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Seedlings: A story worth continuing

by Devon Maher

Last month the *Nimbin GoodTimes* ran a story paying tribute to the inspiring work of Greg and Ness James and their amazing successful Organic BioDynamic seedlings. Having contributed to the community for 13 years, Greg and Ness deserve a well-earned break.

They have earned the chance to put their feet up and we want them to be able to enjoy that. Their story grabbed our attention, speaking to the couple at the Blue Knob Markets.

Greg and Ness have quite remarkably offered to pass on their expertise and proprietary knowledge to a younger emerging generation of Nimbinites who want to take on the mantle of feeding their community with the healthiest possible produce.

"Who is the Us?" you may ask.

We are Community Choice Organics, and we are a growing collection of local people who have the vision to create affordable, organic and biodynamic fresh food which will provide food security for Blue Knob and the surrounding region.

We have procured a space within Blue Knob and our project is growing in size and momentum much quicker than we anticipated. This being the case is the reason why I am here.

Community Choice Organics is run by the people for the people. We are putting a call out for help and support. At this time, we are looking to create the infrastructure and to build our



Devon with the legendary deep ecologist John Seed, who believes this is part of an important initiative to reinforce local food security

allocated space on Blue Knob Road.

We are putting a call out for funding and a crowdfunding campaign is currently being established. We will need physical infrastructure such as shipping containers, gravel pads, poles, weed mat, greenhouse fabric, bird netting and more.

If you want to become involved or help donate to our cause, please email Devon at: arcofembodiment@protonmail.com to find out more.

Biodynamic nursery
 by Greg James

The universe has answered the community's call: "Where are we going to get our seedlings?" This question has been posed to both

Ness and me since announcing our retirement from seedling production six months ago.

Let me now say with great pleasure that we were recently approached by three young gentlemen local to Blue Knob/Nimbin who are currently working supporting the community through very independent and unique relationships with plants and certified organic growing.

Though different in their interests, they are united in their passion to support the community through their commitment to create and operate a Biodynamic seedling production nursery, to support the Nimbin area, and set to also support the communities of Murwillumbah, Mullumbimby and Byron Bay, just as we have for many years before them.

Ness and I have committed to mentoring them, and to share all the experience, knowledge, and wisdom attained throughout our growing years, to share our awareness of operating a community service facility, and supplying equipment designed and built for Farmer's Choice Organics to produce quality plants, and to assist wherever we are required to see food security maintained for the communities we love and have served for many years.

Please get behind supporting this project in whatever way you can – you'll be supporting people who truly value your food security in a world becoming increasingly insecure by the day.

With love to your garden.

Camphor, camphor everywhere

Weed Words

by Triny Roe

Are there more camphors in the Northern Rivers than any other species? It might seem that way.

This ubiquitous weed tree, camphor laurel, *Cinnamomum camphora*, a species originating from China, Japan, and Taiwan, was introduced to Australia in 1822. It was distributed by the colonists around the country when it was chosen as a suitable species for planting in school grounds and municipal parks. It was tough and produced deep shade.

Fast growing, fruiting at seven years, camphor was too successful. It fruits prolifically. A mature tree can produce 100,000 seeds, and a variety of birds feeding on the fruits carry these seeds to new locations where they flourish. There are now feral populations of camphor along the east coast from Victoria to North Queensland. Particularly prevalent in Northern NSW, it is declared noxious in many LGAs where they are most abundant. Camphor regrowth is very common on the old farms that were once rainforest but are now lifestyle properties.

Easily identified by the strong camphor odour when



Camphor suckering

leaves are crushed, camphor laurel needs constant managing to prevent it taking over. It's a hardy species and readily out-competes regenerating native species. All parts are toxic to humans and animals if ingested. Two hundred years after its arrival, camphor is still colonising fence lines, creek banks, under power lines, road sides, and old farms and paddocks no longer grazed and managed.

Camphor oil can be extracted from the trees. This oil has therapeutic qualities though caution is advised due to its toxicity. The timber from camphor laurel is valued for its fine grain and aromatic qualities and is used to produce furniture. However, not all specimens produce good wood. The best coloured slabs come from trees grown



Ring-barked camphor laurel

on red soils, while rapidly growing trees on creek banks have a coarser texture and are less desirable. Camphors have a shallow root system and are not ideal on creek or river banks. They could be prone to undercutting if not growing in companionship with other plants with deeper roots.

Hand weeding is very easy when they are small. For larger specimens ring barking is possible though it takes longer and requires follow up. Hammer a girdle of bark from the trunk; the back end of a tomahawk works well. Eye protection is essential. Return periodically to remove suckers. Rainforest seedlings need shelter in their early years. While they can germinate and grow for a while under a camphor canopy, they cannot reach

their potential until the camphor is gone. Camphor trees can live from 100 to 500 years.

Slow and steady bush regeneration allows the wildlife to adapt to the changes in the habitat. Many bird species now include camphor fruit in their diet, after their natural food source, the rainforests were logged. Top knot pigeons feed on the big stands of camphor, a cacophony of wings beating as they flock in the air. The small round black fruits are ripe in Spring.

Plant native quince *Guioa semiglaucula*, white beech *Gmelina leichhardtii*, three-veined laurel *Cryptocarya triplinervis* and other rainforest trees to replace the camphors and provide food for the birds. A large range of native species will provide year-long feasting for our fructivorous feathered friends.

The recent flood events appear to have impacted many local camphors. Farmers and ecologists have noticed yellowing of leaves and leaf drop of mature specimens along creeks and roadsides. Is it water logging or fungal attack? Are they dying? Time will tell. Camphors are tough. The main trunk can die but they have a tendency to root sucker and live on.

Cruciferous season

Food Matters
by Evie Fairley

It's the season for adding cruciferous vegetables to your daily cooking repertoire. As it's a rather large plant family: rocket, bok choy, broccoli, broccolini, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi and kale to name just a few.

You shall never tire from dreaming up infinite ways to add them to your cooking creations. Both pungent and bitter in flavour, the pungent flavour cleanses and protects the lungs and the bitter flavour tonifies and vitalises the lungs and kidneys.

So it isn't at all surprising that the vegetables that grow in our coldest months also protect our bodies from the cold.

