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What is methylsulfonylmethane (MSM)?

by Ava Bishop

Chronic back and hip pain can be a terribly debilitating problem especially as we get older. I suffered for about 15 years, slowly getting worse until I could barely walk and had to have a mobility scooter to get around.

That took a dramatic change almost a month ago when I started taking a Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) supplement. Now people are seeing me striding around town without my mobility scooter, without limping and pain. I can stand straight again instead of crippled over. Honestly, I didn't think I could have gone on much longer being in constant pain.

Here are some benefits I've found so far: pain has reduced by 80%, my breathing has improved a lot (I suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). My mental health has gone from being depressed and resigned, to optimistic and extremely



happy. My gut is working so much better now and eating double what I was.

MSM strengthens the anti-inflammatory and immune system, and repairs connective tissue for joints.

So, what is MSM? It is part of the organic sulphur cycle in nature coming from bacteria and plankton in the ocean as a gas and combines in the clouds with rain and falls to the earth entering plants and

animals everywhere. It is part of the building blocks of life.

So why do people suffer deficiencies of it? Because it dissipates from our foods when cooked or processed. It is naturally in mother's milk and cow's milk but due to pasteurisation the MSM is lost.

I don't have room here to tell you all the benefits, so I encourage you to do your own research and find out

for yourselves. It has helped so many of my friends; all reporting amazing relief.

MSM is an inexpensive supplement that has become recognised as a great healer. People around town are saying I'm "walking proof". I just love seeing happy smiling people free from terrible pain.

I bought two kilograms online for \$86, and take just a teaspoon in the morning before I eat. It is nontoxic and does not interact with any medications etc. My doctor is astounded and happy for me and has dropped my medications, apart from my puffer.

I've lost a heap of weight and am building strong muscles again... and I was so sceptical at first, now I'm a true believer. But don't believe me, find out for yourself.

The information provided in this article is for general knowledge and informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Cheap clothing and a low-cost lunch

by Sage Bryant

The Nimbin CWA ladies had another busy month as we updated and revitalised our op shop space, making it more user-friendly and easier to browse.

Our op shop is open every Wednesday and on market Sundays, offering low-cost clothing. We always appreciate donations of clean clothing and bedding.

The CWA Far North Coast Group held our annual Environment and International Day at St Paul's Presbyterian Church Hall in Lismore.

We were fortunate to have two inspirational speakers: Elly Bird from Resilient Lismore and Anna Rose from Environmental Leadership Australia.

They addressed environmental issues and community responses to climate change and disasters. Both women are dedicated to grassroots efforts and are true powerhouses of ideas and action.

This year, the Country of Study for the CWA of NSW has been the Republic of Korea.

To commemorate their National Liberation Day, which marks the withdrawal of Japanese forces from the Korean Peninsula in 1945, some of our members visited the Korean Forest Cafe in Lismore to enjoy traditional meals.

It was a delightful morning filled with great food and wonderful company.

Our toastie days have been such a success. We've extended them to all op shop days. This means we are now offering healthy, low-cost lunch options for the community every Wednesday.

Our rooms open at 10am, and we hope you pop by for a browse and a chat.

Meet our members

Each month, we'll hear from one of our members about their CWA journey.

My name is Kaz Ratcliffe, and I live in Nimbin at the Old Butter Factory.

I joined the CWA in 2019, not long after moving up here from Daylesford in Victoria. I thought it would be a wonderful way to meet like-minded women and contribute to my new



community.

It was Linnet Pike, the president at the time, who first introduced herself to me one day at the farmers market, and I'm so glad she did.

Since then, I've served as treasurer for four years and more recently as vice president, supporting our current president, Tash Fuller.

What I value most are the genuine friendships I've made, as well as the opportunities to work together on supporting our community.

The Nimbin CWA is very active, running fundraisers, operating Nimbin's only op shop, supporting local causes, and creating a welcoming space for women of all ages.

I'm especially proud of our branch's achievements, including the renovation of our 'club house', the Fig Tree building at the community centre, and improvements to the facilities with a new commercial kitchen, heating and cooling.

For me, the CWA is an important part of my life. It provides connection, purpose, and the chance to contribute to the community I now call home.

Looking forward, I'm excited about welcoming new members and continuing to strengthen what we've built together.

Dates to remember

• Open days: 10am-3pm on the 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays of the month,



plus every Wednesday following the Community Market Sunday.

• Op shop days: 10am-3pm, 1st and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

• Community Market days: 9.30am-3pm on the 4th and 5th Sundays of the month.

• Street stall: 10am-12noon, most Saturdays, outside the newsagents.

• Branch meeting: 3pm on the 2nd Monday of the month, new members always welcome

We are located at Figtree House, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin (next to the firehouse via Sibley Street)

For enquires phone: 0461-412-831 or email: secretary.cwa.nimbin@gmail.com

nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

Delayed emotion after trauma

One of my first clients years ago when I was starting out as a therapist was a Vietnam veteran.

He had just retired as an aircraft mechanic when he came to see me in a state of deep anguish. He had been a helicopter pilot during that war responsible for picking up broken bodies in Vietnam jungles.

He said that at the time he just did his job, just got on with it. Didn't feel much.

After he returned home from the war, he settled into his job with a couple of airlines; went to work, came home, showered, cooked dinner, watched a bit of television, and went to bed.

Same thing day after day for decades. No hanging out with friends, no intimate relationships. And then he took early retirement and suddenly found himself standing on a bridge about to throw himself in.

