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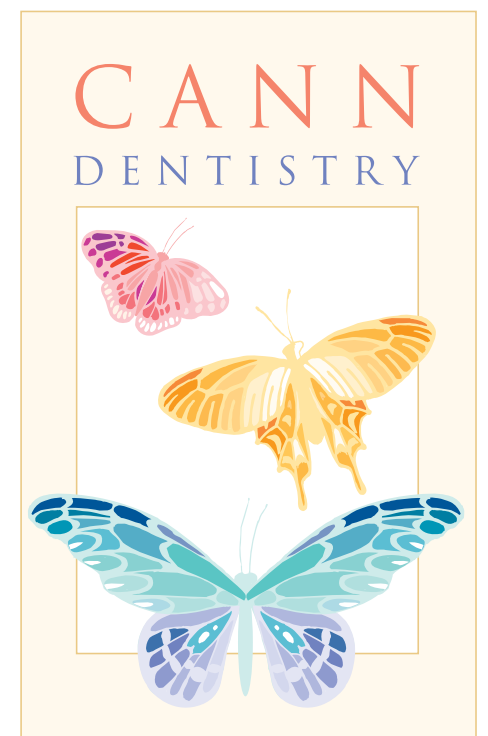
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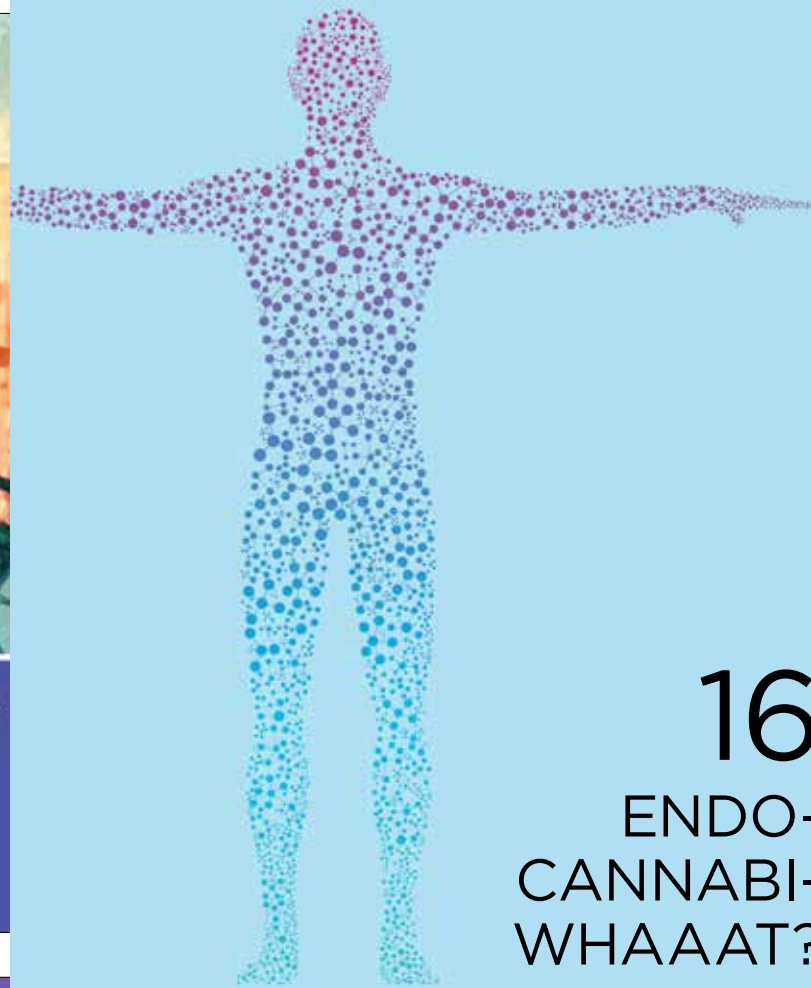


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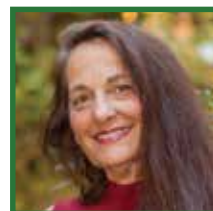
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SEE OUR FIRST VIDEO ARTICLE!



Staff reporter Noah Chen has produced our first video article! Entitled *Lockdown Prompts Inner Reflection*, Noah interviews ...three healers—Linda Minnick, Ursula Lentine and Danielle Hall—about what their clients are needing and seeking during this time of coronavirus. bit.ly/lockdown-reflection

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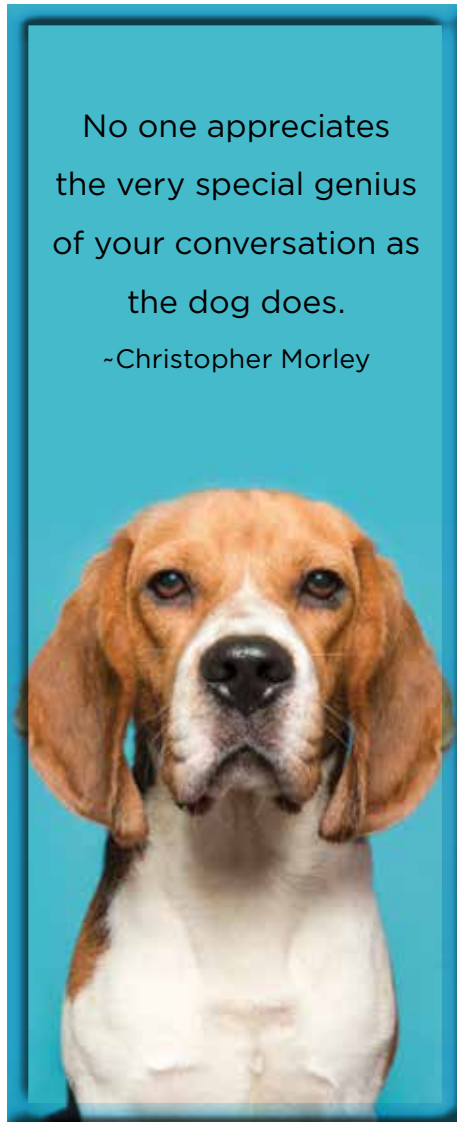
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 -Christopher Morley

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More Online

You may notice something different about this issue's table of contents—we've added a second page! And it's entirely focused on what's available to read online at naAtlanta.com.

The truth is, we've always had new monthly content that only exists online; we just haven't promoted that content—until recently. With the upgrade of our website in February, followed by the explosion of issues presented to us by the pandemic, our shift in resources towards online has accelerated.

First and foremost, we want to make you, our readers, aware of content that doesn't appear in print. We get lots of good material from *Natural Awakenings* Corporate that we don't have enough room for in the print magazine, and we anticipate that local contributions will grow over time, thereby increasing the portion of content that lives exclusively online.

We're also experimenting with developing video articles. In fact, we are pleased to announce our first one: *Lockdown Prompts Inward Reflection* [bit.ly/lockdown-reflection]. While we've reassigned writer Noah Chen to produce more videos, it remains to be seen if this will be a sustainable practice. We are hopeful and optimistic.

Online Community Directory and Calendar

Our new web platform has two more features we hope to nurture into an exceptional value to our readers: the Community Directory and the Calendar.

The Community Directory is the online version of the Community Directory at the back of this magazine; it is akin to the Yellow Pages for businesses and organizations in the conscious eating, natural health and personal evolution spaces. We intend to grow the Directory to the point of being recognized as Atlanta's #1 source for residents to find the practitioners, businesses

and communities they want and need to help support and accelerate their awakenings in hearts, minds, bodies and souls. Please check it out! [bit.ly/naa-directory]

The second feature, the Calendar, hasn't been turned on yet. Aside from the fact that there simply isn't the same volume of events to promote because of the current pandemic, we're also a very small staff, and while we're anxious to introduce that feature, we simply don't have a time frame for it yet.

We fully expect the Community Directory and the Calendar to become robust resources for our readers for the very simple reason that we offer FREE listings in both to solo practitioners, businesses nonprofits, and even governmental agencies.

A Word About Sponsored Content

When you visit naAtlanta.com, you also might notice articles labeled "Sponsored Content."

In fact, we have two types of sponsored content online. The first—and more common—gives local companies the opportunity to choose a department to associate with and sponsor to help promote their brand. For example, Santosha Studio, an Atlanta yoga studio, sponsors our online Yoga Department.

In addition to departmental sponsorship, businesses and organizations can sponsor individual articles and editorial projects. Nuts 'n Berries, for example, sponsored our April listing of farms offering community-supported agriculture programs [bit.ly/CSA-2020].

The second type of sponsored content consists of advertorials, the content that comes directly from advertisers—not our

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

editorial team. The truth is we wouldn't label advertorials as "sponsored content" if we could avoid it, but due to limitations of the web platform itself, we aren't able to replace the phrase "Sponsored Content" with "Advertorial." Thus, in the future, and for transparency's sake, you will see "Advertorial" right after "Sponsored Content." It's not ideal, but it is a simple workaround.

If this discussion strikes you as being "in the weeds," it's because we pride ourselves in adhering to a high level of journalistic ethics, which includes being very clear about where information is coming



The Yoga of Dismantling Racism

Sponsored Content The last several months have illuminated the darkest parts of the racism that ravages our society and laid bare the urgency of widespread change. [Read More »](#)

from. While we want all of our advertisers to succeed, we certainly don't want readers to mistake content that advertisers place for content generated by the writers and editors of *Natural Awakenings*.

Integrity and trust are paramount to the way we do business every day, and we want readers to trust that we will always do our best to publish responsibly. 🌱

Paul Chen has been owner/publisher of *Natural Awakenings Atlanta franchise since January 2017. He is a practicing Buddhist and a founding member of East Lake Commons, a cohousing community.*





FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE AND ANTI-AGING CLINIC Opens in Suwanee

Karen F. Miller, M.D., Rabia Vaughns, PA-C, and Gina Ditta-Donahue, FNP-C, have joined forces to open Elevate, a functional and integrative medical practice and anti-aging clinic in Suwanee. Their mission is to help people suffering with chronic illness to restore health and wellness and to provide natural anti-aging solutions.

Treatment begins with a comprehensive physical assessment, including advanced diagnostic testing, to develop personalized treatment plans for each patient.



