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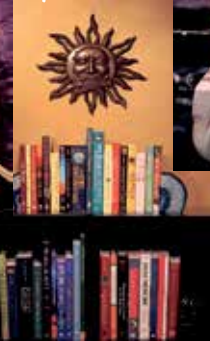
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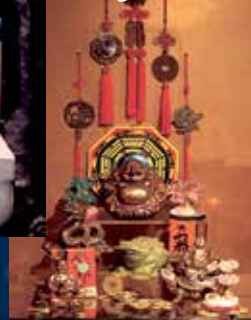
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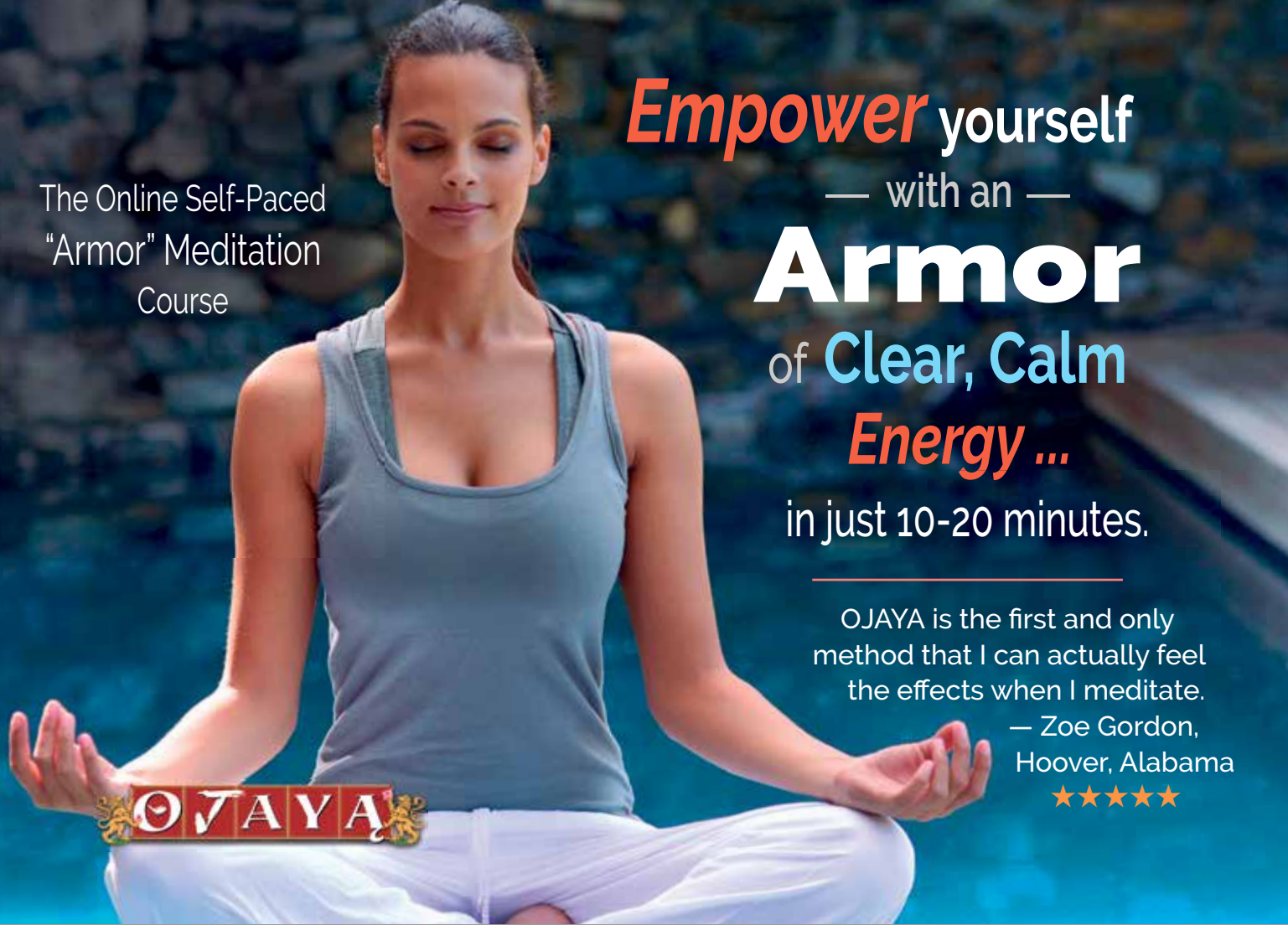
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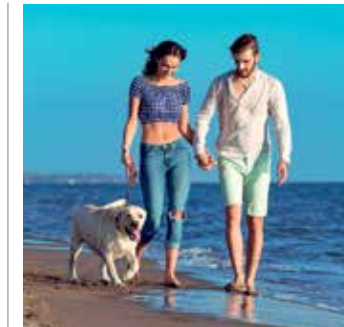
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FROM THE ARCHIVES: SIX YEARS OF YOGA SPECIAL SECTIONS

We're proud to be the only Atlanta magazine publishing yoga content nearly every month, and we're particularly proud that we've now published six annual yoga special sections.

Looking back, we're startled by the first line of the first article of the first special section: "If Texas Senator Ted Cruz is selling yoga mats, then yoga has definitely gone mainstream, even in the South." Don't remember that one!

And we remember learning that many who take yoga teacher training (YTT) have no intention of becoming teachers; they take YTT to deepen their practice. Talk about commitment and dedication... To evolving into better human beings. That's why we publish yoga content (nearly) every month.



YOGA STRETCHES INTO THE SOUTH

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COVER PHOTO CREDIT

The three yogis who are featured in our article, "Yoga Outliers," are Giorgi ("Sava") Savaneli, owner of Mysore Yoga, Amanda Trelvelino, owner of Santosha Studio, and Iyabo ("Iya") Ifafunmilola Kiyaa Faluade, owner of YogaSkills.

Photo credit goes to Jason Dennard; this is his sixth cover shot for us, and he shot the individual photos of Sava, Amanda and Iya that are found in the article. Check him out at jasondennard.com and [@jasondennardphoto](https://www.instagram.com/jasondennardphoto).

Special thanks goes to Sava for allowing us to use his studio as the location for this shoot. It is located at 6050 Sandy Springs Circle in Sandy Springs.



Jason Dennard Photography

Natural Awakenings is a family of 50-plus healthy living magazines celebrating 27 years of providing the communities we serve with the tools and resources we need to lead healthier lives on a healthy planet.

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



YOGA THE CHANGES THAT CORONAVIRUS HAS WROUGHT

It's hard to imagine, but this is our sixth annual yoga special section honoring national yoga month, and September has always been a time for the team at *Natural Awakenings* to take stock of the state of yoga in the ATL.

As we emerge from the last two and a half years of upheaval, we see a considerably altered yoga landscape; many Atlanta studios have closed. While we have not kept count, we know it's a lot. One was particularly painful for me: Decatur Yoga and Pilates. Debra Kelley's second studio, the absolutely beautiful DYP North, was my home studio. While I have never been an all-out devoted yogi, I was finally getting to the point of at least one class a week, on Sunday mornings.

But then, the pandemic.

Despite my general sense that things happen for a reason, it's difficult to reconcile the loss of so many once-thriving centers of yoga—places where much happens beyond the mat. At their best, studios are centers of light; they are not only places where people learn asanas, they are communities of similarly minded individuals dedicated to a practice that, to

put it succinctly, makes them better people. For some yogis, the seven limbs of yoga beyond asanas become more important the further they go; they begin to understand that yoga, at its deepest, is spiritual science. It is a path of heart, of compassion, and it leads to *samadhi*, union with the Divine.

Impermanence: It's the Law

That which is born, dies. Change is guaranteed. But we all know from life experience, personal and societal, that progress is not constant, much less linear; there are times when we regress.

It is easy to believe we are in a period of societal regression, and the closing of so many beloved yoga studios can be seen as just another sign of decay. But the truth is, even while many studios have closed, new ones opened. I believe we've experienced a loss, but it's possible we're taking one step back and two steps forward.

A few clear winners in the yoga world emerged during the pandemic, and they speak to where we were collectively; yin, restorative, and yoga nidra classes seem to have exploded. While the three are different, they share a restful, recupera-

tive sensibility. Given the increased stress bearing down upon us all during COVID's reign, it's no surprise. Similarly, I sense a noticeable uptick in the number of sound baths being offered.

In that way, yoga expands its appeal. As one of the yogis our yoga editor, Mila Burgess, interviewed for the third article in this month's special section believes: The world would be a better, more loving place if everyone practiced yoga.

A Meandering Self Pep Talk

This month's column has been a most difficult one to write simply because I didn't have anything specific to say. My feeling going into this was one of loss for all the wonderful studios that have closed. Just this week I learned of two more upcoming closings. But as I wrap up, I realize I've been trying to stay positive in the face of the closings. Fortunately, there are many things to be positive about: Many studios figured out how to survive; new studios have opened; established remote platforms extend yoga's reach; many yogis have found relief and comfort in restorative, yin, and yoga nidra; and the Dirty South Yoga Fest is planning a spring rebirth.

But most of all, I remember all the benefits yoga has brought to so many, that people have continued and will continue to practice, that new students will discover the yogic path, and that yoga will continue to change the lives of countless people for the better. And then there's the discovery that, according to the 2022 Mindbody Wellness Index, Atlanta is among the top three U.S. cities in terms of the sheer number of people taking yoga classes.

Maybe that fact can help transform our beloved city from the one "too busy to hate" to the one "that knows how to love." 🙏



Publisher of Natural Awakenings Atlanta since 2017, Paul Chen's professional background includes strategic planning, marketing management and qualitative research. He practices Mahayana Buddhism and kriya yoga.

NEW YOGA STUDIO OPENS IN MILTON

Crossroads Yoga opened its doors on August 15 in Milton at 980 Birmingham Road #604, in the “Baby Publix” shopping center. A grand opening is planned for the weekend of November 4 and 5 when Milton mayor Peyton Jamison will attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony and the studio will host an open house.

Crossroads’ introductory offer includes two options: first class free or \$30 for unlimited classes over 30 days.

With 1,000 square feet and one studio, Crossroads is Milton’s only yoga studio. Founder and owner Kim MacPherson says, “Milton has been underserved for too long as far as yoga studios go.” She reported selling studio memberships even before the studio opened.

Crossroads offers 23 classes a week. As its website details: “For those who like to sweat, we have vinyasa, power yoga, yoga sculpt and more. For those seeking calmer classes, we offer slow flow, yin/restorative yoga, gentle yoga, meditative flow and more.”

“I want Crossroads Yoga to help people connect, heal and be inspired,” says MacPherson, who is one of 11 teachers at the studio. She notes that most of her instructors were “trained and certified by the incomparable Kim Saunders,” who will also be teaching her Uplift class on Saturday mornings. Saunders is the founder of Lift Yoga & Body, now owned by Lori Denton, and of the YTT Collective, which will be offering its first yoga teacher training later this month.

For more information, visit Crossroads.yoga.



Kim MacPherson

IAMOH Grand Opening in Covington

IAMOH Herbals customers will now be able to visit the previously online-only store in person to shop for holistic healing products and tools, including wild sea moss, herbs from all over the world and herbal soaps, syrups, bitters, tinctures and infusion blends. The new location is 10156 Carlin Drive in Covington, just minutes from Interstate Highway 20 East.

“It is an absolute dream come true to officially open the doors to IAMOH Herbals and share our vibe with those on the holistic and spiritual path,” says IAMOH founder, Larese Dockery.

The intention of IAMOH—an acronym for “I Am My Own Healer”—is to help people make a lifestyle change through providing education, products and a safe and unique environment.

“One of our immediate family members fell very ill at the hands of conventional medicine,” says Dockery. “But after witnessing the healing power of herbs and food, we knew we had to help share our experience. We have since expanded to importing wild sea moss from St. Lucia and Ireland and offering wholesale options for others to join the movement.”

Three years ago, Dockery committed to maintaining a plant-based diet, deepening her spiritual connection and incorporating the power of herbs into her daily life. “Natural self-care has the ability to transform one’s life physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually,” she says. “We want to provide the tools needed to holistically heal people in our community.”

A grand opening is being planned, but details were not available at press time. IAMOH Herbals will also continue to do popup shops and events around the state.



Larese Dockery

[Photo: David Price Sr. Priceless Photos]

Get updates on social media at [@iamoh_herbals](https://www.instagram.com/iamoh_herbals), visit IAMOHHerbals.com or email Info@iamohHerbals.com.

