

Topping up with stupidity

Don't get me started by Harry Gumboot

It was the images of a 4WD leaving a Sydney service station with 20 new five-litre fuel containers strapped to its roof that caught my attention.

I did some research. Diesel was around \$2.20 at the time, while the containers were around \$20 each. Our ever-so-clever fuel hoarder had just paid \$6.20 a litre.

The closest I've come to hoarding was in 2017 when the tank at the Nimbin servo needed to be replaced following Cyclone Debbie. Diesel was around \$1.27 at the time, and for several months I had a choice of filling my van at Mount Burrell or driving to Lismore.

I quickly acquired several 20-litre containers to store extra fuel at home and carried an empty in the back for opportunistic purchases. Regular visits to grandkids over the border, where prices were consistently 50 cents lower than in NSW, only reinforced the habit.

As a result, disruptions to fuel supplies caused by fires in 2019, Covid restrictions in 2020-21, and floods, landslides and fractured roads in 2022 didn't really affect me.

Does grabbing a few extra litres when filling the tank constitute hoarding? Not

if, like EVs, it carries you beyond the servos with no fuel because of panic buying, or a long queue out the front waiting for a tanker to complete its delivery.

There are people who need their vehicles for work, but a lot of us could carpool or catch the bus. The return fare to Lismore is less than the cost of a litre of fuel for pensioners. Brisbane already has 50-cent fares, and the Victorian Government has just announced free public transport for April. NSW should do something similar.

Meanwhile, I'm taking steps to protect my small reserve because, after a month of chaos in the Persian Gulf – a place that is not the source of most of our fuel – there are fuel thieves in the community. The Headers, the school and a local water carrier are among those who've had their supplies pilfered. Those responsible might consider the role hydrocarbons play in the practice of tar and feathering.

Speaking of thieves: The twin turbines on the distinctive blue and white aircraft recently seen hovering over the region burn around 400 litres of fuel an hour.

If it's any consolation to taxpayers, it's high-grade kerosene, which, at the time of writing, cost 54 cents a litre.

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The undeservedly underrated merit of modesty

On a tender evening with grey painted across a still life sky, making out a gleaming brush stroke of sunset gold beyond a silhouette of gum trees, I marvel at the folly of humankind.

I mean, c'mon – honestly? You've got to be kidding! It's not that I am blind to the fact that things were probably not going in the right direction for a long time. We had it coming, which is to say, where there is a will to ignore contemplation and discernment, or even compassion and kindness, these will be ignored.

What the world needs now is modesty. I am poring over my *I Ching*, the *Book of Changes* (Wilhelm, R & Baynes, CF,1950), with an occasional side glance at the latest news, trying hard to keep my composure, while wanting to scream: No more of that! Enough is enough!

Why modesty? "The superior man of modesty and merit carries things to conclusion. Good fortune."

We need a superior someone to come forward who is able to negotiate a peaceful solution for an impossibly explosive situation.

This does not have to be a single person, it could be a body of pre-eminent individuals who are united in the one distinguished merit of



by Antionette Ensbeay

proper decency, who do not step into the limelight with a baseball 'crown' on their head, who have an unassuming mannerism that shows a discerning mind, who can step into the arena without big intimidation, and who command justice without commanding people.

We need this body of mindful determination to create a peaceful world. For lack of a better concept, I will call this body PIP, short for 'Peace in Perpetuity'. PIP is different because the PIP body does not shun merit, nor boasts with lately-so-fashionable notions of unearned superiority, and, in contrast to the UN, PIP is not a weak background chorus of resignation.

PIP is proactive because PIP is holding a responsible – a deeply responsible – position in saving the world from ruin and lasting harm. The objective of PIP has

nothing to do with retaliation or being super offensive, on the contrary, PIP gathers the world's best and makes them confederates – not in combat, never in battle, but in dismantling the earth-wrecking, rotting structures built on hegemony and hatred with such cool and reserved proper correctness that the evil spirits don't even realise what's happening.

It's simple modesty paired with the knowledge of the discerning mind, that destruction is not the world's formula of superiority, but love, decency and the assent to live and let live.

PIP does not demand, does not negotiate or set deadlines or confuse the situation with radical and unexpected moves. PIP is modest about its modesty and is surrounded by a beautiful clarity, or if you want, transparency, because PIP has got nothing to hide, and no-one will be offended. Everyone is treated equally.

Whether living on top of a mountain, or down in the shade of the valley, every pearl of a seed that carries life is the epitome of the world's fortune. As PIP is touching on inherent compassion, even the radical, the beastly, the mean-spirited among us has a place, a right to exist – but will come to nothing if they defend their right by trespassing on the right

of another. They are not 'followed', applauded, nor even named because anyone acting in the extreme has simply no place in the PIP realm.

Now, this is a kind of stipulation that PIP would shy away from, according to the principle of remaining properly modest. It is more a concession than a demand, and never put forward in speeches or 'posts'.

It is implied, like the vital force that has the earth and the moon tracing their route around the sun and the planets making their way across the sky, without having it written large across their foreheads, what their motive is, what they accomplish or who they have taught a lesson lately. PIP does similarly follow the established order in the world, thereby directing our destiny that is subject to the immortal order of peace.

In the words of the *I Ching*: "The superior man can carry out his work to the end without boasting of what he has achieved."