Nature is truly amazing if we follow the rhythm of the seasons, in turn we lessen our footprint when we eat what is produced both locally and seasonally. So for the recipes this month I chose the humble Brussel sprout, maligned by many, but perhaps just misunderstood and cooked horribly wrong.

Shaved brussel sprout salad with pumpkin seed dressing

300g (2 cups) shredded Brussel sprouts
1/2 red onion
1 medium apple
3 tbsp dried cranberries
For the dressing:
3 tbsp pumpkin seeds
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar



2 tsp maple syrup
Salt and pepper to taste
Wash sprouts and remove any wilted leaves. Thinly slice both the sprouts and red onion if you have a food processor this will make it quicker
Quarter the apple and core then slice finely (leave the skin on the apple)
Toss the above ingredients with the dried cranberries

For the dressing dry toast the pumpkin seeds until they are fragrant then add to the food processor with the other dressing ingredients and whiz (it should be slightly chunky).
Toss the salad with the dressing and serve garnished with extra pumpkin seeds and cranberries.

Roasted Brussel sprouts with balsamic vinegar

450g Brussel Sprouts
1 tbsp olive oil
Salt and pepper
For the maple and balsamic glaze:
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tsp maple syrup
1 tsp olive oil
Preheat oven to 220°C.
Slice the Brussel sprouts in half length-ways. Place sprouts on a baking sheet drizzle with oil and season with salt and pepper.
Toss gently to coat and roast in the oven for 20 mins.
Mix the glaze ingredients together and drizzle over the crispy roasted Brussel sprouts.
Bon appetit!

The Spud: instant potato mash

Avoiding the precarious: consider low energy food storage and preparation

by Thom Culpepper

Due to American perfidious, political-ideological 'sanctuaries', (sanctions) on peoples that it loathes, a lot of the world is now dangerously threatened with precarious food-denial.

The city-based, supermarket-dependent bourgeoisie have few resources to overcome this rearing problem. 'Amenity' horticulture is their main preoccupation.

Not only in the world's third world 'South' but in the first world NATO-Europe as well, people are being denied access to desired and traditional food resources, and any legal access to their cultural lands, with the immigrant, 'latifundia-class' owning and paying the cops and the armies.

Root vegetables and other various tap root vegetables, eg carrot, turnips (neaps), salsify, celeriac, root celery, parsnip etc, have effectively and in general been supplanted by South American root species; the potatoes being the ubiquitous dominant forms.

This 16th century immigrant to Europe via the Spaniards came as a by-product of their relentless southern invasion of the Americas in the search for and exploitation of South



American gold and silver resources. There is a solution! Grow your own and share/exchange. Dedicate some of your otherwise committed time. Use the advantage of being in Oz.

Grow it, desiccate it, store it dry without refrigeration, or buy it already processed. Considering the energy costs of 'wet' storage, desiccation is a profound energy-saver.

Refresh, invigorate, re-humate, blend dry or fresh garden-harvested herbs and serve at the same time, a big plus on time and your energy costs. Time to grow your own again.

And learn to preserve and make-up the high protein stuff: the salamis, salsecchis, jerkies, yoghurts and cheeses, nuts, wines, beers and dried grain products.

The potato paradox
The potato has measured water content of 99%, so a 99 kilos/ litres of H₂O + should give a 1 kilo of desiccated spuds that should give up 100kg of 'wet' spuds and that should have been dried to 1 kilo of spud dry weight, but due to the proof of 'Quine's classification of paradoxes', the true answer is 50 kilos. Wikipedia will tell you why.
So, whatever... 1 kilo of dry spuds (at normal water content) will yield 50 kilos of reinvigorated useful, 'wet' spuds.
Still a huge saving in storage/ use costs. Stored well, vacuum packed and kept vermin-free, it's a health and energy winner.

Making a meal of the dried spud

Dried spuds 25% by weight, soak in boiled water 4-5 minutes.
Blend in 5-10% of milk, plus 15 grams of butter or sour cream, salt and herbs to taste, fold together and plate on toast.
Cover with sun-dried tomatoes and fresh basil, sliced preserved lemons, garnish with freshly cut (or dried), shallots and dress with pan-dried parmesan cheese.

thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Don't rejoice yet

by Scott O'Keeffe

A sudden landscape die-off of an abundant and robust plant should always ring alarm bells. Even though the plant might be an obnoxious pest, its demise might be an indicator of a serious ecological problem in the landscape.

A local dairy farmer recently drew my attention to the apparent die-off of camphor laurels (*Cinnamomum camphora*) in the Goolmangar Creek catchment. She told me there were dozens of large trees that appeared to be dead, and more dying, on the floodplain. She asked: "What's happening to our trees? Are we losing livestock shade trees? Are the creek banks going to erode more? What's causing this? Will it spread?" All very good questions to ask of a landscape ecologist.

Before rejoicing about the death of one of the district's most pernicious weeds, consider what might be causing the dieback, and what the consequences might be.

Let's first look for the cause. We've just had a flood in a catchment with a long history of agriculture and poor water quality. Could the dieback be the result of a chemical contaminant, such as herbicide? I took a tour through the catchment and found that there are a large number of affected trees, mostly in the lower part of the catchment. It seems to primarily affect camphor laurel (in the *Lauraceae* family), although I have

also seen some Photinia (*Rosaceae* family) with nearly-identical symptoms. A wide variety of other trees growing cheek by jowl with the dead camphor laurels seem to be unaffected. Perhaps this means that the cause is not chemical since other sensitive species are unaffected. We can't say for certain, but there may be other more likely causes. Could this be a disease spread by floodwaters, and perhaps aggravated by extended saturation of the floodplain soils?

Phytophthora cinnamomi is a fungus-like microorganism that causes dieback in Australian native forests subjected to disturbance and stress such as water logging. It also affects crops such as avocado. Overseas, cinnamon trees, which are very closely related to camphor laurel, are adversely affected by *Phytophthora*. Camphor laurels overseas are grown for timber, and trees in these places are susceptible to *Phytophthora* and several other infectious pathogens.

