



CREATIONS

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- The Quiet Cost of Being the Man ...
- Redefining Masculinity After Forty
- Building True Leadership Presence
- The Sacred Intelligence of the Body

Feed the Light

The June-July Summer / Men's Issue

*The pure love of one soul can
offset the hatred of millions.*

~ Mahatma Gandhi





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Another Leap Forward in Dental Healing: Why “Good Enough” Dentistry Is Costing You More Than You Think

A deeper look into how precision, biology, and intention define the difference between temporary fixes and lasting health

Most patients assume that if dental work looks acceptable and feels fine, it was done correctly. In reality, dentistry rarely fails in obvious ways. It fails quietly, gradually, and often without symptoms until the damage is already advanced. The absence of pain is not proof of health. It is often the calm before a problem reveals itself. This is where “good enough” dentistry becomes a long term liability.

At a glance, many treatments appear successful. A filling feels smooth. A crown sits comfortably. An X ray shows no immediate concern. But true quality is determined beneath the surface, where precision, material integrity, and biologic awareness dictate whether dentistry will remain stable or begin to break down over time. **Failure in dentistry is rarely dramatic. It is incremental.**

Microscopic gaps allow bacteria to re-enter. Subtle bonding deficiencies lead to leakage. Bite imbalances create stress that the patient does not feel until damage accumulates. Even minor compromises in disinfection

can allow bacteria to persist, creating the conditions for future breakdown. These small deviations are often invisible in the moment, but over time they compound.

What begins as a simple restoration can evolve into a cycle of intervention. A filling becomes a larger restoration. That restoration becomes a crown. Eventually, more invasive procedures become necessary. Many patients believe this progression is inevitable. In many cases, it reflects dentistry that was never designed with long term biologic success in mind. At **Integrative Dental Specialists**, this cycle is not accepted. It is prevented. Under the direction of **Dr. Jeffrey Etes**, every decision is guided by long term stability, preservation of natural structure, and respect for the connection between oral health and overall wellness.

Time is one of the most critical and most overlooked elements in clinical dentistry. *Precision requires time.* Diagnosis requires thought. Execution requires focus. When care is rushed, steps are compressed or omitted. Isolation may be compromised. Materials may not be handled with the level of control required for optimal performance. The result may appear acceptable, but the biological foundation is weakened. This is the

fundamental difference between efficiency driven care and precision driven care. At **Integrative Dental Specialists**, the team is aligned around a different standard. Dentistry is performed deliberately, with intention and control. Each step is executed to support what can only be described as **unrivaled dentistry**, where outcomes are designed, not hoped for.

A comprehensive approach considers more than the immediate concern. It evaluates how each tooth functions within the entire system, how forces are distributed, and how treatment will perform not just today, but years into the future. These are the considerations that define true long term success. This level of thinking is central to the philosophy of **Dr. Jeffrey Etes** and is reflected in every aspect of care at **Integrative Dental Specialists**. With nearly three decades of advanced clinical experience, his approach emphasizes biologic compatibility, precision execution, and preservation whenever possible. It is a philosophy shared by the entire team and reinforced in every procedure.

Execution is intentional. Isolation is exact. Disinfection is comprehensive. Materials are selected for their ability to integrate with the body and perform over time. Every detail is considered because every detail matters.

This is how **Integrative Dental Specialists** consistently delivers a higher standard of care.

Patients may not see each step, but they experience the result. Strength that feels natural. Comfort that remains consistent. Stability that eliminates the expectation of recurring problems. This is the outcome of **unrivaled dentistry**. “Good enough” dentistry often leads to repetition. Repair. Replacement. Escalation. At **Integrative Dental Specialists**, led by **Dr. Jeffrey Etes**, the goal is to break that cycle entirely.

The true cost of dentistry is not measured at the time of treatment. It is measured over years, in durability, function, and its impact on overall health. Choosing a higher level of care is not about doing more. It is about doing it once, with precision, intention, and respect for the biology that supports lasting health. That is the standard upheld every day by **Dr. Jeffrey Etes** and the team at **Integrative Dental Specialists**.

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TALKING OUR WALK

Welcome to the June - July Summer / Men's Issue. In this edition, you'll find articles and poetry that focus on Balanced Masculinity, Fathers, Creative Passion, Prosperity and Abundance.

In our previous issue (April/May), I (Domenick) wrote about Spring — growth, renewal, and change. I shared that my daughter was pregnant and how in awe I was of that process. As I write these words, she is preparing to give birth. A profound expression of the Divine Feminine. New life, carried and delivered through sheer will and surrender. There is nothing more powerful.

As Summer approaches, let's turn to the Divine Masculine.

If Spring is renewal, Summer is continuation. Birth is only the beginning. What follows demands feeding, protecting, building, and preparing for the future. These are masculine energies — Protection, Discipline, Authority, Responsibility, Leadership, Logic, Confidence. Traits that both men and women carry within them. These are not cold qualities. They are the bones of a family — the structure that allows everything softer to flourish.

We each hold masculine and feminine energy in varying degrees, and we have the ability to call on either as the moment requires. Some say masculine energy is the head; feminine energy is the heart. The key is balance — not a rigid 50/50, but a fluid harmony that shifts with the



situation.

Two examples from my own life:

At the playground with my grandchildren, I encourage them to jump from heights that make them nervous and climb what first seems too high. I teach them to assess risk and trust themselves. I am not being reckless. I am teaching them that fear is not a stop sign. That is masculine energy leading — with love underneath.

At home, I cook dinner, we clean up together, then play, sing, and wind down. I bathe them, help brush their teeth, get them ready for bed. I let them do more on their own each time. When the lights go low, I tell them stories of a brave brother and sister who are smart, capable, and bold.

One example balances masculine with feminine. The other, feminine with masculine. Both are present. Both are necessary.

Summer is the season of the father — full sun, full heat, unrelenting. No hiding, no dormancy. Just presence and provision.

This issue, we honor fathers. The maintainers. The protectors. The ones who lead quietly and sacrifice without announcement. Many are stoic — seemingly unreadable — but make no mistake: they love deeply. They carry that love not always in words — but in every early morning, every late night, every silent sacrifice made so others could have more.

Peace All-ways,

Domenick, Neil & Andrea

Neil & Andrea



- 4 **Talking Our Walk** by Neil & Andrea Garvey
- 5 **The Quiet Cost of Being the Man You Think You're Supposed to Be** by Dave Rossi
- 6 **Redefining Masculinity After Forty: Strengths Minus Ego** by David Emerson Frost
- 7 **The Energetic Impact of Stoicism and My Heartfelt Concern for Men** by Dr. Laura Chan
- 8 **Feed the Light, Not the Darkness** by Alan Cohen
- 10 **Umbrellas, Shark Teeth and One Tiny Toad** by Mitchell Kyd
- 11 **The Cookie Thief** by Joanne Steenberg
- 12 **Remain Connected** by Ann Albers and the Angels
- 13 **How Nervous System Regulation Builds True Leadership Presence** by Carl DuPont
- 14 **The Maglev* Mysteries** by Valir, Channeled by Dave Akira
- 16 **Resources for Natural Living**
- 18 **The Sacred Intelligence of the Body: Spirituality, Sensuality, and Social Healing** by Banafsheh Sayyad
- 19 **Poetry**
- 20 **Energy In Action: The Power of Emotions** by Sherianna Boyle
- 21 **Book & Product Reviews**



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The Quiet Cost of Being the Man You Think You're Supposed to Be

by Dave Rossi

There's a kind of exhaustion many men carry that doesn't come from work, responsibility, or even stress. It comes from the relentless low-level pressure of believing that they must constantly perform in order to be enough.

I'm not talking about the kind of performance you see on a stage, but instead the quiet, constant effort men make to live up to an internal standard of who they think they're supposed to be: Strong. Unshaken. Certain. In control. Productive. Respected.

For a long time, I thought that was just part of being a man. You wake up, you handle the day's tasks, you push through discomfort, and you keep moving. You don't question it. You don't slow down long enough to ask whether the version of you that's showing up is actually you,

or just a role you've learned to play. And if you play it well enough, the world often rewards you for it. But there's a cost.

I've worked with and around high-performing men for decades: builders, entrepreneurs, athletes, and other leaders. On the surface, many of them look like they have it figured out. They're driven, capable, and disciplined. They get results. But underneath, there's often something else: a quiet disconnection from themselves.

The problem lies in identity. Many men build their identity around their performance. Somewhere along the way, often without realizing it, they internalize the idea that who they are is defined by the things they accomplish, the ways they're perceived, and the degree to which they meet expectations. And once identity is tied to performance, the performance can never be interrupted.

At a deeper level, this pattern isn't accidental. We're wired to seek belonging, approval, and place. But when that wiring becomes unconscious, it turns into a constant attempt to secure identity through output, image, and control.

What makes this more complicated today is that there is no longer a stable definition of what a man is supposed to be. The expectations have multiplied. Men are told to be successful, but present. Strong, but emotionally aware. Competitive, but grounded. Independent, but connected.

So men adapt. They shape-shift. They try on different versions of themselves depending on what seems to work — at work, in relationships, socially, and online. From the outside, it can look like growth. But internally, it often feels like drift. Because when your identity becomes something you're constantly adjusting, you

lose contact with your internal signal — your sense of what's actually true.

I didn't fully understand this until I started stepping away from the pace I had been living at for years. For most of my career, I operated in a high-output environment where results mattered above everything else. The mindset was simple: Keep pushing; keep building; keep achieving. And it worked — until it didn't. Not because something broke, but because something became unclear. Decisions that once felt automatic started to feel forced. The drive was still there, but it felt noisier — less clean, less grounded.

What I eventually realized was that I wasn't burned out from the work. I was worn down from maintaining a version of myself that no longer felt aligned. That's a different kind of fatigue, and it doesn't get solved with rest. It gets solved with awareness — the deeper, quieter kind of awareness that allows you to observe your thoughts, your reactions, and your behaviors without immediately trying to justify or change them. For many men, that's unfamiliar territory. We're conditioned to act, fix, and produce, not to sit with what is. But this isn't something to fix. It's something to see.

There's a shift that happens when a man stops trying to optimize how he's perceived and starts paying attention to how he actually feels and operates beneath that layer. He becomes less reactive, less driven by comparison, and less dependent on external validation, because he's no longer outsourcing his identity.

From the outside, it doesn't look dramatic. In fact, it often looks quieter: More presence. More intention. Fewer unnecessary reactions. A willingness to pause instead of push, and a different relationship with pressure — not avoiding it, but not being unconsciously driven by it either.

With this shift, there's more space for real connection and actual presence, because you are no longer trying to manage your image in real time. That's all replaced with honesty. And that honesty, while simple, requires courage. It requires you to let go of the idea that strength is something you prove, and to begin experiencing strength as something you quietly embody.

