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Contents

12 INTEGRATIVE WOMEN'S WELLNESS

Five Top Health Concerns and What to Do

16 QIGONG AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

18 STAY FIT WITH BODYWORK THERAPY

Enhance Workout Performance and Recovery with Massage

22 NATURAL MAMA

Holistic Approaches to a Healthy Pregnancy

24 SUSTAINABLY STYLISH

Eco-Fashion that's Kind to the Planet

27 DEVAKI LINDSEY BERKSON

on Bioidentical Hormones for Long-Term Health

8



22



25



27



DEPARTMENTS

6 news briefs

7 intro spotlight

8 health briefs

10 global briefs

11 spotlight

16 local voices

18 fit body

22 healthy kids

24 green living

25 eco tip

27 wise words

29 calendar

29 classifieds

33 resource guide

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letter from publisher**Ladies, Let's Talk!**

Mark and Shanna Warner

You are not your body.
You are not a dress size.
You are not your curves or lack of them.
You are not a number on a scale.
You are not your eye color, hair color or skin color.
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You are not that wheelchair.
You are not the hearing aids or the glasses.
You are not your problems.

However, that twinkle in your eyes when you hold a little baby? Yep, that's you. The way your mouth curves up when you see someone you love across the room? Yep, that's you, too. The dedication you have to the causes, the beliefs, the truth, the justice? Your spirit that rises up to the challenges of life? That's totally you. And it's beautiful to see.

You are beautiful—inside and out—just the way you are right now in this very moment. If anyone ever tries to tell you differently, ignore them. Ignore the haters and the dividers. Ignore the people who try to tell you that you don't measure up, that you are less than. So all you mothers, sisters, friends and lovers, all you women who get knocked down but refuse to stay down, you are beautiful.

Your body is a vessel that holds the spark of the Divine. And you are that spark in the world. Let it flame on, "like shining from shook foil" (Gerard Manley Hopkins), like a candle in the darkest night. Raise your light higher and higher, and never let anyone bring you down.

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news briefs

Earth Angels Encourages Healthier Cosmetics



When consumers read ingredient lists in traditional makeup brands, they often find strange ingredients and unpronounceable, lab-created chemicals. Those ingredients go directly on the skin and get absorbed into the body.

Many women like using makeup and beauty products, and they still want to have access to facial powder, hair spray, deodorant, lip balms, eyeshadow and blush. If there is a desire to stay away from the harsh and dangerous chemicals in many cosmetics that are sold today, consumers increasingly have access to safer, commercially available options. Those natural options, however, are often far more expensive than traditional beauty products.

A better option involves learning to create natural makeup at home. Oklahoma publisher Shanna Warner shares her 10 recipes for natural cosmetics in the free ebook *Earth Angels*. The ingredients are easy to find and are often already in our pantries. Warner shares, "The process of creating makeup is easy, fun, inexpensive and healthier for your skin and body. Welcome to a new way to think about cosmetics and beauty!"

Cost: Free. Read online at Smashwords.com/books/view/1071085. For more info or to request a PDF file of the book, email Publisher@NAOklahoma.com. See ad, page 20.

Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art Is Open to Visitors

The University of Oklahoma's Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, in Norman, has safety measures in place and is open to visitors. Masks and social distancing are required, and sanitizing stations are in place.

The museum is one of the finest university art museums in the United States.

The permanent collection of more than 20,000 objects includes the 3,300-object Eugene B. Adkins Collection and the more than 4,500-object James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection.

The museum also houses the Weitzenhoffer Collection of French Impressionism, 20th century American painting and sculpture, traditional and contemporary Native American art, art of the Southwest, ceramics, photography, contemporary art, Asian art and graphics from the 16th century to the present. Temporary exhibitions are mounted throughout the year that explore the art of various periods and cultures.

In November 2012, the University of Oklahoma announced a new annual \$60,000 gift from the OU Office of the President, which provides free admission for all visitors to the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art in perpetuity.



Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art Management

Location: 555 Elm Ave., Norman. For more information, call 405-325-3272 or visit Ou.edu/fjjma.

Likeminded Therapies

Natural Awakenings is proud to welcome Jesse Cox and Rodrick Neher of Likeminded Therapies Massage Clinic and School of Massage to the magazine. They specialize in therapeutic, orthopedic and holistic massage, both as professional service offerings and as subjects taught in their school.



Likeminded Therapies recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary in business. Throughout the last decade, they have been dedicated to offering a different approach to health and wellness. Massage is best known for helping with physical aches and pains, but the practitioners and teachers at Likeminded Therapies take a deeper, holistic approach to healing and bodywork. Cox and Neher are committed to that path as professionals and teach from that perspective, too, passing the ideology on to the next generation of therapists.

There are many complementary therapies available at the clinic and school, including Body and Emotion Code, the Feldenkrais method, healing touch and energy work. The therapists are all highly trained and hold the appropriate licenses and certificates required.

For Cox and Neher, the ultimate goal is to help introduce people to the greatest healer of all—themselves. They enjoy watching students evolve and change, granting the potential to help all lives they touch to be the best version of themselves possible. For their clients, Cox and Neher find the experience of being able to help someone, even if it is just being able to help them hurt a little less, a fulfilling challenge.

Location: 5929 N. May Ave., #408, Oklahoma City. For more information about class schedules and clinical services, visit LikemindedTherapies.com. See ad, page 19 and Body Works page 21.

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Don't Rely on Money for Happiness

People in the “poorest of the poor” communities in which money is not a high value can feel as happy as people in high-income Scandinavian countries, concludes new research from Canada's McGill University. For the study published in *PLOS One*, interviewers studied 678 people living in Bangladesh and the Solomon Islands, both extremely low-income countries. People in remote fishing villages with subsistence-level incomes reported very high levels of “subjective well-being”, which they attributed to spending lots of time with family and being in nature. Villagers that had migrated to urban areas for work were more likely to gauge their well-being by economic and social factors, and reported lower feelings of well-being, leading researchers to speculate that monetization, especially in its early stages, may be detrimental to happiness. “When people are comfortable, safe and free to enjoy life within a strong community, they are happy—regardless of whether or not they are making any money,” says Chris Barrington-Leigh, a professor at McGill's Bieler School of the Environment.



Nix Baby Foods that Harbor Toxic Metals



As convenient as store-bought baby food is, it can pose hidden dangers for infant brains, say U.S. congressional investigators. A report issued by the House of Representatives on February 4 found “dangerous levels of toxic heavy metals,” including arsenic, lead, cadmium and mercury, in baby foods made by major companies Hain Foods, Gerber, Beech-Nut and Happy Family Organics. Walmart, Campbell Soup Company and

Sprout Organic Foods refused to cooperate with the investigation. On March 5, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration pledged to enact new standards, increase inspections and testing, and support research to lower baby food contaminants.

Low levels of exposure to heavy metals can cause serious, irreversible damage to children's brain development, studies show. Naturally present in the environment, they enter baby foods through soil, water and air; companies attempt to minimize this impact through processing. In one example, Hain Celestial, which makes Earth's Best Organic, says it no longer uses brown rice, which can harbor arsenic.

Avoid Coffee When Pregnant to Safeguard Brain Development

A mother's coffee drinking during pregnancy can change important pathways in an infant's developing brain, raising the risk of behavioral issues, attention difficulty and hyperactivity years later, say researchers at the University of Rochester, in New York. Analyzing thousands of brain scans of 9- and 10-year-olds, researchers found clear changes in how white matter tracks, which form connections between brain regions, were organized in children whose mothers reported consuming caffeine while pregnant. “These are sort of small effects and it's not causing horrendous psychiatric conditions, but it is causing minimal, but noticeable behavioral issues that should make us consider long-term effects of caffeine intake during pregnancy,” says John Foxe, Ph.D., principal investigator of the university's Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development study. Previous studies have found that a fetus does not have enough of the enzyme necessary to break down caffeine when it crosses the placenta.





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Ark Park

World's Largest Wildlife Highway Crossing Opens in San Antonio



photo courtesy of phil hardberger park conservancy

The new Robert L.B. Tobin Land Bridge connects people with nature in the heart of San Antonio across a six-lane highway at Phil Hardberger Park. Private donations and a five-year bond program approved by voters helped fund the \$23 million bridge, the largest wildlife crossing of its kind in the U.S.

Wildlife and vehicle collisions are a big problem across the country, increasing by 50 percent in 15 years, with an estimated 1 to 2 million large animals killed by motorists every year, accord-

ing to *National Geographic* sources. In the U.S., 21 threatened and endangered species face extinction partly because of traffic accidents. Wildlife crossings are seen as an effective solution to the problem, with fatality reductions of up to 95 percent, depending on the location. The San Antonio bridge is notable for its size—150 feet wide and 150 feet long—and that it accommodates people, too. Animals in the 330-acre park that benefit from the bridge include ringtails, squirrels, coyotes, lizards, raccoons and deer. They are using it as intended, and it also serves as a habitat for native plants.

Fitting End

Composting Human Remains is a Reality

Frustrated with the limited options for environmentally friendly burial services and the rampant use of embalming in most funeral homes, which turns these sites into major groundwater polluters, environmental activist Katrina Spade founded Recompose (*Recompose.life*), the country's first human composting funeral home, in Seattle. Formaldehyde, one of the most common embalming chemicals, is a carcinogen.

Inspired by Spade's idea, Governor Jay Inslee passed a bill legalizing composting as a form of human burial in 2019. Before then, the only legal and eco-friendly burial options were natural burial sites, of which there are only one or two hundred in the country. Both cremations and traditional burials cause environmental damage. Recompose offers an innovative funeral service that turns human remains into healthy soil. It gives Washington state and surrounding residents a chance to make a positive environmental change through their death, as well as their life. The process is said to save a metric ton of CO₂ in the burial process, and the facility is accepting clients throughout the Northwest.



photo courtesy of recompose.life



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Ah-Choo!

