sphinx's gaze would have taken in the dawning of the Age of Leo. The Sphinx embodies the four fixed constellations of the zodiac, the four corners or pillars of the cosmos: Leo (Fire), Taurus (Earth), Scorpio (Water) and Aquarius (Air). The Sphinx marks the end of an Age and the start of a new one; and the Egyptians called the Sphinx 'Hu', meaning protector. Like the cherubim in Genesis who bars the way back into Eden, the Sphinx faced forwards to the rising sun and guarded against any slide back to the former era. The Sphinx asks Oedipus a riddle. What walks on four legs, then two legs, then three legs? The answer is the ages of man, but not in the usually presented simplistic sense of a baby crawling, then a man walking and an old man with a walking stick. 'Ages' here alludes to the evolution of humanity, and the form of the Sphinx is thus a monument to our evolution from man as animal, aware only of baser animal desires, to man upright in heart and mind and action, to mankind spiritually reunited with the Great Spirit, the Source of all. Our own natural Sphinx here in Nimbin, also gazing eastwards, comes from another age entirely, laid down by three volcanic eruptions, 23, 22 and 21 million years ago when our caldera formed and then sculpted to form over many Aeons. That puts it all in perspective, eh?

Protecting horses during bushfires

by Les Rees

We have all been under a huge amount of stress due to the impacts of the horrific fires in our locality. Many had to move themselves and their animals to evacuation sites without knowing what they would be returning to.

It is times like this when the community comes into its own, supporting one another any way they can. Many animals were evacuated to Lismore where they were offered free accommodation sites and stabling for a multitude of animals.

There were many standout volunteers, like the Everingham family who tirelessly trucked so many animals from homes threatened by fires to the safety of the showground in Lismore.

You know that you live in a wonderful part of the world, with people like this stepping up in our community and I am sure many people will be very thankful to them.

Having seen a few devastating bush fires in Tasmania, we were prepared very early, activating our bush fire plan. I cannot stress the importance of this enough because it is so traumatic to lose your home and your animals.



Moving animals can be a challenge, especially with horses as they pick up on our energy. Given that they are flight animals, they can become very anxious and difficult to control due to their natural inclination to flee.

This is not an ideal state for them to be in when trying to load them into the confined spaces of a float or truck, especially if they are not used to travelling in them. I would rather move my horses to safety early than leave it to the last minute.

In an ideal world it would be great if we could establish a list of people who would be willing to allow horses to use their paddocks in times of emergency away from smoke air pollution as equines are particularly susceptible to respiratory problems.

For horses that have been subjected to smoke, it pays to keep an eye on them. If

there are signs of coughing or breathing difficulty, call a vet. Any horses with existing respiratory problems will be at greater risk of secondary problems eventuating.

Limit exercise when smoke is visible. Don't have your horse do activities that increase the airflow in and out of the lungs. This can trigger bronchoconstriction (narrowing of the small airways in the lungs).

Provide plenty of fresh water close to where your horse eats. Horses drink most of their water within two hours of eating hay, so having water close to the feeder increases water consumption.

Water keeps the airways moist and facilitates clearance of inhaled particulate matter.

Limit dust exposure by feeding dust-free hay or soak hay before feeding. This reduces the particles in the dust such as mould, fungi, pollens and bacteria that may

have difficulty being cleared from the lungs.

Give your horse ample time to recover from smoke-induced airway insult. Airway damage resulting from wildfire smoke takes four to six weeks to heal.

Ideally, plan on giving your horse that amount of time off from the day when the air quality returns to normal. Attempting exercise may aggravate the condition, delay the healing process, and compromise your horse's performance for many weeks or months.

If you are unable to move your horses, remove all rugs, open up gates to clear spaces away from highly flammable areas. Never leave them locked in a small area.

Ensure that you cut their tails short enough to avoid contact with burning material at ground level and leave out plenty of water for them to access.

Given that I would always opt to move my horses, I ensure that my float is ready and equipped for all their needs ready to go. For those whose horses don't travel very often, it would be advisable to do some loading practice before the event.

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What is training?

by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

Training is the action of teaching a person or animal a particular skill or type of behaviour, according to Google.

The main word in this sentence is teaching. Training is not about making a horse behave or perform in a particular way, training is all about teaching.

The two main components required for attaining a skill or behaviour are training and relationship. Both are necessary. Just training on its own without a relationship will never really work, resulting in slow or no progress, or a horse that does what it's told but is dead inside (Learned Helplessness).