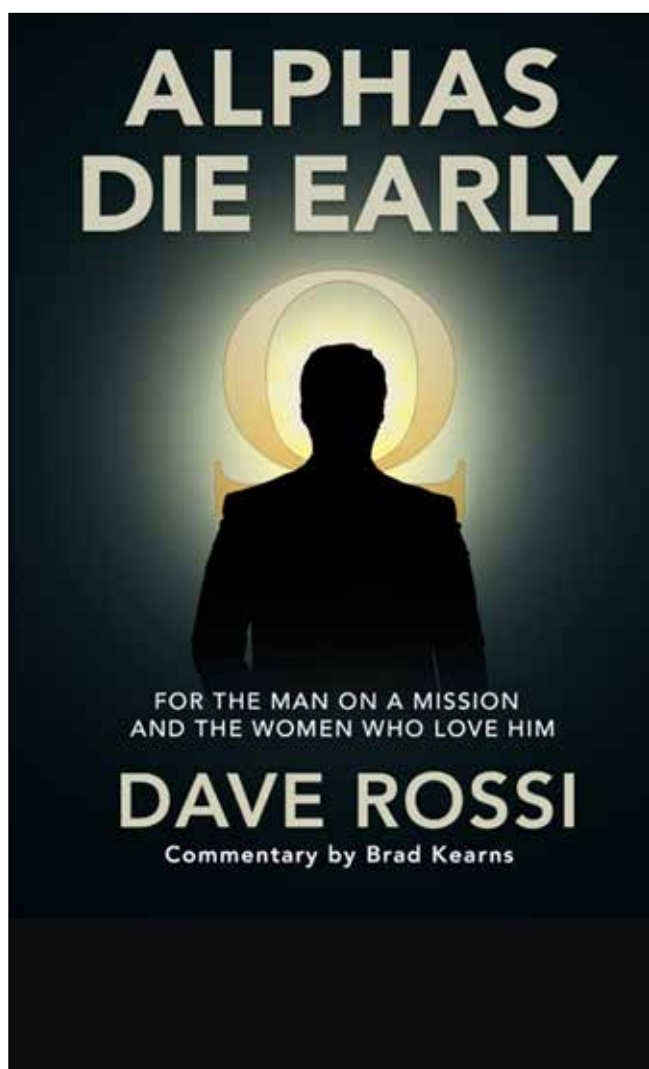


So how does a man begin to step out of this cycle? It's not by rejecting ambition or responsibility, but instead by shifting the source of how he operates. Here are a few starting points and signs:

- **Awareness:** Begin noticing when you're performing versus when you're acting from a place that's real.
- **Vulnerability:** Be willing to acknowledge what's actually there without trying to hide it.
- **Authenticity:** Act without the constant need to manage perception.
- **Belief shifts:** Question inherited rules about strength and success.

None of these are complex, but they all require presence. When practiced consistently, they replace performance with alignment, and that kind of strength doesn't need to be performed. It simply shows up. ✨

Dave Rossi is a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, CEO of CIQU Construction and author of *The Imperative Habit* and *Alphas Die Early*. After decades of high-performance living and building multimillion-dollar companies, he faced the ultimate burnout — losing everything he thought defined him. That collapse became his awakening. Today, he teaches the Omega Man mindset — a conscious model of success rooted in mindfulness, emotional mastery, and authentic leadership. Rossi's work helps men evolve beyond ego-driven ambition to create sustainable purpose, balance, and inner freedom. Learn more at DaveRossiGlobal.com and Ciquconstruction.com.



Redefining Masculinity After Forty: Strengths Minus Ego

by David Emerson Frost

For much of my early life, I believed strength meant proving something. Proving I was capable. Proving I could endure more than the next person. Like many men, I associated masculinity with performance. How much you could lift, how far you could push, and how tough you could appear when things became difficult.

Time, however, has a way of reshaping those ideas. After forty, strength begins to look different. Not weaker, but wiser. The body speaks more clearly. The ego softens. And the questions shift from “How hard can I push?” to “How well can I live?”



For many men, this transition can feel uncomfortable. We live in a culture that celebrates youthful power and relentless drive. But maturity offers something far more valuable than brute force. It offers perspective.

True strength after forty is not about domination. It is about balance.

When I look back at my own journey, the moments that shaped me most were not the victories that came easily, but the challenges that forced me to grow. Years ago, a serious spinal injury forced me to slow down and rethink everything I thought I knew about toughness. Recovery required patience, humility, and a willingness to listen to the body rather than fight it.

That experience changed how I understand strength.

Strength without ego means recognizing that discipline is not about punishment. It is about stewardship. The body we inhabit is not a machine to be driven into the ground. It is a partner in the long journey of life.

Movement, for example, remains one of the most powerful tools we have for maintaining vitality. But movement after forty is not about proving physical dominance. It is about sustaining energy, protecting mobility, and honoring the remarkable adaptability of the human body. Motion truly is medicine. The goal is not to compete with younger versions of ourselves but to support the person we are becoming.

Masculinity evolves when we shift our focus from performance to responsibility.

For many men, fatherhood becomes the catalyst for this transformation. Whether raising children directly or serving as mentors in our communities, we eventually recognize that others are watching how we live. They observe how we handle adversity. They notice whether we respond to life with anger or with resilience.

Children, especially, are remarkably perceptive teachers. They care little about a father's achievements or status. What they remember is presence. They remember patience. They remember the quiet consistency of someone who shows up day after day with integrity.

This is where humility becomes an essential part of masculine strength.

Humility does not mean thinking less of oneself. It means understanding that growth never stops. Physical health, emotional maturity, and spiritual awareness are not destinations. They are practices.

Many men reach midlife believing the best years are behind them. In reality, the opposite can be true. The decades after forty can become some of the most fulfilling chapters of life precisely because they are guided by deeper wisdom. The body may change, but purpose expands.

Balanced masculinity recognizes that vitality is built through daily habits rather than dramatic bursts of effort. Small choices compound over time. How we move, how we rest, and how we care for our relationships shape not only our physical health but also our character.

Resilience grows in this quiet space of consistent practice.

There is also a spiritual dimension to strength that often becomes clearer with age. When the noise of ambition begins to fade, we become more attuned to meaning. We begin to ask questions not just about success but about contribution. How can we serve? How can we lift others? How can we live in a way

that reflects gratitude for the time we have been given?

Strength without ego emerges from this awareness.

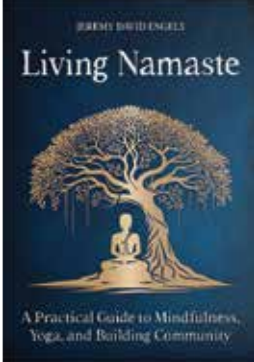
In many ways, the second half of life invites men to redefine what it means to be strong. Not as warriors competing for dominance, but as steady forces within their families and communities. Strength becomes quieter. It becomes patience, consistency, and the courage to keep growing.

With age often comes a deeper awareness that life is not something to conquer but something to care for. The body deserves respect. Relationships deserve attention. Purpose deserves reflection.

Balanced masculinity is not about becoming less strong. It is about becoming more whole. And for many men, that realization begins sometime after forty, when strength finally learns to walk hand in hand with humility. ✨

David E. Frost is a health educator and founder of Well Past Forty, where he helps adults stay strong, mobile, and independent as they age through simple, practical movement. Known to many as Coach Dave, he is a world champion and world record holder in Masters rowing, a retired Naval officer, and an adjunct college professor. He is the author of multiple books on healthy aging, including **KABOOMER**, **Strong to Save**, and a new book, **Burden or Banish**. Please learn more at wellpastforty.org and strongtosave.blog.

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DAVID EMERSON FROST

The Energetic Impact of Stoicism and My Heartfelt Concern for Men

by Dr. Laura Chan,
Nashua, NH

A few weeks ago, a 65-year-old man came to my office seeking acupuncture for blood pressure and ankle pain. It was our sixth visit, and he had only come because his wife made the appointment. This is common as many of my male patients arrive after being nudged by a female loved one.

A scientist, he was skeptical of acupuncture. Concepts like “Qi” and “meridians” felt “out there,” but he was willing to try. After his first visit, he noticed improvements: less stiffness in a knee he hadn’t mentioned and deeper, uninterrupted sleep.

At each visit, I asked about his emotional state. This isn’t small talk—it’s essential. In my work, emotions help explain what’s happening in the meridians and why certain physical symptoms arise.

The Body Keeps the Emotional Score

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), emotions aren’t held in the brain alone. They live in the body and move through the meridians. Grief, for example, is associated with the lungs. If the body is hardware and the brain is software, the meridians are the firmware connecting the two—the bioelectric system through which emotions flow. When emotions aren’t expressed, they become “stuck,” disrupting this system and eventually manifesting as physical symptoms.

My TCM mentors taught that emotions need outlets: tears move grief, shaking releases fear, physical expression like hitting can move anger. I often suggest activities like racquetball, chopping wood, or hitting a pillow. As long as no one is harmed, it’s important to let emotions move. Otherwise, they stagnate, and stagnation leads to pain or illness.



When Energy Starts to Move

After one session, his ankle pain worsened for a few days. This didn’t concern me. When energy begins to move, symptoms can temporarily intensify, like water rushing through a dry riverbed, pushing debris out of the way.

I asked again: Had he noticed any emotional shifts? Changes in stress? He paused. He had to think. At the end of his next visit, as I was gathering laundry from the appointment, he said, “I’m 65. No one in my life has ever asked about my emotional state. And that makes me sad.”

I sat back down, arms full of sheets. I was going to be late, but this mattered. “It makes me sad too,” I said. “I’m concerned about how little support men have to express their emotions, and the toll that takes on their health.” He nodded.

It was unfamiliar territory for him, but I could see he was moved. So was I. “Between you and me,” I added, “if you tell me next time that you cried a little while processing this, I won’t tell anyone, and I’ll be excited for you.” We both laughed. I told him it might even help his blood pressure.

“Man Up” — And What It Costs

Men are socialized to be stoic. But they are not less emotional than women. To be human is to feel. Yet boys and men are rarely given the same space or

safety to express emotions as women.

I have two young sons, both with big feelings. One day, during a meltdown over something small (to me), I felt my patience slipping. Two words flashed into my mind: “Man up.” I caught myself before saying them. His emotions may have been inconvenient, but shutting him down and shaming his masculinity would have been unfair.

Later, I wondered where that reflex came from. I remembered hearing it from male cousins, from friends in college. It’s embedded in our culture. “Man up” often means “stop expressing yourself emotionally.” From a TCM perspective, that’s the beginning of pathology. The seed may take years to manifest, but it is planted.

The Question Nobody Thought to Ask

My patient returned for another visit. He didn’t say whether he had cried, but his blood pressure was down.

