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The taste of spring

Food Matters

by Neil Amor

Few vegetables represent the taste of spring more than asparagus.

Its popularity in history is long, with records of it growing in ancient Greece.

The Greeks harvested wild asparagus and connected this vegetable to their goddess of love, Aphrodite.

Numerous other cultures have also considered freshly sprouted asparagus a symbol of fertility.

More than 2,000 years ago, Egyptians cultivated asparagus for medicinal purposes and, according to legend, they would offer it up to the gods in their rituals, as it was so revered.

The first asparagus was found in the wild and was much thinner than the spears we see today. Through the years it has been grown to develop a thicker stem with more edible flesh.

Asparagus can be grown from seed, potted plants or dormant crowns (bare roots available in winter). Although asparagus can be started from seed, the plants take three years to mature, so it is usually grown from



1-year-old crowns.

However, the plant can be productive for 10 years or more, so it's worth the wait. You can start planting as soon as the soil is workable in late winter or early spring.

Asparagus can be enjoyed raw or cooked, and it's often a star ingredient in soups, stews, salads, and other dishes.

Asparagus benefits include its low caloric value and its high vitamin, mineral, and antioxidant content.

Here's an ideal recipe for the warmer nights ahead.

Grilled asparagus with tarator

350g (2 to 3 bunches) asparagus
1 tsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
sea salt
1 lemon, quartered
freshly ground pepper
micro herbs, to serve

Tarator:
50g roasted walnuts
sea salt
two cloves garlic
40g fresh breadcrumbs
freshly ground black pepper
juice of 1 lemon
125ml extra virgin olive oil

To make the tarator, put the walnuts, salt and garlic in a mortar and pound to a paste with the pestle.

Add the breadcrumbs and a dash of water (about two tablespoons) and pound to mix through.

Add some freshly ground pepper and the lemon juice, then add the olive oil a little at a time, pounding to a creamy consistency. (Makes about 250ml.)

Trim the tough ends off the asparagus. In a bowl, mix the asparagus with the olive oil and some sea salt.

Preheat the grill or barbecue over high heat until hot. Grill the asparagus, turning until lightly charred, about four minutes, then remove to a plate.

Drizzle with more olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt, squeeze the lemon juice over and give a good grind of fresh pepper. Garnish with micro herbs and serve with the tarator.

The Nimbin Organic Food Co Op is roaring into Spring with a fresh paint job! Looking to getting involved in this valued community-run organisation? Contact EaLa, our volunteer co-ordinator, on 0405-659-181.

Until next month, eat well.

In praise of tinned fish

by Thom Culpepper

As many know, getting your affordable amount of necessary seafood required canned seafood, the only option if you lived away from the sea.

The only other option of fresh fish was an unaffordable cost to the family's food budget.

But there was always that can of sardines, salmon, tuna, herring and assorted other sea creatures – oysters, other shellfish, clams, mussels, shrimp, crab, winkles, even eels (jellied) in some cultures – with which to make do.

Aldi stores have a good selection of other canned stuff, the herrings in various sauces are recommended.

On matters of their food qualities, according to the FAO they are substantial. High in Omega-3 Long chain fatty acids, protein, vitamins D, A, B12, calcium, iodine, iron, selenium and zinc and many of the micro-nutrients, required for life support.

Besides, canning saves waste, fresh fish being subject to useless loss. Most of the canned fish being pelagic and very numerous, they replace the mercury-prone and over-fished coastal and reef fisheries.

Canning pasteurisation allows for the bone material to be fully utilised for micro-nutrients. Storage is another benefit, canned fish can be safely managed for as long as five years.

New research shows the use by dates are very conservative and species dependent and vary with the canning technology utilised (FAO says again). Some plastic-lined cans are a no-no.



A trip to Aldi is now sometimes drawing a negative, especially on the regular (87c) can of sardines; other outlets have them at maybe twice the price.

The cash-rich public are awake-up to the genius and economy of the modern tinned fish.

Lower grade salmon ('pink' as against the American-Commo 'Red'), being the historical base for an Oz salmon or tuna salad, tossed with a radish rose, a water-enhanced celery split, a slice or two of vinegar-pickled beetroot and a twist of a slice of orange under a dousing of a Carnation milk-concocted mayo and garnished with Kraft 'Bunghole'.

Well all that has all changed. The 'net-influencers' have discovered the survival food of the poor and they are all on about the fabulousness of the tinned fish.

Get up early working-class gals and lads, if you want a share of the canned produce of the deep blue, because the 'capitalised' are after your sea nosh.

Just to release themselves from the

boredom of fresh reef fish fillets and wild-caught salmon, or the \$30 a kilo large prawns or the umpteenth \$s a crayfish tail or soft-shell fresh crab. Hard having so much surplus income with which to make choices, hard indeed!

On another matter, the Nipps have started to contaminate the North Pacific Ocean with millions of tonnes of nuked water from their grand nuclear event and subsequent fuck-up.

All seafood from Nippon has been barred by China. The staple algae being at home on the coastal fringes.

Culpepper has a hoard of pre-nuke-release, freeze-dried, wakame and nori, propagated and harvested in China. You may want some, those who know, will. Email me for a sample, you pay the post: thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Win the cooker!

