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Ready to grow organic seedlings

by Eric Smith

One of the joys of the Blue Knob Market is reviewing the ever-changing trays of seedlings from Greg and Ness at Farmers Choice Organic Seedlings. These small but vigorous green sprouts hold the promise of an enormous variety of productive plants in your veggie patch, and you can pack a basket of produce and other goodies along with those little seedlings too.

Speaking of growth, our market is a little thin on the ground in general right now, and we could use a few more stallholders. Is your patch big enough to share with the community? We could also use a few makers (our stall fees are reasonable), and we are always welcoming to the occasional fundraising stall – those are available free of charge.

We are lucky to have this market – almost nine years old now – with our glorious sweeping view of Blue Knob, nestled in with a gallery, a café, a ceramic studio, and occasional talks and workshops in the Moore workshop space. So do come



out to the market- We are always glad to see you...

The Blue Knob Market happens on the grounds of the Blue Knob Hall Gallery

every Saturday from 8.30am till noon, rain or shine. If you are interested in having a stall, please send a message to our Facebook page.

For more information, and if you cannot get to any of these markets, email me at: upsidedownliving@hotmail.com

Rescuing koalas

Koala Kolumn

by Linda Swankie

At 11.30pm one night, I received a call about a blind koala bumbling around on someone's porch. I jumped out of bed – well staggered really – and rushed off to the rescue.

When I arrived I found the caller, Tracy, had put a laundry basket over the koala to ensure it didn't disappear before I could get there.

I removed the basket, lifted the koala into the rescue cage and noted that both eyes were sealed shut due to severe conjunctivitis.

Tracy pointed out that there was a slight bulge in the pouch, so there could be a joey. I asked if she would like to name the koala and she called her Pearl, after her grandmother. Apart from her bad conjunctivitis and 'poor' demeanour, Pearl was in relatively good condition.

I drove her to the Care Centre in Lismore and gave her fresh leaf to eat until the morning.

Next day she was weighed and taken to Keen Street vet where Ray, the amazing vet, anaesthetised her so he could carry out a full health assessment.

He took bloods for analysis, checked her overall condition and performed an ultrasound to check for internal signs of disease, such as cysts on her

ovaries. From the amount of wear on her teeth, he aged her at around three years old and confirmed that she had a young, male joey in the pouch, possibly around four months old, so too young to have emerged yet.

Pearl's eyes were bathed regularly with warm saline to remove all the pus and crusty discharge and treated twice daily with an antibiotic. She also had weekly visits to the vet for injections to treat chlamydia, which was the cause of the conjunctivitis.

During her time at the care centre, her little joey, Oyster, began to show signs of emerging from the pouch.

First an arm was seen sticking out, then a head, until Oyster finally made his debut, much to the delight of the volunteers who all stopped work to enjoy their first sight of the cutest koala ever.

We were keen to release Pearl as soon as possible as she had a young joey so, once her treatment was complete, blood tests were done to confirm she was clear of chlamydia.

As her conjunctivitis had been so severe when she was rescued, the vet trimmed some of the swollen tissue around her eyes to help her see better, and be more comfortable, then we took her home after six weeks in care.

Tracy was so excited to have her back, but it was a bit of a



nail-biting moment.

Although our whole purpose is to return koalas to the wild, we can't help worrying when we send them back out, as they have so many things to contend with.

We released Pearl back to the tree she had regularly used before being rescued, but little Oyster made the climb quite difficult for her.

He decided to ride on her head instead of her back so, as well as the extra weight, she was having trouble looking up the tree to see where she was going.

She finally made it though and was settled in comfortably and eating before I left, still with my heart in my mouth.

We rarely hear about our koalas after we release them, but Tracy promised to keep an eye on Pearl and Oyster and let us know how they were

doing. After a couple of weeks she sent a message to say that she had seen Pearl, back in the same tree that morning, but there was no sign of Oyster.

With him being so young he was probably in the pouch of course, but I couldn't stop worrying.

How relieved were both of us, a couple of months later, when Tracy saw the two of them together and reported they both looked well and that Oyster had grown a lot bigger.

Such a relief to know it all turned out so well – and thank you so much to Tracy for keeping us updated.

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.

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When is a weed not a weed?

Weed Words

by Triny Roe

When it is chickweed! As the days become cooler, it's time to get stuck into the chickweed.

Stellaria media, aka winterweed, is a stellar plant. Actually named for its tiny white starry flowers, this succulent herb is a winner.

It's not just for the chickens. Tasty and nutritious, a source of vitamin C, iron, zinc and potassium, this annual leafy vegetable grows wild. Widespread, it can and should be eaten regularly when in season.

If it's appearing in your lawn, congratulations. Don't mow it and certainly don't spray it. Harvest and feast on it.

