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ATOS Productions

Issue 39

March • April 2008

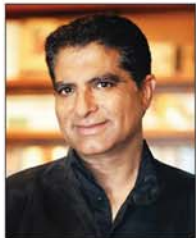


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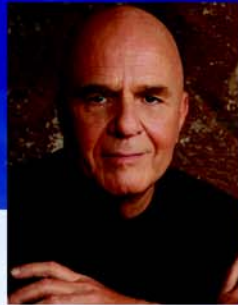
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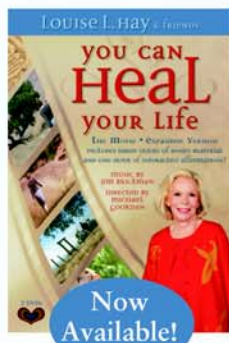
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WORDS FROM THE PUBLISHER.....

Funny that when a theme is picked for the Journey, I have no idea at the time that it will fit like a glove in my life when the magazine comes out.

Many years ago a spiritual advisor shared with me that the day will come when I would wake up and meet a stranger, and the stranger will be me. That day has come and gone several times, but not with the intensity I felt the first week of this year. Not one to shy from confrontation, the demons decided to have a field day for a bit during an intensive workshop I did in California. Intensive, in this case, is proof that words can be much too limiting. Not exactly sure why, but I do not feel like the same person that got on a plane for LA on January 4. I never really expected that I would wake up to some inner realizations that my life was not all that I believed it to be. But I guess when something stirs us up in a way that we don't expect; it is like waking from a sleep and seeing the world in whole different way. What it was that ultimately woke me up was taking a few steps out of my "comfort zone." I pushed myself to open up in a safe environment and let go of my self-judgment that I would be judged. A lot of what we did in this intensive was to detoxify our thoughts and cleanse our patterns of personal sabotage. The most interesting part to it all was that it was not like I had never heard a lot of it before, nor not done some of the exercises. It was like I had a toolbox full of tools and went to work and actually used some of them for the first time. The idea behind the intensive was to let go of the objects, or perhaps nightmares, that have been holding you back and come to your purpose in being. A Course in Miracles would ask us to believe that this is all an illusion, or perhaps a dream, and that when we wake up it will simply be that we have let go of the belief in our separation from God. I can buy into that. But perhaps there are dreams within the dream that we in fact choose to control through our actions and those are just steps to our final awakening. I'm not sure about any of it – but I am sure that thinking about it all has made me awful tired and I'm going to take a nap.

May we all find our awakening to that which takes us to our true purpose and serves the universe. ~ Namaste' Clyde

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Our Theme for the Next Issue...

The Heart and the Mind

An Awakening: The Imbalance of the World

Feeling stressed....burned out....anxious or depressed?
What is the source of this suffering I must ask?
It is the suffering caused by a life lived from the ego to be quite exact.
The suffering of attachment, of judgment and separation....
.....too much noise while you sit in quiet frustration.
Give, give, giving without any receiving.....take, take, taking without any giving.
Too much thinking, and not enough feeling.....
.....too much of everything else.
Too much worry and not enough trust....
.....too much belief and investment in an illusion that is unjust.
It hurts the ears and takes a chunk from the soul....
.....the drama and gossip is out of control.
What is the solution to all this you ask?
Stop doing in order to be something.....
.....and start being in order to do something.

In the guidance of Spirit, Nikki

Nikki Pawlowski, spiritual coach and intuitive guide can be reached
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Michael Sharp

In the coming years, Canadian author Michael Sharp sees more and more people waking up from their temporal slumber. He says awakening to your higher self is the easy part, it's remaining awake, despite the new realizations one might face, that's the challenge. "You don't have to tackle it all at once. You can work through it. And as long as you're looking for help, you're moving forward." See page 6.



John Major Jenkins

To many December 21st, 2012, will be just another Winter Solstice, but for author John Major Jenkins it's the end of an era. For almost 30 years, Jenkins has devoted himself to reconstructing ancient Mayan cosmology and philosophy. He sees this date, the end of the Mayan's current calendar as a wake up call humanity forgot it ordered, (page 10). "It is an opportunity for humanity to remember and awaken the True Self, but it is not automatic. If such an awakening is deeply desired, then a sacrifice of the illusions of sleep and ignorance must be accomplished."

Jill Huettich

The practice known as Akashic Records is an experience in awakening many never forget. In her regular column, *Insights* (page 36) Jill Huettich explores how people learn to access information concerning the lives their soul as lived in the past. "I can't think of a better way for someone to have a life-altering experience than to be able to access the history of their soul since the beginning of time." Huettich speaks with Ohio Akashic Records teacher Dahna Fox to learn how people understand issues at the center of their lives, by discovering the soul's intention,



Janee Kuta-Illiano

Before regular Health and Wellness columnist, Janee Kuta-Illiano experienced her own awakening, she found herself getting upset at the silliest things. She worked with a life coach to identify and neutralize her emotional reactions to life's events, but she says it wasn't an easy process. She says she had to be committed to getting to the finish line. "I actually felt like something was wrong with me if I wasn't peaceful and calm each day." In the *Health and Wellness Pages*, (page 17) Kuta-Illiano says figuring out yourself is not brain



THE AGE OF AWAKENING

As avid stargazers, the ancient Maya were keen to an astrological cycle called the *Precession of the Equinoxes*. According to the Mayan's December 21, 2012 is the close of a current 26,000 year cycle. In it, the Earth transits through each of the 12 signs of the zodiac for about 2152 years each. These astrological ages represent one month of the grand, Cosmic Year. The Sumerians, Tibetans, Egyptians, Cherokees, and Hopi refer to this same 26,000-year cycle in their mystical belief systems.

However, the Mayans refrained from making any predictions as to what would happen when their calendar came to an end and a new cycle began. This has created many doomsday and Age of Enlightenment scenarios for us to speculate.

Michael Sharp is an author and professor at Athabasca University in Alberta Canada, who surmises in 2012 the collective human consciousness, will go through a Golden Age of Spiritual Awakening. He says as more and more people wake up to the world around them and begin shedding all the emotional turmoil and ego driven realities that don't serve them, old systems of politics, ways of creating energy and all modes of constricting civilization will crumble away. He hopes they will then be rebuilt in physically and emotionally sustaining ways.

This Age of Awakening, the 2012 Era, which some say has already started, is often referred to as the 'Return of Christ Consciousness.' What does this mean to you?

In the book *The Great Awakening*, I describe your body as a container and consciousness in your body as a continuum. I use a drinking glass as a metaphor. In your left hand you have an empty glass and that glass is your life, which is foggy. In your right hand you have a water jug and in that jug is you; your consciousness. When you're born there's maybe 5% (of water) in the glass. When you grow up it's at 10% capacity. When I was a kid the scientists said we only use 10% of our brain. So awakening, spiritually awakening is moving to 15%, to 20%, 25%. To levels we haven't seen on this Earth. (Levels) that are even beyond where Christ was at or Buddha. So Christ Consciousness would be at a level higher than that we currently exist.

If you think about that, it's kinda cool because if you look at all the problems in the world and you say, "Geez, look at what we've done with 10%. Imagine what we could do with 15% or 20% imagine when everyone's an Einstein or a Christ?" That's what I see in this whole 2012, this rise in consciousness, this whole process of returning to who we are and fixing the world. Because the world is a mess and it's like we've all been sleep walking and bumping into each other.

How do people begin the process of awakening to more than their "normal" state?

That's very simple it's just like getting up in the morning. Because we've all been sleeping for thousands of years, typically you need a wake up call. Just like an alarm clock.

Someone saying "Wake up! Wake up!" And you say, "Okay I'm going to wake up." It's just like a manner of will power and intent. You just say you're going to get up. It's the same thing with spiritual awakening. You say, "I'm going to get up." You start going through the process.

Initiating it is very easy. The problem is when you do start to awaken. Because you're waking up into a world that's not very nice. You may open your eyes and see things in your life that you never saw before because you were sleeping. You'll see things in the world, local area, politics, economics, things you never noticed where there before. The natural reaction is to do the ostrich thing. Saying "I don't want to deal with this stuff," and try to go back to sleep. Awakening is easy; it's the process through that, those initial phases, that can be difficult.

Yeah, because now you're faced with all these things you see about yourself and your life that you have to face and it's scary.

Absolutely. Imagine you wake up and your room, your life, is a disaster area or the house is on fire. You have two things you can do. You can go back to bed or you can clear the way. Whether they are internal issues, issues in your family these are things you are going to have to deal with.

In our society I think it's almost universal we're taught not to do that stuff. We're taught to be polite, (so) we exist in the illusion of 'everything is okay.' When often things are not okay. It you see that and decide to turn away from it, you're not waking up. You're choosing to exist in the dream world then. It could be stuff about your childhood, or your family or your workplace, but you don't have to tackle it all at once. You can work through it. And as long as you're looking for help you're moving forward.

You've mentioned that as more people wake up to the world around them, the current way of doing things socially and politically will fall away. However, the current power structure has a desire to remain in power. So don't you think those in power will resist this age of enlightenment, if it happens?

Absolutely. That's already happening. A lot of what's going on in the Middle East and in Russia, I see that as a real attempt to head this off. Fear is the opposite of awakening. If you're scared huddled in your chair, you're not awakening, you're dreaming. You're in this matrix that's been created for you. Absolutely, that's going to happen. But the trick is, you have to remember that these people (in power) have the potential to awaken, too. They're playing this role and they can wake up. It's just a matter of time.

First that will happen at the lower levels of power and then in the middle. The people at the top, are really insulated and protected...by their entourages that do not let them access to this stuff. They are literally walled off. They don't awaken. But they're not going to have the means to do what they want to do anymore. ...When that happens, probably past 2012, the old world structures will just crumble, liter-

ally, over night. It should be fun to watch.

Some people may wake up and take a look around the room, the outside world, from the bed. Meaning they are stuck on the decision whether to truly get up or not. Perhaps its fear of failure or a lack of confidence in their abilities, but something keeps them from committing to fully taking this path of Awakening. What would you say to people experiencing this kind of struggle?

I say if I can do it, you can do it. I didn't come from a very good background at all. If I could list all the psychology issues that are possible to have, I had about 90% of them. So if I can do it, you can do it. Yes, it is difficult and there can be a lot of pains and stuff. But the pay off is like the biggest Las Vegas payoff that you can get.