Peachtree Yoga Adds Qigong to Weekly Lineup



Efrain Brady

Peachtree Yoga in Sandy Springs, Atlanta’s oldest yoga studio, has begun offering a weekly qigong class every Sunday morning from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. The class is taught by Efrain Brady, who has over 20 years of experience teaching qigong.

“One pose is introduced every class, along with the acupuncture point related to the element or meridians that the pose is working on,” says Ilona Moore, owner of Peachtree Yoga, who introduced the class in July. Asked why she added a qigong class to her yoga studio, Moore replied: “It is a natural addition to the yogic path—working with energy and aligning yourself with its flow.”

Brady started teaching qigong in 2000. He also teaches tai chi and is a Traditional Chinese Medicine therapist. While he also offers weekly classes at the Herb Shop and Healing Center in Holly Springs, Peachtree Yoga is the only place in Atlanta that he currently teaches. The class price is \$20.

Moore invited Brady to present a full-day workshop on Traditional Chinese Medicine in May 2022 and plans to hold the workshop again in the coming months.

Peachtree Yoga is located at 6046 Sandy Springs Circle. For more information, visit PeachtreeYoga.com or PathsToIntegration.com.

LAVIDA MASSAGE SANDY SPRINGS RELOCATES

LaVida Massage Sandy Springs has relocated to 6623-C Roswell Road, NE and will be holding a grand reopening event September 18 from noon to 5 p.m.

Special deals will be offered on all products and services on the 18th. For example, chair massages will be discounted by 50 percent that day, so the cost of a 15-minute chair massage will be reduced to \$15. Retail products, including essential oils, diffusers, and CBD salve and oil will be discounted by 20 percent. And anyone that books a massage on the 18th for that day, or for a future date, will receive free add-ons to their massage.

“We are ecstatic to be part of our new Abernathy Square family,” says manager Katie Ruggiero. “It is our goal and passion to reach each and every person in our area to teach them the importance of self-care, self-love and a little ‘me’ time.”

LaVida Massage Sandy Springs is licensed and insured in the state of Georgia and offers specialty massages ranging from relaxation to sports medicine to prenatal.

For more information, email SandySprings.ga@LaVidaMassage.com or call 404-236-7291.



Photos: Kyra Maple

Minnick Releases Book on Awakening

Life coach, PSYCH-K facilitator, speaker and author, Linda Minnick recently released her new book, *A New Day, A New Life: A Personal Journey of Awakening*. A personal account of transformation, the book “is an example of how anyone searching for answers can do so by being open to the Universe,” says Minnick.

This is Minnick’s first solo work; she has co-authored others. In *A New Day*, Minnick takes readers along on her journey from being a child in a large Catholic family in the Midwest, through her search for a personal God, to becoming a teacher and practitioner of transformational thought and living a joyful life. The work takes one from “ordinary physical existence to the extraordinary multi-dimensional world of metaphysics, spirituality, and energy transformation where the only limits are the ones you set for yourself,” according to its publicity.

“The book is about one person’s journey to enlightenment, and it offers encouragement for others to do the same,” says Minnick. “I am very excited that I’ve been able to share my story.

I know there will be people that see themselves in my words, and I hope that it supports them in their own journey, too.”

Minnick has been a life coach for more than 30 years and has been in private practice for 11 years.

A New Day, A New Life: A Personal Journey of Awakening is available on Amazon.com.



CBD MADE EASY EXPANDS DISTRIBUTION



Dr. Ardina Pierre

Atlanta-based cannabidiol (CBD) provider, CBD Made Easy announced a new retail partner in Nature’s Own Herb Shop, which has stores in Hapeville and Buford.

Dr. Ardina Pierre, founder and owner of Nature’s Own Herb Shop, says she will carry the Delta-8 and Delta-9 products offered by CBD Made Easy, the first such products that her stores carry. She says many of her customers suffer from anxiety, depression and even bipolar disorder, and Delta-8 and Delta-9 help with those conditions. She chose CBD Made Easy because the manufacturer does not use solvents in their formulations.

Founded in 2019 by Andrew Strickman, CBD Made Easy manufactures a full line of products including CBD, cannabigerol (CBG), cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THCV) oils, Delta-8 THC products, gummies, topicals and pet CBD formulations. He says that his company’s products contain

no fillers, synthetic ingredients or GMO ingredients, and they use pressed hemp seed oil instead of medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil to “ensure maximum bioavailability and zero digestive tract issues.”

Nature’s Own Herb Shops are located at 628 S Central Avenue in Hapeville and 2590 Hamilton Mill Road, Suite 113, in Buford. They join CBD Made Easy’s other Atlanta distribution partners: Sevananda, Health Unlimited, both Health Nut stores and GIAS Organic.

For more information, visit cbdMadeEasy.com and NaturesOwnHerbs.com.



ADVANCED WELLNESS Hosts Free Open House Extravaganza

Advanced Wellness of Atlanta is hosting a free open house for the public to learn more about them and their variety of holistic services on October 1 from 2 to 5 p.m.

Those who go can meet massage therapists specializing in lymphatic drainage and prenatal and neuromuscular massage, learn about acupuncture and biomagnetic pairing therapy, meet owner and chiropractor Dr. Tedeschi, and learn about chiropractic and nutrition. Guests can even try out a synergistic therapy such as a footbath, light therapy or cymatherapy.

“By opening Advanced Wellness, I intended to create a safe space for like-minded practitioners to come together to help others on their healing journey,” says Tedeschi. “This open house will show just how many resources people have available to support their wellness journey.”

Dairy-free ice cream from Atlanta-based Greatest Of All Pops will be served at the open house, along with champagne, coffee and one-of-a-kind mocktails. Representatives from



Photo: Molly Lindberg

local organizations will be on hand to share about the ways they are helping the Atlanta community.

Advanced Wellness of Atlanta is located at 1549 Clairmont Road, Suite 105, in Decatur. For more information, visit AdvancedWellnessATL.com.

MA’AT AND KYNES LAUNCH Total Wellness Consulting



Dr. Imani Ma’at and James Bernard Kynes [Photo: Victor Coker]

Total Wellness Consulting is a new business offering a variety of wellness products and services—from wellness coaching and relationship counseling to holistic weight loss to water ionizers and air purifiers.

Founded by Dr. Imani Ma’at and James Bernard Kynes, Total Wellness Consulting also launched the video streaming show, “Progressively Yours Health and Wellness.” The duo plan on addressing natural health and wellness topics throughout the month of September.

Dr. Ma’at worked at the CDC for 22 years as a health scientist and has degrees from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Teachers College of Columbia University. She created the workshop “Healthy Haiku,” which integrates her backgrounds in health and teaching. In the workshop, “participants have an opportunity to learn about health issues and create and share their own poetry and prose,” says Ma’at.

Kynes is an ordained minister and a state-licensed marriage and family therapist who has been in practice since 1992.

For more information, visit TotalWellnessConsulting.com. To access recordings of “Progressively Yours Health and Wellness,” visit bit.ly/progressively-yours.

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Food Dehydration Made Easy

BEST WAYS TO PRESERVE THE HARVEST

by Sheila Julson

Drying food is the oldest known method of food preservation. Middle and Far Eastern cultures have used the sun and wind to dry foods since 12,000 B.C., according to the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP). Today, the easy availability of food dehydrators offers a convenient way to preserve the fall harvest.

When done correctly, dehydrating food is a safe method for maintaining its original state, says Tracey Brigman, NCHFP associate director and University of Georgia clinical assistant professor. “Dehydrators remove the water content in foods, resulting in a low risk of bacteria and spoilage.”

Unlike other food preservation methods such as canning or fermenting, dehydrating food does not require lots of special equipment, tools or skill. “Dehydrating food is super easy to do,” says Carole Cancler, the Hawaii-based author of the *Complete Dehydrator Cookbook*. “Drying food is more forgiving. You can’t make a lot of mistakes. Canning, if you do it wrong, can make everyone in your family sick.” The only caveat, Cancler says, is that food not thoroughly dried will get moldy. In humid environments, dehydrated foods must be kept tightly sealed to keep out moisture and prevent mold from forming.

Julia Skinner, founder and director of *Root-Kitchens.com*, an online fermentation and food history company, adds that when foods are dehydrated, they shrink and therefore take up less storage space. “They’re great to pack for traveling or for small kitchens. Dehydrating can also concentrate some flavors, such as with dried tomatoes.”



Almost Anything Can be Dehydrated

Many types of food can be dehydrated, including fruit, veggies, meat, fish, herbs and nuts. “It’s easier to say what can’t be dehydrated,” Cancler says. “The general rule is you don’t want to dehydrate food that has a high fat content, such as fatty meats or avocados.” They go rancid quickly during storage. While there are dehydrated, high-fat foods sold commercially such as cheese, peanut butter and eggs, these are processed using special equipment and techniques that can’t be copied in a home kitchen.

Sliced strawberries, chopped onions or celery are good foods for beginners.

“People tend to throw those foods away a lot. They buy them and don’t use it all up before they spoil. Dehydrate leftover strawberries for snacks and dehydrate vegetables to use in soups or stews,” Cancler suggests.

Getting Started

Starter model home food dehydrators, often found at resale stores or rummage sales, can be purchased for about \$50. Some have adjustable temperature settings for different kinds of foods. When purchased new, most food dehydrators include recipe booklets.

When using a dehydrator, Skinner advises, turn it on to the appropriate setting and lay the food in a single layer on the trays provided, then let the dehydrator run for a few hours. She usually turns food halfway through to prevent sticking.

Cancler says that in some cases an oven can be used to dehydrate food, but it isn’t the most cost-effective method. “I don’t recommend continued use of the oven, because depending on where you live and the type or size of food being dried, drying can take anywhere from eight to 36 hours. Running an electric or gas range for that long uses a lot of energy.”

She says that ideal temperatures are 125 to 135 degrees, but most standard ovens only go as low as 170 degrees, which is too warm to dehydrate fruits or vegetables. “Then you must do wacky things like prop the door open to cool down the oven.” The exception, she says, is jerky: “It must be dried at a higher temperature, and lower-end food dehydrator models don’t get hot enough.”

Sun-drying foods outdoors is risky, Brigman cautions, due to varied weather conditions. In addition, insects and air pollution have to be considered. “For safety reasons, consumers should really purchase a food dehydrator. While it may be a high cost when you begin dehydrating, if you are a serious food preserver, it will save you money in the long term,” she says.

Sheila Julson is a freelance writer and regular contributor to Natural Awakenings magazines throughout the country.

Continued on next page.

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4 cups mango purée (from about 4 large, unripe mangoes)
1 cup clover honey
½ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
¼ tsp ground cloves



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Preheat electric dehydrator to 140° F. Wash and peel mangoes, chop roughly into chunks. Purée in blender until smooth. Pass purée through a food mill or sieve; discard any coarse fiber extracted in food mill. Add honey and spices to the purée and mix thoroughly.

Lightly spray two fruit roll tray liners from an electric dehydrator with vegetable oil cooking spray. Spread mango mixture evenly to ¼-inch thickness on the trays. Position fruit roll liners on dryer trays and place in dehydrator. Dry continuously for about 10 hours. Maintain dehydrator air temperature steadily at 140° F. (Monitor the dehydrator air temperature periodically with a thermometer.)

Remove trays from dehydrator when purée is dry, with no sticky areas (about 10 hours—this will be highly dependent on the relative humidity of the drying room). Test for dryness by touching gently in several places near the center of leather; no indentation should be evident.

Peel leather from trays while still warm. Leave the second tray on the dehydrator while peeling the first leather, or re-warm leathers slightly in the dehydrator if they cool too much prior to peeling. Cut into quarters, lay on a piece of clean parchment paper about 1 to 2 inches longer at each end of the leather and roll into fruit leather rolls. When cool, twist the ends of the parchment paper tightly to close.

Store fruit rolls in an airtight container for short-term storage, up to about 1 month. Leathers should be stored in a cool, dark dry place. For longer storage up to one year, place tightly wrapped rolls in the freezer.

Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation

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Nature's Virus Killer

Copper can stop a virus before it starts

By Doug Cornell

Scientists have discovered a natural way to kill germs fast. Now thousands of people are using it against viruses and bacteria that cause illness.

Colds and many other illnesses start when viruses get in your nose and multiply. If you don't stop them early, they spread and cause misery.

Hundreds of studies confirm copper kills viruses and bacteria almost instantly just by touch.

That's why ancient Greeks and Egyptians used copper to purify water and heal wounds. They didn't know about viruses and bacteria, but now we do.