Known as hakobe in Japan, chickweed is one of the featured herbs in a spring festival called *Anakusa No Sekku* – the Festival of Seven Herbs. People eat rice porridge with fresh greens traditionally harvested from the wild.

A native of Europe and Asia, chickweed has naturalised in many parts of the world, including North America and Australia. Fond of a little shade, it appears around human habitation and on edges of bush.

This small plant has an ancient history and has been used medicinally since the Middle Ages. It has been recorded as treating a number of complaints from arthritis to weight loss.

An infusion in the bath is soothing for eczema and skin irritations. It can be taken as tea or tincture.

"It is a fine soft pleasing herb under the dominion of the Moon." In the 17th century, English herbalist and physician, Nicholas Culpeper, wrote of



the benefits of chickweed in treating "all pains in the body that arise of heat." It can be used externally as a poultice.

Note this is not a medical column. Please consult a health professional if you are sick.

Meanwhile you can't go wrong simply eating it for good general health, in moderation. Excessive quantities could be harmful.

There is more than one plant known as chickweed and some look-a-likes, not all are edible. In the same family, *Caryophyllaceae* or carnation family, as *Stellaria*, some plants in the genus *Cerastium* look similar but don't have culinary or therapeutic qualities.

Chickweed grows low to the ground with stems that can form thickish mats. The leaves are opposite and simple. Their edges are smooth. The upper leaves clasp the stem but the lower leaves have petioles.

The tiny white flowers have only five petals, but it looks like there are ten because they are deeply lobed. The stems have a thin line of hairs growing in a strip along one edge. The hairy side swaps from node to node. Identification



can be confirmed by the thread in the broken stem (see picture above).

Chickweed grows in a range of soils so if you don't already have it, collect some stems from elsewhere, put in a paper bag and shake. The minuscule seeds will fall out and can be planted in your garden at home in a moist area.

Thoroughly wash fresh chickweed in a bowl before eating and you will see seeds remain in the water. Throw the water where you want chickweed.

Try chickweed chopped fresh in a salad, with scrambled eggs or in a quiche. It makes a delicious pesto minced up with macadamia butter, garlic and parmesan cheese.

Anytime you need fresh leafy greens you can use chickweed. You can also make tea. It's probably already growing in your garden, maybe in the damp shadow of a shed.

Take care where you harvest. Avoid roadsides and car parks that may have been sprayed with herbicides as well as zones where the dogs might pee or the menfolk, or ladies who like lawns, may relieve themselves.

Happy eating.

Plant of the month



Breynia oblongifolia Coffee bush

by Richard Burer,
Bush regenerator

Breynia is a small shrub very common in the area.

Growing to about three metres, Breynia is often found in open and closed forests.

In dryer forests Breynia can be common in the absence of fire.

Interestingly it can be found in Tropical rainforests of far North Queensland and also New

Guinea.

Breynia supports many different animals which feast on its leaves, flowers and yearly reliable orange/pink berries.

I often get asked if it is a weed or a native and yep for the untrained eye it can look like a Senna, and yep it's common, you might even find it in your veggie patch.

Keep an eye out this spring for this hardy little shrub with green flowers.



by Pauline Ahern

On a beautiful Autumn Saturday in May, 30 garden club members and guests visited the working farm of Linda and Joe on Stanger Road.

This 100-acre property was a cow paddock 20 years ago with a woodlot of mature hardwoods. The family have transformed it into a productive farm (though as Linda states it is a work in progress).

They have built an owner-builder passive solar house, using where possible timbers milled from their own woodlot.

Three dams have been constructed, and as well as supplying water for the crops, orchards and animals, the dams are very much a part of the riparian revegetation areas,

Linda and Joe with their son Alec are tireless

workers, often taking a gamble on trying a new system or crop.

They have a mixed orchard for their own use, an orchard of finger limes for future commercial use, a small herd of beef cattle, free range chooks for eggs, a flow hive producing enough honey for themselves and friends, a productive house garden and a larger commercial garden for quick turnover vegetables and herbs.

A new enterprise is growing Shiitake mushrooms.

This was an inspirational visit, and we thank Linda, Joe and Alec for their hospitality.

Next garden club visit will be at 2pm on Saturday 15th June at Kerry and Dan's house and garden at 336 Stony Chute Road (3.36 kms from the Nimbin end of Stony



Photos: Peter Brooker

Chute Road).

This will also be the Annual General Meeting of the Club; yearly

membership is due, and new members are welcome.

Bring a plate to share, a cup and a chair.

Help save wildlife with WIRES



This Greater Glider, a threatened species, was rescued from a barbed wire fence at Dyraaba in May.

Concerned about our wildlife in the face of increased land clearing, expanding mining and global warming?

Get active and join with like-minded people who are collaborating to make a difference.