If a steady drop hollows the rock, it might be worth your patience to hold fast to the tiny seed in your heart of humble, patient, strong and decent love, the kind that lives in the wind that bends the grass, propagating peace in perpetuity.



The art of practice by Susan Paget

Meditation

more cosmic aspirations. No more counting or visualising. My practice is now basically "sitting quietly" and here's what that looks like:

Most mornings, I throw a cushion on the ground, say "OK Google, set timer for 10 minutes," and then I sit. I prefer sitting low for this but there are many times where I'll do it in bed first thing and it could certainly be done in a chair or even lying down.

I align with the traditional meditation position of sitting with a straight back. It requires attention. Laying down might make me prone to falling asleep but honestly, if you're interested in meditation but don't like the idea of sitting, get as comfortable as you'd like. I won't tell the meditation police!

Once I'm sitting, I listen to what's going on outside. It's the best way I've found to be present. Up here in the Northern Rivers, there's so much incredible bird song so usually this is my sitting soundtrack.

But there are many times when I'm out of town where the sounds are of a city waking up with horns and ambient conversations. It's near impossible to not have some sort of sound regardless of where you sit, so it's something to embrace.

After about 30 seconds of noticing sounds, my mind will begin its usual time travelling, bouncing between past, future and fantasy, workshopping challenges and going through to-do lists. And this is when the magic happens.

My practice has taught me to catch these wandering thoughts and notice that I've moved off the path of listening

to the background sounds of the present.

Once that realisation happens, I start again and I consider it a huge win. I've become aware of my thoughts, woo hoo! From there I reset and go back to listening to the sounds of what's happening around me until the cycle starts again. The cycle happens multiple times during a session.

And then the Google alarm goes off and I say, "OK Google, stop." And that is my sitting practice for the day.

Over the years I've taught sitting to people who've never liked meditating. I set the phone timer for three minutes; we close our eyes and just be. No rules. No breathing patterns. No Oms. All that needs to be done is to see what happens when we hit the pause button.

Where does our mind go? Does the time go by fast or does it drag? And before we know it, three minutes is over and, drum roll, we have meditated.

I'm so grateful that I kept practising all these years, even when what I was doing felt so unrelatable and ineffective, and I hope that if you've been told you should start meditating, that this gives you a little insight of how to do it in a practical, no-nonsense way. Just sit for a few minutes and see what happens. You might find, just like I did, that this seems to do the job. No cave required.

Susan Paget is a television producer, well-being writer and yoga teacher who lives in Tumble Creek. Listen to her podcast 'The Art of Practice', watch on YouTube @theartofpracticetv or connect at: theartofpracticeofficial@gmail.com

A moment

by S Sorrensen

I feel a tear drop from my left eye and tickle its way down my cheek. Another forms in that eye, blurring my vision, causing the stark treeless vista of the agricultural flatlands to soften and smudge.

It looks better this way, but I wipe my eye because I'm driving through this bleakness. And though the road is endlessly dead straight, vision helps.

I'm not crying. No way. It must be hay fever. I fumble in my hippie bag feeling for a pill packet, and pop one into my mouth. I hope it's a hay fever pill.

I'm not crying. I'm sad though: the horror of bombed schoolkids, the grief of two virtuous warrior women I knew dying. If it's not hay fever, it's probably whatever chemical that huge tractor on my right is spraying on the acres of flowering yellow crop, the wind billowing the spray across the road.

Why would I cry? I spent a weekend enveloped in love. On Saturday night, I bathed in the Nimbin love at the Blue Moon Cabaret. Setting aside the din of the deadly worldwide hype for a few hours, I was a happy witness to a passing parade of real moments with real people, creating a community, with live artists articulating the love that can't be said.

This road, this forever-straight road, suddenly manifests a corner for which I'm not prepared. (I'm thinking about love, and there's something in my eye.) Oh dear. I hit the brakes hard, my duffel bag of clothes flies into the back of my seat, my hippie bag smashes into the dash and spills its guts over my feet. (Oh! There's a mint. Good.)

If you love something (or someone) and it's (they're) in pain, that's sad. After millennia of interdependence with Earth, humans have recently yanked themselves away from the rhythms and syncopations of the natural world. Food comes from a supermarket, fuel from a servo, happiness from wealth.

But after such a long time of intimate connection, we are still connected despite our recent estrangement. We still feel the planet's suffering. This manifests in social and personal unease. Anger and hate. Violence and war.

If I was to cry (and I'm not; it's hay fever or pesticide drift), I would be crying for the distressed Earth, the source of all grief.

After the cabaret, I sat in the midnight stillness of my shack under the cliffs at the end of the world and drank



shiraz, the alcohol prolonging the warmth and love of that evening of community, a balm for the loss.

The next day, the community expanded to Lismore where I attended the March for Forests. There, people celebrated their connection to nature and to each other by sharing the heartbreak of senseless destruction.

Out of tragedy came love. I watched humans, young and old, many wearing koala ears, dance to beats pumping from speakers under the Stop Logging Our Native Forests banner.

The agricultural wastelands are disappearing behind me as the road twists its way up and over a range. There are trees! The air smells sweet. Like home. It's clean, no chemicals, but still another tear follows the slippery track down my face. The hay fever tablet must be working by now too, but still my eye squeezes out a tear.

This journey is about love. I was looking for it. I found it. But it wasn't where I'd thought. Love lives in pain's shadow. It is the day to sorrow's night. I found it in a town square. I found it in a village hall. I thought I might find it in a person beyond the desolate flatlands.