"The antimicrobial activity of copper is well established." National Institutes of Health.

Scientists say copper's high conductance disrupts the electrical balance in a microbe cell and destroys it in seconds.

The EPA recommended hospitals use copper for touch surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. This cut the spread of MRSA and other illnesses by over half, and saved lives.

The strong scientific evidence gave inventor Doug Cornell an idea. He made a smooth copper probe

with a tip to fit in the bottom of the nostril, where viruses collect.

When he felt a tickle in his nose like a cold about to start, he rubbed the copper gently in his nose for 60



New research: Copper kills viruses in seconds.

seconds.

"It worked!" he exclaimed. "The cold never happened. I used to get 2-3 bad colds every year. Now I use my device whenever I feel a sign I am about to get sick."

He hasn't had a cold in 10 years.

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- "Cold sores gone!"
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- "I am shocked! My sinus cleared, no more headache, no more congestion."
- "Best sleep I've had in years!"

After his first success with it, he asked relatives and friends to try it. They all said it worked, so he patented CopperZap® and put it on the market.

Soon hundreds of people had tried it. 99% said copper worked if they used it right away at the first sign of germs, like a tickle in the nose or a scratchy throat.

Longtime users say they haven't been sick in years. They have less stress, less medical costs, and more time to enjoy life.

Customers report using copper against:

- Colds
- Flu
- Virus variants
- Sinus trouble
- Cold sores
- Fever blisters
- Canker sores
- Strep throat
- Night stuffiness
- Morning congestion
- Nasal drip
- Infected sores
- Infected wounds
- Styes
- Ringworm
- Other microbial threats

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The EPA says copper works just as well when tarnished.

Dr. Bill Keevil led one of the science teams. He placed millions of viruses on a copper surface. "They started to die literally as soon as they touched it."

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GROWING YOUNGER

LONGEVITY STRATEGIES THAT HELP REVERSE THE AGING PROCESS

by Marlaina Donato

Longevity, a human quest through the ages, is now a hot topic among scientific researchers that assert there has never been a better time to maximize our potential for metabolic renewal. Biological age—the state of our health at the cellular level—is in the spotlight, as are the anti-aging benefits of science-supported phytonutrients, cell-rejuvenating foods and safe, non-surgical, stem cell procedures. Functional medicine, with its focus on the biology-based root causes of disease, is also a rising star in the arena of age reversal.

No matter which path we follow to aging vibrantly, the most inspiring takeaway is that lifestyle, not genes, determines destiny. “On average in the United States, the last 16 years of life are spent with multiple diagnoses and on multiple medications. We are giving our hard-earned money to pharmacies, hospitals and nursing facilities,” says Kara Fitzgerald, a naturopathic doctor in Newtown, Connecticut, and the author of *Younger You: Reduce Your Bio Age and Live Longer, Better*. She and other researchers contrast “lifespan”, the years from birth to death, to “healthspan”, the years spent in good health free of age-related disease and disability. “Lifespan is not necessarily healthspan, and we can change that,” she says.

Age Is Not Just a Number

Until recently, age was determined by the year on our birth certificate, but “bio age” is the new number to pay attention to. It might not only predict health outcomes down the road, but also add years to our lives. In groundbreaking work in 2017, anti-aging researcher Steven Horvath at the University of California, Los Angeles, used algorithms to calculate biological age on the basis of how extensively our genome is modified by a process called DNA methylation. Researchers are now understanding what factors can turn on positive gene expressions and turn off those that may activate life-threatening diseases.

“Bio age is how fast our bodies are aging, and aging is the main risk factor for all diseases, including Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, dementia and neurodegenerative

disorders,” says Fitzgerald, noting that only 10 to 20 percent of longevity outcomes are genetic.

Fitzgerald and her team drove this point home with the first randomized, controlled study on the power of lifestyle and diet to turn back the biological age clock. Based upon functional medicine, the program enrolled 18 healthy men between ages 50 and 72 in a target group and 20 in a control group. Those in the target group ate a nutrient-rich diet, slept seven hours a night, practiced relaxation techniques and took supplemental probiotics and phytonutrients. They ate only between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., exercised for at least 30 minutes five days a week, avoided sweets and consumed two cups of dark, leafy, greens and three cups each of cruciferous vegetables and colorful vegetables daily, as well as six ounces of animal protein.

The results, published last year in the journal *Aging*, showed that three years of bio age were reduced in the target group in just eight weeks compared to the control group. “What we eat, our stress load and our response to it, the quality of the air we breathe and if we exercise are all drivers or reducers of our bio age. Knowing this, we absolutely need to take responsibility for our lives,” says Fitzgerald.

This bio age reversal is good news when we look at the grim statistics. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Cancer Society, approximately 610,000 people die of heart disease in this country each year and more than 600,000 Americans are predicted to succumb to cancer this year alone.

Molecular Magic

Harvard genetics professor David Sinclair, author of the seminal *Lifespan: Why We Age—And Why We Don't Have To*, discovered antioxidant-rich resveratrol in grapes in 2003. Since then, he and other researchers have found additional compounds with the ability to activate longevity pathways. Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD, or B₃), a coenzyme involved in many metabolic processes essential to life, has been shown to rejuvenate aging mice, increasing energy-producing mitochondria in the cells and fortifying muscle mass. The body makes less NAD as we age, but research suggests that intermittent fasting, exercise and heat saunas can stimulate this youth-preserving molecule. NAD-boosting supplements are also on the market, but consuming foods like naturally fermented sauerkraut, raw milk, nutritional yeast and pumpkin seeds is also a good strategy.

SIRT6, an enzyme in close relationship with NAD and responsible for many molecular anti-aging processes, including DNA repair, is abundant in seaweeds, especially the strain *Fucus vesiculosus*, commonly known as bladder wrack. Research published in the journal *Marine Drugs* in 2017 indicates bladder wrack's anti-inflammatory and anti-tumoral properties, as well as its potential to protect the liver and normalize high blood sugar and blood pressure.

Fisetin, a powerful flavonoid found in certain foods like strawberries, peaches, apples, persimmons, tomatoes, onions and cucumbers, rivals ever-beneficial quercetin. Research published



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DECADES OF HEALING WISDOM
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last year in the *European Journal of Pharmacology* cites fisetin's numerous potential benefits for neurodegenerative conditions such as Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, stroke and vascular dementia.

The Trifecta of Acid, Inflammation and Stress

Chronic systemic inflammation is now understood to be the physiological springboard for most diseases ranging from cancer to depression, but its connection to uric acid is critical in producing free radicals that accelerate aging. "Unfortunately, most doctors look upon uric acid solely as a risk marker for gout. We now recognize that uric acid serves as a powerful signal in the body to prepare for food and water scarcity," says neurologist David Perlmutter, author of *The New York Times* bestseller *Grain Brain* and the recent *Drop Acid*, a guide to lowering uric acid in the body. "Uric acid levels above 5.5 milligrams per deciliter trigger the body to raise the

blood pressure, increase the blood sugar, become insulin-resistant and increase the formation and storage of body fat," he says. "Central to regaining metabolic health and reducing risk for metabolic conditions like Alzheimer's disease, coronary artery disease and Type 2 diabetes is reining in uric acid."

Chronic, unmanaged stress is a major factor in physical and mental decline due to elevated levels of cortisol. "Stress threatens the health and diversity of our gut bacteria, leading to increased gut permeability, a central mechanism underlying widespread inflammation, which is the cornerstone of all chronic degenerative conditions," says Perlmutter. "Those conditions as a category are ranked by the World Health Organization as the number one cause of death on our planet today."

Fitzgerald concurs, "Excessive inflammation—an imbalanced immune response—accelerates the aging process, and it increases with stress. Stress is the gasoline on the fire of aging."



Eating to reduce inflammation is key, and there is power on our plates when we add some of Fitzgerald's longevity boosters like turmeric, green tea, shitake mushrooms, wild-caught salmon, eggs, liver and sunflower seeds. A study last year in *Experimental Gerontology* reported that the amino acid L-theanine, found particularly in green tea, reduced oxidative stress, liver degeneration and inflammatory responses in aging rats.

Radical Renewal Without Surgery

In the daily survival game, the body's stem cells generate specialized cells to replace those throughout the body that are

damaged and dying. This ongoing repair process slows down as we advance in years, but cutting-edge procedures offer new hope for conditions ranging from arthritis to age-related brain fog.

"Stem cells improve DNA methylation and telomere length, and result in a reduced physiologic age compared to your chronologic age," says Chadwick Prodrinos, a Chicago-based, board-certified orthopedic surgeon and the founder of the Prodrinos Stem Cell Institute, in Antigua. "Joint replacements are offered quite liberally nowadays, but most of our patients with severe arthritis who were offered joint replacements do well in our care without them for virtually any joint in the body." Prodrinos and his team combine umbilical cord-derived stem cell treatment (non-embryonic/fetal) with specially selected nutritional supplements and in some patients, platelet-rich plasma and hyaluronic acid injections.

No matter which path we follow to aging vibrantly, the most inspiring takeaway is that lifestyle, not genes, determines destiny.

Even with exciting advances in the promotion of long life, experts are unanimous in stressing that going into our golden years disease-free begins and ends with individual lifestyle choices, starting with what we put in our mouths. "Diet is the most critical variable in terms of our metabolic destiny. It's been said that a person can't exercise away a poor diet, and there's great wisdom in this statement," says Perlmutter.

"While stem cell treatment has been quite effective, it is important to remember that avoiding chemicals in the environment, exercising vigorously and maintaining a low BMI [body mass index] are clearly the most important factors in good health," advises Prodrinos.

Marlaina Donato is an author, composer and painter. Connect at WildflowerLady.com.

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Heading Off Headaches

NATURAL STRATEGIES HELP HALT THE PAIN

by Carrie Jackson



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Headaches are one of the most common pain conditions in the world. According to the Cleveland Clinic, up to 75 percent of adults have had a headache in the past year. While symptoms vary in scope and intensity, understanding the underlying cause of a headache can lead to better treatment outcomes. Most headaches can be treated holistically, and lifestyle modifications can be key to lasting relief.

There are more than 150 types of headaches, with the most common being tension, migraine and cluster. Migraine attacks, which according to the Migraine Research Foundation affect 12 percent of people in the U.S., are about three times more common in women than in men. Classic symptoms, which can be mild to severe, include throbbing or pounding pain located in the sinuses, forehead, back of the head or one of the temples.

Triggers

Migraine can be triggered by changes in the weather, fatigue, stress, anxiety, insufficient sleep, dehydration and hormonal changes, according to the American Migraine Foundation. Headaches can also be provoked by certain allergens, such as cigarette smoke, exposure to harsh chemicals in cleaning or beauty products, mold, dust, caffeine, alcohol and fermented foods.

According to Alexander Feoktistov, M.D., Ph.D., founder of the Synergy Integrative Headache Center, in Chicago, many headaches are caused by some form of stress. “Both

physical and emotional stress can manifest with headaches. These are often triggered by changes in a routine or schedule, which throws the body's regulatory rhythm off. Skipping meals, varying your sleep patterns and exercising inconsistently can all confuse the body and lead to a headache, varying in intensity from dull and distracting to severe and debilitating,” he explains.

The Mind-Body Connection

While not completely understood, mental stress and anxiety can also be a trigger. “The mind-body connection is fierce,” says Christina P. Kantzavelos, a licensed clinical social worker who specializes in chronic illness and pain at Begin Within Today, in San Diego. “It's important to keep in mind that pain literally originates in the brain. I use a Constructed Awareness approach with clients and bring curiosity to the pain they are experiencing, including headaches. What thoughts and emotions are coming up when they focus on the pain?” she says. “Physical symptoms are often the manifestation or tangible evidence of what is going on in your unconscious mind. Our bodies become stronger or weaker, depending on our emotional state. Fear, self-criticism and invalidating the self can be the root of a headache.”

Try Acupuncture or Acupressure

Evidence suggests that acupuncture is effective in relieving the pain of headaches by changing the flow of energy, increasing blood circulation, releasing endorphins and relaxing muscles. Acupressure and other techniques can be done anywhere, says chiropractor and acupuncturist Michele Renee, director of integrative care at Northwestern Health Sciences University, in Bloomington, Minnesota. “The best acupressure point for headaches is the soft skin in-between the thumb and pointer finger. Massage it for 20 to 30 seconds at a time to relieve pain or hold it for 10 seconds,” she says. “Migraines are caused by vascular dilation in the head, so I recommend putting your hands and feet in hot water or taking a bath to stimulate blood flow away from the head to the rest of the body.”