Wildlife rescue requires a team effort. There are those who answer phone calls from the public and organise a response. There are those who rush to the rescues and transport creatures to carers or all-important vets.

There are those who feed little hungry mouths around the clock and others who help gather native foods. There are those who help build cages and nest boxes, and those who knit pouches.

There are those who assist with fundraising activities, those who give talks in schools; those who cater at training days; and those who do the many administrative roles that keep things running smoothly. Every single contribution is important in saving wildlife.

WIRES is always in need of more volunteers. Join WIRES today and start saving little lives.

For more information about how you can join and contribute, phone 6628-1898 or email: wiresnr@wiresnr.org

I would like to dedicate this article to all of the amazing animals that have impacted my life. They are represented as a collective consciousness, as a species, while some are individual souls.

In some cases we have spent years (possibly lifetimes together) while others have existed momentarily. Nevertheless, they change my life and perceptions irrevocably, forever more.

Only with the wisdom of hindsight, do I realise some of the changes that have happened in my life due to these encounters, fast tracking my evolution.

From a very young age I have had the dolphins come and visit me in my dreamtime, bringing information, including prophecy. They have helped me understand the world and the planet on a deeper level, and have assisted me in predicting and knowing when family members (human and animals) are going to pass over; often leading to sleepwalking events.

My first 'known' encounter



was the unexpected passing of my Pop at age five. He died suddenly during the night of a stroke. My parents kept checking on me and two hours before his passing found me at the end of my bed on my knees.

When asked what I was doing, I said I was getting Poppie's feet ready for heaven. I'd be aware of these visitations as I would wake up feeling and smelling the salt water on my body and in my throat and nose.

Two years ago, I was offered

an opportunity to swim with the dolphins, sharks and manta rays in Hawaii.

The dolphin energy felt familiar to me and we swam with multiple pods on multiple occasions. Each pod carried its own energy and message.

One of the most amazing moments was being belly to belly with a Mumma dolphin while she sonared up and down my body.

I'm still in awe of what happened that day, my whole body in goose-bumps

underwater! I absolutely know that the dolphin is my spirit animal.

Meeting them in person was a dream come true. There will be many more swims I am sure.

Snakes have shown me how to transmute fear into respect and understanding, allowing me a broader perspective on the cycle of life.

By virtue of their presence, I felt the need to take control of my unfounded fears including conducting research, doing snake handling courses,

arming myself with as much knowledge as possible in regards to species, habitat, habits, diet, lifestyle. While seeing each and every soul in their own right, with their unique energy code.

They taught me to project my energy forward when I walk to let them know I'm coming, and they do the same if a likely encounter is to occur, I receive an image in my minds eye and sometimes an image of where I'm likely to see them.

After living overseas I came home to Australia, with a specific wish: a dog that needed some love. Less than three weeks later I had Ms Edna. She was scared of many things and had not been treated well. It was a steep learning curve for me.

As I navigated our lives together, she taught me the value of patience and belief, the ability to change what no longer serves, and most of all, unconditional love.

It is the depth of bond that we created in life that allows me to still work with her today as she assists animals to transition, sending messages and signs to pass on to their guardians.

And of course Dora, the human communicator, she has been one of my biggest mentors, confidante, comedian, personal trainer and motivator, we have been together nearly nine years.

I adore her wilfulness and ability to know what she wants. She is the absolute ambassador for living life on purpose on her terms. I am eternally grateful for every day I have with her.

Not to mention the huge role she has played in my evolution in this lifetime.

The animals come to us with wisdom and knowledge. Some of which is crucial for the health and well being of the planet.

After all, the habitat is here for all of us to explore and enjoy. Not exploit.

If you would like to learn how to connect and communicate with all animals, we have an Animal Communication for Beginners workshop to be held on Saturday 15th June, in Alstonville.

Mention this article and you can still take advantage of the early bird price.

Text to 0490-156-038,
email: rivergem88@gmail.com

The enticingly exciting prospect of becoming lighter

by David Ward

Once we've given over our consciousness to all those addictive substances and all enveloping behaviours, we largely lose the ability to think clearly.

We become vulnerable to all the hype about how hard it is to come back to our senses. We find ourselves believing in those stories of the near impossibility of ceasing our addictive pursuits, which of course become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Once lucidity is regained things like achieving our desired body weight can suddenly become as simple as cutting our food intake in half, before we even look at the quality of that food.

Reducing food intake or choosing to remove refined sugar from our diets goes a long way towards restoring our clarity, but how do we kick start this consciousness to begin with?

We need to start by getting our feet back on the ground, and one of the best ways to achieve this will be through your own home yoga practice. We're not simply doing yoga in this instance, we are using yoga to ground ourselves and to awaken, one of the many uses yoga was originally designed for.

Yoga it seems, exercises and stimulates our consciousness as much as any other part of our bodies and it gets our feet back firmly on the ground.

