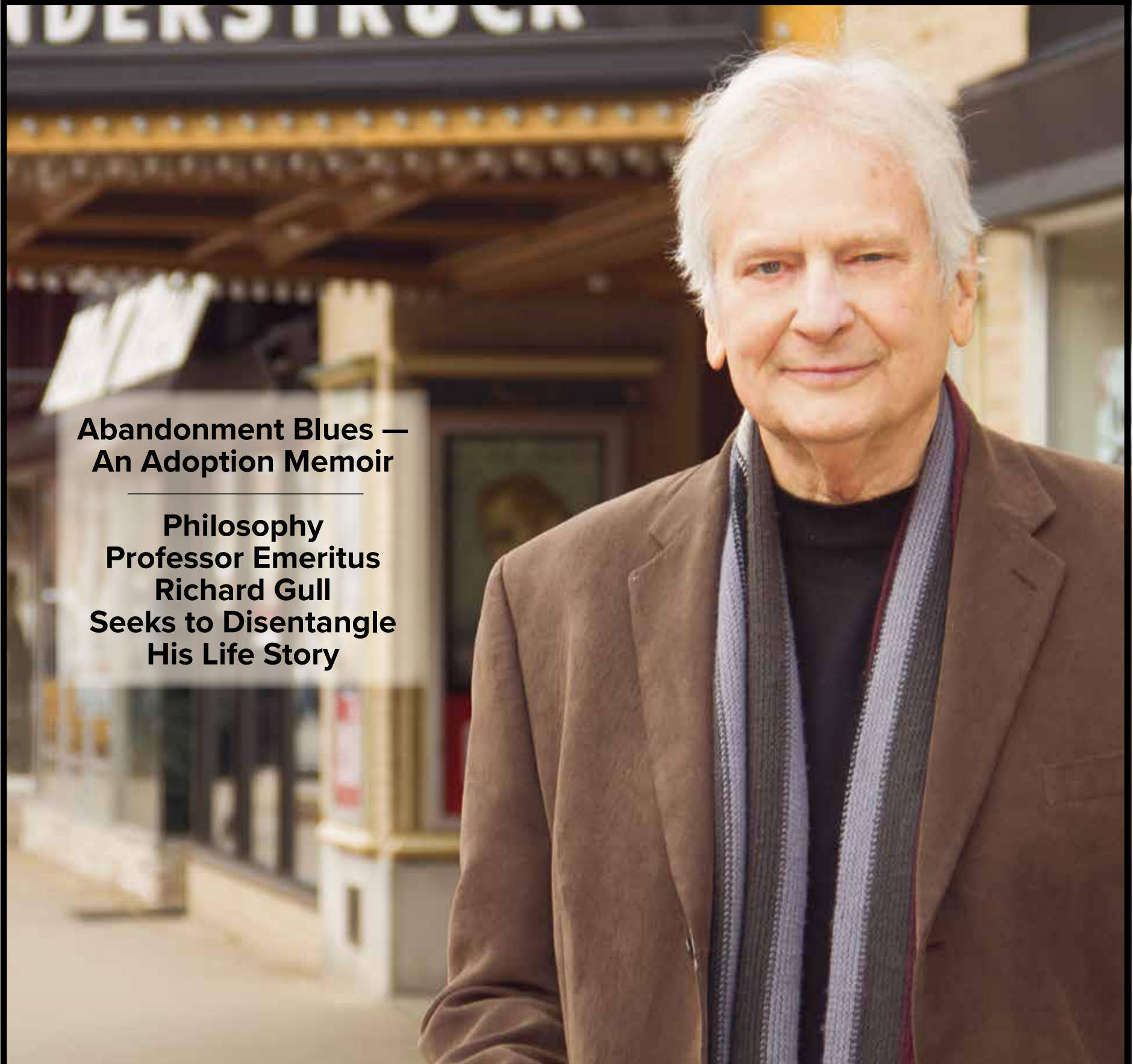


# THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

## SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S CONSCIOUS LIVING MAGAZINE

FREE

JANUARY THROUGH APRIL 2018 - ISSUE 68



**Abandonment Blues —  
An Adoption Memoir**

**Philosophy  
Professor Emeritus  
Richard Gull  
Seeks to Disentangle  
His Life Story**

**Kentaro Toyama, Author of *Geek Heresy*, on Social Justice and Technology**

**Susan Beckett and the Story of *Groundcover News***

City of Crows • Chris Forte, Author of *The Humble Warrior* • Ypsi's Rocket •  
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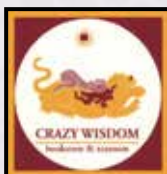
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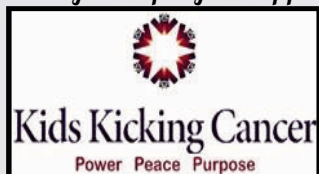
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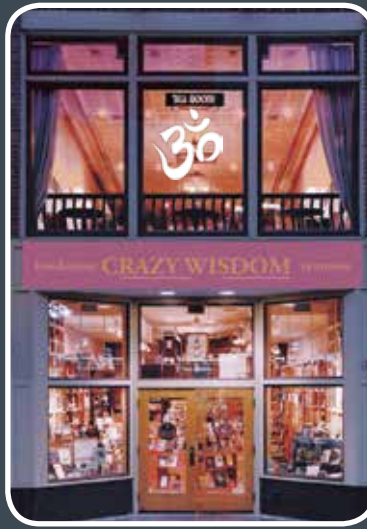
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"Crazy Wisdom" is a term popularized by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, one of the major figures in bringing Buddhism to the West. He described it as an innocent state of awareness that is wild and free, completely awake and fresh. It's a spiritual worldview that represents thinking outside the box — moving against the stream.

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This issue is distributed starting in the last week of December. 11,000 copies of The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal are printed, and they are available at our bookstore as well as at more than 235 other locations in the area.

The deadline for Free Calendar submissions for the May thru August 2018 issue is

Monday, March 19.

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Jan. 19 • *One Year Wiser* by Mike Medaglia, hosted by Deb Flint

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Mar. 16 • *The Art of Communicating* by Thich Nhat Hanh, hosted by Bill Zirinsky

Apr. 20 • *Furiously Happy* by Jenny Lawson, hosted by Deb Flint

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# City of Crows



By Irena Nagler

*I'm preparing to leave a corvid hurly-burly. Beneath its restless swirl I lean against an oak tree, attempting to be unobtrusive. Nearby, under the storm of wings, a man is standing, his back to me, profoundly rooted, silent by a stone marker. We both wear coats as black as the feathers of the birds. Above us, they arrive: alighting and arising, some perching on branches, others in perpetual motion and outcry.*



Artwork by Irena Nagler titled **Storytellers**

**The clouds their fathomless source, [the crows] are faintly outlined, then hurl themselves into the foreground. Sometimes, swerving abruptly, they appear to change worlds, to make visible a quantum leap, as if a page turned in the air.**

*As I walk down a curving hillside street, more are pouring into the area to join their friends. In enormous numbers, they fly on a backdrop of gray-white clouds tinged with orange. The distant crows far to the west are barely visible. They seem to be generated from the cloud-world in an endless fountain and materialize as they draw nearer. The clouds their fathomless source, they are faintly outlined, then hurl themselves into the foreground. Sometimes, swerving abruptly, they appear to change worlds, to make visible a quantum leap, as if a page turned in the air.*

*It is strange to look around and see weary people heading home from work, waiting for buses, not looking up at this fantastic play directly overhead and filling the horizon.*

The crow gatherings are a winter phenomenon. They are boisterous and convivial. Trees and skies teem with unfurling black tatter-coats and calls that sound like fabric being ripped. Their occurrence in urban areas is fairly recent, beginning after the 1950s when cities, where hunting is prohibited, became more forested, often preserving big oak trees. Crows like small cities with large trees and nearby agricultural fields.

I remember my first introduction to them. I was three years old, out in the back garden with my father. It was a grey day, raw and windy, probably in March. My father was busy at some work.

I was looking up into an old oak. Just beside it, two black birds appeared, seeming to lie on a bed of air emanated by the oak. They probably cawed. I remember a sensation of time slowing.

"Crows," said my father. He didn't like them much, but that didn't come through in his voice; he merely named them for me. They were two musical notes on an invisible staff strung from the tree. I sensed something resonant, iconic.

An artist friend, Dino Lampron, painted a picture that he said was partly of me. A face in profile, a high forehead. A player on a flute or pipe. Nested within the figure where its bronchi might be, and suggesting the vocal source, is a crow or raven. Dino calls the painting "Alter Ego." It is vibrant with voice and spirit motion, emerging from trance, an unwritten legend. The colors are fiery, with a touch of the green flash preceding sunset.

Crows are sometimes feared and persecuted as shadows. A crow may call, synchronous with a perception, as if affirming it. I find that supportive and heartening. So do many. Others interpret it as ominous.

Railway tracks cut through a barren, stony swath under the Broadway Bridge. It collects rain puddles that, seen from the bridge, become eyes reflecting the sky. Though the pools are messy and temporary, the reflections are whole, flawless,

numinous. They could be doorways to alternate versions of the world. Shadows thrown from the high bridge loom large over that narrow strip of transit land.

One late afternoon in April, walking on the bridge, I notice a crow strutting along in the dirt by the tracks. It has that loveably awkward bird-gait with waddling hindquarters. I think briefly of a crow I once saw being shot. Its tribe had flown to circle and scream around the fallen one.

I see the shadow of me crossing the bridge, looming long in rays of evening light. The scene down there becomes theater: my shade, the incarnate crow. The two pass through each other. There is a heightened awareness of desert-like drama in the railway area, its dry-dirt strip of land after winter, the sky in the water, and the alter egos in shades of black and gray.

I used to walk under a crow roost in a tree on the corner of High Street and Elizabeth, wading in a gray-black snow of downy feathers that had accumulated over time. At dusk, the birds clustered overhead spoke in sleepy descending croaks and croonings. ("Night, everyone...?") I took some feathers home and deposited them in an eccentric red glass candleholder or ginger jar (I never quite figured out what it was) that I'd acquired somewhere, maybe in the basement of Treasure Mart.

One morning I awoke from a dream of rising from a tree into daybreak in the midst of a black-feathered flock. The red contraption with its feather collection was by my bed, an Aladdin's lamp of feathery smoke. The dream scattered atoms into the day.

Ann Arbor has a "nationally outstanding crow population," according to a 1997 *Ann Arbor News* article by Joanne Nesbit. Late in autumn, rivers of crows in the afternoon sky migrate to pan-clan gatherings. They are better weather predictors than humans. A few years ago, I was a little puzzled by this wintry behavior in mid-November, earlier than usual. Two days later it was snowing. The weather channels had not predicted it.

**Crows are sometimes feared and persecuted as shadows. A crow may call, synchronous with a perception, as if affirming it. I find that supportive and heartening. So do many. Others interpret it as ominous.**

Circa 1991, Cynthia Sims Parr, a visiting scholar at the University of Michigan doing doctoral research on crows, gave a talk about their vocalizations at the University's Exhibit Museum of Natural History. She played tapes of calls and croons and conversational noises. She had studied their winter and summer patterns of movement and association.

In the summer, the crows live in family groups. In winter, they congregate near dusk in great numbers, then disperse again to sleep after dark in communal roosts comprised of a few families. One can come upon these unexpectedly at night: winter oaks with a mysterious new population of leaves, black against an indigo lake of sky, maybe a full moon. Suddenly a leaf rustles and croons or calls in rough tones, arises from its branch and settles again, echoed by a flurry of others.

Between the birds, the sky forms negative-space doorways into infinite reaches. At night, trees filled with murmuring black leaves hug Central Campus buildings and nearby houses. Attempts to drive them away only succeed temporarily.



I began to visit the most obvious crow winter staging area, and found another deep in a small, wild local forest. Wearing my black coat, I fancied that I was like one of the birds, or at least a sort of distant cousin.

I brought friends, one or two at a time. As we approached, hearing loud cawing, we would see a forested ridge above us blackened and scintillating with arriving birds. An excitement gripped us. They flew in great cauldron-swirls overhead. One, perched in a white pine tree, called with such a human voice that we had to laugh, and wonder aloud whether it had been in some sort of relationship with one of us.

One [crow], perched in a white pine tree,  
called with such a human voice that we had to laugh,  
and wonder aloud whether it had been in some  
sort of relationship with one of us.

One friend wanted a photo of the crows. I asked him not to reveal the location if he posted it online. When we emerged from the scene, he found his camera had temporarily ceased to function. It resumed again once we had left the crows.

Corvids can be taught to imitate human speech. There is a myth that they must have their tongues split into forks to be able to speak words. Some cruel behavior has resulted. Their tongues play only a minor part in vocalizing. Instead of the larynx as a sound resonator, birds use the syrinx (based on the word for Greek musical panpipes): a structure connected to the twofold branching of bronchi toward the lungs. They can thus make two sounds at once, layering them.

Corvids may not be cognizant, in the human sense, of the words they mimic. But in speaking them, they resonate with us.

Crows have much in common with humans. They can distinguish faces in a crowd. They will watch and remember behavior for years. They sometimes give gifts to humans who befriend and feed them: jewelry, candy, and other objects that they have picked up. They create technologies: one might bend a wire into a hook for use in lifting something, or fill a cup with water to moisten food. Crows have been observed putting walnuts in front of stopped cars to be broken open by the wheels.

There's a crow tree in my backyard. A family returns to it year after year. The young ones have a call not unlike a human baby's, persistent when asking for attention or food.

Crows mate for life. They usually nest in evergreens. Parents croon to their offspring, half of whom do not survive predators. The young ones frequently stay for a few years and help to raise new nestlings and fledglings, feeding them, bringing food to the incubating female, defending the territory, calling to ward off predators, guarding family members while they forage in fields. If they leave for years and return, they are welcomed back into the family. Crows do not breed until they are two years old.



Artwork by Dino Lampron titled *Alter Ego*

Crows are suspected of driving away smaller birds. Their tendency to eat grain from cultivated fields does not endear them to humans. There's a hunting season for them in many states, including Michigan (no bag limit).

They do sometimes eat other bird species' eggs and attack nestlings. But, in general, studies don't indicate that crows' occasional aggressive behavior makes a decisive difference in songbird populations. If they are removed, other predators move in.

Like their mythic counterpart, the Raven — who stole the sun to bring light to the world — crows seem to seize pieces of sky and set them glittering on branches. Though crows don't hoard shiny objects, they do play with them.

Before Europeans arrived, there were more ravens than crows in Michigan. Ravens prefer seclusion and forestland. It's possible that Ann Arbor was once more of a hunting territory than a town or village. It was also perhaps sacred land. According to a descendant of Potawatomi in the area, a healing center here drew people from all directions, accounting for the many trails that meet by the river.

In the city's oldest section, near the river, are many examples of the meeting of three roads. Ancient Greeks would have consecrated them to Hecate, Goddess of the Crossroads. One of her many animal symbols is the crow.

One friend wanted a photo of the crows. I asked him  
not to reveal the location if he posted it online.  
When we emerged from the scene, he found his  
camera had temporarily ceased to function.  
It resumed again once we had left the crows.

The Irish Morrigan, a warrior goddess, has a crow's head. Like most of the "dark goddesses," she is linked with the sovereignty of Earth, the imperative to orient oneself and society toward Earth's wisdom and long experience, to allow its natural authority and guidance in creative efforts, so that human brilliance will not upset too many balances.

Crows are associated with other goddesses of darkness. Black has been given a negative connotation in Western culture, with racist elements. But for many individuals, it throws a shadow of evocative beauty and depth. The mystery holds great treasures. Crows and ravens are iridescent in their black plumage. There is a blue and violet shine to their feathers when light touches them.

*Naturalist Jed Bromfield accompanies Jennifer Kovach and me to a crow gathering place near a beloved nature area. It's February, but the weather is warm and rainy. We squelch around in a forested valley that drips and echoes, and Jed names plants for us. We can hear the birds beginning to arrive.*

*Jed can caw like one of the tribe. We walk and walk, following the crows at a distance. Stones loom around us, and, everywhere, the old trees. The air is gray, enclosing us in soft mystery.*

*Afterwards, the three of us make a foray into Café Verde in our rain capes and mud-spattered boots, feeling that we drag along with us the aura of the rain-drenched valley and soaked winter leaves. Sitting at a table, drinking the most intense lemon-ginger tea ever made, we become "Blackwater Hattie, Jenny Greenteeth and Sir Jed Corvus Brachyrhynchos," a swampland trio.*

Crows have much in common with humans.  
They can distinguish faces in a crowd. They will watch  
and remember behavior for years. They sometimes give  
gifts to humans who befriend and feed them: jewelry,  
candy, and other objects that they have picked up.

Outside, in their winter palaces among oak branches, our alter egos brim over with the excitement of reunion at the end of a day. Their voices scrape rough ink-strokes of sound on the air. They land on branches with heart-stopping grace, folding black fringes of wing.

Birds are sentinels who inform everyone, avian or otherwise, of what's going on in the worlds of forest, field, and city. For those who know how to interpret the communications, knowledge of — and safety in — the environment is enhanced.

When present enough, we may tune in through resonance with any being of our living system to a world thrumming with its own electric communication. It taps on our bones, waiting for us to listen.

Our alter ego crows insist upon it.







# SoulCollage® - Discover Your Wisdom, Change Your World



By Laura Seligman

SoulCollage® is an intuitive practice that gently guides us home to our own inner knowing and guidance. It captured my heart at an impromptu offering during a spiritual retreat over six years ago. With SoulCollage®, there was immediacy, a sense of synchronicity, and an alignment with everything I loved: the creative process, spiritual practice, and inner cultivation. I was surprised by its simplicity. I wondered how collaging images to make a deck of cards could tend the soul. It would be so easy to dismiss it as a craft project. Instead, I discovered how much it would transform and integrate my life, both my inner world and my sense of community.

That is the unique gift of the SoulCollage® process. It opens the door so we can meet ourselves exactly where we are and explore life from an entirely fresh perspective. This gentle practice can become a doorway to more fulfillment, freedom, and inner peace.

With SoulCollage®, there was immediacy, a sense of synchronicity, and an alignment with everything I loved: the creative process, spiritual practice, and inner cultivation.

Seena Frost created SoulCollage® over thirty years ago during her training with Jean Huston, a pioneer in the human potential movement. In a 2010 interview celebrating the release of her second book, *SoulCollage® Evolving: An Intuitive Collage Process for Self-Discovery & Community*, Seena explained:

Images are transformative because they surprise us and awaken us, often in ways that words coming from outside—from books or lectures or sermons or therapists—cannot...When your image begins to speak with your own words, it speaks from a deep layer of the soul that usually doesn't have a voice. It is these words bubbling up that surprise us (dancingwiththeshadow.blogspot.com).

Only we know what the card means, its power, gift, and strength.



With SoulCollage®, each of us creates a deck of cards that mirrors our own unique journey and perspective. My deck reflects both my personal narrative and a universal understanding of larger energies expressed in archetypes and the natural world, especially animals. Each card reflects one essential presence and can carry multiple layers of meaning that are revealed over time. The cards may give voice to the parts that hide in the shadows or challenge me to live with more balance and a wider perspective. Equally important, they celebrate the unique parts of who I am. My evolving deck helps me laugh at my dramas and lighten up. I am able to meet the layers that want to be explored, held, and dissolved. Fundamentally, my cards guide my ongoing inquiry into how aspects of the personality can be harnessed in service of the unfolding of the soul.



My evolving deck helps me laugh at my dramas and lighten up. I am able to meet the layers that want to be explored, held, and dissolved.

The process is simple and playful, and absolutely anyone can do it. No art or creative experience is required. We intuitively choose and collage found images, photographs, and personal artwork onto a card. Working in silence, we pause from our daily life, slow down, and listen more deeply.

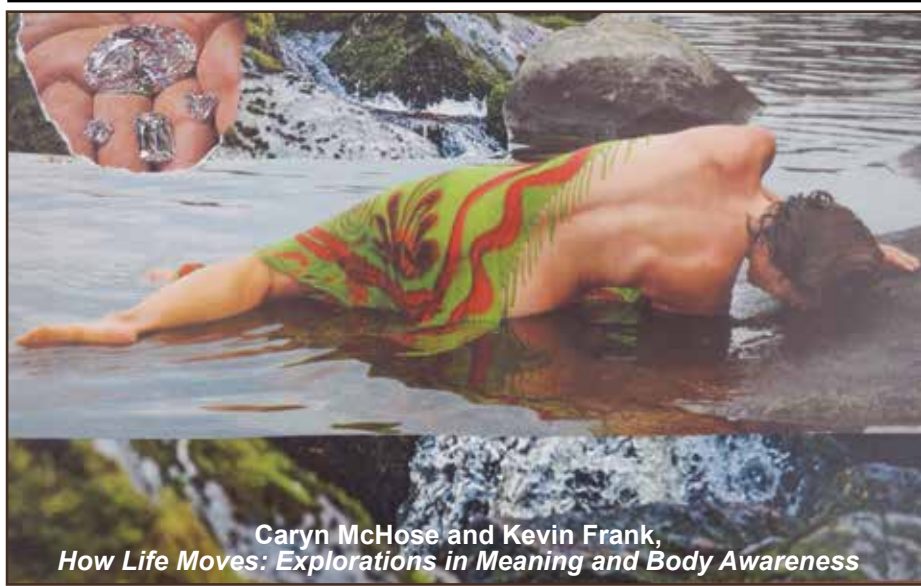
Engaging our active imagination, we use a process to discover the unique voice and message of each card. It may express some part of our personality or a relationship, or a more universal theme such as true strength, equanimity, kindness, or mercy. We may journal alone to get to know the essence of the card, and in a workshop we may work with a partner as a witness who scribes what bubbles up as we enter into a relationship with our card. Our partner honors our discovery by not offering insights or interpretations. Only we know what the card means, its power, gift, and strength. These cards invite us into their depths as we are ready. It is a very personal, intimate journey. The images come alive and invite the possibility for transformation. In community with others, there is a trust that develops as we honor the sacred space of our exploration.

We respect the copyright of photographers by using these cards only for our personal use. We never barter, trade, or sell them. Rather, we use them in our own unique way to understand ourselves and build community with others.

These cards invite us into their depths as we are ready. It is a very personal, intimate journey.

Making these cards in community with others has its own unique power. The group bond that grows even in an afternoon can be very nurturing and inspiring as we bear witness to one another. I remember after the last presidential election, a participant in my group in Los Angeles made a card that honored her mother who was in a concentration camp during WWII. The voice from the card commanded, "You have to do something NOW. It can't wait!" Using the SoulCollage® process of getting to know the essence of this card, she was able to discern the power of the call to take action without feeling driven by guilt. This person went on to become a political advocate to honor her mother's legacy. It was a voice that could easily have been dismissed by self-judgement or other distractions.





Caryn McHose and Kevin Frank,  
*How Life Moves: Explorations in Meaning and Body Awareness*

The ultimate reward of creating a SoulCollage® deck, even a small one, is in doing a card reading for ourselves. We pose a question about our life seeking clarity, support, or guidance. The question may be very personal about a particular issue or a more universal question such as, "What wisdom do these cards have during this turbulent time in the world?" Since we have made these cards, it is our own inner guidance that speaks to us. In this way, SoulCollage® is different from a tarot card reading.

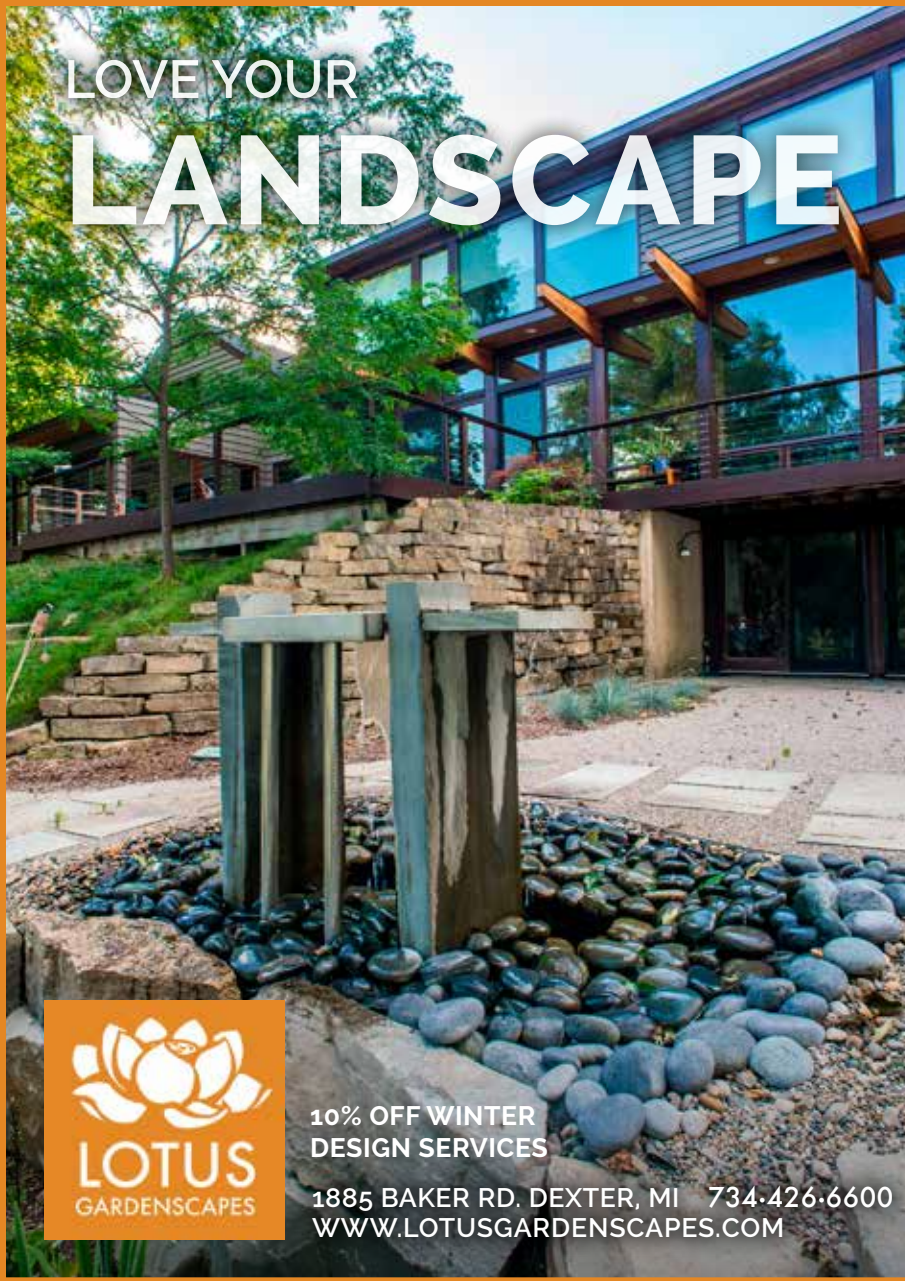
Participants in past workshops have found the process life affirming, life altering and enlivening. One participant commented, "I'm amazed at how the images have their own voice and don't always say what I expect from them." Another noted, "This process was a new way to move through stressful times...a help instead of unhealthy coping mechanisms."

My deck of SoulCollage® cards reflect the unity and emergent path of my life; the richness, the sorrow, the difficulties, the beauty, wonder, and grace. It's a tangible, alive practice that invites me to know and be who I am, fully. It's tender and sacred work that I do alone and in community with others. I have found Ann Arbor unique as a community that is curious about and engaged in spiritual exploration and the creative process. SoulCollage® helps us discover our wisdom and change our world. This is the gift we can give ourselves and one another. It's an honor for me to share it.

*Laura Seligman, M.S, is an artist and a volunteer at the U-M Museum of Art. She is a long time student of t'ai chi, Buddhist practice, and the Diamond Approach. Laura brings to SoulCollage® her skills facilitating numerous groups throughout her career. She delights in supporting others in using their creativity to transform their lives. For more information, you can contact Laura at lauraseligman@gmail.com.*

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# Making Friends with Your Subconscious in Creative Writing

By Julie Mariouw

**T**here are such depths within us all — how do we, as writers, access and use the material that is in our subconscious minds? In her book, *Archetypes for Writers*, Jennifer Van Bergen affirms that “Writing takes place in the subconscious.... The subconscious actually operates — in everyone — as an independent mind. It perceives, processes, and retains things that never enter the conscious mind at all. We all have material in the subconscious. In fact, it is where nearly all our material is found, but that material cannot gather itself together, emerge, and become part of a work of art (or our life) unless the conscious mind allows it.” So how do we get our conscious minds to allow it?

One helpful writing exercise is “clustering.” I came across this exercise in a book called *Writing the Natural Way*, by Gabriele Rico, Ph.D. Rico focuses on the dual-sided nature of the brain, labeling the left side the Sign mind, and the right side the Design mind. She asserts that the left side of our brain “is largely occupied with the rational, logical representations of reality and with parts and sequences”; while the right side “thinks in complex images,... seeks patterns to make designs of whatever it encounters ... your Design mind attends to the melody of life, whereas your Sign mind attends to the notes that compose the melodies. And here is the key to natural writing: the melodies must come first.”

Rico explains that “... clustering is a nonlinear brainstorming process akin to free association. It makes an invisible Design-mind process visible through a nonlinear spilling out of lightning associations that allows patterns to emerge. Through clustering we naturally come up with a multitude of choices from a part of our mind where the experiences of a lifetime mill and mingle. It is the writing tool that accepts wondering, not-knowing, seeming chaos.”

To create a cluster, you begin with a nucleus word, circled, on a blank piece of paper. You can choose any word or phrase you like. Your most important job is to write quickly, in order to bypass your internal editor. Write what comes to mind, each new word/thought in its own circle, radiating outward from the nucleus word, connecting each word with a line to the preceding circle. And, finally, after you have exhausted most possibilities, you will suddenly become aware of the direction your writing should take. Writers describe that they “just suddenly know” what they should write about.

At this point, referring back to your cluster as needed, you begin to write, as quickly as you can, without stopping to edit or correct anything. Your job as a writer is to allow your unconscious/design mind to be in the driver’s seat, gradually revealing to you the patterns that it contains. Writers usually end up with a story that already has a beginning, middle, and end, and contains its own pre-determined logic and associations. Of course, you will have to continue to work with this material to expand upon and deepen it, but you have allowed some of the raw material from your subconscious brain to go down onto the page, and that is not an easy thing to do!

Another technique for accessing your subconscious in writing is from a book called *From Where You Dream*, written by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Robert Olen Butler; something he calls “sense journaling.” According to Butler, “... the unconscious is scary as hell. It is hell for many of us.... You have to go down into that deepest, darkest, most roiling, white-hot place ... and you can’t flinch, can’t walk away. That’s the only way to create a work of art — even though you have plenty of defense mechanisms to keep you out of there, and those defense mechanisms are going to work against you mightily.”

How does Butler propose, then, that we bypass these defense mechanisms? He believes one way is through our senses: “The primary point of contact for the reader is going to be an emotional one, because emotions reside in the senses ... and are therefore best expressed in fiction through the senses.” Butler believes that emotions are experienced, and therefore expressed in fiction, in five ways:

- First, we have a sensual reaction inside our body — temperature, heartbeat, muscle reaction, neural change.
- Second, there is a sensual response that sends signals outside of our body — posture, gesture, facial expression, tone of voice.
- Third, we have flashes of the past. Moments of reference in our past come back to us in our consciousness, not as ideas or analyses about the past, but as little vivid bursts of waking dream.
- Fourth, there are flashes of the future, similar to flashes of the past, but of something that has not yet happened or that may happen.
- And finally, we experience what I would call sensual selectivity. At any given moment we are surrounded by hundreds of sensual cues. But in that moment only a very small number ... will impinge on our consciousness.

So Butler proposes that we, as writers, “return to some event of the day that evoked an emotion.... Record that event in the journal. But do this only moment to moment through the senses. Absolutely never name an emotion; never start explaining or analyzing or interpreting an emotion. Record only through those five ways I

mentioned.” He believes that, if you write this way every day you will help to “turn off that flow of garbage in your head, you’re turning off certain kinds of words ... abstract and analytical meta-words. What then takes their place is a very strong presence of language.... The line-to-line words come from your unconscious and so does the very form in which you write.”

Another technique to access the writer’s subconscious mind is from a book called *Ensouling Language: On the Art of Nonfiction and the Writer’s Life*, written by Stephen Harrod Buhner. Buhner calls the technique “finding The Secret Kinesis of Things — to minutely focus perception in a particular way... an extension of the capacity for

nonphysical touch outward, into the world, and then writing down, in a specific way, what is perceived.”

He instructs: “Let your eyes wander around the room until something catches your attention — desk, pen, cup; it doesn’t matter what it is. It is just, for whatever reason at this moment in time, interesting to you. Now look at it carefully, note its shape, notice its color. Really look at it. Let your eyes touch the thing as if they were fingers capable of extreme sensitivity to touch. Now, ask yourself, How does it feel? In the tiny moment of time that follows that question, there will be a burst of feeling.... Your nonphysical touching has just felt a part of the exterior world.... What stands revealed is a dimension to things beyond height, width, and breadth. There is a feeling dimension to them. The Secret Kinesis of Things.”

Buhner believes that “If you do this kind of exercise [regularly] you will notice that ... you forget yourself and became immersed in the writing.... You move, either lightly or deeply, into the writing trance. And, he states, ‘The point of this is to begin the partnership that must exist between your conscious mind and the dreamer. To allow the dreamer to get used to being out in the open and writing. That part needs to learn that it is okay to emerge and write and that you won’t do anything to harm or denigrate it.’”

It only takes practicing these skills on a regular basis to deepen and widen your writing connection with the contents of your subconscious mind; be kind and gentle with it, and it will return the favor!

*Julie Mariouw is a published author, English teacher, and Amherst Writers & Artists affiliate, certified to lead workshops in the AWA method described in Writing Alone & with Others by Pat Schneider, Oxford University Press. She offers creative writing workshops for writers at all levels of skill and experience, in the Ann Arbor area, through Wellspring Writing Workshops, L.L.C. For more information, visit [www.wellspringwritingworkshops.com](http://www.wellspringwritingworkshops.com) or her Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/wellspringwritingworkshops/](http://www.facebook.com/wellspringwritingworkshops/).*

**“Writing takes place in the subconscious.... The subconscious actually operates — in everyone — as an independent mind. It perceives, processes, and retains things that never enter the conscious mind at all.”**

**— Jennifer Van Bergen**



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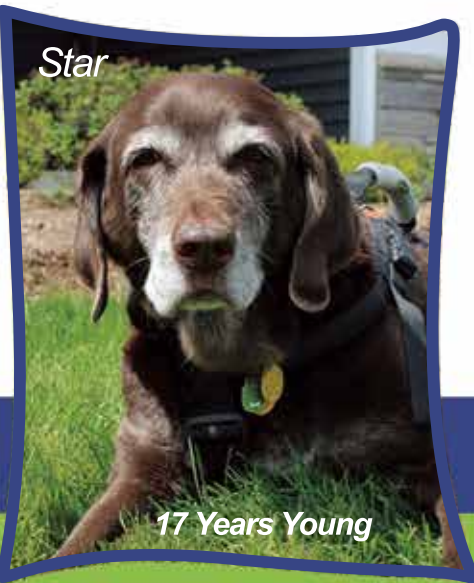
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# Balance Massage Therapy~ The Business with a Healing Touch

By Sandor Slomovits

Photos by Rebecca Rowe

Balance Massage Therapy (BMT) celebrated its ninth anniversary this past October. Founded in 2008 by Josie Ann Lee and Christin Lee Drayback, the business has grown dramatically, from five massage rooms and five therapists when they opened, to eleven rooms and sixteen therapists, who now give more than 10,000 massages per year. Although BMT opened at a challenging time for the economy, the business has thrived in part because it very effectively combines the disparate talents of its two women founders. Lee says,

I literally grew up in a business. My parents owned a country store that was on the same property as our house [in Metamora, MI]. My crib was just on the other side of the counter. My love for business was born dusting the shelves of Hickory Market.

While Lee started on the business track from day one, Drayback came to massage somewhat later in her life. "I was working at General Motors in Flint while I was finishing up my bachelors at the University of Michigan. I'd only been working for GM a couple of years when they started offering buyouts to help with their finances." She took the buyout and decided to go on to graduate school to get her Masters in Social Work, planning to pay her way by doing massage. She enrolled at the Ann Arbor Institute of Massage Therapy (AAIMT), partly because the school offered training in a number of massage styles. (Today, depending on the needs and preferences of their clients, Drayback and the other therapists at BMT offer a wide variety of massage styles, from neuromuscular therapy, Swedish, hot stone, myofascial release, to prenatal, rotator cuff, and oncology pain relief.) Drayback says,

I just connected with massage therapy. I absolutely loved it! It was more than what I thought. I only knew about relaxing stuff, but all the problem solving, really being able to help with pain, and deeper tissue stuff, I loved it so much that I really just wanted to do that. It was really neat to go through that year of massage school, because besides learning massage, you're getting so much bodywork, you just see these huge changes with everybody in the class with you. You change, you change a lot.

**"As you get into massage you're going to learn your limits, you're going to learn what feels like too much. You can keep massaging forever, you just may have to adjust what you're going to be doing."**

— Christin Lee Drayback, co-founder

Meanwhile, Lee, who'd been living and working in Chicago for a software company, moved back to Michigan after her father passed away unexpectedly. Lee recalls,

I helped my mom run our family store for a year before she decided to close it. I wanted to stay close to my family and so moved to Ann Arbor. I'd had this dream of opening a politically themed cafe so I decided to get a job working in coffee so I could learn the ropes. I started working at Caribou Coffee in March 2006.



Josie Ann Lee and Christin Lee Drayback



**The business has grown dramatically, from five massage rooms and five therapists when they opened, to eleven rooms and sixteen therapists, who now give more than 10,000 massages per year.**

Drayback also wound up working at Caribou Coffee starting in September 2006, because the flexible schedule there allowed her to continue studying massage. (She never did end up pursuing that degree in social work, having become so committed to studying massage.) The two women became fast friends and, as Lee wrote recently in an email to BMT clients, "We had no idea on that day in September that in two years and one month's time we'd be engaged, and opening our own business."

A pivotal moment for both women came soon after. As part of her training at AAIMT, Drayback needed to perform massages on forty friends and family. At the same time, Lee's mother had joined a widows group to help with her mourning and healing process. Drayback and Lee asked her if the group would like to receive free massages from Drayback. The answer was 'yes' and, says Lee,

From the moment we arrived, to the moment we left, we were showered with love and joy. They had craft projects going on, a huge potluck spread, and enough hugs and smiles to warm my heart for days. Chris set her table up in the back of the large room and throughout the day took turns massaging my mom's friends. I remember that day so well. It was a room filled with the common understanding of sorrow while living in the moment of caring and happiness. It was a game changer for me. I could hear Chris working with each woman and letting them know midway through their massage it was time to turn over so she could 'balance' them out. My heart was also touched by watching the reaction the women had after their massages. It left me with such a greater understanding of the power of touch and healing that comes with massage. The women were so grateful that someone had taken time to care for them, to provide them touch, to get them a sense of healing. I remembered thinking, there is a clear reason it's called massage "therapy."

That moment and lesson stayed with both of us and when we decided to open our own studio, "Balance Massage Therapy" was just a natural name. We knew we wanted Balance to become a place that allowed people to heal from all that life brings them.

**"I literally grew up in a business. My parents owned a country store that was on the same property as our house [in Metamora, MI]. My crib was just on the other side of the counter."**

— Josie Ann Lee, co-founder

By the time BMT opened, they had a very clear vision of how they wanted to run their new business. "We wanted it to be accessible, affordable, adaptable," says Drayback. "We would be open seven days a week," says Lee. "Even though we weren't going to be busy right when we started, we'd make it a place that we were here if people found us, and something that would consistently be a part of their wellness plan."



“We wanted to see people multiple times,” says Draybuck.

We really wanted them to have that positive effect from massage. We didn’t want to see people only once a year. We didn’t want to see people just when they got a gift. We really wanted them to get a lot more out of the massage. That was always our focus right from the beginning: trying to work everything around getting that amount [the cost of a massage] that’s going to be great for everybody — it’s going to be great for our clients, it’s going to be great for our therapists...

Lee continues,

We talked in terms of value, *right?* So, not like discount...*What is the value of a massage at Balance?* It’s got to be expert therapists, so there’s got to be a service component. *But how do we make it affordable?* We limited our variables from day one. We just do massage. We don’t sell any products. We don’t add on aromatherapy. We are therapeutic massage. That was our flag that we planted and then we built everything around that.

They’ve learned a great deal along the way. “We did mailings in the beginning to get the word out,” says Lee.

When you’re new, you don’t know what you’re doing. I would literally drive the neighborhoods and write down addresses. Then we learned that Dixboro is not a mailing address, (laughter) it’s Superior Township. We got all our cards back! (Long laughter.) We tracked everything, so if we put money in a local magazine versus radio – what was the spending that was working? So then we could change the next year and spend our marketing budget a little bit smarter. Now we take the marketing money we used to spend to *get* clients, we now spend it *on* our clients. We do client appreciation, we do giveaways, we have been able — which is nice — to transition that money going out, to staying in. Because people tell the story for us at this point.

They’ve also seen the massage industry and people’s attitude toward massage change over the years. “More and more people are familiar with massage, familiar with the health benefits,” says Draybuck. “It’s not just for relaxation, it’s not just a spa day thing. People have a specific issue that they are coming for, and working through it.” Lee continues, “I think that’s also a testament to the massage industry getting licensing through the State, so there’s more credibility for it as a wellness industry. The massage industry itself is getting more respected. We’ve seen more of our client base become more of a therapeutic, repeat client.” Lee reflects further,

**“I remember that day so well. It was a room filled with the common understanding of sorrow while living in the moment of caring and happiness. It was a game changer for me. I could hear Chris working with each woman and letting them know midway through their massage it was time to turn over so she could ‘balance’ them out.”**

— Josie Ann Lee




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And they are also eagerly looking ahead to the future and planning how to improve Balance. “One of the things that helps with the quality of the therapists here is we do a lot of internal training,” says Draybuck.

So, besides systems and really getting communication very clear, we also work with technique. It’s been great from day one to be able to help people get the feedback that they need. A lot of therapists, when they get out of school and they’re working, they don’t get feedback anymore. They don’t know why somebody is not coming back, what can make them better. When people first get started with us we get a lot of feedback for them, we work with them a lot, so they learn those little things that are going to make them more successful faster. They don’t have to start from square one. We’ve learned all those lessons.

“Our team wrote a vision statement in 2015 for 2020,” says Lee. “Part of my job is to make sure we’re working through that vision. That helps me figure out our strategic plan for the year, like where we’re putting our time and energy. A lot of this year was getting Chris’ certification...” Draybuck interjects, “I just got my Continuing Education Provider status, so now we can offer some Continuing Education Units to therapists as well, which is what they need to continue to renew their license. They’re required to take so many classes every three years.” Lee continues, “So now we can start creating the classes, and we can offer them internally, and then eventually we’ll be able to offer them to other therapists. Then, hopefully, Chris will be able to work with therapists if they also want to teach. Because it’s a really hard career physically, so it’s how can you extend your career at some point.

**“The women were so grateful that someone had taken time to care for them, to provide them touch, to get them a sense of healing. I remembered thinking, there is a clear reason it’s called massage ‘therapy.’”**

— Josie Ann Lee



# Balance Massage Therapy~ The Business with a Healing Touch



**"We just do massage. We don't sell any products. We don't add on aromatherapy. We are therapeutic massage. That was our flag that we planted and then we built everything around that."**

— Josie Ann Lee



**"Now we take the marketing money we used to spend to get clients, we now spend it on our clients."**

— Josie Ann Lee



**"Even though we weren't going to be busy right when we started, we'd make it a place that we were here if people found us, and something that would consistently be a part of their wellness plan."**

— Josie Ann Lee

Continued from page 13

"You have to learn what you need to do to take care of yourself as you work, to extend your career," says Drayback.

The biggest focus is on good body mechanics from the very beginning, and revisiting those good body mechanics. We also do trades here on a monthly basis, so getting bodywork yourself is going to help work out a lot of those issues. As you get into massage you're going to learn your limits, you're going to learn what feels like too much. You can keep massaging forever, you just may have to adjust what you're going to be doing. You may be doing a different type of massage, or you may be doing less people. But the director of my school, she's still massaging, she's in her seventies. She's been massaging for over thirty years and she's completely fine and injury-free.

Lee and Drayback are sharing their lives and their business, and feel very fortunate to have found each other. "Chris and I met at transitional times in our lives," writes Lee. Drayback, like Lee, had suffered a significant loss before the two met. Her brother died of cancer during her sophomore year at U-M. "I think both experiencing such a devastating loss at an early age made us realize that there are no guarantees in life," writes Lee.

We didn't have anything holding us back. We'd been through hell and came out of it with a renewed sense of purpose. I love our story of finding each other. It's a sad one at a lot of levels, because had we not experienced loss, our roads wouldn't have led us to each other. However, it's so full of joy and love. Finding each other helped us grow as people, strengthen as a couple, and create a business that lets us help people every day.

*Balance Massage Therapy is open seven days per week and is located at 5155 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor, 48105. For more information, please call (734) 660-5919 or visit [lifeisactive.com](http://lifeisactive.com).*



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Monday	Classes	Teacher
9:45 - 10:45 AM	Hatha & Meditation	Kevin
6:00 - 7:15 PM	Heart-Centered Hatha Yoga	Carter
7:15 - 8:15 PM	Gentle/Restorative Yoga	Tina
7:15 - 8:15 PM	Vinyasa	Ana
Tuesday	Classes	Teacher
9:30 - 10:30 AM	Hatha	Carter
9:30 - 10:30 AM	Gentle Flow Yoga	Sarah
11:00 - 12:00 PM	C2* FREE Community Yoga: On-a Flow	Ana
6:00 - 7:00 PM	NIA	Megan
7:15 - 8:30 PM	Pre-natal Yoga: Mommy Time	Lisa
7:15 - 8:30PM	Vinyasa	Wendy
Wednesday	Classes	Teacher
9:15 - 10:30AM	Heart-Centered Hatha Yoga	Carter
6:00 - 7:15 PM	Ashtanga:Primary Series I Foundations	Wendy
6:00 - 7:15 PM	Vinyasa: Movement Flow	Tracy
7:30 - 8:30PM	Hatha Flow	Sarah
Thursday	Classes	Teacher
9:15 - 10:30 AM	Gentle Yoga & Meditation	Dina
9:15 - 10:30 AM	Classical Vinyasa Yoga (no beginners)	Samantha
6:15 - 7:15 PM	Vinyasa: Moment Flow	Isa
7:15 - 8:30PM	Vinyasa	Jo
Friday	Classes	Teacher
9:15 - 10:30 AM	Vinyasa	Wendy
9:30 - 10:30 AM	Gentle/Restorative Yoga	Diana
5:30 - 6:30 PM	C2* FREE Community Yoga: On-a Flow	Ana
Saturday	Classes	Teacher
7:30 - 9:15 AM	C2* FREE Community Yoga: Ashtanga	Self-led
9:15 - 10:30 AM	Vinyasa I & II	Rachel
11:00 - 12:15 PM	Hatha: Traditional Yoga (All levels)	Natasha
11:00 - 12:00 PM	C2* FREE Community Yoga NIA	Ana
Sunday	Classes	Teacher
9:00 - 10:15 AM	Heart-Centered Vinyasa	Natasha
9:15 - 10:15 AM	Hatha: Yoga Foundations (All Levels)	Carrie
10:30 - 11:45 AM	Pre-Natal Yoga: Mommy Time	Tracy
10:30 - 11:30 AM	NIA	Megan

\*C2 Classes: DONATIONS WELCOME 4 Weekly classes supporting local Non-profits!

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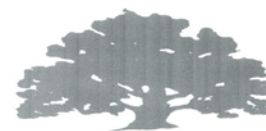


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Professor Paul Muller-Ortega, Ph.D., is a world-renowned scholar in the field of Indian Religion and Hindu Tantra. He is the founder of Blue Throat Yoga, which teaches the practice of Neelakantha Meditation and the elegant Svatantra philosophy of freedom in the Kashmir Shaivism tradition. He has taught meditation to thousands throughout the world, and served as Professor of Religion at Michigan State and the University of Rochester.



[bluethroatyoga.com](http://bluethroatyoga.com)



Photo by Hilary Nichols



# Namaste, Katie...

Whether you're a seasoned yogi or getting ready to roll out your mat for the first time, here you'll find a variety of useful tips from local yoga instructor Katie Hoener.

Dear Katie —

Last issue (issue #67), you wrote about an easy way to count breaths during meditation. I have found that when I set a timer on my phone, I am always wanting to peek. I am hoping for something even simpler. Does it exist?

Chris R., Ypsilanti

Hi Chris,

Thank you for the reminder! Yes, there are many ways of timing a meditation, and though it may seem counterintuitive to set parameters for a meditation practice, it is better than not practicing at all. As you mentioned, there are timers on our phones, which is one way to structure a meditation. There are also countless guided meditations online — check out Deepak Chopra's various mobile Meditation Apps at chopra.com (I am always interested when he releases his 21-day Meditation Experience, and I use his Chopra Center App for this). With guided meditations, you get a theme/mantra/intention and a soothing voice to bring you back into the moment.

**There is also a way to count using the thumb to slide along the segments of the remaining four fingers. As there are 12 segments to rotate through, with nine trips around you get to 108 (in yoga, 108 is a sacred number).**



There are also non-technology ways to measure our meditation and build our practice over time. Some individuals like mala beads. These are beads (of any type) in a specific number count. In yoga, the number 108 is a sacred number, and most mala arrangements have some derivative thereof. For example, my mala bracelet has 36 beads, so if I complete three turns, I have 108. There is also a way to count using the thumb to slide along the segments of the remaining four fingers. As there are 12 segments to rotate through, with nine trips around you get to 108. Now, your opening meditation practice may last 12 breaths. That's about one minute if you have an easy resting breath. Any start is a good start as we have discussed, so find a number that has meaning to you and start your practice there. Enjoy.

Namaste, Katie —

I was referred to yoga through my therapist as a supplemental practice for anxiety. Though I find my time in class extremely helpful, I could use a go-to pose while at work. There are times that I feel like I need a "time out," and I go to the bathroom, or an unused room, yet I find these spaces are not the best for breath practices. Do you have any suggestions?

Anna M., Whitmore Lake

Dear Anna,

To start, great job by you and your therapist to develop a broad set of skills for managing your anxiety in a variety of settings. Yoga is a great practice to assist with other mental health treatments, and there are some great practices to assist you. As you mentioned mindfulness through a pranayama practice is a great way to soothe racing thoughts, but it does not always fit into every situation.

One great posture to help in a work setting is Uttanasana (Forward Fold). Inversions — postures where the base of the spine is higher than the base of the skull — signal to the parasympathetic nervous system that the body is in a safe place, sending calming hormones through the body. Many inversions require that we get on the floor, yet Uttanasana can be done in a variety of settings. In allowing the body to signal this sense of safety, we set ourselves up to move into some of our other skills, perhaps a brief breath practice, a visualization, or another practice that provides you with a sense of calm and peace.

**One great posture to help in a work setting is Uttanasana (Forward Fold). Inversions — postures where the base of the spine is higher than the base of the skull — signal to the parasympathetic nervous system that the body is in a safe place, sending calming hormones through the body.**



Katie Hoener is an RYT 500, receiving her 200 and 500 hour trainings. She is also a Licensed Master Social Worker. She is a partner at Verapose Yoga in Dexter ([www.veraposeyoga.com](http://www.veraposeyoga.com)). Please send in your own yoga questions to [Katie@veraposeyoga.com](mailto:Katie@veraposeyoga.com).

Namaste, Katie —

I want to start off by saying how much I love yoga. I rely on yoga. My Vinyasa time is my time. It is my happy place! So, my next statement is a difficult one: I feel like right now it is too much. Between work, my family, and everything else, the fast-paced nature of the class is leaving me feeling exhausted, not energized. I don't want to let it go, my happy place, yet it is starting to feel stressful. Any tips?

Chelsea K., Ann Arbor

Dear Chelsea,

Oh, how we can relate to your current situation (I am including our dear readers here)! In a society of "do more, take it all on," we have a tendency to think even our self-care is something that we throw on top of the pile, and that we have the capacity to balance it all. First step, take a moment to allow yourself to feel overwhelmed. Feel whatever that feels like. As outlined eloquently in *Self-Compassion* by Kristin Neff (William Morrow, 2011), one of the first steps to genuine self-compassion is recognizing that we have feelings, and sitting with them for a period of time that is comfortable for us.

Once you are ready for solutions, you might consider how a gentler class would work for you. Many yoga studios that offer Vinyasa also offer restorative classes, which may be titled "Yin" yoga. Yin involves lengthened holds in asanas, and allows a deep, slow exploration of the body and mind. If your studio offers a slower class, perhaps alternate weeks with Vinyasa and Yin, and see where that takes your practice, both on and off the mat.

One suggestion that I offer to my students is to keep what is working for them and leave the rest. This applies to how far they move into a particular asana, or whether to take that asana at all. So another option is to continue in your Vinyasa class, and to give yourself the permission to take a break, coming into Balasana (Child's Pose). Your practice is a place to feed and nourish, not to exhaust and bring you down. See if making some slight modifications can get you back to your happy place!

**Yin involves lengthened holds in asanas, and allows a deep, slow exploration of the body and mind. If your studio offers a slower class, perhaps alternate weeks with Vinyasa and Yin, and see where that takes your practice, both on and off the mat.**



**SUSTAINABLE HEALTH**

# Considering a New Year's Resolution? Forget Weight Loss, Work on Posture!

By Mark Thiesmeyer Hook

Thanks to the combination of a month of eating holiday treats and the annual New Year resolution ritual, January is one of the busiest times of the year for fitness professionals. For the next few months, my fitness center will be bursting with people who have decided that this is the year they're going to solve any number of things that they think are wrong with their bodies.

Most of those issues have to do with weight loss. Yes, most of us could benefit from improving our diets and dropping a few pounds. You may be tempted to make weight loss your 2018 mission. But this year, I have a different suggestion: make 2018 the year you stand taller.

## The Importance of Posture

Posture is the position we hold our bodies in when we're sitting or standing — and mainly thanks to modern life, most of us are doing it wrong. Just take a look around and you'll see unhealthy postures everywhere. The necks of high school and college students carrying heavy backpacks look more like the necks of turtles peeking out of their shells. In coffeehouses and offices, people hunch their shoulders over keyboards. People also frequently sit with most of their weight on one hip, leaving their shoulders uneven. Men walking down the street have both their shoulders and their guts protruding ahead of them.

I'm not singling out posture because of how it makes us look, but because of how it can make us feel.

An unhealthy posture causes pain. The bones of our spine, our vertebrae, protect our spinal cord and the nerves that control every movement and sensation in our bodies. Improper posture causes our spines to twist and bend in unnatural ways called subluxations, and subluxations in turn lead to pinched nerves.

Pinched nerves cause sensations that range from extremely painful to disturbingly weird. For example, a subluxation in one of your lower vertebrae can cause tight, painful hips, shooting pains going down your leg, or even a burning sensation in your foot. My father once had a subluxation in his neck that made him feel as though he had bugs crawling on his face!

In addition to the pain from subluxations and pinched nerves, an unhealthy posture also causes unnecessary muscular strain, which can lead to muscle damage — both of which *also* lead to pain.

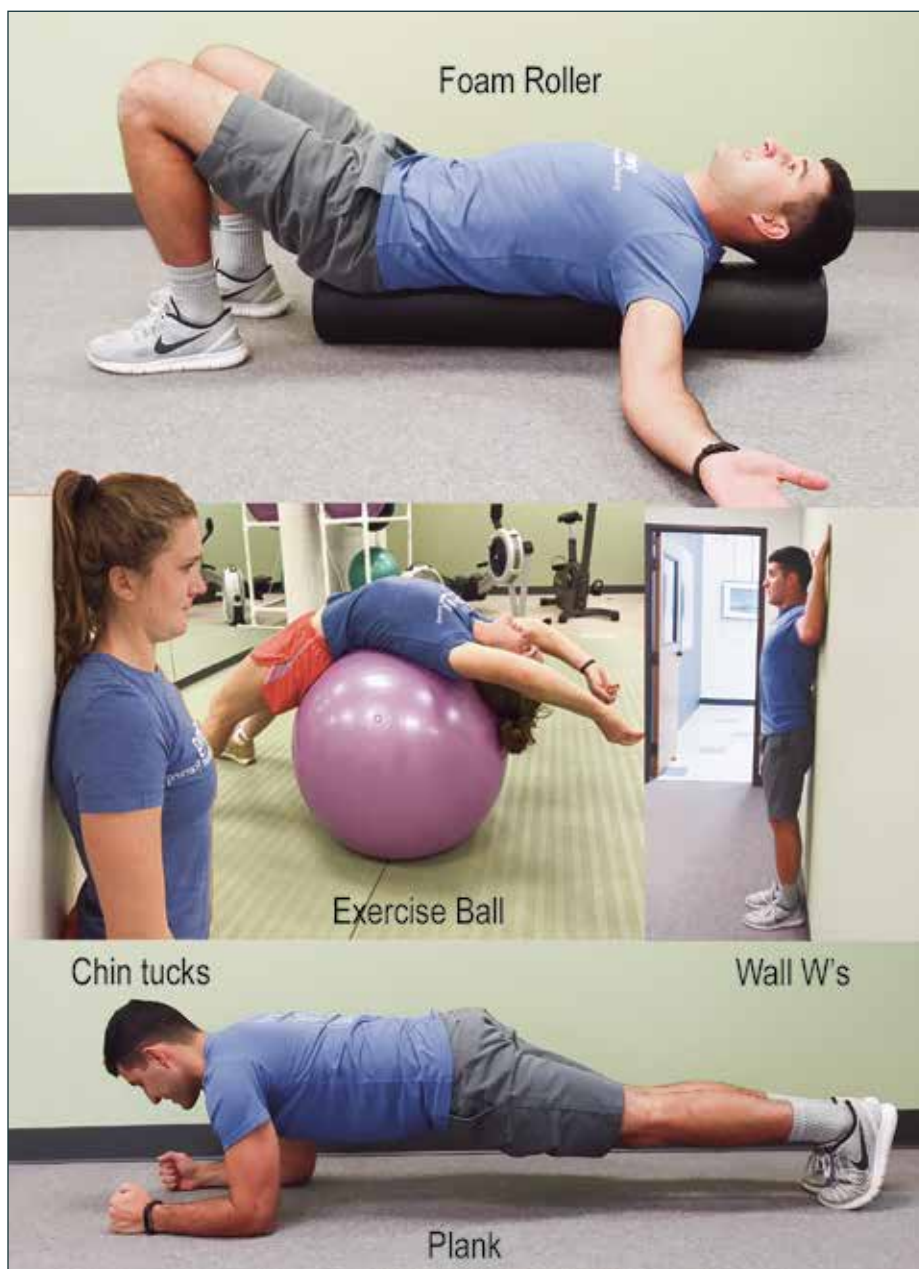
Posture impacts our overall physical and mental health. Slumping affects your mood and energy — in fact, several studies have linked rounded shoulder posture to depression and lethargy. This happens because slouching "squishes" our lungs, making it harder to breathe deeply. A slumping posture can actually result in losing up to 30 percent of the air that should be entering your body when you inhale, which leaves you with less oxygen for creating energy and fueling your brain.

Furthermore, posture affects our sense of ourselves. According to researcher Amy Cuddy, assuming certain "power poses" (think Wonder Woman's famous stance) can actually increase confidence and lower anxiety levels by reducing the levels of cortisol in our bodies. Apparently, we have the power to change our body chemistry just by holding ourselves differently, including by keeping our spines erect. Granted, subsequent research has had mixed results replicating Cuddy's study, but no one argues that great posture increases how people perceive you.

## Three Steps to a Healthier Posture

If achieving and maintaining a healthy posture was easy, mom's advice to stand up straight and hold your shoulders back would have done the trick. But we do have the power to re-train our bodies to hold a healthy posture, and here are three steps to help you do just that:

1. Awareness. Being aware of how we hold ourselves is the first step to doing a better job of protecting our posture and our health. Start noticing when and where you slump, round your back or shift your weight to one side. How does driving, sitting at your desk, watching TV in your favorite chair, or texting affect your posture? When you discover the areas that lead you to slumping or distributing your weight unevenly, put Post-It notes in those areas to remind you to watch and correct for healthy posture. Download an app for your smart phone or computer to remind you about your posture.
2. Stretch and strengthen the right muscles. Tightness in our front neck muscles, shoulders, chest and/or hip flexors can pull our spines out of alignment. Each of these muscle groups can tug your torso forward leaving you looking down at the ground. It is important to note that a tight muscle is often a weak muscle. Simply stretching these muscles may not get you dancer posture. If a muscle has an underlying weakness, it will often tighten back up in an effort to stabilize your body. So instead of stretching alone, the goal is to both stretch *and* strengthen the muscles responsible for holding our spines erect.



3. A good personal trainer — one who has been trained in proper body mechanics — can help you achieve the dual goals of stretching and strengthening your postural muscles. If your time or budget doesn't allow for a trainer at this time, though, here are a few exercises you can do safely at home.

## Exercises for a Healthy Posture

### Exercises to stretch and release

My foam roller and exercise ball are my two favorite tools for stretching, and I use them at the beginning and the end of every day. Just lying on a foam roller that's stretched from your head to your tail bone with your arms outstretched in a "T" can help straighten our spines and relax the muscles in our chests and necks.

If you're ready for a more intense stretch, lie face-up on a well-inflated exercise ball, walking yourself forward until your neck and head are supported. Then, keeping the back of your head in contact with the ball, push slowly backwards, one inch at a time, working your head toward the floor.

### Exercises to strengthen

- Chin tucks  
This is an easy, effective exercise to strengthen the muscles in our necks and between our shoulders. To do chin tucks, stand with your butt and shoulders against a flat wall. Gently press your head into the wall, while simultaneously pulling your chin downwards toward your chest. Hold for two seconds; release and repeat ten times.
- Wall W's  
Stand with butt, shoulders, and head against the wall. Bring your arms in front of your shoulders with bent elbows. Simultaneously press your elbows and hands back to the wall maintaining the bend in your elbows. Try to touch your elbows and hands to wall at the same time. Repeat 15-20 times.
- Plank  
Lie face down with your elbows under your shoulders. Tighten your stomach and press your hips up holding yourself on your elbows and toes. Keep your back as straight as a board (thus a plank!). Use a mirror to monitor your posture. Hold for 10-60 seconds.

Mark Thiesmeyer Hook, M.S., M.P.H., R.D., is an author, exercise physiologist, and registered dietitian. He owns the Better Living Fitness Center, which offers personal training (including posture training), nutrition counseling, yoga, and cardio classes. For more information, contact [mark@betterlivingfitness.com](mailto:mark@betterlivingfitness.com) or (734) 747-0123.





## Green Living

As Without, So Within ~  
Embracing the Business of Winter

By Kirsten Mowrey



Welcome to winter! The season of—after the bustle of the holidays—quiet, darkness, cold, and internal pulls. Sleeping under warm covers, drinking warm drinks, and letting the pace of life slow down. All that summer activity unwinding under the soporific effects of the contrast between the cold, dark natural world and the warm inviting inside.

At least, that is how winter used to be for many of us. In recent years, however, there seems to be no difference between the pace of January and July, except in the clothing we wear. Unless there is a blizzard causing us all to creep our cars along the roadways, we rush hither and yon, regardless of the season.

Winter is a part of this ecosystem and if we want to be rooted here, we need to embrace it.

When I started this column, I said I wanted to go into the depths of green living, to talk about attunement to our environment, our specific locality, and how it enriches us with its uniqueness. Winter is a part of this ecosystem and if we want to be rooted here, we need to embrace it. Not just adding sweaters and boots and all the extra clothing, but also the meaning and purpose of winter: to rest and restore, pull our sap toward our roots, hang out in our burrows and renew.

I learned this wisdom when I volunteered at a local farm. We stopped harvesting the plants in the hoop house in late November; they weren't growing enough, even in the protected conditions. Growth slowed to imperceptibility in December and January, only to begin surging forth in February and March. To rest, to stop, to slow, to restore: all of this is the meaning and purpose of winter. *How can we build anew in the spring if we haven't taken the time to rest when the natural world conspires to help us do exactly that?*

To rest, to stop, to slow, to restore: all of this is the meaning and purpose of winter.

Making time to slow, to observe our environment, to reflect within ourselves, and restore isn't just a biological process. It is a necessary process for growth, development, and fulfillment of our deepest dreams as humans. A realm of human endeavor that pursues reflection in search of excellence is the business world.

In *Presence* (Senge, Flowers, Jaworski & Scharmer, 2004), Sloan Management faculty member Peter Senge (*The Fifth Discipline*, 1990) and his coauthors write about the "seeds of an emerging future" to meet the challenges of managing in an increasingly technology-based economy. Since business "operates less and less like the 'halls of production of the old, repetitive manufacturing industry' and more and more like a 'casino of technology,'" anyone operating in this world cannot use past experience to dictate future decisions, argue the authors, because the decisions are out of date before they even arrive. Instead, they point to the letter 'U' as a process guide, with the left top, bottom, and right top each representing a stage to help guide us in our new technology-based world. To start with our imaginary 'U,' begin "sensing"—observe what is happening around you, as much as you can take in. Then, at the bottom, "presencing"—retreat and reflect on what you observed, listening to your inner knowing. Finally, "realizing"—action, your combined observation and reflection. Through the Society for Organizational Learning at MIT, Senge and his

Making time to slow, to observe our environment, to reflect within ourselves, and restore isn't just a biological process. It is a necessary process for growth, development, and fulfillment of our deepest dreams as humans.



colleagues teach this U-theory to business, non-profit, and government organizations worldwide; reminding us that at the heart of our journey is reflection and retreat. Or as we once knew it: *winter*.

I spoke with Ann Arborite Jeremy Seligman, who has known Senge since 1993. He still works with Senge's colleagues through the company Systems Perspectives and also has his own local business, Insight to Action ([www.insight-2-action.com](http://www.insight-2-action.com)), focusing on organizational growth and design. He says observation is "not an external skill I build but an internal capacity to be quiet and have an opportunity to actually be with what is and not what I am capable of seeing through [my] many unexamined filters." Curiosity and a receptive mind is an important part of the observation process. Here, Seligman relates a story from Senge of a typical scene:

There's a meeting scheduled for 11 a.m. You walk in at quarter after. I sit here in silence and I do the following: "Kirsten's late. It's the second time this week Kirsten's been late. Kirsten must not care about us very much." Here's the key pivot: Kirsten is unreliable. I'm going to tell other people how unreliable Kirsten is.

His point is once we *think* we know something, we are no longer curious, no longer receptive, observing, and no longer learning. Pausing, stopping, and reflecting allow for the emergence of wisdom—a winter of sorts, even if only for minutes.

Beginnings are a natural moment for inhaling our certainty before diving in.

Our calendar begins and ends during winter, taking advantage of the seasonal mood of pause and reflection. Beginnings are a natural moment for inhaling our certainty before diving in. Here Seligman uses a tool called the "check in." He starts every session with a check in, and finds that for many groups it's the first time they've done one. For those who haven't done it, a check in is a snapshot of how you are in that moment: thoughts, feelings, experiences, at whatever depth you feel comfortable sharing. Seligman explains,

That someone would talk about what they are bringing into the room that day, what's true for them, they think that's weird. [Yet] bringing your sick parent into the room with you, our compassion is aroused. I recently had a room with 65 people in it and we did a check in. When we came back and asked them what the experience of checking in was like for them, it was revelatory. People said they appreciated their table mates more and they had already had an experience that shifted their presence and their assessments of their possibilities to be a contribution [that day].

Completion of a project is another time to reflect and here the tool is the "after action review." Originally designed by the US Army, the review asks questions such as: *What was our intention? What happened? What was the gap between our intention and what actually happened? What might explain that gap? What might we do differently if we were to engage in that activity in the future?* The end of the calendar year in winter invites us to look at the year past, at the memories created, joys and griefs, growth and decay, what we harvest and what we compost.

At the end of our conversation, Seligman said, "We need to treat complex and nuanced issues as though they are complex and nuanced. The goal for us at this time in our business and our government and our culture is not to take complex things and make them seem simpler than they are, but to increase our capacity to stand in complexity." I agree. We face so many challenges in our work lives, our families, our communities, states, and nations. Winter gives us space, time, rest, and renewal. It is a vital part of the cycle of life. I don't think it's happenstance our calendar begins and ends with winter; so many beautiful dreams are begun in the dark. Winter is here, readying us to burst forth in the spring with the dreams, hopes, and promises born in its quiet repose.



# CRYSTA GOES VISITING

In this column, Crysta Coburn writes about crazywisdom-esque people and happenings around Ann Arbor.

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## Unique and KUHLart from Kristen and Chase Violetta



Handmade art fairs, such as Ypsilanti's own beloved DIYpsi, are festivals full of creativity, artistry, and entrepreneurs. DIYpsi is where I first came across Kristen and Chase Violetta, the married team behind KUHLart. Kristen does screenprinting and Chase creates wood-crafted goods.

Where does the name KUHLart come from? Kristen explained, "KUHLart is a combination of my first initial and maiden last name (Kristen Uhl). 'It's pronounced like 'cool.' Despite having a new, married last name, we've decided to keep it because our goal is to continue to make 'kuhl' new items!"

*"My prints are often inspired by some of my favorite TV shows, bands, places, and contemporary patterns. Chase is inspired by the unique textures and knots of the rough lumber purchased from Michigan-based hard wood dealers."*

Kristen "was a printmaking major in college and interned at a screen printing shop for a couple of summers." Chase "hand-built an exposure table and flat file/storage unit so [Kristen's] been able to easily print right from the comfort of [their] own home." (Pictures of the table are on their website.) Kristen told me, "Chase picked up woodworking after he built his own CNC (computer numerical control) machine and realized all of the possibilities. Once he started a workshop in our garage, the woodcrafting tools multiplied quickly. We're always bouncing ideas off of each other and trying to find new ways to combine mediums. We were surprised at how well screenprinting and woodworking complement each other."



Some of the items you will find at their table or in their online Etsy shop that complement each other perfectly include cutting boards, wine glass holders, coasters, "drink local" T-shirts, screen print beverage insulators, and a tri-colored "drink up" screen print poster. For Halloween, find "Happy Halloween" cards and for the winter holidays, laser cut wood ornaments. If you're a fan of popular TV shows, check out the fun and unique selection of posters from *Game of Thrones* to *Broad City*.

"My prints are often inspired by some of my favorite TV shows, bands, places, and contemporary patterns," said Kristen. "Chase is inspired by the unique textures and

knots of the rough lumber purchased from Michigan-based hard wood dealers. He aims to bring a fun twist to traditional, functional household items. We both love modern, geometric styles so we've seen a lot of that come through in our pieces as well."

When I asked if they had plans for the future of their respective arts and business, Kristen answered, "Absolutely! We still feel like there is untapped potential for both of our artistic areas. We'd love to be a cost-efficient, small business option for anyone in need of printed T-shirts and designs. In addition we hope to continue to push the limit on what we can create together and may even open our own shop one day."

I look forward to seeing what this clever couple comes up with next!

Kristen and Chase Violetta can be found online at [kuhlart.etsy.com](http://kuhlart.etsy.com) and reached via email at [kuhlartinfo@gmail.com](mailto:kuhlartinfo@gmail.com).

2

## When Ice Cream is Not Enough with Ellen Gendelman

"We all need connection. Feeling alone is one of the most painful conditions. In my written work and therapeutic work, my passion remains to help people achieve close connection and maintain secure attachment throughout their lives," said Ellen Gendelman, therapist, certified professional coach, author (and more). She glows when she talks about her work and her desire to help people, especially people struggling with the relationships (or lack there-of) in their lives. When asked what drives her work, she answered, "the passion to help people, when clients walk out more relaxed, with more clarity, more tools for relationship enhancement, I cannot think of any greater privilege, than to help enhance quality of life, improve self-awareness, help people discover their purpose and find meaning in their lives."