Don't Forget Exercise

Renee also suggests maintaining a regular exercise routine to ward off headaches. “The less active someone is, the tighter their muscles are and the more likely they will experience headaches. Make sure to get out for a walk every day, or try running to keep the body and mind moving. Yoga is another great activity as a mindfulness practice that decreases stress and also keeps the body moving to eliminate tension.”

Supplements Help

Nutritional supplements can also be helpful, Renee says. “Increasing nutrients such as magnesium, coenzyme Q-10 and riboflavin can help minimize pain. Before stocking up on supplements, be sure to consult with a holistic practitioner to make sure you are making the wisest and safest selections for you. Many nutrients can be found in common foods like dark chocolate, leafy greens, seeds and nuts, meat, fatty fish and legumes.”

Most headaches can be treated holistically, and lifestyle modifications can be key to lasting relief.

Good Practices

Feoktistov recommends that patients experiencing headaches start with lifestyle modifications and over-the-counter meds such as ibuprofen. “Practice good sleep hygiene, stay hydrated by drinking water and minimizing caffeine, and introduce meditation as a way of focusing on what's physically and emotionally going on in your body,” he says. “If headaches disrupt your daily routine, are severe or frequent and/or poorly controlled with over-the-counter medications, it's time to seek help from a headache specialist or other medical professional who can work with you on a path to healing.”

Carrie Jackson is a Chicago-based writer and frequent contributor to Natural Awakenings magazine. Connect at CarrieJacksonWrites.com.

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TOP SUPPLEMENTS FOR
DOGS AND CATS

by Shawn Messonnier



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The market for pet products is awash with supplements, so it's not surprising that it can be challenging to figure out what a dog or cat really needs. The foundation of any healthcare program for dogs and cats, regardless of age and breed, is a healthy diet, well-chosen and appropriate supplements, minimal vaccines and medications, and veterinary check-ups.

Basic helpful additions to a pet diet include a vitamin-mineral product, an enzyme and probiotic combination, and a fatty acid. For older animals, a choline supplement may delay the onset of cognitive disorder. Any tweaking of diet and supplements should follow regular testing that may diagnose a disease in its early stages. Here's an overview of the top basic supplements every dog or cat should have.

Vitamins, Minerals and Joint Support

To provide immune and antioxidant support, and to bolster digestion, skin and coat health and overall wellness, a basic supplement should contain vitamins and minerals as well as small amounts of glucosamine and chondroitin for joint support.

Enzymes and Probiotics

Digestive enzymes are used in supplemental form to improve or increase digestion and nutrient absorption. They can be derived from pancreatic, plant or microbial sources such as bacteria or fungi. Enzymes are important especially when the animal's digestive processes become exhausted or inefficient, such as during periods of stress or such gastrointestinal diseases as acute gastroenteritis, pancreatitis or either liver or inflammatory bowel disease. Enzymes may also be helpful for cancer, allergies and arthritis.

Probiotics are living, healthy bacteria and yeasts, many of which are a part of a dog's or cat's microbiome. They can assist with healing in a variety of ways, including producing healthy fatty acids; decreasing the attachment of harmful bacteria and yeasts to the intestinal walls; increasing antibody production; supporting immunity; restoring healthy GI flora; and reducing inflammation.

As a result, probiotics are useful for treating dogs and cats with a variety of medical problems, including leaky gut syndrome, acute non-specific gastroenteritis, antibiotic or other medication-induced diarrhea, allergies, stress, obesity, neurodegenerative disorders, high cholesterol levels, inflammatory and irritable bowel disorders, and GI and parasite infestations. Probiotics may also be helpful for middle-aged and older dogs and cats, because GI microbial diversity diminishes with aging.

Fatty Acids

A good fatty acid fish oil supplement is also important. There are many brands on the market; some offer the flexibility of being administered either as a liquid (pump) or gel capsule. Phytoplankton, which serves as a food source for fish, is the source of the

active ingredients docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). Fish oil tends to be derived from cold-water fish rich in EPA and DHA such as wild (not farmed) salmon, mackerel, sardines and herring.

This is beneficial for the treatment of heart disease and may reduce atherosclerosis, thrombosis (blood clots), coronary heart disease, arrhythmias, heart failure, sudden cardiac death and stroke. Due to its anti-inflammatory effects, fish oil is often used for dogs and cats for the treatment of skin problems, arthritis and cancer, along with heart, inflammatory bowel, autoimmune and kidney diseases. It may reduce the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation therapy in cancer patients, decrease cancer growth and metastasis, and reduce wasting in undernourished animals.

Choline

For dogs and cats 5 years old and up, a choline (phosphatidylcholine) supplement addresses aging changes that affect the brain and can lead to cognitive disorder. Choline is a component of several major phospholipids that are critical for normal cell membrane structure and function. The body uses it to maintain water balance; to control cell growth and gene expression; as a component of lung surfactant; and most importantly, to produce the major nerve transmitter acetylcholine. It may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by lowering homocysteine levels.

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Supplements other than these can be used as needed, based on the results of diagnostic testing and regular veterinary health exams. Under the guidance of a holistic or integrative veterinarian, supplements can add to a dog's or cat's health and longevity. 🐾

Shawn Messonnier, DVM, owner of Paws & Claws Animal Hospital and Holistic Pet Center, in Plano, Texas, is the author of several books on veterinary medicine.

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Atlanta's Yoga Scene Bounces Back

by Mila Burgess



Virtually every industry felt the impact of COVID-19 policies and protocols, and many small businesses, including yoga studios, struggled to survive. The road to post-pandemic recovery has not been easy, but yoga studios are experiencing a slow but steady return to normalcy. We talked to several local yoga leaders about their journey of reemergence from the pandemic shutdown.

HIGHLAND YOGA

Virginia Highlands, Buckhead, Memorial Drive, Westside and Decatur
Elsie Brotherton, owner



Elsie Brotherton, owner of Highland Yoga, admits she was in denial at first. She didn't think her studios would need to close. When the inevitable happened, Highland Yoga was fortunate to be positioned well to pivot to digital offerings because they had already established an online platform in 2019. Brotherton immediately put existing memberships on hold and created a separate digital membership, offering prerecorded and daily livestreamed classes at traditional class times.

In June 2020, Highland reopened with capped class sizes and socially distanced mat spacing. Brotherton kept the policies in effect until April 2021, when vaccinations were becoming widely available. Capacity is no longer limited in any of the locations.

Then, when the Delta variant circulated, Brotherton felt a sense of urgency to implement a vaccination requirement. She decided that two of her locations would offer classes only for fully vaccinated students, two would have a hybrid model of vaxxed and vaxxed-optional classes, and one location would exclusively offer vaxxed-optional classes. She also added UV filters to the HVAC systems in the locations that didn't have them yet.

"We never had a reported case of COVID spread through classes, and I wonder if the heat, high humidity, and filters contributed to that," says Brotherton. While students could access prerecorded classes on demand before the pandemic, Brotherton believes that her current livestreaming model has been a positive change.

Brotherton recognizes that in today's world, community-seeking is a compelling reason to come back to the studio. Because many people are working from home, Brotherton has intentionally shifted the class schedules to better mesh with new class attendance trends. She has increased the number of workshop offerings, unveiled new community-driven software and has assigned an employee the primary focus of building community and creating events.

Highland Yoga has also witnessed an increase in people seeking yoga teacher training, which Brotherton attributes to the Great Resignation—people are looking for something new and trying to find their why. Even during the pandemic, she was able to open the Decatur location in August 2020 and Westside in 2021. She feels fortunate to have had "lucky, unrepeatably circumstances in place when COVID happened," she says. She considers her high-performers and tight-knit team the anchor of Highland Yoga's success.

Brotherton believes many people are still recovering from mental health crises due to the pandemic and need yoga more than ever. "The appetite for community and connection can't be replaced," she says. "People will always seek in-person fitness classes."

KORSI YOGA, ROSWELL

Ahoo Sarab, owner



When forced to close Korsi Yoga for two months, Ahoo Sarab knew her community would be craving connection. With a background in film and television,

she felt strongly that if she were to switch to an online platform, she would need high quality, visually appealing content. She recognized that time was of the essence and there already existed beautiful online offerings, so she asked teachers to record themselves teaching at the studio. The community was invited to take these complimentary classes on YouTube. She also opened up Korsi to teachers so they would have a place to practice.

In May 2020, neighboring business, Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee (LOTH) in Roswell, offered Korsi the use of their lawn to host donation-based yoga. LOTH provided the space free of charge and post-yoga coffee for participants. Sarab remembers that everyone involved—students, teachers, the LOTH team—was seeking a sense of normalcy and the twice-weekly classes helped provide just that.

Sarab reopened Korsi on June 1, 2020 but it was only getting three or four students at first. Sarab implemented a mask requirement, required temperature checks, and did not allow shared mats, props or showering at the studio. Then, as information and vaccinations became more widely available, students began to return in greater numbers.

In March, 2021, Korsi hosted its first post-COVID event. Sixty socially distanced practitioners showed up to practice in the Michelangelo Sistine Chapel Exhibit. Today, there are fewer class participants than before COVID, but students continue to return to in-person classes. Korsi is participating in Alive in Roswell, a monthly community event, and the studio will be launching its first yoga teacher training since 2019 in the fall.

STILL HOT YOGA, DECATUR

Ahoo Sarab, Cleve Willis owners

Still Hot Yoga in Decatur, a Bikram-style studio co-owned by Sarab and Cleve Willis, is the oldest hot studio in Atlanta; many students have been practicing there for two decades. The community pleaded with the owners to keep their doors open during the pandemic, but they were forced to close.

Donations from students to support the studio poured in. For the first six months after re-opening, classes were capped at eight participants, but numbers have increased, and classes have been fully booked with a three-month-plus waitlist. Wanting to create space for new students, though, Still Hot Yoga has some parameters in place to ensure registration is more accommodating. Sarab believes that the strength

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and loyalty of the hot yoga community contributes to its high demand, and that, through the uncertainty of the last two years, the studio's presence was comforting to students. "It just might have been the only predictable thing in a world that didn't make sense."

SWEET TEA YOGA, PEACHTREE CITY

Sarah Ruiz, owner



When the pandemic forced her to close her studio, Sarah Ruiz, owner of Sweet Tea Yoga, understood that her teachers and community needed yoga. As a

studio owner, one of her goals is to give back to her community. Her initial pivot was to offer livestream classes on Facebook. She sent out email blasts while working toward transitioning her business to an online platform. Her studio was relatively new, having opened in 2018, and she was concerned Sweet Tea didn't have a wide enough student base from which to draw. Nevertheless, she was able to offer two to three successful classes a day via Zoom. While teaching that way had its challenges, Ruiz's community showed up and practiced together online for two months.

Sweet Tea re-opened on June 15, 2020. Masks were required, class sizes were limited, and mats were socially distanced. The online portion of her business transitioned to synchronously streaming live classes. Once vaccines were widely available, Ruiz introduced some vax-required classes.

Although it has been a point of contention for some of her clients, Ruiz only recently lifted the mask requirement at Sweet Tea and opened back up to full capacity in May 2022. Classes aren't yet at full capacity, but she recognizes that she made the shift when school was ending,

summer vacation travel was beginning, and she anticipates seeing growth now that school is back in session.

Sweet Tea's sound healing and restorative yoga workshops are in demand, whereas some of the more physically challenging offerings, like inversions and arm balances, are less popular. Ruiz believes people are craving rest and restoration more than anything. The studio held a successful yoga retreat at Elohee Retreat Center in North Georgia; vaccination or proof of negative PCR was a requirement for attendance. Ruiz plans to increase retreat offerings in the future but feels that keeping them local, for now, is the right choice for her community.

Ruiz is proud that she and her team were able to help people feel connected. "Our Sweet Tea teachers truly wanted to be there and help in any capacity," she says, and that provided them a sense of purpose and normalcy.

DIRTY SOUTH YOGA FEST Jessica Murphy Trachtenberg, founder



The idea for Dirty South Yoga Fest came out of a circle discussion in 2014 among a small group of yoga teachers. The focus was on how the future of yoga

in Atlanta might look. The community was craving relationships. Teachers didn't just want to connect with each other, they wanted to create an overarching pathway for individual studios to go beyond nurturing their own communities to connect and collaborate with others. Jessica Murphy Trachtenberg participated in that initial discussion and was inspired to establish an Atlanta-based yoga festival that she dubbed Dirty South. It would be a grassroots effort, and her simple hope at first was that people would show up.

