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CREATIONS

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THE *Nest* of LOVE

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Evolutionary Relationships
Last Year's Birds and This Year's Nest
Love and Sex
Speak Out - Or Be Silently Complicit
Why Do People Take Drugs?

*We're not held back by the love we didn't receive in the past,
but by the love we're not extending in the present.*

Marianne Williamson

THE HEALTH COST OF LOSING YOUR TEETH

It may be surprising for you to discover that about 180 million Americans are missing at least one tooth and the overwhelming majority have many missing teeth. More than 35 million of us have lost all our teeth and 10% of us cannot wear dentures and must go around completely toothless. Tooth loss is so common that you, the reader, may be missing at least one tooth yourself!

Missing a front tooth may be emotionally devastating, but missing even one back tooth creates silent havoc on your health. As the number of missing teeth increase, so do diseases and risk of death. Here are just a few of the recent scientific findings: **Tooth loss increases your risk of stroke and heart attack, both deadly as well as debilitating diseases.** Tooth loss also increases your risk of rheumatoid arthritis, a painful and crippling disease. If you are missing 5 or more teeth your chance of pancreatic cancer (survival 5%) increases by 20%! *Did you know that people without teeth live 10 years less than those with teeth?* Oh and it also makes you fatter!

The reason for these associations, are both obvious and yet undiscovered. If you think about it, digestion begins in the mouth.

It is no surprise then, that improperly chewed food has a devastating and far-reaching impact on our health. Food that is not properly chewed may not be fully processed resulting in half-chewed food, robbing your body of vital nutrition. The digestive tract constantly works overtime trying to digest unnaturally large chunks of un-chewed food. Poor nutrition combined with increased stress on the body leads to diseases, suffering, misery and early death. This is not an opinion; this is according to the latest peer reviewed research.

In view of this information, it seems obvious that preserving our natural teeth for our entire life should be one of our life pursuits — along the lines of eating healthy, exercising, and being happy. Sadly, the odds are against us. Today our teeth have to survive longer than any time in human history simply because we are living longer. This trend will continue, especially within the health-conscious

community —like the readers of this article. The 1800's techniques, still taught as the standard of care in all American dental schools, worked when you died in your 30's or 40's. They may not be the best choice for people living well past one hundred!

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TALKING OUR WALK

Year-in and year-out, it's comparatively easier to assemble the **February-March Winter Issue**. Why you wonder? Well, the overriding themes are Relationships and Sex. Need I say more? (Maybe not, but I've got to fill this page).

The reality is that everything is relationship—our partners, parents, children, co-workers, teammates, companion animals, places, things, and even with ourselves. How we respond, both outwardly and inwardly, define these relationships.

Paramount to any meaningful relationship is authenticity. Presenting our real selves to the world, acting from our heart and speaking our truth, creates fulfilling connections. While writing this piece, I heard Oprah Winfrey say "... speaking our truth is the most powerful tool we all have." One would think this to be self-evident. Sadly, in practice, far too many folks hide behind multiple masks to fit into the trend du jour—and oftentimes of a more sobering nature, hiding out of fear.

In this issue, Salena Migeot counsels us to *Speak Up—or Be Silently Complicit*. And now many are "speaking up." A new day has dawned: the #MeToo movement is currently the loudest evidence.

Elsewhere, people are speaking out against the systemic medical tyranny fostered by Big Pharma. Documentaries (covered in CREATIONS this past year) are giving public voice to thousands of parents whose children have been damaged by vaccinations (*The Truth About Vaccines*; and *Vaccines Revealed*); and proof of the efficacy of a multitude of alternative, natural and safe healing modalities (*The Truth About Cancer*).

Let's *speak* of centuries-old governmental suppression: Any word or deed we don't oppose, we ultimately condone. But the masses refrain from questioning the status quo keeping "complicity silent" for fear of reprisal. *Shaming*, a most effective method for quelling dissent, is Standard Operating Procedure. When "W" was in office, he exhorted that if you weren't completely on board with every U.S. military tactic employed, ("we're gonna smoke 'em out") you were "with the terrorists." Real "patriots" need not be concerned with *collateral damage* (dead and maimed civilians), the euphemism popularized during the Vietnam debacle.



Question the official explanation of the collapse of the World Trade Center (including Building 7 that was never touched) and you are a "Conspiracy Theorist." Wayne Dyer provided my favorite definition for this name-calling/shaming: *A conspiracy theorist is a derogatory term for a critical thinker*. Please send this compliment my way anytime.

"Inconveniently," a contingent of over 2,000 Architects & Engineers (AE911 Truth) thoroughly examined the evidence. But the pesky thing about this evidence for these experts is that "the symmetrical collapse of all WTC skyscrapers, according to the official story, violates the laws of physics and thermodynamics." Over 200 years ago, John Adams—historically considered to be a patriot—offered this: *Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence*. Those darn facts really know how to ruin a good story!

Regardless of the divisiveness emanating from the White House these days, heart-centered folks would likely agree that relationships are best nurtured through consideration and compassion—the always in-style "Golden Rule." Several years ago a close friend gifted me a button that poses three questions we might do well to consider before making a statement concerning another person:

1) Is it true? 2) Is it kind? 3) Will it help? If your thoughts cannot pass through all three of these gates, it is probably best left unsaid.

Namaste,

Neil + Andrea

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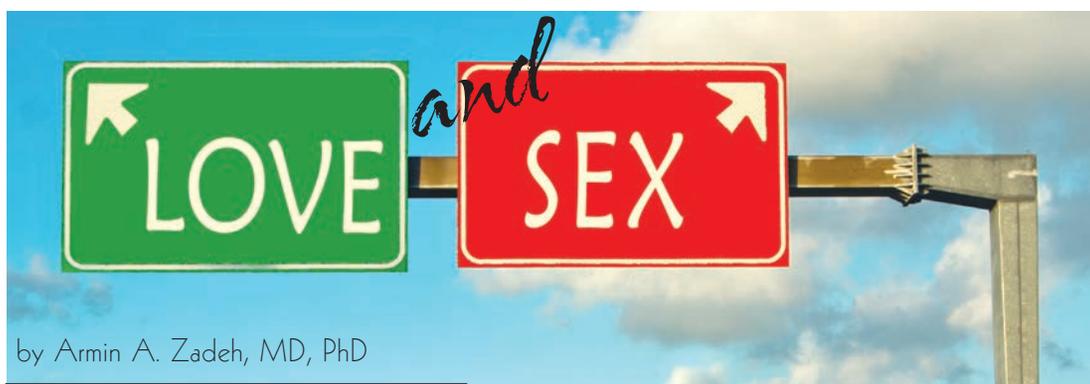
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by Armin A. Zadeh, MD, PhD

How are love and sex related? Both are common components of romantic relationships, but their dynamics are quite different. From an individual perspective, love and sexual desire may even be competing impulses.

Both, however, serve the same evolutionary purpose of passing DNA from one generation to the next. While the function of sexual desire is to facilitate the physical transfer of our genetic information to our offspring, love aims at protecting individuals (and their DNA) to facilitate their own reproduction.

Love and sexual desire may exist independently. Many deeply loving relationships have no sexual component. These bonds, often referred to as platonic, can yet be very powerful. Sexual relationships can also exist independently of love. We all know examples of relationships that are purely physical. In some instances, partners actually dislike each other but still enjoy sex together.

Love occasionally has a negative effect on sexual desire, and vice versa. Freud recognized that sex may trigger the impulse of aggression, which conflicts with loving feelings for a partner. Love demands protection and preservation. Aggression—while not necessarily intentionally hurtful—involves feelings opposed to love, such as power and domination. Some individuals indeed have better sex with partners they don't love because they have fewer inhibitions about hurting their partners' feelings with their words and actions. On the other hand, sex among loving partners may have a much more sensual, rewarding character—as expressed in the phrase making love.

Men and women may seek different attributes in partners depending on whether they are looking for love or sex. Attributes such as aggressiveness or promiscuity may be appealing to somebody looking for sexual adventures, but they are often not sought after in long-term partnerships. Nevertheless, a relationship based on sex—without love—may sometimes evolve into a loving relationship. After all, it involves two people spending considerable time together and sharing intimacy. Eventually they may get to know each other and enter a partnership.

Sex and love are, however, distinct impulses that should not be confused. Because sex may lead to ecstatic feelings and short-term satisfaction, an associated relationship may be perceived as meaningful although it often does not develop into mature love.

Regardless, many people repeatedly seek the excitement and satisfaction of sexual relationships. Fromm argued that such “orgiastic” bonds, if excessive, may be the result of developmental delays or substitutes for emotional connections.

Even so, recreational sex has become a popular leisure activity, facilitated by online dating sites and smartphone applications. As lust, or the impulse for sex, is a strong human drive, people indulge in sex much as they indulge in other impulses, such as feasting or enjoying stimulants. Common among these impulses is the transient nature of the satisfaction they provide. Some cultures and religions, such as Hinduism, regard the pursuit of instant gratification as a passing developmental phase. Eventually most people recognize the temporary nature of the fulfillment and look for more meaningful, lasting satisfaction.

Provided that there is mutual consent between adult partners, there is no ethical concern with frequent sexual engagements, as long as those involved have no expectations beyond sexual satisfaction. Given the strong drive for sex among humans and the undeniable excitement associated with sexual encounters, humans' responses to lust are an important aspect of life.

Since one function of lust is to promote procreation, and the chances of passing on our DNA are increased if we mate with more than one individual, we typically feel lust not for a single partner but rather for a range of individuals who exhibit certain external characteristics or behavior, such as body shape or inviting posturing. These characteristics are largely genetically determined but may be influenced by social mores and behavior patterns. We may feel a stronger lust toward people we do not know—again an evolutionary advantage, as it promotes fusing our DNA with that of multiple partners to create new life, as opposed to the same partner repeatedly. Similarly, people may feel a stronger attraction toward younger adults, whose fertility is generally greater.

Among primates, humans are unusual in that they copulate more than most other species and copulate through-out the reproductive cycle. Such high sexual drive

likely contributed to human reproductive success, but it may be a problem for monogamous relationships. Although many long-term couples enjoy fulfilling sex lives, the drive for engaging in sexual encounters with multiple individuals does not abate when we enter a committed relationship: it may even increase as the novelty and excitement of sex with a partner fade. For some, the lure of novelty may grow over time, creating conflicts with a partner. Similarly, as partners age, younger “competitors” may appear more attractive. It is therefore not surprising that many partners in long-term relationships face fidelity problems.

Reliable information about lifetime infidelity rates among couples is difficult to obtain, given the stigma associated with infidelity in Western societies, but most estimates suggest that it occurs in 10 to 40 percent of relationships. In the beginning of romantic relationships, the excitement and passion make it easy to focus lust on the partner. Over time, the passion may wane: this should not be seen as evidence that love has died but rather as a natural phenomenon. If this occurs, frank communication between partners may open possibilities for the improvement of sex in monogamous relationships.

From an evolutionary standpoint, strict sexual monogamy may not be the optimal way to increase a species. Intuitively, it would be more effective for individuals to have several relationships that allow reproduction. Sexual monogamy is comparatively rare among mammals. By contrast, social monogamy—that is, a couple looking after their offspring together—appears advantageous to the species. Thus, while love and sexual desire may stand in conflict at times, both play a strong role in supporting the species' survival.

Taking an abstract, idealistic view of love, we might permit our partner to engage in sexual activities with other people if this would contribute to the partner's happiness. Social movements based on the idea of “free love” have arisen throughout human history, but they probably became most popular during the sexual revolution in the 1960s. While free love works for some people, many, if not most, have trouble consenting to a partner's mating with others, as it strongly conflicts with our territorial instincts and our sense of self-worth. To resolve this conflict and avoid the associated hurt feelings in typical modern romantic relationships, partners have to prioritize monogamy over sex outside the partnership. Lust for other individuals has to be contained and suppressed for the good of a loving relationship.

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From a pragmatic standpoint, giving in to lust for other people is shortsighted and typically endangers the partnership as well as the happiness of all those involved. In other words, the benefit of engaging in sexual activities with other partners is generally small compared to the cost of potentially destroying a good relationship.

The satisfaction derived from sex is typically brief compared to the permanent fulfillment of a loving relationship. Thus, it is important to emphasize that the choice to engage in sex outside a relationship is an active decision. Some may feel that the appeal of sex per se, or sex with different partners, is worth the cost.

Others try to have it both ways. Individuals who cheat on their partners often claim that it happened as a result of a spontaneous impulse, without conscious thought. However, the conscious or subconscious decision to engage in infidelity usually is made *before* the opportunity presents itself. In other cases, infidelity is rationalized by pointing to perceived hostile actions by the partner.

Let's review the example of Andreas and Ruth. Their names and story have been modified to retain anonymity, but they are based on true events. Andreas and Ruth had been married for six years and had two young children. Ruth was often exhausted by the time they went to bed, and she was rarely in the mood for sex. Andreas resented her for their inactive sex life, and in his mind this justified the possibility of cheating. After all, it was Ruth's fault. If she consented to sex more often, he would not have been pushed into this situation.

On a business trip, Andreas went out to a bar with some colleagues. After a number of drinks, he started to flirt with a female colleague and invited her back to his hotel room. The next day, he had a bad conscience but blamed his actions on his wife's attitude and on alcohol.

In truth, however, he had no justification for blaming anybody or anything but himself. He acted without love for Ruth: he acted with disrespect and irresponsibility. Had he committed to being a loving partner, he would have seen that Ruth was exhausted because of her sacrifices for their family. He could have tried to take some of the burden off her shoulders. He could have arranged for a weekend alone for the two of them to rekindle their romance. He also could have understood that parents of young children may have different priorities, at least for a while.