*When Ice Cream is Not Enough is a reference to how often people, children and adults alike, seek comfort in foods like ice cream when feeling hurt.*

*"We all need connection. Feeling alone is one of the most painful conditions. In my written work and therapeutic work, my passion remains to help people achieve close connection and maintain secure attachment throughout their lives."*

In addition to coaching and counseling one on one and in groups, Gendelman holds "webinars on different topics pertaining to personal growth" through her website. "A recent series was geared to empty nesters adjusting to their lives no longer defined by their children's schedules and what that means for them in their lives." When I inquired how a webinar works, she answered that "when people sign up for webinars, they receive a link and just need to click at the assigned time; they are also recorded for future listening or in case a person is unable to attend during the live training." It sounded to me like a webinar would be a good start to seeking help with lower commitment than making an appointment with a therapist.

Webinars are one way for Gendelman to reach more people. Writing a book is another. (Appropriately enough, she and I first met in a bookstore.) "As a therapist,



there are constraints as to how many clients I can work with at a given time," Gendelman explained. "When you write a book, the sky is the limit and I have been told by many readers that the conflicts [in the book] are so realistic that [my coauthor, Renee Jaspan, and I] must have been looking into their windows."

Technically, Gendelman and Jaspan have written two books, but, as she explained, "They are both one book just geared to different audiences. Both speak to the value of nurturing loving relationships. Every relationship is bound to have conflict. Many of us feel threatened unless others see things from our perspective. Yet, both of these books demonstrate valid emotional perspectives on both sides of the conflict." The first, entitled *The Missing Peace*, uses "examples [that] are written in a culture familiar to religious Jews." As for the second, Gendelman said, "[My] coauthor and I decided to put this work out for the public as these issues are universal. We changed the title to *When Ice Cream is Not Enough* and changed the cultural context to give it a wider, more universal appeal." The title *When Ice Cream is Not Enough* is a reference to how often people, children and adults alike, seek comfort in foods like ice cream when feeling hurt.

If "you long for a close, loving relationship which encourages you to become your ideal self," call Ellen Gendelman, sign up for a webinar, or buy one of her books. She will put her experience and dedication to work for you.

Find Ellen Gendelman online at [www.awindowwithin.net](http://www.awindowwithin.net), or call at (248) 915-9122 or email at [awindowwithin@gmail.com](mailto:awindowwithin@gmail.com). Her books are available for purchase online and at Crazy Wisdom.

### Witchy Woman Michelle Jesse



Michelle Jesse is the "owner and overall badass" of Pagan Potions, seller of "magically infused products," such as soy wax candles and sprays, "using the moon's energy, witchcraft, and other mysterious spells." She is also a professional psychic medium and practicing witch.

"I discovered I was a medium at the age of eight years old," Michelle shared with me. Her uncle had died by suicide and all of her family gathered to mourn this loss. "They were all crying, and everyone was upset. I couldn't understand why they were all so sad, and I was getting frustrated that everyone ignored the fact that he was with us. I pulled my mother into another room and asked why everybody was so upset, because he was standing right [by my aunt]."

As she grew up, she found herself in similar situations, then, as Michelle puts it, "I realized I was seeing those who passed, and that I was a medium." Through exploring her unusual experiences, Michelle eventually became friends with a "wild and unique" girl named Sarah, who knew about astrology, a taboo topic in Michelle's strict Polish Catholic home. Michelle was fourteen, a rebellious age. "Together [Sarah and I] dabbled in everything. Candle magic, smoke magic, water magic, earth magic, anything you could think of... Sarah and I went to every bookstore we could find to search for anything about the 'occult.' One day I ran across a book called earth magic, (which still today is my favorite) and I never turn[ed] back." (Today, Sarah also works for Pagan Potions.)

Michelle Jesse is the "owner and overall badass" of Pagan Potions, seller of "magically infused products," such as soy wax candles and sprays, "using the moon's energy, witchcraft, and other mysterious spells." She is also a professional psychic medium and practicing witch.



While working as a psychic medium in Plymouth, Michigan, Michelle "would always prescribe a candle, some herbs, and a specific time frame (moon/planet phases) to whatever [the client's] purpose. Before they took it home, I would bless their candle with Reiki energy and write what seemed to be a novel of instructions." It was a client who told her "you're so good with the candles, I don't understand why you don't make them yourself." It was a light bulb moment for Michelle.

The amazingly scented candles have fun and, occasionally, provocative names, such as Love Potion 69, Clear This Shit Out, Psychic Visions, Kick Some Ass, and — my personal favorite — Unf\*ck Yourself. There are also some sprays if you prefer not to light candles. "We put so much love, time, laughter, and positive energy into each and every thing we make," said Michelle.

Not only can you buy Pagan Potions products online through the Etsy shop, but they can also be found in certain local shops, like the Eyrie in Ypsilanti, Studio 300 in Northville, Illuminate Your Spirit in Livonia, and Little Truths in Milford.

Find Pagan Potions online at [witchypotions.etsy.com](http://witchypotions.etsy.com), or follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Paganpotion](http://www.facebook.com/Paganpotion). Contact them via email at [motherearth1313@yahoo.com](mailto:motherearth1313@yahoo.com).



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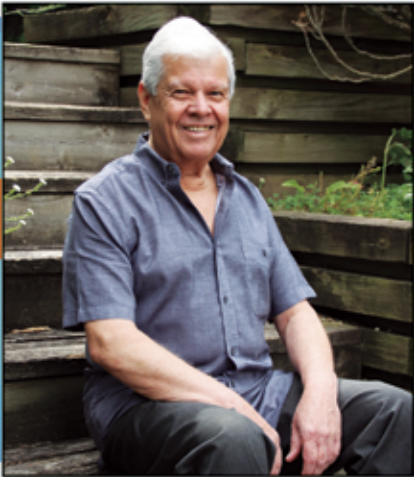
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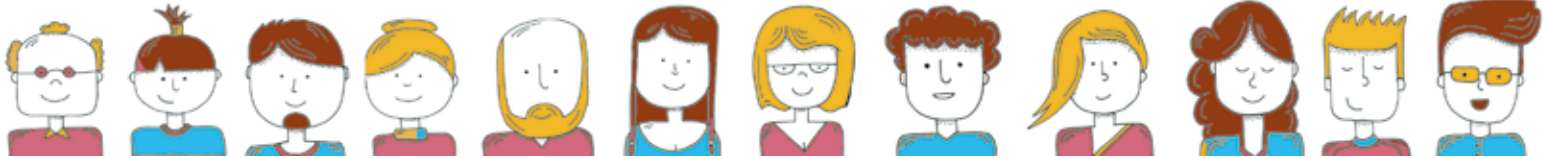
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# WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



By Lynda Gronlund-Naeem

*This ongoing column features upcoming events within Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County and surrounding areas' Body/Mind/Spirit communities, new (during the past year or two) practitioners and holistic businesses, new books written by local/regional authors, new classes, as well as new offerings by established practitioners and holistic businesses.*



**Michael Berman, Owner**

Photo by Becky Rowe



Photo by Becky Rowe

**Bloom Wellness offers flotation therapy, which entails floating up to the ears in a large saltwater bath kept at skin temperature. (See article on page 28 for more info)**



**Berman said it feels like floating in space, and it can allow people to reach a deep meditative state.**



Photo by Becky Rowe

**Berman spent the last year really focused on creating a great sensory experience, taking inspiration from a documentary about 5-star restaurants and how they create a great dining experience. Berman said he is passionate about immersing people in a world where they can relax and enjoy themselves.**



## New Offerings by Established Businesses and Practitioners

**Kate Durda and Stephanie Tighe, shamanic healers, teachers, and community leaders based in Ann Arbor, through their organization Spirit Weavers, will host the Society for Shamanic Practice's (SSP) annual conference in September of 2018.**



This will be the first time a national conference on shamanism will be held in Michigan. The theme of the conference will be Shamanism Without Borders, a concept SSP began working on in 2009 based on the work of Doctors Without Borders, an international humanitarian group sending doctors to places they are badly needed, such as war zones. Shamanism Without Borders is a global network of shamanic practitioners who tend to traumatic events and natural disasters. Durda explained that disasters and traumas are rampant in our time, from environmental disasters and weather events to mass shootings and terrorism, and one way people can cope and help others is through spiritual practice and beliefs. These can provide an anchor, she said, to combat hopelessness and directionlessness. Shamanism is a healing practice focused on restoring balance and providing healing to self and others, as well as a belief in animism (meaning everything has a spirit).

The concept of Shamanism Without Borders (SWB) envisions a global network of shamanic practitioners who can respond to trauma and disasters, working to heal the land, the animals, plants, human survivors, those who have lost their lives, and everything and everyone impacted, including even those responsible for man-made disasters (because they need healing, too). The work involves tending to people who have been impacted on a spiritual level, "helping restore them to balance, remember hope, restore trust, assist with grief [and] recover from trauma and loss." It also involves "clearing negative energy, which can collect in places of trauma and continue to cause secondary trauma." It also provides assistance for the spirits of those who died in "crossing over."

In 2012, SSP invited Durda and Tighe to host a regional conference to introduce the concept and methods of Shamanism Without Borders, and to work on a local issue. The group chose to work on the site of the Talmadge Creek/Kalamazoo River oil spill of 2010, for which cleanup was still ongoing. The group of practitioners spent the weekend at the site, interacting with the river through ceremonies, dancing, drumming, rattles, singing, prayers, visioning, and more. Durda said that while they have no "hard facts" about what effect they may have had, the participants were positively affected, and they heard reports of events after the weekend that made them feel they had made a difference.

A more current example of SWB work involves a group in Charlotte, Michigan. A particular intersection in town had an inexplicably high incidence of fatal traffic accidents. No one knew why; there was nothing particularly dangerous about it. The group thought perhaps some negative energy was stuck there, causing these accidents. They explained their intentions and work to the local police, who provided statistics about the accidents. In the ten months since they began their work, there has been a significant drop in accidents at the site, and the police fully support the group in continuing their work!

Anyone interested in learning more about Shamanism Without Borders is invited to attend the September conference. As a pre-requisite, participants should have completed an introduction to shamanism workshop or similar experience, which Spirit Weavers can provide. One is scheduled in February at Ann Arbor's Enlightened Soul Center.

For more information and details, visit [www.spiritweavers.net](http://www.spiritweavers.net), or contact Kate Durda at (517) 667-0694 or [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com).

**Dr. Susan Rose, D.O., moved her practice from Brighton to Ann Arbor's Parkway Center late last summer.**



Rose is an osteopathic physician practicing traditional osteopathy, particularly Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM). OMM is a method of manual tissue manipulation used to diagnose and treat dysfunctions that cause pain and illness. Osteopathic physicians are fully licensed doctors, and Rose was in family practice for 20 years before deciding to focus on OMM. She explained that while there are very few practicing osteopaths currently, 1 in 4 medical school students are on the path to becoming D.O.s. Of the practicing osteopathic doctors, fewer still choose to concentrate on OMM, making it little known by patients and other medical practitioners.

Rose opened her practice three years ago and had originally wanted to move into the Parkway Center, but there was no room open at the time. The Parkway Center is a

**Continued on page 24**



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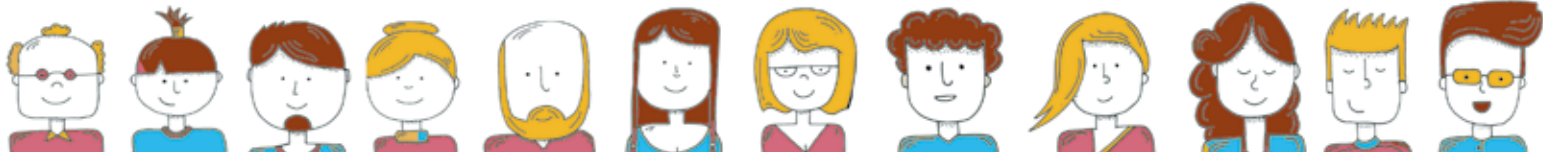
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**[www.mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com](http://www.mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com)**



# WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



**Continued from page 23**

unique space consisting of several Victorian homes built in 1893, now painted purple and home to a variety of holistic and medical practitioners, with offerings including a homeopathic pharmacy (Castle Remedies), a chiropractic center, massage therapy, acupuncture, nutrition consulting, a holistic family practice, dentistry, psychotherapy and counseling, naturopathy, and more. Rose said her new space is pleasant and the staff is great.

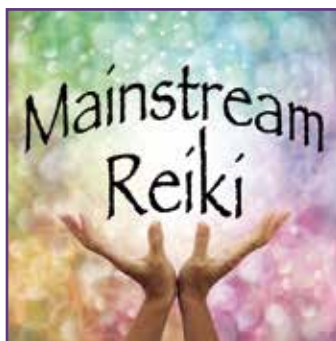
She treats a lot of musculoskeletal pain, she said, and since OMM is not well-known, many patients have tried everything else before becoming aware of her. She gave one example of a woman she treated for an injury she sustained during childbirth that was causing her a lot of pain. Her pelvis had shifted downward on one side, and the other six doctors and healthcare practitioners she had seen were treating her for an upward shift on the opposite side, which is more common. Through manual examination and testing, Rose was able to recognize the problem and treat it with manual manipulation and assigned exercises. Rose emphasizes that patients need to be active participants in their own healing by following through with stretches or exercises. She said that she finds her current patients much more compliant than in family practice, because they are motivated to become pain-free and restore optimal function. She stated that weakness and tightness of muscles and tendons are usually less of a problem than asymmetry, and said that people can avoid some problems by focusing on symmetry in exercise and daily life.

Many of Rose's patients are performing artists. She holds a new and rare certification in Performing Arts Medicine and is especially interested and skilled in working with wrist, elbow, and shoulder problems in musicians. She said that out of necessity she has created some of her own techniques for dealing with hands and fingers. She works with athletes as well, including gymnasts, swimmers, tennis players, and others. She also treats head injuries, vertigo, and G.I. problems, noting that it's possible to manipulate more than just the musculoskeletal system. She is certified in Integrative Pediatrics pertaining to OMM in babies and children, treating issues in newborns like misshapen head after birth and feeding problems. Children can be treated for ear infections, asthma, headaches, injuries from falls or sports, and GI complaints.

*Dr. Susan Rose's new space is located in the Parkway Center at 2345 South Huron Parkway, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. She can be reached by phone at (810) 588-6911 or by email at [information@drsusanrose.com](mailto:information@drsusanrose.com). Her website is [www.drsusanrose.com](http://www.drsusanrose.com).*

**Reiki Master practitioner and teacher Andrea Kennedy has moved her practice, Mainstream Reiki, to a new space at the Center for Innovation and Education on Russel Street in Saline.**

She previously operated out of Borer Family Chiropractic, and this move has allowed her to expand her operating hours. The space has a waiting room and treatment room, and Kennedy has use of a large conference room for classes and other events.



On the third Thursday of each month from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., she is offering a "Community Reiki Share," a free group experience for people who are interested in knowing more about and experiencing Reiki, as well as students and practitioners of the modality. She said the room can accommodate up to 50 people, and all are invited.

She will be offering a Reiki Level I and II class for new practitioners on May 3 and 4, and an advanced level course from May 4 through 6. The level 1 and 2 course counts for continuing education credits for nurses, psychologists, and social workers. Details and registration are available online.

Kennedy is focused on bringing Reiki more "into the mainstream" (hence her practice name), and is very interested in clinical studies that have been done regarding its use in medical settings. She said that patients who receive Reiki on average need less pain medication and go home from the hospital sooner than those who do not. Details and links to many studies are available on her website. Kennedy provides medical outcalls for people in hospitals.

Kennedy offers gift certificates and a first session with her is only \$25 (usually \$65).

*Mainstream Reiki is now located at 400 West Russel Street, Suite 2370, Saline, MI 48176. The website is [www.mainstreamreiki.com](http://www.mainstreamreiki.com). Andrea Kennedy can be reached by phone at (734) 664-2255 or by email at [andrea@mainstreamreiki.com](mailto:andrea@mainstreamreiki.com).*

**Pure Hot Yoga Ann Arbor, which opened on Ann Arbor's west side in 2014, welcomed new co-owners Ann Putvin and Jörg Berger in October.**



Owner and director Lora Rosenbaum said that the studio is growing, and partnering with the couple will allow them to offer more classes and continue to improve in all aspects. Rosenbaum and Putvin met at a yoga teacher training, and Putvin now teaches Hot Yoga at the studio. Putvin's husband, Berger, is now serving as the office manager and is in training to begin teaching Hot Pilates.

The studio offers Hot 262 Yoga, Hot Pilates, and Yin Yoga, which complement each other. Hot 262 Yoga is a 90-minute class consisting of 26 postures and 2 breathing exercises in a room heated to 105 degrees. Hot Pilates and Yin Yoga are 60-minute classes done in milder heat, 95 degrees. A shortened lunchtime Hot Yoga class is also offered as "Hot Yoga Express," which Rosenbaum explained has all the components of 262 Hot Yoga, with some postures not repeated as they would be in the full-length class. It is a good starting point for anyone unsure about trying the full 90 minutes, as well as an option for people who want to do a class on their lunch break. Rosenbaum also offers yoga teacher training. Her third 5-week intensive immersion session will be offered in the spring of 2018. She is also working with a student on forming a local chapter of Uprising Yoga, which brings yoga and meditation classes to incarcerated youth, and to bring classes to men in Jackson Prison with the goal of healing trauma and developing positive habits.

The studio began life as Bikram Yoga Ann Arbor West, but Rosenbaum explained that with the recent controversy surrounding the style's founder, Bikram Choudhury, whom she described as "ill," many studios are changing their language to distance themselves from the negativity while still bringing the benefits of hot yoga to their communities. Pure Hot Yoga Ann Arbor belongs to the Original Hot Yoga Association, a national organization and certifying body dedicated to Hot Yoga.

*Pure Hot Yoga Ann Arbor is located at 221 North Maple Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. The studio is online at [www.purehotyogaa2.com](http://www.purehotyogaa2.com), and can be reached by phone at (734) 780-4555.*

**Dr. Monica Turenne, an Ann Arbor veterinarian, earned her certificate in Animal Hospice and Palliative Care from the International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care, in October.**



Turenne has offered end-of-life services for animals since taking her veterinary practice mobile in 2012, and said this certification has expanded her knowledge. She is part of the first graduating class to receive this certification, and no other organization she knows of offers a similar program. She said it is "moving the profession forward."

The program entails 100 hours of advanced training, 2 case studies demonstrating knowledge and competency in hospice and palliative medicine, and a comprehensive final exam. Turenne said it elevated her knowledge and capabilities with medications, physiology, and trajectory of disease, and communication with and support for pet parents.

Hospice is focused on maintaining comfort and quality of life for the pet with a terminal or life-limiting disease for which there is no cure, or for which treatment may be prohibitively expensive and potentially not in the best interest of the pet. It bridges a gap between the diagnosis, when the animal may still have quality time left, and the possibility of compassionate euthanasia.

Turenne begins hospice care with an initial in-home consultation. During this 90-minute consultation, she reviews the pet's medical history, observes and examines the pet, and most important, listens to the pet parents. She discusses goals for the pet, the trajectory of disease, and how quality of life can be maintained. She can help pet parents understand whether the animal is in pain or has a decent quality of life, and how they can help ease pain or increase comfort. She also makes sure the pet parents are receiving the support they need, either through family and friends or self-care, or she may recommend a counselor or support group. After the initial visit, Turenne and the pet parents decide on a plan for continued care, and Turenne remains available for regular check-ins via email or phone so that she can provide ongoing advice and support. More in-home visits can be arranged if needed, as well.



If the pet parent, with advice from Turenne, at some point decides the animal does not have a good quality of life and nothing more can be done to ease its pain, Turenne can provide in-home euthanasia. Performing euthanasia in the privacy and familiar surroundings of home can make the experience much more bearable for the pet parent and comforting to the pet. People have done special things, such as lighting candles, playing music, saying prayers or performing ceremonies. Turenne said any appropriate location can be used; some pet parents want to be outside because the animal loved being outside, or wherever the pet parent feels would be best.

Turenne said she is very grateful to be able to help and comfort pets and their owners in these very difficult times.

Dr. Monica Turenne can be reached at [mt@fourpawsvetwellness.com](mailto:mt@fourpawsvetwellness.com) or (734) 385-7161. Her website is [www.fourpawsvetwellness.com](http://www.fourpawsvetwellness.com).

**The 2018 Beautifully Wrapped Calendar, which features 12 beautiful brightly colored images of women and men in different headwrap styles, marks the project's seventh year.**

Zarinah El-Amin Naeem, a Detroit based anthropologist, started the Beautifully Wrapped calendar in 2011 to showcase the art form of headwrapping and to raise funds for a girls' education program in Senegal. She explained that the idea behind the calendar is to spark conversation about diversity, beauty, individuality, spirituality, peace, and community. It features people of different faiths and backgrounds, including Muslim, Sheik, and Christian.



Naeem also runs an annual Headwrap Expo, featuring fashion shows, workshops, vendors, and a celebration of headwrapping styles from all faiths and cultures. Some of the models featured in the calendar are people she met through the Expo; others have submitted pictures from far away. This year's calendar includes a man in Kuwait and women in Asia and Indonesia. The cover photo is of a woman from Gambia currently living in Detroit.

Naeem herself is an African-American Muslim who wears a headwrap every day. Her style is dramatic and colorful. She explained that her parents came to Islam at a time when many other African Americans were embracing it, and the women put their own African-inspired spin on covering their hair. The colorful, high-piled, artistic style has become fashionable in other parts of the world as well.

Naeem said that in high school she covered her hair only occasionally, but when she went to college she liked being able to identify other Muslim women by their scarves, and decided she liked the outward expression of her faith paired with the artistic and individualistic style she was able to bring to it. She feels it is especially important to expose young people to images of diversity and beauty, to open their minds and reduce assumptions about people who dress in particular ways for their faith, culture, or any other reason.

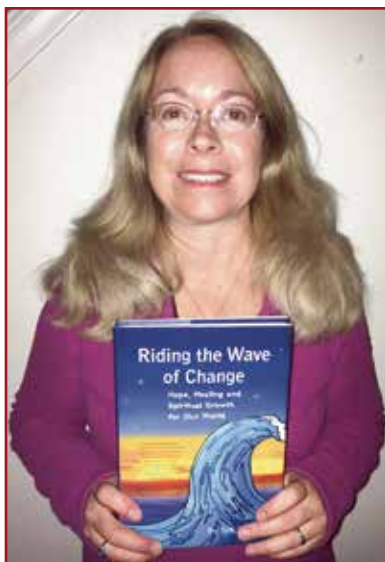
Part of the profits will also go to a new traveling exhibition of the photographs from the present and previous calendars, which will be held in libraries, hospitals, and other public places. The exhibition will be accompanied by presentations on cultural psychology, headwrapping practices and styles, and the intersection between fashion and faith.

More information about the Beautifully Wrapped calendar is available at [www.beautifully-wrapped.com](http://www.beautifully-wrapped.com). The Enliven Your Soul Foundation is located at 8050 West Parkway, Detroit, MI 48239. Zarinah El-Amin Naeem can be reached by email at [info@headwrapexpo.com](mailto:info@headwrapexpo.com) or by phone at (313) 377-2857.

## New Books by Area Authors

**Local spiritual healer and teacher Eve Wilson published her book *Riding the Wave of Change — Hope, Healing and Spiritual Growth for Our World*, in October.**

The book is "the product of 30 years of seeking the next higher perspective on life and how to heal people and the planet on the deepest levels," Wilson explained. She said that the current turbulent time we are experiencing is a temporary transition period in our evolution. She calls this the journey of ascension. "Ascension is how we emerge from the swamp of our lower nature of hatred, fear, and greed and evolve into our true potential of union with our own higher intelligence, purpose and love." She said that this period will last for about 30 years "as we shed the negativity of the past and embrace this new identity." She said that she wants people to understand that even though things seem very dark and chaotic, we "are eternal, safe, and unbreakable, as is all creation, including our planet." She also explained that what we are now experiencing is much better than what could have been, due to the work of many healers and people who have worked hard to improve themselves and the world, thus creating an "easier birthing process." The book offers tools to help people face their fears and "ride the waves with skill and trust."



Continued on page 27

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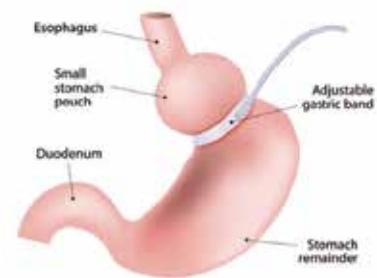


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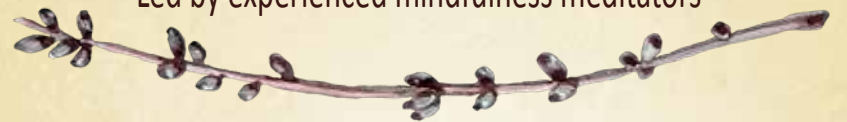
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Tuesdays, 12-12:30, The Ark, 316 So. Main St.  
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Contact: Lynn Sipher, [lynnsipher@gmail.com](mailto:lynnsipher@gmail.com)

### Saline Open Meditation

Tuesdays, 11 am – 12 pm, Center for Education and Innovation  
(former St. Joe's building), 400 W. Russell St.  
Contact: Paulette Grotrian, [mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com](mailto:mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com)

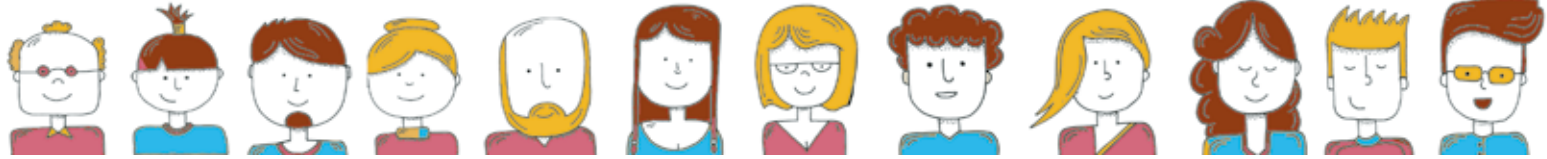
### Ypsilanti Open Meditation

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W. Michigan Ave.  
Contact: Joya D'Cruz, [dcruzjoya@gmail.com](mailto:dcruzjoya@gmail.com)





# WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



## Continued from page 25

In the same week her book was launched, Wilson's blog — The Weekly Word for Healing and Ascension — won an award from [www.feedspot.com](http://www.feedspot.com) as "one of the best healing blogs in the world." Every Friday, Wilson posts about aspects of life in the time of ascension, with a positive perspective and tools for empowerment.

Wilson also offers a monthly "Ascension Support Class" consisting of meditations that support individuals while enabling them to also send a healing influence into the world.

Riding the Wave of Change is available at Crazy Wisdom. For more information and to read Eve Wilson's blog, visit [www.spiritualhealers.com](http://www.spiritualhealers.com). She can be reached via email at [evew@spiritualhealers.com](mailto:evew@spiritualhealers.com) or by phone at (734) 780-7635.

### Ann Arbor author and grief coach Selene Negrette published a new book in the summer, *Not Your Usual Grief Book: How to Heal While Connecting with Your Child Who Died*.

It is her second book. Negrette lost her son to leukemia 21 years ago, and said she felt like her life was over. Her journey since then has included earning a Master's degree in Social Work and working as a pediatric hospice social worker for the last 17 years. She said she is "starting a grief revolution" by helping grieving parents heal with a unique spiritual approach.



The book walks parents through the lessons she learned through losing her own son and working in pediatric hospice. She said she is trying to "bridge the missing link between suffering and healing," which she said is not found in the places people generally look for answers — society, religion, even family and friends.

She explained that bereaved parents suffer because they miss their child so much, and yet their child's spirit is still near. Society does not accept that the child is reaching out or leaving messages for their parents — such as a feather on their path or a rainbow in the sky. But Negrette believes these signs are indeed real, and wants to reinforce the idea to parents to allow them to find comfort and healing in them. Her book, as well as her one-on-one grief coaching and her 8-week online program, "From Winter to Spring," encourage and teach parents to recognize these messages intuitively and "feel the love their child is still giving them."

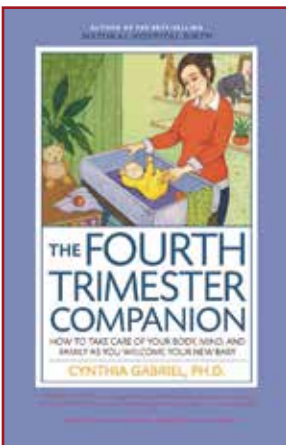
Learning to receive messages from their child intuitively can also lead parents to receive messages from the angels and Universe, explained Negrette, who is also a certified angel intuitive. This can lead to healing and even positive transformation.

Negrette also hosts a weekly radio show on Body Mind Spirit Radio, on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m., called Blessings With Selene.

More information about Selene Negrette's book can be found at [www.notyoursusualgriefbook.com](http://www.notyoursusualgriefbook.com). She offers a free phone call about how she can help grieving parents or others seeking spiritual help and can be reached by phone at (859) 797-3919 or by email at [SeleneNegretteAuthor@yahoo.com](mailto:SeleneNegretteAuthor@yahoo.com). Her radio show (including recordings of previous shows) can be accessed at [www.bodymindspiritradio.com/portfolio/blessings-with-selene](http://www.bodymindspiritradio.com/portfolio/blessings-with-selene).

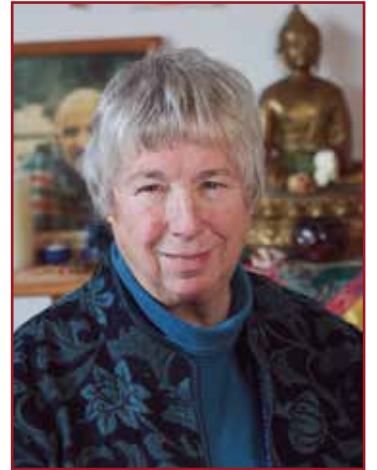
### Cynthia Gabriel, an Ann Arbor based medical anthropologist, doula, childbirth educator, and mother, published *The Fourth Trimester Companion: How to Take Care of Your Body, Mind, and Family as You Welcome Your New Baby*, in December.

The book emphasizes a concept that has been getting more attention from doctors, nurses, and midwives in recent years — that a well-cared for baby needs a well-cared for mother, and that good mother-care during the three months after birth provides benefits for her, her baby, and for her family. It provides guidance on what to expect after birth and practical advice for care of self and baby. Gabriel is also the author of *Natural Hospital Birth: The Best of Both Worlds*. Her books are available at Crazy Wisdom. Cynthia Gabriel can be reached via email at [motherearthbirth@yahoo.com](mailto:motherearthbirth@yahoo.com).



### Barbara Brodsky, founder and guiding teacher of Ann Arbor's Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry, has published a new book called *The Path of Clear Light*.

The book, like several others she has published, was dictated to her by the spirit entity Aaron, whom she regularly channels. It was told to her over the summer at her cabin in the woods and is in the process of being printed at the time of this writing. She described it as "almost a syllabus of his 30 years of teaching." In a video introducing the book, Aaron said, through Brodsky, that the book would "go into specific practices, to center yourself in light, even when you are experiencing darkness, pain, fear, anger, and other negative experiences. How to ground yourself in that light without denial of the negativity."



For more information about *The Path of Clear Light* and Aaron/Brodsky's other books, visit [www.deepspring.org](http://www.deepspring.org). Barbara Brodsky can be reached via email at [bbrodsky@deepspring.org](mailto:bbrodsky@deepspring.org).

## New Classes

### Meryllynne Rush and Patty Brennan founded Lifespan Doula Association at the end of 2016 to offer end-of-life doula training, certification, continuing education, and mentoring for doulas, as well as resources and referrals for families looking for end-of-life support.



To date, they have trained 61 people, including hospice volunteers, nurses, doctors, social workers, administrators, and family and community members who want to support a specific person who is dying.

An end-of-life doula can fill many supportive roles in a holistic and non-medical capacity, such as taking care of practical needs as a caregiver, assisting with advanced directives, helping plan a funeral or celebration of life, providing support for caregivers and family, coordinating with hospice workers, giving spiritual guidance, and supporting loved ones in their bereavement. Each family and individual's needs are different, and the doula can customize what services he or she offers. Said Rush, "Most people say they want to die at home surrounded by family and friends in a loving and peaceful atmosphere." End-of-life doulas help to make this happen. Doulas can work with a family from as early as initial terminal diagnosis, or they may be called in very near the end of the person's life.

The profession is very new, and there is currently no national certifying body. Brennan and Rush are working to change that. They are in the beginning stages of forming a new national alliance of end-of-life doulas. They envision a mainstream embrace of end-of-life doulas with national standards for training and certification.

The end-of-life doula training is a 21-hour, in-person, intensive training usually done on a Friday through Sunday. Rush and Brennan provide trainings in Ann Arbor but can also travel to train non-local groups. They also offer two additional workshops: a green burial and home funeral workshop and an advanced care planning workshop. The next scheduled end-of-life doula training is March 2nd thru March 4th, 2018, in Ann Arbor.

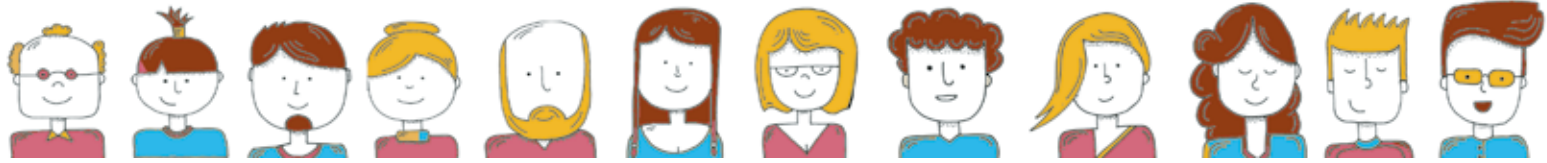
Rush and Brennan are longtime friends, both former homebirth midwives, and alternative healthcare educators and providers. Rush is a local expert and consultant on green burial and home funerals; Brennan is the owner of the Center for the Childbearing Year, which offers training and services for birth doulas and pregnant and postpartum women and families.

To learn more about the training, or to find an end-of-life doula, visit [www.LifespanDoulas.com](http://www.LifespanDoulas.com), email [mrush@lifespandoulas.com](mailto:mrush@lifespandoulas.com), or call (734) 395-9660.

Continued on page 28



# WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



Continued from page 27

## New Practitioners and Businesses

**Michael Berman opened Bloom Wellness on the west side of Ann Arbor in 2016.**

Bloom offers flotation therapy, which entails floating up to the ears in a large saltwater bath kept at skin temperature. People are buoyant in saltwater so floating is effortless. Berman said it feels like floating in space, and it can allow people to reach a deep meditative state. He became aware of the practice a decade ago and credits it with helping him sleep. He said, "I could silence my brain in a way I had never found before." In addition to meditation and relaxation, floating can help with chronic pain, fibromyalgia, P.T.S.D., back pain, and sleep issues. The Navy Seals use it as part of their training to help trainees get into a "flow space" for optimal performance. Professional sports teams also use it to help players recover. Berman says his father floats nightly, and his brother Andrew, who helps run the studio, does it regularly as well.



What sets Bloom apart from other float therapy providers, said Berman, is his obsession with "beautiful experiences," including pleasant sights, sounds, and smells. He spent the last year really focused on creating a great sensory experience, taking inspiration from a documentary about 5-star restaurants and how they create a great dining experience. Berman said he is passionate about immersing people in a world where they can relax and enjoy themselves.

Many flotation tanks are like pods with a lid that can be closed during a session. Bloom's flotation rooms contain something more like "high end luxurious bathtubs." The openness reduces any anxiety first time users may feel when they see the room. The rooms are private, so people may be unclothed if they wish during a session. Depending on individual preference, candles and music can be used, or the room can be dark and silent. Special occasion float experiences for birthdays, anniversaries, or other celebrations can begin with a Japanese tea ceremony, foot bath, and a massage in a Japanese massage chair. Bloom also offers massage, sauna, facials and spa treatments, so any of these services can be done in sequence.

For people who like to float regularly, there are packages available. Berman is also introducing the "Peak Wellness Lifestyle," a membership program with V.I.P. pricing for massage, sauna, and floating. In January, Bloom will begin offering lifestyle and nutrition coaching, fitness classes, and mindful movement classes, all centered around "power, harmony, and flow." Classes will include yoga, kettlebells, meditation, and sound bowl meditation.

*Bloom Wellness is located at 2450 West Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. More information is available online at [www.bloomwellnessa2.com](http://www.bloomwellnessa2.com). Michael Berman can be reached by email at [mike@bloomwellnessa2.com](mailto:mike@bloomwellnessa2.com) or by phone at (734) 436-8492.*

**On October 1, Heather Glidden and Darlene Sosenko opened Joy, a new mind-body movement studio.**

The studio is located on Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor in the space recently vacated by Espresso Royale. Glidden, a Gyrotonic/Gyrokinesis® and Pilates instructor and massage therapist, has owned two studios in the past. This new venture with Sosenko, she explained, represents an evolution in her vision. The studio integrates different methods to support people, from novices to elite athletes, in "moving their bodies, opening their hearts, and nourishing their souls." Sosenko's background encompasses personal training, athletics, yoga, and health coaching, as well as Gyrotonic/Gyrokinesis® training. Glidden explained that their different but complementary backgrounds help shape the studio, making it diverse and adaptable to all kinds of people.



Joy studio offers private and small group training in Pilates, Yoga, Gyrotonic® and Gyrokinesis®, health coaching, and the Franklin Method. The Franklin Method "teaches dynamic alignment and how to move your body with maximum efficiency to keep [it] youthful and energized." Gyrotonic® is a movement method using a

specially designed apparatus with the goals of stimulating the nervous system, opening energy pathways, increasing flexibility, strength, and efficiency. Gyrokinesis classes use the Gyrotonic movement method with a mat and chair, and no special equipment.

Joy studio also holds occasional events, like Partner Dance 101 and Latin Dancing. Massage is also offered. Glidden said, "Our offerings are designed to help people connect more deeply with their own bodies and selves ... [so] they may bring more joy into their lives and into the world."

Glidden encourages anyone to come in and try anything they find intriguing. "People seem to think they need to get more flexible or do this or that before they can start. I tell them we're here to help you get there! Come as you are, and we'll work with you to get you where you want to go."

*Joy is located at 214 South Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. More information is online at [www.joyannarbor.com](http://www.joyannarbor.com). The studio can be reached by email at [studio@joyannarbor.com](mailto:studio@joyannarbor.com) or by phone at (734) 274-9482.*

**Diana Burney is a registered nurse and certified clinical hypnotherapist specializing in a weight loss technique called the Virtual Gastric Band Program.**



She opened her Ann Arbor hypnotherapy practice, Mind's Gate, in July. She has been practicing hypnotherapy since 1983 and has had practices in Ohio, Arizona, Florida, and Oregon. Eleven years ago, she moved to Ann Arbor to be close to her grandchild, and has worked as a nurse at St. Joseph Hospital since then where she teaches weight loss classes for patients who suffer from obesity-related illnesses. She said that she wanted to offer people something more to help them lose weight, as it's often a complicated, time-consuming and difficult process.

The Virtual Gastric Band Program, pioneered by UK hypnotherapist Sheila Granger, uses hypnosis and mind management techniques to train people to be satisfied with smaller portions and change their attitude toward food, resulting in lasting weight loss. Burney said that clients lose about two pounds per week, which is ideal because faster loss can create health complications as well as loose skin that is a problem for so many who undergo gastric band surgery.

Work, family, and social lives frequently make weight loss difficult, and hypnosis can help people "gain the mental strength to make positive changes that make them healthier, happier, and thinner," Burney explained. She gave one example of a client who had had trouble losing weight. After a stressful day she would go to a bookstore to relax and always ended up overindulging in pastries and coffee from the store. After experiencing the program, she reported that when she returned to the bookstore, she found she didn't want or need the pastries to enjoy her relaxing reading time.

Clients meet with Burney four times, once weekly, to undergo the Virtual Gastric Band Hypnosis treatments. In the first session, they use guided imagery to imagine that they have undergone gastric band surgery to reduce the size of the stomach to that of a golf ball. Subsequent sessions are used to deal with psychological triggers to overeating. Clients also receive a C.D. to listen to between sessions to help reinforce the work. Burney said clients report feeling like they've "flipped a switch in the brain" to turn off cravings and the desire to overeat. Two clinical trials in the U.K., she said, found a 95 percent success rate for the technique.

Burney offers other hypnosis services, including stress release, sugar addiction, weight release, releasing "baggage from the past," spiritual work, and "any kind of habit reversal." She stressed that "all hypnosis is technically self-hypnosis": no one can be hypnotized without wanting to be, and no one can be made to do something they don't want to do through hypnosis. She said that "80 percent of our functioning is subconscious," and hypnosis addresses the subconscious in ways mainstream weight loss and habit change programs do not. For this reason, she is passionate about promoting hypnotherapy as a tool for better health and habit change.

Burney will offer a workshop on managing cravings with hypnosis on January 6 at the Enlightened Soul Center in Ann Arbor at 1:00 p.m. Participants will have the opportunity to be hypnotized twice and will receive a C.D. to take home with them. The cost is \$100, and 20 percent of the fee will go to the Safe House Center, a domestic violence shelter in Ann Arbor.

*Mind's Gate Hypnotherapy is located at 2035 Hogback Road, Suite 105, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Diana Burney can be reached at (734) 786-6588 or [earthrelease@msn.com](mailto:earthrelease@msn.com). Her website is [www.mindsgatehypnosis.com](http://www.mindsgatehypnosis.com).*



**Jenna Zusei Hirschman and Charles Yugen Stuart began hosting friends and neighbors in their Ypsilanti home for weekly Zen meditation instruction and practice in the early summer of 2017.**

The couple are students in the process of entering the seminary program at the Great Heartland Buddhist Temple of Toledo and have been authorized by their teachers to provide beginning instruction in Zen meditation and to lead the weekly group. They have now opened the group to anyone, and emphasize that all are welcome. They live in the West Ypsilanti neighborhood near Eastern Michigan University called Normal Park and have transformed their living room into a Zen-do, with an altar and meditation cushions. Currently about 6 “regulars” come every week; they can accommodate as many as 12 people.



The Great Heartland Buddhist Temple of Toledo practices Soto Zen, which, Hirschman explained, is a Japanese lineage. She said that she came to Zen practice hoping to find inner calm and peace, and found that the best way to attain this was through sharing and service. She and Stuart are excited to be able to provide this “hyper-local” meditation group opportunity for those who might not want or be able to travel to Toledo or even to Ann Arbor, but can make it to Normal Park. A cat does roam the house, so those with allergies should plan accordingly.

The group meets on Mondays. At 7:00 p.m., Hirschman and Stuart provide instruction to anyone new to the practice. From 7:45 to 9:00 p.m. the group practices brief chanting, and seated and walking meditation. There is no cost, but participants may bring items like incense for the altar if they like.

More information is available on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ypsi.sits](http://www.facebook.com/ypsi.sits). Jenna Hirschman can be reached by email at [jennahirschman@gmail.com](mailto:jennahirschman@gmail.com) or by phone at (734) 834-5070. The address can be obtained from her. Information about the Great Heartland Buddhist Temple of Toledo is at [www.buddhisttempleoftoledo.org](http://www.buddhisttempleoftoledo.org).

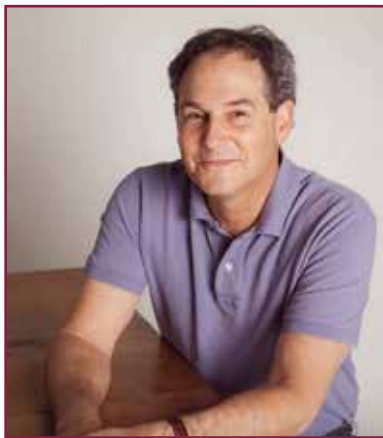
## Upcoming Events

**Ann Arbor-based permaculture researcher Nate Ayers and the new organization Michigan Adaptation Professionals are bringing Martin Lee, University of Michigan graduate and author of *Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana – Medical, Recreational, and Scientific*, to Ann Arbor on March 23 and 24.**

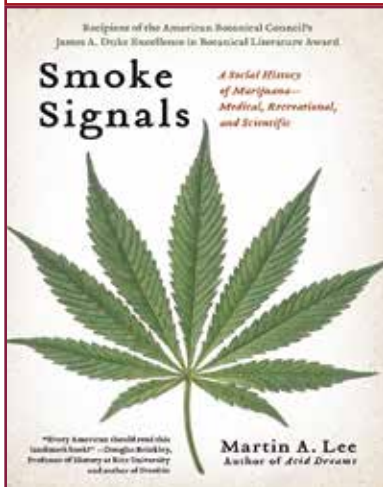
(In addition, Lee is also the co-founder and director of Project CBD.) On Friday, March 23 at the University of Michigan, Lee will speak on the science and politics of CBD. On Saturday, March 24, he will lead an afternoon workshop at a local CBD/medical marijuana facility, followed by a ticketed evening dinner, reading and book signing at a downtown restaurant. Locations and times are still being decided and confirmed.

Ayers explained that CBD, or cannabidiol, is a compound found in cannabis or hemp, the marijuana plant. The plant contains hundreds of compounds, including THC which is well-known for creating the “high” feeling recreational marijuana users are seeking. CBD is not psychoactive, so it doesn’t make people “high” or “stoned,” and is showing a great deal of promise in medicinal applications. Thus far, products containing CBD are technically considered legal in all 50 states, because it does not have the psychoactive effects of THC, but there is some controversy and confusion surrounding its legality. Because of its association with marijuana/THC, Ayers explained, not much research has been funded on CBD, so we are “years behind in studying it.”


As a permaculture expert, Ayers explained that cannabis was historically an incredibly functional plant which was used for medicine, rope, fabrics and more. It was demonized in the United States in the 1930s by farmers growing other crops, because it was so hardy and multifunctional that it threatened their profits. Today, he said, it has potential applications in fuel, fiber, plastics, medicine and other uses, but the politics and legalities make it difficult to grow, use, and study.



Martin Lee is the co-founder and director of Project CBD. He will be speaking in Ann Arbor on March 23 and 24.



In addition to *Smoke Signals*, Martin Lee is also the author of *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: the CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond*



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Medically, said Ayers, CBD has shown potential in treating degenerative disease, aiding bone growth, helping brain function and P.T.S.D., and more. It is potentially useful both therapeutically and preventatively. It can be consumed as an oil or in capsules, or used topically in skin creams, or taken in suppositories rectally or vaginally. Some strains of marijuana are rich in CBD and can be smoked, vaporized, or consumed for that purpose.



Details on Martin Lee’s visit will be available as they are confirmed at [www.michiganadaptation.com](http://www.michiganadaptation.com). Lee’s website is [www.projectcbd.org](http://www.projectcbd.org) and he can be reached through a contact form there.

Cannabidiol—CBD—is a cannabis compound that has significant medical benefits, but does not make people feel “stoned.”

###

Please note that the “What’s New” column is part of the editorial (not paid-for advertising) part of the journal, and the editors may or may not include what you submit. Whether the editors include material or not will depend on space considerations, as well as other editorial issues, such as the need for high resolution jpgs and the overall mix of stories included in the “What’s New in the Community” column in a given issue. If you would like to submit information to be considered for this column, please email [communitynews@crazywisdom.net](mailto:communitynews@crazywisdom.net) or drop off or mail to the store: What’s New in the Community, 114 South Main, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104. The firm deadline for submissions for the next issue (May thru August 2018) is March 1, 2018.





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## Births/Infants



### Melisa Schuster, LMSW

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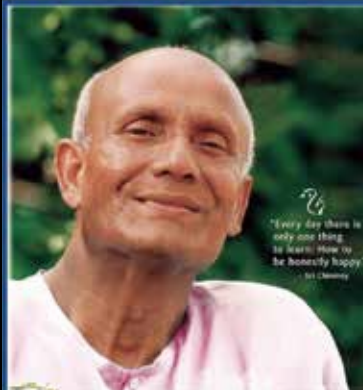
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# Leaps of Faith

## Tales of Local Businesses

*This is part of a series of articles we've been doing on local business owners and their relatively newer businesses. As the economy in Michigan has struggled over many years, there are still brave souls who have taken the leap of faith to open their own businesses here. What follows are personal profiles of two businesses that are thriving despite the odds.*

By Mary Stokley  
Photos by Susan Ayer

## Societe Indoor Cycling: Building Fitness and Community Together in Ann Arbor —

*Societe Indoor Cycling - Greg Reid*  
2121 Oak Valley Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
(734) 926-5373; [www.societeindoorcycling.com](http://www.societeindoorcycling.com)

Greg Reid met Sara Hutton (now his wife) online in the spring of 2013. Reid remembered, "I wasn't sure about [online dating], but I gave it a try, and I met Sara so it worked out in my favor." They moved to Ann Arbor, Sara's hometown, last year when Reid left his high-powered job as Vice President of Recruitment for Christie's Auction House in New York after a 20 percent downsizing in their management tier.

During family visits to Ann Arbor before the move, Reid and Sara missed the boutique style workouts that they enjoyed in New York. "We tried local places, but we just didn't like the big box gym style of fitness because it just didn't provide us with as good a workout." So when they moved to Ann Arbor permanently, opening an indoor cycling center was the one thing Reid felt particularly passionate about.

Sara's father had an interest in the real estate market and helped Reid find a space that met his requirements of parking, the ability to house a loud sound system, and had enough square footage to accommodate Reid's vision. "After searching for almost a year, we finally found the space we needed at the Ann Arbor Ice Cube on Oak Valley Drive," Reid said. "The price per square footage made it a little further



Boutique style gyms focus primarily on one style of fitness that is often paired with personal training. There is a proliferation of yoga fitness centers in the Ann Arbor area, as well as those which offer a small collection of fitness or cross-training programs. You cannot walk on a treadmill, work out with dumbbells, play tennis, and go to the pool at these boutiques.

removed, but it had what we needed and [mostly] worked with our budget, so, after taking a [severance] package from my former position, I decided to go for it. We broke ground just before Christmas, and our ribbon cutting with the Chamber of Commerce was on May 2nd."

Boutique style gyms focus primarily on one style of fitness that is often paired with personal training. There is a proliferation of yoga fitness centers in the Ann Arbor area, as well as those which offer a small collection of fitness or cross-training programs. You cannot walk on a treadmill, work out with dumbbells, play tennis, and go to the pool at these boutiques. "Boutiques are much more hands on from fitness center to member than the 'big box' fitness centers where you just go in and do your own thing," Reid explained. "We customize our product to where each client receives that first-hand touch and a first name basis kind of experience."

"You have to enjoy [indoor] cycling to want to come [to Societe] because all of our classes are based on cycling," said Reid. "We do offer a little more than just cycling because we didn't want to pigeonhole ourselves into just one thing, because people who don't love cycling won't come at all or won't come back. We've created two studios, one with 30 bike cycling room [that] is the origin of all of our classes."

Pure cycling classes offered in Studio One include: Societe 101 (entry level, introduction to the bike and how to ride), Rhythm and Ride (a derivative of Soul Cycle out of New York, offers more innovative moves, in and out of the saddle of



Owners Greg Reid and Sara Hutton (center) and staff

"We're all about encouraging the camaraderie of community, the coming together to achieve a common goal; in this instance, fitness." This extends to the charity events they sponsor, bringing community together to raise money for a good cause.



the bike, pushups on the bike, and goes to the beat of the music), and Performance Cycling (hardcore cycling focusing on endurance). Reid uses Performance IQ software which captures all of the output (watts, calories, and distance) and projects it onto a 115-inch screen, so riders can actually see what they've accomplished in the workout, and Reid or another certified trainer, can set up whole class competitions.

"In Studio Two," said Reid, "we do combination classes like: Cycle/Yoga (vinyasa), Cycle/Tone (high intensity interval training with dumbbells and body weight), Cycle/Boot Camp (like cycle/tone, but a different style of strength training), Cycle/Pilates, and Cycle/Core (abs, oblique, and lower back work), which all include 30 minutes of high intensity cardio cycling followed by one of these types of strength training or stretching."



"We opened for business in a very challenging time of the year," explained Reid. "We opened May 2nd, heading into summer, when people want to be outside, and the students were mostly gone from the university and when people were starting to go on vacation. But we wanted to get open and get our name out there in the community, and it gave us the time to work out some kinks, since this is the first business I've owned. Thankfully, every month has been better than the last; we've grown every month since we opened."

Because they have the most advanced technology and the largest cycling studio in all of southern Michigan, Societe is doing team training with Eastern Michigan University's men's hockey team, once weekly for cardiovascular endurance, so that when they're skating they won't be as winded and, hopefully, will be better conditioned.



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"We're also working with Pioneer High School's women's basketball team and the Ann Arbor Hockettes synchronized skating team," said Reid. "These are areas I'm excited to get into because the results we're getting are positive, and the feedback has been great." Heart rate monitors are used during training to show how fast the players recover. When they first started training, the players felt winded and had a harder time recovering, and now those recovery rates are vastly improved.

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As a recruiter, Reid enjoyed helping people find a job. Owning his own business is different because he's always on, and it seems like there's never enough time to do what he wants to do with the studio. He feels engaged with Societe because it's something he wants to do, and he's happy when he sees results and when someone tells him they overcame a struggle that week.

This fits the mission of the business: Fitness/Community/Together. "We're all about encouraging the camaraderie of community, the coming together to achieve a common goal; in this instance, fitness." This extends to the charity events they sponsor, bringing community together to raise money for a good cause.

The best way to understand Societe is simply to take the time to visit the facility, do a workout, and enjoy the sense of community you will find there. Experience the state-of-the-art technology and equipment that will get you through the workout, fresh towel service, and other amenities available to members. Reid will be more than happy to work you through the paces and provide you with a quality workout.

###

Feature continued on page 36



# Leaps of Faith

## Tales of Local Businesses

Feature continued from page 35

### Ypsilanti's Downtown Rocket —

*The Rocket Candy & Novelties*  
Eli Morrissey and Paul Balcom  
122 West Michigan Avenue  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197  
(734) 483-2291; [www.shoptherocket.com](http://www.shoptherocket.com)

*The Rocket Gifts & Candy*  
23147 Woodward Avenue  
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Eli Morrissey and Paul Balcom both attended Eastern Michigan University, where they met, and after graduating decided to stay in the Ypsilanti area. Balcom graduated with a degree in Occupational Therapy, and Morrissey's degree was in Urban and Regional Planning, interesting degree paths for the two young men who now own a novelty and gift store in downtown Ypsilanti known as the Rocket.

"After we bought our house here a couple years after graduating, we thought it would be cool to put a store down here," Morrissey explained. "There were a lot of empty storefronts down here, it was an opportunity to open a business, and perhaps be able to help revitalize downtown." Balcom agreed with Morrissey's assessment of their decision and added, "We'd seen a history of a business opening up for two years and then it would be gone. We liked the composition here; there were some cool businesses. We didn't know exactly what we wanted to do, and we talked about it for a while."

When Balcom was mid-way through his MBA program at EMU, Macy's cut his position after he had worked with them for 15 years. He and Morrissey thought maybe this was the right time to get involved and do something before he re-entered



**When you walk into the store, your eyes are assailed with throwback memorabilia to the days of your childhood. (For some of us, that's further back than others.) You'll find Star Trek, Doctor Who, and Star Wars, just to name a few.**

the workforce. Morrissey was employed full time with the Department of Commerce and had a steady income to add to Balcom's severance. Morrissey said, "With Paul's sudden loss of employment, it was time to throw ourselves into something new, and if it didn't work out, it didn't work out, but then we could move on from there."

They certainly didn't open the Rocket with the intention of going out of business in two years and worked the store themselves while they got established in business and in the community. "We knew the harsh realities, and for a long time, Paul worked an exorbitant amount of hours in the store himself, and I worked in the store when I could while working a full time job," Morrissey explained. They didn't have any employees that first year, and for the first four years they were open, Morrissey continued to work for the Department of Commerce.

When the store originally opened in November 2006, it was located across the street from their current location, where the Model Cave Hobby Shop is now. By the end





of the fourth year they were bursting at the seams and needed more space. They'd learned that the buildings of the current location were being rehabbed, and the owner asked if they'd be interested in having one of the spaces. They decided to take it on.



**Paying attention to their customers' wants and bringing to life their own desire to be "retro" in nature are at least two of the ingredients that make the Rocket what it is today, a thoroughly enjoyable retail destination that provides novel and novelty gift items.**

At that same time, Morrissey decided to leave his job with the Department of Commerce and work full time with Balcom at the Rocket. "Paul was still spending ungodly hours in the store, even though by this time we had hired a small staff, and when I wasn't working my full time job, I was working here in the store because we'd only just hired a small staff. So, with the opportunity to expand, it was just time to jump in completely." The Rocket re-opened in their current location in November 2010.



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When you walk into the store, your eyes are assailed with throwback memorabilia to the days of your childhood. (For some of us, that's further back than others.) You'll find Star Trek, Doctor Who, and Star Wars, just to name a few. Then there is the candy selection in the middle front section of the store. You may recognize candies from your childhood that you don't normally find in stores these days. Shopping at the Rocket is a pleasant and nostalgic experience.

When Balcom and Morrissey opened the store, they weren't exactly sure what their specialty was going to be, although they liked the idea of it being something "retro." "We liked the idea of having candies, sweets, perishables, and novelties, but we weren't sure how to throw all of that together, so we ended up with a little bit of everything," Balcom explained. "If you pay attention, your customers will tell you who you are by the kinds of things they purchase. And when you start picking out those trends, you begin to know who you are as a business."

Paying attention to their customers' wants and bringing to life their own desire to be "retro" in nature are at least two of the ingredients that make the Rocket what it is today, a thoroughly enjoyable retail destination that provides novel and novelty gift items. "With a local edge," Balcom added, "because we carry a lot of Great Lakes, Michigan, Ypsi, Detroit branded items, and we try to use local artists and vendors for our card lines and T-shirts."

**The Rocket in Ypsilanti was built out of a sense of hope in the ability to build a successful business, to help revitalize the downtown area and give it new breath, and to create a space where all people are welcome to visit, shop, and become friends.**

Ypsilanti didn't have a store like the Rocket when it opened, and as it's evolved, it continues to stand alone unequalled, a place the entire family can enjoy. "Perhaps when you initially walk into the store, you might think of it as an old-fashioned candy and novelty store," Balcom said. "But the more you dig into it, you find that it's also new and fresh and current with what is popular in anime and television shows currently airing."

Balcom and Morrissey decided to open a second store in December 2015. "We looked at several different locations for another store. We wanted to have a presence in downtown Detroit, but there were no spaces available at that time," Morrissey explained. "However, there was a space ready and available in Ferndale, so that was the most viable option. We also felt the Ferndale area best represented what we'd been doing here in Ypsilanti, too, with a diverse population of people, a younger population, families... many of the same demographics we have here." And as Balcom added, Ferndale is far enough away that it feels like a different business which has developed its own personality. Morrissey continued, "As life partners and business partners, it's comforting to be able to build businesses in gay-friendly and welcoming communities like Ypsilanti and Ferndale. It's always nice to be able to live and do business in places where you're accepted."

The Rocket in Ypsilanti was built out of a sense of hope in the ability to build a successful business, to help revitalize the downtown area and give it new breath, and to create a space where all people are welcome to visit, shop, and become friends. Those same sentiments carry over to the Rocket in Ferndale, so if you've never visited the stores before, take the time to stop in, look around, and say hello to Balcom, Morrissey, and the staff. I'm sure you'll quickly find it to be one of your favorite places in town.

###





The Food Section

# Conscious and Tasty Eating and Nutrition



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By Dawn Swartz



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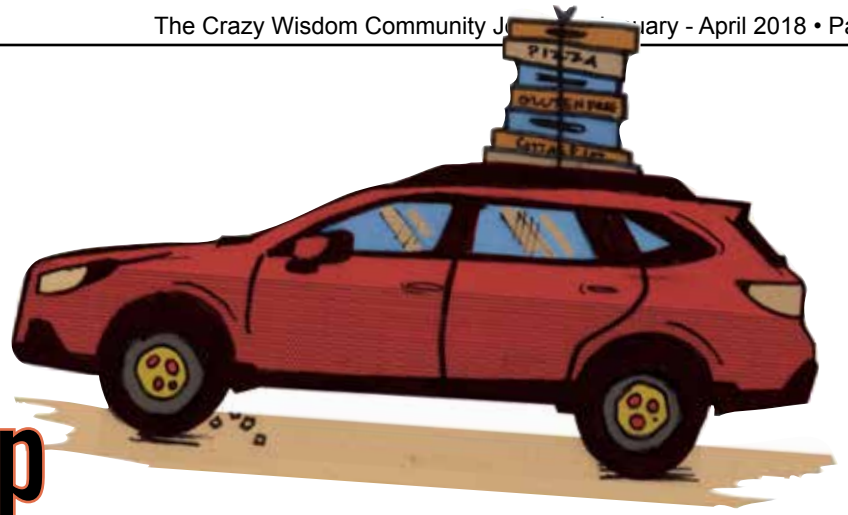
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# Three Ann Arbor Gluten Free Pizzas That Are Worth the Trip



By Dawn Swartz • Illustrations by Caitlin Muncy

## Blaze Fast Fire'd Pizza

980A West Eisenhower Parkway

It's refreshing to feel those serving you have had even two minutes of training dedicated to gluten free (GF) realities. It's the simplest diet at this point in U.S. food trends, so there's no excuse not to have the knowledge if you make your living serving food. When I told the first server on the line at Blaze Fast Fire'd Pizza that I was GF, the others heard it quickly. One changed his plastic gloves, another asked if this was for allergy or preference, and yet another advised I would want to choose the balsamic dressing on my salad and say "no" to the turkey meatballs. I was impressed by their helpfulness and knowledge.

What helped to make this a great pizza was the many veggie options, including, artichoke, arugula, banana pepper, basil, two kinds of olives, cherry tomatoes, garlic, sweet peppers, jalapeños, mushrooms, oregano, pineapple, fresh and sautéed onions, spinach, and zucchini. As for meat toppings, there are bacon, meatballs, turkey meatballs (not GF), sausage, ham, chicken, pepperoni, and salami. There are also nine cheeses to choose from and seven sauces.

**If you have ever tried GF pizza, you know the hardest thing to get right is the crust.**

If you have ever tried GF pizza, you know the hardest thing to get right is the crust. Blaze succeeds with one qualifier: pass on the olive oil drizzle. I know it sounds good, but any wetness added to this pizza affects the crust. It may sound delicious to crown your own creation with a spot of pesto or olive oil, but don't gamble on this. I didn't believe it so they let me try it both ways, and they were absolutely right! A crust that looks and tastes like silly putty could ruin your day, let alone your dinner or your date. So just go without the drizzles.

For beverages, they offer the usual serve-yourself soda fountain (where you can expect the sweetener is going to be high fructose corn syrup). The four non-pop offerings are sweetened with cane sugar. It's easy to spot the two which have less sugar; they are labeled "agua fresca" as opposed to the two lemonades. But they're all delicious.

Before going, you should know that most people order online. When I got inside, I at first felt ignored because I couldn't even tell where the line started for build-your-own pizza, and it seemed everyone was getting helped besides me. Why? They had all ordered online. So, I highly recommend ordering online.

Also, try not to go at 8 p.m. when I did. Later I was told that they were training four new people that night, and the dinner rush had just ended. Another time I went at 5 p.m., and it was still a wait, just not as hectic as the previous time. Blaze is located next to Whole Foods and REI. Another location is on Washtenaw Avenue.



## Pieology Pizzeria

620 East Liberty Street

Pieology on Liberty Street has been serving GF since its arrival in 2014. The manager and staff were sure to say they only do "GF friendly" because the GF pizza shares the horizontal space with all other meals, so those with severe gluten allergy take note.

Pieology also has many veggie options, though they leave out my favorites, zucchini, sautéed onions, and sun-dried tomatoes. Here you can have extra olive oil without having it spoil the crust, and this place

works like a well-oiled clock. Mostly young student-types on staff, and they have had sufficient training. I was also advised not to have the meatballs, but my server didn't seem to have GF knowledge past that. Drinks available are the usual high fructose pops, with tea, local craft beers, and wine.

Pieology crusts are ordered from outside the company, so they are identical with all other Pieology restaurants (one in Grand Rapids and a handful in the Detroit suburbs). The crust tastes good, but they must be a millimeter thicker than other gluten free crusts, so they have more crunch. At least it's not going silly putty on you. I didn't want to eat the edges as I did the other places I tried. The leftover cold pizza tastes more chewy than freshly baked, but I definitely didn't want to finish the edge pieces, which were really hard.

## Cottage Inn Pizza

various locations

The next place I found GF pizza was surprising. In my experience, the biggest names are the last ones to be progressive because they think they can make money without the bother. Cottage Inn Pizza is different. Begun at the Ann Arbor William Street location, Cottage Inn has spread to other states in the U.S. and as far away as China.

**But now to the "meat" of the matter: the crust! Oh, the crust! It tastes so good that I could eat it by itself as breadsticks. By adding olive oil, it's as delicious as potato chips.**

If you tried their first stab at GF, you may have been turned off. But within the last year they have found a new supplier of GF shells. It's made by Senza Glutine, an Italian maker and purchased by all Cottage Inn locations, so you can be sure of uniformity. And they have a trick to insure that the crust will not be soupy: they actually bake the underside first before adding the toppings while covering the bottom side, which will be browned when the toppings are in place. The crust is also vegan, free of egg, dairy, soy.

If you're from Ann Arbor, you already know that Cottage Inn has about everything for toppings. The only things missing that I like are sautéed onions and zucchini, but that's not unusual. On every table is placed a whole bottle of olive oil for a drizzle, which you may use without a problem, but sparingly.



Here all the managers are trained in the need and reasons for being GF, and I appreciated that I didn't have to go through my entire explanation of the hows and whys of GF eating. Hopefully soon all the workers there will receive this same GF training.

**If you tried their first stab at GF, you may have been turned off. But within the last year they have found a new supplier of GF shells. It's made by Senza Glutine, an Italian maker and purchased by all Cottage Inn locations, so you can be sure of uniformity.**

But now to the "meat" of the matter: the crust! Oh, the crust! It tastes so good that I could eat it by itself as breadsticks. By adding olive oil, it's as delicious as potato chips. I would suggest they offer it on the menu, perhaps as a GF appetizer.

I want to encourage those who stay out of restaurants for fear of the GF pizza to give dining out another chance. Though there is a caution: don't expect a GF pizza to be as good the next day. Alas, if you cannot finish a whole pizza on the spot, the best plan is to bring a friend along for the treat!

*Dawn Swartz has been happily gluten free for almost two years. Contact her at [fddl2003@yahoo.com](mailto:fddl2003@yahoo.com).*



# From Land to Hand: Green Things Farm Brings Organic Food to Locals

By Nadia Todoroff  
Photos by Joni Strickfaden

*Green Things organic farm is located on Nixon Road in Ann Arbor and owned and run by Jill (28) and Nate Lada (31). Nate grew up on the East Coast, and then the Detroit suburbs. He loves rock climbing, making boards on the sawmill, and spending time with friends. His grandparents had a small farm in Wisconsin which inspired his interest in farming. He manages the complex systems on the farm — from building infrastructure, running irrigation, and fixing tractors to planning cattle pasture rotations and making planting schedules.*

*Jill grew up in Grand Rapids and spent a lot of time with her family on the beaches of Lake Michigan. Her role on the farm is business management. She does most of the marketing, sales, accounting, harvest coordination, and crew management. She is the speediest vegetable picker on the farm! She loves growing and arranging flowers and driving the electric weeding tractor, as well as walking their dog in the woods, traveling to places with good food, and riding horses.*

**Q: What do you grow on Green Things?**

A: We grow all sorts of vegetables, and we raise cattle, chickens, and pigs. We also grow flowers, herbs, and raspberries.

**Q: Where do you sell your harvest?**

A: The Kerrytown Market on Saturdays and St. Joseph’s Hospital on Wednesdays. We also sell at Argus Farm Stop and wholesale to restaurants in town. We have a farm stand as well on the farm.

**Q: What attracted the two of you to farming?**

A: Initially we were drawn to farming because we wanted to make positive environmental change in our community food system. [Farming was also attractive to us because it meant we could] work outside, be our own boss, and eat well. The land we bought was a bare field, so we have had to build the farm up from scratch. The soils and natural areas are a long-term project we work on improving each year. These challenges are what make life interesting! With the arrival of our son, Graham, this past spring, I have also come to appreciate how conducive farming is to raising a child. We both have an active role in raising Graham, and he gets to spend a lot of time outside.

**Q: What’s the story behind Green Things?**

A: We were looking for farm land together for a few months and weren’t having good luck; we both went to U-M and met in college — we were both in The Program in the Environment (an interdisciplinary program that combines courses in natural and social sciences with courses in the humanities). I was done with school and Nate was working a part-time job while we were looking for land.

Nate and I decided to leave and travel for a few months when some friends from Ann Arbor called and said to come back to town because the Tillian Farm Development Center (an unpaid farm incubator program that supports young farmers by providing free access to land) was taking applications. We applied and got accepted, so we started farming there.

**Q: How did Tillian Farm help get the two of you off your feet to start your own farm?**

A: We didn’t have to commit to buying land before we were sure we wanted to have



**“I love the lifestyle. I really like working for myself and creating something tangible. Each year I can see the product of our efforts going into building soil health and developing community around the farm.”**

a farm. We built hoop houses and other farm infrastructure, and a mentorship program helped community building. We bought the land that we own now the second year we were there.

**Q: What are the biggest challenges the two of you face as young farmers?**

A: At first it was being able to live on the property; we just built a house this past year on our farm. In the beginning, the land we bought was vacant and originally was a conventional soybean field, so putting all the infrastructure in for an organic farm was a much bigger challenge than anticipated.

**Q: What do you love about farming?**

A: I love the lifestyle. I really like working for myself and creating something tangible. Each year I can see the product of our efforts going into building soil health and developing community around the farm. I like hiring people and teaching them about farming, I love working outside, and we eat really well. Community building is a big part of what we do, and we host community events over the season.



**Q: What's a typical day like on the farm?**

A: We just had a baby — he's five months old so things are changing a bit. But usually we get up pretty early and cook breakfast for our farm crew. Then we make a plan for the day, and then it's chores like watering transplants and feeding the animals. Depending on the day, we do harvesting or weeding or planting projects. And then we've got a lot of building projects, we are still very much in the developing phase of building the farm. We try to end work around 5 p.m., have a nice dinner, and go to bed. These days Nate and I either have the baby with us out in the field or we take turns watching him in the house.

*Green Things Farm is located at 3825 Nixon Road in Ann Arbor. For more information, visit [www.greenthingsfarm.com](http://www.greenthingsfarm.com).*

**“The land we bought was a bare field, so we have had to build the farm up from scratch. The soils and natural areas are a long-term project we work on improving each year. These challenges are what make life interesting!”**



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# Salt, Coconut Oil, & Superfoods for Everyday Health



By Kristen Clore

Remember the saying “you are what you eat”? It is an important saying in our society today more than ever. In this article, I want to teach you the benefits of some often misunderstood foods (salt and coconut oil) and teach you some benefits of everyday superfoods that help give nutrients your body needs.

First, let me start with a review of refined foods. Refined foods are foods that have been milled, processed, and heated. Our society is based on many processed foods which can be

detrimental to our health because they lack minerals, enzymes that help us to break foods down and utilize them properly. Eating these devitalized foods can significantly decrease our body’s ability to obtain the benefit of other superfoods we eat.

Salt is often misunderstood as being “bad” for us. The problem with this statement is the lack of definition and its partial truth. Yes, refined salt (or table salt as we mostly see it) is indeed bad for our health. Refined salt is mostly sodium and chloride. However, unrefined salt is salt that is not heated, does not contain anti-caking agents, is not white and crystal looking like sugar, and instead usually contains color impurity and often contains some caking of the salt and up to 15 percent moisture from its original source.

