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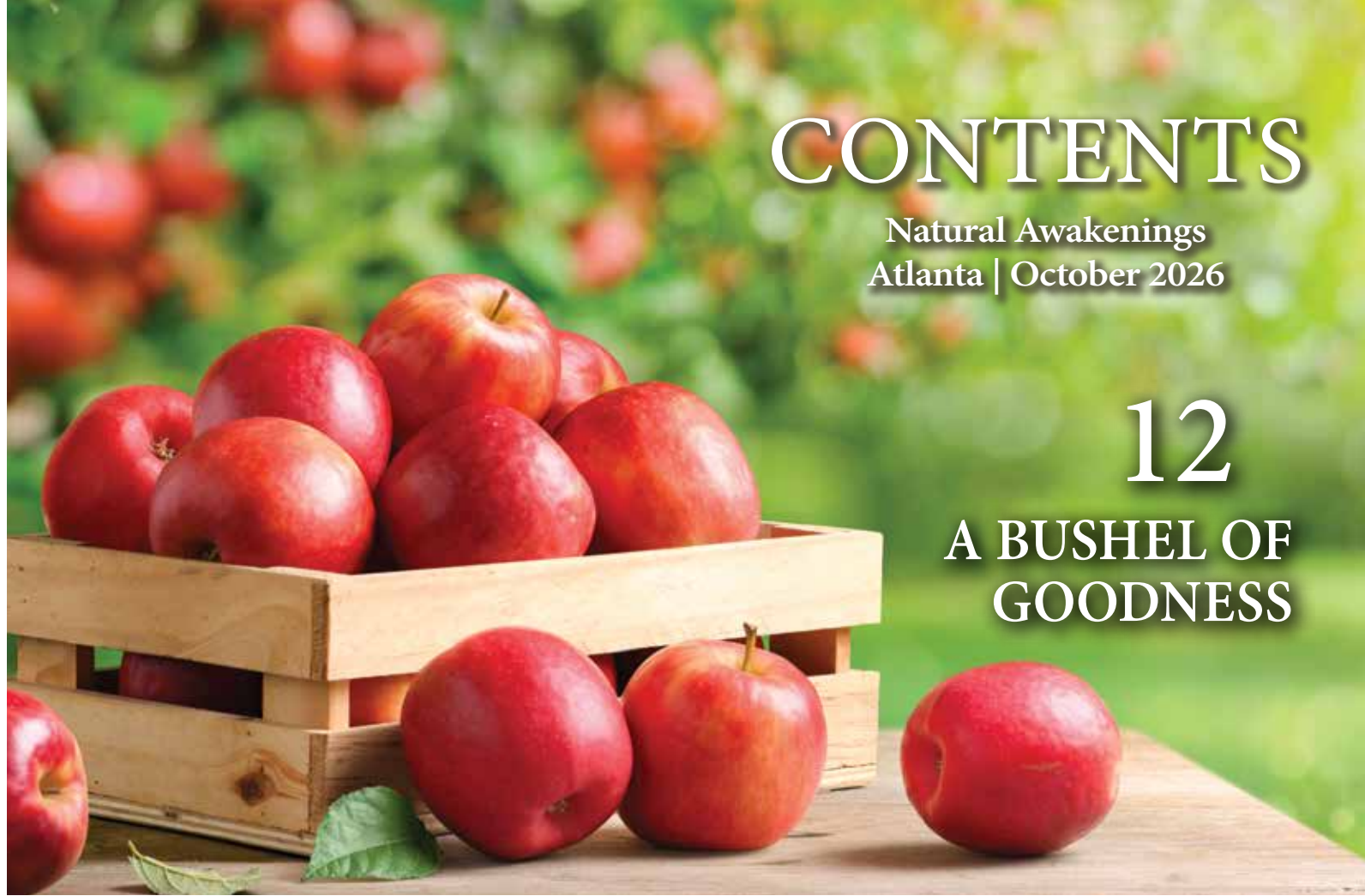
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Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation
350 Main St., Ste 9B, Bedminster, NJ 07921
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Correction: In our September article Atlanta Yoga and The Autumn Equinox, we misstated the autumn equinox date. It was September 22.

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When Adrift, Rely on Wisdom

I've had more days lately when I feel emotionally adrift. I consider myself, generally speaking, a fairly positive, upbeat person who is very outgoing and genuinely likes people. On the days I don't feel this way, I tend to feel disconnected. At such times, it helps me to recall the words of the wise. I've just combed through a stack of quotations and would like to share a few of my favorites with you.

"Every time you judge yourself, you break your own heart."

—Swami Kripalvanandaji

"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

—John Milton

"If we do not transform our pain, we will most assuredly transmit it."

—Richard Rohr

"The problem is acceptance, which is something we're taught not to do. We're taught to improve uncomfortable situations, to change things, alleviate unpleasant feelings."

—Anne Lamott

"Holding on to anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die."

—Anonymous

"When you are able to see them as victims of suffering, the nectar of compassion will flow in your heart."

—Thich Nhat Hanh

"I do not at all understand the mystery of grace—only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us."

—Anne Lamott

"Looking back over a lifetime, you see that love was the answer to everything."

—Ray Bradbury

"Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon? Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

—Mary Oliver



Publisher, Natural Awakenings Atlanta. Paul's professional background includes strategic planning, marketing management and qualitative research. His spiritual orientation is nondual, drawing from Buddhism, yoga and Advaita Vedanta.



Metaphysical Shops Exhibit Works by Local Artists

Works by Rita Omark at The Well of Roswell
The Well of Roswell features works by artist Rita Omark in an exhibition on view through December 12, with a reception from 2 to 4 p.m. on October 11. Omark was the The Well of Roswell's first guest artist five years ago, and co-owner Becky Arrington says it invited her back to show how her creativity and style have developed.

Omark is self-taught and holds a certificate from the Atlanta Botanical Garden Drawing Program. Her studio of 14 years is located at Sycamore Place Gallery in Decatur, where she also participates in an independent-projects art class with artist and teacher Sylvia Cross.

"Pure color drives the process for Rita, as her vision for others viewing her art is to follow color and line and be transported to that 'other place,'" says Arrington. "Her style is eclectic, and she works with many media: acrylic and acrylic inks, watercolor, oil pastels, graphite and pen, colored pencil and collage."



Abstracted Forms



Repose

Omark enjoys painting images from her imagination, dreams and vision quests. Most often, she says, something "all its own" comes through for expression.

The Rita Omark exhibition runs through December 12 at The Well of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Parkway, Suite 300, in Roswell. For more information about the artist, visit rita-omark.fineartamerica.com.

The Well of Roswell is also seeking artists for 2027. Interested artists may send examples of their work and a short bio to TheWellOfRoswell@gmail.com.



Stretch

Phoenix & Dragon Features Art by Diana Eaves
Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore hosts artist Diana Eaves' first solo exhibition from October 2 through October 29. Her work has been exhibited at Kai Lin Gallery and the Zuckerman Museum of Art. Eaves also led the design team for a sculpture dedicated to Silenced Voices in The Southern Museum's permanent collection.

"Diana's works were exceedingly popular in our group shows over the years, and we are happy to host her first solo exhibition," says Rachel Mara, curator at Phoenix and Dragon.

Eaves primarily uses oils and takes an expressionistic approach to explore gesture, movement, and presence. Her paintings combine loose marks and vibrant color, moving between representation and abstraction. The exhibit is free to the public.

The Diana Eaves exhibition runs October 2 through October 29 at Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore. Phoenix & Dragon is located at 5531 Roswell Rd NE in Sandy Springs.

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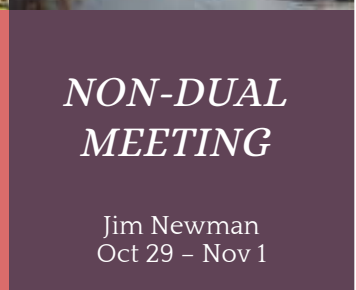
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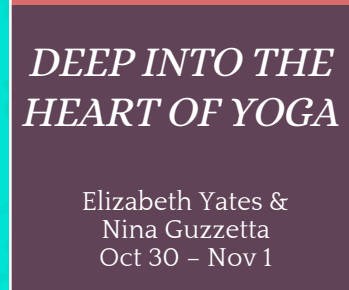
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Rolting Training Offered in Atlanta in 2027

The Dr. Ida Rolf Institute is offering its professional Roling Structural Integration education in Atlanta beginning in March 2027. The new location gives students in the Southeast another option for completing in-person training toward certification as a Certified Rolfer.

Rolting Structural Integration is a form of manual therapy and movement education that works with connective tissue, or *fascia*. The institute describes the practice as supporting greater ease, balance and organization in the body.

Founded in 1971, the nonprofit Dr. Ida Rolf Institute is the original school established to carry forward the work of Dr. Ida P. Rolf. Its Roling Certification Program includes 731 clock hours covering anatomy, fascia and connective tissue, movement, touch, structural integration and hands-on clinical education. The institute also provides Advanced Roling Structural Integration, Rolf Movement Integration and continuing education.

“There is growing interest in fascia and the role connective tissue plays in how people move and experience their bodies,” says executive director Samantha Sherwin, EdD.