It's really like an exponential curve. The first steps are the hardest and then it gets easier. It's also kinda a three steps forward and two steps back and then you step forward some more. But eventually the progress becomes smooth and faster and easier and your life changes and people will come into your life who are more in tune with you and the way you want to be and that makes it easier. There's not a lot of people (who are awake now), but that will change.

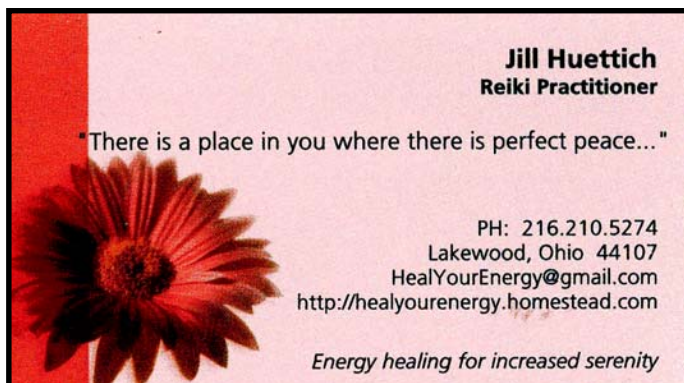
We're all sparks of consciousness. We're all these beings of divine love and incredible power and once you wake up to that, you're going to look back and say, "How was that stuff ever a problem?"

Dr. Michael Sharp is sociologist, university professor, mystic, and world teacher. His books include topics on, ascension (The Book of Life), chakra and kundalini activation (The Dossier of the Ascension), the nature of God (The Book of Light), and even the Tarot as a tool of spiritual advancement. He lives in Alberta, Canada and can be reached though his website, www.michaelsharp.org



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*Sunday, April 6 @ 2:30 PM - Meditation, Prayer, Music: World
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Awaken To Who You Really Are

By Dr. Norm Williams

Blaise Pascal, the famed seventeenth-century mathematician/physicist and theologian, said, “*One must know oneself, if this does not serve to discover truth, it at least serves as a rule of life and there is nothing better.*”

Until you are awakened to the truth, you will spend your life embracing false beliefs about who you are. You will take for granted that what is seen on the physical plane is who you are; or, as some people say, “your authentic self.”

Moreover, you will persist in the belief that the various roles you play and the things you acquire during your life will enhance who you are. However, these falsehoods will only serve to further impede your progress towards fulfillment in your life.

The time will come when you will know who you really are. You will know that you are one with the creative force of the Universe.

This truth will reveal itself to you one day in the fullness of God’s time as “*the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*” [John 1:9]. Then you will not continue to live in darkness (ignorance). And you will no longer rely on the external for guidance. For: “*the Spirit of truth ...will guide you into all truth*” [John 16:13]. You’ll come to know that nothing outside of you can prevent you from achieving your good in this world.

The Bible says you were created in the image and likeness of God. Hence, there is a God-like, absolute part of you. Whereas you can change, reinvent, or redesign your physical self, the true Self is unchangeable.

When you become aware of the true Self, you will know who you are. And, according to the Bible, the truth will set you free. It will free you to realize your possibilities. And you will come to know that you are a part of me, I am a part of you, and that we are all a part of God. The apostle Paul underscored this point when he wrote, “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*” [Philippians 2:5, 6].

And yet, each one of us is unique. We see this phenomenon throughout nature. For example, each snowflake is unique but is still a part of the snow. Similarly, each wave in the ocean has its own unique characteristics, yet each one comes from it.

Sunbeams cannot separate themselves from the sun any more than snowflakes can separate themselves from the snow or the waves from the ocean. Neither can human beings separate themselves from one another or from God. Like the sunbeams, the snowflakes, and the waves of the ocean, you are part of creation and a part of nature.

Therefore, you have a connectedness and interdependence

with all living things on Earth while you are connected to God, the Infinite Source, which is the Universe. Recognition of your oneness is crucial to your ultimate success in your journey through life.

You represent both a physical and a spiritual nature. You have a visible physical or mortal self and you are an invisible spiritual true Self. All of you are familiar with the former. However, what you might not have known, up until now, is that it’s not who you are.

The reason for this lack of awareness is due to the fact that the true Self lies dormant within you. You can only have knowledge of it when it is awakened.

Naturally, before this awakening occurs, and due to your ignorance, you have no reason to suspect that your physical self is not absolute and that it is not who you think you are. Unlike the true Self, it is influenced by the nurturing, cultural conditioning and experiences to which you are exposed during your life.

Therefore, you are not *your* physical self. As the possessive adjective “your” suggests, it belongs to you. It is not you.

You may recall the following scene in Lewis Carroll’s well-known novel, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*: Who are you?’ asked the Caterpillar.

Alice replied rather shyly, ‘I—I hardly know, Sir, just at present—at least. I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.

Your body is not the true Self. It has been referred to as the temple of the soul. Indeed, it is a vessel for your mind and the Spirit that is the true Self. Your body represents the interconnectedness in nature. Each part is connected to every other part through nerves and the circulation of blood. Consequently, what takes place in one area of your body affects other areas.

When you become aware of the true Self, you will know who you really are. You will then be in a position to let who you are shine through you. And, as a result, you will be able to have your unique gifts and talents expressed to the world through you. You will recognize your possibilities. And you will come to understand every other living being with whom you interact on this planet.

*Dr. Williams is a Toronto-based author/writer, business/executive strategist and personal coach. An internationally renowned self-actualization/personal-growth authority and inspirational/motivational speaker, he is a student of metaphysics, positive psychology and human molecular biology. His new book, *Take Steps to Realize Your Dreams*, is a powerful self-help/spiritual, inspirational and motivational guide available at <http://www.pdbookstore.com/comfiles/pages/NormWilliams.shtml>.*

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THE AWAKENING THAT 2012 INVITES

By John Major Jenkins

Many spiritual seekers intuitively know that the year 2012 invites an awakening rather than a doomsday. To recognize this truth is the first step in understanding the potential that 2012 has for a humanity that is struggling at a crossroads. Awakening will disentangle us from the fear-mongering archons who wish to keep humanity stuck in a state of limitation, or sleep.

I'm reading a great book called *The Secret Heresy of Hieronymus Bosch*, by Lynda Harris. In it, she writes: "Cathars believed that, as a result of their immersion in matter [illusion, ignorance, the false identification with the ego], the souls of ordinary humans had forgotten their true origins, and had become 'drunk' or 'asleep' . . . Such souls need to be awakened again, so that they can remember their real natures and understand their condition. Awakening is the first step in the soul's rescue, and the beginning of true knowledge or 'gnosis'."

The intuition that awakening is needed implies a kind of Gnostic or Hermetic view of the cosmos. It is very different from the popular idea that our souls "evolve." The evolutionary idea assumes we are moving toward something that we never previously knew or were. The awakening concept recognizes that the soul was originally eternal and infinite, but forgot its true nature. As we awaken, we remember our eternal spiritual selves that were forgotten.

In the vast cycles of time, we forget and remember, fall asleep and awaken. We die and are reborn, we rise and fall as the Wheel of Time spins. In Mayan, Gnostic, and Hermetic cosmologies, the portals of the soul's entry and exit are represented in the sky by the crosses formed by the Milky Way and the ecliptic (in the constellations of Gemini and Sagittarius). The December solstice sun represents the soul, and as it shifts along the zodiac with the precession of the equinoxes, it comes into alignment with these portals. In this profound model, the key eras of forgetting and remembering are 13,000 years ago and today. (More on this

at <http://Alignment2012.com>.)

The next galactic alignment occurs in the years around 2012. These movements and alignments are the macrocosmic counterpart to our individual soul's remembering and forgetting. Era-2012 signals a time of remembering, or awakening, but requires a sacrifice of the illusions that keep us sleeping — letting go of the sleep-trance induced by materialism, consumerism, nihilism, and ignorance.

Awakening requires a sacrifice. Forgetting requires buying into an illusion. In the Mayan Creation Mythology, the galactic alignment is portrayed as the triumph of One Hunahpu (the eternal soul) over Seven Macaw (vain egoism). The myth also encodes the galactic alignment of era-2012, since One Hunahpu is the December solstice sun deity. According to my pioneering research, this explains why the ancient Maya chose to end their 13-baktun cycle on December 21, 2012.

Doors open in the great cycles of time — alignments that invite remembering (awakening) and, on the other end of the process, forgetting (falling asleep). The era-2012 galactic alignment is happening NOW, not only in 2012. It is an opportunity for humanity to remember and awaken the True Self, but it is not automatic. If such an awakening is deeply desired, then a sacrifice of the illusions of sleep and ignorance must be accomplished. This is not to be sought in external ritual or following this or that guru, but by way of one's own internal metanoia (a turnabout in the deepest seat of consciousness). However, the option of remaining asleep is free will's prerogative.

If we want to awaken our True Selves, we must reorient the inner eye to the true identity of the eternal/infinite source-soul, rather than remaining fixated to its distorted shadow reflection, the mortal ego. I believe the shift to awakening is best pursued with the age-old practice of meditation. Namely, Vipassana meditation. This practice focuses the attention on the still-point between the breaths.

That still-point between the cosmic motions of time is what the 2012 galactic alignment is about, and we can experience it for ourselves, through the inner awakening of gnosis — direct knowledge of our true eternal selves. A few months after establishing a sincere practice of twenty minutes every morning, your life will be transformed.

*John Major Jenkins is the author of *Maya Cosmogogenesis 2012*, and *Galactic Alignment*. His new 3-CD audio program is called "Unlocking the Secrets of 2012" and is available with a special offer on his website, *Alignment2012.com*. In September 2008, he will speak at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, New York.*



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Coming Home to the Self: From Awakening to Wholeness

By Nancy Nicholas

"In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond; And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring. Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity."

~ Kahlil Gabran, The Prophet

Recently, someone asked me what I meant when I said I'd gone through a Spiritual Awakening. As I looked back and remembered all that happened during that time of my life, I was awed to see all the evidence of God's hand working directly to shape my life path.

My experience began when I stated to a friend that I wanted God to be more central in my life. Within three months, my entire life had changed. My marriage ended and I found myself a single mother on my own. During this crisis in my life, my Spiritual Awakening occurred.

