

DIANBUNG GARDENS

WORKSHOPS

Feb 5-8 Advanced Design Skills Workshop
March 23-30 Permaculture Teacher Training
April 9 – May 15 Growing Abundance – Organic food production / market garden and food preservation
April 10 Botany Essentials
April 16 Composts and Compost Teas
April 23 Planning Year Round Food Supply
April 27 DIY Soapmaking / Natural Cleaning

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The shape (and the memory) of water

by Eric Smith

The subject of discussion is, as often is the case, what is not present. Water. The less we have of it, the more we talk about it.

Stories new and old are surfacing – the tragedy of a tank that was broken by a falling tree, a community discussing the fair usage of a shared resource, that place I used to live at with that amazing dam, glad to hear your spring is still running, mine gave out.

Unfortunately, while this seems unprecedented, it appears to be closer to the new normal. We may sometimes get the same amount of rain as we once had, we may get less, but it will probably come more “all at once”, with flooding and dry spells more frequent.

While it is ridiculous to not shower when the tank is overflowing, as soon as it stops raining, begin water-saving mode. Leave a bucket in the shower for watering the garden, don't just toss clothing into the wash because you have worn them once (spot-treat stains quickly and let them dry).

I had a maiden aunt who always said, “The best way to clean things is to never let them get dirty in the first place.” I don't think she did the kind of gardening and animal care that I do, but it is worth considering. Can a little extra care prevent mopping up a spill and hosing something down?

Working with your soil in terms of ground-cover plants and mulch are also critical to help weather the longer dry spells. Our market experts at First Sun



Just add water

Biochar and Farmers Choice Organic Seedlings can help with more tolerant plants and soil amendments that will help you create a more lasting system round your patch.

And obviously, water storage becomes crucial. Thanks to this dry spell, all of our long-term dreams are already becoming concrete – two more tanks are on the way, and a dam is already ready for the next rain. As we fluctuate so heavily, we cannot forget – it may be wet and rainy in the near future, but another dry spell is just around the corner...

Around the market

While we pull out of the long hot summer, autumn is upon us. Stone fruit

is being replaced with apples and pears, and with any luck some rains will start to feed the more substantial cruciferous vegetables of the harvest.

We will have massage at the Saturday Blue Knob market again – Fuji Teodosio will be providing Shiatsu and Zenthai massage. Our market has always been a slower, calmer place to gather – enjoy a relaxing massage as well as gathering your local treats to eat.

The Blue Knob Market happens on the grounds of the Blue Knob Hall gallery and café every Saturday from 8.30am 'til noon (that's near the corner of Blue Knob and Lillian Rock Roads). Come and enjoy our local and eclectic array. We are always glad to see you.

The wonders of Gumbi Gumbi

by Robin Stein

Contemporary science is slowly becoming aware of the benefits of many Indigenous, traditional healing medicines.

Pittosporum Angustifolium, or Gumbi Gumbi as it is more commonly known, is one of the top ten Indigenous remedies. It's an Acacia that grows in the dryer areas of Australia. And the Indigenous people have been using it for many generations.

Over the past few years, I've come to know this plant extremely well. My introduction to Gumbi Gumbi was a balm my partner used successfully to calm the deep itch from Lyme disease.

A local Indigenous medicine man approached me for help with his 12-year old son who was ill. The boy recovered quickly and he brought me a huge bag of Gumbi Gumbi leaves as a thank you.

I asked many questions about it and each was answered patiently and in detail. He described how to make a tea from the leaves. It needs to be simmered in water for some hours until the water turns red. Then it's ready to drink.

I asked permission to make a tincture from it and it was readily given. He told me that so many folk he helps, just take it for granted. Nobody had the respect to ask permission before, so I was the only person he'd employ to make tincture for him. I felt humbled.

When it was ready, I filled 10x15ml dropper bottles and told him it was extremely important for my own research that he document each patient to whom he gave the tincture. I needed to know what condition was treated and the result.

Then I shone a torch onto the huge jar I used to make the tincture. Within only weeks, the alcohol in which the



Gumbi Gumbi soaked had turned Merlot red.

And the medicine man was speechless. He left to distribute the 15ml bottles of tincture to sick people. And he was totally amazed when he returned.

Every single person to whom he gave the tincture had recovered unbelievably fast. Much faster than drinking the tea. No matter what the problem - for some blood disorders, gout, bronchitis, eczema and itchy skin, migraine and other headaches, digestive problems and irritable bowel, menstruation and other pain, rheumatoid arthritis.

It has the ability to strengthen the immune system, hence its ability with auto-immune disorders.

I thought about the speed with which it worked for Indigenous people for a very long time. I'd given the tincture to several non-indigenous patients and although it definitely helped, it appears that Gumbi Gumbi heals Indigenous people very much faster.

From constant analysis, I've come

to realise that the Indigenous have been using this herb for healing for many, many generations, and now have receptors for it throughout their body, enabling the medicine to heal far more easily.

Naturally, I wondered how to make it work faster and more successfully for non-indigenous people?