So being unconscious equates to being vulnerable to exploitation, before we know it we may find ourselves responding to advertising and handing over full responsibility



to an expensive weight loss program.

Could it really be that simple, cutting our food intake in half, confronting and addressing the potentially resultant cravings, understanding the emotional aspects of overeating? Well obviously it could, if you believed it could.

This is where things get exciting and empowering, understanding that we have the ability to sculpt that shape we see in the mirror, that we can put down that number of kilos and not have to carry them any more.

When it comes to smoking, as another example, that we can live without that constant irritation in the lungs and throat, that we can begin to allow ourselves to relax.

After sugar and coffee the first thing I let go of was tobacco, permanently, and that was 12 years ago. I consciously understood that that was what I had to do, in order to move towards my desired state.

For much of that 12 years I've been aware of an excess layer around my waist: the slow creep of the figure on the scales indicated it was increasing.

No matter how hard I went with my yoga or how healthy my diet was, I was unable to shift this, that is until the last few months.

I'd been ignoring advice that I just needed to eat less, I'd skipped over the section of the yoga book on conscious eating, the voices in my head telling me it didn't apply.

12 years into this re-wiring of my mind, there's still more breakthroughs to be had, more

Soul retrieval in Tuscany

by Auralia Rose

I am standing inside a 13th century church in the Italian town of Montepulciano, set amongst the green rolling hills of Tuscany, staring at a brilliant stained glass window.

My eyes are riveted on the female figure on the left dressed in a long red dress, holding a palm frond. On the right is the Prioress of the church, Saint Agnes, who helped build the church and convent with the help of donations from the local community.

An art historian informed me the figure on the left was both a martyr and benefactor of the church.

Twelve months earlier during a meditation I received a vivid and compelling image that has brought me here. My vision was of an old cathedral set amongst green rolling hills that I somehow knew was Tuscany, despite never having been there.

During the vision my attention quickly shifted to a beautiful stained glass window, honing in on a young girl in a long red dress tied at the waist, holding a palm frond.

Somehow I knew this girl was me in a former life. A few days later I was in an Italian delicatessen where I was astonished to see a magazine with the exact image I had seen of the cathedral in the Tuscan hills on the cover. The town was Montepulciano.

Meanwhile the story was rapidly unfolding and developing. I had recently met a self styled spiritual leader, an American of Italian descent who was visiting Australia.

Charismatic and good looking, this man abused his power and position as a spiritual leader, treating women with little respect and leaving a string of broken hearts wherever he went.

Feeling uncomfortable and somewhat repelled by this man, I somehow knew we were connected through a past life in Montepulciano.

Possessing the skills to regress myself, I travelled back in time to find out what our relationship was. He quickly



appeared as a priest of the church who used his position to rape the young novices and nuns from the adjoining convent.

The young girl in the stained glass window was one of them. Feeling defiled and shamed, unworthy to serve God, she threw her nun's ring down a hollow under the church, where I believe it still lies.

She subsequently left the convent and returned to her family who bequeathed all their wealth to the church as penance for their daughter's "sins".

The experience and subsequent visit to Montepulciano enabled me to retrieve a large chunk of my soul that was still connected to that place and time, releasing the shameful subconscious

memories of being abused by the priest as well as the issues of martyrdom.

The martyr theme had been a constant in this life resulting in me feeling I always had to give money away.

Our soul in its desire to help us grow and evolve will present whatever opportunities we need to do just that.

I never saw the priest/spiritual leader again, the universe had done a great job of bringing us together to help clear this energy I had been carrying for nine centuries, including the habit of always giving money away – phew, thank you Universe!

Contact Auralia on 0422-481-007,
email: auralia_rose@hotmail.com
Web: www.auraliarosewellbeing.com

Building positive connections

by Les Rees

We have all been through rough times in our lives, some far worse than others, and they can either lead you into a positive or negative state.

Sometimes things happen that are beyond our control, having devastating consequences, leaving us vulnerable and afraid, gradually stealing confidence and esteem. Some people fall apart, whilst others become defensive and difficult.

Some choose different paths, learning from new experiences with positive outcomes, whilst others are stuck in the same place, constantly engaging in repetitive behaviour patterns that increase their negativity.

Imagine then what life is like for the animals in our care when they are on the receiving end of mental health issues. They not only have to work out what our expectations of them are, they have to cope with a language alien to their own, often misunderstanding our intentions as well as dealing with any issues they may have themselves.

We owe it to those in our care to heed the warning signs of behavioural issues before they become problematic. We need to be aware of positive ways of connecting with them, reinforcing better behaviour using a gentle leadership approach.

Successful herd leadership revolves around the building of trust. The leader has to have the ability to use the power of intent rather than overly engage in aggressive behaviour to keep order within the herd. They have the



Gypsy

responsibility for the safety of the herd so they have to be constantly alert to danger as well as protecting themselves from the challenges of young stallions.