The first moment of this new awareness came while sitting and looking out the window. I can still feel the loving energy rolling over me and the intense green outside my window. It was an amazingly blissful experience and from that point on I was suddenly more aware of everything. I could feel other people's emotions and physical symptoms. I knew when someone was thinking of me and if they were going to call.

I saw signs everywhere. A red fox came up to me in the Maine woods and stayed with me for half an hour. Hawks flew so close I could have reached up and touched them. Butterflies landed on me. Hummingbirds hovered so near to me that I could see their hearts beating. Nature was speaking to me and nurturing me. I spent hours in the woods, immersing myself in nature... sliding down muddy hills, walking barefoot through streams, gazing at the leaves above and getting lost in the blue of the sky.

Spirit guided me. People came out of the woodwork in the most unexpected places to hand me a book or give me a message which provided the answer I was seeking. I saw the full moon every month for a year, consistently being woken out of a dead sleep in the middle of the night, even when cloudy, to experience it shining down on me. I filled thirteen journals with all the insights and amazing coincidences that kept happening to me at every turn.

I had moments of indescribable bliss...when I felt so connected to everyone and everything and knew that all I had to do was love and that I was free and safe! I also had times when I fell back out of this awareness and experienced great pain and the fear of separation. The disorientation was intense as I moved between my two realities and tried to sur-

vive the death of one life and the birth of another.

This spring will mark eight years since my Spiritual Awakening. Since then I have traveled far in my understanding of myself and of the world of Spirit. I've learned about my soul and come back home to myself. I've discovered that my body isn't a place to leave but instead of source of safety and wisdom not available from any other source. I've learned how to hear God and my spiritual family so clearly that it is as if they are sitting beside me (or within me). I've been shown visions and metaphors that speak of the Divine Spirit within all of us. I've learned how to put my own needs first and to honor the truth of who I am instead of trying to be someone I'm not.

I've also learned that this journey is not without struggle. I had to travel to uncover the depths of my soul, learn that which is mine to share, and then bring it back to the world of the flesh. It is truly a "Hero's Journey" filled with dragons to slay, moats to swim, and fair maidens to rescue (all of which turned out to be aspects of myself). And then I came home only to begin the struggle to share the wisdom I'd entered this lifetime to teach.

Having walked this path without a manual or map, I offer you a few bits of wisdom to smooth the path of your journey within and back home.

- Our bodies are instruments tuned to the Divine. Listen to it, feel it. If it feels unwell or afraid, then STOP. Honor what you are experiencing. When the body feels peace, move forward. When it feels fear, stop and listen. Always chose to honor what it tells you. Never "override" its inherent wisdom.

- Ask for help. Ask God, ask the angels, ask your loved ones, ask Lightworkers who offer their gifts to ease your passage. Then watch for the answers to your prayers...in books, music, a passing comment, a doe in a quiet forest, a windswept field...these are all messages for you...listen to them.

- Love! Remember this: It is not in receiving that we find joy and safety, it is in loving. Maintain your boundaries with others in the outer world, but love unconditionally within. Love yourself unconditionally as well. Loving brings joy and the choice to love is always in your hands. No one can take away from you the ability to love, and in remembering that you will always be free.

- Have faith, not only in God but in yourself. Each time you chose to honor your truth, to put your needs first and refuse to sacrifice them for any reason, you build a resource

within that can't be shaken. When you can trust yourself to take care of YOU, you will find a peace unlike anything you've experienced...and in that space you will know without any doubt that Spirit is guiding you and that you are never alone.

May your journey be blessed with amazing wonders and profound peace!

Nancy Nicholas is a Holistic Life Coach and an Intuitive Healer/Medium. She provides spiritual guidance and practical coaching strategies to help Lightworkers share their gifts and live their Divine Purpose without sacrificing their own well-being. She can be reached for a free consultation by phone at (330) 416-6184 or you can visit her website www.empoweringlightworkers.com to learn more about her coaching services. Nancy is also the owner of Crossroads Coaching (www.crossroadscoachingonline.com) and Sanctuary at the Crossroads (www.sanctuaryatcrossroads.com).



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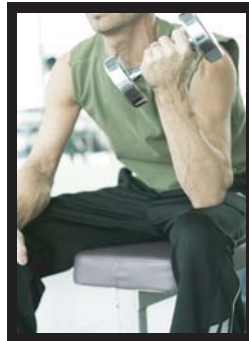
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The Looking Glass

By Eva Starr

I grew up watching Disney movies and then sharing them with my daughters as they grew up. The joy of it all is that one never gets tired of watching Disney movies. By the time my youngest was growing up, there were so many more to choose from, we watched them all. The good, the bad, and the ugly.

One of my favorite Disney movies is Alice in Wonderland. How many awakenings did Alice have as she traveled through the rabbit hole?

"Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next."

~ Lewis Carroll

As we go through our day-to-day life, we should ask ourselves, 'what do we see as we peer into the looking glass of our world?' Everything we see is a reflection of who we are...that my dear friend is the *awakening*. That's why the Louise Hay mirror work is so important; to look in the mirror of ones soul and look deep inside your psyche and still love every single thing about you. The good, the bad, and the ugly. When we love ourselves, we can only project love unto others.

When someone is criticizing another human being, or being judgmental in reality, they are criticizing themselves. They are peering into the looking glass and what they see is a reflection of who they are. The people who appear to be the cruelest are the ones we need to love the most, for they are the ones in the most pain. It makes sense if you think about it. If you love yourself, you love the world. If you love the world, you wouldn't think of casting the first stone toward another. Awakening comes when you, yourself, realize that your whole world is reflecting back to you, it's the mirror image of *you*, my friend.

Let's look at Jesus, he was probably the most kind, loving and forgiving soul who walked this planet, but they stoned him, ridiculed him, judged him, and finally, crucified

him. What did Jesus do? He loved and forgave them, saying "they know not what they do." As we are able to look outside our world into the looking glass, we realize what we see is a reflection of holes in our own aura of Swiss cheese that needs healing. That *moment* of recognition is an *awakening*.

It's easy to love those who love you, but our quest is to love all that crosses our path. Then the sleeping giant inside becomes awakened and recognizes what it sees in the looking glass is his own. During my travels to San Diego, I've had countless opportunities to become awakened, and each one took me another rung up the ladder. It's not about reaching the top of the ladder that's important; it's loving everything in your path, as you climb up the ladder, rung by rung. The good, the bad, and the ugly.

If you can do this, each storm yields yet another rainbow and the skies get sunnier day by day. We can reflect on the *Course in Miracles* teaching and ask ourselves, "is this real, or is this an illusion?" According to the course, everything that comes out of a place of love is real and anything that comes from a place of attack is an illusion. When one is able to distinguish between reality and illusion, then one is truly awakened.

"Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man." ~ Chuang Tzu

Awakenings come in various disguises. The good, the bad, and the ugly. So as you travel down the rabbit hole and peer into the looking glass, does the reflection you see reflect who you want to be? It's your mirror, own it.

Eva Starr's spiritual journey has taken her coast-to-coast studying the various schools of thought. She has recently relocated to the San Diego area. Check out her website reachformoon.net for updates & to be added to her mailing list. Contact Eva Starr at evastarr24@yahoo.com 440-930-8865 for speaking engagements.

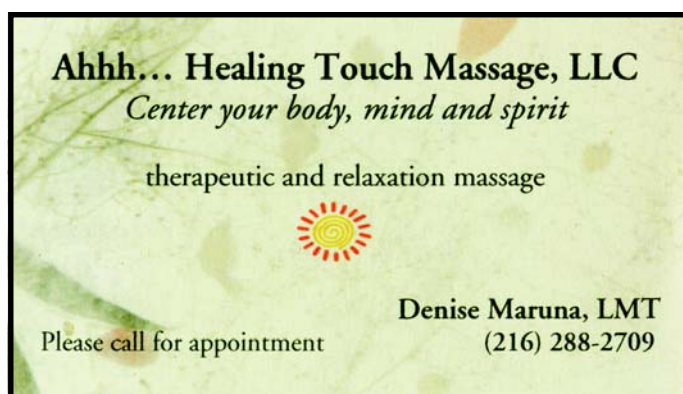


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HEALTH & NUTRITION

COMFORTABLY NUMB AWAKENING THE TRUE SELF WITHIN

BY JANEK KUTA-ILIANO

Recently, I was with a friend listening to a cover band sing “Comfortably Numb” by Pink Floyd when I had a moment of awakening. You don’t really need to know the words to that song in order to get the drift of its lyrics. The words seemed to describe my life at given moments and the realization struck something deep inside of me. I felt afraid and knew I needed to start doing some serious work on myself in order to figure out why I felt so numb.

Shortly after, I met with a life coach and a therapist to start uncovering these underlying causes of my behaviors and emotions. Initially it was hard to go to a therapist since somehow I learned that going to a therapist meant I should be ashamed of something. I placed negativity on the whole experience but have found it to be a very positive place in which to explore myself and set some achievable goals.

I had known for awhile that something wasn’t right because I found myself getting upset over such silly things. But didn’t know what to do about it. For instance, one day, I spilled milk (almond milk that is...) on the floor and you would have thought the world was coming to an end. My reaction to the spilled milk was way over the top and totally uncalled for. So, why was I so upset over something so trivial? The reason why spilling milk on the floor was so frustrating was not because of the obvious, but the spilt milk made me see how rushed my life was and how I didn’t realistically plan my days.

With the lack of realistic planning, I was setting myself up for failure each and every day. My life coach asked me to start tallying up the time it would take for me to get all of my things on the “To Do” list completed. I laughed as I quickly saw that I would have to commit to over 10 hours a day getting everything on my list done on top of raising a family and being a wife. My goals for the day were unrealistic and unattainable and it was news to me! I kept thinking that I was not efficient and not doing a good job with my life. But what has really been going on was my lack of realistic planning which was creating all these negative emotions. So the spilling of milk was just the tipping point for all that pent up emotion.

During this unraveling process, I also realized that I was not verbalizing my feelings very effectively. Identifying feel-

ings sounds easy enough, but it has proven to be difficult for me and I would imagine it is for others out there as well.