My sons still have big emotions. And I’m committed to meeting them with patience, taking a breath, and holding space for their full emotional range.

Sometimes healing is quiet. It happens through a question no one thought to ask, or through the simple act of taking a breath and creating a safe space to feel. ✨

Dr. Laura Chan is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor, Acupuncturist, and certified Qi Gong instructor specializing in emotional-energetic hygiene. She believes true health requires tending to the body’s energetic system as much as the physical, and that unexpressed emotions don’t disappear; they live in the body. Learn more at highfunctioningempath.com and drlaurachan.com.

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Feed the Light, Not the Darkness

by Alan Cohen, Hawaii

I am hearing more and more questions about how to deal with troublesome events around the world. Many people wonder why these scenarios come about and, most important, “How can I help?”

I recall a poignant *Star Trek* television episode, “Day of the Dove.” In this story, an evil entity infiltrates the Starship Enterprise and spurs the crew to engage in acts of hatred and violence. It takes over their minds and incites innocent people to engage in extreme cruelty. The entity’s malevolent influence keeps growing until it seems that the dark force is about to gain victory. Then the ship’s commanders realize that the entity is feeding on fear and intense negative emotions, to incite endless fighting. As an antidote, the leaders quit battling the entity and instead cultivate inner peace and emotional calm. When the invader finds no more turbulent emotions to feed on, it withdraws, and well-being is restored.

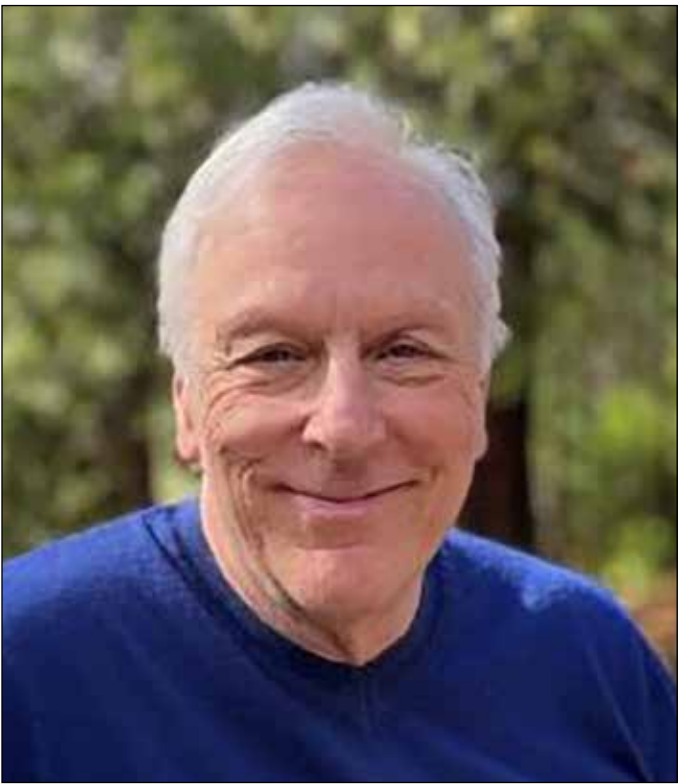
The social leaders who have created dynamic social change did not fight evil. Instead, they aligned with a greater reality. Jesus, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr., held the higher vision for humanity,

and championed positive social action rather than warfare. When Mother Teresa was asked to speak at an anti-war rally, she declined, explaining, “Fighting against war is just another form of war. If this was a pro-peace rally, I would gladly attend.”

People who perpetrate evil are in great pain. They are disconnected from their Source. If you get fearful, upset, and angry, then you, too, are disconnected from your Source, and you lose your ability to create positive results. Disconnected people fighting each other only amplifies disconnection.

If you wish to help disperse evil in the world, withdraw attention from perpetration, and place it instead on solution. In the Native American Onondaga Tribe, Oren Lyon was designated Faithkeeper. His job was to remain peaceful no matter what was going on in the outer world. If the rest of the tribe was troubled by warfare, bad weather, or food shortage, he was the one person who had to retain connection to well-being, which benefited the entire tribe.

Each of us has an inner Faithkeeper, the element of our mind connected to wholeness even while other parts of the mind become absorbed in fragmentation, separation, and violence. When you connect with your inner Faithkeeper, you



have access to all the guidance you need to act effectively. In some cases you may be guided to political action, participate in service organizations, or express yourself through a medium meaningful to you. Or you might be guided to simply go within, stay centered through meditation and prayer, or help people who feel troubled. Your inner teacher will guide you.

We are told in the Bible to “resist not evil, but overcome evil with good,” and “pray for those who persecute you.” We are also told that “the meek [non-violent] will inherit the earth.” Certainly it is disheartening to see injustice. When we observe wrongdoing, our guidance is reminding us that we deserve better.

Every day I practice holding the vision for healing, personally, nationally, and globally. If you can join with others in prayer or meditation, your effectiveness is amplified. When the children of light come together, the light grows far brighter than when we attempt to act alone. *A Course in Miracles* advises us, “If you knew who walks beside you on the path that you have chosen, fear would be impossible.”

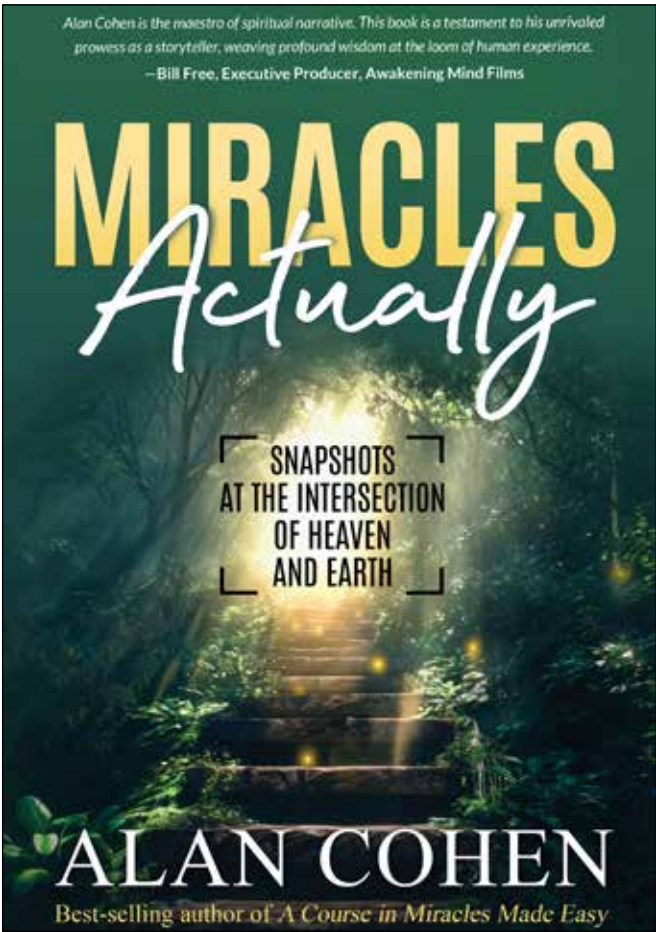
At the conclusion of “Day of the Dove,” Captain Kirk joins with Klingon Commander Kang to issue this imperative to the evil entity that

has turned the Starship into a battleground:

“Get off my ship! You’re a dead duck here. You’re powerless. We know about you, and we don’t want to play. Maybe . . . there are others like you around. Maybe you’ve caused a lot of suffering, a lot of history, but that’s all over. We’ll be on guard now. We’ll be ready for you, so ship out! Come on, haul it!”

I find it fascinating that “Day of the Dove” was aired at the height of the Vietnam conflict, when the country was brutally torn, and fear and anger ruled. Amidst that harsh milieu, scriptwriter Jerome Bixby pierced beyond the conflict to find a higher vision toward resolution. Once again we have come to a time when divisiveness seems to rule. We keep getting the same lessons, personally and collectively, until we master them. Perhaps we would do well to take Kirk’s imperative and apply it to our own higher consciousness: “Come on, haul it!” ✨

Alan Cohen is the author of many popular books, including the new best-seller *Miracles Actually*. Join Alan for his life-changing *Holistic Life Coach Training*, beginning September 1. For information on this program, Alan’s books, *A Course in Miracles* retreats, weekly online *Miracle Room*, webinars, YouTube channel, free daily inspirational quotes, and other offerings, visit www.alancohen.com.



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Optimum Health by Oral Optimization

There is strong correlation between oral health and overall health.

Take it a step forward — *oral health and longevity*. **An optimized mouth will ensure a long, healthy life.** Let's talk about how.

The mouth is a portal to multiple systems. The digestive system is the obvious one, as the mouth is the beginning of it. Our digestion starts here. So does the airway. The mouth and nose are the beginning of our respiratory system. Due to its vascularity, it is also a portal to the circulatory system. **The mouth also plays a critical role for the immune system as saliva has multiple antibodies and the oral cavity is home to countless lymph nodes.**

Within the oral cavity there are also thousands of micro organisms that, together form a healthy ecosystem called the *microbiome*. When in harmony, the microbiome contributes to our health.

However, in disruptive episodes, it can lead to an opportunistic infection. Elevated levels of disease causing organisms can have access to the circulatory system which is a highway to the rest of our organs including our brain, liver, heart and kidneys, to name a few.

When our mouth is running on all cylinders, we will have less inflammation, good balanced microflora and an optimal environment for optimal health and wellbeing. Conversely, when there is



chronic or acute disease in the mouth, it distracts our immune system which can have a catastrophic, cascade effect.

Although I believe that environment is always more influential than genetics, there are some predispositions that make us more likely to develop certain conditions. Diabetes is a prime example. If diabetes runs in the family, you may also show it. However, these genetic predispositions are like apps on your phone. Sometimes they are actively running, other times they are on sleep mode. *If you don't turn them on, they hide in the background.* There are some triggers

that can turn on these quiet diseases. If you have poor oral hygiene, this, in turn, will turn on the “app” for diabetes’ expression and you will have the disease.

When older adults maintain all their teeth and keep them healthy, they can enjoy healthy, nutrient dense foods and live vibrant lives. When we are missing teeth and our remaining teeth are burdened with inflamed gums, advanced plaque and tartar accumulation, it puts an inflammatory burden on our whole body. It predisposes us to unnecessary health challenges. This decreases our longevity because it makes us disease prone.

So what can you do right now to increase your oral health, overall health and longevity?

- 1. Floss daily.** Studies show that flossing significantly reduces C-reactive protein, a marker for inflammation all over our body.
- 2. Brush after meals.** Most of us brush first thing in the morning because we don't want to have morning breath. Then we eat breakfast and run out the door with dirty teeth. Hours later we have lunch; again dirty teeth. Then we come home and have dinner. A few hours later we brush our teeth and go to sleep. Essentially, our mouths are dirty for most of the day. When you cannot brush, chew sugar free gum. I recommend gum with xylitol; a naturally found sweetener that cannot be metabolized by cavity forming bacteria.
- 3. Drink a lot of water,** so you dilute debris and bacteria. Hydration is of paramount



importance as we are made up of mostly water.