So don't rejoice yet. Consider the fact that there are 136 native plant species also in the *Lauraceae* family. Many of these are native to local rainforests including riparian areas. Some, or all of these species might also be affected by the pathogens that affect camphor. Camphor could be a vector for infecting other laurel species. It is a possibility, but however slim, it should not be disregarded.

Whatever the cause, the rapid disappearance of camphor will

have some kind of ecological impact. Where camphors are the dominant trees lining creeks their loss will increase erosion, which is already a serious problem. A sudden serious decline could also create a local food shortage for native fauna, such as the Topknot Pigeon (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) that rely on camphor fruits for food in the absence of their now scarce ancestral foods. Let's also not forget that, as the dairy farmer pointed out, camphor laurels are important shelter trees for livestock in Northern Rivers.

How should we respond? If we know the cause of this phenomenon we can decide how best to respond. But we need more information to identify the cause.

In the meantime, we should probably do what we can to ameliorate increasing streambed and flood plain erosion by planting fast growing native replacement trees. Some of these should be trees that produce fruits to replace the camphor that native fauna has come to rely on. Even if there is no serious decline in camphor, planting additional native riparian trees will not be wasted effort.

There will be a follow-up to this article once some additional observations have been made, and information collected. You can contribute to this. Check any affected camphor trees for signs of regrowth. This might be reshooting from stems and branches or suckering from the roots or bases



of affected trees. Note the location and send in a photo. If you find a tree that you are able to "attack", carve off a layer of bark on an affected camphor tree.

Remove the outer bark to expose the cambium. Note the location and send in a photo. *Phytophthora* and other pathogens sometimes produce discolouration in the cambium of affected trees, so these observations might be useful. If you have any other ideas, thoughts, or observations, send them to: RedWren@posteo.de

Top: Sudden death of camphor laurels on Goolmangar Creek floodplain. Trees of many sizes are affected by local camphor dieback. Notice they retain their dead leaves.

Above left: This dead camphor retains its foliage. This can indicate infection by a pathogen.

Above right: Creek bank erosion will increase if dead camphor laurels, like the one on the right, are not replaced by trees adapted to grow in the riparian zone.

VITAL LIFE ENERGY

Tarot musings

by Amy Scott-Young

One of the best sources to understanding the Tarot is William Walker Atkinson. Atkinson started out as a young and successful lawyer.

However, the stress and overstrain of his job caused him to have a complete physical and mental breakdown. In his search for healing, he discovered the principles of New Thought and believed they “restored his health, mental vigour and material prosperity”.

Atkinson wrote about his discoveries under many aliases and although his teachings are too broad to discuss here, we can briefly touch on his principle of vital life energy through the symbolic hand gesture of the following cards.

The Hierophant. This hand gesture shows us that the currents of vital life energy are directed through the first three fingers of the hand. These fingers represent the central nervous system and enable high levels of thought, awareness and memory.

It is also the traditional hand gesture of the papal benediction used by the Pope as a blessing. It suggests that our archetypal Hierophant has significant skill and knowledge in the area of their expertise and is able to effectively apply themselves in the world. This is a person with much power who others look upon for vision and influence.

It is also a reminder that we need others to believe in our skills and knowledge to successfully carry out our plans in the world.

10 of Swords. Our vital life energy is stored in the central nervous system which transmits nerve signals through the spinal cord from the bottom of the brain stem down to the lower back. When this connection is severed, we do not receive accurate environmental information from our peripheral nervous system which can lead to neuropathy and paralysis.

From an esoteric perspective this is a great metaphor for being completely out of touch with one's surroundings. Either we have become too sympathetic toward the demands of others and choose to unnecessarily experience pain and suffering, or we have become unsympathetic and emotionally detached. In either case, we have shut down our psychic defences, do not believe in our own abilities and have little influence over our world.

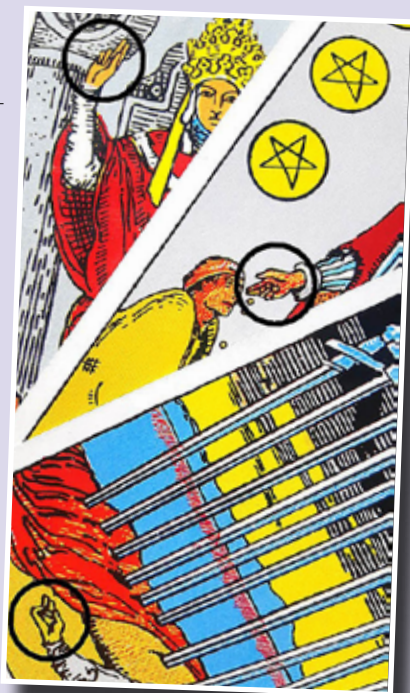
If left unchecked, the stresses of everyday life will be discharged into the body, inevitably leading to dis-ease.

6 of Pentacles. How we recharge our vital life energy is determined by how we absorb and transmute the four elements of matter. This principle is embodied in the Pentacle (or Pentagram) which over-arches the main figure in this card. In the physical sense this relates to the food, water and air we ingest. Esoterically speaking this relates to:

- The Will – the ability to concentrate on our own preferences and interests;
- Sensation – the ability to feel which is key to creating the feedback loop necessary to test, learn and make decisions that improve our performance; and
- Movement – the ability to act and continually apply ourselves.

The 6 of Pentacles is characterised by the realisation that although failures are inevitable, the compensation we receive is always commensurate to the well-balanced effort we put in. This means that if we continue to pursue our interests with an open mind, we will find that self-confidence and success will begin to develop where doubt and failure previously existed. As the saying goes, if we want others to believe in us (as they do The Hierophant), we must first give them something to believe in.

“Energy and invincible determination – these two things will sweep away mighty barriers and will surmount the greatest obstacles.” – William Walker Atkinson.



ICLs and court orders

Last month I was convinced I had no option but to make a report to the government authority empowered to protect a child from a parent. As we'd revealed to the Judicial Registrar (JR), in the confidential Family Dispute Resolution Conference part that the child's circumstances were not good, there seemed some urgency. I worried that caseworkers and police might turn up unannounced to retraumatise the child, or that the mother might abscond with him.