I often see personality problems driven by a need to gain attention. Horses that are always in your face can get over-assertive and cause problems in their relationships with people. They gradually dominate their owners who initially see it as cute and funny.

However, it can lead to aggression when the horse finally oversteps the mark by biting or kicking if we fail to engage with it. Often the owner then becomes fearful and reacts by using violence. Two negative behaviour patterns created this outcome. There are no winners, just the loss of trust and respect.

The warning signs were obvious and handling the situation could have a positive outcome. If we learn to read the causes of our behaviour, we can protect

ourselves from future negative influences.

I've found that the best way to work with a horse like this is to gently push his face away each time he gets into your space. After a few times, he or she will drop their head and release a deep breath.

Leave it for a few minutes for the horse to think about this then offer your hand to the horse to smell. This way you have been a strong leader, you haven't resorted to aggression and you have not destroyed the trust and respect between you and your horse.

I have a young horse who was like this not only with me but with the rest of the herd, which resulted in irritable defensive behaviour patterns developing. Even his special friend became quite aggressive with him. However, once I gently defended my own space using the above method, the change was miraculous to watch.

He became much happier in himself, he gained more confidence and the other horses now react positively towards him because he has become respectful of their space.

Moreover, he and I have developed a special bond. We trust and respect each other and we are still having those loving cuddles together without it developing into negative behavioural patterns. Winners all round, I'd say. Who would have thought that it could be so simple to achieve so much in 15 minutes of re-directing his head away from my space?

Les Rees is an Equine Naturopath and Sports Therapist.
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From domination to listening

by Suzy Maloney

Recently a student pointed out that my work is defined by how I listen to horses.

The traditional way of interacting with horses is to tell them what to do, it's unidirectional communication. The human tells the horse what to do and the horse must do it. If the horse protests, then the human gets stronger and 'shows the horse who is the boss' until the horse does it.

This is how I was taught and this is what I did for many years. I was good at it and most horses did what I asked most of the time. For this reason I was considered a good horsewoman.

When I look back now, I see myself as an egotistical dominatrix. Strong words I know, but a good description of the total domination I had over most horses. I was admired for this ability.

It seems I've come a long way from there. As my student pointed out, I spend more time listening than asking now. In the Natural Horsemanship world we have the term 'horse whisperer'. It's a step on from 'horse dominator' but is still a unidirectional concept.

In our very language we are still saying it goes from the human to the horse. I'd like to suggest that what's much more important is the communication from the horse to the human.

Many horses spend their entire lives never being listened to. Every attempt at communication either isn't noticed, is noticed but not considered important or is noticed and deliberately squashed. How horses react to this depends on their personality. Some will just give up trying to communicate anything at all; they retreat inside becoming obedient automatons with totally switched off brains and hearts. Some keep trying;



Suzy and Soray

they end up shouting and may be labelled difficult or dangerous. A few find a middle road, they find a way of dealing with human's strange ways but never get a chance to show the world how truly amazing they are.

When a horse first comes into contact with a human who listens to them it can be like watching a flower open up. As they realise someone is listening they start talking. At first there is little trust, they expect it all to go back to how it's always been, this is where it's necessary to be patient. Then slowly but surely they talk more and more.

I'm not talking about words; it's behaviours that express how a horse feels and thinks. It might be a simple thing like a horse swishing their tail when worried or subtle behaviours such as a slight frown, a lick and chew, a softening of the eye. All horses are talking all the time, it's what they do. They are the grand masters of body language.

If we are totally in the moment and open to every nuance of the horse's body and energy, we come to realise what chatter-bugs they really are! It's a continuous stream of information. And if we change our behaviour in response to what they're

saying, they realise we are listening, then the magic starts happening.

The shut-down lost horses come out of their shell, and they usually have a lot to say, years' worth of bottled up stuff. As the old stuff comes out they become happier and more interested in life. Slow horses will pick up their speed and find a freedom in life they have not known before.

The reactive horses who've been shouting can finally quieten down; someone is listening to them so they don't need to shout anymore. Their behaviours become less extreme and they become happier and safer horses.

And there are huge benefits for the human as well; they get to experience two way communications with one of the most beautiful creatures on this earth. The healing that is then possible for both the horse and the human is truly amazing.

Happy horse listening.

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Beyond the Rainbow

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Four keys to a more peaceful postpartum

Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

If you're pregnant, you have probably thought a lot about the birth of your little one. But what about postpartum, the time after your baby arrives?

Hopefully you realise that planning your postpartum is just as important as planning your birth.

Some postpartum professionals say 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. Don't underestimate the profoundness of it. With a little planning, those first few weeks after birth can be filled with so much joy.