Ironically, Andreas was convinced that he had never loved anybody but Ruth. He did not have any feelings for the colleague he slept with. In his mind, the casual encounter happened in a moment of dis-inhibition, triggered by physical attraction, alcohol, and lust. His case illustrates that mere affection or concern is not necessarily love. Love—again defined here as the continuous effort for the happiness of another person—demands focus and devotion. Even if Ruth never found out, Andreas did something that he knew would deeply hurt his wife. He acted selfishly, without considering the happiness of his loved one.

Sexual desire may be influenced by love. Surveys among couples reveal that

satisfaction with marital sex declines when partners feel less loving toward each other. Often, dissatisfaction with the relationship results in less sex, which in turn increases the probability of infidelity. Thus, a sudden change in the quality or quantity of sex in a relationship may be a sign of a problem that should be addressed. Conversely, love for a partner—and with it, sexual desire—can be restored by conscious effort. **Loving attention to a partner promotes an increase in sexual desire in the partner.**

Is it possible that Andreas indeed loves Ruth despite what he did? When impulses such as anger, fatigue, or frustration dominate our minds and actions, we may say or do things that do not convey a lot of love. Such episodes do not necessarily mean we feel no love for this person. Similarly, when an impulse of lust is paired with an opportunity of intimacy with somebody else, yielding to that impulse may not conclusively indicate a complete lack of love for a partner. It does mean, however, that the person who cheats has not mastered love.

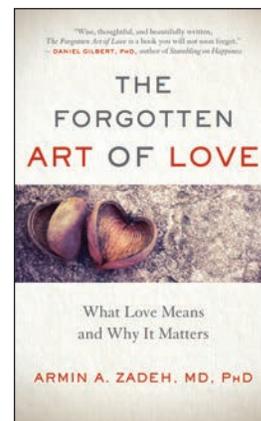
Andreas's love for Ruth was not important enough to him, not sufficiently strong, to contain his self-serving impulses and prevent his infidelity: he lost his focus on love. A person with a great capacity for love recognizes such impulses and controls them. **The weaker the focus on love, the easier it is to be**

distracted by impulses and give in to them. Many people are like Andreas. They may feel some love for their partner, but not enough to control egocentric impulses and withstand challenges.

In life, we generally cannot have it all, and everything comes at a price. **A loving relationship is among the most valuable achievements in life, but it requires sacrifice, including the sacrifice of some individual freedom.** The excitement of entering new relationships will cease; raising children requires an equitable shouldering of parenting duties. This seems a small price to pay for a life full of love, care, and respect. ✨



Excerpted from the book **The Forgotten Art of Love: What Love Means and Why It Matters** ©2017 by Armin A. Zadeh. Printed with permission from New World Library — www.newworldlibrary.com.



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LAST YEAR'S BIRDS AND THIS YEAR'S NEST

by Alan Cohen
Hawaii

With the advent of the Internet and Facebook, I've had lots of people from my past find me and reach out to connect. Some from as far back as elementary school, high school, and college. Some of these people were my best friends at the time.

It was exciting to hear from them again, and in most cases we had a lengthy phone talk or lunch date. Part of me thought we might rekindle our friendship.

But in all cases, after our initial meeting, we didn't have much more to talk about. Most of our conversation was reminiscing. After that, the interaction ran out of gas. We hugged, wished each other well, said, "Let's keep in touch," and we went our separate ways, never or rarely to connect again.



Part of me felt sad that such friendships had no current life. Then I saw a quote by Miguel de Cervantes, author of the beloved classic novel *Don Quixote*: *Do not look for this year's birds in last year's nest.* What a fabulous, penetrating lesson! What is of the past belongs to the past. What is of the present belongs to the present. Sometimes the two overlap; often they do not.

This brought me to discover a principle I call *Golden Intersections*. When we connect with someone, whether for a moment, a decade, or a lifetime, there is a purpose to that meeting. *A Course in Miracles* tells us that there is no such thing as a random encounter; every person we meet is sent to us by Spirit for a purpose. Our job is to discover and extract the gift in that meeting and use it. No connection is outside our destiny of good.

All relationships exist for a *reason*, a *season*, or a *lifetime*. *Reason* relationships might occur via a crossing of paths for a meaningful moment. A conversation in an elevator, a hearty laugh with a waitress, or one date with a person you do not see again, are never an accident; they all have a purpose. *Season* relationships go on for months or years: a romantic relationship, a strong friendship, or a close connection with a co-worker belong to you for a length of time. Then, like all seasons, the interlude comes to an end and gives way to something new. *Lifetime* relationships are usually with family members or a dear friend. They run deep and run the gamut of activities and emotions.

No matter how long your relationship lasts, there is a gift in it. Sometimes that gift comes through love, fun, and joy. Sometimes it comes through hardship and challenge. Do not write off difficult interactions as a mistake or a waste of time. In some cases the gifts they bestow are more transformational than easy relationships. *A Course in Miracles* tells us that it takes great spiritual maturity to recognize that all events, encounters, and relationships are helpful.

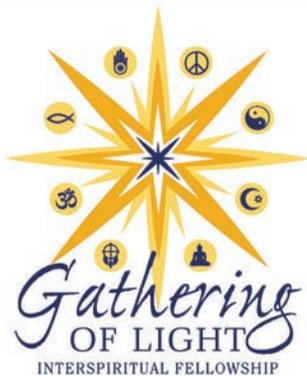
I used to romanticize the past by wondering if I had made a mistake by not getting together with some past girlfriends when I had the chance to. I second-guessed

myself for leaving or not cultivating relationships that could have turned out to be soulmate connections. Then something truly uncanny happened: *In every case*, some unexpected event showed up to demonstrate to me that there was a good reason those relationships did not endure. For example, my first love was my high school girlfriend Laurie in New Jersey. I was constantly high on love for months until we had a stormy breakup when I went off to college, and I never saw Laurie again. Often I wondered if we might have continued our love affair and come together for life if I had handled the situation better.

Thirty-five years later a friend of mine in Maui invited me to an intimate dinner party at his home in a remote tiny mountain town. "I want you to meet my friend Eddie," he told me. I was shocked to discover that this Eddie was Laurie's brother! When our conversation came around to Laurie, I admitted I felt bad about our breakup. "No need," Eddie told me. "If you saw the life Laurie has chosen, you would not miss her. Her lifestyle and the choices she has made are worlds away from what you are doing." Then he told me about Laurie's volatility and scarred relationships. Still I gave him my email to pass along to his sister so I could at least say hello after all these years. Laurie never connected. Now I realize that ending the relationship, even for what seemed foolish or immature reasons, was the way it had to be. It had a delightful purpose when it existed, but when that purpose had been served, there was no reason for it to continue.

We always have an opportunity to let the past go and allow new life to fill us. If you and I can just have faith that what belongs to us will stay with us, and if something served us in the past it does not necessarily belong to us in the present, we would forever shine in the now. Last year's birds built their nests, and both the parents and the chicks have flown on to a new life. When we stay as light as birds in the glorious now, we too fly on to our highest destiny. ✨

Alan Cohen is the author the bestselling *A Course in Miracles Made Easy: Mastering the Journey from Fear to Love*. Join Alan in Hawaii this June 19-23 for a life-transforming retreat, *Power, Passion, and Purpose: a Training to Live Your Vision*. For more information about this program, Alan's books and videos, free daily inspirational quotes, online courses, and weekly radio show, visit www.alancohen.com.



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EMPATHIC CONNECTION IS WHAT WE LONG FOR

by Scott Stabile, Michigan

Empathy helps. Consider situations in which it helped immensely to know that others could relate to what you were going through.

After a brutal breakup, we don't want someone who's never had their heart broken telling us to get over it.

We want to sob to a friend who knows the grief of a broken heart and the time it can take to move on. If you're a parent being driven crazy by your toddler, you may not seek out your single friends to commiserate, not when you've got other struggling parent friends who really get what you're going through. It's comforting to be heard; it's empowering to be understood.

Human beings don't long just for connection; we long for empathetic connection.

When we can relate to someone going through a difficult time, when we can empathize with her struggle, we serve her by letting her know. I've spoken with thousands of people over the years about my parents' murder, almost always to a reaction of shock, and then sympathy. I've cried into the arms of close friends who would've sold their souls to take away my pain. Their compassion and love touched me deeply, of course, and I'm grateful to have had so many loved ones with whom I could unravel. But something entirely different happens when I encounter others who lost their parents when they were young. Others who understand what it's like to live most of their lives without a mom and dad, or who know the pain of losing a loved one to murder. Others who have been there. In our shared experience, we can offer each other the distinct — divine — comfort of empathy. This is how we help each other feel less alone in our individual struggles.

Empathy eliminates separation.

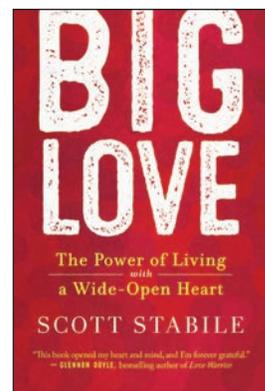
It fosters connection. That's the thing about being human — we are all each other. Even when we can't relate to the exact same situation as another, we can

still make an effort to empathize. We have probably lived some version of being there. Heartache is heartache, after all. Anger is anger. Grief is grief. We have all walked the path between joy and sorrow, stopping at every emotion along the way. Empathy asks us to be willing to share ourselves with each other, willing to be vulnerable and speak about our pain so that others feel the freedom to speak about theirs.

Empathy is a gift, to give and to receive.

One of the things I love most about my Facebook community is our willingness to empathize with each other's experiences. When people post about depression, addiction, chronic pain, grief, anxiety, or whatever else, others respond with comments that make it clear to those who shared that they are not alone. They have been there, too.

The point is not to hijack someone else's experience, or to drone on about our own struggles, but to respond in a way that lets others know they're not mutants for feeling the way they feel. Likely, many of us have experienced whatever they're experiencing, or something very similar. ✨



Excerpted from the book **Big Love: The Power of Living with a Wide-Open Heart**. ©2017 by Scott Stabile. Printed with permission from New World Library: www.newworldlibrary.com.

Scott Stabile is the author of **Big Love**. His inspirational posts and videos have attracted a huge and devoted social media following, including nearly 360K Facebook fans and counting. A regular contributor to the Huffington Post, he conducts personal empowerment workshops around the world. Visit him online at scottstabile.com.

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ARISE AND SHINE

by Dreama Vance

A couple of years ago when we first moved to our new place, we popped into the brand new big chain grocery store that had just been built in our tiny little town, which is basically out in the boonies.

We stopped to get some organic apples since we were getting ready for a car trip. I stood in the checkout line and observed the woman in front of me. Her shopping cart was full of boxed and bottled items. The bottles were full of neon-colored liquid. I have no idea what was actually in those bottles, but she did have two boys with her that looked to be about 15 and 12, as well as a little girl in the cart. I can only assume those bottles of something that could not possibly have been grown in nature, were for the kids. The two boys were busy raiding the candy trays on display at the counter and holding bottles of soda pop. I don't really know what was in the boxes in her cart, either, but they, too, had bright colors and "grab your attention" packaging.

There was not one item of LIVE food in her cart. Not one piece of fruit, nor one vegetable was to be found. As I stood and watched the tableau of this family, my heart actually hurt for them. This picture has stayed with me and still weighs heavy in my heart.

Believe it or not, our food choices are closely tied to consciousness. Dead "food" promotes a "culture of death" as Dr. Gabriel Cousens calls it. Live food promotes life and feeds our spiritual awareness. Dr. Cousens is a well known advocate of a raw vegan diet and the spiritual enhancement that comes from this diet and lifestyle. He has several books out about the topic, including *Spiritual Nutrition*, where he specifically talks about how our food choices effect the subtle energy bodies, kundalini, and ultimately our spiritual path to God.

Processed food is, quite frankly, killing us. No matter how much good stuff you put into the body, if you are still polluting your system, you will simply be treading water, not making headway.

Think of your body as a pristine pool of water. When we start adding a drop of black ink to the pool, at first it is hardly noticeable. The more we add, however, the murkier the water becomes. If we decide to clean up and restore our pool to its pristine state, we can eventually do that by adding clean water, but only if we stop adding the black ink.

Improving our own well being and therefore increasing our spiritual awareness must involve the two steps of 1) eliminating the bad stuff and 2) increasing the good stuff that we eat.

I've often wondered which comes first, a change in diet, or a change in consciousness. I think perhaps they dance together with one taking the lead first and then the other. **One thing that happens for sure is the cleaner you eat, the more aware and conscious you become, the more emotions will arise to the surface for you to become aware of, and that you will have to handle.**

Food and emotions are intricately linked in all of us. In fact, it is one of the main ways we are socialized into our culture. The sooner we see this food and emotion connection and begin to understand it, the easier it will be to make our own changes in diet and the more tolerance we will have in understanding others.