Climate Change Makes Pollen Season Worse for Allergy Sufferers

A new study by the University of Utah published in the journal *PNAS* found that pollen seasons have been getting longer and more intense in North America over the last 30 years, aggravating asthma and weakening defenses against respiratory viruses, resulting in more emergency room visits that disrupt lives. Researchers comparing pollen metrics between 1990 and 2018 from 60 monitoring stations indicate that seasons are starting up to 20 days earlier and lasting up to eight days longer, affecting millions of allergy sufferers. The study looked at variable factors such as temperature, rainfall, frost days and carbon dioxide concentrations, and found that an increase in mean annual temperatures was the strongest driver. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 19 million adults have been diagnosed with hay fever, an allergic reaction to pollen, a fine powder from plants that can come into contact with the eyes, nose, mouth and throat.

Dr. Michelle McElroy

Doing More of What Makes It Better

by Shanna Warner

Dr. Michelle McElroy, the founder of Aging Gracefully, in Jenks, knew she wanted to be a doctor from the time she was 8 years old. She graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering with an option in Biomedical Engineering. From there, she attended Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, in Kirksville, Missouri, to receive her DO. Once finished, she returned home to Michigan to complete her residency in OB/GYN.

But shortly after starting to practice medicine, she realized that what she had been taught in medical school and residency wasn't helping her patients with chronic conditions. After nearly two decades as a practicing OB/GYN, McElroy knew that she needed a change. Her patients needed something more, as well. Chronically ill patients were not getting better, and she did not want to give them medicines for the rest of their lives. "I felt that I wasn't truly helping my patients as an OB/GYN in the insurance model. After 18 years of practicing, I was burned out. This is when I started looking for something else and found functional medicine."

McElroy was certified in bioidentical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT). Even though it helped her patients, it still wasn't enough. Another physician, Anna Cabeca, DO, told her about the Institute of Functional Medicine. McElroy was interviewing to join the practice when she discovered that Cabeca was already transitioning to functional medicine. "After talking with her, that was where my interest was also. I signed up for my first course shortly after meeting with her. I knew right away that I had finally found the medicine I had always wanted to practice."

Functional medicine is sometimes called root cause or lifestyle medicine. It stresses finding the causes of disease and treating

those causes, not just treating symptoms. It also focuses on empowering patients to make positive, healthy lifestyle changes. Currently certified in both BHRT and functional medicine, McElroy's goal is, "Always to get you to be the healthiest version of you that is possible."

Now, McElroy finds that her practice puts a smile on her face. "I am truly helping people make long-term changes in their health and their life. I can see the difference in them each time when they come into the office. I have my patients fill out a medical symptom questionnaire prior to each visit. I follow their progress and see the improvement." She has a personal and professional mission to help as many people as possible. She does this for patients in the office and through the public talks she does on her professional Facebook page.

Starting her own functional medicine practice, Aging Gracefully, has been the personal highlight of her career. McElroy believes that her inner strengths shine through when she works with patients to get them to their optimum health. Honesty, empathy, persistence and being an excellent listener are the tools she uses at each appointment. At Aging Gracefully, she mainly works with patients who are struggling with male and female hormonal issues, Hashimoto's or gastrointestinal issues.

The number one health problem she sees in her practice is linked to diet. "Poor food choices are definitely one of the biggest problems I see. We have been told for years to eat a low-fat, high-carb diet. Based on poor information, Americans followed that advice and got fatter and sicker. The food companies have been making food that is designed to keep people hooked on sugar. Science has proven that fat is not bad for us and that it is sugar that is making us sick. Because the government misled us for so long, people don't know who to believe or what to eat."

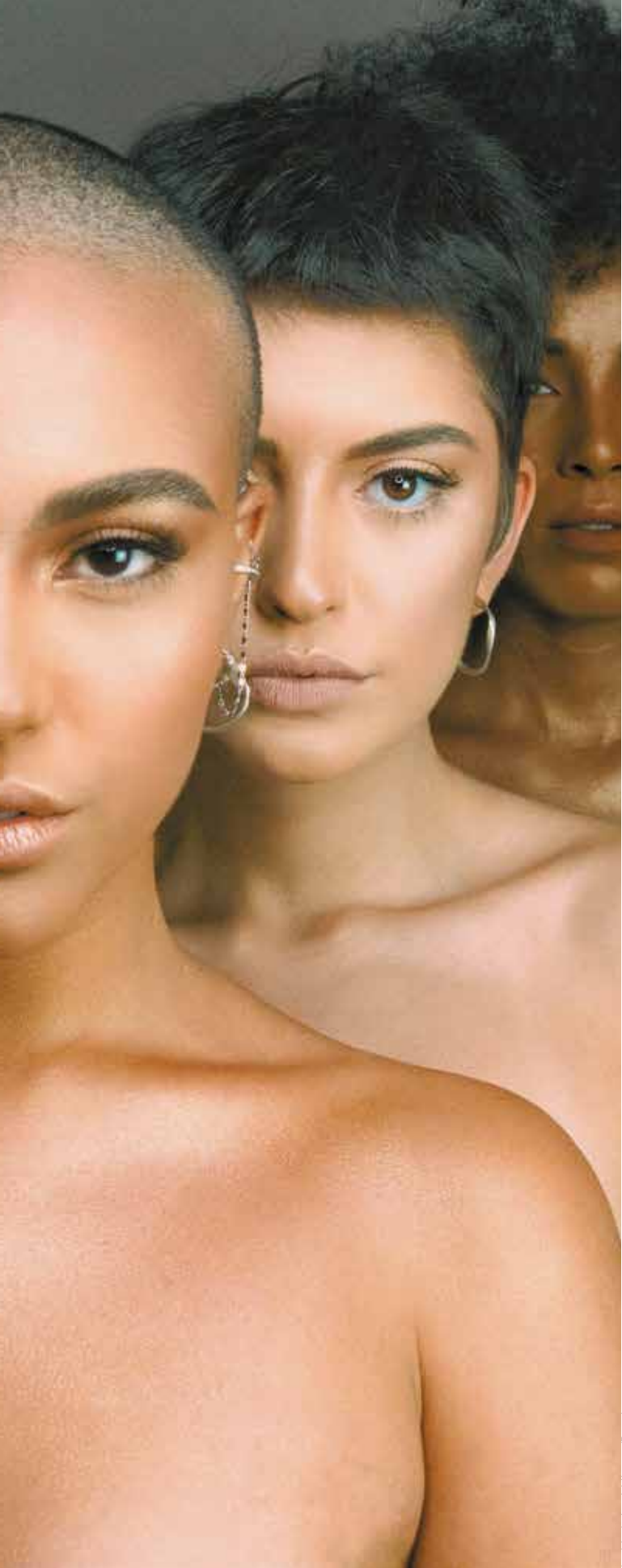


McElroy has a philosophy in her life and for her patients; it is focused on the 90 percent rule. She says that perfection is not the goal in living a healthy lifestyle and making positive changes. "It is unrealistic to expect anyone to eat clean 100 percent of the time, or exercise seven days a week, or sleep eight hours every night or whatever else their goal is. We all need to accept 90 percent as good enough."

Now she focuses on empowering patients to reach the 90 percent goal. She also has great advice for them about awareness. She listens intently to patients and encourages them to listen, too. She tells them to listen to their gut and their intuition. "Pay attention to whatever symptoms you are having. Take note of what makes it better and worse. Avoid those things that make it worse and do more of what makes it better. Find a provider who you like and trust to help you with what you cannot figure out on your own."

"Doing more of what makes it better" is Dr. Michelle McElroy's theme at Aging Gracefully. Her wish is for everyone to be as healthy as possible for as long as possible. And she says, "I will continue to grow my practice so I can help as many people as possible reach that goal."

Follow Aging Gracefully on Facebook.com/DrMichelleMMcElroy. Location: 715 W. Main St., Ste. K, Jenks. For more information and to schedule a free Discovery Call with Dr. McElroy, visit AgingGracefully.co. See ad, page 26.



INTEGRATIVE WOMEN'S WELLNESS

Five Top Health Concerns and What to Do

by Ronica O'Hara

Anyone walking into a U.S. hospital today will notice something that was inconceivable 50 years ago—one in three practicing physicians is a woman, and among physicians under age 35, it's three in five. That compares to one in 14 in 1970. For women needing health care, that fact can change everything. "Research says that female physicians provide better care to female patients than male physicians do," says Harvard Medical School Associate Professor Alice Domar, Ph.D., a pioneer in women's mind-body medicine. "They are more likely to listen carefully and take complaints seriously."

That's just one factor in how health care is improving for women. Only three decades ago, women were simply considered "small men" in medical research and rarely included as subjects in clinical studies. Today, after a 1993 federal mandate ensured their inclusion, it's been well established that women metabolize drugs differently than men, respond to health threats with a more robust immune system and are more likely to experience side effects. These findings have helped spur major changes for women in standards, dosages, medications and procedures—resulting in fewer cancer deaths, better treatment of autoimmune disorders and more nuanced cardiac care strategies. Although much has improved about women's health, much more remains to be done.

Cancer

About one in three women is diagnosed with cancer in the course of a lifetime, and they have better survival rates than men, of which one in two receives that diagnosis. Between 2001 and 2017, the overall cancer death rate for women declined by 1.4 percent each year as diagnoses and treatments became more refined and targeted. The number one cancer killer for women is

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lung cancer, although 19 percent diagnosed have never smoked. The next most deadly are cancers of the breast, colon/rectum, pancreas and ovaries.