Instead, he went to his doctor and, after that, came to see me. Suddenly he was feeling all those emotions that he cut himself off from, for all of his working life.

I get this. In the past month or so I've been suddenly feeling the deep sadness from nearly dying this time last year, when I was hospitalized with blood poisoning that

damaged my kidneys.

Suddenly sad, coupled with recurring iterative memories of being in three hospitals with tubes in me for blood transfusions, temporary dialysis and other indignities.

I feel for those in the Northern Rivers, and particularly Lismore, who lost their houses, livelihoods and animals after the 2022 floods. I was lucky, living as I did in Lismore Heights above the devastation.

The floods and aftermath are one reason I returned to my hometown of Perth, Western Australia where flooding doesn't happen. The trauma felt, I know, was not immediately felt by all and many, I'm sensing, are feeling it now.

I must admit that I'm feeling the feelings now delayed as well.

Why are feelings sometimes delayed for so long? You'd think that in the face of immediate catastrophe that feelings would be running high. They are for some, but not for others.

Our immediate reactions in the aftermath of trauma are complicated and shaped by our life experiences, culture, coping skills, and community support.

Coping styles are individual and variations in how a person copes (including those



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

who just get on with life, without feeling much) is not a sign of psychopathology.

There is no "normal" response to trauma. The realisation of this is relatively new to those who study trauma. When I was studying for my Master of Counselling degree, this wasn't really talked about and the advice given to us was to encourage the person to talk about their experiences at the time of the traumatic event.

A person like my Vietnam vet client, or me, for that matter, would not be helped by this approach – until they were ready to feel their emotions; emotions have to be felt in their own good time.

Coping styles vary from action oriented to reflective, from emotionally expressive to reticent.

There are those who just get on with life, and there are those who are left exhausted, confused, sad, anxious, agitated, numb, dissociated, confused, in emotional and physical pain, and feeling nothing much at all.

Of course, these feelings can become crippling and lead to long term distress: nightmares, sleep disorders, iterative thoughts, flashbacks, anxiety and depression, suicidal thoughts, as well as avoidance of emotions that are associated with the trauma.

Delayed emotional responses are not inevitable. Why this is so, is poorly understood. It could be that the event is not felt life threatening, or perhaps it is familiar to some lucky people.

The thing is, though, that we cannot assume that if a person who has been in a horrible event is not showing much emotion is OK. Care and support are necessary whatever the person exhibits, or doesn't.

Creative arts, therapy, mindfulness exercise, watching the breath, and sometimes medication helps. What doesn't, is self-medicating with drugs and alcohol.

The thing is, be gentle and practice self-care.

Plant of the month



Long-leaved tuckeroo
Cupaniopsis newmanni

by Richard Burer

Spring is here folks, and I reckon it will be some warm relief to dry us out after a fairly wet winter.

Of course, the wet winter brings the opportunity for excellent tree growth. Our plant of the month, long-leaved tuckeroo is no exception.

Its new growth is beyond stunning and its pink flowers decorate in panicles up high in the new growth of this small tree.

Threatened, or with fairly limited distribution, the Nimbin area is about its most southern location.

It can be quite common on drier rainforest edges on the edge of the Nightcap, Mountain Top, Stony Chute and as far south as the Jiggi valley.

Richard Burer is a Nimbin-based natural area restoration contractor and consultant: richard.burer@gmail.com

Flourish Sanctuary spring awakening

by Jagad Samuel

As spring arrives, Flourish Sanctuary blossoms into a season of renewal.

Flourish continues to nurture community with weekly sessions of meditation, satsang, permaculture and sound healing to yoga, kirtan, and even a radioshow. Each is offered to inspire and deepen awareness.

Whether you are seeking inner stillness, practical skills for living, or simply a place to connect with others, Flourish welcomes you.

Meditation with Jagad

Meditation offers a rare opportunity to pause from the busyness of life and reconnect with a deeper sense of peace. In these sessions, you are guided into stillness through simple practices that calm the mind, open the heart, and bring awareness.

Meditation can reduce stress, improve sleep, and increase clarity. Whether you are new to meditation or experienced, Jagad creates a welcoming and supportive space. Mondays 10.45am to 12pm.

Practical permaculture

Practical permaculture is a hands-on exploration of harmonious living with land. In these sessions, you can learn practical skills such as composting, plant health, water management, and growing food in sustainable ways that work with nature.

Beyond techniques, permaculture fosters a deeper connection to life, showing how small actions can make a big difference. Bodhi's grounded and loving approach makes permaculture inspiring. Wednesdays 9am to 11am.

Sound healing with Michael

Michael invites you into a world where vibration becomes medicine for body, mind, and spirit. Using a didgeridoo, Japanese singing bowls, pyramids, and voice, Michael creates a soundscape that guides you into deep states of relaxation and inner stillness. Experience a "sonic massage" where your tensions dissolve. You may leave feeling renewed and uplifted. Thursdays 9.30am to 10.30am.

Kirtan, Yoga, Meditation (KYM)

KYM weaves together the uplifting joy of kirtan, the grounding flow of yoga, and the quiet depth of meditation into a nourishing experience. The practice begins with movement and breath to awaken energy, then flows into stillness where peace arises before devotional chanting opens the heart. This combination strengthens the body and calms the mind. Come for one part or come for all. Saturdays 9am to 12pm.

Sunday Satsang with Jagad

Satsang is a gathering of community, reflection and wisdom. Rooted in the ancient tradition meaning "company of truth", these sessions blend meditation and dialogue to create a space of spiritual nourishment. Satsang is guided by the questions of those who attend. Explore timeless teachings in a modern context, sit together in stillness, and share from the heart. You will leave feeling lighter and more connected.