A tear. Must be the sunscreen.

My first job in the law

I was a law clerk, not yet able to afford to be admitted as a solicitor, instructing Senior Counsel in a ten-week jury trial in the Queensland Supreme Court. My boss, the instructing solicitor, introduced me to Terry, the silk, and returned to Byron Bay, leaving us to it.

We acted for three of the five defendants. Another solicitor and his aged Junior Counsel had the other two. The charge was conspiracy to import a few tons of cannabis sativa. Much of the evidence was in transcripts of hours of listening device and telephone intercepts.

The listening device, the clients worked out from the occasional sound of a boiling kettle, was underneath the table in Joe's flat at Surfers. The flat opposite was rented by the AFP.

The Crown case was that one dark night a ship, sailing in past Kangaroo Island and the Fleurieu Peninsula, would drop that part of its cargo over the side. The skipper of the Shark Car would locate the floats, and the crew of the cray-boat got the sacks ashore and

load them into the stripped-out caravan, to be towed to Queensland by Rodger's silver-grey Ford LTD.

When Rodger discovered the tracking device under the car he rang Joe, whose response was in the telephone intercept transcript: "It's Off. O fucking double-eff OFF!"

Then someone knocked on his door. Rodger showed me a photograph of Joe from Maximum Security, a grinning older gentleman between two larger and younger ones, their arms around him, the inscription: "My mates, both murderers."

On the first day of trial, Terry invited me to sit beside him at the bar-table. Something told me that would be inappropriate, and I took a seat behind him. Our case was largely based on the failure of the Crown to adduce evidence of the position of the ship. In evidence, it was still at Dubai. Against us was a line of telephone intercept: "...the last time?" with the answer, "Champagne and loose women, mate."

We'd dealt with the line in the listening device



Legal writes by John 'Sindhu' Adams

transcript that excited the Crown; "Those stalks and seeds, what you don't need," apparently referring to the expected import. It was, Goran told me, Rodger walking past singing a Cheech and Chong song.

When Terry stood for closing submissions, I watched his head slowly turning, catching the eye of each juror in turn, allowing silence to fill time. Then he began, conversationally, explaining what we were all doing here, his voice growing gradually louder as

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CV12: Sounding the alarm

If you experience difficulty with digestion, nausea, acid reflux, abdominal distention, vomiting, constipation, dysentery, or a feeling of fullness even after eating small amounts, or if you notice undigested food in your stool, these may be signs of disharmony in the stomach and spleen according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). An acupuncture point called Zhongwan CV12 may help in these cases. Zhongwan CV12 is located on the conception vessel, which runs along the anterior midline of the abdomen. It lies about 4 cun (proportional measurement) the navel, roughly the width of four thumbs placed side by side. CV12 is positioned midway between the navel and the lower end of the sternum, at the centre of the upper abdomen. Normally, acupuncturists use needles, moxa (referring to moxibustion; see page 28 of NGT, September 2024), or cupping on CV12 to improve the function of the stomach and spleen and relieve symptoms. Among ordinary Chinese people, a ceramic spoon with a little oil may be used to scrape the area of CV12—a technique called Gua Sha (scraping



by Chi Fung Lee

method). Sometimes a cigarette is used to warm the area as a substitute for moxa, while ginger compress or a warm bean bag can also be applied for added therapeutic effect. Beyond physical issues, stimulating CV12 may also help with psychological issues such as overthinking, worry, or anxiety.

How to diagnose with Zhongwan
Zhongwan CV12, meaning “middle cavity,” is the Front-Mu point of the stomach. Front-Mu points are located on the front of the body and are considered “alarm” points because they reflect the health and function of their corresponding internal organs. Zhongwan CV12 acts like an alarm, signalling when the stomach is out of balance. You might wonder how acupuncturists detect problems at CV12. Often, patients notice discomfort in this area themselves, but careful palpation is key for practitioners. While most acupuncture points are used for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, CV12 is especially important for identifying and addressing stomach-related issues. By examining this point, practitioners can feel

temperature (warm or cold), tenderness, tension, and pain (sharp or dull), which all indicate stomach imbalance. In this way, the stomach “sounds the alarm,” alerting both practitioner and patient that attention is needed.

Protect your digestive system
Simple tips anyone can follow to improve digestion include eating wholesome foods that suit your body type and stopping when about 65 to 70 per cent full, avoiding overeating, especially before bedtime. Eat slowly in a quiet environment and chew your food thoroughly. Avoid drinking too much liquid during meals. After meals, a short walk can help stimulate digestive function. Avoid eating immediately

after intense arguments or strong emotions; in such cases, warm tea or water is better. Finally, occasional intermittent fasting can give the digestive system a rest and help improve overall function.

Happy belly massage
Belly massage is a simple way to support digestion. You can do it before or after meals. Begin by warming your hands by rubbing them together, then gently massage the abdomen in a clockwise direction with one hand, following the path of the colon. Use light to moderate pressure, paying special attention to areas that feel tense or uncomfortable. For extra benefit, you can watch stand-up comedy while massaging and allow yourself an occasional deep belly laugh. This combination of gentle massage and laughter helps stimulate digestive function and improve circulation. When paired with a proper diet and healthy lifestyle, these TCM practices can help maintain a strong and balanced digestive system.

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

So they say...