Breast cancer deaths have dropped by 40 percent since 1989, thanks to greater awareness, early detection and better treatments. “Women learned from the AIDS crisis that making noise gets results,” says Domar. “Look at how far breast cancer research and treatment has come in the past 10 to 20 years, how powerful Breast Cancer Awareness Month is, and that everyone recognizes that pink ribbon.”

Common symptoms: Bowel changes, lingering sores, fatigue, lumps, unusual discharge, difficulty digesting or swallowing, nagging cough or hoarseness, belly or back pain.

New research: An international research team has identified a direct molecular link between meat and dairy diets and the development of antibodies in the blood that increases the chances of developing cancer.

Medical advances: Painful, invasive biopsies may become a thing of the past. Mayo Clinic researchers have developed a simple blood test that detects more than 50 types of cancer, as well as their location within the body, with a high degree of accuracy, and the City of Hope Cancer Center, in Los Angeles, has developed a urine test that analyzes cell-free fragments of DNA to detect cancer.

Preventive strategies: Vitamin D supplementation lowers the risk of mortality across all cancers, German researchers found, estimating that if all Germans older than 50 took such supplements, up to 30,000 cancer deaths per year might be avoided. A 10-year study found that people between 55 and 74 that took a low-dose aspirin at least three times each week lowered their risk of all types of cancer by 15 percent and overall mortality by 19 percent.

Heart Disease

One in three American women die from heart disease, more than all cancers combined. “Unfortunately, awareness that heart disease can and does happen to women remains low, and this results in delay of care,” says cardiologist Nicole Harkin of Whole Heart Cardiology, in San Francisco. “Women tend to seek medical care later in the course of their heart attack and with more risk factors, resulting in poorer outcomes, and they are more likely than men to die of their first heart attack.”

Women have different symptoms of heart disease than men, are often misdiagnosed and have a 20 percent greater risk of dying within five years of a heart attack. Pregnant women that develop hypertension are two to five times more likely to later develop cardiovascular disease.

Common symptoms: Heart pressure, fatigue, breathlessness and pain between the shoulder blades.

New research: Eating more than seven servings per day of refined grains like croissants and white bread increased the risk of heart disease by 33 percent and stroke by 47 percent, concluded a study



in *The British Medical Journal*. In a Stanford study, participants that ate plant-based meat for eight weeks had improved markers of heart health, lower LDL levels and lost two pounds compared to those eating meat.

Medical advance: To successfully fix a floppy mitral valve that's hampering blood flow in the heart, doctors can guide a catheter up a patient's leg vein and staple the troubled parts of the valve with a tiny clip, a safer and less invasive procedure than open-heart surgery.

Preventive strategies: Eating nuts several times a week lowers by 30 to 50 percent the risk of heart attacks, sudden cardiac death and cardiovascular disease, four large cohort studies have shown. Older women with high fitness levels have one quarter the risk of dying from heart disease as women that are out of shape, report Spanish researchers.

Autoimmune Diseases

The prevalence of autoimmune diseases has grown by one half in two decades, even as medications and targeted therapies have kept more patients active and out of wheelchairs. “Where it used to be the norm for many physicians to consider women with some autoimmune illnesses to be neurotic, that approach is now being recognized as being abusive and unacceptable. This is a critical step towards recovery,” says chronic fatigue expert Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!*

About 80 percent of the 23 million Americans that suffer from debilitating autoimmune diseases are women, and those conditions tend to develop during childbearing years. The eighth-leading cause of death among women, these illnesses shorten lifespan by an average of eight years. The 80-plus diseases, including

fibromyalgia, lupus, celiac disease, Type 1 diabetes, psoriasis and rheumatoid arthritis, are linked to genetics, environmental triggers, some medications, obesity, injuries and stress.

Common symptoms: These vary widely, but may include achy muscles, fatigue, recurring low-grade fever, joint pain and swelling, skin problems, abdominal pain and swelling, hair loss, swollen glands and tingling in hands and feet.

New research: Eating significantly fewer foods containing the amino acid methionine, found at high levels in meat, fish, dairy and eggs, could slow the onset and progression of autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis in high-risk individuals, reports a study in *Cell Metabolism*.

Medical advance: Evidence is mounting that low doses of naltrexone, a substance-abuse treatment drug, can treat conditions like lupus, Crohn's disease and rheumatoid arthritis by normalizing the immune system and relieving pain with few side effects. "It costs only about 70 cents a day, is made by compounding pharmacists and is remarkably beneficial for a host of autoimmune conditions," says Teitelbaum.

Preventive strategy: To fight inflammation, take a daily turmeric or curcumin supplement that includes piperine (black pepper) for better absorption. A University of Houston meta-study in *Nutrients* found that curcumin supplements improved symptoms in 14 osteoarthritis, two ulcerative colitis and eight Type 2 diabetes studies.

Hormonal Imbalances

The past 20 years has seen significant improvements in the studies and treatments of female hormonal issues. "There are now treatment options that allow women to transition into menopause, options for prevention of osteoporosis and momentous changes

in fertility," says Stephanie Seitz, a naturopathic family physician in Scottsdale, Arizona. At the same time, she adds, "I have seen environmental toxins rising in my female population. I see young girls coming in with polycystic ovary syndrome, early menarche and painful menstrual cramping; women having trouble getting pregnant for unknown reasons; the rise of fibroids, premature ovarian insufficiency and endometriosis."

Hormones are the body's chemical messengers, regulating processes ranging from hunger to blood pressure to mood and playing a key role in reproduction. They have come under assault from endocrine disrupters, thousands of largely unregulated per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, abbreviated PFAS. These "forever chemicals" are found in everything from plastics to cushions to canned foods, and are in the blood of 98 percent of Americans. Studies have linked them to girls experiencing puberty one year earlier than 40 years ago; to rising cases of infertility, miscarriages and low birth weight; to menopause occurring two to four years earlier; and to obesity, polycystic ovarian syndrome, endometriosis and breast cancer.

Common symptoms: Because hormones regulate all of the body's processes, symptoms of imbalance run the gamut and may include fatigue, weakness, erratic menstrual cycles and weight gain or loss.

New research: Early menstruation increases the likelihood of hot flashes and night sweats decades later at menopause, according to a University of Queensland study. Eating five teaspoons of extra-virgin olive oil daily reduced women's moderate to severe menstrual cramps by 83 percent in two months, Iranian researchers found.

Medical advance: A major study of 9,000 postmenopausal women with hormone-sensitive breast cancer showed 94 percent that received hormonal therapy, but not chemotherapy, did not have recurrences.



Preventive strategies: To avoid toxic chemicals, buy organics; replace plastic kitchen containers with glass; replace Teflon pans with ceramic or cast-iron; use chemical-free cosmetics and shampoos; nix air fresheners and chemical cleaners; and check out food and care products at the Environmental Working Group (ewg.org). To help detox the body, consider working with a naturopathic doctor to develop a program that may include cleansing foods, herbs, saunas, elimination diets and chelators such as activated charcoal and algae.

Depression

Women are twice as likely as men to develop depression, with one in four having a major episode at some point in life, yet fewer than half seek treatment. "Many women are too busy caring for others and feel guilty about their depression, fearing it could get in the way of their caregiving goals," says New York psychoanalyst Claudia Luiz. "Many have the fantasy that if they open that door and allow themselves to focus on their feelings, they won't be able to keep going."

Depression occurs most frequently in women ages 25 to 44, and one in five teenage girls reports having had a major depressive episode, a number that has exploded due to social media use. Psychotherapy is effective for 62 percent of adults with depression, antidepressants work for 54 percent and combining the two is helpful for 72 percent.

Common symptoms: Sadness, anxiety, flat feeling, loss of

motivation or feelings of pleasure, change of eating or sleeping patterns, low energy, difficulty concentrating or headaches.

New research: Sleeping irregular hours, doing night shifts and working for more than nine hours a day have been shown to put women at higher risk of depression, while eating more dietary fiber in produce, grains and legumes significantly lowers this risk.

Medical advances: For the estimated one in four people with depression that doesn't respond to medication or therapy, emerging approaches offer fresh hope. Low doses of the anesthetic drug ketamine lifted the depression of 70 percent of hard-to-treat subjects by targeting specific serotonin receptors, Swedish researchers report. Transcranial magnetic stimulation, which uses magnetic pulses to stimulate parts of the prefrontal cortex, lifts symptoms for 50 to 60 percent of subjects, studies show.

Preventive strategies: Eating at least two servings a week of wild-caught, oily fish or a daily 1,000-to-2,000-milligram fish oil supplement with a 60-to-40 EPA to DHA ratio has been shown to be effective for symptoms of depression, bipolar disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and postpartum depression. Taking a brisk daily walk in nature with a friend or dog lowers four factors linked to depression: a "nature deficit", physical inactivity, low vitamin-D levels and isolation.

Natural health writer Ronica O'Hara can be reached at OHaraRonica@gmail.com.



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Qigong and Women's Health

by Tom Bowman

Qigong is a relatively new health practice to many in the West. It is classified as Complementary Integrative Medicine by the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and can work alongside Western Medicine. It has been around for 5,000 years, with acupuncture arriving 1,500 years later. Qigong is unique because of its approach to healing. Unlike Western Medicine, qigong approaches healing from both a physical and emotional perspective while looking for the root causes of the illness.

The goal of qigong treatment is to achieve the proper flow of bioelectricity called *qi (chi)*. Bioelectricity flows through our bodies on a continual basis all the way down to our cells. Stagnation of bioelectricity causes illness. The conscious mind affects the physical body. Our mindset can boost physical healing, and it can interfere with the healing process. Including emotional issues in the healing equation is vital in qigong.