Satsang is held on 14th September (2nd Sunday) in Mullumbimby, and on 21st September (3rd Sunday) at Flourish Sanctuary in Nimbin.

NimFM 102.3 radio show

The Flourish radio show offers a blend of conversation, music, and reflections to feed your soul. Each episode explores timeless wisdom in a fresh, down-to-earth way, inviting listeners to pause, breathe, and reconnect with what truly matters. Join as Bodhi, Pritam and Jagad share with others, Mondays 7.30am to 9am.

World Peace Festival

The World Peace Festival is a celebration of community, music, and mindful living, bringing people together for four and a half days of inspiring workshops, performances, live music, and shared experiences.

Early bird tickets are available now, giving you the chance to secure your spot at a discounted price.

Volunteers are also warmly welcomed to apply to join the festival team and be part of creating this unique event. Don't miss the opportunity to connect, contribute, and celebrate peace at: www.worldpeacefestival.com.au

Beyond Asana with Sattwa

Beyond Asana with Sattwa is an invitation to step deeper into the heart of yoga, moving past the physical postures into the rich world of breath, meditation, and inner awareness.

Guided with warmth and insight, Sattwa offers practices that awaken presence, stillness, and self-discovery, creating space for transformation.

Another special session will be held on a Saturday in September (date to be confirmed), so if you're interested please check the Flourish website: www.flourishsanctuary.com.au or phone 0433-173-508.

Nimbin Aged Care & Respite Services

Do you have the right qualities to make a great aged care worker?

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Pay: SCHADS Award, Home Care Level 1-4 depending on skills and experience, plus entitlements and allowances—Long Service Leave, First Aid Allowance, Superannuation, \$0.99/km reimbursement.

Interested? If you have relevant qualifications, experience and people skills and would like to join our caring team please **EMAIL** your letter of interest and current resumé to: enquiries@nacrs.com.au

Home & Community Aged Care workers

Rising to positions of consequence

Revenge of the Loon

by Laurie Axtens

Many of us will rise to positions of consequence in our lives.

To be honest, our community is crying out for decent people to take on the responsibility of being a union organiser, a convenor of a community group or a political representative.

These positions are onerous, and few decent people want them. Instead they fall to people who often have questionable motivations as they see them as pathways to higher honours or as positions that can be unscrupulous manipulated for personal gain.

All of us can think of people who fit in both categories.

How do we safeguard ourselves against people without respect for others, who manipulate procedures and ignore the spirit of inclusion to feather their own nests?

How do we get good people to put up their hands when they know that those hands will be sticking up above the parapet?

In that rarified air where the privileged, whom they have held to account, will



be spraying fire and factious nonsense to damage those very hands; for they covet the love and esteem that decent people are accorded.

There is only one way – and it is the way of personal courage – each of us must get

up and stand up and not just for our rights but the rights of all.

It is easy to sit back and watch the carnage as the greedy, pompous and sanctimonious unload on the reasonable, decent and hard working. And think "God I'm glad that's not me." That has to end.

Where we see injustice, we must oppose it; where we see bullies bullying, we have to stand up and stare them down.

These creeps thrive in compliant communities where everyone is too scared to say boo.

We all get to die – all the hiding and cotton wool packing isn't going to change that. In the end it's just simple self-respect.

Everywhere I look, I see people too scared to live, cowered by people of the lowest calibre; high handed conceits who are little more than seat polishers.

Don't wear it – it sits poorly on your shoulders.

Wake today and look in the mirror and ask yourself: am I really worthy of self-respect? You can be.

Make today the day – you throw away the life of fear and subservience.

Make today the day you reach outside your own concerns and give a shit about the people around you.

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The difference between love and unconditional love

Crystalline Clarity

by Daryl Spilberg

Love is the thread that interlaces the very matter of our Universe.

In the unique existence that is life on planet Earth, love is foundational to it. However, have you ever stopped to think at what level love can be found, felt and the intention behind it?

Love is blessedly common in our world, but unconditional love is much rarer and to be more cherished. In our ever-changing reality, it is pure unconditional love that is worth seeking out and must be valued highest of all. So, what is the difference between the two?

One client, Patricia, came in with problems about her ex-partner Kevin, who had been stalking and hassling her since their breakup a few months earlier. Kevin had been an abusive partner, and Patricia was desperately trying to move on, but the continual presence of Kevin shadowing her was causing many problems.

Kevin kept insisting that he loved Patricia so much that he couldn't let her go, and as Patricia was reluctant to take the matter to official authorities, she sought out a Crystal Dreaming session with me to resolve the issue.

In an expanded state of awareness, Patricia saw multiple past lives with Kevin until reaching their first one together, where they had made a binding agreement to always be together.

Patricia voided all contracts between them as well as releasing any energetic ties to Kevin and ended the matter there and then.

A couple of months later, Patricia reported with amazement that Kevin had stopped hassling her since the day of her session.

While there were various misguided intentions in this situation, the key missing ingredients were Patricia's Divine highest good and free will – when one has unconditional love for another, they will always have these



two key aspects in mind.

Nowadays, with people devoting themselves to spiritual movements, gurus, teachers, spirits and gods, it is always critical to ask and question: "Do you love me unconditionally?" In the Crystal Dreaming sessions I facilitate, this key question is of paramount importance.

