Christopher Macklin 
Ministries

Christopher Macklin was born in Chester, England. He is a powerful 13th Dimensional, Melchizedek channeling medium and healer, utilizing Divine Healing techniques, cultivated through Divine knowledge from God and the spirit world for over 30 years.

Our office is located in
Branson, MO ~
180 Claremont Dr
Branson MO 65616
(417)334-6200

Christopher works on a global basis offering his techniques and his teachings
Contact Christopher for a remote Divine Healing session via Skype.
http://www.christophermacklinministries.com
Still-Mind Conscious Spirit®  (www.still-mind.com)

It’s time to let the world know that you are part of the new consciousness emerging around the world...

...for a better world.

---

Make 2015 Your Year of Self Discovery!

Get your very own personalized ASTROLOGICAL FORECAST

Only $25 for 3-months / $35 for 6-months / $50 for 1-year

The Future Forecast Transit Report is a chronological overview and analysis of the major transits and planetary movements affecting your natal horoscope over a specified period of time, providing timely hints and suggestions about the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead... for YOU. (1 Year is approximately 60-80 pages)

(Please indicate the month your Transits are to begin)

Other Helpful Astrology Reports

Compatability Report - A detailed comparison of the Natal Horoscopes of two people - $95

Natal Horoscope Report - Written in plain English without astrological jargon, your Natal Horoscope Report will provide helpful insights into your innate strengths and weaknesses, your potential for worldly success, relationship possibilities, health issues to pay attention to, together with your deepest personal needs - $35

To Order:

Send Name, Date, Time & Place of Birth for each person with payment and return address to:

Tim Gunns  ·  110 Hilltop Drive  ·  Waynesville  ·  NC 28786  ·  tgearthstar@aol.com  ·  828-452-9378

Payments may be made via Paypal to tgearthstar@aol.com, or by check or Money Order
ON THE COVER
16 Are You Living With Intention?  
by Malika Chopra

22 Conscious Evolution  
The Great Awakening  
by Barbara Marx Hubbard

40 Natural Methods to Control Cholesterol  
by Susan Wiggins

49 Becoming Aware  
by Lisa Garr

58 Opening to Meditation  
by Diane Lang

FEATURES
12 Down To Earth Astrology  
by Tim Gunns

28 Cannabis for the Treatment of Epilepsy, and More  
by Dr. Joseph Mercola,

33 Between Now and When  
Calcutta  
by Richard House, M.D.

46 Feeling Great  
by Dadi Janki, Peter Vegso, and Kelly Johnson

52 Alzheimer’s as a Way of Living  
More Than One Life Experience Within a Lifetime  
by Megan Carnarius, RN, NHA, LMT,

56 Mind Wars  
Who Owns Your Mind?  
by Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman

64 Animal Messengers  
Your Inner and Outer World  
by Regula Meyer

DEPARTMENTS
5 Up Front
18 Book Reviews

Cover Art
The Music of Silence
by Jean-Paul Avisse

For further information, contact  
Prestige Art Galleries,  
3909 W. Howard, Skokie, IL 60076. (874) 679-2555,  
www.prestigeartskokie.com

Jean-Paul Avisse

For a free color brochure, please send a S.A.S.E.
Tesla Announces The Release Of A Battery That Can Power Your Home!

The wait is over! On April 30th, at its design studio in Hawthorne, California, Tesla Motors Inc. unveiled its new product line, and it’s not a car but a home battery and utility-scale battery.

We had heard rumors of this new battery back in February when Elon Musk discussed it during an earnings call, but no additional details were made available at that time. How much will they cost? What hardware will be used and supported? Will these build upon the concepts in existing home batteries? Are they rechargeable? If not are they recyclable?

Tesla announced last September its plans to build a new Gigafactory in Reno, Nevada, sixty-two million dollars has been spent so far. When all is said and done an estimated $5 billion will be spent on this project. Tesla plans to begin building lithium-ion batteries at this facility in 2017. The lithium-ion battery technology is being positioned to be the front runner in emerging energy storage that also provides supplementary electricity. Could this technology ultimately threaten our traditional electric grid? These new batteries when combined with the rapidly expanding residential solar market present exciting new opportunity’s for off the grid living.

Tesla has teamed up with SolarCity, a company chaired by Musk and ran by his cousin Lyndon Rive. Founded in 2006, the company has over 160,000 customers and controls almost 40% of the residential market. SolarCity installs panels for both commercial and residential applications and leases them for less than what you pay on your energy bill, and they sell surplus energy back to local utility’s. This model has proven to be extremely successful for SolarCity. They have begun installing Tesla batteries mostly in commercial buildings at this time. The batteries allow them to store excess energy for use during peak hours. This has shown to shave off 20-30 percent of energy bills. Solar City is currently running a pilot program with around 500 homes in California. The project is using 10-kilowatt-hour battery packs that supply homes with about two days of power in the event of an outage.

Norway to Become First Country to Switch Off FM Radio in 2017

In what will likely be the opening move in a global transition to digital radio, Norway has announced it will shut down its FM band. Norway will start turning off FM radio on Jan. 11, 2017, and plans to stop transmission of the last FM signal to the country’s northernmost regions by Dec. 13 of that year.

The announcement, made by their Ministry of Culture, makes Norway the first country to do away entirely with FM radio. The move is intended to save money and allow a full transition to digital radio, which Norway argues will give listeners “access to more diverse and pluralistic radio content and enjoy better sound quality and new functionality.”

The Norwegian government said the cost of transmitting national radio channels through the FM network is eight times higher than via the Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) system, the standard digital radio technology used across Europe. By shutting off FM, Norway’s national radio channels will save more than $25 million a year, according to official figures “releasing funds for investment in radio content,” argued Minister of Culture Thorhild Widvey.

“This is an important day for everyone who loves radio,” said Thor Gjermund Eriksen, head of public broadcasting network NRK, in a statement. “The minister’s decision allows us to concentrate our resources even more upon what is most important, namely to create high-quality and diverse radio content to our listeners.”

The DAB system in Norway already offers 22 national channels, compared to just five on the FM band, and has the capacity for 20 more.

Norway has long been a digital radio pioneer. NRK launched the world’s first DAB channel on June 1, 1995. Other Scandinavian countries as well as the U.K. are thought to be considering an FM switch-off by 2022. The digital rollout in other European countries has been slower, with old FM radio still proving more popular in several territories.

—TrueActivist.com

—Hollywood Reporter
Learn Tai Chi or Qigong

~ Beginners-only to advanced courses
~ Weekend workshops & seven week courses
~ Free introductory sample classes
~ B.K. Frantzis certified teachers
~ Anyone can learn

Brookline Tai Chi
1615 Beacon Street  Brookline, MA

Call 617-277-2975 for a free brochure or see www.BrooklineTaiChi.com
Nature’s Path Purchases Its Own Clean, GMO-Free Organic Farms

O

ne of North America’s cleanest and most sustainable food brands has taken a giant leap forward in securing the future of organic food production. Cereal company Nature’s Path Organic has reportedly purchased 2,800 acres of farmland in Montana to keep up with growing consumer demand for foods that are free of chemical pesticides, genetically-modified organisms (GMOs), preservatives, antibiotics and other toxins.

Frustrated by a lack of steady supply for organic cereal grains, Nature’s Path decided to take matters into its own hands by capturing a key element of the supply chain: the farms where grains are grown. The company reportedly spent more than $2 million to purchase the land in Montana, which it will eventually use to grow chemical-free organic wheat, oats, and other cereal ingredients to keep up with demand.

Nature’s Path says constant supply constraints have been one of the biggest problems hampering its growth as a company over the past decade, during which time consumer demand for organic food has skyrocketed. Efforts to ramp up organic food output from its existing suppliers weren’t enough, says the company, so it had to think outside the box and take an unconventional approach that some industry experts feel is likely to become more common within the organic food industry.

“We just want to secure our own future,” stated Nature’s Path founder Arran Stephens about the company’s somewhat unusual purchase decision.

Lack of supply is becoming increasingly common within the organic food industry as companies strive to provide more organic food to consumers while some farmers are still hesitant to grow it. Organic food is unsubsidized by the government, which means it tends to cost more to produce, and ensuring a payoff from an organic investment is a bit more tricky compared to simply growing conventional crops.

Converting conventional cropland to organic also takes time—anywhere from one to three years, or even longer—during which time farmers are required to grow their crops using organic methods but can only sell them for conventional prices. This can be a difficult pill to swallow, which is why companies like Nature’s Path, Chipotle, Hain Celestial, Pacific Foods and others are opting instead to just grow their own.

“You can have great brands and great products, but if you don’t have supply of [agricultural] products, you’re going to be in trouble,” says Irwin Simon, chief executive of the publicly traded Hain Celestial Group Inc., which owns organic and natural food brands such as Earth’s Best and Health Valley.

As far as Nature’s Path is concerned, the company plans to invest $2 million annually to purchase increasingly more conventional cropland on which to grow its own organic crops. The company says it will contract with farmers to manage the land, taking one third of the crop at no cost and buying the rest at market price.

“From producing the first USDA certified organic cereals, to buying up farmland in order to convert it to organic, to supporting outreach to organic farmers, to installing an organic garden at our corporate headquarters in Richmond BC, Arran has worked to keep organic advocacy at the forefront of our company’s mission,” reads the Nature’s Path organic history page on its website. —Natural News

Police in the United Arab Emirates are preparing to adopt a strange new partner. The city of Dubai has announced that they will be introducing a fleet of automated security guards in 2017, making them the first city in the world to use robotic police officers.

Unlike the fearsome machines that have been frequently portrayed in movies like Robocop, these bots won’t be taking on an aggressive role (at least, not immediately).

The robots will be patrolling crowded public areas, providing surveillance and acting as information terminals for tourists. The man in charge of Dubai’s “smart” unit, Colonel Khalid Nasser Alrazooqi, suggested that the robots will eventually work without any human input, and believes they will be fully implemented by the end of the decade.

This way we can provide better services without hiring more people.

However, the city may be establishing a dangerous precedent. The US Military’s UAV program was created with the intention of building surveillance aircraft, but quickly turned towards remote piloted war machines with offensive capabilities.

It’s only a matter of time before these “robocops” are programmed and equipped for urban pacification.

—Activist Post
Five Days Without Media Devices Improves Children’s Ability To Read Emotions

Children’s social skills have been declining. A recent study reports that by removing digital media, children and youth could develop positive interpersonal skills.

UCLA scientists found that sixth graders who went without using a smartphone, television or other digital screen for five days improved their ability to read human emotions.

“Many people are looking at the benefits of digital media in education, and not many are looking at the costs,” said Patricia Greenfield, a distinguished professor of psychology in the UCLA College and senior author of the study. “Decreased sensitivity to emotional cues—losing the ability to understand the emotions of other people—is one of the costs. The displacement of in-person social interaction by screen interaction seems to be reducing social skills.”

The psychologists studied two sets of sixth-graders from Southern California public school systems. Fifty-one of the participants lived together for five days at a nature and science camp and fifty-four remained at home and attended the camp after the study was conducted.

The camp restricts use of all electronic devices. At the beginning of the study, both groups were evaluated for their ability to recognize human emotions in videos and photographs. The students were shown 48 pictures of faces that were happy, sad, angry or scared and asked to identify the emotions. They also watched videos of actors interacting with each other and were asked to describe the characters emotions.

The children who had been in the camp significantly improved their abilities to recognize emotion after five days without media devices. The children were able to distinguish nonverbal cues, whereas before their five day restriction they did not recognize these cues.

The study reported that you can not learn nonverbal cues from a media device and it is essential that face-to-face communication occur in order for children to learn these skills. Lead researcher, Yalda Uhls, reports, “If you’re not practicing face-to-face communication, you could be losing important social skills.”

The students that participated in the study reported that they text, watch television and play video games an average of 4.5 hours per typical school day. Surveys conducted report that the national average is actually higher. The director of the UCLA Children’s Digital Media Center reported that the results are significant considering that the occurred only after five days without media devices.

Removing digital media devices and encouraging more face-to-face interaction will allow children to learn to read nonverbal cues and increase social development. The study is hoping to encourage parents and families to have device free time in order to help children reach appropriate social development milestones.

The Raw Food World

The oldest stone tools have been discovered in Kenya, dating back 3.3 million years, and have been used by early humans. These tools are proving to be solid evidence that our earliest ancestors used sharp tools even in such primitive times, before the rise of Homo Sapiens, according to Science Times.

The stone is around 700,000 years older than some of the oldest tools which are currently known to mankind, according to IFL Science.

The oldest tools discovered till now were found in the city of Gona in Ethiopia and date back to almost 2.6 million years. These current stone tools, discovered in Kenya were found around Lake Turkana, have also led to the discovery of many fossils which tell a lot about early and primitive human life.

In 2010, scientists had discovered animal bones in Ethiopia that dated back 3.4 million years. These bones also had cut marks on them which led to the discovery that primitive human beings used to make marks using tools.

This recent discovery has led scientists to believe that the humans who had resided in that part of the world were more advanced than previously thought, since they knew how to make such tools with stones. —Yibada.com
Rich in antioxidant anthocyanins, exotic black rice is a whole-grain that competes with the antioxidant potency of fresh fruits. A study presented at the 240th National Meeting of the American Chemical Council confirmed that one spoonful of black rice bran—equivalent to 10 spoonfuls of cooked black rice—contains the same amount of antioxidants as a spoonful of fresh blueberries.

Researchers at Louisiana State University analyzed bran samples from black rice grown in the southern United States and found them replete with low-sugar, high fiber plant compounds that have been proven to prevent heart disease and fight cancer.

“Just a spoonful of black rice bran contains more [specific health-promoting antioxidants] than are found in a spoonful of blueberries, but with less sugar and more fiber and vitamin E antioxidants,” said Zhimin Xu, Associate Professor at the Department of Food Science at Louisiana State University Agricultural Center.

Black rice was revered in ancient China as the most rare, nutritious and tasty of all rice. In fact, the Chinese referred to it as “forbidden rice” only to be eaten by nobility. Unfortunately, it fell out of favor through the centuries, and is now used in Asia primarily as food decoration and as a component of noodles, sushi and desserts. It’s still a complete rarity in the West, although its new status as a super food that can fight cancer and prevent heart disease may bring it out of hiding and back into favor.

Like many other super foods—including blueberries, acai and carrots—black rice is loaded with anthocyanins, the antioxidants that give these foods their intense colors.

Anthocyanin antioxidants deliver multiple powerful health benefits, such as:
- Eliminating harmful free radical molecules
- Protecting arteries from plaque buildup
- Protecting against DNA damage that causes cancer

The darker the rice the better. White rice has been stripped of the healthful anthocyanin-rich bran that makes black rice so nutritious. The bran of brown rice has been shown to contain higher concentrations of gamma-oryzanol antioxidants that lower LDL “bad” cholesterol and help prevent heart disease. Black rice has all this and much more!

Because the anthocyanins in black rice are water soluble, they can reach areas of the body that fat-soluble antioxidants cannot, which is why numerous studies have linked diets high in these antioxidants to lower risks of heart disease and cancer, as well as a host of other health benefits.

Be inspired to get creative with implementing this purple-hued super food into your diet. It has an intense, nutty flavor that unlocks a hint of fruit as you chew. If the taste is a bit too earthy, then blend the rice kernels into a powder and sprinkle on fish, meat, experts advise that when purchasing black rice, you should look for “whole black rice” at the top of the ingredient list.

---

**Pine Bark Extract (Pycnogenol) Puts Aspirin To Shame**

Given the dire state of affairs associated with pharmaceutical intervention for chronic pain issues, what can folks do who don’t want to kill themselves along with their pain? When it comes to aspirin alternatives, one promising contender is pycnogenol, a powerful antioxidant extracted from French maritime pine bark, backed by over 40 years of research. Amazingly, the research shows that it may have value for over eighty health conditions.

In 1999, a remarkable study published in the journal *Thrombotic Research* found that pycnogenol was superior (i.e. effective at a lower dosage) to aspirin at inhibiting smoking-induced clotting, without the significant (and potentially life-threatening) increase in bleeding time associated with aspirin use.

Pycnogenol, like so many other natural interventions, has a wide range of side benefits that may confer significant advantage when it comes to reducing cardiovascular disease risk. ---GreenMedInfo
What if conventional wisdom regarding our most fundamental energy requirements has been wrong all along and we can directly harness the energy of the Sun when we consume ‘plant blood’?

Plants are amazing, aren’t they? They have no need to roam about hunting other creatures for food, because they figured out a way to capture the energy of the Sun directly through these little light-harvesting molecules known as chlorophyll; a molecule, incidentally, which bears uncanny resemblance to human blood because it is structurally identical to hemoglobin, other than it has a magnesium atom at its core and not iron as in red blooded animals.

The energy autonomy of plants makes them, of course, relatively peaceful and low maintenance when compared to animal life, the latter of which is always busying itself with acquiring its next meal, sometimes through violent and sometimes through more passive means. In fact, so different are these two classes of creatures that the first, plants, are known as autotrophs, i.e. they produce their own food, and the animals are heterotrophs, i.e. they depend on other creatures for food.

While generally these two zoological classifications are considered non-overlapping, important exceptions have been acknowledged. For instance, photoheterotrophs—a sort of hybrid between the autotroph and heterotroph—can use light for energy, but cannot use carbon dioxide like plants do as their sole carbon source, i.e. they have to ‘eat’ other things. Some classical examples of photoheterotrophs include green and purple non-sulfur bacteria, heliobacteria, and here’s where it gets interesting, a special kind of aphid that borrowed genes from fungi to produce its own plant-like carotenoids which it uses to harness light energy to supplement its energy needs!

---

**EatByDate.com** is trying to educate people about true shelf life to weed through the confusing terms and prevent us from throwing out food that is still safe to consume.

The USDA, Cornell University and the Food Marketing Institute have created a new application to help consumers understand how different storing methods affect a product’s shelf life. This could help maximize the storage life of the foods and drinks we keep at home. The app includes a useful calendar and alarm feature designed to remind you when to consume certain items so you don’t forget to eat them before they expire.

The terms “Best Before Date”, “Best By” and “Best if Used By” should not be confused with “Expiration Date” or “Sell By Date”.

---

**Natural News**
**Natural Cures Once Ruled the Land In the US Before Big Pharma Took Over**

Slate just reported on this amazing map of ‘Herbal Cures’ from 1932 of the medicinal plants in common use among pharmacists and the public back then. The map itself states under the heading “The Service of Pharmacy”.

“It is important that the public does not lose sight of the fact that the professions of Pharmacy, Medicine, and Dentistry, each give an essential service, which must not be impaired or destroyed by commercial trends. The public and the professions will suffer equally if these services are allowed to deteriorate. In pharmacy the public should understand something of the breadth of knowledge required of the pharmacist. Few people realize the extent to which plants and minerals enter into the practice of pharmacy, and how vital they are to the maintenance of the public health. It has been stated that upwards of seventy percent of all medicines employed are plant products.”

Flash forward eighty years and we have a medical system which relies almost entirely on patented chemicals and/or biologicals that are far removed from anything resembling the ‘back yard farmacy’ of yesteryear. The FDA’s very definition of a drug now precludes the use of natural substances, and drug-based medicine has become a form of human sacrifice, on a scale that may exceed previous civilizations sacrifice of their population for ostensibly religious reasons. This map should be shared far and wide and hopefully will shed light on the massive, emergent database of natural substances (there are about 1700 indexed on our website alone) that can be used to treat a staggeringly wide range of health conditions (over 3,000 indexed on our site alone).

Note: Amazingly, you will find the much demonized Cannabis Sativa listed as a medicinal plant used on the Druggist’s map! Consider that in modern times this plant alone has been used to incarcerate hundreds of thousands of citizens simply for possessing, using and/or trading it as a commodity!

—Green Med TV

---

**Wi-Fi Is Killing Trees, Study Finds**

Trees placed closest to Wi-Fi radiation showed a “lead like” shine on leaves, as well as the death of leaves’ lower and upper epidermis, Dutch researchers say.

Enjoying reading the latest technology news and reviews online? Hope you’re pleased with yourself, because you may be killing a tree. Researchers from Wageningen University in the Netherlands have discovered the sad news that Wi-Fi makes trees sick.

The tree-loving folks of Dutch city Alphen aan den Rijn commissioned the study, whose results have not yet been published, after finding abnormalities on trees that couldn’t be explained by known viral or bacterial infections.

Over the last five years, the study found that all deciduous trees in the Western world are affected by radiation from mobile-phone networks and wireless LANs.

