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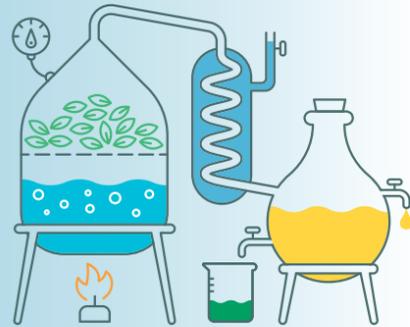
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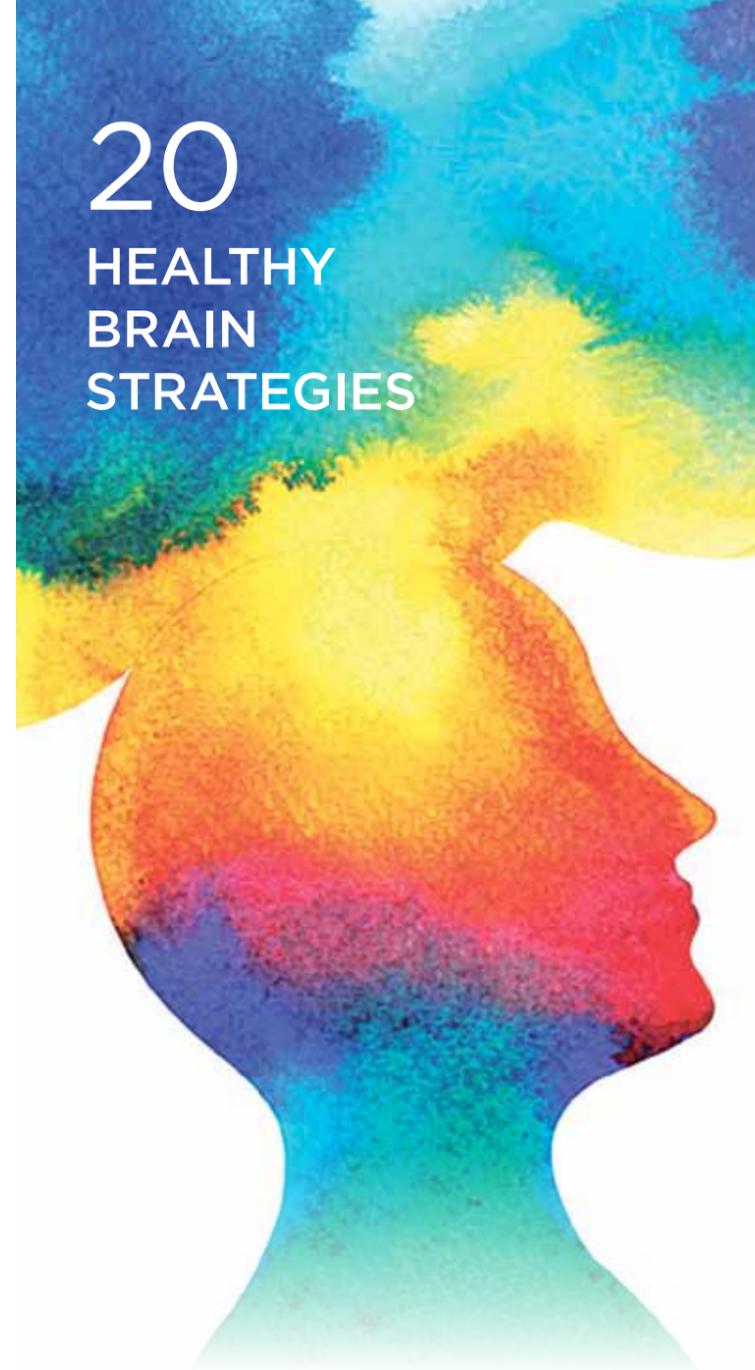


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DECADES OF HEALING WISDOM
MOMENTS OF HEALING GRACE

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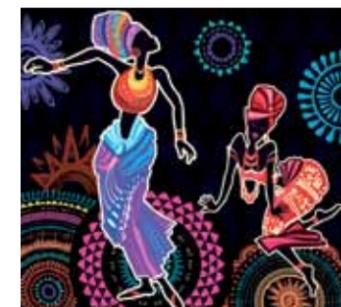
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- **Korrine Holt**
 Founder, Vibrology Center
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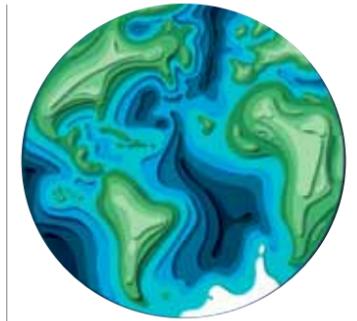
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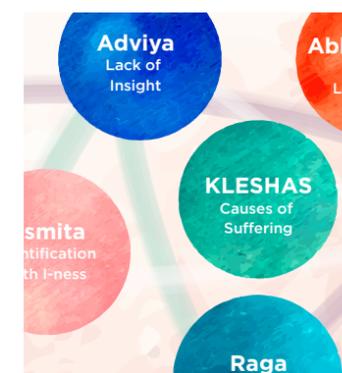
SHEILA'S LEGACY

Our yoga editor of two years, Sheila Ewers, concludes her tenure with this issue. What a body of work she leaves behind! Here are some of her best pieces, profound, practical and full of heart.

OBSTACLES TO HIGHER AWARENESS

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Hello, Goodbye



It's a season of change here at the magazine as we welcome three new staff members and bid adieu to their predecessors.

First: We say farewell to our yoga editor, Sheila Ewers. My first impression of Sheila came from the first article she wrote for us. DAMN, she can write! Within three paragraphs, I knew we had found our next yoga editor after Graham Fowler's prolific two years with us. I was thrilled I wouldn't have to search any further.

One of the benefits of working with extraordinary people is the pleasure of their company, but I don't think Sheila and I met more than twice after our initial meeting. Truth is, she ran the department so well that there wasn't really a need to meet. As I told her recently, "If you don't hear from me, that means all is well!"

Well, not really. I believe it's a failure of management when excellence isn't recognized in the moment. While that can't be rectified in a brief farewell piece, let me say that I can't imagine a more sensitive, thoughtful, compassionate and heartfelt response to the events of 2020 than Sheila's. As I review her writings, I am struck by how my appreciation for her work deepens even now.

Perhaps the best I can do to honor Sheila is to quote her. This is from her July 2020 piece, "The Yoga of Dismantling Racism."

"The action of dismantling systemic racism and working for social justice is yoga. It is an advanced practice that requires every one of us to, first, do the deep work of svadhyaya, self-study, and then bring our awareness into the world and skillfully do our part to create the union we profess to believe..."

"This is no comfortable or easy endeavor. It requires what my meditation teacher, Jonathan Foust, once called 'ruthless self-observation,' particularly for many of us who are white and unconsciously benefitting from hundreds of years of white supremacy and privilege. It takes courage and resolve—and it won't happen overnight. When the voices of protest we see in the streets today quiet down, it will be more important than ever to continue our efforts. We must not look away."

Dear Sheila, I cannot thank you enough for your two years of stewardship. Your inner beauty, compassion and devotion to personal evolution are remarkable, and I feel forever blessed by our association. May you always have that which is for your highest and best.



Mila Burgess [Photo: 2TPhoto]

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Second: Hello, Mila Burgess, E-RYT 500, our new yoga editor! Recommended by Sheila, Mila is different from her predecessors in that she is not a studio owner; she is yoga teacher and a yoga teacher trainer for Life Time Atlanta. Based on her story ideas for the next year, I can tell that the direction of content for our yoga department will push the boundaries, too. Consider it "Yoga Plus"—as in "Yoga and Creativity" or "Yoga and Emotional Competence." I

hope you are as excited as I am to read what will soon spring from Mila's fingertips!

Mila did not come to yoga readily—and I like that about her. She was a fitness advocate and practitioner; training hard was her way, and she saw yoga as "too squishy" to be of value. She loved her first

yoga class, not because it induced a peaceful mind, but because it was "fitness yoga," and she got a great workout. With this background, I hope that Mila's tenure will expand the interest and readership in the yoga community and beyond. Her first article will appear in January 2022.

Third: We are thrilled to announce the addition of a seasoned journalist as our new staff writer. Sandra Bolan, whose first article appears this month, is an award-winning reporter with over 25 years of experience. She served for nine years as a reporter for the Stouffville Sun-Tribune of Ontario, has published educational and photographic books about dogs, and is a dedicated extreme athlete in her spare time, having competed in Ironman and marathons.

It will be impossible for Sandy to replace her predecessor, who happens to be my son, Noah Chen. He's now getting considerably more work than I can provide, with better pay, from his mom!



Noah Chen [Photo: Noah Chen]

Continued on page 41.

The Mantram of Unification

The sons of men are one and I am one with them.

I seek to love, not hate;
I seek to serve and not exact due service;
I seek to heal, not hurt.

Let pain bring due reward of light and love.

Let the soul control the outer form, and life and all events,

And bring to light the love which underlies the happenings of the time.

Let vision come and insight. Let the future stand revealed.

Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.

Let love prevail. Let all men love.

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ATLANTA BRIEFS

Take Our Reader Survey for a Chance to Win \$100

The *Natural Awakenings* Publishing Corporation is asking readers to fill out its online readership survey in order to better understand and serve its readership. One randomly selected participant will receive a \$100 Visa gift card as a thank-you.

"Participation takes just five minutes and will give us a better understanding of what you need and how well we're delivering on your expectations," says founding CEO Sharon Bruckman. "We'll also use your responses to help guide the direction of future development."

Natural Awakenings provides information and resources in both print and online format for living a healthier, happier life. Published in more than 50 communities nationwide, it enjoys a loyal monthly readership of over 1.3 million and is one of the country's most widely read healthy-living magazines.

To take the magazine's survey, go to NaturalAwakenings.com/Survey.



HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELLNESS OPENS IN MARIETTA

A new holistic health store opened in Marietta last month. Holistic Health & Wellness is a 1,000-square-foot store located at 3372 Canton Road, Suite 116, stocking crystals, Tibetan and crystal singing bowls, essential oils, incense, Native American products and orisha tools.

"Through experiencing the stress of living through a pandemic, I wanted to open a store that would be inclusive of all and provide tools for people to be healthy spiritually, mentally and physically," says Dawn Brunson, founder and owner of the store.

Brunson also offers a number of services at her location. She is a Usui Reiki practitioner, a certified development coach and a 200-hour trained yoga instructor. She offers Reiki healing sessions, coaching sessions and private and small group restorative yoga instruction.

"I wanted a business that could serve the whole person and take into consideration that although we are all different, the majority of people just want to experience a sense of wholeness," says Brunson, an Army veteran committed to making a difference in the LGBTQ community.

The store is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

For more information, visit facebook.com/HolisticHealthAndWellnessATL.



SEEDS OF WELLNESS RELOCATES

The holistic health company Seeds of Wellness has relocated its office from Alpharetta to Roswell, about three miles southwest of its former location.

The company was founded by Shannon Gowland, and its offerings are a reflection of Gowland's skill set: herbal and food therapy consultations, year-round organic CSA (community-supported agriculture) pick up, Reiki, and private and small group instruction in yoga, qigong and meditation.