Tuition varies by program and phase of training. Current tuition, admissions and financial aid information is available at rolf.org/courses.

For more information, call 303-449-5903, email admissions@rolf.org or visit rolf.org.

A Bushel of Goodness

Enchanting Ways to Enjoy Apples

by Marlaina Donato



Nothing beats the first crisp bite of a blushing Macintosh or the cozy aroma of an apple cobbler bubbling in the oven on a cool October day. Autumn is the perfect season to celebrate the nearly 100 apple varieties grown in the United States. From tossing matchstick-thin slices of Pink Lady into a fresh salad and shredding a Golden Delicious for a tangy slaw to blending a Granny Smith into a bright dressing or savoring a warm, lightly sweetened turnover, this timeless fruit is as wholesome as it is delicious.

Everyday Superfood

Apples are more than just a fall favorite—they are a powerhouse of health benefits. According to the Mayo Clinic, apples are packed with inflammation-fighting antioxidants that help protect against lung, colorectal and certain breast cancers. Their fiber aids digestion, supports a healthy weight and studies show that eating apples regularly may lower the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

Apples are rich in quercetin, a flavonoid that promotes heart health. Eating just two apples a day may even help reduce high cholesterol. “One medium apple contains four to five grams of fiber, much of which is found in the skin,” says Ronald Weiss, a dual board-certified physician, botanist, farmer and founder of Ethos Farm Project, in

Long Valley, New Jersey. “The soluble fiber, called pectin, acts as a prebiotic, feeding the beneficial bacteria that live in the gut. Pectin produces short-chain fatty acids that nourish the cells lining the colon, reduce inflammation and support a healthy digestive tract.”

Weiss notes that every apple is a healthy choice, but different varieties offer slightly different nutritional profiles because of their unique polyphenol content. Deeply colored apples often contain higher levels of antioxidants like anthocyanins, while tart varieties such as Granny Smith are slightly lower in natural sugars and high in beneficial polyphenols. For the greatest health boost, enjoy apples with the skin on, where much of the fiber and antioxidants live.

Sweet and Savory Magic

While apples shine in classic desserts, they are also a versatile star in everyday meals. “I make a cabbage slaw with apples all year long. It’s great on tacos, as a side dish or a big salad for crowds,” says Amy Pennington, a Seattle-based cook, urban farmer and author of *Apples: From Harvest to Table*. Once a self-professed apple skeptic, she fell in love with seasonal heirloom varieties at her local farmers markets.

One of Pennington’s favorite indulgences is a festive breakfast of potato latkes (pancakes) topped with homemade applesauce and sour cream served with a glass of champagne. Her apple chutney with ginger, cayenne and Indian spices like cardamom, cinnamon and clove is a flavorful partner for cheese boards or sandwiches. And for a fun winter treat, she suggests homemade apple chips made by slicing apples thinly, brushing them with honey water and dehydrating them until they are crisp.

Olwen Woodier, a cooking instructor, farm owner and author of *The Apple Cookbook: 125 Freshly Picked Recipes*, enjoys tossing halved, cored apples into the roasting pan alongside onions and peppers with chicken, pork tenderloin or other roasts. She also adds diced apples to stews and sautés apples with onions and herbs to complement fish or vegetarian curries. Woodier, a cooking instructor and the owner of Glenfiddich Farm Cookery & Gardens, in Leesburg, Virginia, loves to incorporate apples into chutneys, sauces, butters, jams and jellies.

For preservation, freezing is a simple alternative to canning. Woodier recommends blanching fresh slices or cored apples for one minute before placing them in the freezer. “Applesauce, baked goods, ready-to-bake pies or whole apples can all go in the freezer,” she says.

Healthy Goodness

From orchard to table, apples offer endless ways to nourish the body and delight the senses—proof that the old saying holds true: an apple a day really can keep the doctor away. 🍏

Marlaina Donato is an author, painter and composer. Connect at [WildflowerAndWoodSmoke.com](#).

CHICKEN CURRY SALAD WITH APPLES AND PARSLEY

YIELD: 2 TO 4 SERVINGS

- 2 cups chicken stock
- ½ lb boneless skinless chicken breast
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp curry powder
- ¼ tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1 medium apple (Gala, Cortland or Honeycrisp), cored and diced
- 1 Tbsp raisins, chopped
- ½ cup torn fresh parsley leaves

In a small saucepan, add the chicken stock and set over medium-high heat. When the stock is just starting to bubble, reduce the heat to medium and submerge the chicken breast in the broth. Cook, turning once, for about 15 minutes, until the chicken is totally cooked through and firm.

Remove the chicken breast from the stock and set on a plate to cool. (Strain and save any leftover stock for another use.)

Once it is cool, cut the poached chicken into 1-inch diced pieces and place them in a medium bowl. Add the mayonnaise, curry, paprika, salt and pepper; fold together until the ingredients are well mixed and the spices are evenly incorporated.

Add the apple, raisins and parsley leaves; fold together until just combined.

Serve the salad stuffed in a pita, on sandwich bread or plated with a green salad on the side.

Recipe courtesy of Amy Pennington from *Apples: From Harvest to Table* by Amy Pennington (St. Martin’s Griffin, NY).



GRILLED TUNA OR TOFU WITH APPLE CHUTNEY

YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 4 tuna steaks or 8 thick slices of solid tofu pressed with a clean towel to release water
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1-inch piece of ginger, grated or chopped fine
- 2-4 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- Store-bought or homemade apple chutney

Place the tuna steaks or tofu in a single layer in a large dish.

In a bowl, combine the marinade of vinegar, ginger, garlic, brown sugar, salt and pepper.

Pour the marinade over the tuna or tofu. Turn to coat both sides and leave at room temperature for about 30 minutes.

Remove tuna or tofu from the dish, discard or reheat the marinade in a small saucepan for serving with the tuna/tofu.

Return the tuna or tofu to the dish and drizzle with the olive oil and sesame oil. Turn to coat both sides.

Heat an indoor grill to medium-high or outdoor grill to high with racks positioned about 4 inches from the heat.

Grill the tuna for 3 to 4 minutes for medium-rare. Grill the tofu for about the same time or until nicely browned to the chef’s liking.

Serve with apple chutney.

Recipe courtesy of Olwen Woodier. Excerpted from *The Apple Cookbook* © by Olwen Woodier, photography © by Leigh Beisch, used with permission from Storey Publishing.



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FARRO, MUSHROOMS AND APPLES

YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

4-6 large garlic cloves
 1 cup or big handful of fresh parsley
 2 Tbsp olive oil; drizzle more as needed
 1 medium sweet or red onion, diced
 1 or 2 apples (Fuji, Cameo, Honeycrisp or whatever is available), peeled, cored and diced
 8-12 oz mushrooms, sliced
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 1½ cups farro, prepared according to package directions
 ¼ cup apple juice or vegetable broth
 ½-1 cup chopped cashews, walnuts or pistachios, toasted 3 to 5 minutes over low heat, if desired
 1 cup snipped fresh herbs (basil, cilantro, or whatever is available)

Place the garlic and parsley into a small food processor and pulse until minced, or mince finely by hand.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic mixture, onion and apples, and sauté for 5 minutes.

Stir in the mushrooms, salt and pepper, and sauté for 10 minutes.

Mix in the prepared farro and apple juice (or broth) and cook until the farro is tender and warmed through.

Stir in the nuts and herbs. Taste and add more salt or pepper as desired.

To accommodate meat eaters, add sliced sausages, sautéed shrimp or leftover chicken.

Recipe courtesy of Olwen Woodier. Excerpted from The Apple Cookbook © by Olwen Woodier, photography © by Leigh Beisch, used with permission from Storey Publishing.



Charity Burggraaf

CREAMY MUSTARD-CARROT VINAIGRETTE

YIELD: 1 CUP

1 cup water	2 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
1 Tbsp chia seeds	1 Tbsp maple syrup
½ cup diced carrot (about 1 large carrot)	1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
½ apple, peeled and cored	Kosher salt
	Freshly ground black pepper

In a small bowl, combine the water and chia seeds and let sit for at least 30 minutes, forming a chia gel.

When the chia is soft and gelled, in a blender, puree the chia gel, carrot, apple, ginger, syrup, mustard, salt and pepper until very smooth, about 3 minutes.

Store any extra vinaigrette in a covered glass jar in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Recipe courtesy of Amy Pennington from Salad Days: Boost Your Health & Happiness with 75 Simple, Satisfying Recipes for Greens, Grains, Proteins and More by Amy Pennington (Sasquatch Books).

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ON HOMEOPATHY

Homeopathy vs. Herbal Medicine

Two Natural Approaches With Very Different Principles

by Athena Eamon

A stroll down the natural health aisle may reveal bottles of herbal and homeopathic remedies sitting side by side on the shelf. Although they may seem similar, these two therapeutic systems have distinct origins, preparation methods, concentrations, dosage philosophies and ways of working in the body.



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Herbal medicine, also known as botanical medicine or phytotherapy, harnesses the power of plant parts like leaves, flowers, roots, bark and seeds to prevent and treat illness. The chemical compounds found in the herbs interact with human physiology and can be studied pharmacologically and clinically to understand their effects on biological processes.