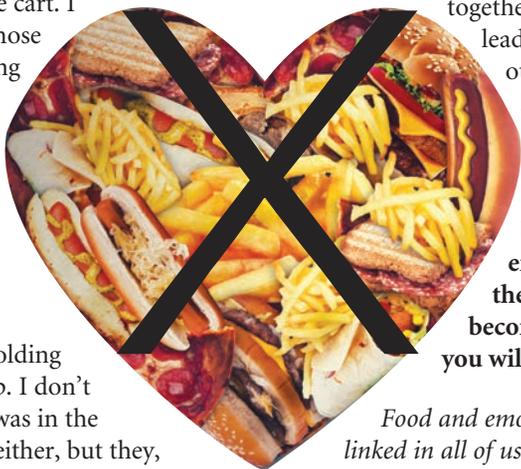
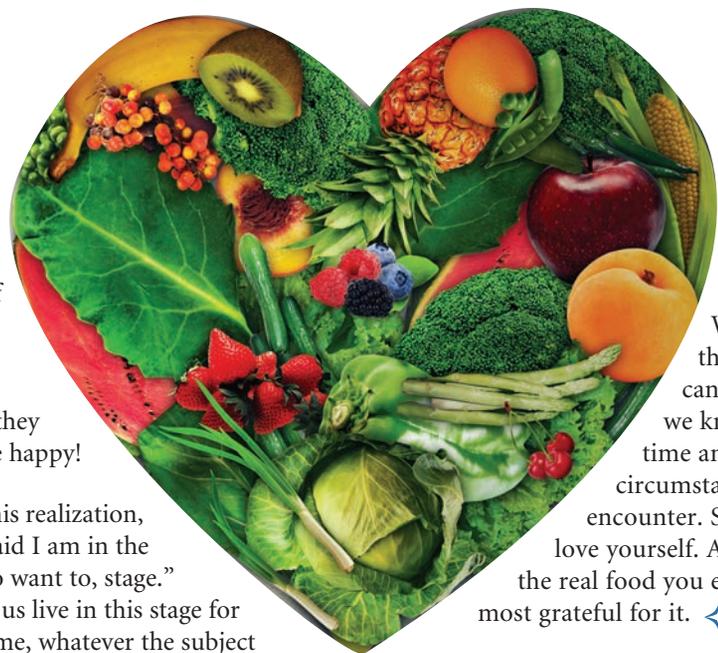
I've been involved in the raw food movement since about 2002. How that happened is a story for another time. I have watched many come and go in the movement. I've watched many leaders change their tune. Although I am not 100% raw, I am always moving in that direction. It stands as a guiding light in front of me, beckoning me on to better wellness and higher consciousness.

Recently I was talking a friend through prepping a raw dish and she looked at me and said, "You like doing this." I stopped and realized, it brings me joy. Eating this way brings be joy. Somewhere in my journey during these last 15 years, the decision to eat more raw and living foods went from an intellectual decision to make

good choices to one of wanting to make choices because they make me happy!

Before this realization, I often said I am in the "want, to want to, stage." Many of us live in this stage for a long time, whatever the subject matter, be it doing daily exercise, starting a yoga practice, learning a new skill, or eating healthier. We live in that "want to want to stage" thinking about it, maybe even doing it, but if we are actually doing it, it is our willpower and discipline that carries us. When we finally reach the "want to stage" it is like finding freedom! Now we are doing whatever it is because we want to do it. Just like if you want a glass of water, you get up and go get one. Now you are motivated by the experience itself, and the joy and happiness you feel with the practice.

We all make choices everyday. We all do the best we can with what we know at the time and with the circumstances we encounter. So always love yourself. Always love the real food you eat and be most grateful for it. ✨



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KEYS TO HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

by Dr. Will Tuttle, Ph.D.
Healdsburg, CA

One of the basic principles in understanding longevity is that the higher we are eating on the food chain, the more concentrated the toxins are in the foods we are eating. Cows, pigs, chickens, and farmed fish, for example, are eating corn, soy, alfalfa, and other grains that absorb environmental toxins, especially if they're not organic.

Additionally, their feed is often enriched with fishmeal, chicken litter, slaughterhouse waste, and other substances that concentrate toxins, and that industry has found profitable to use, promoting weight gain and milk production.

The result is that with animal foods, we are consuming PCBs, dioxins, heavy metals, nuclear radiation, pesticides, herbicides, and a wide range of injected drug and hormone residues. These physical toxins tend to increase rates of cancer and weaken our immune system, reducing longevity. There are also naturally occurring toxins in animal foods, such as the primary protein in milk, casein, which we are not designed to digest, as well as other animal proteins that tend to be inflammatory and to acidify our blood and tissues. These substances, along with saturated animal fat, hormones, heterocyclic amines, and other naturally occurring substances increase risk for heart disease, strokes, diverticulitis, kidney and liver disease, obesity, autoimmune disease, arthritis, and other conditions that reduce health and longevity.

However, beyond these physical toxins that accumulate in animal-sourced foods, there are what we can refer to as *metaphysical toxins* that we may not be aware of. The animals who provide the flesh, dairy products, and eggs we are typically pressured into eating from infancy, are confined, mutilated, abused, and killed in ways that lead to our consuming metaphysical toxins. I have heard the plaintive wails of despondent dairy cows whose calves are stolen from them at birth, and the squeals of pain

and terror as pigs are sent to slaughter. **In purchasing animal foods, we are both causing and consuming acute fear, despair, pain, sadness, and frustration.** What is the result of building our bodies with these hormonal and vibrational realities? Further, all the cows, pigs, chickens, and other animals we use for food are killed at a small fraction of their natural life spans, when they are mere infants or children in human terms. What is the result of killing billions of animals for food when they are only infants? Destroying the longevity and health of others, do we destroy our own health and longevity?

We can see the answer to this in the decreasing longevity rates in the U.S., and in the vast profits accruing to the medical-pharmaceutical industry, which sells billions of dollars of drugs annually in three main markets: 1) for animals who are imprisoned for food; 2) for people who eat foods derived from these animals and consequently need medications for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other resulting conditions, and 3) the largest market of all, for people who are prescribed medications for mental conditions such as insomnia, depression, anxiety, panic, and dementia, and who, significantly, are typically buying and eating animal foods, causing insomnia, depression, anxiety, and panic in the animals whose flesh and secretions they are eating. The ancient wisdom holds true eternally: as we sow, we reap.

Longevity is not only about the quantity of years we live; it is also about the quality of our lives as well. As a composer and pianist, I have spent quite a bit of time over the years offering concerts to elderly people confined to nursing homes, and have thus been able to witness some of the effects of our food and medical systems. Many of us who in our later years are committed to these institutions are drugged into states where we exhibit little awareness and our capacities and functionality are tragically minimized. We may live for years in these facilities doing little more than

watching television and staring blankly. These painful years add little to meaningful longevity, yet cows, pigs, chickens, and fishes continue to be killed to keep us alive, and as a culture, we fail to see how our abuse of these animals boomerangs and affects us all.

Looking more deeply into longevity, we are called also to address the bigger picture, and the purpose of our lives on this Earth. Why are we here, actually? If we live longer, what are we doing with the additional years? How are we contributing to our deeper purpose, and to the purpose of humanity? What role does our lifetime here have in the larger journey of our being as an expression of eternal consciousness?

No matter how we look at it, whether we live to be 60, or 80, or even, say, 110 years, which seems remarkably long to us, we will inevitably find ourselves at that moment when we leave our bodies, and this moment is unpredictable. The mere handful of decades we have here on our earthly adventure, relatively brief and precious as it is, opens ineluctably to a new experience after death that is strongly influenced by how we live our life here.

We are not merely physical objects, pieces of living meat with a brain and biological drives. This delusion of materialism is perpetuated by our animal-enabling culture, which is based on eating animals and relentlessly reducing beings to things.

Despite the reductionist narrative of our culture, we are all manifestations of infinite and eternal consciousness. Though what we are can never, essentially, be born or die, our human life is significant, because we have the

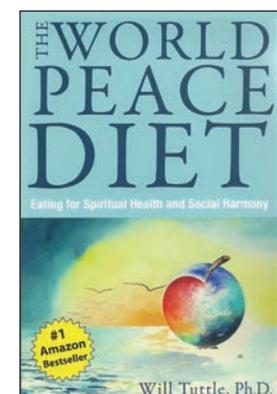
opportunity to learn, grow, express, and contribute as part of a boundless unity of being.

By questioning the official stories of our culture that promote violence and disease, and pursuing our lives as questing adventures of awakening joy, love, freedom, and respect for all expressions of life, we connect with our spiritual health and longevity, which is rooted in the timeless awareness that is the core of our true nature. By living this lifetime in alignment with vegan values, endeavoring to bless others and allowing them to fulfill their purposes, we sow seeds not just for physical health and longevity, but also for metaphysical health and longevity as well.

Our journey is far more vast than we can fathom, especially within the context of our cultural conditioning. The seeds we sow will produce after their kind, with consequences that reverberate throughout the entire web of creation, far beyond what we're aware of here. The quality of these reverberations determines the quality of our lives not just as physical beings here on Earth, but as expressions of eternal consciousness in the far bigger picture into which our lives here unfold. This is the most significant longevity, and one through which the compassion of vegan living brings benefits to all of us, both here on this Earth, and also into our unfolding journey beyond the veils of this lifetime. ✨



Will Tuttle, Ph.D., author of the international best-seller, **The World Peace Diet**, is a pianist, composer, Dharma Master in the Zen tradition, recipient of the Courage of Conscience Award and Empty Cages Prize, and vegan since 1980.



CALENDAR

OF EVENTS

ONGOING EVENTS

MONDAYS

TRANSMISSION MEDITATION – offers an unparalleled opportunity to serve humanity in a simple yet very potent manner. By participating in this unique form of group meditation, you assist the Masters of Wisdom in the healing and transformation of the world, accelerating your own spiritual evolution in the process. 6:30PM. Call 516-791-1485 for more info and location in Valley Stream.

SHAMANIC MEDICINE WHEEL GROUP for healing and personal transformation. Meditation, drumming, journeying with Irene Siegel. 7:30pm, Huntington. Call for info and registration, (631) 547-5433, www.CenterPointCounseling.bz.

A CIRCLE OF WOMEN presented by Moonfire and The Women's Ways Mystery School gathers monthly. Celebrating the sacred in every woman since 1990. Now in ISLIP TERRACE, SOUTHAMPTON, NY, Chappaqua, NJ, CT, NH, MA. 631-287-9000, www.MoonfireMeetingHouse.com, <http://womensways.typepad.com/circle>.

TUESDAYS

PSYCHIC PALM/TAROT/MEDIUM READINGS by Roni Todd. Private Readings in Roni's Psychic Sanctuary. Tuesday or Wednesday by appointment only. Call 516-889-3732.

SPIRITUAL WORKSHOPS BY GOL Experience an array of mindful and provocative group sessions focused on supporting each individual's spiritual growth. Prior sessions included; book discussions, energy circle, chakra work, past life, food issues and more. 7PM at 95 Old Country Rd, Melville Call 631-265-3822 for more info. See our calendar on our website GatheringOfLight.org.

GUIDED MEDITATION GROUP 2/6, 2/27, 3/13, 3/27. New members welcome. 7:30 – 9:30 PM Smithtown. Information, Registration: 631-724-9733. www.lightawakenings7.com.

WORKSHOPS 2/13 Introduction to Meditation Workshop. 3/6 Astrology: Understand Yourself & Others. 7:30 – 9:00 pm Smithtown. Information, Registration: 631-724-9733. www.lightawakenings7.com.

WEDNESDAYS

"ZEN FOR LIFE" MEDITATION CLASSES at The Holistic Center for Soulful Living in Smithtown. Wednesday nights, 7 – 8:30pm. Join a beautiful circle of love & transformation and create Peace, Balance and Inner joy for yourself and others. Walk-ins welcome or register at SoulfulLivingCenter.com

THURSDAYS

TRANSMISSION MEDITATION – offers an unparalleled opportunity to serve humanity in a simple yet very potent manner. By participating in this unique form of group meditation, you assist the Masters of Wisdom in the healing and transformation of the world, accelerating your own spiritual evolution in the process. 6:30PM. Call 516-729-0664 for more info and location in Farmingville.

PSYCHIC PALM/TAROT READINGS by Roni Todd at A Time for Karma, 14 S. Village Ave., RVC, NY. 1-6pm. (516) 889-3732.

FRIDAYS

MOONFIRE MEETING HOUSE presents our **"Men's Long Island Talking Stick Circle"** on the first Fri of the month. Open to men searching for Balance, Courage and Brotherhood. 631-287-9000; www.MoonfireMeetingHouse.com.

SATURDAYS

SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP – GATHERING OF LIGHT - Are you looking to deepen your spiritual connection? We welcome all faiths, beliefs, and traditions. Come join like minded people in community. Saturday, 10 AM. www.gatheringoflight.org. 631-265-3822. (See ad p.8)

SPIRITUAL DISCUSSION 1st Saturday of every month, 10AM-12Noon. Traveling a spiritual path is a journey of discovery and is always easier when undertaken with the fellowship of other like-minded people. Our Saturday discussion is for those who would like to share their journey with like-minded friends. Center for Spiritual Living Long Island, 17 Maple Place, Hicksville. 516-822-9314. www.csl-longisland.org.

MAGICAL, MYSTICAL PSYCHIC READINGS with Rev. Pauline Southard at A Time for Karma,

Rockville Centre. 12:30PM – 5:30PM. Readings can include: Astrology, Tarot, Channeling your spirit guides, Angels and Mediumship. Fridays also. For appointment call 516-445-4242. www.karmickat.com.

CHILDREN'S SPIRITUALITY CLASSES 10AM during GOL services at 95 Old Country Road, Melville 11746. Contact Linda Brenner at lbrenn23@optonline.net to confirm.

SUNDAYS

SUMMERLAND CHURCH OF LIGHT, NSAC Return to your Spiritual Home each Sunday at 10 am in our loving sanctuary, where all truth and knowledge-seekers are welcomed. 120 Plant Avenue at Oser Avenue, Hauppauge. 631-316-1588. (See ad p.13)

INNER LIGHT CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIVING Are you looking for a meaning to Life and to YOUR life? We are a community of people who are seeking a more fulfilling life through the principles of universal spirituality. Join us for service each Sunday at 11AM. 10 Cedar Swamp Road, Suite 5, Glen Cove, 516-796-0769. www.innerlightcsl-li.org and <https://www.facebook.com/innerlightcsl/>. (See ad p.23)

CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIVING LONG ISLAND teaches universal spiritual principles that help us through life's challenges, allowing us to live more fulfilling lives. If you resonate with authors like Louise Hay, Wayne Dyer and Michael Bernard Beckwith, see their ideas come alive at CSL-Long Island. Center for Spiritual Living Long Island, 17 Maple Place, Hicksville. 10:30 A.M. 516-822-9314. www.csl-longisland.org.