Finally, I believe the answer lies in the heart of each non-indigenous person. If those who need this herbal remedy for healing offer their sincere thanks, and feel gratitude towards the land on which it grows, as well as to those who prepare and bring it to them, I believe it will begin to work far more successfully.

Indigenous people cared for country. And in turn, the resources necessary for survival were provided for them by country. Each of us can learn from this wisdom.

Disclaimer: The statements that are expressed here reflect the views and opinion of the author and not necessarily NGT. Please seek your own medical advice.

Eros rescued from road

Koala Kolumn

by Linda Swankie

On 23rd September 2018, FOK received a call about a koala that had been hit by a car outside Byron High School, where it was lying in the middle of the road with cars driving over it. Luckily one caring couple stopped and found the koala was still alive but unconscious, so they carefully picked him up, took him home and called us.

Our rescuers immediately went to collect him and, by the time they arrived, he had regained consciousness, but was unresponsive with blood around his left eye. The vets were closed, but the hotline operator called Keen Street Veterinary Clinic in Lismore, to let them now we had a car hit koala, and they were waiting for us when we arrived about 9pm.

The koala, who we named Eros, was checked over by our amazing vet Ray who gave him emergency fluids and strong pain relief. He was in a bad way and needed monitoring closely overnight, so our rescuers/carers took him home and tended to him through the night, giving intravenous fluids and pain relief every three hours. He was totally unresponsive the whole time and just lay limply in the cage so we feared the worst.

Amazingly he survived the night so, next morning, we took him to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital where they have more specialised equipment to assess and care for injured wildlife. Eros was about two years old so was probably dispersing when hit by the car and, apart from his injuries, was in good health. He had a head injury and a broken left forearm with nerve damage and bruising. He received initial treatment at Currumbin then, when he was more



stable, was moved to Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital (AZWH) for further treatment.

During an operation to fix his broken arm he suffered a cardiac arrest, but was revived successfully, although his blood pressure remained low. The next day his arm was re-x-rayed to check the bone alignment, which seemed fine. It wasn't possible to fully assess the extent of the nerve damage at that point, as the bone needed to heal a little first. Eros was given regular pain killers and supplements to help with bone healing and improve his overall body condition.

Medication often disrupts koala's gut flora, which is essential for them to be able to digest eucalyptus leaves. Over the next few days Eros developed diarrhoea and became slightly dehydrated, so he was given regular IV fluids and his pellets were monitored to check for bacterial infections. He responded well and his pellets returned to normal, but he kept suffering intermittent gut problems over the remainder of his stay at AZWH which required close monitoring and further treatment.

On 16th November Eros's arm was re-x-rayed and the cast was removed as the fracture had healed well. He remained at AZWH until he was using both arms well, his gut issues had been fixed and tests confirmed he was negative



for chlamydia, then he was returned to FOK for release.

After all this little koala had gone through, we were thrilled to release him on 17th December after three months in care. This is Eros looking cheeky and healthy at FOK just before his release.

If it wasn't for the caring couple who made the call, the dedicated volunteers at FOK who give up their time and sleep to rescue and care for koalas at all times of the day and night, and the amazing support of all the vets, Eros would have died. Now he has the chance to go on to live a full life in the wild where he belongs, and hopefully father many young joeys – after all, he was named after the god of love.

FOK rescues and cares for more koalas than any other organisation in NSW and is always desperately short of volunteers. There are a variety of roles that anyone can help with, so please contact us if you would like to get involved – and as always, if you spot a sick or injured koala please call our 24-hour rescue hotline on 6622-1233.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting, phone (02) 6622-1233. More info is at: www.friendsofthekoala.org

Plant of the month



Giant Water Gum *Syzygium francissi*

by Richard Burer,
Bush regenerator

One of my most favourite local trees is Giant Water gum, *Syzygium francissi*. This particular specimen stopped me in my tracks last week, so spectacular, strong, hardy and resilient. This tree is everything to our local creeks, rivers, waterways and rainforest remnants. Without this common tree our waterways, soil and biodiversity would be in poorer shape. Giant Water Gum seems to be able to handle

anything you throw at it, how about a flood? "Thanks for holding it all together." What about the current drought? "Thanks for the shade on the creek and in the paddock." Thanks for being stunning with your blaze of pink red new growth. Thanks for being massive, your purple fruit hanging waiting for rainforest doves and for smart humans to collect your fruits for easy propagation. How old are you? "A hundred years at least." I'd say way, way older.

Get on top of those weeds now

by Triny Roe

We had some rain during February and now everything starts to grow again. Time to crack out the mower and, more importantly, get out and weed.

Get them when they're small. Stroll around your block and see what has sprouted recently. Wind, water, birds and bats carry new seed to new locations. You never know what is going to pop up.

Groundsel bush, *Baccharis halimifolia*, is important to look out for, as mentioned last month. It can be spotted in paddocks and sometimes on roadsides around the district. If you have it and haven't begun to address it, be aware that this woody shrub flowers profusely in April and May.

Please don't allow another year of seed to be produced. This pest species has the potential to become a big problem if not controlled. Personal observation has noticed an increase of groundsel bush in the Nimbin Valley over the last few years. Don't let it flower again this year.