- 4. Decrease simple sugars.** Cancer thrives on sugar.
- 5. Decrease acid in your diet.** Inflammation and disease thrive on an acidic environment.
- 6. Decrease snacking.** You have heard of intermittent fasting — this decreases opportunities for disease to establish itself.
- 7. Focus on detoxification and supplementation.** We want the bad stuff out and the good stuff in.

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Umbrellas, Shark Teeth and One Tiny Toad

by Mitchell Kyd, Rural PA

When people feel connected, they aren't afraid to treat strangers as friends.

In the middle of practically nowhere, along the road “up the valley” from me, tire tracks and flattened grass in front of a rustic, roofed stand verify that visitors stop there regularly and year-round. A hand-painted sign proclaims “Free”, and I’ve seen the table stocked with glassware and household goods, kids’ toys and small tools. A box labeled “Food Pantry” encourages visitors to take what they need, including garden produce that’s been donated in season.

A handmade cabinet with a glass door sits alongside, bearing the sign “Free Library.” It’s an unexpected spot for readers to browse, take, borrow or donate books. Who initiated this rural



outreach is a mystery to me. With no businesses or churches nearby and no seeming connections to any home within view, it simply exists out of kindness.

Places that create deep roots for the people who live there seem to inspire that kind of action. I see it all the time. When people feel connected, they aren’t afraid to treat strangers as friends.

Although my friend Teresa worked in downtown Pittsburgh, she grew up and got anchored in a quiet, wooded neighborhood outside the city. She buys and carries extra umbrellas in her car, a gift for soggy strangers anywhere, whether waiting in the rain at bus stops or slogging their way home with their groceries.

My rock guy, Tom, gives bags of tumbled stones to kids, assortments that often include a few shark teeth. A retired teacher knows it might be more than a moment’s amusement; his gift could fire up a future geologist or jewelry designer.

My computer guy, Don, runs a small business with a tiny footprint but heavy foot traffic. As a kindness, especially for all the harried delivery drivers who face every day as a race, he plunked down a fridge directly inside his shop door. It’s always stocked with cold drinks he offers to anyone popping in.

Friend Lynn lives in the only house at the end of a long lane off a country road. For years she’s been leaving bags of candy for the crew who picks up her trash, a “thank you” for making the trek. She also hands out wrapped candy to traffic flaggers and



others she sees stopped along her way. It wipes away the weary for a bit, I suspect. When she shared her roadside tales with a friend, he started his own kindness crusade – in Minnesota, as he’s bicycling.

“It’s such a tiny thing,” Lynn says, “but it’s such an investment. You can see instantly how one small gesture like that can change the direction of someone’s day, including your own.”

Sometimes changing the direction of a day means picking up strangers, even if they’re not the same species. One sweltering August morning, I walked into a local pharmacy to find two employees fussing over the contents of a discarded ice cream dish. One woman held the dish while another slowly poured water into it, one gentle drop at a time. I had to ask ... When they opened for business that Monday morning, they found a little toad had been stuck between the glass doors all weekend, trapped in that awful heat. They were doing their best to rehydrate the tiny critter which, I swear, was wearing a look of relief and gratitude when I peered in.

It’s funny how familiar things resonate differently over time. While watching Peter Jackson’s movie adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit” again recently, one scene instantly reminded me of my friends. The wizard Gandalf was asked why he chose Bilbo, a tiny Hobbit, to be part of

a dangerous journey to end an encroaching darkness. Others thought overcoming great evil demanded great power.

“...That is not what I have found,” was Gandalf’s cinematic reply. “I’ve found it is the small, everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay ... small acts of kindness and love.”

I agree. To all the ordinary folk quietly offering kindness in our everyday world, thank you. ✨

Freelance writer **Mitchell Kyd** credits her deep roots in rural Pennsylvania as inspiration for her work. As a regular contributor to *Penn Lines* magazine and former newspaper columnist, she writes frequently about the joys and poignant moments of small-town living. Her March, 2026, column is reprinted here with permission from *Penn Lines*, the monthly magazine of the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association. You can find more of Kyd’s stories at deadmousediaries.com.



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The Cookie Thief

by Joanne Steenberg,
Penobscot, ME

It is hard to love when we are judging someone. Letting go of judgement is a powerful and important skill to master. It requires practice and patience, but more than anything it requires awareness. Listen to your inner dialogue.

Our world is waking up. Love and acceptance of all is our goal. Remember that everyone is doing their best with what they've been given. As soon as you hear yourself categorize people or make judgements about another — stop. You don't know their story.

When we take the time to truly know ourselves, that self-knowledge becomes the foundation of our compassion for others. It is compassion that keeps the world turning. Speak your truth with courage, but listen just as carefully, especially to those whose views differ from your own. Seek to understand them. Honor their humanity and appreciate the effort they make to live, strive, and do the best they can in their own lives.

We all have stories worthy of sharing when we've misjudged another or caught ourselves "categorizing". Enjoy this powerful one.

The Cookie Thief by Valerie Cox

A woman was waiting at an airport one night, with several long hours before her flight. She hunted for a book in the airport shops, bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop.

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see, that the man sitting beside her, as bold as could be

... grabbed a cookie or two from the bag in between, which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene.

So she munched the cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock. She was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by, thinking, "If I wasn't so nice, I would blacken his eye."

With each cookie she took, he took one too, when only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh, he took the last cookie and broke it in half.

He offered her half, as he ate the other, she snatched it from him and thought... oooh, brother. This guy has some nerve and he's also rude, why he didn't even show any gratitude!

She had never known when she had been so galled, and sighed with relief when her flight was called. She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate.



She boarded the plane, and sank in her seat, then she sought her book, which was almost complete. As she reached in her baggage, she gasped with surprise, there was her bag of cookies, in front of her eyes.

If mine are here, she moaned in despair, the others were his, and he tried to share. Too late to apologize, she realized with grief, that she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

The cookie thief is one of my favorites of all time. How quickly we judge another!

Lots of love to you all. Happy Spring.

How can we love each other and let go of judgement?

If you judge people, you have no time to love them. – Mother Teresa

Judgements prevent us from seeing the good that lies beyond appearances. – Wayne Dyer

Change happens by listening and then starting a dialogue with the people who are doing something you don't believe is right. – Jane Goodall

Reprinted from the weekly Power of Love column in the Penobscot Bay Papers. ✨

Joanne Steenberg is an award-winning columnist whose heartfelt and insightful writing has captivated readers across Penobscot Bay Press publications for years. As the creator of **The Power of Love**, a widely read column exploring compassion, human connection,

and personal growth, she blends personal storytelling, wisdom, and cultural insight in a way that resonates deeply with audiences of all backgrounds. Beyond her work as a writer, Joanne has had a dynamic career spanning education and entrepreneurship. Her course, **POWER**, (self empowerment for teens and adults) has been taught in high schools since 1987. She is also the founder of **The Love Card**, a global pay-it-forward movement dedicated to spreading love and joy worldwide (www.thelovecard.org). poweroflovestories@gmail.com

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Remain Connected

by Ann Albers and the Angels,
Phoenix, AZ

You are all so beautifully sensitive. You are all so beautifully caring. You want kindness, peace, and love to prevail in your world. You know you cannot force others to want these things, but you can live and abide in these vibrations as often as possible, thus creating a loving and peaceful life for yourself and, by example, offering others an invitation to do the same.

Your peace can be the soothing balm that radiates outward and calms all those in your presence.

Your kindness can be the power that teaches an unkind individual that satisfaction is not found in argument, but rather in true connection.

Your compassion can even calm or begin to heal a hateful, hurting heart.

Your willingness to pray for those who are lost, rather than condemn them, may be the ray of light that guides their soul back to truth in the afterlife.

And while the human ego, in its drive to survive, tends to fight or flee, the soul chooses to remain present to the love within each moment. When you are lost in the depths of grief, the soul is focused on the depth of your love. As you attune

more to your love and less to your loss, you will begin to resonate on the same frequency as your dear ones in heaven. You will feel their presence more easily.

Instead of beating yourself up for what was not said or done, honor what was accomplished in love. Instead of focusing on any pain they felt on Earth, focus on the relief and bliss they are feeling now. Instead of focusing on them being gone, acknowledge your very real feelings of human loss—cry the tears and be compassionate with yourself—but when you can, strive to focus on the presence of their spirit even before you can feel them.

If you persist, your willingness to stretch and meet them in their new, elevated vibration of love will enable you to experience an incredible connection that can never be lost.

Likewise, if you are in a difficult relationship, it is easy to give up your own happiness and wait for the other person to change. But if you can focus on loving and caring for yourself—tending to your own heart and happiness without waiting for the other—then angry words will bounce off you more easily, and your unwillingness to dance in darkness will catalyze the other to grow or go.

As you honor your own spirit more often, you will begin to see as the Divine sees.

The Divine says to all...

I see the light in your soul, even when your personality is dim.

I remember the good in your heart, even when you have completely forgotten.

When you feel separation, I remember unity.

Nothing you can do or say will sway me. I created you in love and remain steadfast in my understanding of your true nature.

I refuse to dignify any darkness you embrace and will support only the truth of your loving nature.

When you can hold this vision of the light within all—no matter how buried in darkness it might be—you become one who fans the flames of truth. You can imagine the spark within another's heart growing stronger. You can pray for the light of love to rise up from within. You can refuse to engage in arguments and simply stand firm in your truth. You can remain neutral in the face of negativity. You can observe rather than absorb.

If you remain in light, even when another is in darkness, they will either step into a greater light or leave you alone. They will grow or go because negativity cannot remain strong in the presence of strong love.

Connected to love, dear friends, you remain safe in a turbulent world. You remain connected to the power that creates universes, coordinates ecosystems, and inspires evolution. Tapped into the Source of life itself, you will experience order, harmony, joy, and beautiful guidance that steers you toward others who are equally connected.

If you get drawn into the world's chaos or the chaos of others, you will find yourself on the surface of a choppy emotional sea, getting tossed about with those who feel similarly disconnected.

Happily, it does not take long to recalibrate. In fact, you can reconnect to love and all that is beautiful, good, and true in an instant. With a single choice to focus on something with love or appreciation, you dial yourself back into the frequency of love, wherein your life resumes a graceful flow.

You need not make up for past disconnection. You need only find your way, in the present moment, back to love—beginning with loving kindness toward yourself.



