

WINTER 2018: Our Souls

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Have a Pg.21
Jelly Drop

Helping people with Alzheimer's
stay hydrated ... and happy

Positive
Deviance:

The power of focusing
on what's going right

Pg.14

Ya Here for
the Poetry?

Pg.12

COVER
STORY
Pg.24



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Our Souls:

The hidden – and not so hidden – life within

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Cover Photo © Cecille Arcurs

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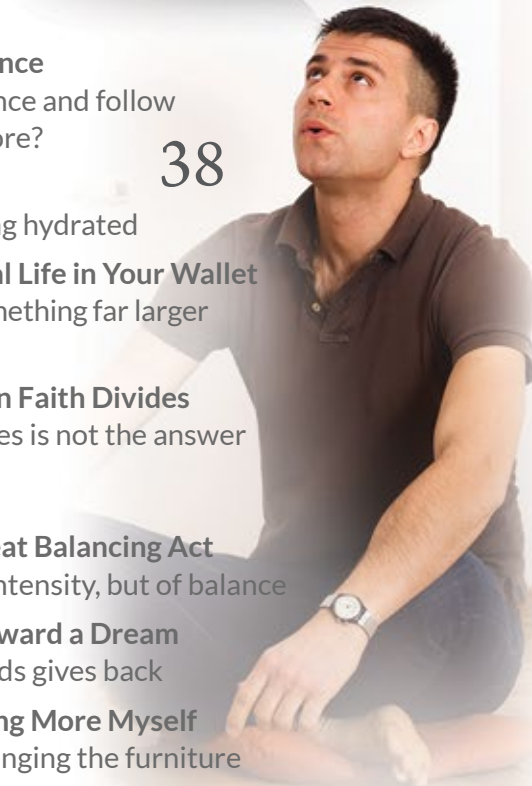
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THOUGHTS FROM THE HOME OFFICE

Winter is coming ...



If you're a fan of the *Game of Thrones* television series or books, that phrase has a particular meaning. If not, it just means it's getting cold out there!

In the LIV FUN issues this year, we've talked about our physical bodies and how to stay fit, our brains and ways to keep sharp, and how our emotions are a huge part of experiencing life. In this issue we turn inward and explore our souls. This subject is a big one, with many different perspectives — each one unique, very personal, and very powerful. Kind of like the soul itself. We are all unique beings moving through life affecting the world around us, and in turn being influenced and affected by external forces — nature, science, each other. How do we seek out and find positive influences that feed our souls, and how do we leave a lasting impact on the world around us?

Deep thoughts ... and no one has all the answers. I think the important thing is to ask ourselves the questions from time to time and give some thought to how we're really doing — inside. Are we the *who* we want to be and, if

so, are we sharing that? If not, what are we doing to actively become our best selves? The articles in this issue examine the hidden (and not-so-hidden) spiritual self, and explore ways that we pull all of our disparate selves into one. It's not about religion, although that may be what resonates with some. Whether through religion or other means, our souls need attention from us if they are to guide us through life living as our best selves.

The holidays are coming up quickly, and what better time to stop and take some time to look inside ourselves and re-center. The daily routines and the commotion of the holiday events can sometimes put us in a get-through-the-day mode. While some days just getting through the day is a huge victory, hopefully we can each find the time to invest in our best self and be sure that's the one we are taking into the holiday season and sharing with the people we love. I wish you all the very best this holiday season, and hope you stay warm and happy. After all ... winter is coming!

Happy holidays,
Greg Clark
Executive Vice President
Leisure Care



On a typical afternoon strolling down Broadway, Manhattan's pulsating streets radiate a cacophony of sounds that invade my ears. Unlike the three out of five passersby whose ears are budded against the clamor, tuned in to whatever sounds charm their senses, I opt to "be here now." That is, to be present in the dizzying orchestration of the moment, with its fast-paced pedestrian chorus, jostling for sidewalk space, voices a dissonance of languages, ranges of scale and syntax, chattering, shouting, laughing, or murmuring intently into mobile phones, as yet another section of the citysong, construction cranes, clash with the harmonics of honking taxis, playing its stop-and-go USA rendition of Gershwin's "An American in Paris." All of these sounds fuse into the symphony that performs the "here and now," cannily enchanting my senses: New York, New York.

Or, am I escaping into the chaos, aiming to avoid the bedlam prowling my innermost self?

Meanwhile, the earbudders tune in to their preferred sounds, usually music. Budders can enjoy a vast selection of symphonic, or not-so-structured, voices and musical instruments. Whatever rapture garners their attention, it's not this raucous traffic jam or the clicking high-heeled shoes on feet swirling around them. Instead, they're choosing to control what seeps into their consciousness. What beats of drums and clash of cymbals touch their deepest senses?