Moving in
I have recently moved into my lover man's unit where everything is aesthetically perfect, though space is tight. I want to bring my upright piano, which means a prized sideboard must go. Help!
- Mary Q Contrary, Byron Bay

with Uncle Norm & Aunty Maj

Magenta says...

It's so typical of men – everything of theirs is precious and nothing of ours is, even a beautiful piano. Norm thinks every ashtray he's ever collected is priceless. Don't even think about donating his old Wheels magazines to the op shop, and definitely keep your hands off his model cars. No matter how crappy, if it's his, it's sacrosanct. But if it belongs to me then it's just a schmonza. **Crystal vision** This became blindingly obvious when he knocked over my beautiful crystal ball. I had saved up for this prized possession and have been peering into it for 25 years. When I got upset because it was now scratched, he said, “Oh, it's just a bauble.” I had never seen anything in that crystal ball previously, but now the truth was suddenly illuminated. **Pathetic aesthetics** So, I sympathise with you over his pathetic aesthetics. If you were a subservient woman you could take up the flute which is compact and would easily fit into his bloody dresser. That is if it's not full of his old magazines. Or you could learn the ukulele which could hang on the wall. Mary, you have to make a stand right from the get-go or you'll never have a fair go and neither will your relationship. Tell him he should be thankful it's only one piano. I have to live with three upright pianos and a monstrous concert grand because Norm is a piano tuner/repairer. So, tell him to move over, stop whinging and count his blessings. He's got you, hasn't he?

“Marriage is indeed a manoeuvring business.”
- Jane Austen



Norm says...

“Piano: a parlour utensil for subduing the impenitent visitor. It is operated by depressing the keys of the machine and the spirits of the audience.”
This quote from the Devil's Dictionary unfortunately sums up the attitudes of many people towards the piano. Let's be optimistic and hope that your lover man is not one of these. After all, it's said that music is the highest expression of the arts and you, dear Mary, play the piano, the King of musical instruments. I would think it is one of the many attributes that made you attractive to him in the first place. He shouldn't complain – it could be a lot worse. My whole life revolves around pianos and Magenta has to put up with four of them hogging space like wooden hippos. And that's down from 12 at one point! You could have turned up with a violin, an ‘instrument’ that at best sounds like a rat caught in a trap, and at worst a braying donkey. Or perhaps a trumpet, which imitates the sound of a left cheek-sneak on a leather couch. Indeed, I think lover man should be most grateful to forgo his sideboard for a bit of music and culture in his oh-so-aesthetic world. Besides, if it is so prized he can probably pocket a few bob for it on eBay. The thing is Mary, if he is prepared to get rid of the sideboard, what are you going to do for him in return?

I have an album of solo piano music called ‘The Tallowood Sessions’. You can check it out at: normanappel.youtube.com or download it from: normanappel@bandcamp.com. I hope you enjoy it.

Send your relationship problems to:
magentaappelpye@gmail.com

From global village to eco-friendly galactic state

by Anand Gandharva

Visionaries can't agree on when the Aquarian Age arrives/d, but know it is stirring. How to foretell what happens depends on focus: individual or community. Predicting is ambiguous – our road is free as a bird, but as communities we move very predictably. Strange but true: we know how many accidents per year will happen, yet can't foresee individual fate. Insurance rates are set by extrapolating how many houses will burn each year, but what happens to an individual house no-one knows. When a million units fall, each has a free journey, but together they form a normal distribution, a bell curve.

Who is top or bottom, M Ghandi, ML King, Lao Tzu, E Musk, Charles III, or B Dylan, no-one really knows. We make our own beds. Managing a viable future for communities is harder. Traditionalists try to keep things as they are, denuding wildernesses, using poisons or allowing pets to kill. Rules help change human habits. For example, to phase out toxic chemicals and avoid disaster, society needs clear regulations to disclose lobbying. See: <https://corporateeurope.org/sites/default/files/2026-02/The%20Pollution%20Playbook%20How%20Industry%20Blocks%20Regulation%20of%20Toxic%20Chemicals.pdf> It is not only an Australian problem. Europe just subsidised animal agriculture



'Relax: We can light our path to eco-friendly only one step at a time.' Drawing by the author

100 x more than plants. Lawmakers try to protect existing incomes, but also meet 2050 aims for climate change. The issue is complex, but comes down to consumer demand: what you use. Happily, the new 'Eco-Social Contracts for Sustainable and Just Futures' show how to react to climate change, biocapacity loss, widening inequality, democratic illegitimacy and the loss of public trust. Approving the new eco-social contract is the non-violent revolution of our era: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-99109-7> by caring for people and nature. Approval wakens locally in progressive heads in art, festival, ecovillage and university. Meanwhile, anyone can visit the inner cosmos guided by light, sound, meditation, spirits, breathing, dreams, hopes, dance, yoga, brainwaves, faiths, guides or chemicals. Exploring realities, it is vital not to overestimate one's importance. There are billions of humans, trillions of planets, zillions of animals. The best advice for living has been around for millennia – the golden rule: “Treat others (all of nature) like you treat yourself.” See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Rule While each being differs and has its own character, assuming humans are not part of nature wrecks environments and harms other living things with excess population growth. In the past – fewer people, endless wilderness – we could do this. Natural regeneration replaced what we took away, but population explosions teach new values. Lower elbowroom. Key factor: lacking personal values to guardrail

overconsumption affects flora, fauna, climate, self and community: together we drive climate change. Change is upon us. Easing climate and handling the tree of life depend on phasing out polluting fossil fuels, fixing today's broken food system and investing in circular economy. See: <https://content.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/m/27265af6811ef30/original/Towards-the-circular-economy-Vol-1.pdf> Freedom is not anarchy, but knowingly adhering to sustainable values. Before humans can look after planet or solar system, we have to manage ourselves, environments and Earth durably. We cannot predict our own future – but collectively, as a community we must become eco-friendly. Are you helping?