In fact, it is possible for someone to be following a guide or other being who may indeed love them and truly think they have the best intentions for them, but during the session ulterior motives and other agendas can become apparent and stop them from answering yes to the question as their love is not unconditional.

We all have a team of unconditionally loving beings that are watching over us and guiding us throughout our lives. It is possible to connect with them; however if following other beings who do not love you unconditionally, it can be extremely detrimental to your progress in life.

This can block you from accessing your true guides, stop you moving towards your Divine highest good, and limit doing what you came here to do as your life plan, to name just a few.

Ready to connect with the beings that love you unconditionally, aligning you on the path to your Divine highest good and your life plan?

Book in a Crystal Dreaming session at: www.crystallineclarity.com.au or feel free to call for a chat on 0422-717-905.

The body energy system

How we move and interact with the Matrix



by Lisa Camilleri

We are energetic beings first – vibrational, interconnected, and deeply intelligent.

Long before the mind can make sense of anything, your energy body has already received, responded, and shifted. It's through this subtle body – your chakra system, auric field, meridians, and emotional imprint – that you move through the world and interact with what many call the matrix.

The matrix isn't just a digital construct or societal system, it's the field of information, frequency and emotional memory that surrounds us. It is the invisible web where beliefs, programming, trauma and collective energies live. And your body energy system is not passive in this field – it's constantly communicating with it.

Every emotion you feel, every thought you repeat, every relationship dynamic you engage in – it's all energy. These frequencies travel through your nervous system, sit in your chakras, and become the blueprint of how you experience life.

When your energy system is clear and aligned, you interact with the matrix

through trust, authenticity, and resonance. But when there's distortion – unprocessed emotions, inherited patterns, fear-based beliefs – you'll notice resistance, confusion, illness, or misalignment.

Take the solar plexus chakra for example. It governs personal power, confidence and direction. If you've been raised in a system that teaches obedience over intuition, or conformity over self-trust, this chakra may be blocked.

You might then find yourself doubting your path, outsourcing your power, or staying stuck in a version of reality that doesn't feel like your own.

But here's the beautiful truth: when we work with the body's energy system – through intuitive healing, breath, movement, sound, or intention – we can recode how we interact with this matrix. We stop reacting to old programming, and start creating from a higher frequency of presence and choice.

Our energy field becomes our compass – not just reflecting our past, but directing our future.

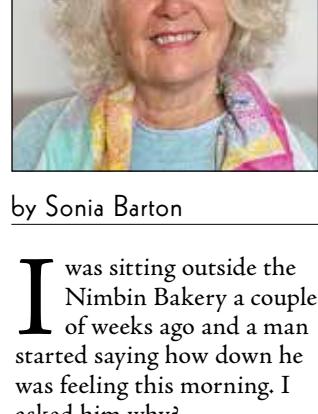
We're not here to escape the matrix. We're here to rewrite how we move within it.

And it starts in the body.

When you tune into your own energy – notice the tightness in your chest, the pull in your gut, the heat in your throat – you begin listening to the deeper language of your soul.

Healing doesn't always mean 'fixing'. Sometimes it's just remembering how to listen, how to feel, and how to honour the sacred intelligence that's always been within you.

Lisa Camilleri is an intuitive energy healer and cacao facilitator. Sessions available in Lismore and Nimbin + online. Book via: www.lisaenergyhealer.com or follow @lisaenergyhealer on Instagram



by Sonia Barton

I was sitting outside the Nimbin Bakery a couple of weeks ago and a man started saying how down he was feeling this morning. I asked him why?

He said he'd been watching the BBC news on TV and it was all doom and gloom so what's the point of living? He said he was feeling depressed about the future.

I was so shocked to think how many other people must be feeling this way, because they watch 'the news' and read the papers. (I stopped watching TV about 10 years ago).

In a world that bombards us with endless noise via social media rants, TV, global crises, tyranny, inflation and personal setbacks, holding onto what you can't control is like carrying a backpack full of bricks. It weighs you down, steals your peace, and clouds your vision.

We hear the lies and don't question or use logic, due to fear. The best way to control people is by dividing them into different ideological

Let it go!



Will Ferrell as newsman Ron Burgundy in *Anchorman* (2004).

groups, have them fight each other and have no idea who the real enemy is.

Every thought we think is creating our future.

Everything is created twice, first in the mind and then in the reality. So pay close attention to the thoughts you choose. They have a way of becoming real.

Let it go. Try turning off the news, have a few days off from watching it and see how different you feel. After all, watching the television is an addiction.

Instead, you could go out into nature, read a book, catch up with your friends and family, and release the grip on things beyond your reach, whether it's a toxic opinion, a past mistake, or a future you can't predict.

Embrace the freedom of focusing on what you CAN change: your mindset, your actions, your impact.

It's now 2025. In my opinion I would say don't be a prisoner to the chaos; use

it as a fuel to change. Then you'll learn to rise above it, lighten your load, and move forward with purpose.

Let's spark a movement of letting go and living free.

Go into your own 'bubble' of living a happy life by eating healthy food, drinking filtered water, try and get off medications by seeing a Naturopathic doctor, and really try to stop thinking so negatively.

It takes will-power and courage, but once you start feeling different you will see the positive changes that only you can make. Take your power back instead of giving it to the people in 'power'.

More stillness, alignment, joy and truth is possible. Remember that your present situation is not your final destination.

The best is yet to come.

Sonia Barton practices Bowen therapy and Reiki. Phone 0431-911-329 or go to: www.bowenenergywork.com.au

A moment

by S Sorrensen

I turned 70 last week.