Fortunately, procrastination overcoming urgency (lawyers are supposed to be calm and objective), I didn't report, and the child is still with his mum. Back in court by telephone for a directions hearing, the JR asks me, as the applicant's solicitor, what I want.

“The appointment of an ICL might be appropriate.”

“That's what I was thinking,” she replies, and so orders.

The child (I call him ‘child’ because that's what the Commonwealth *Family Law Act 1975* calls him) is 12 years old. ICL stands

for Independent Children's Lawyer, of which there are two types, depending on the child's age and maturity. For younger children they're ‘best interests’ representatives, effectively advocating for what they decide to be the best interests of the child, and putting the child's ‘views’ before the court.

In child development literature kids can make up their minds about things like who they should be living with by about seven, but the law is cautious. Whenever there's a choice between two courses of action, the court performs a balancing act considering a range of factors dictated by the Act, regulations, rules and caselaw before making its decision. But, by age 12, unless there are developmental delays, kids are assumed to be capable of giving instructions and the ICL then becomes a ‘direct representative’. So, our child is still with mum but gets his own lawyer.

I also ask the JR if we can file an amended Initiating Application and she asks how long I need. We're given 14 days. The mother's



Legal writes

by John Adams

solicitor, because they've alleged that my client is a violent drunk, asks for an order for CDT (carbohydrate deficient transferrin) testing. I agree and explain to him afterwards that it's hardly something we can object to.

In the Orders appearing on the Comcourts Portal next day is, ‘... within 48 hours of being requested by the Respondent to do so the Applicant shall undergo a carbohydrate deficient transferrin test (using the HPLC method) to test whether he is regularly consuming alcohol at an excessive level and shall

provide a copy of the results to the Independent Children's Lawyer and Respondent's solicitor as soon as results are received.’

Back in our just reopened office in South Lismore, next to the not quite yet reopened laundromat, opposite the apparently unlikely to ever reopen railway station, my associate drafts the Amended Initiating Application and big sister's affidavit while I work on the brother's. On Friday I find, among the usual avalanche of emails offering me assistance with social media or my under-construction website, the email, sent a little over 48 hours before, requesting CDT testing. I forward it to my client.

Next day I interrupt a lazy Saturday afternoon to call him to see if he got it. He's driving but stops to talk. He doesn't check his emails that often. Once upon a time, pre-internet, lawyers communicated by letter. Time itself was different. ‘Within 48 hours of being requested’ would have been considered a bit frantic. Then there's the question; when exactly is, or was, the request? I doubt whether it's a problem. He'll see the doctor and get a referral on Monday.

Alarming rates of Long Covid

Nature's pharmacy

by Trish Clough, herbalist

A disturbing number of people are experiencing incapacitating symptoms in the months after contracting Covid-19.

The presentation is very similar to Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), or ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis), which is also recognised as a post-viral syndrome.

Scientists are estimating that at least 400,000 Australians are experiencing the debilitating effects of Long Covid (*The Saturday Paper*, July 9-15, 2022). They are finding approximately 10% of people who had a Covid infection are left with Long Covid. This is very concerning, as the numbers of people with Covid infections keeps increasing.

Common symptoms of Long Covid are severe fatigue, brain fog, breathlessness and chronic pain. In addition, people have other symptoms which are more individual. Many are unable to work, or can only do a reduced number of hours.

For decades CFS was discredited by much of the medical profession, some calling it “yuppie flu”, or assuming it to be a psychological condition. Because of the sheer numbers and immediate focus on Covid-19, scientists are more seriously trying to understand Long Covid, with a view to finding suitable treatments.

Research using MRI scans of the brain are not finding structural damage, so the researchers are seeing it as a functional disturbance instead. The most likely attribute is neuroinflammation, ie inflammation of the nerves of the brain which can then trigger inflammation throughout the body.

It is possible the individual variation in symptoms relates to each person's pre-existing weaknesses and susceptibilities. There is some evidence of an immune



Fresh turmeric

system reaction where T helper cells (involved in fighting infection) are over-activated and create constant inflammation throughout the body.

I can't claim to have the answers to managing Long Covid with natural remedies, as the condition is too new for research to have been completed. But it is something I am seriously thinking about. The underlying issues to address (neuroinflammation, immune dysregulation and chronic pain) are so similar to chronic Lyme and ME, with all three conditions being triggered by infections. I would approach treatments using similar principles.

Neuroinflammation is complex in its management. Firstly the integrity of the blood brain barrier (BBB) is usually disturbed and needs remedies. At the same time the integrity of the gut wall is crucial to a healthy immune response, and needs treatment. If damaged it allows massive inflammation throughout the body.

After improving the BBB integrity, or sometimes concurrently, I would introduce specific herbs and nutrients that support and help repair the health of the central nervous system. Fortunately there are many herbs that can help with this.

Oxygenation is another crucial issue, and requires healthy blood vessel linings and microvascular (tiny blood vessel) support to ensure adequate nutrients to organs and cells. There are herbs which repair the endothelial linings of the blood vessels, and others that support the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

Mitochondrial support, to enable production of cellular energy, is also a key treatment objective. Anti-oxidant rich fruit and vegetables are important, as are herbs high in an ingredient called resveratrol.

Pain management is an important goal. Although the scientists recognise that Long Covid is a disease of inflammation, they find that prescription anti-inflammatories are not sufficiently effective. I wonder whether it is because these medications damage the integrity of the gut lining, creating a vicious circle effect?

My preference is to use a safe gentle natural formulation that has nerve pain reducing and anti-inflammatory actions. It also supports the BBB and reduces neuroinflammation.

Unusually, I am not naming specific herbs in this article, as I strongly believe that Long Covid needs very individually-tailored treatments and on-going management. I'm reluctant to create what may look like a list of herbs as a ‘cure all’, without the specific research on Long Covid.

My assessment is based on my understanding and experience treating and managing other similar post-infection illnesses, as well as understanding the specific targets of damage Covid-19 can cause.

Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough@internode.net.au

The information in the column is meant for general interest only and should not be considered as medical advice



The snowdrop

One of my favourite plants is the snowdrop. It spends most of the year as nothing more than a small swollen bulb underneath the dark earth.

Time moves on, day to night to day. Seasons change from hot to cooler to cold, rains come and go and come again, and nothing much seems to happen around that patch of ground. Where did I plant the snowdrop bulb again?