Relationship on its own can work if the horse already has all the skills you require for whatever you want to do. If you're in this category, lucky you! Go out and have fun with your horse and read no further.

If however, you're like most of us, and there are things you'd like to do with your horse which they don't know how to do, then read on.

When you decide to do a 'training' session with your horse, pop on your teacher's cap. You are in the role of teacher and mentor. A mentor models the behaviour they are seeking in their students. If you want a calm horse, then you need to be calm. If you want your horse to listen to you, then you need to listen to them and so on.

A good teacher wants their students to succeed. When you're doing a session with your horse, try and always set it up so your horse can succeed at whatever

skill you are working on. Asking them to do something they are not yet prepared for is frustrating for both of you and can result in things going backward not forward.

Break skills down into bite-sized chunks, don't try to teach the whole behaviour at once. For example, this morning I was with a horse who had been throwing her head up when her rider mounted. She was an Arab and when her rider mounted the head sprung up at high speed and almost touched the clouds! (She'd been checked by a chiropractor and was sound, plus had no problems with the riding, just the mounting).

My job was to ask her to lower her head while the human mounted. We did this in a series of bite-size chunks. First I asked for the head to stay down while weight was put in the stirrup, once she had achieved this without needing to be asked we moved on to laying over the saddle, waiting until she could do this without being asked.

Then the actual mounting, and by the time we got there she didn't need any more help and just kept her head at normal height.

This behaviour was dealt with in 10 minutes by teaching her what we wanted for each tiny step. If it reappears we will repeat the steps, knowing that each time it will take less time.

I always try and remember what it



Suzy, Borax & Sarah

was like when I was at school. Which teachers did I actually like, which did I learn things from, and what were they like? How did they teach? Without exception, it was those teachers who took the time to treat each student as an individual. Those who were patient and kind, who listened and communicated with me as an equal, and who were looking to reward, not to punish.

And remember that every single thing you do is training. From the moment you open the paddock gate you are training, whether you mean to or not.

Horses have no idea that one thing is a training session and another just everyday life. The beauty of this is it means every time you go near your horses you need to be present and in the moment, you can't just 'attend' to horses while thinking about something else.

So have fun being a positive teacher for your horse, and reap the benefits.

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The Welcome to Nimbin Kit is a project of the Nimbin Advisory Group (NAG). It was auspiced by Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC), in partnership with the Nimbin Community Centre and the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce. Funded by the partners and Lismore City Council, with contributions from Nimbin Hills Real Estate and Lifestyle Real Estate.

With thanks to the Nimbin Bush Theatre for its generous contribution towards the printing of the Kit.

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Psychotherapy: uncertain art, uncertain science

I used to be an occasionally good university teacher before changing professions to practising psychotherapy full time. This was over in Perth, Western Australia. We had a syllabus to follow, lectures and tutorials to run and they followed a pretty standard course. For about a dozen years or so, since then, I've worked solely as a psychotherapist. There are similarities to teaching – we want the best for those under our care – but the way we go about it is very different. As psychotherapists, we observe and guide the other person(s), and we participate in their lives, aiming to bring forth insights, understanding, different ways of doing things, as well as strengthening their sense that only they are the authors of their lives.

Psychotherapy is art and science: fumbling, uncertain, creative, experimental; it's a growing body of psycho-social-spiritual knowledge, it's an understanding of the dynamics between people; it's sometimes methodical, ordered, and follows a clear beginning, middle and end; it's helped by therapist self-awareness (which is very



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

important) and depends on just seeing what is effective and what isn't, it unfolds, it explores, and it's not a journey that finishes with the last therapeutic session. It's part of a lifetime of self-discovery. Those coming to therapy or counselling or whatever you call it, should not expect clear cut outcomes all the time; it's not an anti-inflammatory pill for the mind, despite what some might tell you. A course of treatment is a dubious way of talking about what is a much more subtle and impactful process. Here is a therapeutic conversation that has goals along the way, but they are reached via improvisation, intuition, acute listening and trial and error. That is the best therapy, as I and several others see it. Yes, we can strictly follow the protocols

of psychotherapeutic schools and models and rituals, but when we do so, we cease to actually listen to what our client is saying in her words, her body, indeed her whole demeanor. When we get caught up in saying the 'right thing' we have stopped listening to what is. I fear I have missed quite a number of people as I've observed and participated in their therapeutic journeys, by doing exactly this. For that, I am sorry.