"We have been offering herbal consultations and fresh local veggies since 2007," says Gowland. "My desire is to educate communities on the importance of healthy lifestyle options using what the earth provides. Immersed in nature as a child and having the opportunity to work the land and give thanks to that which She provides has given me the knowledge that I bring to communities."

The new location is 595 East Crossville Rd #500 in Roswell; its former location was 11940 Alpharetta Hwy #102 in Alpharetta.

Classes at Seeds of Wellness start at \$25 while consultations start at \$175 and CSA veggie boxes start at \$100 per month.

"The space is a center to explore new ways to realize soundness of body, mind and spirit," says Gowland. "Learn the benefits of meditation and a healthy lifestyle that are unique for your journey."



For more information, visit SeedsOfWellnessCenter.com and RoswellFarmersMarket.com.



Shannon Gowland [Photo: Kelle Mac Photography]

Real Good Tea Introduces Functional Beverage Line

In 2020, Atlanta beverage experts Seth Ninger, Jason Santamaria, Chris Doyle and Gregg Cohen teamed up with the goal of creating delicious, health-oriented, functional beverages. They felt that too many drinks on the market were overloaded with artificial sugars and other additives, and they wanted to do something about it. They formed a company, Portfolio Beverages, Inc., and its new product line, Real Good Tea (RGT), is now available in local stores and online. RGT is formulated using all natural premium teas, vitamins, botanicals and 50 milligrams of high-quality hemp extract per can.

"Real Good Tea is ideally suited as a health companion for those on a wellness journey," says Tamika Carlton, the company's director of marketing. "We are excited to bring four functional beverages to the market that are not only delicious but support the goals of health-minded individuals."

These four current flavor offerings are: Rise-Up, Stay Well, Destress and Wind Down. Each beverage contains ingredients that support the target intention. The 12 ounce cans of tea are sold in packs of four, eight, and 12 and range in price from \$23.99 to \$65.99.

The co-founders bring industry expertise to the newly formed company. COO Seth Ninger was formerly Director of Operations for Harvest Wholesalers, LLC. Chief Flavor Officer, Jason Santamaria has worked in the beverage industry for more than eight years, and Chief Product Officer, Chris Doyle, has worked in beverage manufacturing for more than eight years.

For more information, visit RealGoodTea.com or email connect@RealGoodTea.com.



Portfolio Beverages Inc.

Is It Time to...

...Bring Holistic Concerns and Mindfulness to Real Estate?

by Sandra Bolan

Holistic Realty

Many of us buy organic and grass-fed foods to avoid exposure to chemicals, hormones and antibiotics, but when it comes to cleaning our homes, many of us use bleach, aerosol cleaners and antibacterial soap with impunity. As for outside the home, landscapes often harbor herbicides, fences are often covered in lead paint, and PVC garden hoses proliferate.

However, a growing number of people are opting to live chemical-free, and some are seeking to buy homes with as few volatile organic compounds (VOCs) as possible.

"I believe real estate is the next frontier that will be radically transformed by the wellness movement," says Tori McGee, an Atlanta-based real estate agent who specializes in holistic real estate. "Our homes, communities and surrounding environment directly affect our daily behaviors and lifestyles, and together these determine up

to 90% of our health outcomes."

Some of McGee's clients are not only concerned about their well-being, they are immunocompromised. Pilates instructor, studio owner and California native Rebecca Nelson, for example, opted to start reducing toxins from her life and eat clean more than 15 years ago. She did so for her own well-being since she has a gene mutation that reduces her ability to detox. But she also wanted her young family to grow up to be strong and healthy, and she knew that common household toxins can impede that process. When she moved her family to the Atlanta area earlier this year, she did so with McGee's help.

"Tori is amazing and unique in her own way. But I think that is the culture of holistic realty," says Nelson. "You don't feel crazy. The whole buying process feels authentic and true to how we want to live our lives."

Prior to moving across the country, Nelson, 46, bought and sold homes with traditional real estate agents—and she asked a lot of questions. She asked if anyone had tested the home for radon gas or mold, or if they had evaluated the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) of the home. She asked if lead paint was used in the home and asked about the home's air and water quality.

"I would look like a complete crazy person. But I'd prefer to not be the one educating the professional," Nelson says.

McGee conducts tests of all kinds and also has a long list of nontoxic service providers and remediation experts with whom she consults. But they weren't easy to find. Many companies call themselves "green" or "environmentally safe," but they are actually "green-washed nontoxic," she says. "Greenwashing" is an emerging term for when a company presents itself as having more of a positive impact on the environ-

ment than it actually does.

McGee started out as a nutrition specialist in 2008, never intending to become a real estate agent. But in 2003, she made a conscious decision to remove all chemicals from her family's life because her young daughter was diagnosed with ADHD, and McGee made it her mission to do what she could to help her daughter.

Research has shown that exposure to common toxins found in carpets, floors, cleaning supplies, lawn care items, as well as food and personal hygiene products may contribute to learning disabilities, according to *ADDitude*, a resource for families living with ADHD.

When McGee began looking for a home of her own to buy in 2013, she realized there was a need for holistic real estate agents. "No one really cared," she says. Most traditional real estate agents acted like mold and other toxins were no big deal.

In 2015, she received her realtor's license and felt that she needed to create wellness for homes. "It has to be a lifestyle. If [real estate agents] aren't living it and it doesn't mean anything to them, then how are they going to care for their clients' health?"

Mindful Realtor

The reputation of a real estate agent is only slightly better than that of a lawyer, car salesperson or a member of Congress, according to a *Forbes* study of the most and least trusted American professions. So when Kathryn Determann learned about a realtor who was positioning herself as "mindful," she, along with fiancé Matthew Oglesby, thought it a tough sell.

"I'm just naturally skeptical about these sorts of approaches and jargon, like 'mindful,' 'sanctuary' and 'holistic,'" says Oglesby. "It had nothing to do with Mindy. I'm just intrinsically skeptical of that sort of talk, especially when applied to a capitalist enterprise like real estate."

Oglesby is referring to Atlanta-based mindfulness-oriented real estate agent



Tori McGee
[Photo: Crystal Barbee Photography]

Mindy Roberts.

The home-buying process, especially in the Atlanta market, is more emotionally stressful than ever before. With this stress comes a lot of distrust on the part of buyers and the selling agent. But Roberts takes a mindful approach to help her clients understand that everyone is on the same team and they all want the same thing—to close the deal.

"I like to create as little room for letdown as possible," explains Roberts, an accredited real estate agent of three years with a specialty in mindfulness. There is, however, no certification for mindful realty.

Roberts admits Oglesby was tough to get on board because he felt the home-buying process was going to be out of his control and he wasn't going to be heard. But Roberts changed his mind.

"I just think there's so much power in validating someone's emotional state," says Roberts, who found the couple a mid-century home in a neighborhood they liked.

"We wanted to make a thoughtful purchase and preserve a piece of Atlanta history," explains Determann.

The couple purchased a former home of baseball legend Hank Aaron, but like many other homebuyers, they got sucked into a bidding war. It was a "wild process," says Determann, but "Mindy helped us feel grounded through the offer process. Determann admits they were surprised their



offer was accepted because it wasn't the highest bid. In fact, there was an all-cash offer for over the asking price on the table.

"I feel like we wouldn't have gotten that [house with] anyone else," says Determann.

Before she started bringing mindfulness to realty, Roberts worked as a consultant for commercial real estate agents. She admits she didn't have a particularly high opinion of realtors at first, but a group of agents helped Roberts "deconstruct" her "vices against real estate agents," and encouraged her to become a realtor herself.

"My mindful practices are just a step further; they only exist in my business because they exist in my personal life," she says.



Mindy Roberts [Photo: Melissa Schollaert]

A big part of Roberts' process is to help her clients remain unattached. That is, if they don't get something they want, the disappointment doesn't define their existence.

Roberts "talks a lot about how stress comes from fear of the unknown and a lack of trust in ourselves," says Oglesby. "She talks about the importance of making sure you're aligned with yourself and your priorities so that there is less room for letdown and more room for better outcomes." 🙌

For more information about Mindy Roberts and Tori McGee, visit ansleyre.com/agents/8281/mindy-roberts and AtlantaHolisticRealtor.com, respectively.

Staff writer Sandra Bolan is an award-winning journalist who has been writing for more than 25 years and has contributed to publications in the U.S., Canada and Bermuda. Contact her at SandyBolan18@gmail.com.

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Eat Well to Feel Well

Thanksgiving Fare that Boosts Mental Health

by Christy Ratliff



Across America, people of all ages are struggling with mental health issues. Nearly one in five people is living with a mental health condition, and the number of people seeking help for anxiety and depression is skyrocketing, reports Mental Health America. According to the organization's *2021 State of Mental Health in America Report*, suicidal thoughts are increasing among both adults and children, and 9.7 percent of youth is experiencing severe major depression compared to 9.2 percent last year. The highly contagious COVID-19 Delta variant has only exacerbated these mental health challenges.

The hope and help we seek may be as close as our own kitchen. Accumulating research shows that a diet rich in highly processed foods may increase the risk of developing or worsening various mental health conditions. But a nutrient-based diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables; omega-3 fatty acids; nuts, seeds and legumes; whole grains, fresh herbs and spices; fish and olive oil, may help to support and enhance mental health. We can start this Thanksgiving by serving up healthier, nutrient-rich options to alleviate anxiety and depression, stabilize mood and promote mental health and wellness.

"The gut/brain connection helps us understand the food/mood connection," explains Dr. Uma Naidoo, a Harvard-trained nutritional psychiatrist, professional chef, nutrition specialist and author of the national bestseller *This is Your Brain on Food*. "The enteric nervous system—that is, the nerves supplying the gastrointestinal tract—totals over

100 million neurons and communicates directly with the brain, or central nervous system, by way of the vagus nerve, which is responsible for our 'rest-and-digest' response.

"It's also vital to note that the gut contains the highest number of serotonin receptors, and the gut itself produces all the neurotransmitters that are also made in the brain, including serotonin, often called the happiness hormone. In turn, these neurotransmitters are implicated in sound mental health or potential problems when they are deficient."

"What we eat affects mental health in many ways," adds Amy Spindel, a functional holistic nutritionist in Plano, Texas, and founder of *FoodWithThoughtNutrition.com*. "Nutrient deficiencies can cause poor neurotransmitter production. Insufficient vitamin B₆, folate and vitamin B₁₂ can be implicated in depression and anxiety symptoms, as they are all needed for various stages of neurotransmitter production, especially serotonin, dopamine and GABA."

"Traditional sugary, high-carbohydrate foods promote unstable blood sugar and selectively feed inflammatory gut microbes," Spindel says, suggesting that we skip the typical foods many of us associate with the holidays such as pecan pie, marshmallow-topped sweet potato casserole and canned cranberry sauce. "Blood sugar fluctuations cause the body to scramble in an attempt to re-regulate glucose, which may mean spikes of cortisol or adrenaline, as well as insulin. The end result can be depression and anxiety from excessive stress hormones and a glucose-starved brain."

But making such changes, particularly during the holidays, isn't easy. "If the thought of changing up the traditional Thanksgiving menu gives you pause, you are not alone—and this is why I believe in adding in habits (and in this case, dishes) which have a positive ripple effect on our bodies and our brain, allowing for a self-sustaining cycle in our lifestyle," advises Naidoo.