Life goes on, new decisions are arrived at, new choices made, old stuff is left behind, new plans initiated. Change is constantly with us: some we fear, some welcomed, some just thrust upon us and we are forced into making new choices.

Why, when transformation is happening within us, for us, do we try and hold it back, to contain it, to try and continue the same old, same old? Why, so often, are we just afraid of change? Why do we attempt to hold back the inner juices of inevitable shift in our being?

The little bulb lying silently underneath the dark earth follows its own apparent inchoate primordial process, doing its own thing: growing roots, and preparing an upward thrust through granules of soil out to the

sky beyond; much of which we don't see until little green leaves appear.

Are we actually any different? Does change in our own life go unnoticed until we find ourselves seemingly suddenly facing unfamiliar new things? Is meeting the sky unfamiliar to the little bulbed one, or is this new stage already known in the fabric of the cells of its being, in its memory of existence itself?

My feeling is that we, like the little plant, have a deep knowing of the nature of transformation and a deep reverence for it. The stuff of religious ideas is emergent from it. The Christ rising from the dead, the miracles of lamas who transmogrify into rainbows, the mysteries of manifestations are all implicit in our ordinary processes of change.

What then, the fear? Much of our lives are spent in trying to hold still the unstoppable. Do we not have faith in natural processes? In the Tao of life?

I like to watch the making of sand mandalas by Tibetan Buddhist monks. Utmost attention is put to each grain of sand rubbed down by vibrations to the patterns forming below. The mandalas are of heavenly architectural



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

buildings representing the dimensions of ourselves.

When the "buildings" are made, they are sung over, and then scraped up into a vase and walked down to a river or the sea to be scattered to the beyond. Each act is the letting go of any idea of holding to the unchanged, for all is change, all is flux.

There is something very beautiful in change. The little plant, now growing strongly, forms buds and then, in the miracle of silence, exquisite white flowers come forth: white blossoms with spots of green and a faint perfume. It is a pretty flower, the snowdrop, but so are we as revelations of beings in the process of becoming.

Let's not be frightened of change. We cannot control every aspect of our lives, and neither is there any benefit in attempting to do so. We can simply acknowledge that the changes that we become aware of have been happening anyway outside our consciousness. It is implicit in the nature of being itself.

We cannot control the essence of life because it pulses through us. We are like snowdrop bulbs making flowers in the making of new futures.

Does karma need to feel so bad?

Most of our past lives have been filled with the gamut of human experience, good, bad and downright ugly. Do they really need to be so difficult or traumatic?

The answer is no, but that's how most of us have chosen to learn in order to expand in awareness and love. Seems a bit silly doesn't it?

On our soul journey from one lifetime to another we forget that we actually create our own reality. Through a misguided subconscious belief that we must be punished for our sins, our misdeeds have turned up to haunt us in subsequent lives.

Our beliefs, expectations, unresolved emotions, feelings of disempowerment have all convinced us that we are victims of circumstance.

Karma is a big part of the story but karma is just the result of cause and effect, every action having a reaction, but do we need to be punished for what we have done in this life or previous lives? Well that depends on the nature of our misdeeds and ultimately is between our Higher Self and Creator Source.

However, if we can understand and acknowledge how we have digressed from our inner compass of right and wrong and genuinely seek forgiveness from whoever or whatever we have harmed, that's enough for us to balance much of our karma because it is only there to teach us, not to punish us.

Sometimes we will also need to make amends if that is still possible.



by Auralia Rose

Unfortunately, we have believed on a deep level that our wrongs are punishable and need to be resolved through an "eye for an eye tooth for a tooth" ideology.

We have reached a stage in our personal and planetary evolution where we have grown spiritually to the level where we have a unique opportunity to heal and resolve all our karma.

Of course, the person you have harmed may not be ready to forgive you, but the most important thing is that you have genuinely apologised and sought forgiveness. That person will stay locked into that particular energy dynamic until they are ready to let the so-called hurt go.

"So-called" because it takes two to tango, there is always an agreement on some level, mostly unconscious, to participate and engage. If we understand this notion of offer, we can choose whether to accept or not.

If you still have karma to clear, it will usually show up in difficulties with people or situations in your life. Past Life Regression will reveal

where your karma originates.

We are at a very critical time on our planet where there is a spiritual war between dark and light and it is more important than ever to clear any remaining karma and to see ourselves as co-creators of our lives rather than victims of it. No matter how bad things may seem, we always have free-will choice about how we view things and how we respond.

As Divine Beings who are not separate from the Creator Source, we are very powerful creators, something that has been kept from us by the dark controllers of this world because when we remember our true Divine nature, the power of that threatens their tenuous hold over us.

We are currently seeing a lot of chaos on Earth due to the waging of this spiritual battle, but by focussing on the chaos and negativity and being fearful, we are helping to propagate it and make it our reality.

The good news is that the Light will win, and indeed has won, despite appearances. We are at the end of a 26,000 year cosmic cycle which is ushering in a new Golden Age of peace love and harmony, yet we can hinder and delay the return of the Light through our fears, negative focus and beliefs.

Clearing your karma and being aware of your choices will help us get there more easily.

With love and blessings,

Phone 0422-481-007
www.auraliarosewellbeing.com

Global shit

As sabres rattle around the globe and economic uncertainty prevails, I think we need to take a very deep look at our history, culture and how we perceive different ideologies.

Western values have changed greatly over the last two centuries, but we still hold democracy as our highest attainment and rightly so. Democracy is a western ideology that we have exported to the far reaches of the planet with varying degrees of success. Not all recipients were either ready or receptive to the concept.

It is difficult for us to understand why this hasn't happened. We are trapped within the confines of our own cultural conditioning and can't always fathom why Afghanis, for instance, have rejected democracy in favour of the Taliban. Until we can dream in their language, we probably never will.

As world leaders unite under the banner of democracy, so does the

push back occur in Russia, China, North Korea and other totalitarian states. Their governance systems are marginalised and attacked ideologically. It is little wonder then that they take stock by strengthening their militaries and seek to expand beyond the geopolitical fences the west has erected around them.