Bad moods are good for you



by Magenta Appel -Pye

if you can afford it, and anti-depressants. The unrelenting pursuit of happiness may often be self-defeating. Despite the near-universal cult of happiness and unprecedented material wealth, happiness and life satisfaction in Western societies have not improved for decades. By extolling happiness and denying the virtues of sadness, we set an unachievable goal and may cause more disappointment and even depression. Being in a good mood, despite some advantages, is not universally desirable.

Sadness helps creativity
Sadness can enhance empathy, compassion, connectedness and can be a creative artistic trigger. Many of the greatest achievements of the human spirit deal with evoking, rehearsing and even cultivating negative feelings. Greek tragedies exposed audiences to, and trained them to accept and deal with, the inevitable misfortune of human life. Artists such as Beethoven and Chopin explore the landscape of sadness, a theme long recognised as instructive and valuable.

Benefits of bad moods
There is growing evidence that negative moods, like sadness, have psychological benefits such as: being more attentive and focused in difficult situations, having better memory and making more accurate judgements. Studies have found bad moods reduced gullibility and increased scepticism when evaluating urban myths and conspiracy theories, and improved the ability to detect deception more accurately, according to Joseph Paul Forgas, Scientia Professor of Psychology, UNSW. People in bad moods had more motivation to complete a difficult mental task because they tried harder and persevered more. Negative moods can improve the quality and effectiveness of persuasive messages and social influence strategies. And people in a mild bad mood paid greater attention to social expectations and norms, and they treated others less selfishly and more fairly.

Don't worry, be sad!
So, don't worry if you are feeling irritable, fractious or melancholy. Accept it as a normal part of the human experience and find a way to use it to your advantage. These days we handle them by insurance,

Empire of the mind

View from the loo
by Stuart McConville



On 17th March, many Irish celebrated St Patrick's Day with typical Irish flair and copious amounts of Guinness. Of course, it was St Colmcille who brought Christianity to Ireland, not St Patrick. There are no snakes either. There is no fossil record of snakes ever being in Ireland. The snakes were a metaphor for Druids, practitioners of the old ways, dating back to the followers of the Goddess Danu, the Fir Bolg and Tuatha De Danaan. St Patrick was very good at killing them and therefore worthy of sainthood, according to the Roman Catholic Church. Even the Gaels, a race coming from the east that eventually conquered the original Irish with steel weapons (at the end of the Bronze Age), were advised by the Druids of the Emerald Isle. The Gaels were wise enough to realise that although their weaponry was far superior, their opponents had superior spiritual and governance systems. Thus they adapted to those of their foes, to ensure their victory was sustainable over time. Imagine how much better off we may have been if our forebears had the wisdom to learn and study indigenous law and spirituality and incorporate it into our ways. Indigenous legal systems did work quite well, and their spiritual systems developed over the millennia were /are unequalled. Unfortunately, there would have been no chance of destroying the country in hell-bent colonial

exploitation, so that idea just never had a chance. The opportunity to trade these concepts for our advanced physical world would have made for better bedfellows in the long run. It does seem to be true that the races from the European continent have had the edge in colonial aspiration and development of technology, while those races from warmer more abundant climes have had more time to co-operate and evolve spiritually. It makes sense if you imagine the lost opportunity cost of not developing technology in a climate where one harsh winter could see out half your tribe. The emphasis was on survival, both from climate and enemy alike. Of course the world has changed and globalisation has occurred through trade and travel, homogenising ideas, aspiration and finance, but not people. People have largely stayed in the countries of their ancestors, not withstanding a bit of immigration and emigration around the edges. The result is that the cultural flow from one social well to another has not been balanced because any flow has been from poor countries with lower standards of living but better social systems to wealthier countries where aspiration is matched with outcomes. Languages remain a barrier, cultural norms are contravened and friction can often be the outcome, at least in the first generation or two. To many average Aussies, this deal is one way and not to their advantage. However, if we integrate the cultural and social systems of our poorer but often wiser immigrants, we win big time, just like the Gaels in Ireland did, well until St Patrick came along anyway. So if you are sliding to the right on immigration, just remember the lessons of history. Take Iran for example. Some have called Iran the Empire of the Mind, because no matter who conquered them, the Persians were always able to provide the best systems for governance and administration and thereby slowly replace their conquerors, while absorbing the best cultural and social practices on offer in the process. Let's make the most of our immigrants in Australia and learn from them, so that they feel like they're giving back for the great opportunities our country can offer.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Waste Water and Composting Toilets. Phone 0427-897-496, Email: poohsolutions@gmail.com Web: www.poohsolutions.com

ASTRO FORECASTS



by Tina Mews
What's happening
in the heavens?

Aries

With Mars in Aries from April 10 to May 19 your energy level could easily go on overdrive. Have a plan and think before you leap. Acknowledge the contribution of others as you may need their support in the longer term. The New Moon in Aries on April 17 demands some self-discipline which provides you with the ability to slowly but surely reach your goals.