"As a nutritional psychiatrist, I feel that we are more emotionally nurtured by a feeling of abundance in 'adding' new Thanksgiving dishes than thinking about this as 'excluding' foods," she notes. "For example, tossing a fresh, folate-rich spinach and arugula salad with bits of antioxidant-rich strawberries, crisp roasted chickpeas and omega-3-rich olive oil adds color, flavor and a plethora of mood-nourishing ingredients to the dinner table. Even adding extra veggies to existing dishes, such as allicin-rich garlic to green beans or extra celery and fresh herbs to stuffing, adds in powerful phytonutrients with gut-loving fiber."

"Thanksgiving favorites that are ample in neurotransmitter-producing nutrients include turkey, shellfish, sweet potatoes and acorn squash, asparagus, leafy greens, oranges and green beans," Spindel adds.

While it's true that we cannot control a global pandemic or solve the mental health crisis in America with positive thinking alone, we can minimize our feelings of powerlessness and despair by making small but significant dietary changes—not just on Thanksgiving, but every day of the year. 🍂

Christy Ratliff is a professional health and wellness writer based in Central Florida.



Thanksgiving MENU

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Annabelle's Mac & Cheese (contains dairy & gluten) (32oz)	\$20
Turkey Gravy (GF/DF) (16oz)	\$7
Cranberry Sauce (GF/Vegan) (16oz)	\$7
Raw Chocolate Pecan Pie (GF/Vegan) (24oz)	\$20

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Roast Turk'y Loaf or GF Lentil M'room Walnut Balls	\$16
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Sauteed Garlic Green Beans (GF/Vegan) (32oz)	\$10
Savory Stuffing (GF/Vegan) (32oz)	\$10
Vegan Mac & Cheeze (GF/Vegan) (32oz)	\$17
Mushroom Gravy (GF/Vegan) (16oz)	\$7
Cranberry Sauce (GF/Vegan) (16oz)	\$7
Raw Chocolate Pecan Pie (GF/Vegan) (24oz)	\$20

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Feel-Good Recipe Ingredients

Some study-proven foods to enhance mood found in the following recipes include:

 ■ **Pistachios.** These tree nuts, which are actually seeds, are rich in healthy fats, vitamins and minerals. According to a Pennsylvania State University study, eating pistachios may reduce the body's response to daily stress.

 ■ **Honey.** A National Institutes of Health study shows that the nutrients in raw honey may enhance mood and help with insomnia. It's also rich in antioxidants, which contain anti-inflammatory properties that help protect the brain.

 ■ **Fresh herbs.** Sage provides natural anti-anxiety properties, while thyme and rosemary are rich sources of micronutrients and flavonoids, shown to protect against inflammation in the brain, a key factor in major depressive disorder.

 ■ **Apples.** Nutrient-rich apples are a good source of quercetin, a plant flavonoid, which studies suggest may be beneficial for mental health.

■ **Green beans.** An excellent source of vitamin A, green beans help fight inflammation and support the nervous and immune systems. They are high in folic acid, a B vitamin that studies have shown to potentially lower the risk of depression.

 ■ **Tomatoes.** Several studies show that regular consumption of tomatoes may help ward off depression.

■ **Olive oil.** Multiple studies show that low levels of olive oil, in conjunction with a Mediterranean-style diet, has a positive impact on mental health and brain function.

 ■ **Cornmeal.** Naturally gluten-free, cornmeal is an excellent source of folate, an important B vitamin. Research from the National Institutes of Health suggests that those with low levels of folate are more likely to experience depression.

■ **Raisins.** A great source of vitamin B, raisins can help the brain produce serotonin, an important neurotransmitter for reducing many anxiety-related symptoms.

Natural Awakenings recommends using organic, non-GMO (genetically modified) and non-bromated ingredients whenever possible.



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Mood-Boosting Recipes for a Happy Thanksgiving

Goat Cheese Appetizer with Honey, Fig and Pistachios

1 medium, fresh goat cheese log (about 11 oz)
¼ cup roasted pistachios, chopped
¼ cup honey (this recipe calls for 2 Tbsp; others call for ¼ cup)
1 to 2 Tbsp fig spread
Healthy selection of whole-wheat crackers, vegetable chips, etc.

Spread chopped pistachios on a small plate. Roll goat cheese in pistachios to coat sides and top. Transfer to a serving tray and sprinkle whole pistachios on top and around the cheese. Drizzle honey over and around cheese log. Warm fig spread for 5 to 10 seconds in a microwave. Drizzle spread over cheese log or half of cheese log, as desired. Serve with whole-wheat crackers or chips.

Courtesy of Susan Randall. For more information, visit SimpleHealthyKitchen.com.



Greek-Style Green Beans (Fasolakia Lathera)

⅓ cup olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 lb green beans
1 medium potato, sliced (¼-inch thickness, cut in half)
3 medium tomatoes, grated, or 12 to 15 oz chopped tomatoes
¼ cup parsley, chopped
1 tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
Fresh pepper

In a medium pot, heat olive oil on low to medium heat. Sauté onion until softened. Add potatoes and heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Add beans and mix with olive oil until coated. Add tomatoes, parsley, sugar, salt and pepper. Mix well. Add just enough hot water to cover the beans halfway. Cover and simmer for about 40 minutes, or until beans are soft and most of the liquid is absorbed. May be served as a side dish for four people or a vegetarian/vegan entrée for two.

Courtesy of Elena Paravantes, RDN. For more information and Mediterranean recipes, visit OliveTomato.com.

Buzz's Fresh Herb and Apple Sage Stuffing

1 loaf bread, toasted (whole wheat (WW) or half WW, half French bread)
¼ cup unsalted butter
2 cups celery, chopped
1 large yellow onion, chopped
1 to 2 cloves garlic, chopped (to taste)
3 Granny Smith apples, chopped, with skin on
¼ cup sage leaves, chopped
¼ cup fresh rosemary, chopped
1 to 2 Tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
2½ cups reduced sodium vegetable or chicken broth
2 eggs
1 to 2 tsp salt to taste (may substitute nutritional yeast or fresh dill)

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease a large, 2-to-3-inch-deep casserole or baking dish. Toast bread and cut into 1-inch cubes. Set aside. Melt butter in a large pan. Add celery, onion, garlic, apples and fresh herbs. Stir to mix and cook until softened, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. Beat eggs in a large mixing bowl. Add bread cubes and apple/vegetable/fresh herb mixture into the egg mixture. Add broth and salt (or nutritional yeast or fresh dill) and mix well. Spoon stuffing into prepared casserole dish. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 20 to 30 minutes more or until golden-brown crust forms. Remove from oven, uncover and cool.

Courtesy of Buzz Spence. For more information on fresh herbs for emotional health, visit MotherEarthLiving.com.



Seluisauganasda Cherokee Cornmeal Cookies

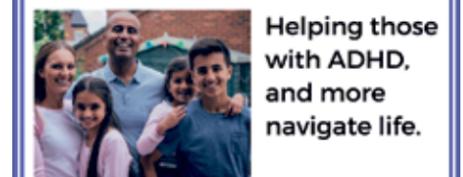
Here's a creative, nutritious way to celebrate indigenous tradition during the holidays while also being mindful of mental health.

¾ cup softened butter
½ cup organic brown sugar
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla
1½ cups flour
½ cup cornmeal
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
½ cup raisins (Other versions of this recipe include nuts and dark chocolate pieces.)

Preheat oven to 350° F. Spray cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray and set aside. Using a wooden spoon, mix butter and brown sugar in a large mixing bowl. Add egg and vanilla. Stir until smooth. Add flour, cornmeal, baking powder and salt. Add raisins. Mix well. Drop dough by rounded teaspoonful onto baking sheet. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until slightly golden. Makes about 2 dozen small cookies.

Courtesy of La Potosina. For more information, visit IndigenousFoods.wordpress.com.

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The Rise and Fall of Holistic Medicine in America

AN INTERVIEW WITH GUY GUNTER, BSC, DC

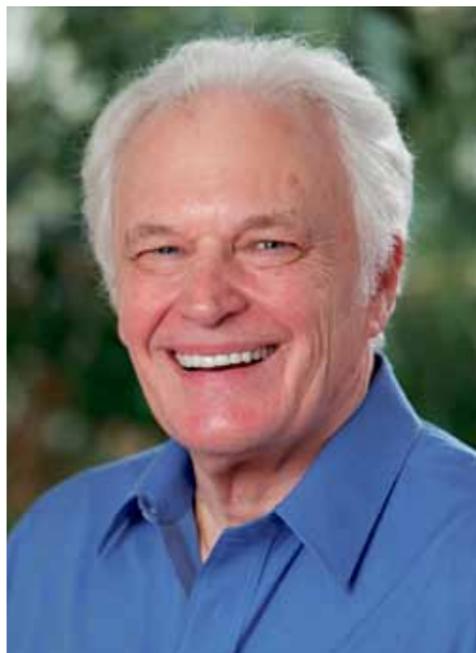
by Diane Eaton, MCIS

“American medicine doesn’t cure anybody. It just manages disease,” says Dr. Guy Gunter, a chiropractor with a multi-disciplinary, holistic private practice in Sandy Springs.

His assertion is backed by research. In spite of the many benefits of modern medicine, a staggering number of Americans suffer from chronic, debilitating and mysterious illnesses. The U.S. has the highest chronic disease burden and an obesity rate that is two times higher than the average of 11 other high-income nations, according to The Commonwealth Fund. And close to one-fifth of Americans aged 50 to 79 have heart disease compared with one-tenth of Europeans in the same group, according to a longitudinal study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information.

A major factor in these disappointing numbers? American medicine, as a rule, has left behind the holistic perspective it once embraced, choosing a fix-the-parts, specialization model. While it can sometimes work wonders, the industry has in effect turned its back on the premise of holistic medicine: that the body can heal itself if given the support it needs.

“In Chinese medicine, you’re clearing out the blockages to *chi*; in Ayurveda, you’re clearing out the blockages to digestion,” says Gunter. “The idea that there’s some kind of obstacle that is interfering with health, and that removing it can restore health, was common to just about everybody. But the pivot to a mechanistic approach—the movement of medicine to be about surgery and pharmacology instead of lifestyle management—has



reached its zenith now.” And America’s health suffers as a result.

With a degree in microbiology, a master’s degree in bacterial genetics, certifications in Traditional Chinese Medicine and applied kinesiology, and a long-standing passion for the study of nutrition, Gunter’s well-rounded approach speaks to his holistic perspective.

What Does Holistic Mean?

To Gunter, a holistic approach involves gathering as much data as one can and using creativity and imagination to come up with a likely hypothesis. “Everything is connected,” he says, “and you’re attempting to locate a thread [to follow]. With someone who has an obvious digestive illness, for example, you want to find out

what other organs are affected. You can test them [with alternative testing methods] and see which organs are off-balance.” Then, if a practitioner “knows that there’s a gut connection with that organ and the meridians that feed that organ, for example,” they have a thread to follow, guiding them to respond to the condition.