The offer to win a MasterPro 12-1 cooker still stands. An original recipe with Northern Rivers produce earns the magic beast! Entries to NGT or the above email post for adjudication.

Weeds are weeds because they are hardy survivalists against all odds, and have a propensity to spread rapidly.

The 2022 floods will continue to impact years after the event as floodwaters reached zones that had never been inundated before introducing weeds to new areas. Propagation material – seeds, tubers, bits of branches and segments of stems, and even pieces of root – can develop into new plants. There are many species likely to be distributed by floodwaters, including aquatic plants which can cause major problems in waterways.

Frogbit, limnobium laevigatum, salvinia, salvinia molesta, and water hyacinth, *eichhornia crassipes*, are all weeds of national significance (WONS). They are considered serious threats to the environment and agriculture, and it is illegal to trade them.

These species can vegetatively reproduce rapidly and form dense mats, blocking waterways and irrigation channels, impeding recreational activities like swimming, fishing and boating.

Water lettuce *Pistia stratiotes*, is another water plant with a reputation. Though considered native to north Queensland and the Northern Territory it has

Watch for Parthenium weed



become weedy in other parts of Australia, establishing in still and slow-moving water bodies. It's also on the banned lists in several countries around the world due to its invasive potential.

While some might consider these aquatic plants are low risk in home ponds, even without flooding, water birds who visit these ponds can carry tiny pieces to new locations and initiate fresh infestations in nearby creeks.

Weeds can arrive in many different ways. As well as carried by wind, water and wildlife, on machinery, vehicles and footwear, weed seed can come via landscaping supplies and stockfeed.

Contaminated organic chicken feed has been responsible for spreading one of Australia's most terrible weeds around NSW. Until 2020, parthenium weed, *Parthenium hysterophorus*, had been a weed, primarily of

Queensland, contained there by strict machinery hygiene practices.

However, in the last few years, dozens of outbreaks have occurred around NSW, including in the Northern Rivers. There could be more to come.

Parthenium weed seeds can remain viable in the soil for several years. If you have poultry and feed them grain, keep a sharp look-out for a fast-growing frilly leafed plant with little five-pointed star-shaped white creamy flowers. If you see it, call a weed officer. It's another WONS, and a priority weed which means while it is not yet widespread in the region, there is a chance to prevent it becoming endemic.

Act early to avoid parthenium weed from entrenching and spreading further. Handle only with gloves, protective clothing and dust mask, as this

plant can cause contact dermatitis and severe allergic reactions which get worse with on-going exposure. Or call the weed officer for specialist advice and support. This is a weed we do not want.

Heavy infestations of this plant have caused people to leave their farms in Queensland. Though stock generally avoid it, if their menu is limited and they eat it, the flavour of the meat and milk will be tainted. Kidney damage can also occur, as can death.

Parthenium weed grows prolifically so it can quickly overtake the pasture. It has a competitive advantage as it produces allelopathic phytotoxic chemicals which inhibit the germination and growth of other species.

Able to mature and set flowers within four weeks of germinating, Parthenium weed can spread rapidly in just a few months. One plant can produce 15,000 seeds. Act promptly!

Weeds are inevitable, especially in rural areas. Early identification and implementation of appropriate control measure will help protect biodiversity and protect lifestyles and livelihoods.

Everyone has a biosecurity duty to manage problematic pest species and prevent their spread.

Happy weeding.



In search of lungfish

In mid-April, a collaborative effort between Richmond Landcare, Ozfish, and Tuntable Creek Landcare aimed to unravel the mysteries of Tuntable Creek by searching for the elusive and prehistoric lungfish.

The decision to conduct eDNA testing stemmed from several credible sightings reported via social media and discussions with Tuntable Creek Landcare, prompting the need for scientific verification.

Excitement reverberated throughout the community as Emily Headlam, Landcare Co-ordinator at Richmond Landcare, emphasised: "If evidence of the fish is found here, it could lead to significant conservation actions and positively impact the wider community."

Tuntable Landcare,

an active participant in Lismore City Council's Urban Landcare Program, collaborated closely with Richmond Landcare to facilitate the eDNA testing in partnership with Ozfish.

This collaborative initiative aims to enhance regional biodiversity. Additionally, community members actively engaged in the endeavour by participating in water bug sampling, providing valuable insights into the overall water quality of Tuntable Creek.

Recently, the test results arrived, revealing that the lungfish remains elusive in this particular creek. However, the study did detect various other aquatic species, such as the longfin eel, rainbowfish genus, Australian bass, carp, and Australian smelt.

CHANGE

The art of practice

by Susan Paget

Have you ever heard the saying "When one door closes, another opens?"

It's one of those hopeful phrases that a well-meaning friend might share when you're going through some sort of ending such as a relationship, loss of a job, or life stage like becoming an empty nester or beginning retirement.

In my many experiences of "door closing" moments I can confidently say that yes, this is true. When I look back at all the times that life chapters of mine have wrapped, without a doubt the changes have been for the better. But that midpoint place, between the slamming shut of the past and the opening of a new beginning, is tricky territory. It can feel uncomfortable and stressful to be at a place where what you knew before, even if it wasn't great, is no longer there and the future is unknown.