Gina Ditta-Donahue, FNP-C, Rabia Vaughns, PA-C and Karen F. Miller, MD, IFMCP. (Photo: Rabia Vaughns)

“So much of chronic illness is lifestyle-based,” explains Vaughns. “We work with individuals as a whole person and leverage lifestyle factors and integrative therapies and supplements to develop a personalized wellness plan that cultivates real and lasting health.”

Therapeutic options include functional medicine evaluations, customized lifestyle planning, supplements, advanced lab testing, compounded medications, anti-aging and skin consultations, micro-channeling, PRP therapy, hair loss restoration, infrared sauna and non-hormonal birth control, among others.

A certified functional medicine provider with a background as an OB-GYN, Miller often works with patients with complex illnesses and is passionate about using the most natural means possible to help women overcome gynecological health conditions.

Vaughns works with patients and focuses on non-invasive pain relief using Calmare Scrambler Therapy for neuropathy, pain caused by cancer and chemotherapy, and more.

Ditta-Donahue offers natural skin rejuvenation and hair growth restoration using compounded medication solutions, platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy, and ProCell microchanneling.

Elevate is located at 4485 Tench Road, Suite 740, in Suwanee. For more information, call 470-266-1380, email admin@ElevateFunctionalMedicine.com or visit ElevateFunctionalMedicine.com.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP Offers Free Week-Long Online Immersion

On August 9 through 15, the Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF), an organization founded by revered yogi and guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, will host its 2020 Self-Realization Fellowship World Convocation, a free, global, online spiritual gathering.

The event encourages spiritual renewal and uplift during these challenging times by providing immersion into Yogananda’s yoga meditation teaching. All sessions will be free, led by SRF monks and nuns, and livestreamed on the organization’s website, Yogananda.org.

The spiritual gathering will offer strength, solace and spiritual guidance through group meditations, united prayer, kirtan and talks on the teachings.

Widely regarded as the father of yoga in the West, Yogananda is the author of *Autobiography of a Yogi* and has introduced millions to the teachings of meditation and Kriya yoga through the SRF. The Convocation is a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Yogananda’s arrival in the West.

The global event is ideal for those who are new to meditation or want to deepen existing practices, according to a press release. It will be a practical way to explore yoga meditation with one of the oldest and most respected yoga organizations in the country and meditate online in real time with like-minded yogis worldwide.

Registration is required to attend. For more information or to register, call 323-225-2471 or visit Yogananda.org/convo2020.



Roberts Releases Black Woman’s Guide

Self-actualization coach, yoga and meditation instructor and founder of Black Vegan Life™, Trish Ahjel Roberts released her new self-help memoir, *Thinking Outside the Chrysalis: A Black Woman’s Guide to Spreading Her Wings* in July.

“As the world’s attention is drawn inward by the global pandemic, the reality of police brutality pushed people into the streets,” says Roberts. “With all the inner discord caused by this pushing and pulling, many people asked me for help. I’m so grateful I was able to complete this book at a time when it can be so meaningful.”

More than a memoir, the book offers a peek into the lived experiences of a single Black mother in Atlanta interweaved with rich Buddhist and yogic teachings; it is especially relevant at a time when the

world needs both action and patience. Providing an unusually immersive approach, the book includes recommendations and resources for music, guided meditations, affirmations and more.

Author of the novel, *Chocolate Soufflé*, and the e-book, *Black Vegan Life™ Guide to Self-Care*, Roberts is also a frequent contributing writer to *Natural Awakenings of Atlanta*. She offers books, blog posts, coaching, resources and more on her website, HoneyButterflyz.com. Her books are available on Amazon and at HoneyButterflyz.com/books.



In response to the popularity of its Forest Bathing Series, The Dunwoody Nature Center has added an additional session on August 8 from 8:00am to 11:00pm.

Forest bathing is a Japanese form of nature therapy that is designed to connect

people with nature by helping them to fully immerse themselves in their natural surroundings. The practice is said to enhance well-being, reduce stress and restore calm through connection to nature and trees.

The event takes place outdoors, rain or shine, with certified Forest Therapy Guide Robin Hancock, who will lead a 2.5 to 3-hour session at the Nature Center. Hancock received her certification through the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy in 2016 and is the owner of Renewal by Nature.

A recent Series participant shared, “Forest Bathing was a wonderful spiritual experience, more than I could have imagined! I believe in my heart more and more people are seeking a connection with Mother Earth and her bountiful gifts.”

Tickets are \$35 for members of Dunwoody Nature Center and \$45 for nonmembers. The Dunwoody Nature Center is located at 5343 Roberts Drive, Dunwoody. For more information, call 770-394-3322 or visit DunwoodyNature.org.





WHOLE-BODY DENTISTRY

Biological Dentists Get to the Root Causes

by Linda Sechrist

While the majority of individuals may consider oral health as separate from overall health, the mouth and body are very much connected. Until the late 1970s, this was rarely acknowledged outside a circle of dental professionals, physicians and allied researchers involved in organizations such as the International Academy of Biological Dentistry and Medicine, The International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT) and the Holistic Dental Association.

Dentists associated with these groups favor the use of preventive measures, a minimally invasive approach to dentistry and biocompatibility testing for all materials used in oral health procedures. Their individualized methodology and systemic health method of addressing the root causes frequently includes nutrition and lifestyle, providing patients with a less-toxic and safe experience for their overall health.

An important newcomer to this area is the myofunctional treatment system

used in orthodontics for children 5 to 15 years old. Research in this field now points to the real causes for crooked teeth and incorrect jaw development—mouth breathing, tongue thrusting, reverse swallowing and thumb sucking (known as incorrect myofunctional habits), in addition to allergies, asthma and an open-mouth posture.

Early interventions beyond conventional solutions

Jean Marie Nordin, DDS, co-owner of Groton Wellness, in Groton, Massachusetts, added pediatric orthodontics to her practice after learning about early innovative interventions from her mentor, James Bronson, DDS, of Bronson Family Dentistry, in McLean, Virginia. “Our program for children involves a comprehensive evaluation on the first visit. We look at breathing habits, the way their tongue swallows and the function of the muscles. In medicine, we believe that form follows function; therefore, we observe what muscles around

the mouth actually do when the individual swallows. It is really the way you breathe and swallow, as well as how the muscles work, that plays a significant role in where teeth end up and line up,” explains Nordin, who identifies problems in patients between 2 and 5 years old.

“We can start them on a removable Myobrace mouthpiece that can be worn at night and an hour during the day. The mouthpiece begins to change the way the tongue works, waking it up and strengthening it. If a child is born with the physiological problem of a tongue-tie that can’t swallow properly or get up onto the palate, that tongue will never expand the palate like it’s supposed to,” she clarifies.

For chronic mouth-breathers, the face grows long and narrow, which in the long term can cause cardiovascular disease. In the short term, it can cause anxiety, because the nitric oxide receptors located in the nose signal arteries and veins to relax. “A cardiologist knows about this phenomenon,” says Nordin, who notes that the dysfunction can be unwound before a child turns 9.

While early interceptive myofunctional orthodontic treatment methods such as Myobrace appliances have proven effective for children, there’s also good news for adults that suffer from breathing problems which cause sleep apnea, says Nordin, who employs a myofunctional therapist. Orofacial myofunctional therapy is neuromuscular reeducation of the oral facial muscles via a series of exercises that work with the muscles of the lips, tongue, cheeks and other parts of the face.

Early intervention and role modeling

“Parents can begin playing a pivotal role in how their children care for their teeth, as well as how they feel and behave in the dentist’s office, as early as age 1. I encourage every mother to bring their child to an appointment. They can hold the child in their lap so they can watch me caring for mom’s teeth. Generally, by the time they are alone in my chair, they aren’t frightened,” advises Pentti Nupponen, a doctor of dental medicine and owner of the Halifax Center for Holistic & Cosmetic Dentistry, in Halifax, Pennsylvania.

Chris Kammer, a doctor of dental surgery and owner of Gums of Steel Oral Hygiene Transformation, in Middleton, Wisconsin, also suggests early interceptive treatments for young children. “Early treatments with removable appliances which expand the arch in the roof dome, influence bone growth and make room for incoming teeth can be performed by general dentists,” says Kammer, who notes that a proper diet may help prevent crowding of teeth, as well as malocclusion, or misalignment, of upper and lower teeth.

Gum and heart disease

Doctors practicing functional medicine are more likely to refer patients to biological and holistic dentists. Cardiologists are particularly aware of a 2014 *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* study in which researchers looked at individuals with gum and heart disease. Individuals that received adequate care for gum disease had 10 to 40 percent lower cardiovascular care costs than those who didn’t get proper oral care. Another study revealed that gum disease increases an individual’s risk of heart disease by approximately 20 percent. Given such evidence, the American Dental Association and American Heart Association have acknowledged the relationship between the two diseases.

By neglecting important ongoing research regarding new and old dental practices, as well as orthodontics, mainstream media has largely left the public in the dark regarding problems associated with root canals, mercury amalgam fillings and some dental implants.

Root canals, tooth extractions and gum disease

Iveta Iontcheva-Barehmi, owner of Boston Dental Wellness, in Brookline, Massachusetts, takes a holistic and biological approach to dentistry founded on the philosophy that everything within the whole body is connected. “Teeth are related to organs, tissues and glands along the body’s meridians, energy channels through which the life force flows,” says the integrative periodontist, who prefers extracting teeth when necessary and using zirconium implants rather than performing a root canal.

Iontcheva-Barehmi explains, “It’s logical that the connection between the merid-



ians and teeth can indicate an individual’s overall health and wellness. Tooth extractions protect patients from tooth-related disease and systemic infections that can be harmful to overall health. A failing root canal is a chronic abscess around the root of the tooth. It has a direct connection with the bloodstream and disseminates infection through the whole body. This is the reason why holistic dentists recommend extractions.” She believes the best research on this was done by Weston Price, a Canadian dentist and pioneering nutritionist.