—CNET
Think before you act or speak your mind when the full moon culminates on June 2nd, in 12° Sagittarius, make sure your communications and intentions are fully understood, especially by you! Emotional or intellectual independence may become an issue.

When Venus enters Leo on June 5th (till July 18), affairs of the heart and creative activities receive a helpful boost, while dramatic self-expression increases—a boon for actors!

The red planet, Mars, makes a supportive sextile to Jupiter also on the 5th, fostering cooperation amongst allies, though it can also elicit aggressive tendencies.

A desire to expand one’s horizons could manifest when the sun sextiles Jupiter on the 8th. Plan a trip, review outstanding legal affairs. This positive alignment can provide a boost for educational studies and creative work, particularly when blended with intuition.

Action planet, Mars, sextiles Uranus on the 9th, a favorable auspices under which to initiate new activities or ventures—after Mercury resumes direct motion on the 11th, of course. Progressive career opportunities may present themselves, perhaps at a social gathering. However, be discerning. A good physical workout will help to reduce any stress that may develop.

The sun sextiles Uranus on June 10th, when flashes of inspired thought could reveal hidden goals or ambitions you didn’t realize you’d harbored. Seek creative ways to finance a project. Consider a new creative enterprise. Take a vacation or get-away break.

After 3-1/2 weeks in retrograde, Mercury stations Direct on the 11th in 05° Gemini, a cosmic signal that mental processes are beginning to accelerate and that logic and reason will become more reliable. Move ahead cautiously with plans, sign documents—after careful consideration. Avoid hasty decisions though, as an air of impulsiveness will prevail for a few days.

Neptune stations Retrograde on June 12th, at 09°49’ Pisces (till Nov 18), when unresolved issues, neglected feelings, and emotional “undercurrents”—subconscious rumbles—from the past may surface, to be reviewed and reevaluated for greater understanding.

Saturn, lord of karma, re-enters Scorpio on the 14th, bringing financial matters, both personal—in terms of one’s emotional dependency upon, need for, or attachment to money—and on the world stage, front and center for the next three months, before it finally moves back into Sagittarius on September 17th... Issues of intimacy, joint ownership of assets, and sex scandals of the rich and famous will crop up with greater frequency, and with severe repercussions. With Scorpio’s ruler, Pluto, currently in Saturn’s home sign of Capricorn, these two major cosmic players are again in mutual reception—each in the other’s home sign—a generally favorable situation which strengthens each planet’s influence and attributes.

June’s new moon arrives on the 16th, in 25°07’ Gemini, stimulating a desire and emphasizing a need to elevate communications to a new plateau. Take a progressive new tack in the way you interact with and relate to others, particularly at the personal level, but also in the way you relate and communicate in general. People will want to talk about what they feel, and how they feel. Moods could change like the wind.

The summer solstice occurs as the sun enters Cancer on the 21st, till July 22nd. The sun is now hovering above the equator on this, the longest day of the year, signaling to Mother Nature the seasonal transition from spring to summer in the Northern Hemisphere. There is now a shift in emphasis of the solar energies from the logic-oriented mental realm of Gemini into the more feeling, nurturing, growth-sustaining environment of Cancer.

A sudden fortunate opportunity could occur when Jupiter trines Uranus on the 22nd; at the very least, prospects should look brighter. Fresh input stimulates change, and future plans may require some adjustment. An innovative solution to a quandary could be found.

Guard against careless speech, and drivers, when Mercury squares Neptune on the 23rd. Be sure that you know where you’re going, as it will be easy to lose your way. Dreams could be interesting during this transit, though confusing. Avoid impulsive spending.

When Mars enters Cancer on the 24th (till Aug 8), activities can become more emotionally charged, so try not to vent on loved ones. It may help to practice objectivity. Emotional security can become linked with sexuality with the red planet in this sensitive, needy sign.

An unexpected social or financial opportunity could occur when Venus trines Uranus on June 28th. Artistic inspiration abounds. People need more space now.

Venus aligns in conjunction with Jupiter, on July 1st, in 22° Leo, when love, luck and optimism abound, while creative work, educational, philosophical or religious activities can be satisfying. Indeed, broaden your mind in any way that you can now. Enroll in higher education classes, or a course.
An uplifting trine between the sun and dreamy Neptune becomes precise also on July 1st, when clear, properly focused creative visualization techniques could produce rapid results. Take photographs, or begin filming for a movie—under this beguiling influence it may turn out to be spellbinding!

July’s full moon culminates later on the 1st, in 10° Capricorn, many may be awakening to a higher purpose or calling. Others may be close to realizing a long sought-after goal or objective. It may become necessary to set realistic boundaries regarding where work and career ends, and personal “down” time begins, creating space for reflection, assimilation, and future planning.

Sign contracts, conclude a deal; move forward with PR or advertising plans when Mercury sextiles Jupiter on the 3rd. Be open to new ideas and philosophies. Plan or take a trip.

Some creative financial adjustments may have to be made around the time the sun opposes Pluto on July 6th, when the breakup of a major financial institution or news of a significant cessation of funding could make the headlines. Be alert to attempts at intimidation, coercion or “power plays”. Intense encounters or events are possible.

Thoughts turn to domestic issues during Mercury’s transit through Cancer, from the 8th thru July 23rd, when the notion of relocating may cross the minds of those feeling unsettled. Be aware that unconscious desires could influence one’s decision-making process now.

The sun makes a jarring square to Uranus, planet of surprises, on July 12th, when sudden changes or disruptions in one’s daily routine could occur. Accept inevitable changes, but this is not the time to initiate change based solely upon a desire for greater personal freedom. One’s need for self-expression may have to yield to more pressing demands or constraints beyond your control. Don’t try to “buck the system” just now. Instead, cultivate patience.

Action planet Mars forms a potentially volatile opposition to Pluto on the 15th, when you’ll not want to bite off more than you can chew, or take too much for granted. Indeed, the wise will exercise caution in all activities. It would be helpful to examine material motives at this time. Desires are powerfully aroused, and the possibility exists for angry outbursts and accidents. Remain calm and in control of your actions for several days around this juncture.

July’s New Moon arrives on the 15th, in 24° Cancer, heightening emotional sensitivity. Nurture those around you, and trust your instincts regarding proposed new ventures or alliances. Resolve to jettison any remaining detrimental emotional attachments.

Be enterprising and seize the initiative when a mentally invigorating conjunction between Mercury and Mars becomes precise later on the 15th, in 5° Cancer. There’s no beating around the bush now, communications are direct and to the point. Make connections with progressive individuals and groups for your mutual benefit. Perceptions and mental acuity are also heightened now.

Mercury’s square to Uranus later on the 18th is often a harbinger of mechanical or systems failures so be sure to back-up important computer files beforehand, and take extra care while driving. It may be wise to postpone important decisions or signings for a few days, as mental processes might tend to be somewhat erratic. A great time to brainstorm, though!

Constructive progress can be made towards career goals when the sun trines Saturn on the 21st. Being both practical and creative achieves best results now. Advice from an authority figure could prove helpful.

When the sun enters its home sign of Leo on the 22nd (till Aug 23), it can boost one’s self-confidence, enhancing creative abilities, while encouraging one and all to reconnect with their inner child over the next thirty days. Make time to play—not only is it fun but it can relieve stress and pent up pressures too.

Following Mercury’s entry into Leo’s world of drama on the 23rd, communications can assume a more theatrical air. This four-week transit may provide a boost to sales, advertising or PR operations. It also favors creative mental work.

When the sun conjuncts Mercury later on the 23rd, in 01° Leo, get in touch with your thoughts and feelings about things that inspire you to be creative. Be alert to fleeting financial or educational opportunities. Reevaluate a current fiscal arrangement, and if necessary, renegotiate terms.

A potentially volatile square between Mars and Uranus occurs on the 25th, so exercise caution while traveling, as irritability or excessive agitation could lead to accidents, or heated arguments. Avoid acting on impulse, take the time to consider the consequences of your actions.

Venus makes a rare Retrograde station later on July 25th, in 01° Virgo (till Sept 6), for a six-week period in which a friend, lover or partner from the past may reappear. However, avoid making new partnership commitments, launching business ventures, or indulging in major purchases or investments until the planet of love and money resumes direct motion. Instead, evaluate existing relationships, financial priorities, and income sources. If appropriate, consider alternatives.

When Uranus stations Retrograde on the 26th (till Dec 25), in 20°3’ Aries, the sudden disruption of plans or affairs due to unexpected changes in conditions, circumstances or attitudes is possible, and for several days around this juncture. Expect shocks, surprises, and a lot of nervous energy. Aviation or technology-related events may be in the news. Review your ambitions or career objectives now.

Rely upon inner inspiration and guidance if considering new beginnings or a life-direction change when July’s full moon culminates on the 31st, in 07°56’ Aquarius. Issues of personal freedom and relationship expectations are likely topics for discussion now.

When Venus retrogrades back into Leo later on the 31st for a protracted ten-week transit, affairs of the heart and creative activities receive a helpful boost. This may also be a period of reassessment for such matters. Indeed, a friend, lover or partner from the past could reappear now. Dramatic self-expression increases—a boon for actors!

Following is a general overview of how the planetary trends for June/July, 2015 apply to each sun sign. If you know your rising sign (Ascendant), read that, too, for additional insights.
Down To Earth Astrology

**Aries** (March 20—April 19)

You’re keen to reach out and reconnect with friends and family in June, when communications and local travel can increase, as you seek to engage in more social activities, perhaps as a welcome distraction from the tedium of the work-a-day world. Come July, you’ll be more focused on domestic activities, which might entail renovations or remodeling, to make your home feel more like a sanctuary, in which you can escape the pressure and demands of everyday life. You may also be undergoing an emotional renaissance, of sorts, as residue from your past begins to fall away, leaving you feeling lighter and ready for more fun, joy, and laughter in your life.

**Taurus** (April 19—May 20)

Bringing your financial affairs under control will be a priority in June, when you seek ways to increase your cash flow. Keep a tight rein on your purse strings now, as it will be all too easy to spend money as quickly as it comes in. If possible, set more of your income aside for that proverbial rainy day. Indeed, your plans for the future may depend on it. In July, your mind is filled with bright new ideas for creative projects, some of which could be particularly innovative. A professional alliance or partnership is possible now, which might help to make at least one of your novel notions a reality.

**Gemini** (May 20—June 21)

While Mercury, your sign’s ruling planet, is retrograde in early June you may reconsider elements of a personal project, as new information or data comes to light. The same might apply to a professional alliance, from which you may feel you should earn greater credit, or receive a larger share of the proceeds from a venture. However, be sure to maintain a sense of proportion, keeping your best interests for the future in mind. In July, your energies will be more focused on the financial aspects of a professional endeavor, when you seek to increase your earnings through creative, even innovative, means. This process could prove to be cathartic in some way, from which a new goal or objective might emerge.

**Cancer** (June 21—July 22)

Take time to reflect on past accomplishments, before embarking on any new personal endeavors, as from this you may gain some perspective, from which to better gauge your potential and capabilities. Revisit your dreams and hopes for the future, and infuse them with the belief and certainty that anything is possible with focused intent, a good plan, and consistent application, and adequate financing, of course, to grease the wheels of progress. It is fortuitous then, that this forecast period could prove to be quite lucky for you, when financial increase is distinctly possible.

**Leo** (July 22—August 23)

Review your goals and strategies for the future in early June, when plans could change in light of new developments. A domestic situation could require more of your time and energies, causing you to adjust your schedule or priorities. Friends and colleagues may also vie for your time and attention. Indeed, you, and your services, could be much in demand, which, in turn, can bring a welcome sense of satisfaction. Your personal endeavors now will be blessed with good fortune, particularly if you blend innovation with tradition. It may be possible, in this way, to transform your employment prospects, or at least, the way that you feel about your job.

**Virgo** (August 23—September 23)

You may be feeling pressured by responsibilities or obligations in early June, but this will pass as you accomplish each task of your ‘to do’ list. Indeed, your efficiency and diligence will not go unnoticed by your employer or superiors, and subsequently, new doors could open for you in the near future. A new professional opportunity could come your way, for which you may need to make some adjustments to your schedule or routine. A creative project with friends or associates could also be in the works, which may bring about bold new plans for the future.

**Libra** (September 23—October 23)

You’re keen to expand your horizons in bold new ways, with perhaps a series of creative projects this summer. An alliance with innovative and progressive individuals could prove to be the catalyst for a new field of endeavor, one that would allow your innate talents and abilities free rein. This, in turn, will be a tonic for your self esteem,
which may have been under siege in recent years. You
are in the process of overcoming certain limitations,
or what you may have considered as such, from an
earlier phase of your life, and are now ready, willing,
and able to move on!

**Scorpio** (October 23—November 22)
You’ve put in a great deal of time and
energy to bring stability to your financial
affairs of late, and may now begin to see light at the
end of the proverbial tunnel. You now feel ready to
rise like the phoenix from the ashes of prior
incarnation that you’re keen to put behind you, as
you look now to the future with hope and optimism;
though you may have to pinch yourself to make
certain you’re not dreaming. This sense of liberation
can be emotionally cathartic, allowing your creative
ergies to flow more freely, into endeavors from
which you can prosper and thrive.

**Sagittarius** (November 21—December 21)
The times they are a changing, at least,
your perception of time is more acute.
That’s because Saturn (Chronos), the lord of time, is
currently crossing your solar ascendant, heading
back into Scorpio for a few months, allowing you to
take a serious look at your hopes and dreams for the
future—your ‘wish list’, if you will. The significant
others in your life come to the fore during June,
when you’re keen to spend more time with your
nearest and dearest, which in turn, brings you great
emotional satisfaction. Your values and priorities
have been changing, of late, and soon your worldly
aspirations will, too.

**Capricorn** (December 21—January 19)
Sometimes you wonder whether the work
that you do is actually worth the effort and
commitment you put into it. It’s healthy to do a little
soul searching now, as you might discover a new
vocational path in the process, and seriously
consider changing your objectives. Indeed, you may
feel that destiny is calling you to transform your
world in some way. However, be sure to run your
ideas by your nearest and dearest, as their feedback
or advice might provide the perspective you need to
ultimately make the right decision.

**Aquarius** (January 19—February 18)
Summer is the time of year when your
creativity perhaps flows more freely, and
this June appears to be no different. As your playful
side also comes to the fore now, you’ll probably seek ways to combine the two. Your grasp on
finances, however, appears tenuous, at best, so
you’d be wise to rein in your spending. In July
money matters show signs of improvement, when
modest gains are possible. A new work opportunity
could come your way now, something much more in
line with your natural skill set that you’ll be
overjoyed at your good fortune.

**Pisces** (February 18—March 20)
Domestic matters are much on your mind
in June, when activities on the home
front increase, which will require you to remain
focused and to stay on top of details. Your cash flow
may also increase now, relieving some of the
pressure you’ve been under, while allowing you to
make some much-needed improvements, easing
tensions, and lifting your mood. Your creative
inspiration returns now, flowing freely, now
unobstructed by prior concerns, and a new personal
project could quickly take flight, while, likewise,
your spirits begin to soar. Your health and well being
benefit from this new found sense of buoyancy,
making this a good time to get yourself in shape.

---

Tim Gunns is an astrological consultant,
conference coordinator and producer,
and formerly program director of the
Los Angeles Conscious Life Expo, and
the national Whole Life Expos.

Tim prepares personalized no-nonsense inter-
pretations of **Natal Horoscopes** ($40), **Future Forecast Transit Reports** ($75 for 1 full year), and **Relationship Compatibility Reports** ($45). Shipping is free. Send: Name (as you’d like it to appear on the chart), Date of Birth, Time (as close as possible), Place of Birth (city/country, etc.) for each person, and your return address, phone# and check to: Tim Gunns, c/o 110 Hilltop Drive, Waynesville NC 28786. 828-452-7885. Consultations by phone may also be scheduled. Payment can be made via Paypal to tgearthstar@aol.com  http://www.earthstarmag.com
Our minds have a powerful influence on our bodies—and our lives. So why not use our minds to improve our lives? Why not set an intention to become a more caring person, to attract love, or to contribute to the betterment of humanity?

What would you like to change? What parts of your life aren’t working? What’s missing? By considering these questions, you can uncover the seeds of your deepest longings. What small changes can you make to feel more rested, happier, more connected, more inspired?

Embracing small personal changes can be the first step toward creating greater change in the world, and humanity at large.

To my delight, I receive a response to one of my e-mails from a consultant to Eckhart Tolle TV. He tells me that Tolle will be in San Francisco for a speech, and while he won’t be taking private meetings, he has agreed to meet me because he is intrigued and excited by the concept of intent. When the day arrives, I’m nervous. He’s revered for his work in the realm of spirituality and transforming consciousness, and my father...
has told me he truly lives in the present moment and is connected to spirit at a deep level. I don’t want to look like a total flake.

To make things worse, I’m beset by the worst allergies I’ve had in years. I sneeze for three hours straight before our meeting, worrying the whole time about whether I should go through with the interview. My eyes are red and runny, my nose dripping, my throat cracking and swollen. I pick up the phone several times to call and cancel, then set it back down. I don’t want to miss the opportunity to talk to Tolle, so I take a deep breath and forge ahead. And when we sit down together, the sneezing stops.

As I ask Tolle my main questions—What is intention? How do you define it and bring intentions to life?—some church bells ring in the distance. Attuned to the present, as my father had promised, Tolle lights up and says the chimes take him back to his younger days in Europe. We spend a moment just listening, and something about the lovely sound, combined with his calm, welcoming presence, soothes me and puts me at ease.

“At its most basic, intention is a thought that arises in the mind and wants to manifest in the external world. On a cosmic scale, before something manifests, it is probably already there in the mind of God,” he says.

“In order to identify an intent, instead of asking yourself ….

What do I want?
A better question might be:
What does the universe want from me? or
What can I give the universe?

It’s easy to get caught up in desires that are driven by your ego, but asking those questions can help you focus on a purpose that is greater than yourself. That doesn’t mean the purpose has to be something world changing.

Many people believe that following their purpose means doing something grand. The truth is, greatness may be hidden in the everyday activities of work and parenting. If you think of intention as a desire that wants to manifest through you, you can become a vehicle for achieving ambitions that go beyond your own ego.


Malikka Chopra is the successful author of two previous gift books for parents, 100 Promises to My Baby and 100 Questions from My Child. She is a busy mom of two, a successful entrepreneur, and the founder and CEO of Intent.com, a successful social platform for people sharing their intents to lead a happier, healthier, and more meaningful life. Malikka grew up in Lincoln, Massachusetts, and graduated from Brown University and the Kellogg School of Management. For more information please visit: http://www.mallikachopra.com
Summer Reading

**Becoming Aware**

**How to Repattern Your Brain and Revitalize Your Life**

By Lisa Garr

Lisa Garr wants you to stop going through the motions in life. She wants you to become aware. Her mission on her internationally syndicated radio program, *The Aware Show*—and now in her first book—is to inspire positive growth in all areas of life and bring conscious conversations into everyone’s living room. Lisa’s own story is remarkable. Several years ago, she suffered a traumatic brain injury during a freak biking accident that rendered her unable to speak or rely on her short-term memory. She not only used cutting-edge EEG techniques to heal, but also set out to live a different life than the one she was leading in her pre-accident days. Lisa used this experience as a wake-up call and decided to transform in every way possible. Today, the woman who couldn’t even say a few words is a radio and Internet sensation with a massively growing audience and multimedia platform. Now she brings the lessons she has learned from countless interviews with inspirational, spiritual, and new-thought leaders to the pages of this book.


---

**Animal Messengers**

**An A-Z Guide to Signs and Omens in the Natural World**

By Regula Meyer

We each feel connections to animals in our own way. Some of us have pets. Others admire animals in the wild. Because the outer world often reflects our internal states and animals are highly sensitive to our energies, each encounter with an animal signals something about our inner world and innermost concerns. Providing sophisticated psychological insight into encounters with more than 150 animals, birds, reptiles, insects, and aquatic life, Regula Meyer explores the messages each animal provides for us on a personal level when we encounter them. With this animal-by-animal guide, you can discover the deep meaning behind your encounters with animals and the messages they bring as oracles of our souls.

Bear & Company. Paperback, $18.00.