THE TEMPLE OF METAPHYSICAL SCIENCE, NSAC— Come join us in our search for Spirituality & Inner Peace. The American Legion Building, Baker Street & S. Ocean Ave., Patchogue. Healing & Service: 11AM. (800) 316-1231. (See ad p.22)

UNITY LONG ISLAND – If you like Wayne Dyer and Louise Hay, you will love Unity Long Island's Positive Path of Spiritual Living! Services are held @ 11:00AM, 38 Old Country Road, Garden City, NY 11530, 2nd Floor. 516-823-0940 www.unitylongisland.com UnityLongIsland@gmail.com. (See ad p.15)

SPECIAL EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2-11

THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT HEALTH, FREE 10 DAY CONFERENCE – February 2 - 11, 2018 at the Long Island Hilton/Huntington. Over 35 of the world's top authors live on stage sharing the unbiased truth about health, nutrition, the food system, the medical system and the environment. FREE to the public. Register online at www.realtruthtalks.com or call 516.921.1417.

FEBRUARY 3

FREE VIDEO SCREENING: Benjamin Creme on The Emergence of Maitreya, the World Teacher and the Masters of Wisdom. Includes panel Q&A and introduction to Transmission Meditation. Saturday, 2PM, Quest Bookshop Lecture Hall, 240 E. 53rd St., NYC - No registration required - www.share-international.us/ne 718-200-7965.

FEBRUARY 16

SPECIAL EVENT: NUMEROLOGY & PALMISTRY WORKSHOPS (choose one!) with Carol Durand, Numerologist and Roni Todd, Psychic, Palm Reader. Friday, at 8:00 PM. Members: \$15, Non-Members: \$20. Levittown Hall, Levittown Parkway, Hicksville, NY. 516-731-0909, www.eyesoflearning.org. Levittown Hall, Levittown Parkway, Hicksville, NY. 516-731-0909, www.eyesoflearning.org.

FEBRUARY 17

ONE EN-CHANTING EVENING, A LOVE EVENING TO THE DIVINE Join us for a concert, kirtan, drum circle and sing, chant, dance and drum your way to ecstatic connection. Saturday, 6:30pm to 10pm Admission \$20pp. 95 Old Country Rd., Melville. Call Gathering of Light for more info, 631-265-3822.

MARCH 3

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MARCH 16

LECTURE: ACTIVATE YOUR ASCENSION CODES AND ENTER THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ONENESS with Sandy Guarnotta, Reverend, Psychologist, Psychic Medium and Intuitive Healer. Friday, 8:00PM, Members: \$10.00, Non-Members: \$15.00. Levittown Hall, Levittown Parkway, Hicksville, NY. 516-731-0909, www.eyesoflearning.org.

APRIL 6

SPECIAL EVENT: MEET THE PSYCHICS that will be at the Spring Festival on April 22. Friday, 8:00PM, Members: \$10.00, Non-Members: \$15.00. No pre-registration required. Levittown Hall, Levittown Parkway, Hicksville, NY. 516-731-0909, www.eyesoflearning.org

MAY 6

LIFE BEYOND DEATH Enjoy a great lunch while Certified Medium Kim Russo connects to loved ones in spirit, plus an extraordinary talk by parapsychologist Loyd Auerbach about evidence of an afterlife. Sunday, 12-5PM, Huntington Hilton. www.foreverfamilyfoundation.org 631-425-7707. (See ad p.31)

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EVOLUTIONARY RELATIONSHIPS — TRANSFORMING THE SPACE BETWEEN US

by Patricia Albere
Berkeley, CA

Personal transformation is a pretty popular topic these days. But while personal improvement is an important part of modern life, there's another kind of transformation that has the power to change not only ourselves, but the world around us. I call it "mutual awakening" and it's focused on awakening to and transforming the space between us.

The Invisible We

We're all familiar with the concept of "subjective" experience, which often is defined as the inner, personal, and private world that each of us lives on a momentary basis. But there's another version of the subjective called the "intersubjective," which is the shared space of consciousness that exists between two or more people. We've all experienced moments (if not steady states) of oneness, of being inside the same experience, together. Some examples of this state include love, compassion, joy, laughter, penetrating clarity, and a myriad of other experiences.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote, "We are tied together in a single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." Throughout the ages and across the spectrum of traditions, spiritual teachers like Dr. King have told us the same thing: At the deepest level, we are all one and everything in this world is interdependent. Paradoxically, this underlying oneness gives rise to the multiple unique forms in which we find ourselves. Yet, our essential nature is unity—with each other and with all of life.

The field of relatedness has been described by many philosophers, physicists, sociologists, and mystics, but I particularly like the one-word definition offered by Dr. King: *mutuality*. In ordinary usage, mutuality connotes reciprocity, sharing, partnership, and mutual benefit. In my work, I use it to refer to that place where souls overlap—a confluence of consciousness. Mutuality also points to the

fact that relationship is a two-way street, where two or more individuals agree to be consciously related.

Awakening Mutuality

Mutuality emerges when two or more people occupy the same space in consciousness. As Sufi scholar Kabir



Helminksi writes, "Two stones cannot occupy the same space, but two fragrances can." *Truly, our souls are more akin to fragrances than stones because they are permeable, able to commingle without losing their essence or their autonomy, while our egos always remain separate, like two stones tumbling in the ocean of consciousness but never blending with it.*

We can tune in and listen to what the relationship itself desires, what it's ready for, and what potential it contains. Then, if we want those potentials to be fulfilled, we can elect to work together to expand and deepen our *experience of mutuality*. What I call evolutionary mutuality is a true union of souls, in which there is an unbounded merging of the essential self of both individuals, who each remain distinct and unique but who achieve a heightened state of awareness and engage in dynamic interplay.

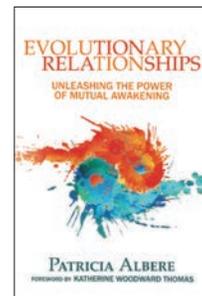
Mutual awakening starts with moving beyond our separate sense of self into full and immediate contact with our essential nature. Only then, may we come into reality with another. Once we become aware of our inner essence in all its fullness, the next stage is to connect with the inner experience of the other. When this is achieved by both partners, a sacred space is created where the partners become aware of the field of relatedness between them.

Waking Up, Together

By learning to let go and enter this field together, we awaken simultaneously—it's never just happening to one person. This is an entirely different process than the kind of individual awakening that has been described for thousands of years by spiritual mystics, with their myriad techniques and practices. Instead, mutual awakening is an invitation to become something greater together, though spirit. What's exciting is how available it is, as though consciousness itself has been waiting for us to pay attention in the right way. When we do pay attention, we experience the mystical depths of shared unity, and we shift our normal way of being and acting in the world.

Mutual awakening is a movement of attraction and expansion between two or more people who wish to give and receive at higher and higher levels. The more energy is exchanged, the more mutuality occurs. This reciprocity of energy, attention, and love creates access to unending dynamism and new evolutionary potentials. In this heightened state, *Evolutionary Relationships* serve as channels for our connection to each other and to the greater intelligence and energy of the cosmos, the universal mystery and greater reality to which all of us are connected. As the Bible states, "Where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." ✧

Patricia Albere is an internationally known spiritual teacher and author of the bestselling book *Evolutionary Relationships: Unleashing the Power of Mutual Awakening*. She is the founder of the *Evolutionary Collective* and has worked with over 200,000 people in groups in the last 40 years exploring a new field of 'intersubjective awakening' and post-personal development.



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SPEAK OUT — OR BE SILENTLY COMPLICIT

by Salena Migeot, Southampton, NY
and The Collective of Guides

Beloved Ones,
We greet you with great love and profound exuberation for all the revelations that are coming to light. This is the time—the year that will prove to be pivotal in the shift in consciousness that is upon you. You are being lifted up in ways that will allow you to withstand many more revelations with the understanding that it is truly in the highest good for all to be exposed.

Instead of you despairing at all the depravity, back room deals, payoffs, and corruption that is being exposed, we ask you to rejoice in the exposure—it is a grand indication that things that no longer serve the greater good are being exposed in order to make way for a new, more egalitarian, more efficient, more transparent, and more values based system. This will evolve over the coming year and beyond, but will be markedly different from the ‘business as usual’ that has become the norm. The public will have no tolerance for their public servants being anything but ethical representatives of the public they serve. People will realize more and more that tolerating that which is unacceptable has made them complicit and thereby somewhat accountable for whom they elect.

Even for those who did not vote for, patronize, or support the unethical newsmaker of the day, the tolerance or acceptance of their actions through looking the other way in similar situations, regardless of how seemingly distant, has made most of you complicit in the system that has supported these ones. Even for those of you who have been silenced by those more powerful than you and in a position to keep you down despite your considerable talents and abilities, to some extent you unknowingly have perpetuated the system that allows them to stay in power, regardless of their disregard for others.

We are not blaming the victims here in any way. We are saying: You are a collective of individuals that make up a much greater whole. To a large extent, what you believe in is what you support. If you believe



the system is corrupt, you support that system’s status quo. So, even if you do not want to support corruption, your belief that it is so, that you are powerless to change/fix/improve it in any way, allows the system to continue unchecked. At this time, it is more important than ever that those of you who are staying silent and seemingly staying safe as a result of your silence, be willing to at least consider speaking out.

That consideration, regardless of you acting on it, fuels the momentum of exposure that is currently happening. If you act on it and actually speak out, it is a much more powerful fuel. **We ask that those of you who have experienced, witnessed, or in some small or large way been complicit in that which is much more recognizable now as abuse, corruption, or a misuse of power, be willing to consider speaking out to at least a close friend or confidante, but preferably to a much larger and wider audience.** When you do you will energetically help others in similar situations.

You will also be a powerful catalyst for the cleansing that is already happening with or without your participation. Just like a rambunctious child in a bathtub that is not aware of how little or much control and input they have in that situation depending on their choices, the cleansing can be quick and complete or very long, slow, drawn out, and perhaps accompanied by outbursts, tantrums, screams, and splashes. Each of you can be more mindful of how your choices affect the whole and accelerate the process via your intentions and input or allow it to be a long, drawn out process through your continued silence.

We are always supporting you and we can only assist to the extent that you allow us. Therefore, we ask that you enlist our help and assistance by asking us to give you the courage you need to do what you know in your heart is the right thing to do. We ask you to be specific where appropriate—meaning: if you know that a certain piece of evidence exists that would expose something that, to serve the greater good, should be exposed, we lovingly suggest you ask our assistance in creating the circumstances that would expose it. You do not have to elaborate or be specific. We will not, except in extreme circumstances, assist in exposing any victims without their consent. If those victims wish they had the courage to come forward, we can and will either assist them in speaking out or, we will co-create the circumstances that will make it easier for them to speak out i.e. assisting other victims of the same perpetrator(s) in speaking out so that the one who does not have the courage will find the courage through their fellow victims stories.

Beloveds, the current exposures are merely the tip of the iceberg. There is much, much more to be revealed. We encourage you to see it all as a very necessary cleansing process—one that will be difficult, perhaps somewhat traumatic for many to watch, listen to, or hear about, but please, please, please know and own that, again, it is necessary.

Once the cleansing process is complete, you will all feel, be, and move forward feeling much better and having the clear knowing that the dirt is a thing of the past and that your new reality will be one in which cleanliness matters to all in a way

that will not aid, abet, or support abuse, corruption, sexual force or coercion, or the misuse of power in any way. In all areas of life, whether it be the local recreational center or the highest offices in the land, exposures will be happening.

The majority of you will be sick and tired of hearing the stories. And they will continue to come out. And on and on. Beloveds, **please hold purity and innocence in your hearts** and do not allow the exposures to erase those concepts from you. Think of newborn babies and their innocence and purity. Think of pristine areas in nature, or better yet visit pristine environments as a cleansing balm for your soul. Visit forests, woods, bodies of water, or even local parks as a reminder that beauty is everywhere as long as you take the time to appreciate it.

There is much beauty on the other side of this process and we encourage you to look forward to that and create your desired reality through your thoughts, affirmations, and visualizations. ✨

Salena Migeot travels throughout the Northeast and to Arizona to do channeled readings at psychic fairs. Salena channels “A Message from Your Guides” every few weeks and e-mails them to an ever-growing list of readers for free. If you would like to be added to the list, e-mail her at Salenam2@msn.com with “Guides” in the subject line. To arrange a reading, you can e-mail her or call her at 609-741-0402.

ARE YOU REALLY OKAY?

Erica Settino
Huntington, NY

You're okay, you say. And sure, I can see that. You are after all, out in the world "adulthood" with the best of them. Showing up to work, meeting deadlines, getting dinner on the table, and even having some laughs along the way. It's true, you're lovely. You're doing a standup job. But are you really okay?

The reason I ask is that I am not. Don't get me wrong, I've got my stuff together—for the most part. But regardless of how highly I manage to function or how happy my day-to-day life may be, I am still a woman who shudders when a man speaks through clenched teeth.

I am a woman, who although not afraid of confrontation, deflates like a slow-leaking balloon when faced with my husband's anger—no matter how logical, legitimate, or warranted it may be. I collapse into myself; shoulders rounded in unnecessary defense. To this day, I am a woman who sees a wooden spoon and am reminded not of a favorite recipe, but of what it feels like to be threatened with violence by those I held most dear.

Oh, it's just spanking, you say. And after all, I turned out fine, you reason. But are you fine? I mean, how fine can you actually be if you are hitting the most precious, fragile, and vulnerable people in your life under the guise of love?