While some homeopathic remedies are derived from plants used in herbal medicine, others come from minerals, chemicals and even animal sources. Homeopathy operates on the principle that “like cures like”. It uses highly diluted natural substances to encourage the body’s own healing mechanisms.

Before embarking on herbal or homeopathic treatments, it is important to consult all members of a patient’s whole health care team to ensure that potential interactions are managed and the best integrative care is supported.

Athena Eamon is a researcher and parent with nearly two decades of experience studying and using homeopathy, integrative health and whole-person wellness.



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by Zak Logan



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Sleep apnea is a common, yet often undiagnosed, sleep disorder affecting millions worldwide. In the U.S. alone, 30 million people suffer from it, but 80 percent remain unaware, putting them at risk for serious health issues like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke and depression. While obstructive sleep apnea caused by structural airway problems is

the most prevalent form, central and complex sleep apnea, which are neurological in origin, also pose significant health risks over time.

Signs and Symptoms

Sleep apnea can range from mild to severe, but all types share a common problem: compromised oxygen levels due

to disrupted breathing, which prevents deep, restorative sleep. Symptoms vary and may include sporadic snoring, mouth breathing, fatigue despite adequate sleep, headaches and brain fog. Treatments like Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) therapy and adaptive servo-ventilation (ASV) are often prescribed, but a proper diagnosis is essential to explore all treatment options, including lifestyle changes.

Contributing Factors

Several factors may contribute to sleep apnea, such as poor posture, habitual mouth breathing and chronic systemic inflammation. According to Amy Dayries, an integrative dentist in Roswell, Georgia, obesity is a common companion of sleep apnea, however individuals of healthy weight can also be affected due to their specific airway anatomy, jaw or craniofacial structure, enlarged tonsils, nasal obstruction, age, family history or other factors. She also notes that chronic sleep disruption can trigger inflammatory and

neuroendocrine responses, resulting in sympathetic dominance, where the body remains in a heightened state of alertness instead of resting.

The Importance of Airway Health

A narrow airway or jaw development problems may often be overlooked. Dr. Tony Ebel, a pediatric chiropractor and family health educator, emphasizes that the airway is a foundational, not just specialty, concern. “The airway is a neurologically controlled system involving the tongue, palate, jaw, throat and diaphragm, all coordinated by the brainstem and cranial nerves running through the upper neck, including the vagus nerve,” he explains.

From a dental perspective, Dayries highlights oral or craniofacial features that require further screening such as a highly arched palate, significant dental crowding, a relatively small or retruded lower jaw that sits too far back relative to the upper jaw, enlarged tonsils or a large tongue. Research published this year in *Frontiers in Allergy* suggests that histamine-induced chronic nasal congestion from allergic rhinitis can worsen or even trigger obstructive sleep apnea.

Sleep Apnea in Youngsters

Children and teenagers experience sleep apnea differently than adults. “Instead of loud snoring and obvious daytime sleepiness, it involves sweating during sleep, especially around the head and neck; picky or slow eating; gagging on certain textures; fatigue that gets written off as typical teenage behavior; falling grades; anxiety; depression; irritability; difficulty focusing; headaches; or getting sick often,” explains Ebel, who recommends getting a nervous system evaluation from a trained pediatric chiropractor.

Seek Professional Guidance

Dayries suggests seeking professional help if poor sleep becomes persistent and is accompanied by loud or habitual snoring,

witnessed pauses in breathing, nighttime choking or gasping. Dentists can play a crucial role in screening for signs and risk factors, and may refer patients for further medical evaluation. They can also collaborate with sleep physicians to treat adults with custom oral appliances that gently move forward and stabilize the lower jaw during sleep, keeping the airway open. This type of oral appliance therapy can be particularly beneficial for adults that cannot tolerate CPAP therapy or prefer an alternative.

Ebel notes that while airway-focused dentists or orthodontists can assess palate width, jaw position and tongue restriction, other health practitioners can also help identify the deeper root cause of the problem. Sleep physicians or pediatric ear, nose and throat doctors can order sleep studies and evaluate tonsils and adenoids. Myofunctional therapists can retrain tongue posture and orofacial muscle function, while neurologically focused chiropractors can assess brainstem and autonomic nervous system function, which often occurs underneath or upstream of all those other layers.

Lifestyle Changes for Better Sleep

Changing habits can significantly impact sleep apnea. Ebel recommends breathing through the nose, sleeping on the side or back, rather than the stomach, and using a pillow that fills the space between the ear and shoulder without pushing the head forward. Dayries suggests avoiding large meals shortly before bed, limiting caffeine and alcohol, especially later in the day, and maintaining a regular sleep schedule.

By understanding the hidden causes and overlooked symptoms of sleep apnea, individuals can take proactive steps toward better breathing and sounder sleep, ultimately improving their overall health and well-being. 🌿

Zak Logan is a freelance writer dedicated to natural healing and getting back to basics.

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Life After Cancer

The Healing Journey

by Marlaina Donato



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A cancer diagnosis can be frightening, and the treatments that follow—chemotherapy, radiation, surgery—are often grueling. But there is hope. The American Cancer Society estimates that 18.6 million Americans were living with a history of cancer last year. Many survivors emerge with a renewed outlook, embracing experiences that nurture the body, mind and spirit.

Even after treatment ends, lingering effects can shape daily life, including fatigue, pain, stiffness, nerve discomfort, emotional ups and downs, fear of recurrence, and changes in body image and physical function. According to the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, long-term wellness for cancer survivors often relies on smarter nutrition, restorative sleep, regular exercise, stress management and meaningful social connections.

Rebuilding the Foundation and Finding Purpose

“Our body is an incredible and miraculous self-healing biological organism, but it needs the correct support and nourishment,” says Sally Wellbeloved, a women’s cancer coach, holistic health advocate and survivor in Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, South Africa. “We need to come into right relationship with our physical body.”

Wellbeloved knows firsthand what it means to rebuild after triple-negative breast cancer. Learning to listen to her body became essential. “I have learned to honor my body’s needs, and this was only possible when the noise in my head could settle down,” she explains. “It has been quite the process and taken me a long time to decondition that way of being and living.”

Her approach combines a plant-based, organic diet with targeted supplementation based on bloodwork and genetic testing. She also prioritizes a return to the natural rhythms of life—slowing down after sunset, avoiding devices at least three hours before bed and embracing deep, restorative sleep. To manage stress and heal emotional wounds, she recommends meditation, yoga, dancing, walking in nature, swimming in the ocean and equine-assisted therapy. She also uses emotional freedom technique, which combines cognitive focus with fingertip tapping on specific body meridian points, as well as somatic therapy, which uses awareness of physical sensations to help heal emotional pain.

For Wellbeloved, finding purpose is a lifeline. “This is the most fundamental thing that pulls us forward and inspires us—that thing you have always wanted to do, but thought you couldn’t or weren’t good enough,” she says. Her advice is to move toward that dream day by day. “Just take one, small step,” she emphasizes. “This is what got me through my darkest time and became my mantra.”

Moving Forward With Strength and Confidence

At Wellness House, in Hinsdale, Illinois, Jadyn Chipman helps survivors rebuild through movement. As the center’s exercise and stress-management programs manager, she oversees fitness classes, yoga, walking groups and other forms of movement modalities, helping participants safely regain their strength, flexibility, balance and endurance in a supportive environment while also learning transformative lessons they can carry into everyday life.

“The end of treatment can be a major transition,” Chipman explains. “Our movement programs are designed to meet people where they are in their cancer journey. Mentally, exercise can reduce stress, improve mood and restore confidence and a sense of control. On a deeper level, movement can bring joy, connection and a renewed sense of possibility.”

Chipman is excited about the growing understanding that quality of life is an important part of cancer care, both during treatment and beyond. She has witnessed how exercise, good nutrition, stress management and integrative therapies can empower people to take an active role in their recovery and well-being.

Healing Through Creativity

For some, recovery comes through creativity. Melissa Greene, a writing coach in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, founded her program *Write From the Heart* after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, as a way to process grief and fear. “Writing has helped me through life—no, saved my life—and I wanted to share what I understood about my own process,” says the published poet, lyricist and short story writer whose career spans 40 years.

Her stream-of-consciousness writing workshops create a welcoming and genial space where students can safely explore their memories, thoughts and feelings on

the page. Although they are welcome to read what they’ve written in class, sharing is optional, and laughter is encouraged. “I discovered that writing begins from a deep longing to express, not rules or technique, and that humor and whimsy play a huge role in relaxing the nervous system,” she notes.

Some of Greene’s workshops specifically cater to cancer patients and survivors at various medical centers in Pennsylvania. For a 2020 clinical study published in *BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care*, she taught creative writing to participating cancer patients at the Penn State Cancer Institute. The researchers found that this type of creative intervention had a positive effect on the participants’ mood.

“Students may choose to write about the cancer experience, or not,” says Greene. “But, whatever their topic, we are all there to listen, care, support and understand. Writing becomes a tool of comfort, courage and hope that they can reach for throughout recovery and beyond.”



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Making Peace With New Emotions

For breast cancer survivor Karen Villagran, an emergency medical technician in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, healing meant looking inward. Before her diagnosis, she had dedicated her life to helping others, but found it difficult to extend the same empathy and nurturing to herself. "My nervous system was stuck on survival mode for decades," she reflects. "I feel that my cancer diagnosis wasn't the beginning of fear; it was the culmination of it."