A qigong practitioner takes many factors into consideration when making a health assessment. Many factors contribute to women's emotional and physical health, with both short and long-term effects: number of births, menstrual issues, quality of her childhood, quality of current relationship, work-related stress, birth control, exercise, faith, duration of current/past illness and current emotional well-being.

A qigong practitioner understands where these issues are rooted. Considering the principle of eceptive/Radiative (Yin/

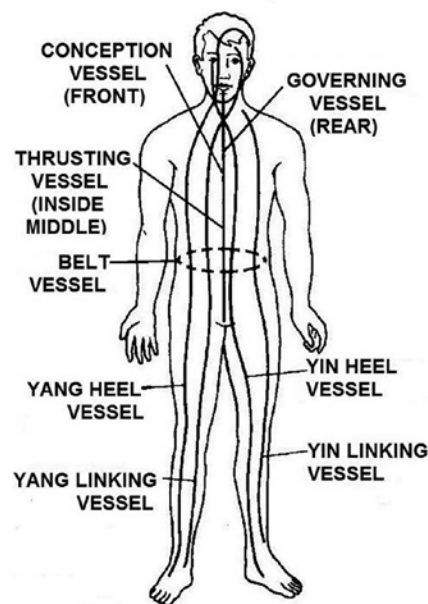
Yang): men are considered radiative, which simply means that they are constantly using their energy; women are considered to be receptive, which means they store and use much less of their energy. This is part of a woman's ability to carry an unborn child for nine months.

Next, qigong practitioners look at ways of dealing with adversity. Women have the ability to nurture and have compassion. In difficult situations, a woman may keep her feelings to herself. Negative feelings can become a catalyst for health issues that qigong classifies as pathogenic emotions. Our emotional state affects our organs: anger affects the liver; worry affects the spleen; anxiety/grief affect the lungs; fear affects the kidneys; shock affects the heart first and then the kidneys; and sadness affects the lungs. In qigong treatments, it is important to get a person back in balance.

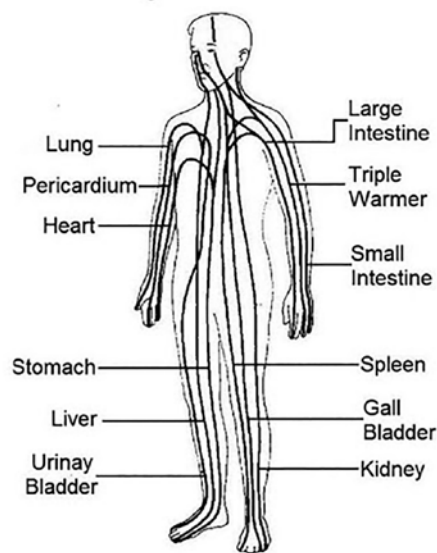
Qigong theory describes meridians and vessels in the body that travel along the torso, arms and legs. These are responsible for regulating and replenishing the bioelectricity (*qi*) to our organs. These follow along the routes used by the circulatory, nervous and lymphatic systems. A blockage in a meridian or vessel will initially impact the muscles next to the blockage, then spread in either direction from the affected area.

Breast concerns and issues are linked to the main liver meridian and the linking and heel vessels that pass at the center of the breast. This is a common situation leading to breast concerns, linked to the emotion of anger, and in the case of

8 Extraordinary Vessels



12 Major Meridians



the vessels, issues with the reproductive system. This is why it is important for all women to practice healthy tissue massage of the breasts daily in order to maintain the proper bioelectric (*qi*) flow.

Another recommendation for women's health is practicing Kegel exercises. This will strengthen vaginal muscles and prevent loss of energy flow within the reproductive organs. This can help prevent potential issues later. This is important for women to include in their health routine, especially if they are middle-aged, have recently given birth or have had surgery in the reproductive area.

As we enter our middle ages, muscle tone can be lost. Tai chi and qigong practice can help. These types of exercises have a long history of helping middle-aged practitioners stay strong and agile into their 80s. Strengthening from within is a practice taken very seriously in qigong, including strengthening the bones. Any and all pressure that we put directly on our bones makes them stronger. To help prevent bone-related problems later in life, stay active with simple exercises like walking.

Clinical qigong addresses specific illnesses and includes participation of the practitioner and the patient in the healing process. Treatment for high blood pressure, the immune system, anxiety, stress, surgery recovery, improving flexibility, balancing emotions and strengthening organ function can all be addressed through qigong. Traditional Chinese Medicine, acupuncture, meridian massage, *tui na*, *gua sha*, cupping, reflexology and energy work are some of the tools used by a clinical qigong practitioner. Patients receive treatments, health-specific meditation and very low- to medium-impact exercises to match their physical capabilities. This helps continue the healing process between visits.

Qigong is an excellent treatment modality for people with disabilities and their caregivers, those recovering from surgery, dealing with a loss of energy or simply recovering from an illness. Age is not an issue when it comes to qigong training—the focus is on well-being and prevention of illness.



Tom Bowman received his qigong certification from Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming in 2007 and completed the Medical Qigong course

of studies with Master Hong Liu, M.D. Bowman is a member of the National Qigong Association and is recognized as a Clinical Practitioner and Level Three Advanced Instructor. He is founder and director of the Qigong of Tulsa Wellness Center. For more information, call 918-855-4222 or visit QigongOfTulsa.com. See ad, Body Works page 21.



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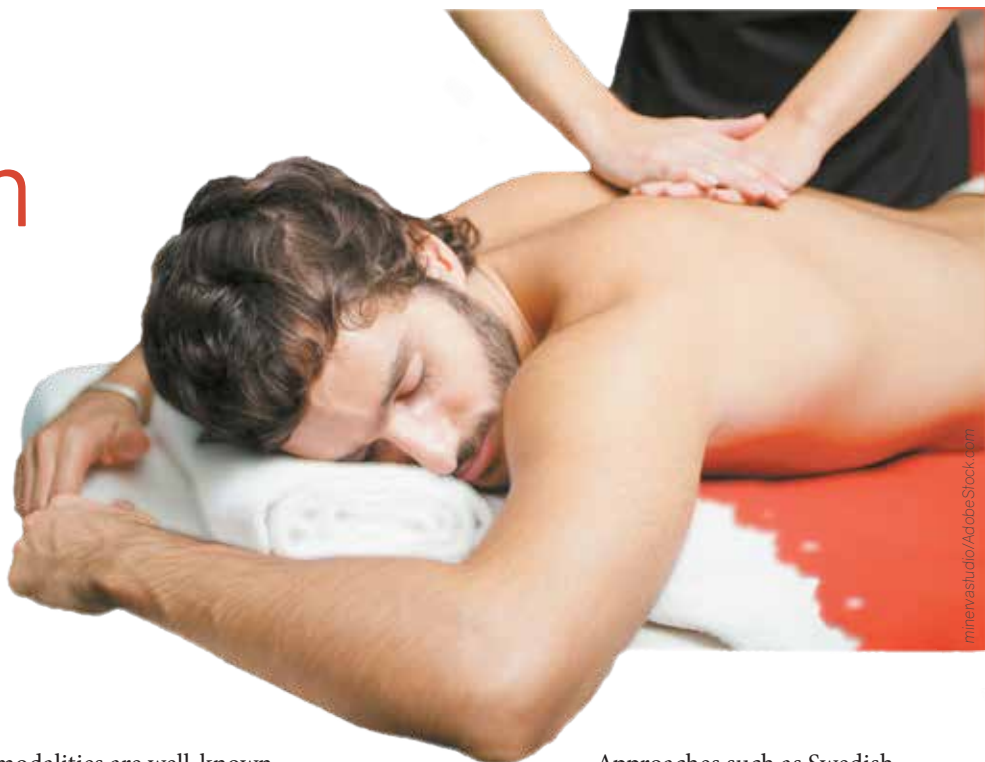
Stay Fit with Bodywork Therapy


Enhance Workout Performance and Recovery with Massage

by Marlaina Donato

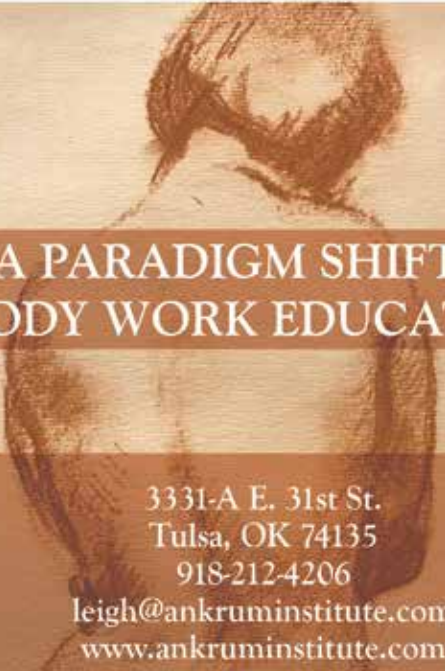
Therapeutic massage and other bodywork modalities are well-known stress-busters, but they can also hasten recovery after a workout or injury. A little restorative TLC with a bodywork practitioner before or after exercise can combat post-workout soreness and stiffness, maximizing our fitness investments in and out of the gym.

Approaches such as Swedish, deep tissue and sports massages, and myofascial trigger point release therapy can boost both blood and lymphatic circulation, giving soft tissues a vital shot of





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cellular nutrition. Massage modalities affect biochemical processes and on the deepest level, mitochondria—the cell's energy-producing engines. Research from 2015 published in the journal *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* shows that massage immediately following injury due to resistance training encourages tissue regeneration.