We all read about how you should practice relaxation and breathing techniques to help deal with stress. I have read it so much that I began to feel like something was wrong with me if I couldn’t calm myself through deep breathing and just letting go. Breathing was not working for me and it actually felt like I was trying to stuff all those negative feelings back into my body instead of expressing them as they came up. I actually felt like something was wrong with me if I wasn’t peaceful and calm each day. Like it was bad to feel disappointed, upset, jealous, angry, tired, rushed, distracted, grouchy, etc. I would beat myself up for feeling anything other than perfect. I was soon able to realize that I wasn’t honoring my feelings. What a relief to let go of trying to be perfect! Now, I am trying to identify what is really bothering me on any given day. What has been amazing is that the quicker I identify what is really bothering me, the faster the emotions and frustrations fade.

Something as simple as identifying feelings has awakened my ability to know myself and see what is really behind my emotions. I realize that I am not my feelings but it takes time to stop such a tiring habit. Imagine being dragged around by your feelings each and everyday? It is completely exhausting.

As I have started letting go of this notion of having to be perfect, I see how hard I have been on myself. It was finally okay to not be everything and everywhere all the time. I now appreciate that I am doing the best that I can with the little time I have. From that, I started respecting my need for personal time and started scheduling time to take care of me. I *made* time for personal development and exercise and as I continue do this, the better I feel. Even if it is doing some sit ups and jumping jacks in my spare bedroom for 15 minutes, at least it was something I did for me.

I want to be zen-like and peaceful, but that is a process I have to work at. If you leave life up to chance then you will always be hoping and wishing that things turn out they way you want. You have to actively participate in your life and set realistic goals that leave you feeling fulfilled and not overworked and unhappy. Stop setting yourself up for failure. We are human and need to be realistic with what we can do

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Figuring out yourself is not brain science, but it is harder to figure out what is going on when the one you are examining is YOU. It is much easier to look at someone else and see the issues, but not so easy when it is you who is figuring you out. That is why we all need help to awaken our true potentials. We don't need know it all and it is okay to lean on others for help and insight.

This life is whatever you want it to be. Awaken your true self! Start doing the things that make you happy. Identify what it is you want in life and lean on others to help you with the process. We don't have to be in survival mode everyday. Are you "Completely Numb?"

The only thing that separates us is that some of us take action to change the negativity in our lives, while others let life circumstances take them over. You can set a different course for your life if your will and desire are strong enough to take action.

This is not as good as it gets. Life can be eventful, fulfilling and full of promise if you start examining what it is that you really want. Be well and know that we all have "stuff" to deal with. You are never alone.

Janee Kuta-Iliano is the director of ALiVE ONE whose purpose is to empower others to take control of their health. She is a Wellness Coach offering Colon Hydrotherapy, Internal Cleansing & Detoxification Programs and whole food nutritional products. Visit her website at www.aliveone.net. For more information contact Janee at 440-478-9802 or janee@aliveone.net

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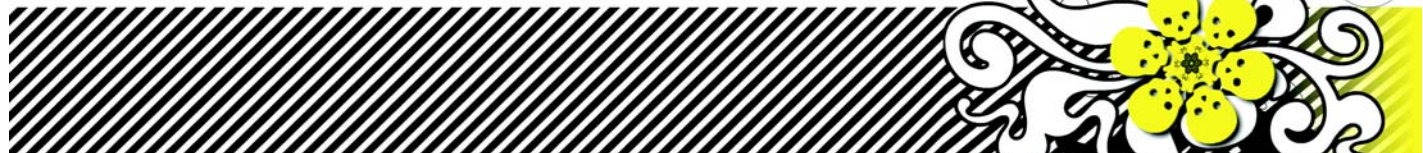
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INTUITIVE NUTRITION

By Shannon Leigh Thomas

It is time for a major change in the way we view nutrition and diet, time for people to step away from rigid diets and discover which foods create their own personal health. We live in a society where the amount of conflicting information about nutrition is staggering. Much of this information is alarmist, linked to major degenerative diseases and premature death. The trailers for the six o'clock news advertise "Watch news at six to find out what's newly discovered, deadly and *may* be lurking in your cupboards..." as the camera zooms in on some innocent appearing cabinetry.

Who can resist that? We tune in and are warned of one thing after another. We all want to be healthy, so we follow the advice of the most current accepted theory, only to hear later that it was wrong or has been replaced by another. I know from experience that the process of trying to sort through all the conflicting information and different health regimens can be daunting, if not down right overwhelming.

Diet and nutrition used to be like religion to me. I spent years dogmatically living a life focused on food, always looking for the *one right way* to eat. I wanted to feel good and I thought that eating was like a mathematical equation; if I could just come up with the right numbers, the perfect sum would result every time. I am a living example of the failed embodiment of probably half a dozen different dietary disciplines, but even before the diets, at an early age, I would pick up little tidbits of so-called dietary wisdom all over the place; it was like these snippets of information were branded on my brain.

I remember boldly declaring as some sort of statement of healthy independence from my parents that I *would not* eat salt, that it was *bad* for me and I wouldn't eat it on *anything*; then later staking another claim, I won't eat pig, and another, I won't drink milk. In retrospect, I suppose that making a stand for health at the family dinner table was not the worst way to express a compulsive teenage need to rebel and I *was* onto something. I just didn't have the knowledge to know what was wrong with the way I was eating or how to fix it.

As a young adult, I realized that randomly isolating nutritional devils was not working for me, and part of this awareness stemmed from the fact that I didn't feel good, even with a wellspring of so-called health consciousness. I was sick a lot, suffered from an autoimmune disorder and felt as unhappy, listless and energy-deficient as ever. I'd also begun to learn that some highly advertised health foods - such as margarine - simply did not live up to their billing. My poor health and growing distrust inspired a new approach. Instead of picking isolated information out of the media, I decided that I would find the *right way to eat*; this

idea became the cornerstone of many strange years of shifting food philosophy and a vat of dietary guilt.

I read book after book filled with nutrition advice. I systematically eliminated sugar, wheat, dairy, chocolate, tomatoes, potatoes, tropical fruits, soy, peppers, salt, animal fats and red meat from my diet. I just knew that if I could get my diet perfect, my health would be perfect. During this time, I remember visiting a friend one afternoon and forlornly stating: "Healthy eating is about what you don't eat."

No wonder I was depressed; I had eliminated most of my staple foods and didn't know what to eat in their place. There is truth in the idea that certain foods should be eliminated from a healthy diet, but the reality of that idea is not nearly as rigid as many nutritional philosophies suggest. The whole truth is that what you avoid or don't eat is an important first step (especially in our culture of toxic convenience foods), but what you eat is *equally* important. What you do eat and enjoy cannot be left out of the equation or health is indeed worthy of all the despair I felt that day.

If your diet is not enjoyable it is not sustainable for any length of time. Humans do not *live to eat*, rather we *eat to live fully*, and part of living fully is enjoying what we eat. So the question then shifts from: What is the perfect diet? To: What is right for me to eat right now? This is a much simpler question, but it does require us to consider what foods will really nourish us in the moment. There is no formula or answer that will apply to everyone.

My personal struggle with food lessened significantly when I realized that healthy eating is much more about quality than restriction. I now eat organic, whole foods that are locally grown as much as possible. The bulk of my diet is vegetables, leafy greens and properly prepared whole grains; the animal products I consume are from animals that have been humanely raised on local farms; and I have limited the amount of processed, chemicals I allow into my diet.

When I began the process of experimenting to see which foods were healthy for me, I reintroduced all of the food demons I had worked so hard to eradicate, and as I allowed them back in I thought about how they made me feel. Did they work for me or not? Some stayed, some were okay in moderation and the rest really didn't work...

For example: I find that some dark chocolate every now and then feeds my soul but that sugar makes me jittery; that tomatoes work for me, but potatoes make me tired. I recognize that my protein needs change with the seasons, that more animal proteins suit me in the colder months and that less is more in the warmer months. I realize that cultured dairy products like plain whole milk yogurt

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and kefir made from raw milk help my digestion, but that drinking a straight glass of milk is a quick way to a stuffy nose. Wheat always makes me tired, gives me brain fog and slows my digestion, but occasionally it is worth it if it means I get to sit down with my family and enjoy a home-made pie.

This really what health is about, recognizing that foods nourish the body and much, much more. Knowing what to eat is a work in progress and giving up the idea that there is a "perfect, prescription diet" out there is the first step. Cultivating inner awareness, flexibility and balance is the key. When you have an awareness of your body's needs and flexibility of mind, the balance between the two is joyful health.

Shannon Thomas is a Holistic Health Counselor with a health counseling practice in Northeast Ohio. Shannon received her certification from The Institute for Integrative Nutrition, which is affiliated with The Teacher's College at Columbia University, and is certified by The American Association of Drugless Practitioners. Shannon custom tailors programs for individuals and groups to help them meet their own health and wellness related goals. She also conducts seminars on a variety of health related topics. She can be reached at shannonlthomas@mac.com

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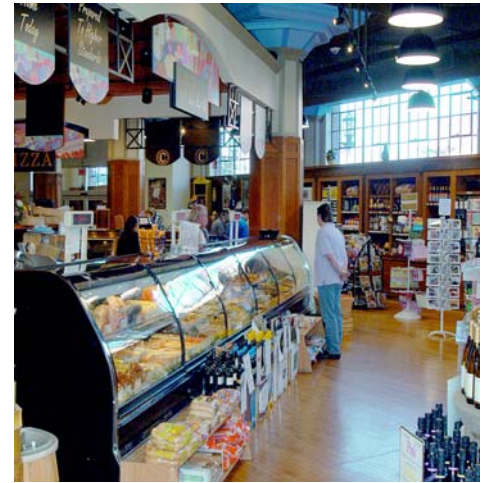
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Awake in India

By Psalm Isadora

Jan. 25, 9am

The Question of Suffering

Yesterday afternoon was very difficult for me. Pune is a pretty small city in India compared to Mumbai, Delhi or Calcutta. But every time you get into the city, there is the noise, the traffic and the most extreme poverty. The most extreme poverty. It breaks my heart, but I am here for a reason and if I take it all in I will drown and not get anything done. Women come up to me in the dusty streets, covered in dirt with their babies slung to their hips. They do a silent pantomime of holding out their hand to me and then bringing to their mouths to show they need my money to buy food. And their eyes, their eyes are big haunting black discs that convey so much sorrow. Are they really so sad? Are they really so hungry? I don't know, but coming from America it is a terrible thing to see a mother and child asking for money and food like this and to say no. There are so many of them that even if I emptied my wallet, I wouldn't even begin to make a change. And then I would be left with nothing, and wouldn't be able to do the work I came here to do. It seems to me that people who need help usually need more help than you can comfortably give. So I will work on myself, I will let the change in myself grow until it can't help but bring change for others. This is how I usually think of things, people need help, I want to help, but how do I want to help? How can I use my special talents creatively in a way that will bring me the most happiness and contentment?