The pain of multiple surgeries and treatments prompted her to address deep childhood trauma and unresolved emotional pain. "I had to change my vocabulary of how I spoke to myself, how I felt about myself and how I treated myself," she explains.

With the help of therapy, daily meditation and hypnotherapy, Villagran began to rewire her brain and make new neural pathways. "Physical recovery saved my body, but emotional recovery is what's finally teaching my nervous system that the danger has passed," she asserts. "Cancer stopped me from rushing through life so I could finally live."

Prioritizing Cancer Screenings

Early detection remains one of the most effective tools in improving outcomes for many cancers. Primary care physicians can determine appropriate screening schedules tailored to the personal and family medical history of their patients. Most private insurance plans and Medicare cover routine, evidence-based screenings with no out-of-pocket cost.

The American Cancer Society provides guidelines for early detection of breast, colon, cervical, endometrial, lung and prostate cancer. Visit [Cancer.org/cancer/screening/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer](https://www.cancer.org/cancer/screening/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer).

Finding Inspiration Online

- **Ulman Foundation** (UlmanFoundation.org).



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org) offers cancer support programs and services for adolescents and young adults.

- **Livestrong Foundation** (Livestrong.org) is dedicated to improving the quality of life of individuals affected by cancer. Their CancerFit and exercise oncology resources help survivors rebuild strength, endurance and confidence after treatment.
- **Brave Like Gabe Foundation** (BraveLikeGabe.org) inspires people to share their cancer stories, while also working to find treatment for rare cancers.
- **Team Phoenix** (AuroraHealthCare.org/services/cancer/cancer-support/team-phoenix) empowers women to become proactive in their cancer survivorship, redefining themselves as athletes through the joys of exercise and living well.
- **American Cancer Society Voices of Hope** (ACSResources.org/voicesofhope) features cancer survivors and caregivers that speak about their cancer journeys in order to inspire others.
- **Cleveland Clinic** (ClevelandClinic.org/departments/cancer/patient-education/art-therapy) helps cancer patients tap into their emotions through personal expression and creative experiences with guidance from professional art therapists. 🎨

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

Yoga



A Yogic Foundation for Aging Well

by Octavia Nasr

From elementary school teacher to yoga teacher, Holly Bonvissuto, a movement and wellness specialist and author, has built a career bridging many worlds. Using yoga as her foundation and compass, she lived through years of health challenges and a naggingly undiagnosed autoimmune condition. Teaching yoga helped her see that she was hardly the only one dealing with physical setbacks. Instead of letting her often daunting and debilitating journey slow her down, she used the lessons it offered to create a wellness method, write a book and help her clients stay limber along the way.

"I've been given the gift to teach so that I can help break complex things down for people in a way that they understand," says Bonvissuto. Today, she teaches at Lift Yoga in Johns Creek with an emphasis on mobility, strength and holistic health. In her classes, she applies the 4S Method, a practice she developed for intuitive and sustainable wellness. The method is comprised of four pillars of wellness—strength, suppleness, sustenance and serenity—that together support functional movement, healthy aging and vitality. She considers it a complete individualized approach to well-being that adults across generations and diverse backgrounds can utilize. Yoga plays a big role in each.

The 4S Method was born out of Bonvissuto's observations of her clients' needs. "It started as a workshop series on aging well," she says. After that, the physical shifts she experienced during perimenopause added a new dimension to her quest. As her workshops filled up, she followed up with clients and wellness experts and became convinced she needed to share the principles of the four pillars with others.

To build core strength and stability, muscular integrity and joint health, Bonvissuto uses foundational yoga poses in her classes, such as warrior, tree, mountain, cobra and bridge.

For suppleness, Bonvissuto includes twists and deep stretches to foster flexibility, mobility and healthy range of motion. She reminds her students to allow the body to get into the shapes naturally, to notice how the poses feel in their bodies, and that



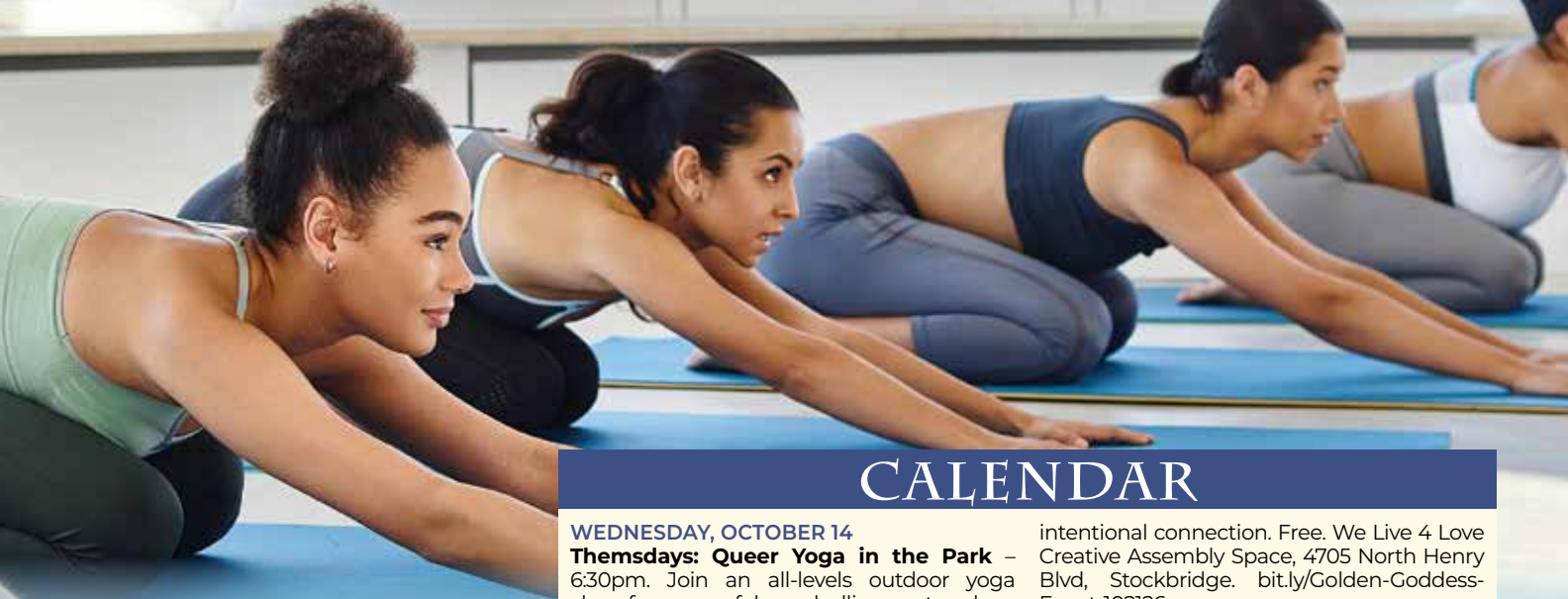
Kathryn Paige Photography

"there should be no pain here. It's just a good stretch." She encourages them to cultivate flexibility in life as well as on the mat.

To cultivate sustenance, Bonvissuto teaches that nourishing the physical body is key for healthy living and that how and what people eat reflect their level of self-respect. She also says that yoga gives us opportunities to practice "sustenance of the heart." In class, she reminds people to notice what is weighing heavily on their heart and spirit, and guides them to soften and make room for breath to flow through.

Serenity can be found in the focus and balance of postural yoga as well as the peace and bliss of meditation, says Bonvissuto. Starting her classes with quiet moments of self-inquiry and intention-setting, she believes people owe it to themselves to practice nervous system regulation, presence and stress reduction.

Bonvissuto's 200-hour teacher training in 2019 was a good introduction, but she felt it didn't show her the true depth of yoga. So she dove into numerous trainings and specialized certifications. From 2021 to 2025, in addition to teaching yoga classes, she served as Director of Operations for Lift Yoga's multiple locations



CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Themsdays: Queer Yoga in the Park – 6:30pm. Join an all-levels outdoor yoga class for queer folx and allies centered on movement, softness, self-expression and community. Bring mat and water. Free. 740 Cherokee Ave SE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Queer-Yoga-Atlanta-101426.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Morning Yoga at Pittsburgh Yards – 9-10am. Start your day with an active, energizing vinyasa flow in a welcoming yoga community. Bring mat, water, towel and props. Free. Pittsburgh Yards, Atlanta. bit.ly/Pittsburgh-Yoga-101726.

Reach & Release with Coach Angie Be – 10-11:30am. Community wellness event with yoga, movement and stress release for all fitness levels. Free; optional Reiki or assisted stretching from \$10. Wade Walker Park, 5585 Rockbridge Rd SW, Stone Mountain. bit.ly/Reach-And-Release-101726.

