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Farmers Market helps communities

by Louise Plant

A huge call out of thanks goes out to the Nimbin community.

The raffle organised by the Nimbin Farmers Market helped to raise over \$385 for the Hospital Auxiliary, which we know will be used to help our hospital and the local community.

I would like to thank all the Farmers Market stallholders for their donations and support and for all the hard work that they have done to be able to share their

productivity and outcomes over the past 12 months.

The market and the community welcomes local seasonal growers. Contact me if you would like to find out more, email: planettr@wn.com.au or phone 0418-940-653. It is fabulous that the market has stayed consistent through these trying times for us all.

The Nimbin Farmers Market will return on 12th January and the Blue Knob Farmers Market will return on Saturday 8th January

Have a great Blissmas, from all our local growers, makers and bakers.



Rice: *Oryza sativa* in its many shades: *Black (purple when cooked), brown, 'golden', green, red and white*

by Thom Culpepper

The seeds of some grasses, *Oryza sativa* (Asian rice), *O. glaberrima* (African rice) and the 'wild' genera *Zizania* and *Porteresia* are among the world's staple grains that supply much of the bulk of humanities past and current cereal food needs.

This article will deal with some of the detail on the coloured rices, but the health facts on 'Black' and 'Red' rice (Rr) will be of our prime concern, and 'Black' rice (Br), in particular.

Br types are in the main a shiny black grain, turning a deep purple when cooked. This is due to the Anthocyanin and iron content, one of the richest in any of the plant/grain foods.

The unhusked, (it is never husked), grain has a similar fibre content to brown rice (brr), (unhusked white rice).

Some of the 'Red' rices have medium-high levels of Anthocyanin, but nothing to equal the black rices.

Black rice has been noticed in health investigation to be implicated in the prevention of Alzheimers, cancer, diabetes and heart diseases.

A study presented at the 240th national meeting of the American Chemical



Society said, "an equal amount of black rice bran has more Anthocyanin than equal amounts of blueberries, more fibre and vitamin E antioxidants and far less sugar."

A powerful adjunct to an anti-ageing, and an anti-inflammatory health regime.

A short note on the other coloured rices: 'Brown' and unhusked white types; 'Golden', an enriched vitamin 'A' and beta-carotene; 'Green' a form of wild rice (Wr) the stem is eaten as a fresh vegetable. 'Red' (Rr), similar to black rice in nature, has the highest nutritional value when eaten with the 'germ' intact.

Some Red types have a low glycemic index, a slow digestion and allowing low blood sugar outcomes. They also have a high mineral and antioxidant content. As a

grain 'additive-effect' 3000 to 1 is a common rice yield.

On black rice, the Emperor's rice, or the 'Forbidden Rice', history says, if eaten by the lower classes it was at the risk of their very lives. Time has quenched this rot, and black rice (Br) has become a little more democratic, so to say.

All may now engage risk-less consumption. That is if you can find the 'dark' stuff. The 'white stuff' in all its many forms being ubiquitous.

Having found the beast, it requires a lot more time in cooking.

Cooking method

Wash the grain, drain and soak for an hour or so.

Add 1.5 cups of soaked rice to 3.5 cups salted water, bring to the boil and then simmer for 35-40 minutes, remove from heat, drain

and allow to stand for 15 minutes.

Black Rice with Spiced Sweet Potato, Edamame and Eshallots

Ingredients

2 cups of cooked black rice
 1/4 kilo of diced sweet potato
 1 bunch of shallots.White end cut into 25mm pieces, green tops course-cut
 200 grams of fresh shelled edamame beans
 1 tblspn minced ginger
 2 tblspn sesame oil
 1tsp sesame seeds lightly pan roasted
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/4 tsp ground five flowers spice

Method

While the rice is cooking, saute the sweet potato, ginger and the shallot white pieces, until wilted. Cover and leave 5 minutes, add the rice and spices.

Simmer gently five minutes, add the edamame beans and cook a further five minutes, add the green chopped shallots, let stand for a further five minutes and serve with a splash of Worcestershire or soy mushroom sauce.

Dress with roasted sesame seeds.

thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Having fun and self-care

A eulogy, rainbows and the Council

Many years ago now, I was asked by a trainer in one of my classes when I was learning to be a psychotherapist what I did for fun. This seemingly frivolous question is actually extremely important.

Unless we therapists can enjoy our recreation and have fun, our professional lives are very short. The burn-out rate among therapists is very high. About half have to leave the profession because of mental exhaustion, which leaves many open to debilitating breakdown in emotional and physical health, and relationships.

Those that press on without relief, experience high rates of depression, feelings of depersonalization and cynicism which naturally impacts on the quality of the therapeutic relationship itself. This problem, of course, isn't just confined to psychotherapists; all of us in the helping professions can be affected by burn-out: a fact now being especially highlighted by the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

I've written about the need for therapists to receive regular clinical supervision and personal therapy, if that is desired, and I may have mentioned that we really do need to maintain membership of a professional psychological and/or counselling organisation in which professional ethics are paramount, and the required adjunct professional liability insurance to keep us on track and provide a safety net in the unlikely event of a client deciding to sue us.

But what I want to write about in this article is not what happens when we press on beyond our personal limits, but return the focus to fun and a happy means of creative letting go. Without a pressure valve, all of us simply wear out.