I encourage you to think about how you'd like to feel as you journey into motherhood. Many mothers say they would like to feel peaceful during postpartum.

Knowing what to expect can give you more confidence and feeling prepared can make this time more enjoyable.

No matter what number baby this is for you, one thing is for sure...

• You will need extra help

This is where 'building your village' before you birth will be so valuable. Take a moment to think about all the tasks you do day-to-day.

Your new baby will need care around the clock 24/7, which means you will need



to receive help with everyday tasks. Feeding your baby is a full time job in and of itself.

So, I encourage you to think about who can help you, particularly during the first six weeks.

• Rest when you can

You've probably heard people say 'sleep when the baby sleeps'.

The importance of rest cannot be underestimated so you'll need extra help to make this possible. Rest helps you to recover faster and heal more effectively.

• Nourishing foods are really important

You will need to eat regularly and ideally you'll have access to easy-to-digest foods.

You can prepare by cooking extra meals during your pregnancy and then store them in the freezer.

One of my favourite things I suggest you consider is a 'meal train'. This is where friends or family make delicious home-cooked meals and bring them to you on a

roster. This helps you feel nourished and loved. Did you know that good foods will help you make better breastmilk for your baby?

I always recommend people take a look at the *First Forty Days* book (by Heng Ou) and also *Nourishing Newborn Mothers* (by Julia Jones).

Both of these books have fantastic postpartum recipes to help a new mother heal and rejuvenate. Pick some favourites and then email the volunteers on your meal train so they can nourish you with meals suitable for your healing body and mind.

Of course the new mother will need to heal and recover from the birth so it is a good idea to have some idea of what you may need to prepare beforehand.

There are more articles about natural remedies for postpartum at: www.doulawisdom.com

• Your oxytocin matters

One more crucial piece of the postpartum puzzle is your oxytocin levels. Hopefully

you've heard of this incredible hormone? It contributes to your health and happiness.

After you have your baby, oxytocin helps your uterus to contract back to its original size. It also helps with milk flow in breastfeeding and helps you to bond with your baby.

You can boost your oxytocin levels by having skin-to-skin contact with your baby, eating warm foods and doing things that bring you happiness.

I highly encourage you to get a plan in place before you birth, build your village, ask for help, do some meal planning and know how to naturally boost oxytocin.

If you're healthy and happy, you'll be able to nurture your newborn more easily.

If you want to feel more confident about birth and postpartum, you can download the natural birth checklist at www.doulawisdom.com or contact Kirrah on 0429-308-851 or email: kirrah@doulawisdom.com

Walking in the sandals of another

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

Today I received a beautiful foot massage with sandalwood oil and, in my usual meander of mullings, I got to thinking about the words *sandal* and *wood* and how they evoked in me a vision of walking through the woods in brown leather sandals, and then from that vision an idea for this article on how it feels to walk in the shoes of another.

I've chosen to write of these shoes as sandals, because there is a certain innocent simplicity in the wearing of the latter and I quite like that.

I have been lucky to have had a few mentors in my life who have shared with me their skills, insights, and knowledge in a lovely generosity of spirit. They have, effectively laid down a path in their walking, which is a very Buddhist idea. In this way, they have also shown me how to be a human being and to mentor others without fanfare. For these things I am profoundly grateful.

But taking the image further, from making a pathway for me to walk safely following them, to inviting me to wear their shoes, well that takes a lot more risk on their part.

One of my mentors, a university teacher of mine, nurtured my interest in the subject of Jungian psychology beyond the call of duty and, when I was in the third year of my first degree, he

asked me to be a tutor for second year students just while he was on leave. That was a big thing for me. Here the pathway was not just cleared for me, but I had to wear his metaphorical shoes. It was scary for the 21 year-old me, but I made the shoes my own and really haven't looked back.

Some shoes, some expectations, seem impossible to put on and if they are squeezed into, feel intolerable. Such shoes do not, cannot, fit. If a parent or a teacher or someone with authority expects us to walk their way without compromise, and without any recognition that we are not designed for that level of engagement, then we can have years of guilt, shame and feelings of inadequacy. This scenario is quite common in our society. The macho father demanding his sensitive son work in his cut-throat world of commerce or the soldier wanting his child to be a fellow warrior, the intellectual mother demanding her physically talented daughter, skilled in carpentry, become a fellow academic, the mathematically gifted teacher demanding a favourite pupil give up dancing for accountancy, and so on.

Extreme mismatches make for great misery. Some people who have felt

forced into occupations and lifestyles suffer enormously with depression and suicidal thoughts. They've internalized the expectations of others and turned against themselves, causing inner collapse. It is part of my work as a psychotherapist to ease off the ill-fitting shoes of mismatched expectations and provide support and encouragement as the client finds their own comfortable shoes to walk in. Comfort (from the Latin, to strengthen greatly), after all, doesn't mean giving in to laziness, but to finding one's own inner strength and feeling good in the world.