Breath and Sound – “You Are the Medicine” – 3-5:30pm. Experience rebirthing® breathwork and immersive gong sound with Ananda and Gretchen to release emotional blockages and support healing and deep connection. Bring blankets, pillows and eye mask. \$55 preregistration; \$65 door. bit.ly/Yoga-101826.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

Yoga & Sound Bath Experience – 4-5pm. Beginner-friendly yoga flow with live singing bowls supports relaxation, nervous system regulation and emotional release, followed by guided meditation. \$15. Free parking. 1800 Jonesboro Rd SE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Yoga-Sound-Bath-101826.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

Atlanta Laughter Yoga Club – 5:30-6:15pm. Enjoy laughter exercises, deep breathing and playful activities designed to energize and connect. Free; donations accepted. Trolley Barn, 963 Edgewood Ave NE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Atlanta-Laughter-Yoga-102026.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

Almost Free Yoga – 6:30-7:30pm. All-levels yoga designed to help participants move, stretch, breathe and connect. \$10.78. Medical & Sports Massage, 6000 Lake Forrest Dr NW, Ste 375, Sandy Springs. bit.ly/Sandy-Springs-Yoga-102126.

Get Grounded with the Golden Goddess – 7:30-8:30pm. Wellness experience featuring journaling, chakra awareness, breathwork, meditation, gentle yoga, sound healing and

intentional connection. Free. We Live 4 Love Creative Assembly Space, 4705 North Henry Blvd, Stockbridge. bit.ly/Golden-Goddess-Event-102126.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

Free Yoga at Campus 244 – 9-10am. All-levels yoga powered by lululemon, followed by socializing. Bring a yoga mat, water and comfortable clothing. Free. Campus 244, 244 Perimeter Center Pkwy NE, Dunwoody. bit.ly/Free-Yoga-Campus244-102426.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

Zen Flow Yoga – 5-6pm. Relax, recharge and reconnect during an all-levels yoga class led by Yogi Che. First three classes free; get pass at front desk. Beulah Community Family Life Center, 2340 Clifton Springs Rd, Decatur. bit.ly/Zen-Flow-Yoga-102826.

Yoga on the Green (Fall Sessions) – 6-7pm. All-levels yoga with pose options for beginners through advanced practitioners. Bring mat or towel and water. Free. Greenville St. Park, 51 Greenville St, Newnan. bit.ly/Yoga-Fall-Sessions-102826.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

Vegans & Vinyasa – 6am. Intimate morning yoga with mindful movement, community connection, fresh-baked vegan biscuits and fresh-pressed juice after class. \$15.52. Atlanta Breathwork Therapy Center, 216 Powers Ferry Rd, Marietta. bit.ly/Vegans-Vinyasa-103026.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

5th Saturday: Mother Nature Yoga – 10am-12pm. Beginner-friendly, accessible yoga and meditation with Missy Goss-Coln to reconnect with nature, body and breath. Bring mat, props and water. Free-\$14.01. Cascade Springs Nature Preserve, 2852 Cascade Rd SW, Atlanta. bit.ly/Mother-Nature-Yoga-103126.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Warrior Yoga – 4pm. Free yoga and meditation event designed to foster resilience, enhance health and build community among veterans. Camp Southern Ground, 100 Southern Ground Pkwy, Fayetteville. bit.ly/Warrior-Yoga-110126.

FRIDAY, NOV 13-SUNDAY, NOV 15

Balanced Intention: The Practice and Theory of Slow Yoga Practices – Fri, 2:30-5pm, 6:30-8pm; Sat-Sun, 9:30am-6pm. Explore yin, restorative and somatic practices with Patty Schmidt and Marti Yura. 20 CECs available. \$395; \$345 by Nov 2. bit.ly/Vista-Yoga.

and co-led the studio’s yoga teacher trainings. In these capacities, she got in touch with the studio community’s needs and how it responded to the studio’s classes. She began creating her own yoga offerings always merging styles together. Her Roll & Restore class, for example, incorporates restorative yoga with myofascial rolling. Her Flow & Mobility class merges traditional yoga with functional mobility.

With every additional certification, Bonvissuto felt she gained a deeper understanding of bodies, anatomy and movement science. “Each step of the way was a different evolution of how I showed up as a yoga teacher,” she says. And her advanced menopause education helped her realize how important strength training is as a complement to yoga.

Bonvissuto’s new book, *The Good Living Code: A Rebel’s Guide to Aging Well*, introduces the 4S Method in great detail. It also documents her journey of physical suffering, the burden of repeated misdiagnoses and the welcome relief of

learning the name of the condition that haunted her for years—lupus—a chronic autoimmune disease in which the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy tissues and organs without a known trigger.

For Bonvissuto, helping people is a calling, and teaching yoga is a gift of energy exchange between herself and her students. It’s all about honoring the lineage, history and philosophy of yoga every time she shows up to teach, she says. Before every practice, she walks the room “to set a protective intention.” During *savasana*, or corpse pose, “I imagine my heart swelling with love and passing as much love and energy as possible to every single person on their mat.”

Five Recommendations

To newly certified yoga teachers, Bonvissuto recommends taking five steps after they’ve completed a 200-hour yoga teacher training to make the most of their training:

1. Teach immediately. Volunteer, teach friends or neighbors and log hours right away to discover your unique voice.

2. Maintain your personal practice. Do not sacrifice your personal time on the mat for teaching time. “Lose your practice, lose your center.”

3. Cultivate curiosity. Follow what stirs you, but avoid jumping straight into a 300-hour training until you have gained practical classroom mastery or management skills.

4. Release perfectionism. Accept that human errors happen to both experienced and novice teachers alike.

5. Build peer support. Connect with fellow yoga teacher training alumni or teachers to prevent the feeling of isolation that’s common in early instruction. 🙌



Born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, Octavia Nasr spent two decades at CNN as a news editor and anchor and has been teaching yoga since 2015. Follow Octavia and pitch her stories on Instagram @OctaviaEightfold.

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What We Can Learn From Astronauts

A Conversation With Frank White

by Sandra Yeyati



Courtesy of Frank White

humanity expands into the solar ecosystem. He is a professor and dean at Kepler Space University and serves as SpaceTech and AI curator for Intro-act, a financial technology company that connects investors with companies seeking funding.

White graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard College and is a Rhodes Scholar. He earned a master's degree in politics from the University of Oxford. For nearly two decades, he worked for Harvard University in development communications.

What is the Overview Effect, and what inspired you to develop the concept?

The Overview Effect is defined as the experience of seeing Earth from a distance, highlighting its wholeness against the backdrop of the universe. Astronauts emphasize that Earth is our only home, likening it to a spaceship, where, as they said, “We’re all in it together.” This feeling of oneness and unity aligns with the teachings of sages, philosophers and spiritual leaders over the centuries.

What common themes or emotions have astronauts shared with you?

While maps and boundaries are useful, the astronauts come back understanding that we’re fighting and killing each other over borders that exist only in our minds, not on Earth.

Another common theme is noticing how thin the atmosphere is and realizing how lucky we are to be alive. Only about 37 percent of Earth is land where we can live comfortably. We inhabit a tiny sliver with just enough atmosphere to sustain us, underscoring the fragility of our lives. Seeing Earth full of life against the dark backdrop of the universe, without any evidence of life elsewhere, evokes a feeling of gratitude for our existence.

Lastly, there’s a sense that all of life on Earth is connected, and, again, that we’re all in this together. The metaphor of Spaceship Earth is extremely helpful because astronauts emphasize that we are all crew members. There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We all need to contribute to keep the spaceship functioning.

How have astronauts shared the overview perspective with all of us back home?

The Apollo missions in the 1960s began the process of bringing the Overview Effect down to Earth. The iconic 1968 Earthrise image showed our planet full of life and intelligence against the universe’s blackness and the Moon’s barren surface, emphasizing how precious our planet is and giving the environmental movement a huge boost, according to historians.

The Artemis II mission this year stood out with its joyful, human and relatable astronauts and Christina Koch’s Earthset photograph as they flew around the Moon. Commander Reid Wiseman, whom I had interviewed in 2019, said, “We wanted to bring the world together, and I think we did.”

What is the thesis of your book The Cosma Hypothesis?

The Cosma Hypothesis proposes a new philosophy of space exploration for people to debate and discuss. Initially, the rationale for space exploration was focused on how we can benefit, what we can exploit—a mindset that persists today with talk of mining asteroids for precious metals. I support that effort, but I want it to be balanced with a non-exploitative approach, as well.

I propose that our role is to bring life, intelligence and self-awareness to other parts of the universe because we are part of a living, conscious and intelligent ecosystem. In the book, I also announce the founding of a nonprofit, The Human Space Program, which promotes these principles.

What projects is The Human Space Program undertaking?

One of our projects is the Overview Round Table for Youth, which immerses young people in a virtual reality space station orbiting Earth where they can engage in weekly projects to improve the world. Participants have quests and seek help and advice in a supportive environment.

Another project involves building a computer model to test assumptions about future space evolution. We will be able to examine the costs and trade-offs of space-based solar power, for example, which involves collecting solar energy from orbit and beaming it to Earth. Or we can look at the consequences of establishing a human community on Mars. Computer modeling is better than arguing about things.

Are you planning to go to space?

I am. My main goal in going is to amplify the Overview Effect. While realizing this lifelong ambition is important to me personally, disseminating the message is even more crucial. The Overview Effect is fundamentally about Earth. I love Earth and believe it’s the best planet we have. We had to leave the planet and look back at it to grasp the reality of our situation and consider doing things differently—to love and appreciate it.