Taurus

With Uranus leaving your sun sign for good on April 26, an eight-year cycle is ending. What has changed for you since 2018? Besides the many disruptions and challenges to your stability, what are the new insights you have gained? What has fallen away and provided you with more freedom? Venus, your ruler is in Taurus until April 24, indicating a focus on investing in yourself with fresh creative energy.

Gemini

The focus of energy is on your social networks, friends and community groups. sWhat is your shared vision? What is practical and fair and how can you move forward together? Uranus enters your sun sign on April 26, bringing flashes of insights, innovation but also disruptions and chaos to your usual channels of thinking and communication for the years to come.

Cancer

Your need to grow and advance your cause in a safe way is challenged by a demand of you stepping forward and taking on a leadership role. You are asked by the cosmos to take courageous steps into the future, show your face and actively work on fulfilling your dreams. It is time to acknowledge your power and be bold.

Leo

With so many planets in fire signs during this month, the danger is pushing too hard and subsequently being disappointed if things don't work out the way you envisaged it. Exercise patience and channel your surplus energy into projects that benefit the community as well as yourself. See yourself as being on a heroic journey guided by a vision that is larger than yourself.

Virgo

This is a time of transformative change when things that have broken apart need to be put together again in a completely new order. This is why you may feel called to invest your energy in joint projects with shared values to make the world a better place. The stabilising energies of Venus in Taurus (until April 24) are helpful with remaining grounded and positive.

April

April is another intense month signified by a massive line-up of planets in Aries, a cardinal fire sign that drives on competition and impulse rather than strategic planning. We can expect an atmosphere charged with impatience and irritability but also with the promise of new opportunities that push us further into the unknown. On February 20, Saturn and Neptune perfected their conjunction at the zero-degree Aries point, a very potent world degree, meaning that their alignment corresponded with events that affect everyone. Even though the Saturn-Neptune conjunction occurs once every 36 years, it hasn't happened at zero-degree Aries in recorded history. This so-called 'Aries vortex' has fueled both fiery action but also the opportunity for fresh beginnings as the old-world order has finally collapsed under its own outdated structures. By the end of this month, we witness another turning point when Uranus, planet of revolution, disruption and rapid innovation, makes its final entry into Gemini for a seven-year stay.

The Full Moon occurs on April 2 in Libra, opposing the Sun in Aries and highlighting themes of relationship, balance, and diplomacy. Libra seeks cooperation and values partnerships built on equality, while Aries represents independence, self-assertion, and courage. With Jupiter in Cancer forming a square to the Full Moon, the need for emotional security and lasting peace has to be once more negotiated. Rather than projecting fears, aversions, or disappointments onto others as the source of one's problems, this is an opportunity to address felt vulnerabilities and unresolved survival patterns.

On April 10, Mars enters Aries and remains until May 19. Mars is the ruler of Aries, boosting courage and motivation but also aggression and unreflective, self-centered action. The New Moon will have Sun, Moon, Mercury, Mars, Saturn, Neptune and Chiron all lined up in Aries! This brings intense focus on how we start something new, but also how we take risks, feel the need to defend ourselves, or express anger. The red planet will meet with Neptune on April 13 and Saturn on April 19, creating powerful momentum for wilful action that may not turn out the way we envisaged it. It may be best to take a breather and rest during these days. In the big game, events can escalate quickly, especially with leaders who act on impulse and without consideration of others or possible consequences.

On April 17, a very potent New Moon in Aries is closely conjunct Chiron, the wise and benevolent Centaur, healer and teacher who symbolises the bridging of body and soul challenging us to integrate what seems unfamiliar and unacceptable within ourselves. The passage of Chiron through Aries that started in 2018 is soon ending. (Chiron enters

Taurus from June 20 – September 18 and from April 2027 – July 2033.) One of the core themes that is inherent in the Aries archetype is the search for one's individual spiritual identity by battling an old system to initiate a new order. We are reminded that for the world to heal, the old order had to be broken down. Chiron in Aries at its best fights for an equal society and encourages others to stand up for themselves, their beliefs and their rights as human beings. A great example is Mohandas Gandhi who had Chiron in Aries opposite his Libra Sun. He was the leader of India's independence movement.

While Chiron has journeyed through Aries, Uranus, the planetary forcefield of revolution, has been in Taurus, also since 2018. Uranus enters Gemini on April 26 to remain until 2032/3. Uranus has had its first entry into Gemini during July – November 2025. On a symbolic level, the function of Uranus as the cosmic awakener and modern ruler of Aquarius is to liberate us from old conditioning. During the Uranus-in-Taurus years, we underwent a 're-evaluation of all values'. Financial systems have changed, we have witnessed several global supply chain emergencies, farmers revolts, a housing crisis plus a rapid degradation of our environment. People have changed their shopping habits by supporting local markets and co-ops. With Uranus at the last degree of Taurus until April 26, an anaretic degree symbolising the end of a cycle, we are made aware once more of our dependency on oil.

In Gemini, Uranus electrifies the mind, stirs the drive for intellectual freedom and a rebellious approach to communication and learning. Other areas affected are transport, air travel and space exploration. We can expect huge breakthroughs in these areas as they will go through a massive paradigm shift. On the other hand, we shall be more vigilant concerning the influence of big tech, AI and all hidden powers of mind control. The challenge is to keep one's critical thinking faculties alive by questioning every piece of information that we receive, may it be coming via a person, an authority or fed by any form of media. On a different note, the last Uranus-in-Gemini generation was born during 1941-1949. It was the main group who brought on the 60's revolutions attempting to make the world a better place with their social and cultural reforms; and they communicated their message on the cusp of the Age of Aquarius which is still in its birthing stage to this day.