Treating gum disease

To treat gum disease, Amparo David, DMD, owner of Dentistry by Dr. David and the founder of the TMJ & Sleep Therapy Center of New England, in Bolton, Massachusetts, refers patients to the periodontist she keeps on staff. “I can tell that a patient has internal inflammation by looking at the gums and tongue. Gum disease has been linked to health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and premature births or low-birth weight babies,” says David, whose preventive and healing suggestions for healthy gums includes chewable oral probiotics, daily coconut oil pulling, consisting of swishing a tablespoon of oil in the mouth for 15 to 20 minutes to reduce harmful bacteria there and on the teeth. She also recommends flossing with an electric toothbrush and a Waterpik. “I suggest adding one or two drops of tea tree oil and iodine to the water in the pick,” notes David, who urges patients to eat less sugar and carbohydrates and more vegetables, proteins and fruits.

“We treat gums with ozone after a deep cleaning because it kills bacteria on contact. Patients maintain healthier gums using ozonated oils twice a day and by using a good toothpaste with no glycerine or fluoride,” says David, who notes that temporomandibular joint (TMJ) problems are tied to sleep disorders. “Many adolescents have TMJ problems, and sometimes experience this after extraction or retraction orthodontics.”

Despite the slow trickle of related information to the public and the lack of acknowledgement by the majority of dental professionals, these new philosophies and biological dental protocols are definitely improving overall health and wellness. According to the IAOMT, a dentist that chooses to put biocompatibility testing first can look forward to practicing effective dentistry while knowing that patients are being provided with the safest experience for their overall health. 🌱

Linda Sechrist is a senior staff writer for Natural Awakenings.

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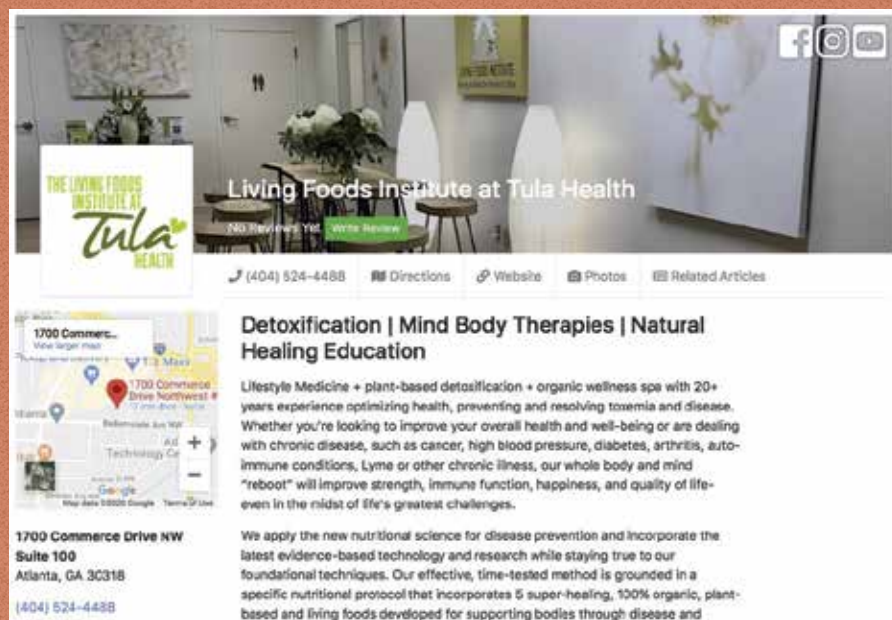
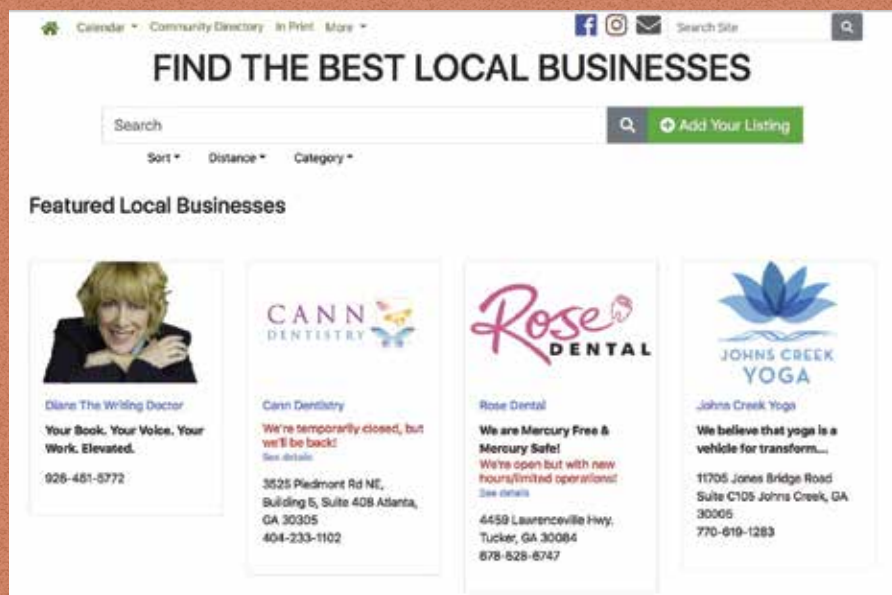
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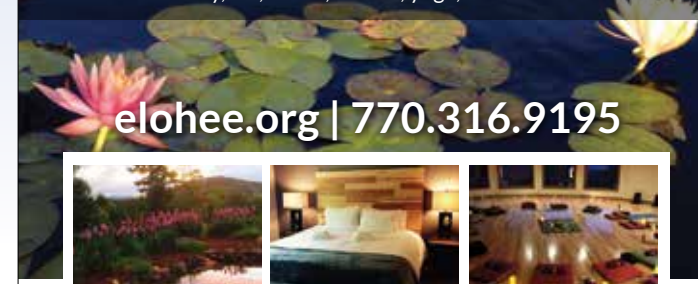
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The Mysterious & Essential

Endocannabinoid System

by Felecia L. Dawson, M.D.

We are being inundated with all things CBD! CBD, or cannabidiol, an ingredient derived from hemp and cannabis, is coming at us in many forms—from oil to infused clothing and linens. While CBD may be relatively new to the market, our bodies know the compound well because CBD interacts with the body's endocannabinoid system (ECS), which is now considered to be one of the most important systems in the body for maintaining our health.

Discovered as recently as the 1990s by researchers who were trying to understand how cannabis affects us, the ECS is believed to be critical in helping the body maintain balance and homeostasis. It is considered a “master regulator” and performs different tasks involving the nervous, immune, hormonal and other systems that contribute to our ability to think, move and digest, fight off infections and cancer and even experience pleasure.

The ECS includes three key components: receptors, which, when stimulated, help to promote homeostasis in the body, reduce pain and curb inflammation; endocannabinoids, which activate the receptors; and enzymes that break down the endocannabinoids after they are used.

In 1998, Professor Vincenzo Di Marzo, a research director at the Institute of Biomolecular Chemistry of the National Research Council (ICB-CNR) in Naples, Italy, summarized the endocannabinoid system as one that helps us “relax, eat, sleep, forget and protect.” Six years later, in 2004, Dr. Ethan Russo hypothesized that many diseases—including chronic fatigue syndrome, lupus, fibromyalgia, cancer, endometriosis, autoimmune disorders, Alzheimer's, migraines, anxiety, depression and even PTSD—are due to inadequate ECS function, for which he coined the term “Clinical Endocannabinoid Deficiency Syndrome.” Research now supports his theory.

Typically, when someone is ill with any of these diseases, at least one component of the ECS is present in abnormal amounts. For example, research has shown that people who have migraines or PTSD have fewer endocannabinoids in their systems than those who do not suffer from those conditions. Rebalancing the ECS with the help of cannabinoids like CBD can reduce pain and inflammation.

12 Ways to Keep Your Endocannabinoid System at Its Best

1. Consume at least 1000mg of Omega-3 fatty acids every day.

Ninety-five percent of Americans are deficient in Omega-3 fatty acids. The body uses Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids to make endocannabinoids, but Omega-3s produce higher-quality endocannabinoids. The average American diet is heavy in Omega-6 fatty acids, however, due to the corn and soybean oils found in so many processed foods. These promote chronic inflammation, the number one cause of most chronic diseases. On the other hand, Omega-3s are anti-inflammatory. To help with autoimmune diseases, 3000mg of Omega-3s are recommended daily. Good sources include wild-caught salmon and sardines, fish oil, algae-derived Omega-3 oil, eggs from pasture-fed chickens, walnuts and hemp seeds or oil.

2. Eat at least five servings of vegetables with spices.

It is important to eat a variety of vegetables containing all the colors of the rainbow. Leafy greens, in particular, contain certain *terpenes*, which are organic compounds that give fruit, vegetables and other plants (including cannabis and hemp) their color and flavor. They also affect our mood and decrease inflammation. Black pepper, oregano, cloves, hops, rosemary and cinnamon are some of the spices that contain these terpenes.


3. Sleep seven to nine hours per night.

The body repairs and detoxifies itself, especially the brain, while we sleep. Inadequate sleep and chronic stress not only interfere with these important functions, they deplete the ECS. Prolonged sleep deprivation is a chronic stressor; sufficient sleep is essential to good health.