I have made it a rule for myself not to hand money to people on the street. The first time I came to India, a little boy came begging when I was sitting in a rickshaw stopped in traffic. Rickshaws are basically motorcycles with metal shells on top. They are much cheaper than taxi cars, but they also leave you open to the streets. In a real car, your windows would be rolled up and you would have some distance between yourself and the rest of the world. I gave the boy a rupee note, and then 5-6 more boys came running up, climbing on and into the rickshaw, grabbing me. Traffic began to move and they were almost getting run over, holding on and

running along with the rickshaw. The driver began beating them off with a bat. I sat in the back terrified and sickened, I have learned that things escalate quickly here.

I said no so many times yesterday. To an older woman with a small child who dragged the child through traffic to follow me. To a teenage boy with a stump for a leg. To an old man with a cane. To a young mother with the most beautiful face and a baby on her hip, standing at the side of my rickshaw. I remember all of them, I remember their faces even though I put out my hand and say no. Even though I have to pretend I don't see them, looking straight ahead as if they don't exist. Even though I yell at them, "Amma (mother), no, no", begging for them to stop begging from me. They don't just go away when you say no; they stand and stare or grab at you, until you have to be very clear, very insistent on not giving them anything. You have to do it to cross the street, you have to do it to go anywhere, to do anything. I remember all their faces and I am sorry. Sorry that I am not able to help each of them. The Buddha was awakened to suffering in this same country, he must have seen these same faces. It is difficult to be awake to suffering, to not hide in comfort and distractions.

I came back to my hotel last night to have some tea before bed, and there were a group of dogs begging for food. Most of them looked pretty healthy, but one puppy had a lame leg and you could see it's whole skeleton wrapped under its skin. She was a pathetic sight. One of the tables was throwing naan bread to the dogs, and every time the little one ran for some, the other dogs would snarl and scare her away until she limped off, nursing her leg. So I took her in my lap and caught some of the naan bread and fed it to her from my hand. She gobbled it up with her tiny, sharp teeth, almost swallowing it whole.

After awhile she must have gotten full, because she stopped eating the naan and curled her tiny head on my lap. All bones, I could see her spine as she curled herself up, like a seashell on my lap. She tucked her head inside my elbow like a little bird. When she looked up at me, she was so small and pitiful, but also beautiful. She is a little blond dog with big black eyes that look like they are rimmed in kajol, the black Indian eyeliner. I sat and held her in my lap, wrapped in my shawl for warmth, trying to give her a little comfort and a resting place.

I could feel her little belly breathing against mine, a little bony belly, so fragile. After awhile I had to put her down, I wanted to take her to my room, but I could see the fleas all over her. I put her down and walked away quickly, I looked back and saw her limping behind me, so I walked faster so she could not follow me. I got to my room and started to cry.

So much suffering I am confronted with here. Human suffering, animal suffering, nature is suffering also. It was difficult to breathe. What to do about all this suffering? You

do the work that is in front of you. You do the work that wants to be done. You do the work that has begun itself and just asks for you to go with its flow. I know this. I know that everything is suffering, but also everything is bliss, I know this. I know that the people and the little puppy have been born and will die, and that I am attached to the idea of time, of when and how and where. And I believe that we all are involved in choosing our births, our families, and our lives circumstances so we can learn as individuals and inform the whole. I know these things, and I know how silly I am, every day there are hungry dogs and people, and yet I still live my life. But put one little dog right in front of me and I am brought to my knees. I am drowning in my feeling of the suffering of the whole world. I am not looking for answers or philosophy. I just know that when I have to turn someone away, I armor my heart and it hurts me. So I cried and that released my heart, and then I fell asleep.

Today I will do the work that is in front of me, I will take the little dog to the animal hospital. I will do what I can here and now. And tomorrow I will leave for another city, I will leave the little dog behind. And maybe I will have made a difference, and maybe not. But I will have stayed present to the circumstances and genuine to myself. That is all I can ask, to move lightly with love, and to help because it gives me pleasure, not because I am trying to save the world. To do the work that is in front of me, the work that is asking to be done.

Jan 25, 10pm

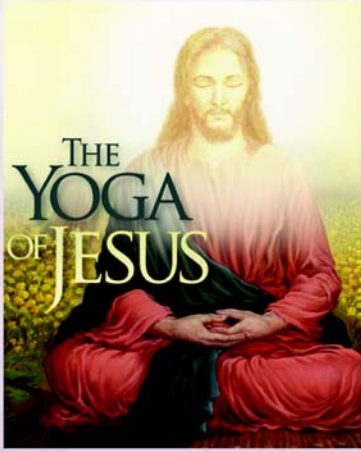
Someone gave me the name of a vet who came to the hotel to look at the puppy, I have decided to call her Lola. Of

course she does not belong to me and I cannot take responsibility for her, but her belly is full of chicken tonight, and she is sleeping soundly wrapped in a warm shawl in my room. The vet was wonderful, he even does yoga! He helped the puppy and then I helped him with his back pain by prescribing some squats, fierce chair pose and uddiyana bandha. He gave the dog an injection for her leg, and said we are best leaving her to find the balance in nature. He said that her little body is strong and most likely she will find the strength to recover herself.

The drive for life is so strong in all of us. His words reminded me that it does not all ride on my shoulders, I am not that important. I surrender the dog to God, grace, nature and her own innate intelligence. Earlier today I fed her and when she was full she ambled away to lie on a sunny patch of grass. Her little face was so content and serene, the warmth of the sun was comforting her. There are so many variables that it is a great mystery what will heal her. I caused myself a great deal of suffering last night by putting the weight of the world on my shoulders and not surrendering to that mystery. I am grateful for the encounter, it showed me my attachments, my fear, my limitations and my compassion. Inshallah (God's will be done). Tomorrow I fly to the ashram to be with my guru.


Psalm Isadora lives and teaches yoga in Santa Monica, California. She leads retreats to India with the blessings of her guru, Sri Amritananda. Her next India Immersion retreat will be in December 2008. To request information, email her at psalmisadora@gmail.com or go to www.psalmisadora.com.

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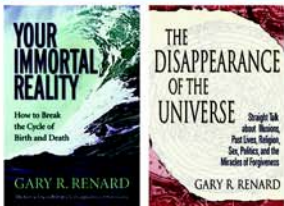
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Story of an Awakening: How I Lost My Temper

By Durga

Until I finally allowed my yoga practice to shake me and wake me up, so to speak, and help me take responsibility for my actions, I spent years blaming my problems on a rigid upbringing in a conservative French Catholic family. When you mix this strict background with a quarter of Italian blood brought over the Alps by a wandering Venetian grandfather, you get me: an explosive but repressed character. A yogini who strives toward non-attachment but whose European roots make darn sure she first sees things through drama-colored lenses.

“Slight” exaggerations, dramatic outbursts, and tearful reunions might be the norm in my corner of Europe, but these character traits certainly got me into my share of trouble when I moved to the United States. Take my first job. The fact that I very vocally accused my coworker of being an idiot in my boss’s office, in a very conservative financial firm, went straight to my job review. I also got into a few “fights” with law enforcement officers, accusing a police woman, armed and literally twice my size, to be a liar while trying to fight a traffic ticket in LA, or getting into an altercation with a security officer at an airport because he

didn’t stop the conveyor belt fast enough and the present for my dad almost got crushed (in my defense, my father had cancer and the present meant a lot). Very nasty words were exchanged on both sides (my grand-mother would be proud). The list goes on, and it sounds awfully similar to Adam Sandler’s character in Anger Management. Yikes.

Much worse, my anger and lack of restraint also got me into lots of trouble in my personal life and relationships. I said countless hurtful things to people I loved very much. I would slowly build a subconscious list of what my various boyfriends did or did not do, keeping tabs, trying to be nice, until the day when I just could not hold it in and would blurt out months of complaints screaming at the top of my lungs (and believe me, I can scream). The smallest thing would set me off, when the time was ripe. I remember coming back from a restaurant once, my boyfriend at the time was driving and started picking his tooth. That just drove me over the edge. I accused him of being uneducated. He ignored me and gave me the “wall.” I decided to go off on his family. How his mom took over the whole kitchen when she came to visit and always started by disinfecting my counters

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with Lysol wipes. Moved on to how he left me by myself doing laundry three Christmases ago because I had to work and he went off to visit his family out of state. At first he rolled his eyes, in a "there she goes again" sort of way, until I finally found something that hit home. And he gave me this look that just broke my heart. But by then I was on a roll and had completely lost control. I felt terrible the next day and vowed never to do it again. But that's the thing about being out of control. You just can't control it! It feels like a nightmare you can't wake up from.

But something happened a couple of years ago that started to change all that, an awakening of sorts.... I discovered yoga. It amazes me to think that I lived in Los Angeles for close to ten years and never ran into a yoga studio. Then right after I moved to Cleveland, job search going poorly, guess what, there was a studio right around the corner from my house. Got hooked after the first class. As all of you yogis out there know, well, I guess yoga found me when I was ready. It was the asanas that first grounded me. The physical practice gave me an outlet. After an hour and a half of intense practice, I felt great. Calm. Happy. But the change in my behavior off the mat did not happen right away. Once in a while, although not as often, I still got upset, I still lost control and went off the deep end into some crazy mad rant over some picked tooth or other futile reason I happened to latch on at the time. Yoga was giving me occasional peace, but it was also giving me more awareness of my shortcomings, which was somewhat depressing.