A few neglected paddocks over the last couple of years have provided a copious new seed supply. This hardy woody shrub can produce 1.5 million seeds. About half fall in the vicinity of the mother bush and can lead to the establishment of a dense grove. The other 750,000 fluffy seeds can float on the wind up to forty kilometres.

Even if it is not already next door, it could come from the far end of the valley during very windy weather. By MardiGrass it will be in full flower. Please plan to deal with it now. At



Groundsel growing in new subdivision

the very least, prevent further seed production to help keep this noxious weed from spreading any further. It is considered a Regional Priority Weed and, as such, landholders must prevent its distribution.

Groundsel bush is prone to establishing on new subdivisions that have been bulldozed, on overgrazed land or old cattle paddocks no longer maintained. The recent drought has given much of the local grazing a real hammering. New real estate developments take several years to be fully occupied. In the meantime, and even afterwards, who looks after the revegetation zones in the gullies and on the creeks? Groundsel can invade closed and open forest especially after logging and other disturbance.

Giant devil fig, *Solanum chrysotrichum*, and seeded bananas, *Musa acuminata* are other problem species that are spread by bats and birds. Once again, easy to hand weed when very small. Hard work after they reach maturity.

Increasing urbanisation can lead to more weed problems as tree changers with city backgrounds fail to recognise local weeds and problems they cause if not dealt with promptly. Everyone has priorities. For some it's building a house, or raising children. And oh, it's so pretty!

Do your research and look around. Before you plant or propagate something, make sure you're not promoting a pest species. Nurseries, market and street stalls are sometimes seen selling environmental weeds. Polka-dot plant or freckle face, *Hypoestes phyllostachya*, is often seen in markets, but can cause devastation in riparian zones and rainforest margins, replacing native understory species.

Jacaranda, *Jacaranda mimosifolia*, is an iconic tree with a spectacular purple floral display. With festivals in Grafton and Goodna, one can be forgiven for not knowing this species is listed as an undesirable weed tree. A native of Bolivia and Argentina it was first planted in Brisbane in 1864. Today, naturalised in parts of SE Qld and Northern NSW, jacaranda establishes on roadsides and creek banks and is considered an environmental weed.

Impressive native species to plant instead include wheel of fire tree, *Stenocarpus sinuatus*, or Crown of Gold, *Barklya syringifolia*.

Happy weeding.

Nimbin Garden Club notes

by Linda Mielcarek

The first meeting of the Nimbin Garden Club for 2019 was held at Nic and Andrew's property. Unfortunately, due to the hot dry weather of late, our first actual garden visit had to be cancelled and was substituted with an informative talk on first aid.

Twenty-six members and guests attended the meeting and heard the talk given by Nancy from Workforce Skills and Training, ably assisted by Alf who demonstrated how to apply bandages and splints to limbs affected by snake or spider bites.

They also included a segment on how to deal with anaphylaxis and using an epipen, all information and technique that should be in the armoury of a gardener.

Nancy also pointed out that there is an app called Emergency+ that we could all put on our mobile phones which would provide emergency services with your geographic co-ordinates should you be unfortunate enough to suffer a bite or injury and require help.

It was also brought to our attention that, due to our appalling taste in television shows, 000, 999 and 911 will all now connect you to emergency services.

Next meeting will be held at 2pm on Saturday 16th March, at Peter and Boulalai's property.

Peter and Boulalai have only been there since September last year, but have done an amazing amount of land clearing and planting of speciality Asian herbs and vegetables. Although in its absolute infancy, it's very inspirational.

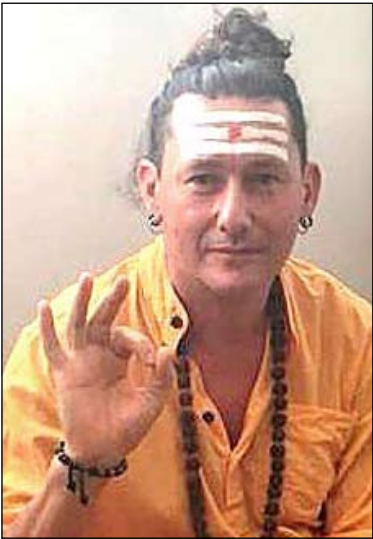
The address is 35 Buchanans Road, Lillian Rock/Wadeville. Car-pooling is essential as they can only fit about 6-8 cars. Buchanans Road runs off Kyogle Road about 500 metres from Barkers Vale school, and is a 20-minute drive from Nimbin post office.

Sexuality – razor’s edge to divinity or hell

There are few subjects that can span our most intimate moments, endless controversy, unequalled bliss and our darkest wounds and possibly even with the same person. Though generally avoiding discussions on commercialized Tantra and its Westernized disintegration, as the Buddhist saying goes, “We are all galloping towards death not stopping for an instant.” So what is there to lose?

How can we improve sexual education? The school presentation of sexual education for me was about as exciting as a frog dissection. When my testosterone hormones kicked in, my sex drive was an unstoppable, sometimes inconvenient and immensely pleasurable adventure focused around my genitals and the opposite sex.