**Refined foods are foods that have been milled, processed, and heated. Our society is based on many processed foods which can be detrimental to our health because they lack minerals, enzymes that help us to break foods down and utilize them properly.**

Devitalized food leads to acidity in the body which can result in impaired and uncomfortable digestion. If you’re experiencing uncomfortable digestion, sore throat congestion and phlegm, impaired sleep or leg cramping, try adding a pinch of unrefined Celtic sea salt to your water, or 1/8 teaspoon to 20 ounces of water. I use Selina Naturally and Redmond Real Salt brands.

It is important to remember that unrefined sea salt does not have added nutrients, so it is not a significant source of iodine. Be sure to supplement your diet with iodine rich foods. One of my favorites is a delightful snack of dried seaweed chips! If you’re looking for something around your house, prunes often contain about 10 percent of your daily iodine needs. You may have difficulty eating prunes daily, though.

Unrefined coconut oil contains medium chained fatty acids which are more readily digested for energy. It is also antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory. Eating unrefined coconut oil can block intestinal flora that cause inflammation. Applied topically, it can shield and nourish your skin from harmful bacteria and yeast. If you’re experiencing decreased energy and indigestion, replace your refined cooking oil with unrefined coconut oil. Coconut oil also has a higher smoke point compared to other beneficial oils like extra virgin olive oil or flaxseed oil. This means coconut oil can be used in higher temperatures of cooking (versus our favorite, extra virgin olive oil, or EVOO). Save the EVOO and flaxseed for topping your food after it has been cooked or adding to foods that are not heated.

**Eating unrefined coconut oil can block intestinal flora that cause inflammation. Applied topically, it can shield and nourish your skin from harmful bacteria and yeast.**

Chia seeds have been used since the Aztecs. Chia means “strength” in the Mayan language. To easily add chia seeds to your daily routine, soak them in unsweetened coconut milk overnight to create a “chia pudding.” It will have the consistency

similar to tapioca, and I love to add cinnamon and other spices to enhance the flavor of mine. Chia is a “superfood” because it is high in fiber, protein, omegas 3 and 6 and has many trace minerals including potassium, calcium, and zinc. If you’re trying to improve your skin, digestion, heart healthy diet, manage your foods for diabetes, build muscle, or lose weight, try adding chia seeds to your daily routine in replacement of a refined food.

**If you’re experiencing uncomfortable digestion, sore throat congestion and phlegm, impaired sleep or leg cramping, try adding a pinch of unrefined Celtic sea salt to your water, or 1/8 teaspoon to 20 ounces of water.**

Hemp seeds are a wonderful food that can be added for protein and minerals. Hemp seeds contain vitamin E, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, calcium, and other trace minerals that are important for immune system health. Hemp seeds are also considered a complete protein, containing all of the essential amino acids, building blocks for health in our body. If you are working on heart health, skin health, or digestive and hormonal issues, hemp seeds in replacement of a sugary protein bar may be a good trade for you.

Kale is not the newest trend in chips, but has actually been enjoyed since ancient Rome. Close cousins of kale include arugula, bok choy, broccoli, and mustard greens! These cruciferous vegetables are anti-inflammatory, contain good fiber for keeping a healthy gastrointestinal tract, and can be helpful in an anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory diet. Cruciferous vegetables digest best by being steamed or slightly cooked. Vitamins A, K, and B, selenium, and trace minerals, as well as healthy vision, healthy gastrointestinal tract, and heart health are all benefits from cruciferous vegetables.

**A favorite of mine is matcha tea. It detoxifies naturally because it is rich in fiber, chlorophyll, vitamin C, zinc, and magnesium. If you’re looking for matcha tea, be sure to get it in an unsweetened version.**

We all love beets for the liver cleansing and digestive health, but did you know beet greens are healthy, too? And they contain more iron than spinach!

A favorite of mine is matcha tea. It detoxifies naturally because it is rich in fiber, chlorophyll, vitamin C, zinc, and magnesium. If you’re looking for matcha tea, be sure to get it in an unsweetened version. Many sweetened toxic blends of matcha exist and do not provide the same health benefits as pure, unsweetened matcha. When used unsweetened, it can help with a heart healthy diet, boost your metabolism, calm your mind, and relax your body.

Make the best of every day by removing refined foods from your diet and adding nutrient filled foods like these.

*Kristen Clore, OTR, Nutrition Response Practitioner® is an occupational therapist and certified wellness coach with the Nutritional Healing Center of Ann Arbor, located at 3610 West Liberty in Ann Arbor. For more information call (734) 302-7575, or visit [www.thenutritionalhealingcenter.com](http://www.thenutritionalhealingcenter.com).*





# Cooking — A Spiritual Practice



By Liza Baker

According to Sophie Egan in her book *Devoured*, March 2015 was a watershed moment in the eating lives of Americans: for the first time since the government began tracking our spending habits around food, we spent more money on food prepared outside the home (restaurants, takeout, etc.) than on groceries that we cooked at home.

In *Cooked*, author/activist Michael Pollan writes that the average American spends 27 minutes

making dinner, far less time than it takes to watch an episode of *Iron Chef*! America has become a nation of people who love to watch cooking as a spectator sport but don't otherwise engage in it regularly.

Cooking from scratch every night of the week can seem overwhelming, even more so if you make a hot breakfast and pack a homemade lunch (or four) every day because, let's be honest, we are all living high-octane lives, especially if we are not only busy professionals ourselves, but also the parents of over-scheduled kids. Add to that the ideas that each meal should look like something out of a gourmet cooking magazine and be prepared at the speed of light, and, well, there's not much incentive to even try.

**America has become a nation of people who love to watch cooking as a spectator sport but don't otherwise engage in it regularly.**

But try we must if we want to make some changes to our waistlines.

Importantly, cooking from scratch on a regular basis can be what Charles Duhigg, author of *The Power of Habit*, would call "a keystone habit": one that unintentionally causes a cascade of positive outcomes. You may notice that once you make a habit of cooking at home using whole ingredients, your weight drops, your numbers fall in line, you spend more quality time with family at the table enjoying the food you've prepared, you have more energy, you work out more regularly, you sleep better, your stress level drops, and so on.

You can enter this cascade at a different point as well: you work out more regularly, you start eating better to fuel your workouts, you sleep better, your stress level drops, you lose weight, et cetera. Or you take up meditation, your stress level drops, you lose weight, et cetera. The point is, one habit fuels other ones, partly for physiological reasons and partly for psychological ones: success in one area of our lives tends to help us feel as though we can take on another problematic area.

**I often surprise my clients by asking, "How do you show up in the kitchen?" It's not a trick question, and it's one that they have rarely considered beyond a flip "As little as possible" or a shamefaced "Not often enough."**

Because of my culinary background, most clients come to me for help in reclaiming their health by reclaiming their kitchens, so I created what I call the Flip Your Kitchen™ system for them. The system initially involves a little planning and effort—and it can have a deep impact on what economists call the triple bottom line: improved physical health, a fainter environmental footprint, and a connection to your local food economy and your community in new and rewarding ways.

There are some "hard" skills to be acquired — namely learning to meal plan and to cook — and there's also a "soft" skill — the mindset shift that takes place when you start to bring an intentionality to how you show up in the kitchen and at the table, how you nourish yourself and others.

You may just laugh out loud if I tell you that cooking is one of my spiritual practices, but I first came across the idea with one of my mentors, Peggy Curry of Curry Girls Kitchen, who is working on a cookbook and creates wonderful videos of healthful recipes with her daughter and business partner, Megan Curry.

From Peggy, I adopted the idea of making the kitchen a sacred space — also from her, I got the centerpiece of my "kitchen altar," a little ceramic angel medallion that graces the handle of the cabinet directly over where I spend most of my kitchen time.

In culinary school, I learned to start each day's cooking by taking care of my knives and setting up my station; at home, I start each meal's prep by centering myself with a few deep breaths, a gentle touch of the angel medallion, and a listing of gritudes: for the food I am privileged to have and the earth, air, water, sun, and pollinators, the chain of growers, pickers, packers, and transporters who have brought it to me. I set an intention to treat the food with respect for the nourishment it brings. Only then do I start to cook.

I often surprise my clients by asking, "How do you show up in the kitchen?" It's not a trick question, and it's one that they have rarely considered beyond a flip "As little as possible" or a shamefaced "Not often enough."

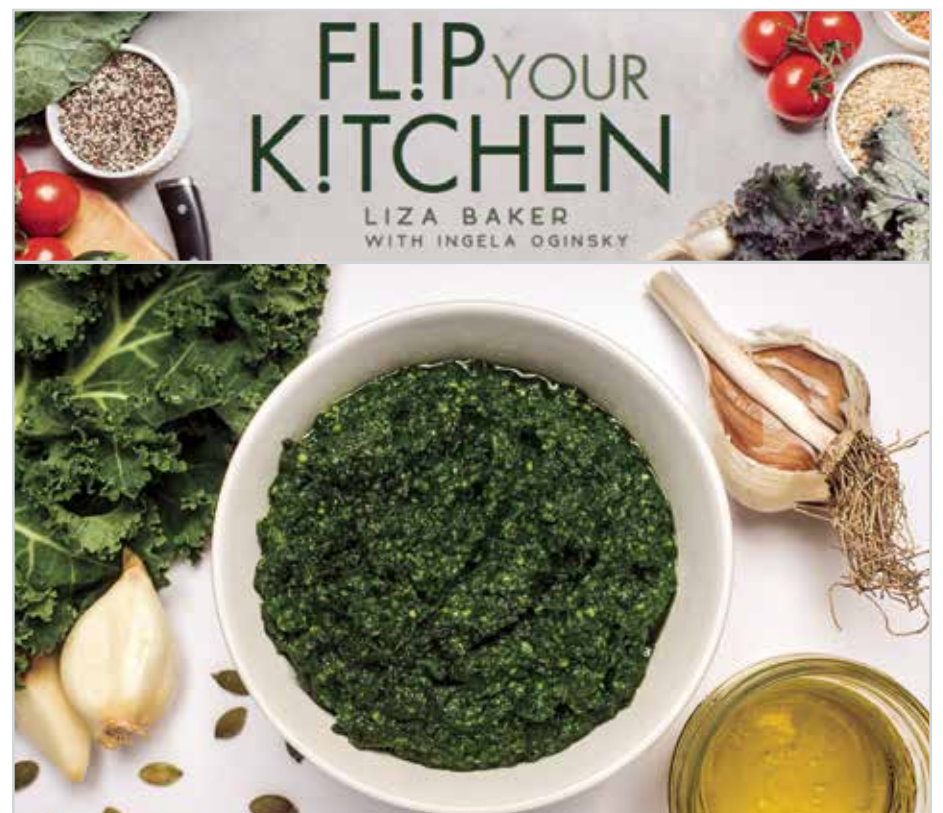
I find that thoughtful answers to this question are most often a reflection of how we show up in our lives: those who survive on protein shake breakfasts, fast food lunches, and microwaved or takeout dinners don't honor other aspects of their lives that need just as much nourishment—careers, relationships, physical activity, spiritual practices, sleep, et cetera.

**In culinary school, I learned to start each day's cooking by taking care of my knives and setting up my station; at home, I start each meal's prep by centering myself with a few deep breaths, a gentle touch of the angel medallion, and a listing of gritudes.**

Proper secondary nutrition through meals created from scratch at home using whole ingredients can raise our nutritional status and our energetic vibrations in the world, and a home cooking practice can start a chain reaction as our so-called primary foods — all the other aspects of our lives that can nourish or toxify us — also begin to help us thrive, not just survive.

Over the past few decades — or even over the past election cycle — the degradation of our health, our environment, and our sense of local community seems to be gaining momentum: we have fallen out of step with Nature (or whatever other name you prefer for a higher power).

**Proper secondary nutrition through meals created from scratch at home using whole ingredients can raise our nutritional status and our energetic vibrations in the world.**



Most of us eat (and eat well) at least three times a day. Becoming mindful of where our food comes from and how we cook it, who has this blessing and who doesn't and why — how we come to the kitchen — is one small step toward bringing our own vibrations more in line with that of the Universe.

*Integrative Nutrition® health coach, kitchen coach, sanity whisperer to working women, and COO of a family of four, Liza Baker helps people discover how best to show up their lives (and in their kitchen). She lives with her husband in a half-empty nest in Ann Arbor and is passionate about health and happiness, education and exercise, SOLE food and social justice. Visit [simply-healthcoaching.com](http://simply-healthcoaching.com) for more information. Liza's book, Flip Your Kitchen, is available at Crazy Wisdom.*



# Great Tastes in LOCAL FOOD

Column by Crysta Coburn • Photography by Rachel Everheart



Get schooled in Food 4.0 with this amazing Chickpea Beets Burger! Your taste-buds will love this patty nestled in with romaine, tomato, coleslaw, and a spicy mayo.

## First Bite

Ann Arbor's Main Street has another new fast casual style restaurant, this time in the form of First Bite, located between Huron and Washington streets. Made from scratch to order, First Bite serves what they call Food 4.0, "positive food." Per their website: "We believe that food, more than anything else, must positively impact all major stakeholders: the producers (farmers and generally, our vendors), our customers (you!), ourselves (the First Bite team and their families), and also the environment (mother Earth). Everything we do must impact them all in a positive way. And only that can bring you truly positive food!"

The menu is composed of burgers, wraps, bowls, salads, soups, sides, sweets, smoothies, and cold and hot beverages. There is no beef on the menu, though, so the burgers are either vegetarian or poultry. The Turkey Cheese burger, ground turkey blended with feta and topped with veggies

and goat cheese, is so moist and delicious, and if you know turkey, you know how difficult it can be to keep turkey moist. I was told the customer favorite — and I taste why! — is the Chickpea Beets burger, a flavorful chickpea and beets patty with romaine lettuce, tomato, coleslaw, and spicy mayo sauce.

The burgers are served with a side of chips and a pickle, but you can upgrade to seasoned potato wedges, which are pretty filling! Other sides include "Un-fries," seasoned and baked beets and sweet potatoes, and Crispy Delight, thin flatbread with mozzarella cheese, tomato, sautéed vegetables, and balsamic glaze.

Beverages include probiotic smoothies, kombucha, LaCroix, lemonade, iced tea, cucumber water, coffee, hot tea or chai, and what they call Rare Kava (you may notice the name advertised prominently in the restaurant's front window). Kava, a western Pacific crop, has many uses, including as a sedative and euphoriant. The drink is served hot.

First Bite offers many choices when it comes to ordering kava, to help make the bitter and earthy drink more palatable to those unused to it. First, choose a size (I strongly recommend the smaller four-ounce), then pick conventional cow's milk or almond, chocolate, or regular (I suggest chocolate). To make it easier on the tongue, a sweetener of simple syrup or stevia is offered. I was warned by the friendly person helping me through the ordering process that the kava would make my lips tingle and tongue go numb. Be prepared when you order your own bowl! (The traditional way of serving kava is in a bowl.) The more I sipped, the number my lips and tongue became, a little like a trip to the dentist, but not nearly as long-lasting as Novocain.

As for desserts, the ice cream is super creamy and full of flavor. There is also coffee cake and a Cookie of the Day. The entree portions are large, though, so good luck finding room for dessert.

Located at 108 South Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor, First Bite is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., closed on Sunday and Monday. Find them online at [www.firstbitefoods.com](http://www.firstbitefoods.com) along with the full menu, or call (734) 369-4765 with questions.

## Cheese Shop of Saline

If you live in or near Saline, Michigan, and you love cheese, you have won the lottery! Co-founder of the Zingerman's Creamery, John Loomis, and his wife, Ruth, opened the Cheese Shop of Saline in the wonderfully walkable and growing downtown late last summer, right near the corner of Michigan Avenue and Ann Arbor Street.

Walk into the spacious shop, and you will find an array of cheeses made on-site as well as cheese from across the country (I was delighted to spy Humboldt Fog, a personal favorite goat milk cheese from Northern California) and imported from Europe. There are also all forms of delectable delights to go with the cheese, such as crackers, breads, oils, cured meats, craft beer, wine, chocolate (I couldn't resist grabbing a TCHO organic hazelnut chunk chocolate bar) and more.



First Bite offers many choices when it comes to ordering kava, to help make the bitter and earthy drink more palatable to those unused to it.



My husband was particularly delighted to find Zapp's brand potato chips, a Louisiana-based company whose chips you don't often see this far north. We did not go home with any Zapp's (though now we know a place to get them), but we did leave with a quarter pound of white Stilton with blueberries on the sweet side and another quarter pound of Cotswold, a Double Gloucester with chopped onions and chives, on the savory.

Walk into the spacious shop, and you will find an array of cheeses made on-site as well as cheese from across the country (I was delighted to spy Humboldt Fog, a personal favorite goat milk cheese from Northern California) and imported from Europe.

White Stilton is a fabulous, creamy cheese that often has fruit added to it with delicious results. It's one my go-tos for a cheese tray, and blueberry is my absolute favorite. The blueberries in this particular cheese tasted fresh and juicy.

On the other end of the spectrum is the Cotswold, a bright, golden orange cheese with a confetti of green chives, bursting with color and flavor. I like pairing this with lightly toasted slices of baguette, making it a great choice for Fancy Grilled Cheese Night, and Cotswold goes great with beer and certain full-bodied wines.

Speaking of cheese sandwiches, I was sad to miss out on artisan sandwiches that, as of my visit, were only being offered on the weekends to test different recipes and get feedback from the public. We were told that sandwiches were going to be a regular offering in the future. I look forward to trying all of them!

*The Cheese Shop of Saline is located at 98 North Ann Arbor Street in downtown Saline. They are open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Check them out online at [www.facebook.com/cheeseshopofsaline](http://www.facebook.com/cheeseshopofsaline). Call at (734) 470-6326.*

## Ziggy's

Where to begin with a business originally billed to me as a David Bowie-themed pachinko bar? My husband and I anxiously awaited the opening of Ziggy's in downtown Ypsi, near the corner of Michigan Avenue and Washington Street, cheering when a picture of David Bowie went up by the door and again when the sign appeared in the window, making the takeover of the remodeled cafe and performance space — and now arcade! — official. When the grand opening day arrived, we were there with bells on. Local jazz band Impulse (formerly known as Anointed Souls) rocked it out on stage (look for them; I'm serious), and we enjoyed glasses of New Orleans style cold brew coffee.





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*Ziggy's is the perfect place to meet with friends, enjoy great music, get some writing done (during the quieter daytime hours), or play old Nintendo games on the large screen behind the bar. (Try your luck at Wheel of Fortune and attempt to win an 8-bit Bentley!)*

You will find Bowie's face and associated icons (such as the red lightning bolt of Ziggy Stardust) splashed across the walls and Kleenex boxes, but there are also comic book characters like Captain America and Batman wall art, Star Wars figurines, arcade games, and yes, pachinko, a vertical pinball game originating in Japan that is also a popular gambling device.

As of my first few visits, the bar was limited to a coffee bar, but the alcohol license was on its way. Ziggy's serves Ypsilanti-based Hyperion coffee, baked goods from Saline's Brewed Awakenings, Ann Arbor-based Tasty Bakery gluten-free brownies, pie from Ann Arbor's Eat, and more. For the non-coffee drinkers, there are also tea and soda options, including Mexican Coca-cola.

The atmosphere is chill, funky, and cozy, and the open space is tastefully decorated, unified despite the different seating areas. And even though they've been open less than a year, Ziggy's already feels a part of the community, participating in every First Fridays event, hosting live music performances and other special events (like holding a swing night with the Ann Arbor Swing Dance Association).

Naturally, much of what makes a business so inviting is the staff, and the people at Ziggy's are friendly, open to chatting, and helpful, offering suggestions if you are having some difficulty with the menu options (if you are both dairy and gluten free, for example).

Ziggy's is the perfect place to meet with friends, enjoy great music, get some writing done (during the quieter daytime hours), or play old Nintendo games on the large screen behind the bar. (Try your luck at Wheel of Fortune and attempt to win an 8-bit Bentley!) If you're feeling particularly adventurous, you can play pachinko, which I have yet to try. (The machine is noisy, and I honestly find it intimidating.)

Is it eclectic? Yes. But as the legend David Bowie himself said, "I find only freedom in the realms of eccentricity."

*Ziggy's is located at 206 West Michigan Avenue in downtown Ypsilanti. Check their Facebook page for hours of operation and events for the week, [www.facebook.com/ziggyspsi](http://www.facebook.com/ziggyspsi), or call (734) 221-3961.*



# CRAZY WISDOM POETRY SERIES



**Crazy Wisdom Tea Room  
hosted by Joe Kelty  
and Ed Morin**

**Second and Fourth Wednesday  
of each month, 7-9 p.m.**

**Second Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.:** Poetry Workshop at Crazy Wisdom Tearoom. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m.

**Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.:** Featured Reader(s) for 50 minutes. Open Mic reading for 1 hour. All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m.

## Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series Featured Readers

**January 24 - Jamie Thomas** is author of *Etch and Blur*, which won the Brick Road Poetry Prize. He also won an Academy of American Poets Prize. His poems have appeared in *New Ohio Review*, *Third Coast*, *Missouri Review*, and *Verse Daily*. He lives in Detroit and teaches Writing and Literature at Ferris State U.



**February 28 - Katherine Edgren** has a new book of poems, *The Grain Beneath the Gloss*. Her two poetry chapbooks are *Long Division* and *Transports*. Her poems have appeared in *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Barbaric Yawp*, and elsewhere. A retired social worker and former Ann Arbor City Council member, she lives in Dexter.



AND

**February 28 - Jennifer Burd** is author of a new poetry collection, *Day's Late Blue*, and the earlier *Body and Echo*. Her book, *Daily Bread: A Portrait of Homeless Men & Women of Lenawee County, Michigan*, is creative nonfiction. She teaches creative writing and literature online and also for Jackson Community College.



AND

**February 28 - Laszlo Slomovits** is one of the twin brothers in Ann Arbor's children's folk music duo, Gemini (GeminiChildrensMusic.com). Besides his music for children, he has set to music the work of many poets, including ancient Sufi mystics Rumi and Hafiz and contemporary poets Naomi Shihab Nye and Jennifer Burd.



**March 28 - Dawn McDuffie** has lived and worked in Detroit since 1968. Her poems explore the city landscape and an inner world of memory, imagination, and dreams. She's published three chapbooks: *Carmina Detroit*, *Bulky Pick Up Day*, and *Flag Day in Detroit*, and a new book—*Happenstance and Miracles*.



**April 25 - Jan Worth-Nelson** pounds out journalism as editor of Flint's venerable *East Village Magazine*, while producing a steady stream of stories and poems recently in *Belt*, *Hypertext*, *The MacGuffin*, *Midwestern Gothic* and *Exposition Review*. She is author of the novel *Night Blind*, based on wrenching Peace Corps experiences in the Kingdom of Tonga.



## CRAZY WISDOM POETRY CIRCLE

**The Poetry Series is open to all.  
There is never a charge.**

**Crazy Wisdom Bookstore  
114 S. Main St., Ann Arbor  
734.665.2757 crazywisdom.net  
cwpocetrycircle.tumblr.com**

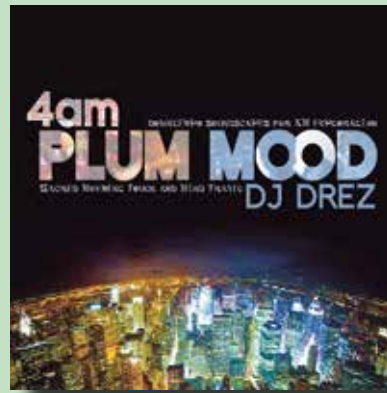
# Music Reviews

By Sarah Newland



### Only Love Is Real cd

By MC Yogi  
MC Yogi is a popular American hip hop musician and yogi. Unusually, his music style characteristically contains themes promoting Hindu philosophy. Highly danceable with great rhythms and lyrics, his work is upbeat and energizing. \$16.99



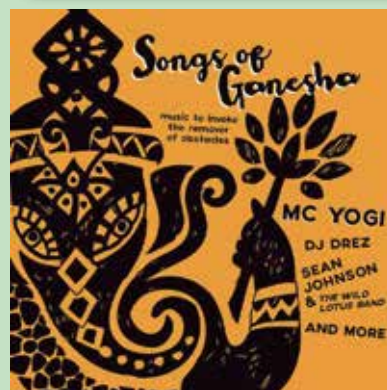
### 4 am Plum Mood cd

By DJ Drez  
Downtempo soundscapes for early morning exploration, sacred movement, touch, and mind travel. \$16.99



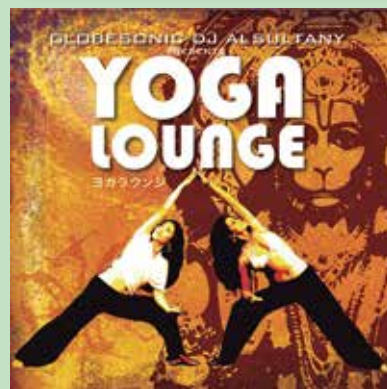
### Night Visions cd

By Desert Dwellers  
This ethno-electronic musical alchemy speaks as freely to hard-charging global bassheads as it does to laid back yogis. The unity of this electro-organic sound is captured and showcased on this collection of remixes, demonstrating the fluent multilingualism of these sonic explorers. \$16.99



### Songs of Ganesha cd

By Various Artists  
This cd celebrates India's beloved deity of creativity, art, science, wisdom, and forward motion. Ganesha's divine essence transcends names or images and resonates here in 11 selections intended to evoke his liberating presence, release blocked energies, and take us toward our highest aspirations. Includes MC Yogi, DJ Drez, Sean Johnson, and Jai Uttal. \$16.99



### Yoga Lounge cd

By Globesonic DJ Alsultany  
Here are songs by Deva Premal, Jai Uttal, MJ Greenmountain, and more, remixed into a contemporary electronic sound for extended chill sessions. \$16.99

**These CDs  
are available  
for purchase  
at Crazy Wisdom!**



# CRAZY WISDOM TEA ROOM

NO  
COVER  
CHARGE!

live  
music

WEEKENDS

Fridays  
& Saturdays  
8:00 - 10:00 pm

- Cozy, Intimate Gathering Space
- Family-Friendly
- Broad Range of Genres



114 S. Main St., Ann Arbor  
734.665.2757  
www.crazywisdom.net  
Booking Coordinator:  
Michelle Wilbert  
music@crazywisdom.net

Crazy Wisdom is proud to offer weekend nights of music that unite people of all ages and backgrounds in a common passion... great music!

Friday, January 5: Bobby Pennock  
Saturday, January 6:  
John Finan and Sharon Tse  
Friday, January 12: Bob Skon Trio  
Saturday, January 13: Bob Young  
Friday, January 19: Stuart Benbow  
Saturday, January 20: Indian Music Night  
Friday, January 26: The Nerk Twins  
(Mike Wilhelm and Gregory Sumner)  
Saturday, January 27: Judith Banker

Friday, February 2: The Lucky Nows  
Saturday, February 3: Eastward Bound  
(Luti and John Finan)  
Friday, February 9: Phil McMillion  
Saturday, February 10: Mike Ball  
Friday, February 16: Jere Stormer  
Saturday, February 17: Indian Music Night  
Friday, February 23: Rochelle Clark  
Saturday, February 24: Beverly Meyer

Friday, March 2: Hey Mavis!  
Saturday, March 3:  
Mark Jewett and Joe Cartoon  
Friday, March 9: Jeff Karoub  
Saturday, March 10: February Sky  
Friday, March 16: Arlo Aldo  
Saturday, March 17: Indian Music Night  
Friday, March 23: Ghost City Searchlight  
Saturday, March 24: Bill Edwards  
Friday, March 30: Jen Whaley  
Saturday, March 31: Rochelle Clark  
and Michelle Held

Friday, April 6: W. Washburn Gardner  
Saturday, April 7: Dan Hazlett  
Friday, April 13: Luti  
Saturday, April 14:  
John Finan and Sharon Tse  
Friday, April 20: George Heritier  
Saturday, April 21: San, Emily and Jacob  
Friday, April 27: Jay Sielstra  
Saturday, April 28: Bello Spark





# The Crazy Wisdom Kids Section

Book Reviews – Great Kids Books  
available at Crazy Wisdom in our Children’s Section



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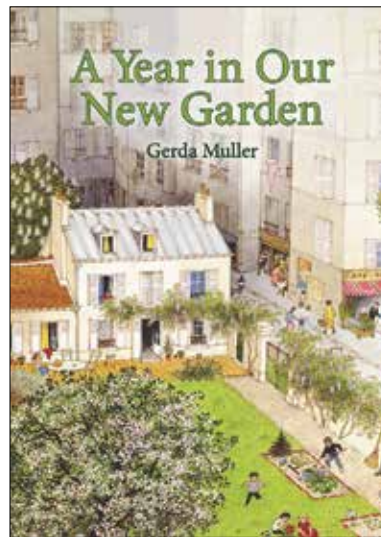
By Waldorf parent Sarah Newland

**A Year in Our New Garden**

By Gerda Muller

From my favorite Waldorf Children’s Literature section is a new book by the classic Gerda Muller, published by Floris. Anna and Benjamin’s family has just moved into their new house and, even though it’s in the middle of a busy town, it has a beautiful big garden for them all to enjoy. Join them as they spend a year learning about the wonderful things you can do, such as planting, harvesting, playing, enjoying picnics, and spotting wildlife. This is a beautifully detailed, seasonal story that is companion to *A Year Around the Great Oak*.

\$17.95



**Malala’s Magic Pencil**

By Malala Yousafzai, Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize

When Malala was a child in Pakistan, she wished for a magic pencil. But as she grew, her world changed and so did her wishes. Her right to attend school was threatened – just because she was a girl. Instead of a magic pencil, Malala now picked up a real one. She wrote alone in her room about the challenges she faced, and people from all over the world read her words. International icon, education activist, and the youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize tells her inspiring story of growing up in a war-torn region yet still seeing the magic of hope everywhere she looked.

\$17.99

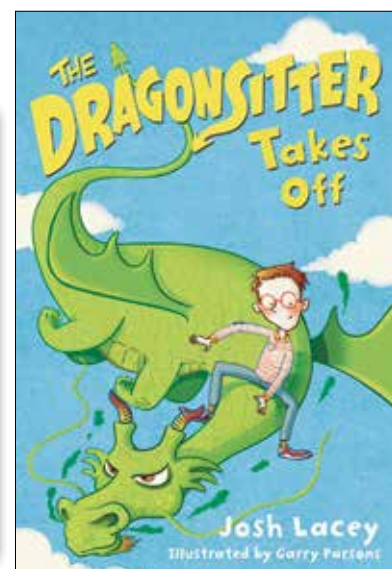
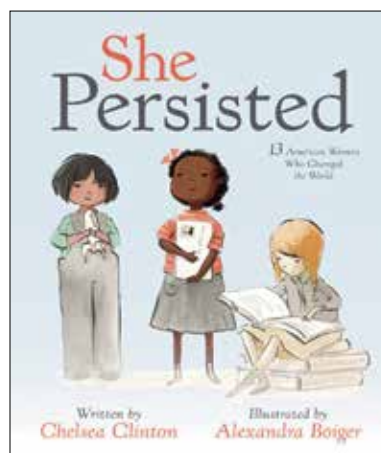


**She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World**

By Chelsea Clinton

Throughout our history, there have always been women who have spoken out for what’s right, even when they had to fight to be heard. This book is for everyone who has ever wanted to speak up but has been told to quiet down, for everyone who has ever tried to reach for the stars but was told to sit down, and for everyone who has ever been made to feel unworthy or unimportant. Educational also for parents as there are women included I had never heard about!

\$17.99



**The Dragonsitter Takes Off**

By Josh Lacey

Eddie thought dragonsitting would be easy. All he had to do was follow Uncle Morton’s instructions: buy plenty of chocolate, hide the ice cream, and don’t let Ziggy out after dark. But then Ziggy disappears, only to be found in the linen closet, refusing to budge. And Eddie learns that his uncle’s dragon has been keeping a BIG secret.

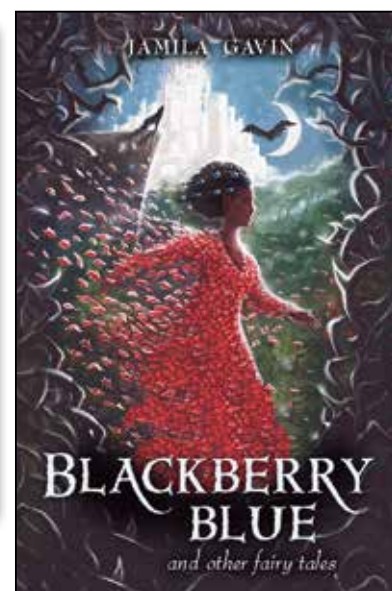
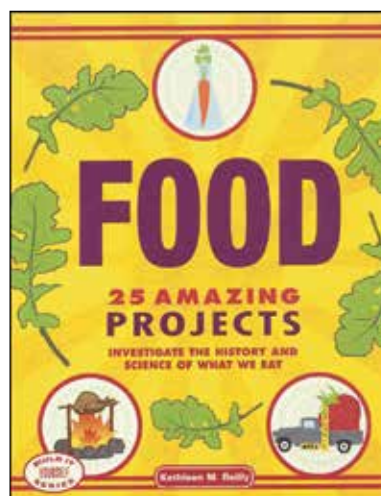
\$15.00

**Food: 25 Amazing Projects**

By Kathleen Reilly

From the minute life begins, food makes you strong, helps you grow, and gives you energy. You might not give a lot of thought to where your food comes from, how it got to you, what’s really in it or what it does for you. This investigation into the history and science of what we eat gives kids food for thought as they dive into exciting projects about the incredible world of food.

\$15.95



**Blackberry Blue and Other Fairy Tales**

By Jamila Gavin

Enter a world of magic and transformation. Here are six magical stories to thrill and enchant you. Watch Blackberry Blue rise from the bramble patch; follow Emeka the Pathfinder on his mission to save a lost king; join Princess Desire as she gallops across the Milky Way on her jet black horse. “A delight,” writes *The Times*.

\$10.99



You may also purchase the reviewed books at [shopcrazywisdom.com](http://shopcrazywisdom.com) by either visiting the website or scanning the QR code to the left.



<https://shopcrazywisdom.indielite.org/kids-reviews>



# Parenting in the Age of Legal Cannabis ~

## Telling Your Children the Truth Gives Them Freedom, Not Permission

By Dori Edwards

"It is a new form of tyranny by the old over the young. You have the adult with a cocktail in one hand and a cigarette in the other saying 'you cannot' to the child. This is untenable." –Margaret Mead

### The Age of Legal Cannabis

More than 60 percent of the U.S. population has legal access to medical Cannabis. With the new laws passed in the November 2016 election, just over 20 percent of the U.S. population now lives in a state with recreational Cannabis laws. Medical Cannabis is legal in 29 states and Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam, according to the Marijuana Policy Project, a pro-legalization group. In Michigan, adults and children with permission from their parents may have legal access to medical Cannabis with a recommendation from their doctor.

In the 1970's and 80's, the War on Drug's slogan touted by Nancy Reagan was "Just Say No." But in a new American culture where Cannabis is legal, public opinion has evolved. Sanjay Gupta, a top neurosurgeon and CNN correspondent, after taking a serious look at Cannabis and its benefits, said, "We have been terribly and systematically lied to for over 70 years in the United States and I apologize for my own role in that."

Hemp, a cousin of the *Cannabis sativa* plant, has been used medicinally, for food, clothing, paper, oil and over 2,500 other uses for thousands of years. *Cannabis sativa* — the dried leaves, flowers, and stems — contains the mind-altering chemical delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and other related compounds. Medicinal extracts can also be made from the Cannabis plant.

### To bring our body into balance when our body is deficient in producing our own endocannabinoids, supplementing is a natural response.

In 1991, researchers discovered that every single human has an endocannabinoid system, a system in our bodies for mediating the psychoactive effects of Cannabis. This system actually regulates balance or homeostasis for all the other systems in the body. This system is responsible for maintaining many of our normal bodily functions. We produce endocannabinoids naturally, and CB1 and CB2 receptors are found in our brain, nervous system, stomach, spleen, heart, and everywhere else in our bodies except our brain stem!

To bring our body into balance when our body is deficient in producing our own endocannabinoids, supplementing is a natural response. And because there are no receptors found in our brain stem, we cannot overdose on Cannabis. The endocannabinoid system is important for "cognition, neurodevelopment, stress response and emotional control, and it helps to modulate other major neurotransmitter systems," says Krista Lisdahl, Ph.D., Director of the Brain Imaging and Neuropsychology Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

### Educating our clients on usage, effects, potency, and counter-indications is part of our mission and what we promote culturally.

Another fact to understand is that legal, regulated Cannabis is medicinal. On a daily basis, we see how much good this plant does for people. People with P.T.S.D., anxiety, depression, chronic pain, seizure disorders, and even cancer patients are finding relief without the severe side effects of pharmaceutical drugs. We at Blue Sage Health are in the leadership of the movement to label all products, which is currently not required in Michigan. Educating our clients on usage, effects, potency, and counter-indications is part of our mission and what we promote culturally.

Cannabis is a safe and effective alternative medicine. Now we face an opioid epidemic, with tens of thousands overdosing on opioids annually. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, data suggests that medical Cannabis treatment may reduce the opioid dose prescribed for pain patients or replace them.

### Parents Can Begin the Conversation

Becoming an informed parent can alleviate your own fears about Cannabis. So much more is known about Cannabis than when we were kids. Start your conversation by asking, "What do you know about marijuana or Cannabis?" And allow them to tell you what they have heard and go from there. Blaming and shaming conversations will backfire. Be open to hearing what they know. Then share your knowledge. You don't want telling your kids all the facts to make you sound like Charlie Brown's Teacher: *Waa Waa Waa Waa Waa...* so be prepared with the answers so they can make decisions based on truth.

After decades of prohibition, parents are now in a strange place. For years, it has been easy for parents to tow the *Reefer Madness* line that Cannabis will make you crazy with catch phrases like, "Don't smoke pot, your brain will rot." Used responsibly, Cannabis's perceived harmful effects on the body have been proven mostly false. Tech savvy kids armed with a quick Google search will read right through the deceptive warnings and we parents could lose their trust.

So what can you tell your teenager that is more nuanced and appropriate in the age of legal Cannabis? As parents, we should stay focused on what we genuinely know, and not let fear get the better of us.

### Becoming an informed parent can alleviate your own fears about Cannabis.

Sometimes the hardest things to say are the most important. The truth can be scary. By telling the truth, you don't want to give them permission. We promise you, telling your children the truth gives them freedom, not permission. It empowers them to have the confidence to make decisions. It empowers them to seek out answers to other questions swirling around their growing brains.

First, know your teen. The truth is Cannabis is less popular now with teens than it has been historically. Federal data shows teen Cannabis use declined in Colorado in 2014 and 2015, after the opening of that state's recreational Cannabis market. As of last year, four out of five American teenagers do not use Cannabis recreationally, which is down from the 1970's and 80's. College students are much more likely to try it, and according to a U-M study, among 21 to 25 year olds, use is the highest it's been in three decades. Colorado youth data shows 91 percent smoke, 28 percent eat, 28 percent dab, and 21 percent vape.

### We promise you, telling your children the truth gives them freedom, not permission.

This is more than a "drugs are bad" discussion. This is an education and civil rights discussion. Historically, this country was founded on hemp. George Washington declared every man with more than one acre of land should grow hemp. Our Constitution was written on it, our militaries were outfitted in it, Henry Ford made a car from and fueled by hemp, and apothecaries carried tinctures of it. For political reasons, it was made illegal in the 1930s. Whatever the many reasons for that are, the truth remains the same: we have been lied to about this miraculous plant.

When it comes to Cannabis and talking to your teens, there needs to be a firm line drawn delineating your expectations alongside empowering your teens to make decisions based on truth. Educate *yourself* about why medical Cannabis is being legalized and who it's for and how you feel about it. In an age of instant access to information, if you tell your children "no" without a truthful explanation, they may be more likely to investigate the issue and eventually try it for themselves when the research conflicts with your message. If they discover that you weren't truthful, will they be willing to reach out to you on other issues that pique their interest? Colorado data shows strong mentors, parents they can ask for help, and clear family rules make teens up to 4x less likely to use Cannabis.

Be able to answer: What is it? Why is it legal? Where is it legal? Why is it different than alcohol? Can Cannabis impair a driver and can you ride with a friend who was using it? What are the consequences at school? On sports teams? For admissions? At university? At home? At work? What is potency? What is self-medicating? Why do teens they know who use it, do it? If your teens are over 18 and have a card, what resources are there to balance the lifestyle and their responsibilities?

### If children are taught to weigh out consequences it arms them with the information they need to make educated decisions.

If children are taught to weigh out consequences it arms them with the information they need to make educated decisions.

In conclusion, let's end the paranoia and deceptions around Cannabis. Cannabis is a useful, safe medicine, so let's treat it that way.

*Dori Edwards of Blue Sage Health Consulting in Ann Arbor, Michigan is the co-founder of the Ann Arbor Medical Cannabis Guild, which promotes standards for cultivating holistic Cannabis alongside professionalism and integrity in cannabis businesses. Visit [bluesagehealth.com](http://bluesagehealth.com) for more information.*

*For more information about Cannabis and public health, visit the C.D.C. and F.D.A. websites, as well as Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, Oaksterdam University, [learngreenflower.com](http://learngreenflower.com), [Weediquette](http://Weediquette.com) from ViceTV, and [leafly.com](http://leafly.com).*





# The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

## Events Calendar for Kids • September through December 2017

*New, Fun, and Just Plain Cool Things to do!*

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**Valentine's Tea with the Fairies at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, February 15, 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.** • Join the fairies of the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room for a magical tea party! Enjoy special treats in your favorite fairy attire, and then gather for story time and a surprise activity in our community room. No charge for children under 18 months. Contact Jessica at [jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net](mailto:jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net).

**Spanish Immersion Playgroup • Saturdays, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, Mar. 3, Apr. 7, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** • Learn and practice Spanish through play. Sing songs, play with toys, create process-based art, and more with Manzanitas Spanish Immersion Playschool. For children ages 6 months to 5 years old. Children must be accompanied by adults. Donations welcome. Contact Jessica Carter at [info@appleplayschools.org](mailto:info@appleplayschools.org) or [manzanitasplayschool.org](mailto:manzanitasplayschool.org).

**Apple Scouts Hikes with Apple Playschools • Saturdays, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Apr. 14, 10-11:30 a.m.** • Come hike with us. Apple Scouts is a gender-inclusive outdoor club for children ages 6-12. We spend our time hiking, tracking, mapping, reading, and building structures all while exploring the rich surroundings offered by local preserves, woods, and trails. \$5 suggested donation. Contact Apple Playschools at [info@appleplayschools.org](mailto:info@appleplayschools.org) or [appleplayschools.org](mailto:appleplayschools.org).

**Nature Storytime with Leslie Science and Nature Center • Sundays, Jan. 14, 28, Feb. 11, 25, Mar. 11, 25, Apr. 15, 29; Wednesdays, Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7, 14, 21, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25.** • Explore and appreciate the outdoors with activities such as live animal visits, hikes, stories, and hands-on activities. Each session includes indoor and outdoor activities. Aimed at children 1-5 years old. \$5/child non-members, \$4/child members. Contact Leslie Science and Nature Center at 997-1553; [info@leslicsnc.org](mailto:info@leslicsnc.org) or [lesliesnc.org/events/ages-1-5](http://lesliesnc.org/events/ages-1-5).

**Nature Tykes Preschool Program • Wednesdays, Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7, 14, 21, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25.** • Opportunity for 4-5 year-olds to learn and grow independently in this 1.5 hour drop-off program. We'll be exploring the outdoors, hiking in Black Pond Woods, meeting live animals, making crafts, and running hands-on experiments. Activities are both indoor and outdoor. Registration is by the month. \$10/child non-members, \$9/members. Contact Leslie Science and Nature Center at 997-1553; [info@leslicsnc.org](mailto:info@leslicsnc.org) or [lesliesnc.org](http://lesliesnc.org).

**Day Off Outdoor Camp with LSNC • Mondays** • Join us for a fun and educational day off from school. Single-day registration: \$70/child non-members, \$65/members. Contact Leslie Science and Nature Center at 997-1553; [info@leslicsnc.org](mailto:info@leslicsnc.org) or [lesliesnc.org](http://lesliesnc.org).

**Jan. 15 • Dream Green** • Uncover the world's most dangerous invasive species as we explore how humans impact the world around us.

**Feb. 16 • Grossology** • Investigate how turkey vultures defend themselves with vomit and experiment with mold and other gross things.

**Feb. 19 • In Your Backyard** • Come find out what makes Michigan's ecosystems tick as we venture outside to find just what lives in our own backyards.

**Winterfest with Gemini • Sunday, Feb. 4, 3 p.m.** • Annual benefit concert with the family music duo Gemini. Celebrate community with a winter event for children of all ages. \$10/individual, \$25/family. Contact Michigan Friends Center at [manager@mfcenter.org](mailto:manager@mfcenter.org); 475-1892 or visit [mfcenter.org](http://mfcenter.org).

**Spring Break Camp with LSNC • Mar. 26-30, 8:30-3:30 p.m.** • Week-long camp designed for young scientists to play outside, explore nature, create art, and make new friends! Discover how plants and animals are connected in the food web. Age-appropriate groups will be created upon registration for children enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade. \$270/child for non-residents, \$260/child for residents. Contact LSNC at 997-1553; [info@lesliesnc.org](mailto:info@lesliesnc.org) or [lesliesnc.org/camps/school-break-camps](http://lesliesnc.org/camps/school-break-camps).

**Tai Chi for Kids with Jonathan Buckman • Sundays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** • This class invites kids to learn about themselves and introduces them to skills that can bring a lifetime of happiness. It covers the slow tai chi form, playful pushing hands, and meditation techniques to use at home or school. Open to children ages 5-17. \$21/drop-in or \$70/month. Contact Pastor Alexis at 845-9786; [pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org](mailto:pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org) or [sunshen.org](http://sunshen.org).

**Yoga with Cats with Tiny Lions Lounge and Adoption Center • Sundays, 8:30-9:30 a.m., Thursdays, 7:30-8:30** • Practice Hatha style yoga with the furry feline masters at Ann Arbor's own cat cafe! Bring peace to your mind and body while filling your heart with joy as you help animals - proceeds help the homeless animals in our community. Ages 12+. \$10. tenth class is free. Contact Karen at 661-3530; [tinylions@hshv.org](mailto:tinylions@hshv.org) or [tinylions.org](http://tinylions.org).

**Little Paws Story Time with the Humane Society of Huron Valley • Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** • If you have a toddler who loves animals, come have a pawsitively fun time with us at HSHV. Designed for children ages 2-5. \$5/child. Up to two adults per child and children under one are free. Contact Karen at 662-5585; [humaneed@hshv.org](mailto:humaneed@hshv.org) or [hshv.org/storytime](http://hshv.org/storytime).

**Pets and Pajamas with the Humane Society of Huron Valley • Fridays, 5-9 p.m.** • Parents, enjoy a night out while your kids ages 5-11 enjoy some after hours time at the Humane Society of Huron Valley. This parent drop-off event includes an animal themed movie, vegetarian dinner, popcorn, and time with the adoptable animals. \$35/first child, \$15/each sibling. Contact Karen at 662-5585; [humaneed@hshv.org](mailto:humaneed@hshv.org) or [hshv.org/kids](http://hshv.org/kids).

**Family MEWvie Night with Tiny Lions • Fridays, 7-9 p.m.** • Cuddle up with adoptable cats and snack on popcorn while you watch a family-friendly flick at the Tiny Lions Cat Café! Fee includes movie and popcorn. Proceeds help the homeless animals in our community. \$10. Contact Karen at 661-3575; [tinylions@hshv.org](mailto:tinylions@hshv.org) or [tinylions.org/mewvienights](http://tinylions.org/mewvienights)

*A snowflake is one of Nature's most fragile creations, but look what they can do when they stick together!*



New, Fun, and Just Plain Cool Things to do! List your kid, tween or teen events in the May through August 2018 issue of the CW Journal!

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (May through August 2018) is Monday, March 19, 2018.



Weekend Getaways

# Experiencing Hastings, Michigan — The Adrounie House Bed and Breakfast

by Petula Brown

*This is the latest in a series of articles Petula Brown has been writing for the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal focusing on weekend retreats and getaways you can visit within a few hours drive of Ann Arbor.*

Adrounie House Bed and Breakfast  
126 South Broadway, Hastings, Michigan - www.adrounie.com

Serene. Balanced. Uncluttered. These are terms that come to mind while recalling a recent weekend visit to Hastings, Michigan. The last 30 minutes of my two-hour drive to west Michigan were winding back roads through rural hamlets and farmlands. The setting was very different from my New York City neighborhood, but communing with the new environment fostered a sense of calm that prepared me for an introspective travel experience. Most of my Michigan experiences have focused on the faster paced areas of southeastern Michigan. Being less familiar with the rest of the Mitten State, I expected my Hastings exploration to be a multifaceted learning experience.

The cerebral journey began upon arrival at the Adrounie House. Situated in historic downtown Hastings, Adrounie's décor transported me to a different era. The Michigan Historical Site was built in the 1890s and retains a Victorian style. Each of the six rooms has a distinct tone. Serelda Victoria's pink and white combined with floral accents is reminiscent of what one might see in an antique dollhouse. Shoshone Rose's earth tones complement Native American artistry for a Southwestern setting. The V. Harry Adrounie, George Lowry, Zabelle, and Emily rooms have their own unique touches, from antique beds to ornate headboards to a claw foot tub.

Across from Adrounie House, the Barry County Courthouse is another historic gem build in the 1890s. With Victorian elements similar to those seen at Adrounie, the government building is likely abuzz with activity during the workweek, while the gardens that surround the Courthouse provided a tranquil outdoor space for an early morning weekend walk.

Modern amenities blend in with the surroundings. Cable televisions are tucked within small armoires while whirlpool tubs are surrounded by period-appropriate decorative elements. De-emphasizing technology supported my goal to get off the grid, but the entire atmosphere fostered a degree of mental rejuvenation I'd be hard pressed to replicate in a typical hotel setting.

There is a historical emphasis in common areas, as well. Vintage photographs, wall treatments, and upholstery selections help transport visitors from 21<sup>st</sup> century complexities to 18<sup>th</sup> century simplicities. Guests will likely be impressed by the golden wedding dress proudly displayed on the landing and the artistic treasures that adorn the parlor, sitting room, and dining room.

Equally engaging are April and Don Tubbs, the owners/caretakers/historians of Adrounie House. Since 1995, they have been the stewards of Adrounie's riches. Living in a private wing of the residence, the Tubbs are a bell ring away for visitors seeking deeper knowledge of the Adrounie or the Hastings area. I appreciated



The setting was very different from my New York City neighborhood, but communing with the new environment fostered a sense of calm that prepared me for an introspective travel experience.

their unobtrusive approach to hosting that allowed me to extend my meditation practice from my Serelda Victoria accommodations to an expansive front porch, but welcomed the opportunity to socialize with them during breakfast. After crafting a home-cooked pancake breakfast, April joined Don in the dining room to discuss a range of topics, from current events to the evolution of Adrounie House.

April and Don's perspectives about Hastings encouraged my exploration of the downtown area. Across from Adrounie House, the Barry County Courthouse is another historic gem build in the 1890s. With Victorian elements similar to those seen at Adrounie, the government building is likely abuzz with activity during the workweek, while the gardens that surround the Courthouse provided a tranquil outdoor space for an early morning weekend walk.

The shift from Victorian environs to 21<sup>st</sup> century Hastings is an interesting contrast with the downtown vibe a couple blocks down State Street. The Waldorff Brewpub & Bistro was the source of much of that energy. Part family restaurant, part sports bar, and part brewery, the Waldorff had an eclectic mix of patrons. It resides in a building constructed in the 1860s, another example of Hastings' reverence for history and ability to intersect it with modern sensibilities like flat screen televisions and Wi-Fi.

The Waldorff's impressive range of beverages and meal options rivals dining selections I've seen at urban centers on the East and West Coasts. I appreciated the variety of handcrafted ales and was pleased by the range of cocktails, sandwiches, pizzas, and desserts. After a substantial meal, a reflective walk through the Courthouse gardens was the ideal end to a day of geographic, intellectual, and culinary exploration.

I continued my excursion with an early morning walk, a strategic choice to prepare for two breakfast experiences. Mills Landing, a few blocks from the Waldorff, has a laid-back neighborhood diner feel. Cordial and low key, the atmosphere provided another opportunity for self-reflection while waiting for the meal. Nautically themed decorations emphasized the menu's seafood focus, and I appreciated the extensive breakfast options. Choosing between mega-sized specialties and health conscious smaller plates was challenging, but I found a tasty middle ground via a specialty omelet made with egg whites accompanied by herbal tea. The lighter fare was also to save room for Adrounie House's pancake breakfast. Freshly prepared by April, the meal incorporated herbs from the House's garden while Don shared details about the home's connection to the Hastings community.

After two meals, I was eager to keep moving, but wanted to explore beyond downtown. The Tubbs guided me to Charlton Park, a five-minute drive but a world away from contemporary Hastings and historical Adrounie. Always on the lookout for nature trails, I enjoyed the expansiveness of Charlton's 310 acres – large enough to host several picnic pavilions and more isolated landscapes for those looking for a private break.

Located next to Thornapple Lake, swimming, boating, and fishing are popular pastimes, but I found the Sunday morning walk on the beach a welcomed opportunity for introspection. The site is also home to a turn-of-the-century historic village and museum. Exploring over twenty residences fashioned to recreate a mid-Michigan village of the late 1800s to early 1900s, I experienced another side of Michigan culture beyond Motown, Zingerman's, and "Up North." Though my two-mile walk through Charlton was a brief introduction, I gained a needed cardio boost that burned off my morning meals before the inevitable drive back home.

Heading back to southeastern Michigan, I realized my Hastings journey was a compilation of adventures – an emotional respite, a historical tour, a culinary exploration, a social outing, and a physical challenge. The brief weekend visit provided an opportunity to sample many facets of Hastings while illustrating ways one can create an experience that rejuvenates mind, body, and soul.



Situated in historic downtown Hastings, Adrounie's décor transported me to a different era. The Michigan Historical Site was built in the 1890s and retains a Victorian style.





# 21 Questions on *Animal Reiki* – An Interview with Kathleen Prasad, Pioneer in Animal-Centered Energy Work

By Andrew Anders

*In the spring of 2017, I invited Kathleen Prasad, one of the world's leading Animal Reiki teachers, to travel from California to teach her renowned Animal Reiki Teacher Seminar in the Midwest for the first time.*

*Prasad is a pioneer in animal-centered Reiki practice and a leading voice in its acceptance and use in animal shelters and for animal rescues. She's practiced Reiki for nearly 20 years and has developed a unique perspective on how to join hands and open hearts with our animal companions for mutual healing benefit. She is the founder of Animal Reiki Source and president of the Shelter Animal Reiki Association (SARA).*

*While she was here, I asked Kathleen some questions about Animal Reiki.*

### Andrew Anders: What is Reiki?

Kathleen Prasad: The word Reiki can be translated as "Spiritual Energy." A more traditional interpretation would be, according to my teacher, Frans Stiene, "True Self," which points toward our inner power of compassion.

One of the misunderstandings of the way Reiki works is that we, as practitioners, are somehow "doing" the healing "to" someone else. From a traditional Japanese spiritual viewpoint, the system of Reiki is seen as a path to rediscover our own inner self-healing power which, when practiced, can create a certain radiance of healing around us, from which others can benefit.

Because animals are so sensitive to our inner states of mind and heart, they can become easily stressed when we are angry or worried. On the other hand, they can also benefit when we are in a balanced space of peace, compassion, and joy. The system of Reiki, as I practice and teach it, features a series of meditation techniques that can help get us back in touch with our inner compassion, so that we can support the animals we love.

**Because animals are so sensitive to our inner states of mind and heart, they can become easily stressed when we are angry or worried. On the other hand, they can also benefit when we are in a balanced space of peace, compassion, and joy.**



Kathleen Prasad

**In Reiki sessions with animals, the Reiki practitioner allows the animal to be the guide. In essence, learning to "do Reiki" for your animals, means learning to meditate with them for healing.**

### Andrew Anders: What is Animal Reiki?

Kathleen Prasad: We often think of Reiki as being a hands-on healing modality for humans; however, this is only one small part of the entire system of practice. Reiki for animals uses the techniques of the system of Reiki to support animal healing; however, it does so in a unique way that is respectful of animal sensitivities. It is gentle — and therefore does not force physical contact — and honors the wisdom of animals.

In Reiki sessions with humans, the Reiki practitioner will gently guide the treatments. In Reiki sessions with animals, the Reiki practitioner allows the animal to be the guide. In essence, learning to "do Reiki" for your animals, means learning to meditate with them for healing.

### Andrew Anders: Is this like animal communication or psychic readings?

Kathleen Prasad: Reiki practitioners do not diagnose health conditions, nor do they give medical advice. With the system of Reiki, the practitioner's goal is to become as clear and empty of judgments and expectations as possible, so that we can connect more deeply heart-to-heart with the animal, and to our inner well of healing compassion. We do not need to know what the animal's problem is; simply being fully present during the heart-to-heart Reiki connection will always bring balance and healing on all levels.

You may or may not receive intuitive information as a result of the deep energetic connection created during the treatment: such information, when received, is merely a by-product of the Reiki connection experience, but is not the goal or purpose of the treatment. The goal and purpose, rather, is to let go and just "be," not attaching to or judging what we might receive, which allows us to connect to the animal without expectation or attachment to outcome.

The healing power of Reiki is not in the intellectual mind, or in how we might interpret the animal's experience, but rather it comes from an open and expansive mind and heart that is fully present without anger, worry, ego, or judgment. In other words, our inner compassion is the ultimate healer.

**Often we think the main benefit of meditating is to de-stress and quiet our minds, but an even deeper benefit is to access our inner well of compassion... Just imagine if your meditation practice can blossom into a time not only for de-stressing yourself, but also for sharing compassion with the animals in your life.**

### Anders: Does the practice differ from animal to animal?

Prasad: In some ways it differs, yes, in other ways, no. The ethical approach and state of mind and purpose are always the same. However, the way that we might navigate a pasture and herd setting might be different than approaching a feral cat colony, which might be different than sitting with a gaggle of geese, or a pet guinea pig. In each situation, we would always honor the animal as the leader, keep our minds positive, and not force hands-on contact. It's important to always remain sensitive to what might be acceptable to one species of animal, but not to another. This comes best with time and experience, and also always taking each new situation with a beginner's mind.

Something I've learned from horses is that it's important to respect the herd and the alpha when entering a pasture. When I'm working with a crocodile, snake, or other species that I'm not as familiar with, I try to approach humbly and to "let go" of my humanness as much as possible by focusing deeply on the meditation, so that my energy becomes as calm and open as possible.



**Anders: How do you meditate with the animals?**

Prasad: It's really quite easy: simply invite the animals into the room where you will practice, or sit or stand near the pasture or habitat where they live, and set your intent to share all the energy you create through your practice with them.

The first time you meditate with your animals, they may look at you a bit strangely, but as soon as your energy shifts into a calm and balanced space, trust me, they will want to sit with you! Even more, I bet you will find it easier to focus on this present moment, to sit still for a longer period of time, and to open your heart to the practice.

Often we think the main benefit of meditating is to de-stress and quiet our minds, but an even deeper benefit is to access our inner well of compassion. This deep inner source of compassion is something we can draw upon in our daily life to help us get through those "not so peaceful" moments we may find ourselves in. Just imagine if your meditation practice can blossom into a time not only for de-stressing yourself, but also for sharing compassion with the animals in your life.

**Anders: How did you learn about Animal Reiki?**

Prasad: Almost 20 years ago, when I began this journey with Reiki, there were no Reiki teachers who specialized in Animal Reiki for me to learn from. I trained with two different teachers in what could be considered the standard Reiki curriculum. My first Animal Reiki treatment was with my dog, Dakota, who began to show great interest when I would do Reiki self-treatment. So I started by using human Reiki techniques on the animals around me — my own, as well as the ones I came into contact with during my shelter volunteer work.

With the animals to guide me, at first I simply observed the responses from different kinds of animals in different settings. I noticed that sometimes it worked out pretty well, but other times not well at all, and animals would leave or be annoyed at the Reiki.

**If animals say "yes" to Reiki, they will show signs of connection and relaxation (which will vary, depending on species). No matter the species, from the practitioner viewpoint, we always use a passive and open approach.**

At a certain point I realized that it was ME, not the Reiki, that they were annoyed by. And so my journey shifted as I asked the animals to guide me in the approach (mental and physical) that would make Reiki an acceptable and happy experience for them. Along the way, the animals taught me so much about life: What it means to heal, and the power of an open mind, and of love, to heal. And so much more!

**Anders: Where does Animal Reiki fit in an overall health plan for animals?**

Prasad: Reiki is a great complement to all other treatments, both conventional and holistic. Reiki treatments support whatever program the veterinarian prescribes.

People often only think of healing as something we do when we are ill. However, what if we could bring compassion and healing to all that we do? That is what Reiki is really about! I invite you to begin each day sitting with your animals with compassionate thoughts. Keep compassion close to your heart all through the day, wherever you go. Find opportunities to show compassion to all beings.

End your day sitting with your animals and contemplating the compassion you have shared throughout the day. Watch your relationship with your animals deepen and heal just from this! With daily practice in compassion, your inner balance and well-being will become strong, your spirit courageous. Your animals will reflect and support your strength and balance. And then, if you or your animal face illness, you both will be ready.

**We do not need to know what the animal's problem is; simply being fully present during the heart-to-heart Reiki connection will always bring balance and healing on all levels.**

**Anders: What does a typical treatment look like? What happens during a session?**

Prasad: Since the animals always lead, this is difficult to say as far as what animals will "do." Some come forward, some move away and relax. Others will stay active through the treatment. If animals say "yes" to Reiki, they will show signs of connection and relaxation (which will vary, depending on species). No matter the species, from the practitioner viewpoint, we always use a passive and open approach.

**Anders: What should I expect from my animal after a session? How many sessions?**

Prasad: I always tell people to look for "healing shifts." This may be in a healing area you expect, or something else entirely. But this will indicate how Reiki is working. Healing might happen quickly, in as little as one session. Or may take longer. This depends on both the animal and also on how long the healing issue has been there, or how severe the issue is.

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Healing does not always mean physical "cure." Healing means "to become whole," and this is possible even in the dying process. Traditionally, four treatments close together for humans is taught; for example, once a day for four consecutive days. However, this doesn't always work with animals. I try to stay flexible and see how the animal is responding.

**Anders: Can I do Animal Reiki training online?**

Prasad: Yes, I offer an online Animal Reiki Workshop. I also have many audio courses on various topics. You can read a book or take a short class and start meditating with your animal today. However, in order to be thoroughly trained as a Reiki practitioner, get certified, and be able to go deeper into the teachings and to learn all the parts of the system of Reiki (and they fit together like a beautiful healing puzzle), you must take a class with a qualified Reiki teacher. I certify people in Reiki 1, 2, and 3, but also offer animal-specific training for Reiki practitioners who've learned standard human-centered Reiki systems.

**Anders: How can I approach a vet or clinic to offer Animal Reiki?**

Prasad: We have many resources and training on this topic through the Shelter Animal Reiki Association (SARA). Pick up our book, *The Animal Reiki Handbook*, for tips.

*Andrew Anders is a Reiki Ryoho teacher and professional practitioner, and the founder of the group Michigan Reiki. For more information, visit [michiganreiki.org](http://michiganreiki.org) or call (734) 480-8107.*

**RESOURCES**

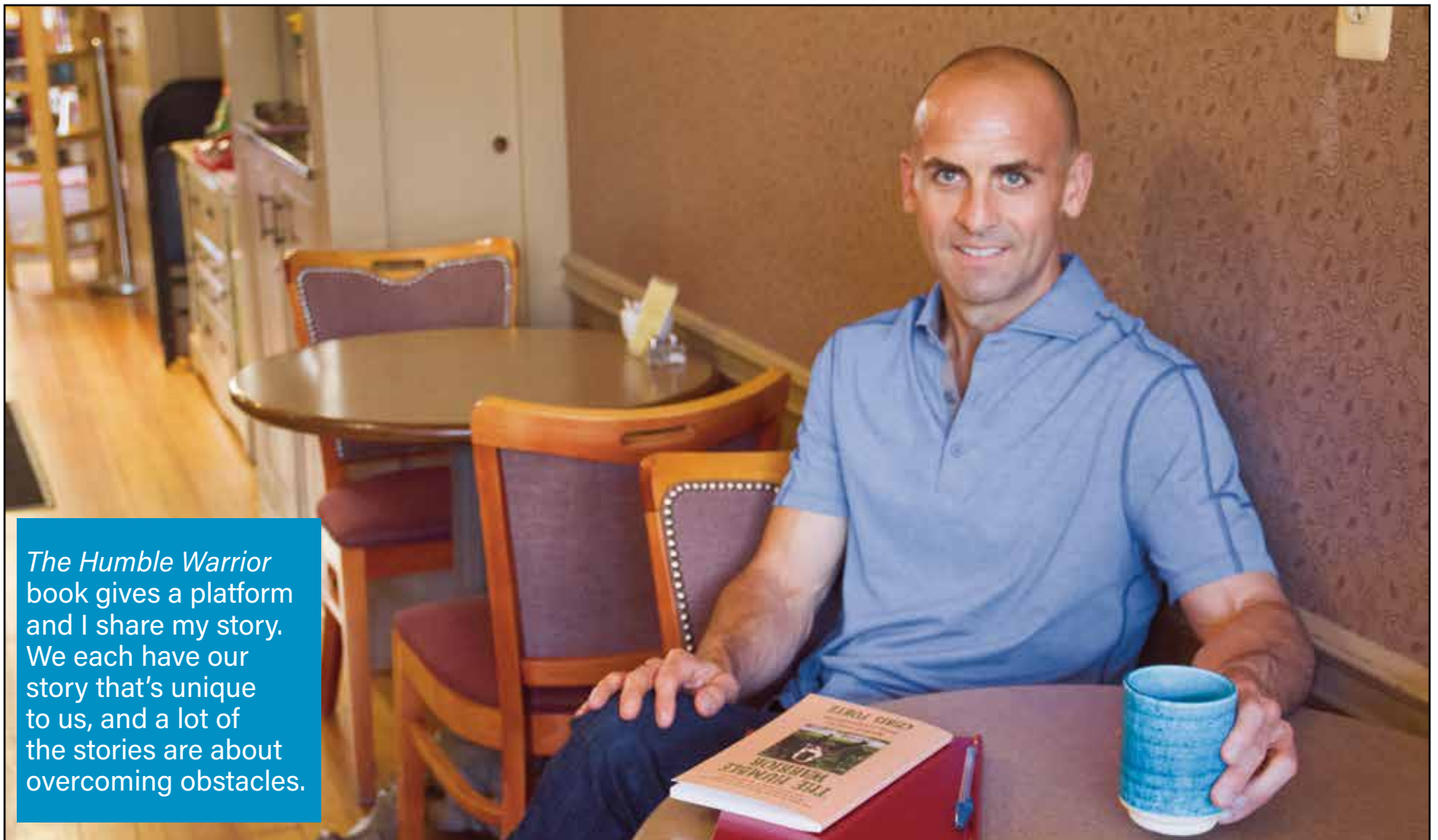
**Animal Reiki Source:**  
[www.AnimalReikiSource.com](http://www.AnimalReikiSource.com)  
Kathleen Prasad's website has articles, information, books and more. Sign up for the newsletter to receive a weekly dose of inspiration and Animal Reiki tips.

**Animal Reiki Code of Ethics:**  
<https://www.animalreikisource.com/animal-reiki-information/code-of-ethics/>

**Shelter Animal Reiki Association (SARA):**  
[www.ShelterAnimalReikiAssociation.org](http://www.ShelterAnimalReikiAssociation.org)  
SARA is a non-profit membership organization that teaches and promotes Animal Reiki through meditation practices. Visit their website for amazing videos on Reiki used with shelter and sanctuary animals.



# Coffee with Chris Forte, Author of *The Humble Warrior*



*The Humble Warrior* book gives a platform and I share my story. We each have our story that's unique to us, and a lot of the stories are about overcoming obstacles.

By Sara Vos  
Photos by Joni Strickfaden

*Chris Forte is a Birmingham-based yogi, author, spiritual fitness coach, former Division I athlete, and creator of The Humble Warrior podcast and memoir. On Christmas Day, 2014, in the midst of his marriage dissolving, Chris hit his knees on the floor and heard, "Book, blog, podcast." He spent two years doing yoga and meditation every day, attending Hay House writing and speaking conferences, and getting certified as a yoga teacher. His book, "The Humble Warrior: Spiritual tools for living a purposeful life" came out in June 2017. From the cover:*

*The Humble Warrior describes the journey of a man who had it all, lost it all, and discovered a path to happiness and success that far outweighs any external circumstances. Chris Forte had what many dream of – the long-term marriage, a 60-million-dollar company that he sold by age 36, the house on the lake – and it all dissolved, bringing the young entrepreneur to his knees. With nowhere to turn except inside, Chris discovered that the riches in life lie beyond our physical reality. Chris developed a personal spiritual practice that restored his spirit and strengthened him so that, no matter what life threw at him, he could handle it.*

*We caught up in August of 2017 to hear about what the journey has been like since the book came out, as well as Chris's plans for continued service in southeastern Michigan.*

\*\*\*

**Sara Vos:** Your book came out in June. What is life like now, and how is your relationship to yourself, to life, and to God shifting?

**Chris Forte:** It's one of these things that is just grassroots and organic, and just about getting the message out there. It's about being an instrument for God and continuing to serve God, and seeing where the message goes. The important part is that this isn't Chris's plan, it is part of a master plan, and to keep trusting in that. God is using me to connect with men. Part of that was writing this book, and the story... and hopefully what people will get out of it, men and women both, is that God is in our hearts.

The hard work continues, but the reward is there... trust in a higher power is the reward. It's just trusting in that. All of this, this entire *Humble Warrior* journey, has really been instructions from God and following them. Human nature is like, "I have to keep working around the clock to promote the podcast and the book." But really what I'm learning is to trust, and to be ready, and to be open.

The next step in my evolution is to live a life free of worry, without stress, to have that balance — to keep looking within my heart. Time is a myth and an illusion for

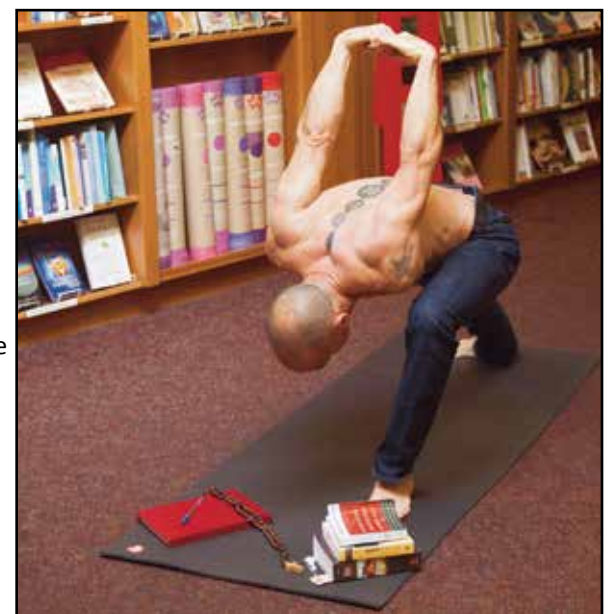
mankind to measure, so I understand that I'm working on God's timeline. God's timeline has no mistakes, is precise, and has you arriving right on time. Some might call this Divine perfection. It's kind of like being in the right place at the right time — and it's that, if someone is serving God, it's really not about their plan.