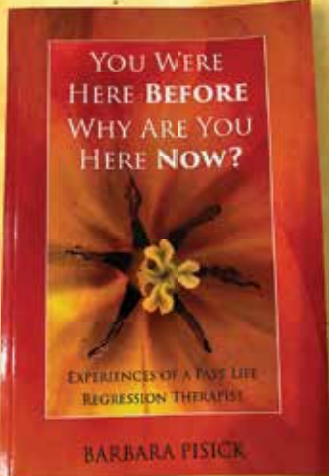
Be kind to yourselves. When you look back on your lives, you will be surprised at how your desire to love and create more light has affected so many more than you will ever imagine. You will be brought to tears by your own light, caring, and brilliance when you see the ripple effect of your lives.

But here and now, in this instant, be satisfied that as long as you continue to give your attention to that which feels a little more like love, you are rippling the pond of human consciousness, elevating your own soul, and paving your path with love and kindness.

God Bless You! We love you so very much.

-- The Angels ✨

Ann Albers is a popular author, spiritual instructor, angel communicator, and modern mystic who has spoken at conferences, been featured on international radio shows, and who delights in helping people experience the power and beauty of their own soul. She guides people to manifest lives they love, and develop a blissful connection with spirit! Ann's free weekly "Messages from Ann & the Angels" reach an international audience with inspiration and tips to help you stay tuned in and turned on! www.visionsofheaven.com. Her book, **Love is the River, Learning to Live in the Flow of Divine Grace** is available at <https://www.amazon.com/Love-River-LearningDivine-Grace/dp/1949780007/>



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The Authentic Executive: How Nervous System Regulation Builds True Leadership Presence

by Carl DuPont

How can I help? I often find myself starting with this very simple question when working with a client. My purpose in life is to help people reconnect with their voices, whether it's to embody executive presence in the boardroom, sing at the Metropolitan Opera House, or just having a difficult conversation with confidence, candor, and clarity. It's all much easier said than done, however, and it's not just a question of aesthetics. It's one of survival, too. My philosophy is that our voices make us human, so they are a vital lifeline to who we are authentically. They help connect us to our caregivers (past), our community (present), and our legacy



(future). This is the most important resource we have, and yet we can so easily take it for granted.

I lost my voice completely in the middle of a busy career of teaching, performing, and presenting. As the old folks say, I was burning the candle on both ends and in the middle too. All the warning signs of vocal fatigue, physical burnout, and mental exhaustion were there, but I was so single-mindedly trying to achieve my goal that I didn't notice them. I just kept going. Up until that point, my voice always miraculously bounced back when I needed it, but the spring of 2018 was different. This time, I went out on stage to perform, and nothing came out.

It was only a complete re-education of my mind and body that allowed me to speak and eventually take the stage again. It is a slow, painstaking process of reclaiming and maintaining a regulated nervous system in a dysregulated world, but it's worth it for anyone seeking change. As a certified Neurosomatic Intelligence Educator, here is how I use my expertise and experience to help others:

Assess

Our self-awareness is the most important tool we have in our arsenal. While it is easy to ignore the early warning signs: pain, fatigue, anxiety, depression, these emotions arrive to show us what is important. As Richard Contino and Penelope Holt point out in *Emotional Intelligence at Work*,

"Emotional needs, good and bad, are at play across every aspect of the business process." They also advise that "the party line that emotions have no place in business is self-serving denial."

Try it: Assess what you are feeling right now. What are the words that get stuck in your throat? Write about it for 5 minutes. Don't let the pen leave the paper; keep writing. Name any emotions that come up. Studies show that naming negative emotions, also called *affect labeling*, can reduce their intensity and down-regulate distress according to the National Institute of Health.

Acknowledge

The next step is to acknowledge reality. I remember my first Alexander Technique lesson when the teacher told me, "You are where you are." I thought it was the most inane thing I'd ever heard! I just needed this teacher to tell me how to fix my problem so I could get back on stage. . . and that's when it hit me. I was striving, straining, and stressing about getting to the next thing, rather than being in the present moment. This approach often pulls us out of alignment and rarely helps us find resonance in the long run.

Try it: Acknowledge three objective truths about where you are right now. It could be your location, your clothes, or even the time of day. Notice any shift that happens when you make a regular practice of acknowledging what is true instead of letting the mind run away with worry.

Adapt

This is our most powerful tool as humans. It's called *neuroplasticity*, and it's broadly defined as the brain's ability to rewire or establish new neural circuits. At any age, we can form new neural connections. It's this adaptation ability that provides us with resilience, improves well-being, and can even boost brain health, according to Harvard Medical School. Our bodies and minds are like clay, so we can take advantage of that fact and repattern anything we'd like to improve about ourselves, even if it's just a little bit.

Try it: Record yourself saying an important piece of information three different ways. Deliver it horribly on purpose. Notice how your brain and body respond when trying something new. Do you notice any connections to other areas in your life? Are

there more possibilities available to you than you could think of before?

Authenticate

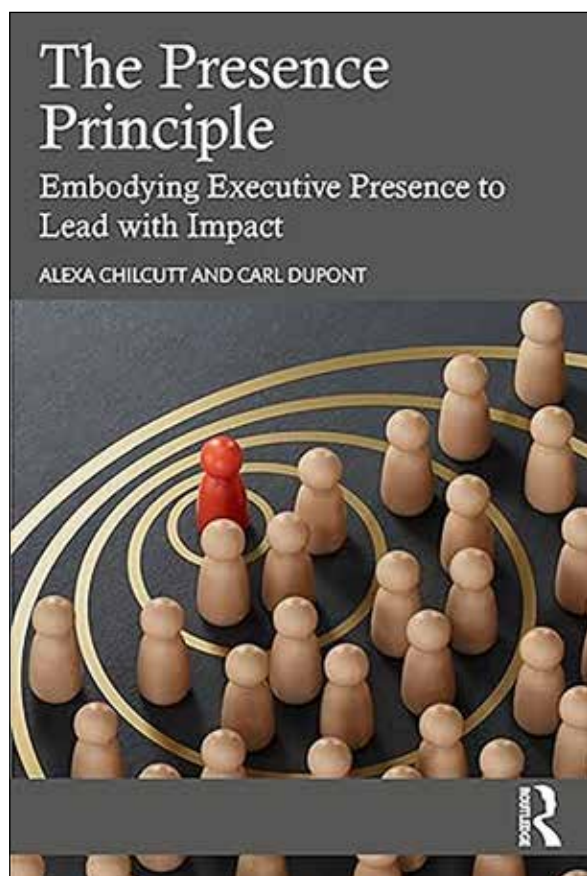
The final step is to check in with your values. Align your adaptations to who you really want to be in the world. If you haven't taken time to reflect on your values, or haven't in a while, now is a great time. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Professor Luke Kalb researches how cultivating a sense of meaning and purpose is part of building a good life. He recommends balance, relationships, and physical activity as key markers.

Try it: Use Brené Brown's list of values to identify what is most important to you. Choose three small things you can do to embody those values in your words and actions this week.

Conclusion

I use these tools with myself and with Fortune 200 C-Suite clients to harness and sustain the change we want to see in the world. They've helped me not only regain my instrument but also sharpen my intention. How can they help you? ✨

Dr. Carl DuPont guides professionals in reconnecting to their authentic voice through a transformative approach that bridges performance expertise with scientific precision. As Director of the Kennedy Center's Washington National Opera Institute Program, Associate Professor of Voice at Johns Hopkins University's Peabody Institute, and Executive Education faculty at Carey Business School, Carl brings rare interdisciplinary insight to leadership development. His methodology integrates his experience as an international opera performer, published scholar, improv actor, Certified Neurosomatic Intelligence Educator, and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® facilitator. Carl's scholarly work appears in Oxford University Press and respected journals including *The Laryngoscope* and *the Voice and Speech Review*. Coaching clients range from Fortune 200 executives to international soloists at the Metropolitan Opera House and "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band. Carl has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, El Palacio de Bellas Artes, Leipzig Opera House, and the Salzburg Festival. He is the founder of DuPont Consulting, LLC and holds the Certificate in Management Development from Johns Hopkins Carey Business School.



A Legacy of Love and Healing

by Lilly Julien

Camp COPE August, 2026 marks 15 summers of a weekend grief camp remembering loved ones and supporting grieving children.

Since 2012, COPE Foundation has supported grieving children and teens who have lost a loved one with its annual bereavement camp. Camp COPE is a free, weekend grief camp for youth ages 7 to 17 who are grieving the death of a significant person in their lives. The camp experience combines fun traditional camp activities with grief education and emotional support led by bereavement professionals and trained, compassionate volunteers.

Being a grieving child can be a lonely, isolating experience. Often, children do not have an avenue to express their grief

or to honor and remember the person they lost. Camp COPE allows grieving children to be together and share feelings with one another. They learn that grief, though painful, is a normal and healthy emotion to experience. Planned activities, discussions and remembrance ceremonies create a safe place for sharing, having fun, and making friends.

A look inside Camp COPE would reveal a group of brave children and teens balancing an array of grief and fun activities. A concurrent retreat across the lake offers their parents and guardians an opportunity to come up for air while processing their own grief. Throughout the weekend they bond and connect with other adults, and can sometimes hear squeals of laughter, with glimpses through the trees, of their children tubing around the lake at the back of a motor boat.

On the other side of the lake, campers are engaged in a multitude of activities: fun filled games, rope climbing, crafting projects like colorful recycled drums and drumming out their emotions in a safe space with their peers. Amid the fun and laughter, there are solemn moments: sharing pictures of their loved ones at Memory Board while hearing similar stories to their own; making luminaries and writing messages to their loved ones; lighting memory candles under the stars and floating them on the water while simultaneously, their parents are lighting candles across the lake. An emotional evening ends by a campfire, singing and making smores.

As the weekend comes to a close, one can witness the transformation of these kids, laughing, hugging, and signing the shirts of new found friends. For more than 25 years, COPE has been an anchor for bereaved

families – offering healing programs, compassionate support, and a community where no one has to grieve alone.

COPE is a nonprofit grief and healing organization helping parents, siblings and individuals living with loss.
www.copefoundation.org

Author's Note: *In 1992, my 20-year-old daughter, Michelle lost her life tragically in a car accident. In the midst of my grief, she came to me in a dream and said, "I'm okay, Mommy. You're the ones who aren't okay and you need to reach out and help each other." I woke with a vision of grieving parents and siblings coming together for emotional support. Michelle's message inspired COPE, (an acronym for Connecting Our Paths Eternally). It was in the process of building COPE, and connecting with other parents who had lost a child, that I found healing.*

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The Maglev* Mysteries

by Valir, Channeled by Dave Akira

Prepare to learn that your current publicly known transportation and space-travel capabilities are but a pale shadow of what already exists. Behind the scenes, there have long been rapid-transit systems connecting distant locations on the planet in the blink of an eye. Whistleblowers speak of magnetically-levitated trains running in vacuum tunnels deep underground, linking major cities and even continents in a matter of minutes. Indeed, much of this is real – remnants of secret projects funded outside the public eye. There are underground networks and suborbital craft that can leap from one side of the globe to the other with astonishing speed.