I'm going through one of these times right now, but I've learned to approach it in a different way. Rather than clinging to a situation I've

outgrown or worrying about what's coming next, my focus is on doing things that help me make use of this very important 'in between' time

Here are a few key practices that can help to accept and embrace change:

Process for closure: When change happens, it can feel icky even if you know that it's for the best. There can be elements of the past that need to be processed. Talk them out with a trusted friend or pour your thoughts into a journal. Along with ranting and venting, it's just as important to consider every lesson learned from this closing chapter and come from a place of gratitude.

Another way to process change is to take stock of how it is stored in your body. Tried and true movement activities like walking and gardening along with some indulgences like long baths and massage are good ways to move the residue of the past out of you. Intentionally creating closure for the body, mind and soul sets up the right foundation for the next adventure that will inevitably come your way.

Learn: Most of us aren't trained to enjoy being in limbo. An art of navigating

life change is making the most of the void. This blank slate where we're faced with the change that has happened and awaiting what comes next can be very intimidating. A positive by-product is that when something falls away, we often have more time on our hands.

What helps me is to constantly have some type of structured learning on the boil like a course or certification to accomplish. When I'm busy, I usually have to put my self-education on the back burner, but when I'm at a crossroads, it's often the perfect time to fire it back up again and hit the books. When a door closes, having something to focus on, something to show up for, helps us feel on purpose which makes all the difference to our outlook.

Open your own door: The theory goes that when "one door closes, another one opens". Someone or something is going to come along at just the right time to start another adventure.

I've been tweaking this phrase to consider the option that I have the ability to open my own door. This 'in between' time is the perfect opportunity for me to ask the big questions of "What do I want to happen next?" or "If I could do anything or have anything happen for me next, what would it be?" These

types of questions are fantastic journal prompts and a great way to uncover what comes next. The crazy thing is, when we ask ourselves exactly what it is that we want, often we don't even know. How exciting to have this time to actually start designing the direction of our lives.

Another way to take charge is to consider planting some seeds of ideas that you've had in your head but have been waiting for the right time to do. What would you like to create or begin if there was no pressure and no risk other than a little investment in time and energy? You never know how this will impact your life until you try. This is how you can put your own hand on the knob of the door.

The time between a door shutting and then opening is a sort of waiting room. In that room is a space where we can reflect on who we were when we walked into it and decide who we want to be when we step out. Next time a door shuts for you, take some time to practice embracing this space of contemplation and discovery.

If you do that, I'd be curious to know what awaits you on the other side.

Susan Paget is a television producer and well-being writer who teaches yoga classes on-line and at her home in Tuntable Creek. susanpaget@gmail.com



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A cashless society



by Magenta Appel-Pye

A cashless society would make us all poorer

Australians are losing more than \$1 billion a year to debit and credit card scammers but the Federal Government is urging a cashless society.

It would be much easier to keep an eye on every cent that anyone spends or makes. Digital payments help the tax department by providing transparency and accountability as there is a digital trail that can be tracked. We all know many big companies and banks have clever ways of evading paying the correct tax, if any, but it is always the lower income earners who are strictly monitored and severely punished.

Cash must be retained as it is trusted and is the only essentially secure way to deal with finances. If your wallet is robbed, you only lose what was in there but when your bank cards get scammed, you could lose your life savings!

Studies undertaken in Europe on the effectiveness of a cashless society warn that this system seriously discriminates against 25% of people who are left behind. Most of these are older people who have difficulty using bank cards, and don't want to do online banking because they are not familiar with mobile phones and

computers.

The widespread use of cash aids the prosperity of local businesses in regional areas as it tends to discourage buying goods on the Internet. So get your purse out and keep your local economy going.

When the floods happened and the ATMs were out for weeks it was impossible to even buy food if you didn't have a stash of cash available. I'm sure there will be other times when we will be happy to have a little stash of cash.

What about all the little cash transactions that keep our communities vibrant such as CWA cake stalls, buskers, school fetes. And home endeavours such as garage sales, small veggie stalls selling excess organic produce at great prices or entrepreneurial kids doing jobs to make a bit of spending money.

It must be even harder making a living in restaurants as a waitperson as more and more people pay on their cards. And there would be no more cash in the hand jobs, which helped both the server and the consumer.

I recently went away and spent more than I intended because I paid with my card. Next time I'm sticking to cash. When it runs out, I'll know to stop shopping.

Tip-jar in our local coffee shop: "Afraid of change? Leave it here."

Lemon balm, a favourite herb

I love lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) because it is so versatile.

A member of the mint family, it has a pleasant taste and aroma. Traditionally used for its nerve calming properties, it also helps with sleep, digestion, and is a useful anti-viral herb.

It is high in antioxidants and has anti-inflammatory properties. A recent study with women also showed libido enhancing properties.

The aerial parts contain essential oils which are important for nervous system symptoms. It is considered more effective when tinctured as a fresh plant, as the essential oil content is reduced when the herb is dried. It can be used as a tea, fresh or dried, but the tincture is most effective medicinally as the essential oils are maximised.