But the mechanistic approach has prevailed in modern American medicine for a long time; cementing it in place was the publication of the Flexner Report in 1910. Paid for by the American Medical Association, the report “stopped all medical doctors from experimenting with any form of medicine except drugs and surgery,” says Gunter. It was a reaction to certain physicians at the time studying chiropractic and homeopathy and experimenting with electromagnetic medicine. In effect, the report defined what modern medicine could—and would—consist of from that point on: namely, drugs, surgery and nothing more.

The COVID Response Revealed Cracks in the System

The refusal of the AMA to take a holistic approach has also handicapped the U.S. response to the COVID-19 pandemic, says Gunter. “There has been no suggestion of any kind of remedy except the vaccine,” he points out. “All they could think of was, ‘It’s got to be a pharmaceutical answer.’” Further, the pandemic revealed the AMA’s inability “to deal with a novel problem that they don’t already have a traditional answer for. The coronavirus comes in, and they immediately treat it like the 1918 flu pandemic.”

Even as a wealth of data about those who suffered most from the virus became available, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) didn’t take the opportunity to expand their response to the pandemic, says Gunter. “The first thing we find out is that [many] people dying from COVID have co-morbidities. They’re obese or they have diabetes problems or lung problems, for example. But did we see any commercials from the CDC saying that people should start taking a multivitamin and get out and walk half a mile a day? They refused to accept data from non-medical sources or look at anything new. Even a paper in the *Journal of Virology* doesn’t make it to the CDC. It just revealed the complete lack of efficacy of modern medicine. All they said was to wear a mask and stay away from each other.” And wait for a pharmaceutical vaccine.

Chiropractic: More Holistic Than It Seems

While these days, chiropractic is typically accomplished with the single-vision approach of a specialist, it was originally developed as a highly holistic practice. Early in the 20th century, chiropractors primarily worked with farmers at a time when eating organics and breathing pure air was commonplace and exercise was intrinsic to their livelihood. The chiropractor’s job was understood to be to “help clear what they called the ‘innate moving energy’ that enters through the head by adjusting the spine and clearing the pathway,” says Gunter. Every vertebra was associated with an organ in the body, so a problem area in

the spine would suggest a weakness in the corresponding organ, providing another “thread” to follow.

“A chiropractic adjustment stimulates all of the channels of communication that run up the spine, to the brain, and back to the body,” says Gunter. “You’re also freeing up areas that are caught or impeded. If you have a vertebra out of place, even if it doesn’t hurt, there’s going to be muscle spasm around it that’s going to interfere with the nerve flow out of that level. That’s been proven. By releasing it, you get a tremendous amount of data flowing up and down the spine, strengthening the organs and clearing the nervous system.”

Spurning Holistic Wisdom Comes at a Price

Not surprisingly, losing touch with a holistic approach to health has other downsides. Consider how we deal with pain. “We have a tendency to suppress pain,” says Gunter. “We think, ‘Oh, my shoulder’s hurting, so I’ll take some Advil and make it go away.’” And if our medical practitioners only treat us by helping us numb pain, we might miss out on valuable information that can support our health in more ways than one. “One of the major shoulder muscles, the subscapularis, is the only muscle that shares a direct nerve with the heart,” says Gunter. “If you’ve got heart problems, you will always have a weak subscapular, and it will crack and hurt.” A practitioner that understands that can work to heal the underlying heart problem that might have gone unnoticed otherwise. And the shoulder gets healed in the process.

Treating an issue as if it exists in isolation has additional disadvantages. “What happens when you get a medication? It isn’t very long before you have to have a second medication to deal with the side effect of the first one. And that tells you that you’re not interacting with the body in a way that strengthens it.” A holistic approach, he says, recognizes that the body “has its own ability to regulate itself and decide what’s good for it.”

Bringing Holism Home

Most important of all, says Gunter, is for people to take ownership of their health. “The crux of my practice is the idea that nobody is going to fix you but you. You have to be personally responsible for answering for your own health.” He advises people to honestly assess how successful their practitioner is at managing their wellness. “Are you feeling better? The only person that can figure that sh*t out is the person who wears the body,” says Gunter. “It’s about overcoming the fear of being responsible and [the belief] that only medical doctors can save you. It’s the big message of the last 18 months.”

Taking a holistic approach delivers better results, according to Gunter. “My observations are that the less I try to tell the body what to do, and the more I support it in overcoming its difficulties, the better things work. The regulation of the brain and the body can be relied upon. That’s where healing happens.” 🌱

Dr. Guy Gunter is in private practice at Healworks in Sandy Springs. For more information, visit Healworks.com.

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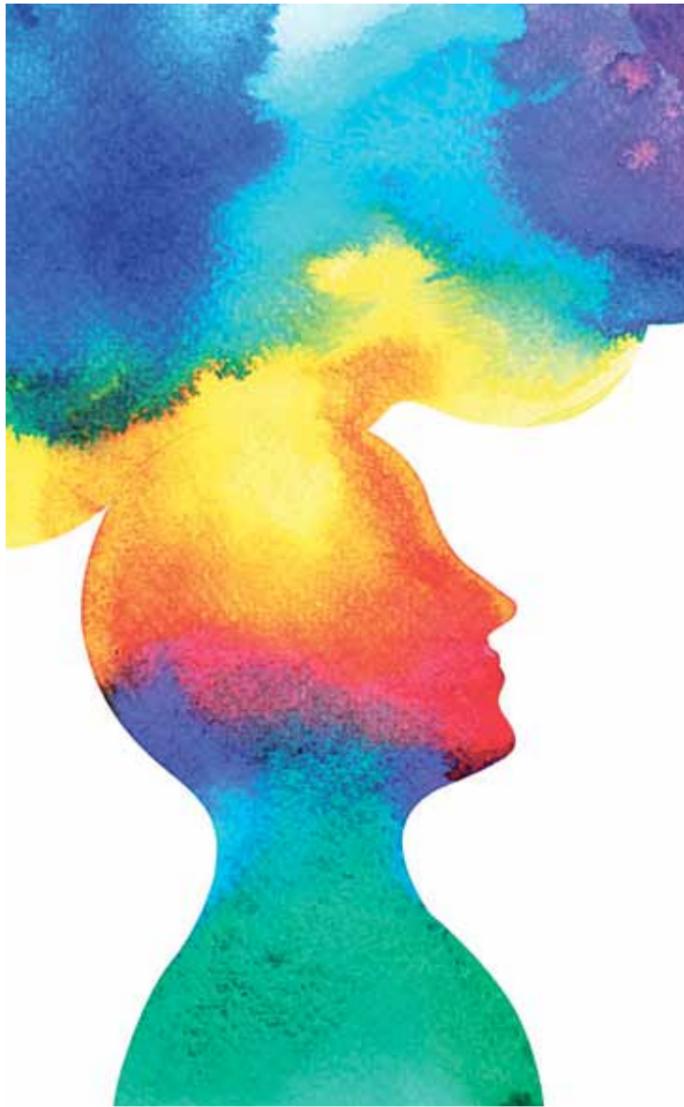


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Healthy Brain Strategies

How to Prevent Cognitive Decline

by Linda Sechrist



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and difficulty in learning new things or making decisions that impact daily living.

Functional medicine experts focused on preventive health care agree on the ABC's for optimizing the brain and protecting against decline: eating a healthy diet, exercising, reducing inflammation and stress levels, balancing hormone levels, cultivating healthy relationships and getting enough restorative sleep. With their expertise, they are helping to shift the old paradigm of inevitable aging and cognitive decline into a new one based on the brain's neuroplasticity.

Harvard-trained neuroscientist Jill Bolte Taylor, author of the bestseller *My Stroke of Insight* and the recent *Whole Brain Living*, is a true poster child for demonstrating the brain's neuroplasticity and ability to recover from a massive stroke. She writes about the congenital neurological brain disorder that became a problem when an arteriovenous malformation exploded in her brain's left hemisphere. For four hours, she observed her brain functions systemically shutting down one by one. On the afternoon of her stroke, she could not walk, talk, read, write or recall any of her life. Eight years later, she was not only slalom waterskiing again, but also explaining to the world, "We are the life-force power of the universe, with manual dexterity and two cognitive minds. We have the power to choose, moment to moment, who and how we want to be in the world."

Devaki Lindsey Berkson, author of *Sexy Brain*, a hormone formulator and former researcher at Tulane University's estrogen think tank, advises, "Most people think hormones are sexy, reproductive things and when they get older, they're relieved that they don't have to think about them. Not true. The body has a virtual physiological internet system. Hormones are the email signals to most cells. While the robustness of hormones and their signals affects lungs, gut, kidney and vocal cord health, it especially affects the brain. Balancing hormones with bioidentical hormones is one solution."

David Perlmutter, neurologist and co-author of *Brain Wash*, cites food as the biggest player in both brain and overall health in his books and PBS workshops. "Eating inappropriately causes intestinal permeability, resulting in inflammation, which in the brain, threatens good decision making—from deciding on the foods we eat to turning off our televisions at night, getting a good night's rest, making sure that we exercise regularly and connecting with other people. Not good for the gut are dairy products,

alcohol, highly processed foods that are low in fiber, high in sugar and refined carbohydrates, as well as antibiotics," he says, adding that meditation and exposure to nature are powerful ways of reducing inflammation in the body and brain.

As explained by neurologist Dale E. Bredesen, author of *The End of Alzheimer's*, stress leads to an increase in cortisol levels that can be toxic to our brains—in particular the memory—consolidating the hippocampus, one of the first structures affected by Alzheimer's. Studies show that high stress levels can also contribute to brain fog, involving difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness and mental fatigue. The Bredesen Protocol, available from health practitioners and online, includes exercising, eating a plant-based diet, supplementing to reduce insulin sensitivity and optimize cognitive function, reducing both gut inflammation and exposure to toxins, treating pathogens and optimizing sleep.

HealthyBrains.org, Cleveland Clinic's Healthy Brains Initiative, is an online

resource center with information on how to manage brain health and create a brain span that matches a life span. It offers six pillars of brain health as explained by brain health experts, including exercise, sleep, relaxation, mental fitness and social interaction.

Supplementing for brain health should be done wisely, says Mark Hyman, author of *Food: What the Heck Should I Eat?* and director of functional medicine at Cleveland Clinic. He recommends at the very least taking a multivitamin and mineral supplement, omega-3, extra vitamins B₃, B₆ and B₁₂, folate and a good probiotic that enhances the brain-gut relationship.

Mastery of the ABC's in kindergarten is required as the foundation of language and a lifetime of learning. Living the fundamentals for a healthy brain can result in a brain span that equals our life span. 🧠

Linda Sechrist is a Natural Awakenings senior staff writer. Connect at Linda Sechrist.com.