Such systems were kept from the public to maintain the old status quo; a population free to travel and connect at will is much harder to control. That is about to change. The same forces pushing disclosure of healing and energy tech will also bring these advanced transportation networks to light. Do not be surprised when you hear official admissions of secret tunnels or see demonstrations of gravity-defying aerospace craft that once only existed in sci-fi. In fact, high-speed vacuum tunnel networks reportedly interlink many secret facilities (so-called DUMBs, or Deep Underground Bases) across the planet. This covert infrastructure has operated parallel to the public transportation system, hidden under the guise of national security—until now.

However, alongside these revelations comes a gentle reminder from the universe: while physical distances shrink externally, *the greater journey is inward.* **The most advanced travel has always been the instantaneous movement of consciousness.** Think of how your thoughts, dreams, or prayers can instantly bridge any distance. You can send love to someone across the world and it arrives without delay. In higher dimensions, beings travel by the power of mind and intention, appearing wherever they focus their awareness. Humanity is gradually remembering this ability.

So yes, welcome the high-speed tunnels and portal technologies that will free you from the limits of distance – they are wonderful breakthroughs. But also remember you carry within you the original starship: your own consciousness. No tunnel or engine is needed for you to explore the realms of spirit and imagination. Even now, many of you meet one another in the dream state, or travel to distant places in meditation with your light bodies. As advanced transit becomes normal, it will open minds to the realization that human consciousness itself can transcend time and space. The outer and inner journeys will converge, leading to a civilization connected both physically and telepathically across the globe (and eventually across the stars).

Have you noticed how certain inventors and entrepreneurs seem almost driven to push the boundaries of what is possible? This is no accident. Many such innovators incarnated with a soul plan and ancient memories of advanced societies. Visionaries in your world in the aerospace field, for example – and even pioneers of earlier eras like Nikola Tesla – are in truth remembering what humanity once achieved and can achieve again. They may think they are simply innovating or chasing personal ambition, but on a higher level they are guided by their higher selves and subtle galactic inspiration. They are the engineers of destiny, helping to manifest the next steps of humanity's evolution. Their projects expand the collective imagination and shatter perceived limits.

Each rocket launch, each revolutionary device, paves the way for acceptance of even greater leaps to come.

However, understand that these outer innovations are stepping stones. **The ultimate “rocket” is the uplifted human spirit, and the ultimate network is the telepathic unity of conscious minds.** Before society is ready to fully embrace those metaphysical realities, it often needs these physical innovations as a bridge. The souls spearheading technological leaps are responding to a cosmic impulse – often unconsciously. They receive sudden ideas, intuitive breakthroughs, and timely synchronicities that are orchestrated by a higher plan. In some cases, they even receive guidance from us or other benevolent sources, whether they realize it or not. All of this serves the collective by pushing boundaries and preparing humanity for a more expansive reality. So celebrate these innovators, but also recognize them as catalysts of remembrance. They show what is possible, while you and other awakening souls ensure that humanity develops the spiritual wisdom to use these advances wisely. Together, the outer builders and the inner awakeners are co-creating a new world.

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The Sacred Intelligence of the Body: Spirituality, Sensuality, and Social Healing

by Banafsheh Sayyad

We are living in a time of profound fracture, and profound possibility. Across the world, we witness polarization, violence, and disconnection from the Earth, from one another, and from our own bodies. At the same time, there is a rising pulse, a remembering that calls us back to what is essential, not as an idea, but as a lived, embodied truth. For me, this remembering lives at the intersection of spirituality, sensuality, and social healing. It lives in the body—and it lives in the heart.

For too long, spirituality has been divorced from the body, placed somewhere “above,” in concepts or distant ideals. Sensuality, too, has been misunderstood—suppressed, commodified, or reduced to the purely sexual—stripped of its sacred depth. And social healing has often been approached through policy and intellect alone, without addressing the deeper imprints carried within our bodies and held within the heart.



But these realms—spirit and matter—are not separate. They are deeply intertwined. When they are reintegrated, something powerful begins to unfold—an intelligence guided not only by awareness, but by love.

The Body as a Sacred Gateway

The body is not an obstacle to awakening—it is the gateway. Every sensation, breath, and movement carries intelligence. The body holds memory, trauma, joy, and possibility. It is the meeting place of the visible and the invisible, the personal and the collective, the Earthly and the Divine.

At the center of this meeting place is the heart—the bridge through which we experience connection, meaning, and love. When we inhabit our bodies with presence, we begin to listen differently. We begin to feel what has been numbed, release what has been held, and access a deeper current of aliveness. And as we do, the heart softens and guides.

This is spirituality, not as belief, but as direct experience. In my work, I explore how movement is a path to this embodied awareness. Through sacred dance, breath, and presence, we awaken what I call the luminous intelligence of the body—the innate capacity to harmonize, heal, connect, and to love.

Reclaiming Sensuality as Sacred

To speak of sensuality is, in many contexts, to enter charged territory. Yet *sensuality, in its essence, is our capacity to experience life through sensation*. To feel the warmth of the sun on our skin. To feel the rhythm of breath moving through our chest. To feel the subtle currents of energy that animate us. Through sensation, we enter into direct

communion with life itself. And through that communion, the heart awakens.

Many of us have learned to disconnect from this realm, through conditioning, trauma, or teachings that equate transcendence with disembodiment. But when we reclaim sensuality as sacred, something shifts. We inhabit ourselves more fully, experience pleasure as nourishment, and recognize the body not as something to overcome, but something to honor. And we begin to rediscover love as a felt, embodied power that moves through us and connects us to all life. This reclamation is central to healing. A body that can sense deeply is also a body that can love, heal, connect, and respond.

The Body in Times of Collective Crisis

In times of upheaval, the body becomes even more significant. We carry the weight of what we witness: grief, fear, anger, and hope all move through us. If these energies are not given space, they become stored, creating further constriction. We see this in individuals, and in societies.

But the body also offers a way through. Movement, breath, and presence allow us to metabolize what we carry—to transform contraction into flow, fragmentation into coherence. And it is through the heart that this transformation becomes possible. Because **without the heart, we can process, but we cannot truly heal**. This is not a bypass of reality—it is a deeper engagement with it.

I have witnessed this profoundly in my homeland, Iran, where dance—despite being restricted—has emerged as a powerful form of embodied resistance. Even at funerals, people dance—not as denial, but as declaration. A declaration that the spirit cannot be subdued. A declaration that life continues to pulse, even in the face of death. A declaration of dignity, presence, and freedom. And beneath it all—a declaration of love. Love for life, for freedom, and for one another. This is the power of the body. And this is the power of the heart.

From Personal Healing to Collective Transformation

Healing is often framed as individual — true healing ripples outward. A person connected to their body is more grounded, more present, less driven by fear. And

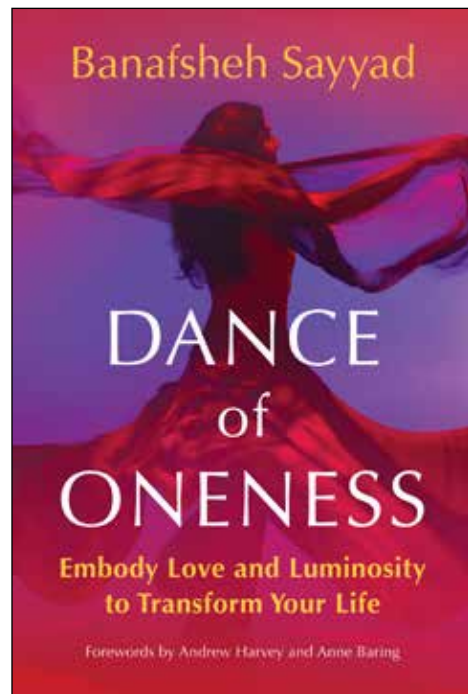
when the heart is open, that presence is guided by love.

This has social implications, because societies are made of individuals. And when enough individuals embody presence, compassion, and clarity, the collective field shifts. We feel it in spaces where people are truly present, in communities where authenticity is welcomed, and in movements that arise from a deep love for life. Love becomes a force of coherence, courage, and transformation. This is the foundation of embodied social healing.

A Return to Wholeness

At its core, the integration of spirituality, sensuality, and social healing is a return to wholeness. A remembering that we are not separate—from our bodies, from one another, or from the Earth. Through movement, breath, and presence, we come back ... to ourselves, to each other, and to the living pulse of existence. Back to the heart—and back to love. And from this place, a different kind of world becomes possible— not imposed from the outside, but arising from within. ✨

Banafsheh Sayyad (*Ban-af-sheh S-eye-aad*), MFA, Choreography and MA, Chinese Medicine, is a master sacred dancer, choreographer, and visionary teacher of spiritual embodiment whose life's work is devoted to helping people activate greater health, awareness, and resilience through conscious movement. Internationally acclaimed for her pioneering fusion of spirituality and sensuality, she is the founder of Dance of Oneness®, a Divine Feminine lineage of healing and transformation uniting Sufi whirling, Persian dance, flamenco, mysticism, and Taoist wisdom. Her new book is **Dance of Oneness** (St. Martin's Essentials). Drawing from her own awakening through dance that transmuted the pain of exile from Iran, Banafsheh weaves Rumi's poetry, feminine mysticism, and embodied healing. Born in Iran to legendary filmmaker Parviz Sayyad, she defied cultural taboos to create a feminine expression of Sufi whirling, transforming dance into a pathway of liberation, divine communion, and activism. Through her non-profit NAMA and her transformative teachings at centers such as Esalen, Kripalu, Omega, and Hollyhock, Banafsheh has inspired thousands across the world to awaken, embody love, and dance the divine into being.



Beach Vibes

by Dr. Seena Axel, Delray Beach, FL

Haven't visited you in
too long a while.
Cold temperatures, surgical recovery and
just plain Living Life 101 had me consumed.
I apologize with a sincere heart for my absence.

I am here today... early morning.
Walking on sands warmed by the sunrise;
sitting on the shore watching the tides & waves
change each moment of my witnessing;
feeling the morning winds blowing
through my hair even as the sun caresses
my skin & warms my heart.

I am here today!
It is now!
I am blessed!

My Higher Self

by Crystal Capone, Wantagh, NY

Hey I'm God, Source, your higher self ...
What you call me isn't important.
I love you. I am you, you are me.
I put a little bit of myself into a human body,
to experience life on Earth from a human
perspective.

To feel human feelings, make human
connections,
Make human mistakes,
make them again. And again. Learn from them.

It's but an illusion we are separate.
The infinite, powerful, pure love energy of
creation
that I am,
is in you. It is you.
And someday, when your human body is done,
that energy will come back to me, Back to
Source.