The Overview Effect can be summarized in three words: truth, love and identity. It’s the truth of our situation. We’re on a moving spaceship, and many astronauts return with great love for Earth, shifting their identity from “me” to “we”. 🌱

Sandra Yeyati is the national editor of Natural Awakenings.



To read a longer version of this conversation, visit [TinyURL.com/WhiteWW](https://tinyurl.com/WhiteWW) or scan the QR code.

My Coming brings peace.

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My Sword, that Love which I am, will separate all men, will show the true from the false, will clear the way for the New Light which I bring.

May it be that you can withstand this change and accept My Light.

Many times before have I told you that My Appearance is nigh.

Look then carefully, My friends, and miss Me not.

My Blessing goes with you all.

Maitreya, the World Teacher



Straightening Up

Exercises to Improve Posture and Well-Being

by Tom Whittle

Bad posture in adults often starts in childhood. A 2020 study published in *iScience* surveyed nearly 600,000 children and found that 65 percent had incorrect posture, with a higher prevalence in girls and kids over 10 years old. Contributing factors may include carrying heavy backpacks, especially when slung over one shoulder, excessive screen time, lack of exercise, stress and being underweight. As we age, poor posture can lead to pain, soreness and stiffness throughout the body, according to the Hospital for Special Surgery, in New York City.

Simple changes can make a big difference. Regularly check that the ears are aligned above the shoulders and the shoulders are over the hips. Stand tall with the shoulders pulled back, chest open and stomach slightly

pulled in. Take frequent breaks from the phone, computer and TV to move around.

Rick Richardson, a doctor of physical therapy at the Physical Therapy Center of Excellence, in Bedminster, New Jersey, suggests that daily exercises to loosen tight muscles and strengthen core and back muscles are essential for maintaining body alignment. Here are his recommended stretching and strengthening exercises. As muscles become stronger, incorporate light weights into the strength poses. Always consult a healthcare provider or physical therapist before starting a new exercise program. 🦋

Tom Whittle is publishing manager of Natural Awakenings.

STRETCHING EXERCISES

Upper Trapezius Stretch



While seated, hold the side of the chair with the right hand and grab the top of the head near the ear with the left hand. Gently pull toward the left shoulder, holding for 30 seconds. Keep the neck muscles relaxed throughout the stretch. Switch hands and repeat. Perform two or three sets on each side.

Levator Scapulae Stretch



While seated, hold the side of the chair with the right hand and rotate the head 45 degrees from the right arm. Grab the top of the head with the left hand and pull the nose toward the left armpit. Keep the neck muscles relaxed throughout the stretch. Switch hands and repeat. Perform two or three sets on each side.

Chin Tuck Stretch



While lying on the back, tuck the chin toward the spine to create a double chin, holding for three to five seconds. Avoid nodding or lifting the head during the stretch. Perform 10 to 15 reps, two to three times a day.

STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

Y-Pose Exercise



With toes on the floor and chest on an exercise ball, hold the body straight with arms out in a Y-position and thumbs pointing up. Raise the arms overhead and hold for one to two seconds. Repeat 10 to 15 times, once or twice daily.

T-Pose Exercise



With toes on the floor and chest on an exercise ball, hold the body straight with arms out to the side in a T-position and palms down. Raise the arms from the floor to shoulder height and hold for one to two seconds. Repeat 10 to 15 times, once or twice daily.

W-Pose Exercise



With toes on the floor and chest on an exercise ball, hold the body straight with arms out to the side and elbows bent down. While maintaining bent elbows, raise them to shoulder height and hold for 1 to 2 seconds. Repeat 10 to 15 reps, once or twice daily.

L-Pose Exercise



With toes on the floor and chest on an exercise ball, hold the body straight with arms out to the side and elbows bent down. While maintaining bent elbows, raise them to shoulder height and then rotate the forearms and hands to shoulder height. Hold for one to two seconds. Repeat 10 to 15 times, once or twice daily.

Power of Music for Growing Minds

How Rhythm, Melody and Movement Support Child Development

by Christina Connors



Marina Demiduk/shutterstock

From the first lullaby to the school choir solo, music has always been an integral part of childhood. It shows up in car rides and bath time, in marching bands, bedroom dance parties and the quiet hum of a parent rocking a baby to sleep. It feels so ordinary that it is easy to overlook how extraordinary it actually is. Research consistently demonstrates that musical experiences are not just entertaining; they serve as building blocks for the development of a child's brain, body and heart.

Young Brains Inherently Respond to Sounds

When a child sings, claps, plays an instrument or simply sways to a beat, multiple regions of the brain simultaneously light up. Emily Bevelaqua, a licensed and board-certified music therapist in Connecticut, explains that regular engagement with music fortifies the pathways connecting the brain's right and left hemispheres, thereby supporting growth across every area of development.

Barbara Baker, a registered music therapist and preschool music educator with more than four decades of experience, describes this phenomenon as full sensory engagement. "Learning to play even a simple song asks a child to read notes, feel rhythm and coordinate their hands, all while building the same memory, attention and eye-hand coordination skills they will learn in the classroom," she asserts.

A recent study published in the journal *eLife* used brain imaging and motion tracking to monitor infants as young as 3 months old. The researchers found that babies can process the structure of music almost from birth. However, the drive to physically move in response to it, the initial little bounce or sway, does not emerge until closer to their first birthday, as the brain's auditory and motor pathways mature and establish connections. This serves as a poignant reminder that musicality is already at work long before a child can consciously hold a rhythm.

Music Provides Developmental Advantages

Bevelaqua points out that music enhances working memory and pattern recognition—two foundational skills for reading, language and mathematics. "Music also supports the executive functions that children rely on to focus, plan and adapt," she remarks. "Because it is so flexible, music can be tailored to whatever a child is working on, whether it involves counting, storytelling or simply sitting still for a few more minutes."

The emotional and social benefits of music are equally profound. It provides children with a safe and structured space to explore self-regulation and emotional expression. Group singing, movement and playing instruments naturally enhance prosocial behaviors, including teamwork, cooperation, impulse control and turn-taking. According to Baker, music can serve dual purposes: It can be an energy booster

that encourages dancing and laughter, or a calming presence that helps a child settle down and relax. Songwriting, even a simple improvised tune, can become a genuine outlet for self-expression.

Music and movement are natural partners in supporting coordination, balance and motor development. Whether a child is drumming, marching to a beat or dancing freely in the living room, they are practicing timing and body awareness in a way that feels like play rather than work.

Children Benefit From Early Musical Experiences

According to Baker, “It is never too early to expose children to the wonders of music. From infancy through listening and gentle movement in a parent’s arms, followed by toddler-age group participation and eventually, a structured, teacher-led program, children can build the early musical skills that support learning any instrument down the road,” she explains.

Kids Respond to Encouragement Rather Than Pressure

Both experts concur that the goal is exposure, not perfection. Families can cultivate a love for music by playing a variety of songs at home, attending live performances, participating in group music or movement classes, and allowing a child to have a say in the instrument or activity that captivates their interest. Finding a teacher that shares a compatible personality is as crucial as selecting the right instrument.

The benefits of music stem from active participation, rather than hitting the right note every time. Children do not need to become proficient musicians to experience the positive effects of music on their brains, self-esteem and interpersonal relationships. They simply need the chance to sing, move and make a little noise. 🎵

Christina Connors is a professional singer, a burnout prevention specialist, and CEO and executive director of Soulful Forest, Inc. Learn more at SoulfulForestInc.org.

What If “That’s Just the Way It Is” Isn’t True?

by Linda Minnick

Are you a *Ted Lasso* fan? I am. In one episode, Keeley, the team’s marketing manager, apologizes because the stadium in which they play their first professional game is only half full. She feels as though she has failed the team. But the players don’t see it that way at all. One of them tells her to tell that critical voice in her head to shut up. Why? Because while the stadium may have been only half full, it was still the largest crowd they had ever played in front of.

Keeley saw failure. The team saw success. Same stadium. Same number of people. Completely different reality.

Recently, my husband had cataract surgery. Afterward, he was stunned to discover that the pretty yellow shirt he had recently bought was actually white. (Which, I should point out, is *exactly* what I had been telling him all along.) The shirt hadn’t changed. His ability to see it clearly had.

And when you think about it, isn’t that an interesting metaphor for life?

We live our lives based not simply on what happens to us, but on how we interpret what happens to us. And those interpretations are influenced by years of experiences, assumptions, beliefs, expectations and messages we’ve stored—consciously and subconsciously.



Alena Darne/Pexels.com

Sometimes our beliefs help us. Sometimes they quietly keep us stuck.

Years ago, I worked with a woman who had grown up in a lower-income family. She loved her family and her community, but at a young age she made a very conscious decision: She wanted a different financial future. So she created one. She worked her way through college, earned her master’s degree and eventually completed the advanced education necessary to become a certified therapist.

Professionally and financially, she was extremely successful. She had broken a pat-

tern she once might have believed was her destiny. But there was another area of her life where the pattern continued to operate. Relationships. Again and again, she found herself with partners who were unfaithful.

When we began talking about it, I asked her why she believed it kept happening. Her answer was simple: “Because that’s the way it is. My dad cheated on my mom. My brothers cheat on their wives. That’s just the way it is.”

And there it was.