---

**A Deeper Perspective on Alzheimer’s and other Dementias**

**Practical Tools with Spiritual Insights**

By Megan Carnarius

A compassionate, professional look at Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, offering invaluable practical insights into care as well as into the spiritual dimensions of the disease. Coming from a rich professional background in caring, Megan Carnarius clearly outlines the different stages of dementia and highlights many practical aspects of dementia care, suggesting accessible tools for family and professionals alike. She also addresses the more subtle, spiritual dimensions of this illness with much compassion and understanding, offering new insights into areas hitherto not explored.


---

**Original Thinking**

**A Radical ReVisioning of Time, Humanity, and Nature**

By Glenn Aparicio Parry

In *Original Thinking*, Glenn Aparicio Parry delves into the evolution of Western thought to recover the living roots of wisdom that can correct the imbalances in our modern worldview. Inspired by groundbreaking dialogues that the author organized between Native American elders and leading-edge Western scientists to explore the underlying principles of the cosmos, this book offers a radical revisioning of how we think. Asking questions such as, Is it possible to come up with an original thought? What does it mean to be human?, and How has our thinking created our world today? Most of us have traveled far from our ancestral lands, and in so doing, lost connection with place, the origin of our consciousness. Parry shows us how to create the tapestry of truly original thinking and to restore thought as a blessing, as a whole and complete transmission from Spirit.


---

**Letting Go Again**

**A Birth Mother’s Take of Adoption, Reunion, Separation, and Growth**

By Kimberly Smythe

*Letting Go Again* is one birth mother’s courageous and compassionate account of giving up her baby daughter for adoption, and their troubled relationship once they are reunited almost two decades later. At times uncomfortable, at times poignant, this book is a searing account of one woman’s experience with adoption, reunion, separation and growth. It raises important questions about motherhood, the effects of adoption, and our definition of family. In so doing it also challenges our perceptions about relationships, acceptance, surrender, and the true nature of love that finds the strength to let go… again.


---

**Between Now and When**

**How My Death Made My Life Worth Living**

By Richard House, M.D.

The author first experienced the oneness of existence at age seven. As a teen, he heard a mystical voice that foretold his death at age 33, a prophecy that left him on death’s doorstep at exactly that age. His surrender complete, he was propelled into the fourth dimension, where his body was miraculously healed. Thus began a redemptive and transformational journey of discovery, as Dr. House was led by the hand and heart on a magical journey around the world—Hawaii, Fiji, Australia, India, London, and, eventually, New York City. Dr. House describes the wonders he encountered along the way as his expanding consciousness revealed the metaphysical underpinnings of the visible world and why we are in it.

The Power of Angel Medicine
Energetic Exercises and Techniques to Activate Divine Healing
By Joanne Brocas

Angels are expert healers and are more than willing to assist us with our challenges and complaints—all we need to do is ask them for their help! When we reach out to a higher power for spiritual assistance, it is the angels who are sent to bless us, protect us, guide us, heal us, and light our way. The Power of Angel Medicine introduces you to many of these magnificent beings, so that you can learn about the divine powers and special attributes that can help you heal. You will discover powerful exercises that will instantly go to work within your spiritual and energetic anatomy to effect positive changes and help you align with divine truth and love, the greatest sources of power for healing.


10 Habits of Truly Optimistic People
Power Your Life with the Positive
By David Mezzapelle

Business leader David Mezzapelle, author of the award-winning bestseller Contagious Optimism, is on a mission to encourage people to power their lives with the positive. In his guide to positive thinking, you can learn the habits and mindsets of Jim Cathcart, Susyn Reeve, Harold Payne and dozens of other resourceful folks to live a life filled with joy and success. Each chapter describes attainable methods for overcoming obstacles, looking forward instead of backward, and learning from missteps without being thrown off course. The excellent advice and inspiring stories will help you become an unstoppable optimist!


The Spiritual Mysteries of Blood
Its Power to Transform Body, Mind, and Spirit
By Christopher Vasey, N.D.

Blood does far more than transport oxygen and nutrients, remove metabolic wastes, and convey hormonal messages from one cell to another. Providing medical examples to show how the body actively works to maintain our blood, Christopher Vasey, N.D., explains how blood’s primary function is to form the bridge between the body and the human spirit. Vasey reveals how the blood, like everything in our world, radiates. The blood’s radiation is what connects body to spirit and serves as a means of communication between the two. Any deficiencies in the blood’s composition directly affect our spirit’s ability to stay connected to our physical body. Vasey offers advice to find the ideal diet for each individual, whether omnivore, vegetarian, or allergy-prone. He shows that by optimizing our blood composition, we improve our connection to spirit and provide a sound base for our soul to further its development.

Healing Arts Press. Paperback, $14.95.

Living with Intent
My Somewhat Messy Journey To Purpose, Peace, And Joy
By Mallika Chopra

Living with Intent is a chronicle of Mallika Chopra’s search to find more meaning, joy, and balance in life. She hopes that by telling her story, she can inspire others with her own successes (and failures) as well as share some of the wisdom she has gathered from friends, experts, and family along the way—people like her dad, Deepak, as well as Eckhart Tolle, Marianne Williamson, Arianna Huffington, Andrew Weil, and Dan Siegel. She also provides a practical road map for how we can all move from thought to action to outcome. Each chapter is devoted to one step on her journey and another piece of her INTENT action plan: Incubate, Notice, Trust, Express, Nurture, and Take Action. Chopra’s insights and advice will help us all come closer to fully living the lives we truly intend.


Feeling Great
Creating a Life of Optimism, Enthusiasm and Contentment
By Dadi Janki, Peter Vegso and Kelly Johnson

Why do we lose our ability to feel great? And what is ‘feeling great’ anyway? Is it really possible to feel great in today’s world where every day there is some new crisis or disorder? Some new upheaval or unexpected negativity? Where violence is rife? Is feeling great out of place or insensitive to the reality of many people’s lives? This treasure of a book calls on decades of spiritual study and practical experience to answer these and other essential questions. You will learn what it really means to ‘feel great’—and it might not be what you expect. Now is the time to start feeling great, and this uplifting book shows you how easy it can be.

Health Communications, Inc. Paperback, $12.95.

Cosmic Cradle, Revised Edition
Spiritual Dimensions of Life Before Birth
By Elizabeth M. Carman and Neil J. Carman, Ph.D.

Where was your soul before you were born? If your soul is immortal, did it have a “life” prior to birth? Did you choose your life and parents? Is reincarnation real? Elizabeth and Neil Carman, the authors of Cosmic Cradle, address these questions through interviews with adults and children who report pre-birth experiences (PBEs) not based on regression, hypnosis, or drugs. Instead, interviewees recall their pre-birth existence completely sober and awake. In contrast to near-death experiences (NDEs), which have been well documented to show us what the soul experiences after death, PBEs throw light upon our lives before birth. Persons with pre-birth memories recall experience in a luminous world before birth, in which they preview the upcoming life with a Divine Planner, and recall how they journeyed to their mothers’ wombs.


www.earthstarmag.com
New Releases

Opening To Meditation
A Gentle, Guided Approach
By Diana Lang

Diana Lang’s books, audios, webinars, and workshops have allowed thousands to access the physical, psychological, and spiritual benefits of meditation. While Lang is well versed in a variety of esoteric international traditions, her teaching is distinguished by its clarity and simplicity. Lang’s desire to help her students easily experience a “state of inner peace and connectedness” led her to write this book largely eyes closed and in meditation. In this way she has avoided the “analytical theory, fixed rules, or intellectual razzmatazz,” that often intimidate would-be practitioners. Her instruction cuts to the chase because she is not actually teaching readers anything new; she is instead reminding them of their foundational essence of soul and self, where peace and centeredness are always and everywhere available.

New World Library. Paperback, $14.00.

Aboriginal Secrets of Awakening
A Journey of Healing and Spirituality with a Remote Australian Tribe
By Robbie Holz with Christiann Howard

Sharing her journey from bedridden patient to inspired healer, Robbie Holz recounts her recovery from hepatitis C, fibromyalgia, and treatment-induced brain damage, as well as the blossoming of her own healing powers, through her work with her husband, the late healer Gary Holz, and her experiences with a remote tribe in the Outback of Australia. Robbie describes many of the miraculous healings she witnessed while working with Gary in his Aboriginal-inspired healing practice. She details the powers that Gary developed after his transformative time being healed by Aborigines, including telepathy, seeing the inner workings of his patients’ bodies, and channeling the healing energy of the universe. Through her story of healing and discovery, Robbie describes principles from the 60,000-year-old Aboriginal culture that can help create transformation in your life.


The Karma Queens’ Guide to Relationships
The Truth About Karma in Relationships
By Carmen Harra and Alexandra Harra

In her new book Karma Queen: The Truth About Karma and Relationships, Carmen Harra draws upon her knowledge of psychology and metaphysics, her experience as a therapist and counselor, and her own relationships to help readers untangle the complexities of their relationships and get the most out of them. This book applies Carmen’s ideas to all types of relationships, because she firmly believes that karma affects every relationship in our lives—including whether we ever meet our soul mate. Rich in practical, solid advice, the book will also feature stories drawn from Carmen’s new reality show and from her life.

Tarcher/Penguin. Paperback, $15.95.

Healthy and Fit with Tai Chi
Perfect Your Posture, Balance, and Breathing
By Sifu Peter Newton

This book identifies typical posture-related weaknesses that can impose limitations on a normally healthy functioning body, then shows how to rectify these conditions by introducing the intricate body-mechanics and natural postures of Tai Chi and Qigong. Breathing, bending, stretching, sitting, standing, walking and running seem to just happen naturally. Too often, however, we forget how to perform these functions properly and drift away from nature’s guidance, which, in turn, damages our health. Using simple Tai Chi exercises this book shows how to assimilate the powerful healing postures, smooth flow of movement and effective breathing methods of the ancient Chinese, to enable our body to operate in perfect harmony with nature.


Happiness A to Z
The Gleeful Guide to Finding and Following Your Bliss
By Louise Baxter Harmon

Happiness is around every corner, but every once in a while we need a map or pointers on how to find it. This book is just such a guide, with 26 chapters filled with ideas and inspiration. Joy unites all people and words are often how we best express our joy. Happiness A to Z is the perfect collection of power thoughts and insightful quotes that expresses some of the best ways to get happy.

Viva Editions. Paperback, $14.95.

Mind Wars
A History of Mind Control, Surveillance, and Social Engineering by the Government, Media, and Secret Societies
By Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman

From the dawn of humanity, the desire to control the thoughts, behaviors, and actions of others has been a pervasive one. From the use of coercive persuasion by ancient Egyptians and the Knights Templar to today’s claims of electronic harassment and microwave “bombing,” we have always been at the mercy of those who wish to reprogram our thoughts and reshape our beliefs. Mind Wars includes fascinating stories about the brave new world of electronic harassment, “voice to skull” technology, and much more. The inner frontier of the human mind is the last bastion of privacy. But are we really in control of our own minds? The answer this book provides may shock you!

Toward the Light
Rescuing Spirits, Trapped Souls, and Earthbound Ghosts
By Amy Major
Stories of ghosts and hauntings have frightened us since the beginning of time. Until recently, few have dared to contact the deceased and discover the true nature of earthbound spirits and the phenomena they create. Our understanding of the afterlife has evolved, and with it the reality that ghosts are just like us, facing many of the same problems we face every day. Spirit rescue mediums are “psychologists for the deceased,” helping them peacefully transition to the other side. Toward the Light is the first guide dedicated solely to spirit rescue and its role in saving earthbound spirits from their self-imposed exile on earth. It is a guide to rescue mediumship, a form of spirit communication used to counsel and aid the deceased in crossing over. It is the first book that will help you understand things from a ghost’s perspective.

Norse Goddess Magic
Trancework, Mythology, and Ritual
By Alice Karlsdóttir
Combining traditional research on folklore and the Eddas with trancework and meditation techniques, Alice Karlsdóttir was able to rediscover the feminine side of the Norse pantheon and assemble working knowledge of 13 Norse goddesses for both group ritual and personal spirit work. Detailing her trancework journeys to connect with the goddesses, the author reveals the long-lost personalities and powers of each deity. She provides detailed instructions for invocations and rituals to call each goddess forth for personal and group spirit work. She also offers a comprehensive guide to ritual tranceworking to allow anyone to directly experience deities and develop spirit-work relationships with them.

Fight Alzheimer’s with Vitamins and Antioxidants
By Kedar N. Prasad, Ph.D.
In this practical scientific guide, leading researcher in cancer, heart disease, and diabetes prevention Kedar N. Prasad, Ph.D., reveals the latest revolutionary discoveries on the use of antioxidants to prevent and treat Alzheimer’s disease. He details how the proper combinations of vitamin and antioxidant supplements can greatly increase the effectiveness of standard medical treatments for Alzheimer’s as well as delay or even prevent onset despite a family history of the disease. Offering the missing complement to the standard care of medications promoted by mainstream medicine, this guide provides a truly holistic approach to Alzheimer’s prevention, treatment, and care.
Healing Arts Press. Paperback, $14.95.

The Afterlife Healing Circle
How Anyone Can Contact the Other Side
By Candace L. Talmadge and Jana L. Simons
The séance is probably the most misunderstood and abused of all spiritual practices, and carries with it some very real dangers. The good news is that the authors of The Afterlife Healing Circle have corrected the disinformation while showing us how to avoid the dangers. The afterlife healing circle is a way we can safely communicate with those on the other side, whether they are loved ones who have passed or future offspring who have not yet been born. It’s never too late to say goodbye—or too soon to say hello.
The world is ready for the advent of a new stage of human consciousness and action. It is time for a “planetary birth experience,” a collective awakening, an experience of shared empathy, love, and creativity. Just as we once evolved from Neanderthal to *Homo sapiens* through a mysterious set of circumstances, not fully understood, so now we are emerging as *Homo universalis*, a species capable of conscious evolution on Earth and beyond.

What are signs of the emergence of a new era of evolution? Ken Carey wrote in *The Third Millennium*:

A mother never knows exactly what hour she will give birth to her child, but she has a “due date,” an approximate time when the baby is expected and will most likely be born. For millennia now there have been those in various traditions of both East and West who have known that the earth has a due date sometime during the second decade of the 21st century. Though there will be much awakening of individuals prior to the first unified movement of the awakened planetary organism, this movement, like a first breath, will occur in but a single moment.
Such a planetary awakening is happening now because the timing is right in relationship to our planetary life cycle. Let’s continue with our biological analogy. A newborn baby awakens at a specific time in its life cycle, just after it has made its journey from the comfort of the womb into the harsh and strange world. The child finally rests at peace. At one delightful moment, which cannot be predicted yet is expected, the infant awakens, relaxes, opens eyes that have never seen—eyes that were created in the darkness of the womb. For the first time the womb-veil thins, light floods in, and the infant focuses and sees its mother. A radiant glow of recognition and joy crosses its face and animates its body. It has come home to the new world, never to go back again.

Let’s compare ourselves as a planetary organism to a biological organism just after birth. We are facing a trauma that could be compared to the trauma a baby faces after birth. We are Generation One, the first generation on this Earth to consciously be aware that we can destroy ourselves by our own actions or evolve ourselves by our own choices. We are struggling to coordinate ourselves as one global system, feeling the panic of running out of Mother Earth’s resources. We are learning to change our energy consumption, to grow our food in healthier ways, to handle our own waste, to stop over-populating and polluting, and far more. As we do so, we are beginning to recognize we are all members of one planetary body.

For the first time, in the 1960s during the Apollo program we opened our Earth-bound eyes, saw ourselves from outer space, and were amazed at the beauty of our Earth as a whole. For one brief moment we saw no boundaries, no nations, and no walls to divide us.

Now, millions of us are awakening to our participation in the whole, as our planetary body integrates and links up throughout the world. The internet, mobile phones, social media, and many other elements of our rapidly growing planetary nervous system are connecting us as individuals and groups, beyond the confines of time and space.

The process is unfolding. Let’s imagine that the Internet is informing us of what is now working to evolve our world. Let’s assume that the NewNews in all its forms is communicating to us the news of who we are becoming. But we are still in a postnatal torpor, traumatized and confused by the abruptness of the changes we are undergoing. Many of us are without hope, without the sense that our future is desirable and attractive, forgetting that each of us has a part to play. Yet, as Teilhard de Chardin writes in *The Future of Man*, “The whole future of the Earth, as of religion, seems to me to depend on the awakening of our faith in the future.” At times, we live with an ominous sense of impending doom, which is realistic. We have never seen another planet go through a transition period wherein its inhabitants were able to create so many offspring, so much technology, and such high levels of pollution and waste. If we do not quickly adjust to our new condition, we may die. Our birth could be a death. The dangers we face are life threatening, just as the newborn infant faces critical problems that must be quickly handled or it will die.

Something more is needed to awaken us as a whole—an infusion of life, love, appreciation, and security to comfort us in our time of trial. Remember, everything that rises converges. The planetary dissipative structure is reaching maximum instability. Everything we do counts, especially in this critical time. Will the impulses of health and creativity prevail soon enough to counter the acceleration toward environmental and social breakdown?
E VOLUTION EXPLORING THE MEANING OF CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION

Conscious evolution as a worldview began to emerge in the latter half of the twentieth century because of scientific, social, and technological abilities that have given us the power to affect the evolution of life on Earth. Conscious evolution is a metadiscipline; the purpose of this metadiscipline is to learn how to be responsible for the ethical guidance of our evolution. It is a quest to understand the processes of developmental change, to identify inherent values for the purpose of learning how to cooperate with these processes toward chosen and positive futures, both near term and long range.

It is important to realize how radically new the concept of conscious evolution is. As an emerging worldview, it only became more broadly recognized in the 1960s, because the primary conditions that brought it into existence are themselves only that recent. This newness explains why it has not yet been incorporated into our academic, political, and religious worldviews.

There are three new elements vital to conscious evolution. I call them “the three Cs”: new cosmology, new crises, and new capacities.

New Cosmology: The First C

Our understanding of cosmogenesis has brought forth a new vision of all creation. In the mid-1960s two scientists, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, identified background radiation from the original moment of creation—the big bang—and were able to extrapolate backward in time to those first instants of creation. “What they were hearing was nothing less than the vibration of the birth of the universe,” wrote Richard Elliott Friedman in The Disappearance of God: A Divine Mystery.

Anyone born before the 1960s was not educated in the crucial new idea that the physical universe had a beginning in time, has been evolving for billions of years, and is still evolving now through us as well as throughout the entire cosmos. When I went to college in the early 1950s, I was told that the frontiers of knowledge had been mostly closed. Neither our new creation story nor the new worldview was even considered at that time.

The importance of the new cosmology is that we recognize the universe has a history and a direction and, therefore, so do we. It reinforces the new story. The metapattern that connects everything is involved not only in living systems but in the entire process of creation. The universe has been evolving in time toward ever-more-complex systems with ever-greater freedom and consciousness. There has been a cosmological phase, from the big bang to the first cell; a biological phase, from the first cell to the first human; a noological phase, from the first human to us. And now, we are entering a cocreative phase, when human life becomes consciously coevolutionary with nature.

The idea that there is a history to everything is a fundamental component in conscious evolution. It reinforces our desire to evolve in history rather than purely metaphysically, or in another afterworld, yet helps us see the future not as more of the same, but as radically new and self-transcending, fulfilling our deepest aspirations for transformation. It gives us long-range visions not only of our past, billions of years ago, but of our future, which is estimated to continue hundreds of billions of years beyond our lifetimes.
New Crises: The Second C

Our new crises are another vital element to conscious evolution, especially the environmental crisis. From the perspective of the new story, this complex crisis can be understood as a natural but dangerous stage in the birth process of a universal humanity.

We are undergoing the shift in a planetary “birth” of the next era of evolution. As we have already seen, what worked before will now destroy us. We must rapidly stop doing what we have done so successfully—building, populating, polluting, and using up nonrenewable resources to survive. We did not know that any of this was wrong, dangerous, or self-centered. Now we realize that cataclysms have wiped out whole species: ninety-eight percent of all species became extinct before humans appeared. But never before did a species know ahead of time that it might self-destruct and that it had an option to do something about it. Now we are shifting from reactive response to proactive choice. Our crisis is an evolutionary driver awakening us to the necessity and opportunity to choose a future commensurate with our potential and to take responsibility for our actions.

I believe that collectively, we do know how to coordinate ourselves as a whole, how to handle our waste, shift to renewable resources, and awaken to our unique, new roles in the maturation of our species. If the crisis is natural, so is the response.