A wolf in a corner is very dangerous indeed. Combine that with economic superiority (China) and almost a monopoly on European energy (Russia), the wolves now have the sharpest claws and fangs.

The west's attempts to impose democracy by stealth in China and Russia have failed. The State in both cases is too powerful to let these ideas spread, even if they were held in high enough regard. At least in the case of China, I don't believe the general populace is interested in democracy.

China is rising from the yoke of peasantry and now



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

the expectation is that the middle class will grow and peasants will be a thing of the past. This is the most important objective China has to observe and it will only come from expanded trade partnerships and further economic growth.

China has never traditionally been an expansionist, imperial military power and I don't think that is what is driving them now. They know that the promise of an expanded middle class is the only defense they need against democracy. People never revolt against a system that

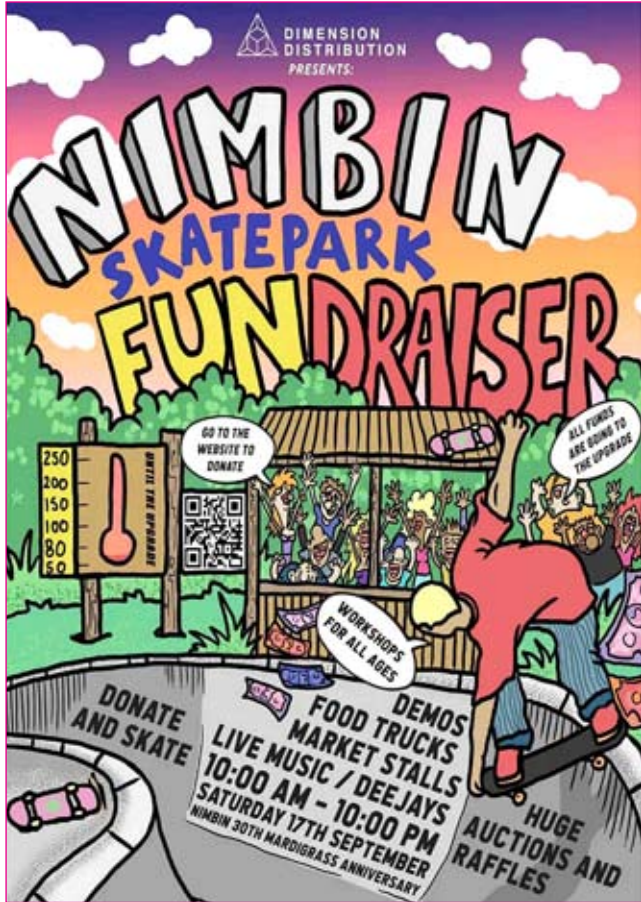
makes them richer.

Our government is in an unenviable position with regards to China. We neither possess the military might or economic power to hold much sway. Our close ties to the US and their stance on Taiwan make our bed a bed of nails, and we are lying in it without a fuss at the moment.

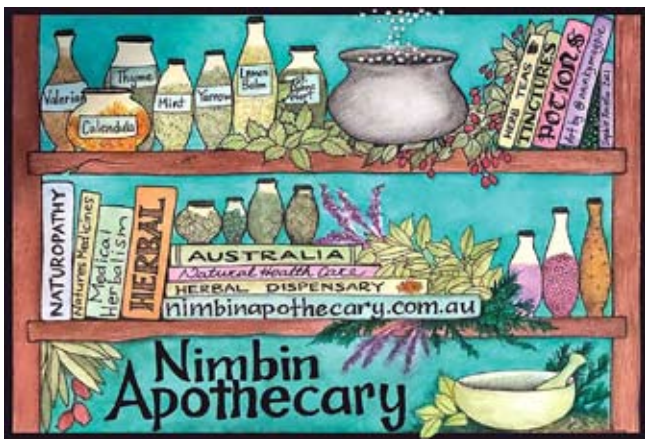
Our biggest diplomatic challenge is ahead of us, to navigate the stated intention of China to bring Taiwan back into their jurisdiction (Taiwan was originally part of China). We would be best served by accepting that China repatriates Taiwan in a way that recognises their independence and democracy, similar to the transition of Hong Kong.

In the meantime, let's get as many immigrants from Taiwan as we can and give them jobs in the Signals Directorate (Aussie spy agency). If this is not the path we take, we had better toughen up and get ready to fight an unwinnable war.

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Your breastfeeding questions answered

Doula Wisdom
by Kirrah Stewart

With World Breastfeeding Week upon us, I put a call out to my community asking what was the number one thing you would like to know about breastfeeding. I had lots of responses come in. These are some of the most common questions.

What are the benefits of breastfeeding?

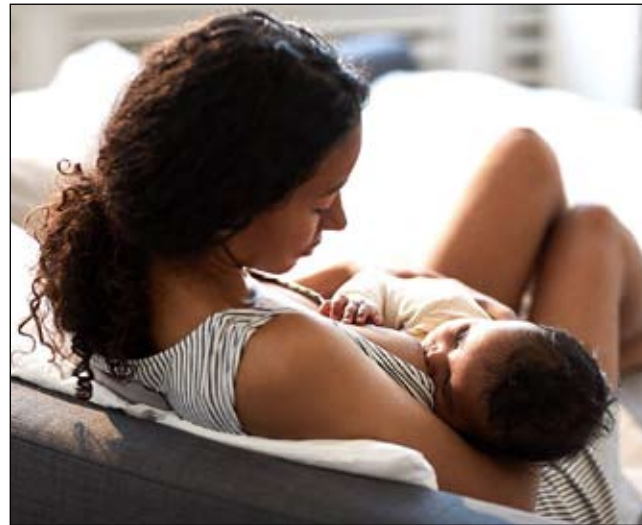
There are so many! Breastfeeding provides ideal nutrition for babies and significantly improves short and long term health. It is well documented that human milk is superior to all the substitutes.

Breastfeeding improves immunity, helps protect against illness and diseases and also comforts and soothes and helps with bonding. Babies that have been breastfed have higher IQ scores and better oral development than formula-fed babies.

There are also numerous benefits for the mother including reduced postpartum bleeding, reduced risk of cancers (breast, ovarian and endometrial) and it's also more convenient and increases bonding.