It's a pity that most hearing disabled are denied all but the beat of drums; this tone-deaf disability must frustrate those who desire more than what off-key, offbeat music they might conjure in their minds. I believe they compensate, though, by exploring their inner core through other natural means, such as following the flow of a river, watching trees sway in the wind,

and other trance-inducing activities that deliver them to their bliss.

Meanwhile in Manhattan, the budders focus on internal music, choosing, I can only surmise, sounds that create for them a beat that somehow propels them forward ... or deeper inwards.

The budders seem oblivious to their surroundings, sometimes dangerously so. Some non-budders take it personally. I don't. I'm simply waiting for the techies to invent an earbud that fits my ear without triggering pain, admittedly a first-world complaint, but real none-the-less, so I too may enjoy music that transfixes my senses, enraptures me in joy, laughter, bliss, even on occasion, in sorrow, whatever my psychic state craves at any given moment.

*"The budders
seem oblivious to their
surroundings, sometimes
dangerously so.
Some non-budders
take it personally.
I don't."*

I'd love to traverse Broadway under the influence of Gershwin, or Bach, Mahler, Tchaikovsky, the miraculous Beatles classics, or Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah," any Aretha Franklin song, Led Zeppelin, or Stevie Nicks. I, too, could shut out dissonance and follow music down the path to the quintessential me, wherein I uncover the unique symphony that defines me at my core.

Music transcends all cultural walls, even generational lines, when it's brilliant enough to outlast the ages. Music unites us, just as pods of whales are united by their linguistic compositions, as crickets share their nighttime concertos, as songbirds reach across all linguistic

boundaries, and all these complex sounds, yet to be deciphered by humans, nevertheless stir the hearts of humankind.

Not all species possess the gift of language that grants a creature the ability to grasp their family's unique language and apply syntax. That's because not all species come equipped with the ability to develop the physiological passageways that, together with the inherited language genome, manifest complex vocalization.

Humans share the aptitude to create complex languages with dolphins, whales, elephants, seals, and just three species of birds: songbirds, parrots and hummingbirds. Scientific studies suggest that, like humans, these mammals and birds not only communicate complexly with others of their own species, but some may also correlate certain sounds in their languages with elements of their own wellbeing.

I wonder if a mother whale desperately clinging to her calf already dead from swallowing toxic substances finds solace in the nearby sounds of a human flutist playing "Loch Lomond."

When last summer Arizona Senator John McCain was laid to rest, the incomparable voice of René Fleming singing "Danny Boy" chilled me to the bone, drew tears of joy and sorrow from glen to glen, and the world was reminded that, above all, we will one day ourselves go away and we hope loved ones sing *Aves* at our graves, the resurgent music of dying and thence returning home touching that deep ethereal nuance within us. That same week, who wasn't moved to both joy and sorrow by Stevie Wonder's performance of "Amazing Grace" in memory of lately departed Aretha Franklin, Queen of Soul?

Music has that profound power to help us connect with something deeply human — and at the same time divine. ♦

The Sound of SILENCE

Dare we shut out the dissonance and follow music down the path to our essential core?

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler

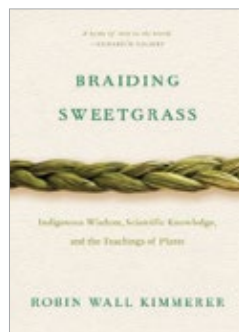
Entertain Your Brain: Books

by Misha Stone

Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

*“Put your heart, mind and soul into even your smallest acts.
This is the secret of success.”*

— Swami Sivananda



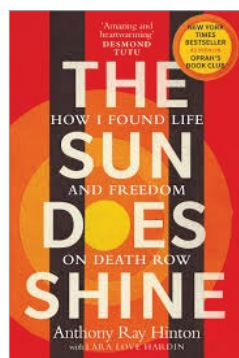
Braiding Sweetgrass:
Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of the Plants
by Robin Wall Kimmerer (Milkweed editions, \$18.00)

“How, in our modern world, can we find our way to understand the earth as a gift again, to make our relations with the world sacred again?” Kimmerer brings her role as a botanist, professor, poet, mother, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation to this rich collection of essays aimed at answering that question. Starting with the Skywoman myth, Kimmerer explores how the stories we grow up with define us and how so few of us grow up with stories or even language that nourish a sense of connection to the plants and trees that surround us. Through personal stories and scientific learning, these essays offer ways of relearning a sense of reciprocity and responsibility that roots us in a sense of communion and thankfulness. This lushly written and thoughtfully observed book contains meditations on indigenous language and culture, the genius and limitations of science, and all that we still have to learn from nature and ourselves.