The newness of the crisis means, however, that no existing leaders or institutions in the current top-down political, religious, and corporate structures can train us. No team is waiting at the end of the birth canal, as far as we know! The process of awakening comes from our deeper and more intuitive knowing combined with scientific understanding. This is why I call us Generation One, the first on this Earth to face evolution or extinction as a species together.

New Capacities: The Third C

Our new capacities—powers now available to us, such as biotechnology, nuclear power, nanotechnology, cybernetics, artificial intelligence, artificial life, and space development—are radical evolutionary capacities that are potentially dangerous in our current state of self-centered consciousness. From our present perspective they may seem unnatural, and indeed they are. Yet, if we consider our needs at the next stage of evolution—as a universal species—these may be precisely the abilities we require to survive and grow in the extended physical environment of outer space, and in the expanded consciousness environment of inner space.

In a biological organism, for example, capacities that are lethal in the womb are vital in the world. So our extraordinary new powers, which can be deadly to us in our current stage of self-centeredness and planet-boundness, may be natural for us at the next stage of cosmic consciousness and universal life.

Because we fear the danger of misusing our new technologies in the present, we must not prematurely destroy them. Rather, we should see ahead to their possible use at the next stage of evolution and guide their application toward the emancipation of our evolutionary potential rather than attempting the impossible task of stopping knowledge and preserving the status quo. We must remember that the nature of nature is to transform—especially when nature hits a crisis of limits.

From the perspective of the three Cs, we can see that the new cosmology can be interpreted as the story of the birth of a universal humanity, that our new crises are the results of our natural evolutionary process, and that our new capacities are the growing powers of a young, universal species—all barely one generation old.

What is conscious evolution?

Conscious evolution means evolution by choice not chance. For billions of years nature has been evolving through five mass extinctions, but no species was aware of it. Now, we are aware that we are facing the sixth mass extinction, and that humanity has some role to play in this crisis. We are affecting our own evolution by everything we do; the food we eat, the cars we drive; the number of babies we have; the energy we use, etc. We have entered the first age of Conscious Evolution. The book is a vital manual and guide for our entire generation facing species-wide evolution or devolution together for the very first time. It offers us a new way through together.

What is the social potential movement?

The human potential movement was founded on Abraham H. Maslow’s genius to study well rather than sick people. He called them self-actualizing. He found every such person had one thing in common—chosen work they found intrinsically self-rewarding that was of service. He mapped the characteristics of self-actualizing people and launched the positive human potential movement. In Conscious Evolution we begin to map peaks of social creativity, innovations and projects that are now working toward a positive future. We begin to see the outlines of the self-actualizing society. Conscious Evolution is a vital step in launching a social potential movement.

What is the “New Story” that Conscious Evolution is based on?

It is the newly discovered universal evolutionary story based on the recent discovery of cosmogenesis, the scientifically based awareness that the universe has been, is now and will ever be evolving—and so are we. It is also obvious, when looking at the whole 13.8 billion years of the New Story, that nature is like an evolutionary spiral. It takes jumps toward higher consciousness, freedom, and order through forming new whole systems, as from single cell, to multicellular creatures, to large animals, to humans and now to humanity developing a new nervous system, a global brain, a “noosphere” or thinking layer of Earth through the Internet, 7 billion cell phones, Facebook, Twitter, Google, Linked-in, etc. We are being connected to one another as one living system — which is the next whole system jump.

What do you mean by co-creator with the process of evolution?

The same process of creation that creates the universe is within us, motivating us to be more, to do more, to love more. This tendency within us is the Impulse of Evolution motivating us. Our atoms, genes, brain, organs together are a resume of the whole story of creation. Within each of us is an Impulse of Creativity, a yearning to realize our potential. A co-creator is a person who feels this impulse within as an expression of his or her own life purpose. It is one who says yes to this impulse and begins to seek fulfillment through expressing his or her own unique creativity. Co-Creators are the next step after Paul Ray’s definition of “cultural creatives.” Co-Creators are deeply attuned spiritually and to their vocations, or soul’s purpose. They are learning to co-operate with one another co-creatively as co-equals, outside of the current top down pyramidal system. They are innovators of a new culture and a new society now arising in the midst of the dysfunctional world.

What do you mean, “problems are evolutionary drivers.”

Stress causes evolution. Problems force us to seek new solutions—to discover emerging potentials within the system—like new clean energy, new health practices, etc. We find that the solution to problems is not more of the same. Every time nature hits a crisis that cannot be resolved by doing more of the same, it begins to innovate and transform. This is what is happening now. As crises mount, innovations are increasing in every field. What is needed now is to connect what is working by developing greater synergy among innovations. On a personal level, each crisis we face, especially depression, can also be seen as a driver to find out what wants to be expressed and what potential is emerging within us.
You talk about A Spirit-Motivated Plan of Action. What is that?

Given the imminence of our environmental and social crises, especially global warming, it is obvious that we need a coordinated plan, as great or greater than the technological plan for the lunar landing. John F. Kennedy proposed that we place a man on the moon and bring him back alive “in this decade.” I propose that we take the next step. We declare that within this decade from 2015 to 2025 we, humanity, will scan for, map, connect and communicate what is working in the world toward a sustainable, evolvable, spiritually fulfilling world for all. Conscious Evolution is a call for social co-creators and pioneers to join together to undertake this great social necessity.

What kind of new educational system does Conscious Evolution call for?

It calls for the opposite of the current model of education, especially at the masters and PhD level. Instead of specializing into ever narrowing fields, evolutionary education requires us to take a holistic, evolutionary, big picture perspective. We must see the entire process of creation from the Big Bang to the present and beyond as one continuous process of innovation and transformation with specific laws of chaos and transformation that can be applied to enter our own process of evolution consciously.

This new system activates a new community of evolutionary leaders, innovators and co-creators in every field and function and invites all students to learn from these innovators as to what is working toward the next stage of evolution, mentoring and guiding the young. It is drawing together a new “memetic code” for the future. As genes build bodies, memes build cultures. Currently our leadership at the head of existing systems, such as politics, organized religion, economics, and the arts do not have memes to guide us toward a positive future equal to our potential. This lack of images and ideas and visions to move toward must be filled by evolutionary education, including self-education and by curriculum. Conscious Evolutionary education is a life-long process of gaining ever greater guidance from within oneself, and from the process of evolution as to how each person on Earth can realize their full creative potential for self and society.

What can an individual do about all this? How do I participate personally in conscious evolution?

Excellent question. The best way to participate in evolution is to discover your deepest life purpose, the impulse of creativity within you and to say yes to that. It is to follow your inner “compass of joy,” learning that when you feel joyful, on purpose, alive and creative you are participating in both self and social evolution, provided that your actions are also of service to at least one person as discovered by Maslow’s study of self-actualizing people. Another key is to form small groups of two or more who resonate with these ideas and learn how to cultivate a field of “resonance,” heart coherence, resounding to each other your highest traits and aspirations.

Futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard is a prolific educator and author of seven books, including a revised and updated edition of her seminal work Conscious Evolution. She is an evolutionary thinker who believes that global change happens when we work collectively and selflessly for the greater good. Visit her online at http://www.evolve.org.
Many drugs are developed not because there’s a great medical need, but rather because there’s big money to be made from them.

In many cases, holistic therapies and medicines already exist that can take the place of any number of synthetic pharmaceuticals. Cannabis is one such therapy, and according to Dr. Gedde, “it’s time to ask questions and look at a new way of thinking about this plant.”

Dr. Gedde is the owner and founder of Gedde Whole Health, located in Colorado, and the Clinicians’ Institute of Cannabis Medicine.

“I actually never imagined that I’d be in this field,” she says. “My medical training was originally in pathology and research, and I spent many years in the research lab.

My PhD is in biophysical chemistry along with my MD. I did my training at Stanford, and then I worked in the pharmaceutical industry. I had no idea that cannabis actually was medicine.”

A wealth of research shows marijuana does indeed have outstanding promise as a medicinal plant, largely due to its cannabidiol (CBD) content. Cannabinoids interact with your body by way of naturally occurring cannabinoid receptors embedded in cell membranes throughout your body.

There are cannabinoid receptors in your brain, lungs, liver, kidneys, immune system, and more. Both the therapeutic and psychoactive properties of marijuana occur when a cannabinoid activates a cannabinoid receptor.

Setting Up a Medical Practice Around Medical Cannabis

About ten years ago, Dr. Gedde opened her medical practice to focus on non-pharmaceutical alternative therapies. But it wasn’t until 2009 that she discovered medical cannabis.

“That was when this whole topic came up in Colorado. I started to look at the possibility of including recommendations for [medical cannabis] in my practice.
What I started hearing from my patients really amazed me. I started hearing about all the benefits and the lack of toxicity of cannabis.

I learned about the endocannabinoid system, which helped me understand how it could possibly be true that it could do all these things without being toxic.”

About two years ago, she received her first request from a parent who wanted to use the high-cannabidiol (CBD), low-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) form of cannabis for her child’s epileptic seizures.

“I went ahead with that and started to learn about what this could do. Now, two years later, the news that cannabis is a therapy for epilepsy has reached the world I think.

We’re very committed to gather ongoing information about what’s happening with these children and to get this information out to other physicians in a way that they can use and understand.

We want to generate high-quality, publishable data from practice and our experience. We want to help people understand the background and the scientific basis of what cannabis can do, and really start to understand that it’s a medicine, and bring it into what we have as medicine,” she says.

Cannabis Basics

The cannabis plant contains cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Both have medicinal properties, but whereas THC has psychoactive activity that can make you feel “stoned,” CBD does not. The whole plant also contains a variety of terpenes that have medicinal properties as well.

Through traditional plant breeding and seed exchanges, growers have started producing cannabis plants for medical use that have higher levels of CBD and lower levels of THC. Dr. Allan Frankel, a board-certified internist in California who treats patients with medical cannabis, works with a number of CBD-rich strains.

CBD is currently a Schedule 1 controlled substance, which means:

- The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse
- The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the US
- There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision

There’s no doubt that CBD needs to be rescheduled, as each of these three points are blatantly wrong.

“The place to advocate, in my opinion, would be on the federal level,” Dr. Gedde says. “Advocate for the rescheduling of cannabis. It’s currently listed as a Schedule I—very dangerous substance. To match its actual safety and toxicity profile, it should be at a much lower schedule. If it was moved, three major things would happen:

(1) Physicians would be able to prescribe cannabis. Doctors could actually help their patients to get the exact thing that they need without the sort of situation where patients are required to find their own source.

(2) Physicians can do actual clinical research. You can’t do an approved human study with a substance that the federal government says is highly dangerous. It’s not permitted. If it’s rescheduled, doctors can now do actual clinical research, which has been prohibited.

(3) We could potentially get insurance coverage for cannabis, which would be very important for people to be able to really benefit from it.”

She also suggests talking to your state legislators. At
present, 23 states have legalized medical marijuana. Another 11 states have pending legislation for 2015.

Awareness is starting to shift, and many are now starting to recognize the medical value of cannabis. Even the US Surgeon General recently spoke out in favor of medical marijuana.

His statement echoes a growing sentiment in the medical and scientific communities that the health benefits of marijuana should no longer be ignored. But there are still many hurdles, and many states still have strict laws against its usage—even in terminal patients.

How Does Cannabis Compare to Prescription Drugs?

A number of prescription drugs are well known to be dangerous. Pharmaceuticals in general are among the leading causes of death in the US, and some drugs have killed tens of thousands of individuals. The painkiller Vioxx is one classic example that killed over 60,000 before being pulled off the market.

According to Dr. Gedde, cannabis is certainly far safer than most prescription drugs, and there’s enough information to compare it against the known toxicities of many drugs currently in use. This includes liver and kidney toxicity, gastrointestinal damage, nerve damage and, of course, death. Moreover, cannabidiol and other cannabis products often work when other medications fail, so not only are they generally safer, cannabis preparations also tend to provide greater efficacy.

As noted by Dr. Gedde:

“There’s an ongoing death rate from use of pain medications as prescribed. So, even as prescribed, they’re highly dangerous and they are open to abuse. As far as medications used in the pediatric population to control seizures, there are also severe toxicities to organs. Many of them are very sedating. The children become unable to function or really to interact because of the sedating effects. Other medications have a side effect of rage and behavioral problems.

Unprovoked rage is actually a known side effect of some of the anti-seizure medications. Cannabis and in particular cannabidiol has none of these issues. No toxicities. The main side effect of cannabidiol is sleepiness. As a child gets accustomed to it, that does wear off and the child can be very alert and functional on the cannabis oil once they have worked into the dosing. Once you put them against each other, there really is no comparison in terms of safety.”

Cannabis for Seizure Control in Children

In Dr. Gedde’s experience, about 25 percent of children experience a rapid reduction in seizures when given cannabis oil—sometimes within days, or weeks. But results do vary, and not every child will respond well in the immediate term. She notes that some children are so sensitized to medications that they need to start at a very low dose, and give it plenty of time to work.

“We are working out in the clinical practice the protocols that seem to give the best benefit the most quickly to the most children, but we do find that some children get results very quickly. For others, it takes more time, up to a number of months,” she says.

There’s limited information on using cannabis in children for issues other than epilepsy. However, in January 2015, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) updated their policy statement on marijuana, acknowledging that cannabinoids from marijuana “may currently be an option for...children with life-limiting or severely debilitating conditions and for whom current...
therapies are inadequate.”

The main objection of pediatricians at the Children’s Hospital in Denver to using CBD in children—even for conditions like uncontrolled seizures—is that there are no studies in children of potential harms of long-term use of CBD (cannabidiol). There might be long term adverse effects of CBD and other cannabinoids that we will only come to discover later.

“This is a good point in my view, and a reason not to suggest use of CBD as a dietary supplement or as a general “health tonic” for children,” Dr. Gedde says. “In my view, it is important to weigh the use of a therapy, including potential risks not known, against the risks of the uncontrolled illness itself and of other therapies in use. For many patients, even with incomplete information about CBD, weighing those risks including known toxic effects of their current therapies does point to at least a therapeutic trial with CBD being a good choice.”

Potential Side Effects of Medical Cannabis

According to Dr. Gedde, the main side effect you need to watch out for is the psychoactivity of THC, i.e. its ability to make you “high.” However, she also stresses that THC actually has many valuable medical benefits, so depending on your problem, you may want higher or lower levels of THC. For example, in patients who suffer with severe pain, where the perception of pain causes great distress, the psychoactivity of THC allows the patient to shift their perception of the pain in their mind and body.

“That’s an example where the psychoactivity is needed, but there are other areas where it’s not. Selection of the type of product, the actual cannabinoids in it, and the mode of using it is very helpful for dealing with that side effect,” she says. “Beyond that, and the kind of distress that excessive psychoactivity [can cause] if somebody gets too much, cannabis is very safe. There are no known deaths linked with it. That cannot be said about virtually anything else on the planet, including water. You can overdose on water and die. You can’t get enough cannabis in your body to kill you.”

US Government Holds Patent on Cannabis as a Neuroprotectant

Interestingly, the US government, through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), holds a patent on cannabis, specifically on cannabidiol (CBD) as a neuroprotectant and an antioxidant. This patent was filed over a decade ago, and was approved by the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in 2003. The patent was based on studies done with the support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

“It certainly is a paradox. Through the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the US federal government holds the stance that marijuana has no medical value and is highly dangerous; whereas we have in fact scientific evidence that it is useful as a medicine, and that far from being dangerous, it’s actually quite non-toxic and supportive—certainly in comparison to other medications.

I think we have to ask why we have this split. It really seems like a policy, especially in certain areas of the federal government that would encompass the drug war and drug laws. That type of policy certainly is not consistent with our medical knowledge and scientific knowledge.”

Education Is Key

Many people ask how they can educate themselves about cannabis, and Dr. Gedde notes that it can be a difficult proposition despite the fact that there are numerous peer-reviewed publications about the benefits of cannabis.
“The reason why it’s difficult is that the preponderance of research funds has been to show harms related to cannabis as a drug of abuse... [L]ook for the real research that’s there on the endocannabinoid system and the ways that marijuana cannabis has been helping people for centuries. And look into the history of medical practice; that’s where the information starts to come out.”

It’s also helpful to look at current clinical practice, which is possible in a few states, including Colorado, where cannabis is safely and legally accessible. This is where you can learn more about appropriate dosing, and the methods of use that have been found to be effective for a range of different conditions. “[T]he story about marijuana and cannabis that we’ve been told has been very one-sided,” she says, “and there’s a lot more to the story. There’s a lot of potential benefit there.”

One reputable source where you can find research relating to the use of cannabis is cancer.gov. This is the US government’s site on cancer. You can also peruse the medical literature through PubMed, which is a public resource. The Journal of Pain, a publication by the American Pain Society, has a long list of studies on the pain-relieving effects of cannabis and would certainly seem worth the effort for anyone with chronic pain to utilize.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which also has information relating to the medicinal aspects of marijuana, preclinical and clinical trials are under way to test marijuana and various extracts for the treatment of a number of diseases, including autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer’s disease; inflammation; pain; and mental disorders. To learn more, I also recommend listening to my previous interview with Dr. Frankel, in which he discusses many of the medical benefits of cannabis.

Dr. Mercola is the founder of the world’s most visited natural health website, http://www.Mercola.com. You can learn the hazardous side effects of OTC Remedies by getting a FREE copy of his latest special report The Dangers of Over the Counter Remedies by going to his Report Page.

How an Ion Drive Helped NASA’s Dawn Probe Visit Dwarf Planet Ceres

A NASA probe that takes four days to go from 0 to 60 mph recently made space exploration history.

NASA’s Dawn spacecraft arrived at the dwarf planet Ceres, the largest object in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, on March 6th.

Dawn became the first probe ever to orbit a dwarf planet, as well as the first to circle two celestial bodies beyond the Earth-moon system. (Dawn, which launched in September 2007, studied the protoplanet Vesta, the asteroid belt’s second-largest denizen, up close from July 2011 through September 2012.)

The $473 million Dawn mission’s unprecedented deep-space feats are enabled by its innovative ion propulsion system, which is about ten times more efficient than traditional chemical thrusters. Dawn’s engines ionize xenon atoms and then accelerate the ions out the back of the spacecraft using a large voltage.

This process generates tiny amounts of thrust—the equivalent of a piece of paper pushing on your hand. But that thrust adds up over time, allowing the Dawn spacecraft to achieve tremendous velocities.

“Ion propulsion enables us to do things, and go places, that would be either extremely expensive or completely impossible to do,” Dawn project manager Robert Mase, of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, said “Dawn really capitalizes on this innovative technology to deliver big science on a small budget.”

Dawn is showing just what the technology is capable of, and that will be a big part of the mission’s legacy, —Space.com
O

compassionate captain, lead me to my destiny and life’s work; I will be pleased to take the train.

I hear a confounding note as destiny’s song entices me onward. It is the distant remembrance of that other Richard, the proud doctor who served humanity in other ways—and was well paid for it. What about Megan and Steve and all the others who gave my life definition and stability? How can I walk away from who I was?

I look down at my feet, the ultimate agents of decision making, and see that they are carrying me back to the Pilgrim Center. I notice that my hands are flexing and quite anxious to start packing for the trip. With a spontaneous chuckle, I admonish my mind to sit back and enjoy the ride.

As I am rolling my prayer rug into burlap and securing it with hemp twine, I stop a moment to consider its purpose. I’ve lugged it halfway around the world. For what? The answer becomes clear as I inadvertently cut my hand on the rough twine, the blood dripping onto the stone floor of my quarters. Suddenly, I see myself giving the rug to the perfect master that I will surely meet in Calcutta—the rug a devotional gift. I will pledge my life to him in service and obedience. My blood will be shed for him, a guardian of the creation. What more worthy cause can there be?

The entire time I’ve traveled in India, I seem to know what to do and where to go without giving it much conscious thought. I don’t sit down and plot out an itinerary—what spots to visit, where to stay, how much it will cost, and so on. So this day I simply heft my 40-

Communion with the transcendent powers...is not a feat that can be achieved by anyone; it is a mystery peculiar to the one elected, and is therefore through and through personal in character.

—Theodore Roszak

By Richard House, M.D.

Between Now and When Calcutta

www.earthstarmag.com
pound pack, grab the rug, and take a rickshaw to the S.T. Bus Station in Ahmednagar. Yes, my captain has issued me a rail pass, but there is a place to visit first, it seems: the caves of Ellora and Ajanta near Aurangabad, where Baba occasionally did inner work.

There are seven million people in transit on the roads of India at any given time, many of whom travel by S.T. buses. Similar to American school buses but painted a light blue color with unglassed windows and luggage racks on top, they are everywhere.