Tailored Tools

"In the context of exercise, someone who trains three to five times per week at a high intensity will likely have a higher level of fitness. However, the demand placed on the soft tissue structures will equally be high, and may require more treatment to offset this. This may vary from once a week to once a month," says Andy Stanbury, head of soft tissue therapy at Pure Sports Medicine, a London clinic for sports injuries.

After working with high performance athletes for 15 years, he always asks, "What do I need to add to improve a patient's fitness or performance?" For a patient that wants to improve fitness by running, "I would want to optimize their range of movement and stimulate the nervous system in readiness to exercise. I may look to use some myofascial release techniques, active release therapy, instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization or muscle energy techniques. This would of course take place before the run." For post-run recovery, Stanbury suggests more relaxing modalities, such as gentle massage, combined with breathwork.

The Fascia Factor

Fascia, a network of connective tissue, wraps the body in protective layers from the most superficial muscle to the deepest organs and plays a central role in flexibility. This complex netting can become stuck due to inactivity, injury or surgery. Keeping it supple is vital for everyone.

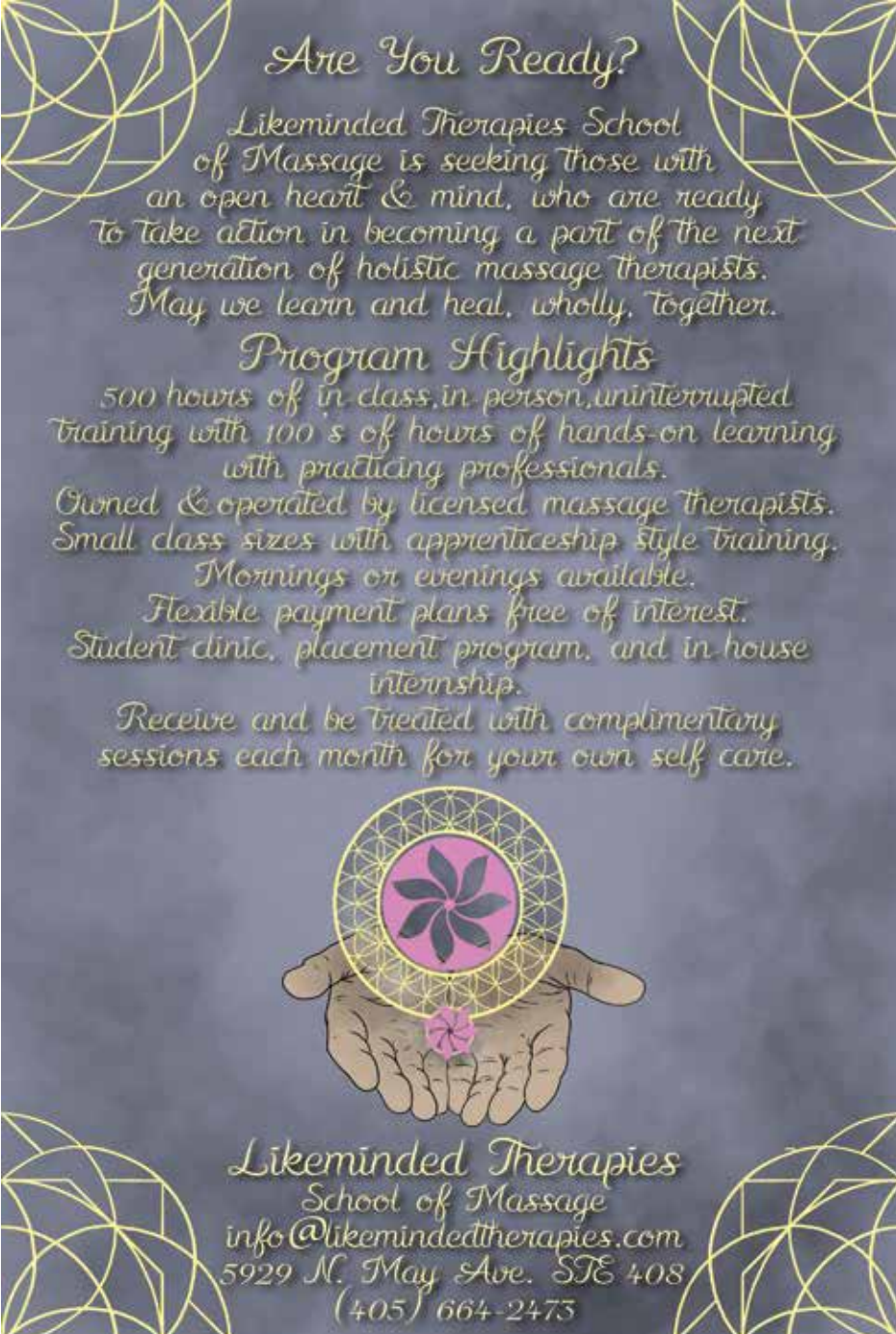
Bodywork like myofascial release that targets trigger points—knots of tension—can help to ramp up postoperative and overall injury recovery. "Myofascial release is a technique used to reduce the tension in the fascial membrane. Slowly stretching the fascia will unwind

and reduce the pressure on the muscles and nerves, reducing pain and creating range of motion and flexibility," explains Anthony Hansen, a myofascial release therapist at Therapy on the Gulf, in Naples, Florida.

Hansen, who specializes in a "fast release" technique, emphasizes the importance of a gentle approach. "Trigger points are caused by cellular debris encapsulated by the fascia, so it's much better to stretch it loose than it is to force

it. Normally, it takes about three to five sessions, depending on the condition of the patient, for the fascial system to unwind before the patient will feel relief."

Active trigger points refer, or radiate, pain elsewhere in the body while latent points tend to be more localized and are sore when compressed. "From a whole-body perspective and when we put this in the context of fascial planes, restoration of efficient movement is key, particularly post-surgery and when progressing training



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load,” says Stanbury. “However, this is not just movement of the body (muscles), but movement of blood, lymph and energy.”

A supple, tension-free body helps deter and bounce back from injuries. Regular bodywork, especially Swedish and deep tissue massage, fosters muscle recovery and helps prevent future issues. Self-massage using foam rollers and massage balls or canes can also be very helpful.

Bodywork offers full-spectrum perks, points out Stanbury, including “improved tissue mobility and elasticity, more efficient blood circulation and reduced anxiety and stress. This will, in turn, help promote better sleep, which is, of course, where we recover best.”

Marlaina Donato is a body-mind-spirit author and composer/recording artist. Connect at AutumnEmbersMusic.com.

MODALITIES TO HELP EASE PAIN AND STRAIN

SWEDISH MASSAGE:

Gentle, gliding strokes to stimulate circulation, lower blood pressure and reduce muscle tension.

DEEP TISSUE MASSAGE:

Specific, focused massage to break up muscle congestion and reduce restrictions.

SPORTS MASSAGE:

Offered at many gyms, physical therapy facilities and recreational sports events for recovery and prevention.

MUSCLE ENERGY TECHNIQUES:

Stretching and hands-on techniques that enable gentle muscle contraction to improve joint function and lengthen muscles.

MYOFASCIAL RELEASE:

Modalities that specifically target trigger points in the muscles and fascia to release adhesions, increase oxygen and reduce pain and tightness include the following:

Active Release Therapy: May be beneficial for chronic pain due to repetitive movements, especially where muscle weakness, numbness or tingling/burning is experienced in the soft tissues.

Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Mobilization: Also known as the Graston technique, practitioners use an array of hand-held instruments for deep trigger points in the fascia and muscles—beneficial after injuries and conditions such as piriformis, muscle-induced sciatica and back pain.

Myofascial Cupping: A technique that employs cups to create suction on the muscle tissue to move lymph and blood through the area of deep trigger points.



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Monthly Business Highlight - Free Spirit Yoga & Meditation Sanctuary

Free Spirit Yoga Studio & Meditation Sanctuary was created 20 years ago by founder Dee Mathis. She shares the yoga experience to all ages and fitness levels. She currently has students from 10 years old to their late 70's. The most popular class is Yoga Nidra, a guided meditation that features sound healing with sacred crystal bowls. Mondays at 7:15 PM CST on Zoom. Dee successfully created the class to help an 8 year old child who was having panic attacks. If you are feeling stressed and not sleeping well, try this class. It's Spring and Free Spirit Yogis are blessed to be back in the park, to soak up the energy of the earth and oxygen from the trees. They practice safely, all are vaccinated, wear masks and stay a safe distance away. All classes honor the Spirit of Yoga and are an eclectic blend of healing disciplines, including a beautiful Raja Yoga Meditation called Heartfulness, meditating on the energy of love in the heart. Discover all of the amazing benefits of the different forms of healing yoga with Dee at Free Spirit Yoga.



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healthy kids

Natural Mama

Holistic Approaches to a Healthy Pregnancy

by Julie Peterson



wavebreakmedia/micro/AdobeStock.com

During her first pregnancy, Sarah Wallace, a former registered nurse in Atlanta, was chronically anemic. “I was so tired I would fall asleep while I was eating dinner,” she says. That pregnancy resulted in a baby with a low birth weight. Fortunately, Wallace learned more about nutrition and wellness. Her now 4-year-old has caught up to the growth charts and is thriving, and her next pregnancy went smoothly.

No matter how pregnancy is counted—280 days, 40 weeks or three trimesters—mama and baby share blood, nutrition and air for the duration. “Taking a holistic path before and during pregnancy is about embracing the nature of our bodies and committing to maintaining all aspects of wellness during this journey,” says Nancy Peplinsky, founder of the Holistic Moms Network, based in Caldwell, New Jersey.