I suppose some confusion is to be expected. It is after all, what happened to us. So much so that the blurred lines between love and fear, concern and control, were woven into the very tapestry of our bruised flesh. We are the walking results of our parents' unchecked rage and inability to control their impulses. I—you, we—deserved better. And now, so do our kids.

Please, I beg of you, stop hitting your children and rationalizing that because you were hit and "turned out fine" so too must they endure the terror of a parent's assault. Because, let's be honest, in this regard we aren't really fine. And they won't be either.

To be clear: spanking is most definitely abuse. Any action taken to instill fear and create an environment of insecurity and distrust can be characterized as maltreatment, which is one of the ways

Dictionary.Com defines abuse. An over-simplification if you ask me, but you get the point.

It is in these most precious and precarious early years when our children's psyches are literally being formed, that our words and actions are of the most crucial import. Not only does what we say and do affect their physical development, but their emotional and mental development as well. And here's the thing, I know you love your kid(s); wanting only what's best for them now and in the future. But your screaming, spanking, threatening, and/or abandoning (amongst other horrors) is not going to be what ensures their success in this life. It will in fact, only make things much, much harder for them. Trust me, I know.

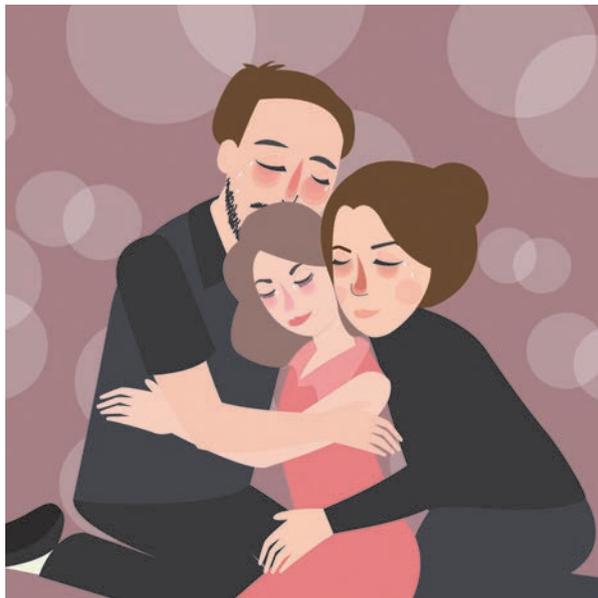
It is our job as parents and adults to do the hard work that will enable us to provide our children not just with the basic standard of care, but with the exceptional level of love, trust, and respect that they so deserve. **If you hit your child(ren) you are teaching them amongst other things, that:**

- ♥ Violence is acceptable and, in fact, the way to handle difficult situations.
- ♥ Their bodies are not their own and that bigger people can do to them whatever they see fit.
- ♥ We have no responsibility for controlling our emotions and resulting actions.
- ♥ Those who are closest to them cannot be trusted to protect them.
- ♥ There is something inherently wrong with them, making them unworthy of love, patience, and compassion.

In essence, you are teaching your children that to be loved is synonymous with being hurt. And if this is what you still believe because it is the message your parents relayed to you through their behavior, well then really, how could you be okay? The thing is, that just like your children, you too are deserving of love, safety, trust, and compassion. You too are entitled to a life free of all the baggage that comes from familial, cultural, and/or societal demands of perfection.

That's what this is about after all, isn't it: the need to be perfect and appear to have everything in order and under control? Let's face it, it's an impossible standard to achieve without children in the picture, let alone once they are on the scene.

Yet it is from the very challenges and chaos that comes with being a parent, that our



greatest, most profound understanding of what is truly important comes. It is through their innocent and inquisitive eyes that we begin to see the world in new and improved ways. And not only the world, but ourselves as well. After all, no one will ever love us as honestly, unabashedly, and loudly as our children.

And don't they deserve to have their parents love them just as wildly and as fiercely in return, without mixed

messages or condition? Don't they, especially in a world that can be so very cruel, deserve the safe landing of a parent's loving arms and open heart, regardless of all the bumpy imperfections that will most certainly litter the path? Didn't you? Don't you still?

It is the choice we make for them, for ourselves, and for the world at large, to break free from old patterns of behaviors and convoluted messages that play in our minds like a mixed tape on repeat. We are more than capable of breaking the cycle of abuse. At once, freeing both ourselves and our children from the indoctrination of a lineage that turns parents into abusers and children into victims.

Only once we commit to this kind of work, and experience the resultant healing, do we all stand to truly and finally be okay. ✨

Erica Settino is the Editor-at-large of Creations Magazine, published writer and long-time yoga teacher and activist. More information about Erica and her work can be found at Karuna For Animals: Compassion In Action, Inc., and ericasettino.com.

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DECODE YOUR SEXUAL DREAMS TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP

by Clare R. Johnson, PhD

Sexual dreams can teach us a lot about our current relationship – and help us to change it for the better. Dream interpretation in the sense of “one dream image has one meaning for everyone” is a misleading way of looking at dreams. In fact, the only person who can really know for sure what his/her dream means is the dreamer.

This is because dream imagery reflects deeply personal associations. In this article, I’ll share my best dreamwork techniques to help you unwrap the meaning of your own sexual dreams. If you’re new to dreamwork, it’s useful to know something about the symbolic language of dreams in order to understand how they communicate with us.

Dreams of sex with someone else

The first thing to know about sexual dreams is that they are not always about sex! Dreams are often not literal. This can be a big relief, especially if we just dreamed of having rampant sex with a work colleague whom we dislike. Such a dream doesn’t necessarily mean we are secretly attracted to them. It could mean they possess a quality that we need in our life—whether this quality is bullish determination or the ability to appear unaffected by criticism.

What if we dream of sleeping with an incredibly attractive partner? This may not mean that we are secretly tempted to be unfaithful to our partner. This type of dream may reflect our attraction to something new in any area of our life—the desire for a career change, or an urge to begin a new creative project. The only way to know for sure is to work with the dream to tease out its meaning.

Problems in the bedroom

These often have a psychological root. By working with our dreams, we can understand the reasons behind a dysfunctional sex life and take steps to improve matters. Jealousy and boredom can make sex uninspiring or difficult, and these emotions may come up in sexual dreams. Disturbing sexual dreams can be viewed as “red flags” pointing out a problem or difficulty. For example, a dream of being raped may signify a power struggle in any area of life; at work, or in a relationship.

Power struggles are common in relationships, with one partner feeling bossed around by the other, or with one partner controlling the other through volatile behaviour, critical remarks, or violent outbursts. Our dreams raise to consciousness, issues that we need to deal with in order to become happier and healthier. Dreams truly want the best for us—we just need to learn how to understand them!

Top 5 Techniques for Unwrapping the Meaning of Sexual Dreams:

1. Re-enter the dream. Close your eyes, vividly re-imagine your dream, and see how the imagery develops and transforms when you engage with it imaginatively. Ask your dream lover why he is behaving this



way, or see what happens when you react to events in the dream kindly and calmly. This can be a healing and integrative way of responding to disturbing sexual dreams.

2. Lucid Writing technique. Mentally re-enter your sexual dream as above, then take a pen and write *without stopping* for five minutes, with the dream as a starting point. Allow the writing to go wherever it wants, without judgement. Prepare to be surprised! This transformative technique can result in insights into your feelings towards the sexual imagery and events. Writing it all out can reveal hidden sexual hang-ups, desires, or erotic blocks, and be the vital first step to freeing yourself (or your partner) from them.

3. Make a bridge to your waking life. Hone in on the strongest emotion in your dream and ask yourself, “When did I last feel this way in my waking life?” Or: “What was happening in my life when I last saw the person who appears in this dream?” This can instantly connect your sexual dream to a current life situation. Once you know what the dream is referring to, re-examine it to see if it also suggests a possible solution to a problem.

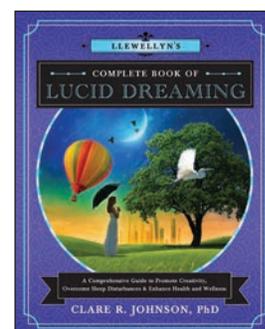
4. Explore the dream as part of yourself. One psychological view is that every aspect of the dream represents a part of ourselves. Try taking any object or person in

your dream that has an impact on you, and imagine you are that object/person. Speak with their voice: how do they feel? What do they want? Why are they in your dream? This approach can generate insights galore.

5 Become lucid in the dream. In a lucid dream, we are aware that we are dreaming while we are dreaming. When we become lucid in a sexual dream, we can work directly with the imagery to guide it into something powerfully erotic—some lucid dreamers magic up their personal idea of a sex god! Lucid dreamers can ask the dream questions to find out what the imagery means, or consciously send love and light to the dream. Lucid dreaming is itself a highly creative and potentially healing state of consciousness.

Sexual dreams can reveal insights into our lives, shed light on our closest relationships, and provide us with a great deal of fun and pleasure. ✨

Clare R. Johnson, PhD has researched lucid dreaming for over 20 years and is the Vice President of the International Association for the Study of Dreams. She is the author of two new books: *Llewellyn’s Complete Book of Lucid Dreaming*, and *Dream Therapy (Mindful Dreaming in the US/Canada)*. Clare is the creator of *DeepLucidDreaming.com*



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SEX AND THE SEXES: WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

by Anodea Judith
California

It's pretty clear the issue of sexual harassment is rearing its head from every corner of society. Both women and men have been putting up with this nonsense for far too long and it's time we got to the bottom of it—because it's not going away until we look at its origin through the outdated beliefs that made *pleasure* into a *sin*.

Hear me out on this.

Back in the day, say 2-3000 years ago, when patriarchy was taking over the pre-existing religions of gods and goddesses, men decided there was only going to be one Divine source ... and it was male.

That gave men the power to decree morality. The Goddess was plowed underground and a new order proclaimed.

Around that time, sex was made into a bad thing—at least for women—while men's pursuits were considered normal, even manly. Maybe it was all the babies that came from it, but the sin was attributed to the woman. She was a temptress, a villain, a slut, or a whore—the cause of all the evil in the world, starting with Eve and extending to every woman today who is vilified for daring to speak up or wear the wrong outfit to the mall. If a woman chose to be free in her sexuality, she was humiliated or punished at best, but could also be hanged, stoned, or burned at the stake.

You can even find a passage in Deuteronomy to that effect relating to rape victims:

"If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the girl's virginity can be found, she shall be brought to the door of her father's house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death." ~Deuteronomy 22:20-21.

So women's lovely bodies and breasts had to be hidden, their sight considered immoral, even for a mother nursing a child. What a loss!

If women's sexuality is the cause of evil, that leaves men in a double bind—how to get a woman to give them what they want when it endangers the woman's reputation, childbearing, and sometimes their life if they comply. (Meanwhile men



are not supposed to go to another man for it, either.)

But it also put women in a double bind, to say nothing of a double standard. The very same gender that was trying to get something from us was simultaneously punishing us for giving it to them. And though we are not supposed to be a temptress, every billboard and magazine tells us we should look thin, beautiful, and sexy all the time.

Women are then seen as either sluts that should know better or withholding bitches that deserve what's coming to us. And this makes men into disgusting pigs that can't keep their hands to themselves.

This is a no-win situation for everybody. We are not going to solve this mess until we reclaim sexuality as a positive force for life, one that can be enjoyed by both men and women *under consensual conditions*.

Women have to understand that guys like sex and have an innate drive to get it. They are not bad, evil people, just a gender that has been sorely betrayed by their own kind. Men have to get that women have been terribly hurt by the objectification and constant invasion of our bodies, while being denied the right to control what happens to these bodies, before, during, or after sex.

We have to stop the blame game, and turn instead to an empathetic understanding of what it's like for each other. We need to engage in dialog, hear each other's stories, and listen with our hearts. We have to learn respect, that *No means No* and a true Yes is a blessing.

Women are taking back their bodies, their boundaries, and their rights. In the

long run, this will be good for men too. This is not to condone rapacious actions, of which there are far too

many, but to work with the mess that we have. There's scarcely a woman who hasn't experienced some kind of harassment, and approximately 1 out of 3 experience sexual violence at some time in their lives.

There's scarcely a man that hasn't, at some time, transgressed a boundary, whether mildly or forcibly, and some men have also experienced harassment and invasion.

We are the products of sexual mores that were created a long time ago, ones that go against the biological nature of our bodies. If we're going to work together, govern together, and co-create a society together that works for all, we need to get out of the adolescent locker room and start acting like grownups who enjoy sex, yet handle it wisely. ✧

Anodea Judith, Ph.D. is a globally recognized teacher, and author of 9 books on the chakras, psychology, energy, yoga, and social change, including the best-selling *Wheels of Life*, *Eastern Body-Western Mind*, and *The Global Heart Awakens*, as well as an award-winning video *THE ILLUMINATED CHAKRAS*. Her newest book, due to be released from Hay House in April 2018 is *Charge And The Energy Body*.

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THE DISOWNED SELF

by Brenda Shoshanna
New York City

There is a great compulsion to define ourselves by rejecting others. Everywhere one group fights another, turns their back on someone with different views, races or religions.

We know another by labeling them, never taking a moment instead, to look into their eyes. But this is simply an external manifestation of how we treat ourselves.

We latch onto certain aspects of ourselves that seem acceptable, give it a label and identify ourselves that way. All the while, there are all kinds of feelings, voices, needs and hopes living within. Most are disowned. Not ever known. We hide from the different aspects of ourselves, dismiss and reject them. We do the same to those we meet in the outside world. Then we wonder why we feel lonely or empty? Not realizing we are not living from the fullness within. We are only living from a small part of ourselves, and never meeting the richness and beauty in others.