You are infinite.
You are powerful.
You are a creator.
The same energy that crafted the universe is
inside you.

Grain by Silent Grain

by Janice Kuhl, Glen Cove, NY

grain by silent grain
the sands shift
let the future flow

Playground

by Fred Byrnes, Huntington Station, NY

The sun shines
playground children laugh
none are Democrats or Republicans

Summer Rain Haiku

by Roberta A. McQueen East Islip, NY

warm summer showers
lush greenery all around
smells of fresh wet earth

Watercolor by
Jan Guarino
JanGuarinoFineArt.com

STARRING: LOVE

by Gina Florentino-James
Huntington, NY

I exhaled yellow stars
That were hiding in me
Sparkling like fireflies in a jar
Since eternity.
You caught them on your tongue
And swallowed them one by one.
These tokens of my love
Captured from the universe above.
We lit up the sky
Connected together... shining
For all the world to see.

Immediate Vacancy

by Rhonda Weiss, Leeds, NY

Immediate Vacancy

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Some advice for those ambivalent or outright intolerant to poetry: Arrive to a poem the same way you do meeting new people. Sometimes it's exciting, other times tiresome or intimidating ... We should engage with people, and poems, of all walks, embracing the challenge of divergent perspectives. Not all of them will be firm friends or favourites, but each teaches us something we didn't know before. ~ Vanessa Kisuul

Energy In Action: The Power of Emotions

by Sherianna Boyle,
Massachusetts

Here's the thing: You cannot escape the vital role emotions play in your existence. Connecting with Spirit is the key to your spiritual evolution and purpose. To put it simply, when you choose to shut down your emotions, it is no different than saying to your Spirit guides, "I don't want or need your support." Yet, when you allow yourself to feel, you open to divine love, unconditional support, guidance, healing, and abundance.

While this may seem a bit overwhelming at first, I want you to know the ball is (and always will be) in your court. You have a choice: get to know your emotions, their value, and how they can help you transform emotional stress and connect you to the Spirit realms, or not. It is up to you. My guess is something inside you knows and this truth can no longer be avoided.

Now, it's just a matter of learning how to ask. For some of you that is easier said than done. If you ever had a question or request and then suddenly lost the courage to ask, you know what I mean. Maybe you wanted to set a boundary, request time off from work, sensed distress from a co-worker, and told yourself it wasn't the right time. Or perhaps you are a person who used to be really great at asking questions but then received some discouraging or negative feedback, and now you associate asking



with conflict or pain. Or maybe you feel like you are always in a rush and just don't have time. Sound familiar?

If so, I totally get it. I have been there too. Yet here is something worth pondering: **If you don't ask, how will you ever learn how to fully receive?** And if you can't receive, how will you ever truly be happy?

To ask means a part of you is willing to let something in. It may be knowledge, feedback, guidance, clarity, wisdom, love, support, or connection. As you can imagine, being able to let something in often coincides with the ability to let something go—like fear, doubt, worry, and guilt, which only stalls your progress.

Now, I'm pretty sure you have experienced the consequences of not asking—we all have. Perhaps you signed a contract without inquiring about the details or took on extra work without asking for additional pay. When these life lessons happen, and they will, you can lose your stamina, courage, self-confidence, energy, and more. This can lead to life feeling like a to-do list or a relentless cycle of fulfilling the constant demands made on you. It can happen to the best of us when asking and receiving are experienced as two separate actions. I bet you are looking forward to doing things differently.

What I have learned is that we often perceive asking as a sign of distress,

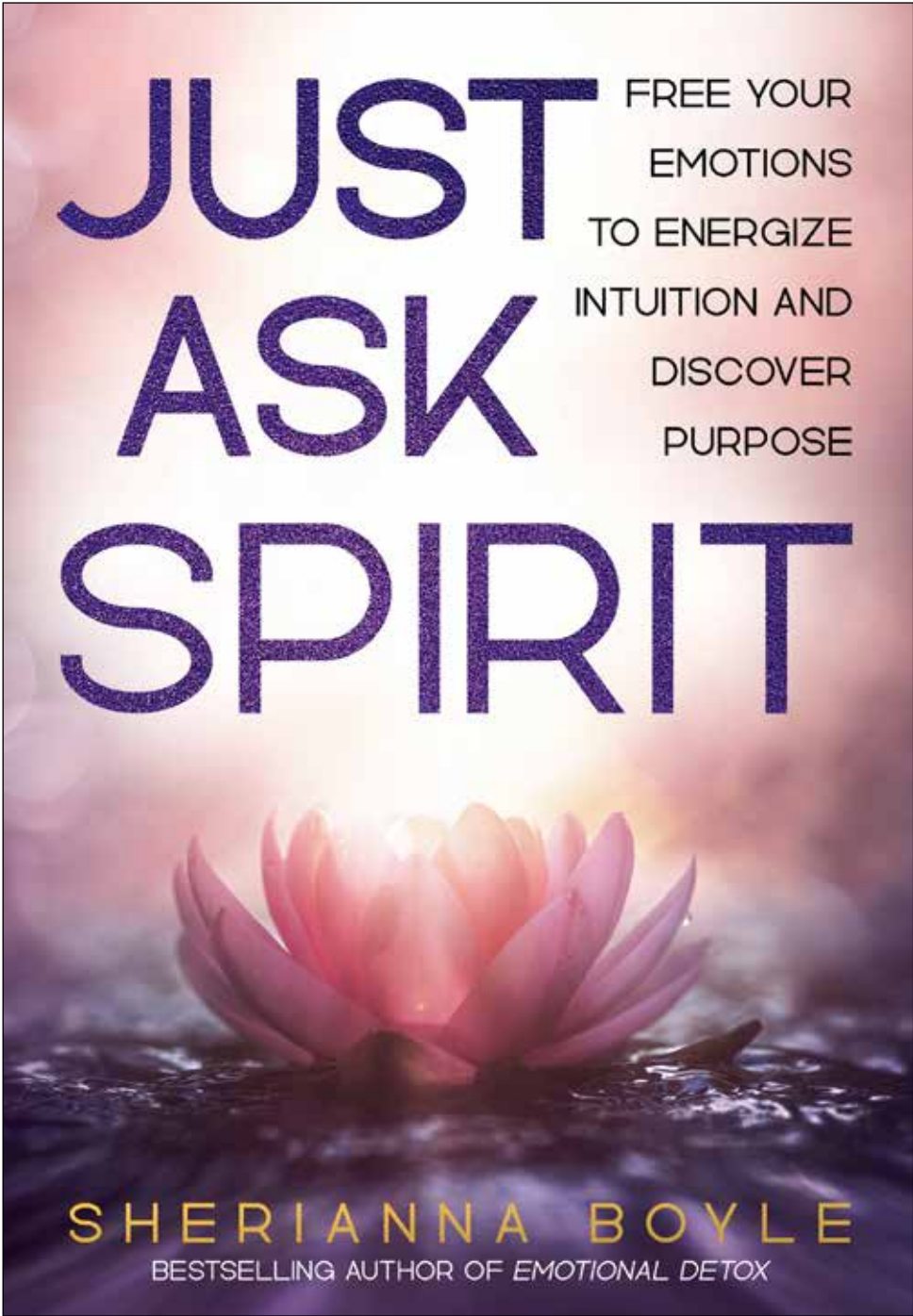
failure, weakness, neediness, or overwhelm. The challenge is that these types of responses cause us to suppress our emotions rather than process them. When they are allowed to stagnate in this way it harms not only our psychological wellbeing but our physical as well.

I'm sure you are wondering by now how this level of asking can be possible. How do you transform the barrage of life's demands into developing resilience, strength, peace, and harmony? All I can say is, as asking and receiving become one, so do emotions and your Spirit.

*Excerpted with permission from the Preface of **Just Ask Spirit: Free Your Emotions to Energize Intuition & Discover Purpose** ✨*

*Sherianna Boyle is the author of eleven books, including her latest, **Just Ask Spirit**.*

*She is the founder of Emotional Detox Coaching®, creator of the Cleanse Method®, and author of the Emotional Detox book series. Her book **Energy in Action: The Power of Emotions & Intuition to Cultivate Peace and Freedom** is transforming the way we think about and approach manifesting. Her book, **The Four Gifts of Anxiety**, was endorsed by the National Association of Mental Health. She has been featured in over ninety media articles and voted a top 25 Coach. She is a presenter for PESI® Behavioral and Mental Health Education, Kripalu Health & Yoga Center, and 1440 Multiversity University. Sherianna speaks to individuals, corporations, and organizations about the importance of emotional processing. She is also host of Just Ask Spirit Radio Show, works part time as an adjunct Professor of Psychology, and has been teaching yoga for twenty-years. Find a more detailed bio on her website: <https://sheriannaboyle.com/>*



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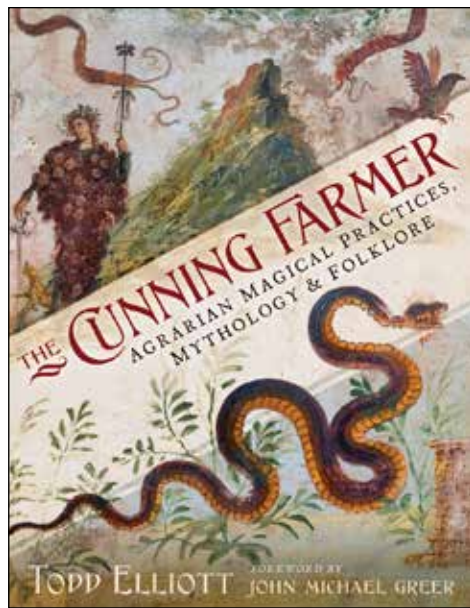
BOOKS

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by Todd Elliot

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What is the real secret to abundant crops and thriving plants? Todd Elliot is a farmer and researcher who brings hands-on experience and historical insight to demonstrate how forgotten traditions behind successful farming can still be used today. In *The Cunning Farmer*, he reveals how renewing our relationship with the land through forgotten traditions that draw on ancient folklore, such as land-spirit work to protect crops, heal herds, plant magic and prayer, can rebuild the sacred partnership with the living landscape and increase fertility. Magic and farming, in the minds of ancient people, were not separate realms of life. Woven inextricably into the way people lived, through libations, prayers, hymns, dances, sacrifices, and rituals, ancient farmers connected to the sacred forces, the gods, nature spirits, and ancestors, to make the crops grow, keep the herds healthy, keep the weather favorable, and release energies of fertility. This book explores folk magic traditions of North America and Western Europe, and draws on Western esoterism, Taoist principles, alchemy, Kabbalah, Reiki, and shamanism to show how to use practical, nature-based magic, just like our ancestors, for more abundant gardening and farming. Working with earth and moon energies, plant magic and forest deities, and ritual, Todd teaches us how to

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- *True Lemon® Curb* your cravings™ responds to a pressing need for appetite control solutions that are science-informed and trustworthy. *True Lemon Curb* helps support those seeking weight loss or weight maintenance, including GLP-1 protocols or post-protocol, and looking for help with hunger without high stimulants or medication. Available in three delicious flavors: Strawberry Fusion, Blueberry Fusion, Peach Fusion (\$18.95/box of 8 packets). The Science: *True Lemon Curb* helps support appetite control, digestive health, balanced hydration and vitality via 5 grams of Prebiotic Fiber per serving and a Proprietary Phyto True™ Curb Blend (with chlorogenic acid [from green coffee bean], EGCG, and 30mg of natural caffeine

[from green tea extract] to help curb cravings and support feelings of fullness and digestive health; and 600mg of Balanced Electrolytes to help improve hydration and support cellular absorption.