4. Move your body at least 150 minutes per week.

Some combination of aerobic, strength training and flexibility exercises is best for long-term wellness. Exercise that you enjoy

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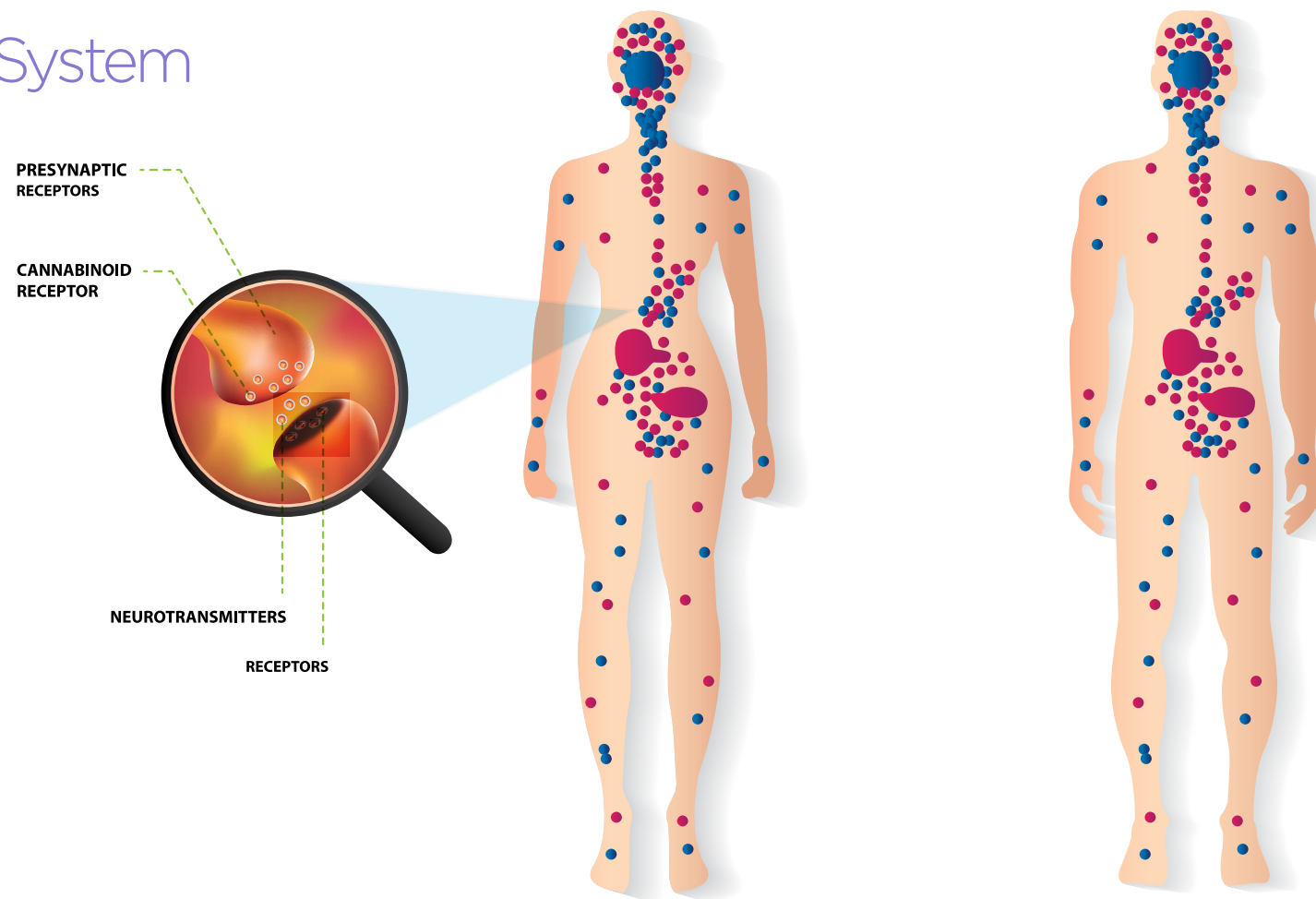
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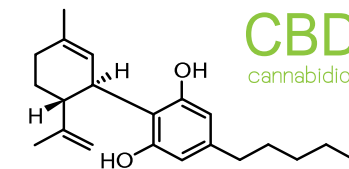
The Human Endocannabinoid System

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) consists of numerous cannabinoid receptors that are endogenous to the mammalian brain, and play a pivotal role in physiological processes such as mood, memory, pain and appetite.



CB1 receptors are primarily found in the brain and central nervous system, and to a lesser extent in other tissues.

CB2 receptors are mostly in the peripheral organs especially cells associated with the immune system.



CBD suppresses the breakdown of anandamide, a naturally occurring cannabinoids in the body that is responsible for activating the CB1 and CB2 receptors.

stimulates the production of endocannabinoids causing “the runner’s high.”

5. Manage your stress.

Again, chronic stress tears down the ECS. Beginning your day with a meditative practice like reading an inspiring book, having a cup of tea, taking a morning walk in nature or deep breathing can make a difference. Meditation is particularly beneficial because deep breathing from the belly moves the diaphragm and vagus nerve, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting rest and repair. Doing something physical when stressed is the quickest way to release tension, so get up, take a walk, do some jumping jacks or squeeze a ball to get moving.

6. Limit alcohol and caffeine intake.

Chronic, excessive intake of alcohol or

caffeine is a physiological stressor that tears down the ECS. Baseline endocannabinoid levels and CB1 receptor function decline over time.

7. Consider electroacupuncture.

Studies show that electroacupuncture increases endocannabinoid levels in the skin.

8. Consider bodywork.

Both osteopathic manipulation and massage can increase endocannabinoid levels in the skin.

9. Eat organically or at least avoid the “dirty dozen.”

Monsanto, now owned by Bayer, is facing multiple lawsuits claiming its pesticide, Roundup, causes cancer. Some pesticides also disable CB1 receptors. More and more research is showing that pesticides, artificial

preservatives, dyes and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are at the root of many chronic diseases and cancer. If you consume animal flesh or fish, be sure they are free-range and wild-caught, respectively. The higher up on the food chain, the more concentrated the toxins. Additionally, eat only organically-grown produce and avoid the “Dirty Dozen”—the Environmental Working Group’s annual list of non-organic foods that contain the most pesticides. For 2020, that list includes strawberries, spinach, kale, nectarines, apples, grapes, peaches, cherries, pears, tomatoes, celery and potatoes.

10. Avoid plastic and tin food containers.

Phthalates, chemicals frequently found in plastic and tin storage containers, block cannabinoid receptors. It’s essential to avoid

food cooked or heated in plastic. Glass or stainless steel food containers are safer.

11. Socialize, play and sing!

We know we feel better and stress disappears when we play. We also know that people with strong social bonds—especially in-person connections—tend to be healthier. Studies with rats show that those who are socially isolated have fewer cannabinoid receptors, while those who play and exhibit grooming behaviors have increased ECS tone. In addition, a small study of postmenopausal women recruited from a choir demonstrated increased endocannabinoid levels after singing. The key is to do what brings you joy.

12. Supplement with phytocannabinoids (medical cannabis or CBD) that have been tested by an independent

third-party lab. If you were born with or have acquired CEDS, or if you experience any of the conditions listed at the top of this article, you might benefit from medical cannabis or CBD. Supplementation may help overcome inadequate amounts of endocannabinoids, enzymes or underactive receptors of the ECS. ♡



Dr. Felecia Dawson, M.D. is a medical cannabis advocate, educator and consultant based in Atlanta. She has board certifications in obstetrics, gynecology and integrative medicine and offers online educational consultations. Visit DoctorFelecia.com

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The Hidden Connection Between Gout and the Current Pandemic

by Dr. Mike Greenberg



This article originally appeared in the peer-reviewed Journal of Clinical & Experimental Orthopedics in June 2020.

Among the myriad changes COVID-19 has brought to our world in the past few months, one is a renewed interest in Plaquenil (hydroxychloroquine), an antimalarial drug commonly prescribed for Lupus and Rheumatoid Arthritis. In the often heated debate swirling around Plaquenil's potential efficacy to treat COVID-19, several critical questions have emerged: What is the connection between two auto-immune diseases and the super-contagious novel coronavirus that has never been seen before? What is the connection, if any, between malaria and the SARS-CoV-2? And, perhaps most puzzlingly, why does malaria medication help Lupus and Rheumatoid Arthritis but none of the one hundred other auto-immune disorders like MS, Sjogren's syndrome, and Celiac disease?

I first learned about the mysterious ties between malaria medication and seemingly unrelated conditions back in the 1990s when I was practicing in Los Angeles. One of my patients, a Korean War Veteran and Hollywood stuntman, had degenerative arthritis of the spine, which I treated with gentle spinal care techniques. He also complained of chronic knee pain resulting from an injury. I tried electrical stimulation and ultrasound treatments, neither of which had any effect. My disappointment turned to surprise when, on his next appointment, he told me that his knee was better now that he was taking an antimalarial drug prescribed by his primary doctor. Now completely flummoxed, I asked if he had caught

malaria in Korea. He had not. His doctor mentioned that he sometimes got results for arthritis with the malaria drug, and my patient decided to give it a try. I was impressed.

Around that time, my mother-in-law visited us from Dusseldorf, Germany. She gave me a few magazines she had purchased prior to boarding her flight. As I flipped through *Der Spiegel*, an article about an archeological dig in Pompeii caught my eye. In examining the remains from the famous 74 AD volcanic explosion, scientists discovered that most of the victims' bodies contained the malaria parasite. I didn't remember hearing about that when I studied the Roman Empire in college! Was it possible that these Romans were all carriers of the mosquito-transmitted parasite? Was this an epigenetic expression?

I was reminded of this mysterious connection in 2011, when I was treating arthritic patients by eliminating food allergies, specifically those related to nightshade vegetables like peppers, tomatoes, and eggplant. I often found evidence of a generic hidden parasite and couldn't help but think of the malaria found in those bodies from Pompeii. A few years later in 2014, I was treating patients with gout and found that my treatment for nightshade allergies was not effective; this, despite that fact that gout is a form of arthritis. I tried treating for malaria naturally, without medication, and they responded. How that is accomplished is beyond the scope of this article; but clearly, malaria was present, (perhaps in epigenetic form) somewhere in their bodies. Unfortunately, malaria in its current form remains a health crisis.

In 2017, there were an estimated 219 million new cases of malaria in 87 countries. Approximately 500,000 people worldwide, primarily in Africa, die each year from malaria, even though there is a malaria vaccine.

Gout is also an ancient disease, dating back to Egyptian times, around 2500 BC, and possibly even earlier. In the fifth century BC, Hippocrates referred to it as "the unwalkable disease" due to the telltale swollen big toe. Later on, it was called the "disease of Kings," most likely because the rulers overindulged in meat and drink. As it turns out, this was an astute observation. We now know that dietary causes account for about 15% of gout, specifically a strong association with the consumption of alcohol, corn syrup-sweetened drinks, and red meat. Part of the clinical picture are foods high in purines, such as dried anchovies, shrimp, dried mushrooms, and beer, which yield high amounts of uric acid. In recent decades, gout has become increasingly more common, with approximately 9 million people diagnosed in the U.S. alone. This is believed to be due to increasing risk factors in the population, such as insulin resistance, longer life expectancy, and processed food in the diet. People who are lactose intolerant seem to experience some joint pain; other triggers include trauma and surgery. Males are affected more often.