The bus station consists of a small ticket office and a large open space where blue buses are randomly parked, some full, some empty, with milling crowds of people around each one. Ticket in hand, I approach the nearest empty bus reciting my litany: “Aurangabad? Aurangabad?”

Various pointed fingers eventually lead me to the proper overstuffed bus, which is about to depart. I brazen my way forward through the crowd until I reach the open doorway, men standing on the steps within.

“Aurangabad? Aurangabad?” One of the men nods and pulls me aboard, no small feat with my encumbrances. The bus is full of people, all seats taken. I see women in colorful saris and men in various styles of dress standing in the aisle. Soon, amid great commotion, I am propelled down the aisle with difficulty, whereupon two Indian men give up their seats so that I and my gear can plop down. As I do so, the bench seat breaks away from the floor, and the seat and I fall backward onto the two unfortunate passengers behind. There are oohs and aahs as I wrench the seat forward and, with some rope from my pack, tie it off to the seat in front. Aha! says the crowd.

The honking horn announces our departure, and my journey begins.

The hotel in Aurangabad that offers morning trips to the caves is not a four-star affair. It is with some hesitancy that I sit down to dinner in the restaurant, fluorescent lights buzzing above, and I the only customer.

“Dal and rice, please, and bottled water,” I request, the same meal I always order while dining in India. Dal, a spicy lentil soup, and steamed rice, as safe as any prepared food can be. Nevertheless, my intuition has proven correct. I am sick all through the night, but not seriously so. It’s the only such episode I would suffer during my travels, although I occasionally go hungry as a precaution. After a sleepless night due to gastrointestinal upset, I am still enthusiastic about the day’s prospects. The tour bus is idling in front of the hotel as the driver and his helper secure the group’s luggage atop the roof. I am the only Westerner, it appears, as I find a seat next to a well-dressed man with graying hair, who greets me with a handshake. I soon learn his name, S.I. Mohile, and that he is a retired lawyer with a spiritual bent who wants to visit the ancient caves as part of a pilgrimage to sacred places in India; this his first stop.

“These caves at Ellora,” he says, “go back to the fifth century. Some were carved out by Buddhists and served as monasteries, while others were Hindu and Jain, all existing side by side until the 1800s—amazing to us now.”

I nod in agreement, since current religious animosity would hardly permit such familiarity. Meher Baba said that the intense spiritual atmosphere of the place itself and the religious tolerance of the time made it possible for such a thing to occur. “What ended it?” I ask Mr. Mohile.

“No one knows. And why,” my friend asks, “are you visiting this place?”

“I’ve been staying at Meher Baba’s ashram, and am traveling across India.”

“Ah, I know of Meher Baba, a true saint,” he said, a
welcome thing for me to hear from an educated man with a spiritual bent.

The caves are located high on a cliff face and require an arduous climb up hundreds of stone steps. It is remarkable to see the many women in their colorful saris slowly make their way upward. The wealthy or infirm hire palanquin to carry them, four young men making a difficult living doing so. S.I. Mohile and I are in good shape and soon make our way up to the cave entrances.

During the climb, I notice that my left hand has assumed a posture of extended index and fifth fingers, with clenched middle fingers—odd. This recalled the spontaneous finger and hand postures I’d experienced in Hawaii, so I’m not overly surprised, just curious.

My lawyer friend and I then enter a large cave with ancient frescoes on the walls and a larger-than-life-sized carved sculpture of reclining Buddha in the center of the room. I am surprised to see that Buddha in all his ancient glory exhibits the exact same posture of his left hand that mine had unconsciously assumed a few moments before. I stand looking down at my left hand in wonder. What does it mean? I silently ask the reclining statue. What does it matter? the statue replies, laughter echoing off the walls of my mind.

The other caves are interesting and awesome in their functional beauty: ornate Hindu temples coexisting with the simple lingams of Shiva. There are monasteries with sleeping quarters, pillows fashioned from stone, and every manner of artful decoration preserved from ancient days.

What I feel most strongly is the energy of higher dimensions, a gossamer feeling of peace and purpose that leaves me impatiently awaiting new mystical experiences. There are none, even though Mr. Mohile and I spend the day going through many such caves in Ellora and Ajanta.

The train station in Aurangabad is not nearly as frenetic as the bus terminal had been, or perhaps I have just become more accustomed to the scene.

“A first class ticket to Nagpur?” I ask.

“No problem, sir,” the clerk says as he waggles his head side-to-side in the typical Indian affirmation. I have decided to buy a ticket to Nagpur, about halfway, instead of through to Calcutta. One never knows is my thought at the time.

The train patiently waiting at the platform reminds me of my childhood Lionel train set, the old-fashioned locomotive puffing out black smoke, its baleful whistle somehow exciting and scary. Upon closer examination, I see there are horizontal bars across the unglassed windows of the coaches, giving the appearance of a prison train were it not for the unshackled arms waving from many windows as new passengers, including me, board the rear coaches that are not yet filled to capacity.

The pleasant clickety-clack sound and rolling motion of the train induces a dreamlike state that sends my seatmates to sleep, newspapers on laps, and leaves me adrift in between this world and the next. I remember the passing fields of green plants growing in the harsh soil of India, oxen and implements guided by turbaned farmers dressed in white. I would learn that this common crop is called pulses (lentils), a dietary staple that I would enjoy eating as dal during my travels across this ancient country.

Raipur, where I decide to overnight, is lit up with parades in the street, banging drums and music filling the air. The clerk at the large hotel says that it is a Hindu festival day and that the celebration would continue all night. The sounds of drums and blaring music eventually fade into dreamless sleep.
When I awaken, it is a different hotel and a different city. Groggily alarmed, I shower and dress, noting that my clothes are just this side of filthy. The clerk downstairs affirms that I am in Nagpur, the farthest my purchased train ticket would take me. It is only then that I vaguely recall other hotels and other days on the train. My state of intoxication, so different from one chemically induced, is filigreed with joy and not remorse. My sense of alarm soon shifts to one of urgent prodding from my captain: no time to lose, no time to lose. Get there. I take a taxi to the airport, the hell with the train.

The Indian Airlines plane descends into Calcutta in late afternoon. As I disembark, I actually stop on the tarmac and announce to the blue sky above, O kay, I’m here.

The stone façade of the New Kenilworth Hotel is reminiscent of the embassies nearby, the central courtyard giving it a grand appearance that makes me wonder about affordability. I resolve to pay the rates, whatever they may be, but am surprised as the matronly woman announces much lower rates than I expected. I quickly sign the register and pay a week in advance, noticing a dining room off to the right with two waiters standing at attention with white linen napkins draped over forearms European style.

The woman keeps my passport, as is the custom in hotels, and advises that my room came with a servant who would bring food and drink upon request.

She claps her hands and the fellow appears, an older man who shoulders my pack and struggles across the courtyard with my suitcase in hand. I carry the prayer rug and hurry behind him as we approach a square stone tower at the opposite end. There is a room below and one at the top of a flight of stairs. The servant, called Jai, stands aside, allowing me to ascend. At the top of the stairs there are tall double doors painted black, the very same doors that had appeared in my dream in Hawaii, the dream room where my spiritual marriage was to take place. I actually look down to see if I am magically wearing a tuxedo, but, no, just dirty khakis and scuffed boots.

Jai then unlocks the doors and gives me the key. The interior of the room is dark, just like in the dream, and remains so even when I turn on the floor lamp.

Finally, a place to stay for a while—air conditioned, no less.

Somewhere around 2 a.m., I awaken and look out the window. The hotel is dark, no people in evidence; the place quiet as a tomb. I arise and sit in the chair, the only light coming from the cracked bathroom door. I soon enter the timeless blank of existence where nothing stirs, but where everything awaits expectantly. My head snaps back on my neck, my mouth falls open, and I gasp at the sudden pain, a remembered pain that is insistent but not at all unwelcome. Unlike before, the gurgling pain is tolerable. It carries me to a netherworld where pain is a minor inconvenience. I sit and sit, as the night fades into a surmised dawn as my ears record the sounds of human discourse outside. I peek. The drapes show a lighter color, just as I thought they might. I hear the chittering of birds outside, then the bark of a dog. These sounds of Earth dissolve the netherworld as my neck releases forward and I creak to my feet, each foot a mysterious pad that meets the surface of the concrete floor, each wanting to move in sequence. Then it all floods back: I’m here. My neck hurts like hell. There is a beautiful land where all your dreams come true... These lyrics from an Anthony Newley show tune start clearing my mind and refreshing my mood, which is expectant. I massage my neck and walk outside to the panorama of Calcutta. There is a beautiful land...
The streets are like arteries and veins, pulsing with ebb and flow, always moving, each person in the crowd intent on some business, either on foot as I am or in the various wheeled devices that carry people and goods to their desired destination. And it is noisy. My senses are so sharpened that it is difficult to sort out sounds and images, my muddled brain having too much to do. I like it. This is Earth alive with sound and purpose, humanity stretching forth its wings, poised to soar above the clamor.

I wander without much thought, the sights sometimes quite disturbing. There are back alleys that are shrouded in gloom, the devil’s lair where life is bought and sold without regard to the sanctity of spirit. There are the very poor who sleep on the sidewalk, a curled arm for a pillow, the breath of life so faint that it hovers in the air above their impoverished flesh, waiting for release to try again. And again.

I see families in rags, begging for food or coin; withered limbs, a child with cleft lip and palate pleading for pity, eyes locked on mine as I turn away.

I hear Jai calling me. I’m walking near the polo grounds, a vestige of the British Raj. There are many thin men hunkered down on the grass, a moving line of turbaned heads nodding as they attend to their work of cutting, the sickles rising and falling in synchronous rhythm as they slowly make their way forward, a silent line of duck-walking men who will never see a polo match but who will feed their families this day.

I hear Jai calling again and wrench my heart away from this scene and start walking back to the stone tower, which is a goodly distance away. All right, all right, I’m coming.

Jai bows and offers to fetch some breakfast.

“No, Jai. I’ll be eating my usual meal at sunset. Please bring it then, with a knock on the door.” I smile at the thought of this simple device that will pull me out of the dimensional worlds, a knock that I must answer. Jai then stations himself next to the door, sitting cross-legged on the cool marble floor, proof against evil spirits who may wish to disturb my captain and me.

The loud hum of the air conditioner blots out all other sounds in the darkened room.

As I sit with towel in hand, awaiting divine pleasure, I soon yelp as the position reasserts itself without any regard to comfort. The pain this day is red tinged and fretful with hand and arm contortions hard to suppress. I summon calmness and surrender to meet this upset, soon finding a pinpoint of light to follow in the black and red.

My hands relax and fall to my sides, the towel in my lap falling away, too. I’m dimly aware that there is no drool, nor will there be again. Aha, I think, accommodation. Time passes away to the timeless.

The knock on the door is quite insistent. Upon leaping up I tumble to the floor, my legs asleep and useless. Well, shit, I think, and call out, “A moment please, one moment.” I am sleeping on the sidewalk with one eye out for rats and vermin. My body is wracked with painful disease. I am alone and tortured with the desperation of the forgotten.

I see a vaporous beam snaking along the damp concrete and I watch as it arrives at my forehead. I am lifted, head and body still horizontal, and carried through the night air with the breeze of motion tingling my skin. I stretch out my arms and lift my head, smiling at the thought of Superman. With a whoosh of air and swirling cape, I land on my feet in front of a pure white gate brilliant with light.

“Oh, God,” I say aloud as the dream fades into the nothingness from whence it came. I am still dressed, with boots on, my favored way to sleep. At least my clothes are clean now, thanks to Jai, who I discover is
not outside my door, the hour too early at 5 a.m.

I brush my teeth and rework my braided hair. I gather up the goods I bought in Australia a lifetime ago, medicines and kitchenware, and ask the night clerk to call a taxi.

As the sky colors with violet and red, the taxi slowly proceeds along the dismal street where I recently lay asleep on the sidewalk. It is a horrible scene of destitution and poverty, even the closed shops broadcasting dreary enterprise. Then, in the glow of pearlescent light, the white gate appears on the right, a beacon in the darkest sea of suffering. I pay the taxi walla enough to keep him waiting.

When I begin to fear that the gate will never open—my repeated knocks echoing off into the damp air—a white- and blue-clad nun slides open a small window in the gate.

“Y es?”

“I’ve brought things for you, medicines and cutlery.” I hold up the bag for her inspection. She says nothing. “I’m a medical doctor from America.” At this, she nods and opens the gate to admit me.

“Thank you, kind sir,” she says with a European accent. She is about 20 years old and quite beautiful in an unadorned way. “Mother Teresa is out of the country, but I accept these things in her name.” She nods vigorously as I display the antibiotics and goods. There is light dancing around in the foyer where we are standing. I sense the presence of little ones, fairy-like beings, who are at play. I can’t help but smile.

After five days in the chair, my head releases forward and I am done with it. I clap three times and open the black double doors, turning and bowing deeply to Jai, who had just come on duty. “I will be gone all day and will take a meal in the restaurant at sunset. You are...” (for a moment I can’t find the proper word) “...released.” He bows and backs away. I will never see him again.

Outside, the sun is streaming down in shafts of particulate light. I merge with the crowds of people on the sidewalk and let the flow take me where it will. Aha! A coconut vendor offers a green orb with a drinking straw of spiraled white and red. I gulp down the sweet milk until it’s gone, carefully placing the coconut on a patch of grass near the sidewalk.

Vendors cry out in foreign tongues, hawking their goods from sidewalk stalls and carts. Incense fills the air as I wander among them, stopping now and then to touch exotic things.

After a time, I notice that there is a person following me at a distance, something that had been pushing at my awareness. He, a young man of 20 or so, dressed in white clothing, no turban or hat, stops when I stop, goes when I go, always 20 paces behind, never meeting my eye. How odd, I think, how very odd.

Stealing a glance over my left shoulder, I enter Victoria Gardens. Yes, he is still following me. I find a shaded bench under an arbor that looks out over a reflecting pool of still water. I can imagine Queen Victoria sitting on this very bench with the satisfaction of having tamed this wild city with a strong dose of English propriety.

A few seconds later, the young man appears and stops on the gravel path in front of me. He faces the reflecting pool without paying me any notice and starts throwing coins into the rippling water. I wonder at this unusual disregard for money by a person who can surely find better use for it. To my amazement, the young man starts twirling around in a spontaneous dance, arms
uplifted in between throws of coins from his pocket: Around and around he goes, the water rippling anew with each toss. I am captivated by this display and begin to suspect that this is an important event and not just a random wonder. His dancing is somewhat awkward with him spinning in tight circles, arms outstretched. There is a neutral expression on his face, but his eyes are alight with intensity.

My mysterious friend concludes his dance and stands for a moment looking out over the water. He then turns and comes to the bench, sitting at my right side without meeting my gaze. We sit in silence for a time, both looking straight ahead. My astonishment at this ongoing sequence soon turns to expectant waiting: I know that this is a mystical event of some sort, and I summon patience. Perhaps it was a wait of a minute or two, but is, more accurately, a prolonged wait of 35 years. He slowly turns to me and lightly touches my right elbow with his right hand. Leaning close to my ear, he says in a clear voice, “I’m sorry.” He quickly gets up and walks away, never to be seen again.

I am buoyant. I don’t understand what has happened but know without a doubt I am forever changed as a result of his light touch on my right arm. Good Lord, what does it mean—”I’m sorry”?


Taco Bell & Pizza Hut to Remove Artificial Ingredients from Food

In yet another set of victories for the healthy consumer, fast food giants Taco Bell and Pizza Hut have announced that they will be removing artificial ingredients from their food items—a change undoubtedly sparked by our collective desire for food that is free of questionable ingredients.

For its most recent food changes, Taco Bell announced that it would be switching out its black pepper flavor ingredient for—gasp—real pepper! The fast food chain will also be eliminating trans fats in its foods by the end of 2015—a move that should have been done years ago. But we still applaud the changes.

Further, Taco Bell will be eliminating Yellow dye number 6 from its nacho cheese, as well as Blue number 1 from its avocado ranch dressing.

“Yellow 6 caused adrenal tumors in animals, though that is disputed by industry and the FDA. It may be contaminated with cancer-causing chemicals and occasionally causes severe hypersensitivity reactions,” a study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest found in 2010. “Yellow 6 adds an unnecessary risk to the food supply.”

“Blue 1 was not found to be toxic in key rat and mouse studies,” scientists noted, adding “but an unpublished study suggested the possibility that Blue 1 caused kidney tumors in mice, and a preliminary in vitro study raised questions about possible effects on nerve cells. Blue 1 may not cause cancer, but confirmatory studies should be conducted. The dye can cause hypersensitivity reactions.”

Pizza Hut announced similar changes, vowing to eliminate all artificial colors and preservatives in its food by August of this year.

—Natural Society
A pproximately 25 million people take statin drugs to reduce their cholesterol, yet heart disease remains the number one killer of Americans.

While statins lower LDL cholesterol and C-reactive protein, and modestly elevate protective HDL cholesterol, they may increase the risk of heart failure in certain people.

Researchers have now discovered two compounds that work together to safely lower dangerous LDL cholesterol—while simultaneously boosting protective HDL.

An extract from the leaves of artichoke has been shown to raise protective HDL levels without the side effects of statins.

In addition, a derivative of vitamin B5, called pantethine, safely lowers LDL while maintaining CoQ10 at protective levels—resulting in an 11% reduction in major coronary heart disease events.

Together, these two nutrients offer protection against two causes of vascular disease.

Statins Do Only Half The Job

Statin drugs potently lower cholesterol when used properly, but produce a number of side effects that too often cause people to discontinue using them.

Statins have been associated with muscle weakness and pain (myalgia), muscle breakdown (rhabdomyolysis), kidney disease, and negative effects on the digestive and central nervous systems. Even more disturbing, statins also raise the risk of developing diabetes by 9 to 13% (a risk that is up to 48% higher in postmenopausal women).

Clearly, statins are not the panacea that pharmaceutical companies have led physicians and the public to believe. One drawback is that they don’t elevate HDL enough to confer meaningful removal of excess cholesterol buildup on the arterial wall via reverse cholesterol transport.
**How Cholesterol Balance Dictates Your Health Risks**

Lowering LDL is one piece of the puzzle for preventing heart disease. Another component is to raise HDL levels, which removes cholesterol from blood vessel walls and protects it from oxidation. Numerous epidemiological, animal, and human studies demonstrate the value of achieving and maintaining high HDL levels.

In one impressive human study, each 5 mg/dL increase in HDL led to a reduction of up to 29% in the risk of cardiovascular disease; other studies show that the risk of having a heart attack or dying goes down 3% for each 1% increase in HDL.

Statin drugs have a major problem: They reduce the production of coenzyme Q10, which is necessary for releasing energy from foods that heart cells need to function. This negative effect may paradoxically raise heart failure risk in certain populations.

What aging humans need is a balanced approach to reducing cardiovascular disease—one that safely lowers LDL while simultaneously raising HDL levels. Researchers have found two nutrients that can do just that.

Pantethine, a derivative of vitamin B5, safely lowers LDL without negatively impacting CoQ10 levels, while artichoke leaf extract can raise HDL levels without harmful side effects.

Let’s look at artichoke leaf extract first.

**Artichoke Leaf Extract**

Artichokes are members of the thistle family. The edible portion of the plant is actually a giant flower bud, but the leaves that cover it are rich in flavonoid molecules that have been shown to help lower LDL cholesterol levels and raise protective HDL levels.

Chief among these is cynaropicrin, along with luteolin, cynaroside, and chlorogenic acid. These molecules protect the cholesterol in LDL particles from the dangerous oxidation that leads to atherosclerosis. Artichoke extracts are also able to inhibit the synthesis of new cholesterol molecules by nearly 60%, which might help to lower total blood cholesterol levels.

In addition, artichoke leaf extract promotes the fecal excretion of bile acids, which are detergent-like molecules that carry cholesterol out of the body. This action has been shown to lower total and non-HDL cholesterol levels in a preclinical study by 15 and 30%, respectively.