Sweet Bean Paste
by Durian Sukegawa, translated by Alison Watts (OneWorld Publications, \$16.99)

If you liked *A Man Called Ove*, you'll enjoy this quiet Japanese novel about a young man whose life changes when he lets someone in. Sentaro is doing a listless job in a bakery after a stint in jail. He does little more than work, drink and sleep, depressed about where life has taken him — until the morning 76-year-old Tokue comes in complaining that Sentaro's *dorayaki* (sweet bean paste buns) have no flavor because they have no heart. As he watches her make sweet bean paste, despite her age and misshapen hands, with a kind of care and attention he has never mustered for anything, his perspective begins to shift. Tokue's newfound joy in exploring the world so late in life helps Sentaro realize how much he has to gain if he allows himself to truly live. This heartwarming story resounds with the power of friendship and the wisdom of our elders.



The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row
by Anthony Ray Hinton (St. Martin's Press, \$26.99)

“It was hard not to spend time wishing for a different life, but I tried not to dwell on all of the what-ifs.” If you've read Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*, you are already familiar with Anthony Ray Hinton's case — a black man in Alabama accused of a crime he did not commit, sentenced to death row for 30 years before the state dissolved the charge. In this autobiography, selected as an Oprah Book Club title, Hinton describes what it was like to live in a 5x7 cell, somehow maintaining hope while watching his friends on Death Row being taken away to their executions. He reads, starts a book club, daydreams about marrying Halle Berry, and lifts his head as high as he can for his devoted mother and childhood friend who fight on his behalf, somehow finding the capacity for joy through not giving up on life. When Stevenson becomes his attorney, Hinton's hope to clear his name is reignited. You cannot read his story without crying about the injustice Hinton experienced and how hard Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative he founded had to fight to get him released. But it's Hinton's clear, resolute voice that will make you laugh and inspire awe for this man who did not let the wrongs done to him extinguish his love of life and willingness to help others.

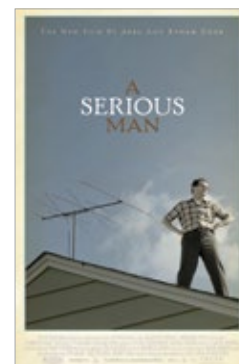
Entertain Your Brain: Movies

by Robert Horton

*Hearty congratulations to our own Robert Horton, recently elected to the prestigious
National Society of Film Critics.*

*“Acting is not about being famous; it's about
exploring the human soul.”*

— Annette Bening



A Serious Man (2009)

It's one of the lowest-profile movies the Coen brothers have made — but it's also one of their best. Meet Larry Gopnik (the superb Michael Stuhlbarg, from *Call Me by Your Name*), a middle-aged Jewish physicist in the suburbs of Minneapolis in 1967. For everybody else, it's the Summer of Love, but Larry is beset by trials that are nearly metaphysical: His wife leaves him, his kids act out, he's getting personal threats, and his rabbis can't answer his probing questions about why he's been singled out as a modern Job. In true Coen fashion, the movie is wildly funny but also utterly haunting; Larry's spiritual quest is authentic, regardless of the wacky circumstances. The story begins with a prologue (in Yiddish) set in 19th-century Poland, an unexplained stroke that tells us not to expect answers, but to accept the mystery. By the time the film reaches its startling conclusion, the mystery *is* the only answer. (Available streaming on Amazon, iTunes, Vudu, Netflix, YouTube and Google Play.)



Lost Horizon (1937)

It would be easy to chide this Hollywood classic as an example of dime-store spirituality, a case of complex ideas boiled down to greeting-card wisdom. But Frank Capra's film has more going for it than that — a real search for meaning and a wonderful fantasy of how humanity might evolve under the right circumstances. Novelist James Hilton invented the land of Shangri-La, an isolated valley of peace somewhere near Tibet. Ronald Colman plays the idealistic leader of a group of outsiders, stranded in Shangri-La after their plane crashes. Capra's sumptuous production brings the arguments to vivid life with some very sincere questions about mankind's priorities, along with a little supernatural hoodoo on the side. The movie must've made an impression during its first release, with the planet poised on the verge of world war and the prospect of a utopia very tempting indeed. Not to be confused with the 1973 musical adaptation, one of Hollywood's legendary flops. (Available streaming on Amazon, Vudu and iTunes; on DVD at www.DVD.com.)