Genetics also plays a role in gout, due to their connection with uric acid. Moreover, rare genetic disorders such as Lesch-Nyhan and medullary cystic kidney disease are complicated by gout. That said, it is clear that neither genetics nor diet are solely responsible for gout.

Gout commonly occurs in combination with other medical problems; indeed, conditions such as metabolic syndrome, obesity, hypertension, and abnormal lipid levels occur in nearly 70% of cases. Gout also complicates other disorders such as kidney failure, solid organ transplants,

and polycythemia. Overweight increases male risk of gout by threefold. Chronic lead exposure and lead-contaminated alcohol are also risk factors for gout, due to the harmful effect of lead on kidney function.

Because of the combinations of factors involved with gout, doctors disagree on the course length of medications. Short-term treatment may not be enough to prevent further complications, while long-term use of gout medication involves many side-effects. There is an

ongoing debate around which strategy is safer and more effective.

This brings us back to COVID-19. What is the connection between the lockdown virus and the disease-modifying, anti-rheumatic and antimalarial drug? We don't know. And in the absence of conclusive evidence it has certainly received its share of positive and negative press. One hypothesis is that Plaquenil allows more zinc to enter cells, providing an added boost to the immune system to fight off viruses. Some patients responded well to the medication, while others have not. Some patients have developed heart abnormalities as a result of taking it.

Without millions of dollars, it is impossible to approach these questions in a scientific manner. Yet, that does not preclude us from researching the

malaria-immunity connection. Results with my gout patients, although anecdotal, should certainly give us pause to think.

There is also the positive press Plaquenil does get for Lupus and Rheumatoid Arthritis; both of which may be linked by a herpes virus. My brain is tickled by the malaria (parasite) viral connection. It seems entirely possible that malaria is very common, and even hidden in our genome, or collective heredity, perhaps in the "junk DNA."

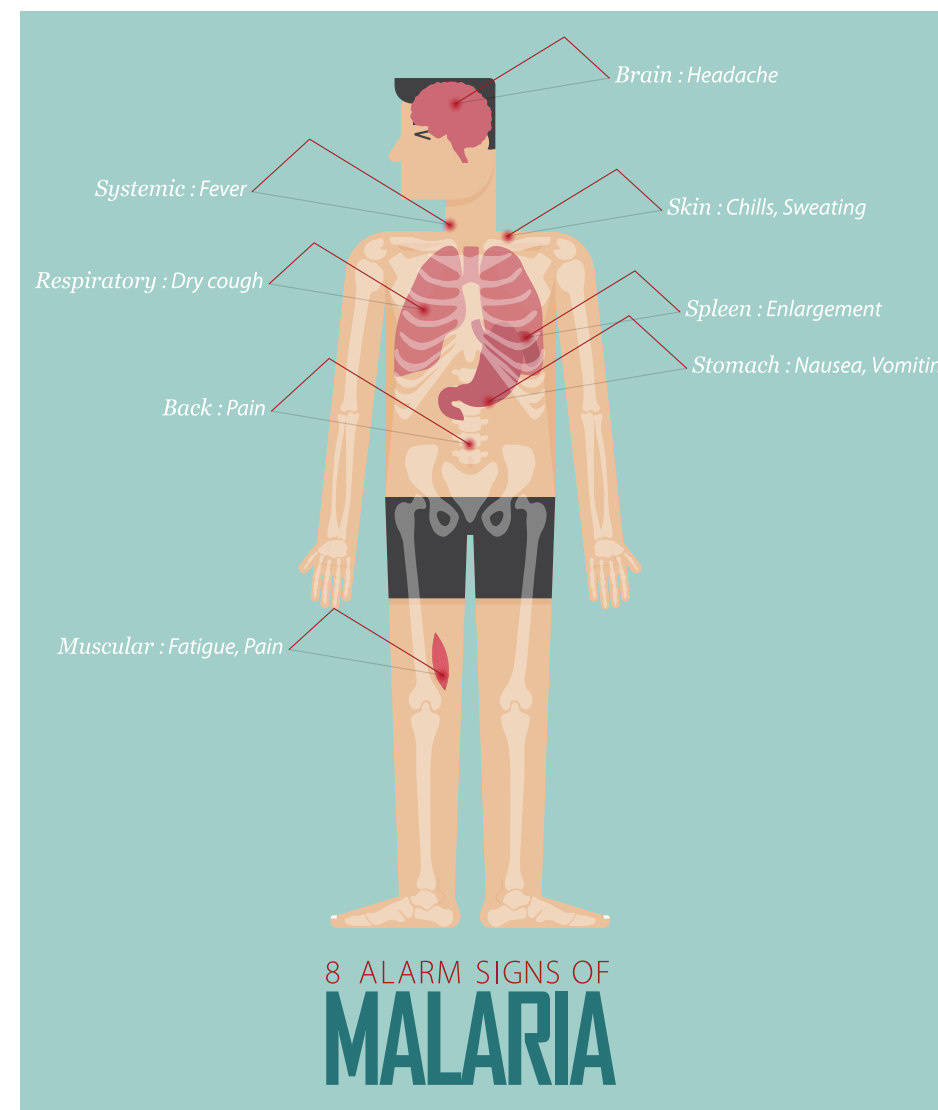
Based on my experience and research, I contend that this is the case. I also believe that the malaria parasite causes gout. Uric acid remains the primary marker for diagnosing gout; yet, while abnormally high levels of uric acid is the classic feature of the condition, nearly half the time gout occurs without hyperuricemia, and most people with raised uric acid levels never develop gout. Thus, the diagnostic utility of measuring uric acid levels is limited.

Current medications used to treat gout include; Allopurinol, which reduces uric acid production; Colchicine, which reduces inflammation; Indomethacin, a strong NSAID pain reliever; and Lesinurad, which helps the body get rid of uric acid when urinating.

In conclusion, it is my humble opinion that the pharmaceutical industry could improve their treatment of gout by addressing the underlying cause rather than just the symptoms.



Written by "Dr. Mike" Greenberg, a holistic chiropractor. For 20 years in Los Angeles, "Dr. Mike" treated many celebrities, pro athletes, and CEOs. He has been a participating healthcare provider in 4 Olympic Games, helping athletes to win gold and break world records. Dr. Mike has toured the country treating colleagues. He has patented a multi-vitamin formula for optimal absorption of nutrients. His book, Keep Your Eyes on Attracting Love is available on Amazon. Dr. Mike and his wife Andrea decided to raise their two children in Atlanta. In 2015, he was selected as a top holistic doctor in the state of Georgia. You can reach Dr. Mike at Advanced Medical & Chiropractic Services by calling (470)-799-2384.



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NATURAL PET



COOL TREATS FOR CATS AND DOGS

by Tonya Wilhelm

Spending quality time with our pets is always a win, especially if it's in the kitchen. Pet treats can be more than tasty; if we use the right ingredients, they can be downright nutritional. Stop at a favorite local health store to pick up the ingredients to prepare these easy and cool pet treats.

Berry Delicious

Basil isn't just a culinary herb—it improves digestion, delivers anti-inflammatory properties and antioxidants, strengthens the immune system and helps to detoxify the liver. It's perfect for this summertime frozen snack.

Blueberries aren't the only healthy berries. Blackberries are full of vitamin C, high in fiber, manganese and antioxidants, are a good source of vitamin K and offer antibacterial and anti-inflammatory attributes. Coconut oil provides vitamins and minerals, is antibacterial, antiviral and has antifungal properties, making it a good choice for yeasty dogs. It also aids in digestion, although too much of a good thing can cause diarrhea. Berries are a great treat for pets. Raspberries

contain quercetin, a naturally occurring flavonoid that reduces inflammation.

Yields: Depends on size of molds

1 cup coconut oil
½ cup blackberries
½ cup raspberries
1 Tbsp basil leaves

Place the coconut oil in a pan over low heat. Stir until melted and set aside. Place the blackberries, raspberries and basil leaves into a mixer and blend.

Add the melted coconut oil into the mixer and blend ingredients together.

Place a silicone ice cube mold on a cookie sheet for support. The smaller the cavities, the better.

Pour the mix into the molds and place in the freezer.

Once frozen, pop out treats and store in a glass container in the freezer.

Serve one frozen treat to each pet every few days.

photos courtesy of RaisingYourPetsNaturally.com



Sardines and Milk

This frozen pet treat will delight both dogs and cats. Not only will they enjoy this treat, but it offers a powerhouse of nutrition. Sardines provide pets with healthy fats such as eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), otherwise known as omega-3 fatty acids. They also provide vitamin D₃, B₁₂, coenzyme Q₁₀ and amino acids. Not bad for a small fish.

Cow's milk for pets is pretty much a no-no. They do not tolerate its high level of alpha-s1-casein protein. Goat's milk, on the other hand, contains extremely low to no amounts of this protein, and so allows better absorption of the nutrients. Goat's milk also supplies essential nutrients such as iron, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, vitamin B₅ and A, as well as healthy fats, enzymes and minerals, making it a good choice for the liquid component in this frozen treat.

Yields: Depends on size of molds

1 can (3.75 oz) wild-caught sardines
in water
1 cup goat's milk, raw or fermented is best

Place the ingredients into a mixer and blend. Place a silicone ice cube mold on a cookie sheet for support. The smaller the cavities, the better.

Pour the mix into the molds and place in the freezer.

Once frozen, pop out treats and store in a glass container in the freezer.

Serve one frozen treat to each pet every few days.

Cooling and Soothing

Blueberries are quite popular as a healthy fruit for good reason. They are the most antioxidant fruit around. Because they contain natural compounds called anthocyanins,



which are flavonoids, blueberries help protect against cardiovascular disease. They also have high amounts of EPA and DHA, making these little berries quite the superfood.

Carrots offer a great crunch. They also are a fine source of betacarotene, vitamin A, fiber and potassium. Not just a calming herb, lavender is also anti-inflammatory and even aids in digestion. Strawberries are fragrant and tasty, and also provide vitamins C and B₉, magnesium and potassium. These sweet fruits are rich in antioxidants.

Yields: Depends on size of molds

½ cup blueberries
½ cup carrots
½ cup strawberries
1 Tbsp dried lavender

Place the ingredients in a mixer and blend.

Place a silicone ice cube mold on a cookie sheet for support. The smaller the cavities, the better.

Pour the mix into the molds and place in the freezer.