Navigation by the Stars: Personal and/or relationship astrology; Life cycles and your year ahead transits: plans, directions, concerns for 2026-2027; In person or on-line consultations. Astrology at Lillifield Community Centre: 'A Change in Frequency: Uranus in Gemini & Chiron in Taurus' May 23, 10am-4pm. All welcome. For info and registration call 0457-903-957 or email: star-loom@hotmail.com Gift vouchers available.

Libra

The powerful emphasis of planetary energy in assertive and fiery Aries may feel at times quite overwhelming. Keeping balance as well as function as the balancer or mediator for others might be your task during this month. Remain calm, stay alert and allow yourself to question people's expectations. You may have to draw some boundaries to keep yourself well and in a positive frame of mind.

Scorpio

The planetary line-up in Aries may push you toward pioneering new avenues of emotional healing. The ancients believed that each illness or dis-ease has a spiritual cause. The New Moon on April 17 could encourage you to take a more proactive approach inspiring you in taking steps toward not only overcoming old wounds but also in delving deeper in understanding the message they contain.

Sagittarius

The line-up of planets in Aries inspires enthusiasm but also impulsive action pushing you to act on your vision and ideas with more urgency. However, try not to rush into things without clear direction or become overly idealistic about your goals. Stay grounded firmly in the present and what is achievable when pursuing new ventures or dreams.

Capricorn

The energetic emphasis is on home, family and domestic projects. The challenge is to further your visionary goals while also incorporating the opinion and guidance of others. This can be a period of personal reinvention after a time of dissolution, when you consciously redefine your sense of identity and explore new ways of being.

Aquarius

The line-up of planets in fiery and bold Aries inspires new ideas influencing the way you perceive, think and communicate with others. The emphasis is on projects in your direct environment. Then, the entry of Uranus in Gemini by the end of the month is lighting up your creativity and innovative capabilities for the years to come. Find a balance between thinking big and being applied.

Pisces

With the line-up of planets in Aries during this month your financial and self-worth sector is emphasised. What do you value most? You are undergoing a fundamental change of attitude toward your material possessions and what really matters to you. Through this, you may discover new ways to earn an income.



by Marilyn Devlin

April is Aries time. Named after Ares... the Greek god of war and courage. Mars the planetary ruler of Aries is often known for his association with battles and wars... aggression and fights. He's the warrior. Yet he also brings us courage to embrace challenge. He's our motivator, he grants us powers to protect and defend ourself.

I've been feeling surprisingly calm about current world events and the real impacts on us all. Considering possible ways to move through any likely 'disruptions'... in what we've taken for granted is our 'business as usual'

Prime Minister Albanese was quoted as saying something about "Getting back to normal". A similar thing we might recall being said during Covid. I clearly remember those special moments during Covid... when Nature shined her exquisite radiance... Wowing us all. Looking surreal in her extraordinary beauty and purity. I remember saying... "Why would we ever want to go back from this?" But alas.

There's no 'normal' to get back to. Behind the illusion (yes real, to live within) of matter and form... the alarms are blaring... CHANGE... or else. Mother Nature is patient... like the loving Mother and provider she is... but there's a line. When life is being impacted on such a scale (throughout all our systems)... time is up for big change.

The grand reaper arrives... not just when it's our time to leave here... but in any system, structure or events that are decayed and dying on such a scale to threaten the survival of everything.

History repeats this again and again... civilisations come and go.

But who knows what the outcome will be... we will know when we do. Will we try patching it up once again... willing it back to life? Or will it be too late?

Nature's law rules... universal law orchestrates it all. Directly connected to a power much greater than us. The Life Force itself.

Just as we are. But do we understand our place in the whole scheme of things. What is our role as a human on planet Earth... the same laws apply to all.

Will we allow the discomfort and inconvenience of the about face change that is needed... or will we try to patch it all together (again)... resisting the inevitable.

There is so much magnificence... so much beauty, so much love... so much kindness and care. Life is full of all of that. And we have all of that inside of us. Will we aim for that? Are we brave enough to allow the changing tide? Do we believe in the inner strength we carry? Do we understand we carry the wisdom of the ages. Do we remember what history teaches us?

Are we willing to be true stewards of our extraordinary Earth. Are we willing to be brave? Do what is needed to steer the ship around. We will see.

We live in big times. Historical times. It was a day or two before new year... I was down at the beach... walking... then playing in the waves. The huge swells had only just begun. The ocean roared... it looked and felt powerful. Many had never seen it that way before. Then I heard it... clearly, it spoke... loudly... "Reckoning". 2026 would be a year of "Reckoning".

With just three months of 2026 experienced... who knows what's next? I luv how Mars is our motivator, our ability to protect and defend our self. How he gives us courage to embrace challenge.

We've been softened by too much convenience... we need to strengthen our courage, and our ability to navigate change.