Those of us who are continuing to work effectively enjoy our lives, and our relationship with clients is benefitted. All the successful therapists I know integrate self-care into their daily lives. Some of these people have been in the profession for a very long time. A mentor of mine, a psychologist with over 50 years' experience, lives and works in Fremantle, Western Australia and rides his bicycle at 3am in the morning, swims in the ocean, and does qi gong. This man is one of the funniest, and most relaxed human beings I know. He is also one of the best therapists around. I do some professional development with him fortnightly.

My friend and colleague in



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

Germany, and a specialist in drug and alcohol counselling, walks in nature beside the River Rhine with his little dog bounding in the waters beside him. He, like my mentor, is a really funny, playful guy. These therapists are compassionate, generous, clear minded, direct, intelligent, knowledgeable and very skilful in what they do with clients, fellow therapists, and everybody else. Salt of the earth, you could say.

Other therapist friends dance, play the didgeridoo in the forest – listening for an echo – fish from boats out at sea, surf, garden, cook, sew tapestries, create paintings. They are nourished in engagements and they integrate playing into their ordinary, and thus extraordinary lives.

What do I do for fun? I love the water. I swim, snorkel, dive (free and scuba), kayak and all that lovely watery stuff. I have a large selection of fins, for all kinds of activities (I'm an Imelda Marcos of swim fins!)

I've even added deep water aerobics to the mix; an activity that makes me laugh. There's something intrinsically very silly about comporting oneself through the water with hands held above one's head or propelling oneself like some water beetle or small lizard flat out swimming, or engaging in deep water running, or any of the other sometimes challenging exercises. It's play, with a purpose.

The beauty of it all is that when I'm doing it, I am only doing it. This is really important because when I'm doing therapy I need to be only doing therapy. My presence, body and mind, needs to be entirely on the therapeutic endeavour. If I were to work beyond my own psychological capacity, without respite, I know that I would be joining the 50% of exhausted therapists who, by rights, shouldn't be working at all.

And so, I swim, laugh, play,

When I was in the farmhouse
and you were on the hill
after your Scandinavian
woman left you all alone
in the house you'd built
so well together to
Council specifications
hints of family violence
I went to see a clairvoyant
You've got to have rules / he
said

You'd remember the rules
the meeting in the farmhouse
You were in the chair
You signed the minutes

The clairvoyant said
If you don't have rules
there'll be a murder there
I'm serious / he said / you were
the one who said when we got
back
from holidays in India / What
rules?
I don't remember any meeting

Later on when you got done
for arson and attempted rape
and slandered us from the
dock of the District Court
dirty hippies smoking dope
and growing weeds / I really

thought
you weren't to blame / at least
no more than all the rest
so I was quite surprised to find
that you're the one who in the
end
managed to get himself
murdered

That was over 20 years ago
and still we've got no rules
Brian's share was sold from
Scandinavia to
a person who, this year,
made a tidy profit of about
six hundred percent and now
the buyers want to celebrate
they're newly on the land
their son is in a band
and New Year's Eve is coming
up.

Other owners are concerned
given the range of estimates
of numbers expected to attend

Me I'm stuck in Lismore filing
our defence, response and cross-
claim
in the case of Rainbow
Wholefoods
at the suit of Fair Work
Ombudsman / it freaks me out.



Legal writes
by John Adams

Then Guy drops in / the
Council
threatens to destroy
his Rainbow Temple / there are
no rainbows in the sky

Emails to and from the farm
regarding public liability and
parking / shitting / scared
koalas
there are other objections
just lead to arguments.
Someone mentions swimming
in the dam while pissed and
stoned

now I don't know what to do
/ but

The Fair Work Ombudsman
has a different lawyer
a partner in a city firm
a proper lawyer / I can tell her
how I've fucked it up / she
laughs and
tells me everything I have to do
By close of business Friday night
the discontinuance is filed and I
can let it go and think about
the farm

I check the Local Council site
they have an actual policy
the regulations make it clear
their plans are non-compliant
no more need for argument
I now know what to do
they call it laying down the law

Could Brian's share be proof
perhaps
that karma flows with the land?
For a couple of years / a while
ago
I rented the house where Brian
died
I never felt uncomfortable / but
now it's pretty obvious
it's time we had some rules

Spring: medicine making (part 2)

Last month I wrote about how I make fresh plant tinctures to use in my clinic. This month I will discuss just some of their uses. Many medicinal herbs are in flower in the spring and summer, which is ideal harvest time as the plants have high levels of active ingredients.

I had my best harvest ever of *Houttuynia cordata* after a lot of rain. Like many medicinal herbs it has many actions and indications. I use it mainly as a powerful antimicrobial. It is effective against many bacterial infections, both 'gram positive' and the more difficult 'gram negative' bacteria.

It has effectiveness against many fungal infections, parasites and viruses. It has demonstrated action against some influenza viruses, herpes viruses, SARS-related coronavirus and cytomegalovirus. I am not aware of any research to date with the more recent



Nature's pharmacy
by Trish Clough, herbalist

Covid-19. Traditional uses of *Houttuynia* are as a cooling anti-inflammatory remedy for fevers, swellings and abscesses, particularly of the lungs. In Chinese medicine it is used to remove toxins and expel pus.