Society unconsciously allows adolescents to explore sexuality in a blind leading the blind fashion surrounded by myths, fears, misadventures and imposed limitations. Frustrations aside, the period of connecting to one’s own body and genitals via the nervous system, the neurological system and understanding what causes both pleasure and pain, first without a partner, is an essential prerequisite



by Cameron Storey

whatever your sexual orientation.

After reading *Making Love* by Barry Long, I changed the way I both viewed and participated in love making. The purpose became centred around creating a loving space in the present and collecting the subtle energies of woman rather than pleasure driven and orgasm oriented. Sexuality may be seen as having three differing intentions: 1) for pleasure, 2) for procreation, and 3) for spiritual development.

Sexual Secrets by Douglas and Slinger covers aspects of pleasure as

well as spiritual development, and is an exotic presentation of erotic history and practice, also covering much of the famous *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana and taking the subject of sexuality to deeper levels of sacredness and subtlety.

One aspect of these practices that was quite revolutionary was spending more time stationary inside a woman, for at least half an hour, in order to absorb her secretions and subtle energies and reciprocate in return.

Normally male restlessness/ rajas is transformed into post-coital sleepiness/tamas and female sleepiness/tamas is transformed into post-coital energy/rajas. Remaining stationary balances the rajas of the male and the tamas of the female transforming into a sattvic state for them both.

The polarities can also be reversed in the beginning with male sleepiness/tamas and female/ restlessness but less frequently. The consequent sattvic state then makes climaxing optional rather than driven.

If the drive to experience pleasure and climax are fed long enough, their conclusion is addiction and not freedom at all. Each of us has experienced selfishness, the sense of separation

and the isolation it brings.

Worldwide studies show the average couple has sex around 54 times a year and for around 5.4 minutes each time and this gives no time for subtle energy exchange. Increasing the duration (quality) while decreasing the frequency (quantity) leads to a different mind-set and body function.

Tantric Grounds and Paths and Guide to Dakini Land by Geshe Kelsang reminds us of the importance of both a concentration base and meditation depth. The ‘Direct Experience of Emptiness,’ said to be a prerequisite to Tantric practice, led me to seven years of meditation with celibacy to first stabilise meditative equipoise and only then to try to integrate sexual energy and awareness subsequently.

The balancing process is relational meaning your partner’s level of internal tranquillity or restlessness affects the outcome of the love making. So while it’s possible as a male to have sexual relationships without the need to climax at all it’s not always possible to accomplish with everybody.

Making love can become an extension of yoga and meditation where the observation of the Law of Impermanence governing breath, emotions, thoughts and sensations

leads to the realisation of no solid self. (One’s own self and/or the other’s self.)

The realisation past this is the realisation of Pure Awareness without attributes, no inherent bodies, no inherent minds, and no forms. Regardless of any realisations, of course, any partnership you are in can disintegrate into misunderstandings and emotional chaos regardless of the best intentions.

Relationship takes two people to make it work, but only one to bring it to an end. The pain that arises when relationship ends can be the worst pain we will ever experience. Perhaps this explains the ‘Widowhood effect’, why long-term couples often die within a few months of each other. Not even death – do us part.

The Dharma Centre has yoga classes on Mondays at 4.30pm with Therese and on Thursdays at 4.30pm with Matt, as well as yoga classes at Birth and Beyond Nimbin on Fridays at 9.30am with Cameron, and Saturdays at 9.30am with Therese. If you are interested in medicinal healing ceremonies like the two Kambo Ceremonies just run recently, find us on FB: Dharma Centre – Lillfield or phone (02) 6689-7120.



Food Matters

by Neil Amor

The Nimbin Organic Food Co-op has hit the ground running for 2019.

A newly energised team continue to apply their energies to provide the local community with a valued service.

A new service bench has been built and installed by a local artisan, providing a more enjoyable shopping experience.

Over the last few weeks we have installed new refrigeration, allowing for an expanded range in cheese, dairy and vegan products.

On that point, the Co-op has acquired a locally produced Vegan slice in three varieties and all organic ingredients... yum.

Our purchase team continue to source local produce whenever available, thereby giving small local

Ginger and tamari dressing

This versatile dressing can be used on salads, steamed greens or grilled meats. It keeps for about three days in the fridge.

175ml apple cider vinegar

125g brown sugar

50ml water

75ml tamari

2 tsp sesame oil

1 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 tbsp finely grated white onion

1 tbsp finely grated ginger.

Method

Pour vinegar into heatproof bowl. Place sugar and water in a small pan and bring to the boil then turn heat down to medium and allow sugar to caramelise until it goes dark brown (about 2-3 mins).

Just before caramel begins to smoke, remove from the heat, quickly pour into the vinegar bowl and whisk well. Add tamari and sesame oil and whisk well.

Slowly drizzle in the extra virgin olive oil, whisking continuously, then stir through onion and ginger.

farms the support required for a sustainable local food culture.

The Nimbin Organic Food Co-op is 100% volunteer run and supported by the Nimbin community.

If you have some free time, work well in a team and care about supporting and growing our community, give our Volunteer Co-ordinator a call on 0497-833-717 and join us.