One thing I need to say with regards to not listening properly to a client is that it forces me to sit with my own discomfort, to tolerate uncertainty and the hoard of ghosts of self doubt, but to also aim to be more present, more sensitive, next time. Erving Yalom says of this that such is a prerequisite for the profession. Ours is a somewhat wobbly profession. We try to steer an even course through uncertain waters, while knowing that this goes against much of the common perception of what we do. That idea is that what we do follows predictable, measurable pathways but very often it doesn't work that way, and that's ok. The outcomes may be quite different from

what we could've expected at the outset.

Though I speak of such things, I also know that the journey we travel together isn't without a safety net. Well, actually a few safety nets. Psychotherapists have been trained (in my case, university trained at a post-graduate level), we have experience, we are monitored by a colleague or colleagues in supervision, we participate in ongoing professional and personal development, we are bound by a rubric of ethics, we are insured, we abide by the laws surrounding our practice and, basically, we just care what happens to our clients.

Ours is a caring profession. We guide, we accompany, we share, but we do so from a fairly objective position. If we did it any other way, both of us would be lost. But in participating with the client in a deeply human way, we allow them, and us, to be changed at the very heart of the therapeutic encounter. This is a rich, wonderful collaboration where both client and therapist are nourished in a journey that reintroduces the client to the authorship of their own lives, and that's good to be part of.

Asking how to support new parents

Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

Pregnancy and new parenthood is a time of huge transition and massive adjustments. No one comes out 'the other side' unchanged. The unusual thing is, is that people want this adjustment to be 'quick' and there's a weird phenomenon of wanting to 'bounce back' and 'get on with things' much sooner than anyone is ready.

This goes for the new mother and also the people around her. Society as a whole generally celebrates women getting 'out and about' and recovering quickly. However, there is no 'going back to normal'. The mother is forever changed.

Many postpartum professionals believe that the transformation a woman needs to make to become a mother is actually more intense than birthing her baby. There are so many changes happening; physically, mentally, emotionally. It's important to understand the profoundness of it. From feeling vulnerable to loss of identity to loneliness to sheer exhaustion, parenting is hard, really hard.

We are seeing up to 85% of women feeling out of balance in those early days with up to a quarter of women experiencing postpartum depression. Mental health issues during early parenthood are very common and can affect anyone.

I believe these high rates of depression are resulting from a lack of support, underestimating just how intense postpartum actually is and trying to 'do it all'.

Mothers are not meant to make this transition on their own. It's

really important to take time to rest, recuperate and heal so that you can properly care for your newborn and also replenish your reserves that were depleted during pregnancy. Try to resist the temptation to 'do it all' and instead learn to say yes to accepting help and support. With the right support, you and your baby can emerge feeling rejuvenated and peaceful instead of overwhelmed and exhausted.

A note to people seeing new parents...

1. Ask what they need (perhaps you can pick up something on the way);
2. Keep visits short during postpartum - encourage them to rest;
3. Help with household chores like washing up or doing the laundry;
4. Bring a meal or make a snack;
5. Ask 'How are you?' and 'How can I be helpful?' and wait for an honest answer.

Here is a handy note (pictured) that new parents can put up at their home for those early days with their newborn.

There is a mental health campaign that is shedding light on the fact that 'it's ok to not feel ok'. This is trying to lessen the stigma surrounding mental

Thank you for visiting us!
it would make a big difference if you could



encourage us to rest



Do a load of laundry or dishes



Bring a meal or make a snack for us



Ask us what we need help with

doulawisdom.com

health issues and to encourage people to seek support when they are not feeling ok.

There are many great support networks available for people that are experiencing postpartum depression. The most widely used tool to screen for depression is the Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Scale. This is something that can be done online or with a health care provider.

If you suspect someone you know may be experiencing postnatal depression, please encourage them to seek help from a trained health care professional. These are useful websites: www.panda.org.au and: beyondblue.org.au

If you know someone who has just had a baby, it's a good idea to keep checking in regularly. You can ask simple questions like; how have you been feeling over the last two weeks? Do you have good support? Have you had any issues? How can I be helpful?

Many people find it very difficult to ask for support. This is why we need to change the paradigm around postpartum care and people need to learn to offer support to new parents.

This postpartum window is relatively small in the scheme of things but it's crucial to really respect it. Let's all work together to bring more reverence to the time after birth so we can help families have the most peaceful postpartum possible. Because, it really does take a village to raise a child!