I have bountiful supplies of a purple leaf *Perilla frutescens* which has self-sown prolifically in my garden. The leaves, seeds and



Californian poppy

stems have all been used in traditional medicine in East Asian countries. It is also eaten as a food. (I confess I don't like the taste, same with *Houttuynia* which is known as 'fish mint' and is also used as a flavouring).

Traditional uses are many, including pain relief, treatment of allergies, cough with excess phlegm, asthma, colds and fevers. It is also

used for depression and anxiety. The leaves and seeds are considered to be natural anti-histamines. Studies show benefit with both asthma and dermatitis.

Perilla contains high levels of anti-oxidant components, especially the purple leaf varieties. Leaf extracts that are high in essential oils (I'm sure mine are because they are highly aromatic!) have demonstrated effectiveness against 'golden staph' bacteria and E coli bacteria.

Trish Clough is a Lismore herbalist who has been practising for more than 30 years. She now conducts her own clinic practice in Club Lane in Lismore after owning "Traditional Medicinals" for 20 years. 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.

Bushwalkers gearing up for new year walks

by Peter Moyle

The Nimbin Bushwalkers are in recess until February, and already plans are in place for our schedule of walks. As we have members from all over the Northern Rivers, we move about quite a bit, which gives us a variety of environments as well sharing the travelling distances. We may have a coastal walk that will be followed by an inland adventure.

The same applies to our weekends away, where we have some beautiful National Park campgrounds both on the coast as well as further inland. The weekends are very popular as we

get the opportunity to spend a couple of days relaxing as well as walking at different times of day to see the landscape in all its shades.

The other benefit of the weekend walks is that we have scheduled walks each day and if convenient we have members just come for the daily walks rather than staying overnight, a win for everyone.

National Parks have been busy in the last year and more is planned in upgrading the camping areas and walking tracks. Our popular areas and on the list for this year are the Border Ranges, Toonumbar National Park, as well as the granite belt of Bald Rock and Girraween.

On the coast we will be back on the Yuraygir coastal trail and in spring try for the flowers on our local beach areas.

The Nimbin Bushwalkers have two activities a month, one a day walk and the other a weekend away with day walks each day. This we hope pleases most, and the club is more into walking on formed trails taking our time and having plenty of time for the views and natural attractions we come across.

New members and visitors are welcome, and each month we have an update on activities and upcoming walks in the *Nimbin GoodTimes* so check out What's On, contact the walks leader, and join us.

Your chariot has arrived

Tarot musings
by Grant Walker
and Amy B

The Chariot represents a peak in knowledge and understanding. Just as the father sun reaches the traditional solstice peak, you are riding high in life with this new knowledge and understanding.

You stand on top of the world, not in it and your priorities are set accordingly.

A breastplate of pure love protects you from this world; you are well prepared for the impending challenges of the Tarot's Underworld.

Cancer is the protector of emotions and family; their loving and caring nature provides us with a protective sanctuary at all times, the celestial crab has powerful claws and they are not afraid to use them; heaven help any person that causes harm to a Cancer's loved ones.

The Chariot is confirmation of a job well done, with The Wheel of Fortune on the horizon, your timing is perfect, there is no need to keep riding the wheel any longer, you are now permitted to hover just above it, enjoying both the ups and downs of your earthly experience.

*When you have learnt to protect the ones you love like the Crab,
Yet can get out of their way as quickly as the Twin;
When you have created a home that a Bull would be proud of,
Yet you can leave it as quickly as the Archer;
When you respect the traditions of the world like the Sea-goat,
Yet you can embrace change as quickly as the Water-bearer;
When you can follow instructions like the Two Fish,
Yet you can lead as a Lion when required;
When you can be as balanced and detached as the Scales,
Yet also capable of being mad as a Ram;
When you can analyse your life like the Virgin,
Yet you are ready to leave it as quickly as the Scorpion;
You have learnt the lessons of this world and your Chariot has most certainly arrived;
The Wheel of Life and Death turns no more for you.*



Raising a young family in this world is the most challenging and rewarding experience you will have in your life. No other task demands 24-hour dedication, seven days a week like child-rearing. Your life begins again, you lose control over your daily circumstances yet gain the wisdom of surrender.

Any attempt to cling on to the past will simply terrorise your mind and heart, in surrender we can reassess and realise our changing priorities to ensure that our children ride safely positioned in the front seat of our Chariots.

Your Initiation through your children is afoot, in order to complete the great Initiation of Life through you children, consider a few home truths.

Our children have more to teach us, than us them; we teach our children very little, instead they are observing and learning every moment they are with us; we don't own our children, we are mere temporary guardians charged with their health and well-being; as soon as your child can walk, they will start to walk away from you; the most important gift you can give your child is presence, the next is space, and finally, if we love ourselves, your children in time will learn to love themselves.

This is a journey that we at Seeds of Initiation are living right now, we with you face the relentless ups and down of parenthood.

Over time we have discovered that not only are we lucky to have three beautiful children between us, but we have also learnt that our children are just as lucky to have chosen us for the start of their own journey.

Grant Walker (author) and Amy B (illustrator) are the creators of the Seeds of Initiation tarot deck and book. See: www.seedsofinitiation.com

Soul Retrieval and the Great Awakening

by Auralia Rose

Happy 2022!! And while I'm tempted to say good riddance to 2021, I am grateful for all the valuable lessons I have learned and the many ways in which I have grown on a personal and soul level.