These complementary mechanisms likely all contribute to the observed reduction in cardiovascular risk factors seen in human studies of supplementation with artichoke leaf extract.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LDL Level (mg/dL)</th>
<th>Associated Risk Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100*</td>
<td>Optimal (minimal risk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-129</td>
<td>Near optimal (low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160-189</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190 and above</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*While less than **100 mg/dL** is the published upper limit of optimal, Life Extension® feels that the ideal limit should be less than **80 mg/dL**. Those with pre-existing/high-risk cardiovascular disease should strive for less than **70 mg/dL**, but should have hormone levels checked to make sure they are not being suppressed (many vital hormones are built on a “scaffold” of cholesterol molecules).®

**Modest Reductions In Total Cholesterol And LDL**

Human studies of supplementation with artichoke leaf extract show a reduction in cardiovascular risk factors, including reduced LDL and total cholesterol levels and improved endothelial function.

When researchers gave patients with high cholesterol (more than 280 mg/dL) 1,800 mg per day of dry artichoke leaf extract for six weeks, they saw tremendous results. Patients using the artichoke leaf extract experienced an 18.5% reduction in total cholesterol, while the placebo patients only saw an 8.6% reduction.
Importantly, LDL fell 23% in supplemented patients but by only 6% in controls, while the ratio of LDL to HDL decreased 20% in supplemented patients and only 7% in controls.

Another study demonstrated the ability of artichoke supplementation to improve the function of the endothelium, the thin layer of cells lining arteries. Since endothelial dysfunction is a first step in atherosclerosis, improving endothelial function is especially important in helping prevent heart disease. The study showed that patients with moderate hyperlipidemia who supplemented with artichoke experienced a 36.4% improvement in endothelial function compared with controls and also had favorable decreases in blood markers of endothelial dysfunction, demonstrating the ability of artichoke to directly improve vascular health.

And in a study published in Phytomedicine, adults with mild to moderate cholesterol elevations who took 1,280 mg per day of a standardized artichoke leaf extract for twelve weeks reduced total cholesterol by an average of 4.2% from baseline, while in control subjects that figure increased by an average of 1.9% during the study.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Safely Control Cholesterol

- Americans continue to die at unacceptable rates from cardiovascular disease, partially driven by persistent elevations in LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and insufficient protection by HDL (“good”) cholesterol.
- Statins lower LDL cholesterol and some raise HDL cholesterol, but they produce side effects that may cause many people to stop taking the drugs, leaving them unprotected.
- Two natural ingredients are now available that can lower LDL cholesterol without reducing CoQ10 levels and increase beneficial HDL cholesterol.
- Pantethine, a derivative of vitamin B5, reliably lowers LDL cholesterol and the LDL carrier protein apoB, without statin-like side effects, and without lowering protective CoQ10 levels.
- Artichoke leaf extract raises protective HDL levels and levels of the HDL carrier protein, apoA.
- Dual-acting protection against America’s leading killer, cardiovascular disease, is now within reach of all Americans, without a prescription and through a natural product.

Artichoke Leaf Extract Increases HDL Cholesterol

The unique benefit from artichoke leaf extract comes from its ability to raise protective HDL cholesterol levels without adverse side effects.

Compelling evidence that artichoke leaf extract can raise protective HDL cholesterol levels has now arrived in a human study demonstrating a never-before-seen improvement in this vital risk-reducing factor.

The study examined 92 overweight subjects with an average body mass index of 25.4 who had mild elevations of total cholesterol. The subjects received either 250 mg twice daily (total 500 mg per day) of a triple standardized artichoke leaf extract or a placebo. After eight weeks, mean HDL cholesterol rose by 8 mg/dL in supplemented patients, but only by 0.2 mg/dL in controls. In those who received artichoke leaf extract, this represents a 10% increase in mean HDL cholesterol from baseline measurements.

In addition to a beneficial rise in good cholesterol, mean total cholesterol levels fell in supplemented patients by 15 mg/dL, but by only 5 mg/dL in controls. Significant differences were also shown in the total cholesterol/HDL ratio and in the LDL/HDL ratio in supplemented patients, compared with controls.

Importantly, there were no adverse effects noted in this study.

In a follow-up study, the same researchers found that when patients with mild cholesterol elevations took a daily 200 mg dose of artichoke leaf extract, their total cholesterol fell by nearly 10% after only thirty days. Excitingly, this study also demonstrated a 19% increase in levels of protective apoA (the HDL cholesterol-carrying protein) and a similar 19% rise in the ratio of apoA to apoB (the LDL-associated protein).

UNDERSTANDING GOOD VERSUS BAD CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol itself is neither good nor bad. It is simply an essential form of fat that contributes to our cell membranes and is an absolute requirement for the formation of many vital hormones and other signaling molecules.
The differences between “good” cholesterol and “bad” cholesterol are mainly related to protein molecules that carry the cholesterol and their ability to shield the fat molecule from oxidation as oxidized fats are powerful triggers of atherosclerosis.

These carriers, when loaded up with cholesterol, are called lipoproteins. Before being loaded with cholesterol, the carrier proteins are called apoproteins, with suffixes such as “A” and “B.”

Apolipoprotein A (or apoA), when loaded with cholesterol, is called high density lipoprotein, or HDL. HDL particles also contain auxiliary enzymes, including one called paraoxonase1 (or PON1), which have potent and specific effects. Because apoA helps draw cholesterol out of fat-laden cells, and because the presence of PON1 protects cholesterol from oxidation, HDL cholesterol particles have favorable health effects, earning them the title of “good cholesterol.”

Apolipoprotein B (apoB), when loaded with cholesterol, is known as low density lipoprotein, or LDL. LDL particles are vulnerable to chemical changes induced by oxygen free radicals, however they are protected from oxidation via the activity of PON1. Because apoB transports oxidized cholesterol from the bloodstream and into cells, LDL cholesterol has the opposite effect from that of HDL cholesterol, exerting negative health effects and earning LDL the title of “bad cholesterol.”

The “Magic Bullet” Behind Increased HDL Cholesterol

It’s clear that artichoke leaf extract can favorably impact HDL cholesterol levels, but how? Scientists are still uncovering those answers, but so far we know that artichoke extract has a number of potential mechanisms that could have a positive impact on HDL cholesterol.

Studies in humans demonstrate that supplementation with artichoke leaf extract raises levels of the protective apoA carrier molecule that supports the HDL particle, which contributes to observed increases in beneficial HDL levels. A pilot study has shown a significant 19% increase in apoA after thirty days of supplementation in a human population; in addition, the ratio of apoA to apoB rose by 19%.

Another leading hypothesis behind artichoke leaf extract’s ability to raise HDL levels has to do with its high content of chlorogenic acid, known to raise HDL-cholesterol by enhancing PON1, the powerful enzyme that forms part of the HDL particle. Increased PON1 correlates strongly with HDL cholesterol.

Pantethine Safely Lowers LDL Cholesterol

A long-standing concern with statins is that they reduce the production of essential coenzyme Q10, which may ultimately raise some cardiovascular risks in certain populations.

Pantethine, a derivative of vitamin B5, reliably lowers LDL cholesterol without reducing CoQ10 levels. Studies indicate that pantethine helps reduce cholesterol levels by dual mechanisms—reducing the rate of new cholesterol production and speeding the breakdown of existing cholesterol. Both lab and clinical studies show that these mechanisms lead to real-world reductions in dangerous cholesterol levels.

Laboratory studies have shown that adding pantethine to liver cells in culture significantly reduces the production of fatty acids while increasing fat-burning activity. As far back as 1984, a study on live rabbits fed a high-cholesterol diet found that pantethine supplementation reduced plasma total cholesterol levels by 64.7% compared with control animals. Supplemented animals also demonstrated an increase in the beneficial HDL/total cholesterol ratio, a more than 18% reduction in the area of aortic plaque formation, and a reduction in the severity of lesions in the aorta and in the coronary arteries.

After that study was published, a variety of small studies during the late 1980s and early 1990s began exploring pantethine for human use—and all demonstrated pantethine’s ability to reduce total and LDL cholesterol, as well as its ability to reduce the ratio of total cholesterol to HDL.

But it is the dramatic findings
of two recent studies that have experts re-energized about pantethine in reducing risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

The first study involved people in basically good health, but whose lipid profiles placed them in a low-to-moderate risk of cardiovascular disease. Because of their low risk, these patients were not candidates for statin therapy, making them ideal for a prevention study of this kind.

For four weeks, all subjects were started on a therapeutic lifestyle-change diet, with the main focus being a reduction in saturated fat. After that, they were randomly assigned to receive 600 mg per day of pantethine or a placebo for the next eight weeks, and then 900 mg per day for an additional eight weeks. At the end of the study, placebo recipients had no significant changes in total or LDL cholesterol or levels of apoB (the LDL-associated protein). Pantethine-supplemented subjects, however, had modest reductions in total cholesterol of 6 mg/dL (3% from baseline), in LDL of 4 mg/dL (4% from baseline), and in apoB of 4 mg/dL (5% from baseline).

A study of similar design in 2014 found better results. After just four weeks, the researchers noted significant differences between the supplemented and placebo groups. And after 16 weeks, the patients supplementing with pantethine experienced reductions from baseline in total cholesterol of 6%, in LDL of 11%, and non-HDL cholesterol of 8%. Interestingly, an increase in the dose of pantethine from 600 to 900 mg per day during weeks eight through sixteen did not produce additional changes in LDL. An additional critical finding in this study was an 8% reduction in apoB from baseline in the supplemented group—a significant reduction since apoB is the core protein in the deadly LDL cholesterol particle.

Given that for each 1% reduction in LDL cholesterol levels there is a correlating 1% reduction in the risk of coronary artery events, these pantethine-induced changes bode extremely well for those at risk for cardiovascular diseases. In this study, the 11% reduction in LDL cholesterol translates into a highly meaningful 11% decrease in the risk of a heart attack or other coronary artery disorder.

An additional important factor in the context of safety here is that levels of CoQ10 did not fall (indeed, they rose slightly) with supplementation. This is in direct contradistinction to statins, which produce dangerous lowering of CoQ10, potentially impairing energy metabolism in heart and skeletal muscles.

**NEW AND IMPROVED VITAMIN B5**

Pantethine is a derivative of vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid). It lowers cholesterol—particularly the risk-producing LDL form—by enhancing cellular utilization of fats and sugars and by reducing the production of new cholesterol molecules. Pantethine essentially functions as a more metabolically active form of vitamin B5. Its benefits are especially seen in how it relates to an essential enzyme cofactor called Coenzyme A (CoA).

Vitamin B5 is the precursor molecule to CoA. Unlike vitamin B5, however, pantethine participates directly in reactions requiring CoA, without the need to undergo additional enzymatic conversion that is required of B5 itself.

Once pantethine has been efficiently converted into CoA, CoA participates in more than 70 crucial enzymatic reactions in the body—particularly those involving the breakdown of food molecules and release of the energy in their chemical bonds to do useful work in the cell. This is important because every single fat and sugar molecule you eat must eventually combine with a CoA molecule to enter the cycle of reactions that will release its chemical energy.

Research shows that supplementation with pantethine significantly raises the content and activity of CoA in the liver, much more efficiently than does vitamin B5 itself.

**Summary**

Virtually every American is at significant risk for cardiovascular diseases as they age. Factors behind this risk include elevations in LDL and insufficient protective HDL.

Mainstream medicine and Big Pharma have succeeded in getting more than 25 million Americans to use statin drugs that lower LDL cholesterol at the expense of side effects so pronounced that over 20% stop using statins, leaving them vulnerable to LDL-induced arterial disease.

A new combination of ingredients includes pantethine, shown to safely lower LDL without statin-like
side effects, and a novel artichoke leaf extract, capable of raising HDL levels. This combination is likely to provide dual-acting benefits.

Those with moderately elevated LDL and/or insufficient HDL may be able to eliminate statin drugs through use of the natural compounds described in this article.

For people with stubbornly high LDL that may require statin drug therapy, the advantage of adding these natural compounds is that it may enable the dose of the statin drug to be reduced to a level where side effects are minimized or eliminated.

A fact that physicians have yet to grasp is that lower-dose statins in most patients can provide equivalent protective benefits as high doses promoted by profit-hungry pharmaceutical companies. This was shown in a study with the popular statin drug atorvastatin (Lipitor®), whereby fewer patients taking lower doses died from any cause compared to higher doses.

Statin drugs are demonized by advocates of natural approaches, and the horrific side effects inflicted by high-dose statins justify these concerns, especially for those who do not adequately supplement with CoQ10.

An objective strategy when taking into account the high rates of disability and death caused by arterial disease is to try lifestyle and natural approaches to reduce LDL below 100 mg/dL and increase HDL as high above 50 mg/dL as possible. If these safe methods fail, then use the absolute lowest dose of a statin drug to achieve LDL/HDL blood readings in the safe ranges.


Exploding Smart Meters!

The watchdog group Stop Smart Meters has received yet another report of exploding smart meters, this time in Capitola, CA:

“On 5.12, the Smart Meters blew off my house and about 100 of my neighbors’, just like in Stockton. I didn’t see any mention of the Smart Meters blowing up in Capitola on 5.12 on your website and feel like PG&E just brushed it under the rug. My washing machine broke in the process and PG&E is not helpful at all.”

This follows a similar incident in Stockton, CA in March where meters blew off houses and many appliances were damaged after an electrical surge.

Utilities kindly correct us if we are mistaken, but this is not a phenomenon affecting glass and steel electromechanical analog meters. It’s too bad that we have such corrupt “oversight” that has not only allowed utilities to deploy this untested, hazardous technology on nearly every building—in violation of numerous laws, but then destroy millions of safe meters so it would be harder for policymakers to order a recall.

Sounds like a stitch-up, and believe us—it is. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.

Capitola was one of fifteen local governments in California to pass an ordinance banning the meters back in 2010 when we had just started our campaign. If PG&E and the corrupt California Public Utilities Commission had respected local law, things may have been different.

If the Santa Cruz County Sheriff had protected public safety and enforced the law rather than protecting and escorting those who violated it; if the Sheriff had not arrested us for civilly disobeying and rightfully blocking what we knew then was an unsafe deployment, the exploding meters and chronic RF sickness that have become part of the California landscape in 2015 may have been avoided.

How many millions of unsafe meters are sitting on people’s homes right now, waiting for a surge that can instantly transform electrical meters into incendiary bombs?

We called PG&E for comment (they always love to hear from us), and asked what the cause of the problem was, and asked for evidence of any similar incidents with analog meters. They said they would call us back.

We also contacted the Capitola City Council as well as state legislators for the area and have demanded an independent statewide investigation into these incidents.

—Stop Smart Meters!
Optimism opens a door in difficult or hopeless situations. Optimism knows that there is always a way, no matter how many doors have been shut, and it believes that there is always a good alternative.

No matter what the crisis, an optimistic outlook will tell you that the situation you are facing is a sign that you need to find a different way of thinking or a new way of doing things. Sometimes it’s easy to miss the signal because change can be uncomfortable, to say the least. No one really wants to do the work it takes to change unless it’s absolutely necessary, so they often ignore the warning signs until they become so obvious and clear that there is no other choice but to wake up. Now the choice is either to heed the warning and make a change or continue in self-delusion and fall behind on your journey to develop a lifetime of feeling great. But if you take the road that lacks optimism instead of taking steps toward renaissance, your steps will lead you to complaints, resentment, or even desperation.

Optimists hold on to hope . . . they don’t ignore the reality and consequences of problems, but they also don’t despair or lose themselves in the chaos when Pandora’s Box is opened. In your daily life, you will face many obstacles; sometimes they will be bumps in the road, other times they will be complete detours. But no matter if it is a brief detour or a true Pandora’s Box with a whole assortment of problems that bring fear, chaos, and distress, optimism will enable you to persevere. When you can draw on patience and determination, your commitment to positive thinking and introspection
will allow you to find solutions, and it will attract healing and peace from within yourself and from the world around you.

Work on becoming an optimist—maintain a gentle determination that will allow you to focus on potential alternatives and find solutions to problems. Be flexible and allow yourself to be led. Combine the art of making things happen with the ability to allow things to happen, and realize that more than one factor is involved in building a bridge and finding a solution. When you apply these principles to your life, you will feel yourself moving closer and closer toward that constant state of feeling great that once was so elusive.

**The Story of the Two Applicants**

A man answered an ad in the paper for a job, and was asked to come in and fill out an application. As he waited in the lobby he asked the receptionist, “How are the people here?”

“Well, what were the people like where you worked before?” she responded.

“They weren’t very nice,” he said. “They overworked me and my boss was strict and rude. I’m glad to be rid of them!”

“Really?” replied the receptionist. “That’s just how you’ll find people here, too.”

Disgusted, the applicant picked up his keys and marched out the door.

Half an hour later another applicant came through the door. While he was waiting for an interview, he asked the receptionist, “How are the people at this company?”

“What were the people like where you worked before?” she replied.

“Oh, they were great! My boss was good to me and gave me opportunities to learn new things. I worked hard but it was good work. I’m going to miss them,” he mused.

“Well, that’s just how you’ll find people here, too. You’re going to love it!” she said.

**Lesson:** Don’t let your thoughts reside in a negative mind. An optimist resides in hope.

**Exercise: Authentic Living**

**Becoming an Optimist**

Here is an exercise that will sharpen your skills at being an optimist. Learn these rules and put them to practice; you will quickly find that they cease to be “rules” and become part of your character instead. Be mindful of them from morning to evening—they will carry you a long way toward fulfilling your goal of feeling great day after day.

**Peter Vegso’s 15 Rules for Happiness**

Sometimes we need a shift in perspective to lift our spirits. It’s easy to get caught up in ourselves and our situations and allow them to dictate how we feel, but we can learn to control the inner and outer influences that affect us. We can actually train ourselves to overcome distressing or pessimistic emotions and enjoy greater happiness in our lives.

Be grateful for what you have—you may not have everything you want, but it’s likely that you have everything you need. If you don’t, be grateful for the ability to pursue your needs and set a plan to achieve them.

Find a source of awe in each day—there are a million things waiting to be discovered: a person’s kindness, a sunrise, a faithful pet. Take a look around you and learn to recognize them.
Reach out to someone—be kind, listen, share something. Until you make that effort, you won’t know what the person next to you needs. An encouraging word may be all that’s needed to give someone an emotional boost.

Do something for yourself—even if it’s something small like taking an extra ten minutes with your coffee in the morning or taking the scenic way home from work.

Be aware of your thoughts—when something runs through your mind that you can’t do anything about, let it go. All that thinking will cause you to sink lower; you need to rise above things that are not contributing to your happiness.

Live for today—realize that you only have right now and make the best of it; yesterday is gone and tomorrow will bring challenges of its own.

De-clutter—clean out your junk drawer, tidy up your desk or your closet. When you put external things in order, your mind and heart will also function in a more orderly fashion and that is an especially liberating feeling.

Donate—find something that you haven’t worn or used in a while that someone else can use; maybe it’s a coat, a blanket, or the blue jeans you can’t fit into anymore. Make sure they are in good condition; donating old rags is not very helpful or caring.

Quit feeling sorry for yourself—even if something legitimate is making you sad, know the true source of the sadness and grow, but an attitude of “poor me” is simply being negative.

Set a goal—whether it’s exercise, eating better, encouraging your child more often—each little step forward will be rewarding.

Practice calm—every one of us has hectic days that can unravel us if we let them. Breathe, settle down, and tackle one situation at a time; you’ll accomplish more and feel less stressed.

Take a quick inventory of things around you that are comforting—the pictures on your desk, the trees on the roadside, the music in your car, the bed on which you are sleeping. Wherever you are, there are reminders of your fortune—be thankful!

Smile more—even if you wake up on the wrong side of the bed, determine that you will not take negative feelings into your day. Try smiling at yourself in the mirror (and try not to laugh!).

Get outside—of the building. The sun has an amazing ability to change our perspective; its warmth can permeate even the grumpiest façade. If it’s not a sunny day, take a drive or take a walk in the rain and appreciate its ability to renew and make things grow—including you.

Get outside—of yourself. Too much thinking and internalizing can make you dull and self-centered. Lift up your chin and be an overcomer—you really can be happy if you try; and that makes everyone around you happy.

Excerpted with permission from Feeling Great, Creating a Life of Optimism, Enthusiasm and Contentment, HCI Books.

Feeling Great, Creating a Life of Optimism, Enthusiasm and Contentment (HCI Books), is a fascinating and complete guidebook that offers a simple blueprint for a lifelong embodiment of true contentment by a triad of leading wisdom keepers—Dadi Janki, Peter Vegso, and Kelly Johnson. Feeling Great breaks down the elements that must be present in your life to experience sustained peak living. Feeling Great is available at http://www.hcibooks.com, Amazon.com and many bookstores.
The setting of the championship race was certainly picturesque: Castaic Lake, a reservoir formed by the Castaic Dam in the Sierra Pelona Mountains of northwestern Los Angeles. Action scenes for movies and TV are often filmed there because of the gorgeous but rugged natural terrain, and this is where I arrived for the state championship. I was in second place overall, but this was the last race and counted for double points. I was focused in on my goal of taking the title. It didn’t matter to me that when the race started at eight in the morning, it was already a searing 95 degrees. Or that this particular year, they ran the course in a different direction than they had run it in previous years, which would entail far more climbing for the racers. About 5,300 feet of steep uphill biking was in my future during the 21-mile course.