In my dispensary I use both the fresh plant and dried plant tinctures. For anxiety, insomnia, depression, and panic attacks I prefer the fresh plant tincture. In a Wordpress blog called "The Herbarium", it is recommended to only infuse the leaves for 4-8 hours to make a fresh plant tincture, instead of the usual two weeks. This maximises the extraction of the essential oils and minimises the tannins. I haven't used this method,



as I prefer a slightly more holistic tincture, as there are many other constituents in the herb that have additional benefits. My current batch was extracted for nine days and I find it excellent for sleep and stress.

Herbalist and author, Matthew Wood recommends the fresh plant tincture for nervous system issues particularly when associated with digestion or heart symptoms. Indications can include rapid pulse, heart palpitations, and high blood pressure.

Lemon balm is a specific for hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid), which often presents with these symptoms. Research has shown beneficial effects of lemon balm extract on thyroid hormone and autoantibody levels in laboratory studies.

I combine lemon balm with



Nature's pharmacy

by Trish Clough, herbalist

other herbs, depending on the symptom picture. Cardiac and thyroid conditions should be assessed medically and may require prescription medications.

Lemon balm is a calming digestive support. It is beneficial with indigestion, flatulence and nausea. It can help babies with colic. For digestion it can be combined with other herbs such as chamomile, fennel and vervain.

Lemon balm and its active constituents have been researched in numerous studies. It has proven anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties. A published review found it has anti-viral properties against at least six viruses, including SARS CoV2. Ingredients in lemon balm are able to bind to its

spike protein and deactivate it.

Other viruses that are inhibited by lemon balm include some influenzas, herpes simplex ('cold sores'), and herpes zoster (shingles). Additionally lemon balm helps control the inflammation caused by these viruses. Taken as a warm tea, it helps to induce sweating to calm the fever.

If I am using lemon balm for its anti-viral action, I prefer to use the dried plant tincture. There are many plant constituents involved in the anti-viral actions, so I find it best to use a concentrated dried plant preparation with the broadest spectrum of constituents.

The best time to harvest lemon balm is in the summer when it is flowering. The leaves and flowering tops are stripped from the stems and used to make the tincture. I usually have a competition with tiny grasshoppers that like to eat my lemon balm.

Since moving to Iluka I haven't noticed any in my garden. I'm hoping they won't find my lemon balm this time around!

Trish conducts her own clinic practice in Iluka and is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough@internode.net.au

What if there was an easy way to get happy?

What if there was an easy way to let go of all the thoughts, feelings and emotions that keep you stuck in your head?

I'd like to tell you about a process called Access Consciousness. I learned this process about 20 years ago when I was "waking up" and becoming more spiritually aware of what I was doing here on planet earth.

At that time I was learning that everything I was told or taught wasn't necessarily my truth. I also learned that my thoughts created my reality.

I was learning that we are programmed to behave in a particular way to "fit in", and thank goodness I came across Access Consciousness, obviously I was ready to choose to change who I was at that time.

It is a process called the Bars, and the practitioner touches certain parts on the head, while you relax and de-stress, for an hour. Each point relates to things like creativity, creating connections, money, control, hopes and dreams and awareness.

Electrical impulses build up in these points and sometimes you feel like you don't know what to do with all this energy build up in your head. Well, by the



by Sonia Barton

practitioner holding these points until the energy is dispersed, you feel so much lighter afterwards; you feel like a weight has been lifted off your shoulders.

But not only that, apparently it clears all the energies from all your lifetimes. Because we are all connected, a couple of hundred thousand people are also able to clear that energy in the process. We are affecting so many humans when we lie down and receive this process.

The target of Access is to get us to the point where we are conscious enough to create change in ourselves so that we can increase the possibility of changing the trauma, drama and insanities



that are present in life.

Consciousness is the possibility to eliminate all the created walls of separation. What will it take for this to become a reality here on planet earth?

We use tools that can create big changes in your life by you choosing to change. One of the tools is asking questions.

Example: How does it get any better than this? That's a great question to ask always – whenever something good happens, or whenever something bad happens.

When you ask it when something bad happens, it gets better – because you asked. "Ask and ye shall receive" is one of the laws of the universe. It's one of the ways things work around here. But you have to ask in order to receive.

I recently did a refresher course in Sydney with my teacher because I feel that we need this work right now, we

need to release that build-up that is going on in our minds, and to focus more on the future that WE want to create.

We are so powerful, and we can choose to create change in ourselves which in turn creates change in the world.

A phrase which is so powerful that you can use every day; say it 10 times in the morning and 10 times in the evening to create change: "All of life comes to me with Ease, Joy, Glory and Magic."

You are the source for creating the change you desire. But you have to be willing to be it. All it takes is for you to choose.

If you are ready to start making some changes in your world and would like to experience a session of Access, I have clinics in Nimbin and Murwillumbah.

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Black and white in family Law

My client, a proud Bundjalung man, lived locally with his white wife. They have two children.

They were learning language at school and spending time with Elders, when their mother unilaterally relocated them and herself a couple of thousand kilometres away, alleging the usual alcohol, violence and coercive and controlling behaviour. His lawyer filed a Recovery Application in early May last year.