Once frozen, pop out treats and store in a glass container in the freezer.

Serve one frozen treat to each pet every few days. 🐾

Tonya Wilhelm is a professional dog trainer, spreading the word about positive methods of preventing and managing behavioral issues with a holistic approach. To connect, visit RaisingYourPetsNaturally.com.

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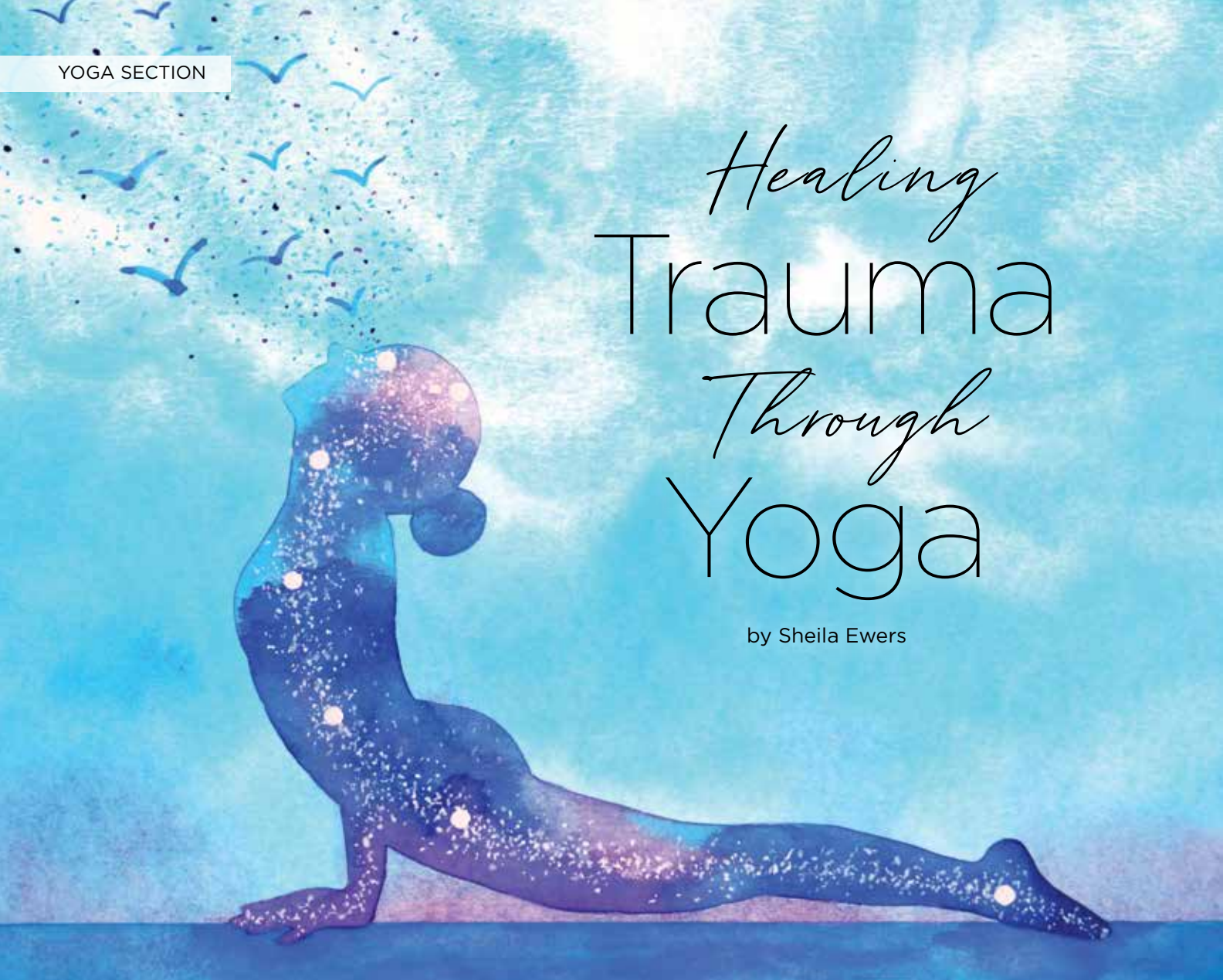
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Healing Trauma Through Yoga

by Sheila Ewers



We have learned that trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain and body.

~ Bessel van der Kolk

Experts estimate that more than 50% of Americans will go through at least one traumatic event in their lives. The event might involve childhood abuse or neglect; war or other forms of violence; physical, emotional or sexual abuse; accidents and natural disasters; grief and loss; the witnessing of acts of violence; medical crisis; cultural and intergenerational suffering and more.

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll conducted in April, nearly half of Americans report that the coronavirus is harming their mental health. That same month, a federal emergency hotline run by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reported nearly a 1000% increase in calls compared to a year ago.

The National Council for Behavioral Health identifies trauma as a risk factor

in nearly all substance abuse, and it finds a direct correlation between trauma and physical health conditions such as diabetes, COPD, heart disease, cancer and high blood pressure.

To combat this mental health crisis, researchers have been turning to approaches that are more innovative and holistic. David Emerson, founder of the Center for Trauma and Embodiment at

the Justice Resource Institute in Brookline, Massachusetts, has been documenting the ways that yoga can help to heal embodied trauma for years. In his book, *Overcoming Trauma through Yoga: Reclaiming the Body*, co-authored with Elizabeth Hopper, Ph.D., he notes that through yoga, “practitioners are able to cultivate the ability to remain present, to notice and tolerate inner experience, and to develop a new relationship with their body. This body-based practice then has a ripple effect on emotional and mental health, on relationships and on one’s experience of living in the world.”

Among their many studies at the Justice Resource Institute, in 2017, Bessel Van der Kolk, psychiatrist, author and leading researcher in the field of trauma, tested the efficacy of a 10-week trauma-sensitive yoga program with a sample of 64 women with chronic, treatment-resistant PTSD. Results indicated that, compared to women who completed women’s health education classes, participants who practiced yoga exhibited significant decreases in tension and depression and were more likely to no longer meet criteria that imparted a PTSD diagnosis. Other test groups have shown similar results.

In these unprecedented times, with a global pandemic, heightened racial tension, political polarization and economic instability, it’s likely that many more people are experiencing some trauma—from mild cases to more severe. Emotional symptoms can include helplessness, sadness, grief, anger, shame, fear or disbelief. Physical symptoms might manifest as trembling, shortness of breath, racing thought, changes in sleep patterns or changes in appetite.

Calming the Mind and Retraining the Body

Traumatic experiences change the way the mind and body manage perceptions. Survivors often get stuck in “fight or flight” mode—the activation of the sympathetic nervous system—causing the release of adrenaline and cortisol and resulting in hyperarousal and hypervigilance.

In contrast, the breath awareness and elongated exhalations emphasized in yoga help to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which calms the mind

and allows the body to regulate heart rate, digestion and rest. Because traumatic experiences are often stored viscerally, working with the body is critical to releasing the tension that reinforces stress.

Yoga helps to retrain the body and rewire the brain to help it feel safe. As practitioners learn to observe what is happening in the mind and body, awareness increases, emotional responses become easier to regulate, and a feeling of safety may begin to return.

Yoga helps to retrain the body and rewire the brain to help it feel safe.

While every student who is healing trauma will respond to yoga in their own way, many report profound shifts beyond reducing anxiety. Students surveyed in studies conducted at the Trauma Institute by the Natural Institute of Health report a variety of benefits, including the newfound ability to sleep without any medication, to talk about what had happened to them, to stop binge eating, to give up drugs or alcohol, to be intimate again, to seek other methods of healing and more.

Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Classes

Not all yoga classes are trauma-sensitive classes, and not all yoga teachers have been trained to navigate trauma. A trauma-sensitive class would include several foundational components, such as the following:

- Inquiry and choice are emphasized. Students are empowered to explore forms that feel comfortable and safe in their bodies. They have choices about how to embody the postures with plenty of modifications and assurance that no form is better than the other; each is just an invitation to feel and explore.

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Self-preservation is the first law of nature.
~Samuel Butler

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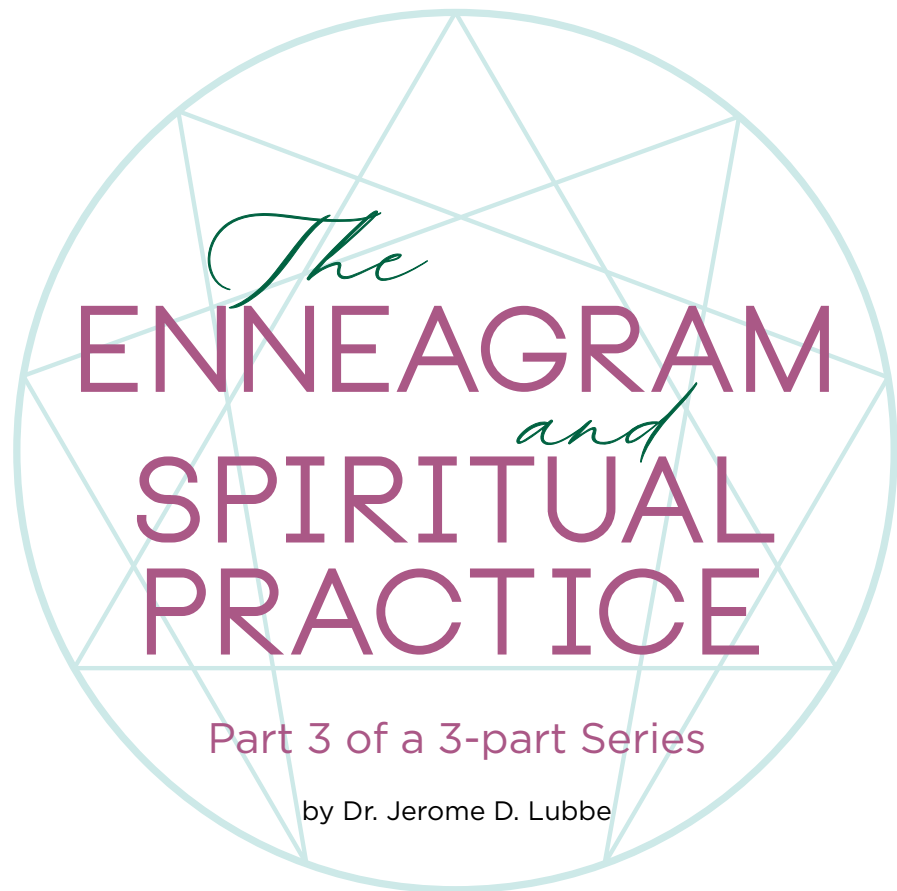
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Part 1 of this series provided a high-level introduction to the Enneagram system and its ability to help expand awareness. Part 2 expanded further on the intelligence centers, types and instincts of the Enneagram—the “continents,” “countries,” and “dialects” within the global map of the Enneagram, respectively.