Moving deeper into my core and developing a stronger connection with my wonderful Higher Self and Source, I have realised how much untapped strength, trust, optimism and love is there inside of me.

We are in the Great Awakening and I believe this year more than ever we have a huge opportunity and responsibility to co-create a new world that supports and sustains humanity in ways not experienced on earth for a very long time.

As our eyes have been opened

to much of the corruption in governments and institutions, many people have been galvanised into reclaiming their power. Many have begun to form small community groups which allow and encourage freedoms long denied to us, attracting members who say NO to those who would keep us small and disempowered.

The Great Awakening is about letting go the idea that someone else could take power away from us and remembering that we are sovereign beings, that our own true power has always been inside of us. When we know who we truly are at our core we can create a better world, open to our gifts and talents, let go of what is outdated and doesn't serve us and move towards whatever we came here to do and be.

This month I would like to speak about Soul Retrieval

and how retrieving and reintegrating those parts of your soul which have been lost or given away during your many incarnations can greatly assist you going into 2022.

During traumatic life experiences parts of our soul may flee, fracture or hide in an effort to protect itself. Depression, dysfunctional relationships, an inability to move forward, a sense of separation, feeling ungrounded and not fully present, are some of the ways soul loss can manifest in our lives.

Imagine if all of the experience, knowledge and power from countless lifetimes was available to you now! This is being whole and fully present. Developing conscious awareness of your unified soul presence results in experiencing more of your unlimited creative Divine nature.

When you unify all your soul fragments you have access to all that soul consciousness that has been buried and unavailable to you. You begin to experience and radiate the pure essence of your being, an inner peace and connectedness which nothing can disrupt, like being in the eye of the storm. You create more peace, love and light for all, uplifting the collective consciousness.

During this time of rapid growth, we are currently undergoing on earth, this is more important than ever. It is time for wholeness, time to be fully present, in the moment so we can move more easily through these intense times.

Let 2022 be the year you regain your power and change your life and contribute to the creation of a world unlike anything we have seen or experienced on earth.



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

I am waging a war of trickery with the butcher birds, who are teaching their young to eat my dog food.

Dependency is a bad thing and I don't want them relying on my benevolence. Besides, their normal diet includes pest insects that I would rather they eat.

It is an ideological war, they think they want a free feed (communists), I want them to work harder for their tucker (capitalist!). Yesterday I caught two of them in a towel and gave them a stern talking to.

Western society has been

It's a MAD world

waging its own ideological war for many years now. Since the concept of mutually assured destruction (MAD) arose when superpowers armed themselves with nuclear arsenals, the idea of a winnable world war has receded to only those between (or within) countries with no nukes.

The west has righteously positioned itself as morally correct with democracy as its core principle, and the war we now wage is manifest in the uprisings of the Arab spring, the Umbrella movement in Hong Kong and the democratic uprisings in Belarus. These are the battles for hearts and minds, waged with the assistance of the West's intelligence agencies, on the doorsteps of nuclear powers that are, according to us, morally bankrupt. It is a cold war, where information is the weapon of choice.

The defeat of the US alliance in Afghanistan has thrown a shadow over the capacity of the west to hold the moral high ground.

Promises were made that will never be kept. Women experienced freedoms that were swiftly taken away. Democracy fell into a spiral of corruption. Soldiers were trained but had no will to fight. It didn't work for Afghanistan. In the eyes of the world, especially the Arab world, the West has now become morally bankrupt.

To our adversaries, this presents an opportunity to add to the cyber attacks, the product import bans that we now see commonplace. We are at our weakest point, our democracies are under attack from corporate lobbyists, political corruption is embedded. Divide and conquer the oldest idiom of warfare, still holds true.

Misinformation from state actors, North Korea, Russia, China is flowing thick and fast to divide us, especially over Covid, but where a conspiracy can grow, it is fertilised. They want us to leave the folds of democracy and lose faith in our political

system. They benefit when we don't vote anymore. The battle for hearts and minds works both ways.

Unfortunately, our stupid politicians did not see this coming. The stick they used, vaccine mandates, reeks of autocracy, and isn't that supposed to be the big difference between our system and those without true democracy?

Our system will crumble if enough people lose faith. It won't even need to be many of us. Just enough to believe we are no better than a dictatorship will tug at the plug that will sink the ship.

So please, think about your choices. Look at the big picture. Ask yourself who stands to benefit most. Information taken in isolation is out of context and has consequences.

Stuart runs Pooh Solutions, waste water consultants and composting toilets. Phone 0427-897-496 or email: poohsolutions@gmail.com

The Hole at Happy Hollow part 2

Diary extracts from an intentional community secretary, Clarice Cleareyes

Two weeks are up and there have been only four suggestions re the hole in the ground.

Peter and I chatted and decided to extend the time by another two weeks. That means another email to the community, but we need more people to be involved with opinions and points of view. So far the contributions are:

1. Krystal thought it was a message from the universe, a warning caused by our neglect. She thought we should be more aware of planets aligning, and Mercury was still in retrograde.
2. Sally wants to fill it with a couple of loads of rocks remembering this was the method used to save three dams in the past. She added she recognised this wasn't always successful but thought it was worth a try. It could be expensive but the dollars can come

from the sinking fund, an appropriate use of the money.