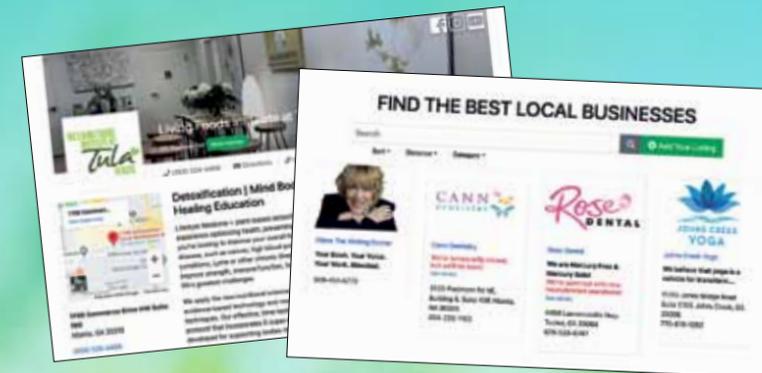
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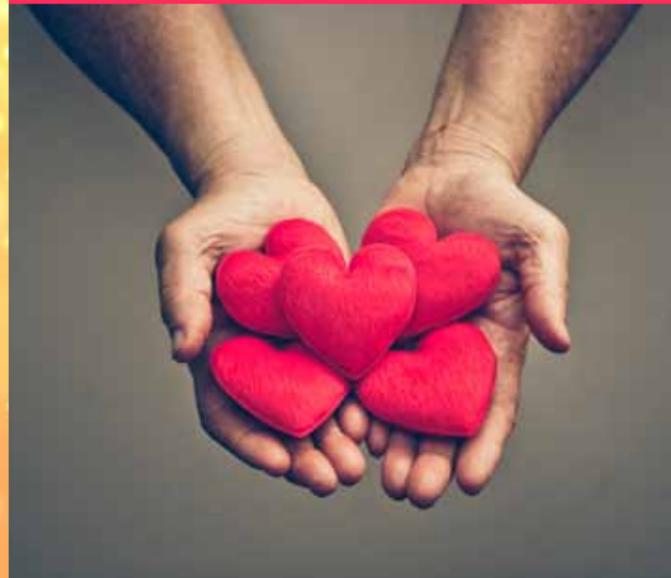
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NATURAL PET

Honoring the Loss of a Pet

Simple Ways to Grieve and Heal

by Marlaina Donato



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French novelist Anatole France's sentiment, "Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened," rings true for anyone that shares a love story with a beloved pet. Whether we lose a cat, dog, horse, bird or lizard, the final parting can be quite emotional. Society supports us with empathy and rituals of closure when we suffer the loss of a human love, but grieving an animal companion can be a uniquely silent passage. Surrendering fully to the mourning process, creating a joyful ceremony and celebrating the life of a loved one invites healing and solace.

Sacred Grief

The animal-human alliance is hallmarked by the absence of emotional baggage, and is therefore capable of provoking grief that equals or exceeds losing a close relative. "This is a deep bond that is never judgmental on how we look, spend money or what we do for a living, as long as we love and nurture. And, in return, we receive undying, unconditional love," says Pam Baren Kaplan, a pet loss grief counselor and life coach in Chicago.

Diane Stout, a pet parent and retired dog groomer in Paupack, Pennsylvania, knows the impact of this unconditional love, especially through life's changes. "Long after a spouse has died and family have moved away to other lives and preoccupations, the family pet

remains the faithful dinner or TV time companion," she says. "A cherished pet is often the last true companion."

Cancelling appointments or taking time off from work after a pet's passing does not connote emotional weakness. "Treat yourself with the same kindness you would show another person going through this difficult time," advises Cheryl Wyatt, a certified grief companion at Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice, a national network of veterinarians that provides compassionate end-of-life care. "Allow yourself the time to do your mourning work. Tears are cleansing. If they happen to come 10 hours or 10 years from now, you have permission to shed them."

Compassionate Transitions

Loving an animal until the last goodbye includes relieving their suffering to the best of our ability. In-home euthanasia can make a heartbreaking time more bearable for both pet and owner. "Providing beloved pets euthanasia at home differs from a clinical setting because it allows them to remain in their safe, happy place. At home, the veterinarian can greet the pet family and provide the loved one's peaceful passing wherever they are most comfortable—a favorite bed or spot on the couch—surrounded by all those who love them most," explains Wyatt.

Pet funerals are becoming more common, and ceremonies are as unique as the animal remembered. Stories, poetry and memories can be shared by family and they can include a living memorial such as a tree planted in the animal's name.

Stout, also an accomplished artist, finds

joy in painting her pets that have gone and suggests "a scrapbook of pictures and memories, because a look back at puppy or kitten pictures can bring an instant smile."

Kaplan agrees, "Creating what I refer to as 'a legacy of love' can be done by the entire family or by one person. This is a book that you put together with favorite photos of your pet and journal the story around the photo. This is a great way to include family member's memories from their perspective."

Choosing a unique, handmade vessel for ashes can honor an animal. Mary Jane Panebianco, owner of SpiritpetShop on *Etsy.com*, was inspired by the passing of a co-worker's dog. "At the time, I worked in a mixed media art gallery, and she had one of our ceramic artists create her dog Sandy's memorial urn. It was beautiful and so well done. I did some research on

the pet industry, and everything I found was so commercial and mass-produced. I knew pets and their owners deserved another option."

Panebianco works with a small number of award-winning American artisans and accepts custom orders for handcrafted urns. "Many of my pet parents have told me how having a beautiful memorial for their beloved pet helps them make peace with their pet's passing. It's the last thing you will do for them."

In the beginning and in the end, it's all about the love. For Stout, it's what animals teach us. "To play and dance often, to give unconditional love, loyalty and friendship, to find joy in the little things, and that life is too often short." 🐾

Marlaina Donato is an author and recording artist. Connect at *WildflowerLady.com*.

Advice for the Bereaved

Cheryl Wyatt, of the Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice, recommends:

- Set aside some time each day to be alone in a quiet place to give yourself space to grieve.
- Honor the memories.
- Write out your emotions freely in a journal; compose a poem or letter to your pet.
- Light commemorative candles in his/her honor.
- Create a memory table—include all of the things that remind you of

your beloved pet. Leave it up for as long as you like.

- Continue to speak to your loved one, sing to him/her whatever brought you joy in being together.
- Wear a piece of jewelry that bears your pet's name or contains a small amount of his/her remains.
- Join an online group or meet in person with other people that are going through the mourning process.
- Don't let people that don't grasp the depth of the human-animal bond tell you how you should feel.

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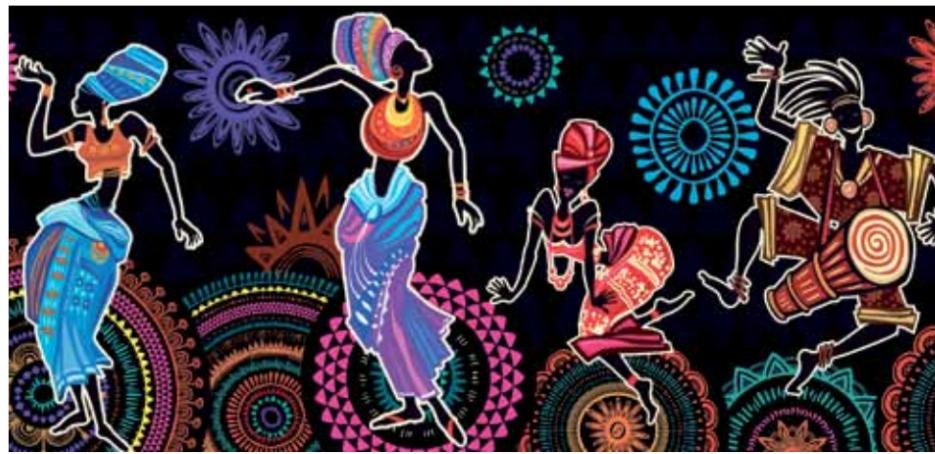
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SACRED DANCE

Moving into Divine Energy

by Marlaina Donato



Hearth-healthy dancing of all types is known to promote overall physical and mental health. When they are spirit-infused, forms like African, Middle Eastern, ecstatic and yoga-inspired kundalini dance offer us the opportunity to stay in shape while also fortifying the body's intrinsic life force.

Classes in these styles of dance, which are most often conducted barefoot, draw upon a deep cultural well and include the infectious heartbeat of live accompaniment. Just about anyone can find their own blissful groove when going with the flow is the focus. "In class, I choose to emphasize the feeling more than the step itself. The goal is always to get a spiritual release," says Darian Parker, a Brooklyn-based West African dance teacher, professor and choreographer. "I always encourage my students to privilege 'having a good time' over succumbing to self-criticism from not perfecting a step."

Modern Moves, Ancient Roots

There are more than 3,000 ethnic groups on the continent of Africa, and each dance style has a purpose that is defined by its unique history. In the West African tradition, dances are designed to heal the individual and from the broader perspective, restore community. Parker, a faculty member of Cumbe: Center for African and Diaspora Dance, in Brooklyn, celebrates the culture and art of the Mande people. "In short, Mande dance trains your spirit just as much as it trains your body," says Parker. "In many Mande cultures, the ground is thought to be the habitation of our ancestors, who are thought to animate our bodies when we dance. In this way, you can think of dance as a ritual technology that renews our connections with those who came before us."

While an African dance class encourages high energy and joyous expression, ecstatic dance can be a portal to self-discovery and connectedness. Springboarding from ancient societies worldwide, modern ecstatic dance is freeform and hallmarked by trance or tribal beats. "Ecstatic dance has offered me a portal to my subconscious, my spirit, my deep knowing. It's a way to, as Gabrielle Roth, the creator of 5Rhythms, put it, 'Get out of my head and into my body,' and in my body there is wonderful wisdom," explains Heidi Sheldon, a seasoned ecstatic dancer and licensed counselor in Stroudsburg, Pennsylv-

nia. "Your spirit knows what to do when it hears and feels the rhythms. You just need to allow your body to follow."

Belly of Bliss, Heart of Light

Middle Eastern dance is comprised of many dance styles—folk and tribal, classical and most widely known, belly dancing. In ancient times, the latter was practiced in rituals for fertile harvests and women's fertility, including physical preparation for childbirth. In 2017, a pilot study published in the *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies* showed that belly dance improves depressive symptoms, fatigue and quality of life in women with breast cancer.

"Belly dancing is a tantric form of dance that empowers women to release shame and accept and love themselves and their bodies just as they are. The movements open us to pleasure and sensual bliss in our very own skin. In this way, it is very healing and therapeutic," says Banafsheh Sayyad, a Persian dance artist and founder of the Dance of Oneness Academy, in Los Angeles. Sayyad's movement, a fusion of Persian and Middle Eastern dance, flamenco, contemporary dance and meditative whirling, is deeply connected to an ancient feminine ethos.

As a teacher, she brings the *Sama*—the dervish (pronounced "darvish" in Persian) dance of the Sufis historically reserved for men—into the hands of women. "In the traditional Sama, the right arm is extended up toward the sky with the palm facing up," she says. "The left arm is extended out with the palm facing down toward the Earth. In so doing, you transmit and emanate the light you've received into the world through your heart. So, this dance is about becoming a channel for light and love in the world."

In essence, stepping into any dance class can be good for the soul. Sayyad reminds us, "Every movement and dance style, if done with the intention of surrendering one's sense of separateness into an experience of the greater or dissolving one's identity as a drop of water into the greater ocean of oneness, can be sacred." 🌸

Marlaina Donato is an author and recording artist. Connect at WildflowerLady.com.