How do you know if baby is latched correctly?

Many people want to know how they can reduce nipple soreness and make sure that baby is getting enough milk. This has to do with the attachment of baby to the breast.



When bringing baby to the breast, it's important to line the nipple up with the baby's nose, make sure their chin is touching the breast first and that they have a wide open mouth and deep latch.

If well attached, you will hopefully notice that it feels good and that you can hear or see baby swallowing milk. Your breasts will often feel softer after a good feed.

Some nipple tenderness or sensitivity may be normal early on, but if it continues to hurt, seek the help of a lactation counsellor or lactation consultant to learn how to better attach baby.

The nipple should not look squashed or pinched at the end of the feed. This is a sign of a poor attachment.

What can help ease engorgement?

Engorgement (swelling of the breasts) is common in the first days after birth. It subsides as your body adjusts to how much milk to make.

The most important thing to do is to frequently remove milk. This effective milk removal will help reduce

swelling and pain. It's a good idea to learn how to hand express for comfort, and offer baby the breast whenever they show an interest.

How often should a newborn be feeding?

A newborn's belly is very small, so they need to feed very frequently. This stimulation helps you build up your milk supply too.

It's good to feed on demand whenever baby shows signs of being hungry. It is usually a minimum of every 2 to 3 hours (8 to 12 or more times every 24 hours).

In many developing nations, babies are more frequently kept on the parent's body and fed whenever baby shows the slightest cue of being hungry or unsettled. This could be up to 15 to 20 times a day (sometimes for only a few minutes at a time).

How long should baby feed for?

Sometimes babies just want to breastfeed for comfort and soothing. Other times they will be feeding to satisfy



Kirrah and her niece Evelyn

hunger.

A good way to tell if baby has had enough milk is when their fists relax, they are content, look 'milk drunk' and they become sleepy. Allowing your baby to suckle for as long as they like will help increase breastfeeding success.

As babies get older, they become very efficient at feeding and may be finished within a few minutes. There is no right or wrong amount of time to feed for.

You can expect around six or more wet nappies and three or more poo nappies every 24 hours. This is a very helpful indicator that baby is getting enough milk.

Kirrah is a postpartum doula, masseuse and lactation counsellor supporting families in the Northern Rivers. To download a free natural birth checklist, head to: www.doulawisdom.com or text Kirrah on 0429-308-851.

Three unusual cases

I thought I'd write about three unusual cases this month, because I get calls from people who have tried lots of other therapies and usually come to try Bowen as a last resort with their issues.

I say to them that it's worth a try because you are giving your body the opportunity to reset and regroup itself. While it is in deep relaxation during a treatment it has the chance to observe itself and give all your body's systems time to start healing on a deep level.

Plus all the previous work they did such as physio and chiropractic will already have helped on many levels. Sometimes Bowen is like the missing part of the jigsaw and helps pull everything together.

I'd like to share three of these cases with you.

A man was in a care home suffering with Parkinson's disease. When I first saw him he was curled up in a ball on his bed. He couldn't speak or eat very well, his skin was a grayish colour, and he looked as though he didn't have very long to live. I gave him Bowen therapy while he was on his bed, only a 30-minute treatment once a week.

After a few weeks he began to unfold himself, the colour came back into his skin and he could sit up in bed. I was



by Sonia Barton,
Therapist and Reiki teacher

always surprised at his rate of recovery each time I saw him.

Eventually he began to walk around the care home, he was eating well and he got his voice back. After a few months he was able to go home on weekends to get a break from the care home.

The day he said "thank you" to me I cried in my car, it was amazing to see how much this man had improved only with the 30 minute treatment each week. It was miraculous really.

A woman had a shoulder injury after a bad fall from her horse. She had tried most things over 15 years to help with the pain and discomfort. She was

determined to give Bowen therapy a good go. She had a feeling it was going to help her.

Week after week she came, and eventually her body "gave in" holding onto the injury and misalignment and she felt the whole shoulder clunk back into place. She was thrilled, to say the least.

When I was near the end of my training, a woman came to me with trigeminal nerve pain in her face. The pain was so bad that she said that she felt like driving her car into a wall to kill herself.

I phoned my tutor to ask "what shall I do regarding a treatment in this situation?" He told me to do nothing fancy, just give her a basic treatment because Less is More.

Within 24 hours the pain had stopped. She was astounded and I was too. I couldn't believe that such a gentle treatment could be so profound on anyone. This is when I really believed in the magic of this healing work.

I work in Nimbin and Murwillumbah. If there is anything that I might be able to help you with please call for a friendly chat.

Phone: 0431-911-329
BowenEnergyWork.com.au

nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

Natural Law

by Helene Collard

In this season of deep releasing, purging and shedding, a great recalibration is taking place. The level of surrender and trust you have allowed is greater than ever before. The discomfort you have leant into, has brought anguish and tears. Blood, sweat and tears.

Remember it is darkest before dawn. And the advent of dawn is closer than you realise.

Focus. Keep your energy clean and clear, by carving out space for the things you know are good for you. The things that refine your energy field. Mother Earth is upgrading her frequency, make sure you are primed to upgrade with her. Focus.

Clear and seal your personal energy field. Your personal energy field is the area an arm's length around your physical body. This field, sometimes called the aura, is our interface with the world. Everything we experience is processed through our personal energy field, before entering the physical body. If we have unresolved experiences that harmed or confused us, the resulting mental/emotional dissonance stores in the aura and if left uncleared, over time will create increased agitation and conflict, and eventually manifest in the physical body as illness or disease.

From an energy healing perspective, 'all illness begins in the aura'. Therefore, it is vital we attend to keeping our personal energy fields clear and sealed.

Moreover, with Mother Earth upgrading to a higher frequency, we are being called to recognise and step into our unique magic and to let that shine in full force. Clearing and sealing your personal energy field involves regularly closing the door on everything and everyone, to create a space just for you and the divine. Old colonial-based paradigms of thinking, create dualistic tension between individualism and collectivism, positing them as opposing ways of being.

The new paradigm involves highly individualized, self-actualised humans, collaborating with other highly individualized, self-actualised humans, on ideas, concepts and projects that are beneficial to themselves, the planet, and all of life (the collective). In Reiki, we say 'for the highest good of all', and the foundation of Reiki practice is not treating others, it is treating the Self.