Le Havre (2011)

Near the docks of the French port city of Le Havre, a laid-back shoeshine man named Marcel Marx finds his modest life interrupted. He stumbles across an African child, Idrissa, who got separated from his family during their arduous migration on the way to England. Marcel is nobody's idea of a hero — the general consensus is he's a time-waster and lucky to have a wife and an extremely humble roof to live under — but he stirs himself enough to help the kid out. This film is in the usual poker-faced style of Finnish director Aki Kaurismaki, which keeps it from getting too sentimental. It's got deadpan humor to burn, but its tale of a community finding its soul is completely serious in the end. Plus, there's a fundraising event featuring a white-haired French rockabilly star named Little Bob that is even better than it sounds. Not all happy endings come in sparkly colors; sometimes they're rooted in earthy grit on the water-front. (Available streaming on Amazon, iTunes, YouTube and Google Play.)

Entertain Your Brain: **Music**

by John Pearson

Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

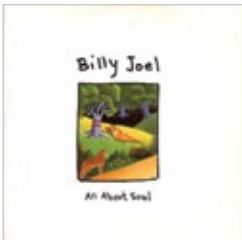
*“I am, as I’ve said, merely competent.
But in an age of incompetence, that makes me extraordinary.”*

— Billy Joel



I’d Rather Go Blind (Single) — Etta James, 1968

Recorded in 1967 and released in 1968, this powerfully sung B-side has become a soul classic. Unfazed by being subordinated to the flip side of the upbeat “Tell Mama,” “I’d Rather Go Blind” performed very well on the charts and sustains high regard among musicians and critics to this day. James’ delivery is uniquely hers and stands out, to this reviewer’s ears, as conveying something more than the simple lyrics would suggest; perhaps emotions from being in recovery from heroin addiction bled into the recording session. In any case, it’s important to note that James is given partial writing credit for the tune, lending credence to the theory that there is more of her in the song than merely her vocalizations.



All About Soul (Single) — Billy Joel, 1993

Written and recorded by Billy Joel, “All About Soul” peaked at number 29 on the Billboard Hot 100. This reviewer regards it as somewhat of a mystery that this example of near-perfect composition and execution did not do better on the charts. Not technically falling under the “soul” genre (although one feels that a case could be made), the song’s lyrics come across as a clear and powerful reaction to the indomitable, uplifting spirit of a significant other in Joel’s life. Couple the lyric with a rich accompaniment of strings, vocals, and driving rhythm section — the bass guitarist shining especially brightly — to arrive at the masterful result, enjoyable and infectious from beginning to end.



Crazy Love (Single) — Van Morrison, 1970

Morrison’s breathy paean to, no doubt, his then-wife Janet (who poses with Van on the single sleeve) is a jewel of heartfelt admiration, respect and love. Morrison’s style, sometimes referred to as Celtic Soul, is exemplified by this charming piece. “Crazy Love” was originally released as a B-side single to “Come Running” and later included on Morrison’s critically and commercially successful 1970 *Moondance* album. The song’s popularity has not flagged in 48 years; it has been covered by many artists and been used in several movies, six and counting as of this review. For trivia buffs out there, Morrison uses a trio of gospel backup singers on this track, one of which is Emily Houston, mother of Whitney Houston and aunt of Dionne Warwick. ♦