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Mindfulness for Stressed Teens

School Programs Teach Healthy Coping Skills

by Erin Lehn

Teen stress levels often rival those of adults, concludes data collected by the American Psychological Association in 2017. This is especially true these days with the influx of social media expectations, political unrest and a global pandemic to contend with. Other daily pressures—such as relationship turmoil, bullying, academic challenges, unstable home lives and mood disorders—can add to the stressors. With all of these pressures, it's no wonder many teens often tune out and turn toward their devices, getting fixated on other people's lives or compulsively recording their own experiences, but not fully living them.

A wealth of research has demonstrated that one of the most beneficial ways to help teens navigate the ups and downs of these tumultuous years is through mindfulness education. A randomized clinical trial published in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* in 2009 was one of the first studies that provided evidence of the effectiveness of mindfulness-based stress reduction treatment of adolescents. Since then, there has been no

shortage of research findings proving its benefits.

"In a nutshell, mindfulness is about being keenly aware of your life, in the present, versus the automatic tendency to ruminate about the past or worry about the future," says Gina Biegel, CEO and founder of Stressed Teens, a Campbell, California, business that has been disseminating mindfulness-based programs tailored to adolescents since 2004. "It's noticing your thoughts, feelings and physical sensations in the present moment without harmful judgment."

"Mindfulness is a practice in the art of aligning your energy, mindset and emotions," says Tris Thorp, the San Diego-based author of *Healing Your Heart* and a Chopra Center-trained leadership coach. "When teens acquire the skills to better navigate what's happening in the moment, they'll have more opportunity available to them because they're calm, centered and grounded."

"The best moments come when a teen realizes their own wisdom, sees it emerge and is able to grow stronger as a result," says Jem Shackelford, head of curricula for Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP), a leading nonprofit provider of mindfulness training for schools in the U.K. and internationally.

According to Biegel, a regular mindfulness-based practice helps rewire the brain when people focus on pleasant, beneficial and positive experiences. "For survival purposes, our brains are naturally wired to the negative, aka 'negative selection bias,'" she says. "Thankfully, we can train our brains to be more tilted to the positive. In fact, just thinking of a positive memory for 12 seconds can create a benefit for your well-being."

While there are multiple approaches to weaving mindfulness practices into a school setting, here are two highly effective practices.

- **Certify teachers** in mindfulness training so they can deliver the materials directly to their students. "MiSP curricula are produced by educators that have many years of experience of what works in the classroom. They are also long-term mindfulness practitioners, giving them a unique perspective of how mindfulness can be used and taught effectively in school," says Shackelford.

- **Implement a school-wide approach.** Stressed Teens offers online mindfulness-based groups and one-on-one therapy and coaching sessions for teens, as well as professional instructor certifications and the Whole-School Mindfulness-Centered Social-Emotional Learning program. This approach, in which an entire school participates for a calendar year, is especially beneficial because everyone is going through the program at the same time. "Typically, schools complete two lessons per week to fit the curriculum into one semester or one lesson per week to spread learning over two semesters," Biegel says.

While teens can learn and practice these techniques alone, a whole systems approach that involves the family, school and community has been shown to have the biggest impact. "A teenager with a mindfulness practice can have a beneficial effect on other members of the household. However, there needs to

be support from every angle in a teen's environment for it to be sustainable," says Thorp. "There's so much evidence-based research and measurables that demonstrate how impactful these programs are in schools and communities. There's a clear reduction in acting out, reduced conflict, and more participation and engagement."

"Think of the ripple effect of possible benefits if the whole community and systems a teen are in are also learning and practicing mindfulness," says Biegel. "Mindfulness-based methods also include and affect positive human values like gratitude, kindness, generosity, self-care, compassion and acceptance. Youth, parents and educators can all benefit from that."

For more information, including free mindfulness-based resources, visit StressedTeens.com, MindfulnessInSchools.org and TrisThorp.com.

Erin Lehn is a frequent contributor to *Natural Awakenings* magazine.

10 Mindfulness Tips for Teens

1. Stop what you're doing and count your breaths to 10.
2. Devote your awareness to more of the pleasant and beneficial moments in your day.
3. Accomplish only one task at a time. You will be more productive than if you split your attention to multiple tasks.
4. Start a daily gratitude journal. Each day, consider the big things you're grateful for, like your family, friends, health or home. Also, don't forget the little things you're thankful for, such as a cup of coffee or a hug.
5. Get some form of exercise every day. Even a 15-minute walk can do wonders for the mind.
6. Spend time outdoors enjoying nature. Notice the power of grounding by paying attention to your feet on the ground.
7. Begin a daily mindfulness practice. Start with 10 minutes and work your way up.
8. Commit to a nourishing self-care routine with a caveat to set incremental goals you can accomplish. You do not have to overdo it.
9. Acknowledge the positive qualities of your family, friends and others in your inner circle. Let them know how much they mean to you. Let them know you see them and hear them.
10. Carve out daily enrichment time such as learning an instrument or creating artwork. Bring mindful attention, paying notice to your five senses, to anything you do in your daily life.

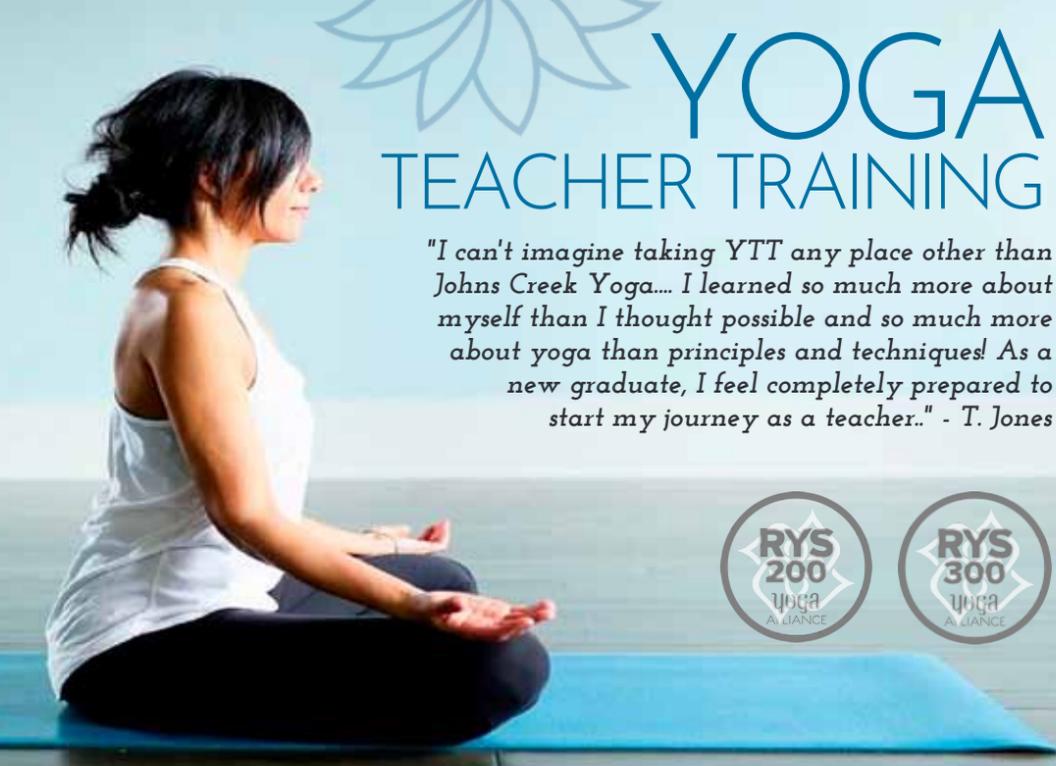
Tips courtesy of Gina Biegel, CEO and founder of Stressed Teens; Jem Shackelford, head of curricula for Mindfulness in Schools Project; and Tris Thorp, author and coach. For more helpful mindfulness tips, click on the Stressed Teens Toolbox link at StressedTeens.com, visit MindfulnessInSchools.org/freeresources/ and TrisThorp.com/blog/.



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Mila Burgess

TRANSITIONS

Welcoming Our New Yoga Editor

by Sheila Ewers

This issue marks my last as yoga editor for *Natural Awakenings* magazine in Atlanta.

When I first took the position in November 2019, I proposed a list of topics I wanted to share with our readers, but by March 2020, when COVID-19 began to dominate our lives, I realized many of the generic “feel good” subjects I had in mind would no longer work. Throughout that year and into 2021, both personally and professionally, I found myself reaching for the yoga

tools I had been refining for many years to help me find solace in a world shaken by pandemic, racial tension, political unrest and uncertainty. Moreover, I found myself redefining my practice and my understanding of the relevance and importance of yoga and the ways it inevitably intersects with social justice and conscious action off the mat.

In my position as yoga editor, I felt compelled to help readers understand that what we do on the yoga mat must be accessible to all people and should inspire us to live more consciously in an ever-changing and often difficult world. I have appreciated the opportunity to try to meet the challenge of these times in the articles I have written, and I hope our readers have found tools that will continue to deepen their practice and sustain their lives both on and off the mat.

Introducing Mila Burgess

This month, I have the privilege of introducing you to my successor, Atlanta’s new *Natural Awakenings* yoga editor, Mila Burgess. Mila’s path and mine have frequently intersected over the years, and I know her as a person who lives her yoga fully, studies continuously and has a deep well of knowledge and experience to share. I took the liberty of asking her a few questions so you could get to know her a little better:

How did you first become interested in yoga, and how did your journey from student to teacher come about?

My introduction to yoga occurred when a friend, who had just completed teacher training, invited me to attend her first class. She assured me it would be a “great workout,” and I wanted to support her. I enjoyed the challenge of learning something new and felt it was a nice complement to the triathlon training I was doing at the time, so I began to sprinkle yoga classes into my weekly routine. However, it wasn’t until a few years later—when I wandered into a yoga class that offered not just a full range of motion but a full range of *emotion*—that I realized yoga is actually a “great work *in*.” Everything resonated deeply with me. It was more than just a class; it was an experience, and I became a regular student of that teacher. Not long after that, I felt the call to teach and to share with others the physical, mental and emotional gifts I was receiving on my mat.

What or who inspires you and keeps you passionate about yoga?

Yoga always has something new to offer, from poses to pranayama to philosophy. The ability to take a deeper dive, consider different perspectives and make connections between yoga and other areas of life excites me. My teachers have been and continue to be great sources of inspiration. So do the yogis in my classes and teacher trainings, whom I have the honor of learning from and with every day.

Can you share some of the ways you live your yoga off the mat?

Whether through the fluidity of flow, the mental and physical challenges of long-held poses, the practice of meeting ourselves where we are or the discovery of breath as a powerful tool, I certainly believe our yoga mats provide a fertile training ground for the off-the-mat practice of yoga. For me, this shows up as greater awareness and acceptance of myself and others. It translates to the ability to be more present, equanimous and intuitive.

What elements of yoga are you most excited about sharing with our readers?

I’m excited to share more about mindfulness, pranayama, and

the growing body of both neuroscience and positive psychology research on topics related to meditation and yoga.

What can we say that readers can expect from you each month?

Yoga is expansive! Readers can expect to see a balance of the art and science of yoga along with the many topics that relate to it, both on and off the mat. 🧘‍♀️



Sheila Ewers, E-RYT500, YACEP, owns Blue Lotus Yoga in Johns Creek. A former professor of writing and literature, she leads group and private lessons, yoga philosophy workshops, yoga teacher trainings and retreats. Contact her at Sheila@JohnsCreekYoga.com.