The next step in my evolution is to live a life free of worry, without stress, to have that balance — to keep looking within my heart. Time is a myth and an illusion for mankind to measure, so I understand that I'm working on God's timeline. God's timeline has no mistakes, is precise, and has you arriving right on time.

He is still grooming me. As much as I'd like to be out there doing cool stuff, teaching... there's a lot for me to continue to learn. A lot has been through humility, patience, and trust — that God's plan is actually perfect, and that it's God's timeline, not my timeline. The awareness of that has been part of the journey.

He knows my circumstances, he knows everything I'm going through. To let go and surrender is tough, but it's also being free. Besides patience and trust, there's a lot of things that go into this... to really learn balance without stress. In addition to that, it's "Have I completely given my ego and my will over to God?" When one has worry in their heart and soul, one is not in accordance with God's law.

So that's what I'm working on, and that's *The Humble Warrior*... going through all the process of writing the book was the first step in learning this lesson. My part in this was the spiritual fitness and putting the tools in it, which was great. I put in aspects of being a coach, about spiritual fitness... thinking, "Can I make a living doing this?" But really, when you break down *The Humble Warrior*, it is about my relationship with God, and that is truly what I want to teach. It was a process to come to this realization. I had to take all these steps, to arrive at the conclusion that these steps I've taken were meant for me.





**Sara Vos:** Is that a different way at engaging in the world, prior to how you were living before the December 2014 wake-up moment on Christmas?

**Chris Forte:** Yes. These steps I've called "spiritual fitness" are what keeps me grounded in my relationship with God as a priority. I truly believe that if I, or someone, is to be used as an instrument, then there is an aspect of communicating to others what works for us. So the seven spiritual fitness principles I use and teach were developed so that I can have a relationship with God.

Part of what I'm learning is that I need to learn to listen. I need to get to that quiet place. If God speaks in the heart, I need to get to the place of listening — not hearing what I want. There is a distinction. If you're truly listening, you know you're well taken care of. If you're truly listening, you will let a plan unfold the way it needs to. It's not about sitting back and doing nothing — you still need to take action steps, but you need to have awareness about what action step you're taking, and why you're taking it.

So that is what is continuing to unfold in my daily spiritual practice. "Doing the work for God" is about doing whatever "your work" is to the best of your ability. I get to teach my girls — it's about realizing this is where you are at this point in time. It doesn't mean you're going to be here forever, but just what you're having to do now.

I'm a different person at 47 than I was at 42, or 32... so my relationship (with God and with myself) is continuing to grow exponentially. I'm looking forward to getting to a place where I'm loving and serving every day.

**SV:** How does this show up in your coaching with clients?

**CF:** This week I was speaking with a young man I was coaching who was having a hard time, and it turns out that he had let go of his practices when life and work had gotten stressful for a few days. I told him, spiritual fitness and creating a daily practice is about going through the motions so that when stuff isn't going well you have something to lean on. The spiritual fitness daily practices bring you back into, "Everything is going to be okay. Everything is going to be okay."

This young man has a 30-minute drive to work, and because he was overwhelmed, he turned on the radio instead of doing the rosaries. So I coached him to just get back on track today, and that's the beauty of all the processes — that you can just get back on track. That's the beauty of it. You just get back on track. It's about being connected with God, Source, Spirit, or whatever that word is for you — it's just about getting back on track in that relationship when you temporarily fall off. People like me can remind you to do that.

**SV:** If someone wants to work with you, how does that look?

**CF:** Anyone local, within a half hour of Birmingham, we get together face to face. Depending on their situation or where they're at, we generally meet every 2-4 weeks. With out of state folks, we generally do a phone call, Skype, or Zoom so we're connecting live. Our sessions are a place where folks can talk about anything they want to talk about. We bring in routines — a.k.a. Spiritual Fitness — which folks can begin at work and home to improve all areas of their life. Spiritual Fitness routines can be implemented to make immediate, positive changes.

This isn't like a 2, 4, 6, 8, 10-week program — it's about building increments for a lifetime practice. It's not that you'll need me as a coach for a lifetime, but we are building a lifetime practice — for you. The individual person is the ultimate creator.

A lot of people want to be more connected to God. A lot of people were taught that we connect with God on Sundays, but that's not what works daily, right? So I just provide some tools that have worked for me, but ultimately you - anyone, inside of them — has the power to connect with God within.

It's not about making major, drastic changes. It's about, "What little, incremental changes can you start to make, to grow?" That's the beauty of my self-discovery — asking those questions late in my 20's, "What's my purpose? What's my relationship with God? What is spirituality?" and now I have this simple platform that I can teach, that someone can start implementing right away in their life, with certain tools.

*The Humble Warrior* book gives a platform and I share my story. We each have our story that's unique to us, and a lot of the stories are about overcoming obstacles. The Spiritual Fitness tools are about overcoming obstacles, and also about building that bridge and connection to God, and with our inner self. It's about being a little more compassionate, a little more loving, a little more kind with ourselves so that we can be that way for others.

For every tool that I say is about connecting with God, it's also about connecting with yourself. These are solo practices. We are giving ourselves a "time out" so we can have time to look within. These practices are really just a healthy time out for our self. With all the technologies and social media moving so quickly, it's really about cultivating and crafting time and space in the day to have that time with yourself.

In the book, I give a sample template about how to create that space for yourself using the seven spiritual fitness steps. Between yoga, working out, reading, meditation, I'm up to a couple of hours per day, but in the beginning I wasn't like

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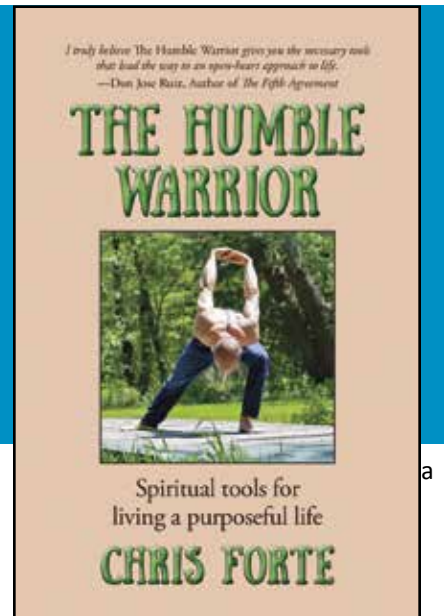
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I think the book could help a lot of people heal from past divorce, or who are going through divorce right now. It's not about pointing blame at the partner. It's about taking the opportunity to look within and take responsibility for your part in everything.



that. You can start with ten minutes day, fifteen minutes a day, twenty minutes a day — your prayer could be the anchor that gives you the start. It could just be waking up and saying, "I am grateful to be alive today." A lot of people just kind of get out of bed, hop in the shower, and start the day, and the Spiritual Fitness tools help you shift the way you start your day. One of my clients now spends 15-45 seconds being grateful for his life when he wakes up, then he makes his bed, then he gets in the shower. So we are just changing little things, and we build upon those.

**SV:** Would the practices also help with parenting?

**CF:** Absolutely! Absolutely. That might actually be the next book, to be honest with you. Parenting can be a lot less stressful with tools like these — you stop putting your unresolved stuff on your kids. You're a little bit more at ease and balanced, and the only thing you can control in life is how you respond. When something happens, instead of going on the offensive, maybe you can take a breath, maybe you can listen to the whole story, and maybe you can realize that it's a little thing, in the whole scheme of life.

Speaking of parenting, the divorce rate is still fifty percent in our country and may continue to rise. Divorce is just a part of life. To realize that a failure in a marriage is sometimes in the highest good of all for all parties, and to be grateful for that time you had with that person... it doesn't have to be so bitter. Divorce can actually be a grateful experience in realizing that it was just a point in time that you were with that person, and to wish that person many blessings in their journey.

I think the book could help a lot of people heal from past divorce, or who are going through divorce right now. It's not about pointing blame at the partner. It's about taking the opportunity to look within and take responsibility for your part in everything. It's not to say they don't have faults or anything like that, but if you can start to own your side, you can realize, "Wow, maybe this person is going through a lot of their own pain," and it has nothing to do with you, and you were just caught in the crossfire. Anyone who reads the book will have the opportunity to learn more about my own journey in this realm.

So again, building connection with God, becoming more kind, loving, and compassionate with yourself, allows you to do that with others — including, and maybe especially, the ones who have hurt, betrayed, or otherwise harmed you. So if there is anyone going through a divorce, I'm sure I can be a very helpful resource for them.

**SV:** How can people stay in touch or buy the book, Chris?

**CF:** People can buy the book on my website [ChrisForte.com](http://ChrisForte.com) or e-mail me [Chris@ChrisForte.com](mailto:Chris@ChrisForte.com). Our podcast may end up as a new inspirational, empowering radio show! A new show is coming, but it may not be called "*The Humble Warrior Podcast*." That's the next evolution... Stay tuned!



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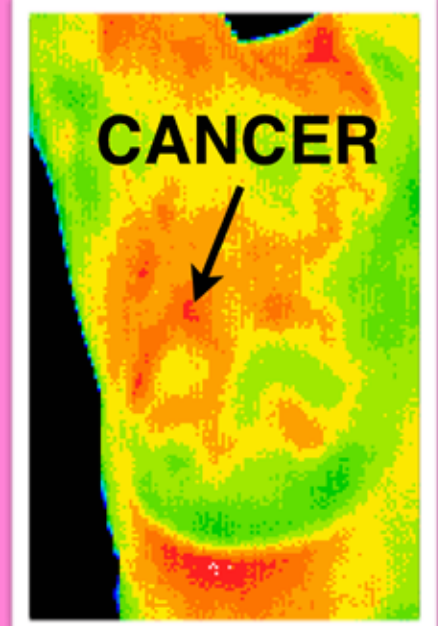
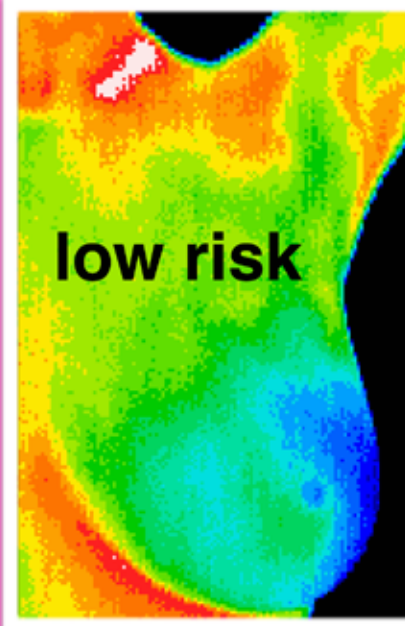
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# From the Ground Up — How *Groundcover News* Took Roots on the Streets of Ann Arbor

Publisher Susan Beckett and  
Board Member + Vendor Hailu Shitaye



Feature starts on next page



# From the Ground Up — How *Groundcover News* Took Roots on the Streets of Ann Arbor: A Conversation with Susan Beckett

By Sandor Slomovits

Photography by Fresh Coast Photography

Susan Beckett is the publisher of *Groundcover News*, a street newspaper sold in Ann Arbor and throughout Washtenaw County directly by vendors — many of whom are experiencing challenges related to poverty. *Groundcover's* stated mission is: "Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty." At two dollars per issue, the monthly paper features articles highlighting homelessness, poverty, and other social issues, but also includes poetry, Sudoku, crossword puzzles, and recipes. Unique to such street newspapers like *Groundcover*, it also contains stories by and/or about its vendors.

Beckett is trim, wears her hair short, with a straightforward, matter of fact manner, but also has a vivid, entertaining way of talking about the history of the paper and its vendors.

We talked in *Groundcover's* office in the basement of Bethlehem United Church of Christ, in downtown Ann Arbor. I began by asking how long she's lived in Ann Arbor, and what brought her here.

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**Groundcover's stated mission is: "Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty."**

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**Susan Beckett:** I grew up in New Jersey, about twenty miles west of the Lincoln Tunnel, met a couple Midwesterners when I worked at summer camps in the Adirondacks, and could not believe there were such nice people in the world....

**Sandor Slomovits:** Having grown up in New Jersey? (Laughter.)

**Susan Beckett:** One of them was going into her senior year at U-M and she said, "Have you visited colleges yet? You need to go visit colleges. You should come visit me. You can stay with me in the Lenny Bruce Co-Op." So I did and I said, "This is where I want to be." So I came here to go to college and I never left.

**Sandor Slomovits:** When was this?

**Susan Beckett:** I started in 1971. I didn't graduate for a really long time. I was a creative writing major and sometime around the middle of my junior year I realized that I just didn't have it in me to be a starving artist. I dropped out for a semester, talked with one of my wise uncles who said, "You should take some technical writing and computer courses because there's plenty of jobs out there for people with those skills." So I went back to school, but wasn't able to graduate, and my parents wisely said, "You're on your own now."

I got a technical writing job at Comshare and wrote documentation for accounting programs, boring things like that for about a year. Then they needed somebody to document the operating system and because I'd taken enough computer courses to be able to speak to the technical people and read all the code, they said, "How about if you do it?" That was a long project — about a year and a half — and when I finished, the manager of the operating systems department said, "Now I want you to come work for me." I said, "I'm not that good a programmer, I just took a few courses." He said, "That's OK. You understand how everything fits together, and that's what I need more than anything." So I spent the next ten years doing computer programming.

**Sandor Slomovits:** You got into computers early.

**Susan:** Yeah, pretty early, particularly being a woman working on operating systems. I was one of several actually at Comshare. They were a pretty progressive place. I eventually got married and *really* wanted to have children, and they weren't coming, so I started back to school to get certified to teach elementary education.

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**"I called and Amanda Moore, now Amanda Zuehlke, said, 'Oh yeah! I love Ann Arbor. You can definitely make a paper work there. If we can do it in Toledo, there's no question you can in Ann Arbor. You have such a vibrant downtown....'"**

**—Susan Beckett**

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Susan Beckett

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**"One of the things I found out is that people have a great desire to write and to be heard, but their lives are chaotic enough that there are very few that actually follow through with that."**

**—Susan Beckett**

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And Comshare went through hard times, I got laid off, worked at a couple different places, had a miscarriage; eventually, though, I had my daughter. Three weeks after she was born was my last day of programming. I finished up getting certified and then just enjoyed having my daughter. Couldn't get pregnant again, and then when she was about two I took her to the Sunshine Special, a nursery school on Scio Church Road... And when she was two and a half she said, "I want to go full time." (Laughter.) And I said, "Well, your friends have to go full time because their parents are working." And she said, "Well, get a job!" (Sustained laughter.)

**Sandor:** Out of the mouths of babes.

**Susan:** Yeah! I said, "OK, fine, I'll go do my student teaching. I've been waiting till you go to kindergarten, but if that's the way you feel about it." So I started student teaching that summer and then immediately got pregnant again. (Laughter.) And my son, unlike my daughter, did not want me to get a job. He wanted to just putz around with me. "It's fine to go to nursery school a couple days a week, but that's enough for me." So, I did some substitute teaching on the days he was at the Jewish Community Center pre-school. I did a lot of substitute teaching, mostly in my kids' schools, which was great 'cause I got to know everybody.

And then my mother passed away, kind of suddenly, and I just sort of went catatonic.

**Sandor:** When was that?

**Susan:** December of 2009.



**Sandor:** How old were your kids at that time?

**Susan:** They were grown, twenty and seventeen. I just kind of lost all initiative. If somebody asked me to do something, I'd do it, but I just didn't generate anything on my own. And somebody from Temple Beth Emeth, where I was on the social action committee, said, "There's this meeting of the Religious Coalition for the Homeless that Ron Gregg is organizing, and we need somebody to go, and can you go?" Of course the answer was, "Sure I can, because I'm not doing anything else!" (Laughter.) So I went.

The summer before that my daughter had worked out in Seattle for Grassroots Action, where you solicit signatures and money for the ACLU, environmental causes, et cetera. I visited her while she was out there and, because I had a car, she kept saying, "Let's go to the store." So we were in and out of the store multiple times a day it seemed, and every time we went in or out this guy yelled "Real change" at us. And finally I said to her, "Why does he keep saying 'real change'? Does he think we have slugs or something?" And she started laughing and said, "No, that's the name of our street paper." She explained to me what it was and I bought a copy and I thought, "What a great idea!"

So, when I came back to Ann Arbor, I talked to my fellow activists and they all said, "Well, that is a great idea. But, you know, Seattle is a big city, Ann Arbor is not. You couldn't make it work here." I got that same response from ten people and I said, "OK, just let it go." (Laughter.) ...Until this meeting with the Religious Coalition for the Homeless. It was pretty clear the impetus for the meeting was to try to get together the resources to have a 24 hour wet shelter, which was going to cost millions of dollars, and at that time we were already deep enough in the recession that everything was being cut back. There were not millions of dollars to be had anywhere.

**"Yeah, they don't know where to start, they don't know the people, they personally have no commerce with the people who need that kind of help. Everybody's a little afraid to just go up to somebody who's holding a cup. But Groundcover provides a medium of exchange in many ways."**

So at one point I said, "I know this isn't going to solve all the problems that have been laid out, but it will solve some of the problems for some of the people." And I told them about the street newspaper. And several people said, "That sounds interesting." Then the end of the meeting came and it was time for people to say who was going to do what, and nobody's hand went up, and I said, "I'll look into finding out about a street newspaper." And several other people, including Sandy Schmoker, who's been a volunteer since the beginning, said, "Well, I think that's a good idea and I'll help you."

At that time there was a coalition of American newspapers, and I contacted them and found out that they had just hired a guy, the first time they had a staff person, who would help get a paper started. He said, "Here's the PDF of our manual for how to get started, and lucky you, a paper just started in Toledo three months ago, and so they can show you the ropes." He gave me contact information for the person down there. I called and Amanda Moore, now Amanda Zuehlke, said, "Oh yeah! I love Ann Arbor. You can definitely make a paper work there. If we can do it in Toledo, there's no question you can in Ann Arbor. You have such a vibrant downtown. How about if I come up and meet with you, because I love to come to Ann Arbor."

**"My grandmother and all the girls knitted to try to make some money. It was always a very big deal to my grandmother. She said, 'I never want to rely on a soup kitchen or anything like that again.' That made an impression on me. I knew how much she wanted to provide for herself in a dignified manner."**

**-Susan Beckett**

She came up and met with me and Sarah Heidt from the Religious Coalition for the Homeless. We met at one of the old Borders Bookstores and the first thing she did, she went to all the free magazines, and said, "OK, in the environment you're in, you're going to have to have at least some color, probably want a twelve page format, just call up any of these guys and find out who does their printing, find out who the local printers are..." She just went through everything with us, what we would need to do. She called the next day and said, "I talked with the person who gave us our startup funding, and he's going to do the same for you." One Matters is going to give you a check for \$1,000 dollars, and it'll take no more than \$800 to print your first edition; and then you can use the money you get from that, plus the extra couple hundred to print your second edition, and then you should be off and running. That's all the seed money you'll need."

This all happened at the beginning of 2010, just a few days after that first meeting with the Religious Coalition for the Homeless, and from there, things moved fast. Susan wanted to gauge community interest before going further, and so she made an appointment with Ellen Schulmeister, the Executive Director of the Delonis Center. (The Delonis Center is Ann Arbor's homeless shelter and the location of the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County, which provides housing and other services for between 1,300 and 1,500 people experiencing homelessness each year.) Susan and Ellen were to meet at Sweetwaters Café, but Ellen was running late. While Susan waited, she saw an acquaintance.

**Susan:** We said "Hello," and he asked why I was there. I told him and he said, "I might know somebody who'd be an editor for you." I said, "You know we really don't have any money to pay anybody." And he said, "She just got laid off because of the recession, and I think she's looking for something to do. She might do this for you,

Continued on page 60



**And she reminds me that her father's family left Germany to escape from the Nazis, that they were relatively lucky and most got out. "Still it loomed pretty large in my childhood as something I wasn't going to stand and be passive about. I guess I made a decision back when I was like ten years old, that I wasn't going to be passive."**



# From the Ground Up — *Groundcover News*

Continued from page 59

anyway.” So he gave me Laurie Lounsbury’s contact information. I called her and she said, “Yes!” (Laughter.) (Lounsbury now sings with the local band, She-Bop.)

So I met with Ellen Schulmeister, and she said, “Yes, I think there’s a place for this in the community,” and, “Yes, you can come make a presentation to the people at the community meal.” So Marquise Williams, also a longtime *Groundcover* volunteer, and I went to the Delonis Center and, after telling them what it was about, passed around a clipboard where people could put their name and if they were interested in writing and/or selling the paper. About two thirds of the people said they were interested in writing, and about a third said they were interested in selling. It was very surprising to me. And as it turns out, some of them have gone ahead and written for us. One of the things I found out is that people have a great desire to write and to be heard, but their lives are chaotic enough that there are very few that actually follow through with that.

**Sandor:** That might be true of the general population, too. There are a lot of people who’d like to write the great American novel.

**Susan:** Yeah.

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**“Some of the customers, they trust their vendors enough to have them do some of the tasks that they might no longer be able to do themselves. We have another vendor right now who is doing that on a regular basis for an elderly woman; whatever she needs, she just goes over there for so many hours a day.”**

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**Sandor:** And whose lives are not as chaotic, and they still don’t get around to it. (Laughter.)

**Susan:** Yeah, well some of us create plenty of our own chaos. (Laughter.) So then we just started having meetings. We contacted all the people who’d signed the clipboard, we put up flyers in a few places, started having meetings over at First Baptist church, up on Washington, organizing meetings — that’s how we came up with the name, *Groundcover*. We had all kinds of suggestions and that was the one that got the most votes.

We decided we wanted to put out our first issue around the time of the Art Fair, thinking that that would be a good time to spur sales. In retrospect it was not, but our first issue came out in July 2009, and we made it the July-August issue. We printed 5,000 copies; I think we sold a few hundred. (She laughs ruefully.) Then we came out in September, and shortly after that we started printing monthly.

At first, we found our vendors at places like the community meals and the First Baptist dinner on Tuesday nights. Our early vendors were really good about talking to other people and reaching out. And we did presentations pretty frequently. We were going to the breakfasts at St. Andrews at least a few times a week, maybe every day. That was where people could get papers. St. Andrews got us a couple of big bins and a place to keep them. Then, in one of our issues, we put that we were looking for office space, and Bethlehem United Church of Christ contacted us and said, “We have space and it’s something that our congregation is committed to, so come take a look.” They’ve been wonderful to us — it’s rent free, they provide the electricity, cleaning service, the Internet, which we also use for the phone — I mean, really incredible.



*Groundcover News* vendor David Staron

I had never been somebody who believed much in destiny, or the hand of God, or anything like that, but this experience was.... I can’t really ascribe it to much else. So much fell into place so fast. You know, in my personal life I tend to try to plan and make sure and organize, but *Groundcover*, I’ve kind of just operated on faith, that if we needed, it’ll show up. (Laughter.) And it has! (More laughter.) In fact, it’s interesting, we were talking just a couple of weeks ago, people were saying, “We need to get more publicity, we need to get the word out there some more.” And then I saw the email from you. And someone from the *Michigan Daily* is interviewing one of our vendors and stopped by yesterday.... Hey, I guess we needed it, and it showed up.

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**“By the time somebody gets homeless they’ve pretty much burned every bridge, and people are reluctant to resume contact with somebody who’s likely to be asking for something. So, by becoming independent again, it allows them to repair personal relationships.”**

**–Susan Beckett**

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I asked Susan about her childhood and family experiences to get a sense of what may have led to her work, first in computers and later in founding *Groundcover News*. Her father, who immigrated to the U.S. from Germany when he was thirteen years old, was an engineer who worked on the guidance systems for some of the NASA projects. But, as she explains, it was her mother who pioneered her interest in computers:

My mother went back to school when I was about eleven to learn computer programming. Eventually she became a vice president at Chubb Insurance Company in charge of systems analysis. She was one of the glass ceiling shatterers. But she grew up in the [Great] Depression. Her father died when she was twelve, and they struggled. My grandmother and all the girls knitted to try to make some money. It was always a very big deal to my grandmother. She said, “I never want to rely on a soup kitchen or anything like that again.” That made an impression on me. I knew how much she wanted to provide for herself in a dignified manner.



And there was more. For the last thirty years Susan has been a volunteer lobbyist with Results, an organization that lobbies nationally for proven low-cost solutions to issues of poverty and hunger. "When I started, there were still 40,000 children dying every day from preventable disease and hunger," states Susan. "I've always been drawn to children and just couldn't tolerate the thought of kids going through that and parents going through that...." (Her voice trails off.)

I tell her that I know that none of us are happy to know that there are people out there who are suffering, who are having a very hard time, in some cases needlessly dying, but relatively few of us say, "OK, here is what I'm going to do about it." She agrees, "People feel powerless."

So I ask her again what was different for her? What else in her childhood pointed to her saying, 'I'm actually going to do something'? And she reminds me that her father's family left Germany to escape from the Nazis, that they were relatively lucky and most got out. "Still it loomed pretty large in my childhood as something I wasn't going to stand and be passive about. I guess I made a decision back when I was like ten years old that I wasn't going to be passive."

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**Susan Beckett:** I want to go back to something you said earlier, about how and why so few people actually do something. That's part of why *Groundcover* operates the way it does, where it's sold only person-to-person on the street, because it's kind of an entry point for doing something. I think one of the reasons that people often don't do anything, is because they...

**"There was a little girl at St. Francis who had cancer and Tony, he would write on every paper he sold, "Pray for Mariel." Her parents were so touched that they invited him to the funeral. It really made a big difference to them."**

**Sandor Slomovits:** Don't know where to start.

**Susan:** Yeah, they don't know where to start, they don't know the people, and they personally have no commerce with the people who need that kind of help. Everybody's a little afraid to just go up to somebody who's holding a cup. But *Groundcover* provides a medium of exchange in many ways. And a lot of our customers have gone on to befriend their vendor in many ways. Some great relationships have come out of that. There are parishioners at St. Mary's who go out for lunch or dinner with some of our vendors, sometimes have them over for dinner. They've bought them whole sets of winter outdoor clothes. A parishioner at St. Francis just gave one of our vendors a bicycle so that he can get around better. Tony (a *Groundcover* vendor) has done yard work and building repairs for several of his customers, and I'm pretty sure that some of Joe's (another *Groundcover* vendor) customers have had him do landscaping work, snow removal. Some of the customers, they trust their vendors enough to have them do some of the tasks that they might no longer be able to do themselves. We have another vendor right now who is doing that on a regular basis for an elderly woman; whatever she needs, she just goes over there for so many hours a day.

There is an especially poignant story. There was a little girl at St. Francis who had cancer and Tony, he would write on every paper he sold, "Pray for Mariel." Her parents were so touched that they invited him to the funeral. It really made a big difference to them. And he was devastated. Even though he knew it was coming, when she finally died, he was devastated.

**"I think we sold about 7,500 papers in March, which is an uptick from where we had been [earlier] this year. When we started, our monthly circulation was probably between 1,500 and 2,000. Then it quickly grew."**

**-Susan Beckett**

**Sandor:** How many vendors have you had over the years, and how many of them are active now?

**Susan:** We've trained about 375. Active right now, we have about thirty-eight.

**Sandor:** What is *Groundcover's* circulation these days?

**Susan:** I think we sold about 7,500 papers in March, which is an uptick from where we had been [earlier] this year. When we started, our monthly circulation was probably between 1,500 and 2,000. Then it quickly grew. We were pretty much doubling every year. I can tell you when the [Great] Recession broke. 2012 was a great year for us. We were between 9 and 11,000 a month, and growing like crazy. And then the Recession broke in Ann Arbor, and people started getting jobs; and our more capable vendors got mainstream jobs, which was *fantastic* – it's what we wanted. But it had (she laughs) a negative effect on our circulation because they weren't out there selling anymore, and so we dropped down to 5- to 6000. And we're just starting to climb back up now, which I hope doesn't mean that fewer people are getting jobs.

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# From the Ground Up — *Groundcover News*

Driver - Kevin Spangler; Riding - Susan Beckett (foreground), founder and publisher of *Groundcover News*, and Sandy Schmoker, volunteer with *Groundcover* since its inception



Continued from page 61

**Sandor:** That's an example of a *good* unintended consequence.

**Susan:** Yeah. When we started *Groundcover*, I was thinking it was a way to help people get through the Recession, and I was fine with having it end when it was no longer needed. And in terms of the job situation, we're kind of at that point where there's enough jobs available for people who are capable of working full-time on a set schedule and don't have the kind of blemished past that keep people from hiring them. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people who don't fit that category. We still have 35, 40 people selling for us – people who have severe arthritis or migraine headaches, or they have a prison record. We have one person who is legally blind, and disability doesn't cover enough for people to actually live. It just covers enough to have an apartment on the edge of Ypsilanti, or a room, maybe, in Ann Arbor. That's all. And then you have nothing left to eat or anything else. So, until there's an alternative, I guess we're it.

**“We have one person who is legally blind, and disability doesn't cover enough for people to actually live. It just covers enough to have an apartment on the edge of Ypsilanti, or a room, maybe, in Ann Arbor. That's all. And then you have nothing left to eat or anything else. So, until there's an alternative, I guess we're it.”**

**Sandor:** So *Groundcover* helps provide these things – food, et cetera – that disability doesn't?

**Susan:** Right, but because now the majority of our vendors fit into that category – they're people who can't work every day, or they can't work in the winter because it's too cold and it aggravates their arthritis – so they sell about two hundred papers a month. That gives them enough to supplement Social Security. Then we still have a few people who are either new to town or have some other impediment to employment, but who work really hard and sell 600 to 900 papers a month.

**Sandor:** How much does it cost for the vendors to buy the paper?

**Susan:** Up until April 2017 it was twenty-five cents. Then we raised the cover price to two dollars, and we gave them one month where it was still twenty-five cents, so that they could build up some extra capital for that month, and then the price went up to fifty cents for them. And when somebody new comes, we still give them ten free to start. And sometimes things happen, and they can get up to ten papers on credit. And then there are certain things, like the first Thursday of every month at our social hour, we do a review of the articles in the paper, and everyone who talks about an article gets ten free papers. When the truck comes in with the new batch of papers, everybody who helps unload gets ten free papers. So there are ways to re-capitalize, even if you didn't save the money.... (Her voice drops to a whisper and she smiles.) Like we told you....

**Sandor:** Do you feel *Groundcover* has been successful, that it has made a difference in lives?

**“I had never been somebody who believed much in destiny, or the hand of God, or anything like that, but this experience was.... I can't really ascribe it to much else. So much fell into place so fast. You know, in my personal life I tend to try to plan and make sure, and organize, but *Groundcover*, I've kind of just operated on faith, that if we needed, it'll show up. (Laughter.) And it has!”**

**–Susan Beckett**

**Susan:** I guess a lot depends on how you define 'success.' We've had a number of people who have been reconciled with their families. By the time somebody gets homeless they've pretty much burned every bridge, and people are reluctant to resume contact with somebody who's likely to be asking for something. So, by becoming independent again, it allows them to repair personal relationships. So that's been a huge success.

Some people, they're only here for a couple of months, they need to get enough money to buy decent clothes, or buy tools for their trade so that they can get back to work in whatever they were doing before whatever catastrophe struck. We've had a number of people who have come out of prison who have been very enterprising and very capable. Whatever it was that they did years ago that landed them in prison, they'd moved beyond that.

We had one man, he was selling *Groundcover*, he used that to buy a moped, fixed it up and sold it, bought a minibike, fixed it up and sold it, bought a car, fixed it up and sold it. He was doing all of that on the side, now that he had money to work with. He was a very enterprising guy, he just needed startup capital, and eventually he managed to clear up whatever it was that was keeping him from driving a car, and got his truckers license. Last I knew he was driving a truck back and forth across the country, was back to living with his family somewhere in Appalachia... Life was good again.

There was a woman named Peggy, who had leg problems – in and out of surgeries, rehab – but most months she still managed to sell 800 papers or more. She's now, for the last couple of years, been working as a peer counselor for Avalon. (Avalon is an Ann Arbor-based organization that helps to provide permanent housing for people who are homeless and who have a mental or physical disability.) She still sells papers, mostly just on Sundays, but she's successfully stabilized her life, and is helping other people stabilize theirs now.

We had a veteran who, when he first started with us, was homeless, really at loose ends. For him, [selling papers] was more having something to do and a reason to talk to people. I think that was more important to him than the money – to experience some success at something. Now he's gotten housing, he's built himself a life again. It just helped him through that interim, that waiting, where you have no sense of agency. This is something where they have that sense of agency.

**“We had a veteran who, when he first started with us, was homeless, really at loose ends. For him, [selling papers] was more having something to do and a reason to talk to people. I think that was more important to him than the money – to experience some success at something. Now he's gotten housing, he's built himself a life again.”**

We've had a number of people in the construction trades, they don't have insurance, they get hurt, they need an operation, all their assets get drained, and they end up either losing or selling their tools. So *Groundcover* has provided a way for them. Some of them have sold *Groundcover* while they were in a cast. It was something they could still do through rehab. And when they finally are able to work again, they have the resources to buy the tools that they need.

You know, it's funny, once they get other employment they usually drift away and go right out of my consciousness. (She laughs ruefully.)

**Sandor:** I'd be surprised if it was not like that. You're dealing with a lot of people.

**Susan:** And new ones all the time.



**Sandor:** Sure. It's like with teachers – they tend to remember the trouble kids, not the ones who do well.

**Susan:** Yep. That is so true.

**Sandor:** What is your sense, what would have happened to these people if *Groundcover* had not been there?

**Susan:** We have had a number of people on disability. They were just so depressed, struggling all the time to make ends meet, and falling short and falling more heavily and heavily into debt. That's the other thing: people used to... go to payday loans, which is really ridiculous for somebody who has *no* payday. They would consider their Social Security check to be a payday. And so people were getting very heavily indebted. My sense is that there would have been more suicides, quite honestly. People with no way to get out from under – there would have been more suicides and more substance abuse.

**“Every month we do some kind of development course. Sometimes it is advanced sales training, sometimes it is introduction to computers, sometimes it's more advanced things with computers. We've done a financial literacy course several times, we've done mindfulness a couple of times, we've done anger management a couple of times. We operate from both what we see that they need and what they ask for.”**

**–Susan Beckett**

**Sandor:** What comes to mind for me is the Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam*, doing good deeds as a way of repairing the world. And also the rabbinic statement, “Whoever saves a single life, is considered to have saved the whole world.”

**Susan:** You also have to moderate your expectations. Almost everybody now is housed, and some of it is not great, a room somewhere without much in the way of facilities, but it's a safe place to be. And we still have some people who are getting hotels by the night, but again, they're not on the streets. And then we have about five people who just this past year got their own place, and they pay for it out of *Groundcover* money. It's a big improvement in circumstances. And we've been able to get a lot of people hooked up with the kind of counseling they need, financial counseling in some cases.

Every month we do some kind of development course. Sometimes it is advanced sales training, sometimes it is introduction to computers, sometimes it's more advanced things with computers. We've done a financial literacy course several times, we've done mindfulness a couple of times, we've done anger management a couple of times. We operate from both what we see that they need and what they ask for. We've had a number of writing courses. The whole gestalt, I guess. Some people have actually become really accomplished writers, and many are seriously repairing their debt now.

We have a new partner in our financial literacy program this year, the United Way, and they have been terrific. They have an individual coach who meets with people. We do a match savings program, like we have for Kevin Spangler. Kevin is our latest poster child. (Spangler is a *Groundcover News* vendor who, with the help of his *Groundcover* sales income, recently started what has become a very successful and fast growing pedicab business called Boober Tours.) If Kevin wants to buy a new pedicab, he puts in \$200, we'll put in \$400. So it's pretty motivating to get involved. But it turns out that really the most valuable part of it is just learning how to manage your money, and then this individual coaching. Kevin said that the coaching has saved him many thousands of dollars. We have a number of people undergoing credit repair. It's building a foundation for a better life.

**Sandor:** It's good.

Susan nods, and then says with a rueful smile, “It's not fast though.”

###



Gemini, Ann Arbor's nationally known folk duo, will play a benefit concert for *Groundcover News* on Sunday, February 11, 2018. The concert will be for children and families and is intended to serve as both a fundraiser and to raise awareness for *Groundcover News*. At press time, the location and time is still TBD. For more information, please visit [www.GeminiChildrensMusic.com](http://www.GeminiChildrensMusic.com) or [www.GroundcoverNews.com](http://www.GroundcoverNews.com).

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Susan Beckett says she'd like to increase *Groundcover's* coverage around Washtenaw County, “But,” she adds, “That's as ambitious as I am.” She does say *Groundcover* can always use volunteers, especially in the office, selling the vendors their papers and adds that, “People should know that if they have an article they would like to see in *Groundcover* they should just go ahead and send it to [submissions@Groundcovernews.com](mailto:submissions@Groundcovernews.com).”

There are a number of organizations locally that help people who are experiencing homelessness, hunger, and poverty. Four of the largest are: [annarborshelter.org](http://annarborshelter.org), [missiona2.org](http://missiona2.org), [avalonhousing.org](http://avalonhousing.org), [foodgatherers.org](http://foodgatherers.org). All of them can use financial support and volunteers.





# Meeting the Heretic —

## Social Justice and Technology with Professor Kentaro Toyama



**Memes go viral, and we become absorbed with football players on bent knees, or “fake news,” peeling back the skin of society to show us unspoken underlying feelings and beliefs.**

**“Technology is never the main driver of social progress...”  
- From Toyama’s book, *Geek Heresy***

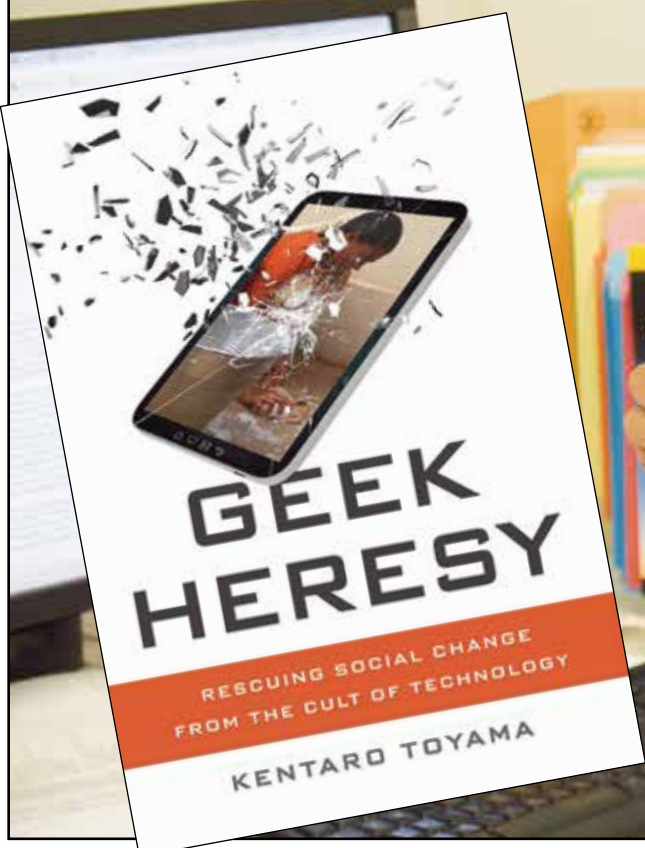


Photo by Joni Strickfaden

**Interview by Kirsten Mowrey  
Photography by Joni Strickfaden and others**

*Smartphones. Skype. Tablets. Email. Apps. Technology weaves itself into our lives, penetrating every aspect of daily living, making most of us scramble to keep up with its continual metamorphosis. Memes go viral, and we become absorbed with football players on bent knees, or “fake news,” peeling back the skin of society to show us unspoken underlying feelings and beliefs. Few of us have time, or take time, to evaluate what place we want technology to have in our lives and how it affects quality. We are racing to keep up. Often hailed as the resolution to the world’s ills, my life experience led me to believe otherwise. Then I read *Geek Heresy*, and felt engaged in a nuanced conversation of on the ground social change.*

*Geek Heresy: Rescuing Social Change from the Cult of Technology (PublicAffairs, 2015) argues that: “Technology is never the main driver of social progress.... that even in a world steeped in technology, social challenges are best met with deeply social solutions.” The author, Kentaro Toyama, worked in Silicon Valley, and currently researches technology’s role at the University of Michigan’s School of Information. The essential question of his research is how do you apply digital technologies to support socioeconomic development? His conclusion: technology amplifies whatever underlying human forces are already present. Humans must be the directors and managers of social change with technology as the tool, not the opposite.*

*Heretic is a strong term. Webster’s defines it as “a religious believer opposed to the orthodox doctrines of a church” and then expands it to include all disciplines as “a person who holds any opinion opposed to official or established views or doctrines.” Language about technology is akin to religion: read the iPhone 10 reviews.*

*What converted this technologist from believer to skeptic? Born in Japan, he moved to the United States for the first time when he was six months old, crossing the Pacific four times before completing high school in Japan. While studying physics at Harvard, he became attracted to the creativity offered in computer science and completed a Ph.D. from Yale. He said that, “as a kid he was attracted to the hard sciences because they were certain, determinate, and would hold true forever,” but became attracted to computer science because of the ability “to write [programs] uniquely your way. It was more satisfying.” That may have been the beginning of his journey to *Geek Heresy*. He also began to work on how people can apply technology to address social challenges on the ground where he was working for Microsoft Research in India.*

*I sat down with Kentaro Toyama one solidly rainy Thursday in late March. In person, he is slim and well spoken, thoughtful, very cautious of over-generalization and firm in his beliefs. He wears glasses and his hair short, his clothing nondescript. Starbucks was full of loud ambient music and laptop zombies, so we walked over to the Michigan League and talked amidst the hubbub of human interaction outside a banquet hall. We discussed his work — the complexities of creating transferable models — whether for developing countries, technologists, or democracies; how we understand hierarchies and networks to enact social change; if access to computers amplifies quality of life; thoughtfully raising children in a technological society; and growing the right heart, mind, and will in ourselves.*

\*\*\*

**Kirsten Mowrey: You started to talk about the difference in work environments on our walk over here, a corporate versus a university environment.**

**Kentaro Toyama:** Well you know, I only know a couple versions of each. One is, universities give this big aura of being very egalitarian places. People kind of have an understanding: there are faculty and there are students, but the hierarchy at universities is very strong. In some funny ways, it’s much stronger than at a private organization, where technically there is a line of command, and in theory your boss is your boss, but in practice... in a funny way, it’s administratively more hierarchical, but socially less hierarchical.

**Kirsten Mowrey: At a tech company?**

**Kentaro Toyama:** Yes, whereas at a university, it’s opposite: administratively less hierarchical, culturally more hierarchical. Because of the culture and faculty, I don’t think [they] are that aware of it. They don’t realize that they are basically monarchs unto themselves in this world, especially if you are tenured faculty. There are very few things that can touch you. Especially students, I think, really feel that difference in power. That’s very different from, at least, a tech company.

**Kirsten Mowrey: So you do feel faculty forgot where they came from once they get to their position?**

**Kentaro Toyama:** A lot of faculty I think have never known life outside the university, at least as an adult, so they just don’t recognize things are not as hierarchical in other contexts.



**KM: Have you had this conversation with any of your colleagues, now that you are in this environment?**

**KT:** (laughs) I've had it with a few, especially those who have had life, who have experienced life, outside academia and I think we all agree. At the extreme end, faculty are very entitled. It's an incredibly blessed life, to have this time flexibility, because it's just not afforded in that many other contexts. And yet, and I'm included in this, we all complain about all the administrative meetings we have, but compared to a corporate environment, it's nothing.

**KM: When you think back on your Microsoft days?**

**KT:** Yeah, yeah, I mean we had a full-time job and then there were all the meetings atop meetings.

**KM: How much do you teach versus how much research?**

**KT:** That's a good question. During the semester it feels like it's much more teaching but the reality is I'm fortunate to be in a school that's very well run and has a lot of resources. I usually teach one class per term, which during the semester takes about a third of my time. The rest is research and other efforts that support the University.

**KM: You did mostly research when you were at Microsoft?**

**KT:** I was at Microsoft Research, so the predominant activity was research.

"People were saying, 'OK, here's this great success story called Silicon Valley. Can we take this success and spread it to the parts of the world that aren't doing so well?'"

**KM: Is that a similar environment to research in a university?**

**KT:** At Microsoft it was, because our V.P. at the time, Rick Rashid, he came from Carnegie Mellon University. He very much believed in a model of research that was modeled on the university scheme. So we as researchers had an incredible amount of flexibility in choosing the kind of research we wanted to pursue. We didn't have a teaching requirement that you would have at a university but a strong encouragement to find ways to positively impact the company.

**KM: According to your book you were doing research but then got asked to go to India, correct?**

**KT:** Right, and again, that's another example, it's not as hierarchical as it seems. My immediate manager at the time, he was South Indian. He got the sense politically within Microsoft that he would be able to go ahead to do a research lab in India and he asked me if I would be willing to go with him as his assistant director. Obviously this would be risky for the company. Because this was about starting a new research lab. It was even more than just the funding; it was, "Are we willing to stay in this country and have a research lab there?"

**KM: Were you teaching when you went to India?**

**KT:** I was a researcher, and when I moved to India, I stayed a researcher but I also took on management duties, as well as the assistant director of the lab.

**KM: In your book, you mark that experience in India as where you began to ask the questions that became *Geek Heresy*.**

**KT:** That's correct, absolutely. Most of that book is based on what I learned in experiences in India. I used to do technical computer science research, and when I moved to India, I decided to look at what we could do in that country that was unique to being in India. I changed my research direction and it became more about how do you apply digital technologies to support socioeconomic development.

India was a great place to do this. On the one hand you have a very — it's considered an information technology superpower, it has a very high capacity in information technology. But most of that is relegated to a very thin strata of very well educated, very wealthy people at the top. The rest of the country is extremely poor. Many different people in the country, from government, from nonprofit, they are all asking this question, which is: "Can we take something of the success of this technology industry and spread it in some way to the rest of the country?"

"Hillary Clinton, when she was Secretary of State, pushed a foreign policy called 'Internet Freedom': the more we push a free and open Internet, the more countries become democratic and more likely their governments become accountable to their citizens."

**KM: Take that thin strata and build roots that go down through other classes?**

**KT:** The way that I would say most people conceive of this is people say, "Hey, there's something about computers that make most of the country rich, can we spread more computers into rural areas and urban slums and maybe those computers will make those people become more rich?"

**KM: So the theory is money goes along the computer lines?**

**KT:** I don't think anybody would actually say, "Yes, if you interact with a computer you are going to become wealthier." But somewhere in the back of their mind that is the association: a computer can get you into jobs that raise your income, or will allow you to find ways to become an entrepreneur yourself, or something like that.

**KM: Your book is about that premise in some way, not just in India, but in the U.S. as well, and how that doesn't necessarily follow.**

**KT:** Absolutely. Just around the time that I moved to India, the world as a whole was moving toward ways digital technology could impact social change overall. The exact same story I told about India was kind of happening on a global scale. People were saying, "OK, here's this great success story called Silicon Valley. Can we take this success and spread it to the parts of the world that aren't doing so well?"

Today we see that manifested in comments a lot of our leaders make. For example, Mark Zuckerberg has basically said on the record that the world's 500 million richest people are far more wealthy than the world's remaining 6 billion people combined and the way to solve that is by getting everybody online. Maybe that's expected from a technology tycoon, but we are also now hearing it increasingly from our political leaders. Hillary Clinton, when she was Secretary of State, pushed a foreign policy called "Internet Freedom": the more we push a free and open Internet, the more countries become democratic and more likely their governments become accountable to their citizens. This Silicon Valley success being a force for positive social change in many other contexts began in the early to mid 2000's, and I would say is not only ongoing but growing.

**KM: It's interesting that you mention this piece about freedom following networks. Anne-Marie Slaughter's new book, *The Chessboard and the Web: Strategies of Connection in a Networked World* (Yale, 2017), talks about how networks function different from hierarchies. [Slaughter, a famous academic, was the former Director of Policy Planning for the U.S. State Department under Obama.]**

**KT:** In quite a few social science disciplines, there's a fairly well established [theory] that information, as well as social movements, go through these kinds of network phenomena. It's often grassroots efforts that spread through social networks, not digital networks. If you believe that, it's very tempting to say, "If that's happening without technology, then can't we both speed it up and make it better by overlaying a digital one, where networks are no longer limited by who you can meet face to face but they could conceivably be across the globe?"

My overall conclusion, which applies not only to this network situation but to almost all situations where technology and society interact is: technology amplifies whatever underlying human forces are already present.

So I do believe that technology can facilitate these overall network building things, *but* the polarity of whether that is good or bad is not dependent on the technology, but the people. What [Slaughter] is saying is probably true in the sense of, *Yes, we have these social networks and they help to spread certain kinds of ideas and movements*, but whether that is overall a good or bad thing for you depends on what forces you are interested in seeing amplified.

**KM: I read an interesting piece talking about spreading along networks: the explicit, deliberate spreading and the implicit hidden pieces that go along with it and can be counterproductive to the explicit purpose.**

[The piece referenced is "7 Questions with Anne-Marie Slaughter, CEO of New America," from *Time Magazine*, March 16, 2017. Slaughter explains, "When you hear 'Make America great again,' that nostalgia is not just for a time when America was more homogenous in terms of jobs, race, and gender roles. It may also be a longing for the clear lines of the Cold War — dangerous, but clear." In this context, the explicit is the homogeneity; the implicit is a Cold War mindset.]

**Continued on page 66**

"Yes, we have these social networks and they help to spread certain kinds of ideas and movements, but whether that is overall a good or bad thing for you depends on what forces you are interested in seeing amplified."

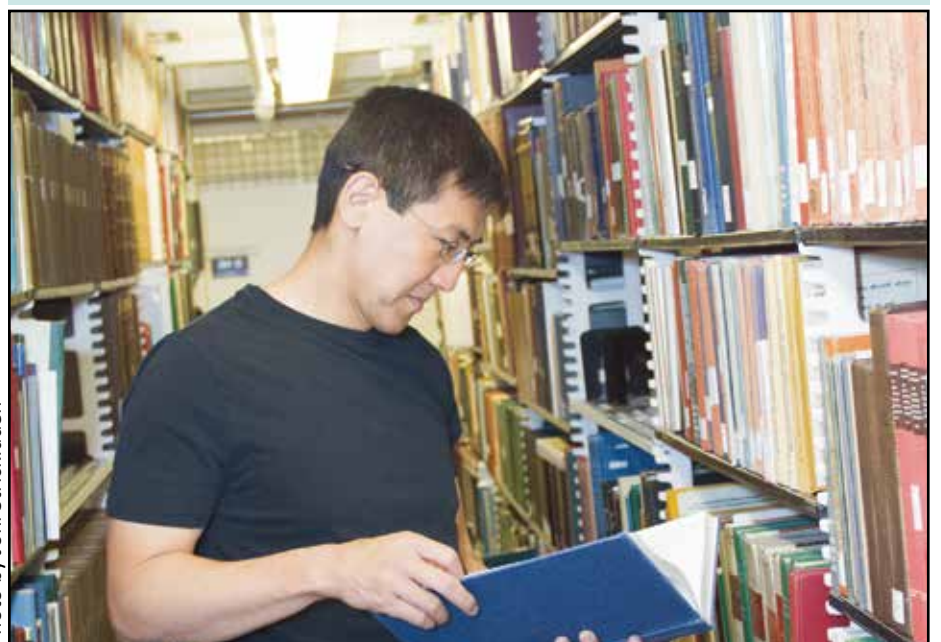


Photo by Joni Strickfaden



# Social Justice and Technology with Professor Kentaro Toyama



Photo by Joni Strickfaden

“To me, the underlying issue with false facts is not that there are now accelerated ways of getting false facts out there, but the fundamental political division that causes some people to want to believe certain things.”

Continued from page 65

**KT:** I would say about those implicit things, oftentimes they are implicit in the actual text or videos that you might be able to receive, but they are not implicit in the sense of our hearts collectively.

One of the things I stress about amplification is that anytime you see something that looks like it went “viral” that usually there was a latent desire for that thing among the population it went viral in to begin with. It’s very easy to point to the thing that went viral and say there’s something special about that thing that caused it. The reality is conditions for that thing to go viral were already implicitly present in the population.

For example, recently there’s been a lot of talk about “fake news,” and depending whether you are left lean or right lean on the political spectrum, you might say, “This is not fake news at all, it’s real news. It just so happens it’s underreported by the mainstream media.” Or you might say, “This is fake news and it should be stamped out, nobody should be allowed, people should take responsibility for propagating, it’s false.”

The reality is, in the U.S., we have free speech and it’s not actually against the law to outright lie. You can say things that are false, [things] there’s not strong evidence for, and we believe that’s an important part of democracy. People should be able to raise issues that not everyone thinks is settled fact. There’s even historical cases that the majority thought to be settled fact and turned out to be false. And now that we look back, we can say the people we thought were wrong were actually right. And in those instances, you don’t want to stifle that kind of speech.

To me, the underlying issue with false facts is not that there are now accelerated ways of getting false facts out there, but the fundamental political division that causes some people to want to believe certain things. And once they have an excuse to believe those things, they are more than happy to [believe it] and they spread it to their friends. To me, that’s the underlying issue. The false facts issue is almost a superficial overlay on top of this deeper underlying political division. And if we

“A lot of people who are successful technologists often imagine their own personal experience is easily generalizable to everybody else. One of the places where I see this all the time is in education.”

can’t address that political division, it won’t make a difference what we do with technology or with our attempts to minimize false facts, because largely what will happen is the divisions will stay there. And the next time there’s something tempting for one side or the other, people will believe it.

With “fake news,” that more people see the news, that is technology. What people choose to do with that news and what they believe, that is a function of the individual.

**KM:** When writing about India, you mention this acronym that I’ve seen other places: WEIRD [for Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, Democratic]. I wondered, do you encounter that mindset in the technology world, and especially when they start to expand the technology to other communities?

**KT:** (chuckles) That is a great question and I would say absolutely yes, and it’s even a stronger version than WEIRD. A lot of people who are successful technologists often imagine their own personal experience is easily generalizable to everybody else. One of the places where I see this all the time is in education. A lot of the people in the technology world are extremely curious, bright people who, for whatever reason, when they were young kids, basically taught themselves about technology.

They remember vividly the first time they interacted with a computer and how it opened up a new world for them — suddenly they realized how much excitement there was in the world that they didn’t otherwise see. I think it’s great that there are people in the world like that, but a lot of times those same people grow up and the way they imagine to change the world is so that every kid has that same experience they did.

I think they are ascribing the cause for their positive experience entirely to what they perceived to be the change in their world, which was the machine, and not to other factors that might have led them to be the kind of people that were curious and capable and self-driven and all that. [In] the rest of the world — there are actual experiments along these lines — most people don’t suddenly become world class mathematicians or scientists just because you put a computer in their lap when they were five years old.

If your goal is education for everybody, high quality education for everybody, it’s just not enough to put a laptop in the lap of every child. Even though that might work for a very small minority of people. When you mention WEIRD, the big problem with these ideas is we have a tendency to overgeneralize from a very small minority’s experience and to assume that what’s true for that minority is true for everybody else. So, yes, I would say many of the positive things, let’s say in the U.S., don’t necessarily generalize to other contexts for a whole range of reasons. Similarly, the experience that individual successful technology entrepreneurs have with technology certainly doesn’t generalize to the population as a whole.

“... most people don’t suddenly become world class mathematicians or scientists just because you put a computer in their lap when they were five years old.”

**KM:** I want to ask then, of WEIRD [Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, Democratic], which do you feel is most easily transferable?

**KT:** You mean out of the WEIRD? Ohhh (pauses, thinking). Obviously we can’t change geography, but if we were to decide, [and] my experience as a technologist cannot be generalized. I would say the following: each of those letters is individually very difficult to change, whether education for a large population or industrialization for a country or wealth for a country or democracy for a country. If you don’t have those things now, there’s no magic switch you can flip to have them next year, even if you made a very dedicated effort. These are the things that take on the order of decades to achieve, so I don’t think there’s an easy solution.

I would answer a different question, which is: Which one of those is the most worth working for? I would say it’s education, because in the end it’s underlying all of these other qualities, assuming you believe they are valuable. It is often possible to provide education in contexts that are otherwise challenged, so you really don’t need a lot of, at least, material substance to provide a good education. You do need good human adult supervision, you need good teachers, good parents who believe in education and so on. Those things are difficult to achieve and costly, but to me that’s the one that’s most worthwhile to make.

**KM:** In the conclusion of your book you talk about an organization in India called Pradan, that does focus on the people. [Pradan places well-educated professionals within marginalized communities to educate and mentor, especially in rural India, through strategies like social mobilization and food security; more info at pradan.net.] It doesn’t sound like they have a great deal of material wealth as an organization, so they focus on their human capital, and you actually talk about it in terms of mentorship. You define that as “relevant expertise and resources.” When you talk about bolstering education, do you mean following that kind of mentorship model?

**KT:** Exactly. I use mentorship as a word because I think it encompasses what we think of as formal education but also a wide range of educational activities that don’t necessarily happen in school. Which can often happen between people who are peers, or people who are in hierarchies. But some of the important things about mentorship are what mentorship is really about: how do you help the mentee grow as their own person, helping them become better versions of themselves? It’s really an exchange; the mentor should not be seeking to get something material out of it. If there’s anything for the mentor to get out of it, it’s an opportunity for them to



become a better person in the process as well. Mentorship is one of the few types of relationships where it's willing to acknowledge there's some differential of power or level or skill in a relationship and still be focused on what I think is most beneficial for the person being mentored and possibly both parties.

**"I eventually just thought I'm no longer interested in being at a company whose primary goal is to sell more technology to whoever is willing to pay for it."**

**KM: Quite a few a business books and business environments actively encourage mentorship to transfer information and expertise. It does seem like cultivation. Is that encouraged in academic environments?**

**KT:** (mmhmmm, nodding) Oh yeah, I think academia is almost all about mentorship. Senior faculty mentor junior faculty, junior faculty mentor graduate students, graduate students mentor undergraduates. Certainly education institutions, to the extent that they are really good, really highlight mentorship as an activity. You mention business environments, business people really believe in mentorship. We think a lot about venture capitalists investing money in organizations, but they see a lot of their job as mentoring young entrepreneurs to become better entrepreneurs.

What's interesting about that to me is the following: if you talk to any entrepreneur about what is going to make the world a better place, they are thinking in terms of products and services that their company makes. "If you buy my product, your world is going to become better," "If you buy my service, we can help you achieve something." Yet within their own companies that's not how they think about how to help the company become better; they think in terms of mentorship.

Young junior employees need mentorship from senior employees, executives need mentorship so they become future C.E.O.'s and so on. On the one hand, they completely understand the value of mentorship, but as soon as it becomes interacting outside of the walls of their office, they think of making the world a better place not in terms of mentorship but through selling products and services. To me, that's a kind of schizophrenia which is very much visible in Silicon Valley.

For example, when I was at Microsoft, we would routinely hear from Bill Gates and Steve Ballmer and the entire leadership that "the employees of the company are the companies' greatest assets." They would tell us in all kinds of contexts why this was important. So when you are hiring, you want to hire people who are better than you so the company becomes stronger. And when you are a manager, you want to make sure you are giving enough growth opportunities to all of your employees so they can become better employees and so on. But then as soon as they look outward, they say, "OK, so the way your company can become better is to buy our products (rueful grin/laugh). Your family can be better served by using more technology." So again, it's this schizophrenia. If business leaders just transferred what they understand about mentorship within their companies to how they think about how they should engage with the rest of the world, to me, that would be a dramatic and more valuable shift than most of the same people trying to find ways to solve complex social challenges through innovative products. (laughs)

**KM: I wonder if that's what people find so difficult in corporate environments: they like the company but they feel torn and conflicted about the values that it expresses.**

**KT:** Sure, it's a challenging thing. One of the reasons I left Microsoft was as much as I felt it was a great corporate environment for me personally, I eventually just thought I'm no longer interested in being at a company whose primary goal is to sell more technology to whoever is willing to pay for it.

**KM: Did that happen for you when you were in India, or when you had come back to the States?**

**KT:** I left India and Microsoft at exactly the same time. It was basically one and the same.

**KM: Did you come to Ann Arbor next?**

**KT:** I then spent five years writing the book and trying to get it published. I had a kind of fellowship like situation at U.C. Berkeley for a year and a half and I did a bunch of part-time gigs, some of it with the Gates Foundation. I did a lot of volunteering for nonprofits during those years. I kept doing some kind of work, but it was mostly part-time and writing.

**KM: What brought you to Ann Arbor?**

**KT:** I started thinking after my book is done, I need to get a real job again. I applied for faculty positions at several universities and the University of Michigan position was by far the best.

**KM: Did you have family you needed to uproot?**

**KT:** Yes, my wife came with me. We were in a moment of transition because she had just given birth to our son two months before we moved here, so a lot of things changed at the same time.

**KM: Big change — is it just the three of you or has your family expanded?**

**KT:** Just the three of us.



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**Professor Kentaro Toyama interacting with students of a school set up by the nonprofit organization Seva Mandir in Rajasthan, India**

**KM: And how old is your son now?**

**KT:** He's two and a half.

**KM: You came here for this position and your spouse, is she in the academic world as well? How has it worked out for her?**

**KT:** She had decided to go back to school at that point. She and I met when we were at Microsoft, and at some point during the five years that I was without a full-time job she worked at Microsoft in Seattle, so we lived in Seattle for awhile. Now she's actually interested in starting a company around data science for human resources, which was her area before.

**KM: I know that you are here [at U-M] and you are also listed as being with Dalai Lama Center in Cambridge. How much time do you spend in each place?**

**KT:** Actually, I'm here full-time and I'm also a fellow with the Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at M.I.T.



# Social Justice and Technology with Professor Kentaro Toyama



Discussing an irrigation project with farmers and Digital Green staff in Jharkhand, India

Continued from page 67

**KM:** That's a fellowship you did?

**KT:** There was actually no formal component to it. The man who runs it is a monk, an Indian man who is a Tibetan monk who is a disciple of the Dalai Lama. He started this center at M.I.T. [thecenter.mit.edu] and he has a very interesting background. He's ordained as a monk in the Tibetan tradition and I think he majored in physics at Syracuse University, so he's very into East/West, both at very high levels. What he's interested in is getting more of the secular but highly educated population in the West to engage in issues that are important to [Tibetan] Buddhism. Things like compassion and kindness and empathy and acting on those values. He has this Center and he has a number of people he designates as fellows and we go back once or twice a year and give talks. On a few occasions I have advised the Center on projects that it's doing.

**KM:** Is it like the way McArthur grants work, where you get a letter one day and you are chosen?

**KT:** Not the same level of prominence, but something like that. There was no application process, he just got in touch with me.

**KM:** What do you lecture about, your research?

**KT:** I talk about my research. When the book came out I went and did a book talk.

"If you believe technology will save us, you would focus on a better engine. I think the real problem is the driver: they are schizophrenic, unsafe, and the pace is unsafe."

**KM:** How was the book received when it was published?

**KT:** That's a great question. My core targets for the book are two different kinds of groups. One group is technologists who are really interested in trying to apply technology for social change. The other group — people who work in international development — are increasingly interested in using technology to that end.

I'm quite happy with the fact that I think both of those groups have at least been exposed to the book in various way... and there are various degrees of agreement.... I believe you can use technology to positive ends, it is just part of this amplification: technology works where there are already positive efforts happening. It doesn't fix situations where the human situations are somehow not working.

**KM:** It amplifies what's there.

**KT:** Exactly. One kind of comment that I've heard, a lot of people who come to my talks say something like this: "I completely agree with what you are saying but the person you really need to convince is my boss." And of course, the boss is not at these talks. I know, from working in the corporate world and nonprofits and academia, the big challenge is that a lot of the people who set the agenda and

who have the capacity to direct resources in various directions are either really not interested in what's happening on the ground or given to very deep reflective thinking before they take action....

If I could convince Bill Gates of some of the substance of the book, I would say that is far more impactful than if I convince 100 other people who work for him.... He blurb'd the book really kindly, but I've a feeling that was done more out of our previous interactions and his staff read the book and said, "Here, here's something you can write about it."

**KM:** "Here, sign this?"

**KT:** (laughs) Yeah, it was probably more along those lines. That's the real challenge. I do say to people who tell me this: "You're right and the only thing you can say to this kind of leadership is, it's the same kind of thing we try to get the people we try to help... to collectively organize, collectively organize and then push back against people who have power."

**KM:** There's a professor at the Ross Business School who says the same thing about middle management — Robert Quinn.

**KT:** Oh, that's very interesting. I believe a similar thing. There's a similar dynamic that happens not just within organizations but across organizations, especially in the nonprofit world where, you know, there are lots and lots of nonprofits who function entirely through grants.

"What he's interested in is getting more of the secular but highly educated population in the West to engage in issues that are important to [Tibetan] Buddhism. Things like compassion and kindness and empathy and acting on those values."

**KM:** Yes.

**KT:** They might as well be employees of those foundations [they contact for grants]. They are limited to only doing what the grant more or less directed for. I also think people who work at foundations, project officers, are very aware that they are not doing the work on the ground and therefore they are open to listening to their grantees, as long as their grantees are willing to step up. It's a risk for the grantees, because maybe if you say something offensive you won't get that next grant, but if you band together as a group of grantees and collectively organize there is a potential to cause that change. That's something I often say. Being in a position to work with say, rural farmers who are politically organized, we say, "You need to band together." We need to follow our own advice! If we can't do that, there's very little hope for somebody who has very little education and less economic slack to do those things.

**KM:** Be the change you wish to see.

**KT:** Exactly.

**KM:** What you are seeing in terms of the community you wrote the book for, have some taken up your ideas?

**KT:** I don't think it's created a large scale change, that definitely hasn't happened. It's certainly helped change a lot of things. It's provided ammunition for a lot people who already believed some things similar to what I believe. I think for some people, a small minority, it's changed their minds, at least from feedback I've heard. It's affected how they think about what kind of job they want to pursue and so on. For some people, it's a kind of practical guideline for projects that want to engage in technology.

**KM:** Were you ever tempted — there's a footnote in Chapter 5, where you mention trying to sell the manuscript and editors said it was very fair and balanced and so perhaps would not sell well — to be more aggressive?

**KT:** It's great that somebody reads the footnotes! A lot of stuff ended up in the endnotes that I wanted in the original book, but it was too wonky and so I put it there. To be completely honest, I made it as attention getting as I could without going beyond what I believed was true. I am an academic and a researcher and we basically get brainwashed during the Ph.D. process not to say anything that we cannot justify with ten citations or our own research. But I do think it's important that people [who] have a conviction for [a] need to get expressed, even if those things are (laughs) too rational and sane to catch attention. I think that brings up a larger question of the kind of world we live in now, where just the sheer number of different ways we can get news out — it's becoming more and more of a competition as to who can get more eyeballs.

**KM:** Did you ever watch the TV show *The Newsroom*? There is a scene where they are trying to verify a report from a second independent source, and they are being pressured to report without the verification to be the first on the air.

**KT:** Exactly, that pressure is so great. Again, I would say that is technology amplifying the sensationalist in all of us. As much as I would like journalists to stick to that, I also want to see it before everyone else. So until we live in a world where everyone has sufficient education and self control to realize that's not ultimately good for us, it's really hard — basically technology is amplifying that and making it easier and easier for that to come out.

**KM:** What about that self control — as a technologist, and now a father, how do you find yourself finding self control and balance?



**KT:** As a personal matter, I just think any use of technology has to be very deliberate and has to be supporting your own non technology goals. Rather than that you just have it because it's a cool thing to have. Despite the fact that I am a computer scientist by training and work in a School of Information where people find social media an interesting phenomena to study, this (pulls a Nokia candybar phone from the early aughts out of his pocket) is my cell phone and people are still shocked sometimes. "Where is your cell phone? Where is your smart phone?" I can't respond to emails the moment people send them to me, I often find myself wishing I could browse where the nearest coffee shop is, but all of those advantages are not outweighed by the fact that if I did in fact have a smartphone, it would dramatically distract me from what I am doing in the moment.

**KM:** You call yourself a recovering technoholic? Is a small phone part of that?

**KT:** I'm not as much of a gadget freak as some of my friends and colleagues are. I put that in to sell the book, to create a marketable spin around it. I would say I had bought into a belief that more and better technology necessarily makes the world a better place and I no longer believe that.

I just see this so much in the people around me that I have a constant reminder. I think that different people can handle it different ways. I'm also fortunate to be in a generation which is not [dependent]. You don't feel you've completely lost touch with your peers if you don't have a smartphone.

With my son, we make a fairly strong effort to keep him away from any kind of screens at this point, other than for the purposes of FaceTime or Skyping with his grandparents, who are not in Ann Arbor. That's a very deliberate, purpose driven choice. We believe in the value of him communicating with his grandparents once in a while is far outweighed by whatever he might get out of that.

The funny thing is, you know, kids are drawn to the technology. The fancy blingy way in which user interfaces are designed is designed exactly to grab your attention and you can see it in my son. The first time he saw a YouTube video, he was just mesmerized, and now, if there's a hint of a possibility that that's going to happen, he will beg for it. To me, that's exactly what we don't want to give into. We want to raise a son that has enough understanding and engagement with the physical world and the social world before he starts interacting with screens.

**KM:** Was this all intentional, did you and your wife have a lot of conversations about this?

**KT:** I would say it was definitely intentional. I don't know that we had so many conversations, she definitely understood. She has a smartphone, so she has made a different choice about her personal device and I admit to occasionally asking her to look up stuff because I don't have the smartphone (laughs). I'm borrowing it, so I can't completely condemn her use of it. But yes, to the extent possible, we're very deliberate about it.

**KM:** You've made these choices for your son, but you work at the University. Is this a conversation you bring in?

**KT:** Yes, I do in fact. In one of my undergraduate courses, I ask the students to try to go on an I.T. fast for 24 hours. Most of them cannot do it. They try and it's either too difficult — and I allow them to use the technology for anything they need for coursework, but even so they find it very difficult to go for 24 hours. Some of them come to the conclusion after that that they are so dependent on this that it's a little bit scary. Some of them think, "Well, this is the way the world is, so why should they have to go without?"

I think of it like automobiles. Automobiles are this very powerful technology, and when you are an adult, at least in the U.S., if you can't drive or don't have a car it's very difficult to get around, at least in most cities. But that doesn't necessarily mean we have to give every five-year-old driving lessons or give them a car when they are ten. We make very careful choices about when kids get cars and that's not just expressed within the family, but in a societal way. Usually you can't get a driver's license until you are 16, at least in most states. To me, that is an indicator: here is a great technology that we understand is necessary for our life and that we as adults believe we should have, but that doesn't necessarily mean that we should lower the age that kids should have access to devices because we are human beings, and until we have a certain amount of self control and understanding of moral things, and some training with the device, it would be crazy to let 12-year-olds on the road.

**KM:** Except in rural areas.

**KT:** But that's a particular context and it's understood. They still aren't allowed to drive in the city and can't go fast. I don't know what the choice should be, but we made a choice as a society and a very deliberate one. I think we have not had the chance to do that with these (gestures to my recording smartphone) devices. Despite all kinds of parents having challenges with it. There is not a parent I haven't spoken too, ever, who thinks everything is perfect with their child and the new technology. Most of them want to limit it in some way, or if they try, it's very difficult. Yet we are strangely kind of paralyzed in inaction.

I could easily see the kind of situation where every school has some kind of P.T.A. meetings before the terms begin where they ask, "Okay parents, what would you like the rules [around technology] to be?" Some schools have already instituted mobile phone bans during the school hours, which I think is terrific and wise. But maybe parents need to decide amongst themselves what is a good age to give a kid a smartphone. Because once a whole bunch of kids have it, it's that much harder for another parent to refuse their kid. But social pressures shouldn't be the reason any one family should feel like they have to give a phone to their child.

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**KM:** Social and class pressure.

**KT:** Exactly, exactly, I count all of that as social pressure. If you have a seven-year-old who comes home and says, "Well, all seven of my best friends all have smartphones and they are texting all the time and I feel left out with it," it's really hard as a parent to just say no. To me, it's another case where what we really should be doing as parents is getting together and discussing these things in advance, not one off buying decisions.