Have you lived before?



by Auralia Rose

Have you met someone for the first time and felt like you had an instant bond or attraction? Do you have chronic physical ailments that the doctors can’t seem to resolve? Do you have unexplained fears and phobias? Do you self sabotage, have self-limiting attitudes and beliefs?

The answer may be found in your past lives which can be accessed through your sub conscious via a focussed state of hypnosis called Past Life Regression (PLR). PLR is an exciting trip into your sub-conscious where all your memories are held. You enter a deeply relaxed but still conscious state which unlocks doors in your mind that open to other worlds, worlds that were yours in another time.

PLR enables you to make the unconscious become conscious for deeper resolution of unresolved emotional issues that can reinforce health, career, relationship, or behavioural challenges. It can illustrate



problems in your life and how lessons learned from the regression can be applied to your current life.

We often form close relationships with people who might have been lovers, friends, family, colleagues or mortal enemies in previous lives. Some past life relationships bring karma from a previous life and some don’t. Some of these past life relationships that we have are soul mates, fated, karmic or kindred souls

Although many people accept the principle of reincarnation – that we are eternal beings, inhabiting many different human bodies and personalities across the ages – many do not realise the profound, complex and subtle ways that our past life experiences impact our current life and personality.

We often bring traumatic memories that are re-created in our current life, making little sense and keeping us from living peaceful lives.

With the dramatically effective approach of PLR people retrieve their own

memories of their previous lifetimes with the help of a professional hypnotherapist.

By unearthing and processing the memories, we release the experiences that are blocking effectiveness in our current life, as well as reinforcing the talents and lessons carried forward from prior personalities.

PLR enables the conflicts from the past that have been distorting our mental, emotional and physical wellbeing to be resolved. Our soul gets a chance to come back and finish what was not finished or learned by us in previous life times. You will be amazed how your life and even the lives of your family and friends quickly change when the originating past life trauma or block is uncovered.

PLR has helped thousands of people worldwide to live more constructive, creative, and peace-filled lives.

If you would like to find out more I would love to hear from you. Phone 0422-481-007, email: auralia_rose@hotmail.com web: www.auraliarosewellbeing.com

When drought conditions end

by Les Rees

It seems as if Mother Nature has been giving the world some powerful warnings concerning complacent attitudes regarding climate change. For many of us it has been a worrying time with so little water and feed for our animals in the Northern Rivers with uncharacteristic weather patterns causing months of drought. For those who have livestock on their properties, it has been a huge relief to have some decent downpours and possible forecasts for further showers over the next few weeks. We can only hope it continues to refill our tanks and dams and aid our arid landscape to return to its normal lush conditions.

However, for horses the sudden fluctuation in weather patterns can create some nasty problems concerning metabolic stress, colic and laminitis when our greedy equines over gorge themselves on the fresh new growth in their paddocks. Horses have very sensitive digestive systems that are easily thrown out of balance especially having been on a diet consisting of the dried grasses and hay. This is obviously particularly prevalent after several months of drought conditions.



I strongly advise that you keep a watchful eye on your horses and even more so, your ponies who can be particularly prone to these symptoms. It is advisable to establish a routine of limited grazing on lush paddocks especially during the daylight hours when the grasses are high in fructans (plant sugar). Ideally they need to be put into an area where they can move around and provide low sugar hay and water during the day when plant sugars are high.

Most of the area around the Northern Rivers was originally sown with drought tolerant grasses suitable for cattle. The high levels of carbohydrates in these grasses promote rapid weight gain and increased milk yield and

their concentrated sources of energy are particularly unsuitable for feeding horses.

These grasses grow back quickly and all equines love it but the sudden concentrated energy overwhelms their digestive systems causing problems. When they ingest too much fresh grass, it causes a gas build up in the intestinal tract and can easily cause them to colic.

In the past I have used the "Paradise Paddock" system to limit grazing which I found to be excellent and reasonably cheap to set up. It consists of a circular run around the edge of your paddock using electric wire to fence it off. This way the horses can keep moving around the paddocks especially if you throw some hay out in different places

along the track. I liked to run it back to a watering spot near my stables which gave me easy access to drinking troughs and also encourages them to keep moving around the place. You can then give them access the centre of the paddock to allow a few hours of grazing on the lush grasses.

It's important to remember that since horses are trickle feeders, they need access to feed on a continuous basis, so provide some low sugar hay or soaked hay for them to graze on during the daylight hours.

I also give mine additional supplements plus a herbal preparation which helps them to maintain their body balance.

www.horsetailherbs.com.au
0437-586-705

It's not amazing

by Suzy Maloney

I frequently hear the phrase, 'It's amazing that you ride bitless'. Then; your horses must be very quiet, you must be a great rider, you must be an experienced horse trainer and how do you stop your horse?, I could never do that my horse is way too hot/forward/fast/naughty, isn't it dangerous?, I'd love to go bitless but I could never control my horse without a bit and other well-meaning comments. Some people think that to ride a horse without a bit is something only for the elite few, for extremely experienced horse people with perfect horses.