Nutrition for Two

The right foods nourish the growing baby, the placenta and the mother’s increasing blood volume, maintaining the mother’s body during the complex mission. Whole foods rather than processed are best. *The Whole 9 Months: A Week-By-Week Pregnancy Nutrition Guide with Recipes for a Healthy Start*, by integrative obstetrician-gynecologist (OB-GYN) Jennifer Lang and dietitian Dana Angelo White, makes it easier to select the proper nutrients along the way and provides ways to deal with nausea and cravings.

Choose organic foods when possible to reduce exposures to pesticides. If organic isn’t an option for every food, *The Shopper’s Guide to Pesticides in Produce*, from the Environmental Working Group (ewg.org), can be downloaded and taken to the market. Either avoid foods on the “Dirty Dozen” list or go organic for those items.

A high-quality prenatal vitamin fills nutrition gaps. Wallace saw a difference between her first and second pregnancy by switching brands. “The first time, I took generic prenatal vitamins. With the second pregnancy, I found whole-food supplements. I never got that exhaustion, and my second baby was a healthy weight,” she says.

“Research has shown that healthy nutrition during pregnancy improves outcomes for mom and baby, while unhealthy food choices can lead to premature childbirth, high-risk pregnancies and poor developmental outcomes in children,” says Peplinsky.

In addition to clean food, it’s important to reevaluate body care products and household cleaners for toxicity. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health has linked personal care and cleaning product ingredients to endocrine disruption, developmental and reproductive disorders, neurotoxicity and cancer.

Body Love

Kristen Burgess, in Fife Lake, Michigan, creator of the website *NaturalBirthAndBabyCare.com*, teaches classes for moms-to-be. “[Exercise] helps your blood volume increase, brings plenty of oxygen to your baby, increases your stamina and endurance for labor (which is an athletic event), and perhaps best of all, keeps you feeling great,” she writes in her blog.

Options such as stretching, walking and prenatal yoga can be soothing for mom and baby. Burgess also advocates prenatal belly dancing to raise the heart rate “while bonding with your baby and relishing your beautiful pregnant form.”

Peplinsky notes, “A holistic approach to pregnancy also embraces integrative therapies such as meditation, yoga, acupuncture and chiropractic, which may

assist in reducing stress, minimizing physical discomfort and joint pain, while improving overall life quality for mom and baby.”

Support Along the Way

A healthy pregnancy includes assistance. In the U.S., most women choose an OB-GYN, with just over 9 percent of 2017 births incorporating a midwife to support the mother before, during and sometimes after birth. A midwife is medically trained and, depending on state law, may offer gynecological examinations, birth control counseling and prescriptions. On her own or as an assistant to a doctor, she coaches the mother during labor and assists with the delivery, which may be in a home, birthing center or hospital. The American College of Nurse-Midwives, in Silver Spring, Maryland, offers a midwife locator.

Another option is engaging a doula that focuses on emotional support for mom, her partner and the family during pregnancy and birth. During labor, she may offer massage, encouragement and breathing coaching. While doulas only provide non-medical care, they can offer evidence-based resources to inform decision-making. There is a database to find one at *DoulaMatch.net*.

There are also books and apps to provide week-to-week details on pregnancy. Genevieve Howland, a childbirth educator in Destin, Florida, and author of *The Mama Natural Week-by-Week Guide to Pregnancy and Childbirth*, offers a weekly article at *MamaNatural.com* about what’s going on with the developing baby and mother.

“Being a holistic mom is about connecting the mind, body and spirit, and approaching wellness with all three in mind,” adds Peplinsky. “The more we listen to our instincts and our needs, the more our health improves during childbearing and afterwards.”

Julie Peterson writes about health and wellness. Reach out at JuliePeterson2222@gmail.com.



Pregnancy Apps

Tracking exercise, nutrition, baby bump images, the joys of the journey and the baby’s development are available options in a variety of apps. There are even apps for dads.

Ovia has many features that expand based on the data entered. It answers questions about food safety and medications, and even has a community feature to connect with other moms.

Hello Belly offers practical tips and a good dose of silliness with pregnancy jokes and memes. There are also yoga videos.

Glow Nurture can be customized, has community spaces, symptom trackers, reminders for appointments and a boatload of articles.

Expectful Pregnancy gives reminders to focus on joy by taking a moment to breathe or meditate. With guided sessions for pregnancy, moms-to-be can put regular meditation practices in place.

Sprout Pregnancy has a pregnancy timeline, weight tracker and journal. The 3-D images showing development of the baby are really cool, as well.

Who’s Your Daddy gives Dad a to-do list, weekly updates, a development timeline, suggestions for taking care of Mom and helps him pick baby names.

Sustainably Stylish

Eco-Fashion that's Kind to the Planet

by Kajsa Nickels

The trendy “fast fashion” industry standard that originated in the early 1990s has had far-reaching effects that continue today. With a production turnaround time as short as four months, designer knock-offs made with inexpensive materials line the shelves of shopping centers throughout the world. But cheap textiles come with a hidden price tag.

According to the documentary *The True Cost*, consumers worldwide buy around 80 billion new items of clothing per year, a 400 percent increase from 20 years ago. A report by the UK-based Ellen MacArthur Foundation, which advocates a regenerative, circular economy, found that more than \$500 billion in value is lost globally every

year from rarely worn manufactured clothing and the lack of recycling. The greenhouse gas emissions from the production of these textiles total more than 1 billion metric tons per year, more than produced by international flights and maritime shipping combined.

Sustainable clothing is important for both the planet and those wearing the clothing, says Jeff Garner, a fashion designer in Franklin, Tennessee, who founded the eco-label Prophetik. “The worst effect is the washing of clothes. The synthetic fabrics and dyes come off in the laundry process and go into our groundwater and oceans, including the microplastics from polyester clothing.”

Jay Charlton, founder of the UK’s Viva la Vegan fashion brand, believes eco-friendly fashion does not have to be poorly produced or poorly designed. Nor does it mean choosing between a million different options, says Charlton, who found her passion for vegan-statement apparel after adopting a vegan diet. “One easy choice here is organic cotton over conventional cotton. While not perfect, it is better for the environment. Most organic cotton is produced under better working conditions for the farmers, too,” she says.

She also stresses the importance of reading labels to determine where clothes originate. “The next time you go shopping, seek out sustainable vegan fabrics and fair wear policies to do what’s right for the planet, people and our animal friends.”

Sustainable Yet Stylish

Just because something is safe for people and the planet doesn’t mean it can’t also be fashionable. Fair Indigo, located in Madison, Wisconsin, is a sustainable clothing company that specializes in garments made from organic Peruvian pima cotton. According to president and co-founder Robert Behnke, Peruvian pima cotton is prized for its longevity and durability. “We want to show the world that organic and sustainable does not have to be either too ‘crunchy’ or too trendy. The clothes that people wear every day—the clothes that make them feel comfortable—these are the brands that will have the greatest impact in truly changing the world.”

Fashion doesn’t have to be brand-new in order to be in style. Although secondhand clothing has been regarded negatively in the past by some, it has become more popular in recent years, especially during the COVID-19 crisis. Market researchers predict that resale clothing sales will increase 185 percent in the

Clothing from companies like Fair Indigo use more sustainable fabrics and ensure better lives for garment workers.

image courtesy of FairIndigo.com

next decade compared to 20 percent for fast fashion. Creative ways we can help reduce clothing waste while staying in style include the following:

Clothing exchange parties. Friends and family members can swap clothes and non-sized items such as purses, hats and scarves in fun, socially distanced events.

Creative mending. People that have extra time on their hands may like to learn a new skill. Also known as visible mending, creative mending includes freestyle stitching around holes and tears, and both beaded and Japanese *shashiko* embroidery.

Repurpose into something new. If an item of clothing is beyond repair, it doesn't have to be thrown away. Old T-shirts can be turned into blankets, pillowcases and even coin purses. Men's dress shirts can be transformed into dresses for young girls or onesies for babies.

Kajsa Nickels is a freelance writer in Salisbury, Massachusetts. Contact her at Kajsa.BlueMountain@gmail.com.



Embrace plant-based workout clothes from companies like Viva la Vegan.

eco tip

Eco-Cosmetics Choosing Sustainable Beauty Products



gizele/AdobeStock.com

Beauty is a \$49 billion industry in the U.S. That's a lot of plastic lipstick cases and shampoo tubes buried in landfills and breaking down into microplastics that leach poisonous chemicals into the world's oceans and our drinking water. As consumers, we can vote with our wallets, sending a clear message to makeup and skincare brands: We want the planet to be beautiful, too.

Sustainability to-do list:

- Instead of using disposable cleansing wipes, make a reusable, washable alternative using a cut-up T-shirt or ultra-soft baby washcloths. Online DIY recipes for the liquid solution include water, witch hazel, essential oils and mild soaps.
- Opt for products that eliminate water as the main ingredient, such as shampoo and conditioners that come in paper-wrapped bars, lowering shipping costs, eliminating the need for plastic bottles and conserving water.
- Say no to single-use sheet masks wrapped in plastic or made of petroleum-based materials. Easier,

eco-friendly swaps abound, such as cucumber slices for puffy eyes.

■ Go with glass packaging instead of plastic. Glass is recycled more easily and doesn't release harmful toxic chemicals.

■ Choose brands that use the least amount of packaging materials as possible, eschewing plastic in favor of biodegradable, paper-wrapped, cartoned or package-less products.

■ Look for brands that use less packing material and planet-forward shippers.

■ Support, applaud and purchase refillable products.

■ In certain areas of the country, #1 and #2 plastic containers commonly used in the beauty industry are not accepted at local recycling centers. TerraCycle.com offers a mail-in solution with free shipping labels for packages weighing more than 15 pounds. Among the recyclable items accepted through this program are lip balm tubes, soap dispensers, shampoo and conditioner caps, hair spray triggers, lipstick cases, mascara tubes, eye shadow cases, foundation packaging and lip liner pencils.