Nimbin Trivia Time

by Eclectus



Questions

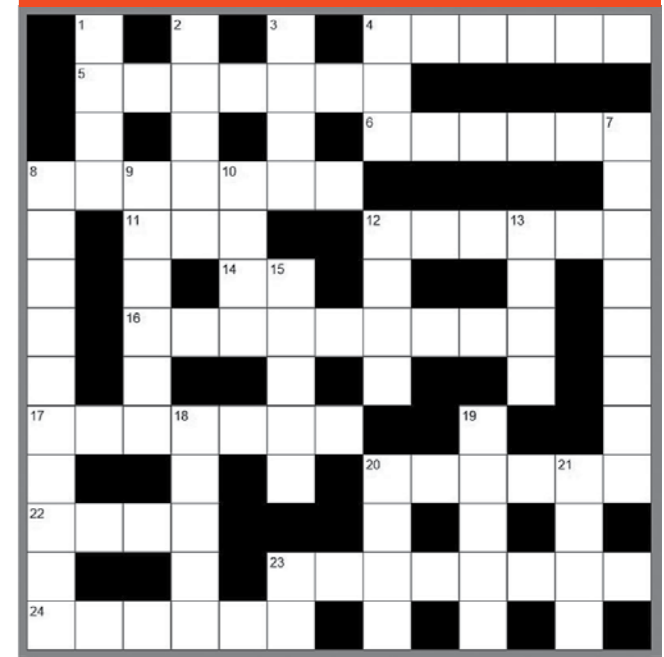
- Who sang "You can get anything you want at Alice's Restaurant, excepting Alice"? Take a bonus point if you can name the singer's famous father. Image courtesy www.194bar.com.au
- Where is the Furies Rivulet: Athens, Venice or Nimbin?
- Is there any wildlife on the embankment of Furies Rivulet?
- Can the wildlife swim?
- Do the Furies have a credo?
- We all have a spleen, but why? What does the spleen do? And where is it? Take a point for each.
- Berkshire, Large White and Vietnamese Pot-Bellied are all types of what?
- True or false? A Martian year is nearly twice as long as an Earth year.
- What is Gorilla Glass?
- Squash was once a very popular sport in Australia with around 1,000,000 players in the early 1990s. Even Nimbin had a squash court, on Shipway Road. 25 years later there were only about 100,000 squash players and there were a lot of empty squash courts. Many were redeveloped or repurposed. Nimbin's became a bus garage. However, over 25 years ago, a couple of regional New South Wales towns developed a popular novel sporting use for the courts, outstripping squash usage and remaining a well-kept secret until hitting the national news last month. For a point each, what is the game called and where is it played?

- ### Answers
1. Alice's Restaurant, excepting Alice's famous father was Don McLean.
 2. The Furies Rivulet is in Athens, Greece.
 3. No, there are no wild animals on the embankment of Furies Rivulet.
 4. Yes, the Furies Rivulet has a well-kept secret until hitting the national news last month. For a point each, what is the game called and where is it played? The game is called Squash and it is played in Nimbin.
 5. Yes, the Furies Rivulet has a well-kept secret until hitting the national news last month. For a point each, what is the game called and where is it played? The game is called Squash and it is played in Nimbin.
 6. We all have a spleen, but why? What does the spleen do? And where is it? Take a point for each. The spleen is an organ in the human body that is part of the lymphatic system. It is located in the upper left side of the abdomen, between the stomach and the lungs. It is about the size of a fist and it is made up of red and white pulp. The spleen filters out old red blood cells and bacteria from the blood. It also stores a reserve of blood in case of major blood loss. It is also part of the immune system where phagocytes consume harmful bacteria and dead or dying cells.
 7. Berkshire, Large White and Vietnamese Pot-Bellied are all types of pig.
 8. True. A Martian Year is about 687 Earth days or 1.88 Earth years.
 9. Gorilla Glass is the scratch, crack and break resistant cover glass used in over 8 billion digital devices today. It was developed by Corning Inc at the behest of Steve Jobs as the first iPhone was approaching release in 2007. Within six months they developed a high, thin cover glass with superior strength through immersion of the sheet glass in a potassium-salt ion-exchange bath at high temperature. This innovation was built on Company research and development stretching back to 1962.
 10. Squash was once a very popular sport in Australia with around 1,000,000 players in the early 1990s. Even Nimbin had a squash court, on Shipway Road. 25 years later there were only about 100,000 squash players and there were a lot of empty squash courts. Many were redeveloped or repurposed. Nimbin's became a bus garage. However, over 25 years ago, a couple of regional New South Wales towns developed a popular novel sporting use for the courts, outstripping squash usage and remaining a well-kept secret until hitting the national news last month. For a point each, what is the game called and where is it played? The game is called Squash and it is played in Nimbin.

Nimbin Crossword

2026-04

by 5ync



Across

- Early settler bread
- Texture of a good cheddar or fudge?
- Civil engineer, famous for his erection in Paris
- Used to make 8 down rise
- Hardy whiskey grain
- Zero friction train tracks
- Because
- Cultured?
- Porridge base
- Native owl
- Work team? Criminals
- Rose
- Increased rapidly

Down

- Animal faeces
- Identifies as a different animal?
- Capable
- Colouring
- Rise up?
- Breads
- PLO leader
- Rip apart? Shed in sadness
- Coin? Herb
- Deposit? Stone
- Slander? Spread
- Nation under Satan (book of revelations)
- Pay out
- Spice from the nutmeg tree
- Joint

Solution: Page 34

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across the Rainbow Region

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- Open Mic, Wednesday 8th April, 6.30pm
- Social bowls, every Sunday from 9am

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