**KM:** I'm trying to picture my friends who are parents all getting together to have this discussion.

**KT:** I would guess they all want to get together and have those conversations and kind of scheme about when their kids should be getting phones.

"I could easily see the kind of situation where every school has some kind of P.T.A. meetings before the terms begin where they ask, 'Okay parents, what would you like the rules [around technology] to be?'"

**KM:** That's phones and personal use, but what about this push in the U.S. to get computers in every classroom, or iPads to every student?

**KT:** At this point, I would say in 90 percent of these attempts to get more technology in the classroom, that money could be much better spent on something else. The reason I say that is for a number of reasons. One is people used to worry about the digital divide, which is the divide between kids who have access to technology and kids who don't. I don't think you can ever close the digital divide; richer households are always going to have more technology than poorer households and you can't get away from that. Richer schools are going to have more technology than poorer schools. However, as of about a decade ago, there is reasonable evidence showing that most schools have a few computers, increasingly because of programs like the F.C.C.'s E-Rate Program, [a federal program that helps schools and libraries obtain affordable broadband, with discounts ranging from 20 to 90 percent] so most schools have Internet access.

It's no longer a question of "Do kids have access to technology or not?" It's "Do students each carry around an iPad or not?" But the real question we should be asking is, "Is the technology actually being used in a way that contributes to learning?" because technology is so difficult to integrate in a deliberate, learning focused way for students. This is true for the younger students even more than older students. I would say most schools and teachers dramatically underestimate the supporting costs that are necessary in a way that is actually beneficial for students. Most programs end with "we're going to distribute all these iPads to all these kids," rather than seeing that as a starting point and realizing they now have to do a whole lot of additional curriculum development, lesson planning development, training of teachers, training of parents in terms of what they should expect at home, so that devices ultimately contribute and add something to education rather than distract students.

**KM:** So to be fully integrated, schools need a whole new curriculum and programming.

**KT:** Absolutely. If the rhetoric is that technology is going to transform education that means that the educational system has to be prepared for that transformation. There are now very good research studies that show that if all you are doing is giving everyone a laptop, that in no way contributes to better grades, better test scores, better attendance, better motivation to study. The kids with the laptops are not learning anything more than the kids without the laptops.

**KM:** So it comes down to teachers again.

**KT:** Exactly, it comes down to teachers. Having both been a teacher and interviewing teachers who are in these situations, when you put technology in a classroom, it actually places a greater burden on the teacher to make greater use of it. Because it's a lot more complex. You are dealing with something that potentially has a lot

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# Social Justice and Technology with Professor Kentaro Toyama



Seeking feedback about the “Talking Book” electronic device with farmers in Mbale, Uganda

Continued from page 69

more power and now you have to worry about how that power is put to use.

**KM: Is that the focus of your research?**

**KT:** It’s one of the things I look at, yes. Right now I’m working with an undergraduate student, she is doing interviews with faculty here and their perception and views on technology. Because often teachers’ views are not taken into account. Parents, who feel they are being left behind, or kids, but the impact [of teaching with tech in the classroom] on teachers tends to get ignored.

**KM: Is she going across departments?**

**KT:** Across departments and also intentionally choosing faculty who we know love technology and are doing some fancy things in the classroom, as well as some faculty we know are a little bit less excited about the technology.

“As a personal matter, I just think any use of technology has to be very deliberate and has to be supporting your own non technology goals.”

**KM: What are your other areas of research?**

**KT:** I have a lot of eclectic research projects happening, partially as a result of the lessons I explained in the book. My own research has not only changed [because of the book, but] I’m actually trying to understand what kind of research is more useful. I’m trained as a computer scientist, my background is in technical computer science, but I no longer think that’s the thing that makes society better. It can contribute to it — it’s like the engine in your car and making it faster and better and more powerful versus who’s behind the steering wheel and driving. If you believe technology will save us, you would focus on a better engine. I think the real problem is the driver: they are schizophrenic, unsafe, and the pace is unsafe. If you think of the Earth as the vehicle, our schizophrenia shows in that we have many different ideas about how to drive that vehicle and things change regularly: elections, for example. So rather than going faster, I would like us to come up with a unifying vision for how to use our vehicle. I use the driver analogy to help people grasp the issue of values and changing them. As a researcher, I am not excited about building technology. What I find exciting and the focus of my research in various different contexts is: “How do I help people achieve their own aspirations?”

**KM: Since you have decided these are social questions and you are a technology person, are you working cross discipline to expand your view and become that better driver? Are you working with a sociology colleague or others?**

**KT:** Yes, absolutely. One of the reasons I came to Michigan is I’m not at the Computer Science Department, I’m at the School of Information.

**KM: How is that different?**

**KT:** That’s a great question. Historically the School of Information was a library science school which became the School of Information because libraries are asking themselves this kind of question: What is our relevance in a digital age, where even

paper books may eventually go away?

**KM: Nooooooo!**

**KT:** I don’t want to see that world, but that’s one kind of direction. At the same time, because computers are becoming more ubiquitous, there are more and more social science questions around the use of computers. Forty years ago those were minimal, but today, it’s a matter of social concern what people are doing with their smartphones and so on. The third component is the technical computer science itself and how that can be built in a way that supports positive social activity. At the School of Information we’re interested in the intersection of all these things. We always say we are interested in questions that involve people, information, and technology.

One very big reason I came to this school and to this university is the School of Information itself is very interdisciplinary. We have people who have degrees in computer science, library science, various social sciences from psychology to economics to anthropology and so on. I certainly work with colleagues who have very different backgrounds than mine on some of these research projects. This is a great research university in which so many of its departments are top tier in their own categories. I have projects with faculty at the law school, in the Ford School of Public Policy, and others.

**KM: What’s the project with public policy?**

**KT:** That’s an interesting project. It’s a collaboration with an economist in my department and a woman who works a lot with Arab American populations in the Dearborn area. We are trying to understand whether or not there are ways that you can diminish discrimination against Muslim Arab groups within the U.S. and whether or not that can be done in a relatively short conversation. It’s based on another research study that showed fairly strong effects by having a certain kind of conversation, but for transgender issues. Political scientists who studied that found that if you have a 10-minute conversation where you ask the participant to think about situations in which they have felt discriminated against, and how that might apply to somebody who is transgender, it often results in a positive change in their perception and a greater willingness to support transgender legislation, for example. So our approach is “Can a similar approach work for anti-Muslim or anti-Arab sentiment in this country?”

**KM: That seems very relevant right now. When did you start that project?**

**KT:** We just got a grant for that a couple of months ago. We started thinking about it before the election.

**KM: Before the election or the campaigning for the election?**

**KT:** Before the results of the election, but of course, the campaigning had been in full swing. One reason why we are working on this project is our own personal interest, but the Ph.D. student who is working on this is himself Muslim and from a Muslim country, so it’s very interesting for him as well.

**KM: Is he in danger — is he from one of the targeted countries, in danger of being deported?**

**KT:** He is a permanent resident of the United States and I think is, at this point, in the clear, but in order to protect his privacy, I won’t say more. He is initially from one of the seven countries that Trump was trying to ban.

**KM: He’s in that group.**

**KT:** Yes, even though he’s not directly affected, he has family members who may have a harder time coming into the country who, at least until last year, had no problem coming to visit.

**KM: One of the phrases you use in your book a lot is the phrase “the right heart, mind, and will.” How would you define that to someone who hasn’t read your book?**

**KT:** I think of heart, mind, and will as being the critical building blocks for people to become better people, better versions of themselves. It’s important that those three are all present. I think almost everything we think of as a positive character trait can be broken down into those three things. Heart is basically positive intentions toward more and more people. That begs the question of what a positive intention is, but it’s the obvious things: Do you want to help prevent suffering for more people? Are you trying to avoid causing suffering for more people? Does more people include not just you and your family, but large groups of people, maybe the people within your religion, maybe the people within your country, maybe the whole earth? Your intention of getting better and better includes other people’s pain and larger and larger groups of people. That’s heart.

Mind is good judgment. It’s kind of hard to pin down, but each of us knows somebody who we feel is very wise in some way, who has a lot of good judgment. They are the kinds of people you go to when you have some kind of problem and you want to talk things out. They may not have the answer, but they are very good at helping to guide you to come to more clarity about those issues. People who have good judgment help with — you know [the saying] the road to hell being paved with good intentions? People have very good intentions but have terrible judgment, and to me that’s what that saying is about. The third one is will, which I think of as willpower and self control.

The reason why I say you need all three is, so let’s take an example that applies to your personal health. You might be somebody who is a very smart, very well intentioned couch potato. You want to have better health, you know what it takes



to do it — exercise and good nutrition, but you don't have the will power to follow through on what you know you should do. Even though you have two out of these three things, you are not going to have the best health you could have because you are lacking.

Another way that this might happen, you might be an extremely motivated nutrition researcher but somebody that's so focused on their research career they don't think of their own health as requiring attention. I would say that person has a good judgment, they know what is required, and a lot of willpower, but its not being directed at their own health, and therefore, that person won't probably live as long as they possibly could.

**"I would say I had bought into a belief that more and better technology necessarily makes the world a better place and I no longer believe that."**

**KM: Does this come from a certain spiritual practice or upbringing? How did you come to this?**

**KT:** It comes from having a real interest in philosophical foundations for the way the world is the way it is and how we could make it better. The heart, mind, and will breakdown: for the sake of the book — this was not a conception I had until I started writing the book, but for the sake of the book— I was trying to find a way to package what I thought was crucial for positive social change to happen in as small and as catchy a package as possible. I also say in the book it's about intention, discernment, and self control, but that's not quite as catchy as heart, mind, and will (chuckle). I spent a great deal of time thinking about how to frame it. That's where heart, mind, and will comes from. I have a natural philosophical bent, so if you think of any given virtue, to me they can be broken down into these three things.

**KM: You also write you want to be "someone who can better execute what he knows." That also sounds like a spiritual path, along with heart, mind, and will.**

**KT:** Let me go back to the spiritual thing. At some level, this book is emphasizing spiritual principles. I have intentionally left any religious spiritual language out of the book because the people I'm wanting to convince are largely secular and find anything mentioning anything smacking of religion as something they don't want to engage with and they associate with fluff. That decision is very deliberate. Interestingly, I've had a number of people who read the book tell me that, "Oh, this



Children from a Samburu community in Kenya

sounds just like Jesuit Catholicism. Or Buddhism. Or the way I think of Christianity."

**KM: Does that come out of your upbringing?**

**KT:** I would define myself as being spiritual but not formally religious. I don't think of myself as aligning with any one existing organized religion, but I've read a lot about various religions. Many religions, at heart they have a very similar message, and to me that message does not require in any way, shape, or form a belief in a supernatural entity to be valid. That's the part that's spiritual. It's really just about how do we become better versions of ourselves.

**KM: Sounds like Charles Eisenstein's work. [Author of *Ascent of Humanity*, Evolver Editions, 2013.]**

**KT:** That's right, and I don't think it's an accident that those commonalities are there. I do believe there's a phenomenon of religious mysticism where some people can basically shut off the thinking part of their brains and they are better able to experience a state of mind that I think naturally gives expression in some of these religious principles. A lot of it is associated what different religions think of as the

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essence of their religion, whether it's love, or oneness with God, or oneness with the world. I think in all of those cases, the underlying understanding is that sentient creatures have the capacity to feel suffering as well as joy. If you can understand what suffering is and how you don't want it, then it naturally makes sense that you should be working toward minimizing that suffering for as many sentient creatures

**"We want to raise a son that has enough understanding and engagement with the physical world and the social world before he starts interacting with screens."**

as possible. To me, that's the underlying essence of spirituality.

**KM: And humanism.**

**KT:** A lot of these religious beliefs come from an intuitive place. People didn't come from a logical place; they didn't necessarily think these through. They are part of an underlying truth and if you think about them in a very scientific way, you will come to a similar conclusion.

**KM: I think of how science hypothesized that competition was the basis for all interactions in the natural world, but as we have added different researchers, we have learned that collaboration also plays a part, that it's a choice of strategy.**

**KT:** Science can support some of these conclusions, but there is some point where you need to make a non-scientific normative decision. You might require science to reason through, but ultimately science is indifferent. From a scientific perspective, whether or not a gazillion people are suffering is not a scientific question. It's either true or not. But beyond the factual truth of that, it's not a question of whether we should increase it or decrease it. At some level science has no goal around it.

**KM: It has no value judgment.**

**KT:** It has no value judgment. It has a goal of understanding the truth as it is, but beyond that, there is no further [goal] that science as a discipline has — scientists may be different, but science doesn't have [one]. Even if the science were that humans are competitive and want to hurt each other, I would still say the spiritually clear thing, the morally clear thing, is to try to avoid that. As much as I think it's somewhat helpful when science actually comes out and says, "Hey, it turns out collaboration is actually good for us" — that explanation always makes me uneasy, because what if the science was another way?

**KM: What you're saying is, no matter what science tells us, at some point as humans, as fully realized humans, we have to look at our values and make a judgment. We are compelled to use all of our gifts and use our heart, mind, and will and make that value judgment.**

**KT:** Yes, yes, exactly, and to take the path that is hopefully more positive.

*Kirsten Mowrey is a bodyworker, somatic educator, and writes the Green Living column for Crazy Wisdom Community Journal. She may be reached through [www.kirstenmowrey.com](http://www.kirstenmowrey.com).*





# Abandonment Blues— An Adoption Memoir

## A Professor Emeritus of Philosophy Seeks to Disentangle His Life Story

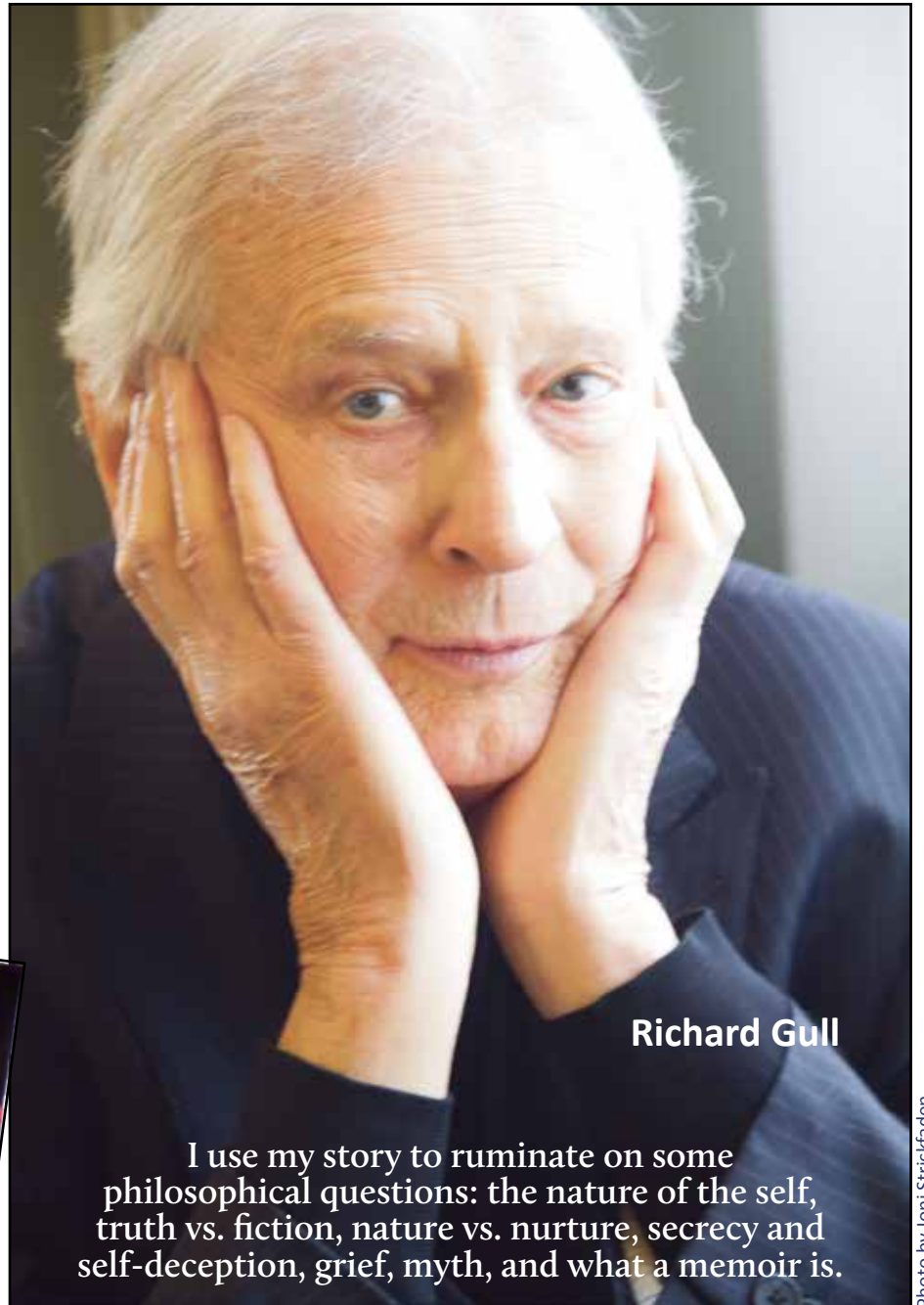
By Richard Gull

*Editor's Note: Richard Gull, Ph.D., retired as Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at U-M in 2007. During his years at the University, he also taught courses in Philosophy in Film; deconstructing films is his second love. He has been on an avid search for his family history over the last few years, and his quest has surfaced long-hidden information about his adoptive family and the families of his birth parents. What follows is a fascinating and original exploration of memoir-writing, and of the life-long search to know and understand one's roots.*

*Gull lives on Ann Arbor's Westside. At 78, he is as intellectually agile and vigorous as any 35 year old. He can be found five days a week working out on the treadmills at Liberty Athletic Club or walking at Bird Hills or practicing yoga. He is a handsome man, tall and fit, and with a mane of white hair. Less a lion in winter than a lion in autumn, he is almost an archetypal male elder – sage, potent, authentic, and with more feeling and emotion now than he may have allowed himself when he was younger.*

*Interestingly, Gull has been in an ongoing monthly men's group for a quarter century, and also led his own men's group for many years. Gull's wife, Sara Schreiber, a psychotherapist, and the founder of Empatheatre, died in 2010. His son, Jason, 48, works as an attorney in the Intellectual Property division at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.*

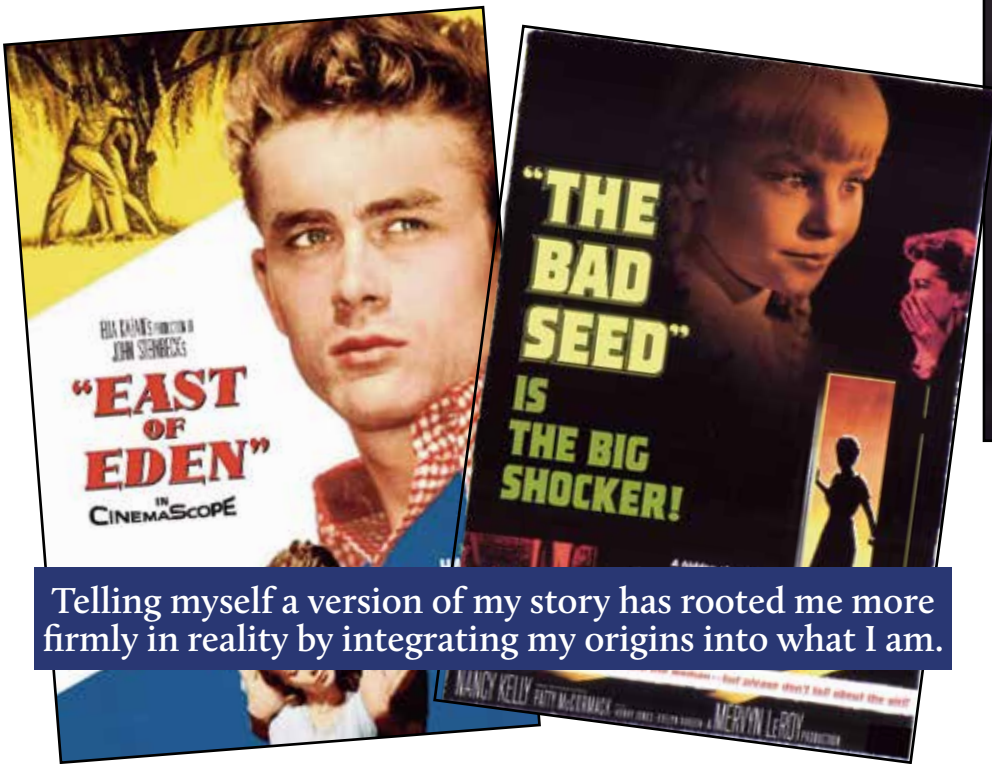
It's one of the pathological complications of adoption — adoptees don't have rights; their lives are about supporting the secrets, the needs and desires of others.  
—A.M. Homes, *The Mistress's Daughter*



Richard Gull

I use my story to ruminate on some philosophical questions: the nature of the self, truth vs. fiction, nature vs. nurture, secrecy and self-deception, grief, myth, and what a memoir is.

Photo by Joni Strickfaden



Telling myself a version of my story has rooted me more firmly in reality by integrating my origins into what I am.

discovered more than the story of my origins; I found my *mythos*, an interpretation of my story. My "illegitimate" birth has been legitimated through memoir. My youthful myth of self-creation has been replaced by a more compassionate myth of abandonment blues that binds my adoptee's shadow family in a drama of loss.

I saw two films when I was seventeen, *East of Eden* (1955) and *The Bad Seed* (1956), that shaped how I saw myself but I've not written about them until now. *East of Eden*, a version of the Cain and Abel story, is about the corrosive effect on children of a secret about their family origins. *The Bad Seed* is an adoption-gone-bad story as horror film. It's serious subtext questions the "blank slate" biopolitics of the time that justified the secrecy of closed adoptions. The myth of self-creation is an existentialist variation on the blank slate theme; if we are blank slates to ourselves then the quest for our origins is not important to our flourishing.

### Introduction

I was adopted when I was six months old. My adoptive mother told me this when I was nine. Whenever I asked whom my birth mother was she said that she didn't know. After she died at age sixty-one, when I was thirty-five, I found letters from my birth mother amongst her papers. I found her, we met her once, but she would never tell me who my biological father was.

I retired from being a philosophy professor in 2008. I've written a memoir about my adoption story. I use my story to ruminate on some philosophical questions: the nature of the self, truth vs. fiction, nature vs. nurture, secrecy and self-deception, grief, myth, and what a memoir is. I discuss how the lied-to adoptee is an archetypal mythic figure in fairy tales and literature, questing for an answer to the universal question "Who am I?" My journey has taken me to the Ozarks twice in recent years. I recently hired a professional genealogist who found my biological father's great grandson in Branson, Missouri, who was raised by him until he was 18. I learned that I haunted my birth parents' lives as a phantom child. They sought surrogates for me. This led me to see that everyone in my adoption triangle — birth parents, adoptive parents, and the adoptee — suffers a version of what I call abandonment blues. I

My youthful myth of self-creation has been replaced by a more compassionate myth of abandonment blues that binds my adoptee's shadow family in a drama of loss.

Everything written in a memoir should go back to, be slanted toward, the internal conflict of desires and beliefs that is the electric third rail driving the story forward.  
— Mary Karr

### How Can an Adoption Memoir Heal a Divided Self?

Writing a memoir is a search for one's story and its meaning, and for one's self. Mary Karr says in *The Art of Memoir* that the spine of a memoir is an internal conflict. Everything written in a memoir should go back to, be slanted toward, the internal conflict of desires and beliefs that is the electric third rail driving the story forward. To use Emily Dickenson's phrase, you "Tell the truth but tell it slant." Karr writes of a memoir's animating internal schism and its resolution:

The split or inner conflict must manifest on the first pages and form the book's thrust or through line---some journey toward the self's overhaul by book's end. . . . A blazing psychic struggle holds [a memoir] together. Usually [its purpose] is to go back and recover some lost aspect of the past so it can be integrated into current identity. (p. 92)



The tension between my adopted self and my inherited self is the psychological spine of my memoir.

As an adoptee my origin story was hidden from me. I was conceived in an affair between two people who were married but not to each other and who were already parents. I was an “illegitimate” child, a more polite word for “bastard.” My adoption memoir is an attempt to legitimate my existence. From the Latin *legere*, legitimate has both the legal meaning “to be legal” and one that connotes claiming or conferring meaning. Adoptee and memoirist Betty Jean Lifton has the latter in mind when she writes: “A recorded existence is a real one. A legitimate one.”

### The tension between my adopted self and my inherited self is the psychological spine of my memoir.

An adoption memoir legitimates the adoptee’s existence by supplying a missing backstory that counters the stigma of the bastard label and dignifies the adoptee’s place in the human drama. Telling myself a version of my story has rooted me more firmly in reality by integrating my origins into what I am. Before learning about my origins, my story was like a novel whose opening pages were missing or a play seen having arrived after curtain up.

#### She was my mother. She wasn’t my mother.

When my adoptive mother died, I discovered letters from my birth mother amongst her papers. She had known my origins and hidden them from me. This discovery led to meeting my birth mother. We met only once. She would not reveal the identity of my biological father. Because of this our relationship dwindled over the years to occasional phone calls.

Thus I had two mothers who were secretive about my beginnings. I write of this in my memoir:

After my adoptive mother died I conjured up a fantasy that she left a message of her own along with letters from my birth mother explaining why she had hidden them from me. I imagined her leaving me a note saying something like: “I hid these papers from you because my lawyer advised me to. I thought that secrecy would protect both your birth parents and your adoptive parents. Since your birth parents were married, but not to each other, they wanted to avoid a scandal. And I was afraid of losing you.”

But there was no such note, no explanation of her secrecy. My adoptive mother’s death followed by my discovery of my birth mother happened abruptly. She was my mother one moment, then suddenly she was gone, and another mother appeared. Both mothers were my mother yet neither was; both were real yet neither was real.

Upon discovering my birth mother’s name, Cora Mae Burris, I jogged down the street chanting out loud to myself, “I know who I am, I know who I am.” But this fervent existential epiphany turned out, on reflection, to be an overstatement. If I now knew who I was, then who was I before this moment? My adoptive mother’s secret not only felt like a betrayal, it made my life with her feel like a fiction now that its hidden substrate had been revealed. This feeling of unreality was not new; growing up I invented fictions about my hidden life: I imagined that I was a misplaced prince or a bad seed.

Karr notes that memoirists are often orphans who have been lied to about their beginnings. She writes:

I don’t know if memoirists as children are lied to more often as kids or only grow up to resent it more, but it does seem that we often come from the ranks of orphans or half-orphans-through-divorce, trying to heal the schism inside ourselves. (p. 164)

Betty Jean Lifton uses Carl Jung’s idea of the Ghost Kingdom to describe the adoptee’s divided self in *Journey of the Adopted Self*:

Adoptees live their everyday experience in their “pretend” family and another in the “time tunnel” of the Ghost Kingdom they share with the idealized and denigrated birth parents. If we can grasp the unreality of the realm wherein adoptees perceive their most real selves to reside, we will understand the adopted person’s own sense of unreality...(p. 57)

As a lied-to-adoptee I’ve had a fluid sense of reality from the beginning; my “real” self was hidden in my Ghost Kingdom while my adoptive self was suspect. What was my real self or my real family? Films can seem more real than actual life. Ideas can be more real than events. An extra-marital affair is a glimpse into a different self, into a different reality. If you marry a lied-to adoptee, be careful.

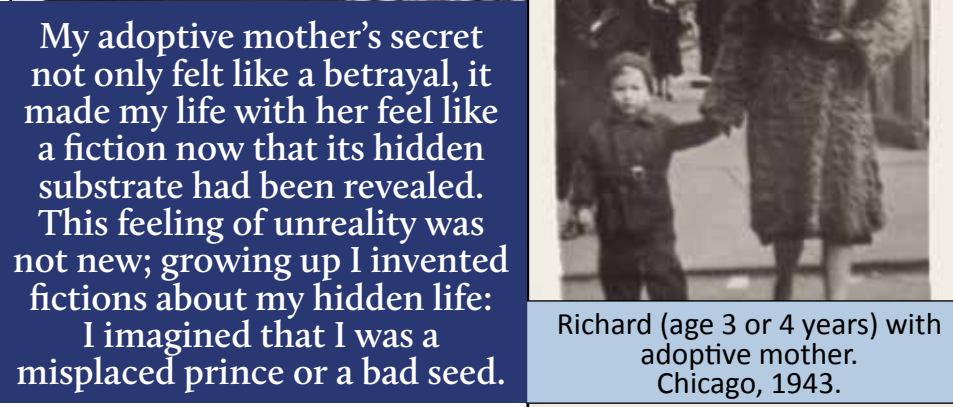
#### Roots and Wings

There are only two lasting bequests we can give our children — one is roots, the other is wings.  
An Old Saying

A memoir is nonfiction; a novel is fiction. A memoir should strive for fidelity to the truth. But truth in a memoir is subjective — it is *your* truth. Others may tell the same story differently. Or they may give it a different interpretation. Or they may impose a different myth on it. A memoir is not just reportage, like journalism. Yet one should



My adoptive family: Robert (father), Veronica (mother), Richard (age 9), and Barbara (sister, age 6), Chicago, 1948.



My adoptive mother’s secret not only felt like a betrayal, it made my life with her feel like a fiction now that its hidden substrate had been revealed. This feeling of unreality was not new; growing up I invented fictions about my hidden life: I imagined that I was a misplaced prince or a bad seed.

Richard (age 3 or 4 years) with adoptive mother. Chicago, 1943.

have an implicit contract with oneself and the reader to tell the truth the best one can and not just make stuff up. Disregard for the truth cheats not only the reader, but also deprives the memoir writer of an examined life. The quest for one’s self gets replaced by a quest for self-aggrandizement. Karr writes:

A memoirist forging false tales to support his more comfortable notions—or to pump himself up for the audience—never learns who he is. He’s missing the personal liberation that comes from the examined life. (p. 12)

Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living; he might have added that a memoir that fails to truthfully examine the author’s life is not worth reading. Similarly, a lied-to adoptee, deprived of knowledge of his origins, is cut off from the examined life that flourishing requires. To paraphrase an old saying, one needs roots in order to have wings. But what I am calling the myth of self-creation denies this.

### As an adopted child, I felt that I was a substitute for my adoptive parents’ phantom biological son.

#### Lies and the Myth of Self-Creation

For the lied-to adoptee a memoir is an attempt to pierce the veil of secrecy in a quest to uncover the secret of one’s being. The original secret gives rise to other secrets that proliferate in the adoptee’s family and nervous system. Perhaps lied-to adoptees sometimes resist telling the truth about themselves because as children they were expected to accept a fictional existence. Betty Jean Lifton writes:

The child is being asked to collude in the fiction that these are his only parents and to accept that his birth heritage is disposable.

Since family secrets have left these adoptees to fantasize about who they really are, as adults they may be tempted to make things up. Novelists use fiction as cover for an utterly free space where anything can be thought. Secretive adoptive parents use the “as if” of fiction, like the expectation to act as if their child’s birth heritage is disposable, to try to foreclose the possibility that their adopted children will have unwelcome thoughts about who they really are. Which ironically can give the lied-to child the desire to write fiction, not memoir, as an adult. Novelist Jeanette Winterson wrote fiction before turning to writing her memoir. As a fiction writer she was self-invented; anything could be thought, unconstrained by memoir’s imperative to tell a true story. As a fiction writer she seems to admit to colluding in the fiction of disavowing her heritage, adopting a myth of self-creation:

I was a loner. I was self-invented. I didn’t believe in biology or biography. I believed in myself. Parents? What for? Except to hurt you.

My birth mother’s name was Cora. Her pen name was Coday Melissa. She told me in a letter that she wanted to write the story of her lost and found son with “the names changed to protect the guilty. Ha!” But she never did write that memoir. If she had, her pseudonym would have given her a fictional self as cover to write her forbidden story; she would have turned herself into a secret in order to uncover the secrets she had kept. Now I’m fulfilling my birth mother’s wish to tell our story. But as a memoirist I cannot use a pseudonym.

I saw the film *East of Eden* (1955) twice when I was sixteen. It has stayed inside of me as a parable about my life, although I’ve never written about it until now. A retelling of the Cain and Abel story from *Genesis*, it impressed upon me the biblical



# Abandonment Blues—

## An Adoption Memoir

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treachery that family secrets can bring. Cal (James Dean) uncovers the family secret that his mother is not dead, as their father Adam told him and his brother, Aron, when they were children; she is a madam in a nearby brothel. Aron idealizes his dead mother, believing that she is God's "youngest angel" in heaven. Cal's jealousy that his father loves Aron and not him leads him to use the secret as a weapon to shatter his brother's ego by taking him to the brothel to meet his mother. This leads to his brother's insanity and death in World War I.

The revelation of the secret about my birth mother did not shatter my self as it did Aron's in the film. But it scrambled my sense of self: Who was my real mother? What is my real self? What is real? And the film raised for me the question of why my adoptive mother kept my origins from me. Was she punishing me in the name of protecting me? Adam in the film justifies his secrecy by saying that it spares his sons pain, but then ends up inflicting pain on them. My adoptive mother may have prolonged her secrecy about my origins out of unconscious anger at me for rebelling against her as an adolescent and keeping my distance. Her secrecy helped her hold onto her status as my real mother at a time she must have felt that she was losing it. Perhaps my anger at her helped justify her secrecy to herself.



My birth mother Cora Mae Burris

My biological father Arnold Stewart (age 69) with wife, Murlene, at granddaughter's wedding, 1976.



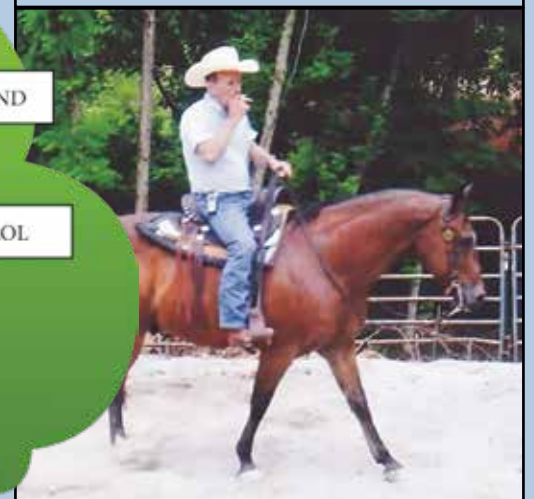
My birth mother Cora Mae Burris, 1974, Mountain Grove, Missouri



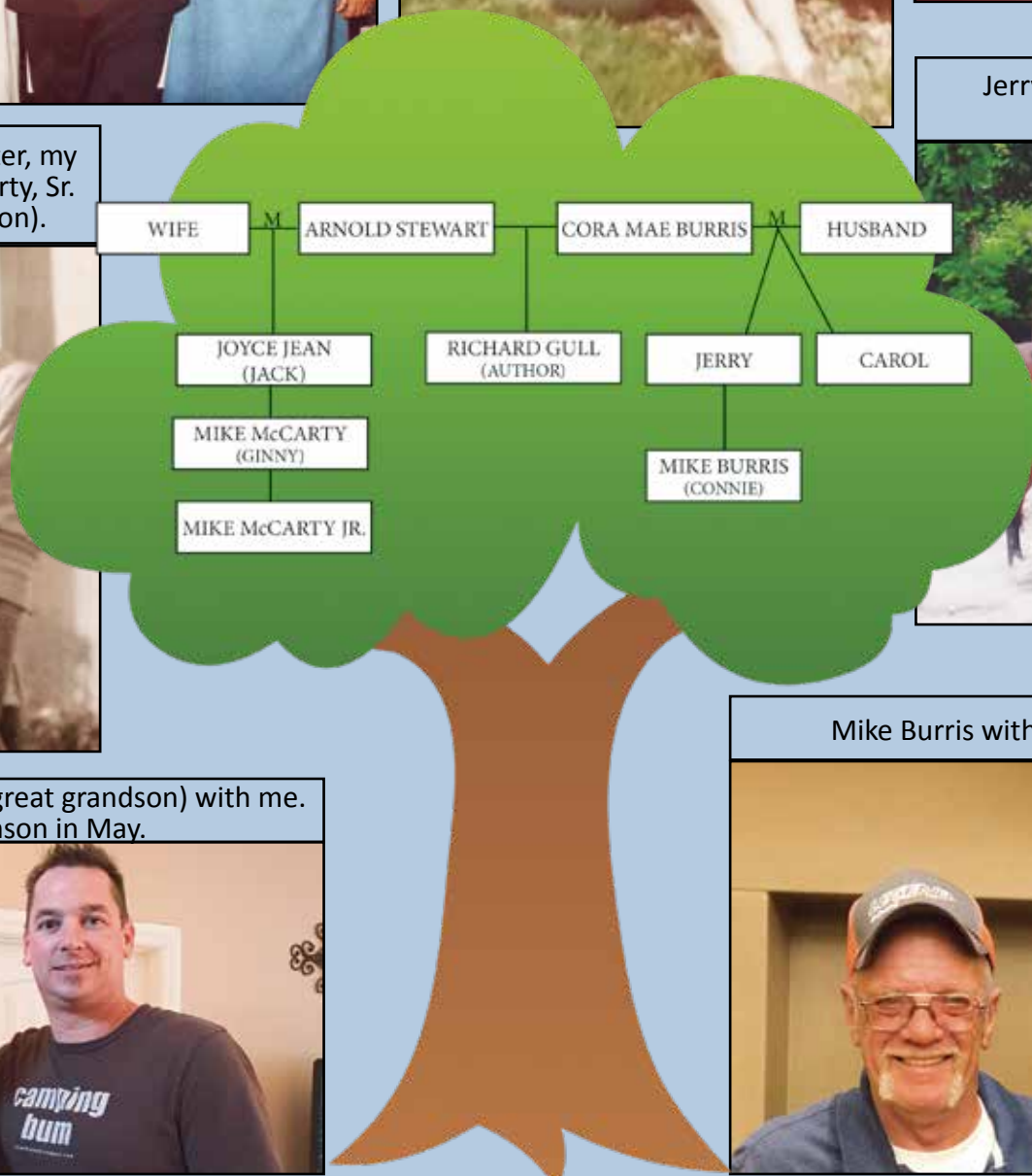
Carol Burris with me. She is my half sister. I visited her in Mountain Grove, Missouri, in 2014.



Jerry Burris, my half brother, on horseback.



Joyce Jean (Arnold's daughter, my half sister) with Mike McCarty, Sr. (her son, Arnold's grandson).



Mike McCarty, Jr. (Arnold's great grandson) with me. We met in Branson in May.



Mike Burris with me in Branson (2017).





My adoptive mother kept my adoption secret from my adoptive sister until I was nineteen and she was sixteen. She accidentally learned that I was adopted when she overheard me arguing with our mother. My adoptive sister told me she was “shocked” to find this out. But she knew about my adoption papers long before my adoptive mother died, yet never told me about them. She didn’t want to, she said, because “you and mom weren’t getting along.” Family secrets can both tie families together as well as drive them apart.

**“If we can grasp the unreality of the realm wherein adoptees perceive their most real selves to reside, we will understand the adopted person’s own sense of unreality...”**  
 – Betty Jean Lifton

**A Proposed Incognito Meeting: A Bastard Moment**

I took my first six-month sabbatical leave in the winter semester 1975 at Oxford University. With my then wife, Susanne, and our five-year-old son, Jason, we rented a row house on a green in Witney, at the edge of the Cotwolds (in Middle English meaning “sheep enclosure in rolling hillside”) ten kilometers outside Oxford. I took the bus into Oxford to study at the Bodleian Library, attend lectures, and have lunch at the King’s Arms pub. I had a Rackham grant to study the question: “What is an Emotion?” — a question I’d been researching for several years.

At Oxford I continued corresponding with my birth mother Cora, who was living in Cabool, Missouri. She kept my biological father’s identity secret from me, annoyingly referring to him in letters as “Susie.” Not long before our return home she proposed an incognito meeting with my biological father at which he would not disclose his identity to me. She wrote:

I hope that you will come to see me when you get back from England. I have a real surprise for you if everything goes well. Your father has expressed a desire to meet you, Richard, but here are the conditions. As you already know he and I cannot be seen together as it would only harm both of us. He said he would like to take us to dinner somewhere but would not want to talk about our situation. You are an intelligent person and can understand that. I would introduce him as my boyfriend and we could have a nice evening. As he has to be at home on the weekend it would be nice if we could make it on a Friday night. You understand ‘Susie’s’ position I’m sure. Our lives are very complicated now. I hope that can be arranged. We never know what the future holds for us.

**Secrecy was intended to help my birth mother go on with her life, however sadly. Secrecy threw me clear of wreckage caused by my birth.**

When I first found Cora’s letters after my adoptive mother’s death the previous year, I had an existential epiphany; I ran down the street repeating to myself, “I know who I am, I know who I am.” At Oxford, reading about my father’s proposal to meet him incognito with its no-questions-asked conditions, I had another existential awakening that Betty Jean Lifton has called a “Bastard Moment”:

One knows one has experienced the Bastard Moment when “illegitimacy” becomes a painful feeling and not an abstract concept. When the euphemisms of adoption are torn away and one is confronted with the shameful social reality of one’s birth. (p. 177)

My biological parents’ incognito proviso confronted me with the pain of entering their world as a secret. True, I had a chance to meet my father in person; but I discovered that I had my own conditions. I was being treated like an object, to be admired, perhaps, but with no respect for my need to know whom my father was. I was being hidden inside the secret in which they were trapped. Novelist A. M. Homes, who was also kept a secret, wrote:

I would have liked to have come out from the shadows, to be seen not as the product of an affair, but as a person, an adult who is more or less of them than they are of one another.

My adoptive mother, whose secrecy about my biological mother had kept our relationship from being “real,” had died the year before; now a second mother, Cora, had appeared whose secrecy made her professions of love and her wanting to be a “real” mother to me ring hollow. I’ve forgotten precisely what I wrote back to her, but I said that I didn’t want to see her again because I didn’t want to be kept a secret. And I never did see her again. Our contacts were fewer — occasional phone calls and several letters over the years.

But my decision to refuse an incognito meeting with my biological father still haunts me. Betty Jean Lifton similarly had second thoughts about a proposed incognito meeting of some blood relatives that her birth mother proposed to her.

Looking back on it now, I regret that I turned down such an opportunity, that I didn’t understand that meeting everyone incognito could have been a step toward meeting them openly in the future---the only step that my mother was able to offer at that period of her life. But at the time, I was immobilized by the shameful power of the Bastard Moment, which threatened to extinguish the legitimate identity I had as a woman, wife, mother, and writer. (p. 177)

**Continued on page 76**

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**Richard (age 38) and son Jason (age 8).**





# Abandonment Blues—

## An Adoption Memoir



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Continued from page 75

**There is Aladdin, Perseus, Theseus, the Oedipus myth, Moses, Cinderella, Robin Hood, and Superman....Often these are archetypal coming-of-age stories; they imagine how one's identity is established without one's parents.**

My birth mother's and biological father's insistence on his anonymity brought on a complex amalgam of emotions: status anger as being treated as a lesser by them; not being trusted; expressions of love bound by conditions that made them feel not genuine; regret at missing a chance to meet my father; grief that I didn't meet him. My bastard self had rudely confronted the self that I had created, the one that studied the emotions in the Bodleian Library. How did my biological father feel about having a son at Oxford? I resented that he was getting so much but was willing to give so little. I resented that they were asking me to compromise myself in order to meet them. I was left feeling that I had colluded in my own estrangement from my origins.

My birth mother was an intriguing person — a poet, a singer/songwriter, a painter. Her husband, a wounded World War I veteran, was 17 years her senior. As I would learn later, my biological father owned a successful car dealership and a cattle farm. Their affair spanned 40 years. I may have been a bastard, but I was also a "love child." My adoptive parents' marriage ended after 35 years.

One year before the proposed incognito meeting with my biological father I had suddenly discovered my birth mother. Before then, as a lied-to adoptee, I was enchanted by the myth of self-creation. As Jean-Paul Sartre's short summing up of the philosophy of Existentialism puts it: "Man creates himself." My ex-wife Susanne once questioned my lack of interest in finding my roots by saying to me: "Who do you think you are — Sartre?" Finding my birth mother brought the temporary exhilaration of discovering my origins. But it did not end my fantasy of self-creation; I did not see myself in this woman who looked nothing like me and who said things like:

Peace with God is most important. I am about as happy as anyone can be now. I wish for you to find this kind of peace. With it comes understanding, tolerance and many blessings.

One year after finding my birth mother, sitting in the Bodleian wondering about the nature of emotion, my myth of self-creation felt confirmed — until the Bastard Moment when I received Cora's letter proposing an incognito meeting with my father. Another famous phrase from Sartre comes to mind: "Hell is other people." I wanted to remain self-invented. Parents? What are they for except to hurt you. Maybe blood ties are overrated.

### **A Memoir Should Have Universal Relevance: The Adoptee as Mythic Hero**

Where lies the universal significance of an adoption memoir? Many people are or are touched by players in the adoption triangle: adoptive parents, birth parents, and the adopted child. But beyond that the orphan (of which the half-orphan and adoptee are subsets) is a universal archetype in fairy tales and literature.

A striking feature of the myths and folk tales of the world is how often their central figure is an orphan. (*The Seven Basic Plots* by Christopher Booker, p. 277)

**A memoir is not just reportage, like journalism. Yet one should have an implicit contract with oneself and the reader to tell the truth the best one can and not just make stuff up.**

There is Aladdin, Perseus, Theseus, the Oedipus myth, Moses, Cinderella, Robin Hood, and Superman. Examples from literature include Perdita from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Nicholas Nickleby, David Copperfield, Jane Eyre, and Harry Potter. Often these are archetypal coming-of-age stories; they imagine how one's identity is established without one's parents.

According to Freud, the adoptee's story is a "family romance" fantasy of those who are not adopted to help them separate themselves from their parents. Betty Jean Lifton writes:

My non-adopted friends keep reminding me that fantasies are part of the human condition, even necessary to the imagination. They never fail to point out that they used to suspect they were adopted. They say things like "I felt like a stranger in my family while I was growing up." ...They, too, [like adoptees] dreamed of descent from royalty, from kings and queens who would one day return to rescue them...

But even though the family romance reveals the universal fantasy of having other parents, it is not a fictional romance for the adoptee for whom there really are two unknown other parents out there. For natural borns, the family romance is a useful fiction in separating from their parents as they grow up; for adoptees, the problem of unknown parents persists into adulthood and leads either to a quest to find them or to accepting the myth of self-creation.

The genetic bewilderment of adoptees may spark an archetypal quest for knowledge of their beginnings. Although adoptees may be "a breed apart," as psychologist of identity Erick Erickson (himself a half orphan) deemed them, their quest is the universal question: "Who am I?" Adoptees are a breed apart in confronting the question: "Who are my kin?" "What story connects me to my family tree?" To be sure they may decline the quest, accept the myth of self-creation, and choose an identity they can live with. I've both quested for my origins and refused to in the name of self-invention. I am now, like Betty Jean Lifton, an advocate of the quest; my rhetorical question to self-creationists is: "If you are not interested in who you really are then what are you interested in?"

### **We Are Not Born as Little Blank Slates**

In addition to my memoir's spine of a psychological schism that drives my story, there is also an argument being made that children are not little blank slates waiting to be filled in or lumps of clay waiting to be shaped. As Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker writes:

As any parent of more than one child knows, children are not indistinguishable lumps of raw material waiting to be shaped. They are little people born with personalities. (*The Blank Slate*, p. 384)

I write in my memoir that the blank slate assumption helped justify closed adoption practices, as well as leading to misunderstanding the origins of homosexuality, autism, and mental illness:

In the flight from the evils of eugenics to a postwar blank slate biopolitics, homosexuals were not born that way, but were too close to their mothers; autism resulted from mothers being too cold to their children; and criminals were always produced by tough circumstances. As the Jets explain to the police sergeant in *West Side Story*: "We're deprived on accounta we're deprived." And under this pervasive nurturance assumption, adoptive parents' secrecy about their child's biological origins was justified since nurture, not nature, is the determinant of a child's personality and character.

**Disregard for the truth cheats not only the reader, but also deprives the memoir writer of an examined life.**



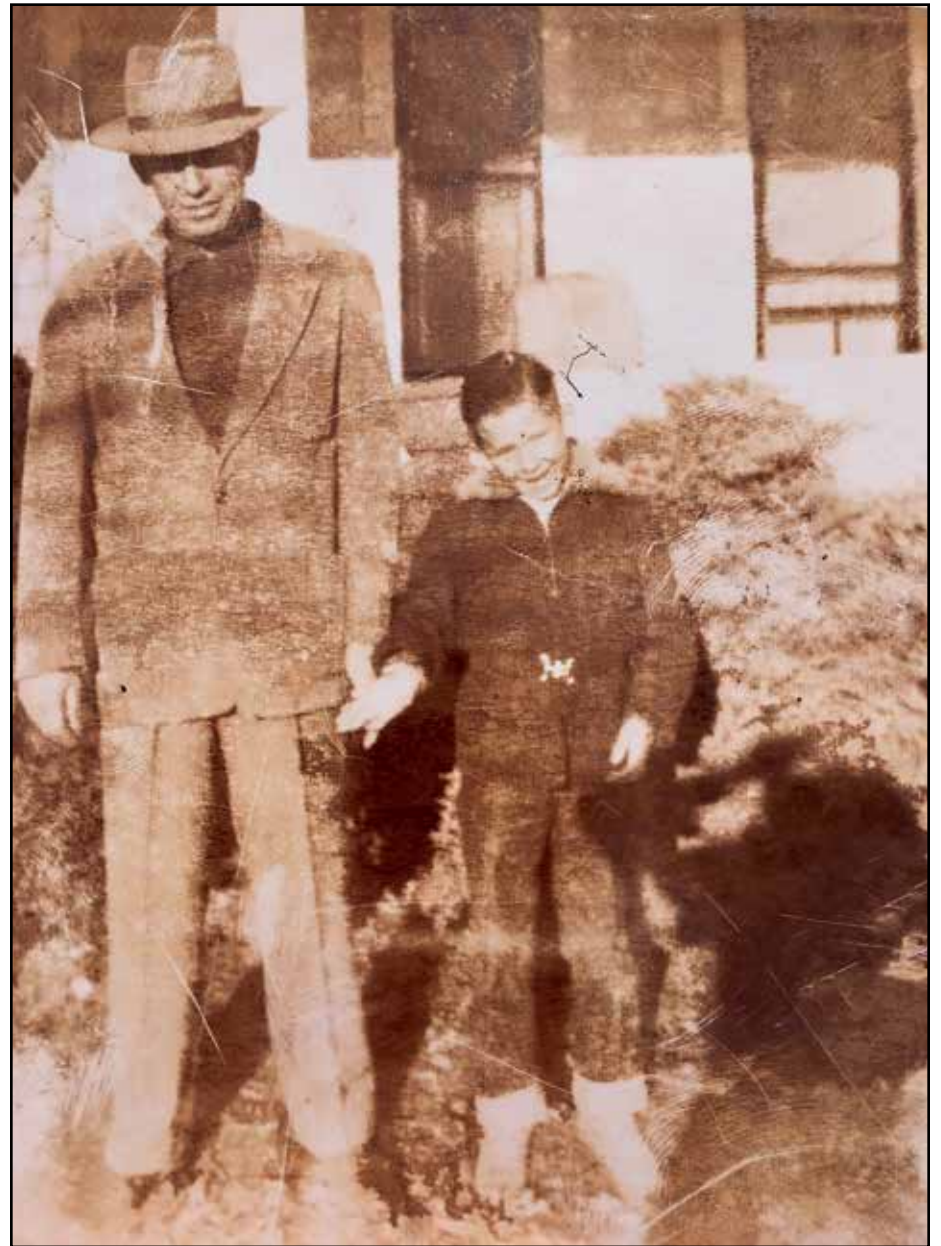
The existentialist myth of self-creation is a variation of the blank slate notion of a person; if we are blank slates to ourselves then knowing our origins is not necessary to our flourishing. Secrecy about a child's origins is justified to the myth of the blank slate; an important justification for seeking one's origins is undermined by the same myth.

A chapter in my memoir, *"The Bad Seed: Nature Overpowers Nurture,"* is about going with my adoptive mother to see the film *The Bad Seed* when I was seventeen. Christine is the mother of her natural born eight-year-old daughter Rhoda. She always knew that Rhoda was strangely different from other children: she only wore starched, short Swiss skirts that she used to spread with her hands to curtsy politely like a child from another era. In William March's novel on which the film is based, her mother says of Rhoda:

*I don't understand her mind or her character. I don't believe that environment has much to do with it.... It must be something deeper than that.... It is something dark and unexplainable.*

Christine becomes increasingly suspicious that her daughter, Rhoda, may have secretly drowned a boy in her class on a school picnic near a lake because he won a penmanship medal she thought she deserved. Rhoda turns out to be a prepubescent femme fatale who murders three people.

Christine had always felt that she was adopted even though her father, a retired journalist who covered infamous murder cases, denied that she was. But she eventually finds out that her father adopted her after her birth mother, a serial killer, abandoned her while escaping from the police. So Rhoda, granddaughter of a serial killer, is a bad seed whose murderous nature was inherited.



Arnold with his grandson, young Mike McCarty, Sr. Arnold was his surrogate father.

**"I was a loner. I was self-invented. I didn't believe in biology or biography. I believed in myself. Parents? What for? Except to hurt you."**  
 –Jeanette Winterson

Like me, Rhoda's mother Christine was adopted, she didn't discover her origins until her mid-thirties, and her adoptive parents deliberately hid her story from her. I wonder if my adoptive mother, sitting in that movie theater with me, noticed the similarity to her own narrative of secrecy about her adopted son's origins. Did she feel uneasy watching a drama in which a parent keeps secret her child's origins? After we saw the film together I asked her if she knew anything about my birth mother. She said that she did not.

The film's "don't worry, it's just fiction" ending did not reassure me. Its story rudely confronted me with the problem of my existence: Who was I, really? I felt it as a

Continued on page 78

### Train to be an independent spiritual director?

*Spiritual director Jonathan Ellis is a former co-owner of Crazy Wisdom and then continued to be a mentor and friend to the longtime current owners. He serves five dozen or so individuals each month from a variety of backgrounds, faiths, and professions who seek guidance on their own spiritual journey through life. He writes:*



*"If you do something over 10,000 times, you are ready to teach! I have had more than that number of sessions with folks, in person in Ann Arbor and by phone around the country, as an independent spiritual director for over 20 years now.*

*"I will turn age 70 soon and want to train new colleagues in the next few years. As a spiritual director, you are not someone who decides a direction for others. In sessions once a month, you help people sort through their ideas and feelings about the spiritual path of their own choosing. With your support, folks get to step back, see their life from a spiritual perspective, and focus their intention.*

*"I have so far mentored over a dozen people to become independent spiritual directors, all of whom had a background in a helping profession and a well developed spirituality of their own. Training now involves two individual sessions a month with me for a year, then working yourself under my guidance for a second year.*

*"In a common practice, I offer this independent spiritual director training on an open donation basis. To inquire, please see [www.blogellis.weebly.com](http://www.blogellis.weebly.com) and then call 734 761-5155 (no text). Afternoons or evenings are best times to reach me. Jonathan Ellis"*

# STORY TELLING

Once upon a time, before the Internet, TV, or even written history, there were stories not just for children but for everyone who could laugh, smile, weep, and leap out of their seats. The Ann Arbor Storytellers' Guild continues this community tradition and celebrates its revival in our highly tech-connected world.

## Story Night at Crazy Wisdom Tea Room!

Listen to old tales and new during an evening of adult stories. Guild members perform for the first hour, with an open mic for the Second hour. So if you have a 5-minute personal story or folk tale, we'll try to fit you in!

7 to 9 p.m., Thursdays, Mar. 8, Apr. 12

Info: [annarborstorytelling.org](http://annarborstorytelling.org) or [facebook.com/annarborstorytellers](https://facebook.com/annarborstorytellers)



# Abandonment Blues— An Adoption Memoir



My adoptive sister Barbara and me, 2011.

## Continued from page 77

sinister insinuation that as an adopted child I was suspect. Did my inherited self contain a malicious essence underneath the surface of my life, a hidden story I didn't know? If the Oedipus myth was an adoption-gone-bad story as Greek tragedy, *The Bad Seed* was an adoption-gone-bad story as horror film. One critic wrote, hyperbolically, that no one will now want to adopt children.

**“One knows one has experienced the Bastard Moment when ‘illegitimacy’ becomes a painful feeling and not an abstract concept. When the euphemisms of adoption are torn away and one is confronted with the shameful social reality of one’s birth.”**  
—Betty Jean Lifton

## Secrecy, Forgiving, and Grieving

Secrecy about my beginning kept my adoptive parents and birth mother from understanding me and me from understanding myself. Their secrecy made me feel unloved. Their professed love for me did not seem authentic; I felt that they were loving my pretend self and not the real me, the one who needed to know his origins. Maybe my anger about this has kept part of me from fully growing up even though I have now grown old. Anger can be a kind of dark magical thinking creating the illusion of agency in a world of helplessness over the irretrievable losses that we suffer. It can turn a memoir into an indictment.

Yet forgiveness may not be the best way to get past my anger about my parents' secrecy. Forgiveness, like the anger it is thought to displace, can itself be a subtle form of payback; in my case it would be to down-rank my adoptive parents moral status to that of a wrongdoers and elevate mine to that of a victim.

But does keeping me in the dark about my origins call for my forgiving them? Even though I *feel* betrayed by them for keeping my origins hidden from me doesn't mean that they did *in fact* betray me. Maybe they had good intentions, wanting to protect themselves and me. Perhaps their secrecy was the product of the closed adoption practices of the era.

If I'm not certain that my anger at my parents is well grounded, what sense does it make for me to forgive them their supposed wrongdoing? Secrecy was intended to help my birth mother go on with her life, however sadly. Secrecy threw me clear of wreckage caused by my birth. Isn't non-blaming grief a more generous letting-go of anger than the moral scrutiny of forgiveness? I grieve for my birth mother's pain at giving me away; and for my adoptive mother's pain brought on by her secret; and for my own ghost self that might have been had I known my roots or had not been given away. A memoir can be a form of grieving. It seems that grief resides in the same place in the soul that needs to make sense of things, to see one's life whole again, in the wake of a momentous loss. As I shall explain, grief is a species of what I will call abandonment blues.

## Abandonment Blues: Did My Birth Parents Each Take on Surrogates for Me, Their More Golden Phantom Child?

Hearing birth mothers talk of their lost children, it occurred to me that they have given them the same mythic quality that adoptees project onto their lost parents. The phantom child is always more golden than the actual one; its very absence makes it more desirable, and more *there*. It must be a hard sibling for the legitimate child to rival, being a creature of myth as it is.  
—Betty Jean Lifton (*Lost & Found: The Adoption Experience*)

**But she never did write that memoir. If she had, her pseudonym would have given her a fictional self as cover to write her forbidden story; she would have turned herself into a secret in order to uncover the secrets she had kept.**

Adopted children experience a moment of abandonment when they are surrendered by their birth mother and handed over to a stranger. My birth mother took me when I was six months old by bus from Mountain Grove, Missouri, to East St. Louis, Illinois, where I was given up at a bus station. Of course I don't consciously remember this. My birth mother wrote a poem titled "Little Boy Blue" about my adoption in which she alludes to the moment of handing me over by saying in one line that she would rather die than again hear me cry:

Little Boy Blue

Little boy blue  
I love you true  
Though I had to give you away  
Now you love another  
And you call her your Mother  
And that's the way it will stay.

Little Boy Blue

I loved your Daddy  
Though he never knew about you.  
And he loves another  
But I'm still the Mother  
of his little Boy Blue.

Now I'd rather die

Than again hear the cry  
of my Little Boy Blue.  
But you are grown now  
A home of your own now  
And I'm the one who is blue.

I've always loved you

I want you to know  
and someday I'll find you  
And I'll tell you so  
You'll understand then my Little Boy Blue  
That what I did Dear was best for you.

Coday Melissa [My birth mother Cora's pseudonym.]

I was given away when I was tiny. Do I still carry hidden in my cells the blues that I felt then and that my birth mother felt from giving me away? Jeanette Winterson writes:

Adoption begins on your own — you are solitary. The baby knows it has been abandoned — I am sure of that. (p. 180)

Two years after I was given up for adoption, my birth mother Cora had another son, Jerry, this time by her husband. I suspect that Jerry became a surrogate, an avatar, for me, Cora's surrendered son. When I met Cora in 1974 she told me that Jerry would be "jealous" of me. She said that he drank and couldn't keep a job.

On my first visit to Mountain Grove, in 2014, I met my half sister, Carol, Jerry's younger sister and a self-described hillbilly. She told me about her brother:

Jerry had a lot of depression. I think it's a disease. He'd cry, say he's gonna kill himself. It scared Mom. Don't know if he was taking something for it.



Jerry Burris with son, Mike Burris. Jerry is Cora Mae's youngest son by her husband. He is my half brother, born two years after me.

On my recent visit to Branson this year I met Jerry's son, Mike Burris, and his wife, Connie, in the lobby of my hotel. Mike told me that he loved his grandmother Cora. She taught him to draw and paint when he was a kid. He and Connie have one of my birth mother's paintings on a wall. He knew that his father Jerry's life worried Cora.



He said:

I could tell she was upset by Jerry's drinking even though she didn't say so. She helped Jerry financially, but he just drank it up. He was a drunk. He beat my mom. Whenever things started goin' downhill for him he'd start hittin' the booze. Cora spoiled him. Gave him money. He was a hung-up-on-himself type of person — a blow hard. He was hard to be around.



Mike McCarty, Jr. with Arnold's (his great grandfather's and my biological father's) shotgun.

Mike went to see his dad days before he died in Branson in 2011. He said that, as a Christian man, he wanted "to be soothed in my mind," so he forgave his father. He said that he hoped I didn't think he was a bad person for talking about his dad like he did. I said that I thought that he was a good Christian who went to see his father before he died and forgave him. That showed that he loved his father in spite of his faults. Before Mike and Connie left, Connie had us all join hands in prayer. She said about me, "We pray that Uncle Richard finds what he's looking for in his search for his family. Amen."

**"The phantom child is always more golden than the actual one; its very absence makes it more desirable, and more there. It must be a hard sibling for the legitimate child to rival, being a creature of myth as it is."**  
 —Betty Jean Lifton

Did her grief over her surrendered son cause Cora to treat my successor sibling Jerry as a surrogate for me, contributing to his downfall?

Earlier that same day in Branson, I heard a strikingly similar story of surrogacy gone bad on my biological father Arnold Stewart's side. A professional genealogist I recently hired in Ann Arbor found my biological father's 45-year-old great-grandson, Mike McCarty, Jr. With his father and grandfather gone, my father Arnold played the role of Mike, Jr.'s, father until the boy was 18. When I first met Mike, Jr., in the lobby of the Hilton in Branson, he said immediately that I looked just like "Dad" (as the family referred to him), especially when he looked me in the eyes. I felt affirmed, elated to be seen as having roots.


Mike, Jr., is a captain in the Branson Fire Department who looks like he stays in shape by lifting weights while on duty at the firehouse. He has a tuft of hair goatee under his lower lip. His favorite television show is "Rescue Me" that he says realistically depicts life in a firehouse. With his Southern Missouri lilt he relished telling stories about Arnold.

Dad had a cattle farm near Mountain Grove on which Mike, Jr., learned to hunt and dehorn cattle as a kid. But he made most of his wealth in his auto and real estate businesses. Arnold loaned car buyers money and was his own repo man, carrying a .38 if he thought there would be trouble when he confronted a deadbeat demanding either the money owed or the car back. My biological father was what the Jews call a *macher*, a big shot.

I compared my birth father to my adoptive father. My adoptive father expressed love for me indirectly, always asking me about my car, "Do you ever check your oil?" But maybe my father's oblique Do-you-check-your-oil love had an unconscious shadow underside. Maybe it was his attempt to symbolically assert his role as my real father by perpetually treating me as a child. Since he was not the impregnator, having an adopted son emasculated his power as a patriarch. And his wife had left him for another man because he was, according to her, a "dead head" as a lover (this is not a reference to The Grateful Dead). Their marriage had ended after 35 years. My biological father *was* like my father fantasy, conjured up from the Ghost Kingdom deep within my inherited self. He was virile and sexual; he produced a man-child. And he was a free spirit who refused to be tied down and hen-pecked; he had a 40-year affair with my birth mother. My adoptive father would never have done that.

Continued on page 80

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Joyce Jean with car (mid-1950s).



# Abandonment Blues— An Adoption Memoir

## Continued from page 79

Mike, Jr.'s, grandmother, Joyce Jean, was Arnold's only legitimate child. Born in Mountain Grove in 1930, Joyce Jean was my older half sister. I was born in 1939, the product of Arnold's long-term secret affair with my birth mother Cora Mae Burris. Joyce Jean married Jack McCarty in the early 1950s and had a son, Mike McCarty, Sr. Jack and Joyce Jean divorced when Mike, Sr., was five. And soon after that Jack was killed in an auto accident. Young Mike, Sr., had lost his father. His grandfather Arnold, my biological father, became Mike, Sr.'s, surrogate father.

When I first met Mike, Jr., in the lobby of the Hilton in Branson, he said immediately that I looked just like "Dad" (as the family referred to him), especially when he looked me in the eyes. I felt affirmed, elated to be seen as having roots.

Arnold confided to young Mike, Jr., that this surrogate fatherhood unfolded in response to a strange incident that took place just after Jack McCarty's death. He told of being visited in the night by the ghost of his dead son-in-law, Jack, about two weeks after his death. He heard a noise downstairs of his two-story farmhouse in young Mike, Sr.'s, room, went down, and found Jack standing at the foot of his son's bed.

Mike, Jr., explained:

Dad looked at Jack and Jack looked at him. He turned to Arnold and said, 'Take care of my boy.' He didn't say anything more. Then Jack turned and walked past Dad. Dad said it was just like a real person. He followed him and kept trying to talk to him: *Jack, Jack. You're dead, Jack. What's happening?* He followed as Jack went out the front door of the house and across the front porch and through the yard toward the fence, climbed over the fence, walked out into a field and disappeared into the night. And that was it. It's hard to believe. I don't know what to believe of it. It sounds far-fetched, but it seemed like a face-to-face with a real person, with Jack, and that's what Dad said.

I believe that my presence as a golden phantom child in both of my birth parents' psyches led them to find substitutes for me.

Whatever one makes of this ghost story, with his father now gone, young Mike, Sr., needed someone to take care of him. But his mother Joyce Jean (my half sister) was a wild woman. She always drove a Cadillac although she never worked, smoked cigarettes with a long holder, drank heavily, and often went out and disappeared for the evening, sometimes with other men. Her Cadillac was often parked outside a bar somewhere and at times she'd call for someone to come get her because she was too drunk to drive home.

Dad didn't allow Joyce Jean to take young Mike, Sr., to Kansas City with her when she moved there from Mountain Grove shortly after her husband's death. Mike, Jr., said of his grandmother Joyce:

There was a reason why Dad raised my father, Mike, Sr. It was not only that Jack's ghost said, 'Hey, take care of my boy,' but also he didn't want my dad to grow up with a runaround or whatever. She went to Kansas City right after Jack was killed; my dad was maybe five or six at the time.

Mike, Sr., married his wife, Ginny, in the late '60s. When their son, Mike, Jr., was born in 1972, Dad said that Mike, Sr., and Ginny now needed to get rid of their Corvette that was too small to haul an infant around. He gave them his new Buick Riviera. They found romantic letters from my birth mother Cora to Arnold in the glove compartment. From then on they referred to Cora as "Dad's girlfriend." Mike, Jr., said:

My mom's the one that found the letters in the glove box. It was some cards and some love letters. So that's when they found out that there was somebody else. They got rid of the letters. They didn't tell Arnold that they knew. But they certainly didn't know that there was a baby involved, that there was a 'you' involved in that.

I said:

It's not surprising that your mom and dad didn't know about me. They found Cora's letters in 1972, the year you were born. I was born in 1939 long before then. My half sister Joyce Jean was only nine.

But Dad's surrogate fathering of Mike, Sr., did not keep him from going astray. Arnold took Mike, Sr., into his car business with him, even making him a partner in 1975. He provided Mike, Sr., and Ginny with houses and cars. But Mike, Sr., drank heavily, was irresponsible, and was divorced from Mike, Jr.'s, mother Ginny, in 1981. After the divorce his father became estranged from his family, moved to Kansas City, seldom saw his son, took odd jobs, was destitute. Mike, Jr.'s, voice broke and tears came as he spoke of his absent father.

He said:

My father always had alcohol problems. I think that's part of the reason Dad kept him in the car business with him — to look after him. Dad always took care of my dad. Whatever he needed, Dad didn't let him stay in bad shape; he was always there for him.

I was struck by the similarities between Mike Burris' (Cora's grandson) and Mike McCarty, Jr.'s, (Arnold's great grandson) stories about their respective fathers. Were they surrogates for me, the relinquished son? Perhaps in my birth mother's grief after giving me away, she spoiled my successor Jerry as compensation, treating him as a surrogate for me. Was Arnold's story of Jack's ghost an expression of his unconscious guilt over his exiled biological son, a surfacing of my ghost, the child that he fathered but never took care of?

It is true that Cora says in her "Little Boy Blue" poem that Arnold "never knew about you." But I think this was cover for him; he had to have known about me. They both lived in small town Mountain Grove. Arnold was a friend of Cora's family. Cora's husband knew that I was not his and insisted that I be given up for adoption. But even if Arnold had not known about me at first, he had learned by the time he told Mike, Jr., the ghost story years after the incognito meeting proposal in 1975.

As fathers, both Jerry Burris and Mike McCarty, Sr., became irresponsible drunks estranged from their respective sons, Mike Burris and Mike McCarty, Jr., the two men I recently met in Branson. Was surrogacy the cause? Joyce Jean was not a surrogate

Was Arnold's story of Jack's ghost an expression of his unconscious guilt over his exiled biological son, a surfacing of my ghost, the child that he fathered but never took care of?



Amos the dummy at the Branson IMAX theatre complex. My half brother Jerry used Amos as his ventriloquist dummy to greet people.



and she turned out badly. Maybe it was nature, and not substitute nurture, that made them the way they were. Or were they just bad seeds? Or was it just their fate to fail as fathers?

Mike, Jr., became a second surrogate to Arnold, but he turned out well. One crucial difference, he told me, was that he had a strong mother in his life, unlike his own father who was abandoned by Joyce Jean. And his father's father was killed in an auto accident when Mike, Sr., was five. Arnold's surrogate fathering may have done no harm. But the ghost that haunted him said, "Take care of my son," undoubtedly resurfacing his issues with paternal responsibility.

**Secrecy about my beginning kept my adoptive parents and birth mother from understanding me and me from understanding myself. Their secrecy made me feel unloved.**

I believe that my presence as a golden phantom child in both of my birth parents' psyches led them to find substitutes for me. My absence was a consequential presence for them. My ghost haunted their lives. This is my *mythos*. The myth is not just my story, but also a set of emotions that I'm calling abandonment blues that binds everyone in the adoption triangle — birth parents, adoptive parents, and adoptee — into a shadow family.

I have compassion for my birth parents; my roots are entwined in their stories of surrogacy. And I have compassion for my adoptive parents' secrecy that resulted from their fear of abandonment, another variation of the blues endured by everyone in the adoption triangle. I play the golden boy in this extended shadow family in that I am a surrogate for my adoptive parents never-to-materialize biological son, and the dissolute son of each of my birth parents is a surrogate for me. My myth of self-creation that previously challenged my bastard moments has been replaced by a more compassionate myth of my shadow family's drama of loss. There is an indefinite number of these dramas in the world of adoptees.

Whatever the cause of their failures, I have empathy for these two surrogate sons who became failed fathers. As an adopted child, I felt that I was a substitute for my adoptive parents' phantom biological son. I felt not quite loved for myself in spite of the assurances that many adoptees are given that their adoptive parents love them as if they were their own.