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- Take care of their brains

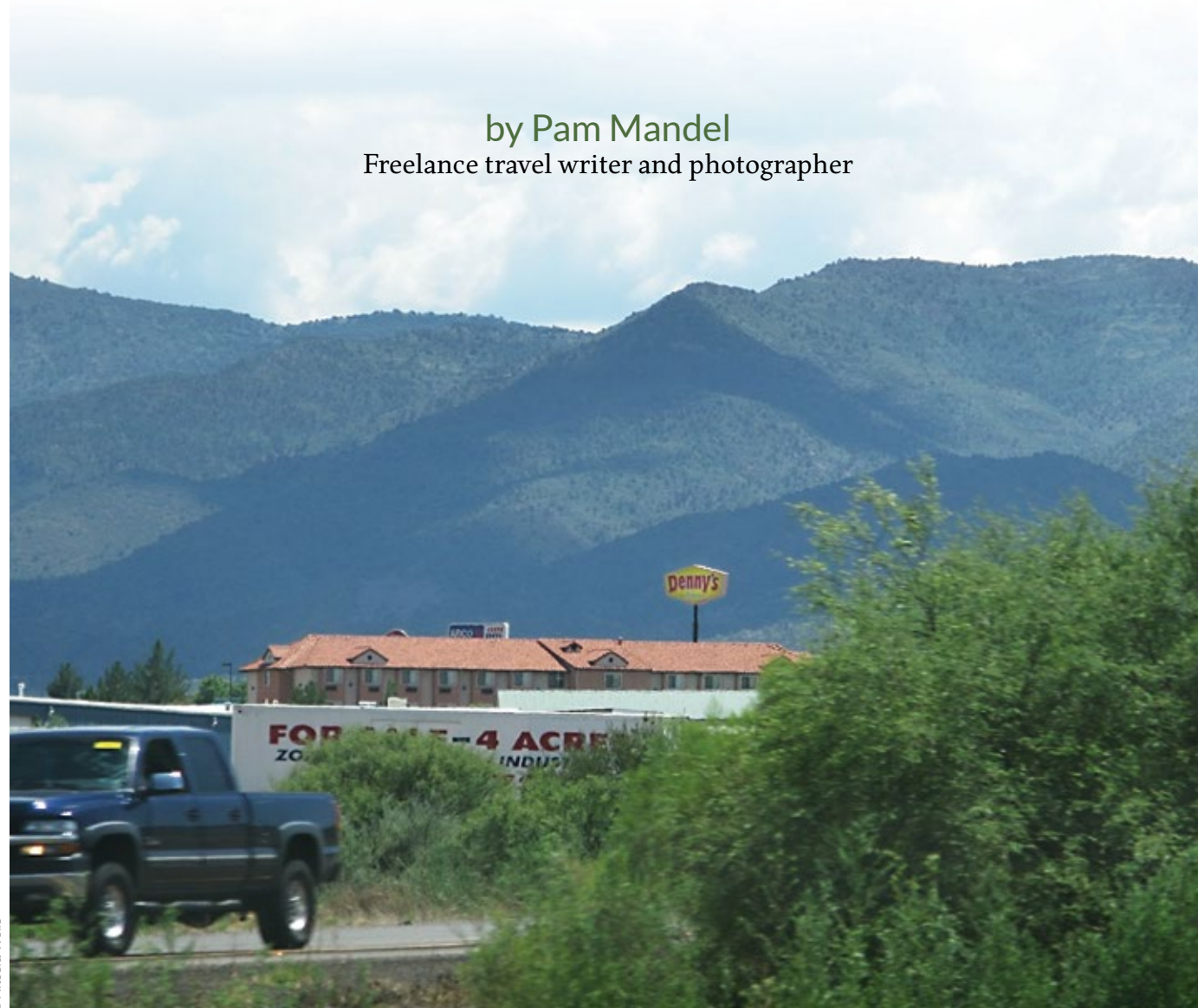


LEISURECARE

YA HERE FOR THE POETRY?

Maybe realizations come easier over a late-night breakfast at the Elko Denny's.

by Pam Mandel
Freelance travel writer and photographer



*“We are, in every derogatory sense of the word, tourists ...
woefully undereducated in what we’re here to experience.*

And we’ve been having a great time.”

There aren’t many late-night dining choices in Elko, Nevada — a few casino restaurants, redolent with second-hand smoke, and the Denny’s, up on a hill across the highway. We chose the Denny’s, as we’d had more than our share of second-hand smoke at our hotel, the Red Lion Casino.

The Denny’s was surgical-room bright, hardly a place for midnight poets to hang out. There were some truck drivers, a couple of late-night road trippers, and us. We sat squinting at each other across the shiny table top. Over all-day breakfast, we asked the same question we’d been asking since we started the trip.

“We planned six days in Elko? What were we thinking?”

There’s a good answer, sort of. My friend Andy and I had decided, on a whim, to attend the 34th Cowboy Poetry Gathering. The Gathering takes place in Elko every February because that’s when ranch work is slow on the ranchlands. And it’s in Elko because of its central location in the middle of Nowhere, Nevada.

Neither of us are devotees to cowboy poetry. We do not have ranching roots. We are not expert historians in the creative arts of The West — in caps, so as to denote its mythical, iconic status. We are, in every derogatory sense of the word, tourists. Naïve outsiders, curious and friendly yet woefully undereducated in what we’re here to experience. And we’ve been having a great time.

“I love everything about this,” I tell Andy, “even the stuff I hate.”

“Agreed. One hundred percent.”

In the last 48 hours we’ve sat awestruck while a handful of Elko high school students recite gut-wrenching

free verse from memory — poems about death and heartache and family — under the quiet, solicitous watch of their cowboy poet instructors. We’ve rolled our eyes at the beads and fringe on a Hollywood cowboy musical act and watched a 70-something woman pound the boogie woogie out of an already-beat-up piano. We’ve consumed excellent open-faced sandwiches and the worst meal in long memory, both at Basque restaurants. (The rangelands around Elko were once worked by Basque settlers.) We’ve heard sentimental rhyming couplets about the land and beat-style free verse about sex and motorcycles. We’ve heard Rilke and Auden name-dropped by grizzled elders in big hats.