There, I said it. I have now outed myself publicly as old. Seventy.

That's a lot of birthday candles. The candles cost more than the cake. If my birthday was in summer, I'd have been obliged to have a fire truck in attendance.

All jokes aside (yes, they were jokes, people – not bad dad jokes, but great grandad jokes), there is no wriggle room with 70. Being in your sixties, you can still see yourself as middle-aged, but 70? No. Seventy is old. Fifty may be the new 40; 60 may be the new 50; but 70 is, well, 70.

The thing is, I've never been 70 before. What are you supposed to do? Wearing slippers is a bad look with a sarong. Walking frames are useless when brush cutting. Ear-hair clippers damage hearing aids. And no matter how many sugars I add, a nice cuppa just doesn't give me the glow that a chilled bottle of rosé from Provence does.

I have yet to adjust to life as an old person. Yesterday, I ordered a senior's discount meal at the Kyogle pub, and Shaylene at the register DID NOT ask to see my ID. Jeez... And the woman behind the counter at the chemist called me 'darling'. (I'm pretty sure she's not my lover.)

My birthday party was wild, though. I drank Japanese whiskey, I sang, I danced. Like there was no tomorrow. The kids thought I was beatboxing, but it was just my knees popping. I raged out 'til sunrise – or maybe it was sunset – or maybe cataracts. I felt young still.

It was the next day when I felt old. Really old. I felt like I'd skipped 70



and gone straight to 80 (which is NOT the new 70).

All jokes aside (old people repeat themselves, right?), 70 may be old, but, like my old Lou Reed t-shirt, I sort of like it. My future has shrunk so small, my grand dreams of treasure and triumph have moved out. But the more compact aspiration of maybe a bit of Netflix after lunch fits nicely.

The burden of ambition, the weight of achievement, has lifted from me, leaving me lighter (and somehow shorter). The question "What will I be?" is replaced with the answer "This".

At my birthday party, a friend (not sure which one; I'd lost my glasses) remarked that if only she had known back when she was young what she knew now, her life would have been better.

This is a common sentiment among us oldies, apparently. I didn't think much about it at the time – I was busy picking candy from my teeth – but the next day as I watched two tabs of

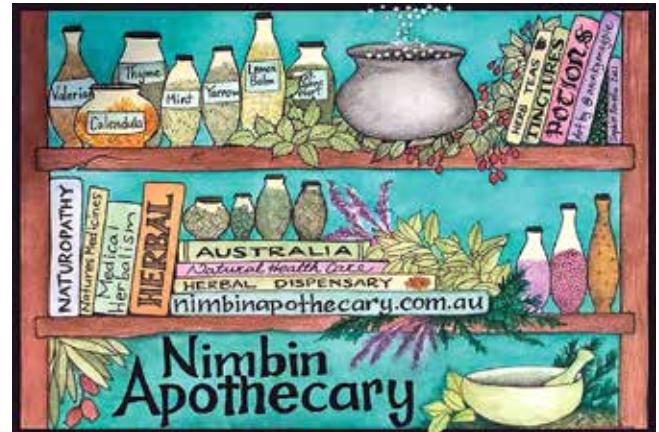
soluble aspirin and a denture fizzing in a martini glass of water, I thought about it, and I disagree.

There are benefits to being old – you don't have to help people move stuff, and... well, that's about it, I guess – but the real gift of age is wisdom. If I'd been wise when I was young, then there'd be absolutely nothing better about being old.

Wisdom gained by mistake and misjudgement is life's gift to the old – not that others listen to old people anymore, but we smile, smugly sipping imported rosé, as young people bounce about like pinballs making the same mistakes we made.

Though our wisdom is not shared, it's not wasted. It makes us empathise with the exhausting tug and tumble of pre-70 living. And the world needs more empathy with, less triumph over.

If the young'uns are lucky, they'll end up being 70 and wise, getting cheap meals (no questions asked) at the Kyogle pub and chatted up at the chemist.



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Bureaucracy and the victim



Some decades ago, a naughty boy at an exclusive school was ordered to be at the headmaster's bedroom at 6am to do exercises; the headmaster watching from his bed.

The boy, now my client, was often naughty. It got to the stage, he says, where he had to do the exercises naked.

"You would be doing push-ups naked and then you would get a whack on the tail for not doing it fast enough. Then occasionally you would get a pat on your naked bum via his hand."

In October 2024, the legal officer at the school called me. Having acted for another of their child abuse survivors, we're already friends. This potential client lives a long way away, but I'm happy to take it on.

The last time, acting for a local legend – for some of us, child sexual assault, rather than destroying one's life, can make it extraordinary – it was a breeze, a few emails and letters, some signatures and an invoice.

She sends me the documents, and we start work. Then it's Christmas, and I drive, at no charge to

my client or the school, to his farm in the Riverina, where I'm treated to a three-course dinner and a comfortable bed.

When would he get the money? I tell him it won't be long, a matter of weeks. Documents signed and witnessed, early next morning I continue on to Adelaide to spend a few days with my daughter.

Finally, in March this year, a letter arrives confirming that the claim settled a month before. Half-way down is a heading, 'Statutory Clearances'. The bureaucratic process begins.

It's ruled by Part 3.14, beginning with Section 1160 of the Social Security Act 1991. If I don't "return a completed MO024 by 13 June 2025 we will consider all services listed on the statement as relevant to the compensable injury or illness, and you will need to repay us the total amount owned."