They did, and since then, the festival has continued to grow. By 2019, the festi-

val was bringing in more than 1,000 vendors, teachers and community members throughout the course of the weekend.

In 2020, planning was well underway for a Dirty South Yoga Fest scheduled for the summer. When COVID hit, Trachtenberg was leading the Dirty South yoga retreat in Chile. Once back stateside, she put the preparations on hold. "Because the festival is an event rather than a yoga studio, I'm grateful to have had the ability to press pause rather than having to reinvent a business," she says.

Trachtenberg did pivot to a virtual festival in the summer of 2020. Students from all over participated, and she was pleased to highlight teachers on a worldwide platform. While it wasn't the same as an in-person event, Trachtenberg enjoyed seeing what else is possible for the community in a way that she might not otherwise have considered.

If all goes according to plan, Dirty South Yoga Fest will return in the spring of 2023. Trachtenberg feels reenergized about it. "Although the circumstances were unfortunate, having an opportunity to reimagine what the festival can be is exciting," she says. She is considering adding smaller events leading up to the festival to engage the community in more intimate ways and bolster connection to the online community. She is also planning to expand festival offerings to explore a few modalities for continued learning, such as Reiki and somatic healing. "Yoga will always be the root and center of the event," says Trachtenberg, but the Dirty South Yoga Fest "will provide opportunities for the yoga community to branch out into other areas of passion." 🌱



Mila Burgess, E-RYT 500, YACEP, teaches at LifePower Yoga in Sandy Springs. She is the owner of Metta Yoga, offering workshops,

private lessons, virtual classes, teacher trainings and retreats. Contact her at Mila@MettaYoga.studio.



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Sunday Evening Yoga in the Park – 6-7pm. 2nd Sun. Enjoy a weekend wind down by moving your body in the great outdoors and set intentions for the new week. With Dr. Krystal Fannin. Free. Blackburn Park, 3493 Ashford Dunwoody Rd, Atlanta. Register: Tinyurl.com/yaz3phza.

MONDAYS

Yoga with Angie – 6pm. Whether you're a beginner or intermediate yogi, we welcome you. Free. Neva Lomason Memorial Library, 710 Rome St, Carrollton. Tinyurl.com/2p9x5pn6.

Hip-Hop Yoga – 6-7pm. With Jaimee Ratliff. Free. The Home Depot Backyard, 1 Backyard Way NW, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/2s3eb4n3.

WEDNESDAYS

Atlanta Laughter Yoga Club – 12-12:30pm. 1st Wed. With Celeste Greene. Come as you are. Free. Trolley Barn, 963 Edgewood Ave NE, Atlanta. CelesteGreeneLaughs.com.

Yoga with Amador – 5-6pm. Also Sat, 10-11am. Free yoga and meditation. Bring own mat. The Interlock, 1115 Howell Mill Rd NW, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/2wkewr9t.

Wills Park Pavilion Yoga – 5:30pm. Pre-registration not required; space is first come, first serve. Free. Located behind the Alpharetta Community Center. 175 Roswell St, Alpharetta. LiftYogaStudio.com.

THURSDAYS

Yoga at The Avenue West Cobb – 6-7pm. An all-levels beginner friendly practice with Mia Yakei. Free. The Avenue West Cobb, 3625 Dallas Highway, Ste 470, Marietta. Register: Tinyurl.com/yck6ap26.

FRIDAYS

Community Vinyasa Flow – 5:30pm. Pre-registration required. Donations welcome. Lift Dunwoody, 1705 Mt Vernon Rd, Ste E, Dunwoody. LiftYogaStudio.com.

Yoga Wisdom Series & Meditation: The Happiness Formula – Thru Oct 28. 6:30-8:30pm. With Mangal-arti Feasting complete with mantra meditation. Explore the world hidden in the ancient yoga texts for means for lasting happiness and wellbeing. \$10. Self-Discovery Center Bed & Breakfast, 1315 Ponce De Leon Ave NE, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/5e7xwv8.

SATURDAYS

Sunrise Yoga Meditation – 7-8am. Simple mantras, gentle asanas, pranayama and guided meditation. Love offering. Unity North, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. UnityNorth.org.

Brooke Street Park Yoga – 9am. Pre-registration not required; space is first come, first serve. Free. Park located behind Alpharetta City Hall. 2 Park Plaza, Alpharetta. LiftYogaStudio.com.

Zen Sound Bath – 11:30am-1pm. 3rd Sat. With Gabri-el Nelson Sears featuring crystal and Himalayan singing bowls, gongs, bells, flutes, drums and chimes. \$16. Trinity Center for Spiritual Living, 1095 Zonolite Rd, Atlanta. Registration required: TrinityCenterAtlanta.org.

Yoga Outliers

THREE YOGA STUDIOS WITH A UNIQUE TWIST

by Diane Eaton

According to the 2022 Mindbody Wellness Index, Atlanta is one of three U.S. cities with the largest number of residents that practice yoga. And while Atlanta's numerous studios offer a variety of yoga practices, the vast majority of them implement a similar structure and approach. But three Atlanta studios stand out as embodying a more unique mission, identity, or set of offerings, so we spotlight them here: Mysore Yoga Atlanta, YogaSkills Atlanta, and Santosha Studio.

MYSORE YOGA ATLANTA

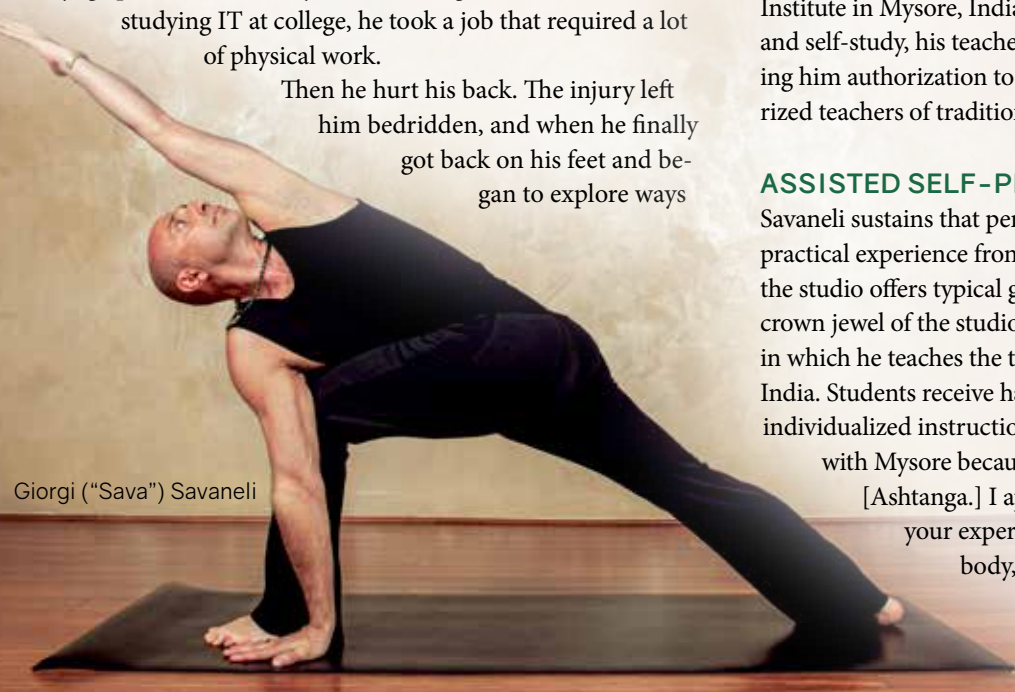


"I'm a very intense person and an over-achiever," says Giorgi ("Sava") Savaneli, owner of Mysore Yoga Atlanta in Sandy Springs.

It's easy to understand why he describes himself that way. Savaneli was born in the country of Georgia in Western Asia when it was still a republic of the Soviet Union, and he began competitive gymnastics

at the age of five. He trained under grueling and often brutal conditions, he says, but he won first place in two competitions and learned discipline and dedication, both of which have fueled his yoga practice to this day. After moving to the U.S. at 19 and studying IT at college, he took a job that required a lot of physical work.

Then he hurt his back. The injury left him bedridden, and when he finally got back on his feet and began to explore ways



Giorgi ("Sava") Savaneli

to work out, he "wandered" into a Vinyasa yoga class to see what it was about. And on his drive home, he experienced a stillness and quiet mind he'd never experienced before, and it deeply resonated with him.

"I really understood that there was something there. I experienced *yoga*, essentially. I experienced the subtleties of yoga practice, and I really liked it." His highly developed body awareness and gymnast background made even some of the more advanced poses quite doable for him as he explored yoga at several studios around town. When he discovered Ashtanga yoga—often considered a somewhat athletic form of hatha yoga with a fixed order of postures—he felt a special affinity. He was drawn to its focused and personalized approach—and it helped him eliminate the pain in his back. He soon completed a 200-hour one-on-one certification in Ashtanga. He traveled to the Shri K. Pattabhi Jois Ashtanga Yoga Institute in Mysore, India, and after five years of practice, research, and self-study, his teacher transmitted the teachings to him, earning him authorization to teach. He is now one of just three authorized teachers of traditional Ashtanga yoga in Georgia.

ASSISTED SELF-PRACTICE

Savaneli sustains that personal approach—transmitting direct and practical experience from teacher to student—at Mysore. While the studio offers typical guided Ashtanga group yoga classes, the crown jewel of the studio is Savaneli's Mysore individual classes, in which he teaches the traditional Ashtanga yoga that's taught in India. Students receive hands-on physical adjustments and highly individualized instruction. "I always recommend people start with Mysore because I will teach you gradually how to do

[Ashtanga.] I apply the system according to your age, your experience, your stamina, your resistance, your body, your mind—everything." Each one of us is unique, he points out, so the individual approach is the most effective.

He calls it "assisted self-practice" because, instead of classes with the typical follow-the-leader format, Mysore is about empowering individuals to learn for themselves. "I'm not going to tell you what to do all the time. I'm going to teach you how so that you learn to do it yourself," says Savaneli. He often has people starting with just 30 minute sessions, since they can get intense. More time is added as the student progresses.

"Yoga is an inside journey, and we need to teach students in a way that encourages looking inside. But it's not pleasant to look at yourself, and it's not popular because it forces us to be honest with ourselves. But if we want to find long-lasting happiness, that's just the work that needs to be done."

YOGASKILLS ATLANTA



While it is nowhere near as well known as Hatha, Ashtanga, Kundalini and the many other types of yoga that originated in India, the roots of Kemetic yoga date back even earlier than its Indian counterparts, according to research, and it did so in Egypt, then known as "Kemet," in Central Africa. "Kemet" translates to "the Black Land," and Kemetic yoga brings to modern times the heart of the self-development practices of ancient Kemetic culture.

Iyabo ("Iya") Ifafunmiloa Kiyaa Faluade, CEO of YogaSkills studio in Atlanta, came to Kemetic yoga naturally—she was literally born into it. Her father, Master Yirser Ra Hotep, had been learning breathwork and energy work and exploring Kemetic science when an exhibit of Egyptian culture arrived in Chicago in the 1970s. Together with his own metaphysical teacher, Ra Hotep "learned that the depicted poses [in the exhibit artwork] had significant meaning to the human body, mind, and spirit," says Faluade. Since it had a lot in common with the yoga of India, they named the practice Kemetic yoga.

Faluade, a priestess of Ifa, grew up steeped in African culture and traditions. Starting a Kemetic yoga studio was "just in divine order," says Faluade, "because it's part of who I am and what I grew up knowing, doing and understanding."

In Chicago, Ra Hotep taught and occasionally took students to Egypt with him to explore its tombs, temples and pyramids and to deepen their understanding of ancient African history and culture. He continues to take groups to Egypt to this day. Eventually, he developed the YogaSkills method of Kemetic yoga, which draws on the movements and postures found on the temple walls of Kemet.

Faluade moved to Atlanta in 2014 and opened YogaSkills Atlanta in 2017. At YogaSkills, she provides private instruction, six-week courses as well as a 200-hour Kemetic Yoga teacher training, which is registered with and recognized by the Yoga Alliance. Some of her certified trainers return to the studio to teach classes. She also frequently offers free programs to the community and is beginning to move into corporate settings, too.