**"I would have liked to have come out from the shadows, to be seen not as the product of an affair, but as a person, an adult who is more or less of them than they are of one another."  
—A.M. Homes**

When Arnold was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1990 at age 83, Joyce Jean put him in a home in Kansas City. Having power of attorney, she immediately sold his farm, auctioned off his assets, and took all the money in his accounts, including the fund put aside for Mike, Jr.'s, education. She told Mike, Jr., that he didn't need the money because he was so smart he would succeed without it. Arnold died in 1995, with all he had worked his whole life to accumulate through hard work and frugality controlled by Joyce Jean, his prodigal daughter. She died two years later. Mike, Jr., didn't know what happened to Arnold's wealth. His material wealth had been lost. And his identity disappeared with his dementia; he didn't recognize Mike, Jr., when he went to visit him in the home in Kansas City.

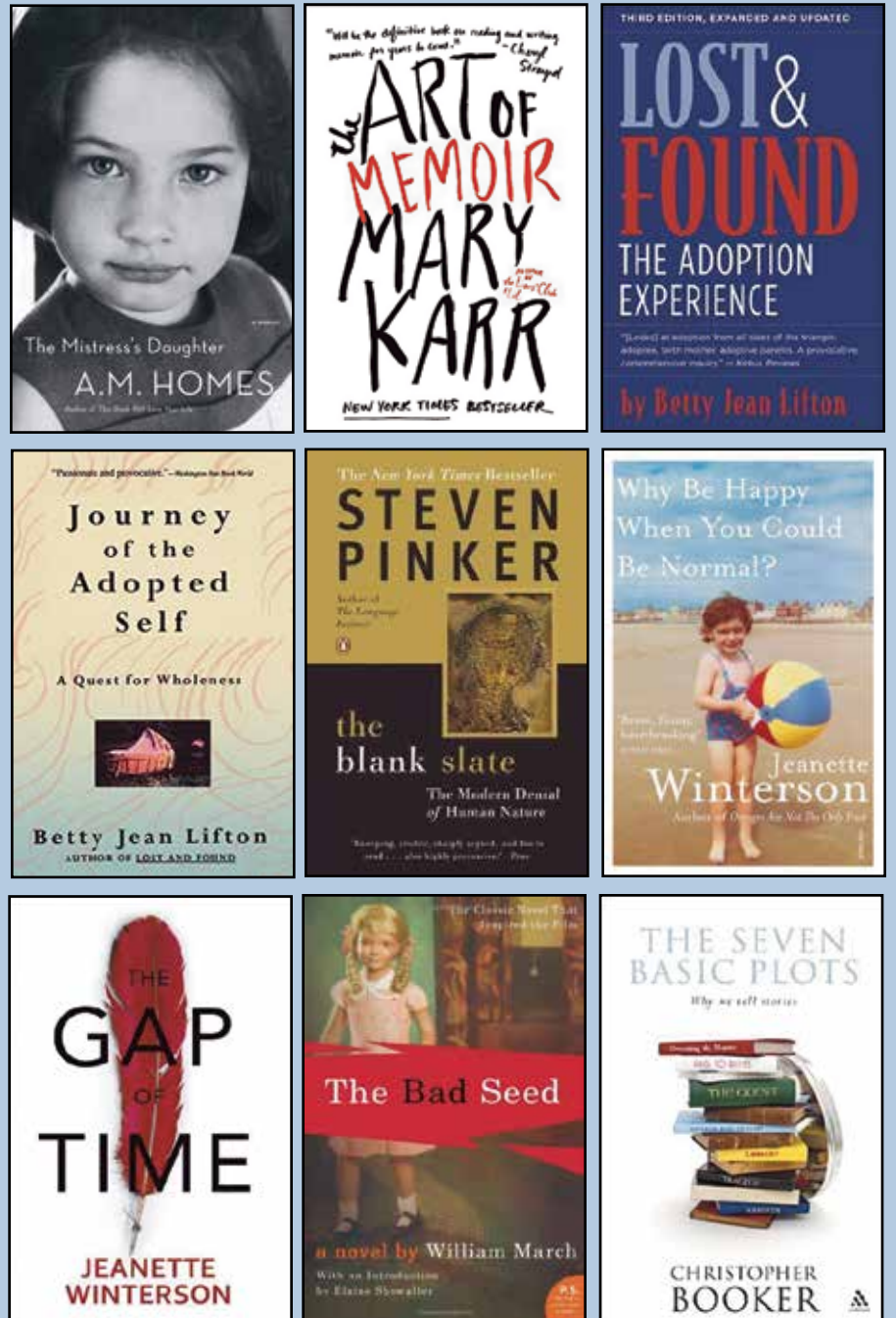
It says in my half brother Jerry's obituary that he was known for performing with a large dummy named Amos at the IMAX theatre in Branson. Amos wore a farmer's straw-hat, had waxy cheeks, wire-rimmed glasses, a white beard, with a corn cob pipe in his mouth; he wore overalls and a white shirt. A fiddle rested in his left arm. He was rigged with a hidden microphone and speakers to amplify his ventriloquist's voice. With his hound dog eyes, large nose, and receding hairline, Jerry looked like a cowboy version of actor Jack Klugman. Visitors in the lobby would tell their troubles to Amos and he would sympathize. Jerry's Amos act was part comedy, part pathos.

**I am now, like Betty Jean Lifton, an advocate of the quest; my rhetorical to self-creationists is: "If you are not interested in who you really are then what are you interested in?"**

My mother and half-brother both had names for their alternative personas: Using her pseudonym Cora became "Coday Melissa" in her writings and Jerry became Amos's voice in his performance as a ventriloquist. They both created themselves as characters in order to project their higher selves through their art. Perhaps by analogy I'm using my memoir to create a literary character that encompasses both my biological self and my adopted self. Creating alternate more compassionate surrogate egos through art seems to run in our family.

###

# Reading List for Abandonment Blues: An Adoption Memoir



- The Mistress's Daughter by A.A. Holmes (Penguin, 2008)
- The Art of Memoir by Mary Karr (Harper, 2015)
- Lost & Found: The Adoption Experience by Betty Jean Lifton (University of Michigan Press, 2009)
- Journey of the Adopted Self: A Quest for Wholeness by Betty Jean Lifton (Basic Books, 1995)
- The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature by Steven Pinker (Viking, 2002)
- Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? by Jeanette Winterson (Grove Press, 2013)
- The Gap of Time: The Winter's Tale Retold by Jeanette Winterson (Hogarth Shakespeare, 2015)
- The Bad Seed by William March (Vintage reprint ed., 2015)
- The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories by Christopher Booker (Continuum, 2005)
- "Existentialism is a Humanism" (a 1946 lecture) by Jean-Paul Sartre
- No Exit (a 1944 play) by Jean-Paul Sartre
- East of Eden (1955 film)
- The Bad Seed (1956 film)



# The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

## A Free Guide to Local Classes, Workshops, and Events January through April 2018

Calendar Edited by Melanie Baldwin

### Addiction and Recovery

**Teens Using Drugs: What to Know and What to Do with Ray Dalton • Part 1, first Tuesdays beginning Jan. 2; Part 2, second Tuesdays beginning Jan. 9, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Two-part series to help participants understand, identify, and respond helpfully to teen alcohol or other drug problems. Inclusive of families, teens, professionals, students, and others. Free. Contact 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/teens-using-drugs.

**Dawn Farm Education Series on Addiction and Recovery • Tuesday, Jan. 16, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Learn about various methods of pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic pain management, relative risks and benefits, and approaches to effective pain relief for people in recovery from substance use disorders. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**NADA Acu-Detox Acupuncture classes with Virginia June • Saturdays and Sundays, Jan. 20, 21; Feb. 17, 18; Mar. 17, 18; Apr. 14, 15.** • Learn the simple five-point Auricular (ear) acupuncture to treat depression, anxiety, substance use disorder, stop smoking, PTSD, trauma, and basic stress reduction. \$605/class. Individual treatments from the clinic are available on a sliding scale: \$10-\$40. Contact Virginia at 277-7347; whitewolfhealing@gmail.com or whitewolfhealing.com.

**How to Support Recovery and Not Support Addiction with Charles F. Gehrke • Tuesday, Jan. 23, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Learn about simple but effective actions for family, friends, and others to avoid enabling another person's addiction, support the other's recovery, and maintain their own health and well-being. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Trauma, Chemical Use, and Addiction with Tana Bridge • Tuesday, Jan. 23, 7:30-9 p.m.** • A review of events involved with trauma exposure, trauma specific symptomology, the impact trauma has on the brain, on coping and subsequent substance use, and the help that is available for individuals struggling with addiction. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Does Addiction Treatment Work? with Carl Christensen • Tuesday, Feb. 20, 7:30-9 p.m.** • A review of the recent criticisms of treatment for addiction including Twelve Step, residential, and medication-assisted therapy, the scientific studies that do and do not support their use, and other controversial issues. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Relapse Prevention with Erik Anderson • Tuesday, Feb. 27, 7:30-9 p.m.** • This program will discuss the dynamics of substance use disorder relapse and creative, effective strategies to handle both everyday and high-risk situations and prevent relapse. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Grief and Loss in Addiction and Recovery with Jerry Fouchey • Tuesday, Mar. 20, 7:30-9 p.m.** • This program will describe grief, loss, and grief recovery often experienced by people with substance abuse use disorders and their families, including a powerful personal story of grief, loss, and recovery. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Collegiate Recovery Programs: Supporting Second Chances with Mary Jo Desprez • Tuesday, Mar. 27, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Learn about the national and local efforts to build recovery support programs on college campuses, and support provided to recovering students by collegiate recovery programs. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Finding Hope that Recovery Is Possible: A Personal Journey with Kevin McCauley • Tuesday, Apr. 17, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Join Dr. McCauley as he describes his personal journey and what he has learned about addiction. His message gives hope to those dealing with addiction and their loved ones. Free and open to all. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or webercenter.com.

**Cultivating Mindfulness to Support Recovery with Elizabeth Robinson • Tuesday, Apr. 17, 7:30-9 p.m.** • This presentation will describe theory and research supporting mindfulness, demonstrate mindfulness techniques, provide opportunities for the audience to experience and cultivate mindfulness, and review the evidence of the positive effects of mindfulness on recovery from addiction. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

**Suicide Prevention and Addiction with Raymond Dalton • Tuesday, Apr. 24, 7:30-9 p.m.** • This program will raise awareness of the prevalence of suicide among people with substance use disorders, describe signs of suicidal thinking, and discuss effective ways to offer support and help people who may be contemplating suicide. Free. Contact Emily at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

### Animals and Pets

**PetMassage WaterWork™ Workshop with Jonathan Rudinger • Monday through Thursday, Jan. 22-25** • Training class to teach participants the PetMassage WaterWork™ treatment. A great addition to canine rehabilitation, weight loss, conditioning, training, and palliative care programs. \$2,200. Contact Anastasia Rudinger at 1-800-779-1001; info@petmassage.com or petmassage.com.

**Animal Communication Basic Class with Judy Ramsey • Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 10-11, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Learn how to communicate with animals the way they communicate with each other and experience a whole new world of perception. Open your intuitive sense with step-by-step exercises in a fun, supportive environment. \$150/person. Contact Judy at 665-3202; ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com or HeartToHeartAnimalCommunication.net

**Low Cost Vaccine Clinic with the Humane Society of Huron Valley • Select Saturdays, 9-11 a.m.** • Healthcare for our pets is essential, but can be pricey. To help keep animals with their families and help families keep veterinary care affordable, the Humane Society offers low cost vaccine clinics. Appointments not necessary; just bring cats in carriers and dogs on non-retractable leashes. Vaccine prices vary. Contact 662-4365; clinic@hshv.org or hshv.org/vaccineclinic.

**Community Cat Volunteer Training with the Humane Society of Huron Valley • Select Fridays, 1 p.m.** • Be an advocate for cats! Come learn why Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) helps humanely reduce the number of free-roaming cats, lowers euthanasia, and creates better, less hostile environments for our community cats. You'll also learn how you can help--and we need you! Free. Contact Cheryl at 661-3523; tnr@hshv.org or hshv.org/tnrclass.



Artwork by Logynn Hailley

*"To earn the trust of your meditation, you have to visit it every day. It's like having a puppy."*

— Chelsea Richer



**Family MEWvie Night with Tiny Lions • Select Fridays, 7-9 p.m.** • Cuddle up with adoptable cats and snack on popcorn while you watch a family-friendly flick at the Tiny Lions Cat Café! Fee includes movie and popcorn. Proceeds help the homeless animals in our community. \$10. Contact Karen at 661-3575; tinyions@hshv.org or tinyions.org/mewvienights.

**PetMassage™ 5-day Foundation Workshop with Jonathan Rudinger • Thursday through Monday, Feb. 15-19 and Apr. 19-23** • You will understand the roadmap to creating and marketing your canine massage business: the theory, techniques, vocabulary, culture, and vision of PetMassage: become aware of body mechanics, learn to understand and provide for diverse canine needs, learn various complementary bodywork techniques, and understand basic dog anatomy and physiology as it applies to canine massage. Distance learning available. \$2,000. Contact Anastasia at 1-800-779-1001; info@petmassage.com or petmassage.com.

## Art and Craft

**Mixed Media Class with Kay Gould-Caskey • Mondays, Jan. 8-Feb. 26 or Mar. 5-Apr. 30, 2-4 p.m.** • Experience the joy and satisfaction of creating art from collaging, found objects, drawing, photos, stitching, painting, and much more. No previous experience necessary. \$150/8-week session. Contact Kay at 769-1810; fallingwaterkay@yahoo.com.

**Drawing/Painting with Kay Gould-Caskey • Wednesdays and Saturdays, Jan. 6-Feb. 28 or Mar. 3-Apr. 28, 1-3 p.m.** • Learn techniques for graphite, colored pencil, watercolor, or acrylic - your choice. Students at all levels of experience are welcome. Learn shading, composition, color values, line quality, and much more. \$150/8-week session. Contact Kay at 769-1810; fallingwaterkay@yahoo.com.

**Drawing Fundamentals with Dave Carr • Saturdays, Jan. 20 and 27th, 2-5 p.m.** • Two-part workshop on the foundational principles of drawing for beginner-level artists, or anyone ages 10-adult with a desire to cultivate their skills of observation and creativity. Both sessions will consist of two hours of instruction followed by one hour of student drawing and critique. \$70. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Birds of Prey Photography: Portraits with Kate Zurenko and the Michigan Avian Experience • Saturday, Feb. 3, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.** • Learn how to photograph native birds of prey with a special focus on portraiture. After reviewing the basics of setting your DSLR to best capture these stunning avian models, participants will have the chance to photograph several birds of prey in an indoor "studio" setting. During the session, the Michigan Avian Experience will discuss the natural history and unique traits of these non-releasable wild birds. \$75. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Knitting 101 with Bonnie Mulliner • Tuesday, Feb. 13, 6-8 p.m.** • Learn the basic techniques of two-needle knitting. Participants will begin a simple dish towel project and get all the knowledge they need to complete it at home and begin other projects. Participants are encouraged to bring their own needles; needles and yarn will both be available. Free. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Walking in This World: Julia Cameron's Suggested Follow-up to *The Artist's Way* with Mary Ledvina • Mondays, Mar. 12 - June 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** • During this twelve-week class, you'll learn to unearth, envision, and pursue your dreams, refill your well, listen to your inner voice, and accomplish creative exploits. *The Artist's Way* is a step-by-step process of creative recovery for anyone who wants to unblock. \$330. (\$270 before Feb. 26). Contact Mary at 646-9161; maryledvina@earthlink.net or maryledvina.com.

## Astrology

**Drop-In Astrology Readings with Alia Wesala • Second and Fourth Saturdays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom** • Alia provides brief astrological consultation sessions to individuals, couples, and families. \$1.50/minute. No appointment necessary. Contact 719-0782; astrolibration@gmail.com.

**Drop-in Astrology/Energy Work with Simran Harvey • First and Third Sundays, 12-3 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom** • Simran offers astrological consultations with the option to energetically address issues and situation in the moment. Stand-alone astrology or energy work

**2018 Prediction Panel with Pat Perkins, Carole Ray, and Elizabeth Hazel • Sunday Jan. 21, 1:30-4 p.m.** • Panel covering upcoming planetary activity, eclipses, and retrogrades. Analyzing how 2018 transits influence city, state, and national charts. With three slow planets changing signs, the energies are shifting. See how it looks on your own chart. \$15/ members. \$20/non-members. Contact Sue Bacon at (248) 765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

**Astrology, Karma, and Reincarnation with Robert and Pamela Taylor • Sunday, Feb. 25, 1:30-4** • Learn how the birth chart is a map of your karmic destiny and how it relates to your past, present, and future. \$15/members. \$20/non-members. Contact Sue Bacon at (248) 765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

**SMARRT's Annual Spring Blast • Sunday, Mar. 18, 1:30 p.m.** • Join us for a divinatory luncheon to celebrate National Astrology Day on Spring Equinox. We'll pass divination tools around the table. There will be baskets of Easter fortune eggs and a free tarot reading with Pam or Tracy for each attendee. There will also be a raffle. Cost of lunch. Contact Sue Bacon at (248) 765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

**Open Forum: Chart and House Rulers with Elizabeth Hazel • Sunday, Apr. 8, 1:30-4** • Ascertaining the rulers of natal houses and judging their ability to perform their jobs is the key to great astrological interpretations. We'll review criteria for judging planetary strength and look at sample charts for examples of planets as brilliant or struggling house rulers. Great for beginners and an entertaining review for experienced astrologers. \$10. Contact Sue Bacon at (248) 765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

## Auras

**True Colors - Chakras and Auras with Heidi • Wednesday, Mar. 28, 7-8 p.m. (tentative)** • Every color in the spectrum has a unique energy signature and each of us is born with our own spiritual colors. Those that support our physical body are associated with the chakras and those that radiate from us create an aura around us. Learn how the two intersect to serve and heal us, including how to see and read auras. \$18/resident of Plymouth/Canton. \$28/non-resident. Contact Heidi at 788-6478; heidi@CrystalMoonParanormal.com or CrystalMoonParanormal.com.

## Author Events

**Discovering Zen in American Poetry with John Wolff at Crazy Wisdom • Saturday, Feb. 10, 3:45-5 p.m.** • Book signing. *The Driftwood Shrine* author, John Gendo Wolff, will discuss poetry by Americans like Emily Dickenson and William Carlos William, highlighting the influence of Zen in their work. Free. Contact John at (231) 510-6243; gendojohn@gmail.com or driftwoodshrine.com.

**Advanced Medical Intuition Book Signing and Discussion with Tina Zion at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, Apr. 5, 6-8 p.m.** • Tina Zion's new book, *Advanced Medical Intuition: 6 Causes of Illness and Unique Healing Methods* is now available. Tina will sign your copy with a personal message. She will also discuss her book and have a Q&A session. Free. Contact Tina at (260) 417-5969; tz@hughes.net or livingawareinc.com.

## Ayurveda

**Learning about Panchakarma with Nia Aguirre • Third Saturdays, Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Mar. 17, 10-11:30 a.m.** • Learn several Ayurvedic ways to cleanse, build, and balance your total self: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies. \$50/session includes take-home kit. Contact Nia at 883-7513 or niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

**Ayurvedic Herbs and Spices for Healing and Prevention • Second Mondays, Feb. 12 or Mar. 12, 6-7:30 p.m.** • Spice up your life and health with herbs and spices used in the Ayurvedic tradition. Easy to prepare recipes will be shared. These recipes are not spicy hot, but suggestions will be given to those that love it hot. \$50/session. Contact Nia at 883-7513 or niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

## Book Discussion Groups

**Crazy Wisdom Monthly Book Discussion • Fridays, 7:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room** • The monthly book discussion connects participants through the selection, reading, and discussion of books from Crazy Wisdom Bookstore's diverse inventory. All book selections will be available at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore at a 30% discount. Discussion is free. Contact 665-2757; email deb@crazywisdom.net or visit the Crazy Wisdom Monthly Book Discussion page on meetup.com.

**Jan. 19 • *One Year Wiser* by Mike Medaglia, hosted by Deb Flint** • Mike is an illustrator and Zen Buddhist who takes the reader on a journey of self discovery, revealing the truth that peace, contentment, and happiness are inside all of us already, we just need the tools to access them. This is a quick-reading heavily illustrated book that will help make 2018 a great year.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 104.



# The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

## Book Discussion Groups (cont.)

**Feb. 16 • *What Your Clutter is Trying to Tell You* by Kerri Richardson, hosted by Deb Flint** • What if clutter is trying to tell us something? Kerri encourages us to approach clutter with curiosity and compassion, rather than fear and loathing, using practical advice that we can all apply to the spring cleaning season that approaches. Come get inspired to organize!

**Mar. 16 • *The Art of Communicating* by Thich Nhat Hanh, hosted by Bill Zirinsky** • Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hahn, reveals how to listen mindfully and express your genuine, most authentic self in this small, but focused book. A great read for spring, where thoughts turn to important relationships.

**Apr. 20 • *Furiously Happy* by Jenny Lawson, hosted by Deb Flint** • This book has been a best-seller for Crazy Wisdom, and for good reason. Lawson has written a book about embracing everything that makes us who we are the beautiful and the flawed using it to find joy in life. She explores her lifelong battle with mental illness through the use of humor with fantastic results. Join us to unpack this #1 *New York Times* bestseller.

**Lighthouse Book Club: *Seth Speaks* by Jane Roberts with the Lighthouse Center • Wednesdays, Jan. 3-31, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Discussion of *Seth Speaks* led by the Lighthouse Center. Join us for a lively discussion about this essential guide to conscious living clearly and that powerfully articulates the furthest reaches of human potential, and the concept that we all create our own reality according to our individual beliefs. Contact Prachi at 645-2188; cprachi17@gmail.com or <http://lighthousecenterinc.org/book-club/>.

**Jewel Heart Readers • Tuesdays, Jan. 16, Feb. 13, Mar. 20, Apr. 10, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Enjoy lively discussion on monthly dharma-related book selections with fellow sangha. All are welcome. Free. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [annarbor@jewelheart.org](mailto:annarbor@jewelheart.org) or [jewelheart.com](http://jewelheart.com).

## Breathwork

**Podcast: Happiness Rising, Living with David and Pat Krajovic • Tuesday, Jan. 1; Wednesday, Jan. 31; Friday, Mar. 1; Saturday, Mar. 31; Sunday, Apr. 29, 9-9:30 p.m.** • Learn how to be in the flow, how to end drama and struggle, and reclaim your power to create a life of abundance. A follow-up meditation is also available. Access at [ascensionbreathing.com/shop](http://ascensionbreathing.com/shop). Free. Contact Dave at 416-5200; [inspired@ascensionbreathing.com](mailto:inspired@ascensionbreathing.com) or [ascensionbreathing.com](http://ascensionbreathing.com).

**Consciousness Rising Breathwork/Meditation with Dave and Pat Krajovic • Mondays, Jan. 15, Feb. 12, Apr. 9, 9:45-11:15 a.m. and Wednesday, Mar. 14, 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.** • Disintegrate stress, negativity, and limitation as powerful energies of meditation and conscious breathing uplift your spirit, calm your body/mind, and restore balance. Includes invocations, music, guided meditation, affirmations, and hands on facilitation. \$29. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com](mailto:relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com) or [bodyworkshealingcenter.com](http://bodyworkshealingcenter.com).

**Creating My Day, From Ordinary to Extraordinary with Pat and Dave Krajovic • Friday, Jan. 26, 6-9 p.m.** • Have the power to create a day to delight. How you start and end your day determines how grand it will be. Learn a system to set the energies in motion. More good, more joy, greater prosperity, beauty, and ease into the life you create. \$59.95. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [inspired@ascensionbreathing.com](mailto:inspired@ascensionbreathing.com) or [ascensionbreathing.com](http://ascensionbreathing.com).

**Happiness Rising! with Dave and Pat Krajovic • Sunday, Mar. 18, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.** • Want more happiness, fun, and peace in your day? Experience more joy, health, prosperity, and balance in your life. Breathwork and meditation to help you rise above limitations and become more aware. \$111. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com](mailto:relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com) or [bodyworkshealingcenter.com](http://bodyworkshealingcenter.com).

**Transformational Breath Experiential Afternoon Workshops with Julie Wolcott and Marcia Bailey • Saturdays, Mar. 24 and Apr. 24, 1-4 p.m.** • We begin the workshop with a discussion of the benefits and basics of the breath process, set intention, experience a full breath session, and end with integration. Participants may register for one or more of the three review sessions. First-timers arrange with Julie or Marcia to come one hour early for an overview. \$30/session for a reviewer, \$40/new participants. Contact Julie at 355-1671; [info@breatheannarbor.com](mailto:info@breatheannarbor.com) or [breatheannarbor.com](http://breatheannarbor.com).

**Alchemy of the Heart All Day Workshop with Julie Wolcott and Marcia Bailey • Apr. 14, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Come breathe with us! This day-long event will include two full 60-minute Transformational Breath sessions, plus related exercises and sharing. Main theme: See with your Real Eyes, the "Eyes of the Heart". Check out Michael Brown's YouTube videos or books prior to event if possible. \$120 for a reviewer, \$130 for new participants. Contact Julie at 355-1671; [info@breatheannarbor.com](mailto:info@breatheannarbor.com) or [breatheannarbor.com](http://breatheannarbor.com).

## Buddhism

**Tantra, Dzogchen, and The Meaning Saturated State with Christina Burch • Thursday, Jan. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** • An introduction to the path of Tantra and Dzogchen as it is practiced in the Nyingma school of Vajrayana Buddhism. This is a path of meditation and mind training known as the Diamond Vehicle. We will explore the driving search for meaning which fuels this path and its particular relevance and potential as practiced in today's postmodern technological world. Free. Contact Amy at [amyblondin@gmail.com](mailto:amyblondin@gmail.com) or [tsogyelgar.org](http://tsogyelgar.org).

**The Four Noble Truths with Demo Rinpoche • Thursdays, Jan. 4, 18, 25; Feb. 1, 8, 22; Mar. 1, 8, 7-8:30 p.m.** • The Four Noble Truths is the first teaching Buddha gave after his enlightenment. Through recognizing suffering and understanding its underlying causes, we gain tools to help clear our negativity, build positivity, and develop our greatest human potential. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [programs@jewelheart.org](mailto:programs@jewelheart.org) or [jewelheart.org](http://jewelheart.org).

**Introduction to Vajrayana with Glenn Mullin • Mar. 31, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Apr. 1, 2-5 p.m.** • A four-city series introducing the Vajrayana path in the Mahayana Tibetan Buddhist tradition. While in Ann Arbor Glenn Mullin will explore the relationship between the guru and the student. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [programs@jewelheart.org](mailto:programs@jewelheart.org) or [jewelheart.org](http://jewelheart.org).

**Sundays with Gelek Rinpoche • Sundays, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.** • Recorded talks by Gelek Rinpoche are shown weekly at Jewel Heart, and they are available as video webcasts. Followed by coffee, snacks, and conversation! Open to all. Free. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [programs@jewelheart.org](mailto:programs@jewelheart.org) or [jewelheart.org](http://jewelheart.org).

**White Tara Meditation Sessions at Jewel Heart • Sundays, 9:45-10:45 a.m.** • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism, known for her quick and compassionate activity. She is particularly associated with healing and long life. Join us for a guided meditation using visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental and emotional suffering. Free. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [programs@jewelheart.org](mailto:programs@jewelheart.org) or [jewelheart.org](http://jewelheart.org).

**Sunday Services With Zen Buddhist Temple • Sundays, 10-11:30 a.m. or 4-5:30 p.m.** • The morning meditation service consists of two periods of meditation followed by chanting and a talk. The afternoon dharma service has two shorter periods for sitting meditation, sometimes a walking meditation, reflection, chanting, and a short talk. Donations accepted. Contact 761-6520; [annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org](mailto:annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org) or [ZenBuddhistTemple.org](http://ZenBuddhistTemple.org).

## Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals

**New Year's Day Service with Zen Buddhist Temple • Monday, Jan. 1, 11:30 a.m.** • Come join us as we begin 2018 with contemplation and candle-lighting. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

**Spring Equinox with Esther Kennedy • Sunday, Mar. 18 3-4 p.m.** • Nature's renewal begins; Spring arrives for us in our Northern Hemisphere. A time when days and nights are almost equal, when sunlight triggers bird song and worms begin to emerge from Earth. Gather to celebrate this first turning of the Earth's seasons. Free. Open to all. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; [webercenter@adriandominicans.org](mailto:webercenter@adriandominicans.org) or [webercenter.org](http://webercenter.org).

**Vernal Equinox Celebration with the Michigan Friends Center • Tuesday, Mar. 20, 5:30-9 p.m.** • We will celebrate the balance of light and dark and the birth of Spring with a potluck dinner and circle in which to share thoughts, poems, songs, stories, and knowledge. Bring something to share or come ready to partake in what others have brought. Dress for the weather and bring a flashlight. Donations welcome. Contact Carolyn at 475-1892; [manager@mfcenter.org](mailto:manager@mfcenter.org) or [mfcenter.org](http://mfcenter.org).

**46th Annual Dance for Mother Earth Powwow with the U of M Native American Student Association • Mar. 24-25** • The Dance for Mother Earth powwow is a celebration of Native American culture and heritage that is open to the public and welcomes natives and non-natives alike. Come out to watch dancing, drumming, hear storytelling, try Native American food, and shop Native-made goods from a wide range of artists and craftspeople. \$10/adults. Contact Gabi at [danceformotherearth@gmail.com](mailto:danceformotherearth@gmail.com) or [powwow.umich.edu](http://powwow.umich.edu).

**Easter Satsanga and Meditation with the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Sunday, Apr. 1, 10 a.m.** • We warmly welcome everyone, of all faiths, to join us on Easter morning for our Meditation Gathering. We gather at 10:00 to start at 10:30. We will be sharing in song-chants, inspired thoughts, and Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharma's Blessing, followed by Pure Meditation and silent prayer for as long as you wish. Free. Contact the Centre at (517) 641-6201; [info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org](mailto:info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org) or [selfrealizationcentremichigan.org](http://selfrealizationcentremichigan.org).

**Sunday Service at Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Sundays, 10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** • The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth is a gathering of spiritual seekers that meets in its own beautiful building every Sunday to celebrate oneness with all beings, experience the power of group meditation, benefit from enlightening readers, enjoy guest musicians, and listen to talks that inspire and stimulate spiritual growth and understanding. There is a children's spiritual education program during the service each week and a monthly potluck following the service on the first Sunday of the month. Free. Contact Lauren at 327-0270; [lauren.tatarsky@interfaithspirit.org](mailto:lauren.tatarsky@interfaithspirit.org) or [interfaithspirit.org](http://interfaithspirit.org).

*"The best way to get rid of the pain is to feel pain. And when you feel the pain and go beyond it, you'll see there's a very intense love that is wanting to awaken itself."*

— Deepak Chopra



## Channeling

**Evenings with Aaron channeled by Barbara Brodsky • Wednesdays, Feb. 28 and Mar. 28, 7-9 p.m.** • Open session with Aaron and Barbara Brodsky. Aaron gives a talk followed by a Q&A session. Talk will cover a variety of spiritual practices including Vipassana and Pure Awareness Meditation, working with inner guidance, and supporting changes in our physical/spiritual bodies through work with body energy, the elements, sound, and Open Heart. Donation. Contact Tana at 477-5848; om@deepspring.org or deepspring.org.

## Chanting

**Monthly Ann Arbor Kirtan at Friends Meeting House • Fridays, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 13, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Informal evening of yogic and Sanskrit chanting. Kirtan is a participatory call and response, cross-cultural music experience that incorporates the audience into the performance. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Kashi at 883-6947; kashi@kashinivas.org or kirtanannarbor.org.

**First Wednesdays Ann Arbor Kirtan at Kashi Nivas • Mar. 7 and Apr. 4, 7-9 p.m.** • Informal evening of yogic and Sanskrit chanting. Kirtan is a participatory call and response, cross-cultural music experience that incorporates the audience into the performance. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Kashi at 883-6947; kashi@kashinivas.org or kirtanannarbor.org.

**Guru Gita at Kashi Nivas • Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.** • Devotional chant from the Skanda Purana on the esoteric significance of the guru and the guru-disciple relationship. Guests are invited to bring a photo of their guru to place on the altar. Chanting books are provided. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Kashi at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

## Childbirth

**Preparing for Birth with Tree Town Childbirth • Tuesdays, Jan. 9 - Feb. 14, Mar. 6 - Apr. 10, 6-8:45 p.m.** • Birth is normal and you can do it! Let us help you prepare to navigate your birth experience. In our comprehensive six-week series, emphasis is placed on developing confidence in woman's natural capacity to give birth, making informed choices that are right for you, comfort measures for labor and how partners can help, what to expect postpartum, and more. \$275. Contact Toni at 730-2909; toni@treetowndoulas.com or treetowndoulas.com/classes.

**Condensed Childbirth Prep with Tree Town Childbirth • Jan. 13, 14; Mar. 10, 11; Apr. 14, 15, 1-4:30 p.m.** • This interactive, hands-on class is designed to accommodate the schedules of busy first-time parents who simply can't make it to a six-week series. Perfect for couples seeking a refresher course as well. We'll review the process of labor and birth from start to finish. Emphasis is placed on natural approaches to pain management, support techniques, comfort measures, and smoothing your recovery. \$175. Contact Toni at 730-2909; toni@treetowndoulas.com or treetowndoulas.com/classes.

**Newborn Care Basics with Tree Town Childbirth • Saturday, Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** • Three-hour class provides you with the tools to care for your infant. We will talk about soothing a crying baby, diapering choices and how to use them, giving a baby a bath, car seat safety, and reading your baby's cues. This class is perfect for expectant/new parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster parents. \$60. Contact Toni at 730-2909; toni@treetowndoulas.com or treetowndoulas.com/classes.

**Breastfeeding Basics for Doula with Barbara Robertson • Thursdays, Feb. 15 and Apr. 19, 6-9:15 p.m.** • Learn the very latest in evidence-based breastfeeding support from an expert. This class will enhance the doula's ability to assist breastfeeding mothers immediately post-birth and in the early days postpartum. Fulfills a DONA International certification requirement for doulas. \$85, \$70/early registration. Contact Patty at 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

**DONA Birth Doula Workshop with Patty Brennan • Friday-Sunday, Feb. 16-18; Apr. 20-22** • Become a professional birth doula at Michigan's premier doula training center. Learn from doula business expert, Patty Brennan. You do not need to be a mother yourself, or have a medical background to become a doula. This training is hands-on, skill based, and fulfills two certification requirements for birth doulas through DONA International. \$535, \$485 early registration. Contact Patty at 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

**DONA Postpartum Doula Workshop with Patty Brennan • Thursday-Sunday, Mar. 22-25** • This course prepares you to provide excellent in-home care to families in the postpartum period. We will focus on breastfeeding support, baby wearing basics, support strategies for depressed moms, holistic healing measures, working with families with multiples, and more. Fulfills two certification requirements for postpartum doulas through DONA International. \$610; \$550/early registration. Contact Patty at 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

**Birth and the First Three Months with Katy Gladwin • Variable Dates** • The first three weeks of this six week class are designed to teach you the practical nuts and bolts of late pregnancy, labor, and birth. The postpartum segment will help you prepare for your transition into parenthood. A joyful transition into a family can take some work, so being prepared for the changes in partner dynamics and roles, family development, and sexuality will ease these big family shifts. We will also touch on the basics of postpartum physiology, breastfeeding, and Postpartum Depression prevention. Contact Beth at Indigo Forest at 994-8010; theindigoforest.com/workshops-classes/class-calendar/.

## Children and Young Adults

Complete listings for children and young adults are found in the Events Calendar for Kids section on page 50. This section is devoted to events for children and young adults along with their families.

**Valentine's Tea with the Fairies at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, February 15, 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.** • Join the fairies of the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room for a magical tea party! Enjoy special treats in your favorite fairy attire, and then gather for story time and a surprise activity in our community room. No charge for children under 18 months. Contact Jessica at jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net.

## A Course in Miracles

**A Course in Miracles Reading Group with Rev. David Bell • Mondays, 6:45-8:30 p.m.** • Facilitated group reading of the spiritual text *A Course in Miracles* at the Interfaith Center. Donations accepted. Contact 327-0270; dave@interfaithspirit.org or interfaithspirit.org.

**A Course in Miracles Study Group with Lorri Coburn • Thursdays, 12-1:30 p.m.** • All are welcome to study the non-dualistic interpretation of *A Course in Miracles*. Free. Contact 646-6585; lori.coburn@gmail.com or lorricoburn.com.

## Crystal Healing

**Manifesting Your Life the Way You Want with Jennifer Vanderwal • Sunday, Jan. 14, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • Learn how beliefs can block us from living the life of our dreams. Discuss crystals, essential oils, herbs, affirmations, and other techniques in a guided meditation to start creating the life of our dreams. \$44. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com or bodyworkshalingcenter.com.

**Loving Yourself and Others with Jennifer Vanderwal • Sunday, Feb. 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • Learn the importance and benefits of self-love and how crystals enhance self-reflection and inner knowing. Experience the bliss of a loving crystal array enjoined with a guided meditation to access the healing power of self-love. \$44. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com or bodyworkshalingcenter.com.

**Using Stones to Enhance our Psychic Abilities with Jennifer Vanderwal • Sunday, Mar. 25, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • Learn the various stones that can be used for psychic enhancement. Includes discussion of various crystal healing arrays, affirmations, colors, aromatherapy, and herbs. Includes guided meditation to enhance the psychic abilities. \$44. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com or bodyworkshalingcenter.com.

**Deepening Communication with our Guides and Angels with Jennifer Vanderwal • Sunday, Apr. 8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • Discuss the Angels and Guides. Use various crystals, essential oils, herbs, affirmations, other techniques, and guided meditation to enhance communication. \$44. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com or bodyworkshalingcenter.com.

## Death and Dying

**Death Café with Merilynne Rush and Diana Cramer • Third Saturdays, Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Mar. 17, Apr. 21, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room** • Eat cake, drink tea, and talk about death. This event has no agenda and participants guide the conversation. This is not a grief support group, but a way to further the cultural conversation about the one thing everyone has in common. Free. Contact Merilynne at 395-9660; mrush@lifespandoulas.com or lifespandoulas.com.

**End-of-Life Doula Training with Merilynne Rush and Patty Brennan • Friday-Sunday, Mar. 2-4, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.** • End-of-Life Doulas accompany the dying person and their loved ones through the final months, weeks, and days of life by providing support, resources, education, and friendship for those who accept and embrace dying as a period of life, not just an abrupt ending. \$565; \$515 before Feb. 22. Contact Merilynne at 395-9660; support@lifespandoulas.com or lifespandoulas.com

## Drumming

**Drumcommunity Circle with Lori Fithian • Jan. 23, Feb. 14, Mar. 27, Apr. 19; 7 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room** • Get your hands on a drum and add your sounds and spirit to the community groove. All are welcome to join the circle. No experience necessary. Drums available. Free. Contact 426-7818; lorifithian@mac.com or drumcommunity.com.

**Drum and Dance Jam with the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • First Saturdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Facilitated community drum circle; bring your own drum or use one of ours. \$5 suggested donation. Contact Curtis at 327-0270; tesolcurtis@yahoo.com or interfaithspirit.org.

## Energy Healing

**Drop-in Energy Work with Simran Harvey • First and Third Sundays, 12-3 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom** • Simran offers a clearing energy called the Advanced Pulse Technique that balances aspects of the mind, body, or emotions as old issues dissolve and happiness, comfort, abundance, and freedom emerge. Surrogate work available for young children or incapacitated adults. \$1.50/minute. No appointment necessary. Contact Simran at 255-9533; astroenergywork@gmail.com.



# Cultivating Mindfulness: A Clinical Psychologist's Perspective

By Rebekah Hansen



Imagine for a moment you feel emotionally uncomfortable. Maybe you feel anxious about an upcoming presentation, or nervous about confronting a loved one about an important matter. Take a moment and think about what you often do when you feel distressed. For most of us, our natural inclination is to think about how we can change how we are feeling and what we can do to help us feel better. We may go for a run, call a friend, or try to think about something else. We may also practice some cognitive tools such as replacing “negative thoughts” with “positive thoughts.” For example, if you are thinking, “I am going to bomb this exam,” you may think of an alternative, more rational thought: “even though I am feeling nervous, I can succeed at this.”

These coping strategies can be helpful and useful, and I have recommended similar strategies in my psychotherapy practice and in my consulting work. Sometimes, though, these techniques don't work. When we are trying to change how we are feeling in the present, often we are unconsciously labeling the present moment as “bad.” And we are labeling the future (when we hope

**When we are trying to change how we are feeling in the present, often we are unconsciously labeling the present moment as “bad.” And we are labeling the future (when we hope to feel different) as “good.” This attempt to change the present by force can make the unpleasant feelings more intense.**

to feel different) as “good.” This attempt to change the present by force can make the unpleasant feelings more intense. For example, when techniques don't help us to feel better, we may think, “I really need to relax... I am not relaxing... what is wrong with me, why can't I calm down?”

Another way of approaching these unpleasant feelings, and even a way to experience our lives in general, is through mindfulness. In the above example, this would involve accepting our thoughts and

our anxiety with a certain amount of self-love and without judgment. For some of my clients who struggle with anxiety, they may take a deep breath, witness their feelings, and say to themselves, “Yup, here is that feeling of anxiety again.”

Mindfulness is rooted in early Buddhist and Hindu traditions. Many theorists and practitioners' conceptualization of mindfulness parallels the Buddhist concept

of the three poisons: desire, aversion, and ignorance. Sometimes we chase after things that are enjoyable, such as food, drugs, or a pleasant feeling (desire). Other times we may attempt to avoid things that are painful or unpleasant, such as anxiety (aversion). And sometimes we delude ourselves, such as believing we have all the answers (ignorance).

Mindfulness involves accepting the present moment, our thoughts, feelings, and sensory experiences without judgment of right or wrong, true or false. Some people begin their mindfulness practice by saying to themselves “I am not that” to various objects, thoughts or feelings. For example, they may say to themselves “I am not the clock,” and then recognize “I am not my thoughts.” It is also not unusual for people to say to themselves, “I am that.” This phrase subverts the dualistic notion of subject/object and emphasizes oneness.

Quite simply, mindfulness is about being aware of the present moment and accepting what is. Mindfulness isn't about evaluating or judging. Instead of saying to yourself “I should not be feeling...,” you can simply say to yourself “I am feeling...,” or even, “it is interesting I am feeling...”

**Mindfulness involves accepting the present moment, our thoughts, feelings, and sensory experiences without judgment of right or wrong, true or false.**

For me, mindfulness is linked to my perceptions and experiences of life and death. I remember starting a regular mindfulness practice about 18 years ago when I did hospice work. I had the honor of being with people and their loved ones at the end of their lives. To this day, I can vividly recall being emotionally struck by the cruelty of death. I remember feeling helpless knowing that I did not have the power to give my clients more time on this earth. I also remember being shaken into the beauty of the present moment. I can recall a sense of urgency to be present with my clients, with their pain and with their joy. It was during this time when I developed a regular mindfulness practice. I remember celebrating with some people who found joy and meaning out of simple tasks such as getting the morning paper and sipping a rich cup of coffee. In turn, I noticed I seemed to slow down. I lived near an ocean at the time, and I remember spending hours watching, smelling, and appreciating the ocean waves lap against my bare feet. I was profoundly changed. I had the privilege of witnessing the ease with which some of my clients and their families seemed to open to gentle giving and receiving of love, compassion, and forgiveness. My work changed how I viewed myself and my own death. It also shifted how I experience other people and the world at large.

What I feel most passionate about in my work is experiencing my clients in a loving, nonjudgmental way. I think it is easy for some of us who struggle with emotional pain and “irrational” thought processes to pathologize ourselves, similar to the ways parts of society stigmatize those who are suffering — whether it be emotional, cognitive, or societal through discrimination and intolerance. Thus, many people have a belief that something is innately wrong with them or that they are broken. In my psychotherapy practice, I will acknowledge this belief and validate my clients' suffering. I will also invite them to look at some of their struggles in an accepting, nonjudgmental, mindful way. Even though there is usually a path toward more growth, healing, and life satisfaction, I also believe that in this moment we are whole. The name of my business, “Tree Town Therapy,” was inspired by this practice of honoring ourselves and others. In the essay, “Ram Dass on Self-Judgment,” Ram Dass talks about how he looks at himself and others in a similar way he experiences trees. In describing how he perceives others, he says, you see all these different trees. And some of them are bent, and some of them are straight, and some of them are evergreens, and some of

**I think it is easy for some of us who struggle with emotional pain and “irrational” thought processes to pathologize ourselves, similar to the ways parts of society stigmatize those who are suffering — whether it be emotional, cognitive, or societal through discrimination and intolerance.**



them are whatever. And you look at the tree and you allow it. You appreciate it. You see why it is the way it is. You sort of understand that it didn't get enough light, and so it turned that way. And you don't get all emotional about it. You just allow it. You appreciate the tree.

The minute you get near humans, you lose all that. And you are constantly saying "You're too *this*," or "I'm too *this*." That judging mind comes in. And so I practice turning people into trees. Which means appreciating them just the way they are.



## MINDFULNESS EXERCISE

For this exercise, try to separate yourself from your experiences and witness your body sensations, your thoughts, and your feelings with curiosity and self-love. Please remember that mindfulness isn't about doing things perfectly. It may be helpful to compare yourself to an investigator. You may practice this exercise quickly for 20 seconds or slowly for many hours.

### *Body Sensations/Sensory Experiences*

Notice how your body feels right now in this moment. You may slowly scan your body and notice each part, or you may do a quick check. You may notice that your neck is tight or your foot is tapping. If you are outside, you may notice the breeze on your face, or the smell of leaves.

### *Thoughts*

Now pay attention to either the content or the process of your thoughts. For example, you may notice yourself thinking about the clock, or that your thoughts are going fast or slow. You may also notice self-judgments, such as a thought of concern that you aren't doing this mindfulness exercise in the "right way."

### *Feelings*

Turn your attention to how you are feeling right now. You may label your feelings or you may notice your feelings without labeling them. You may notice that you are feeling happy, sad, confused, excited, overwhelmed, and/or bored. Notice how your feelings change and flow like waves coming and going. Maybe your feelings are intense or maybe you cannot get a sense of your feelings. Either way is okay. Remember there is no perfect way to do this.

Many people notice a reduction in anxiety and depression and an increase in happiness if they practice brief moments of mindfulness every day. This mindfulness exercise may be paired with an everyday activity, such as showering or brushing your teeth, in order to increase the likelihood that you will remember this practice.

*Rebekah Hansen, Psy.D., L.P., has a doctorate degree in clinical psychology and is a fully licensed psychologist. She provides psychotherapy services and consulting. She specializes in anxiety, depression, vicarious trauma, and grief and loss. Many of her clients identify as LGBTQ (especially transgender). She also works a lot with university students, including international students. She can be contacted at rebekahpsych@gmail.com or (734) 223-3520. Her website is treetowntherapy.com.*



## Energy Healing (cont.)

**Chi Clinic with Samo Joanna Myers and Pastor Alexis Neuhaus • Monday-Friday, 2-3 p.m.** • The Chi Clinic supports individuals in person or remotely, five times a week for an hour a day, to help them feel centered, rested, focused, and energized. \$100/month (first week free). Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**School of Inner Cultivation and Healing with Master Sang Kim • Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Fridays, 3:15-5:30 p.m.** • The SUN SHEN Internal Cultivation and Healing System is an intimate, hands-on integrated approach which incorporates spiritual counseling, tai-chi, energy cultivation, and healing to resolve physical, emotional, and spiritual problems for oneself and others. \$300/month. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**Self-care Qigong with Wasantha Young • Jan. 8-Apr. 12; Mondays, 9-10 a.m.; Tuesdays and/or Thursdays, 6-7 p.m.** • Learn energy work, meditation, self-acupressure, and energy movement systems that support and nurture the integration of the mind/body/spirit. \$185. Contact Wasantha at 741-0695; info@peacefuldragonschool.com or peacefuldragonschool.com.

**Natural Spiritual Healing Course, Diploma Program with the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Feb. 10-11, 24-25; Mar. 3-4, 17-18, 24-25** • Transform yourself and the lives of others - develop a healing practice, take healing skills and knowledge into your way of life and work, or take the course as part of a personal self-development program. Five weeks training over two years, including an independent assessment. \$990 includes lunch. Bursary available. Contact the Centre at (517) 641-6201; info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org or selfrealizationcentremichigan.org.

**Hallowed Water for Clearings and Protection with Heidi • Wednesday, Mar. 7, 7-8:30 p.m.** • One of the key components of any blessing, space clearing, or spirit clearing is holy water. Although it can be purchased at specialty stores and churches, sacred water is more effective when charged with your own energy. Learn the unique method developed by a certified medium with expertise on clearings, including preparation, consecration, activation, and timing. \$18. Contact Heidi at 788-6478; heidi@crystalmoonparanormal.com or crystalmoonparanormal.com.

## Exercise and Fitness

**Foot and Gait Workshop with Gwyn Jones at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, Jan 18, 6-7:30 p.m.** • This workshop will introduce you to the 26 bones, 33 joints, and 100s of muscles, tendons, and ligaments in your feet. We will move, stretch, and strengthen all of them. Understand the importance of how healthy feet can better your gait, balance, and movement patterns. \$25. Contact Gwyn at 730-9448; gwynjones04@gmail.com or gwynjonespilates.com.

**Align Your Spine with Gwyn Jones at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, Feb. 1, 6-7:30 p.m.** • This workshop will look in-depth at how our movement patterns and non-movement patterns have an affect on our posture and alignment. Become aware of how to move, stretch, sit, and stand for better posture. \$25. Contact Gwyn at 730-9448; gwynjones04@gmail.com or gwynjonespilates.com.

## Exhibitions

**Socially Responsible Investing with David Kent • Wednesday, Apr. 11 at Crazy Wisdom** • Attend an informal discussion about Socially Responsible Investing and planning ahead in this unpredictable world. Bring questions and comments. Free. Contact David at (810) 422-7439; david.l.kent@lpl.com.

## Festivals and Fairs

**Ann Arbor Earth Day Festival • Sunday, Apr. 22** • This free, family-friendly event features displays from over 40 local environmental, nonprofit, and governmental organizations: live animal demonstrations, hands-on activities, live entertainment, green building & commuting technologies, energy topics, water awareness, sustainable agriculture, and more. Free. Contact Leslie Science and Nature Center at 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org/a2earthday.

**Earth Day Celebration for All Ages with Zen Buddhist Temple • Sunday, Apr. 22, 9:30-11:30 a.m.** • Service followed by a celebration and garden planting. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org or zenbuddhisttemple.org.

On January 1, 2018, the Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be available on our website:  
[www.crazywisdomjournal.com](http://www.crazywisdomjournal.com).



## Film

**A Gerry Fialka Roundtable Conversation in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • Monday, March 26, 6-9 pm • Free** • Artist, writer and pare-media ecologist Fialka will be back in the Tea Room to talk about his new book, *Strange Questions: Experimental Film as Conversation*. (Edited by Rachael Kerr. Introduction by David James.) Fialka's compelling interviews with notables in avant-garde cinema offer insights into moving image art—its creative processes, motives, consequences, formative influences, and hidden psychic effects. Through interviews with George Manupelli, Chick Strand, Tom Gunning, Lynne Sachs, Jay Rosenblatt, Martha Colburn, Evan Meaney, Mike Hoolboom, Robert Nelson, Nina Menkes and others, *Strange Questions* links powerful personal stories with the contemporary media-scape. Fialka has been called “the multi-media Renaissance man” by *The Los Angeles Times* and “a cultural revolutionary” by *The LA Weekly*.

**Free Films and Discussion at Jewel Heart • Fridays, 7-9 p.m.** • Enjoy a film followed by discussion about dharma and film. Free. Concessions available. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; annarbor@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

**Jan. 19 • *Rosenwald (2015)*** • A documentary about how Chicago philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, the son of an immigrant peddler who rose to head Sears, partnered with Booker T. Washington to build 5,400 Southern schools in African American communities in the early 1900s during the Jim Crow era.

**Feb. 16 • *Walk with Me (2017)*** • A meditative film about a community of Zen Buddhist monks and nuns who have dedicated their lives to mastering the art of mindfulness with their world famous teacher, Thich Nhat Hahn.

**Mar. 23 • *Ender's Game (2013)*** • A young boy, Ender Wiggin, is recruited to lead the fight against the Formics, a technology superior alien species. He will be tested and honed into an empathetic killer who begins to despise what he does as he learns to fight in hopes of saving Earth and his family.

**Apr. 27 • *KUBO and the Two Strings (2016)*** • A young boy named Kubo must locate a magical suit of armor worn by his late father, a legendary Samurai warrior, in order to defeat a vengeful spirit from the past, with deep themes of rebirth and reincarnation, it is simply an amazing work of animated achievement in cinema.

**56th Ann Arbor Film Festival • Tuesday-Sunday, Mar. 20-25** • The Ann Arbor Film Festival is the oldest experimental and avant-garde film festival in North America. It runs for six days each March at the historic Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor. The AAFF shows over 200 films from nearly 70 countries, offering approximately \$20,000 in awards each year. \$12; \$8/students, seniors. Contact at 995-5356; info@aaafilmfest.org or aafilmfest.org.

## Fundraisers

**Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library Bag Sale • Feb. 10, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Feb. 11, 1-4 p.m.** • Come fill a bag with books! Feel free to bring your own bag, or take one of ours! Donation of bags always welcome. \$4/small, \$5/large, \$10/giant Ikea bag. Free. Contact Melanie at 302-7774; melaniebaldwin89@gmail.com or faadl.org.

## Healing

**5 Keys to Breaking Habit Patterns/Chakra Healing with Meena Puri at Crazy Wisdom • Sunday, Feb. 25, 1-4 p.m.** • Discover the hidden causes of repeating habit patterns, your deep beliefs that are operating your life, how to become aware of the patterns, how to identify the blockages, how to shatter the old paradigm and create a new one, and learn healing at the subconscious chakra energetic level. \$47. Contact Meena Puri at (248) 685-3489; mpuri@ayurvedichealingcenter.com or ayurvedichealingcenter.com.

**D.O.V.E (Divine Original Vibration Embodiment) Workshop with Karen Greenberg • Fridays, Jan. 12, 19, 26; or Feb. 2, 9, 16; or Mar. 2, 9, 16; or Apr. 13, 20, 27** • Learn to identify and re-pattern your client's limiting beliefs, thoughts, and attitudes. Assist your client in expressing any commensurate low-vibrational emotions using multiple methods. If Fridays do not work for you, special arrangements can be made. \$777. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

**The Healer and Ascension Certification Course with Eve Wilson • Enrolling** • Receive a UCM ( Universal Church of the Master) Healer Practitioner Certificate to practice the deepest levels of Healing and Ascension throughout the USA. Auras, chakras, healing Qabalah, Archangels, Ascended Masters, Spiritual Surgeons, Heredity, treating the root cause of disease of body, emotion, mind, and spirit for people, animals, and the planet. Five private healings with the instructor included. \$2,750/in advance; \$2,900/pay as you go. Contact Eve at 780-7635; ewew@spiritualhealers.com or spiritualhealers.com.

**Healing Touch Certificate Program, Course Three with Barb McConnell • Feb. 17-18, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.** • Completion of Courses One and Two. Learn to increase your energy level to facilitate deeper healing in your clients. Chelation, Lymphatic Drain, Glymphatic, and additional techniques are a part of this course. 17.5 CE's for nurses and massage therapists. \$275 plus workbook. Contact Barb at (517) 914-4133; barbmccConnell7@gmail.com.

**Healing Touch Certificate Program, Course One with Barb McConnell • Mar. 10-11, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.** • Learn 12-14 basic techniques to balance and energize the human energy system and promote healing. Lecture, demo, and hands on. 18 CE's for nurses and massage therapists. \$275 (\$290/late) plus workbook. Contact Barb at (517) 914-4133; barbmccConnell7@gmail.com.

**Healing Touch Certificate Program Course Two with Barb McConnell • Mar. 17-18, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.** • Completion of Level 2. Review course 1 techniques plus learn back techniques and Spiral. Emphasis on developing healing sequence for specific needs. 17.5 CE's for nurses and massage therapists. \$275 (\$290/late) plus workbook. Contact Barb at (517) 914-4133; barbmccConnell7@gmail.com.

**Parswanath Puja with Asha Sheth • Sunday, Mar. 25, 2:30-5:30 p.m.** • Parswanath is the Jain Tirtankara of healing on all levels: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Asha Sheth will facilitate the puja; all are welcome to participate in receiving healing energies. Clothing: green, for healing, or other colors; no black please. \$45, \$48/proxy. Contact Prachi at 645-2188; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

**Healing Touch Certificate Program, Course Four with Barb McConnell • Thursday-Sunday, April 19-22** • Prep for Healing Touch Practitioner: learn two new techniques, put together a case study, begin minimum one-year mentorship preparing you for completion of the program. Certification after completion is the next step. CE's for nurses and massage therapists. \$425 (\$450/late) plus workbook. Contact Barb at (517) 914-4133; barbmccConnell7@gmail.com.

**The Weekly Word for Healing and Ascension Blog with Eve Wilson • Fridays** • Practical and spiritual support for riding the waves of change on planet Earth with skill. The latest information and tools for responding effectively and finding joy, ease, and confidence in the process - a hopeful way to finish your week. Free. Contact 780-7635; ewew@spiritualhealers.com or spiritualhealers.com.

**Healing Night with the Lighthouse Center • Third Thursdays, 7:30-9 p.m.** • Meditation followed by Reiki healing. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

## Herbs, Plants, and the Garden

**Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance 2018 Organic Intensives • Saturday, Jan. 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Three Sessions: Diverse Grain Options for Farms and Homesteads, Transplants - all aspects, and Integrating Livestock for the Diversified Farm. \$80/members, \$95/non-members. Contact Julia at (248) 262-6826; moffaorganic@gmail.com or moffa.net.

**Herbs for Cultivating Wellness with Anna Fernandez • Tuesday, Jan. 23, 6:30-8 p.m.** • In this free lecture, local herbalist Anna Fernandez will provide a beginner-level overlook of preventive herbal medicine, and how to use these gentle, but powerful natural compounds to build year-round wellness. This will include discussion of stress reduction, increasing immunity and whole-body resilience, and fortifying specific body systems with herbs, as well as a closer look at the benefits of herbal medicine compared to mainstream medicine. Free. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

## Holistic Health

**CBD 101 with Blue Sage Health • Third Saturdays** • CBD is a compound that research has shown to have analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties and has been found to help with ailments such as pain, fatigue, sleeping disorders, depression/anxiety, blood sugar imbalances, autoimmune, digestion, cancer, neurological disorders, and much more. We will discuss all the different ways it can be used and how you can benefit from daily supplementation. We will have a presentation, followed by a question and answer session with our expert CBD Consultant Julie. We are excited to share with you this incredibly safe, non-pharmaceutical alternative. \$10-\$25 donation. Contact Julie at events.bloomcc@gmail.com or bluesagehealth.com.

**Detox from the Holidays - Open House/Drop-in with Ellen Porter and Samm Pryce • Saturdays, Jan. 20, Feb. 10, 12-2 p.m.** • Detox from your holidays and start 2018 off right by putting your health and wellness at the top of your list. Meet and greet the Acupuncturist and Naturopathic Doctor. Enjoy light refreshments and teas while learning about foot and auricular detox. Free. Contact Ellen at 845-2166; ellen@acuthrive.org or acuthrive.org.

**Heightening Your Vibration: Alchemy with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, Jan. 21, 12:30-8:30 p.m.** • Learn a myriad of tools and techniques to raise your vibration and sustain it. Tools include sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, sacred oils, affirmations, visualization, meditation, personal prayers, gratitude, breathing, drumming, movement, and many more. \$125 Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

**Cannabis Classroom 101 with Bloom City Club • Third Sundays, 6:15-7:15 p.m.** • Cannabis Curious? Cannabis is a safe and effective medicine that is becoming widely accepted in medical communities around the world. Each month's event will cover a different topic to explain the benefits of cannabis and dispel the myths that plague its acceptance. Snacks provided. Suggested donation \$10-25. Contact Bloom City Club at 585-0621; events.bloomcc@gmail.com or bloomcityclub.com.

**Women Grow Networking Event with Bloom City Club • First Thursdays** • Women Grow events connect curious newcomers with established cannabis professionals. Each local event offers a supportive networking environment and educational speakers designed to ignite your passion for the cannabis industry. \$25-40. Contact Bloom City Club at 585-0621; annarbor@womengrow.com.

## Integrative Medicine

**MNRI Dynamic and Postural Reflex Pattern Integration with Dawn Burnell-Powers • Thursday-Sunday, Apr. 5-8, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.** • This course provides the foundation for professionals and parents to understand the importance of primary motor reflex pattern maturation, why a reflex might not be integrated, the impact a non-integrated reflex can have, and explores the MNRI techniques designed to assess and integrate reflexes. \$675/first-time, \$405 repeat. Contact Jacquelin at (810) 231-9042; info@jump-in-products.com or masgutovamethod.com/events.



## Intuitive and Psychic Development

**Drop-In Intuitive Readings with Marcella Fox • Second and Fourth Sundays, 12-3 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • \$1.50/minute.** No appointment necessary. Contact 734-717-8513.

**Drop-In Intuitive Readings and Dreamwork with Irena Nagler • Second and Fourth Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom •** Participate in a shared, interactive dream allowing the soul to release energy, flow, and insight. Irena can use card decks or other objects to focus or simply tune in with the intention to help activate the client's own powers of discernment, creativity, and confidence in choosing the adventures that call to them. She can help with exploration of dreams recalled from sleep or waking dream-states. \$1.50/minute. No appointment necessary. Contact 996-1772; birena@umich.edu.

**Teleconference: Psychic Psychology Women's Group with John Friedlander • Tuesdays, Jan. 2, Feb. 6, Mar. 6, Apr. 3, 8-9 p.m. •** For women only. Meditations concentrating on women's issues relative to biological energies as well as that of the aura. \$12.50. Contact Violeta at 476-1513; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Build Your Intuition Workshop with Angela Chapko • Saturday, Jan. 6, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. •** A wonderful beginning if you have considered expanding your knowledge and gifts to a whole new level. Whether you are a beginner or experienced intuitive, this is a wonderful interactive day to help reboot and create confidence in your new journey! It's important to feel supported and understand the starting stages of opening your gifts. \$135. Contact Ghidrahs Mind Body Spirit at (517) 260-0116; ghidrahs@gmail.com.

**Teleconference: Focused Mind Meditation Practice Session with John Friedlander • Sundays, Jan. 7, Feb. 4, Mar. 4, Apr. 1, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. •** Each participant will both leap ahead with his/her spiritual abilities and make an excellent start in developing sustained focused attention so valuable in developing both abilities and character. \$15. Contact Violeta at 476-1513; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Winter Webinar/Teleconference: Exploring Core Techniques and Advanced Material with John Friedlander • Thursday and Friday, Jan 11, 12, 7-9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 13, 14, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 2-4 p.m. •** New material introduced with continued development of advanced material and core techniques seeking a natural sense of skills in a practical everyday life. Prerequisite: Level One Psychic Development class, CD set, or permission from the instructor. \$275. Contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Teleconference: Clearing Energy Levels Where Emotions Transition into Physicality with John Friedlander • Wednesdays, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, 8-9 p.m. •** Meditation exercises releasing/clearing energies in the levels of the aura. \$12.50 Contact Violeta at 476-1513; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Teleconference: Kundalini Meditation and Clearing with John Friedlander • Tuesdays, Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, Apr. 24, 8-9 p.m. •** Channeled personal aura clearing and manifestation exercise with Mataji, who will work individually with each participant, using your own kundalini to increase power and clarity. \$12.50. Contact Violeta at 476-1513; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Ghosts and Demons with Beverly Fish • Saturday, Mar. 10 6-9 p.m. •** Beverly, local psychic medium, will be discussing her experiences with the spirit world and her work as a demonologist. \$29. Contact Beverly at 474-8663; beverly.fish@comcast.net or fullmoonrising.center.

**Developing Your Psychic Ability with Beverly Fish • Saturday, Mar. 24, 6-9 p.m. •** Learn how to tap into your psychic ability through meditative exercises and techniques. You will also learn how to use protection against negative entities. \$39. Contact Beverly at 474-8663; beverly.fish@comcast.net or fullmoonrising.center.

**Psychometry with Heidi • Thursday, Apr. 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (tentative) •** Learn how to get impressions from photographs and personal belongings through hands-on practice. Everyone in the class will give and receive readings. Please bring to class at least two photographs and two objects of sentimental value belonging to someone (dead or alive) other than yourself. \$21/Plymouth-Canton resident, \$31/non-resident. Contact Heidi at 788-6478; heidi@crystalmoonparanormal.com or crystalmoonparanormal.com.

**Spring Intensive with John Friedlander • Saturday and Sunday, Apr. 7 and 8 •** In-person seminar where we delve into newer meditative areas, exploring topics outside John's core curriculum. Expect powerful healings and growth in skills for everyday use. Available as teleconference. Prerequisite: Level One, CD, or instructor's permission. \$275. Contact Violeta at 476-1513; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

**Raise Your Vibration with Heidi • Every other Thursday, 7-8:15 p.m. •** Study and practice a variety of techniques to raise and maintain a high vibration, without major commitment or cost. Because space is limited, and topics are voted on in advance, you must join the mailing list in order to receive the schedule. \$10-\$15. Contact Heidi at 788-6478; heidi@crystalmoonparanormal.com or crystalmoonparanormal.com.

## Kabbalah

**New Kabbalah: Pathworking Course with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, Jan. 28, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, Apr. 29, 3-6 p.m. •** Authored by Karen Greenberg with Artistic Archetypal Renditions by Ruthie Basham. These powerful archetypes, along with the twenty-two Hebrew letters, connect the ten spheres in the Tree of Life. Integrate these archetypes and letters into the subconscious and be able to access them for all problems. Monthly rates: \$137/person general session; \$150/person for semi-private session (two people); \$120/hour for private session. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

**Brand New Beginning Kabbalah: Kabbalah Miracles with Karen Greenberg • Evening Course begins Tuesday, Feb. 13, 7-10 p.m.; Daytime Course begins Monday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. •** Three-hour workshop meets once a month for about a year. An ordered, systematic approach to develop and balance all the important areas of life. Turn resistance energy into creative energy. Monthly rates: \$137/person general session; \$150/person for semi-private session (two people); \$120/hour for private session. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

## Life Transitions

**Discover the Power and Joy in Your Life Transitions with Melanie Fuscaldo • Wednesday, Jan. 10, 12-1:30 p.m. •** Discover a process to open your heart and mind to the gifts of transition for self or loved one who is experiencing a transition in health, career, relationship, retirement, or death. \$40. Contact Melanie at 668-2733; mfulscaldo@gmail.com or melaniefuscaldo.com.

**Helping Families Strategize as Members Age with Linda Bender • Thursdays, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, 7 p.m. •** Parents and their adult children often are at a loss as how to manage the changes that occur with aging. This workshop will offer strategies to help the family system through this time of transition with the goal that everyone will feel heard and respected. Free. Contact Linda at 395-2285; linda@lindabendertransitions.com or lindabendertransitions.com.

## Love and Relationships

**Cultivate Peace During and After Divorce with Melanie Fuscaldo • Wednesday, Jan. 3, 12-1:30 p.m. •** Cultivate inner peace using a process that focuses on the gifts in any situation. Find hidden blessings and move into joyful power. \$40. Contact Melanie at 668-2733; mfulscaldo@gmail.com or melaniefuscaldo.com.

**Kabbalah for Couples with Karen Greenberg • Begins Sunday, Jan. 14, 1-3 p.m. •** Not couples therapy, but for good relationships that both parties are willing to improve. Two-hour sessions, once a month, for about a year to allow couples to get more work done over a shorter amount of time. \$205/session if either participant has taken Beginning Kabbalah. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

**Creating Your Ideal Mate with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, Apr. 22, 1-6 p.m. •** Identify your ideal mate's qualities and enhance these with the richness of group input. Learn how to use ceremony, meditation, chants, movement, and more to remove blockages, work through fears and issues, and learn to trust the Divine Order and Timing. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

## Meditation

**Music and Meditation with Kapila Castoldi at Crazy Wisdom • Saturday, Jan. 20, 1-4 p.m. •** Music is meditation. Whether we spend some quiet moments listening to spiritual music, or actively engage in playing or singing spiritual melodies, we achieve the same benefits as when we engage in other forms of meditation. This class will explore the role of music in meditation. Free. Contact Kapila at 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

**Mantra and Japa with Kapila Castoldi at Crazy Wisdom • Saturday, Jan. 27, 1-4 p.m. •** Mantra means 'incantation'. The repetition of a mantra keeps our mind busy and at the same time inspired by the eternal truth embedded in the mantra. Japa is a systematic repetition of a mantra hundreds of times to purify our mind. This class will explore the role of Mantra in meditation. Free. Contact Kapila at 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

**Mastering Meditation with Kapila Castoldi at Crazy Wisdom • Saturdays, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 1-3 p.m. •** This three-week introductory meditation series includes topics such as quieting the mind, meditating on the heart, awakening inner awareness, and exploring a meditative lifestyle. Techniques include concentration, breathing, visualization, and chanting. Free. Contact Kapila at 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

**Yoga and Meditation with Kapila Castoldi at Crazy Wisdom • Saturdays, Mar. 10, 17, 24, 1-3 p.m. •** Meditation is part of a broader picture: Yoga. Developed by the ancient rishis (seers) thousands of years ago, the Yoga philosophy applies still to our modern life. The class will explore the sheaths of the body, vital, mind and heart, and the concept and evolution of the soul. Free. Contact Kapila at 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

**Good Friday Meditation with the Lighthouse Center at Crazy Wisdom • Friday, Mar. 30, 12-1:30 p.m. •** Honoring the Christ Consciousness of love and forgiveness. Vegan potluck follows. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com.

*"The universe is always speaking to us ... sending us little messages, causing coincidences and serendipities, reminding us to stop, to look around, to believe in something else, something more."*

— Nancy Thayer



# My Path Led Me to Foot Reflexology

By Denise Held

Foot reflexology is preventative, holistic health care. It calms the nervous system, soothes aching feet, and “tunes up” the body. A foot reflexologist can help a person de-stress as well as recover from foot injuries and pain. By its nature, foot reflexology nurtures.

Nursing training is focused on taking care of people’s health at all stages, from preventative to hospice care, in clinics, hospitals, and homes. Nurses not only take care of sick people who are not able to do so themselves, but they also teach healthy people to make wise choices in order to stay as healthy as possible. By its nature, nursing is nurturing.

I am a Registered Nurse who has transitioned into foot reflexology. For the past ten years, I have operated my own practice, A2 Reflexology. While I no longer work as a nurse in a hospital, my nursing training influences and enriches my reflexology practice.

I was born in Ann Arbor, went to public school here, and graduated from U-M School of Nursing. My first nursing job was as a visiting nurse at Boston Visiting Nurse Association, where I took public transportation and walked from home to home. This was followed by two years in Grand Rapids as a public health nurse at Kent County Health Department. I enjoyed taking care of people in their homes! I wanted to continue it when I moved back to Ann Arbor, but I ended up working as a staff nurse at University Hospital for 20 years; I worked in Urology, Gynecology, Surgery Oncology, and Medicine Hematology-Oncology. In 2000, I left my hospital career to devote more time to my family.

The fast pace and high stress of hospital acute-care nursing led me to explore other healing modalities. Having been trained in Western medical care, I was



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pretty ignorant of “alternative medicine,” but I was increasingly finding a need in my own life for a preventive approach to health care. Some issues, including stress-induced illnesses, were inadequately addressed in Western acute care medicine.

Around that same time, my Mom got sick with acute leukemia. When I took her to her clinic appointments and, later, took care of her in my home before she died, I was heartbroken and shocked that the experimental drug that she had been treated with had not been successful. My only consolation was in granting her wish that she stay at home and in making her as comfortable as possible.