If you're planning a birth, make sure you have downloaded the free natural birth checklist at: www.doulawisdom.com

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Challenging blind obedience to authority

This world is totally upside down: our health system is more a disease system, corporations that make the most profit pay the least tax, our defence force is more of an offence force, our leaders are greedy, lying, deal-making criminals, while jails are full of people who need health support, or like enviro-protestors, whistle-blowers and medicinal-plant users, just shouldn't be there at all.

Whether our fascist government is invading a sovereign country for resources, or supporting the US to do the same, ordering police to arrest protestors (gloves are off-style), selling off public assets, pillaging the coffers like pigs at the trough or conducting a privacy-invading census (the privacy policy states you have no privacy in censuses, which historically have a precedence of being used against citizens), it needs people to unquestioningly follow orders.

And there is no shortage of people willing and able to bow to the totalitarian state where nearly all aspects of life are controlled by the government. This obedience to authority which you may think is just a mark of Nazi Germany during the last century ubiquitously runs through humanity like a dose



by Cameron Storey

of abhorrent flatulence after a bean and cabbage casserole. As the line from the play Hamlet states, "Something is rotten in the State of Denmark." And it's not so much Denmark as humans following order without thinking and/or empathy.

In 1973, Phillip Zimbardo et al conducted an experiment with the aim to investigate how readily people would conform to the roles of guard and prisoner in a role-playing exercise that simulated prison life. Zimbardo was interested in finding out whether the brutality reported among guards in American prisons was due to the

sadistic personalities of the guards (dispositional cause) or had more to do with the prison environment (situational cause).

Once guards and prisoners (all students) were randomly assigned, guards were dressed in uniforms, carried a whistle, a billy club and sunglasses making eye contact from prisoners impossible. Guards were instructed to do whatever they thought was necessary to maintain law and order in the prison and to command the respect of the prisoners. No physical violence was permitted.

Prisoners were arrested, finger-printed, photographed, 'booked', stripped naked, deloused, had their personal possessions removed, given a prison smock, referred to by a number only and had a locked chain around one ankle.

To cut a long story short, the fortnight-long experiment had to be terminated on the sixth day due to the psychological duress of the prisoners who had been harassed and intimidated by the guards during the night, forced to do menial and repetitive tasks, endured physical punishments, stripped naked, had their beds and food taken away, shouted at, insulted, given solitary

confinement and some had suffered psychological breakdowns.

The conclusion for Zimbardo's experiment is that "people will readily conform to the social roles they are expected to play, especially if the roles are as strongly stereotyped as those of the prison guards." (none of the participants who acted as guards showed sadistic tendencies before the study).

In 1963, Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment to find out how far people would go in obeying an instruction to electrocute another person (actor) if there was perceived harm (i.e. screaming or blackouts) and would they continue to obey instructions with increasing voltage up to 450 volts. The results were that 100% of participants followed the instructions up to 300 volts and 65% continued up to 450 volts.

The conclusion, chilling to say the least, was that ordinary people are likely to follow orders given by an authority figure, even to the extent of killing an innocent human being. "Obedience to authority is ingrained in us all from the way we are brought up. People tend to obey orders from other people if they recognise their authority as morally

right and/or legally based. This conditioned response to 'legitimate authority' is indoctrinated in a variety of situations, for example in the family, school, and workplace."

Milgram obtained 100% compliance from his participants, as clearly they were too conditioned to wake up and rebel against his authority. Think about it "Apartheid was legal. The holocaust was legal. Slavery was legal. Colonialism was legal. Legality is a matter of power, not justice." (Anon)

Civil disobedience is led by those who refuse to follow psychopathic authorities or accept the socially-conditioned status quo. Movements include: women's rights, worker's rights, voting rights, LGBTQ rights, indigenous rights, Afro-American rights, anti-tax protests and environmental protection cases, anti-war movements, holding governments accountable and many more.

When will you question the authorities and start helping with the revolution?

The Dharma Centre will be closed as of 10th December and reopen in February. FB: Dharma Centre – Lillifield

World-view interactions

Sadly, as I write this the year does not seem to be ending well, as horrific drought and fires devastating plant, other animals and our own lives.

It is worth both stating the obvious, that our fundamental health and the health of future generations is primarily dependent on a climate and a planet that sustains life.

And it is also useful to look at how our deeper attitude to the natural world influences both how we interact with it and our individual health and well-being.

Australian indigenous culture is intimately linked to the seasons and the natural world, there are people far more qualified than me to speak of this view and we should listen and learn from them whenever we can.