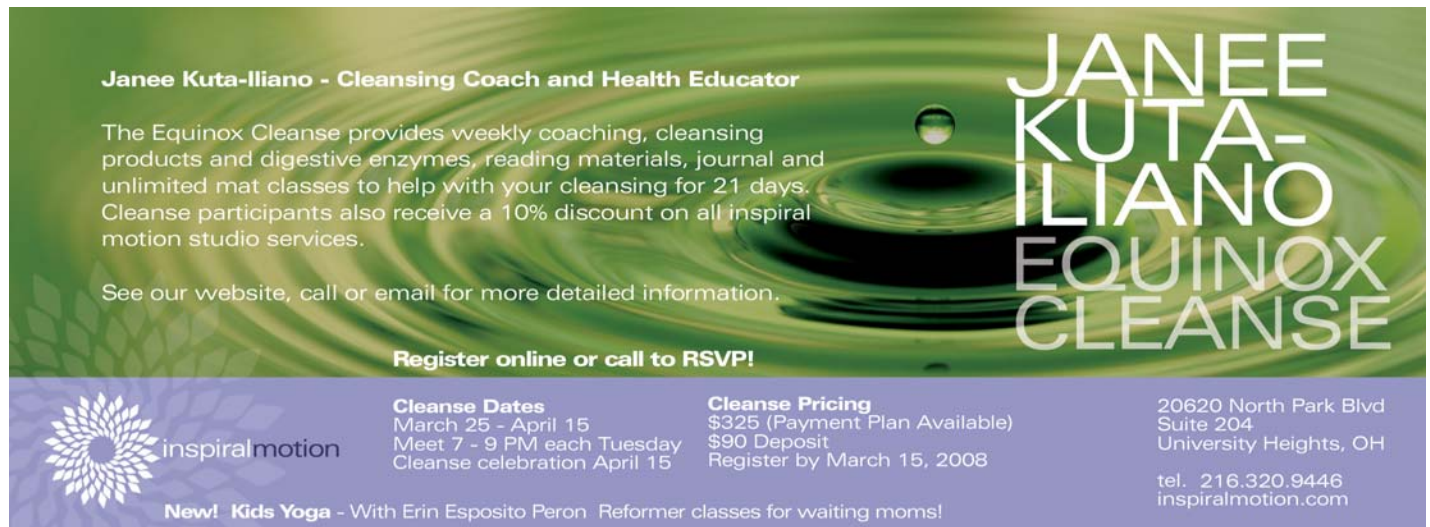
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I wasn't sure of the next step to take. Was I not dedicated enough? Did I not practice enough? Why couldn't I "fix" myself once and for all? After a few months of feeling helpless and trying too hard, I slowly let go. I surrendered. I had practiced so much I hurt my shoulder and my lower back. Everything hurt. I decided to take a break. I wouldn't be the next Shiva Rea. So what. After a while I started again, but a slower, more mindful practice. I added Pranayama, breath work. My wake up call came at work one day, when my boss was complaining about one thing or another. I heard him swear in the room next door, and I could feel the stress oozing out of his office and slowly crawling toward me. Automatically, I cringed. Then suddenly the light went on in my head and I woke up. I realized I had a choice. Allow him to make me feel stressed and angry too. Or choose to not let him affect me. I took a deep breath in – and that's what did it. Right there, it clicked - that was the bridge between my practice and the rest of my life. My breath. Of course I already knew that - in theory. I knew I was supposed to use my breath, but somehow never did think of it in the "heat of the moment" when my mind was running wild, or was never able to hang on to it. But this time it worked - my practice paid off. I inhaled deeply again and decided that I was going to remain calm and happy. And the funny thing is, I did. Well, I did get a little stressed, but nowhere near what it would have been like before yoga. It was such a small step. Yet it made a huge difference. I felt great!

I was at a workshop recently when I had to introduce



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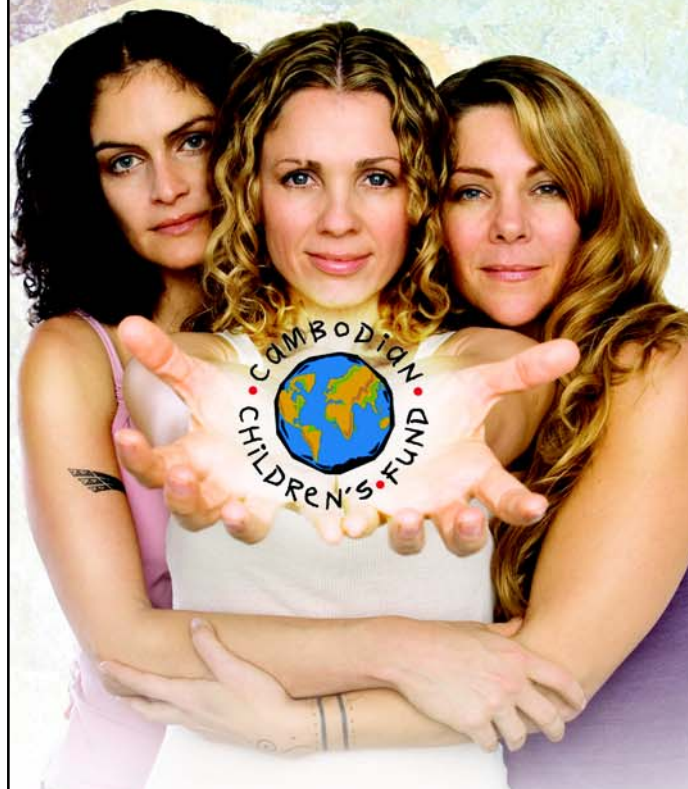
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myself and my practice. I explained that since I started yoga I had "lost" my temper, I wasn't so angry anymore. Everyone laughed at the pun. That was the first thing that came to mind, but thinking about it some more after the workshop, it dawned on me that I really had not had an explosive episode for several months... I really had "lost" my temper, without even realizing it. This was a turning point for me: I felt as if I had awakened in some way, become more aware, and finally had a little bit more of a say in my own life.

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PLANETARY PATHWAYS

By Eva Starr

March: New Moon in Pisces Mar 7th 12:14pm / Full Moon in Libra Mar 21st 2:40pm

April: New Moon in Aries April 5th 11:55pm / Full Moon in Scorpio April 20th 6:25am

ARIES

March – I know it's not like the Ram to ask for help...and the good news is you don't need to *ask*...Heaven is helping you behind the scenes...and the oh so impatient Ram is having a difficult time waiting for the results...slow down Ram, just because you can't tangibly see and touch the results, the pot is simmering and about ready to boil

April – Now you have so much action you don't know which way to turn...The Sun, Mercury & Lady Venus are all lined up at your front door...well don't just stand there, use your intuition, yes you have one, and make a decision for Heaven sakes...and while you're out it, take a little time out for romance, it's your month to *shine*, Happy Birthday!

TAURUS

March – The Bull needs to put some rubber bands in the inflexible pen of yours...it's time to stretch your legs and come out of that Bull pen and *play, baby play*...too much work makes the Bull an angry Bull, besides when you play it stirs up those creative juices of yours and brings joy into your life, and then comes miracles...enjoy Bull

April – See a little play time was just what the Doctor ordered, now it's time to aim those horns and set your goal, then move full speed ahead, the planetary line-up is conducive to jumping right in and following your hearts desire...keep your eye on the *bulls-eye*...you're about ready to score and not a moment too soon...go get 'em Bull

GEMINI

March – There you go again Twins...burning the candle at both ends, or should I say all four...the Twin needs to put it in reverse and take some time out for a little R & R...how about just *being*, instead of *doing*...a little soak in a hot tub with some sea salts to detox the mind, body & soul wouldn't hurt, while you're at it...enjoy your solitude

April – The rest did you go, your intuition is kicking in full throttle, your prayers are being answered before you even ask...start keeping a synchronistic journal of all those seeming *coincidences* that are happening in your life like wildfire...keep a writing journal handy while you're at it...your creativity is soaring sky high

CANCER

March – While you're doing that sideways dance of

yours, keep your eyes, and ears open this month...the Universe is sending you *lunar rays* from all directions, keep that intuitive antennae of yours fine tuned, guidance is coming your way...and with Mars in your sign this month you've got the energy to act on all that valuable information

April – You've sown the seed, quit digging up the dirt, patience my dear Crab, the planetary alignment is working behind the scenes in your favor...that's why they call it *faith*...you can't see it yet, water, nurture and let the Universe take care of the rest, Mars is still in your sign so keep following your guidance, take action where needed, then wait

LEO

March – I understand it's a bit intimidating for the Lion to ask for help, after all you are King/Queen of the jungle...but swallow a little of the *pride* of yours and consult someone who may have a tad more expertise in the subject at hand then you do at the moment, it's a sign of success to be able to recognize when you need to call in the troops

April – I think it may be mating season in that jungle of yours...oh do you hear that mating call through the thick of the forest...yes, go ahead the jungle will still be waiting for you when you get back, after all when you're in love, the whole jungle is singing...so go for it, just pull in that ego of yours just a wee bit, enjoy the *after-glow*

VIRGO

March – The Fairy Godmother had just arrived at the Virgoan doorstep...and she's waving her *magic wand* in your direction...go ahead, take off the white gloves & make a wish...you've earned it...you don't need to be all prim & proper all the time, let your hair down, get wild and crazy and enjoy whatever your heart desires

April – OK back to the healing energies you're so famous for...take a look in the mirror, yes, that's you...you do have a healing heart & the Universe is asking you to take the next step, you're about ready to *play ball* in the big leagues, watch your diet, keep at the meditation, and ask for what it is you want next, it's time to move on up

LIBRA

March – You may be too busy weighing all those decisions that you might've just missed the bus...*pay attention*, you don't have to second guess everything, the Universe is

giving you clear signs, and repetitive ones I might add, so put the scales away for now and start trusting that intuition of yours, then follow through on the guidance, just do it

April – Are we skipping our *morning affirmations*...let's get back into the pattern of spending some time in solitude manifesting our desires...and while you're at it...a little detox of some 100% cranberry juice mixed with water would do those kidneys of yours some good, let's bring that Libran energy back into *balance*

SCORPIO

March – The Scorpion needs to come out of that *deep dark cave* of yours...yes, hibernation time for you is over baby...you've delved way deep into that soul of yours...it's time to take a break and come out and play...in the daylight mind you...you've spent too much time in the dark, literally & metaphorically

April – That break did you some good...now that you know what you want, it's time to go after what you want, and let's remember to keep that Scorpion *stinger* under control while you're at it...we don't want to sting anyone on the way up...what you give out you get back...you can do this...embrace your heart's desire