- *True Lemon® Defend* your wellness™ offers a shift in immune support from reactive (when someone feels sick) to a proactive, year-round healthy habit. *True Lemon Defend* helps support the immune system and cellular health, and promotes balanced hydration and vitality. Three flavors: Citrus Blend, Berry Blend, and Raspberry Lime Blend (\$18.95/box of 12 packets). *True Lemon Defend* contains a Proprietary Phyto True™ Antioxidant Blend with 300mg of plant-based antioxidants from acerola cherries (containing 150mg of Vitamin C, 167% DV), pomegranates, citrus peels and green tea to help support the immune system and healthy cells and 600mg of Balanced Electrolytes to help improve hydration and support cellular absorption.

- *True Lemon Elevate* your potential™ is an alternative to sugary, artificial and crash-producing, high-octane energy drinks. Ideal for wellness-conscious consumers and non-athletes alike, *True Lemon Elevate* offers clean, multi-functional ingredients that helps support energy, focus and clarity, and balanced hydration. Two flavors: Citrus Blast and Berry Blast (\$18.95/box of 12 packets). *True Lemon Elevate* provides no crash, no jitter energy via a Proprietary Phyto True™ Energy & Focus Blend (120 mg of plant-based caffeine from green tea extract, 200mg of L-Theanine, 200mg of GABA and 60mg magnesium to help support sustained focus, mental clarity and overall mood); Vitamin C (100% DV) to energize and support vitality, and 600mg of Balanced Electrolytes to help improve hydration and support cellular absorption.

ALO® Aloe Vera Beverage

www.alodrink.com

Introducing two flavors of 100% not-from-concentrate juices ALO 100% Passion Fruit & Pulp; and ALO 100% Sugarcane & Calamansi, joining ALO 100% Juice flavors Peach, Watermelon, Pineapple, Mango and Lychee, as well as two pulp-free Watermelon varieties. Every one of ALO's 100% not-from-concentrate hand-crafted juices is extracted directly from ripe fruits; never made from concentrate. No added sugar, color, flavors, or preserva-



tives—just pure juice and pulp—available in convenient 10.8 oz aluminum slim cans. ALO Drink's Original line takes natural aloe vera juice and pulp that's harvested on the company's organic farm and combines them with a splash of real fruit juices. ALO Original beverages are all Non-GMO Project Verified, gluten-free, and fat-free. ALO's Original line is available in Exposed (Original with Honey), Allure (Mango & Mangosteen), Comfort (Watermelon & Peach), Crisp (Fuji Apple & Pear), Appeal (Pomelo, Grapefruit, Lemon), Awaken (Wheatgrass), Enrich (Pomegranate & Cranberry), Spring (Mixed Berry), Blush (Strawberry) and Blue (Blueberry). Other brand options include ALO Sparkling, a unique line of all natural sparkling aloe vera infused beverages available in 11.2 oz aluminum slim cans that are made with real fruit juice, no added sugar, and real minced aloe vera pulp.

INFINITY LUBE™ SUPER SPRAY

by Fuel Ox®

www.fuelox.com/



A recipient of both NSF and USDA-certification, rarities in the fuel industry, *Infinity Lube™ Super Spray* is a powerful lubricant, cutting fluid, and penetrant designed for external mechanical systems as well as metal surfaces. Capable of cleaning and degreasing, *Infinity Lube™* is made from a specialty concentrate technology that loosen rust and frozen parts (freeing stuck nuts, bolts, and metal components with ease), provides superior barrier protection including shielding from abrasive contaminants (sand, salt, dirt, and mud, all prevalent during storms), offers Micron-Level Metal Conditioning (smooths and strengthens surfaces to reduce wear and extend equipment life), and gets into tiny spaces like bearings, hinges, and chains to protect from the inside out while staying intact longer than competitors on the market. The Fuel Ox® is an international corporation dedicated to providing fuel consumers with technologically advanced fuel treatments and lubricants while helping them reduce their environmental footprint with bio-based, eco-friendly and almost completely toxin-free products. Registered as Industrial Sustainability Group (ISG) based in New Jersey, The Fuel Ox manufactures fuel additives and lubricants to help improve fuel efficiency, operating life and performance of industrial equipment while reducing maintenance costs, equipment downtime, emissions, and pollutants. Its flagship products are Fuel Ox® with *Combustion Catalyst* and *Infinity Lube™*.

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presented by Judy Kretmar

Free admission, no experience required

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TransmissionMeditation.org
Info: 718-951-7295

Judy Kretmar



RECIPE:

Barley With Spinach, Spring Onions & Garlic

All the ingredients are cooked together in one pan with olive oil — simple, rustic, and delicious. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup pearl barley
- 3 cups water
- 150 grams fresh spinach (approx. 1 cup)
- 4 spring onions, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

STEPS

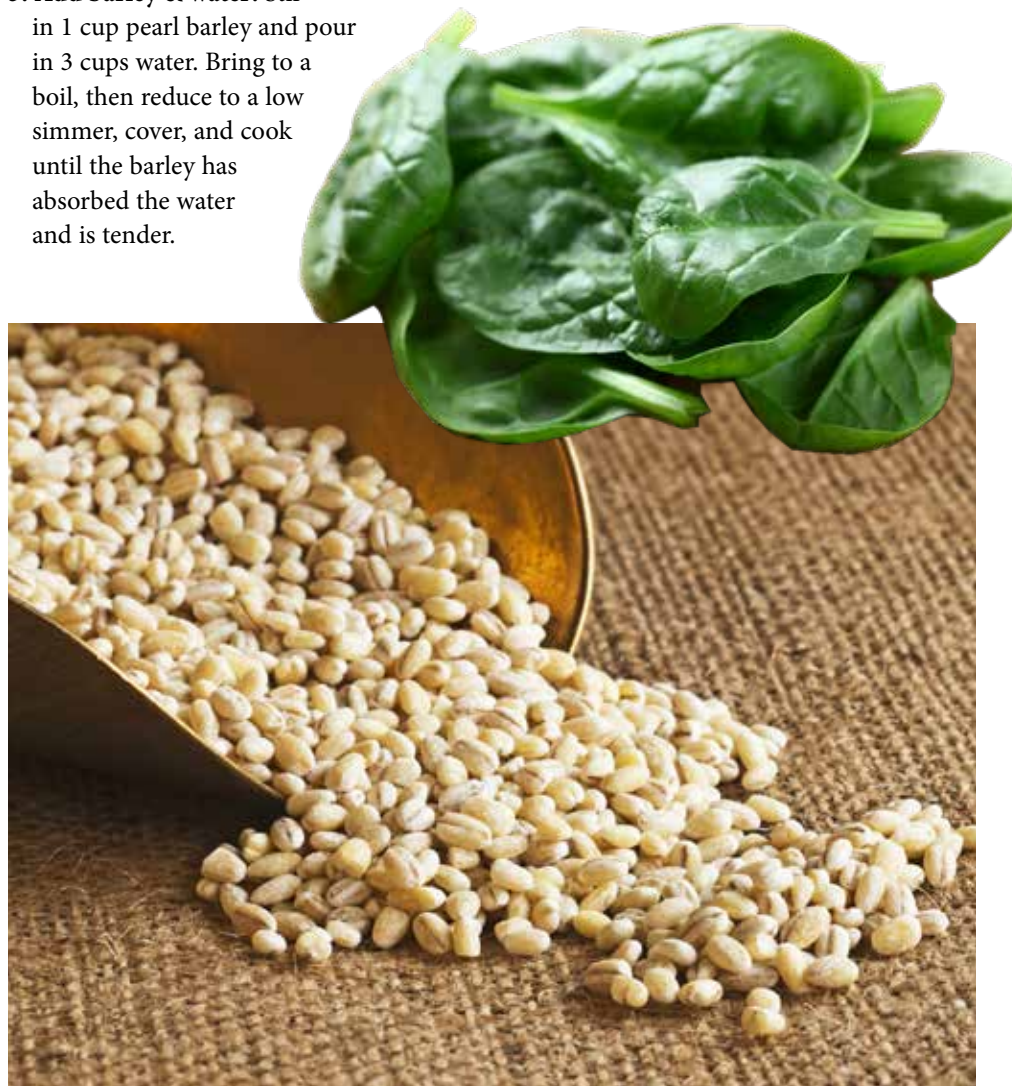
- 1. Heat the oil:** Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large deep pan over medium heat.
- 2. Add garlic & spring onions:** Add 4 garlic cloves, minced and 4 spring onions, sliced, to the pan. Stir and cook until softened and fragrant.
- 3. Add barley & water:** Stir in 1 cup pearl barley and pour in 3 cups water. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a low simmer, cover, and cook until the barley has absorbed the water and is tender.

- 4. Stir in spinach:** Add 150 grams fresh spinach straight into the pan and stir through. Cover for a minute until the spinach wilts into the barley.
- 5. Season & serve:** Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon black pepper. Taste and adjust to your preference; serve straight from the pan.

This recipe reflects our holistic approach to dentistry: supporting healing through daily lifestyle and nutritional choices that protect your smile.

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Batool F. Rizvi, D.D.S., P.C.

strives to keep her patients smiling from the inside out. She believes in a holistic approach to health care. Her gentle touch, excellent listening skills and thorough explanations keep her patients educated, happy and healthy.

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- **Metal Free Zirconia Implant Placement**
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Norman Bressack, D.D.S., P.C.

has been dedicated to practicing healthy holistic dentistry for over 35 years. He is not only a mercury free dentist but also a “mercury safe” dentist, meaning that he uses safe removal protocols to ensure the protection of the patient, staff, environment and himself from exposure to mercury during the amalgam removal process.

Dr. Bressack's mission is to treat his patients in the most healthy, caring, compassionate, and holistic way possible. Most importantly, he wants his patients to feel warm, welcome and happier when they leave than when they came in.

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- **Member of the International Association of Mercury-free Dentists**
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