In Chinese culture, Daoism and Buddhism also have a world-view that does not see humans as the pinnacle of creation or the centre of the universe. Rather we are connected and integrated with all phenomena. Included in Daoist precepts are the following:

- You should not wantonly fell trees
- You should not throw poisonous substances into lakes and rivers
- You should not dry up wet marshes
- You should not disturb birds and other animals.

And in a verse from the Chinese Zen master Hongzhi, "A person of the way fundamentally does not dwell anywhere. The white clouds are fascinated with the green mountain's foundation. The bright moon cherishes being carried along with the flowing water. The clouds part and the mountain appears. The moon sets and the water is cool.



by Brigid Beckett

Each bit of autumn contains vast interpenetration without bounds."

In terms of Chinese medicine, the functioning of ourselves is a microcosm of the functioning of the universe. Five element theory talks about the five states of matter, wood, fire, earth, metal and water, that make up all phenomena and are constantly in the process of changing and transforming into each other.

In Chinese cosmology, each daily, monthly, seasonal and yearly cycle is tied to the cycles of the cosmos and to all life. Also wind, damp, heat, cold, dampness and dryness exist both internally and externally. Internally these conditions are often worsened by external conditions especially if they are unseasonal. Heat for example can manifest as inflammatory conditions.

Although Chinese medicine still thrives in China and is gaining some understanding in the West, culturally the dominant paradigm in the vast majority of countries is now consumerism and

materialism. But for our survival and for future generations the time has come when we have to change.

Individually we can make a difference in how we live personally and politically. Collectively we can and must make a change, and in this region we generally are already in a mind set to do this

Many people will be having a strong emotional response to the climate crisis we are already experiencing, and to the lack of action or even acknowledgement of the situation by those in power.

It can be hard to know how to deal with these circumstances. Emotions in themselves are a normal part of living. But when they are excessive they can stop good functioning of both body and mind. Each organ has its own emotional energy.

For example, the spleen yi involves thinking, the liver hun is creative energy, the kidney zhi provides will power and the heart shen governs all emotions.

To know what to do, to have the will to do it, to come up with creative solutions and to see the overall bigger picture requires the energy of all organs to be in balance. So to look after ourselves so that we can act well when needed.

I would like to wish everyone a better start to the New Year, and a time to rest, recuperate and enjoy good company. A wet Christmas and New Year would be great! And thank you for everyone's support all year.

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

Natural Law



by Helene Collard

*We are all self-governing.
Let us call upon our ancestors and teachers – past and present,
to guide us in the way of the heart.
You are all my relations.
All is One.*

This time carries the seeds of potentiality. What you do now will determine what will germinate and grow, and what will fall away and die.

Be very selective with what seeds you allow into your field. Ask yourself – is this life-giving or does it take too much from me? Sow and farm reciprocity.

This energetic cycle is offering both individual and collective evolution – an opportunity to embrace and integrate a mental and physical transformation, shedding old patterns – powering on lighter and freer.

Who you are, where you (and your ancestors) come from and what you have experienced, matters. These are the stories that place us in the world, in our communities, and in our families.

If we are to truly find ways of walking alongside each other, we must explore, know and share who we are first.

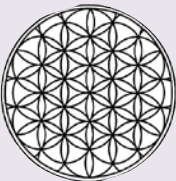
Building relatedness with

ourselves is what Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson (Aunty Judy) calls 'Educaring – educating the Self about the Self' and is an example of where education can be healing.

Allow the walls to fall away, and in December, share some of your story – the part that you haven't yet told.

This unprecedented sharing will activate an 'unlocking' that will allow the river to flow in new places that have been dry... until now, encouraging new and wonderful beginnings to unfold.

Daily Affirmation for December: Today I share my story. Enjoy these days, my friends.



Coming up at Yemaya Centre

- **iRest® Meditation, Somatic Experiencing and Trauma Sensitive Yoga Courses** Sam will be back on 30th January.
- **Qigong** with Martha Wednesdays 9am
- **Yogalates** with Martha Fridays, 9am and 11am. Martha will be away from 20/12, back on 3/1
- **Reiki, Healing Heart Attunements & Rainbow Light Sessions** with Helene – Everyday Helene last day 23/12, back first week of January
- **Reiki Courses:** Level 1: 21-22 March 2020; Level 2: 9-10 May 2020.

Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing (Law & Justice), is a Reiki Master and the founder of the Yemaya Centre: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-797.