## Meditation (cont.)

**Mandala Coloring with the Lighthouse Center at Crazy Wisdom • Third Sundays, 4-5:30 p.m.** • A relaxing way to spend your Sunday afternoon, coloring mantras. An opportunity to tune inward. Mandalas and markers provided. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com.

**Open Meditation Saline: Drop-in Meditation with Paulette Grotrian and others • Tuesdays, Jan. 2-Apr. 3, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.** • Ongoing drop-in meditation session for beginners or experienced meditators. First meditation is guided, followed by reflection, and the second meditation is silent. Free. Contact Paulette at 276-7707; mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com or mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com

**Open Mindfulness Meditation Practice with Antonio Sieira • Tuesdays, Thursdays, 6-7:30 p.m.** • Calm your mind and come into peace. Includes mindfulness, Tibetan singing bowls, Metta meditation, discussion of philosophy, science, and spiritual basis of meditation. \$15/class or six/\$60. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or bodyworkshealingcenter.com.

**Days of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy • Saturdays, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, Mar. 3, Apr. 14, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.** • Monthly gathering focusing on different topics each month to deepen community understanding and commitment to daily meditation practice. \$35 includes lunch. \$10 nonrefundable deposit required with registration. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or webercenter.org.

**Introductory Zen Meditation Course with Zen Buddhist Temple • Five Thursdays beginning Jan. 11, Feb. 15, Mar. 29, 6:15-8:30 p.m.** • The viewpoint of Zen is that life lived fully in each moment is the end and purpose in itself and not the means for something else. Held in the Temple’s meditation hall, the course includes simple stretching exercises, work with the breath, meditation postures, concentration, and mindfulness practice. \$160. \$120/unemployed. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org or zenbuddhisttemple.org.

**Meditation 101- a Two-Part Workshop with Ema Stefanova • Saturdays, Jan. 13, 20, 4:30-6:30 p.m.** • This two-part workshop is specially designed to help people understand what meditation is, and help establish or enrich a successful personal practice. Beginners through advanced practitioners are welcome. Contact Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation at 665--7801; emastefanova@cs.com or yogaandmeditation.com

**Jissoji Zen Ann Arbor Meditation with Taikodo Marta Dabis • Sundays, Jan. 14, 22, Feb. 11, 25, Mar. 11, 25, Apr. 8, 22, 11.** • Zazen – zen meditation – followed by fellowship over lunch. Please arrive early. Orientation and introduction to meditation forms available by request. Donations appreciated. Everyone welcome. Contact Marta at (248) 202-3105; jizzojizen@gmail.com or jizzojizen.org.

**Family Services at Zen Buddhist Temple • Sundays, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 11, Apr. 8, 10-11:30 a.m.** • Family services with age appropriate groups are being offered for toddlers through grade seven. Program includes music, activities, and dharma lessons from qualified instructors. Donations accepted. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org or zenbuddhisttemple.org.

**Peace Generator Silent Meditation and Prayer with the Interfaith Center • Fridays, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20, 7-9 p.m. and 24-hour Generator, Friday-Saturday, Jan. 16-17** • All invited to join a silent meditation on world peace and individual peace. Donations accepted. Contact Craig at 971-8576; info@interfaithspirit.org or peacegenerator.org.

*“There are two mistakes one can make along the road to truth: not going all the way, and not starting.”*

— Buddha





endocrine reflex zones on her feet. Likewise, in someone with high blood pressure, I will be sure to give the kidney, circulatory, and nervous system reflex zones extra massage. A person with plantar fasciitis will get extra massage on the arch and heel, and endocrine and nervous system reflex zones. Any health issue will involve organs and glands, and thus, reflex zones on the feet.

I help people with health promotion, foot pain relief, and nervous system relaxation. Sometimes one of these issues is the most pressing; other times, all three are important. Foot reflexology is known for enhancing the function of organs and glands through massaging the corresponding reflex zones on the feet. The philosophy is that reflexology relaxes the reflex zone, enhancing blood circulation and nerve conduction to the corresponding organ or gland. This enables the organ to function more efficiently.

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Foot pain, swelling, and injury are prime indications for foot reflexology. The massage itself locally increases circulation of blood and lymph, and it helps nerve conduction. This, plus the soothing effect of the massage on tight foot muscles, enables the foot tissue to relax, decrease swelling, and work on healing itself.

Nervous system relaxation is extremely important in coping with today's world. Many people are unable to unwind from continual job or life stress. This keeps their adrenal gland and sympathetic nervous system in high gear, ready for "fight or flight." Normal maintenance functions, such as digestion, sleep, and immune system may suffer from sympathetic system overload. Foot reflexology helps to restore normal bodily function by calming down the sympathetic nervous system, allowing the parasympathetic nervous system (in charge of rest, relaxation, restoration, and immune function) to work. A person who comes in all stressed out will almost always leave a reflexology session calm and restored. Since stress is the cause or contributing factor to many diseases, foot reflexology is a valuable preventive therapy.

For me, foot reflexology is the perfect way to continue my nursing career and help increase the health of the planet, "one foot at a time."

*Denise Held, R.N., Certified Foot Reflexologist, Reflexolo-Chi™, has office hours at the Natural Healing Center, 2002 Hogback Road, suite 14, in Ann Arbor. For more information, call (734) 649-2891, email [deniseheld@gmail.com](mailto:deniseheld@gmail.com), or visit [A2reflexology.com](http://A2reflexology.com).*



*Every session belongs to the client. Some clients want to relax with the quiet, soothing music in the background. Some clients stay alert and attentive to the sensations in their feet as I work; while others fill me in on issues in their life as we talk the whole time.*

When my Mom died, I inherited my Dad's care. He was diabetic, overweight, and immobilized by arthritis. I started washing his feet for him, to prevent diabetic foot complications. Seven years of washing his feet almost daily brought home the importance of good foot care! In spite of his not following his diet or doing much else to take care of himself, his feet stayed healthy, all toes intact.

By this time, it was 2006, and I read a book on foot reflexology offered as continuing education for my nursing license. I was fascinated and hooked! Taking care of people by working with their feet intrigued me. I had sessions with a foot reflexologist and was amazed at how the sessions affected me. Later that year, I took a workshop on foot reflexology. In 2007, I completed a nine-month training in Reflexolo-Chi™ and have been working as a reflexologist ever since. The journey from nursing back to health care was complete.

What I feel most passionate about in my work is helping people to feel better and healthier in a non-intrusive way. People come to me by choice, and I try to make the environment as pleasant and conducive to healing as possible. My only tools are my hands and cocoa butter. Every session belongs to the client. Some clients want to relax with the quiet, soothing music in the background. Some clients stay alert and attentive to the sensations in their feet as I work; while others fill me in on issues in their life as we talk the whole time. I am gratified that almost every person who comes to see me benefits from reflexology, leaving feeling more centered and calm.

I focus on the areas on the feet, or reflex zones, that correspond to organs and glands impacting the person's health. For instance, if someone is feeling a lot of stress in her life, I will pay extra attention to massaging the nervous system and

**Mindfulness Meditation System with Antonio Sieira • Tuesdays, Jan. 18, Feb. 6, Apr. 24, 6-8 p.m.** • Trademarked system of breathing, balance, flexibility, and mental focus designed to create a mind-body meditative experience. Learn powerful techniques to go deeper faster. Initial instruction, \$49.95; repeat student, \$15. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com](mailto:relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com) or [bodyworkshalingcenter.com](http://bodyworkshalingcenter.com).

**Group Singing Bowl Bath with Antonio Sieira • Jan. 23, Feb. 22, Mar. 22, 6-7:30 p.m.** • Experience sound and vibrations from 21 bowls to promote health, spiritual wellbeing, and prevent illness. Free blocked-up energy, calm the mind, delight the body and the emotions as you bathe in the rich harmonics of the individual voices of these beautiful bowls. \$20. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com](mailto:relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com) or [bodyworkshalingcenter.com](http://bodyworkshalingcenter.com).

**Buddha's Enlightenment Sitting • Friday, Jan. 26, 8 p.m.** • Come and meditate to awaken your true nature. Inspired by Shakyamuni Buddha who sat under the Bodhi tree and came to freedom. Sit from 8-10 p.m. and/or 10 p.m.-midnight. After midnight, please stay until 4 a.m. Bring an offering for the altar. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

**Myriad of Meditations with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, Feb. 4 or Mar. 4, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.** • Learn a myriad of meditation techniques and discover which ones resonate with you. \$125. Contact Karen at 417-9511; [krngrnbg@gmail.com](mailto:krngrnbg@gmail.com) or [clair-ascension.com](http://clair-ascension.com).

**Brow Three Meditation Class with Nirmala Hanke • Wednesdays, Feb. 7-28, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Advanced meditation class using the mantra for the Brow chakra, incorporating Jain and Hindu elements: mudras, visualizations, affirmations. Prerequisite: Brow Two class at the Lighthouse Center. \$45/members, \$55/non-members. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; [prachi17@gmail.com](mailto:prachi17@gmail.com) or [lighthousecenterinc.org](http://lighthousecenterinc.org).

**Connecting with Various G-D Names/Aspects: Heavenly Travel with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, Feb. 18 or Mar. 18, 1-8 p.m.** • Learn to travel safely to the planets associated with the Ten Sephiroth (Spheres) in the Tree of Life. Become more deeply connected with ten different aspects of G-D and learn how to connect to the different energies of each aspect. \$125. Contact Karen at 417-9511; [krngrnbg@gmail.com](mailto:krngrnbg@gmail.com) or [clair-ascension.com](http://clair-ascension.com).

**World Peace Chanting Service with Zen Buddhist Temple • Monday-Saturday, Feb. 19-24** • A week-long kido chanting service for repentance, peace of the world, and happiness for all beings. Open to all. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

**Overnight Introductory Meditation Course with Zen Buddhist Temple • Friday-Saturday, Jan. 19-20, Mar. 16-17** • Geared towards out-of-towners or those who cannot make the Thursday night services, this overnight meditation practice is to introduce participants to meditation. \$160. \$120/students or unemployed. Includes accommodation and breakfast. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

**Creating Space with Jewel Heart • Wednesdays, Mar. 14, 21, 28, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25, 7-8:30 p.m.** • This course offers hands-on experience with the basic elements of meditation using breath, posture, and the techniques for coping with distractions and laxity of the mind. \$80. Members free. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; [annarborregistration@jewelheart.org](mailto:annarborregistration@jewelheart.org).

**The Five Literacies of Mindfulness with Daniel Rechtschaffen • Mar. 16-17** • This 1.5 day workshop will offer information and activities on ways which mindfulness can be incorporated into education by cultivating literacy in the five domains: physical, mental, emotional, social, and global. This workshop is based on the book: *The Way of the Mindful Education*, and is ideal for educators, mental health professionals, and others interested in supporting children and youth to develop these skills. \$245, includes book. Contact Rita at [info@mc4me.org](mailto:info@mc4me.org) or [mc4me.org](http://mc4me.org).



## Meditation (cont.)

**A Day of Solitude and Meditation Practice led by Carol Blotter • Saturday, Mar. 24, 9 a.m.-4p.m.** • This retreat is an opportunity to enjoy the quiet of the country while practicing sitting and walking meditation. Beginners will have break-out instruction while experienced meditators can be in silence all day or anywhere in between. This retreat is a fundraiser for the Michigan Friends Center. Suggested donation \$30. Contact Carol at 475-0942; cb.meditate@gmail.com or mfcenter.org.

**Pure Meditation Course including Raja Kriya Yoga with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Sunday-Saturday, Apr. 22-28** • This is the ultimate course for the whole being. Please inquire for details of cost including accommodation and all meals; partial bursaries arranged as needed. Contact the Self Realization Centre at (517) 641-6201; info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org or selfrealizationcentremichigan.org.

**Siddha Yoga Satsang: Chanting and Meditation with Siddha Yoga Meditation Center in Ann Arbor • Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Please join us for an evening including a reading, video, or audio teaching. Then we chant and meditate. All are warmly invited. Free. Contact Dunrie at 276-0318; symcannarbor@gmail.com or symcannarbor.org.

**Meditation Sessions with Jewel Heart • Sundays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.** • Facilitators provide basic guidance in concentrated meditation. Participants will use the breath as a point of focus. Open to all levels of experience. Free. Contact 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

**Drop-in Meditation with Kashi Nivas • Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Meditators from all backgrounds can share in the collective synergy of group meditation. Begins with chanting and a 20-minute silent meditation, followed by group discussion or contemplation. Concludes with refreshments and social time. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Kashi Nivas at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

**Ypsilanti Open Meditation with Joya D'Cruz and others • Fridays, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.** • Secular mindfulness drop-in meditation session, open to beginners and experienced practitioners wishing to support their practice. Two 20-minute sittings, the first guided, the second silent. We also offer a day-long retreat once or twice a year. Free. Contact Joya at 219-2555; dcruzjoya@gmail.com.

**Ann Arbor Open Meditation with Libby Robinson and others • Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m.** • Drop-in secular mindfulness meditation session suitable for those with and without meditation experience. Format is two 20-minute sittings, the first guided and the second silent; some discussion and Q&A in between. No registration required. Donation requested. Contact Libby at 476-3070; libbyrobinson7@gmail.com or aaopenmeditation.com.

**Being in Tune: Mindfulness Meditation at The Ark with Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness • Tuesdays, 12-12:30 p.m.** • Thirty minute meditations. This practice has no religious affiliation. Appropriate for beginners or experienced meditators. Free. Contact Lynn at 332-3365; lynnsipher@gmail.com or mindfultcityannarbor.org.

**Mindfulness Meditation and Discussion with Awaken Ann Arbor • Sundays, 2-4 p.m.** • Weekly guided group meditations are followed by a themed discussion. This student-based group welcomes all backgrounds and experience levels. Free. Contact Annabel at (248) 872-5987; asolemke@umich.edu.

**Integrative Restoration (iRest) Yoga Nidra Meditation with Katherine King • Sundays, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.** • iRest is a deeply relaxing guided meditation. Based on the ancient practice of yoga nidra, or sleep of the yogis, iRest is a secular, evidence-based, mind-body approach that provides the tools to improve many aspects of life. No experience necessary. \$12/class. Contact Katherine at krking@umich.edu.

**Brow Four Meditation Class with Nirmala Hanke • Wednesdays, Apr. 4-25, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Fourth in the series of advanced meditation classes using the mantra for the Brow chakra, incorporating Jain and Hindu elements: mudras, visualizations, affirmations. Prerequisite: Brow Three class at the Lighthouse Center. \$45/members, \$55/non-members. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

**24-Hour Meditation Vigil with the Lighthouse Center • Saturday-Sunday, Apr. 21-22, 7 p.m.-7 p.m.** • You are welcome to attend all or any part of the 24-hour meditation, which provides a deep cleansing and release for the nervous system and the entire mind-body-spirit. This meditation vigil is dedicated to world peace through inner peace. Without violent thought, there would be no violent actions; hence our own inner peace, peace of mind, contributes to peace on the planet. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

*"The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper."*

— W. B. Yeats

**Learn to meditate with Nirmala Nancy Hanke • Second Saturdays, 4-6:30 p.m.** • Participants will learn how all meditations are good and thoughts are an essential part of the process. Talk followed by 20-minute meditation experience with a mantra. Vegan snacks after meditation. Register one week in advance. \$35, \$25/students, \$15/repeaters. Contact Prachi at 471-5804; eprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

**Sunday Candlelight Meditation and Healing with the Lighthouse Center • Sundays, 6-7:15 p.m.** • Candle lighting, Sanskrit chanting, meditation, affirmations, visualization, and healing circle. Reiki healing is available. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

**Intensive Meditation with the Lighthouse Center • First and Third Fridays, 7-10:15 p.m.** • Chanting and prayer, followed by meditating for 20 minutes on each of the seven chakra energy centers. May join or leave meditation at any time. A deep cleansing and renewal to supplement your meditation practice. Love offering. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

## Movement and Dance

**Dances of Universal Peace with Judy Lee Trautman and Drake Meadow • First Fridays, 7-9 p.m.** • Originated in the '60s in San Francisco by Sufi teacher Samuel Lewis to celebrate the world's religions through simple folk dance steps. The dances, a form of moving meditation, require no partner or experience and meet at the Friends on Hill Street. \$5 donation. Contact Judy at (419) 475-6535; jltrautman@sbcglobal.net or peacedance.multifaithjourneys.org.

## Music, Sound & Voice

**Exploring Sacred Sound with Karen Renee Robb at Crazy Wisdom • Sunday, Apr. 8, 1-3 p.m.** • Participants will experience a variety of sound modalities designed to enliven the Spirit, energize the body, and reconnect us to a vital, natural instrument we were born with. Be renewed by the power of voice, frame drums, singing bowls, tuning forks, and more. \$35. Contact Karen at (615) 812-1741; framedrumwisdom@gmail.com or framedrumwisdom.com.

**Cafe 704 Concert Series with the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Saturdays, 8-10 p.m.** • Local music showcase and benefit held monthly at the Interfaith Center featuring an eclectic line-up of the best roots, folk, world, blues, ensemble singing, and jazz in Ann Arbor. Refreshments and treats available for sale. \$8, \$15/couples. Contact Delyth at 327-0270; cafe704@gmail.com or interfaithspirit.org/cafe-704-coffeehouse/.

**Voice Lessons for Non-Singers and Singers with Kathleen Moore • Tuesdays, beginning Feb. 13, 6-7 p.m.** • Beginning level: Learn to listen, hear, and match. Learn to understand your voice as the musical, physiologic, mind-body instrument that it is. \$25/group session. Contact Kathleen at 668-8146; kathymooremusic@gmail.com or moore-voice.com.

**Gift of Song with the Threshold Choir of Ann Arbor • Sunday, Mar. 25, 4:30-6 p.m.** • Experience the comfort of loving song wherever you are in life's journey. Sit or recline, close your eyes, and let our voices support you in meeting life's challenges. We welcome people of all ages and genders who are comfortably listening quietly or joining us in quiet singing. Free. Contact Karen at 531-7960; thresholdofaa@gmail.com or thresholdchoirofannarbor.org.

## Naturopathy

**Dr. Nia's Top Ten Head-to-Toe Natural Health Tips with Nia Aguirre • Third Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m.** • An opportunity to learn new information and self-care techniques that will help several areas of concern for you and your family. Different topic each month. \$30/session. Contact Nia at 883-7513; niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

## Nutrition & Food Medicine

**Ayurvedic Nutrition with Meena Puri at Crazy Wisdom • Saturday Jan. 6th, 1-4 p.m.** • Learn why Ayurvedic medicine is the key in understanding the causes of disease and symptoms, how to heal from the inside out, how to navigate the nutrition/food maze, how to eat right for you, how to curb cravings, about weight imbalance, different food combinations, timing of meals, and the must-haves in your kitchen. \$47. Contact Meena at (248) 685-3489; mpuri@ayurvedichealingcenter.com or ayurvedichealingcenter.com.

**Weight Loss - Do Herbs Help? with Linda Diane Feldt at Crazy Wisdom • Tuesday, Jan. 16, 7-8:30 p.m.** • How can Facebook make a difference? Why is it so hard to keep off weight? Different ideas about weight loss from someone who has lost much more than 100 pounds over ten years, and kept it off. Free. Contact the People's Food Co-op at outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

**Nutrition and the Mind-Consciousness with David M. Hall at Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, Jan. 24, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Does nutrition have any correlation to a person's own mental and spiritual states? Are there connections between brain function, basic awareness, and ability to make good decisions with the food we take into our bodies? Free. Contact David at (520) 343-5976; outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.



**Herbs, Homeopathy, and Integrative Medicine meet Conventional Medicine with Linda Diane Feldt at Crazy Wisdom • Tuesday, Feb. 20, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Learn about interactions, cautions, what is safe, and what is dangerous. Free. Contact the People's Food Co-op at outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

**Women's Herbs with Linda Diane Feldt at Crazy Wisdom • Tuesday, Mar. 20, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Learn about various herbs for use with menopause, menstruation, pregnancy, and postpartum. Free. Contact the People's Food Co-op at outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

**Herbs, Heart Disease, and Cancer with Linda Diane Feldt at Crazy Wisdom • Tuesday, Apr. 17, 7-8:30 p.m.** • All about using herbs to prevent and strengthen from heart disease and cancer. Free. Contact the People's Food Co-op at outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

**Eating Without: How to handle giving up foods we love without losing the joy of eating with Yael Dolev • Tuesday, Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m.** • Learn about new approaches and ways of thinking about dietary limitations. Participants will learn to reframe restrictive diets as an opportunity instead of a challenge. Free. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Dairy Free? Do Not Despair! with Yael Dolev • Saturday, Jan. 20, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • From exploring the differences between milk sensitivity and milk allergy, to discussing dairy alternatives and products that can be used safely without traces of dairy, participants will learn how to alter recipes to be dairy free, how to cook without dairy, and avoid hidden dairy ingredients. \$20. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Gluten Free? Do Not Despair! with Yael Dolev • Saturday, Jan. 27, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** • From exploring the differences between wheat free and gluten free, to exploring the "gluten-free" trend, gluten intolerance, and celiac disease, participants will learn how to alter recipes to be gluten free, how to cook without gluten, and avoid hidden gluten ingredients. \$20. Contact Ben at 834-8496; ben.w@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com.

**Fabulous Fun Fermenting with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, Mar. 24, 1-5 p.m.** • Enjoy learning to make a variety of fabulous fermented foods: sour dough wraps, vibrant purple kimchi, fabulous vinegar, yummy butter, and marvelous mead. \$25/early bird, \$35/within one month of class. Group discounts available. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.



*Dolores Rubio-Turtle is passionate about breaking taboos related to education, environment, health, and feminine issues. She is also a woman's advocate and offers workshops to help restore the value of women as creators of future generations and world peace. For more information, visit [www.orethic.com](http://www.orethic.com).*

## Permaculture

**Practical Permaculture: Ten Simple Ways to Live it with David M. Hall at Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, Jan. 24, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Permaculture is not an intellectual philosophy, it is a set of tools whose use is through living it. If we seek a sustainable future, this calls for a new way of relating to the world, following basic principles of nature. Free. Contact David at (520) 343-5976; outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

**Permaculture Series: The Mysterious Realm of Soil with David M. Hall at Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, Mar. 28, 7-8:30 p.m.** • Below our feet is a living world that few truly understand or appreciate. In one square inch there is estimated to be over four billion organisms. This is a thriving realm that our lives completely depend on and interact with daily. Come to discuss this marvelous and mysterious part of creation. Free. Contact David at (520) 343-5976; outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

## Personal Growth

**Our Stuff 'n Us: Understanding and Treating Hoarding Disorder with Terrence Shulman • Thursday, Mar. 27, 7-9 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom** • Do you own your stuff, or does it own you? Is this interfering with your life? Come to Crazy Wisdom to gather advice and help on moving through your struggles. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Terrence at (248) 358-8508; terrenceshulman@theshulmancenter.com or theshulmancenter.com.

**Managing Cravings with Hypnosis: Losing the Sweet Tooth with Diana Burney • Saturday, Jan. 6, 1-3:30 p.m.** • Hypnosis may be the solution to your problem of sugar cravings and weight gain. During this workshop, participants will be guided to "reprogram" eating habits in order to reduce, or remove, continual cravings and to create positive lifestyle changes. \$100. 20% of profits donated to SafeHouse Center. Contact Diana at 786-6588; earthrelease@msn.com or mindsgatehypnosis.com.

**Creating Internal Resources with Cam Vozar • Wednesday, Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.** • This workshop will help participants create internal resources to cope with stress and increase wellbeing as they learn to connect to spiritual, nurturing, and protective resources. \$10. Contact Cam at 747-9073; cam.vozar@gmail.com.

**Lunch and Learn Series with the Weber Center • Tuesdays, Jan. 16, Feb. 13, Mar. 13, Apr. 19, 12:15-1 p.m.** • Lectures and discussion with lunch. Free. Contact Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or webercenter.org.

**Co-Counseling: Self-Care in Crazy Times! with Ann Arbor Co-Counseling • Friday, Jan. 19, 6:30-9:30 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 20, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.** • A simple, effective peer process for personal growth and mutual support. We'll learn basic tools on Friday. On Saturday, we'll take the process much deeper, addressing distress and encouraging emotional release in these challenging times. \$60/for both days. Contact Gaia at 604-6678; a2cocounseling@gmail.com or facebook.com/a2coco.

**Free Temple Gathering to Discuss Sexuality and Consciousness with Leslie Blackburn • Sundays, Jan. 21, Apr. 15, 5-7 p.m.** • After an opening meditation, we hold a Sacred Circle, creating a safe space to share and ask questions on intimate topics. Donations appreciated. Contact Leslie at (313) 269-6719; support@leslieblackburn.com or leslieblackburn.com.

**Discover SoulCollage with Laura Seligman • Thursdays, Jan. 25, Mar. 15, Apr. 19, 1-4:30 p.m.** • Create your personal deck of collaged cards which reflects your life and inner wisdom. Learn how to consult your cards for self awareness, inner guidance, and transformation. \$55 includes all materials. Contact Laura at 649-2777; lauraseligman@gmail.com.

## Pagan Spirituality

**Witches' Night Out • Second Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room** • These gatherings involve drinking Witch Brew tea and networking with like-minded others. No cover. \$3.50 for a pot of tea with free refills. For more information call 665-2757; info@crazywisdom.net or crazywisdom.net.

## Palmistry

**Drop-in Palmistry/Tarot Readings with Vijayalaxmi Shinde • First and Third Saturdays, 3-6 p.m.; Second and Fourth Sundays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom** • Using palmistry, numerology, and the art of Tarot cards divination, learn the subconsciously hidden answers to important concerns in life to guide towards positive energy, joy, peace, abundance, and health. \$1.50/minute. No appointment necessary. Contact 961-8052; vijaya\_laxmi@comcast.net or positivepalmistry.com.

## Parenting

**Kabbalah for Children with Karen Greenberg • Begins Sunday, Jan. 28, 1-3 p.m.** • Utilizing multi-sensory input and experiential learning, we build self-esteem of awake and spiritually evolved teenagers and young adults. We aid in integrating organizational skills, in navigating through low-vibrational emotions, and in discovering their genius. \$50/two-hour class. Meets once a month for about a year. Contact Karen at 417-9511; krngnrb@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

## Peace

**Basic Bystander Intervention Training with Sheri Wander • Saturday, Feb. 3, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.** • As we see an increase in hate crimes against vulnerable populations in our communities, have you asked yourself, "What would I do if I were there?" There are skills and techniques that you can learn and practice to keep others safe. Our training course will help you how to respond, de-escalate, and/or redirect threats through non violent methods. \$20-\$30. Contact Germaine at 663-1870; germaine@icpj.org or icpj@org.

*"If we surrendered to earth's intelligence, we would rise up rooted, like trees."*

— Rainer Maria Rilke





**Linda S. Bender, A.C.S.W., L.M.S.W.,** has been a practicing social worker for over 30 years. In the last few years she has developed a practice focused on helping people through life's transitions. Linda utilizes many different treatment modalities including EMDR. For more information, see *Life Transitions* on PAGE 89.

## Personal Growth (cont.)

**Aging With Purpose with Sandra Berman • Thursdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 6-8 p.m. •** Encouraging inquiry into our deep sources of creativity and inner wisdom as we embrace mid-life and beyond. Whether individuals are just starting out on the path of inner development or have spent years in exploration, the process promises increased awareness during the second half of life. \$69. Scholarships available. Contact Sandra at sandberman@gmail.com.

**Living Gently with Yourself with Anita Rubin-Meiller • Saturday, Feb. 3, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. •** Retreat to experience an array of practices to help you deepen your capacity for living each day with mindfulness and kindness towards yourself. The majority of practices are based on the work of Kristen Neff. \$90. Contact Anita at 332-0669; anita1018@sbcglobal.net or gentlebe-ing.com.

**Be Here Now! Practicing the Art of Mindfulness with Pat and Dave Krajovic • Wednesday, Feb. 28, 6-8:30 p.m. •** Want to be happy, healthy, and in the flow of life? Learn techniques to create ease and peace, outsmart stress, think yourself well, restore hope, and renew faith. \$44. Contact Pat at 416-5200; inspire@ascensionbreathing.com or ascensionbreathing.com.

**Composting Fear: Cultivating Hope with Ann Arbor Co-Counseling • Friday-Saturday, Jan. 19, 20. •** A simple, effective peer process for working with strong emotions in a culture of validation and nonjudgment. We'll learn basic tools on Friday. On Saturday, we'll take the process much deeper, encouraging the release of fear, despair, anger, and other response to the times we're living in. \$60/for both days. Contact Gaia at 604-6678; a2cocounseling@gmail.com or facebook.com/a2coco.

**Mindful Living Course with the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Apr. 14-15 •** By living more in the moment and in inner harmony, you can enhance all areas of your life, including work and relationships. This course will teach you practical tools and exercises to help cultivate a more present and balanced state of mind. \$225 includes lunch and refreshments. Accommodation and additional meals are available. Bursary available. Contact (517) 641-6201; info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org or selfrealizationcentremichigan.org.

**Journaling a Compassionate Life Review with Anita Rubin-Meiller • Saturday, Apr. 28, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. •** Learn to approach looking at the difficult events and passages in your life through the eyes of compassion. \$90. Contact Anita at 332-0669; anita1018@sbcglobal.net or gentlebe-ing.com.

**Sacred Sexuality Shamanic Apprenticeship with Leslie Blackburn • Feb. - Mar. •** Integrative group training program into the realm of Sacred Sexuality. Rooted in spiritual Earth-based wisdom, we offer guidance, education, and awareness with practical hands-on experience while teaching you ways to connect with your authentic inner wisdom. Contact Leslie at (313) 269-6719; support@leslieblackburn.com or leslieblackburn.com.

**Great Freedom Balanced View Community Video Meeting with the Interfaith Center • Mondays, 7-9 p.m. •** Balanced View Video Meeting followed by a Clarity Call. Donations accepted. Contact Rob at 255-0163; michalowski529@comcast.net or interfaithspirit.org.

**Power of Now Study Group and Discussion with the Interfaith Center • Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. •** A weekly study/discussion group on Eckhart Tolle's book, *The Power of Now*. Donations accepted. Contact Margot at 497-9985; lauren.tatarsky@interfaithspirit.org or interfaithspirit.org.

**Small Group Circle for Introverts with Kathleen Moore • Tuesdays, starting Feb. 20, 6-7:30 •** Are you tired of being analyzed and discussed by extroverts as they make allowances for you needing to take more time to process your thoughts and respond? Would you like a place where who you are is appreciated and understood? Where we can all learn about our considerable strengths? \$25/small group meeting. Contact Kathleen at 668-8146; kathymooremusic@gmail.com or moore-voice.com.

**SUN SHEN One Prayer Class with Joanna Myers • Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. •** The One Prayer is a dynamic self-management tool, custom designed for you. It includes a system of journaling techniques, life organization, and mapping of your purpose and trajectory. This course is designed for anyone wanting a greater understanding of themselves. \$65/month. Contact Joanna at 395-8486; samomyers@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

## Reiki

**Reiki Healing with Andrea Kennedy • Third Thursdays, starting Jan. 18, 7-8:30 p.m. •** Reiki is a Japanese Technique used to promote relaxation, stress reduction, and overall wellbeing. Join us for a 20-minute meditation experience anyone can do; then we will share Reiki in groups. Practitioners, Reiki students, and anyone curious about Reiki are invited. Free. Contact Andrea at 664-2255; andrea@mainstreamreiki.com or mainstreamreiki.com.

**First Degree Reiki with Suzy Wienckowski • Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 20-21, Apr. 28-29 •** Reiki is a gentle, hands-on healing art. Reiki is easily learned by all and after initiation by a Reiki Master healing energy flows effortlessly through your hands. The First Degree class includes the history of Reiki, hands-on treatment form for yourself and others, and four individual initiations. Certificate awarded. \$150. Contact Suzy at 476-7958; suzyreiki@aol.com.

**Usui/Holy Fire Reiki II Levels I & II Certification with Andrea Kennedy • Mar. 3 and 4, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. •** Complete introduction including how Reiki works and what it can heal, history, the Level I placement, scanning the energy field and hand positions to heal yourself and others. Level II placement, three Reiki symbols and how to use them, distant healing, beaming, and Japanese techniques to channel Reiki with your breath and eyes. Ample practice time, class manual, and CE credits. \$325. Contact Andrea at 664-2255; andrea@mainstreamreiki.com or mainstreamreiki.com.

**Second Degree Reiki with Suzy Wienckowski • Friday, Saturday, Apr. 6, 7. •** Second level of training in the Usui System of Reiki Healing. Students learn and are empowered to use the three sacred Reiki symbols. The symbols focus and intensify the Reiki energy enabling the practitioner to heal on a deeper level and to send Reiki at a distance. First Degree training is a prerequisite. \$500. Contact Suzy at 476-7958; suzyreiki@aol.com.

**Curious about Reiki? Introductory Talk with Suzy Wienckowski • Wednesday, Apr. 18, 7-9 p.m. •** Suzy speaks on the Usui System of Reiki Healing. In this gentle, hands-on healing art Universal Life Energy is transmitted through the hands of a practitioner to facilitate healing and promote balance of the whole person. Free mini-treatments will be offered. Free. Contact Suzy at 476-7958; suzyreiki@aol.com.

## Retreats

**Living in Gratitude Now and in the Second Half of Life with Pat and Dave Krajovic and Marsha Stroko • Friday-Sunday, Feb. 9-11 •** Two pivotal works by Angeles Arrien will be the focus of our reflections, journaling, and exercises. Blessings, learnings, mercies, and protections as the four portals to a grateful heart are keys to personal growth in all stages of life. We will explore how to make the virtue of gratitude a guiding light for your life's journey. \$300/single room, \$260/double. Includes lodging, meals, resource materials, except Angeles Arrien's two books: *Living in Gratitude* and *The Second Half of Life: Opening Eight Gates of Initiation*. Contact 416-5200; inspire@ascensionbreathing.com or ascensionbreathing.com.

**One-Day Zen Meditation Retreat with Zen Buddhist Temple • Saturdays, Feb. 10, Mar. 24, Apr. 21, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. •** Sitting and walking meditation, simple manual work, vegetarian meals, and rest--an interval of deepening, of slowing down, silence, and mindfulness. \$60 includes lunch. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org or zenbuddhisttemple.org.

*"Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it."*

— Eckhart Tolle



On January 1, 2018, the Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be available on our website: [www.crazywisdomjournal.com](http://www.crazywisdomjournal.com).

**Spring Weekend Retreat at Steiner with Deep Spring Center Teachers • Friday-Sunday, Mar. 9-11.** • For beginners up to advanced. Contact Tana at 477-5848; [om@deepspring.org](mailto:om@deepspring.org) or [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org).

**Easter Celebration Retreat with the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Mar. 30-Apr. 1** • A truly spiritual way to celebrate the inner beauty of this holy time. Following the first meal, this retreat is held in silence with ample free time to meditate, contemplate, relax, and get in touch with the inner self. \$140/shared room, private rooms may be available. Bursary available. Contact (517) 641-6201; [info@selfrealizationmeditationhealingcentremichigan.org](mailto:info@selfrealizationmeditationhealingcentremichigan.org) or [selfrealizationmeditationhealingcentremichigan.org](http://selfrealizationmeditationhealingcentremichigan.org).

**Three-Day Spring Retreat with Zen Buddhist Temple • Wednesday-Sunday, Apr. 4-8** • Conducted by Ven. Haju Sunim. Intensive period of Zen practice geared toward the experienced student. \$60/day, \$50/day for members. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

**Finding Hope in Times of Chaos with Dave and Pat Krajovic • Sunday, Apr. 15, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.** • Struggling to maintain peace in the stress and chaos of this world? Feel like a ship being tossed in the waves of emotional stress and turmoil? Join us to tap into the skills to navigate the tides of chaos and maintain your resilience, groundedness, and presence. \$120. Contact Pat at 416-5200; [relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com](mailto:relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com) or [bodyworkshealingcenter.com](http://bodyworkshealingcenter.com).

**Holistic Yoga Meditation Retreat at Lake Michigan with Ema Stefanova • Apr. 20-22** • Our intimate retreats are for total beginners, continuing students, and teachers who would like to experience yoga and meditation as a way of life, healing, and growth, and develop and refine their practice. \$425, \$395 at least one-month early. Contact Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation at 665-7801; [emastefanova@cs.com](mailto:emastefanova@cs.com) or [yogaandmeditation.com](http://yogaandmeditation.com).

**Holy Week Retreat: Living as Light for the World with Paula D'arcy • Sunday-Thursday, Mar. 25-29** • It's an enormous challenge to transcend our treasured certainties and respond deeply to a voice saying "Come follow me." The invitation calls you forth in new ways. What does it mean to look through eyes that are finally able to see past the appearance of things? \$300/person. \$25 nonrefundable deposit. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; [webercenter@adriandominicans.org](mailto:webercenter@adriandominicans.org) or [webercenter.org](http://webercenter.org).

**Temple Stay/Visitor's Program and Residential Options with the Zen Buddhist Temple • Ongoing** • This program provides participants with an opportunity to spend time living in a Buddhist community. They follow the daily schedule and participate in programs such as retreats, study groups, public services, and yoga classes as their schedule permits. One can seriously pursue one's spiritual path or seek peace and harmony in a wholesome environment. Prior arrangement with the Temple Director is necessary. The program is usually available throughout the year. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; [annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org](mailto:annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org) or [zenbuddhisttemple.org](http://zenbuddhisttemple.org).

## Salons

**Dignity versus Rights: Exploring the Practical Effects of Constitutional Principles in U.S. and German Prisons with the Michigan Friends Center • Thursday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m.** • Presentation on "how we do prisons" in the U. S. and Germany and the Constitutional backdrop that informs practices, architecture, and policy. Conversation about how and why we use prisons to punish and what advocacy/resistance strategies and state-based reforms are in motion at the current moment.

## Shamanism

**Shamanic Extraction, Residential with Connie Lee Eiland • Feb. 2-4** • This class teaches ways to see, sense, and remove misplaced energy in people. Includes ceremony. Tuition is \$235 due Jan. 6, after that \$280. Contact Connie at (248) 809-3230; [clshebear7@gmail.com](mailto:clshebear7@gmail.com) or [shewolfshaman.com](http://shewolfshaman.com).

**Intro to Shamanism: Path of Empowerment and Healing with Kate Durda • Saturday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Experiential training in the Shamanic Journey, and introduction to Shamanism healing methods and practice. This class is a prerequisite for all advanced training. \$85 by Feb. 21. \$95 at door, cash only. Contact Spirit Weavers at (517) 667-0694; [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com) or [spiritweavers.net](http://spiritweavers.net).

**Advanced Shamanic Healing: Soul Retrieval and Extraction with Stephanie Tighe and Kate Durda • Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 24-25, Mar. 24-25, Apr. 28-29** • Three-part series. Experiential training in the core shamanic practice of extraction (removal of energy blocks) and soul retrieval (restoration of lost energy). In this workshop you will learn the process and ethics associated with assisting someone in making lasting changes in their lives after receiving a soul retrieval. Strong journey skills as a prerequisite. Application required. Contact Spirit Weavers at (517) 667-0694; [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com) or [spiritweavers.net](http://spiritweavers.net).

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**Shamanism Without Borders: Community Approaches to Healing with Kate Durda and Stephanie Tighe • Saturday, Mar. 17, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.** • Introduced by Society for Shamanic Practice in 2010, this is a powerful methodology for working together shamanically when natural or other catastrophic events occur to restore balance and alleviate suffering of all affected. Contact Spirit Weavers at (517) 667-0694; [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com) or [spiritweavers.net](http://spiritweavers.net).

**Path of the Open Heart Shamanism Apprentice Series: Lower World: Power Animals and Allies—Cosmology of the Shaman with Kate Durda • Sunday, Mar. 18, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • In this first of three stand-alone sessions, you will practice the journey to the Lower World and work closely with your power animal(s) for direct inspiration, guidance, protection, and more. Explore and learn about the tradition of Power Songs, healing methods, shapeshifting, and more. \$90 by Mar. 14, \$100 at door. Contact Spirit Weavers at (517) 667-0694; [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com) or [spiritweavers.net](http://spiritweavers.net).

**Path of the Open Heart Shamanism Apprentice Series: Upper World: Teachers and Guides—Cosmology of the Shaman with Kate Durda • Tuesday, Apr. 10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • In this session you will experience the Upper World, a realm of spiritual enlightenment and truth, and the realms of spiritual teachers. Learn a cross-cultural healing ritual for self, remember more about your true self and who you are in this lifetime, and discover or strengthen your working relationship with your Upper World guides. \$90 by Mar. 7, \$100 at door. Contact Spirit Weavers at (517) 667-0694; [spiritweavers@gmail.com](mailto:spiritweavers@gmail.com) or [spiritweavers.net](http://spiritweavers.net).

**Introduction to Journeying with Connie Lee Eiland • Sunday, Apr. 15** • Six-hour class includes power animal retrieval and journey to Upper, Lower, and Middle Worlds. Journey is with drums and rattles. \$70 by Mar. 24, \$80 after. Contact Connie at (248) 809-3230; [clshebear7@gmail.com](mailto:clshebear7@gmail.com) or [shewolfshaman.com](http://shewolfshaman.com).

## Spiritual Development

**Sacred Space in the 21st Century: How to Survive the Sea of EMF with Dave Robinson at Crazy Wisdom • Sunday, Jan. 27, 1-4 p.m.** • A program on using Sacred Geometry to deal with electromagnetic energy effects from appliances, personal devices, smart meters, and ambient energies from public power facilities, among other things. \$20. Contact Prachi at 417-5804; [cprachi17@gmail.com](mailto:cprachi17@gmail.com) or [lighthousecenterinc.org](http://lighthousecenterinc.org).

**Basic Spirituality and Meditation with Rough Around the Diamond at Crazy Wisdom • Mondays, 7-8 p.m.** • Designed for beginning to intermediate skill levels. Topic discussion with related meditation at the end. Donations accepted. Contact Kelli at 707-8032; [rougharoundthediamond@gmail.com](mailto:rougharoundthediamond@gmail.com) or [rougharoundthediamond.com](http://rougharoundthediamond.com).





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**Call Deb Flint at Crazy Wisdom 734.665.2757 or visit: [bit.ly/CWcommunityroom](http://bit.ly/CWcommunityroom)**



**Who Are You as a Christian in an Evolving Universe? with Sara Fairbanks • Wednesdays, Part 1 Jan. 17, Part 2 Jan. 24, 1:30-3 p.m.** • Explore some of the new discoveries contemporary theologians have made about our Creator God and humanity's place in the unfolding universe. See the biblical stories of creation as a divine revelation capable of giving meaning to scientific discoveries. \$5/class. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; [webercenter@adriandominicans.org](mailto:webercenter@adriandominicans.org) or [webercenter.org](http://webercenter.org).

**Spiritual Health for the New Year with Janene Ternes • Saturday, Jan. 20, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.** • As we begin the New Year, we often make resolutions for improving our physical health. The state of our spirit is even more important to our health and wellbeing, but we fail to think about ways to strengthen it. Participate in a variety of prayer experiences designed to refresh your spirit and provide tools to enrich your spiritual journey throughout the coming year. Basic movements will be taught which can be done by anyone regardless of age, experience, or physical limitation. \$55. Contact Janene at 347-2422; [prayerinmotionllc@gmail.com](mailto:prayerinmotionllc@gmail.com) or [prayer-in-motion.com](http://prayer-in-motion.com).

**Wholehearted Living with Holly Makimaa • Thursdays, Feb. 1 and Mar. 1, 7-9 p.m.** • Interested in learning how to use carefully tailored journaling exercises to help you feel more connected to your wholeness? We will explore the transformative power of journaling to help uncover our deepest needs and what is most alive in each of us. We will learn to form an internal dialogue with ourselves that ultimately leads to greater freedom and harmony. Free. Contact Holly at 757-5700; [hollymakimaa@gmail.com](mailto:hollymakimaa@gmail.com) or [yourtransformationaljourney.com](http://yourtransformationaljourney.com).

**Connecting With Archangels with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, Feb. 11 or Mar. 11, 1-8 p.m.** • Become acquainted with the various Archangels represented in the Sephirot, the spheres, in the Tree of Life. Learn who the Archangels are, what they do, and whom to call on for particular assistance and how to safely call upon them. \$125. Contact Karen at 417-9511; [krngrnbg@gmail.com](mailto:krngrnbg@gmail.com) or [clair-ascension.com](http://clair-ascension.com).

**Coming Home - On Right Relationship with Soul's Purpose with ShuNahSii Rose • Mondays, Feb. 19-Apr. 2, Weeks 1, 3, 5, and 7, 7-9:30 p.m., Weeks 2, 4, and 6, 9-10 p.m.** • Feeling at home in our bodies and lives helps us make clear, healthy choices. In order to experience this sense of being home, we must slow down and seek answers as they come, not from externally imposed sources, but from our own deep knowing. \$250. Contact ShuNahSii at 761-9148; [robin@insacredbalance.com](mailto:robin@insacredbalance.com) or [insacredbalance.com](http://insacredbalance.com).

**Bringing the Light of True Dharma to Everyday Life with Barbara Brodsky and occasional guest teachers • Tuesdays, Feb. 20; Mar. 6, 30; Apr. 3, 17, 6:30-9 p.m.** • Prerequisite: At least an introductory level vipassana class, but this class is most suitable for experienced meditators. This year's class will focus on Dharma in Everyday Life. We will use exercises, reading, and in most classes, at least a short talk from Aaron. The specific direction for each class period will be taken from the expressed needs and interests of the class members. \$90. Contact Tana 477-5848; [om@deepspring.org](mailto:om@deepspring.org) or [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org).

**Remembering Wholeness - Darshan with The Mother • Sundays, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, Apr. 15, 2 p.m.** • Energy sharing (darshan) with The Mother, channeled through Barbara Brodsky. Darshan is an event in consciousness as The Mother takes each person's hands and looks into his/her eyes there is an interaction between the human and the divine, which focuses and draws up the consciousness of the human. Donation. Contact Tana at 477-5848; [om@deepspring.org](mailto:om@deepspring.org) or [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org).

**Spring Workshop with Barbara Brodsky • Saturday, Mar. 24, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.** • Topic to be released early 2018. \$35/Local attendee, \$35-80/online attendee. Contact Tana at 477-5848; [om@deepspring.org](mailto:om@deepspring.org) or [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org).

**Christology with Pat Walker • Mondays, Apr. 9, 16, 30, 1-3:30 p.m.** • In this brief series, we will explore three different questions about Jesus in the light of both Christian tradition and contemporary sciences. \$25/series, \$10/class. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; [webercenter@adriandominicans.org](mailto:webercenter@adriandominicans.org) or [webercenter.org](http://webercenter.org).

**Lightworker Activation with SANDYA - Sandra Shears • Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.** • As a Lightworker or World Server, you have incarnated at this time in order to facilitate the transition into the next age. It is time to bring forth the gifts that will accelerate healing and activate spiritual purpose. Ongoing commitment required. \$100 prepaid. Contact SANDYA-Sandra Shears at 340-2616; [sandya2033@yahoo.com](mailto:sandya2033@yahoo.com) or [sandya-sandrashears.com](http://sandya-sandrashears.com).

**Lightworker Development with SANDYA - Sandra Shears • Third Fridays. Individual set-up the previous week** • Group lightwork with current spiritual, astrological, and energy events - includes energy adjustment and activation with a sound attunement. Ongoing commitment required. \$100 prepaid. Contact SANDYA-Sandra Shears at 340-2616; [sandya2033@yahoo.com](mailto:sandya2033@yahoo.com) or [sandya-sandrashears.com](http://sandya-sandrashears.com)

## Stress Management

**Yoga Nidra - Stress Management Seminar • Feb 10-11** • Seminar on stress management. Contact Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation at [emastefanova@cs.com](mailto:emastefanova@cs.com) or [yogaandmeditation.com](http://yogaandmeditation.com).

## Sustainability

**Winternship - Natural Building/Sustainable Skills with Deanne Bednar • Jan. 7-Feb. 7** • One month onsite program at Strawbale Studio on rural land one hour north of Detroit. Experience the basics of thatching, reed collection, earth plastering and sculpting, round pole framing and rocket stove construction. Fireside lectures include site, house design and code info. Also explore fermenting, whittling, and other sustainable skills. \$950/intern, \$475/worktrade. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; [strawbale.programs@gmail.com](mailto:strawbale.programs@gmail.com) or [strawbalestudio.org](http://strawbalestudio.org).

## Spiritual Development (cont.)

**Experience the Sound of Soul with Eckankar at Crazy Wisdom • Fridays, 6:30-7:15 p.m.** • HU is the sacred sound and ancient mantra that can uplift people of any religion, culture, or walk of life. You're invited to experience chanting HU, contemplative time, and spiritual conversation with others of like heart. Come for inner peace and calm, Divine love, expanded awareness, spiritual self-discovery and growth, and healing of the heart. Free. Contact John at 320-2010; [tutdebon@gmail.com](mailto:tutdebon@gmail.com) or [eck-mi.org](http://eck-mi.org).

**Weekly Old Testament (Torah), Prophets, Writings Study with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, beginning Jan. 7, 8 p.m.** • Please join us from the comfort of your own home for a weekly study of the Old Testament via conference call 1-302-202-1108. \$40/month access code provided with receipt of prepayment. Contact Karen at 417-9511; [krngrnbg@gmail.com](mailto:krngrnbg@gmail.com) or [clair-ascension.com](http://clair-ascension.com).

**Monthly Ascension Support Class with Eve Wilson • Every fourth Thursdays, beginning Jan. 11, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** • Healing and ascension meditations to keep your spirit and soul alive. Each class designed to help you heal, integrate your Higher Self, clear soul contracts, and help your soul group, and the world, ascend and heal. \$50/class. Contact Eve at 780-7635; [evew@spiritualhealers.com](mailto:evew@spiritualhealers.com) or [spiritualhealers.com](http://spiritualhealers.com).

**Holy Women of History with Anneliese Sinnott • Thursday, Jan. 11, 1:30-3 p.m.** • Much of the focus of the Church in the past has been on male saints. There are female saints, but many of them lived rather odd lives. These sessions will help us explore some of the women from the world community, past and present, who will inspire us by their holiness. Free-will offering. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; [webercenter@adriandominicans.org](mailto:webercenter@adriandominicans.org) or [webercenter.org](http://webercenter.org).

**Pathway to Intimacy with One's Higher Power through Intimacy with One's Self and Others with Susan Flinders • Saturdays, Part I: Jan. 13; Part II, Feb. 3; Part III, Mar. 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.** • Each segment will be seven hours divided by a one-hour lunch (included). Part I deals with intimacy for the Self. Part II is intimacy with others. Part III is intimacy with One's Higher Power. This program is a benefit for the Friends Lake Cooperative Community. \$120/all three segments, \$50/per segment. Contact Susan at (810) 444-3274; [susanflinders@gmail.com](mailto:susanflinders@gmail.com) or [mfccenter.org](http://mfccenter.org).

**Diamond Approach Book Study with Lou Wier • Jan. 16, 30; Mar. 13, 27; Apr. 10, 24** • This is a study of the Diamond Approach based on the book, *Diamond Heart 1* by A. H. Almaas. Each session will include meditation, a short talk, and an inquiry designed to make the teachings personal. \$60. Contact Lou at 657-1821; [diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com](mailto:diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com) or [diamondworkmichigan.org](http://diamondworkmichigan.org).



**Thatched Roof Workshop with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, Jan. 13, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Explore this beautiful, ecological, and long-lasting roof system using local Phragmite reed grass. Tour three thatched roof buildings onsite. Demo and hands-on thatching on a small frame. Optional to stay for collecting reeds on Sunday. \$55/one week in advance, \$70/after. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.

**Round Pole Framing - The Basics with Micah Lindquist and Deanne Bednar • Jan. 16-17** • Learn principles and hands-on basics of round pole framing for small structures. Tour thatched roofs and round pole structures onsite, harvest wood, use hand tools - make a small mallet to take home. \$100/two weeks in advance, \$120/after. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org

**Rocket Stove and Fire Workshop - Includes Earth Oven with Deanne Bednar • Jan. 27-28** • Create useful heat efficiently from local materials. Fee includes a copy of the new edition of the *Rocket Mass Heater Book*. Tour buildings and stoves onsite. Hands-on: mockup of Rocket Stove combustion unit, model of an Earth Oven plus mix cob and finish plaster. \$125/two weeks in advance, \$150 after. \$80/90 Saturday only with RSVP. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org

**Earth Plaster and Sculpting - in existing homes with Deanne Bednar • Feb. 3-4** • Learn the joy of natural earthen plasters that can be used in a variety of applications to beautify and naturalize your existing dwellings, future natural strawbale home, or Earth Oven project. Learn to identify, mix, and apply natural, local soil to create simple or artistic expressions. \$95/two weeks in advance, \$115/after. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org

**A World of Health: Connecting People, Place, and Planet with the Michigan Friends Center • Wednesdays, Mar. 14, 21, 28; Apr. 4, 11, 18, 7-8:30 p.m.** • A healthy environment is essential for human health and well-being. This six-week discussion course helps participants explore the connections between the health of our communities and the health of our planet. Together we will discover actions that promote good health and in turn, promote a healthier environment. Sliding scale: \$30, \$45, or \$60 as able. Preregistration required. Contact Carolyn at 475-1892; manager@mfccenter.org or mfccenter.org.

**Eco-Cooking with Deanne Bednar • Mar. 25, 1-5 p.m.** • Learn a variety of eco-friendly ways to cook food. \$25/one month in advance, \$35/after. Contact Deanne at (248) 236-5432; strawbale.programs@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org

**The Day Before Earth Day with the Michigan Friends Center • Saturday, Apr. 21, 1 p.m.** • This year's Earth Day program will be held the day before. Theme is eliminating plastic. Come for a day of fun, hands-on activities for everyone. Enjoy a short presentation from Richard Tucker. Donations welcome. Contact Carolyn at 475-1892; manager@mfccenter.org or mfccenter.org.

## Tai Chi, Martial Arts & Self Defense

**Wu Style Tai Chi at Jewel Heart with Marilyn Feingold • Sundays, 4-5:30 p.m.** • Learn the ancient art of meditation in motion with this soft style martial art emphasizing relaxation and balance. Contact Jewel Heart at 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

**Tai Chi Beginners with Master Young and Sifu Carey • Mondays, 10-11:15 a.m.; Tuesdays, 2:30-3:45 p.m.; Tuesdays/Thursdays, 7:15-8:30 p.m.** • Learn the first third of the Yang Style Short Form. Focus on relaxation, meditation in motion, coordination, and cultivation of energy. \$185. Contact Wasantha at 741-0695; info@peacefuldragonschool.com or peacefuldragonschool.com.

**Yang Tai Chi for Mobility Maintenance with Karla Groesbeck • Mondays, 1:30-3 p.m.; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:30-11 a.m.; Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m.** • Tai Chi and Silk Reeling classes are for individuals of any age and fitness level who seek to relax and have fun with this engaging body/mind activity. These are peaceful, flowing, low-impact exercises, well suited for calming, centering, and mobility maintenance. Prices vary. Contact Karla at 325-4244; karla@taichilove.com or taichilove.com.

**Morning Tai Chi with Master Sang Kim • Monday through Friday, 7-8:30 a.m.** • Happiness is not a circumstance, it is a cultivation. When you practice Tai Chi, you get to know a part of you that was hidden and you have been looking for all of your life: the power and potential that your mind and body are really capable of. \$225/month. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**SUN SHEN Basic Tai Chi Form with Ann-Margaret Giovino and Pastor Neuhaus • Mondays, 6-7 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays, 7-8 p.m.** • Build a solid foundation in Tai Chi principles in an intimate setting, with guidance and personal adjustment in the SUN SHEN 35 Form. As you learn the sequence and details of the Form, you will experience the calm, effortless power which comes from relaxed focus. \$55/month, \$17/drop-in sessions. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

*"It's OK to not be OK, as long as you don't stay that way."*

— Anonymous



*Layla Ananda is a counselor, educator, minister, and musician. She offers her many years as a seeker and student of spiritual traditions to assist and guide others. She leads weddings and workshops, and recently released an album, Path to Peace. For more information, visit layla-ananda.com.*

**Wu Style Tai Chi Chuan with Genie Parker • Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 6 p.m., Sundays, 4 p.m.** • Wu Style tai chi chuan is a soft style martial art emphasizing balance and relaxation. All are welcome to learn this ancient art of meditation in motion. \$45/month for one class/week, \$70/two classes/month. Student, senior, and family rates available. First class free. Contact Genie at (248) 229-1060; info@wustyle-annarbor.com or wustyle-annarbor.com.

**Tai Chi Pushing Hands with Joseph Wang • Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m.** • Pushing hands is an interactive Tai Chi training which helps you experience the world in a nonreactive and calm way, find freedom and power within yourself, and interact with others without compromising yourself. \$70/month, \$21/drop-in sessions. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**Tai Chi for Arthritis with Jan Katz • Thursdays, 1-1:50 p.m.** • Medical studies have shown this particular program to relieve pain for people with arthritis and improve their quality of life, as well as preventing falls for older adults. Although especially effective for arthritis, it is a great start for beginners to improve health and wellness. \$50/month or \$17/drop-in sessions. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**Chen Tai Chi Ch'uan with Joe Walters • Mondays and Thursdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Saturdays 10-11 a.m.** • Unique movement art emphasizing inner stillness and relaxation developed through disciplined whole body integration and refined awareness. Instruction in stance training, silk-reeling exercises, and Chen Tai Chi forms. \$85/month. Contact Joe Walters at annarbortaiichi@gmail.com or annarbortaiichi.com.

**Tai Chi for Kids with Jonathan Buckman • Sundays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** • From the slow Tai-Chi form, which activates balance and calm, to playful Pushing Hands, which gives safe, gentle outlet to explore themselves, to meditation techniques which they can use in the classroom and at home. This class invites kids to learn about themselves and introduces them to skills that will bring them a lifetime of happiness. Available to children from 5-17. \$70/month, \$21/drop-in sessions. Contact Alexis at 845-9786; pastorneuhaus@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

**Tai Chi at Weber Center with Bonnie Yarbrough • Mondays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** • Tai Chi is an ancient exercise that involves slow-paced turning and stretching. It has been shown to help improve circulation, balance, posture, increase strength and flexibility, and reduce stress. Good for all ages. Wear comfortable, loose clothing with tennis shoes or socks. \$5/session. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominican.org or webercenter.org.

## Tarot & Divination

**Drop-in Tarot/Psychic Readings with Kathy Bloch • Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • \$1.50/minute.** No appointment necessary. Contact 663-0435.

**Drop-in Tarot/Psychic Readings with Rebecca Williams • Thursdays, 6-9 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • \$1.50/minute.** No appointment necessary. Contact rebeccawilliams999@comcast.net.

**Drop-in Intuitive Tarot with Gail Embery • 1st and 3rd Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m. and 3rd Sundays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Gail Embery has many years of experience as a Tarot Reader. She reads the cards intuitively while incorporating her abilities as a natural medium and gifted clairvoyant. Gail is also a licensed professional counselor. \$1.50/minute. Contact 655-7694; emberyg@yahoo.com or readingswithgail.com.**





# The Advanced Pulse Technique: Bringing Ease to Change

By Simran Harvey

Throughout years of practicing astrology, I sometimes wished I had another dimension to my consultations, but I didn't know what it might be. Astrology provides information on the mental level, but unresolved emotions and past hurts can also be engaged in readings. Although I could offer compassion and presence with resources and referrals, I still desired some mysterious, missing "more."

In 2008 I was invited to a gathering by an acquaintance who was very excited about the occasion. When I got there the focus was totally different from what I had been led to expect. I sat there thinking, *Why in the world am I here?* At the end of the program a man in the audience stood up and offered free energy work to fulfill the practicum requirements for his training in the Advanced Pulse Technique (APT). I was curious and after learning more signed up. At my first session I had a profound experience. This is not usual in the work. Many people feel that nothing has happened in the session, but then notice that their lives have changed for the better. Maybe I needed an especially dramatic change, so I would immediately commit to becoming an APT practitioner. However, the once-yearly training had just completed. I used the long waiting period to gather extensive experience of APT as a client.

*I credit APT with eliminating the one-hundred pound pack I was carrying on my back.*

There are some things in life we must do for ourselves. No one else can do them for us. In contrast, there are things others can facilitate for us. Like so many individuals, I had had difficult beginnings in this life, which set me up to make poor choices in young adulthood, only compounding the early wounding. I found it hard to be in the present when I was often triggered into my unresolved past. Various forms of therapies had been part of my life off and on since I was 21 years old. Much healing had occurred, and still I chafed against

my limits. I credit APT with eliminating the one-hundred pound pack I was carrying on my back.

APT is a very simple and powerful clearing technique in which the client's thoughts and feelings direct the clearing energy to where it is needed. Some of the many things APT can be used to eliminate are:

- undesirable personality traits
- habits that do not serve you
- unwanted current circumstances on all levels (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual)
- limiting beliefs and fears
- unresolved heartaches and unhelpful patterns
- past unpleasant experiences


APT cannot be used to change another person. But we can do an energy process on how sad or angry you feel about someone in your life. When we heal, a space is created for movement in others.

Prior to a session, the client writes a list of things he or she would like to address or change. Extensive detail isn't necessary. Here's a sample list: pain in right hip; sugar cravings; lack of self-confidence; hate cooking; can't forgive ex-husband. As the client shares her list during the session, I am guided by the energy to ask open-ended questions about particular items and then I'm guided to the first item we will address. Once I start the clearing energy, the client brings to mind a sentence that I've been guided to select as the entry point to the clearing. The client is instructed to bring up everything she doesn't like about this item, that gets in the way, that holds her back. All of this happens in the privacy of the client's mind and lasts for only a few minutes. Every thought and feeling attracts the energy to itself. In this way the client controls the focus of the energy.

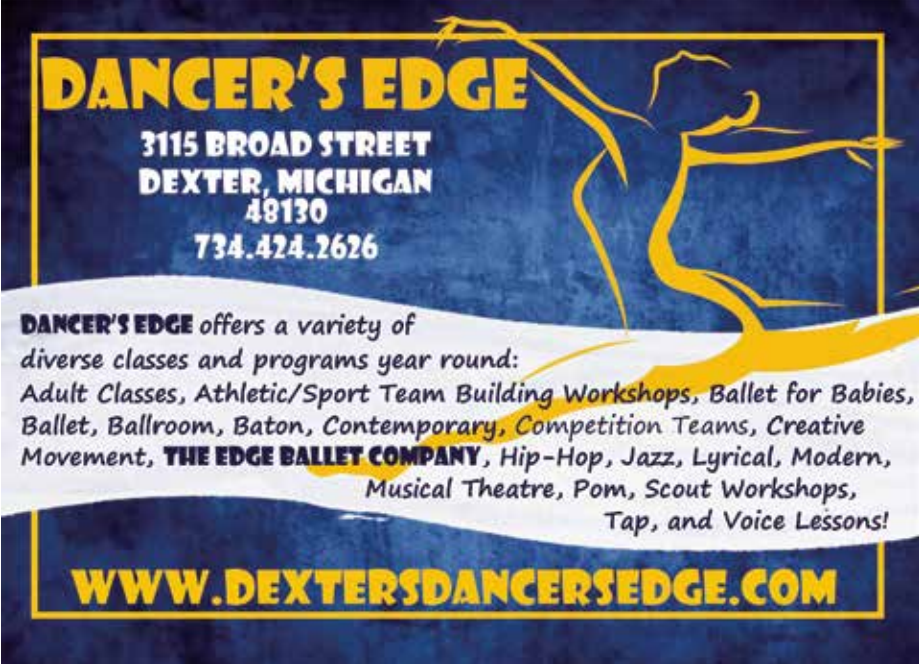
A common report from clients is relaxation. Some receive insights while sitting quietly. Others find it increasingly difficult to think of unwanted things. Most people experience nothing at all.

## Tarot & Divination (cont.)

**A Call to Your Wisdom with Jeanne Adwani • Sundays, beginning Jan. 21, 4-6 p.m.**  
• We will unfold into the 78-card wisdom stories, understanding the elements, the numerology, the archetypes, and the energetic possibilities. We look to layouts and journaling as ways to deepen and celebrate, release, and expand our stories. \$20/class, must commit to 5 classes. Contact Jeanne at 320-3973; [jeanne@evenstarschalice.com](mailto:jeanne@evenstarschalice.com) or [evenstarschalice.com](http://evenstarschalice.com).



On January 1, 2018, the Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be available on our website: [www.crazywisdomjournal.com](http://www.crazywisdomjournal.com).



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For more information, contact the editor, Bill Zirinsky at: [bill111512@aol.com](mailto:bill111512@aol.com)





*A common report from clients is relaxation. Some receive insights while sitting quietly. Others find it increasingly difficult to think of unwanted things. Most people experience nothing at all. That's not important. In these few moments, the energy has only begun and will continue until the issue has been met at its roots.*

That's not important. In these few moments, the energy has only begun and will continue until the issue has been met at its roots. What is important are the desired changes that unfold gently in the minutes, hours, even months after the session. If there is anything deeply connected with the addressed item, it also will be cleared even if it has not been recognized.

Sometimes the clearing is immediate and complete. Other times it takes longer, depending on how many layers of beliefs, emotions, or personality traits need to shift before the item can be fully released. It is not necessary to address the same item repeatedly.

I am certified to work with groups of up to twelve. Participants in a group setting have complete privacy; they do not have to share their items with anyone, including the practitioner, although there is an opportunity to share if they wish.

Surrogacy opens up APT benefits to animals, children too young to focus on the process, and individuals who are very ill or unconscious. I am especially excited about working with parents and their young children who have been traumatized. The child's ongoing development is freed from the negative experience and the parent is released from any difficult emotions they may be experiencing in regard to the incident. In surrogacy the items and the surrogate are determined by the parent(s) of the young child. First the parent/surrogate is cleared of the items, then the surrogate serves as a conduit through which the clearing energy passes into the child in regard to the same items.

Energy healing has no boundaries in space or time. APT can be used on core issues of safety and trust originating in the experiences of the young children we once were. It's not too late.

The creator of APT, Jo Dunning, values gentle unfolding instead of a harsh or chaotic change that overwhelms. In fact, I've noticed that change can take place so subtly it can be hard to recognize APT as the cause. It's like someone moved the furniture around while you were sleeping. You forget how life used to be for you and feel that you've always been this way. Recently, for example, I mentioned to a friend that I was writing this article for Crazy Wisdom. This prompted her to do an inventory regarding long-standing relationship issues she had addressed via APT three or four months ago. She happily reported an energetic shift toward much more emotional freedom. However, she had not attributed the welcomed changes to APT until the technique came to her attention in our conversation.

*It's like someone moved the furniture around while you were sleeping. You forget how life used to be for you and feel that you've always been this way.*

APT is exactly that mysterious, missing "more" I had been seeking for myself and others. I use APT by itself and to enrich my astrological consultations. The energy begins to address a wide range of issues, conditions, and emotions *in the moment*, and continues to completion outside of the session. I work with individuals, families, and small groups. Through surrogacy I have used APT with young children, pets, and farm animals. If you've been re-traumatized in therapy or pushed yourself too hard toward healing goals, APT's gentle effectiveness can be a remedial balm. My experience is that the Advanced Pulse Technique brings a welcomed ease to the process of successful change.

*Simran (SIM ron) brings over 40 years of experience to astrological consultations for individuals and couples. For eight years she has also offered the Advanced Pulse Technique by Jo Dunning, a clearing energy work to bring about rapid, yet gentle change. She can be reached at (734) 255-9533 or AstroEnergyWork@gmail.com.*

## Tea Events

**Valentine's Tea with the Fairies at Crazy Wisdom • Thursday, February 15, 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.** • Join the fairies of the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room for a magical tea party! Enjoy special treats in your favorite fairy attire, and then gather for story time and a surprise activity in our community room. No charge for children under 18 months. Contact Jessica at [jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net](mailto:jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net).

## Therapy & Support Groups

**Mindfulness-Based Forgiveness Group with Mariko A Foulk • Fridays, Mar. 2-Apr. 13 1:30-4 p.m.; Reunion on May 18** • Eight weekly sessions for those age 60+, who want to work on forgiving others or self. We cultivate mindfulness, self-compassion, and cognitive behavioral skills in the process. Contact Mariko at 764-2556; [mfoulk@umich.edu](mailto:mfoulk@umich.edu) or [med.umich.edu/geriatrics/community/index.htm](http://med.umich.edu/geriatrics/community/index.htm).

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### 2018 Events

- ◆ Introduction to the Diamond Approach: January 16, 7-9 p.m.
- ◆ Winter Book Study Group: Begins in January
- ◆ Retreat: June 22-24

For more information, contact: [diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com](mailto:diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com)



**Presenter:** Lou Weir, ordained Diamond Approach teacher

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- ❖ Workshop & Retreat Facilitator



**Karlt Zarley, RN, CHTP**  
210 Little Lake Dr., Suite 7  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
734.761.5908  
[www.karltzarley.com](http://www.karltzarley.com)

*Step into Who You Really Are*



## Therapy & Support Groups (cont.)

**Trim-Life Weight Release Program with Diana Burney • Mar. 16, 23, 30; Apr. 6, 13, 20**  
 • This program will give you the tools to discover the underlying “computer programs” operating below your conscious awareness that have continued to repeat unhealthy patterns of overeating and dieting without success. Includes workbook and nine CDs. \$350/includes \$50 nonrefundable deposit for workbook and CDs. Contact Diana at 786-6588; earthrelease@msn.com or mindsgatehypnosis.com.

## Thermography

**Adelpha Breast Thermography with Linda • Wednesday, Feb. 21, 1-5 p.m. By Appointment** • Safest, noninvasive breast imaging technique showing earliest detections of changes in breast tissue. Measures heat emissions and displays for computer analysis. No contact, no pressure, no pain. \$165. Contact Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or bodyworkshealingcenter.com.

## Transpersonal Psychology

**Psychology of Spiritual Growth with Lauren Tatarsky • Wednesdays, Jan. 10, 24; Feb. 7, 14, 6-8 p.m.** • This class is being offered through the Washtenaw Community College Community Enrichment program. In this course, we will explore the wealth of wisdom found in the field of Spiritual Psychology. From the writings of Carl Jung, Peggy Wright, and Michael Daniels to the theories of Psychosynthesis and Focusing, we will explore the journey of authentic spiritual growth. WCC Registration fee: \$115. Contact Lauren at (303) 875-8290; inspiredlifecounselinga2@gmail.com or inspiredlifecounselinga2.com/psychology-of-spiritual-growth.html.

## Women's Health

**WomanSafeHealth Open House with Elizabeth Shadigian and staff • Jan. 11, Feb. 5, Mar. 8, Apr. 19, 5-6 p.m.** • Meet Dr. Shadigian, Dr. Burkman, and other WomanSafeHealth Team members. Copies of Dr. Shadigian's new book available at Crazy Wisdom. Free. Contact Emma at 477-5100; info@womensafehealth.com or womensafehealth.com.

## Work & Right Livelihood

**Live Your Career Dream with Melanie Fuscaldò • Wednesday, Jan. 17, 12-1:30 p.m.** • Begin to identify your unique career dreams and gifts to share with the world. \$40. Contact Melanie at 668-2733; mfuscaldò@gmail.com or melaniefuscaldò.com.

**Doula Business Development Training with Patty Brennan • Saturday, Jan. 20, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Learn about thinking like an entrepreneur, establishing your value, acing the interview, marketing on a budget, optimizing your website, online marketing tips, how to network effectively, goal setting and other implementation strategies, time management, and more. Learn from the author of *The Doula Business Guide* and *The Doula Business Guide Workbook: Tools to Create a Thriving Business*. \$195, \$175/early. Contact Patty at 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

## Writing & Poetry

**Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series hosted by Joe Kelty, Ed Morin, and David Jibson • Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room** • Second Wednesdays are poetry workshop nights. All writers welcome to share and discuss their own or favorite poetry. Sign up for new participants begins at 6:45 p.m.