3. Bert votes for an expert to advise on holes and he thought he knew the perfect bloke for the job. He's very cheap and needs the work.
 4. Johnno is very concerned about our legal liability. What if someone falls in the hole and sues us, we could all lose our houses in the payout. He thinks a fence must be built immediately to stop anyone falling in.
- After reading the suggestions, it's obvious we need to canvas further, encourage more discussion, and hope for more tangible solutions. I wish it would go away, people are stopping me in the street, some who haven't even seen the hole yet, to talk about what we can do. I suggest they should have a look before deciding anything. I only went down the street for some basics and to check my post office box. I've got better things to do, though at the moment I can't remember what they are.

The Misty Hills neighbours are very

concerned about the hole and have taken up emailing me (the reluctant secretary) with queries. How long has the hole been there? Where exactly is the hole? How big is it? Is it round, square or triangular? Does it have an echo when someone shouts across it?

For some obscure reason about doubting our approach to the problem they have requested to attend our community meeting and be involved with our decisions.

I filled Peter in on the current state of play and he encouraged me to respond, reminding them of our right to meet as a community, free of outside interference or manipulation. It's the most we've have ever heard from Misty Hills, usually they spread rumours about us being an enclave for drop-outs and rich people.

The hole has developed a life of it's own. Hopefully it'll all be over soon, another two weeks for options and opinions, a meeting of the community, we'll nut out a plan, and it'll be all over, red rover!

Animal rescue

by Les Rees

I can't believe that Christmas is upon us, the year has flown by and a lot of you will be saying good riddance to it. Maybe it will be a good time for reflection to consider just how lucky we are to live where we do free from the isolation that so many endured for months on end.

The one thing I hear a lot from clients is how much they have enjoyed engaging with their animals, having time to appreciate them has been a saviour for many coping with the depression caused by the loneliness of enforced isolation.

There were record-breaking numbers of people offering homes to rescue animals and for a while the shelters were almost empty but now they're filling up again as many who took them on have been unable to cope with them.

I personally find this heartbreaking but it will happen yet again after Christmas when puppies and kittens are returned as unsuitable. I ask myself what effect it has on these poor unfortunate mites.

I can only ask people to think through the possibilities, to consider how much time you are willing

to put into your relationship with your animals and, if you don't have the time or the resources, why are you even considering offering one a home?

Loneliness and depression affects them too and can lead to behavioural problems often resulting in being seen as unsuitable for rehoming.

One thing is for sure is that perseverance does prevail when training new animals to fit in with your lifestyle. The first few weeks can be a challenge, but once you get past that point it gets easier as every new day offers the chances of a rewarding relationship.

I have rescued many animals over the years, including dogs, cats, horses and wildlife waifs. There was a point in my life when I felt that I could no longer watch on while perfectly good horses were being sold through the markets to provide meat for dogs. If anyone has ever been to such a market and seen the look of terror in their eyes they will know exactly what I am talking about.

Although I no longer take in rescue horses, I still have my two little unicorns that were surrendered to the RSPCA in Tasmania. They had been traumatised by the conditions they were kept



in, and one of them had almost given up the will to live as he was so thin that he was unable to stand up. I knew that I had to make the decision to take them on and yes, it was a real struggle in the beginning because they were absolutely terrified. But this is when something incredibly special happened.

I had another horse, Charlie that I had helped through some horrendous issues, causing him to shut down. His start in life was in the racing world and he had been badly mistreated. It took a long time to gain his trust but eventually the penny dropped and he opened up into the most extraordinary compassionate being.

It was Charlie who gave me directions on how to help the unicorns. As soon

as he saw them he took over as their protector. When I looked at Charlie he told me whether my approach to handling them was right or wrong. I always listened to him and he was never wrong and together we eventually managed to make the breakthrough. I still have the unicorns (Merry and Pippin) who came with us when we moved up from Tasmania to the Northern Rivers. Sadly, my beautiful Charlie passed some years ago but his presence will remain beside me inspiring pools of reflection and love forever in my heart. Namaste.

Les Rees is an equine naturopath and sports therapist, and runs Horsetail Herbs, email: horsetailherbs@bigpond.com



Balance

by Suzy Maloney

I intended to write an article about rider balance, but as I explored the topic I thought of other situations where balance plays a part in horsemanship. I'll explore each below.

Riding – Any part of the rider's body that is off-balance will affect the horse. If the torso is leaning forward, back, or sideways the horse must compensate for this, affecting the symmetry and ease of movement. Imagine you have on a backpack with a small animal in it. If the animal is leaning you must adjust your body to rebalance. It's the same for the horse.

If the rider puts more weight in one stirrup, or they are different lengths, this will have the same affect. Most of us are one side dominant,

notice which leg you lead with going up stairs. Check your seat bones, are they carrying equal weight and are positioned equally? Some riders collapse through one hip or drop one shoulder lower.

Carrying the head forward affects the balance of the whole body. Many give stronger rein aids with the dominant hand, or ineffective aids with the weak. We can hold one hand higher, lower, to the side or inwards. All these deviations create imbalance.