At the Directions Hearing later the same month, a judge in Sydney, instead of ordering the mother to return the children, made orders appointing an Independent Children's Lawyer, (ICL) scheduling telephone communication between the children and their father, and drug and alcohol testing, and set the matter down for an Interim Defended Hearing in July. This is when we came into it.

We tried for legal aid, but our client has a job, a normal job where he earns a little more than the income test allows for. We gave him a costs agreement and promised we'll try not to charge him too much and give time to pay.

Then the same judge ran the Interim Defended Hearing, ordering that the mother be permitted to relocate the children, transferring the matter to the Indigenous list in the city where the mother now lived, and listing it for mention before another judge in August.

The father was now permitted to spend time with the children for two days once a month, supervised by his ex-wife's brother, paying for all flights



Legal writes

by John Adams

and accommodation himself. He could not afford this, so didn't. He and the children regularly spoke on FaceTime while the mother hung around in the background, though she was supposed to give them privacy.

Six months later a Judicial Registrar adjourned the matter to April this year for a Compliance and Readiness Hearing.

At this hearing, the new judge listed it for trial before him in August. We booked flights. Now, due to unforeseen circumstances, it's listed before a visiting judge in October, still in that far-away city.

The mother and ICL are represented by experienced counsel. The mother no longer seeks that the father's time with the children be supervised.

She also says, "They are well supported in this school, by the classroom teachers, student support co-ordinator and Aboriginal education teacher. Aboriginal cultural connections are being made through the school."

The mother's barrister writes: "I maintain my view that final orders in this matter will provide for the children to remain living in [said city]."

Although family law has grown more complex in the decades since the Family Law Act was introduced in 1975, parenting matters still come down to a simple proposition; every child has the right (as far as is possible) to have a meaningful relationship with both parents, as well as the right to be protected from physical and emotional damage.

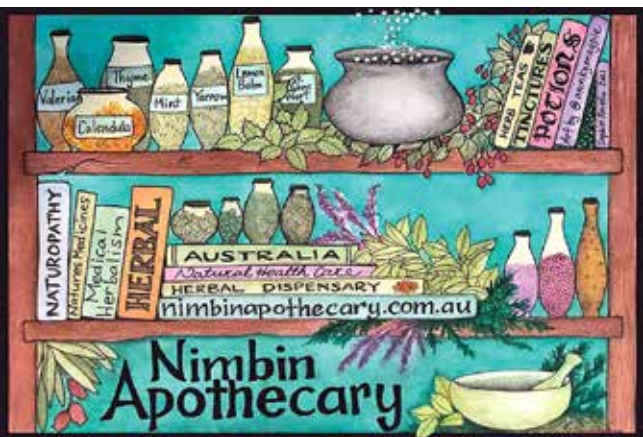
And although it's about to be amended again, to simplify the currently awkward language, Indigenous children have extra rights, such as 60CC(3)(h) which says that the court must consider:

If the child is an Aboriginal child or a Torres Strait Islander child:

(i) the child's right to enjoy his or her Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island culture (including the right to enjoy that culture with other people who share that culture...

There are cases on the effect of an established status quo, that it's not decisive, but when the children are settled, doing well at school, a judge might not want to disturb things. But is it possible that the mother's barrister is right?

Can they really be so easily deprived of language and torn from country like their grandparents?



Dr Elizabeth McCardell

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Reading between the lines

A friend was talking about something important and my response, as it typically is, was "mmm".

She said how interesting it is the different kinds of 'mmms' there are. A non-therapist says 'mmm' in another way entirely, but therapists have an extra tone to their 'mmms'.

I responded by saying our 'mmms' are all about reading as much as we can about what we hear. We are gathering information, said and unsaid. We are listening to the semiotics, the layers of meaning-making in not only words, but tone, inflection, posture, gesture, facial expression of the 'how' of the other person, what is said and not said.

Reading between the lines is important for working with clients whether in person or online. This requires close listening and very good observational skills.

On-line psychotherapy has an added benefit: of contextualising the client usually in their own environment – all providing very useful extra information about them as well as adding to our shared communication, and enhanced communication matters enormously.

Reading between the lines can be described as an intuitive process, even psychic, but, as my friend Peter Nelson says in his book,

The Way of a Seer, Reflections from a Non-ordinary Life (published 2013), psychic knowledge is really just about paying minute attention to all the clues presented to us.

Peter is a retired psychologist and social scientist with that acute ability, and we all have it, if we train ourselves. A lot of miscommunication/misinterpretation arises from inattention. The art is thus, to observe, listen, perceive, not only the other person, but ourselves.

Things not yet consciously known can nevertheless be intuitively felt and manifested in our dreams. Dreamwork is thus a very useful tool to practise. The dreams of our clients and ourselves need to be listened to.

Problem stories and their solutions brought into the consulting space may or may not be recognised straightaway, thus our need to pay attention to those things that are often ignored.

What we therapists often teach our clients is mindfulness. There are numerous ways to become mindful. I sometimes suggest a walking meditation as a means to develop mindfulness. This may consist of walking barefoot on grass or sand or carpet, slowly, feeling the texture of the ground beneath the feet, noticing how one's body adjusts to the slow walk: the



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

way our toes grip the ground and relaxes, the sensation in our calf muscles, the extension of legs from the knees, and so forth.