Fourth Wednesdays have a featured reader for 50 minutes and then open mic for an hour. All writers welcome. Sign up begins at 6:45 p.m. Free. Contact Ed at 668-7523; eacmorso@sbcglobal.net or cwpoetrycircl.tumblr.com.

**Jan. 24** • Jamie Thomas is author of *Etch and Blur* which won the Brick Road Poetry Prize. He also won an Academy of American Poets Prize. His poems have appeared in *New Ohio Review*, *Third Coast*, *Missouri Review*, and *Verse Daily*. He lives in Detroit and teaches Writing and Literature at Ferris State.

**Feb. 28** • Katherine Edgren has a new book of poems, *The Grain Beneath the Gloss*. Her two poetry chapbooks are *Long Division* and *Transports*. Her poems have appeared in *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Barbaric Yawp*, and elsewhere. A retired social worker and former Ann Arbor City Council member, she lives in Dexter.

**Feb. 28** • Jennifer Burd is the author of a new poetry collection, *Day's Late Blue*, and the earlier *Body and Echo*. Her book, *Daily Bread: A Portrait of Homeless Men and Women of Lenawee County, Michigan*, is creative nonfiction. She teaches creative writing and literature online for Jackson Community College.

**Feb. 28** • Laszlo Slomovits is one of the twin brothers in Ann Arbor's children's folk music duo, Gemini. Besides his music for children, he has set to music the work of many poets, including ancient Sufi mystics Rumi and Hafiz and contemporary poets Naomi Shihab Nye and Jennifer Burd.

**Mar. 28** • Dawn McDuffie has lived and worked in Detroit since 1968. Her poems explore the city landscape and an inner world of memory, imagination, and dreams. She's published three chapbooks: *Carmina Detroit*, *Bulky Pick Up Day*, and *Flag Day in Detroit*, and a new book: *Happenstance and Miracles*.

**Apr. 25** • Jan Worth-Nelson pounds out journalism as editor of Flint's venerable East Village Magazine, while producing a steady stream of stories and poems recently in *Belt*, *Hypertext*, *The MacGuffin*, *Midwestern Gothic*, and *Exposition Review*. She is the author of the novel, *Night Blind*, based on wrenching Peace Corps experiences in the Kingdom of Tonga.

**Story Night with the Ann Arbor Storyteller's Guild at Crazy Wisdom • Thursdays, Mar. 8, Apr. 12** • Listen to old tales and new during an evening of adult stories. Ann Arbor Storyteller's Guild members perform for the first hour, with an open mic for the second hour. So, if you have a five-minute tale, we'll try to fit you in! Free. Donations accepted. Contact Laura at 662-3770; lauragami@provide.net, annarborstorytelling.org, or facebook.com/annarborstorytellers.

**Wellspring Creative Writing Workshop with Julie Mariouw at Crazy Wisdom • Jan. 11, 25; Feb. 8, 15, 22; Mar. 1, 8, 15, 6-8:45 p.m.** • This eight-week creative writing workshop focuses on bypassing the inner critic, going directly to images, feelings and memories, and entering the place where story and natural language reside. Julie uses the Amherst Writers and Artists workshop method developed by Pat Schneider. \$160. Contact Julie at 730-6175; julie@wellspringwritingworkshops.com or wellspringwritingworkshops.com.

**Ann Arbor Storytellers' Monthly Guild Meeting • Sundays, Jan. 28, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, Apr. 22** • Meetings always start with stories, and then, more stories! Listeners and tellers welcome. Free. Contact Susan at 997-5388; zoumaris\_susann@comcast.net, annarborstorytelling.org, or facebook.com/annarborstorytellers.

**Creative Writing with Tarianne DeYonker • Thursdays, Jan. 18-Feb. 22, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Tuesdays, Feb. 6-Mar. 13, 1-4 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 24, Mar. 24, 10 a.m.-4p.m.** • Creative Writing Workshop using the Amherst Writers and Artists method. Beginners and experienced writers welcome. \$120/series, \$45/Saturdays. Contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominican.org or webercenter.org.

**Poetry of Nature and Spirit with the Michigan Friends Center • Friday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m.** • We will celebrate a winter evening together, discussing “Nature and Spirit” poems by various authors. Conversation led by Richard Tucker. Join us, and bring a couple of your favorite poems to share. Donations welcome. Contact Carolyn at 475-1987; manager@mfccenter.org or mfccenter.org.

**Turtle Disco: Somatic Writing Studio with Petra Kuppers and Stephanie Heit • Ongoing** • Turtle Disco is a community arts space in Ypsilanti offering a range of somatic and writing classes: Queer dreaming, Kundalini Yoga and Meditation, Amoeba Dances, Contemplative Dance and Writing, and more. We are dedicated to providing a welcome and supportive environment, grounded in a disability culture framework. Donation. Contact Stephanie at (231) 871-0213; stephanieheit@gmail.com or stephanieheitpoetry.wordpress.com/home/turtle-disco-classes/.

## Yoga

**Yoga and Meditation Willpower Training with Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation • Jan. 6-7** • Two-day seminar is intended to inspire the participants toward developing their willpower to help raise themselves out of a health condition, or achieve other worthy goals. Traditional, powerful techniques will be learned. Beginners through advanced practitioners are welcome. Contact Ema at 665-7801; emastefanova@cs.com or yogaandmeditation.com.

**Yoga Therapy for Anxiety 2-Day Seminar with Ema Stefanova • Jan. 27-28** • Two-day seminar on how to use yoga to help with anxiety. Contact Ema at 665-7801; emastefanova@cs.com or yogaandmeditation.com.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called “Background Information” and which starts on page 104.



**Yoga with Zen Buddhist Temple • Six Tuesdays beginning Feb. 6, Mar. 20, May 1 •**

Beginning and experienced students in the classes learn traditional yoga postures (hatha) with an emphasis on relaxation, concentration, and working with the breath. Class fill up quickly, so register early. \$60/six classes, \$12/class. Contact Zen Buddhist Temple at 761-6520; annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org or zenbuddhisttemple.org.

**Yoga Meditation Therapy for Hypertension Workshop with Ema Stefanova • Saturday, Feb. 10, 4:30-6:30 •** Learn how yoga can be used to fight against hypertension. Contact Ema at 665-7801; emastefanova@cs.com or yogaandmeditation.com.

**Compassionate Yoga with Mary Seibert • Sundays, 9-10:15 a.m. •** Kripalu Yoga which is appropriate for beginners and seasoned yoga students. Emphasis on mindfulness, breath, movement, strength, and balance. Contact Mary at 323-2520; mvsa2mvs@gmail.com or compassionateyoga.info.

**Open Level Yoga with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Sundays, 7:30-9 p.m., Thursdays, 6-7:30 p.m., Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m. •** Mixed level class with variations offered for all levels. \$14 preregistered. \$18/drop-in with permission. Contact Michele at 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

**Yoga Classes at The Yoga Room with Christy DeBurton • Mondays, 4:30-5 p.m., 6-7:15 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m., 4:30-5:30 p.m., 6-7:15 p.m., Saturdays, 8:30-9:45 p.m. •** Offering Hatha, Yin, and Vinyasa yoga classes. See website for pricing and full schedule. Contact Christy at 761-8409; info@christydeburton.com or yogaroomannarbor.com.

**Yoga at Imagine Fitness and Yoga • Mondays and Tuesdays, 6 p.m., Thursdays, 11 a.m., Fridays, 12 p.m. •** Yoga classes for everyone, no experience necessary. Specific styles include Hatha, Restorative, Beginners, and Fundamentals. \$20/drop-in. Contact 622-8119; imagine@imaginefitnessandyoga.com or imaginefitnessandyoga.com.

**Hatha Yoga with Kashi Nivas • Mondays, 7-8:30 p.m. •** This class uses quieting yoga sequences to help destress and restore the body. The movements calm the nervous system and bring subtle energies back into balance. Please bring a yoga mat. \$15. Contact Kashi at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

**Yoga Essentials with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Tuesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. •** For those new to yoga, or new to this system. Learn Universal Principles of Alignment that are an invaluable aid to learning the postures, deepening your understanding of the body, developing a yoga practice that is safe, joyful, therapeutic, and fun. \$14/preregistered. \$18/drop-in with permission. Contact Michele at 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

**Yoga for Athletes with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. •** Athletes or anyone looking for a strong practice will enjoy increasing core strength, enhancing flexibility, agility, balance, and mental focus. \$14/preregistered. \$18/drop-in with permission. Contact Michele at 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

**Yin Yoga with Pure Hot Yoga Studio • Thursdays, 12 p.m. •** Yin Yoga increases circulation in the joints and improves flexibility. It is a slow-paced style of yoga with postures that are held for longer periods of time. It may range from 45 second to two minutes. Yin Yoga brings about a meditative awareness of inner silence which is good for beginners. \$49/New Student Special. Contact Lora at purehotyogaa2@gmail.com or purehotyogaa2.com.

**Restorative Yoga with Kashi Nivas • Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m. •** Designed to soothe and refresh the body and soul using props and guided meditation. Please bring a yoga mat. \$15. Contact Kashi at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

**Yoga Happy Hour: Basics and Restorative with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Fridays, 6-7 p.m. •** Learn basic alignment, simple postures and breath, along with some delicious restoratives. Feel your stress melt away. \$11/preregistered. \$13/drop-in with permission. Contact Michele at 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

**Inward Bound Yoga at Friends Meetinghouse • Jan. 8-Feb. 24 and Mar. 5-Apr. 28 •** Variety of approaches to yoga, including Hatha, Prenatal and Postnatal, Ashtanga, and several flow classes coordinated with music. For class descriptions and fees, see website: ibyoga.com.

**Yoga Classes at The Yoga Space • Various class times, Jan. 8-Apr. •** Offering beginner, intermediate, advanced, and senior classes. Classes are an hour and a half. \$108/7 weeks. Contact Sue at 622-9600; sue@yogaspacannarbor.com or yogaspacannarbor.com.

**Holistic Yoga Teacher Training RYT200, RYT300, RYT500 with Ema Stefanova • Courses start Jan. 14 •** These comprehensive custom tailored programs are well designed to: systematically deepen your understanding of yoga and meditation, develop your personal yoga and meditation practice (sadhana), and develop skills for safely teaching yoga and meditation to others. Register now for classes. Register early and save! Contact Ema at 665-7801; emastefanova@cs.com or yogaandmeditation.com.

**Free Trial Yoga Classes with Sue Salaniuk • Jan. 26, Feb. 23, Mar. 30, Apr. 27, 6-7 p.m. •** A Free Trial Yoga class for everyone interested in learning about Iyengar Yoga. No registration necessary. Free. Contact Sue at 622-9600; sue@yogaspacannarbor.com or yogaspacannarbor.com.

**Yoga with Cats with Tiny Lions Lounge and Adoption Center • Sundays, 8:30-9:30 a.m., Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. •** Practice Hatha style yoga with the furry feline masters at Ann Arbor's own cat cafe! Bring peace to your mind and body while filling your heart with joy as you help animals - proceeds help the homeless animals in our community. \$10. tenth class free! Contact Karen at 661-3530; tinylions@hshv.org or tinylions.org/yoga.

**Purna Yoga with Raisha Love • Call for times •** Come back to the roots of yoga in our new studio. Contact (989) 284-1042; askraisha@yahoo.com or purnayogaannarbor.com.

“Never Alone”  
by Vivian L. H. Sanders

(Dedicated with love to my father)

He is made like the mountains he climbs  
broad-shouldered and built  
to carry heavy loads

His mind is strong  
his will moves him forward  
and his heart chooses the way  
He is never alone

You may have seen him walking  
on the many miles of trails in the woods  
You may have met him  
when he chose to make you his friend  
He may have told you a story  
or guided your footsteps  
He knows the way

The woods are his home  
the trees know his name  
and the leaves whisper to him  
as he walks by

He has crossed many rivers  
and passed many milestones  
found treasures and seen sights  
few others have known

But rarely does he speak of what  
he holds nameless and true in his soul  
for he knows there are no words  
for the infinite and  
the mysterious

So if you have the good fortune to  
cross paths with the man of the mountain  
or if you get a glimpse  
or share a word  
or catch a smile

Don't hesitate  
and don't wait  
Open up!  
slow your gait

His gift may be coming  
it'll arrive on its own  
unexpected and strong --  
from the mountains it is made

Then you, too  
might one day discover  
your true sight  
within

You'll know the joy in your heart  
from the depth of your being  
You'll know the peace  
of a master

You will know you are  
never alone

\* \* \*



# Ortho-Bionomy: Using the Vital Role of Body Awareness in Healing

By Cinda Hocking, LMSW

Most of the time, we are only fully aware of our body when it feels especially good or especially bad. If our mental life is busy and we are distracted, we rarely tune in to our physical being and kinesthetic senses. Because of our tendency to be preoccupied with what's happening from the neck up, we are often unaware of how both our thoughts and physical habits lead us to hold unnecessary tension and stress.

Fortunately, with increased attention and intention, we can become more aware and begin to prevent, minimize, and recover from our negative body-stress patterns. Ortho-Bionomy® is a gentle, integrative, educational system of body therapy based in osteopathic principles and postural release, which provides a useful way to evaluate and adjust our body's systems toward comfort and pain relief.



When I did not add to the tension, the process of natural healing could then be maximized. I watched a large, hard hematoma that had developed just off the bone near my elbow instantly subside!

me to walk that middle path between denying and over-identifying with it. When I did not add to the tension, the process of natural healing could then be maximized. I watched a large, hard hematoma that had developed just off the bone near my elbow instantly subside! The bruise the next day was a yellow/green color, indicative of a later healing phase, instead of the usual purple/blue that a fresh bruise would be.

The term "Ortho-Bionomy" comes from "ortho," meaning correct or straight; "bio," meaning life; and "nomy," meaning "the laws of" or "study of." The founder of the technique, Dr. Arthur Lincoln Pauls (1929–1997), defined it as "the correct application of the laws of life."

The healing seemed to occur just from [the instructor] guiding me with small movements and a change in mindset.

My colleague, Sue Phare, and I were introduced to Ortho-Bionomy through our martial arts training. Our teacher was a trained naturopath in Oregon and Ortho-Bionomy was one of the modalities he worked in. He used it with me when I was injured in class from accidentally getting hit with a stick. The teacher pointed out how I was holding unnecessary tension in the area by pretending it did not hurt. He helped me to relax with basic Ortho-Bionomy techniques.

Sue and I knew something extraordinary had happened — and so, of course, we wanted to learn more! Our martial arts instruction included medicinal arts, so eventually we received training in the basics of Ortho-Bionomy, as well as acupressure, mindfulness, and focusing techniques. Several years later, Sue and I decided to search for more in-depth training in Ortho-Bionomy and found Carole Poffinbarger in Hamilton, Ohio. We studied with her and other teachers over several years, and last year became certified Associate Practitioners. We are in ongoing training to become full Practitioners in Ortho-Bionomy.

The healing seemed to occur just from him guiding me with small movements and a change in mindset. The process of paying attention differently to my injury allowed



Ortho-Bionomy® combines the gentle contact of tension points with movements that initiate self-corrective reflexes of the body. These movements include facilitated isometric and isotonic positions, combined with compression and traction, to solicit and provide neuro-feedback.



At the time of a trauma, turning off the connection to the physical, altering it, or medicating it may seem like the only way to cope. When trauma resolution is incomplete, these strategies can slowly develop into self-destructive habits used to escape our physical and emotional pain.



British osteopath and judo instructor Arthur Lincoln Pauls developed Ortho-Bionomy in the 1970s through his extensive study of the medical and martial arts. Dr. Pauls noticed that when injuries were approached in ways that did not exacerbate fear or ignore pain symptoms, they were easier to treat and recover from. He began teaching this work in the United States in 1976, and taught Ortho-Bionomy extensively throughout Europe.

[Ortho-Bionomy founder] Dr. Pauls noticed that when injuries were approached in ways that did not exacerbate fear or ignore pain symptoms, they were easier to treat and recover from.

Seven phases of healing are referenced during the training of Ortho-Bionomy principles. Phases 1–3 are the foundational concepts that Dr. Pauls observed as naturally occurring, which he built upon when he developed Phases 4–7 of Ortho-Bionomy.

### The Phased Reflexed Techniques of Ortho-Bionomy:

**Phase 1** - The unconscious movements we make while sleeping, to help our bodies relax and replenish.

**Phase 2** - Our conscious movements towards physical comfort; those small adjustments we make to ease tension and strain.

**Phase 3** - The period of time in which the body self-corrects/re-aligns when provided with attention or care. This happens when we allow ourselves “treats” such as baths, walks, yoga, and other intentional opportunities to renew and repair.

**Phase 4** – This is where Ortho-Bionomy begins. In this phase, comfort and release of tension is facilitated by another person so you can focus on how you are feeling, rather than dividing your attention between focusing on the body and performing an activity.

**Phases 5-7** — These levels include ways to increase mental focus and work with subtle fluid movements, energetic connections, deep reflexes, and psycho-social-spiritual elements vital to healing. These aspects are included in Ortho-Bionomy and in many other healing and spiritual practices.

Ortho-Bionomy combines the gentle contact of tension points with movements that initiate self-corrective reflexes of the body. These movements include facilitated isometric and isotonic positions, combined with compression and traction, to solicit and provide neuro-feedback. There are techniques for each joint in the body, from the first cervical region of the neck all the way down to the toes. Included are techniques for the neck, back, shoulders, elbows, knees, hips, hands and feet.

Our clients report that, at a minimum, they have a better sense of well-being after a session and feel considerably more relaxed, aware, and integrated. We have had clients experience significant release in restricted breathing and reduction in pain symptoms. Many clients we see are medical professionals, psychics/healers and bodyworkers, and they tell us they appreciate Ortho-Bionomy because it is gentle and adaptive to what the body needs at a particular time. Because of the phase model, it can be practiced on whatever level the client wants or is available for, and is useful for acute, serious, and chronic issues.

One goal of a session is to help facilitate more ease and increase the client’s ability to notice and release stress and strain patterns. Difficult symptoms can sometimes shift significantly in a single session, but generally take 3–5 sessions to start holding the change made in habitual tension patterns for longer periods, and begin replacing the less healthy reactions with more adaptive responses. Depending on the severity or chronic nature of the issue, clients then return once a month or a few times a year to help further re-educate and remind their body of this alternate way of working with their symptoms.

When we experience trauma, we often learn to dissociate and disconnect from these difficult experiences. At the time of a trauma, turning off the connection to the physical, altering it, or medicating it may seem like the only way to cope. When trauma resolution is incomplete, these strategies can slowly develop into self-destructive habits used to escape our physical and emotional pain. For more complete healing to occur, however, body awareness and delving into the places we hold our unresolved issues are vital explorations.

When we develop body awareness, we become empowered to work with our bodies and our chosen health professionals to re-educate our dysfunctional patterns and help restore more normal functioning and natural alignment. For example, when getting an invasive-feeling injection, we can also use body awareness techniques to relax into the shot, making the experience less traumatic with less bruising.

Even the simplest self-awareness tools take consistent practice to integrate into our lives. Simple does not always mean easy, but the journey is worthwhile.

For further information or to schedule an Ortho-Bionomy session, contact Sue Phare at (734) 604-4162 or [lightbodyshopAA@gmail.com](mailto:lightbodyshopAA@gmail.com) or Cinda Hocking, LMSW at (734) 417-7161 or [cindahocking@yahoo.com](mailto:cindahocking@yahoo.com). For general information, visit the website for the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International at [www.ortho-bionomy.org](http://www.ortho-bionomy.org)





# Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

**Aaron** is a spirit who has been a Buddhist monk and scholar in many previous lifetimes and is a being of great love, compassion, wisdom, and gentle humor. In his final lifetime he was a vipassana meditation master, but he has lived in many different bodies and followed many spiritual paths. He is channeled by Barbara Brodsky.

**Linda Adamcz, MSW** is a Certified Practitioner of Integrative Breathwork and Psycho-Spiritual Integration. She has worked in the mental health field for nearly 30 years.

**Jeanne Adwani**, Tarot enthusiast since the early 70s, serving the never-ending stories we all travel in. She seeks the best of the stories that enrich one's life.

**Nia-Avelina Aguirre, ND** is a board-certified Naturopathic Doctor and has been in the natural health, fitness, and wellness profession since 1983. She offers nontoxic, nondrug options along with bodywork and energy therapies for radiant health.

**Erik Anderson LMSW, CAADC** is a therapist with the University of Michigan Counseling and Psychological Services.

**Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness** has a mission to cultivate and support the understanding of mindfulness to promote health and wellbeing.

**Ann Arbor Co-Counseling** is part of the international co-counseling community. Co-counseling is a peer process for processing strong emotions in a culture of validation and nonjudgment.

**Ann Arbor District Library (AADL)** Ann Arbor's public library serving the community of the Ann Arbor School District.

**The Ann Arbor Earth Day Festival** is an annual celebration coordinated by the Ann Arbor Earth Day Festival Planning Committee, a coalition of local environmental nonprofits and agencies, and held at Leslie Science and Nature Center.

**Awaken Ann Arbor** is an inclusive community dedicated to non-dogmatic spiritual growth through a unique approach to practicing meditation, discovering one's purpose, and engaging in meaningful action.

**Marcia Bailey, MA, PhD** is a certified Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Practitioner, Kripalu Yoga Teacher, Certified Transformational Breath Facilitator, and Senior Trainer with the Transformational Breath Foundation.

**Deanne Bednar, MA** has taught middle school art for 28 years, and sustainable future classes for 15 years. She is the director and teacher at Strawbale Studio, focusing on natural building, and sustainable living skills since 2003.

**David Bell** was a founder of Ann Arbor's Interfaith Center and he has been a longtime teacher of *A Course in Miracles*.

**Linda Steinborn Bender, ACSW, LMSW** has spent 30 years helping adults manage day-to-day life by adjusting to health, trauma, abuse, and grief. She has worked in several hospice settings.

**Sandra Berman** is a trained Sage-ing Circle facilitator. She comes to this process through a background in meditation, education, pastoral care/counseling and group facilitation.

**Leslie Blackburn, MS, RCST** is a Sacred Sexual Healer and Transformational Guide. She is a leading educator and coach of sacred sexuality and tantra in the U.S.

**Kathy Bloch** is a Tarot reader, born and raised in Hawaii. She has studied Tarot since 1980 and likes to collect Tarot decks from around the world. She has been doing public readings since 1995.

**Bloom Gardens** is a local nursery and garden boutique specializing in unique plants, local and organic gardening supplies, and whimsical garden décor.

**Carole Blotter** draws her meditation practice from dual roots in Quaker and Buddhist traditions. She has been teaching meditation since 1999, and she is a teacher for The Forest Way, an organization dedicated to providing retreats conducive to balanced and integrated spiritual growth.

**Blue Sage Health's** mission is to educate and empower you to achieve your highest quality of life with the use of this plant-based cannabidiol (CBD). In this class you will learn about your Endocannabinoid System and how CBD can help activate your body's own natural healing system to alleviate chronic issues.

**Bodyworks Healing Center** offers a variety of holistic health services from certified massage therapists and other certified practitioners.

**Michele Bond** has over 800 hours of training in yoga, yoga therapeutics, and meditation with internationally-recognized instructors. She has a background in martial arts, dance, competitive synchronized swimming, gymnastics, stunt fighting, and swordplay.

**Breastfeeding Center of Ann Arbor** offers comprehensive and professional support services for breastfeeding mothers and babies, including private consultations, weekly MotherBaby support groups, and breastfeeding-related retail.

**Patty Brennan**, Director of Center for the Childbearing Year and co-owner of Lifespan Doula Association, is a professional birth, postpartum, and end-of-life doula trainer. Patty is the author of *The Doula Business Guide* and provides business development support for doulas.

**Dr. Tana Bridge, PhD, ACSW, LMSW, ACTP** is a Professor, School of Social Work, Eastern Michigan University and award-winning trauma expert.

**Barbara Brodsky** is the founder and guiding teacher of Deep Spring Center and an ordained Interfaith Minister. She has been practicing meditation since 1960, teaching since 1989, and she draws from dual roots in Buddhist and Quaker traditions. She became totally deaf in 1972, and is a channel for the spirit, Aaron.

**Jonathan Buckman** is a lifetime student of the martial arts and an instructor with SUN SHEN. He is also a social worker and a chess teacher to over 2,000 children.

**Christina Burch, BFA, MA, BPS, MS** is a Vajrayana practitioner who lives in retreat at Tsogyelgar. She is an internationally recognized artist, as well as a practitioner of Classical Chinese Acupuncture.

**Dawn Burnell-Powers** is a Neuro-Developmental Therapist who has worked with the Masgutova Method (MNRI) since 2006. Dawn currently works with children with developmental challenges, and adults who have sustained neurological injuries or who have progressive neurological diseases.

*" Sometimes the dreams that come true are the dreams you never even knew you had."*

— Alice Sebold

**Diana Burney RN, BSN, M.ED** is an Internationally Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist with over 25 years of experience in the field. She is the owner of Mind's Gate in Ann Arbor where she has lived since 2005.

**Carole Caplan, E-RYT 500** teaches yoga and meditation to weave ancient wisdom into modern life. She bases her yoga teaching on traditional Kriya techniques and she is also certified in Thai Yoga Bodywork.

**Dave Carr** has worked as a professional artist for six years, studying under world-class mentors from such venues as Imaginism Studios and Dreamworks Studios, as well as Hugo Award-winning illustrator Stephan Martiniere. Dave's experience spans several industries, from video games to children's books, as well as his own freelance work under the pseudonym "Cave Darr."

**Kapila Castoldi** has studied meditation under the guidance of spiritual teacher Sri Chinmoy for 30 years. Her interest in Ayurveda as a complement to meditation spans two decades.

**Atmaram Chaitanya** is the director of the non-profit Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center. He has offered over 40 years of service as a teacher of meditation, self-inquiry, and kirtan chanting in the Ann Arbor area.

**Center for the Childbearing Year** is Michigan's premier birth and postpartum doula training center with professional certification through DONA International. Also offering comprehensive childbirth preparation programs, including online classes hosted by Patty Brennan.

**Carl Christensen, MD, PhD, FACOG, FASAM, ABAM** is a board-certified addictionologist and pain management specialist.

**Venerable Thubten Chodron** is an author, teacher, and the founder and abbess of Sravasti Abbey, the only Tibetan Buddhist training monastery for Western nuns and monks in the U.S. Ven. Chodron teaches worldwide and is known for her practical (and humorous!) explanations of how to apply Buddhist teachings in daily life. She has published many books on Buddhist philosophy and meditation, and is currently co-authoring a multi-volume series of teachings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the Buddhist path, *The Library of Wisdom and Compassion*. The first volume, *Approaching the Buddhist Path*, is available July 2017.

## Share your poetry with the Crazy Wisdom Community!

Do you appreciate the inspiring quotations sprinkled throughout the Calendar? Now we're adding poetry written by our readers. If you enjoy playing with words and transforming them into poems, please submit your work for consideration.

### Submission Guidelines:

- **Maximum length:** One page
- **Submission Limit:** One submission per person per edition
- **Restrictions:** Unpublished poems only please
- **Contact Information:** Name, email address, phone number
- **Format:** Electronic files (docx) sent to Julianne at [julianne@crazywisdom.net](mailto:julianne@crazywisdom.net)
- **Due date:** March 15, 2018 (for potential inclusion in the summer Calendar)





# Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

**Jules Cobb** is a therapist with Dawn Farm Youth and Family Services.

**Lorri Coburn, MSW** is a psychotherapist and interfaith minister. She is author of *Breaking Free: How Forgiveness and "A Course in Miracles" Can Set You Free*.

**Diana Cramer, MA** has been co-facilitating the Ann Arbor Death Café since 2012. She is a natural death educator, home funeral guide, green burial advocate, and advanced care planning consultant.

**Reverend Taikodo Marta Dabis** is a board-certified hospital chaplain at Saint Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor and ordained Zen priest in the SFZC Suzuki/Katagiri lineage.

**Paula D'Arcy** is a writer, internationally known retreat leader and speaker. In 1975 she survived an accident in which her husband and 22-month-old daughter were killed. She gave birth to another daughter six months later and began the long journey of healing which has guided her life and opened her heart. She is also the founder of Red Bird Foundation which touches the lives of men and women in jail and prison, the disadvantaged and all who long to live life in the largest way.

**Ray Dalton** is the Coordinator of Dawn Farm Outpatient Services and former coordinator of the state suicide prevention hotline in Kansas.

**Dawn Farm Youth and Family Services Team** provides assessment, intervention, treatment, education and support services for adolescents experiencing problems with alcohol and other drug use and for their families.

**Christy DeBurton, RYT** is a Registered Yoga Teacher who has received training from both Omega Institute for Holistic Studies and The Center for Yoga. She has been teaching yoga since 1998.

**Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry** is a nonprofit organization devoted to offering teachings of nonduality and the meditation practices which support those teachings. Barbara Brodsky is the founder and guiding teacher.

**Mary Jo Desprez** is the Director, Wolverine Wellness, University Health Service, University of Michigan.

**Tarianne DeYonker** is a Certified Amherst Writers and Artists Leader.

**Yael Dolev** is a passionate advocate for the joy of eating nourishing food, with a particular focus on the Mediterranean diet and making the most of dietary limitations. She offers her services to the public via Dolev LLC Nutrition Choices & Behavioral Counseling. With a background in agronomy, botany, ecology, and coaching, she is a board member of Chelsea Community Kitchen, and a former editor of "Food and Kitchen" magazine.

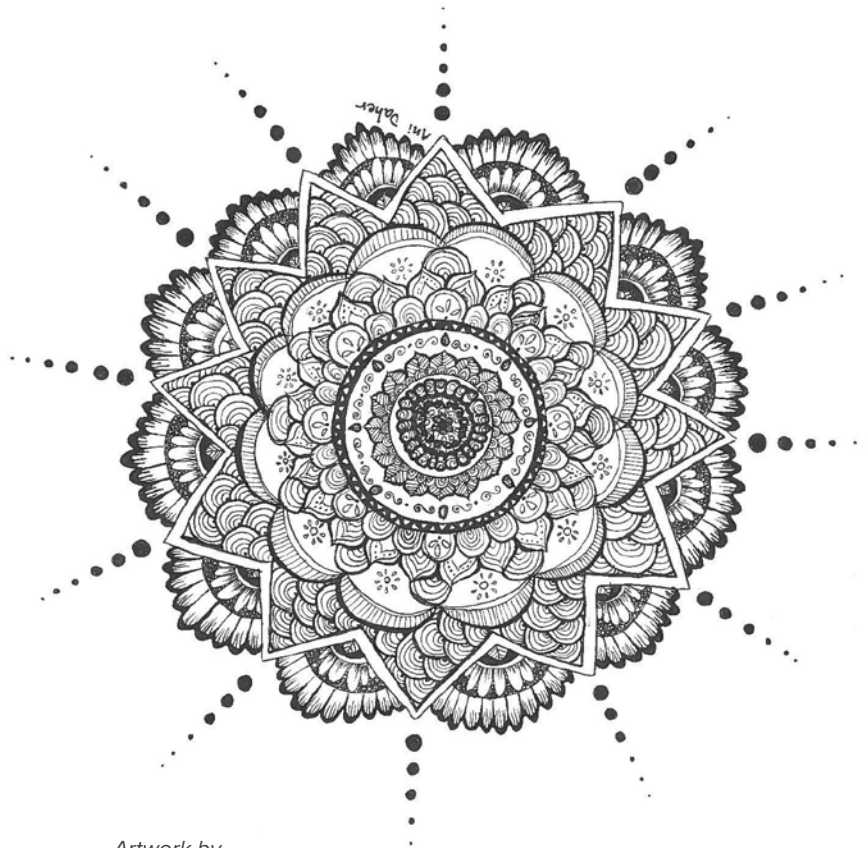
**Kate Durda, MA** is a shamanic practitioner, esoteric healer, published researcher, developmental psychologist, and co-founder of Spirit Weavers. She has extensive training with the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, Sandra Ingerman, and various cultural shamanic traditions such as Tibetan, Andean, Celtic, Buryatan, and various Native American traditions.

**Connie Lee Eiland** has been a shamanic practitioner for 15 years and a physical therapist for 47 years. Since 2000, her shamanic studies have been with Sandra Ingerman, Betsy Bergstrom, Carol Proudfoot-Edgar, Nan Moss, and Larry Kessler.

**Gail Embery** has many years of experience as a Tarot reader. She reads the cards intuitively while incorporating her abilities as a natural medium and gifted clairvoyant. Gail is also a licensed Professional Counselor, and received her Master's degree from WSU in Counseling Psychology.

**Sister Sara Fairbanks, O.P., Ph.D.** has served as an Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Barry University in Miami. An Adrian Dominican Sister, Dr. Fairbanks holds a Master of Theology from Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis and a Doctorate in Theology at the University of St. Michael's College, the Toronto School of Theology in Toronto, Canada.

**Linda Diane Feldt**, a student of the healing arts since 1973, is a holistic health practitioner, teacher, and writer who has taught herbal classes locally for over 40 years.



Artwork by  
Ani Daher

**Anna Fernandez** is an herbalist, midwife, EMT, and mother living north of Chelsea. She has been studying plant medicine since the early '90s. She owns Mother Bloom Botanicals, grows and wildcrafts much of her own medicines, teaches, and helps to organize the Great Lakes Herb Faire.

**Beverly Fish** is a psychic medium and Astrologer. She does private readings by appointment.

**Lori Fithian** is founder and creator of Drummunity and has been facilitating drum circles and rhythm workshops since 1998. A student of drumming tradition for 20 years, her teachers include Arthur Hull and Barry Bateman. She has made a career out of her passion for building community by bringing people together to drum.

**Susan Flinders** is a Fully Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Board Certified Psychoanalyst.

**Deb Flint** is the bookstore manager at Crazy Wisdom and former Adjunct Professor at Siena Heights University and Adrian College.

**John Friedlander** is a psychic, author, and teacher with degrees from Duke and Harvard Law. He has studied with Jane Roberts and at the Berkeley Psychic Institute with founder Lewis Bostwick. His newest and third book, with Gloria Hemsher, is *Psychic Psychology: Energy Skills for Life and Relationships*.

**The Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library** is a committed nonprofit group of volunteers that operates the Friends Book Shop in the downtown library and supports the activities of the Ann Arbor District Library.

**Jerry Fouchey** is a Dawn Farm Outpatient and Personal Medicine therapist.

**Mariko Foulk** has been a psychotherapist for older adults over twenty years through University of Michigan Geriatrics Center, and mindfulness teacher/therapist for almost ten years.

**Melanie Fuscaldo, MA, LPC, NCC** is a licensed and nationally-certified counselor and life coach specializing in joyful transformations.

**Amy Garber, BA, RMT**, is a medical intuitive, psychic, and channel who aids people on their path by consulting with their spirit guides, illuminating past lives, encouraging intuitive development, and connecting with departed loved ones. She is the co-director of the Enlightened Soul Center and co-founder of Intuitives Interactive.

**Dr. Chuck Gehrke** is a board certified addictionologist.

**Ann-Margaret Giovino and Alexis Neuhaus** are SUN SHEN tai-chi instructors and senior students of SUN SHEN Tai-Chi Lineage Holder Master Sang Kim.

**Curtis Glatter** is a professional percussionist and multi-instrumentalist.

**Golden Lotus, Inc.** teaches the science of yoga and its practical applications so that all can achieve the highest levels of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing as they progress on their path toward self-realization.

**Kay Gould-Caskey** has been teaching art since 1970. Many of her students exhibit locally, nationally, and internationally.

**Karen Greenberg, RPT** is a registered physical therapist who has taught for many years at University of Maryland Hospital, dance studios, and via Skype around the world. She is currently a metaphysical teacher of personal and spiritual growth.

**David M. Hall** is a bee-keeper, educator, and rescuer, having rescued over 4.5 million honeybees from extermination and founded two apiaries. He also has a Permaculture Design and Permaculture Teacher certification.

**Nirmala Nancy Hanke, MD**, is a long-time meditator and teacher of meditation at Lighthouse Center. She is a psychiatrist and therapist who integrates meditation, Reiki healing, and other spiritual practices with psychotherapy.

**Craig Harvey** has been leading peace meditations and world healing vigils since 2001, many of them for 24 hours. He hosts the Peace Generator on the third Friday of each month at the Interfaith Center and the 24-hour Peace Generator every three months.

**Simran Harvey** has been an astrologer for over half her life. In 2009 she was certified in the Advanced Pulse Technique, a powerful clearing energy to facilitate change at the energetic level. She received additional training to do the energy work over the phone, on up to twelve people simultaneously.

**Elizabeth Hazel** is an astrologer, tarotist, and author of several books. She has been the SMARRT group's president and is currently a board member.

**Heidi** is an accomplished psychic medium, clinical hypnoterapist, certified astrologer, sacred dance choreographer, and award-winning event producer. She has a passion for crystals, and currently writes the crystal column for the Crazy Wisdom Journal.

**Stephanie Heit** is a poet, dancer, and teacher of somatic writing, Contemplative Dance Practice, and Kundalini Yoga.

**Kelli Hurren** is a Reiki Master & Life/Meditation/Spirituality Coach empowering others in the art of self-mastery and goal obtainment. She believes knowing foundational concepts and consistent daily meditation practice are both vitally important during learning and discovery processes.





# Amplifying Your Intentions with Prosperity Grids

By Heidi Mae Wolfe

Throughout the holiday season and into the new year, we give and receive well wishes for health, happiness, and prosperity with the utmost sincerity. Some will even articulate with the common phrase “and in that order.” I tend to believe that the three are strongly connected and that reaching a higher ground in any one area can raise our optimism so profoundly that we can experience an uplift in other areas, as well. So it seems quite right to place prosperity at the top of our wish list, if that’s where it needs to be. And for many of us who are still recovering from our holiday spending, this might be a good time to do just that.

Making that choice will put your intention out to the universe, but why stop there? A crystal grid can amplify your intention with energy that directly resonates with prosperity and attracts like energy in return. Each crystal has its own unique energy signature. When arranged in a geometric pattern, a sacred, harmonic relationship is achieved, and the crystals will work together towards a common goal.

*Each crystal has its own unique energy signature. When arranged in a geometric pattern, a sacred, harmonic relationship is achieved, and the crystals will work together towards a common goal.*

To create a prosperity grid, there are no hard and fast rules — these are only some guidelines to help get you started in five easy steps. Allow intuition to guide you, and, as an added bonus, the more often you work with crystals and grids, the more elevated your intuition will become.

## 1. Set Your Intention

With all forms of energy work, intention is everything, and perspective matters — “prosperity” and “abundance” can mean different things to each of us. For the sake of simplicity, let’s think of prosperity in the context of wealth and financial well-being, and use that as our intention for the grid.

## 2. Select Your Grid Pattern

Sacred geometry is a school of thought which holds that every aspect of the natural world, including our human existence, is designed by Divine Intelligence using geometric shapes and patterns. This natural phenomenon can be used to guide the flow of energy within your grid by creating a very precise pattern of “ley lines” for the energy to follow. Think of it as a roadmap, and imagine that each crystal on the grid is a place of interest. The pattern acts as a natural GPS system that helps energy travel between all the crystals by providing the most direct route.

There are many grid patterns to choose from, each with its own purpose. The most familiar one is the *Flower of Life* (Exhibit A), which holds ancient spiritual value. Embodied within it is the *Seed of Life* (Exhibit B).

I prefer the *Seed of Life* for prosperity work because it contains exactly seven circles, and the number seven is associated with good luck. It’s also a symbol of infinite possibilities, creation, and life itself, which makes it ideal for creating something from nothing (think “rags to riches”), or breathing new life into something that may have

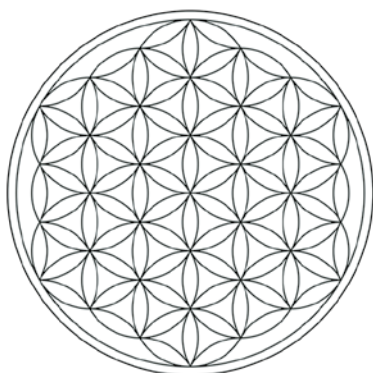


Exhibit A – Flower of Life

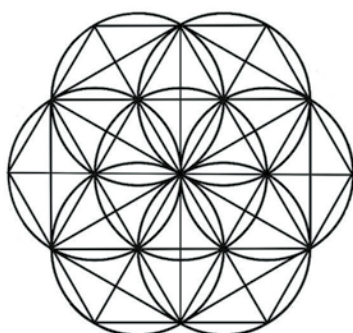


Exhibit B – Seed of Life

stopped growing, such as a bank account. As you continue to experiment with grids, I encourage you to study sacred geometry in greater depth, but for now, let’s use the *Seed of Life* for our grid. Printable versions can easily be found online, and if you’d like to infuse your grid with some additional color energy, you can print it on colored paper.

## 3. Select Your Crystals

Using a minimum of three different crystals or stones is recommended, but feel free to use more or less as your intuition guides you. The three stones have a distinct purpose.

- A *focus stone* in the center draws the energy in while concentrating on your intention, amplifies it, and sends it to all the other crystals in the grid. The direction that the energy flows will follow the ley lines in the grid pattern. Only one is needed, and citrine is an ideal choice.
- The surrounding *way stones* receive the energy from the center and further enhance it with their own unique vibration. It’s not an exact science, but color rays are believed to be a key contributor. Since green is associated with wealth, abundance, and growth, green crystals make excellent way stones.
- For balance, an outer circle with an equal number of *desire stones* will fine tune the energy, bringing it to the ideal state for manifesting the desired result. Any crystal that you might ordinarily wear or use by itself to achieve a particular goal is a good choice, regardless of color.

Should you decide to embellish your grid with additional crystals, it’s not necessary to have six of everything. But to maintain equilibrium, I do recommend working with numbers that “fit” mathematically, such as increments of three. They should also be chosen based on what they can bring to the grid to help further your intention by their own merit. For example, if you’re aware of something in particular that’s blocking you from prosperity, you might add an extra set of crystals that can remedy this. Using quartz points along the ley lines of the grid is also a great way to accelerate and direct the energy flow.

*Sacred geometry is a school of thought which holds that every aspect of the natural world, including our human existence, is designed by Divine Intelligence using geometric shapes and patterns.*

Suggestions for crystals that promote prosperity can be found on the next page. This is by no means a complete list, but they’re fairly common and easy to find. Crazy Wisdom has an excellent selection.

Before you move on, you’ll need a few more things: a wand, smudge, and one or more candles. The wand will be used to activate the grid by channeling and directing the energy. It can be any wand of your choosing. A large clear quartz or selenite point will work nicely and fit comfortably in your hand. As an alternative, a pendulum or athame are also good options.

## 4. Consecrate

Once you’ve collected your elements together, perform your own blessing over the area, the crystals, and yourself. Smudging with sage will cleanse any stagnant or negative energy from all, including yourself. If the smoke bothers you, use a hydrosol spray instead. If the aroma of sage doesn’t appeal to you, choose something else with cleansing or purifying properties. The important thing is that you perform this step; *how* you perform it is entirely up to you.



It's equally important to consecrate with intent. As you're smudging, remain focused on your desire for prosperity, and ask for Divine guidance and protection. In your own way, invoke the aid of your angels or spirit guides, and ask your crystals to awaken their powers to serve your highest good.

*The energy of the grid will be sustained for as long as it remains undisturbed, but the first three days are the strongest.*

### 5. Create & Activate

Now you're ready to create your grid. Remember to stay focused on your intent as you set each crystal in place. Here again, you can reflect on the specific contribution that you would like each crystal to make. Place the focus stone in the middle first, followed by the way stones, and then the desire stones. By working outward from the center, your grid is physically growing as you create it — and so is the energy. If you have any additional crystals, save them for last. Once the grid is complete, you're ready to activate it.

With your wand in hand, start by bringing in the white light of universal love and protection. Visualize it surrounding you and your grid. Direct your full attention on the focus stone in the center, and imagine a brilliant white light radiating from it like a starburst. Once you can see this in your mind's eye, use your wand to direct the light towards all the other crystals by drawing ley lines between all of them. In other words, use your wand to connect all the dots, while visualizing beams of light bonding the crystals together until every one of them is connected to all the others.

Infuse the grid with your intent one last time. Take in a long, deep breath, and as you exhale slowly, "will" your own energy into the grid and send your intent for prosperity out into the universe. Do this three times, and give thanks.

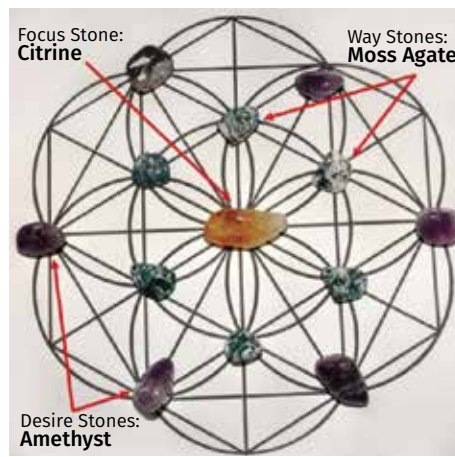
Finally, place your candle(s) anywhere near the grid, and light them. Illuminating your grid is a nice ceremonial touch that symbolizes the white light of universal love and protection. There's no set amount of time for burning the candles, but the longer you keep the grid lighted, the better. So when you put the candles out, you can switch to battery operated candles or a small lamp.

*Illuminating your grid is a nice ceremonial touch that symbolizes the white light of universal love and protection.*

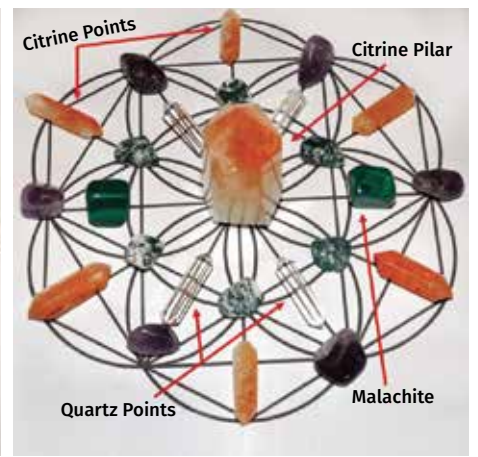
The energy of the grid will be sustained for as long as it remains undisturbed, but the first three days are the strongest. You can continue to add more energy to the grid by meditating, white lighting, re-activating, or adding more crystals. But it will always be strongest immediately after the first activation.

There are many ways to manifest prosperity. Gridding with crystals is one of the easiest to learn and is fairly inexpensive. So I hope you'll consider giving it a try. Whether you long for a life of luxury, or you believe that life itself is the greatest luxury one can have, all of us can benefit from abundance in our lives. May prosperity be one of many blessings you enjoy in the year to come.

*Heidi is a psychic medium, clinical hypnotherapist, certified astrologer, and sacred dance choreographer. She's also an avid student and practitioner of metaphysics, with a passion for crystals, and a strong belief in personal empowerment. For questions or more information, contact Heidi@HolisticHypnotics.com or visit www.CrystalMoonParanormal.com or www.HolisticHypnotics.com.*



BASIC GRID



EMBELLISHED GRID

## Top 10 Prosperity Grid Stones

**Amethyst:** Overall protection (including money and assets); clears unproductive vibrations; profitable business dealings.

**Citrine:** The "merchant's stone"; assists in both acquiring wealth and maintaining it; possibly the most powerful stone for attracting prosperity; also assists in solving problems; ideal as a focus stone.

**Clear Quartz:** Amplifies the energy field of the grid and maintains the balance.

**Copper:** Attracts benefits and good fortune; enables one to recognize barriers; memory retention (to help your intention "stick").

**Malachite:** Associated with the heart chakra, helps one to know and achieve their heart's desire; works to clear any obstructions in your path.

**Moss Agate (green):** New growth; riches; improves the ability to achieve a desired result.

**Ruby:** Promotes financial stability, expansiveness, and manifestation.

**Tiger Eye:** Stimulates wealth and the stability to maintain it.

**Topaz:** Success in all endeavors; attracts wealth; manifestation.

**Sapphire:** Fulfillment of dreams and desires; brings prosperity and gifts.



### Editorial and Sales Assistant for AnnArborHolistic.com and The Crazy Wisdom Journal

Very part-time job, 16-20 hours per month. Help us update and expand our AnnArborHolistic.com website (which is Crazy Wisdom's holistic resource guide on the web) and help us sell ads for *The Crazy Wisdom Journal*. Respectable pay. Work from home, mostly (but also go out visiting local holistically-oriented businesses).

Good organizational and people skills necessary. A good job for someone with already existing roots in the Ann Arbor area's holistic community who could be passionate about overseeing and deepening our online resource site for southeastern Michigan, and excited to be part of our editorial and sales teams.

Email Bill Zirinsky, owner, at [bill111512@aol.com](mailto:bill111512@aol.com)

## Come join us for Tea and Networking Witches' Night Out

in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month **NEW TIME** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

It is a chance to meet others of like mind, drink Witch Brew tea, explore the bookstore and have a great time!



\$3.50 for a pot of Witch Brew tea with free refills

[info@crazywisdom.net](mailto:info@crazywisdom.net)  
[www.crazywisdom.net](http://www.crazywisdom.net)







## Valentine's Tea with the Fairies at Crazy Wisdom

**Thursday, February 15, 1 p.m. and 4 p.m**  
(Tickets go on sale 1-15-18)

Children and their families are welcome for a magical time with our fairies, including story time and a special activity. Fairy attire is encouraged. Be creative! Tickets are \$11/person (free for babies 18 months and younger). Tickets available online at [crazywisdom.net](http://crazywisdom.net) or on the Kiosks at Crazy Wisdom prior to the event. For more information, contact Jessica at [jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net](mailto:jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net).



**Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth.** Spiritual seekers joining in community to attract others of like mind, creating an atmosphere and structure to foster and stimulate our individual and collective spiritual growth.

**Inward Bound Yoga** has offered a variety of approaches to the ancient discipline of yoga since 1995.

**Dave Jibson** is a poet, blogmaster, and editor.

**Jewel Heart** was founded by Gelek Rimpoche and is dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and to bringing the practice of this rich tradition within the context of contemporary life to everyone. Among the last generation of incarnate lamas tutored by the masters of Old Tibet, Gelek Rimpoche's command of western culture enabled him to convey the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with wisdom, wit, and kindness.

**Gwyn Jones** is a certified STOTT Pilates and TRX instructor with a emphasis on natural movement and alignment.

**Virginia June LMSW, MAC, CAADC, RT** is a therapist in the addiction field for 28 years. In long term recovery for over 30 years. NADA trainer for 14 years.

**Jan Katz** is a senior student of SUN SHEN Founder, Master Sang Kim. She is also a certified instructor of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Program of Dr. Paul Lam's Tai Chi for Health Institute.

**Joe Kelty** is a poet and teacher of English and biology at area community colleges.

**Andrea Kennedy** is a Reiki Master Practitioner and Instructor, practicing since 1995. She sees clients at Borer Family Chiropractic in Saline, MI, and brings Reiki into the mainstream through education and social media.

**Esther Kennedy, OP, MSW** a Dominican Sister of Adrian, is a spiritual director, retreat leader, and clinical social worker.

Katherine has completed the Level II iRest Teacher Training and is working toward Certification with the Integrative Restoration Institute, a nonprofit organization.

**Petra Kupperts** is a disability culture activist, community performance artist, and a professor at the University of Michigan.

**Lucinda Kurtz, MA** Brennan Healing Science Practitioner and former professor of Women's Studies, is a spiritual mentor and teacher of Kabbalah who believes Kabbalah, spiritual practice, and ritual can open paths to self-awareness and transformation.

**Dave Krajovic and Pat Krajovic** founded Body Works Healing Center in Plymouth, the Global Breath Institute, and Ascension Breathwork. They have advanced training in a wide array of healing techniques, esoteric teachings, and breath mastery.

**Mary Ledvina** is a writer, artist, healer, and teacher. She loves teaching creativity and has taught art journaling. *Art Journaling Magazine*, *Paragraph*, and *Seeding the Snow* have published her work.

**Leslie Science and Nature Center** educates and inspires children and adults to discover, understand, and respect their natural environment.

**Lifespan Doula Association** provides End-of-Life Doula Training and Certification. Owners Merilynne Rush and Patty Brennan are experts in end-of-life issues and the doula model of care.

**Lighthouse Center, Inc.** in Whitmore Lake is a center for spiritual development founded by Chetana Catherine Florida in 1979. Open to all pathways, the Center is guided by Jain Master Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji and embraces Ahimsa, nonviolence toward all beings.

**Pam Lindberg** is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher.

**Micah Lindquist** is an enjoyable and capable crafter who has helped construct buildings at Strawbale Studio. He enjoys working with round-pole building and is an

## Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

**David L. Kent** is an Investment Advisor Representative with LPL Financial. He has a special interest in Socially Responsible Investing and financial planning that is compatible with a healthy world. Securities offered through LPL Financial, Member FINRA. Member SIPC. David Kent may only transact and/or discuss securities business with residents of the following states FL, MI, OH, VA.

**Master Sang Kim** is an engineer, Christian mystic, and inheritor of Master Gabriel Chin's Yang Style Tai-Chi lineage. Originally from Korea, he has practiced martial arts, cultivation methods, and healing for more than 30 years and has been teaching since 1992.

**Katherine King** has studied, professionally practiced, and taught restoration of the body, mind, and planet for over 35 years using various modalities, including environmental psychology, permaculture, spiritual retreats, massage, aromatherapy, and environmental engineering.

**Raisha Love** has been teaching since 2007. She is a Purna Yoga Certified Teacher at the 500-hour level. She is currently enrolled in the 2,000-hour program at the College of Purna Yoga.

**Holly Makimaa** is a transformational life coach, spiritual counselor, holistic writing teacher, and sacred activist.

**Julie Mariouw** is an English teacher, published writer, former Journal Workshop leader. She is certified to lead workshops using the Amherst Writers & Artists method developed by Pat Schneider, and is an AWA affiliate.

**Kevin McCauley** is a qualified medical doctor and focuses on the important question about addiction: Is it really a disease?

**Barb McConnell, LPN, CHTPI** is a nurse, Certified Healing Touch Practitioner, and instructor for Levels 1-4 with 30 years of experience in hospital, clinical, industrial nursing/industrial management. She also teaches Total Health which includes essential oils.

**Drake Meadow** is a certified leader of the dances and initiated Sufis.

**Michigan Friends Center**, built in 1994, is a nonprofit organization located on the wooded 90-acre land of Friends Lake Cooperative Community. As a spiritually grounded community, they enjoy discussions that explore their shared experience of renewal through nature.

**Kathleen Moore** has been teaching voice for about 30 years and is also a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique, a singer, and a certified music therapist.

**Ed Morin** is a poet and former English teacher at area universities and colleges.

**The Mother** is a combination of many expressions of the Divine Mother such as Mother Mary, Kwan Yin, and others, and expresses different aspects of herself depending on the needs and karma of the person with whom she is sharing darshan. She is trance channeled by Barbara Brodsky.

**Glenn Mullin** is a Tibetologist, Buddhist writer, translator of classical Tibetan literature, and teacher of Tantric Buddhist meditation. He lived in the Indian Himalayas between 1972 and 1984, and studied philosophy, literature, meditation, yoga, and the enlightenment culture. Glenn is the author of over 20 books on Tibetan Buddhism, founded and directed the Mystical Arts of Tibet, and has curated a number of important Tibetan art exhibitions.

**Bonnie Mulliner**, owner of Second Star to the Right Herbs and all-around DIY pro, is a repository of knowledge of traditional homestead arts and crafts. She has been knitting and crocheting for over fifty years, and is skilled in both two-needle and multi-needle technique.

**Samo Joanna Myers** is a SUN SHEN healer, disciple, and senior student of the SUN SHEN founder, Master Sang Kim. Her passion is listening deeply and tapping into a person's ability to change quickly, effortlessly, and permanently.

**Naturopathic School of Ann Arbor** staff are all licensed massage therapists and traditional naturopaths with extensive experience in natural medicine forms of assessment and treatment.

**Sifu Genie Parker** has trained and taught Wu Style tai chi chuan for over 20 years. She is a disciple of Grandmaster Eddie Wu Kwong Yu, head of the fifth generation of the Wu family and a gatekeeper of the Wu style.

**Peachy Fitness** is a small friendly yoga studio in Ann Arbor that provides classes for beginners as well as longtime yogis. The studio is designed with the entire family in mind.

**People Dancing Company** is a regional dance company celebrating 32 years of dance.

**Ellen Porter, M.Ac, Dipl.Ac** of AcuThrive Acupuncture is a Nationally Board Certified Acupuncturist specializing in Classical 5 Element Acupuncture and NADA-Acu Detox Specialist.





# Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

**Pure Hot Yoga Studio** in Maple Village promotes health and wellness. Teachers are trained to enhance all levels of yoga practice, beginner to advanced, in supporting everyone to their best potential.

**Meena Puri** is an Ayurvedic Practitioner, Certified Meditation Teacher and a Yoga teacher. She has been teaching Yoga Therapy for over 22 years and practicing Ayurvedic Medicine for seven years.

**Dr. Samm Pryce, N.D.** founder of Balanced Integration is a Licensed Naturopathic and Alternative Medical Doctor located in Ann Arbor

**Judy Ramsey** has offered animal communication and interspecies counseling for over ten years. She applies her social work and linguistic skills to animals. She has mentored with Penelope Smith and Teresa Wagner and teaches three levels of animal communication.

**Daniel Rechtschaffen**, Marriage and Family Therapist, and Author, founded the Mindful Education Institute and the Omega Mindfulness in Education conference and leads mindfulness in education trainings and conferences at institutions such as the Omega Institute, Esalen, and California Institute of Integral Studies. He has helped create curriculum for the leading mindfulness in education organizations and has a private psychotherapy practice in the San Francisco Bay Area.

**The Eleventh Demo Rinpoche**, reincarnation of Gelek Rinpoche's father, was born in Tibet and recognized by the Dalai Lama at the age of five, when he entered Drepung Loseling. He received his Geshe Lharampa degree there and continued in tantric studies for several years after. He is currently studying Interfaith Engagement at a theological seminary in the United States.

**Karen Renée Robb**, an Ann Arbor native currently based in Nashville, is a vocal & visual artist and healer with over 25 years of vocal performance experience. Her passion for sound, creativity, and compassion has led her to assist others in reclaiming their voice, innate rhythm, and creative expression through use of the frame drum. She is also the founder of The Music City Alliance For Sound & Music Healing, a Reiki Master Teacher and Universal Life Minister.

**Dave Robison** has 40 years experience as an automotive designing engineer at Ford and now applies his skill to holograms and ambient energy in the environment.

**Libby Robinson, Ph.D., MSW** has been practicing mindfulness meditation since 1979. She was trained to teach mindfulness-based interventions by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Zindel Segal, Susan Woods, and colleagues. She has been teaching Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction since 2003.

**Barbara Robertson** is the Director/Owner of the Breastfeeding Center of Ann Arbor. She is a board-certified Lactation Consultant and breastfeeding educator who loves working with moms and babies.

**ShuNahSii Rose** began her practice as a feminist educator, healer, and community organizer in Ann Arbor in 1990 to honor the connection between the natural world and hope for the future.

**David Rosenberg** has been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 1993 and traveled to Pune, India, in 1996 to study at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.

**Anita Rubin-Meiller, LMSW** has been facilitating groups for many years and has offered mindful self-compassion practices for the past six years. A therapist and seeker, she weaves her professional wisdom and personal experiences together in a way that helps others connect to their common humanity with compassion and kindness.

*"At the center of your being you have the answer. You know who you are and you know what you want."*

— Lao Tzu



**Tamara Aprea** is the owner of Pilates Loft Studio, located in downtown Ann Arbor since 2008. Pilates Loft Studio specializes in individualized private Pilates, small reformer and mat classes, and Kripalu Yoga. Their focus is using integrated Pilates and Yoga techniques that help correct imbalances, develop functional movement patterns, and build postural alignment. For more information, visit [pilatesloftstudio.org](http://pilatesloftstudio.org).

**Dolores Rubio-Turtle** first experienced Transmission Meditation with Benjamin Creme in 1994. She passionately believes in service and personal growth and since this practice is vital for both, she is excited to share it now in Ann Arbor.

**Jonathan Rudinger, RN LMT** and founder of PetMassage™, has worked in the canine massage areas since the mid-1990s. He facilitates workshops and home-study courses.

**Meryllynne Rush, RN** has been co-facilitating the Ann Arbor Death Café since 2012. She is a natural death educator, home funeral guide, green burial advocate, and advanced care planning consultant. She is also a certified Respecting Choices First Steps Trainer who teaches end-of-life doula training through Lifespan Doula Association.

**Sue Salaniuk** holds a Senior Intermediate One Iyengar Certificate. She has studied with the Iyengars in India 12 times and continues to advance her studies regularly with teachers in the U.S.

**Mary Seibert, BSN, RYT200** is a Certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher with a foundation in Iyengar. She is also a holistic nurse and Healing Touch Practitioner.

**Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre**, founded by Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharma, is a nonprofit near Lansing. Its aim is to give support to those struggling or suffering in life on any level, and to assist those who seek inner knowledge and personal growth in the pursuit of peace, health, and happiness.

**Laura Seligman, MS** is a SoulCollage® facilitator, artist, and docent. She also volunteers at the UMi Museum of Art.

**SANDYA-Sandra Shears** has been a Spiritual Channel, Healer, and Counselor since 1990 as guided by the Higher Communities of Light. As a Light Worker and Vibrational Practitioner, she specializes in activating other Practitioners, Light Workers, and World Servers.

**Asha Sheth** is a student of Jain Master Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, since her childhood in India. She brings the puja her devotion and a wealth of stories and wisdom of Parswanath.

**Vijayalaxmi Shinde**, a scholar of the ancient Indian art of Palmistry, can give accurate readings and guidance on all aspects of life. Using the art of Tarot Cards Divination, she can help to find subconsciously hidden answers to important concerns on one's life path.

**Terrence Shulman, JD, LMSW, ACSW, CAADC, CPC** has been an attorney at law since 1992 and a licensed social worker since 1997. He is the founder/director of The Shulman Center for Compulsive Theft, Spending and Hoarding and is the author of four books, including: *Cluttered Lives, Empty Souls* (2011).

**Antonio Sieira, PhD** is a professional member of the American Hypnosis Association, with certifications in past life regression, smoking cessation, and weight loss therapies. He is also certified by the American Alternative Medical Association as an Alternative Medical Practitioner, and is the creator of the Mindfulness Meditation System.

**Anneliese Sinnott, OP** is a Dominican Sister of Adrian, MI. She recently retired from the profession of professor of systematic theology at Ecumenical Theological Seminary of Detroit.

**Lynn Sipher, LMSW** has provided psychotherapy since 1985 and mindfulness-based classes and workshops since 2006. She is a founding member of Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

**Barb Smith** is the author of *Brent's World*.

**Song of the Morning** offers an opportunity to become immersed in the simplicity, serenity, and sustenance of a balanced yogic lifestyle. We offer a place of spiritual refreshment and relaxation to those on a conscious spiritual journey toward union with the Divine, to those hoping to discover their own highest potential, and to all who seek respite from the worries and cares of the world.

**Southeast Michigan Astrologers' Round Table (SMART)** is a local chapter of the National Council for Geocosmic Research (NCGR).

**Matt Statman** is the University of Michigan Collegiate Recovery Program Manager.

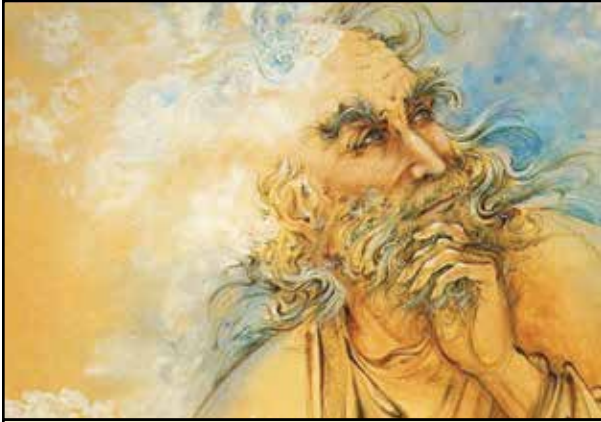
**Emma Stefanova, MA, E-RYT500, YACEP, Member IAYT**, is a yoga and meditation master as well as an experienced teacher trainer, healer, author, and therapist. She belongs to the Satyananda yoga lineage and has taught worldwide for over 30 years.

**Marsha Stroko**, one of the innkeepers of Inn at the Rustic Gate, has a long history of studying and teaching in the field of consciousness and spirituality. She has focused her attention to second half of life issues and brings amazing focus and awareness to the transitions we make as we pass through the gates.





# Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers



## The Poetry Of Hafiz

*Hafiz, a Sufi poet, expressed in poetry love for the divine, and the intoxicating oneness of union with it. Hafiz, along with many Sufi masters, uses wine as the symbol for love. The intoxication that results from both is why it is such a fitting comparison. Hafiz spoke out about the hypocrisy and deceit that exists in society, and was more outspoken in pointing this out than many poets similar to him.*

## I Have Learned So Much

I  
Have  
Learned  
So much from God  
That I can no longer  
Call  
Myself

A Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim,  
a Buddhist, a Jew.

The Truth has shared so much  
of Itself  
With me

That I can no longer call myself  
A man, a woman, an angel,  
Or even a pure  
Soul.

Love has  
Befriended Hafiz so completely  
It has turned to ash  
And freed  
Me

Of every concept and image  
my mind has ever known.

From *The Gift*  
Translated by Daniel Ladinsky

**Lauren Tatarsky** has a Master's in Spiritual Guidance and has been a yoga and meditation instructor for over seven years. She has years of experience working with teenagers on mindfulness, stress reduction, and connecting inward.

**Pamela Taylor** began her journey with astrology at the age of 14 and calls it her life's passion. She is an ordained Spiritualist minister.

**Robert Taylor** has been a scholar and writer of Vedic Philosophy for 47 years; he studied the Vedic scriptures while living as a Hindu monk in India.

**Janene Ternes** is a commissioned spiritual director and founder of Prayer in Motion, LLC. She has developed a variety of workshops that teach and inspire holistic forms of prayer to help others find and achieve their own inner connection with God.

**The Threshold Choir** honors the ancient tradition of women singing at the bedsides of people who are struggling, some with living, some with dying. When invited—and without charge—we visit in small groups, welcoming families and caregivers to join us in song or simply to be present.

**Thrive! Wellness Center** uses Nutrition Response Testing™ involving the body's reflexes to determine the underlying cause of illness.

**Stephanie Tighe, MSW** is a teacher and shamanic healer who co-founded Spirit Weavers, a training and support organization for shamans. She has over 25 years of experience healing and leading workshops nationally and internationally. She has trained extensively with Sandra Ingerman.

**Judy Lee Trautman** is a certified leader of the dances, an initiated Sufi, and an ordained Sufi Cherag.

**Jennifer Vanderwal** is a Healing Facilitator, Reiki Master, Intuitive Spiritual Counselor, and Melody Crystal Healer Instructor. She has taught classes for over ten years.

**Cam Vozar, LMSW, LMFT**, a psychotherapist in private practice for over 25 years, has worked with individuals and couples focusing on trauma, recovery, spirituality, and EMDR.

**Patricia Walter, OP, PhD** a licentiate in theology from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley and a doctorate in philosophical and systematic theology from the Graduate Theological Union. She also holds a doctorate in humane letters, honoris causa, from Barry University. Sister Patricia has taught at Siena Heights University, St. Mary Seminary in Cleveland, and Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome.

**Kashi Walters** is the Co-Director at the nonprofit Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center in Ann Arbor. She is an experienced hatha yoga, meditation, and self-inquiry instructor.

**Sifu Joseph Wang** is the Head SUN SHEN Tai-Chi Instructor and Senior Tai-Chi Students of Master Sang Kim. He has been teaching since 2005.

**Dr. Mark A. Weiner, MD, D-FASAM** is an addictionologist and pain management specialist.

**Lou Weir** is a long-time student of the Diamond Approach and a teacher-in-training. He is also a founding teacher of Insight Meditation Ann Arbor.

**Ben Wielechowski** is the Education Director at Robin Hills Farm. For over seven years he has been a teacher specializing in college-level composition. He is a new father, writer, and adventure enthusiast.

**Suzy Wienckowski** is a Reiki Master and Massage Therapist with over 35 years of experience in healing arts. She teaches the traditional Usui System of Reiki Healing and is a member of the Reiki Alliance.

**Eve Wilson** is the creator and Director of the Healer Development Program and a full-time Healer Practitioner since 1986. She is a groundbreaking leader in healing and ascension who helps others access their gifts and realize their potential as healers.

**Julie Wolcott, MA, CSW, LPC** has practiced in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy for over 40 years. Besides being a Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Practitioner and Kripalu Yoga teacher, she is also a Certified Transformational Breath Facilitator since 2004 and a Senior Trainer with the Transformational Breath Foundation since 2006.

**John Wolff**, Professor of Humanities, Author, and Priest, who in the Zen community is John Gendo Wolff, used to live in Ann Arbor, graduated from Huron High School, and attended freshman year at the University of Michigan. Since then, he has obtained the degrees: B.A., University of Cincinnati; M.A., University of Colorado; M.F.A., University of Montana. He has also taken his family to live in China where he taught English and learned Chinese.

**Women's Divorce Resource Center (WDRC)** is an all-volunteer, nonprofit, educational organization. It offers workshops by experienced divorce professionals including Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Certified Divorce Financial planners, and Attorneys.

**Master Wasantha Young** is a Master of T'ai Chi and Qigong with over 48 years of experience. She has received formal instruction in different styles of meditation and massage therapy and has a master's degree in Transpersonal Studies.

*"To be hopeful, to embrace one possibility after another — that is surely the basic instinct... crying out: High tide! Time to move out into the glorious debris. Time to take this life for what it is!"*

— Barbara Kingsolver

**Rebecca Williams** has been a Tarot card reader at Crazy Wisdom for over ten years. Her readings explore deeper soul movements in our lives. Through intuitive readings she assists individuals to use their own soul awareness and wisdom to promote positive change and instill harmony through all of life's complications.

**Yoga Focus**, an Iyengar Yoga studio, is celebrating 25 years as a yoga center. Teachers value their practice of yoga and the respect for their students.

**Yoga Space** consists of teachers certified in the Iyengar method with decades of experience. They excel at making yoga fun and accessible for everyone.

**The Zen Buddhist Temple** was formally opened in 1981 as part of the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom. The Temple functions on three levels: as a temple serving the public, as a training center for ordained members, and as a Sangha or community of members.

**Tina Zion, RNC, BA, CHt, RMT** is a fourth-generation psychic who has been practicing and teaching holistic healing for over 30 years. She is known internationally for her books including *Become a Medical Intuitive: The Complete Developmental Guide* and *The Reiki Teacher's Manual*.

**Kate Zurenko** is an award-winning Chelsea-based professional photographer, with a special passion for backyard and wildlife photography. Trained at Boston University, she has several years of experience tutoring shutterbugs, from beginner to professional.



# The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

[www.crazywisdomjournal.com](http://www.crazywisdomjournal.com) on the web

## Read the digital edition of the winter issue

Flip through the pages of The CW Community Journal – virtually! Our entire issue is made available online via Issuu Technology, a leading digital publishing platform, so it's easy to read CW Community Journal while traveling, or to share it with out-of-town friends and family.

## Share your thoughts and comments

From each print issue, we also turn select features and articles into blogs – which you can find right on the homepage of our website – so you can leave your thoughts and comments, “like” articles on Facebook, or easily share links via email and social media.

## Find events, classes, workshops, & more

Our local events calendar (found at the back of each print issue) is also available online, making it easy to search for events, classes, workshops, and also read about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders around the community.

▶ and read The CW Community Journal **blog**



A unique mix of content, from local voices – writers, holistic practitioners, workshop leaders, artists and others – and a variety of topics to explore: spirituality, health and nutrition, astrology, meditation, tarot, psychology, art therapy, and more.



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