How to turn this around? Why not start with our relationships, which is a wonderful mirror to see

ourselves in. A great teaching tells us **that what we reject in others is something we cannot accept in ourselves.**

Let us begin by noticing what we are rejecting, and look for it within. No need to fight or hate it. Rather let's make acquaintance with our disowned selves. Listen to it, look at it, give it time in the light of awareness. *Once something has a chance to be acknowledged and expressed it begins a process of growth and transformation naturally.* And we also receive the inner energy that has been tied up in denial and rejection. ✨

Brenda Shoshanna, Ph.D. is a psychologist, author, speaker and long-term practitioner of Zen meditation. Her work is dedicated to integrating Eastern and Western teachings and applying them to our everyday lives. Brenda is an original student of Lester Levenson, the creator of The Sedona Releasing Method. Her releasing workshop, *One Breath Away (Releasing and Renewing Your Life)* integrates Zen practice and principles, The Sedona Method and Brenda's years of training and experience. She has offered over five hundred workshops and talks on all aspects of personal and spiritual development, living life to the brim and discovering authentic peace of mind. To learn more, go to brendashoshanna.com.

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SERVICE TO OTHERS RAISES YOUR FREQUENCY

by Owen K Waters
Texas

The universe is designed to be reflective.

Whatever you put out comes back to you. This is called the Law of Action and Reaction, the Law of Karma, or is simply referred to using the phrase, "What goes around comes around." However, in spiritual work, there is a way to increase what comes around. What goes around can actually come back as more than you gave, and this involves a paradox.

In your spiritual practices, you can generate a deep feeling of peace and inspiration; one which brings a wonderful sense of spiritual upliftment. For example,

in your meditations, you may become inspired with a vision of a future world filled with peace and freedom for all.

You may see, in your mind's eye, a future world where everyone on the planet is safe, and where you can journey to anywhere on the planet with ease. In this future, you see that everyone is consciously aware of their heart's connection to the hearts of each and every other human being on the planet. In this supportive environment, everyone has complete freedom to express their unique creativity as their contribution to a loving society.

As you breathe deeply of the clean, fresh air in that vision of the future, you feel your connection to the Mother Earth and to the life-giving Sun which shines ceaselessly upon our world. Then, you send your love and gratitude to the Earth and the Sun, and wait in quiet anticipation as those great, conscious beings send their love and inspiration to you in return.

While in that state of deep inspiration, it occurs to you that most of humanity desperately needs this type of upliftment;

that most souls on this planet today are starving in a self-created, spiritual wilderness. This brings you to the realization that you have the opportunity to be of service to humanity through an act of self-sacrifice; through an act of giving up that which you have in order to help others who would not otherwise be helped.

While in this state, the sense of unconditional love that you have for humanity virtually begs you to help those who are not yet equipped to do this for themselves. If you now give that state, that energy, that feeling of inspiration away and send it into the group consciousness of humanity, then you have created a vacuum within yourself.

By the law of action and reaction, that vacuum must be filled. However, **an act of self-sacrifice in service to others has a side-effect: It raises the frequency of your consciousness higher than it was before.** So, when the vacuum becomes filled with inspiration and upliftment from the universe, it is filled with an even higher frequency of consciousness than before.

Because of that, you will have become more inspired and more uplifted than ever before. By the act of sacrificing that which you had, you will actually gain more than you had before. Such is the paradox of love in action.

It is also the basis of the ancient path of *Karma Yoga* – the pathway to God through action and service. By giving spiritual energy to humankind, you tread a pathway of spiritual action. This powerful pathway of giving what you have, in order to inspire others, is one that leads you to continually higher states of inspiration along your own spiritual path. ✨



Owen K Waters is the author of *The Shift: The Revolution in Human Consciousness*. He writes a weekly newsletter at www.SpiritualDynamics.net.

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WHY DO PEOPLE TAKE DRUGS?

Walter Ling, MD, California

Why do people take drugs in the first place? Alan Leshner, former director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, puts it simply: “People take drugs to feel good or to feel better.” In other words, people take drugs because they like how the drugs make them feel. Since we all want to feel good, and we all want to feel better when we do not feel good, what’s wrong with that?

Nothing, really. There’s nothing wrong with wanting to feel good and be happy. After all, America’s founding fathers put the pursuit of happiness, along with life and liberty, into the Declaration of

Independence as one of our inalienable rights. What’s the big fuss if people take drugs in pursuit of happiness?

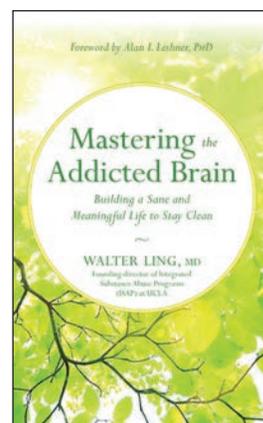
Well, a few things. One is that the “good time” from drugs can become addicting, and **being addicted is not a happy place**. An addict doesn’t do drugs to “pursue happiness,” but out of compulsion. Further, and more importantly, the “happiness” people feel on drugs isn’t the “happiness” that the founding fathers were talking about. The “happiness” referred to in the Declaration of Independence is related to “virtue.” It’s the kind of happiness you experience by becoming the person you want to be and by engaging in meaningful, productive activities that help others. In other words, the founding fathers meant the satisfaction of a successful life, feeling good from having done good, not pursuing personal pleasure for its own sake.

These two types of happiness are entirely different. They have different names, involve different brain mechanisms, and have very different effects on our health. Pleasure for its own sake — “having a good time” without any other meaning or purpose and benefiting only oneself

— is called *hedonia*. This type of happiness creates a physiological response that is similar to when the body is under stress: Excitement is accompanied by increases in blood pressure and respiration, by increases in blood sugar and stress hormones, and by a decrease in immune responses. Which is to say, as with stress, too much of this kind of happiness can make you sick — which is the price you pay for the good time.

The other kind of happiness — feeling good from personal satisfaction and from helping others and one’s community through meaningful actions — is called *eudemonia*. The physiological responses that accompany this feeling are the opposite of hedonia’s: Blood pressure, respiration, blood sugar, and stress hormones all decrease, and immune-response hormones increase — in other words, you get healthier.

You may not be surprised to learn that these two types of happiness involve different parts of our brain. Hedonia, or personal pleasure, is antithetical to reflection; as we’ve discussed, the limbic brain’s reward centers overwhelm the rational cortical brain — the part of our brain that makes us uniquely human. On the other hand, eudemonia emerges from self-reflection and self-awareness, and it requires the highest level of cortical brain function. In a way, with eudemonia we feel good about precisely what makes us uniquely human — like being a good worker, a good friend, or a good parent. That is what feeling good about yourself is all about.



Think back on specific times when you have felt happy. When have you felt hedonia, or personal pleasure, and when have you felt eudemonia, or happiness because of who you are? It’s been said that eudemonia is the kind of happiness you want to tell your grandchildren about. What moments of happiness in your life would you want to share with your grandchildren?

Why do people do drugs? They seek hedonia, to feel good, and if they become addicted, they get stuck seeking hedonia and pay dearly for it, for addiction undermines feelings of eudemonia, or feeling good about the person you are. ✧

Excerpted from the book **Mastering the Addicted Brain** ©2017 by Walter Ling. Printed with permission from New World Library — www.newworldlibrary.com.

Walter Ling, MD, author of **Mastering the Addicted Brain**, is Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and the founding director of the Integrated Substance Abuse Programs (ISAP) at the University of California, Los Angeles. With board certifications in neurology and psychiatry, Ling has conducted clinical trials of psychiatric medications, acted as a consultant to the World Health Organization, and run a private practice listed in the “Best Doctors in America” directory.

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The Space Inside Us

by Alex Tory, Bellmore, NY

A whirlpool of anxiety, worry
and haste surrounds us
Rushing by, grabbing and pushing
Through unawareness, we are consumed
By its pressure and force

But if we stop and notice
We remain separate from it, and
Though we are a part of it
It is not a part of us.

And the space inside us,
The space reserved for holiness,
remains
And the soul is free to explore itself.

A SNOWFLAKE

by Ian Murdock, Northport, NY

A snowflake drifted down from heaven
Its journey long and cold
A predetermined destination
As yet, for it, is untold

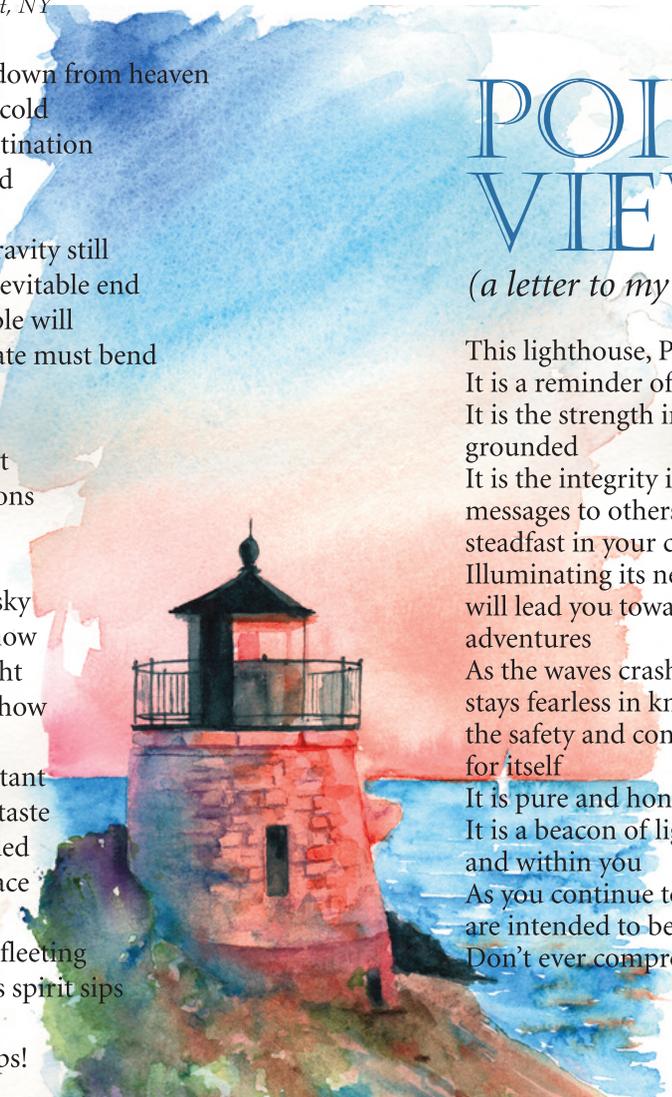
Almost weightless, gravity still
Does draw it to its inevitable end
Exerting its immutable will
To destiny's aim its fate must bend

One among billions
Like stars in the night
Its path known for eons
On its singular flight

You face toward the sky
Squinting into the snow
And smile with delight
At winters glorious show

Then in one little instant
A pure cool you can taste
A snowflake has landed
At its final resting place

Though its life be so fleeting
What sweet nectar its spirit sips
As its life melts away
on your soft warm lips!



Watching

by Bruce Groh, Shirley, NY

On early winter mornings, mothers watch
from front porch windows as their sons and
daughters walk on frozen sidewalks
down to corner intersections.

Some wave twice as sons look back while grasping
their books. Some never do, yet still know someone
will always watch through cold windows.

POINT OF VIEW

by Lou-Ann Thompson
East Norwich, NY

(a letter to my child)

This lighthouse, Point of View
It is a reminder of the light inside of you
It is the strength in your center that keeps you
grounded
It is the integrity in your soul which sends
messages to others that you will remain
steadfast in your convictions
Illuminating its never ending guidance that
will lead you toward new and exciting
adventures
As the waves crash up against the lighthouse it
stays fearless in knowing that it does more for
the safety and concern of others than it does
for itself

It is pure and honest and it has longevity
It is a beacon of light that will shine for you
and within you
As you continue to grow into the person you
are intended to become
Don't ever compromise your Point of View

YOU

by Elaine P. Morgan
Warrenton, VA

I saved your slippers,
eyeglasses, the last pair
of socks you wore.

I kept the red bathrobe,
the sweat shirt with the
Navy emblem I gave you
the Christmas before.

I still have your favorite
T-shirts, leather belt and
all the hats you wore.

I thought they would
always keep you with me
but now I find they do not
love, smile, reassure
and I'm left misty-eyed
missing the one
who wore them more.

You Little Jack Russell You

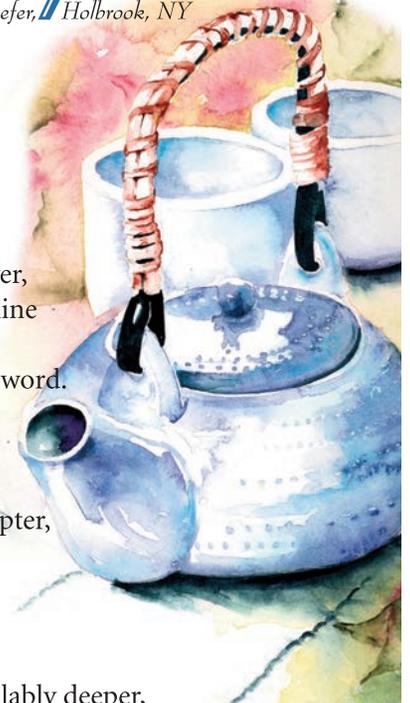
by Mary Wider, Yaphank, NY

Come into my arms, you little Jack Russell you.
You have worked hard all day
Playing hide and seek with the children
Chasing them around the yard
Catching your ball in mid air
Lying with the kids in the mid-day sun.
Come, rest your sleepy head on my shoulder.
I will rub your spotted belly
And hold you close to my heart
Listening to you softly breathe
As together, we drift gently off to sleep.