The shoes we want to wear need to fit us and to make the journey through life relatively comfortable. A good mentor knows this and chooses his or her apprentice according to their leaning towards the lessons the mentor wants to pass on.

Sometimes the shoes are sandals and like the sandals worn by the person wandering through the woods, there is an easefulness of being. Just as the essential oil of sandalwood calms, balances, grounds, clears the mind, so the wearing of the footwear bestowed by the mentor needs to be calming, balancing, grounding and clearing.

The wearer of this footwear treads lightly but purposefully. It is clear the walker knows where she/he is going.

Cog in the evil system or counter culture?

So here you are sitting in your house wondering how you can build a life for yourself and looking at the chaos of the world around you. Firstly, around you are a set of systems and these systems are designed to keep you as an obedient slave. Now if you have the inspiration to dance on the Nimbin pedestrian crossing while flashing your boobs at the local cops you'll probably get arrested. Yes, that actually happened. So for thousands of years you could walk around naked, and no problem but now, WTF?

These laws are not indigenous lore but stupid laws from the ancestors of the colonizers. Say you want to travel in a car. Well it will probably be a fossil fuel powered car which has become popular thanks to the fossil fuel industrialists who have squashed electric ingenuity throughout the twentieth century. The licence for the car which used to be a one-off fee, now needs to be renewed costing many thousands of dollars over your lifetime. The colonizers (Colonization is a process by which a central system of power dominates the surrounding land and its resources, establishing control over the indigenous people of an area) invade the country and create a government which makes legislation, laws and more

departments to control the people and the resources. Income tax was created in 1913 to fund WW1 (World War 1) but was left in place because people were too apathetic to protest. Local government and state government create new fees and taxes: parking fees, parking fines, speeding fines, land rates, dog licences, stamp duties, capital gains tax, building permits, GST (goods and services tax), etc.

So now you have a job in a cafe to pay for all your taxes and fees and fines and have very little to show for all your work after you have paid off your car loan. Due to the shock of having to slave your life away you might choose to try medicinal cannabis to relax at night and sleep deeper, but the next day at the RDT (Random Drug Test) you test positive, regardless of your perfect driving, which costs you the licence you just bought and a fine you don't have the money for from the job you just lost.

So from your initial universe-given-freedom to walk naked and partake of every plant yielding seed and work and obtain the fruits of your work living in a free country (with free land) to being a slave where the fruits of your labour are harvested by some pencil necked thieving-bureaucrat-colonialist. It's hard to believe but wealth is



becoming even more concentrated and less taxed. Oxfam reported "that last year 26 people owned the same as the 3.8 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity, down from 43 people the year in 2017. The wealthy are also undertaxed with only 4 cents in every dollar of tax revenue coming from taxes on the wealthy. Oxfam says "governments should focus their efforts on raising more from the very wealthy to help fight inequality around the world. The super-rich are hiding \$7.6 trillion from the tax authorities." Hoarding Money Disorder (HMD) should be classed as the most serious mental illness of our time. Such persons found suffering from HMD (Forbes

Billionaires list) should have all the excess billions and millions confiscated and redistributed back to the masses of people for food, shelter, clothing, clean water, toilets, health care and work projects.

Are you part of the problem or part of the solution? Embrace the indigenous connection to the earth, connect to humane communities, withdraw your energy from the crazy systems as much as you can and see how the systems were invented out of nothing and are only due to greed. All systems start with a shit idea to exploit and control people and resources. Understand how colonization has destroyed indigenous communities in every country, banned their practices and

medicines and this legacy continues today. Growing organic food and medicine are two of the most important jobs on the planet.

Northern NSW has one of the largest alternative communities of environment loving, off-grid solar-powered, rainwater drinking, organic food growing, plant medicine supplying, sustainably living people anywhere on the planet. This is the future if we are to survive. Civil disobedience has historically been used to protest for: womens' rights, black rights, equal pay, independence from occupation, water, forests, soil and environmentally important areas, to end slavery and much more. Awaken and act.

Assisting the free flow of qi

People may have noticed an increase in aches and pains as it is getting cooler. Cold slows qi and blood, causing pain. "When there is free flow there is no pain; when there is pain there is no free flow." Cold and damp localised in joints also stop this free flow.

The pain may be localised and diagnosed with scans and x-rays. If it is an injury caused by trauma a local treatment may be all that is needed. But especially chronic or recurring pain the underlying pattern needs to be addressed to get good results.

It is always true that impeded flow causes pain, and we need to look at the various causes of impeded flow. The state of the meridians and organs needs to be considered as they produce and regulate qi and blood.

A very common example is the constraint of liver qi, which causes tightness in the muscles making strains and sprains more likely. Very often neck, shoulder and general upper body tightness, often with associated headaches, is caused by liver qi constraint.