At the same time, you might feel the coolness of air on your face, breathed, in saturating your whole self with renewed life energy. Your awareness extends to the landscape through which you walk, for your walking meditation mindfully connects you to your environment.

Such close awareness reveals previously unrecognised things in the environment: the jewel of dew on a single red leaf, a water-turned stone, something previously unseen, now delighted in.

The art of mindfulness reduces stress and improves mood. It's about slowing down, deeply breathing, and engaging all our senses with the environment all around us. As an art it can

be extended to everything we do and are, as we go through life. Learning mindfulness helps us particularly in those situations where we are more reactive than we need to be.

For instance, when somebody says something that stirs up old feelings, whether or not they are appropriate, it's useful to be able to stop lashing out in our reactivity.

Practising mindfulness is valuable for all of us. This skill is most obviously useful when what a client says stirs up old feelings in the therapist and the latter, instead of stopping listening to the client, uses that awareness to further the effectiveness of therapy and then deeper places can be mutually investigated.

One thing though, mindful listening and reading between the lines, is never learned as a once and forever art. It has to be practised in every moment, every encounter, with awareness and intention. As such, we have to be vigilant with ourselves, and with our clients, vigilant toward them, but in a spirit of relaxed allowing: allowing whatever arises to simply arise.

*Dr McCardell has relocated to Fremantle, but is available for on-line consultations.
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SEEDY SECRETS 005

by Michelle Chapman

I'll tell you a little secret – you're a seed collector, a seed vector, a seed protector.

It's in your DNA.
I'm sitting in the dappled sunshine, munching happily on the citrus deliciousness of a white aspen (*Acronychia oblongifolia*) fruit, one of the perks of the 'job'. Not far away I can hear the cautious comments of a group of children on their environmental education outing as they tentatively try these rainforest fruits for the first time. What? You can eat fruits in the forest and not die? What? You can eat fruit from the forest for free? What? People have been doing this for thousands of years?

Yes, you can eat fruits in the forest and not die, if you know what they are. They are usually sourer, more bitter, or crunchier than those in the supermarket, but they come with a soulful sweetness of knowing that one is eating something untainted by machines, pesticides, or plastic.

The act of picking and eating fruits in the forest is a primal one, and the act of collecting seeds for reforestation is vital for our future.

Yes, we can eat fruits from the forest for free, but we need to give back by spreading the seed. This is the ancient deal between frugivores and trees. Whether we spit the seed out



White aspen fruits

somewhere down the track, scatter the fruits around as we collect some for ourselves, or carry the seed away to sow in nurseries, we are playing our natural part as large mammals in the landscape. With many of our large frugivores now extinct or heading that way, seed collectors are the modern seed vectors.

Yes, we have been moving seeds around the landscape for thousands of years. In Australia, First Nations people have explained that for thousands of years our local black bean (*Castanospermum australe*) seeds have

been distributed around the landscape deliberately, to create pathways of food-bearing trees between gathering places. It's in our DNA to interact symbiotically with trees, increasing their chances of survival in return for shelter, food, fibre, medicine and spiritual strength and guidance.

In subtropical rainforest, the dispersal of seeds by fruit-eating birds, bats and mammals is called *zoochory*. Accidental dispersal of seeds with hooks, burrs or adhesive structures on animal fur or clothing, is called *exozoochory*. Intentional dispersal of seeds with tasty arils or fleshy fruit layers is called *synchory*, where the seed is transported and de-fleshed in a different location.

Seedy secret

White aspen (*Acronychia oblongifolia*)

It's easy to spot the bright white fruits on the tree and best to collect from the tree. Wait until the fruits are large and puffy, then the fruit will be tasty, and the seeds will be viable. Shrivelled brown fruits on the ground will be insect infested but can still contain some seeds. Remove the pulp by eating (if clean) or by squashing fruits through a sieve. Separate the seeds and pulp by hosing in a large bucket.

Sow at medium density and cover lightly with seed raising mix. (*Australian Rainforest Seeds*, 2020)

Contact me at: info@seedtreemaps.com for a chat about putting it on a map!



by Uncle Norm & Aunty Maj

She says

The problem is that you are one of these women who ridiculously, ludicrously, incredulously, think men are like women but with penises. They are sort of the same species but very, very different which is actually why relationships work well for survival. Two different skill sets.

Men are more like dogs; cute, fluffy, loving and loyal (if you're lucky). They love to chase balls and gnaw on meaty bones. They like getting dirty and don't mind pungent smells, which is actually quite a good thing.

I know there is a growing range of men's care products these days probably bought by women like yourself and metrosexuals (whatever that is?) Men don't need face care products because their skin is coarser and doesn't dry out and itch as much. This means that despite doing absolutely didley squat for their skin, they actually age better. However, women make up for it in the long run by outliving them.

If you want to get him a present he actually likes and uses, I suggest balls. Any type – golf balls, soccer balls, footballs, cricket balls, basketball, ball bearings. Marbles, bowling balls, a number 8 billiard ball for his gear stick, a tow ball, pinball machine, meat balls, matzo balls, dumplings.

Just don't get him a 'bliss ball' for the bath. He wouldn't know what it was and would probably try and eat it.