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All Levels Yoga – 6-7pm. Also Thurs. Improve strength, flexibility and balance through fluid movement and sustained holds in asanas (postures). \$16. The Open Mind Center, 1425 Market Blvd, Ste 500, Roswell. 678-629-3630. TheOpenMindCenter.com.

wednesdays
Free Community Yoga Nidra – Thru Nov 17. 12:30-1pm. A deeply restorative sleep-based meditation technique. No experience needed. AVO Chiropractic & Yoga, 3101 Clairmont Rd, Ste A, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/zybrycpc.

Hip Hop Yoga – 6-7pm. With Jaimee Ratliff. Inspiring flow for all levels, set to your favorite Hip Hop + R&B tunes. Free. The Home Depot Backyard, 1 Backyard Way NW, Atlanta. TheHomeDepotBackyard.com.

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

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As yoga editor for *Natural Awakenings* for the past two years, it has been a deep and profound honor to share what I have learned over a lifetime of study. But at my core, I am first and foremost a yoga teacher, and to me, that has often meant stepping aside and allowing myself to become an instrument for life-force itself to speak to the students before me. I have often marveled at the words that arrive effortlessly and unbidden while I teach, and I know I cannot take credit for them. It is my deepest belief that we all have the ability to give voice to our souls; that our work is often simply to tune the instrument of our bodies, voices and hearts so that what flows through might be more pure and clear. As I relinquish my editor role, my hope is that each reader of this magazine's yoga section will use the tools presented to attune to that which connects us all. 🙏

~ Sheila Ewers, E-RYT500, YACEP

teaching yoga

You know me as a weaver of words
and mistress of metaphors.
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of your body
billowing like a sail, buoyant and free
standing like a mountain ready to burst with
volcanic power
or liquifying and dissolving until its boundaries
disappear
And I tell you about the breath
How it is life breathing you in widening circles
How it is the pulse of the universe pulsing in you
How if you only remember to breathe, you will
meet God in every moment
I show you your fear in quivering muscles,
and I show you your childhood
in the stretch of your arms
I show you the places your heart has grown armor
and the ones where it has grown wings
But these words are not mine.
They land in my mouth like tufted feathers shaken
from the wings of passing doves
They float free as soon as they arrive
I dare not claim them, so I give them to you
and bow my head to their mysterious source
If you understand them, pass them along.
Another waits to meet herself in their magic. . .



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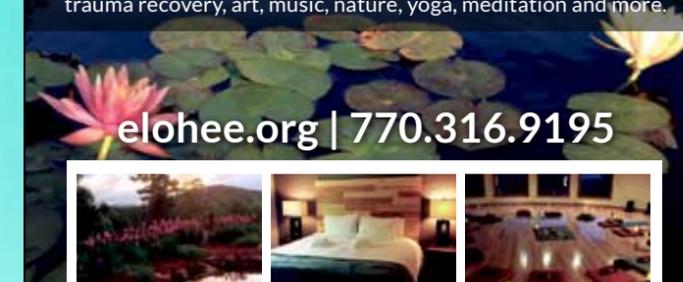


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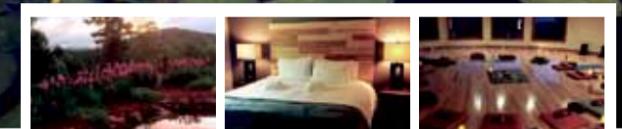


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David Crow on the Healing Power of Medicinal Plants

by Randy Kambic



photo by Simone Anne

David Crow, author of *In Search of the Medicine Buddha*, among other books, is a foremost expert in botanical medicine and other natural health applications. As a teacher, telemedicine consultant, researcher, certified master herbalist, aromatherapist and acupuncturist, he has studied Chinese, Tibetan, Ayurvedic and Western herbal medicine for more than 30 years. He is a strong advocate of the safe use of herbs and essential oils, and installing gardens in public and private spaces. As one of the first medical pioneers to use essential oils and aromatherapy in clinical practice, integrating them into comprehensive treatments, he is also the founder of Floracopeia Aromatic Treasures.

Why do you feel humanity needs to reconnect a sacred relationship with plants?

For our survival as a species. Plants created the biosphere over hundreds of millions of years, including the ozone layer, the oxygen in the atmosphere, the fertility of the soil, the regulation of the seasons and the foundation of the food chain. From those conditions, higher life was able to emerge and evolve: Humans emerged from conditions created by plants. Since we cannot live directly on soil and sunlight as plants do, the structure and function of the human body are designed so that we can extract those

energies in forms that plants provide; our physiology, respiration and metabolism is a mirror image of photosynthesis. We have complete biological dependency on plants in every moment; understanding this is the basis of reverence for nature, which is ecological spirituality, the only long-term solution to the environmental crisis we have created through lack of sensitivity and appreciation of our place in the biosphere.

How is self-care changing to empower people?

The doctor/patient paradigm is changing in many ways as a result of the internet, availability of natural medicines and awareness of the limitations and dangers of pharmaceutical drugs. The availability of nutraceuticals and herbal products from around the world has created a golden age of natural medicine, but has also brought widespread confusion from the overwhelming amount of information combined with marketing of products. People are asking more about drugs and prescribed procedures; they are seeking natural alternatives, and in many cases, either reducing or eliminating their need for pharmaceutical drugs. This change is an important step toward greater health consciousness, which is linked directly to other aspects of creating a healthier society, like the increased demand for organic food that's driving more organic agriculture.

Why are cultural medical systems inseparable from spiritual and meditative practices?

Classical medical systems such as Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, along with indigenous and shamanic uses of plants for healing, have evolved and are inseparable from the spiritual practices of their cultures. For example, Chinese medicine evolved from and with the same philosophical roots and practices as qigong and Taoist alchemy, and Ayurveda emerged from and in turn influenced yoga, tantra and Vedic philosophy. The significance of this is that medical

practices were used both for healing the body and to support yogic and spiritual practices, and vice versa. Now we have modern scientific research confirming the health benefits of spiritual practices such as meditation and prayer, but more importantly, traditional medical systems remind us that there is an ultimate spiritual goal that is higher than mere physical health.

What is your view on the resurgence of psychedelic plant medicines for healing?

All plants have healing properties and also have potential dangers and toxicity, depending on how they are used. The psychoactive plants, specifically the entheogens (those that awaken the perception of divinity) have been used in ceremonies and mystery cults throughout history for healing conditions of body, mind and spirit, but those traditions have always been under the care of highly trained and experienced priests, priestesses and shamans. The experiences while under the influence of these plants are highly dependent on the container of the environment, the cultural mythologies, the ritual, its leaders and the other people present in the ceremony, and it can be highly unpredictable with both good and bad outcomes.

The use of these medicines at higher doses is an excellent opportunity for deep inner transformation, exploration of consciousness and appreciation of the visionary realms that are available to us, but like all intensive spiritual endeavors, requires preparation, orientation and guidance. Using these plants at lower doses, like microdosing daily with psilocybin mushrooms for treating depression and anxiety, offers great benefits for some people without the risks of the psychological, mental or emotional disruptions that can occur at higher doses.

For more information, visit CrowConsultations.com or Floracopeia.com.

Randy Kambic, in Estero, Florida, is a freelance editor and writer.

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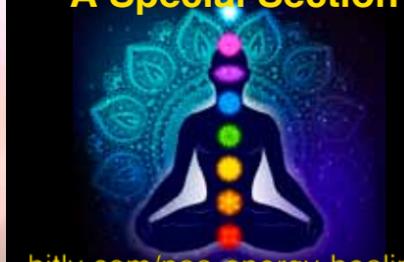


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Submit free listings to calendar@naAtlanta.com and paid listings to ads@naAtlanta.com.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Pumpkin Dumpin': Pumpkin Drop-Off and Composting – 12-6pm. Let your old pumpkins and jack-o'-lanterns decompose the natural way by dropping them off at the Nature Center to be composted. \$1. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. Register: 770-394-3322 or DunwoodyNature.org.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

New Moon Ceremony – 6:30-7:30pm. Join us as we tap into the powerful New Moon energy and open ourselves to abundance, growth, and positive changes. \$20. The Open Mind Center, 1425 Market Blvd, Ste 500, Roswell. 678-629-3630. TheOpenMindCenter.com.



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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Online: Discerning Your Purpose – Saturdays, Nov 6-Dec 11. 10am-12pm. No class Nov 27. With Cora Alexander, LUT. In this course, review strengths, abilities, desires and passions. Via Zoom. Register: UnityAtl.org.

Online: Self-Awareness – Saturdays, Nov 6-Dec 11. 12:30-2:30pm. No class Nov 27. With Dianne Sluder, LUT. Self-awareness is necessary for optimal balance and functioning in life. To be self-aware is to understand ourselves and to be present in our lives. Via Zoom. Register: UnityAtl.org.

Atlanta Veg Fest 2021 – 3-7pm. A market-style outdoor experience. Enjoy vegan food and products, learn from renowned speakers and enjoy entertainment. North Lot, Atlanta Expo Center, 3650 Jonesboro Rd SE, Atlanta. AtlantaVegFest.com.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Fall Family Concert – 3-5pm. Enjoy listening to a few great local bands, create arts and crafts with the kids, and engage with other members of the community. \$5/person; free/age 3 & under. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. Register: 770-394-3322 or DunwoodyNature.org.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Book Coven – 7-8:30pm. Guided by Tonya Gideon. Discuss Thich Nhat Hanh's, *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet*. \$15 suggested donation. Santosha Studio, 896 Davis Dr, Atlanta. 404-964-4858. Santosha-Studio.com.

Live Streaming Premiere: Aware: Glimpses of Consciousness – 7:30pm. Directed by Frauke Sandig and Eric Black. A mind-blowing cinematic journey into the ocean of consciousness. Post-screening cinematic forum. \$12. Register: Tinyurl.com/735hvevn.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Forest Walk: Fall Color and the Art of Natural Forms – 1:30-4pm. Join Naturalist Kathryn Kolb of EcoAddendum for a guided walk. \$15. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. Register: 770-394-3322 or DunwoodyNature.org.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Full Moon Ceremony – 6:30-7:30pm. A great way to release emotions and gain bal-

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Art of Breath Class – 12-1:30pm. With Noel Plaughter. Covers breathing techniques used in many disciplines to provide relaxation, focus and better health. Love offering.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Wisdom and Healing Through Shamanic Journeys – 7-8:30pm. With Vicki Evans. An opportunity to connect with Spirit and your guides for healing and direction. You can use the journeys to ask about all areas of your life, not just the spiritual side. \$20 via PayPal. To register: PayPal.me/vicki-evanshealing.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Poetry Open Mic Night – 7-9pm. With Michael Burke. An evening of splendor with enchanting and thought-provoking spoken word performances from some of Phoenix & Dragon Bookstore's flourishing community of poets. Poets of all ages. Free. On Zoom & in-person.

ance during this time of heightened energy. \$20. The Open Mind Center, 1425 Market Blvd, Ste 500, Roswell. 678-629-3630. TheOpenMindCenter.com.