We’ve been stuck in the snow — “Ya here for the poetry?” asked the strapping snowmobilers who freed Andy’s pickup from an icy patch up Lamoille Canyon. I met a cowboy named Sand — “My brother’s name is Clay.” And Andy met a woman from a family that’s been ranching for 150 years. We had coffee with Becky and David from Cheyenne because we could not avoid them; we ran into them everywhere, including the supermarket, because Elko is not very big. It’s legitimately a mystery why they’re not with us in the Denny’s, though it is late for Elko — around 11 p.m. — and the festival events mostly wrap up around 9:30.

At least three times daily — and now, over second breakfast at Denny’s — we deconstruct our experience. We try to define cowboy poetry. “It’s poetry cowboys like!” said Paul Zarzyski, one of the “headliners” of the gathering. We wonder how many of the poets are “Actual Cowboys” who work the land on horseback, and we consider

the effect of Hollywood on the older generation of cowboy poets, guys — mostly, they’re guys — who ran away to join the rodeo as teenagers.

We notice the nod toward diversity — it appears in the African American musician Dom Lemon, Native American chef Nephi Craig, and Ruby Johnson, a mining engineer also known as Miss Elko USA. She’s a young black woman who reads Maya Angelou’s “Still I Rise” with such presence and power that she seems to channel the voice of the great poet herself.

And we question the lack of not just racial diversity — the crowd is primarily white, and when another band assumed we all knew the words to a Billy Graham-popularized Christian hymn, “How Great Thou Art,” I wondered about Jewish cowboys. Are they here too? Are they represented?

Our entire time in Elko feels action packed, even when we’re just sitting in the Western Folklife Center or at the breakfast counter at the Coffee Cup, an old-fashioned, small-town diner with generous biscuits. Every event we attend, every person we talk with leaves us chewing over new ideas about the Old West. About poetry and culture and how it finds itself in Elko, Nevada, under the kind hands of these self-declared cowboy poets and their fans.

“Ya here for the poetry?” they ask, in the Western wear store and the place that roasts its own coffee and the counter at the bistro where we eat yet another diner breakfast, this time with pancakes that are perfectly crispy around the edges.

There aren’t many late-night choices in Elko, so we went to the Denny’s. We were there for breakfast all day. And the poetry, of course. ♦

The Power of Positive Deviance

One woman's discovery of the power of focusing on wellness in her dance with Parkinson's disease.

by Laurel Saville

Author, consultant, and trainer of dogs and their humans

The first time I heard the term "Positive Deviance" was when it was applied to me. No, it was not in reference to any unusual private proclivities. My deviance has to do with the progression of my Parkinson's disease. Or more accurately, my *lack* of progression.

Positive is not a feeling one usually associates with a progressive, incurable neurological disorder. I remember how my face flushed and my stomach tightened when a physical therapist suggested my stiffness, cramps and aches might be "neurological" rather than muscular. I recall the numb, hold-my-breath feeling when a doctor said, "I think it's Parkinson's" and then apologized for "ruining my day" as he referred me to a specialist.

The tears finally came when a neurologist said she was "quite sure" I had Parkinson's and began

to deluge me with all the medical jargon that comes with disease. In the months following, I was filled with fear of my future.

However, we humans have an incredible ability to adapt, adjust and regain equilibrium after even the most harrowing of experiences. No one would ever wish for an amputated limb or debilitating disease. Yet study after study shows that most people return to a prior level of satisfaction and happiness, no matter how bad their change in fortune. And so it was with me.

It didn't take long to move from a constant state of low-level panic to dark-humored jokes and active research about how best to deal with my new, ever-present companion, Parkinson's.

"I recall the numb, hold-my-breath feeling when a doctor said, *'I think it's Parkinson's'* and then apologized for ruining my day."

POSITIVE DEVIANCE: THE ART OF CREATIVE COPING

The concept of Positive Deviance was first coined by policy developers in the 1970s. They observed that in poor communities, a small number of families had well-nourished children. These mothers had found creative ways to use the same limited resources as their neighbors but to more effective ends. The analysts also realized that these habits, having evolved organically, were more likely to be adopted and maintained by other members of the community. This led to a solutions-based approach to creating social

and behavioral changes that sought to identify and scale-up the best practices that were already happening in an affected group.

This Positive Deviance approach has proved effective in several settings, including improving child nutrition and overall health in poor communities; increasing handwashing in hospitals; decreasing emergency treatment times of acute myocardial infarction in emergency rooms; increasing condom use among sex workers; reducing genital mutilation; and improving educational outcomes.