This couldn't be further from the truth. I'm not an Olympian rider and my horses are far from perfect. The truth is that going bitless is very easy. Here's an example, recently my husband and I were in Colombia. We were staying with family and went to visit the family farm high up in the Andes. The only way to get there was on horseback. It involved a 3 hour ride on some of the most adventurous mountain trails I've ever seen. My husband loves horses but is not an experienced rider. We were to ride horses that

had only been ridden with bits. I'd taken some bitless bridles with me and put one on my husband's horse. I asked her to yield to the side twice then my inexperienced and slightly scared husband climbed on board and rode her up the mountain. She didn't put a hoof wrong. She climbed, trotted and cantered with full responses to the rein aids by an inexperienced rider.

In the above example the situation was safer with the bitless than a bit because if he'd inadvertently jabbed her with the reins with a bit it may have caused her pain and possible loss of balance. Some of those tracks were on the edge of cliffs! It is much safer for beginner and inexperienced riders to use a bitless bridle. The full control is there and the horse is calm.

Another example is a green broke brumby I used to ride at work. He would react to things in the environment, and because I was working, I had to correct him instantly. Every time this happened he would then be toey and hot for the rest of the ride. I started riding him bitless, to which he transferred instantly. He still reacted to things and I still had to correct him, but he would be calm and easy to ride



straight after. The effect was amazing; this was one of the experiences that convinced me about the safety of the bitless bridle.

The above two examples both result in a safer ride but for different reasons. With the first it was a lack of rider skill that made the bitless safer and in the second example the lack of horse skill. These are two situations where many people think you must have a bit, but I now believe the total opposite. If the rider or the horse is inexperienced, then a bitless bridle is a much safer option than that of a bit.

In my years of introducing the bitless bridle to many horses, I have learnt a few things. One is that most horses transition to the bitless bridle instantly and effortlessly. The other is that the riders take a bit

longer. The horses seem able to embrace the change instantly, while the riders hang on to the old idea that you need a bit to control a horse. This has been shown to be incorrect but it is still engrained into the minds of children when they are learning to ride. After years and years of hearing this it becomes difficult to dislodge.

One way I've heard it described is like, 'You have a better horse than you think'. Without the bit the horse relaxes and listens. This makes every horse easier to ride. It's not amazing, it's easy!

Happy Horses Bitless,
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40 days for 40 years

Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

Most people are aware that preparing for birth is an important step in helping to create a positive experience. We are also seeing a revived interest in postpartum care.

Those precious weeks after birth are intense, but with the right support, a mother and her newborn baby can navigate the twists and turns a little easier. They can emerge feeling rejuvenated and peaceful instead of overwhelmed and exhausted.

The new mother deserves to be nurtured

Those first forty days after birth can help or hinder a mother's health for the next forty years of her life. If time is given to rest, recuperate and heal then this can replenish her reserves. This can assist with future pregnancies and also may affect how easily she transitions through menopause later in life. Receiving nurturing postpartum care is an investment in future health. Likewise, failure to place importance on this time can be detrimental to mental and physical wellbeing.

Some of the universal traditions for caring for new mothers

All around the world, different cultures have varying beliefs around postpartum care. Some of the common protocols that are encouraged are: rest, proper nutrition and outsourcing of usual responsibilities.

Slow down and rest

Growing and birthing a baby is physically and emotionally challenging. Sometimes we underestimate how healing and rejuvenating rest can be.



This is where building your village beforehand really comes in handy. Many modern women are accustomed to 'doing it all' and the thought of asking for help can feel awkward or uncomfortable. Taking time to rest after birth is essential and we need to move past the notion that receiving help is 'a luxury'.

Outsourcing help

An eye-opening exercise is to write down all the tasks you currently do day-to-day. You may cook, clean, look after children or pets, shop for food, garden and/or run a business. For proper rest and recovery, outsourcing as many tasks as possible will be important. What can you get help with? Who can support you? What might you need to outsource? For example; can you hire a cleaner, a cook or postpartum doula?

Eating well

Foods that are good for new mothers are easy to digest and warm, like soups and stews. More importantly, they are cooked for the mother. This is not something she should be trying to do herself one-handed and exhausted. Some women choose to stock up their

freezer during pregnancy. Others may ask a friend to organise a 'meal train' where friends and family can deliver home-cooked meals throughout the first few weeks after birth. Food that is lovingly made has the power to heal beyond the physical. And, if the mother has the energy, this short social interaction can be good for the soul.

Bring back the village

Modern society would have you believe that faster is better, but in the case of postpartum, slower is better! There is no 'going back to normal'. The mother is forever changed. It takes time to adjust to her new role and the more supported she feels, the more peaceful she'll be. A happy and healthy mother is better able to nurture her newborn. Mothers are not meant to make this transition on their own. It really does take a village!

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

Thinking beyond stone

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

Many years ago, sometime in the mid 1970s I was in Zurich, Switzerland sitting in an interview with the head of the Jung Institute talking about things.

I was querying a fundamental doctrine of Jungian psychotherapy and the man said my question showed the emergence of the shadow of my father. I thought to myself, "bull," but politely smiled and stayed silent. This one instance ultimately gathered enough steam for me not to stay a Jungian. They were not open to examination and questions.