In one area of her life, she had consciously challenged the reality she grew up with. In another, she had accepted it as normal. The examples she witnessed throughout her life had helped shape what she expected from relationships. Those expectations could influence the behaviors she overlooked, the people she chose, the boundaries she established, and what she unconsciously accepted as simply “the way things are.”

She had changed her financial script, but it never occurred to her that she could change her relationship script, too.

As a professional coach, I see versions of this over and over again—in my clients and, if I’m paying attention, in myself.

“That’s just the way it is” might be one of the most limiting sentences we tell ourselves. Think about how many familiar beliefs sound like this:

- “You have to work hard for your money.”
- “It runs in our family.”
- “That won’t work for me.”
- “What did you expect?”
- “Who do you think you are?”
- “Why do you think they call it ‘work’?”

We hear these things so often that eventually we stop questioning them. They become facts. Except sometimes they aren’t facts at all; they’re *beliefs*. And there’s an enormous difference between the two.

A belief can become a filter through which we interpret opportunities, relationships, success, failure—and even ourselves.

It might tell us:

- *You can’t do that.*
- *People like you don’t do that.*
- *You don’t deserve that.*
- *It’s too late.*
- *That’s unrealistic.*
- *That’s just the way life works.*

And because we believe the thought, we might never challenge the behavior that follows it. That’s where the real opportunity lies. Because once we recognize a limiting belief, we can finally examine it by asking:

- Is this actually true?
- Where did I learn it?
- Is it still serving me?
- What might be possible if I stopped believing it?

Maybe the stadium isn’t half empty. Maybe it’s the biggest crowd you’ve ever played for.

Maybe some of the things you’ve accepted as permanent truths about yourself and your life aren’t truths at all. Perhaps they’re simply old ways of seeing things.

The shirt was never yellow. He only saw it that way. He didn’t need a different shirt; he needed a clearer lens. Sometimes we don’t need to change our entire lives—we need to examine the lens through which we’re seeing them.

If you’re tired of seeing life through the same old lens, work on finding the beliefs that are holding you back. If it’s too challenging to do that on your own, it might be worth the effort, time and expense to find someone who can help you identify—and change—the beliefs that limit what you believe is possible for yourself.

Don’t live a half-lived life telling yourself “That’s just the way it is.” 🎯



*Linda Minnick is a speaker, author, life coach, and Preferred PSYCH-K facilitator. She lives in Roswell with her husband, John. Her most recent book, *New Day, New Life*, is available here: bit.ly/naa-new-day-new-life.*

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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 \$40 to attend — to list for free. Otherwise, basic listings are \$1/word, \$40 minimum, and enhanced listings are \$75. Submit free listings to matsakis99@gmail.com and paid listings to paul@naatlanta.com.

Saturday, Oct 3 & Nov 7

Healing Sound Bath with Raye Andrews – 11am-12 pm.Join Certified Vibrational Sound Therapist, Raye Andrews, for a beautiful symphony of sound. This immersive, full-body listening experience can bring relaxation to your mind, body and spirit. No registration required. Suggested love offering \$20-\$40. Held in the Chapel. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Sunday, October 4

“Man from Motown with a Message” – 11am-12pm and 1:30-3:00pm.Unity Atlanta Church welcomes Eddie Watkins, Jr., guest speaker and musician during the Sunday Service. Live concert at 1:30pm. Tickets \$20. A former Motown bassist who performed with legendary artists, Eddie now shares spiritually uplifting music that inspires healing, connection, and personal transformation. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Wednesday, October 7

Wellness Wednesday – 8-8:30am. Energize your morning with a 30-minute virtual fitness session followed by a complimentary fresh-pressed juice. Free. Kimpton Shane Hotel, 1340 W Peachtree St NW, Atlanta. bit.ly/Wellness-Atlanta-100726.

Friday, October 9

H.I.P. Walk-A-Thon – 11am-2pm. Join a community wellness walk focused on healing, unity, health, peace and purpose. Free smoothies afterward. Free. Westside BeltLine Trail, Atlanta. bit.ly/Hip-Walk-athon-100926.

Saturday, October 10

Feng Shui for Your Home and Life – 2-3:30pm.Explore Feng Shui Principles, Bagua Map, Five Elements, Ch’i energy, Enhancements, and Clutter Clearing with Roberta Grant.Printouts and giveaways. \$10 Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore, 5531 Roswell Rd NE Sandy Springs. RobertaFengShui.com.

Free Jump Rope + Mobility Class – 9-10am. Enjoy simple jump rope exercises and intentional stretching led by NASM-certified Coach Perry. All fitness levels welcome.

Free. Avondale Estates Town Green, 64 N Avondale Rd, Avondale Estates. bit.ly/Jump-Rope-Class-101026.

Red Light Running Society – 9:30am-12pm. Walk, jog or run with a welcoming group for all fitness levels, followed by coffee and donuts. Free; registration optional. Red Light Cafe, 553 Amsterdam Ave NE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Red-Light-Society-101026.

Veterans Connect Health & Wellness Fair – 10am-1pm. Connect with local health professionals and fellow veterans while exploring fitness, nutrition and mental health resources. Free. Boundary Waters Activity Center, 4996 Georgia 92, Douglasville. bit.ly/Veterans-Health-Fair-101026.

2026 BRIDGE Cancer Equity Community Forum – 10am-2pm. Explore how environments influence Black women’s health through discussions, storytelling and workshops. Free; refreshments provided. Emory Rollins School of Public Health, 1518 Clifton Rd NE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Cancer-Equity-Forum-101026.

Community Healing Reiki Circle – 6:30-7:30pm. Experience connection and collective healing through Reiki in a safe, supportive community setting. All experience levels welcome. Free. Center for Intuitive Healing, 1842 Independence Square, Ste D, Dunwoody. bit.ly/Community-Healing-Reiki-101026.

Healing Sound Bath with Raye Andrews – 7-8 pm.Join Certified Vibrational Sound Therapist, Raye Andrews, for a beautiful symphony of sound. This immersive, full-body listening experience can bring relaxation to your mind, body and spirit. No registration required. Suggested love offering \$20-\$40. Held in the Chapel. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Sunday, October 11

FitLife EXPO 6th Annual – 12-5pm. Enjoy free fitness classes, health screenings, wellness experiences, local vendors, giveaways, kids’ activities and community fun. Free. Alpharetta City Center, 2001 Commerce St, Alpharetta. bit.ly/Fit-Life-Expo-101126.

Wednesday, October 14

Mocha Mom Wellness Walk Wednes-

days – 8:30am. Midweek wellness walk for moms to get moving, boost their mood, enjoy fresh air and connect with others. Free. Cauley Creek Park, 7255 Bell Rd, Johns Creek. bit.ly/Mocha-Mom-Walk-101426.

Saturday, October 17

SAGE Saturdays – 11am. Join a monthly wellness gathering featuring low-impact workout sessions, rooftop garden tours, healthy food and beverage demos, farmers market vendors and local artisans. Free; RSVP required. 348 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Sage-Saturdays-Atl-101726.

Reset In Motion – 1-3pm. Take an easy Belt-line community walk to move, clear your mind and connect with others. Free. Yeppa & Co. - Beltline, 667 Auburn Ave NE, Ste 120, Atlanta. bit.ly/Reset-In-Motion-101826.

Wednesday, October 21

Black Men’s Circle - ATL – 6-9pm. Safe, supportive space for Black men to share experiences, have open conversations and build community. Free; food provided. C.T. Martin Natatorium and Recreation Center, 3201 Martin Luther King Jr Dr SW, Atlanta. bit.ly/Black-Mens-Circle-102126.

Psychedelics & Spirituality Wednesday Night Meetup – 7:45-10pm. Connect with an open-minded spiritual community for discussion, personal growth, life’s challenges and integration support. Free attendance and parking. Cultured South Fermentation Co., 1038 White St SW, Atlanta. bit.ly/Psychedelics-Meetup-102126.

Thursday, October 22

Moves on the Green: Free Fitness Event – 5:30-6:30pm. Enjoy a high-energy cardio dance class with easy-to-follow Zumba, Hip-Hop, Afrobeats, Reggae and Reggaeton rhythms. All levels welcome. Free; registration required. Midtown Green, 98 14th St NE, Atlanta. bit.ly/Atlanta-Fitness-Event-102226.

Saturday, October 24

Mindful Walks with Julie Lane, LPC – 9:30am. Join therapist Julie Lane for a mindful group walk with gentle movement in nature and guided meditation. Free. South Peachtree Creek Trailhead, 2079 Mason Mill Rd, Decatur. bit.ly/Julie-Lane-Walks-102426.

JTM Fitness Free Abs Class – 10-11am. Free Saturday core workout for all fitness levels, combining bodyweight and strength movements to tighten, tone and strengthen abs while burning calories. Free. Jamie The Motivator, 3365 West Hospital Ave, Ste G, Chamblee. bit.ly/Jtm-Abs-Workout-102426.

Sunday, October 25

Sunday Morning Yoga at The Interlock – 10-11am. Join a welcoming, all-levels yoga class focused on movement, connection and starting the week grounded and refreshed. Bring mat, water and towel. Free. The Interlock, 1115 Howell Mill Rd NW, Atlanta. bit.ly/Sunday-Yoga-Interlock-102526.