BECOMING POSITIVELY DEVIANT IN THE FACE OF THE INCURABLE

In the examples cited above, all of these problems are, in theory at least, solvable or curable. Parkinson's, so far, is not. Doctors can treat some of the symptoms as they arise but not the disease itself. After diagnosis, it's difficult to not be on high-alert for the appearance of every new symptom and to blame each minor indignity of aging on the disease. I found this hyper-vigilance understandable but emotionally exhausting.

During the first weeks and months after I got my PD label, anytime someone asked if I was limping — an awkward gait is a telltale sign — I would burst into tears. But then I got some first-line medication, people stopped asking questions, and I kept biking, hiking, gardening and writing. Sometimes a little more slowly, a little more awkwardly; sometimes not. As I saw that I was not going to be sucked down a dark hole of disease, I began focusing on how I'd live with rather than be destroyed by Parkinson's. Months went by. Then, years. I found that my highly

active life — both physically and mentally — remained essentially unchanged, even though I took such a small amount of medications that one of my prescriptions expired long before the bottle was empty.

About two years ago, I heard about an interesting study of Parkinson's patients. The introductory material from Laurie Mischley, N.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., of the Bastyr University Research Institute, reads, "Parkinson's disease is often said to be an incurable, progressive and degenerative disease. It is our hypothesis that some of you do not, or will not, have a progressive disease." (Mischley, 2017)

I enrolled because I wanted to be one of those "some of you." In fact, I had the equation backwards. The researchers were not going to share their hard-won knowledge of magical potions that slowed the wave I feared was going to take me down; instead, they wanted to learn what people like me were already doing without their help. This is when I learned I was a "Positive Deviant."



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MAINTAINING FOCUS ON THE RIGHT THINGS

The surveys, administered every six months, focus not on illness, but on wellness, and are clearly interested not in what's going wrong, but what's going right. The questions about what I eat, take, and do with my mind, body and spirit are incredibly detailed. For example, the food diary wants records of quantities, ingredients, and even brands of things I ingest.

I'm happy to contribute this information, but over time, I've realized that the things I find most useful in managing my disease are not readily captured in a survey. When I looked into traditional and ayurvedic approaches to Parkinson's, I was directed to plant-based supplements that contain the same chemical compound in one of my prescriptions, yet had a gentler and longer-lasting effect for me than the pills from the pharmacy. (Okun, 2017)

One day, I noticed that holding a small water bottle in my hand while hiking

improved my arm movement. Another day, frustrated with leg stiffness, I pushed myself into an exaggerated skip up and down the driveway, which gave me immediate relief.

I shared these experiences, and others, at my check-ups with my neurologist. She nodded with interest. Yet, to her medical mind, my water bottle trick became a means of "creating a tactile sensation that improves the neuro-muscular connection." She told me that to achieve the same results I got with my over-the-counter herbs, I could measure, crush, then dissolve my medications in juice and slowly ingest the liquid, being sure to coordinate timing and protein content of my next meal to improve efficacy. My silly skipping was approved as "exaggerated, rhythmic, lateral movement, which seems to ameliorate stiffness in the extremities."

To me, these exchanges exemplify the power of a Positive Deviance approach to problem solving. It may be that the solutions developed in the academy are, at the end of the day, not much dif-

ferent than those learned on the street. But one uses the language of the lab, and the other uses the patois of the populous.

Let's face it, when facing the challenges of a difficult disease, would you rather carefully measure out your medications, fire up your neuro-muscular connectors, and embark on a prescribed program of exaggerated, rhythmic physical exercise that engages lateral movements ... or swallow some simple herbs, grab a water bottle, and go skipping around your yard? ♦

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John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