Bibliophile

by Paul Schaefer, Holbrook, NY

You are the book
I want to read
late into the night,
my palm pressed
into your spine
as I fold back your cover,
tentatively graze each line
with a fingertip,
savoring every perfect word.
I eagerly turn your
smooth white pages,
enticed by subtle clues
as chapter leads to chapter,
seduced by your
unpredictable plot,
twisting and writhing
as it slowly unravels,
drawing me uncontrollably deeper,
revealing intimate details,
compelling me towards
a delirious, inevitable conclusion.



For Just One Single Moment

by Lil Stern, Long Island NY

We look so deep into the depths of our inner being
With hopes and dreams of finding perfect solutions
So that we may be comforted by seeing
For just one single moment,
they are not just delusions

We elect untimely anxiety,
trying to find something so perfect
Yet, we may never ever have the control
And work so hard to accomplish
power over our intellect
Only to realize, that jaded thoughts throw us far back
into the hole

But, what if just for one single moment
We were to consider spending time
in that moment's comfort
Thinking a single moment's thought,
without the torment
Living in that moment, only that moment,
and without the hurt

For not one person, can know for sure
The true nature of the next moment
Or if it will be promised,
or what trials will be in store
Not even the strongest, even when all rules are bent

So then let peace be the journey, serenity the goal
Where beautiful paths filled with little neglect
Lead to a life that is whole
A simpler mountain to climb,
and a single moment to reflect!

FRIENDS

by Sandra Donald, London, UK

I thought it was us.
I thought it was we.
Yet somewhere along the road
I misread some of the traffic signals
And came off the road into a tree.

How easy was it to trust,
Giving one's self because of love
Or something perceived as that!
Can this word that lurks in doorways
Remain unregulated or quantified?

Do you see the casualties
Of the concept of love
Strewn across the globe?
Do you see them clutching remnants
Of nothing in particular, just a stare?

Staggering into the doctor's,
Demanding the cure, a prescription,
Being told no pill cure has been found!
Falling into heaps of despair and feelings
Escalating to fever-pitch screaming,
In a queue with a global waiting list
Of a trillion to one, no after-care support!

In the bright sunlight,
The light hits their skin.
It hurts. With shame, they shrivel
Into nonexistence, wanting someone.
Stop the memories, please. Ease the pain.
You see, it's crying time again!



It's comfort time.
Chocolate, drink, sex,
Isolation, solitude, fate, and options.
From the side benches, they wail, "Why me?
Did I do something wrong in an earlier life?"

Luck is here.
Follow the rainbow
Into the arms of friends,
Listening, comforting, with magical hugs,
With genuine understanding, gestures, and nods,
Coaxing, teasing, and over time repositioning.
It reignites hope back into your existence.

Gear stick in reverse, you back out of the tree,
Hazard lights flashing, deflated confidence on board.
Steering onto the road with visibly stitched wounds,
You slowly edge back out onto life's unknown road.

Glancing into the mirror,
You see friends
Driving closely behind.
Yes, it's time for a very wide smile!

BROKEN GLASS

by Paul Schaefer
Holbrook, NY

You want to fix me
when I'm broken,
fitting all the pieces
together
like a puzzle,
until I'm whole.
But, when I'm broken
it's all shards

and sharp edges
that must be handled
delicately,
a thousand pieces
that still love you
because you see diamonds
when I see
only shattered glass.

"It is difficult to get the news from poems, yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there."

– From Asphodel that Greeny Flower

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MEDIA REVIEWS

by Mark Maxwell Abushady, NYC

MUSIC

KIRSTEN MAXWELL
Kirsten Maxwell
Produced by Carley Ridini
and Kirsten Maxwell
www.kirstenmaxwell.com

Sometimes, reviewers are lucky enough to be able to consider an artist's work a second time and, if the stars line up for that artist, we experience the growth and expansion of his or her vision and talent. If *Crimson* was an excellent debut album for singer/songwriter Kirsten Maxwell (and it was), this self-titled EP release is the blossoming and maturing of her notable talent both as songwriter and singer.

Six songs make up this offering, each a standout; though taken together they perfectly showcase Ms. Maxwell's versatility. Fuller, more lush accompaniments are utilized but, wisely, not at the expense of the intimacy – one



of the hallmarks of this artist. Opening is *I Couldn't Breathe*, a tender love song that explores the feeling, "... when someone takes your breath away." The lyrics are pure poetry, as are those for *I Wonder If*, a most beautiful ballad (Mike Tedesco, piano). *I'll Be The Fire*, on the other hand, is a love song of the more steamy kind, and this is reflected not only in the lyrics, but also in the insistent beat, hypnotic synths and vocal doublings, and breathless quality of the vocals. *Prism*, a

lovely tribute to her mother, is sweetly accompanied by Kirsten on the guitar. *Butterfly*, probably her biggest departure from a folk music sound, expresses the consequences of unconscious actions utilizing futuristic synth and echoed vocal wails. It's almost startling in the epic quality it presents. The final cut – *It Started With a Rose* – finds Kirsten venturing, with ease, into a kind of 50's bluesy-rock sound, chronicling an ill-fated, passionate romance. A terrific EP from an artist set to soar!

FILM

QUEST

**A Portrait of an American Family
Endless Field**
Directed by Jonathan Olshefski
Produced by Sabrina Schmidt
Gordon
www.quest-documentary.com

Quest is a documentary following (for approximately ten years), the life of Christopher "Quest" Rainey and his family. They live in North Philadelphia, a notoriously neglected and challenged neighborhood, rife with crime and gang violence. As with any well-made documentary, the viewer gets caught up in the lives of its subjects, and *Quest* is no different. I think it safe to say that the lifestyle, life environment, and hip-hop/rap culture is pretty different from that of most *Creations'* readers. That said, I think this is an important film, especially in this day and age, to awaken all to the environments and cultures that many of our fellow Americans live in. It will also "re-member" us all to the collective truths and desires that all human beings – parents, children, friends, and so forth – share.

Although this is not the first film to do so, it still amazes to watch a work spanning so many years; to share the joys and sorrows experienced by this family, especially as centered around the childhood-to-early adulthood of daughter, P.J. Rainey. Christopher "Quest" Rainey emerges as a noble personage with a spiritual view on life and community. The opening scene finds him and his partner, Christine'a, marrying. Both have suffered disappointing previous marriages. He describes, eloquently, their shared approach, this time, to marriage: a laudable concept of partnering. In the backdrop of this film is the election and re-election of Barack



Obama ending with the Donald Trump-Hillary Clinton campaign.

Quest Rainey's work centers on a recording studio set up with his wife, which doubles as a shelter of sorts, to the community. Christine'a serves as "mom" to many in this setting. Quest is a record promoter, producer and rapper. He feels he provides a place for kids who need something in their lives other than street violence and despair

– "something to hold onto." He provides encouragement, a sense of friendship and self-worth. And a place where rap and creative expression is encouraged.

In spite of this positive outlook and safe space, his family is shaken by upset and near tragedies from violence endemic to the neighborhood. This is not an indictment of the bulk of people residing there, as one colorful, joyful block party shows. These are neighbors who care about each other.

The documentary ends with Quest Rainey and Christine'a Rainey having spent 20 years together, and going strong.

I refrain from giving away too much of the story. Suffice it to say that, in this time of polarization, upheaval, and exposed bigotry and prejudice, more information, more understanding, and more light is part of the solution. This film adds to the latter.



Mark Maxwell Abushady
is an actor, singer, designer and photographer based in New York City.
www.markmaxwellabushady.zenfolio.com.

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BOOK REVIEWS

& PRODUCTS

HO'OPONOPONO AND FAMILY CONSTELLATIONS: A traditional Hawaiian healing method for relationships, forgiveness and love

by Ulrich Emil Duprée
findhornpress.com

Research shows that much of our happiness and success in life is dependent upon our interpersonal relationships and how we view them. When we think of our relationships, the first ones that come to mind are often those with our life-partners, our parents, children and other family members. Yet our relationships extend beyond just our close circle to our work colleagues, our relationship with our body, food, finance, even the clutter in our closets.

Author Ulrich Emil Duprée believes that many of our problems in life are relationship-related. The good news is that we can heal those relationship issues and live with more freedom and happiness. He shows how the ancient Hawaiian healing ritual of forgiveness—*Ho'oponopono*— is given even greater power when combined with the method of systemic family constellations. Duprée reveals how this healing method can solve problems and resolve underlying conflicts in our relationships with ourselves and with others.

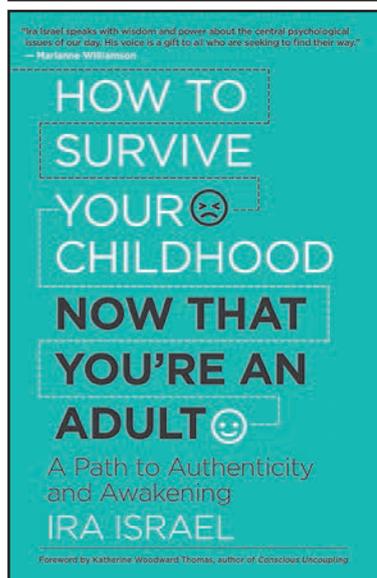
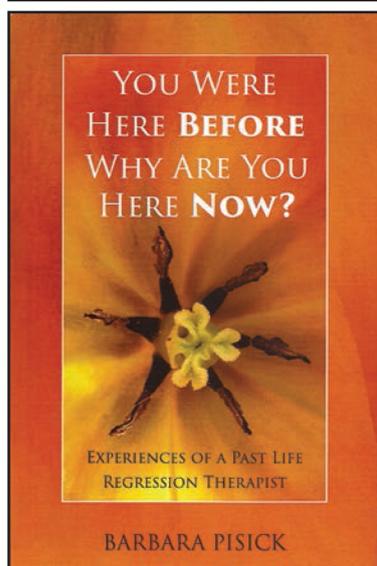
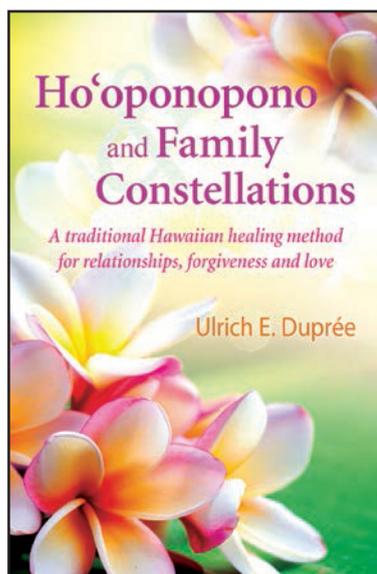
YOU WERE HERE BEFORE, WHY ARE YOU HERE NOW?

by Barbara Pisick
pastliferegressiontherapy.com

Do you ever wonder about your life purpose or question why you are here?

Have you ever had a déjà vu experience or the feeling that you intimately know a person you have not met before? Or found a foreign place familiar? Many people search for these

answers through Past Life Regression Therapy (PLRT). The foundation of this alternative psychotherapeutic



technique is based on reincarnation, the central underpinning for the precepts of birth, death, afterlife, and rebirth in Eastern religions. It is predicated on the understanding that we continue to reincarnate because of the necessity for increased soul development as well as the need to understand and fulfill our soul's life purpose. The soul evolves through many lifetimes. Inherent in this philosophy is an acceptance of the universal connectedness of all people.

Author Barbara Pisick, a psychotherapist for nearly 40 years, continues to be amazed at the immediacy of this work and the rapidity of each person's personal growth. Her clients report that they were able to solve problems that had not been helped by traditional psychotherapy, or by taking anti-anxiety and antidepressant drugs. Most importantly, these individuals were able to gain a new awareness of their current life situations, and how to make the necessary changes. The therapist-client experience is enlivened in *You Were Here Before* by word-for-word, detailed regression therapy sessions.

HOW TO SURVIVE YOUR CHILDHOOD NOW THAT YOU'RE AN ADULT

by Ira Israel
newworldlibrary.com

Few of us are immune to the ideas we absorbed as children. We learned how to get approval or disapproval by creating the kinds of selves who would fit in and succeed with the "right" jobs, relationships, possessions, and so on. Even if we rebel against these ingrained notions by going in the opposite direction, we are still controlled by them. Author and psychotherapist Ira Israel explains that "Children create 'false selves' — facades, personas—in order to obtain the acceptance, approval, and love they crave; however, any acceptance, approval, or 'love' that we receive as adults based on our facades, and not on our inner and usually somewhat messy authentic selves, ultimately causes resentments. We need to be cognizant of how prejudices and fears built during childhood may influence our adult decisions."

How to Survive Your Childhood helps readers raise their level of awareness about their subconscious beliefs or assumptions so they gain insight into their "way of being" in the world. The book also includes an array of practical tools designed to alleviate suffering and help readers stay at the higher end of their happiness spectrum.

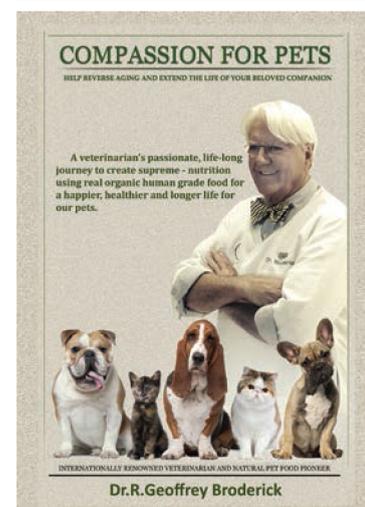
PRODUCT/BOOK REVIEWS

CORNUCOPIA FOOD FOR CATS AND DOGS

www.cornucopiapetfoods.com

We often consider healthy nutrition practices that we use daily to help live long and fruitful lives. But do we give this same consideration to the wonderful creatures that bring so much joy to those lives...our pets? **Cornucopia** canned food for dogs and cats, created by veterinary nutritionist, Dr. Geoffrey Broderick (Doc) in the 1970's, is made from non-GMO, certified organic, human-grade ingredients and wild-caught fish, and is free from antibiotics, hormones, rendered meats and meals, and carrageenan. All of his products are free of chemical additives, artificial colors, flavors, sugars, and MSG. Just as importantly, all the cows, chickens and fish that make up these foods are spared torture and abuse.