Eco-friendly beauty brands:

- By Humankind (ByHumankind.com) is reducing use of single-use plastics.
- LOLI (LoliBeauty.com) is a zero-waste brand that uses food-grade glass yogurt jars that can be repurposed in the kitchen.
- Cadence (KeepYourCadence.com) offers refillable containers as an alternative to wasteful, travel-size products.
- Lush (LushUSA.com) champions package-less products.
- Beautycounter (Beautycounter.com) has pledged to eliminate unit cartons; decrease its use of virgin plastic; use recycled, recyclable, reused or compostable packaging; and create refillable products.

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Devaki Lindsey Berkson on Bioidentical Hormones for Long-Term Health

by Linda Sechrist

Hormone scholar Dr. Devaki Lindsey Berkson, a nutrition and gut expert as well as a continuing education professor for medical doctors and pharmacists, frequently lectures at conferences to clarify misinformation about hormones, such as the difference between synthetic hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and plant-based bioidentical hormone therapy (BHT).

This peer-reviewed, published researcher is the bestselling author of *Safe Hormones Smart Women and Sexy Brain: How Sizzling Intimacy & Balanced Hormones Prevent Alzheimer's, Cancer, Depression & Divorce* and a breast cancer survivor of 26 years.

Why do you refer to hormones as nature's physiologic internet system?

Hormones send invaluable "email" signals to cells throughout the entire body and brain.

What is the difference between HRT and BHT?

Synthetic hormones are altered by pharmaceutical companies to make them profitable. Bioidentical hormones are like



those made by the body and designed by Mother Nature. I advise tracking hormone levels every decade throughout life to determine which levels help an individual feel

their best. Unfortunately, doctors are still being taught that hormones are mainly important for reproductive or sexy things, addressing issues like peri- or postmenopause, andropause, erectile

dysfunction or disease.

How did the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) affect the use of hormones?

Up until 2002, when WHI prematurely stopped one of its hormone study groups which was prescribed a combination of Premarin plus synthetic progesterone, estrogen therapies were the recommended standard of care for menopausal women and the biggest-selling pharmaceuticals in history. Medical journals, research institutions and expert cancer doctors accepted that estrogen was safe and did not increase the risk of breast cancer.

Carried out by the U.S. National Institutes of Health from 2002 to 2008, WHI conducted a series of 40 group studies following the health of 161,809

postmenopausal women. Studies covered various aspects of aging women's health from diet, bone health and nutrients to heart health and the risk of hormone-driven cancers, as well as two randomized trials on hormone therapies. The resulting claims that the HRT combo of Premarin plus synthetic progesterone significantly increased the risks of breast cancer, cardiac events, Alzheimer's disease and stroke alarmed the public and huge numbers of U.S. doctors stopped prescribing hormones.

What has changed?

By 2004, re-analysis of the combo study demonstrated opposite findings, and a 19-year follow-up WHI analysis revealed that estrogen protects against breast cancer while on it and even 10 years after, while progestins do the opposite. Dr. Leon Speroff, professor at the University of Oregon and the physician who authored *Clinical Gynecologic Endocrinology and Infertility*, twice concluded after reviewing every statistical nuance of the WHI, "There continues to be good reason to believe that there are benefits associated with treatment, including improvement of quality of life beyond the relief of hot flashes, maximal protection against osteoporotic fractures, a reduction in colorectal cancers, maintenance of skin elasticity and the possibility of primary prevention of coronary heart disease and Alzheimer's."

Although new science clearly showed that hormones rule body and brain health and are critical for staying healthy,

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fighting illness long-term rather than short-term and lowering mortality timing by preventing heart attacks and strokes, CEOs of Big Pharma companies that provided the synthetic hormones used in the WHI trials continued to fight hard against BHT formulated by compounding pharmacists. Now these very same CEOs have released a BHT combination of estradiol and progesterone and are writing in peer review studies about how much better and safer it is. Big Pharma intends to be the sole source of supply. They plan to do that by eliminating their competition: compounding pharmacies.

What is your experience with compounding pharmacists?

The FDA purports that compounding pharmacies are dangerous, unregulated and use items that are too complicated to compound. Not true. Compounding pharmacists are skilled professionals at mixing bioidentical hormones to a doctor's prescription. I've successfully been using compounding pharmacies for more than 30 years. A compounding pharmacist should be part of the health team when natural, bioidentical hormones are prescribed. Their knowledge can provide a wealth of experience for doctor and the patient. Furthermore, they provide an invaluable service at manufacturing a safe product that is unique for a particular patient.

Hormones are so critical that even if you're prescribed HRT, it's better than losing out for decades on the hormone signals that keep your body younger and less inflamed. To be without healthy hormone signals is an aging and pro-inflammatory process to the body. In other words, get hormones any way you can. While synthetic is better than nothing, bioidentical trumps synthetic.

DrLindseyBerkson.com offers a podcast archive, blog, newsletter and membership opportunities that include live, monthly, Zoom conversations.

Linda Sechrist is a senior staff writer for Natural Awakenings.

Coming Next Month

JUNE

Treating Depression Naturally

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Integrative Approaches to Men's Health

Travel for the Planet

Tips for Eating Vegan on Vacation

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calendar of events

PLANS CHANGE - CALL AHEAD

Some events are being postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19. If you plan to visit an attraction or event in Tulsa, Oklahoma City or the surrounding areas over the coming days and weeks, please contact that organization directly prior to visiting to get the latest details.

SUNDAY, MAY 2

OKC Cinco de Mayo Festival – 1-10:30pm. This year's event will showcase international recording artists, Norahua Folkloric Dance Group and the election of Miss Cinco de Mayo 2020. Also, don't miss a special presentation of Academia OKC students demonstrating their skills in mariachi, folkloric dance, photography and visual art. Free. Scissortail Park, 300 SW 7th St, OKC. 405- 445-6277. ScissorTailPark.org/Calendar.

FRIDAY, MAY 7

Night Market at Scissortail Park OKC – 5:30-9:30pm. The central walkway through Scissortail Park, which is adorned with café lights, colorful decorative light fixtures, makes for a beautiful setting to stroll through the 50 local vendors selling art, home decor, jewelry, candles, antiques and more unique treasures. Free. Scissortail Park, 300 SW 7th St, OKC. 405-445-7080. ScissortailPark.org/NightMarket.

FRIDAY, MAY 7

Mayfest Tulsa – 5/7-5/9. Fri, 11am-11pm; Sat, 11am-11pm; Sun, 11am-6pm. Come see artwork from over 120 artists, five indoor galleries and three stages of entertainment. Don't miss the delicious food court stocked with fair food favorites such as funnel cakes, gyros and fresh lemonade. Free. 400 S Main St, Tulsa. 918-582-6435. TulsaMayFest.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 8

Migratory Bird Hike OKC – 10-11:30am. May 8 is Migratory Bird Day! Join guides on a hike and try and find as many of the park's migrant species as possible. Learn more about migration and bird conservation. Free. Martin Park Nature Center, 5000 W Memorial Rd, OKC. 405-297-1429. Okc.gov.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

31st Garden Festival in the Park OKC – 9am-3pm. There will be potted plants, nursery plants, ironworks, wood as well as natural products to use in your home. Activities geared toward children, fairy home scavenger hunt and alpacas, as well as scheduled guided tours of the gardens. Free. 3400 NW 36th St, OKC. 405-297-1392. Okc.gov.

Rose District Cinco de Mayo Fiesta Broken Arrow – 2-9pm. Come enjoy family-friendly activities, from live music performances and local vendor booths to raffle prizes and Mexican-themed cuisine. Free. Rose District, 303 S Main St, Broken Arrow. 918-259-6511.

plan ahead

SATURDAY, JUNE 19

savethedate

JUNE 19

Conference - Entheogen & Spirituality - Evolution through Psychedelic Education – 8am-8pm. Entheogens are consciousness-altering substances used for spiritual and transformational purposes. Speakers at this educational conference will discuss personal readiness and preparation for entheogenic journeys. Attendees will learn about different entheogens and their uses and will hear real-life examples of profound transformational healing from traumas, the critical step of integrating your entheogen experiences for lasting change, how to use other natural non-entheogens to heal yourself and so much more. \$30/early bird online; \$40/regular admission. Newalla. Facebook.com/EntheogenSpirituality Conf. See ad, page 17.

classifieds

\$30 for up to 30 words, then \$1 extra per word. Email content to Publisher@NAOklahoma.com. Deadline is the 10th.

OPPORTUNITIES

AREAL WORK-FROM-HOME BUSINESS – Position with a private manufacturing company. Non-MLM. Must be green-minded, with a focus on environmentally responsible products. Must love helping people and have access to a computer. Please mention this ad when you call or text. Tammy Bursack, 507-476-0795. More information at WorkFromHomeAndLoveIt.com.

NOW HIRING VETERINARIANS AND ANIMAL ASSISTANTS – Business is good, thanks to our ad in *Natural Awakenings* magazine. Holistic Pet Care, 3001 Tinker Diagonal St, OKC, and Best Friends Animal Clinic, 1313 N Harrison Ave, Shawnee, are looking to hire veterinarians and animal assistants. Call 405-605-6675 or 405-275-9355.

STYLIST NEEDED – Busy OKC salon looking for full-time booth rental hair stylist. Sustain Salon is dedicated to Earth-conscious practices, recycling 95% of their waste while providing high-end hair services. Located in the Metro Park neighborhood. Call or text 405-569-9432.