Many behavioral systems and personality typing models dive deep into the *what* and the *how* of what people do. In contrast, one of the most useful things about the Enneagram is its ability to succinctly and accurately describe what *motivates* and *why* we each engage the world in our unique ways.

Part 3 offers ways to explore one’s “efficiency” within each type of the Enneagram; that is, how easily and naturally one can express each type. It also provides some practical and valuable methods to help one continue to discover more about their unique way of engaging in the world.

Efficiency

As mentioned in Part 2, the question, “What is your number?” is perhaps the most frequently-asked question pertaining to the Enneagram. But the brain-based model helps one recognize that they can see themselves as all nine numbers simultaneously—not just people. Instead, they can consider how efficient they are in each of the nine numbers.

For example, if someone tested as a 1, instead of thinking of themselves as a 1, they might think they have a high efficiency in 1, plus a strong 7 nature as well. Then, they can further inquire into their relationship to the rest of the numbers/natures in the Enneagram. All around the circle can explore the efficiency or inefficiency with which they utilize each number and paint a more holistic picture of their personal neuropsychology.

Efficiency with an Enneagram number means one has an ease of relationship with the nature of that number and so engages it often. It is important to understand this is not an indication of health, but ease of use. Someone who enjoys autonomy is going to have high efficiency in 8, but that doesn’t mean they *are* an 8. They’re multi-faceted. For instance, perhaps they also value clarity and authenticity, so they’re efficient in 5 and 4 natures as well. The analysis should be applied to all nine numbers for a more integrated perspective of the whole.

If someone is inefficient in a number, on the other hand, they will require a significant amount of energy to express that nature. For example, someone who is efficient in 8 but struggles to see the value of serenity will likely be inefficient in 6 and 9. Instead of turning 6 and 9 away as irrelevant, they can instead expand their capacity for greater efficiency.

Thesaurus Exercise

Everyone has experiences that shape the language and trigger associations with the words they use. I remember the first time that I heard that a 2 was known as “the helper” and that a 2 with a 1 wing was known as a “host.” That meant that a 2 not only wanted to help, but when they did it in a goal-oriented way, like a 3, it meant they modeled a person similar to a “host.”

From that, I couldn’t help but conclude that if I wanted to be a “host” who “helped” folks, I should probably work at a chain restaurant. But I didn’t want to be described in that way at all. Of course, that was my ego talking; but, I also understood that I was being triggered by language in a way that felt patronizing. It did not feel life-giving. So, I started searching for words that felt more relevant, connected, inspiring and true to me personally.

That’s how I came up with the Thesaurus Exercise, a process that can eliminate trigger words and create a language that invites positive engagement and support optimal growth. Whether you are brand new to the Enneagram system or an experienced expert, the exercise is both practical and effective. I encourage people to come up with their own set of Enneagram-related words, words that feel more inviting and empowering to them and are more effective at supporting them on their journey of self-discovery.

① Using an online thesaurus, type a word expressing the nature of each number. For example:

8 – Disrupt

9 – Peace

1 – Reform

2 – Nurture

3 – Achieve

4 – Individuality

5 – Investigate

6 – Loyalty

7 – Enthusiasm

② When the list populates with synonyms, notice how many of the words feel unsafe, and how many feel safe. Then, click the word that feels safest or most enjoyable to you.

③ When the list populates again, click the word that feels safest or most enjoyable to you again.

④ Repeat step 3 once more.

⑤ Now review the list. If all or most of the words feel safe and enjoyable to you, you’re done! Because it has positive associations for you, the word at the top of

the page can be integrated or substituted into your personal Enneagram vocabulary instead of, or in addition to, the original “nature” word for that number.

For example, when searching for the word “disrupt,” I might choose “shake,” “move,” and then “act,” as the words that feel the best to me in each step. Then I can replace the word “disrupt” with “act” for the purposes of the Enneagram without changing the nature of the number.

⑥ Repeat this process for each number until you have a lexicon of positive terms. Feel free to use this exercise for any word that stimulates a negative response. As you do this exercise, be sure to only select relevant words that are helpful substitutes for the original nature word. For best results, select words that evoke strong positive responses or that feel personally connected to your lived experience. If necessary, click through the tabs at the top of the lists to select the term that most closely resembles the nature of the original word.

Conclusion

I recommend that people treat the Enneagram as if it were a new language they are

learning. Begin with the basics. Learn the alphabet, the vocabulary, common phrases and sayings. Every language has its own unique structure and use, and the Enneagram is no different. And, just like any language, it has its dialects, accents and nuances, which is why talking to others about it—for example, teachers, mentors, coaches, colleagues and friends—is critical to deeply understanding it. It is not designed to be an exercise in isolation, but rather a profoundly helpful tool for understanding ourselves and others. 🌱



Jerome D. Lubbe DC, DAC-NB, is CEO and founder of Thrive Neuro Health, where he uses functional neurology, neuroplasticity and other tools to improve patient well-being. His book, *The Brain-Based Enneagram*, offers a first-ever neuroscience-based model of the Enneagram. Contact him at info@thriveneuro.com.

Get the whole story! Find Part 1 and 2 of this series at: bit.ly/Enneagram-Part1 and bit.ly/Enneagram-Part2, respectively.



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WISE WORDS

Mustafa Santiago Ali on Healing America Through Social Justice

by Sandra Yeyati

Mustafa Santiago Ali has dedicated his career to fighting for environmental justice, public health, resource equity and political empowerment to uplift the most vulnerable communities in America. For 24 years, he served at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is currently vice president of environmental justice, climate and community revitalization for the National Wildlife Federation. He is a renowned public speaker and has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, VICE TV, Black Entertainment Television, Democracy Now! and other networks.

Does the Black Lives Matter movement feel different than other moments in our history?

Yes. This is a transformational moment. So many different types of folks are coming together in large numbers, not just in our country, but across the planet, saying that change has to happen and we have to eliminate systemic racism and discrimination. They want the 21st century to look like the 21st century, and not something from the 1950s or the 1940s or even the 1960s.

How can we keep the momentum going?

By bringing all kinds of different folks together, building authentic coalitions that are rooted in change, harvesting the energy of this moment and making sure that the right types of legislation—whether at the federal, state, county or local level—are reflective of



what people are asking for. Then we focus on getting engaged in the civic process—voting.

Dr. King said, "I cannot pass legislation to make you love me, but I can pass legislation to stop you from lynching me." When we fast forward that to today, we can pass legislation that addresses social ills, disparities and other egregious

types of behaviors. We can also make sure that our organizations are representative of what America looks like—in our hiring practices and on our boards—and make sure that our philanthropic organizations are moving in the right direction where they are helping to fund and support folks who are doing this transformative work. It really is a holistic set of actions.

How do you remain hopeful in light of America's turbulent history?

I see many artists and entertainers who are getting engaged in an effective way, and they have the ability to reach so many folks. Even more critical are the thousands upon thousands of incredible young leaders who are pushing, willing to put their bodies on the line, creating their own organizations and investing their time to make real change happen.

I see people at the local and state level changing laws that have been entrenched for decades. I see organizations that would not normally see themselves in these types of conversations or actions saying, "You are right. I apologize for not being here sooner,

but we're going to do everything we can now to stand in solidarity with this change that's happening." My hope is anchored in the fact that people are already doing the work and we're seeing fruits from the seeds that people planted sometimes hundreds of years ago, but definitely decades ago.

What kind of justice are you fighting for?

We're fighting for housing, transportation, economic and public health justice, and of course, the environment.

Which vulnerable communities are you fighting for?

I fight for communities of color. I fight for lower-wealth white communities. I fight for indigenous brothers and sisters. And I fight for the planet. I know that disproportionately, these are the communities that are often unseen and unheard, and I know if we can give voice to those communities, then it will benefit everyone. Social justice gives us the opportunity to make America whole—to be stronger and better, as we become anchored in real justice. We have to be focused on moving our most vulnerable communities from surviving to thriving.

What is your contribution to the National Wildlife Federation?

I sat down with President Collin O'Mara to have real conversations about what a 21st-century organization and their 6 million members would look like. I thought that if I could get 10 or 20 percent of those members to embrace environmental justice and to stand in solidarity with folks, then that could help the movement and make real change happen. The National Wildlife Federation board has just approved a full environmental justice analysis of all of its programs, policies, activities and budgeting decisions. No other organization in our country does that, and it sends a clear message to all the other organizations that are out there that these are the types of things you have to do to be a 21st-century organization. ♻️

Sandra Yeyati, J.D., is a freelance writer. Reach her at SandraYeyati@gmail.com.

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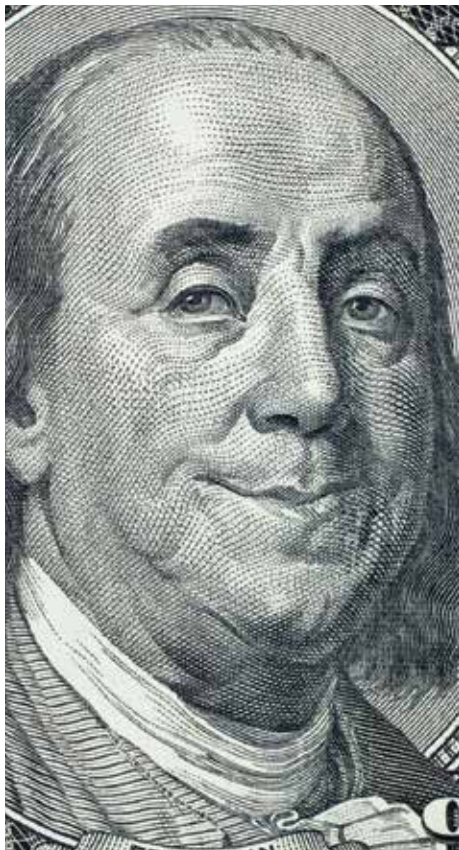
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Publicize your event! This section hosts free and paid listings. Each month, we select a limited number of events — they must have broad appeal and cost no more than \$10 to attend — to list for free. Otherwise, basic listings are \$35 and enhanced listings are \$75.