Apart from the annoying

placement of the zero next to the capital O, the MO024 is 44 pages, listing his thousand medical appointments since 1985, to each of which he is to tick the NO box. I send it by express post. He ticks the thousand boxes. His wife drives to town to have it scanned and emailed back.

In late May a letter from Medicare says, "Our records show that there were no Medicare services provided between 01 February 1984 and 02 May 2025." So why did they need the MO024?

But then, a couple of weeks later, there's another letter. Now, I must "complete and return a Medicare Compensation Recovery Notice of judgment or settlement (Form MO022) or Medicare Compensation Recovery Notice reimbursement arrangement form (MO027)."

I choose MO022, and in July the school's lawyer tells us Medicare is sorted, but that we now need a Centrelink clearance. We download and complete Form SS446, then find that Centrelink doesn't have an email address.

On 3rd July, at Conway Street, I'm told to wait, and do so at my modest,



Legal writes
by John 'Sindhu' Adams

for a lawyer of 20 years' experience, charge-out rate of \$400 an hour. A manager eventually comes over and takes the form.

Later I write to Centrelink in Canberra: "The solicitor for [the school] is asking when we are likely to receive a Centrelink Clearance. Can you assist?"

It's now late in August; still no reply. My client's file weighs a full kilo. He, with his pacemaker and pills, is remarkably patient. He has no choice.

Me, I'm thinking of upping my own mental health regime with more fine weeding and an extra weekly massage.

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Restoring balance and harmony to your life



CV4 Guanyuan — gate of origin

The human body is a sophisticated natural pharmacy, equipped with remarkable systems that promote self-healing and maintain balance. Within this intricate network, acupuncture points act like master switches, helping to regulate vital functions and restore harmony throughout the body. One such point is Conception Vessel 4, also known as CV4 or Guanyuan in Chinese, which translates to the "gate of origin" or "gate of source energy."

This essential acupuncture point in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is located on the anterior midline of the lower abdomen, approximately two cun above the pubic symphysis. In acupuncture's proportional measurement system, one cun is roughly equal to the width of the patient's thumb at the knuckle. To locate this point, one can measure upwards from the pubic bone, which is the bony prominence at the front of the pelvis, or measure about four finger-widths downwards from the navel along the body's anterior midline.

According to TCM theory, CV4 has numerous actions and benefits. It treats various

gynaecological conditions such as irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhea (period pain), amenorrhea (absence of menstruation), menorrhagia (excessive menstrual bleeding), leucorrhea (abnormal vaginal discharge), uterine prolapse, and infertility. Additionally, CV4 addresses abdominal pain, diarrhoea, frequent urination, seminal emission, and impotence. Similar to Stomach 36 (refer to the August article), it is a commonly used acupuncture point for health-preserving moxibustion.

CV4 is a crucial acupuncture point for restoring vital Qi energy and benefiting Jing essence, which is a vital substance believed to be the foundation of life and health. It tonifies and nourishes the kidneys and warms and fortifies the spleen. When the spleen is weak and 'cold,' symptoms may include cold limbs, aversion to cold, abdominal pain and cramping, loose or watery stools, bloating, fatigue, poor appetite, and a pale, swollen tongue with a slippery coating that appears thick, moist, and shiny.

CV4 tonifies kidney deficiency and addresses kidney taxation. Symptoms



by Chi Fung Lee

of these deficiencies include weakness in the lumbar region and legs, as well as pain in the lumbar area and the bones and joints of the legs, particularly in middle-aged and elderly individuals.

Being located on the conception vessel in the lower abdomen, CV4 naturally benefits the uterus, improves fertility, and assists in conception. It is interesting to note that ancient Chinese physicians recognised that a line in the abdomen of women changes colour during pregnancy. This fibrous structure runs vertically along the midline from the pubic symphysis to the xiphoid process (the lower part of the sternum) and is known as the linea alba in Western medical terminology. When the colour of this line darkens, it is referred to as the linea nigra.

This colour change occurs during pregnancy and usually fades after childbirth.

Consequently, ancient physicians referred to this line as the conception vessel. By stimulating this area using various methods, they realised it could treat fertility and gynaecological issues. They also recognised that CV4 is beneficial for men's sexual and reproductive health, based on thousands of years of clinical experience.

CV4 is also the Front-Mu (alarm) point for the small intestine, which means that when the small intestine is out of balance, the area around CV4 may become tender or sore—acting as an internal warning signal, alerting the host to pay attention. Stimulating this point through acupuncture, moxibustion, or massage can help relieve these symptoms and restore internal balance.

A simple and safe home method to stimulate this point for period or abdominal pain is to use an adhesive heat pad. Always consult a professional for any medical advice.

Chi Fung Lee is an AHPRA and AACMA registered acupuncturist in Coffee Camp. Phone 0478-239-298.

So they say...

A man's shed

I came home from work to find my girlfriend had cleaned and tidied up in my shed. After protesting and complaining to her about invading my personal space, she went home upset and now won't talk to me. Am I being unreasonable?

– Amin Yashed, Wilsons Creek

Magenta says...

Opposites attract, but sometimes the other seems so utterly alien, dare I say beastly, that it is hard to imagine how we manage to co-exist, and never is this more apparent than in men's sheds.

Amin, your question depends on just how filthy your shed is. If it's a home for rats and mice and a fire hazard, then you should be grateful for her loving act of service.

You might ask her to tell you if and when she is likely to re-offend so you can clean up the disgusting, unmentionable things that I'm sure you have in there.