Online: Transmission Meditation – 7:30pm. A meditation to help the world. Sponsored by Share International USA SE Region. Free. Via Zoom. Info: 404-680-7423 or Info-SE@Share-International.us. Tinyurl.com/epn9mx68.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Georgia Audubon Society Bird Walk – 8-10am. Meet Georgia Audubon leader at our historic fireplace. Free. Dunwoody Nature Center, 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. Register: 770-394-3322 or DunwoodyNature.org.

Greener Good Volunteer Day + Workshop: Invasive Plants 101 – 9am-12pm. A hands-on invasive removal workshop and volunteer day. Learn how to identify and address common invasive plant issues in your park (or yard) while making a positive impact in a new greenspace along the Chattahoochee River. Riverside Park, 2388 Paul Ave NW, Atlanta. ParkPride.org.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Thanksgiving Eve Communion Service – 7:30pm. Unity Atlanta, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Advent Garden for Children – 11am. Unity Atlanta, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

ONGOING

sundays

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

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

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

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

Second Sunday Sober Bike Ride – 10:30am. 2nd Sun. Brings together people from all walks of sober living who are seeking fun and active ways to connect with likeminded people. BTA Bicycle Tours of Atlanta will provide a bike at no charge if needed. Bicycle Tours of Atlanta, 659 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta. Register: Tinyurl.com/yjzutjf4.

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

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

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

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

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

Last Sunday Social – 12:12-3:33pm. Last Sun with Cosmic Brew. Join us and our community of vendors as we share a healing space, engage in meaningful dialogues and create lasting memories. For location: Hi@CosmicBrew.com or Linktr.ee/CosmicBrew.

mondays

The {SAMA} Class: Virtual – 9am. Also held Thurs & Fri. Incorporates 25 mins of yoga, 10 mins of breathwork, finishing off with 10

mins of meditation. Each teacher will bring their own spin to the class based on their particular lineage of training. More info: SamaFoodForBalance.com.

tuesdays

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

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

wednesdays

30-Minute Guided Meditation – 8am. Be guided through a simple yet powerful meditation that gives rise to an experience of mental peace and wellbeing. No experience necessary. Beginners welcome. \$5. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

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

Decatur Farmers' Market – Thru Nov 17. 4-7pm. Local farmers, artisanal food makers and crafts. Masks required. First Baptist Church Decatur, 308 Clairmont Ave, Decatur. cfmatl.org/decatur.

Angel Message Circle – 6:30-8:30pm. Sharon Ragan works with the energy of thousands of Angels and guides you in your next steps. \$20. Heart Soul and Art, 1470 Roswell Rd, Marietta. Pre-registration required: Heart-Soul-And-Art.square.site.

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

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

thursdays

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

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

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

fridays

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

Drumming Is the People's Medicine – 4-7pm. There is liberation, experimentation, meditation and laughter at this supportive, donation-based gathering for beginners led by Daniel Ellis or Kim Hobbs. Santosha Studio, 896 Davis Dr, Atlanta. More info & to register: Santosha-Studio.com.

saturdays

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

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

Oakhurst Farmers' Market – Thru Dec. 9am-1pm. Closed Dec 25. Fresh produce, meat, baked treats, and more. Additional offerings include live music and chef demonstrations featuring seasonal recipes. Masks required. Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 E Lake Dr, Decatur. cfmatl.org/oakhurst.

Free Online Guided Meditation for All – 9:45-11am. Will go over basics and guided meditation. No prior experience is needed. Classes meant to come together and meditate and learn little by little. Via Zoom. Register: Tinyurl.com/y3x5yy2s.



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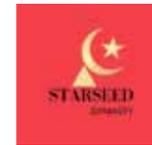


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Continued from page 9.

So the good news is that his talents stay in the family.

Working with one's offspring can be a double-edged sword, but how sweet it is to see him to meet the challenges—and beat them by a mile! Some of Noah's best work shined in the lead article in our August 2019 package, "Black & Vegan in Atlanta." He surpassed even that with his penning "Inherited Trauma: Is It Real? Clues to Post-traumatic Slave Syndrome" in our February 2021 special section, "Healing the Trauma of Slavery."



Sarah Donnell

Finally: We send gratitude and good luck to our copy editor of two years, Patricia Staino, as she moves on to new opportunities. As is often the case in our current work world, I've never met Patricia since she lives in North Carolina. Taking her place is Sarah Donnell, a neighbor of mine here in East Lake Commons from whom I've taken yoga classes! Sarah has more than a decade of writing and editing experience and recently completed her Master of Arts in Social Change from the Starr King School for Ministry. She will be ordained within a few days of this writing. Sarah started with us last month and has already made her presence felt on the national level as a copy editor on December articles for *Natural Awakenings* corporate as well. 🌟



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

An OPEN HEART

by Rosemary Kimble



Three times in my life, I've felt true bliss, my heart blossoming like a flower from Divine love. The first time was when, after many years of seeking the courage to do so, I called my ex-husband and forgave him. When the call was over, I felt a magnificent release of resentment and heartache. I felt warm inside, and my whole being felt like it was glowing with newfound peaceful energy. Bliss set in. I had no idea how much I had been holding on to.

The second time I felt true bliss was in my first ayahuasca ceremony. I faced some hard lessons, and after hours and hours of purging, something inside of me moved and released. I felt myself fill with love, starting from my heart center. I knew it was Spirit at its highest level reaching down to encompass me with its divine light. I felt my heart open wide as if a rose

had blossomed there. My whole being became warm, radiating light. I sat in bliss and cried tears of joy.

The third time was when I met the guru Amma Sri Karunamayi. I had signed up for a meditation retreat but was skeptical through most of it. A number of shamans I had worked with before had turned out to have little integrity, and I was not going to let myself fall for that again. I could not understand anything Amma was saying; her words were incomprehensible to me. Yet, after seven hours, when I went to my car to leave, something told me to stay.

I acknowledged my skepticism, and I asked for guidance to help me learn what I was there to learn. I let go of doubt and went back to the ceremony. Immediately, I noticed a loving energy that had been building all day. I could feel it pulsing through my veins, and I suddenly could

understand everything Amma was saying. She had many spiritual truths to share; I wondered what I had missed earlier when I couldn't hear her.

When Amma was done, only the devotees remained, and Amma stood up to leave. Everyone crowded around her, hoping to have her blessing in the form of her touch. I moved along with the crowd until an opening came, and I found myself standing right beside her. Then, reaching out, she laid her hand on my forehead, and in that single motion, I felt the loving energy of the Divine. Pure, unconditional love streamed down through her and into me, reaching my heart and blossoming again.

I stood there in bliss. Tears of joy fell from my eyes once more. I held my hands over my heart and felt the warmth and power of love. I knew I had once again been blessed with the ultimate love of Spirit. Seeing the human potential embodied in Amma gave me hope.

In each of these experiences, I let my heart open to any possibility. Each time, something peeled away, and a breakthrough occurred. I could have called my ex only to have him hang up on me; in the ayahuasca ceremony, I could have turned away from the teaching that was trying to reveal itself; and I could have gotten in my car and left Amma's ceremony that day. Thankfully, though, in those moments, I was fearless enough to meet what was in front of me.

In each of these experiences, I have been able to see the possibility of connecting with my inherent divinity and be more open to what the universe has to offer me. How blissful my life could be if I remain that open-hearted to every challenge life presents me. 🌸



Rosemary Kimble is an artist with a penchant for the metaphysical and healing arts. She is an animal communicator, medium, intuitive healer, ceremonialist and co-director of *Adventures in Empowerment Retreats*. Contact: Info@VisionsAndReflections.com.

Nature's Virus Killer

Copper can stop a cold before it starts

By Doug Cornell

Scientists have discovered a natural way to kill germs fast. Now thousands of people are using it against viruses and bacteria in the nose and on the skin.

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

In hundreds of studies, EPA and university researchers have confirmed that viruses and bacteria die almost instantly when touched by copper.

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

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

Tests by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) show germs die fast on copper. So some hospitals tried copper for touch surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. This cut the spread of MRSA and other illnesses by over half, and saved lives.

The strong scientific evidence gave inventor Doug Cornell an idea. When he felt a cold about to start he fashioned a smooth copper probe and rubbed it gently in his nose for 60 seconds.

"It worked!" he exclaimed. "The

cold never got going. That was September 2012. I use copper in the nose every time and I have not had a single cold since then."



New device puts copper right where you need it.

"We can't make product health claims," he said, "so I can't say cause and effect. But we know copper is antimicrobial."

He asked relatives and friends to try it. They reported

the same thing, so he patented CopperZap® and put it on the market.

Soon hundreds of people had tried it. The feedback was 99% positive if they used the copper within 3 hours after the first sign of unwanted germs, like a tickle in the nose or a scratchy throat.

Early user Mary Pickrell said, "I can't believe how good my nose feels."

"What a wonderful thing!" exclaimed Physician's Assistant Julie. Another customer asked, "Is it supposed to work that fast?"

Pat McAllister, 70, received one for Christmas and called it "one of the best presents ever. This little jewel really works."

Frequent flier Karen Gauci had been suffering after crowded flights. Though skeptical, she tried copper on travel days for 2 months. "Sixteen flights and

not a sniffle!" she exclaimed.

Businesswoman Rosaleen says when people around her show signs of cold or flu, she uses copper morning and night. "It saved me last holidays," she said. "The kids had crud going round and round, but not me."

Attorney Donna Blight tried copper for her sinus. "I am shocked!" she said. "My head cleared, no more headache, no more congestion."

A man with trouble breathing through his nose at night tried copper just before bed. "Best sleep I've had in years!" he said.

In a lab test, technicians placed 25 million live flu viruses on a CopperZap. No viruses were found surviving soon after.

Dr. Bill Keevil led one of the teams confirming the research. He placed millions of disease germs on copper. "They started to die literally as soon as they touched the surface," he said.

Some people press copper on a lip right away if a warning tingle suggests unwanted germs gathering there.



Dr. Bill Keevil: Copper quickly kills cold viruses.

The handle is curved and textured to increase contact. Copper can kill germs picked up on fingers and hands after you touch things other people have touched.

The EPA says copper still works even when tarnished.

CopperZap is made in the U.S. of pure

copper. It has a 90-day full money back guarantee. It is available for \$79.95. Get \$10 off each CopperZap with code NATA23.

Go to www.CopperZap.com or call toll-free 1-888-411-6114.

Buy once, use forever.

Statements are not intended as product health claims and have not been evaluated by the FDA. Not claimed to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.



Mercury Free and Mercury Safe Biocompatible (Holistic) Dentistry.



As a biological dentist, Dr. Aaron is certified in Safe Mercury Amalgam Removal Technique (S.M.A.R.T.).

With Dr. Ronald Dressler as her mentor, Dr. Aaron is able to draw on his decades of experience using natural therapies (at times in combination with conventional ones) to prevent, diagnose, and treat diseases of the oral cavity safely and healthfully.

Some of the services our office provides:

- Mercury SAFE practices
- Mercury and metal free restorations
- BPA and BisGMA free fillings
- Fluoride alternatives
- Ceramic restorations
- Dental ozone therapy
- Special air purification systems to reduce airborne pathogens and environmental toxins
- Special chair-side evacuation system (DentAirVac) captures mercury vapors to protect patients

Robust referral network for many alternative care practitioners is also available.

Call or text us today: 678.528.6747

We are conveniently located in the heart of Tucker, GA. We have free parking on the premises.
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