Iyabo ("Iya") Ifafunmiloa Kiyaa Faluade

RULE OF FOUR AND GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION

The YogaSkills method focuses on the circulation of life force to facilitate inner transformation as it seeks to build alignment with the Divinities and ancestral spirits of Africa. It also helps to align the spinal column, correct defects in the skeletal-muscular system and create a high level of mindfulness. "As long as you can breathe, as long as you can move, you can do anything," says Faluade. "So, if you're not able to get into a particular posture, with the proper breathing and the proper movement, you will eventually be able to move into it." Being a meditative practice, the practice also "connects your mind, body and spirit to each other and helps you separate yourself from anything that's not serving you."

Faluade feels strongly about letting the public know that Kemetic yoga welcomes people of all kinds, from all over the world. Many of the certified Kemetic yoga teachers are not Black. "Just because it comes from Africa doesn't mean other people can't come and practice it." But she admits that the practice is especially intended for people of color who are looking for something more in alignment with their ancestry than what India-originating yoga might offer for them.

Thanks to the dedication of Ra Hotep and Faluade, there are now more than 7,000 certified Kemetic yoga teachers worldwide. A number of celebrities have embraced Kemetic yoga over the years, including Michelle Obama, Babatunde Olatunji and Chadwick Boseman.



Amanda Trevolino

SANTOSHA STUDIO



“Contentment.” That’s the translation of “santosh” from Sanskrit. But

more importantly, to Amanda Trevolino, C-IAYT, YACEP, E-RYT 500, the owner of Santosh Studio, *santosh* is one of the 10 *niyamas*, or observances, within the yogic journey to spiritual freedom and enlightenment. “It’s not a contentment based on our external circumstances, though,” she says. It’s an equanimity that is found within—and it is what makes her Sandy Springs studio somewhat unique as a yoga studio. Trevolino seeks to make Santosh a “safe and private space to rest, witness your own experience and respond” as well as a “container” that allows people to explore other aspects of yoga more deeply—beyond postures and poses.

The *niyamas* are one of the eight core “limbs” of yoga, and they are very much woven into Trevolino’s approach to her work and her life. After discovering that she had a dysregulated nervous system, she sought to heal what traditional medicine couldn’t seem to help. So she began a yoga practice—her training mostly rooted in the Kripalu lineage—and traveled the world to explore methods and practices for healing and awakening.

After completing her 500-hour teacher training, Trevolino was drawn to becoming a yoga therapist, requiring another 300 hours of training. Yoga therapy is the application of yogic practices, such as postures, breathwork and meditation techniques, to address someone’s physical, mental and emotional needs. It provides a holistic approach to self-help, says Trevolino, and it is the cornerstone of her work. She does a lot of work with somatic movement and yoga nidra, a guided meditative practice, and she works with

people that have a variety of physical injuries. “I wanted to guide people in what I’ve learned about how yoga can regulate the nervous system and make us more okay with ourselves,” she says. “And when our inner world is okay, we’re able to make our outer world that much more okay.”

FACILITATING PERSONAL EVOLUTION

In addition to yoga therapy, Trevolino offers programs that support personal evolution in more unstructured ways. Her newest program, Ignite, is an eight-session, personalized “deep dive” into self-discovery. “It combines a lot of things that I have learned to lean into over the course of my own journey towards self-understanding,” she says. Each week’s session has a particular focus and method that it draws on, such as Thai bodywork for cleansing and preparing, foundational breathwork, basic astrology, Human Design, mantra and more.

Outside of Ignite, Trevolino offers an individualized two-hour session in Human Design, which she describes as “a mash-up of astrology, the I-Ching, Kabbalah and the Hindu chakra system.” The practice helps reveal cultural and energetic conditioning that prevents people from knowing themselves on a deeper level, she says. It also helps people understand that “we have an embodied response that lets us know when something is right for us or not—and it’s not the mind.”

Trevolino is also exploring what she calls “conscious travel” with small groups, in which they experiment with bringing yogic principles into action while traveling. Her upcoming program is heading to Nepal. “It’s like doing karma yoga in the world,” she says. “Can we travel without harming the place that we’re going?” she asks, referencing the *niyama ahimsa*, which is about doing no harm. “Can we not cling, not grasp, when confronted with not having many of the conveniences we Westerners are used to?” she asks, referencing the *yama, aparigraha*, or non-grasping. And, referencing *satya*, truthfulness, she asks, “Can we recognize our truth and speak truth in the world without creating more harm?”

Trevolino also schedules guest teachers to host classes on topics such as mantra, kirtan, sound baths, sacred circles and *kintsugi*—putting broken pottery pieces back together with gold, a metaphor for embracing one’s flaws and imperfections. She finds that these classes help people recognize the interconnectedness and the interdependence of all things. “We do a lot of work in circle,” says Trevolino, “and I find that sacred symbolism can be very powerful. There’s a beautiful continuity—each of us contributing to the other person’s experience.”

“It’s not like I’ve mastered inner peace and have all that buttoned up,” she says. “I need these practices when I get deep into my humanness. I need to remember that my essence is something higher and more deeply connected.” 🙏

For more information about these yoga studios:

- MysoreYogaAtlanta.com
- YogaSkillsATL.com
- Santosh-Studio.com



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YOGA IS A JOURNEY

Personal Stories of The Path

by Mila Burgess

Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self.
~The Bhagavad Gita

Most yoga students walk through the studio door marked “physical” when they first begin their yoga practice. They hope to gain strength, flexibility, mobility, stability and/or endurance. Once they establish a regular practice, though, students often begin to realize that yoga reaches far beyond the physical. As they continue to return to their mats, they notice other benefits, such as the power of the breath, the ability to concentrate and ultimately, for many, the practice becomes far more than exercises on the mat; it becomes a way of life.

Whether one is a first-time participant or a veteran practitioner, yoga is a journey that often takes the student from a physical practice, through a breath-centered practice, to a heart-centered practice eventually that becomes a way of life. Several Atlanta-area yoga practitioners shared with us their unique yoga journeys.

PHYSICAL-CENTERED PRACTICE



Shannon Whiting has practiced yoga on and off for 20 years and took her first yoga class while pregnant. She was suffering from sciatica and found that yoga helped relieve the pain. Although she loved her yoga practice, she was a busy, working mom, and she fell away from it. But in 2019, Whiting’s world was turned upside down when she was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer. Realizing she needed to return to her practice, she built a small yoga studio in her basement and, over the course of the next year, she practiced—through chemotherapy, multiple surgeries, and COVID-19. In 2021, Whiting returned to in-person studio classes. The physical practice is most important to Whiting now, and she has a deep love for it. Yoga is helping her regain the strength, endurance, flexibility and balance that was impacted by her illness and treatment. The cancer-fighting medication she takes causes bone and muscle pain, stiffness and mental fog, and she feels that practicing yoga is a valuable tool for managing these effects. Today, Whiting feels stronger and more fit than she has in two decades, and she is cancer-free.



After burning out from years of hardcore kickboxing workouts and the subsequent closure of her rock-climbing gym, Laura Jones realized she wanted to find an activity that enabled a continuous progression and could be done anywhere. Yoga was the answer. During the pandemic shutdown, she found a teacher she enjoyed on YouTube, but it was only when she took her practice to a large group setting in a studio that she started to connect more deeply to it. Jones feels the greatest lesson yoga has taught her is that her body can do anything. She has scoliosis and rods in her back,

which she had seen as a hindrance. She thought yoga was only accessible to “pretzel people” and didn’t feel she would be able to do it. She also believed her physical pain was coming from the rods, but she has since learned, through yoga, that muscle imbalances and postural issues were causing the pain.

Looking around the yoga studio, she couldn’t help but notice that everyone has asymmetry in their bodies, and she is reminded that it’s normal. While some poses are harder for her because of her unique body, her long arms make balance poses easier. “Who knew scoliosis would actually give me an advantage?” she says. Jones also loves the sense of community she finds in in-person classes. “We sweat together, we push ourselves together, we help each other.” She feels a bond with her fellow yogis and is happy to discover the positive energy they create together.

BREATH-CENTERED PRACTICE



Yoga provided Shari Gayda with a sense of calm in a tumultuous time in her life. She began practicing yoga 20 years ago, and, although her practice has

evolved since then, she acknowledges how impactful it has been to find her breath on the mat. Yoga taught Gayda to pause and take a breath during difficult moments on the mat, but more than that, it taught her that the breathing practice works just as well when facing challenges of everyday life.

When Gayda first started her yoga journey, she was using a daily inhaler, which she hasn’t had to use in years. She credits the change to her breathing practice. Learning to quiet the mind by focusing on her breath has helped her become more present for her family and friends. She’s gained physical strength through her practice, but she feels “the true magic of yoga” when she seals her practice in savasana, or corpse pose. It is then when she is “simply breathing, and the universe offers a perfect moment of bliss.”



Growing up in South African apartheid, attending a strict, private, girls’ school, and living in close quarters with 16 of her relatives, Mayuri Mulji was

overcome with depression and despair when she was a girl. “I hadn’t been equipped with an owner’s manual about how to function and find fulfillment in this world,” she says. Eventually, Mulji began to feel a strong pull toward meditation. At school, she would find quiet places to sit in meditation. Meditation became an especially helpful tool that helped her deal with being teased and bullied for being “one of the few brown girls” there.

Mulji continued to come back to meditation as a grounding force in her life since then, and 12 years ago, a friend invited her to practice yoga. Her practice quickly evolved, and she eventually became a yoga teacher. She likes to quote T. Krishnamacharya, saying, “If you can breathe, you can do yoga.”

Yoga is breath-centered; not only does the practitioner focus on the breath to maintain concentration, the breath is used to move energy through the body, too. “The goal is to stay with the breath for as long as possible, coming back to the rhythm and flow of the breath whenever the mind wanders,” says Mulji. “The breath is the current of life, connecting body and mind. It helps to have a focus for attention, an anchor line to tether you to the present moment and guide you back when the mind wanders. The breath serves this purpose.”

HEART-CENTERED PRACTICE



In January 2014, Will Thomason was “fried” from life, career and family responsibilities. Determined to restore and realign himself, he took a one-year sabbatical

and set a goal of completing 100 yoga classes before the end of the year. He began with Yin and Yoga Basics classes and finished his 100th class in early September. He never looked back.

Today, if it’s 10 a.m. on a weekday, odds are good Thomason will be on his mat taking Vinyasa Flow or Ashtanga Remix classes. In the beginning of his practice, he says, the power of the breath was “a great concept, poorly executed.” He aspired to meditation and could breathe with intention but struggled linking breath with movement. When it finally clicked for him, he was able to take his practice beyond the physical.

Thomason sees his yoga practice as an important part of his lifestyle. He believes in creating systems to achieve one’s goals; yoga has become a foundational system that allows him to accomplish physical, spiritual and emotional well-being. Yoga has also taught him that it’s never too late to start something new. He invites other men to attend yoga classes and is grateful for the connections he’s made in the yoga community in which he practices.



Precious stumbled into a yoga class when she was starting her fitness journey. She unknowingly signed up for a very challenging 90-minute class. “It

was a total disaster!” she says. “It was like the game Simon Says, except I had no idea what Simon was saying.” She didn’t return to yoga for six months but did some research and decided to take a more foundational yoga class, which she stuck to.

What began as a part of her fitness routine slowly began to transform Precious from the inside out. She became more centered and focused and grew stronger mentally, emotionally and spiritually. She says she had no idea yoga was what she needed to put herself back together after her mother’s death, but she could feel that yoga was healing her. It became a central part of her life for self-healing and for

developing and fostering friendships, community and life experiences. She eventually became a yoga teacher but then fell out of her yoga practice during the pandemic. “Like dominos,” she says, “everything else seemed to topple out of place.” In hindsight, after resuming her practice, she believes that the break helped her realize just how integral yoga is to her life.



Brian Early believes that yoga is a life changer, and that the world would be a better, more loving place if everyone practiced it.

Early began his yoga journey nearly three years ago while going through a divorce and trying to find a place for healing and growth. Encouraged by another male yoga student, he decided to give yoga a try, and he found the classes inspiring and the teachers kind and supportive. Initially, his goal was to understand the movements, and he has seen his physical practice grow, but he ultimately discovered that the union of mind and body is powerful. He loves the focus on breath and awareness and the ability to quiet his mind; he finds peace and joy in the practice. Now, Early practices yoga daily and says he feels less balanced if he has to miss a day. He enjoys daily meditation, breathwork, exploring tai chi and diving into reading materials focused on energy and spirit. He values the strong connection of like-minded, heart-centered souls in his yoga community, and even met his girlfriend in a yoga class. Early says he is a yogi for life now. He takes every opportunity to encourage others to start and experience their own yoga journey. 🧘‍♂️



Mila Burgess, E-RYT 500, YACEP, teaches at LifePower Yoga in Sandy Springs. She is the owner of Metta Yoga, offering workshops, private lessons, virtual classes, teacher trainings and retreats. Contact her at Mila@MettaYoga.studio.