Hours later, the win was in my reach. The race was three laps, and in the previous two, I’d always passed the first-place girl on the descent. Jon had taught me how to descend, and I was fearless about it. On the third lap, I spotted her right before the descent began, and I knew I’d pass her on the downhill and get to the finish line first.

That was the last thing I remember.

All of a sudden, I woke up at the bottom of the hill with pine needles stuffed into my jersey. My helmet was sideways on my head and cracked in several places (although I didn’t know that at the time). I wanted to climb back up the hill, but the pine needles were so thick that I kept slipping.

Another cyclist saw me struggling to get up the hill, stopped, and said, “Are you okay?”

Later, he told me that I was trying to get back on my bike and just kept falling back down the hill. All I remember was pedaling and watching that girl in front of me. Eventually, doctors would tell me that memory loss is retroactive, and this is why I don’t remember the actual fall or trying to scramble back up the hill. I assume that I passed out when I was pedaling due to dehydra-
I thought I’d been drinking plenty of water, but it must not have been enough for the heat. I blacked out and fell down a mountain.

What happened next was the most important thing to ever happen to me.

Somehow my body finally dropped to the ground, and I started to float above the entire scene. I was hovering over my body, which was down below me. I could see people surrounding me, but I couldn’t really tell what they were doing. Instead, I could tell what they were feeling. Some of them were feeling like they were on-purpose in their lives and put here to be emergency medical technicians. Others were off-purpose and wanted to do something else—one wanted to be a painter. I knew that one of the female medics had romantic feelings for one of the male EMTs, but she was too afraid to tell him. I could feel their thoughts, their desires, their unmet needs, but I couldn’t hear their voices, as there was no need to do so.

The place I was in was magical. It was vast and pure, with a type of expanded consciousness that I had never experienced before in my life. It was beyond words. I don’t even know if there are words that can explain the level of consciousness I experienced. No words could explain something that is much more expansive than anything I’ve ever known here. I once looked out over the cliff at the great Grand Canyon, and this feeling was even vaster than that experience. When I ask myself why now, I know the answer. This was a place of complete, unconditional love.

There are no conditions of any kind in this state of pure expansion. There are no boundaries; no pain; and no past, present, or future. It is all of those things at once: the past, present, and the future occurring at the same exact time. It is actually a state of all-encompassing awareness rather than a “place.” It just is.

I can’t report that I saw a white light, nor did I travel down a tunnel according to the classic depiction of a near-death experience (NDE) as defined by Dr. Raymond Moody. All I felt was vast consciousness, and anything that came into my awareness was instantly manifested in front of me. I thought of Asia, for example, and Asia was in front of me. I’m not specifically sure why Asia came into my awareness, as I’d never been there; however, it is the best way I can describe how everything was immediately in my realm of awareness, without borders. Even the most remote place I could imagine appeared in my limitless sphere of consciousness.

I was definitely not creating this in my mind, as I was the furthest from analytical thinking I had ever been. I was purely experiencing this peaceful state. I felt so serene and wanted for nothing. There were no unmet needs, hopes, or goals. There were no desires, as everything was present at that moment.

What I would find so interesting when I would look back on it was the absence of pain in that state. What I know now is that all discomfort is created in the mind. I had no feeling of pain after my accident—in fact, I couldn’t feel my body at all. Now I see bodies as beautifully intelligent sacs of fluid and bones, encapsulated by the boundaries of our skin. Don’t get me wrong, because I love our human bodies and know that they are amazing creations, but I also know for a fact that we are not our bodies. We are pure expanded consciousness.

Back at the mountain, one of the EMTs was asking, “Are you Jon?”

“Yes,” a familiar voice said.

“She has been saying your name. She has been asking for you.”

I saw this silver cord, luminescent, pure, and bright, attached between Jon and me. It was like a light beam connecting us. I saw the connection, and knew that it
was something quite significant.

At that moment, I jumped back into my body, which felt very confined and small. I looked up, and my eyes met Jon’s. I didn’t have the ability to speak because my body had been throwing up. These wonderful medics kept turning my head to the side so that I wouldn’t choke on my own vomit. Even though I couldn’t form any words, I marveled that I could communicate in a new way.

_I spoke from my eyes to his eyes._ And it was one of the most powerful and complete communications I had ever experienced.

It only lasted seconds, and then I left again, returning to this beautiful place of expanded consciousness.

The following excerpt has been reprinted with permission from _Becoming Aware: How to Repattern Your Brain and Revitalize Your Life_ by Lisa Garr (Hay House; May 19, 2015).

Lisa Garr is host and producer of a popular syndicated radio show called _The Aware Show_, heard in the Los Angeles market on KPFK 90.7 FM or on KPFK.org and she has a Hay House Radio show called _Being Aware_. Lisa also hosts a series for Gaia TV called _Gaia Inspirations_. Her bi-monthly Summit series is one of the largest on the Internet. And topping it off, she is a weekend host on _Coast to Coast AM_, syndicated in over 500 stations around the world. Combined, she reaches millions of listeners globally a month. _On The Aware Show_, she interviews influential and incredible transformational luminaries from all walks of life. Her new book _Becoming Aware_ (Hay House) helps readers transform their lives by showing how she applied 15 years of these experts’ lessons to her own life as a businesswoman, wife, and mother. Go to: http://www.becomingawarebook.com

---

**Hunger for Organic Foods Stretches Supply Chain**

Last year, executives at organic cereal maker Nature’s Path Foods Inc. grew so frustrated with organic-grain shortfalls that they took a radical step: They bought a farm.

The three-decade-old Canadian company plunked down more than $2 million for 2,800 acres of Montana cropland, part of an effort to seize greater control of its supplies of wheat, oats and other ingredients. “We just want to secure our own future,” said founder Arran Stephens.

Nature’s Path is among a number of organic-food purveyors taking steps to tackle supply constraints that are hampering the growth of one of the hottest categories of the U.S. food industry. Companies including soup maker Pacific Foods of Oregon Inc. and publicly traded burrito chain Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc. are digging deeper into the supply chain with such moves as financing farmers, offering technical training and hiring full-time head-hunters to recruit organic growers.

The efforts are aimed at ramping up organic-food output that has failed to keep pace with surging consumer demand, due in part to the significant costs and risks that U.S. farmers face in converting from conventional to organic farming. Longer-term, the steps could help bring down organic-food prices that have been bolstered by tight supplies, companies say.

Nature’s Path’s purchase of Montana farmland last year is likely to become a trend. The Company plans to dedicate at least $2 million each year to purchase additional conventional farmland that it can then convert to organic production in order to fill a quarter of its grain needs over the next decade. The company contracts with farmers to manage the land, takes one third of the crop at no cost and buys the rest at market price.

—_Wall Street Journal_
Let me introduce you to a few exceptional individuals. C. completed her doctorate in Divinity at age 66. L. ran his own business successfully for many years and had degrees in Mathematics, Music, and Law. R. was a brilliant physicist and hung out most of his career with Nobel Laureates. J. was a marathon runner and emeritus professor at two leading universities. D. helped create DOS for computers. W. was a top cancer surgeon.

I have had the good fortune in my nursing career to work with geniuses, linguists, deans, doctors, philosophers, creative thinkers, and artists. They were individuals who had reached incredible personal heights in their careers and their lives, and were either schooled in the traditional way or in the school of hard knocks. All have Alzheimer’s or other dementias in common, so clearly this does not support the findings that we can avoid dementia by exercising our brains. These folks were using every extra neural pathway possible. What does this mean? It raises some interesting questions.

Most people recognize President Ronald Reagan’s name and know his story. This man had a long and successful career in the public eye, from acting to politics, and made a contribution to the field of Alzheimer’s disease by letting the nation know he was afflicted with it. Prior to this, several other celebrities had acknowledged that they suffered from it, but it was Ronald Reagan who made the biggest impact.

Early in 1990, in my capacity as a volunteer for the

In this edited excerpt from her book, A Deeper Perspective On Alzheimer’s and other Dementias: Practical Tools with Spiritual Insights, Megan Carnarius advocates for a new perspective of Alzheimer’s disease and finds something positive in the diagnosis for both the patient and their loved ones…
Alzheimer’s Association, I was asked to host a booth at a local health fair, an annual event attended by hundreds of people. Other organizations were set up nearby—the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Association, an audiologist, and so on—and I brought balloons and flowers and had a festive-looking table with fliers and handouts.

Let me tell you what happened. I stood there for seven hours cheerfully greeting people as they passed, but everyone was giving my table a wide berth, as if walking close to it would somehow put them at risk for “catching” Alzheimer’s. Only four people actually approached my table all day. The first said, “Oh, my God! What a horrible disease!” and quickly moved on to the next table. The next said, “I know I have it. I can’t remember names,” and when I asked if she had ever been able to remember names, she said “NO, but I know I have it!” and quickly rushed on. The other two people actually had a loved one with the disease whom they were caring for and were already in contact with the Alzheimer’s Association.

At the end of the day, I was feeling somewhat dejected as I was putting my items away, when a woman approached me from the American Cancer Association table. She said,

“Don’t worry. They all used to treat us and our booth that way. People were very afraid of even saying the word ‘cancer.’ They thought it was a death sentence, and when someone got diagnosed they often wouldn’t tell anyone except the closest person to them—not their children, not coworkers. Now people are not as afraid and realize there can be success stories. Maybe, someday, that will happen with Alzheimer’s, too.”

When Ronald Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, people knew the breadth of the life he had led and, with occasional updates from his wife, followed his illness. Nancy Reagan also published a book about their love story and some of the daily notes he had written her throughout their marriage. But what happens sometimes when an individual gets the diagnosis is that there is a feeling of shame and dismissal. “Oh, that is such a shame. They had such a great life.” It almost sounds as if the life were wasted because it ended like this.

When it comes to dying, some people fantasize about going to bed and putting their slippers neatly together, pulling the covers up, and just not waking up the next morning.

Other folks fantasize about doing something they love, then falling over dead. It might be startling to the rest of the people involved in whatever activity it is, but often mourners come to the conclusion that this is also a great way to go. Other individuals live one kind of extreme life and then, through some kind of accident or injury, experience the opposite extreme: for example, Olympic athletes at the peak of their physical abilities or...
NFL football players who suddenly become paralyzed or years later suffer dementia.

When someone takes the experience by the horns and fully engage it instead of avoiding it, something fundamentally shifts in our perception of the situation and also typically how the person will speak about it. They are not a victim anymore. They are able to say honestly, “Yes, I wished this never happened, but I am now aware of . . .” Or, “I understand this . . .” Or, “I believe this . . . and would not have had these insights had I not had these experiences.”

I believe it is easier for us to see the blessings in certain situations with positive outcomes, as in cases when an individual comes into this life and it is quickly apparent they have certain gifts and talents, attributes which the circumstances they are born into also nurture. An example of this would be footballer John Elway. He was born into a family that loved football, and his father was a football coach. By the time, Elway was two he was throwing balls with uncanny accuracy, and his mother remarked that even as a child, he could hit anything they identified as a target. This skill kept growing, and as his life unfolded, he became one of the most renowned NFL quarterbacks of our time. Some people are child prodigies whose stories have come down to us through history, such as Mozart. We wonder, how was it possible that this young boy had complete sonatas rolling off his fingers at the age of 13?

In these examples, it is easy to find ourselves saying, “He was destined to do this.” In conventional thinking, when someone’s life has reached a pinnacle and then something happens to make it go completely in an opposite direction, we tend to judge their life as a failure. What I see, though, is the totality of a life experience—everything that happens is part of our life history, not just selected pieces. It may represent a deeper desire at the level of the soul that with our limited perspective, we cannot understand. Because the Alzheimer’s journey renders the person unable to communicate their internal experience, it is viewed as wasted time—indeed, to all outward appearances, Alzheimer’s seems to consist of accumulating losses and the inability to function in line with “normal” realities.

But what if this is a rich, deeply meaningful period in the person’s life and their understanding of their innermost aspect of themselves? What if it is part of a larger plan, their destiny? What if they are not a victim? What if their essence has been working in this life on the use of mind, the use of the brain, and now they are experiencing vistas and possibilities of this organ that defy description and cannot be conveyed to others? What if the last years of their life are registering on their souls, and that memory has nothing to do with whether they are whole and intact, but experiencing every moment of it, released from their own conventions?

No one in their day-to-day consciousness wants Alzheimer’s. That is not what I am suggesting. No one did anything bad to get it, and people diagnosed with the disease are doing the best they can and also wish this were not happening to them. No matter whether you have lived a full and amazing life or a long and modest life, you may still get Alzheimer’s. So what is happening?

I believe the soul is whole and intact and busy gathering experiences, learning from this additional toil at the end of life. This is not wasted experience. The soul is busy, busy, busy. This is especially true in situations where there has been excellence in the area of mind or use of the brain. It feels to me that the person is discovering something else by having the experience of opposites. To be very cognitively astute, to use the brain and find self-definition through the use of mind is very normal. There is also an element of seduction in it. If we are truly authentic, we recognize that our physical package changes over time.

EARTH STAR  JUNE / JULY 2015  www.earthstarmag.com
We recognize that if we define ourselves according to how we looked at twenty years of age we would spend the rest of our life disappointed.

How do we evaluate a life? How do we assess a lifetime and say it was worthy, it was good? As I said earlier, what I hear sometimes in the tone of the statement “Isn’t it a shame he or she got Alzheimer’s” is that the disease has made the person’s whole life null and void. Are we so materialistic that the mind and the brain are thought of as one thing representing the whole person?

We don’t feel that way about the heart. We have all these feelings, these emotions, and we say things about our hearts. But typically we don’t feel these emotions are literally in the cellular tissue of our heart. When someone has survived a heart attack, we don’t say, “Oh, what a shame. He was such a loving and kind person,” as if the heart attack stops that kind of emotional expression. Yet our chest swells with feelings, our hearts pound with anxiety or the rush of joy. How can someone have a heart transplant and not be squeamish that all their feelings are going to leave them and the feelings of another are going to invade their system? We know that is foolish. Yet we do not feel that way about our brains, our memories, and the use of our minds.

If we need to look for an additional blessing, many individuals with Alzheimer’s attained all the outward hallmarks of success that society expects of us. They grew up, completed schooling, held jobs, had careers, met others they could share dreams and a life with, raised families, had hobbies and interests, volunteered, mentored others, and shared their wisdom and humanity. This brings me back to Ronald Reagan. What was so touching to me after his death was the full state funeral that was held, befitting his status as a former US President, yet in the minds of many members of the public at odds with who he had been in the final decade of his life due to Alzheimer’s disease. Folks who might not have normally thought about it found themselves thinking about what it must have been like for this man who had been involved in so many life experiences yet could no longer consciously recall them. Because people were so familiar with stories about Reagan, this could not be so easily dismissed. It was a breakthrough to have news media ask about the status of Reagan’s dementia in the last years and months, and for the public to engage in a dialogue about this difficult process. It really helped to bring this disease out into the open and not be treated like the leprosy of our time. To have the entire country stop for a moment to observe the passing of a life—a life full of many experiences, including Alzheimer’s—and to have that person honored for the entirety of their life was a final tribute to all people living with Alzheimer’s disease.

Mention the words “mind control” to most people and they will tell you to put on your tin foil hat. Long associated with conspiracy theories, despite so much evidence to prove it has existed in some form or another from the time humans could interact, mind control is finally getting the respect it deserves, thanks to an unprecedented era of privacy invasions on all fronts that can no longer be denied. From the technology we have all come to know, love and depend on, such as cell phones and pads and computers, to the social networking sites we now live our entire lives on for all the world to see, to the creepy presence of cameras on street corners and satellite/drone eyes in the skies...we think we still control our own private lives. We think we control our own thoughts, desires, behaviors and actions. We think we control our own minds...but further examination proves we are exposed in ways we might never have imagined.

From the earliest times to the present day, humans have sought ways to control other humans, even know their thoughts and possibly even change them. Throughout history, there have been religious crusades and political maneuverings specifically designed to do away with those who thought and behaved out of step with the needs and desires of those in authority positions. We see every day now reports in the media of continued attempts to control other human beings, even if it means slaughtering them or placing them into captivity, like zoo animals. Our own media serves as a weapon of mind control, delivering news and information to us that is often bought and paid for by those in power, whether political, religious or corporate. We cannot trust anything we hear anymore as fact or truth, because often it is spun to present to us a particular truth, one that usually benefits the spinner. This is mind control at its most pervasive, in the form of government, military and even corporate invasions into our personal and private domains and it happens in every country across the globe because wanting to control others is an undeniable facet of human behavior and the desire for power no matter one’s race, color or creed.

The declassification of government controlled programs such as MKUltra, Artichoke and others from our past have proven that people who can manipulate others for their own benefit, WILL manipulate others for their own benefit. This includes torture, the abuse of children, and the destruction of human minds for a higher purpose, according to those in charge of said programs, of creating some type of supersoldier or superspy, or perhaps just for the sheer scientific glee of seeing how far you can push another human being to act like a remote controlled robot. Perhaps a bit of both...

But more invasive and insidious forms of mind con-
Control exist in our every day lives that we may not pay much attention to. We spend much of our time either on the Internet looking at news; on social networking sites, which are rampant with disinformation and misinformation alike; watching television or listening to radio; even reading magazines and newspapers and books, all of which serve to fill our minds with the thoughts and beliefs of others. Some of this acts as sheer entertainment, or even education, but at what point do we relinquish our own ability to think, act and behave to others who would no doubt love to do it for us? It’s a question we all need to begin asking as we are coming into an age of absolute information overload.

Now, with constant surveillance and watchful eyes upon us, we not only give up our inner domain of control, but in many ways, our outer as well. Cell phones, computers, gadgets...all can be easily hacked by powerful entities that want to know what we are saying, who we are with, where we are going and what we are consuming, and often we don’t even know we are being diagnosed with such explicitness. There are security cameras on street corners watching our every move, more satellites in the skies above honing in on our activities, even inside our own homes, and now drones flying under the radar with the ability to see through walls as well.

Though much of this technology and advancement has positive benefits as well, we cannot ignore the negative aspects of losing our individual and collective privacy, because once our privacy is gone, we lose who we are at our most basic and core level. Mind control and electronic surveillance is now such a part of our existence, we don’t even protest much against it anymore.

How many people turn off their cell phones despite being told that the technology now exists to listen to your conversations even when you are not using your phone? How many people watch what they say on social networking, often inviting scam artists and criminals to take advantage of them?

There are people who call themselves “TIs,” or targeted individuals, who believe they are being surveilled, harassed and even controlled by others, perhaps from the government, military or some corporate entity...and yet, in this day and age, we are all targeted individuals. We are all potentially being watched, studied, stalked, harassed and manipulated by people who benefit from controlling, altering or changing our innermost thoughts and beliefs, and thus, our behaviors. Perhaps it doesn’t require a tin foil hat anymore to realize that we are at a point in history where technology has the power to see right through us, and transmit what it sees to whomever wants the information, for whatever purposes.

We are at war now, not for oil or resources or territory or religious or political bragging rights. We are at war for control of the last bastion of what it is that defines our humanity...our own minds.

Excerpted with permission from Mind Wars by Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman © 2015, was provided by Warwick Associates. Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman are the authors of Mind Wars, published by New Page Books, 2015, http://www.newpagebooks.com
Can you imagine feeling good and natural and full of life? Imagine what it would feel like to feel calm and centered no matter what your circumstances might be. Imagine having more energy while engaging in everything you do, and feeling ever more connected in your life, day-by-day, breath-by-breath.

Having taught meditation for over thirty years to thousands of people, I can really say that it is the single most important thing you can ever learn in order to expedite and enrich your spiritual life. Everything you learn in school, by analysis or by study, will be exponentially deepened because you meditate. Meditation will influence the way you organize your thoughts and the way you develop your personal philosophy. It will affect the way you appreciate art or a poem or a good conversation. This is because everything is energy and vibration, and since everything is energy, every part of your life will be affected. Meditation gives you access to an inner world of knowing. It’s like having a magic carpet, and you can go anywhere, in any time, in any space.