HE says

Maybelline, WTF were you thinking? I can just see the look of horror and the profound disappointment he felt as he unwrapped your

Father's Day skin care

Last Father's Day I brought my husband an expensive gift pack of skin care products. He's not so young any more and looking a bit scraggy and rough around the edges and I thought he might like a bit of a make-over. Two years later they have not been touched. I feel annoyed, hurt, and unappreciated. Am I being overly sensitive?

– Maybelline, Billinudgel

'thoughtful' present. Oh yeah, he opened each bottle and jar taking a sniff and saying, "Mmm, how delightful." Gah!!!

C'mon, get real girl! We geezers are pretty self-reliant when it comes to choosing and using personal products. If we feel we need something in that department we go out and buy it for ourselves.

In fact, all we need is a cake of soap, a razor, and a dunny roll. Anything else is superfluous. If he really wanted to use skin care products, he would just help himself to yours. Be eternally grateful that he doesn't.

My little covergirl and I recently had a quite spirited argument over me accompanying her to a half-price sale at Sanctum, a local cosmetics outlet. She won. I checked it all out including the men's section, which struck me as being the same as the women's goop, except with different labels. I came, I saw, I blanked out.

Where's it going to end? Next you'll be making him wear lippy and eyeliner. Then you'll make him get Botox and have his back, sack and crack waxed and maybe even an anal bleach. Then you'll be complaining that he's not man enough!

Enough of this bullshit. If you really want to buy hubby a present he will be happy with, get him a toy. A new fishing rod or a set of golf clubs. How about a drill or a nail gun, or even just a gun?

Something for the car perhaps? A cool set of spottys or a nodding doggy for the back window, or just buy him a car, even a nice model car will do.

Speaking of cars, here's a tip for your husband from me. Those skin care products will likely do wonders on the dashboard and chrome work.

Can't wait for Mother's Day.

Did you hear what happened to Helena Rubenstein?
Max Factor.

Send your relationship problems to:
normanappel@westnet.com.au

Food for thought

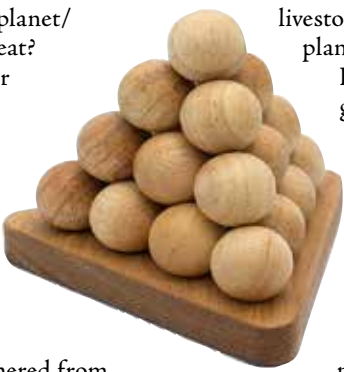
Shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

Most people get hungry. What is used for nourishment tells tales. *The Nimbin GoodTimes* shows character traits – kindness, curiosity, adventurism, creativity, brightness – do not depend on diet. People’s lives throughout history also prove personality comes with birth. What can depend on diet is a number of cultural values. How we relate to people, our body and principles, family, clan, tribe, different nationalities, flora and fauna, environment, even what we believe: faiths, tastes, moral frameworks that guide acts, health. The fine letter (8/2023) on the

spirit of Aquarius and food by Graeme Cooney from Kyogle is a case in point. In short: circles of care: self, family, mates, tribe, humanity, mammals, all of nature. Sure, humans need nutrition to maintain and grow. Tastes are optional, fashion. What was taught, or what is good for Earth now? Population growth caused overshoot, the ability of environments to provide: lower consumption and waste. Hard in economies that promote to ‘shop until you drop’ and arrogance, ‘we are the best species’. Wrong, Materialism can harm. Our health, and nature’s wellbeing is in our hands. E.g., read: <https://news.berkeley.edu/2023/01/09/speciesism-like-racism-imperils->

humanity-and-the-planet/ Example: how to eat? People are no longer regarded on top of an imaginary food chain pyramid, but at the centre of, and dependent on, the sphere of all nature. Sustainable nourishment: fruit and vegetables, gathered from bush, nature strips or weed patches in urban areas, processed by enterprises, gardened in pots, plots and orchards. Ideal food source for a crowded world, where we learn to do more with less, minimising waste and resources per person: reducing footprints. Freedom of choice is a cornerstone of individuality, so eat what you want, but use of Earth must be priced in to help restore environmental health and productivity. Much land and water is used for



livestock, it decimates the planet. Research shows gardening plants and orchards only use 1/3 of animal farming. Australia today seems overcrowded, but in fact it is about resources used per person. Earth still averages two acres of space for each person. Consuming animals was practical when nature was plenty and people were few. It now is reversed: many people, nature in decline. Animals can be pests, or downright dangerous. Ever faced hungry emus, cornered kangaroos, stampeding elephants? They can be chased away. Gardens can be replanted. But they come back to munch, destroy. How one relates to nature is a huge question. What to do with

ticks, snakes, flies, centipedes, rats, magpies, wolves, daisies, weeds, trees, frogs? The balance of nature dictates how many. It includes humanity: habits must evolve. Economies today are too materialistic, promote having things, knowing little. Why not consume the same as predatory society? Fight fire with fire. Because nature is disappearing. Humans need a healthy environment. For personal health, community well-being. Animals value genetic closeness, live alone or in small family clans. Tender to kin. Ferocious to all others. The old gospel truth: dominate and conquer. At eight billion people, we cannot afford anymore to abuse nature, keep on logging, taking land, water, air. Live natural, simply with plant-based diets. Our food, health, budget, survival, thoughts.