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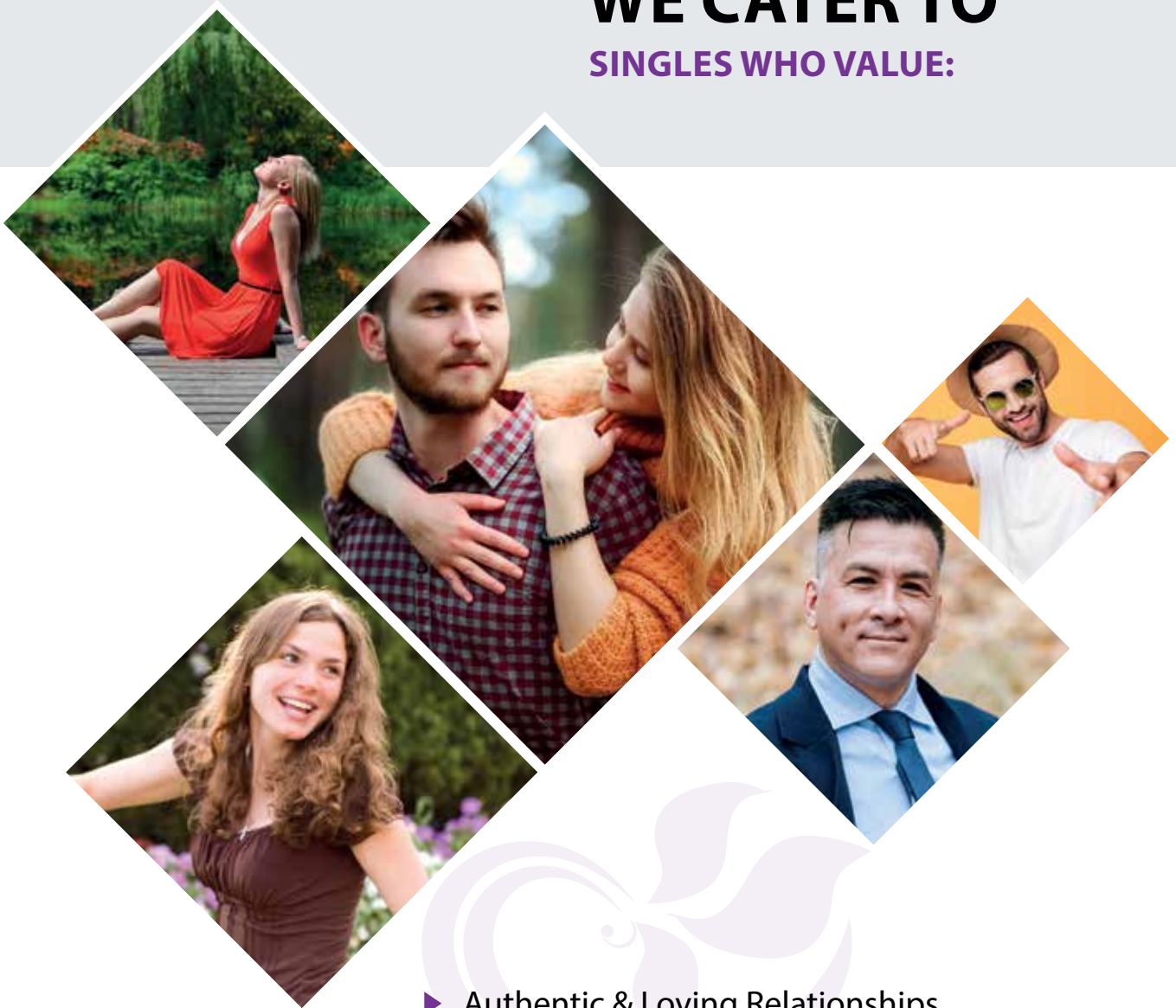
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Tulsa Farmers' Market Tulsa – Every Wed and Sat 7-11am. More than 75 Oklahoma Grown-certified vendors from across Eastern Oklahoma. Free. Kendall Whittier neighborhood. Admiral & Lewis, Tulsa. 918-633-1934. TulsaFarmersMarket.org.

sunday

Yoga for Beginners with Singing Bowls & Crystals Warr Acres – Noon-12:45pm. Kundalini YOGA for PEACE – 1-2pm. Both events held every Sunday. Azalea House of Healing. 5601 NW 72nd St, Ste 106, Warr Acres. Yoga-For-Peace.com.

tuesday

PlyoJam Dance Fitness Tulsa – 6-7pm. PlyoJam's innovative workout combines cutting-edge dance moves with short, intense plyometric-inspired movements that tone, shape and transform the body. Free. QuikTrip Great Lawn at The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

wednesday

Dog Play Wednesday Tulsa – 9am-8pm. Bark your calendars; Dog Play Wednesday is back! Keep checking the events schedule to see pup-coming activities that are not to miss. Tails are wagging just thinking about it. Free. The Patio at The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

Dope Poetry Night OKC – 7:30-9:30pm. All levels are open to the mic, and it is uncensored. Sign-ups begin at 7pm and the show begins at 7:30pm-ish. Free. Ice Event Center Sports Bar and Grill, 1148 NE 36th St, OKC. 323-346-8683. [Facebook.com/events/209553842825723](https://facebook.com/events/209553842825723).

thursday

1st Thursday Tulsa – Noon-1pm. 1st Thur. Sustainable Tulsa's monthly open-to-the-public meeting offers individuals an opportunity to network, enjoy lunch and hear presentations from local, regional and national sustainability leaders. Free. Tulsa Community College's (TCC) McKeon Center for Creativity. 910 S Boston Ave, Tulsa. SustainableTulsaInc.org/1st-thursday.

Vibes Edmond – 5-9pm. 1st Thur. Participating downtown businesses, artists and performers invite you to celebrate creativity. Get ready to be inspired by visual arts and captivated by the sounds and sights of performers as you stroll the streets of Downtown Edmond. Free. 405-340-4481. EdmondVibes.org.

Zumba in the Gardens OKC – 5:45pm. 3rd Thur. The very popular Evelin Pino will be the instructor from the YMCA. This class combines Latin and international music with a fun and effective workout system. Free. Devon Lawn, Myriad Botanical Gardens, 301 W Reno, OKC. 405-445-7080. MyriadGardens.org.

SweatClub Boot Camp Tulsa – 6-7pm. Join this fun and friendly class. Participants will use their bodies and a variety of formats to get moving each week. Expect Tabata, intervals, strength and cardio for a full-body sweat every time. Free. QuikTrip Great Lawn at The Gathering Place, 2650 S John Williams Way E, Tulsa. 918-779-1000. GatheringPlace.org.

friday

First Friday Art Crawl Tulsa – 6-9pm. 1st Fri. Visitors can explore artwork inside galleries, studios and museums and catch a few live music performances or even an exciting fireworks display. As an added bonus, art crawlers can take advantage of free museum and gallery admission while shopping later than normal business hours would allow. Free. Northern section of downtown. 918-492-7477. TheTulsaArtsDistrict.org.

First Fridays on the Paseo OKC – 6-9pm. 1st Fri. Over 80 artists in more than 25 businesses and galleries participate, all within walking distance. Some galleries offer refreshments, and food trucks will be available. Free. Paseo Art District: between NW 30th & Dewey and NW 28th & Walker, OKC. 405-525-2688. ThePaseo.org.

Norman Art Walk 2nd Friday – 6-9pm. 2nd Fri. Norman Arts Council is excited to announce the return of in-person 2nd Friday Art Walks. Free. Downtown Norman. 405-360-1162. 2ndFridayNorman.com.

LIVE! on the Plaza 2nd Friday OKC – 6-10pm. 2nd Sun. Plaza District's free, monthly artwalk, featuring art shows, live entertainment, great food and local shopping. Free. Plaza District: NW 16th St between N Blackwelder Ave and N Pennsylvania Ave, OKC. 405-578-5718. PlazaDistrict.org.

saturday

Adult Birding Walk OKC – 8-9:30am. 2nd Sat. These walks in Martin Park offer adults the opportunity to go birding and socialize with other birders in the quiet hours of the morning. No binoculars needed. Led by retired Naturalist Neil Garrison. Free. Martin Park Nature Center. 5000 W Memorial Rd, OKC. 405-297-1429. Okc.gov.



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Offering a variety of yoga classes seven days a week, including beginners, gentle, vinyasa and power yoga. Also offering private classes, special events and teen classes. They provide both in-studio and online classes

with almost 20 classes to choose from each week. *See ad, Body Works page 21.*

SUNDAY KUNDALINI YOGA FOR PEACE

Melissa Nikhila, MA, KYT
72nd & NW Expy, #106, Warr Acres
Yoga-For-Peace.com



Practice yoga and meditation to heal your body, mind and emotions. Kundalini yoga helps you achieve wellness through postures, breathwork and mantra.

Calm your mind, release negative thoughts and trauma while uplifting your spirit. Hatha yoga improves balance, flexibility and strength, and relax deeply with healing sound and crystals. *See ad, Body Works page 21.*

YOGAQUEST

Dee Day
3325 E 31st St, Tulsa
918-622-5454
TulsaYogaQuest.com



Add yoga to your fitness routine now. Reach your performance potential. Increase your flexibility so you bend, not break. Improve your lung capacity and elasticity to increase energy. Recover quicker. Get a free body assessment and a free class. *See ad, Body Works page 21.*

YOU POWER YOGA

Denise Shaw
1904 E 2 St, Edmond
405-348-9979 • YouPowerYoga.com



Free yoga class for first-time clients. They offer both in-studio and live-streaming classes. In-studio classes limited to

15 students. For either option, book online or via their free You Power Yoga app or the online schedule. Teacher training available. *See ad, Body Works page 21.*



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