Proprioception, the ability to know exactly where our body parts are, is not perfect. Everyone needs someone on the ground occasionally giving feedback. Riding bareback or without stirrups is great for improving balance, as is riding in two-

point seat at the trot. Our emotions need to be balanced. Unbalanced emotions have a huge effect on horses. If you're feeling emotionally wobbly, spending time in the paddock or grooming might be best.

Horses – just like their riders, every horse has a preferred side. I have only met one horse who felt totally even on both sides. Understanding your horse's dominant and weak sides is essential if you are to work towards balance. 100% balance is rarely achieved, but it can be improved. And just like us, a horse may have one hoof/leg that's a slightly different in size or have had an old injury that affects one side. There may be many reasons, but the important thing is to know that it's normal.

Handling – when handling horses, we tend to be one sided. We even call the left the near side and the right the far or offside. Much horse gear is designed to done up on the left side. Most of us are taught to lead on the left side. We mount and dismount on the left side. Over time we spend way more time on the left side. Then we sit on the horse and expect them to be balanced.

This becomes a bit unfair and unrealistic. If we mount, dismount, lead and handle the horse equally from both sides, we can reduce this enormously.

Check the saddle is


perfectly balanced, before and after mounting. The gullet needs to run directly over the spine, with flaps and stirrups the same length. Looking at the saddle from behind ensuring the centre of the cantle is on the spine is a good way to check.

Working – We need to do riding and groundwork the same amount in both directions. If a horse is finding one side difficult, we might spend extra time on that side trying to balance up, but generally we try to be equal. Within a training session, alternate between body, eg trot circles and brain, eg new skills.

If you do too much brain work straight out, the horse may shut down or resist. If you only do body work, they may start running along brainlessly. In the whole picture it's good to balance how much time a horse spends in training, and having fun eg trail rides with other horses.

Finding balance is something we're striving for in daily life. It's important we apply the same philosophy to horses.

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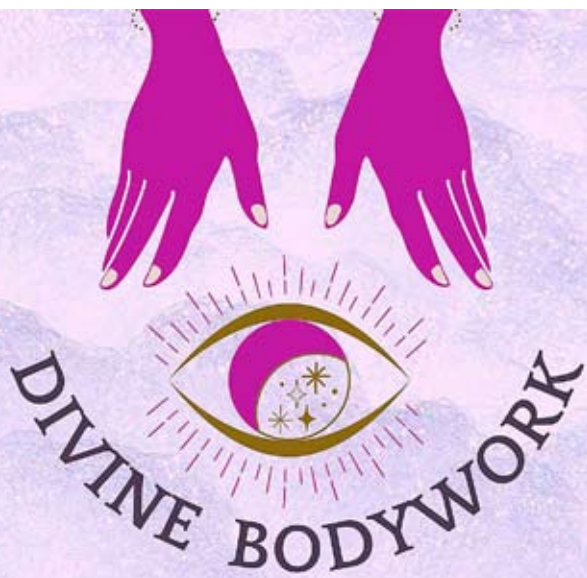
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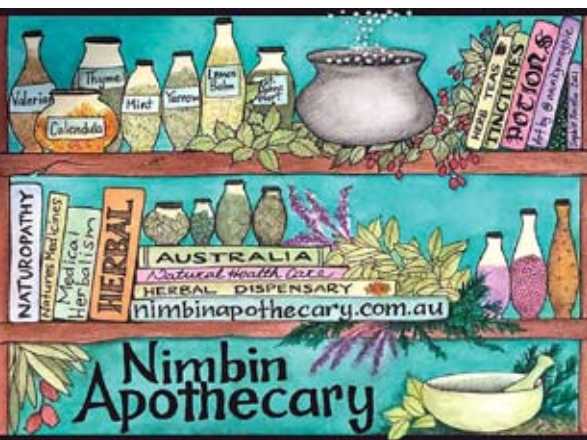
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Mindfulness for mamas

Just as a new year can open a doorway to a new you... postpartum also offers this opportunity. There is no doubt that birth changes people and there is no 'going back'. How people choose to embrace the transformation will affect how they transition.

Matrescence: The time of becoming a mother

The time after giving birth changes how a person feels; physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. The time it takes is different for each parent and baby. The transformation usually takes longer and is more intense than we anticipate. Although a mother will always be 'postpartum', there is a time that she will hopefully feel her vital force return and a new understanding of herself emerge.

The power of meditation

Meditation and mindfulness practices can help mothers feel calmer, have more mental clarity and feel more like themselves. It also helps them to be more in-tune with their body and baby and it may even help breastmilk production.

Although the idea of fitting in 'self-care' may seem impossible, taking a moment here and there will be worth it to bring more peacefulness into your life. Even three deep breaths can be enough



by Kirrah Stewart

to settle your nervous system and help you feel calmer.

Or perhaps you'd like to turn your baby-gazing into a mini-meditation by really noticing all the tiny details. Watch how they breathe, notice their tiny features and feel yourself relaxing by being really present.

Breastfeeding meditation: Breathing with your baby

(from *The Fourth Trimester Card Deck* by Kimberly Ann Johnson)

At a time when most of us can't fit in a formal practice, we can include meditation in that which we are already doing, such as breastfeeding. The following practice is called antar mouna, "inner silence", and was adapted for breastfeeding by Uma Dinsmore-Tuli, author of *Yoni Shakti*.