Conscious Consumerism

THE RISE OF SHARING AND RESELLING

by Sheila Julson



Image courtesy of Asheville Tool Library.org

Tucked into the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, Asheville is a DIY kind of community, attracting artists, musicians, yoginis, homesteaders and other folks looking to live a simpler life. When they garden and undertake home repairs, Ashevilleans find it easy to cut expenses: They've formed a collective tool shed, the Asheville Tool Library, which offers them the use of 2,000 donated tools ranging from safety goggles to leaf mulchers and circular saws.

"When you need a pressure washer once a year or decide to put in a garden, you don't really need to own those tools," says treasurer Stephanie Kane. People are allowed to take on projects they couldn't otherwise afford, she says, "or they utilize existing skills to build the life they want, or even get a business off the ground."

To combat inflation, which is squeezing family budgets, Americans are increasingly exploring shared resources and eco-friendly alternatives like thrift stores, flea markets

and rummage sales. Often aided by online technology, local shared enterprises and secondhand shops are saving people money and reducing the impact of excess consumerism on the environment.

Neighborly Sharing

More than 50 tool-lending libraries exist in cities like Denver, Seattle, Atlanta and Washington, D.C., allowing people to "cut down on waste and overbuying, while helping out neighbors," reports *The Washington Post*. Typically, they are staffed by volunteers and supported by nominal, income-based annual fees.

Starting a tool-lending library begins by connecting with other people in the community, using local online groups and co-op bulletin boards to attract volunteers and donations, or hosting a drive for people to clean out their basements, Kane says. As memberships grow, additional tools can be purchased and employees can be hired. Web-site design and inventory tracking in Asheville and elsewhere is simplified by the "library of things" software from *MyTurn.com*.

Another way that people share resources is through Little Free Libraries—the charming "library on a stick" boxes on neighborhood posts and fences that give away books to passersby. It began in Hudson, Wisconsin, in 2009, when Todd Bol built a tiny model of a one-room schoolhouse as a tribute to his deceased mother, an educator and voracious reader. He stocked it with books and put it on a post in his front yard for neighbors and friends. The concept became so popular that he built more and gave them away. Today, more than 150,000 Little Free Libraries are found in communities worldwide.

Secondhand Thrifting

Whether housed in a local storefront or existing digitally online, resale shops have become big business due to pandemic-inspired decluttering and belt-tightening pursuits. Industry analysts expect thrift store clothing sales to grow globally 11 times faster than fast fashion and to be worth twice as much, at \$84 billion, by 2030.

Buying secondhand benefits not only shoppers, but also local governments struggling with the expense of operating landfills. Hennepin County, Minnesota, which includes Minneapolis, has resolved to send zero waste to its landfills by 2030. Part of this effort includes the Choose to Reuse campaign, which encourages people to shop secondhand as a way to save money, help the environment, reduce packaging, support local businesses and find unique items.

Nonprofit thrift stores like Goodwill Industries and The Salvation Army or those run by longtime charities like the American Cancer Society and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals have well-established reputations and proven track records. Habitat for Humanity's ReStore has more than 900 locations nationwide, offering an ever-changing stock of secondhand furniture, household items and building materials like doors, windows and lighting fixtures. On the other hand, for-profit thrift stores, even if they claim a link to a worthy cause, often donate a much smaller percentage of profits to charity and are reluctant to release financial figures, reports *Salon.com*.



Online Pluses and Minuses

An influx of online resellers adds even more choices for secondhand items. Although they make shopping more convenient, online sites carry risks: In 2019, the Federal Trade Commission reported more than 173,000 instances of online shopping fraud. When shopping online for secondhand items, experts advise, it's wise to shop and pay on a trusted website or app, and to avoid using a personal debit card. Be sure there are photos of the product. On sites like Craigslist, eBay and Facebook, check each seller's rating and thoroughly review all buyers' comments before making a purchase.

With a little enterprise, savvy and flexibility, mass consumerism can be circumvented by sharing community resources and frequenting quality secondhand stores. As Kane puts it, "The sharing economy is essentially about leading a less consumerist lifestyle." ♻️

Sheila Julson is a freelance writer and regular contributor to *Natural Awakenings magazine*.

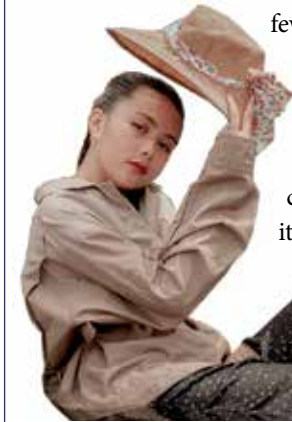
WARNINGS FOR SECONDHAND SHOPPERS SAFETY AND QUALITY CONTROL TIPS

CHILDREN'S ITEMS

When purchasing toys or children's furniture, parents should check for safety recalls and be sure the product contains no lead paint, recommends *WebMD.com*. Check for broken or missing parts and make sure the item is stable. Products manufactured many years ago may not have the same safety features as newer items.



Avoid car seats and booster seats which may have been involved in an accident. The same is true for bicycle and motorcycle helmets. Federal safety standards for cribs frequently change, so avoid used pieces if they are more than a few years old.



CLOTHING

The condition of items donated to thrift stores or posted by resellers can vary greatly, from brand-new items to well-worn pieces, notes *Lifesavvy.com*. Carefully check the item, especially under the sleeves and the inseams, for stains, tears, third-hand smoke odors or other defects.

Whether shopping for secondhand clothing in person or online, *Glamour UK* recommends ignoring the size on the label of vintage items, because they can vary greatly. When unable to try a garment on, check the measurements. Many vintage sellers on *Etsy.com* post them along with the label size.

FURNITURE

Consumer Reports recommends buying local for large items like furniture to avoid shipping costs and allow for close personal inspection.



ELECTRONICS

For those unable to afford or justify the cost of a new \$1,000 smartphone, Apple, Best Buy and Walmart sell refurbished phones, computers and TVs on their websites at a reduced cost. If using an E-commerce seller of refurbished electronics, make sure it uses programs such as CheckMEND to be sure the item wasn't stolen.

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 \$20 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.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Meet A CBD Expert and Get Your Questions Answered – 12-4pm. Andrew Strickman, the Founder of CBD Made Easy, can help answer whether CBD gummies are as effective as extracts and what suits your personal needs you want to address. Nature's Own Herb Shop, 628 S Central Ave, Hapeville. 404-209-1969. NaturesOwnHerbs.com.

Free First Saturday: Butterflies – 1-2pm. Everything you need to know about these incredible insects. Include a hike and activity, but no access to live butterfly tents. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

World Day of Prayer – Sept 7-8pm. Theme: "Holding the High Watch." Join us in-person or online for the opening ceremony, closing ceremony, personal reflection time, or all three. Unity North Atlanta, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. UnityNorth.org.

Remote Healing for Higher Consciousness Chakra – 2pm. Jamie will focus on the Higher Consciousness chakra located about 2 feet above your crown chakra. \$15. Register: JamieButlerMedium.com.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Online: Transmission Meditation – 7:30pm. A meditation to help the world. Sponsored by Share International USA SE Region. Free. Via Eventbrite. Info: 770-302-2208 or Info-SE@Share-International.us. Register: Tinyurl.com/2p9s7wb4.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Online: Understanding PCOS – 12-12:30pm. CentreSpringMD Founder, Dr. Taz, discusses the integrative approach to managing PCOS. Learn more about the signs to look out for, treatment options, holistic tips and more. Free. Register: Tinyurl.com/mr4dwajx.

Editor's Choice **The Atlanta International Night Market** – Sept 17-18. 5-10pm, Fri; 2-10pm, Sat. 2-day celebration of diversity, community, culture and creativity. Includes live performances plus food and retail vendors representing communities from around the world. Free admission. Lawrenceville Lawn, 210 Luckie St, Lawrenceville. AtINightMarket.org.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Georgia Audubon Society Bird Walk – 8-10am. All welcome. Free. DunwoodyNature.org.

Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

Editor's Choice **Butterfly Experience 2022** – Sept 10-11. 10am-4pm. Get an up-close look at one of nature's most beautiful and delicate species. Butterfly tents will be set up on the grounds. Also enjoy educator-led programs and activities, live animal shows, magical and musical performances, arts and crafts, and food and drinks for purchase. \$12. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. Registration required: DunwoodyNature.org.

Meet A CBD Expert and Get Your Questions Answered – 12-4pm. Andrew Strickman, the Founder of CBD Made Easy, can help answer whether CBD gummies are as effective as extracts and what suits your personal needs you want to address. Nature's Own Herb Shop, 2590 Hamilton Mill Rd, Ste 113, Buford. 678-804-9914. NaturesOwnHerbs.com.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Sacred Beats Drumming – 7-8:15pm. Drumming utilizes traditional rituals, ceremonies, rhythms, and chants to access a transformative healing process. The Well of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Pkwy, Ste 300, Roswell. 770-778-2051. TheWellOfRoswell.com.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Family Night Hike – 8-10pm. Explore the sounds and sights of the forest. Includes an animal encounter and a relaxing campfire where you can roast a marshmallow. Limited space is available. All ages. \$12/general public, \$10/members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. Register by Sept 15: ChattNatureCenter.org.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Summer Birding – 8-10am. Join Master Birder Rose Guerra as she guides you through the Nature Center trails and help you to identify the birds present at this time of year. Free/member, \$10/nonmember. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. Registration required: DunwoodyNature.org.

Editor's Choice **The Veggie Taste** – 12-6pm. Vegan, raw, plant-based and vegetarian tasting event where chefs will be sampling some of their delicious mouthwatering cuisine. Includes nutritional speakers, artisan marketplace, music, product samples and much more. 432 Beckwith Ct SW, Atlanta. TheVeggieTaste.com.

PHOENIX & DRAGON BOOKSTORE

5531 ROSWELL RD NE, ATLANTA
404-255-5207
PHOENIXANDDRAGON.COM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

A Course in Miracles De-Mystified – 11am-1pm. With Sandra Niven. A once-a-month class about the modern spiritual classic: *A Course in Miracles*. Fun, informative, interactive and make it easier to learn the main principles. All levels. Love offering.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Goat Yoga – 12-1pm. With GGA Dwarf Goat Yoga. Perform breathing exercises and various yoga positions. While doing so, dwarf goats can hop around you, climb your back, sit on top of you, even nap on you or your yoga mats while you let go of all your stress. \$35.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Aura Photography with The Auraweaver – 12-5pm. AuraWeaver is a specialty photography experience company. Clients receive an aura photo of themselves surrounded by their colorful energy and an interpretation of their photo by our readers.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Editor's Choice **Back to your Roots Farm Fair** – 12-4pm. Family fun celebrating during one of the best harvesting seasons of the year. Meet live farm animals, bring a picnic, and get down in the dirt. Included with General Admission; free/members). CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. Tickets: ChattNatureCenter.org.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Crystals & Astrology: Crystals for Libra – 1pm. Join Lexie for an interactive class where she'll cover Libra characteristics, which crystals can best support this sign, the benefits of the crystals, and how to use them for healing and balance. \$10. To register: WithLoveAndLight.com.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Remote Healing to Strengthen Your Auric Field – 2pm. Jamie will work with crystalline energy, reiki, your spirit team and a team of angelic energies to fortify the layers of your energy field. \$15. Register: JamieButlerMedium.com.

Online: How to Talk to Your Body – 7-8pm. Join Licensed Unity Teacher, Larry Bergmann, for this powerful healing service. Learn techniques for connecting your mind and body together for healing, empowerment and more. Love offering. Visit the calendar listing for Zoom link: UnityAtl.org.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

The Nature Club Dine and Discover – 7-9pm. In-person or online. \$10/general, \$5/CNC Members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. ChattNatureCenter.org.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Friday Night Hike – 8-9pm. A fun and educational hike through the woods at night. \$5. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. Registration required: DunwoodyNature.org.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Crystal Healing for Horses – 1pm. Join Lexie for an interactive class where she'll break down 3 layers of interactions, supportive crystals, and techniques to soften the edges around contentious encounters, and heal emotional distress. \$15. To register: WithLoveAndLight.com.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Making Sense of Climate Change & What You Can Do About It – 7-8pm. Join us for an incredibly informative lecture with Mark Papier who will break down the "climate change" issue. \$10. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. Registration required: DunwoodyNature.org.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1

Open House Extravaganza: Advanced Wellness – 2-5pm. Connect with like-minded people and learn about the variety of holistic offerings available through Advanced Wellness. Enjoy a glass of champagne, coffee or a one-of-a-kind mocktail. Free, but must RSVP. 1549 Clairmont Rd, Ste 105, Decatur. 404-320-0204, 404-860-2510 (text) or Info@AdvancedWellnessAtl.com. DrKarenTedeschi.com.