The importance of bats

by Claudia Caliri, Biodiversity Projects Officer, Byron Shire Council

Flying foxes are nature’s ‘super-pollinators’ and Byron Shire Council’s Biodiversity team is turning its attention from schools to plant nurseries in the next stage of its ‘No Bat No Me’ project. In the last six months, staff have spoken to 300 children from local schools, presenting information about flying foxes, their essential role in the environment and the importance of the protection of native habitat. The school presentations have been very well received and students have been very interested in the relationship between flying-foxes and our local koala population. Many did not know why they are



considered a crucial species in our landscape, and we hope they take this knowledge with them and share it with their parents and families. One of our key messages is that local forests, including healthy koala habitat, depends on our super-pollinators – flying foxes. Flying foxes sometimes do not have the best reputation as neighbours but

they are vital pollinators and major contributors to a healthy natural environment, which in turn supports other native animals such as koalas. The presentations to school students have been supported by a broader advertising campaign that provides key information about flying foxes, as well an educational video that is on Council’s website: www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Services/Environment/Native-animals-and-plants/Flying-foxes We now shift our focus to developing a list of flying fox and koala-friendly plants for property owners who are interested in providing food and shelter for native wildlife. Two local nurseries are working with us to promote this list of plants to people who want to encourage koalas and flying foxes in our Shire to thrive.

WHY WON'T THE PAIN GO AWAY?

by Tonia Haynes

There are a few reasons, why muscular pain and stiffness still won’t leave, even after one has attended a good osteopath, chiropractor, Bowen therapist or physio therapist. Number one. Dehydration has more negative effects on the body than we already know of, so drink water, an action of abundant care for oneself in a country where water is becoming more precious than gold.



A tip. Start the day with half a squeezed lemon in a glass of warm water. Your kidneys will love it and your taste buds will appreciate the fresh taste. The dreaded arthritis visited me early on in my twenties and now, many years later I am still not the cripple that the doctors suggested I would be.

A diet high in fruit and vegetables and regular exercise are essential for a healthy body, but I am not the most disciplined human I have ever met, so over the years I have created a regime that suits my lifestyle and keeps me relatively free of pain. Being that I am not a medical person, I can only share with you the regime I now use. Most days involve Bs, B12, C, D, E, zinc, magnesium, colloidal minerals and a drink of barley green. The barley green supplies chlorophyll, which alkalises the system when I refuse to eat my veggies and the colloidal minerals supply the trace elements and minerals, those little fairies (which are often missing from our food) that keep everything together.

I also have an Earthing underlay on the bed. The underlay, quite frankly, has changed my life, to the point that I wake in the mornings flexible and ready for a good day. Better Earthing.com – do yourself a favour!

Last, but certainly not least. Food allergies, apart from other unpleasant symptoms, can create inflammation in the muscles and make one ache. Mine is wheat.

As explained, this is my plan for health, but everyone is an individual so it is wise to discuss the nutritional supplements that are suitable for you with a medical professional. Particularly if one has heart or stroke issues.

In the meantime, the techniques I use when healing others is a strong desire to assist, which involves good listening skills, information received over 40 years that can reverse digestive issues and realign muscles and bones, so that they learn once again, to dance together, plus emotional clearing, which helps one to see the world from a better place.

I can see you at my delightful cabin 9km out of Nimbin, or if the kilometres are reasonable, I may do a home visit. Phone for an appointment: 0439-794-420.

Something worth reflecting, because it also relates to our bodies: *a Rolls Royce does not run well on two-stroke lawn mower fuel.*

NORPA wins national performing arts award

Northern Rivers-based theatre company NORPA has won a prestigious PAC Australia IMPACT Award for *Love For One Night*, its sell-out 2022 show at the Eltham Hotel. The annual national awards celebrate performing arts leadership and innovation, with a focus on lasting community impact. NORPA was recognised for its innovative presentation of *Love For One Night*, a site specific show at the Eltham Hotel. The hotel, located in a community of just 343 people, was transformed into an outdoor theatre and became the backdrop for a project that provided paid employment opportunities for more than 50 artists and creatives, reaching an audience of almost 4,000 people. Following the devastation of the 2022 mega-floods in which NORPA lost its Lismore home, theatre, office and equipment, NORPA turned to what it does best; creating exceptional performances for its



Photo: Kate Holmes

community that supported healing, coming together and partnership. “We are incredibly proud of the entire NORPA and *Love For One Night* team, led by Artistic Director Julian Louis, and our partners at the Eltham Hotel. We are thrilled their work has been recognised nationally,” said NORPA Executive Director

Libby Lincoln. “So many aspects made *Love For One Night* special. Not only was it produced during a time of disaster response and immense uncertainty for the Northern Rivers region, the play was realised through an innovative and unique partnership between a theatre company and a country pub. The theme of ‘love’

intensified at a time when so many had experienced the heartache and trauma of the floods.” PAC Australia’s Executive Director, Katherine Connor said, “Congratulations to all of our winners, who embody the essence of creating impactful and outstanding artistic work in their communities and beyond.”