Men entertain their mates in this no-neatness, estrogen-free zone where they can smoke inside, ash on the floor and flick butts at each other. A place where the more empty beer bottles, the more homely it feels. Where disarray and filthiness are the sought-after touches of a man's paradise.

Married women understand the wisdom of giving their guy time out in his den with his boy's toys. When he is ready, he will emerge reinvigorated, ready and able to share, and enjoy, the rollercoaster ride of living with a woman.

Ladies, don't think you're doing him a favour by cleaning his shed. If he's anything like my Norm he will resent it, say you've "committed a neatness", and accuse you of turning into his mother. There is nothing that kills romance faster.

Men need their dirty dungeons where they can hibernate and spend some alone time away from the cares of the ordered world. In his own way it is ordered. We just can't see it.

Instead of wasting your precious time, do something nice for yourself so you will be in good humour when he emerges.

So Amin, yes, you have every good reason to stand up for your filth. After all, it's your shed.

"We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are."

– Anais Nin



with Uncle Norm & Aunty Maj

Norm says...

Dear Amin, much has been written on the importance for a man to have a shed, a den, a man-cave, call it what you like.

It is a place where (aside from the toilet) a man can be alone with his thoughts and be his slovenly filthy self. In your shed you can be master of your domain. You're the boss. You can make as much mess as you like with absolute impunity. You can keep things in there that no-one else should know about. Yep, it's your little kingdom, right? Wrong!

Let me explain. When you are in a "normal healthy relationship" with a girlfriend/wife/partner it's like living in a communist state. She becomes the State, and the State has a hand in every facet of your life. So your shed is no longer your shed, it's a State-run facility.

I remember when my wife first cleaned up my shed. I thought I'd been burgled. I couldn't find anything and the place looked empty, cold and uninviting. But, after a few days I had it all back to normal. That's the trick Amin, keep messing it up again and hopefully she'll soon tire of being your mother.

A final thought... If your girlfriend is willing to clean up your shed for you, she's sending you a very strong message. So get out your chippy's pencil and some scrap timber, and carefully plan your next move, before the shit really hits the fan.

I can't believe someone broke into my shed and stole my limbo stick. How low can you go?

Send your relationship problems to:
magentaappelpye@gmail.com

nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

DOES YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT EXCEED BIO-CAPACITY?

Ecological carbon footprints are not like shoesizes that depend on the body you are born in. Instead, they show how caring you are.

Carbon footprints calculate the carbon your lifestyle generates in food, shelter, mobility, goods and, whether liked or not, include a proportion of society's services; say roads, health, military, social security, education etc.

Do you minimise, or use more than your fair share of carbon? Finding out is easy: www.footprintcalculator.org/home/en

Increasing carbon footprint more than the country can handle comes from things like driving fossil fuel cars, buying suspect products, eating animals rather than artificial protein or plant-based foods from the area, land use and housing (eg electricity, light, heating or cooling private spaces).

Your share of services the country generates is automatically added.

To be sustainable, it is

Shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

therefore important to improve personal lifestyle and influence politics.

Terania area and ecovillages throughout the world have a proud history advocating for viable living, not only with protests, but by 'do-as-I-do'. Example: average Western consumption hogs 4.5 planets – wiping out flora, fauna, landscape, native people and more.

The world is moving towards setting upper norms for carbon usage, because humanity is physically challenged by floods, fires and pollution. Like the star system on fridges, all products will be rated. A huge carbon footprint spoils life on Earth.

Before you go on the warpath against carbon hogs, realise that there may be reasons to offend – like being too poor to buy an electric car. Also realise that the carbon footprint of wealthy people can be much greater



'The specific gravity of the soul' by Anand Gandharva

than those of average folk.

Even so, some differences are normal, some absurd. Take Amazon's Jeff Bezos. He is super rich because he sells services consumers buy, reduce air pollution as people don't drive to shops. Their products are delivered at home.

But behind the gloss is

a disturbing picture: his personal footprint, eg. recently he sailed with his wife to get a bogus environmental award at Cannes on a huge diesel-powered yacht that uses the fuel equivalent of 1500 cars. (7154 metric tonnes of CO₂). See: <https://louisispiano.substack.com/p/the-bezos-cannes-tastrophe>

Read more about carbon fairness and perception gaps here: www.anthropocenemagazine.org/2025/07/the-surprising-consensus-on-carbon-fairness-and-the-self-deception-undermining-it

Research shows that most people want a 'good

footprint', but don't have a clue how big their own impact is.

For example, buying vegetable oil from ex-wilderness in Borneo or Amazon can be cheaper than domestic, regulated olive or sunflower oil, but what does it do to your body and wildernesses?

Look before you leap. Exploitation is a global problem but regulation is a national commitment: at present markets undermine Net Zero goals.

One size not always fits all. We differ and shouldn't tar everyone with the same brush. But there is a word of advice for everybody: *Do more with less.*

Reduce your impact. If you must drive a gas guzzler, reduce trips. If you want to eat meat, reduce the number of meals eating animals, or use artificial protein.

Don't harass anyone who differs from your norms, and do your bit for the planet. Improve the world, start with yourself: reduce your own ecological carbon footprint.

Grief is love with nowhere to go

by Michael Brooke

There was a man called Chicken. He died from liver and kidney failure. He will be remembered by few people. By every normal standard he was a failure.

His real name was Kenneth Cobb. He was affectionately called Chicken by a woman who thought he looked like one, and he did too, despite him being big and beefy. He was much loved by those few he allowed to know him.

Despite his unkempt looks, he was a gentle man, most inoffensive. He had a massive chin, which always looked unshaven. He looked like a pugilist.