In addition to the canned food line, Cornucopia offers two probiotic formulas, *Super-Food* antioxidant and *Phyto-Food* immunity support. His award-winning formulas are sold around the world and recognized as the first pet foods that use Preventive Nutrition to actually help prevent disease in animals. Doc's unique approach to nutrition helps pets live longer, healthier lives: "I believe that Preventive Nutrition is the first line of defense against disease and aging, and that a perfect diet is one of the best things you can do to secure lasting health for anyone."



As vegans, Andrea & I are not willing to personally vouch for any of the six varieties. Fortunately, we live with our own two little taste-testers, Tigie and Little Bear

— previously seen on the cover of our June-July, 2017, 30th Anniversary Issue. Transitioning our kitties from dry food(?) to real food was a difficult (and noisy) but highly rewarding task, having to turn a deaf ear to their complaints for roughly three weeks. Similar to humans, it took about 21 days for our cats to form a new habit. The results were visible within the first two weeks: both cats slimmed down, dropping significant body fat; their long-haired coats became softer, shinier and less matted—and no more hairballs! But the most incredible transformation was in their behavior. Little Bear became much less anxious and skittish, even evoking a remark from one of our holiday visitors, noting how relaxed LB was in the midst of a full house of people. Never the most tolerant family member, Little Bear now allows "strangers" to hold him.

COMPASSION FOR PETS, a book authored by Dr. Broderick, covers topics ranging from the nutritional requirements of an omnivorous carnivore (dogs) vs an obligate carnivore (cats), to teaching consumers how to read a pet food label. Doc uncovers the "dirty secrets of the commercial pet food industry," adding, "It is unacceptable to lose one-half to two-thirds of a pet's life by feeding non-human-grade pet food." Invaluable information for anyone who loves their animal companions.

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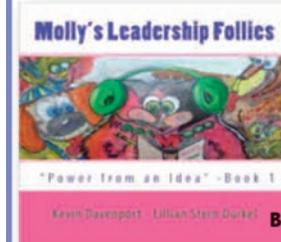
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The April-May "Spring" Issue
ADS DUE March 5th
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The Real Truth About Health

FREE 10 DAY CONFERENCE

Gain New Perspective at The Real Truth About Health Conference.

When it comes to your health and well-being, where are you getting the information to make important decisions about your life? What if you knew that alternatives exist to everything you have learned? Well, get ready for a new reality when **The Real Truth About Health Conference** brings together the world's leading authorities and best-selling authors on health, nutrition, the food system, the medical system, and the environment for *10 eye-opening days* that will provide greater clarity on the critical issues impacting the lives of every single person on the planet.

Presenting for the first time on Long Island, The Real Truth About Health Conference is an educational, enlightening and life-changing event **FREE to attend in person or watch online**, that will take place **February 2-11, 2018** at the Hilton Huntington in Melville, NY. This dynamic programming features thought-provoking lectures, nightly panel discussions, book signings, meet and greets, along with free vegan pizza and vegan ice cream for attendees.

Unprecedented, unfiltered and unbiased, The Real Truth About Health Conference arrives at a critical time when people are uncertain about food, chronic conditions, climate change and other significant issues that are not going away anytime soon. This is an incredible opportunity to discover the untold, underlying factors from the very individuals who have dedicated their lives to these crucial topics. You will have access to whole food, plant-based, health experts such as authors **T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D.** (*The China Study*), **Joel Fuhrman, MD** (*Super Immunity*), **Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr., MD** (*Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*), **Brian Clement, Ph.D.**, and **LN** (*Food Is Medicine*), **Brenda Davis, RD** (*Becoming Vegan*), and **Pamela A. Popper, Ph.D.** and **ND** (*Food Over Medicine*).

Confused about the consequences of GMOs? You'll want to hear straight from experts **Andrew Kimbrell** (*Your Right*

to Know), **Jeffrey M. Smith** (*Genetic Roulette*), and **Sheldon Krinsky, Ph.D.** (*The Deception*).

If you value your health and the health of your family and friends, then you won't want to miss what producer **Del Bigtree** (*Vaxxed*), **Dr. Ben Johnson** (*No Ma'amograms!*), **Dr. Joanna Moncrieff** (*The Myth of the Chemical Cure*), Gary Greenberg, Ph.D. (*The Book of Woe*), and **Mark F. Blaxill** (*Vaccines 2.0*) have to say about these critical issues.

Concerned about what's happening with the environment, climate change, and exposure to everyday toxins, and how that will impact future generations? If your answer is yes, you'll want to join world-renowned climate scientist Professor **Peter Wadhams** (*A Farewell to Ice*) and James Howard Kunstler (*The Long Emergency*) for their discussion on accelerated climate change, and **Devra Davis, Ph.D.** (*Disconnect*), who will reveal the truth about cell phone radiation and how we can protect ourselves.

The Real Truth About Health Conference is 100% FREE to attend so that *every person* has access to the most vital, life-changing information on the topics we face today. This educational, informative and thought-provoking event will be completely **UNLIKE** mainstream media, which is often influenced by the financial power of major industries.

Everyone has a choice—and the smart choice is to be proactive and learn what you can do right now to achieve optimal health and protection for you and your loved ones.

So whether you're concerned about genetically modified foods, the food system, chemicals in our environment, nutrition, the problems with the medical system, bees dying, overfishing, coral reefs dying, animal extinction, the best supplements to take, your ideal diet, or anything else related to keeping yourself and the planet healthy, **The Real Truth About Health Conference is for you. Please feel free to call us with any questions at (516) 20921-1417 or (516) 921-1417. Sign up for free at realtruthtalks.com.**

STOP! Before you do any other weight loss program read this now!

Have you tried all the latest fad diets and lost that unwanted extra weight – only to put all those dreaded pounds back on again? What if someone told you that you could lose weight – permanently – and that you could do it without exercise, hunger, cravings and none of those costly pre-packaged foods that popular diets offer – and that the weight-loss program is 100 percent guaranteed? You'd probably be very skeptical. If you're ready to finally shed those pounds forever ...

Hello, I'm **Dr. Michael Berlin** and I'm tired of all the weight loss ads promising all-natural, long-term results that really do not deliver the whole solution to permanent weight loss. Yes, they have part of the solution, but without the **whole** solution, you cannot get truly permanent results. This is why weight loss is so difficult. You see, there are 10 things in the right proportions that you need to heal in order to get truly permanent and healthy weight loss, and if a program does not deliver all 10 then your weight problem will return. This is because your weight problem is not a weight problem; it is a health problem. Extra weight is a symptom of deeper physical and/or emotional imbalances that **all** must be resolved to get permanent results! The 10 factors are related to: nutrient absorption, stress levels, sleep quality, food combining, liver function, toxicity, hydration, emotional eating, food sensitivities, and hormones. If any one of them is left unresolved, your weight problem will return. It's that simple. You see, people think that you need to lose weight in order to get healthy; but the truth is that you need to get healthy to lose weight! Think about it ... most of us when we were children could eat anything and not gain weight. But over the years, from junk food, toxicity, and stress, our insides get ruined very slowly. As this happens our hormones will very slowly shift from *fat burning to fat storing* — until we reach about 40 years old — and nothing we do can really cure our weight problem. We say that "I'm just getting older" or "its my hormones," and you are right. However, what **CAUSED** your hormones to change? It was that your insides got run down. And these days it

is happening to everyone, including our children, much faster than ever before because of our toxic, fast paced world.

So, if the **CAUSE** of our weight problems is because our bodies got run down on the inside, then the only permanent cure is to reverse the damage, clean the slate, and heal your weight problem for life! In our office we guarantee healthy, permanent weight loss because we don't treat your weight problem, we heal you completely on the inside. We rebalance all 10 factors and we reverse the damage and sluggishness that occurred in your organs, naturally, safely, and efficiently, with only wholesome foods and some supplements. We teach you how to shop, cook, and eat for life in a way that is the healthiest for your whole family. The result is that you will go back to your natural, healthy weight within 3-6 months and *stay there!* Your body will be lean and efficient. Our patients lose about a pound a day the first month and are completely healing and preventing diabetes, cancer, heart disease, sleep problems (including apnea), digestive problems, high blood pressure, cholesterol, neuropathies, and more! Plus, we have incredible all-natural spa treatments to help people de-stress, detoxify, and lose 4-14 inches in one hour. For free information go to: <http://drberlin.weightseminar.com>.



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AFTERLIFE LUNCHEON LIFE BEYOND DEATH

Presented by Forever Family Foundation

Sunday, May 6, 2018
12:00 - 5:00 pm
(Doors Open at 11:30 pm)

Real or Imagined?

Hilton Hotel
Long Island Huntington
The Savoy Room
598 Broad Hollow Rd
Melville, NY 11747



KIM RUSSO
Kim has starred in the TV Series "The Haunting of..." and has been featured in A & E's shows *Paranormal State* and *Psychic Kids*, as well as Biography

Channel's *Celebrity Ghost Stories*. She is the author of *The Happy Medium: Life Lessons From the Other Side*.
www.kimthehappymedium.com

Featuring Forever Family Foundation President **Loyd Auerbach &** Certified Medium **Kim Russo**

Spend a day with *Two People Who Have All the Answers*. One will amaze you with the little known research on Ghosts, Hauntings and Apparitions, while the other will touch your heart as she connects with those in Spirit who will lead her to their loved ones in the audience.

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LOYD AUERBACH, MS
Loyd is a professor, author, lecturer, paranormal investigator, mentalist, psychic entertainer and professional chocolatier. He has authored nine books

on the paranormal -- the latest publications being *Psychic Dreaming & Mind Over Matter*.
www.mindreader.com



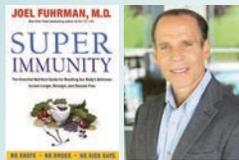
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The Real Truth About Health

FREE 10 DAY CONFERENCE

(come for all or any of the days you choose)

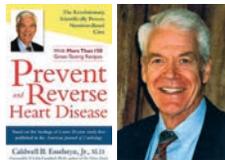
All speakers will appear live on stage at the
Hilton Long Island/Huntington | 598 Broadhollow Road, Melville, NY 11747



Joel Fuhrman, MD
Super Immunity: The Essential Nutrition Guide for Boosting Your Body's Defenses to Live Longer, Stronger, and Disease Free



Pamela A. Popper, Ph.D., N.D.
Food Over Medicine: The Conversation That Could Save Your Life



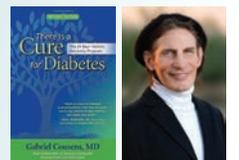
Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr., MD,
Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease: The Revolutionary, Scientifically Proven, Nutrition-Based Cure



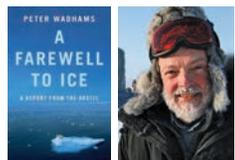
Brian Clement, Ph.D., L.N.,
Living Foods for Optimum Health : Staying Healthy in an Unhealthy World



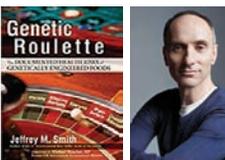
Brenda Davis
Becoming Vegan: The Complete Reference to Plant-Based Nutrition



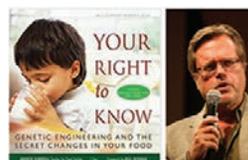
Gabriel Cousens, MD
There Is a Cure for Diabetes



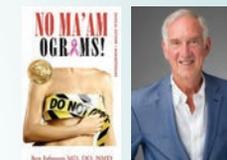
Peter Wadhams, ScD
A Farewell to Ice: A Report from the Arctic



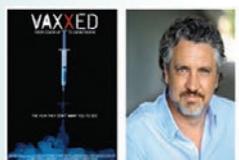
Jeffrey M. Smith
Genetic Roulette: The Documented Health Risks of Genetically Engineered Foods



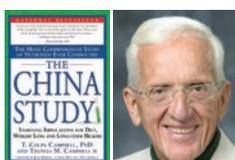
Andrew Kimbrell
Your Right to Know: Genetic Engineering and the Secret Changes in Your Food



Dr. Ben Johnson
No Ma'amograms!: Radical Rethink on Mammograms



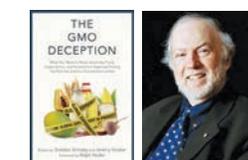
Del Big Tree
VAXXED: Medical Freedom Hanging in the Balance



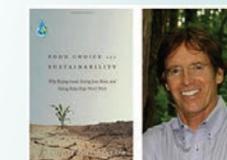
T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D.
The China Study: The Most Comprehensive Study of Nutrition Ever Conducted And the Startling Implications for Diet, Weight Loss, And Long-term Health



Devra Davis, Ph.D.
Disconnect: The Truth About Cell Phone Radiation, What the Industry Is Doing to Hide It, and How to Protect Your Family



Sheldon Krimsky, Ph.D.
The GMO Deception: What You Need to Know about the Food, Corporations, and Government Agencies Putting Our Families and Our Environment at Risk



Dr. Richard A. Oppenlander
Food Choice and Sustainability: Why Buying Local, Eating Less Meat, and Taking Baby Steps Won't Work

Over 35 of the world's top authors are here to tell you the unbiased, accurate, scientifically proven truth about health, nutrition, the food system, the medical system and the environment.

FEBRUARY 2-11, 2018

For more information and to register **FOR FREE** go to:
www.RealTruthTalks.com | 516.921.1417

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FREE Vegan Ice Cream served every day after every lecture

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