Therefore, the new paradigm holds the dance between individualism and collectivism as essential in the upgrade we are experiencing now.

If each of us is, as Quantum Human Design founder, Karen Curry Parker describes, "a once in a lifetime cosmic event," then self-actualisation is about living



your unique code, sharing your special magic, shining your special light. Manifesting and embodying the highest potential of your heart's deepest desire. This requires an investment in YOU.

I have developed some new

lightwork sessions which include Reiki and other spirit medicine tools, to assist the planet and all life on her, to upgrade. Bookings available on my website.

I am also taking bookings for Reiki Level 1. Learning Reiki is far more than a hands-on healing method. First and foremost, Reiki is a practice of communing with the divine for your personal healing, growth and evolution. A Reiki course is a transformational weekend of receiving powerful energy transmissions. It is a major upgrade! In fact, preparation for learning Reiki involves purification of diet and lifestyle, up to a week before the course, and for 21 days afterward.

It is suitable to learn and progress with Reiki, whatever your vocation in life. Reiki is a personal growth tool that will, with regular personal practice, bring you into alignment with your highest potential.

The Yemaya Centre is open

Following the recent floods, the Yemaya Centre is currently open at Happy Mountain: 16/58 Simpson Ave, Wollongbar. Reiki treatments available.

Upcoming Reiki course dates on my website. Visit my website for info and bookings. For the Highest Good of All, Helene

Martha Regnault – 0447-669-679

- Yogalates on Zoom, Tuesdays 6-7.30pm;
- Qigong on Zoom, Saturdays 10-11.30am;
- Yogalates in Rosebank, private sessions by appt;
- Craniosacral energetics in Rosebank, by appt.

Lisa Jonas – Endorphina Creative

- Online astrology readings;
 - Inner wellbeing sessions.
- Bookings email: welcomedorphina-creative.com

Liina Flynn – liina.flynn@gmail.com

- Beginners yoga on Girards Hill, Monday 5.30pm;
- Hatha yoga on Girards Hill, Tuesday 5.30pm;
- Special class to relax the nervous system. Commencing dates to be announced. Contact Liina to express your interest.

Mirek Oprzedek – Earth Shiatsu 0412-294-917

- Shiatsu massage available now at Happy Mountain in Wollongbar.

Visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au for more information.

Covid-19 booster shot protects most vulnerable

In July, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) updated its recommendations for Covid booster shots.

ATAGI now recommends people aged 50 to 64 years join those aged 65 and over in having their fourth Covid-19 vaccination.

People aged 30 to 49 years may choose to have a fourth shot, as they are now eligible also.

From 11th July, an additional 7.4 million Australians became eligible to receive a fourth dose.

As of 27th July, national figures show 96.1% of people have had two doses, 71.2% have had three doses, but only 33.5% of people have had a fourth dose.

For NSW, the figures are 95.3%, 68.9% and 34.8% respectively.

Vaccines are free to all, regardless of Medicare or Visa status, and are administered by GPs and pharmacists, as well as in clinics.

Vaccination interval reduced

The recommended interval between the third and fourth vaccination has been reduced from four months to three months.

For people who have had Covid-19, ATAGI recommends a booster shot 3 months after infection.

Anti-viral access expanded

In other recent changes, Australians aged over 70 who test positive to Covid are now able to access anti-virals on the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme.

Access has also been expanded to:

- people aged over 50 with two or more risk factors for severe disease
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged over 30 with two or more risk factors for severe disease
- immunocompromised people over 18, who may also be eligible.

Covid re-infection period cut to 4 weeks

NSW Health has reduced the Covid-19 re-infection period from 12 weeks to 28 days due to the latest Omicron sub-variants and the rate at which they are infecting people.

The reduced re-infection period means people who have previously had Covid-19 will be required to test again after 28 days if still experiencing symptoms.

Those who test positive after 28 days will be counted as new cases and should isolate.



Healthy eating

While no foods or dietary supplements can prevent or cure Covid-19 infection, healthy diets are important for supporting immune systems.

Good nutrition can also reduce the likelihood of developing other health problems, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer.

What is a healthy diet?

- Every day, eat a mix of wholegrains like wheat, maize and rice, legumes like lentils and beans, plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, with some foods from animal sources (eg meat, fish, eggs and milk).
- Choose wholegrain foods like unprocessed maize, millet, oats, wheat and brown rice when you can; they are rich in valuable fibre and can help you feel full for longer.
- For snacks, choose raw vegetables, fresh fruit, and unsalted nuts.

WHO recommends consuming a minimum of 400g (ie five portions) of fruits and vegetables per day.

Citrus fruits are good options, as well as bananas and apples, and any fresh seasonal fruits are worthwhile.

Root vegetables such as carrots, turnips and beets, and brassicas like cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower as well as garlic, ginger and onions are all great ingredients to have in the larder.

Wisdom – three perspectives



by Peter Ganser
NLP master practitioner

Wisdom requires three perspectives on the issue being contemplated. Age of a person is not the requisite for wisdom, although experience gained with age can support it.

Our collective ability to act from Wisdom has the future of the world in its hands.

The first perspective

This is your own point of view, a view that encompasses your values and beliefs. It reflects your culture and background and draws on your experience until now.



An important perspective is it not?

The second perspective

This is the view of the other person's or people's point of view in the issue. The other perspective has its own unique values, beliefs, culture, background and experience to colour its position.

Walk in the shoes of the other to begin to understand how they perceive the issue at hand.

The third perspective

This is sometimes called the Meta Perspective. It is as if you stand beyond the issue and can see the matter at hand from a mediator's perspective. It is neither the First nor the Second Perspective but a universal and

neutral perspective, if you like, how God or Spirit would perceive it.

Act from wisdom

When you have truly managed to consider an issue from these perspectives you may then be in a position to bring Wisdom to your decisions and actions.

When acting from a position of Wisdom, conflict is minimised; peace can be found; understanding and with it Love is possible; and mankind can find peace and wellbeing for all.

With Wisdom, the foolishness of war, greed and egoism is ended.

How will you choose to act?

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