Scientific studies have shown what has long been known—meditation works. It is a quick stress releaser. It speeds recovery and healing and lessens pain. It lowers your blood pressure and gives you more energy, more stamina, and quicker reflexes. It improves memory and increases your ability to concentrate. In general, you become more balanced mentally and emotionally. Anxiety and depression subside, and creativity blossoms. It also helps in all forms of addiction recovery.

Meditation will teach you to reconnect with yourself and tap into the limitless potentials within you. You’ll feel revitalized and renewed. Through this process, relationships become enriched and enlivened, work becomes inspired, and you’ll begin to discover the potentials of your own positive growth. The list goes on and on. It’s a whole new way of being.

Meditation keeps you emotionally current in your life. It’s like a living journal: you always know where you are. Your heart opens. You learn acceptance, appreciation, and compassion without even trying. By staying connected with yourself and your inner knowing, you reduce your stress level and you generally relax, improving your overall health. It affects every area of your life, from your work to your relationships.

It’s like getting plugged into a greater source of energy: you begin to sense and discover your direction in life and even your life’s purposes (there are many, you know). You will see, feel, and know yourself in a way that will change and delight you—effortlessly. Best of all, time begins to change, and you begin to see that you have all the time you need and want in order to take your next step in your life. You relax.

And the great thing about it is that it’s easy. It’s a
simple practice of awareness that takes just a few minutes a day. It’s a quick little tune-up, after which you can see how you are, check in with yourself, appreciate the moment, and live a little bigger, all because you simply stopped for a moment, and breathed, and let yourself be.

Meditation is as old as the hills and has been used for eons to center and align the self for a happier, more meaningful life. My aim in this book is to show you the practical application of meditation. It’s like a hammer and a nail: something you can use every day for a known result, which works when you use it.

Meditation is an ancient discipline designed to help you learn to be more present in your life. It is an art that is practiced, something that we keep growing into, discovering, unraveling, and expanding in order to learn even more deeply the gorgeous difference between thinking and mindfulness.

Imagine feeling grounded and certain and creative and free, and more and more so every day. These are just a few of the things you will learn and experience when you begin your meditation practice.

An Insomniac’s Guide to Meditation
Four Tips for Getting Back to Sleep Fast

There are times in life where we just cannot sleep. We roll over and toss and turn, coming wide awake hoping to fall back to sleep again. Whether it be for short intermittent periods during stressed and challenging times, or long years of sleeplessness caused by chronic tension, insomnia can be like the quiet beast in the dead of night that slowly drains our energy making us vulnerable and weary, tired and depressed.

If insomnia becomes chronic, we may find ourselves taking natural remedies like melatonin or magnesium, but if those don’t work we could end up reaching for alcohol, or other kinds of drugs, including stronger pharmaceutical medications, in our basic biological need to fall asleep.

Most of what keeps us awake is stress. And meditation can be just the thing to relax your mind to let yourself deeply rest and sleep.

When we worry, we create stress hormones and chemistry that tell the body that something is wrong. It can trigger the sympathetic nervous system which is the part of the autonomic nervous system that is responsible for producing the fight-or-flight response. When this occurs, these stress hormones can elevate causing the heart rate to increase and blood pressure to rise. To us, this feels like nervousness, worry, or anxiety – and this tension can literally keep us up all night.

When the body is tense the sympathetic nervous system is telling the body there is danger, and to be ready. Anything as ordinary as watching the news before you go to sleep or playing a game on your smart phone can create a stress chemistry in the body that impacts your entire body and your sleep pattern.

So how do we get back to sleep? For thousands of years meditation breathing techniques have helped people get back to sleep by inducing a biology of relaxation. This is good news because breathing isn’t something we need to buy or go to a doctor for. We can simply breathe!

When we feel safe, when we are relaxed, the body begins to quickly respond to the fight-or-flight response that originates from stress. We can easily replicate the relaxation response by changing our breath patterns. The breath is the governor that both responds and controls the stress reaction.
But, believe it or not, there is a correct way to breathe and many of us are not doing this. So here are the things to remember:

1 – Don’t hold your breath
This is probably the most important thing I could tell you about breathing. When the breath is stressed the body is stressed, and when the breath is held it very quickly effects the autonomic nervous system which starts the neural/chemical chain of response that can eventually trigger fight-or-flight. Just by remembering to breathe your whole physiology will relax.

2 – Breathe deeply
Start to take deeper breaths—always through the nose—on both the inhalation and exhalation. Try inhaling for three to five seconds, then exhaling for the same. When you can’t sleep, try doing ten of these deep breaths in a row. This will start to change your physiology and create a calm meditational state that will help you sleep.

3 – Make sure the breath is not “reversed.”
This is less known but very, very important in terms of your mental state and also your physical one. When the breath is natural, the belly gently expands as you inhale and contracts as you exhale. When this breathing pattern is reversed because of mental or physical tension, the whole body begins to react in a series of autonomic responses like dominos that can trigger a stressed state. You can’t meditate if you are in stress. And you definitely can’t sleep.

You can check yourself now. Put your hand on your belly as you inhale. As you inhale, the belly should gently rise. When you exhale your belly should gently descend. If it’s not doing that, the body is stressed and in a reversed pattern. Changing this one aspect can help you get back to sleep and also improve your immune system and overall health.

4 – Finally, add a phrase or a meditation affirmation as you are breathing in this natural and healthy way, like:

I am relaxed and at ease.
I breathe out tension with every exhalation.
All is well with me.

This will even further deepen your state of relaxation. In doing so, you are actually performing a mini-meditation. You are teaching yourself to relax on demand. You will begin to realize that you have control over your body and emotions in ways you hadn’t realized, and finally, finally, get back to sleep.


Diana Lang is the author of Opening to Meditation and the owner and director of the LifeWorks Center for Growth in Los Angeles, where she lives. She is also active in a variety of non-profit international efforts to teach meditation and yoga. Visit her online at http://www.dianalang.com
Is meditation difficult?
Meditation is as easy as breathing. I can teach anyone to meditate in about 5 minutes. The hard work is to continue doing it. Meditation only works if you use it. Meditation is not a switch you turn on and then be done with. You must keep flipping the switch of consciousness ON. It is a method of conscious consciousness. In that sense it is an effort, and what is called in metaphysics, a practice.

How can meditation make my life better?
In every way your life can improve when you meditate. Everything you do and speak and even think becomes more aware. Even your sensory perception improves. It helps in making decisions and choices. It helps you to become more present in your relationships. And in general, to become more present in everything you do. It also promotes a sense of being centered. As you become more centered and present you will ultimately become more authentic. Authenticity is the goal — to be your true and REALized self.

Why is meditation becoming so popular?
We are all trying to find more fulfillment and meaning in our lives. In the fast-paced world we live in, with the Internet and 24-hour news, and all of the constant stimulation, we can feel lost, or confused, or undirected. By meditating we can find our way home again, and get back to ourselves. We can experience clarity and real peace. We are all searching for truth and meaning, and meditation will take us there — directly.

Awareness of meditation is growing exponentially as more and more people talk about it, especially well known people, such as: Oprah, Ellen DeGeneres, Angelina Jolie, Richard Gere, Madonna, Sting, Clint Eastwood, Russell Brand, David Lynch, Russell Simmons, Orlando Bloom, Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Gwyneth Paltrow, Lady Gaga, Howard Stern. All of The Beatles meditated, and of course, Steve Jobs.

Is there a right way to meditate?
There are hundreds of ways to meditate developed over thousands of years from many, many traditions. However, all meditation, in theory, works. It’s important to find a style that resonates with you and that somehow feels familiar. There are still basic methods that will allow you to have an easier and more successful experience. However, there is no wrong way to meditate. You don’t have to sit in a certain position, or say a mantra, or light a candle. Just sitting quietly and becoming aware of the breath is a meditation.

Can I still meditate if I can’t sit still?
Stillness is what meditation teaches. It’s something that we have to practice. If a new meditator is having trouble sitting still there are many exercises that are designed for just this condition, like focusing on the breath, for instance. Don’t forget that almost everyone when first meditating feels that they cannot become still, or quiet the mind. This is a normal stage in developing your meditation practice.

How will meditation affect my life?
Right away, you will feel more present. This one thing changes everything. You become more conscious of how you deal internally with yourself, and your world. By meditating, everything from your work to your relationships, your business, your inner self-esteem and your sense of contribution to the world becomes richer. You can learn to be happy, really. You can be fulfilled, really. You will feel whole... actually.

By being more present you become more focused and on purpose in your life. Your direction becomes clear and possible. You will find your attention to everything you do is better and less distracted and life becomes inspired!
Do I have to be religious to meditate?
No. You just need to be open and present. I would make a distinction between religious and spiritual. Becoming awake in our life is a spiritual experience which meditation accelerates.

Will meditation increase my extra sensory perception?
One of the first things you will notice when you meditate is a heightened sensitivity to the world around you and the world within you. You will realize that they are connected. Colors can be more vivid and sound more vibrant. The way you listen changes, even how you experience a conversation. You will feel like you know things that aren’t being said, because you will feel them before they are said. You will find yourself knowing the phone is going to ring before it does, and sometimes even knowing who is on the other end!

This is simply increased presence. As you meditate you will naturally develop a greater compassion and patience for the human condition because you are having compassion for yourself and your own condition.

Is there a link between meditation and creativity/intelligence?
When you meditate you are linking up to a kind of stream of universal consciousness, like a river of ideas and creativity. We can link directly into this stream by simply meditating. Research shows meditation is a great technique to improve creativity and develop the neocortex which is the creative part of the brain, and that meditation creates more elasticity in the brain resulting in a more creative approach to problem solving.

Top companies encourage creativity by offering meditation in the workplace. For instance, The Walt Disney Company was an early adopter of meditation because of the remarkable increase in creativity they saw among their artists. General Mills found similar results and provides meditation rooms for their employees. Google offers an entire meditation program called ‘Search Inside Yourself’ that includes an on-site labyrinth for walking meditations.

Is meditation good for my health?
In a hundred ways your physical health can improve by meditating. Just the function of deep breathing will affect the autonomic nervous system, which is the stress producing system of your body. One of the terms we use to describe illness is disease; in metaphysics we say, dis-ease. You see? Not at ease. Stress exacerbates any illness, chronic or acute. By meditating you are teaching the body to relax and de-stress. By teaching your body a new method of relaxation-on-demand, you can help your body heal.

Studies have shown meditation benefits health in many ways, including:

- Decrease in Stress Hormone
- Lower Blood Pressure
- Reversal of Aging Process
- Reduced Need for Medical Care
- Reduction in Cholesterol
- Better self-esteem
- Faster Healing
- Better sleep
- Decreased Cigarette, Alcohol, and Drug Abuse
- Improved Ability to Focus
- Increased Creativity
- Deeper Level of Relaxation
- Improved Perception and Memory
- Development of Intelligence
- Natural Change in Breathing
- Increased Productivity
- Improved Relations at Work
- Increased Relaxation and Decreased Stress
- Improved Health and More Positive Health Habits
Is meditation good for my self-esteem?
At the heart of meditation is self-acceptance. One of the meditation phrases I teach is, “I deeply and completely accept myself.” It can take years to really experience these words as truth. But it also can be understood in a moment. As you understand this more deeply, your self-esteem, your sense of yourself, your own self-dignity begins to align with the highest part of you.

What do I do if I can’t stop thinking while I’m meditating?
This is really the nuts and bolts of it, isn’t it? Meditation is the practice of becoming aware of our thoughts, thought by thought. We can get lost in thought, like a kind of daydreaming, and float away. Or literally fall asleep and actually dream. But meditation is the opposite of this. It is absolute awakeness: full attention, full presence to whatever is in front of us or within us, right now, just like it is. Meditation is full of exercises for practicing this. Because it’s hard. This is the work of it. But you will find that the benefits are so great that the work is worth every minute. By awareness of the breath, concentration, focusing the mind, and other techniques, you will learn to master your mind while meditating, and discover peace of mind.

Is daydreaming the same as meditation?
You can use daydreaming as a doorway to meditation, or as a technique to enter different states of imagination, as in a guided visualization. But formal meditation is different than daydreaming because it is about the practice of awareness and being wide awake to the moment. It is pure presence.

What does breathing have to do with meditation?
Breathing is used to focus the mind. It is often one of the first things that is taught in meditation. It’s good because you don’t need anything outside yourself to meditate. The breath becomes the mantra, the breath becomes the physiological relaxation technique, the breath becomes the focus, the breath is the teacher.

How do I start meditating?
There is so much to this point, but the simplest way I can answer this is to tell you to simply stop, and quiet your mind. I call this pausing. Even in between my sentences as I’m writing them right now, I am in a mini-meditation. I am pausing. I am recalibrating. I am sourcing something bigger than my own brain from thought to thought.

Then, you’ll need to find the time and place to do it. And then, show up for it. Dedicate yourself to it for a few minutes each day and watch your life change!

When do I start?
Start right now. Start with this breath that you are taking right now. Start by becoming present in this moment. Recognizing that, this is a meditation.

That’s what is so powerful about meditation – and so liberating. You can do it right now. You don’t need anything or anyone or any concept to do it. You just become present. Presence IS meditation.

Diana Lang is the author of Opening to Meditation and the owner and director of the LifeWorks Center for Growth in Los Angeles, where she lives. Visit her online at http://www.dianalang.com
We often encounter animals. Not every animal encounter is one that immediately signals something to us. Chiefly, those spontaneous, surprising contacts are the telling ones. It is also interesting to interpret the animals you encounter daily, or those you own as pets.

Perhaps I can help you to imagine, how it can be that a chance encounter may have something to tell you.

Imagine that you are at the center of the universe. Everything that surrounds you is a reflection of your inner reality. Because everything that exists comes from the same energy source and also understands the same laws, one can thus assume that everything is interconnected. In your inner self, these energies are formulated into thoughts and feelings, which give rise externally to forms, colors, and spaces. What moves and touches you internally also shows itself on the outside. Your inner world is constantly enlivened by astonishing impulses and ideas. Your outer universe also shows these movements.

I believe that the outer world, as the individual experiences it, is an exact mirror of what takes place in the inner world. No two people on earth ever take the same exact journey of perceptions through time and space. Even when two people spend a whole day together, they notice different details and react to different impulses. Perceptions are regulated by the “soul matrix,” the soul archetype. It is therefore the inner impulse that draws one’s attention to something. You are the center of your universe, and your inner world changes, as if in a kaleidoscope, around the center of your perceptions. Thus your archetypes, dogmas, and life themes are always forming new, fascinating mandalas.

The outer world offers the natural counterpart for these mandalas, and our intuitively linked sensory perception is continually building bridges between the internal processes and the corresponding external processes. Because this happens unconsciously, we humans do not create any conscious connection between internal processes and external events. Thus one could also say that people create external experiences for themselves with the help of their inner worlds.

How Can an Animal Encounter Be Interpreted?

To interpret an encounter with a messenger from the animal world as precisely as possible, the process of this encounter should be carefully noted. For this, several factors are important.

1. Observe: What was I thinking about? What problem was I moved by at the moment? Who was I musing about? How did I feel when I saw the animal? Be very exact about this. What counts is not the loudest topic but the most important!

2. How did I perceive the encounter? Did I see, hear,
feel, or smell the animal first? Was it a single animal, or were there multiple animals?

3. How did the animal behave? Was it moving, did it hide, did it react to me, or was it simply going about its business?

4. Where did the animal come from? Where was it located (above or below)? If it was moving, where did it come from and where was it going?

5. Note the various colors of the animals.

6. Note the sex.

7. Young animals, when they are clearly recognizable as such, speak to a certain level within the observer.

8. Dead animals also carry a message.

9. Animals in combination are interesting. For example, a dog chasing a cat; a deer in the cow pasture; and so forth.

These factors should all be seen as resources. They can help you to interpret an observation when the message is not yet clear. The mental clarification of an interpretation through the points given above often enhances the strength of the encounter’s message. It is important, however, to arrive eventually at a point in your deliberation where you no longer analyze the message with your head. As soon as the first “Aha” moment arrives, follow your feelings, your impulses. Then ignore the external factors. The animal has brought you onto its trail. Just as the animal follows its instincts, you must follow yours.

**Bumblebee**

**Lightheartedness, Wonder**

Bumblebees are furry insects that build their nests underground. Like other bees, they produce wax and construct honeycombs. They gather nectar and stock small supplies of honey for rainy days. Each colony only lasts for one summer. In late fall, fertile males and females emerge alongside the workers and mate. Then the whole colony dies except for the fertilized females, who shelter under moss for the winter.

In the spring, each female establishes a new colony. As with wasps, it is mainly the queen who takes care of the offspring, feeding them with honey. The females can sting; their stingers are smooth, and they can sting multiple times. However, bumblebee stings are extremely rare. According to the laws of aerodynamics, given the bumblebee’s body weight and wingspan, it should not be able to fly. Because the bees do not know this, they do so with a loud buzzing noise.

**Message**

The humming of the bumblebee belongs to the summer. It is part of the easiness and lightheartedness of that season. An encounter with a bumblebee reminds you of enjoyment. Let go of those demoralizing thoughts and try not to plan your life around what is possible and what is impossible. Unhindered by restrictive knowledge, the bumblebee buzzes from flower to flower and gathers the nectar of existence, even if its life only lasts for a summer. If you have a very overt encounter with a bumblebee, it could be a sign that something impossible for you will soon become possible.

In other words, a miracle will happen. Perhaps all the miracles of today will be explainable by the science of tomorrow, but that does not matter. Miracles are unimaginable processes: events that are not predictable by present knowledge. So turn off your mind, breathe the moment deep into your heart, and let great, contented joy into yourself. What miracle will happen to you? You will see.

---


Regula Meyer is a spiritual channeler with a deep connection to animals. She teaches workshops in Switzerland on guided meditation, the Medicine Wheel, life’s spiritual purpose, and power animals. She offers individual life-coaching and spiritual guidance consultations. She lives in Sevelen, Switzerland.
Make 2015 Your Year of Self Discovery!

Get your very own personalized ASTROLOGICAL FORECAST
Only $25 for 3-months / $35 for 6-months / $50 for 1-year

The Future Forecast Transit Report is a chronological overview and analysis of the major transits and planetary movements affecting your natal horoscope over a specified period of time, providing timely hints and suggestions about the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead...for YOU.
(1 Year is approximately 60-80 pages)
(Please indicate the month your Transits are to begin)

Other Helpful Astrology Reports

Compatibility Report - A detailed comparison of the Natal Horoscopes of two people - $40

Natal Horoscope Report - Written in plain English without astrological jargon, your Natal Horoscope Report will provide helpful insights into your innate strengths and weaknesses, your potential for worldly success, relationship possibilities, health issues to pay attention to, together with your deepest personal needs - $35

To Order:
Send Name, Date, Time & Place of Birth for each person with payment and return address to:
Tim Gunns • 110 Hilltop Drive • Waynesville • NC 28786 • tgearthstar@aol.com • 828-452-9378
Payments may be made via Paypal to tgearthstar@aol.com, or by check or Money Order

Science and the Near-Death Experience
How Consciousness Survives Death
CHRIS CARTER

Materialistic thinking suggests that perceptions of life after death are a creation of the brain. Armed with evidence from scientific studies, Chris Carter shows that consciousness does not depend on the brain, and that near-death experiences may truly provide a glimpse of an awaiting afterlife.
$18.95, paper, 320 pages
6 x 9, 4 b&w illustrations

The Spiritual Life of Water
Its Power and Purpose
ALICK BARTHOLOMEW

This book reveals water to be a conscious organism that is self-creating and self-organizing. Examining new discoveries in quantum biology, it shows how water binds all of life into one vast network of energy, allowing instant communication and coherence.
$19.95, paper, 368 pages
6 x 9, includes 16-page color insert and 30 b&w illustrations
ISBN 978-1-59477-360-0

Revised Two-Color Edition
The Complete I Ching — 10th Anniversary Edition
The Definitive Translation by
TAOIST MASTER ALFRED HUANG

As a native Chinese speaker, Master Huang has imbued this I Ching with an accuracy and authenticity not achieved in other English translations. He also returns to prominence the Ten Wings, the commentaries by Confucius that are essential to the I Ching’s insights.
$19.95, paper with French flaps
576 pages, 6 x 9
Two-color throughout
ISBN 978-1-59477-386-0
$30.00, hardcover

www.InnerTraditions.com • 800-246-8648