Submit free listings to calendar@naAtlanta.com and paid listings to ads@naAtlanta.com.

MONDAY, AUGUST 17

Virtual Parks & Greenspace Conference – 8am-2pm. Theme: The Nature of Our City. Whether you live in the city center, the suburbs, or on the countryside, your ability to access and enjoy nature is a vital component for living a happy, healthy life. More info: ParkPride.org.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

Virtual Green Reads Book Club – 6:30-8pm. Delve into essential reads related to land conservation and protection, sustainable growth and stewardship among other environmentally focused subjects. Aug book: *The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature* by J. Drew Lanham. Register, Liza Mueller: LMueller@GAConser-vancy.org. GeorgiaConservancy.org.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25

Creating Transformative Spaces with Plants – 7pm. With Patrick Cullina. Come away with ideas and inspiration to reimagine outdoor spaces at home and in your community with transformation in mind. Free. Atlanta Botanical Garden, 1345 Piedmont Ave NE, Atlanta. Atlantabg.org.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

The Nature Club – 7-9pm. Hummingbirds with Roseanne Guerra. Space limited; registration required. \$10/general, \$5/CNC Members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. 770-992-2055. ChattNatureCenter.org.



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Shamanic Women – Aug. 7. 7-9pm. With Vicki Evans. If you're a woman who has had shamanic training or feels called to the shaman's way of life, please join us at our monthly meetings. Limited to 10 people. \$20. To register, PayPal: [PayPal.me/vickievan-shaeling](https://www.paypal.com/venvickievan-shaeling).

Poetry Open Mic Night – Aug. 14. 7-9pm. With Michael Burke. Join us for an evening of splendor with enchanting and thought-provoking spoken word performances from some of Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore's flourishing community of poets. We encourage poets of all ages. Free.

Wisdom and Healing Through Shamanic Journeys – Aug. 27. 7-8:30pm. With Vicki Evans. Shamanic Journeys are an opportunity to connect with Spirit and your guides for healing and direction. You can use the journeys to ask about all areas of your life, not just the spiritual side. Spirit loves to help you live the best life possible. \$20 To register, PayPal [PayPal.me/vickievanshealing](https://www.paypal.com/venvickievanshealing).

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ONGOING EVENTS

sundays

Online Sunday Experience – 9am, Adult Study; 9:30am, Meditation; 10am, Music; 10:30am, Service. With Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta. slc-atlanta.org. To watch: [Facebook.com/spirituallivingcenteratlanta](https://www.facebook.com/spirituallivingcenteratlanta).

Red Clay Sangha Sunday Morning Service – 9am, meditation; 10:30-11:30am, dharma discussion. Via Zoom. To watch: RedClaySangha.org.

Online Meditation Open House – 10am. A 30-min meditation and a 30-min discussion via Zoom. To watch: Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

One World Spiritual Center Sunday Service – 11am. To watch: OneWorld-SpiritualCenter.net.

Shamanic Journey – 11am. 1st Sun. A virtual healing experience brought to you by Heron House via Zoom. Free; donations accepted. To register: [Tinyurl.com/yctrp49j](https://tinyurl.com/yctrp49j).

Sunday Morning Talks and Discussion – 11am-12pm. With Vedanta Center of Atlanta via Zoom. To watch: VedantaAtlanta.org.

Unity North Online Sunday Service – 11:15am. To watch: UnityNorth.org.

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Guide to Successful Fasting Part 1 – Thursday, Aug 13-27. 2pm. Learn what fasting is all about (and what isn't), various easy techniques to implement fasting, types of fasting, who can and can't fast, and much more. \$10/class. To register: WithLoveAndLight.com.

Reiki Mastership Weekend – Aug 22-23. Become a Reiki Master and teacher with Jamie Butler, the Everyday Medium and Reiki Master. A rare opportunity to take this class from Jamie virtually. Prerequisites: Reiki Levels 1 & 2. To register: WithLoveAndLight.com.

mondays

Meditation & Modern Buddhism – 7:30-8:45pm. Learn how to integrate Buddhist teachings and meditation into daily life so that you can apply a peaceful mind, wisdom and a good heart in every situation. With Gen Kelsang Norden. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.

tuesdays

Heart Jewel Chanted Prayers and Meditation – Mon-Fri, 8-9am. Chanted Buddhist prayers and meditation. Free. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Online Meditation Open House – 7pm. A 30-min meditation and a 30-min discussion via Zoom. To watch: Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

wednesdays

Zoom Check In: Wellness Wednesdays – 10am. Check in with your community during COVID-19 crisis. slc-atlanta.org.

Guided Lunchtime Meditation – 12:15-12:45pm. Treat your mind to a mid-day get-away. Introductory meditation techniques to help you improve your concentration and create mental stillness in your busy day. No meditation experience needed. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Unity North Online Wednesday Evening Experience – 7pm. To watch: UnityNorth.org.

Weekly Wednesday Meditation Class – 7-8:30pm. Open to all levels. Experience true inner peace. With the Venerable Nicholas Thannissaro of the Georgia Meditation Center via Zoom. To register: MeditationCircle.org.

thursdays

Livestream Meditation Fundamentals – 6:30-7:30pm. With Meditation Teacher Melanie Boyd. Suitable for complete beginners. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.

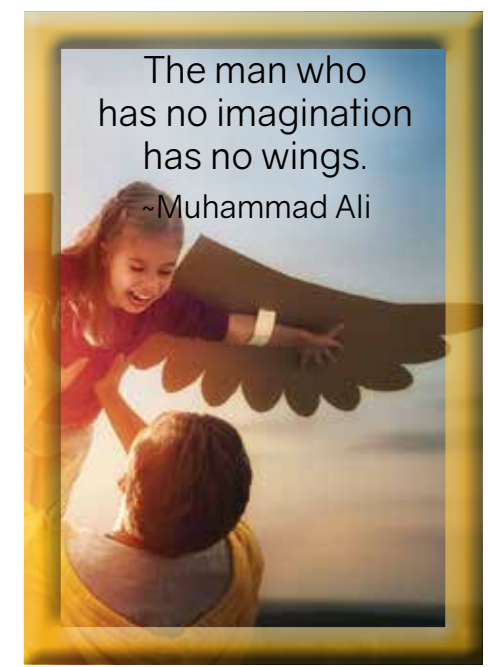
Twin Hearts Meditation – 7pm. This meditation is an act of service. We use divine energy to bless the planet, our loved ones and every part of our life. With Atlanta Pranic Healing Center via Zoom. To watch: AtlPranicHealing.com.

fridays

Prayers for World Peace – 6:30-7:15pm. An opportunity both to simply pray for world peace and to be a part of the solution. Includes a guided meditation, a short teaching and chanted prayers for world peace. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.

saturdays

Free Saturday Meditations – 8-8:30am. To register for livestream: MeditationInGeorgia.org.



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awakenings

WORK = play

by Trish Ahjel Roberts



I worked as a financial advisor for 12 years. I enjoyed the work, but I was consistently underpaid and overstressed, dodging both sexist and racist landmines. After years of pursuing hobbies, creating community and developing my spiritual life, I realized I needed to break out of my shell.

Why was I working so hard toward someone else's dream without being appropriately compensated for my efforts? Why was I so scared all the time?

I was scared of being homeless, feeling embarrassed or losing my moderate social standing and the right to call myself "middle-class." I was scared to lose footing on this wobbly economic and social structure that had become the remains of my American Dream. Something shifted in me. I had to make a decision.

Did I want to live just a little or a lot? Was I doing my best work, or was I just playing it safe?

I realized my work was keeping me from living with the purpose I imagined for my life. I tried to bring my passion for helping others to my role as a financial advisor by focusing on socially responsible investing; but, ultimately, I had to accept the fact I had chosen the wrong work. I'd just had a big birthday, and this couldn't be the apex of my life—doing work and not being appreciated, dreading Mondays, and having phony relationships with co-workers.

I gave myself permission to dream. It was terrifying. I was shocked to realize how long it had been since I had allowed myself to dream. I was so busy staying on the track that was laid out for me, my dream muscle had completely atrophied. Thoughts flooded my mind. I couldn't sleep.

Suppose I quit my job? How would I survive? What was I willing to give up?

I finally decided that I was willing to give everything up. My daughter was going off to college, so the timing was good. If I had to sell my house and couch-surf to pursue my dream, I could do it without dragging her along with me. If I had to move back into my parents' house, I could. I would do what I needed to do, and if I failed, I would die trying. I had been laying the foundation for years. Now was the time to make a move.

Letting go of my house wasn't easy. However, there's not a single possession I have ever owned that is more valuable than my dream of "work equals play." Now, I wake up in the morning with gratitude and purpose. I'm playing, doing work that I would do for free.

Recently, I was working on a major holiday and didn't even realize it. I know part of my disconnect was due to the mental muddiness of quarantine life, but part of it was just from being in "the zone." Most of my adult life has been planned around national holidays and vacation days. Even when I worked autonomously at jobs I enjoyed, I had to follow a schedule and promote a dream that wasn't my own. When I worked for companies that had me sick with the Sunday flu, Mondays were like re-entry from the frying pan back into the fire. Tuesdays were even worse after a long weekend, as if having a glimpse of freedom only intensified the pain.

Now, I am *living* in the zone, completely immersed in my dream of global self-actualization beginning with Black women. From this place of dreaming, of doing good and wanting better, more often than not, I find myself working in the zone. I'm doing work that I don't want to take a vacation from. I can't imagine anything sweeter. ✨



Author, Trish Ahjel Roberts is the founder of HoneyButterflyz Wellness & Transformation. This is an excerpt from her recently released self-help memoir,

Thinking Outside the Chrysalis: A Black Woman's Guide to Spreading Her Wings. Learn more at HoneyButterflyz.com.

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