SAGITTARIUS

March – A little self-forgiveness may be at hand Centaur...let's start with getting rid of all that old guilt, it's getting old, spring is around the corner, let's start the Equinox off with a fresh start and forgive yourself for every-

thing you've been blaming yourself for...it's time to take that *dump truck* and empty it...you'll feel much lighter

April – OK Sag, get out of your own way, you've forgiven yourself, you've asked for help, it's time you understand that you deserve everything the Kingdom has for you, after all you are a child of the Universe, just stand back, *trust* that the Heavens are answering your prayers...listen to the guidance you're being given, then act on it

CAPRICORN

March – When you're hot you're hot...YES, you've been given *cart blanche*...this is your year...your intuition is razor sharp, don't second guess yourself, when you hear that tiny little voice speaking to you, it's not your imagination, it's your higher power and it's leading you to the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, push all skepticism aside, and act

April – Climb that mountain goat, you've been designated king of your mountain this month, use those *healing* gifts that you've been hiding under all that grass and show the world your stuff...it's time that the goat cash in on all those years of preserving and trodding along, the Universe says you can handle it, go for it

AQUARIUS

March – A little scattered these days my Aquarian friend, while it's time to slow down and take some time out for contemplation...yes, not just a day or two, the whole month, get yourself a journal & start asking what is it that you really want out of life, no more playing small, write out your goals on paper, in black & white, it's time to *visualize*

April- The acorn doesn't sprout an oak tree overnight, patience my dear, the planetary line-up is working overtime to help you manifest your desires...it isn't going to fly by your window in the form of the good-year blimp...trust your prayers are being answered, water, nurture, and let Heaven take care of the *how*

PISCES

March – You say it's your birthday, while I'd say you're in for a huge planetary party this month...the Sun, Mercury & lady Venus have all arrived with their best attire on...and they've come to invite you my dear fish to the party...so decide now to start *swimming* in the direction of your dreams, and let the waters move you along, *dive* right in

April – It's time for you to take a back seat to giving, and start being on the *receiving* end...yes, you heard me...it's good to accept and receive it balances the Universal energies, and allows others the gift of giving...and it brings good Karma your way...so start swimming in the direction of the other fish in the sea you want to *help* you

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Awakening with the Akashic Records

By Jill Huettich

As a society, we seem to be obsessed with awakening. From yoga, meditation, and psychotherapy to drugs like acid, people are trying to gain a larger perspective on life. There seems to be a universal desire to make sense of it all, to answer questions like, “Why am I here?” and “What is my life purpose?” For those seeking answers to these questions and more, many have found the Akashic records to be an excellent means for awakening to their potential.

The Akashic records refer to a universal library of sorts. Essentially, they are an energetic recording of everything in the universe. From a human perspective, this means that every thought, word, or deed that a soul has ever experienced in this life—or in any other past or present incarnation—is tracked, organized, and recorded. In essence, the Akashic records hold the life path strategy of your soul. However, the records are not limited to mankind—animals, plants, and even land has an energetic recording. Much like an enormous database, the records contain the history of the universe since the beginning of time.

Occasionally referred to as “The Book of Life” in his readings, renowned clairvoyant Edgar Cayce used the Akashic Records as a major source of information; the name coming from the Sanskrit word *akasha*, or the energetic substance from which all life is formed. Cayce maintained that the records hold the past, as well as all future potential for our lives. He believed that essentially, there is a limitless array of future possibilities, simply waiting to be called into action by our free will choices.

Although science has never confirmed the existence of the Akashic records, it has not been able to disprove their existence either. In his book, *Science and the Akashic Field*, scientist Ervin Laszlo conveys that recent discoveries in the field of quantum physics show that the Akashic field may indeed be real. He suggests that the quantum field, or “A-Field” as he calls it, is similar to a hologram that is imprinted with all that has been or ever will be, much like Cayce’s assertion that an array of future potentials exists for every individual.

Dahna Fox, an Ohio-based Akashic Records Teacher, maintains that not only are the records real, but also says that it is the purest form of information she’s ever found. “You understand the core issues of certain events in your life and once you understand the soul’s intention, you can better understand and embrace the gift of the soul’s wounding.” Simply put, you can gain insight into why you have certain physical or emotional challenges and understand how those trials contributed to your soul’s growth.

She adds, “When you work with the Akashic records, you awaken to the magnificence of your own spirit. Part of awakening is also discovery. By having information you didn’t have before, it creates a total awakening on all levels of your being—mental, physical, emotional, spiritual—including relationships and career.”

The benefits of accessing the records are limitless. For instance, Fox explained that a writer could open the records to

get aid in writing a book; a sculptor could ask for help creating a piece of healing art; a musician could compose with it; a therapist could ask to experience what it feels like to be an abused child for assistance in healing a client; a business owner could request advice on how to improve sales...the possibilities are endless.

The good news is that according to the book, *Akashic Records: Collective Keepers of Divine Expression*, anyone can access the records; however, there is limitation to the information an individual can receive. As the book explains, “No being has access to information beyond their vibrational rate or their frequency.” Consider Einstein, for example—he worked for years before developing the theory of relativity—if he had received all of the information earlier in a flash of insight, he may not have been able to comprehend what he was receiving. This is where the Record Keepers come in; Record Keepers, sometimes referred to as ascended masters or Lords of the Akasha, are energetic beings who ensure that people access the information that is appropriate to them, as well as assist individuals with their queries once they’ve opened the records.

To open the Akashic records, individuals have multiple options. One is to schedule a consultation with an Akashic records consultant and have them access your records—they have the ability to do this on your behalf with your permission. Unlike some psychic readings, the consultation is based on the questions posed by the client. As spiritual teacher Kathy Karlander explains it, this ensures that the information the client receives is relevant. It wouldn’t do much good to give marital advice, for example, if the client wasn’t prepared to make changes in his or her relationship.

Another option is to learn to access the records yourself. Although this may sound intimidating, Karlander says that accessing the records is “not really as hard as most people think it is. The biggest challenge (people have) is trusting the information they receive.”

There are a number of different ways to access the records on your own. Initially, accessing them in the dream state might be the easiest way to get started. Simply take a few deep breaths and set the intention before bedtime, “I will access the Akashic records in my dream state. I will receive the information that is for my highest benefit. I will remember the messages from the records when I awaken.”

In her engaging book, *Discovering the Essence of Your Soul*, Karlander provides step-by-step instructions for accessing the records consciously. She suggests that an individual create sacred space, set the intention to access the Akashic Records, and then write a question in a journal. She recommends noticing what feelings, images, sounds, or thoughts come and then recording the information. Karlander advises that people approach the process with a playful attitude and adds that it’s like exercising a muscle—practice makes perfect.

Continued on page 40

THE GREEN PAGES



Waking Up in a Green Dream

By Lisa Ann Pinkerton

Recently, I was visiting Los Angeles, California. While I was there, the first ever Eco Gift Expo was being held. Over 150 vendors from all areas of retail, from clothing and jewelry, to sports gear and beauty products were there all selling products that were in some way ecologically friendly. Some products used all natural ingredients, organic materials, or recycled content. Bamboo was by far the most popular material. I found it in scarves, t-shirts, furniture, snowboards, and various household items.

Even the tradeshow itself aimed to be sustainably friendly. The tradeshow industry is second only to the construction industry in the amount of waste it generates. A 'zero waste' tradeshow meant using recyclable content, compostable plastic dinnerware, linen tablecloths instead of vinyl, and setting up *Resource Recovery Stations*.

Instead of simple trash and recycle bins, *Resource Recovery Stations* also had a compost bin and paper bin. Friendly volunteers manned the stations, and helped you discern what waste went where. The Eco Gift Expo aimed to divert 90% of its trash away from landfills with these steps.

Overall, Eco Gift Expo Founder Tommy Rosen said the first ever event was a big success. "This is significant, because it indicates that we are now living in a time where there is enough of a demand to warrant a large-scale gift show for eco-conscious consumers. This also means that manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and other service providers are stepping up to supply this increasing demand for consciously produced goods. A great indication of a positive shift."

When I asked vendors how business was, they all gave me the same answer, "It's booming." Most of them mentioned their sales in 2007 were double 2006 numbers and triple 2 or 3 years ago. They said Internet sales were still their largest revenue stream, but that local and national retailers were starting to stock their merchandise as well.

This didn't surprise me. The products for sale at the Expo were high in quality, unique, well designed and affordable. The only caveat I could think of to explain the success

these retail companies were experiencing was that many of the businesses were still young. They had room to grow. It could be said that after about 5-8 years of business their sales could plateau.

Some of the vendors I spoke with agreed with this insight, but others insisted the market for retail goods is changing. They say consumers are becoming savvier. They would rather not buy clothing made by children in Chinese sweat shops. They say consumers are starting to value post consumer, or recycled content, more than ever before. Vendors at the Expo expressed delight that they think more and more consumers are starting to read the backs of cosmetics and beauty supply labels looking for all natural ingredients and shying away from chemically laden ones.

In the rest of the retail world, mainstream product manufacturers are starting to pick up on what these ecologically conscious vendors have known for a long time; if consumers are given a choice of products that are comparable in price, they will choose the one that's kindest to the Environment.

A recent Information Resources Inc. survey of 22,000 US shoppers found that at least 50% of shoppers considered one of these three criteria when shopping.

1. Organic
2. Eco-friendly produced or packaged goods
3. The fair treatment of employees

IRI further found, one-fifth of respondents were "sustainably driven," and required at least two of these factors in their purchases.

That means its safe to say 5 out of every 10 shoppers are shopping with the Earth and Humanity in mind. And 2 out of 10 shoppers are really serious about it. That certainly couldn't have been said 10 years ago, I don't even think that could had been said 5 years ago.

It seems a new consumer movement is emerging in the US. Similar consumer attitudes have been present in Europe for over a decade. People are awakening to the fact that they can lessen their harm on the planet and still have the goods and services they want. Product manufacturers

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are picking up on this, and so are advertising marketers.

But the marketing strategies that people find and fall prey to aren't necessarily based in truth. Last month, the environmental marketing firm Terra Choice, plucked over 1000 products off of the shelves in supermarkets and big box retailers and tested their green claims. It says, virtually all, 99 %, falsely claimed green credentials. This is known as *Green Washing*.