The most common cause is emotional turmoil of some sort. Classically this is anger, frustration and resentment but also the stress of daily life is often the problem, any emotional turmoil will affect the liver.

Emotions are a normal part of life. To either suppress them or indulge in them without restraint does not make for a healthy mind or body. Being aware of emotions without become attached to them or disowning them is often useful. Often we are so used to underlying emotions we don't notice them: "The last person to discover water is the fish".

Physical exercise, especially that which involves the body and mind such as yoga or tai chi, is good for moving qi, learning how to bend without breaking. A feature of pain

caused by qi constraint is that it is worse first thing in the morning or straight after rest, and the first part of a movement is often the most painful.

The other most common pattern for chronic pain is kidney deficiency. Classically this causes lower back pain, also knee pain. The kidneys' energy is the deepest store of energy. As a battery, constant use without replenishment will cause a major breakdown.

The over consumption may be from overwork, over exercise or not enough sleep, or a major or prolonged illness, anything leaving us feeling drained and depleted. Aging is a natural process causing kidney energy decline.

Classically fear is the emotion affecting the kidney, often this will be a deep seated fear from childhood events, but also Post Traumatic Stress Disorder will scatter or deplete this energy. The pain in kidney deficiency, and most deficiency conditions, is worse after exercise or when the person is tired.

Lung weakness causes slouching forward, affecting the upper back and neck. Too much lying down is detrimental to the lungs. In lung deficiency there is a very obvious lack of energy, often with lassitude and respiratory problems. Emotionally, grief is associated with the lungs.

Again, grief is a normal part of life, but when it is held on to or there is a deep-seated sadness over a long time, problems occur. The inability to let go is associated with lung weakness.

Muscle weakness is attributed to spleen deficiency, which can also cause damp, resulting in heavy aching muscles and joints. The spleen energy comes from food. Therefore, an adequate diet and good digestion contribute to strong muscles.

Emotionally, excessive worry weakens the spleen. Again, some worry is normal, motivating us to



by Brigid Beckett

foresee problems and plan. But fruitless non-productive worry is just that, not helping anything and weakening the important spleen energy that governs digestion.

The main message is that multiple factors that can affect chronic pain, and the mind-body connection is extremely important. This can be seen when our body is subconsciously affected by our beliefs.

While a medical diagnosis is often essential, there are also times when a diagnosis by x-rays or scans does not lead to useful treatment, but rather to a belief that there is something vitally wrong. This invariably leads to worse pain.

This is known as the Nocebo effect, that is, a negative placebo effect.

Keeping an open mind and not locking into or being defined by diagnosis, which are very often just words and changeable depending on the "current thinking", can be vital when looking for relief from pain.

Brigid Beckett is a fully registered practitioner working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. Phone 0431-702-560.

NATURAL LAW



by Helene Collard

In the Southern Hemisphere we are approaching the end of Autumn, and releasing into Winter.

The message this month is 'you are well on your way'. Whatever wheels you have put into motion recently, or whatever new seeds you have sown – all is blessed. The wind is behind you. The rainbow, above you. The earth, beneath you.

The turn of seasons (wherever you are), creates the perfect conditions for your new initiatives to receive the sustenance they need to flourish and nourish you, and those around you. Allow this goodness to soak into your skin and bones, knowing that you are worthwhile and deserving of love, peace and infinite blessings. When you feel challenged, remind yourself it's okay, there's something in this experience for your Higher Self. Breathe, trust yourself and know it will pass. You've got this!

It is also a perfect time to gather with like-minded souls and collaborate or simply share nourishing

time together. Allow the magic of sharing and caring to lubricate your soul and replenish your energy.

Daily affirmation for June: "My life is blessed. Today I embrace all the good that life has for me."

Enjoy the month dear friends, and thank you for reading *Natural Law*.

Coming up at Yemaya Centre

- **Kundalini Yoga** with Helena Sipicki Mondays 5.30-7pm NEW!
- **Qigong** with Martha Regnault Wednesdays 9am (NEW!)
- **Yogalates** with Martha Regnault Wednesdays 10.30am (NEW!) and Fridays 9am & 11am.
- **iRest® Meditation Somatic Experiencing & Trauma Sensitive Yoga** with Sam Tuesdays & Wednesdays.
- **Reiki, Healing Heart Attunements & Rainbow Light Sessions** with Helene Everyday
- **Reiki Courses:** Reiki Master, 8-9 June. Level 2, 29-30 June. Reiki Teacher, 27-28 July. Level 1, 26-27 October.
- **Winter Solstice Restoration Week:** 17-24 June

Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing (Law & Justice), is a Reiki Master and the founder of the Yemaya Centre for Reiki & Wellbeing in Lismore. For information, enquiries and bookings visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-797.