This is a valuable practice to use when you are feeling tired



Mama practising mindfulness



Kirrah with her niece Evelyn

or drained by the demands of infant and baby care. It provides an opportunity to direct toward yourself some of the nurturing attention and focus that is given to the baby during a feeding.

1. Sit or lie in a position in which you can comfortably feed your baby. As you settle in and your baby gets into nursing, begin to notice your breath.
2. As your breath comes in and out through your nose, be aware of the four stages of breath: inhale, a little pause, exhale, a little pause. Allow this natural flow of the breath to continue easily as you enter the next stage of the practice, which is shifting the focus of your mental attention from one sense to the next.
3. Bring your full attention to the sense of hearing. Exhale your awareness into the sense of hearing and be aware of the sounds around you. Notice the sounds that are farthest away from

you. Draw your attention closer and closer until you are focussing on just the sound of your baby's breath and the sound of your baby feeding.

Also hear the sound of your own breath as it comes in and goes out. Listen to these intimate sounds, the sounds that are closest to you. Let each sound be recognised, and then pass on to the next. Give your full attention to the sense of hearing.

So, next time you're feeling a bit stressed or not quite yourself... take a moment or two to come back to your breath or try this breastfeeding meditation above.

I hope all your wishes come true in 2022.

Kirrah is a postpartum doula 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.

Re-defining health and medicine

Ever since Descartes divided mind from matter, our world view has been built upon a foundation of separation.

We create tools and technologies that enable us to see the world down to the level of the atom, yet we lack the stories and rites that help us to perceive the entirety of the web of life. In a way, we have atomised ourselves, and this perpetuates a sense of hyper-individualism that is the antithesis to true health.

This individualist world view has invaded our bodies. Natural and integrative medicine have come a long way in connecting the dots between systems and symptoms in the body, yet the understanding of imbalance is still restricted to the individual.

The diagnoses therapists and doctors consider are understood strictly within the confines of the internal environment.

The need for an evolution in the way we think about health, disease and the body is summed up well by Rupa Marya and Raj Patel in their book *Inflamed – Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice*: "The reductionist understanding of disease in



by Miriam Latif

singular terms, such as one gene encoding one receptor, can only get us so far. We evolved as systems within systems. There is nothing singular about us."

The collective term for the external systems which influence our internal system is called the *exposome*, and can include chemical, social, environmental, political and historical drivers. The exposome is why we see minority groups, across the board, disproportionately having worse health outcomes than the rest of society.

The exposome gives us a framework to understand that someone feeling burnt out, depressed and at risk of cardiovascular disease is not because of an outdated model of improper brain chemistry or a poor diet. Perhaps they have a low income and the housing crisis has forced them to leave their community, without support structures or social contact.

Did you know that a 2016 study confirmed that loneliness was found to drive inflammation just as much as smoking 15 cigarettes a day? Or perhaps they are in a state of hypervigilance because they are subject to systemic racism and are carrying intergenerational trauma, and thus have a chronically activated flight-flight response.

Our body does not end at the barrier of our skin. I believe we need to re-define 'body' to include the social, cultural, political and ecological body to which we all belong. This new vision of a body will help us to understand that if we want to thrive, we need not only address the issues of our individual body, but the issues in the collective body as well.

This requires a radical shift as to how we define 'health' and 'medicine' too. There is of course a place for treatment of the individual body – but if we also can't recognise and talk about the way experiences like racism, oppression, wealth inequality and discrimination effect people's health, then medicine will continue to perpetuate the separatist world view that generates the downstream health effects it is trying to heal.

As a therapist, I often ask myself what my role is as I become increasingly aware of the way our bodies respond to structural and systemic issues in society.

I do not know what the answer is, but I do believe part of the solution is to mend the broken lens through which we see the world, so that we can re-define health not in terms of individuality, but upon a foundation of radical relationship.

Miriam is a herbalist who works in Nimbin. You can contact her at: info@theopenheartapothecary.org or on social media by searching for The Open Heart Apothecary.

Magnificence starts early

I did this?

Have you ever considered how you put together all the strategies, processes and understandings that enable you to interface with the world?

We all started out as pretty much a blank slate, except for our basic physiological processes for survival. So here we have a baby; a baby in charge of taking in the information it is presented with to begin structuring its life and responses to stimulus, to survive; a baby that is programming the super biological computer in its' own head – what we call the brain.

The baby's programming knowledge is based on mimicking and trial and error in response to its environment and how best to survive, grow and maybe thrive. The environment is largely controlled by adults with minor players poking in from the sides to varying degrees, like siblings, relatives, neighbours, pets, peers and so forth.

A dynamic and infinitely varying environment for each baby exists and so a unique response in programming is achieved for each.

Science has told us that neural behavioural pathways (our programs) are largely formed by age of 7 and become pretty set by age 9. Of course, science is changing its understanding almost daily in this area, like some years back we were told neurons are not replaced if damaged. Now we know they are.



by Peter Ganser
NLP Master Practitioner

We also now know about neuro plasticity that allows for adaption and growth throughout our life.

(I wonder how the CEO's of Microsoft, Google, Yahoo and so on would feel about allowing a baby to program their computers based on feedback from the environment s/he lives in?)

What if...?