Last week, in a peer group gathering after hearing a lecture on an aspect of Freudian psychoanalysis, I once again piped up expressing my doubt about something said as an apparently irrefutable fact by the lecturer. I said then that I'm still thinking about the matter at hand and that I'm unwilling to accept the explanation given, unexamined. Interestingly, the guy running the group told me, in a roundabout way, that my question demonstrated some developmental anomaly in

my psyche. Again, I thought to myself, "bull," but didn't say anything in reply. I did say, I sense there is more to be thought about here, that we need to examine this thing further and maybe it'll take twenty or so years to do that, but let's do it. The idea that there is only ever one answer, a thing set in stone, is just lazy and not terribly useful. It's sort of like saying, as it used to be thought, that fire obviously has a substance called phlogiston and everybody who is anybody knows this. Phlogiston, they said, is contained within combustible bodies and released during combustion. For a very long time, this was the "scientific" explanation of what fire is, and people accepted it, and many people stopped thinking about it. In the late 18th century, freer thinkers came to understand fire very differently. Fire is the rapid oxidation of a material in the exothermic chemical process of combustion, releasing heat, light, and various reaction products. There is no phlogiston.

A teacher of mine once said of me, I have a bull dog

personality and won't let go, unless I am satisfied. No amount of persuasion, no amount of appeal to a "higher" authority will move me, as I am more interested in the fluidity of possibilities than apparent certainty. This is all very nice, but too often I find myself on the outer because of this, acquiring "diagnoses" along the way!

The laziness in accepting something because a person in authority has said so is giving up one's personal agency as a thinker and that means getting stuck in stone, in my view.

Fritz Perls, a founder of Gestalt Therapy, coined the term "introjection" to describe the unexamined, undigested, swallowed whole foreign bodies (ideas) taken in uncritically from the caretakers (mother, father, school teachers, church ministers, social media) of our lives. Quite often these introjects are consumed like this because of the pressure of fashion, tradition, shame and fear about being different, and direct coercion. Usually the introjects are contradictory and the person spends agonizing hours trying to reconcile the irreconcilable. The noise from

introjects consist of "should should", leaving little room for developing one's own personality. Interestingly too, where a person is dominated by introjects they also have a lot of digestive issues. They literally cannot digest what has been fed them, everything sticks in the craw (nothing goes down, nothing nourishes). Quite often, as soon as introjects are identified and known as coming from elsewhere, their tummy troubles ease up. Identifying introjects is one very important function of counselling. In each counselling session we work together on identifying what is yours, what came from your parents and other caregivers, whose ideas about this and that have you swallowed whole, and why, and getting to think beneath the stone to the soft earth and water below where all of us are free to examine whatever it is we wish without taking on board another person's dogma and doctrine for our own creative life.

Beyond the certainty of stone is a fluidity of being open to multiple ways of seeing and a freedom of being.

Yin and Yang energy

The heat and dryness of January and February has been very obvious, affecting people's energy and seriously affecting plants and animals. In terms of yin and yang theory, we have been short of yin, the cooling moistening energy. Yin is also substance or structure, for example the loss of the solid structures of plants in a drought.

Yin and yang are two phases of a cyclical movement. Things may have totally gone in the other direction by the time this is printed. They are always relative. We notice the dry because we are used to wet summers, in a dry region the same conditions would not be thought as dry. Yin and yang theory was developed from close observations of natural cycles, using this knowledge beneficially rather than trying to change the natural environment.

In terms of health, normally the body can adjust to different conditions. But there can be problems if the weather is unseasonal or the weather changes suddenly. Also if the conditions are excessive and prolonged, such



as living in a house that is always damp. Going from heat into air-conditioning frequently will affect the body's ability to adjust and its defences. Also the outer climate can exaggerate other tendencies. Damp heat conditions are often worse during hot weather, deficient cold conditions worse in the cold.

In terms of the yin energy of the body, the yin is to do with substance, with the yin organs storing essence, blood and fluid, while the yang energy is associated with action and movement. Yin energy is harder to replenish and yin deficiency is seen as a more

serious condition.

Causes of yin deficiency include an imbalance of yang, too much activity without enough rest or sleep. Prolonged illness will drain yin as will high fevers or loss of fluids. Symptoms of yin deficiency generally have aspects of heat and dryness.

More specifically, symptoms will vary depending on the organ affected. Kidney yin deficiency symptoms may include; heat, insomnia, dryness, hearing loss, tinnitus, insomnia, hot palms or feet, thirst (while only wanting to drink small amounts at a time),

anxiety especially in the evening, lower back pain, frequent urination or painful urination. As well as the above causes, kidney yin deficiency can be either hereditary as well as naturally happening with aging – "half the yin is gone by the age of 40".

Heart yin deficiency causes insomnia, palpitations, anxiety, forgetfulness, and insomnia. Long term emotional problems often contribute to this pattern. Extreme external heat such as heat stroke can also be a cause.

With lung deficiency there can be a weak or hoarse voice, tiredness, chronic cough, wheezing, sore throat or unwillingness to speak. Specific causes can be overuse of the voice, prolonged sadness and grief or smoking.