ONGOING

Sundays

Online & In-Person Sunday Experience – 9am, Adult Study; 9:30am, Meditation; 10am, Music; 10:30am, Service. Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta, 3107 Clairmont Rd, Ste A, Atlanta. More info: slc-atlanta.org.

Red Clay Sangha Sunday Morning Service – 9am, meditation; 10:30-11:30am, service & dharma discussion. Via Zoom or in person. 3420 W Hospital Ave, Ste 102, Chamblee. More info: RedClaySangha.org.

Online: NWUUC – 10am. Via Zoom. Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation: 770-955-1408 or nwuuc.org.

SRF Atlanta Meditation Service – 10-10:45am. An opportunity to meet with other truth-seekers to commune with God and share spiritual fellowship. 4000 King Springs Rd, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. srfatlanta.org.

Meditation Open House – 10-11:30am. Discussion at 11:30am and tea at 12pm. Meditation instruction available from 10-11am for those new to the practice. Atlanta Shambhala Center, 1447 Church St, Decatur. More info: Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

Second Sunday Sober Bike Ride – 10:30am. 2nd Sun. Brings together people from all walks

of sober living who are seeking fun and active ways to connect with likeminded people. BTA Bicycle Tours of Atlanta will provide a bike at no charge if needed. Bicycle Tours of Atlanta, 659 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta. Register: Tinyurl.com/yjzutj4.

One World Spiritual Center Sunday Service – 11am. To watch: OneWorldSpiritualCenter.net.

Unity Atlanta Sunday Services – 11am. Attend in-person or watch via live stream. 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Online: UUCA Service – 11am. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta: uuca.org/live.

SRF Atlanta Reading and Inspirational Service – 11am-12pm. An opportunity to meet with other truth-seekers to commune with God and share spiritual fellowship. 4000 King Springs Rd, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. srfatlanta.org.

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

Unity North Online & In-Person Sunday Service – 11:15am. 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. More info: UnityNorth.org.

Meditation Classes – 4-5pm, Level I; 5-6pm, Level II. All religions, all ages and all people. Learn how to meditate for spiritual enlightenment. \$15. 5161 Brook Hollow Parkway, Ste 220/225, Norcross. Register, Andrea: 404-557-4306. MeditationWellnessClub@gmail.com. MeditationWellnessClub.com.

Mondays

Online: Monday Night Meditation – 7-8pm. A live, instructor-led meditation and discussion. Develop a meditation practice by maintaining a moment-to-moment relaxed awareness of our surrounding environment, bodily sensations, thoughts and emotions. All levels. \$10. Register: TheOpenMindCenter.com.

Tuesdays

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

Twin Hearts Meditation – 7-8:30pm. A short, guided meditation blessing the Earth with loving kindness, peace and good will. Donation. Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta, 3107 Clairmont Rd, Unit A, Atlanta. 404-417-0008. Meetup.com/Twin-Hearts-Meditation.

Metro Atlanta Sierra Club Meeting – 7:30pm. 2nd Tues. More info: SierraClub.org/georgia/atlanta.

Wednesdays

30-Minute Guided Meditation – 8am. Be guided through a simple yet powerful meditation that gives rise to an experience of mental peace and wellbeing. No experience necessary. Beginners welcome. \$5. Kadampa Meditation

Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

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

Online: Joy of Breathing Class – 1-1:30pm. Learn the Joy of Breathing technique, practice a deep Pranayama session and enjoy the benefits. Free. Register: Tinyurl.com/muwwanm9.

Decatur Farmers Market – Thru Nov 16. 4-7pm. Local farmers, artisanal food makers and crafts. First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairmont Ave, Decatur. 404-373-1653. cf-matl.org/Decatur.

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.

Practitioner Peer to Peer – 7-9pm. 2nd Wed. Join Adela Raffa and Becky Arrington for this intimate networking and support group tailored specifically to practitioners. Connect with a special community in the healing arts and share the joys and frustrations of your business. \$20. The Well of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Pkwy, Ste 300, Roswell. 770-778-2051. TheWellOfRoswell.com.

Thursdays

Tai Chi & Qigong – 9:30am. For beginners. \$7/at door. Meets in The Jefferson Parks and Recreation Dept, 2495 Old Pendergrass Rd, Jefferson. 678-510-9573. CarolOsborne.org. The First Georgia Dowsers – 6pm. 1st Thurs. Discuss all things dowsing. Host guest speakers each month teaching new and exciting developments within the dowsing community. \$5/nonmember, free/member. Heart Soul and Art, 1470 Roswell Rd, Marietta. Pre-registration required: Heart-Soul-And-Art.square.site.

Dunwoody Beekeeping Club – 6:30-7:30pm. 1st Thurs. Meeting features a program, followed by a question and answer session with the ability to meet and learn from other local beekeepers. Free. 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

Meditation Fundamentals – 6:30-7:30pm. Suitable for complete beginners. Get a practical introduction to meditation and includes topics such as the benefits of meditation, mindfulness, good posture, types of meditation, and how to start a daily meditation practice. In-person & online. \$15. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. 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 Pranica Healing Center via Zoom. To watch: AtIPranicaHealing.com.

Sacred Beats Drumming – 7-8:30pm. 3rd Thurs. Join in our drumming circle led by mas-

ter healer Debbie Loshbaugh as we clear away blocks, release emotions and gain greater clarity. Free. The Well of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Pkwy, Ste 300, Roswell. 770-778-2051. TheWellOfRoswell.com.

Fridays

Qigong Exercises & Meditations – 12-12:45pm. 1st & 3rd. Led by Master Cheng, who has been teaching in Atlanta since 1976. Free/member, \$8/nonmember. Tai Chi Association, 3079 Midway Rd, Decatur. More info & registration: Tai-Chi-Association.com.

Meditation Classes – 6pm, Level I; 7pm, Level II. See Sun listing. 5161 Brook Hollow Parkway, Ste 220/225, Norcross. Register, Andrea:404-557-4306. MeditationWellnessClub@gmail.com. MeditationWellnessClub.com.

Drum Circle – 7-9pm. 2nd Fri. With Rhythm Healer Eric Olson. No experience necessary. \$10. Unity North, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. More info: UnityNorth.org.

Saturdays

Free Saturday Meditations – 8-8:30am. A guided meditation to start your day with a positive state of mind and carry that inner light with you for the rest of the day. No prior meditation experience necessary; all welcome. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Morningside Farmers Market – 8-11:30am. Year-round. Offers organic produce, bread, pastries, grains, meat, honey, along with chef pop-ups, prepared foods, coffee, in-season fruits, and locally produced crafts. Morningside Presbyterian, 1411 N Morningside Dr NE, Atlanta. MorningsideMarket.com.

Dunwoody Nature Center Saturday Volunteers – 9am-12pm. 2nd Sat. For anyone in the community who wishes to volunteer. A wonderful way to start off your weekend in nature and service. To promote social distancing, sign-up is mandatory; limited to 24 people. 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

Oakhurst Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. Year-round. Fresh produce, meat, baked treats, and more. Additional offerings include live music and chef demonstrations featuring seasonal recipes. Masks required. Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 E Lake Dr, Decatur. cfmatl.org/oakhurst. Free Online Guided Meditation for All – 9:45-11am. Will go over basics and guided meditation. No prior experience is needed. Classes meant to come together and meditate and learn little by little. Via Zoom. Register: Tinyurl.com/y3x5yy2s.

Earth Care Sangha Gathering – 10am-12pm. 1st Sat. Rain or shine. Meet in the back parking lot and then carpool to a nearby park for a meditative walk in nature. In case of inclement weather, meet in Holy Grounds Cafe. Unity North, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. More info: UnityNorth.org.

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Glo Bunny and The Hawk

by Tammy Billups

One morning, as I opened the blinds in my bedroom, I noticed a large hawk sitting on a big rock in my flower garden. “Yes, of course, this incredible bird likes my garden,” I thought. “It’s full of birds, squirrels, chipmunks—and Glo Bunny.”

Glo Bunny

Glo Bunny first made herself known when I was weeding my back garden in the spring. The weeds were tall and out-of-control, and I welcomed the pint-sized assistance.

It took me a minute to see her, and I was amazed that she didn’t run from me. I continued to weed for an hour or so every day, and she would always be there, helping me in her own “munching” kind of way.

Many times, she got within a foot or two of me, completely relaxed and not scared at all. I was in awe of her courage and fearlessness, especially since she appeared to be an orphan and no older than a month or so. I frequently told her how I admired her bravery.

One evening, she inspired me to sing Gloria Gaynor’s song, “I Will Survive,” and from then on, I’ve called her Glo Bunny. It didn’t matter if I was singing or talking, she stayed close by, almost as if my voice gave her comfort.

After the deep-weeding project was done, she stuck around. When I called her name from inside my window, she’d excitedly hop toward the sound of my voice. I’d never experienced being a surrogate mom to a bunny rabbit before, and I was fascinated by her ability to instinctively know that she was safe in my company.

The Hawk

The huge hawk was sitting comfortably on a rock close to my shed when I noticed Glo Bunny hiding under the shed. My reaction was instinctual. “Not on my watch!” I exclaimed and rushed to the backdoor in full-blown mama protector mode. As I opened the door, the hawk flew to the top of the fence; it was closer to me now. I walked outside, planning to divert his attention and ask him to kindly move along, but as I got closer—within ten feet—he didn’t fly away. I stopped in my tracks and took a deep breath.

I stood in awe at the hawk’s confidence and fearlessness. I felt his gaze look straight through to my soul. Every fiber of his being was emanating power and grounded strength, and I felt his energy directed toward me. After a few minutes, he spread his wings and flew away.

I felt as if I’d been in the presence of grace. I was unable to move as I watched him fly into the woods. I turned and saw Glo Bunny, sitting there in her usual Gloria Gaynor



“I Will Survive” stance, looking just as confident and grounded as the hawk had looked. I found it interesting that when I reacted, my energy had gotten out of balance with life’s natural rhythms, but the hawk’s and Glo Bunny’s energies were fine.

I felt that the hawk’s energy was intentionally calming me down, telling me, “All is okay, Grasshopper. There is a better way.” Nature follows the natural instincts in life. Animal mothers don’t overprotect or overcoddle their young; they teach them how to take care of themselves by modeling coping and surviving. When a *real* danger to their young arises, they show them survival behaviors—fearlessly protecting them only if necessary.

The experience with Glo Bunny and the hawk showed me that overreacting and overprotecting does not serve anyone. I’d projected “bad” onto the hawk and “good” onto the potential victim, Glo Bunny—easy labels that didn’t actually fit the moment. Reactions that pit one against another are rooted in times we’ve felt emotional pain or were victimized ourselves. As a result, we can be over-reactive when similar situations arise.

I believe that all beings are also our teachers. And, yes, that means even bunnies and hawks are universal messengers for our personal growth journeys. Realizing there’s a higher purpose in each interaction we experience is what creates safety in our hearts. 🐰



Author Tammy Billups is a Certified Interface Therapy, healer and creator of Animal-Human Tandem Healings, a healing modality that accelerates

the healing of humans and the animals with whom they share a soul bond. For more information, visit TammyBillups.com or @TammyBillupsHealer on social.

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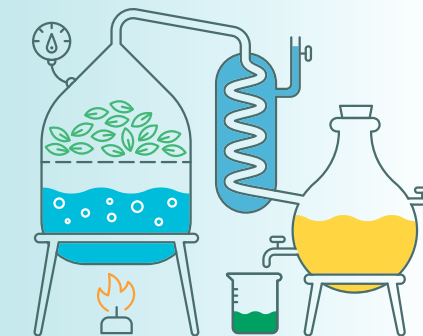
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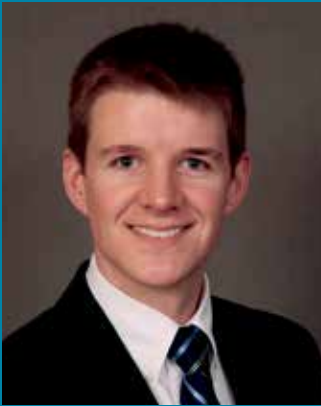


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