What would it be like if we had competent teachers showing us as babies how to optimally program our brain? What if we could examine and edit our programs as adults to improve our performance in ways we wanted.

But wait, where can we find competent adults that can teach us how to program our brains? Aren't we all the same, programmed the same way,

by happenstance and chance?

Can I upgrade?

Well, yes, and you can start by identifying what is not working well and work on it. There have been many people over the centuries that have stepped past their limitations and learnt new pathways to follow – for their neurons and hence in their life.

We can use their experience as a leg-up to help us along. That is to say, we can mimic more capable others for our programming or find others who can help change and upgrade our programs.

We can find new pathways by following spiritual teachings, physical disciplines and therapies, or mental disciplines and therapies (e.g. NLP). What matters is that you find the method that suits you best at the present moment, knowing that this may change as you grow.

Underlying all of this is the following understanding:

*You are truly magnificent!
You are an amazing part of the miracle of life.
You have a super computer (brain) to maintain your earth vehicle (body) that allows you to experience whatever you choose.
Enjoy the experience.*

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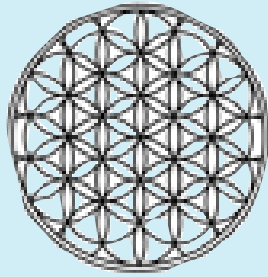
Natural Law

by Helene Collard

We are all self-governing.

Let us call upon our ancestors, Elders and teachers – past and present, to guide us in the way of the Heart.

You are all my relations.
All is One.



Namaste:

The Spirit in me sees the Spirit in you

The transformative potential of recent times has provided opportunities to now see (aspects of) the world through new eyes.

This paradigm shift may seemingly have happened 'overnight', however the reality is, you have worked hard to will it upon you.

Intelligence is gained through reading books and academic pursuit. However, the knowledge most useful now is wisdom.

Wisdom is cultivated and embodied through engagement with Life – consciously learning and growing through the ordeals of life. Attending to what feels stuck, constricted or hard. Restoring flow, openness and ease.

January is a great month to cultivate focus and discipline, to set strong and healthy foundations for yourself. When the world outside has become uncertain and unreliable, the wisest thing to do is strengthen and solidify your internal anchor, to carry you through whatever lies ahead.

Draw strength and willpower, to set clear boundaries for yourself

and others, to protect and cultivate what you know is good for you. This is your job. No-one else's.

Sustainable healthy choices often require planning. Set yourself up to succeed. Call it and then follow through. Less talking, more action!

Simplicity is another key. Keep life basic, uncluttered and drama-free. There are many 'rabbit holes' around, don't get stuck! Tech-free nature time is a wonderful way to clear the mind and get back to basics.

Happy New Solar Year! Harness the potential!

The Yemaya Centre is always open!

During lockdowns or when face-to-face services are not available: Trauma-informed care and practice sessions, remote Reiki treatments, remote deep listening sessions, yogasates on Zoom, endorphina creative on-line sessions.

All other times: trauma-informed care and practice sessions, face-to-face Reiki treatments and Reiki courses, yogasates, shiatsu, endorphina creative workshops, sessions and programmes, yoga and massage with Liina.

Go to: www.yemayacentre.com.au for more information.

Give yourself the gift of Bowen



by Sonia Barton

Well what a year 2021 turned out to be. Our true colours and strength really showed up didn't they?

Preparing for Christmas and actually wondering if we are going to be able to see our friends and family can cause so much stress and anxiety. However, if we just go day by, be-ing present in the moment, enjoying each moment, then life can be far less stressful. Worrying about the future does not help us one bit.

Don't forget that we are creating our future with our thoughts, if you think

Remember we are affecting the world in every moment, whether we mean to or not. Our actions and states of mind matter, because we are so deeply interconnected with one another.

Working on our consciousness is the most important thing that we are doing at any moment, and being Love is the supreme creative act.

– Ramm Dass

Dare to dream and feel what you truly desire, deserve and are. Divine Love. Let life scare you and trust that more light can shine in when the wall cracks.

End this game, let the dam wall break, let the whole truth flood, nothing but the truth. Dark to Light, start heaven on earth. Only Love is Real.

– Danielle Stotjin

the future will be doom and gloom then guess what, that's what you will get.

If you imagine yourself in an abundant world with everything you need is within reach then that is what you will create and you shall end up with.

When you have a Bowen treatment, your body is creating space for new life force, as I release tension in your muscles, tendons and especially the fascia which wraps around your whole body in one piece. Allowing fresh life force, and also allowing more light to come into your body.

We are life force energy and light. We are spirit having a human experience in this body. So it's really important to keep reconnecting to who you really are –love, light and spirit. You can do this through meditation, by setting intention and by having Bowen treatments.

You could set an intention to give

yourself the gift of Bowen once a month in 2022. During this time you can use the time in the session to connect to who you really are. Connect to your heart; get out of your mind and your ego. That is not who you really are.

After 12 sessions I am sure that you will come to know yourself more, feel healthier, have a clearer mind, feel more love for humanity and yourself and generally able to cope with life's pressures.

I send good wishes, much love, many hugs and most of all, fun to everyone and wish you all a very successful and loving 2022.

And remember to always be kind to one another.

Sonia Barton practices in Nimbin, Lismore and Byron Bay. Phone 0431-911-329 or go to: www.bowenenergywork.com.au

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