Trunk or Treat - 12:30 - 2:00 pm.Join us for a fun-filled Halloween Treat Trail for the whole family! Come dressed in your favorite costume and enjoy sweet treats, games, activities, face-painting and a festive photo booth. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org

Monday, October 26

Mind Your Health: Tired Is Not Normal – 6:30-8pm. Learn common causes of fatigue, warning signs requiring medical attention and habits that support better energy. Free. Ignite House, 1928 Stanton Rd, Atlanta. 404-426-5864. bit.ly/Tired-Is-Not-Normal-102626.

Wednesday, October 28

Let’s Talk Veins Atlanta – 8am-3pm. Receive a free vein screening, one-on-one time with doctors and staff, and complimentary lunch. Confirmation required. USA Vein Clinics, 1800 Howell Mill Rd NW, Ste 130, Atlanta. 224-661-1824. bit.ly/Free-Vein-Event-102826.

Saturday, October 31

The Self Care Lab Walk Club – 9-11am. Join a weekly wellness walk along the Atlanta Beltline to explore the city, meet new people and embrace movement as self-care. Free. Meet outside Krog Street Market. bit.ly/Self-Care-Lab-103126.

Wednesday, November 4

The Crest Walkers – 9-10am. Join a community walking club to support better health, boost energy, reach fitness goals and enjoy good company. Free; parking available. Browns Mill Recreation Center, 5101 Browns Mill Rd, Stonecrest. bit.ly/Crest-Walkers-110426.

Friday, November 6

Karaoke & Open Mic Night - 7-9 pm.All are invited to this family-friendly evening of entertainment and fellowship. Karaoke music is provided, or bring your instruments, poetry or any form of artistic expression. Potluck meal. Love offering. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

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ONGOING SUNDAYS

Practicing the Presence - A Course in Miracles – 8:45-10:30 am.This weekly Zoom study group aims at removing the blocks to the awareness of love’s presence. Facilitator: Michael Wilkinson. An open and ongoing class. All are welcome. For more info and to receive the Zoom link, email: MWilkinson@leadstrat.com. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta Sunday Experience. Starting at 3 pm music and Science of Mind message; 4 pm Food and fellowship; 5 pm New Thought workshops. 2650 N. Druid Hills Rd. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30329. More Info: slc-atlanta.org

Red Clay Sangha Sunday Morning Service – 9am, Sitting/Walking Meditation; 10:30, Morning Service;10:45am, Dharma Discussion;11:30am, Close and Brunch. Via Zoom or in person. 3420 W Hospital Ave, Ste 102, Chamblee. More info: RedClaySangha.org.

Grant Park Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. The Beacon ATL, 1030 Grant St SE, Atlanta. cfmatl.org/markets.

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.

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

Unity Atlanta Church Sunday Services – 11am-12pm. The uplifting Sunday services include prayer, message, and guided meditation. Special music is provided by Unity Atlanta Church’s Soulful Harmonics Band

and Celebration Choir. Attend in-person or watch via livestream. Youth Sunday School is held in-person 11am-12pm for ages 5-18. Nursery service is available 10:30am-12:30pm. 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Twin Hearts Meditation – 11am-12pm. This meditation is an act of service. We use divine energy to bless the planet, our loved ones and every part of our life. With Atlanta Pranic Healing Center via Zoom. To watch: AtlPranicHealing.com.

MONDAYS

Chair Yoga with Corina Genson – 12-1 pm. All are invited to this gentle yoga class focusing on basic yoga poses, stretching and breathing exercise. Designed for all fitness levels, including beginners and those with physical limitations or injuries. Drop in for \$20 or 5 classes for \$75. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

TUESDAYS

The Art of Preserving Balance and Vitality Through Movement – 6-7pm. Discover the ancient art of cultivating Chi to enhance well-being. Learn to manage stress, channel emotions, and deepen your connection with life. \$18/class; packages available. Zoom. Efraín Brady, 470-281-8645. PathsToIntegration.com.

Online Meditation Open House – 7-8pm meditation, 8-8:30pm discussion, followed by tea and cookies.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.

“Divine Connection” (Conexión Divina) Zoom Gathering – 8-9pm.The Spanish-speaking community is invited to this Zoom prayer and study group, led by Rev. Xiomara Malagon. For more info and to receive the Zoom link, email: xioma735@gmail.com. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Lane, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

WEDNESDAYS

Meditation & Modern Buddhism – 7-8:15pm. With Resident Teacher, Gen Kelsang Dechok. Talks, guided meditation, discussion and Q&A. All welcome. Kadam-pa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Weekly Wednesday Meditation Class – 7-8:30pm. Open to all levels. Experience true inner peace. With the Venerable Nich-

THURSDAYS

Beyond Limits Weekly Conscious Dance – Between 8pm in Smyrna and 7 pm in Roswell, GA at Awareness Studios. With Marisa Skolky. An intentional dance activated by vocal toning and singing during an hour and a half dance through our emotions, lifecycle, archetypes and levels of consciousness. Followed by a singing bowl meditation, a closing circle and community tea time. \$20. Beyond Limits Expressive Arts Therapy LLC, 4528 King Springs Rd SE, Smyrna. 770-235-3183. MarisaSkolky.com.

Inside Flow Yoga - 10-11am, Lift Yoga Dunwoody, \$20.Vinyasa style yoga that merges breath, movement and music. With Inside Flow, awareness draws inward, expression comes outward, and the practice becomes a shared experience. www.emilyflows.com to resister and for more info

SATURDAYS

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. Morningside Market.com.

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. Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 E Lake Dr, Decatur. cfmatl.org/oakhurst.

Tea & Tarot – 11am-2pm. Casual spiritual mixer with tea, snacks and tarot conversation for all ages and experience levels. No cards or experience required; bring a dish if desired. \$25. Heart, Soul, & Art, Marietta. 770-369-3438. HeartSoulandArt.com/products/tea-tarot.

Classifieds

To place a classified ad, email your listing to ads@naAtlanta.com. Cost is \$1/word; minimum \$30. Deadline: Fifth of each month for the next month’s issue.

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Bending a Little Closer to the Light

by Tommy Housworth



Mindfulness is rarely easy. Maintaining intentional awareness of the present moment is my greatest challenge. Thankfully, I have teachers who encourage me when I stumble or get discouraged. Now and then, a teacher guides me, not by wisdom, but by the rawness of their own struggles. Sometimes, instead of showing up in a tailored suit or saffron robe, they're wearing nothing but their underwear. Let me explain.

A few years ago, on a silent meditation retreat, I met such a teacher, a young man all of 20. In a retreat filled with people taking mindful steps, emanating peace and seeking a certain kind of equanimity, he was a cyclonic force, a wild stallion loose in a glass factory.

We first met when I went to the shower at 4:40 a.m., preparing for the 5:30 a.m. meditation. He charged into the bathroom in nothing but his underwear. Slamming his hand against the wall to hold himself up, he let out a bellowing sigh as he lightened his bladder. He then left the bathroom without washing his hands.

Fast-forward to mealtime—an opportunity to savor the texture, taste, and nourishment the food offers. Gratitude abounds as we spend an hour or more enjoying food prepared with love and attention. Unfortunately, the cyclone didn't get the memo. He churned through mealtime like a helicopter blade. As those around him chewed slowly and thoughtfully, he fashioned his chopsticks into shovels.

And so it went for the duration of our retreat: him unable to sit still, and me vacillating between curiosity and critique. Then, at breakfast, one of the teachers announced that later in the day, they would grant short interviews to anyone who wanted to ask questions or seek advice. There were pieces of paper for retreatants to jot down their name and question or concern. Simply fill out a piece of paper and drop it in the neighboring basket, they told us.

As I walked to the basket to write my name down, the young man darted in front of me. He hurriedly wrote something on his piece of paper and dropped it in the basket. I started to fill out my paper and leaned in to peek at what he had scribbled. I told myself I just wanted to know his name. I told myself it was harmless curiosity. I told myself it was okay, even though it wasn't. My heart crumbled as I read his comments...

"I can't seem to stay in the present moment. It's so hard for me, and I'm really trying. Can you help me?"

My throne of superiority crumbled. Turns out what he was going through was exactly what I was going through, what likely everyone at the retreat was going through. That a young man in his 20s, restless in his own skin, had the mindfulness to show up at a place where he could confront his confusion head-on? That's remarkable. I suddenly realized he wasn't a kid with a lot to learn. He was my teacher.

Teachers appear in the most unlikely of circumstances and in the most unfashionable forms. They are transient beggars and obstinate toddlers, unsmiling strangers and difficult coworkers.

While I do not subscribe to the notion that everything happens for a reason, I try to remind myself that I can find something in any circumstance that offers an opportunity to soften, to open up, to welcome discomfort so I can work with it and find the fearlessness I was born to claim. I can also take those opportunities to harden, close off and cast aspersions. The choice is mine.

Many days, it's hard to make the brave and compassionate choice. But on days when I am mindful enough to remember my young teacher, I open up to the possibility that I can bend a little closer to the light, that I can choose to put in authentic effort in a world that, more than ever, cries out for people to keep trying.



Tommy Housworth is a professional writer, creative director for corporate projects, a certified mindfulness instructor and the author of two collections of short stories. His Substack column is A Sense of Wonder.



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