He was greatly impressed by the intellectuals and university teachers he drank with. They accepted him because it was clear to anyone perceptive that he was special.

He was a listener. Clever talk at the pub table was commonplace, yet Chicken, impassive as a Buddha, would in silence and stillness sit and rarely he would choose to speak. When he did speak, the chatter stopped, the clever ones went quiet and they listened.

He came from a family of gypsies. As a child he'd known poverty and hunger. He came to Australia as a Ten Pound Pom. He worked manually, job after job, as a casual labourer, but began to read and school himself and eventually got the HSC, and then went to university to study anthropology.

He was exceptionally intelligent. He got a degree with honours. But with that, his real troubles began.

Chicken looked and sounded hopelessly, irredeemably 'rough.' His trousers were always baggy, his shirt crumpled. He said of himself, "When I go for a job and I speak, my voice sounds common, my accent leads people to think I'm a dim bloody nobody."

He was born in England and spoke in a London Cockney accent. He wasn't handsome, he wasn't charming, he could not adapt to the manner and mores of potential employers – those who generally displayed themselves as educated, who again and



again made it clear that he was not; he was certainly 'not one of us.'

Just a few academics in the pub – he called them "m'recreational friends" – had come to realise he was profoundly well read: a deeply, oddly enlightened soul.

So when he got his degree, he found himself unemployable. He couldn't get a university job. And anthropology is not a terribly useful skill. Despite years of study, Chicken had become an educated outsider.

He applied for a job as a youth support worker. They asked what he could contribute. He said, "I've worked all my life. I've had many jobs. I know how things work. I could show the kids how to live meaningful lives."

The bureaucrats sniffed: that's no good, they said, because you being the way you are, you'd be demoralising. So they gave the job to another, who dressed, sounded and behaved acceptably, artifically well-schooled.

So Chicken decided, as a book-lover, to become a librarian. Wrong again. Literacy is a discount skill. He didn't look the part. His hands were too big and his manner was gross and he wouldn't be able to handle the computer course, and he was clearly not the right type for a library anyway. So eventually he landed a job as a base grade clerk in the Tax Office.

His main pleasures in life were socialising with his adopted friends and reading, and he never stopped studying. But then his years of hard labour, hard living, and finally sad and lonely drinking, caught up with him. He became an alcoholic hermit. When he couldn't drink any more, he died.

The tragedy of Chicken's life is that he

thought he could make a transition from being a poor working-class immigrant to being a well-educated professional scientist. He never really understood the Australian middle-class professional culture. Mistakenly he believed in academic freedom.

Nobody took him seriously when he talked about ideas because he was physically scruffy and he had a London Cockney slang. He couldn't be a proletarian hero because there was nothing heroic about him. Radical feminists didn't take him into their beds because they said he had been corrupted by Libertarian cynicism, but mostly because he was big, fat and clumsy.

He didn't drink fine wines. He drank plonk, cheap gut rot, preferably alone and by the flagon. Sometimes it was beer. He could walk into a pub in any working-class area and be ignored, because they could place him as one of them. But if he walked into the university lounge bar (where intellectually he belonged) they'd believe he was there to fix the plumbing.

All his life he worked. He didn't drop out. When he couldn't find a job after graduating, he kept himself alive by casual jobs in the 'grey' market – low-paid unregulated graft. What he thought of the tax office is clear: he walked out of it.

His university and teacher friends were informed that he was in hospital. He died alone, before they visited.

I knew him. When I married I moved away to the Northern Rivers, but we kept in touch. I visited Sydney just a day before he was taken to hospital to die. I was horrified. He was such a white, thin whisper of his former self.

He allowed me to sleep in his spare room. It was a rental house and old, nearly derelict, and everywhere stank of mould.

His loneliness was palpable. I was wakened during the night by a cry. The saddest howl, the most vented sound of pure grief that I have ever heard, a lifetime of loss in his voice.

Kenneth Cobb BA will be remembered by few people. By every normal judgement, by his own, he was a failure. Strangely, at his funeral, there was a great crowd.

Not in my name

*Not in my name
An old man cries,
Tattoo of fading numbers speaks
Of another cruel dark time
How can these people who know this horror
Do this to the people of Palestine*

*Destruction on an industrial scale
Dehumanising of an whole people
Penned in ghettos, bombed into the ground
Children starving and dying
As a fresh faced soldier strafes an aid line
An obscene hunger game for those desperate to survive
All echoes of an earlier attempt at genocide*

*He remembers the cruelty of German soldiers
Humiliating a child branded with a yellow star
As he sees Israeli soldiers
Shaming a helpless child of Palestine
He remembers being told his people
Were animals, subhuman, evil scum
As his Israeli family uses
The same hateful hurtful words
To condemn the people of Palestine*

*He speaks of those terrible past times
Because he knows he must
For silence means complicity in Genocide
He will not accept this blood on his hands
A final solution that is not in his name
For he knows this as one who survived
Fascism can only be defeated
When the good stand up to be counted
On the side of universal human rights
Against this war hate crime
An in inhuman wrong
Not in my name.*

– Terese Biscoe, August 2025

This poem won the slam at the Byron Writers Festival in Bangalow on Saturday 10th August.

Held in the A&I Hall, it was one of the few events still running after the cancellation of the talks scheduled for the main festival site due to localised flooding.

The poem was written after watching a clip on-line from a Holocaust survivor expressing his distress at the situation in Gaza. Congratulations Biko, so well meant. – Ed