Companies green wash for a number of reasons; from seeking to expand their market or narrow the perceived green advantage of a rival, to making their company more attractive to potential employees and investors. Sometimes companies even green wash to deflect attention from regulators and government pressure.

The very fact that Green Washing exists tells me that people are awaking up to their affect on the environment. Consumers are beginning to understand their responsibility

to the Earth. They're realizing the part they play in consumer purchases can go a long way to making the world a more sustainable place for generations to come.

Marketers know this and they are trying to exploit it for their own benefit. Green washing can be very savvy and sly. It's up to consumers to be smart about their purchases. Therefore, its up to us as consumers to take the extra step. We should discern for ourselves if a product is truly boosting green credentials. If we purchase products without this extra step, we may feel really good for making an ecologically friendly choice, but is it the right choice? I for one would rather have my *I'm-good-to-the-planet* feelings well founded in fact.

False sustainability isn't any better than unstainability. If we settle for that kind of eco-consumer culture, we might as well shop sleeping. Truly being a sustainably conscious shopper means being one who's willing to look into the green credentials and verify them. When it comes to the Environment, taking full responsibility for one's actions even at the mall, is truly being awake.

Lisa Ann Pinkerton is an environmental radio reporter in Cleveland Ohio. Her work airs nationally on the Environment Report and in Pittsburgh on WYEP's The Allegheny Front. She joined the Journey Magazine as its editor in September 2007. She can be reached at comments@thejourneymag.com.

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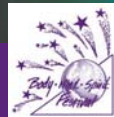
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Points to Ponder

Six Sins of Green washing

In December 2007, environmental marketing company TerraChoice gained national press coverage for releasing a study called *The Six Sins of Green Washing*, which found that 99% of 1,018 common consumer products randomly surveyed for the study were guilty of green washing.

- **Sin of the Hidden Trade-Off:** e.g. "Energy-efficient" electronics that contain hazardous materials. 998 products and 57% of all environmental claims committed this Sin.

- **Sin of No Proof:** e.g. Shampoos claiming to be "certified organic," but with no verifiable certification. 454 products and 26% of environmental claims committed this Sin.

- **Sin of Vagueness:** e.g. Products claiming to be 100% natural when many naturally-occurring substances are hazardous, like arsenic and formaldehyde. Seen in 196 products or 11% of environmental claims.

- **Sin of Irrelevance:** e.g. Products claiming to be CFC-free, even though CFCs were banned 20 years ago. This Sin was seen in 78 products and 4% of environmental claims.

- **Sin of Fibbing:** e.g. Products falsely claiming to be certified by an internationally recognized environmental standard like EcoLogo, Energy Star or Green Seal. Found in 10 products or less than 1% of environmental claims.

- **Sin of Lesser of Two Evils:** e.g. Organic cigarettes or "environmentally friendly" pesticides, This occurred in 17 products or 1% of environmental claims.[5][6]

Jill Huettich...Continued from page 36

When opening the Akashic records for assistance in writing this article, the Record Keepers wanted readers to know that, "Everyone has the right to access this information. There is no one way of doing it. All it takes is a pure heart, a willingness to receive, and the desire. When someone asks, we are here without fail."

Additionally, they said, "It's very important that people understand they have a grand opportunity in this place in history they are creating. Their individual and collective energies based on assumptions, beliefs, and actions are what creates the illusion of reality that sometimes could be construed as negative. It would be very important on an individual basis to choose to align with the highest level of frequency and vibration of love, awareness, gratitude, and peace. And for those

people who have a challenge in experiencing, receiving or giving love, it is suggested that they move to the highest level of 'like' that they are familiar with." They suggested that once you open yourself up to the 'like', you will more naturally be able to open up to the higher vibration of love.

Finally, they advised, "The question that needs to be addressed is what am I really afraid of and why? Why am I afraid to step into my greatness? What would my life be like if I knew I couldn't fail?" ...Asking these questions in sincerity will allow them to discover the truth of who they really are. Hint: The truth is that each of us is a magnificent being of light who is truly loved."

Jill Huettich is a freelance writer and Reiki practitioner in Lakewood, Ohio. She can be reached at healyourenergy@gmail.com.

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Awakening from Ignorance to Service

By Sharon Anne Klingler

“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve...You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.” ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

As the great man said, we all can find a way – even many ways – to serve. In order to do that, we must first know all of humanity to be unified in spirit. And we must believe even the “lowly” are worth our time and effort.

I am reminded of the scene with the Ghost of Christmas Present in Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. He stood wrapped in the richness and wonder and joy of his Christmas robes, (his spiritual life) yet he was helpless to aid the two starving, wretched, frightened children clinging to his ankles beneath his robe. Scrooge asked the spirit whose children they were.

“They are Man’s,” the Christmas ghost mournfully decreed of the destitute, hollow-faced little ones at his feet – as if that were not only the origin of the children’s birth but also the reason for his own helplessness. “And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree. But most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing is erased.”

As a champion of the poor, Dickens was cautioning his readers about their lack of consciousness (ignorance) of the dire destitution (want) that defined existence for too many people during his time. The ghost was pleading to take action – to stop ignoring the needs of others.

Over the years, as I have read that passage many times, I have come to find more meaning in Dickens’ vision than just the social comment which was so close to his heart. To me, *Ignorance* also became ignorance of the spirit; ignorance of the real self, the powerful, joyful self. And *Want* became the experience of lack; the loveless-ness and emptiness that can only be known when one attaches too greatly with the physical world and loses touch with that spirit within.

Today, as in mid-nineteenth century London, there is great lack, hunger, and want. There are those who only want a chance at a new start, a greater education. Perhaps we could see ourselves in the faces of our brothers, and share not just money or food or old clothes, but encouragement – real encouragement. That might make the greatest difference of all.

Close your eyes and think of one person in your life that you sometimes ignore, even if it’s just because you’re busy. See yourself embracing and encouraging this person to know your love, support, and their unlimited possibilities.

You don’t have to serve at a soup kitchen to serve in the world. All you need to do is encourage whomever you can to discover the spirit and the truth in themselves. Help them find the power to take action, to believe in themselves, and to know who they are inside.

Those who do not rise up out of their circumstances of birth or poverty often stay stuck out of their own ignorance. They are ignorant that there may be another way, that they have the power to change things if they make an effort to do so. We have an opportunity to encourage them to act, but to do this we must also lift ourselves out of our own ignorance. Ignorance implies lack of awareness. But actually it comes from the words, “to ignore.”

Unfortunately, in spite of living in the information age of technology, we are a race of beings that have fine-tuned the act of ignorance! We ignore our habits. We ignore our bodies. We ignore our emotions. And most of all, we ignore our spirit. This may be the most devastating act of ignorance there can be. For it is this spirit, this divine spark, that provides us with the consciousness to change, the power to grow, and most importantly, the ability to love.

In Dickens’ time, in cities, on trains, on ships, wherever one went, the lower class was separated from the gilded society. It is now gilding of the ego that separates us from our spirit. Loveless-ness is the greatest lack of nourishment there is. And, unhappily, it is a want that is created by our own hand and by the ignorance we find easier to maintain than to challenge.

The greatest service we can do is to share our spirit with the world. Share your spirit through love, through kindness, through compassion, through generosity. Encourage everyone who seems *dispirited* to take one little step in this discovery for themselves. And once they feel the excitement of knowing a new purpose that gives their spirit a voice, then together we can change the world.

Sharon Anne Klingler is an international speaker, author and medium. Recently, she has written *The Secrets of Success* with her sister, Sandra Taylor, for *Hay House* as well as her comprehensive audio/book program, *Advanced Spirit Communication*. Sharon maintains a private practice in mediumship and other metaphysical disciplines. She is the co-founder of *Starbringer Associates*. Don’t miss Sharon’s “Messages From Beyond” event on Friday, March 7th and her all day workshop “Your Spirit Guides and Masters: Linking to Other Worlds” on Saturday, March 8th. Visit www.starbringerassociates.com to learn more and to register. (And, see her ad in this issue.)


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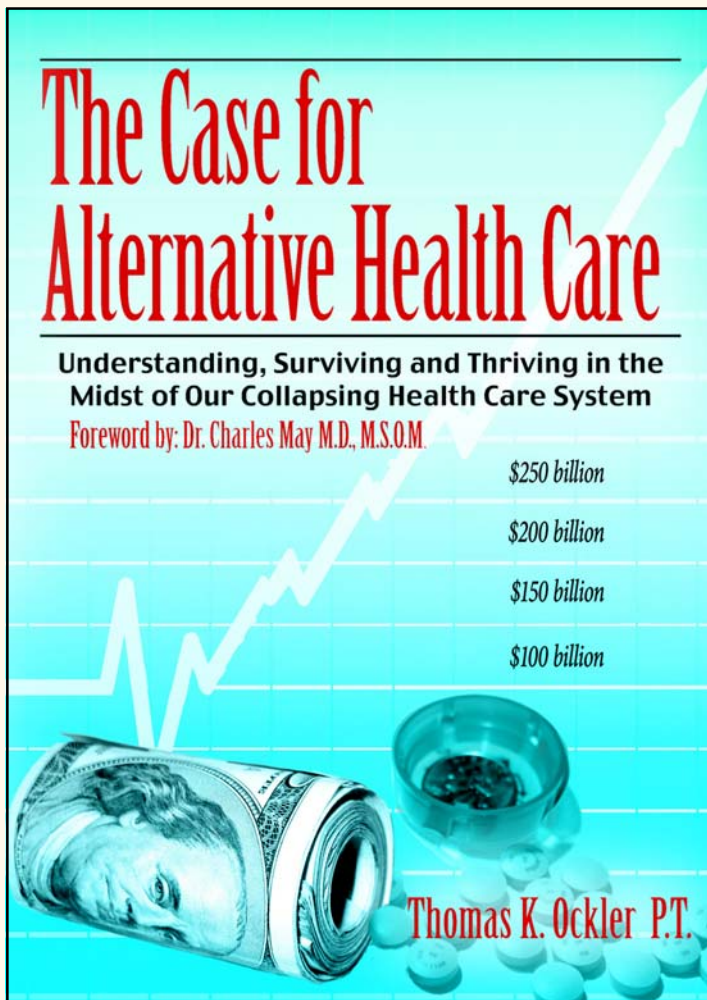
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