Liver yin deficiency can cause dizziness, numbness of limbs, tremors, insomnia, dry eyes or blurred vision, brittle nails, dry hair and skin, scanty or lack of menstruation. Liver yin deficiency is often secondary to liver blood deficiency or kidney yin deficiency. A poor diet or blood loss can be specific causes.



by Brigid Beckett

If there is a yin deficiency, a yin replenishing diet will help. This will include protein, usually 10-20%, with the remainder divided between carbohydrates and fruit and vegetables. Especially good are green leafy and root vegetables and oils in seeds and beans. Also use plenty of water in cooking, soups and stews are ideal. Many pharmaceuticals harm yin; taking yin supplements can often lessen side effects.

A balance between activity and rest, good diet, and caring for emotional aspects of life will always keep energies balanced.

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

The importance of playing with pets

Animal talk

by Donna Connelly

In this month's article I will be covering the importance of playtime. It is such an integral part of our lives. Both, for ourselves and our animal counterparts. It keeps both of our spirits young and our souls nourished.

On conducting research for this topic, I came across a scientific definition of play (James L Gould and Carol Grant Gould) "Play – is to describe any behaviour that does not have any apparent adaptive function. That is, it serves no obvious purpose"

I actually disagree, animals are the masters of energy conservation. And my belief and understanding is, that they happen to go about their everyday tasks with fun in mind.

Animals play for a number of different reasons. When they are young it teaches them boundaries and basic behaviour. .

Play is an important part of their (and our) daily routine.

It encourages living in the moment. Raised heart rate, release of endorphins, laughter and connecting to our inner child: all of these things are important for the evolution of one's soul and spiritual growth. Therein lies play's greatest purpose,

The benefits are endless. For example, dogs learn to play when they are puppies, living with their pack. Then we become their pack.

Playtime in social groups gives them useful life skills like, play fighting, hunting or chasing, at the same time allowing them to bond. I was privileged to witness this firsthand, with puppy integration when I worked at the pet resort. It was wonderful to see the older dogs assist in reinforcing correct behaviour and manners. Dogs learn naturally and so much faster from their own species.

According to a study from Bristol University. Dogs who don't play, can become anxious, develop separation anxiety, aggression, unnecessary barking, whining and other undesirable



behaviours.

However, a dog who plays by itself demonstrates intelligence. Also, according to the experts, dogs require 30 minutes to two hours play per day... I believe if you only have 30 minutes of time to offer a pet, then get a gold fish!

Most animals love interactions with their own species as well as other species. That's why they have taken on such an important part of our lives. We owe it to them to provide enrichment and mental stimulation. It honours their inner puppy.

If you have a free spirited animal living with you, as I do, you will notice that good play is still a much anticipated highlight of their day. My Dora, who is 8.5 years young, still loves a good game of chasey and hide and seek. She will always be the instigator. Quite often if I'm in my office, she will run past with one toy in her mouth, then two and at the most, is three. Now that's some serious dedication! The other signature move she has, is the "bum-but" where she will come up spin around and whack into my legs with her bottom, to engage play.

I am always happy to indulge her because, it truly benefits both of us. It gets me moving, laughing, running



around the house and yard, and I always feel lighter for the experience. Bless her.

The dolphins are a wonderful example of naturally occurring play. When I swam with them in Hawaii there was an overwhelming feeling of pure joy and happiness, in their every movement. The French phrase "Joie de Vivre" sums them up beautifully. Enjoyment of life involves one's whole being.

Eagles soar majestically, searching for prey, from a higher perspective. Doing their graceful dance in the wind currents making the task seemingly more pleasurable and productive.

Why not take a leaf out of the animals book? Live life in the moment, with joy and happiness in everything we do. It would be a lighter journey and would encourage more joy into our lives.

How can you and your furfriends bring more fun to your every day?

You will find myself and the lovely Jen at the NSW Health and Wellness Expos in Casino on the 2nd, Mullumbimby on the 3rd and Ballina on the 16th of March. All from 10-4pm

I will be offering reiki treatments and psychic readings for animals or people who are living or passed over.

You can book in prior to the events to secure your place.

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NATURAL LAW

by Helene Collard

Aloha. Big love. During February there were significant shifts that took place. Regardless of how that feels, these changes are creating alignment and allowing for some tensions to fall away. All is in divine order.

Over and over in human history, women have experienced oppression of many kinds. This harm has created an immense pain that resonates throughout all life – male and female. March is a time to clear and balance the energies, with many women integrating the past and many men stepping up to embody a gentle, present strength to hold the feminine with deep respect and honour.

This releasing of shackles and realignment will have far reaching effects, across all dimensions of time and space. Forging a new way forward, that incorporates the wisdom of the indigenous, that is led by the feminine and held by the masculine.

My recent work with Reiki has involved clearing stories of the past. Many events that we have experienced, continue to negatively impact us now. Holding us back in life and relationships. If you would like support clearing an integrating the past, I'd love to hear from you.

Yours in Wellbeing,
Helene



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Helene 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.