Crossword Puzzle

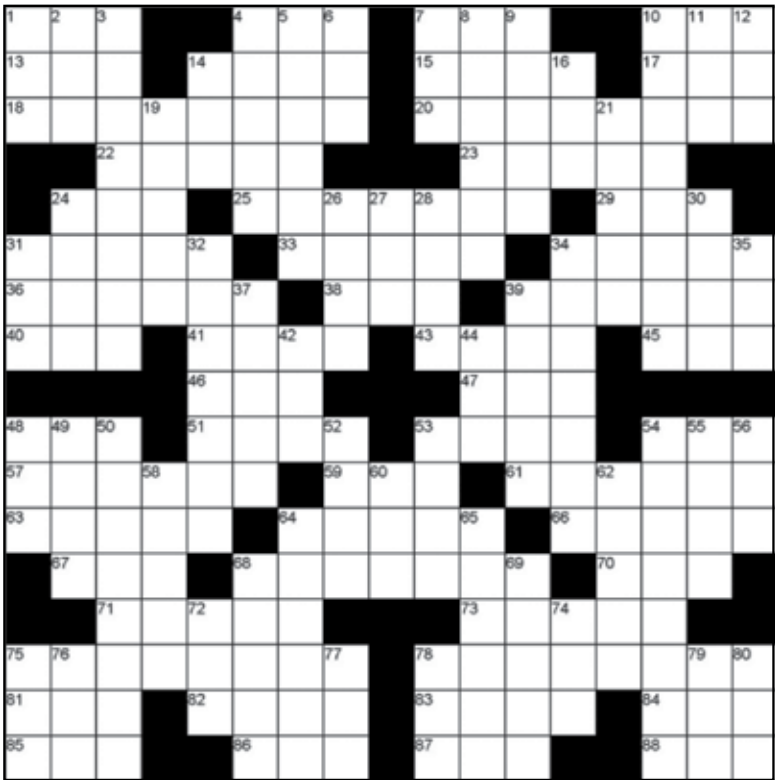
“Don’t Bring Me Down”

ACROSS

- 1 Put on
- 4 Shorn
- 7 Globe
- 10 Average guy?
- 13 First part of a Frederick Douglass quote
- 14 Poet’s time
- 15 Swine
- 17 Yours and mine
- 18 Second part of quote
- 20 Third part of quote
- 22 Split
- 23 Spruce up
- 24 Tiny charged bit
- 25 Convent
- 29 Choose
- 31 Beginning
- 33 Like feet at the beach
- 34 Natural aptitude
- 36 Vinegary
- 38 Old man’s place?
- 39 Refer indirectly
- 40 Certain scale notes
- 41 _____ Ghanoush
- 43 Fourth part of quote
- 45 Headed
- 46 Charlotte to Raleigh direction
- 47 Wildebeest
- 48 IRS concern
- 51 Clothing
- 53 Kind of puss
- 54 Novice
- 57 Fifth part of quote
- 59 Drink like a dog
- 61 Tangy
- 63 Do housework
- 64 Singing need
- 66 Calf
- 67 Hosp. triage sites
- 68 Final part of quote
- 70 Stomach area
- 71 *What’s Happening!!* character
- 73 French novelist or Spanish carnivore
- 75 Education community
- 78 Large terrier
- 81 Manned
- 82 Bundle
- 83 Join together
- 84 Kind of dog or gun
- 85 Summer time in much of the Midwest
- 86 Triple _____
- 87 Mature
- 88 Traveler’s guess

DOWN

- 1 Toper’s woe
- 2 Exclamation of surprise
- 3 Cognitive disorder
- 4 Sasha or Sacha Baron
- 5 Herschel discovery
- 6 Cable inits.
- 7 Kimono sash
- 8 Prayer beads
- 9 Ribald
- 10 Recent Pope
- 11 Opposite of non
- 12 Gray sea eagle
- 14 Lyric: I want my _____
- 16 Grande or Bravo
- 19 Like some paper
- 21 Folklore bugaboo
- 24 Ancient Indian
- 26 Launch team?
- 27 Dallas to Kansas City direction
- 28 Product of or town in The Netherlands
- 30 Laundry option
- 31 Lout
- 32 Monk variety
- 34 Baker’s surface condition, sometimes
- 35 One end of the visible spectrum
- 37 Accepted body of principles
- 39 Invalidate
- 42 Ask fervently
- 44 Diva’s problem, maybe
- 48 Former Jeep maker, initially
- 49 Kind of warning
- 50 Infallible
- 52 Drudgery
- 53 Watchdog org.?
- 54 Consider
- 55 Military group
- 56 Tournament pass
- 58 Checked out
- 60 Aura
- 62 Pouted
- 64 European city situated on more than 100 islands
- 65 Border detail
- 68 Off-read and translated French author
- 69 Strange
- 72 Company’s agt.
- 74 Yield
- 75 Circle section
- 76 Villain
- 77 Pedigree registry, abbr.
- 78 Police blotter inits.
- 79 Parcel
- 80 Air qual. monitor



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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

			8				4	
	3				2			8
				6	7			9
			7	9	6	2		
								4
				2	1			6
7		8					2	3
			1					
6		1				8		

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DIFFICULTY ★★☆☆☆

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42

Healthy U: Good Health 101 and Beyond



Have a Jelly Drop

An innovative approach to helping people with dementia stay hydrated.

by LIV FUN editorial staff

If you’re like me, you can’t stop yourself from grabbing a colorful candy or two from the bowl on the counter. It’s not quite so easy (and a lot less fun) to get enough water every day to stay healthy. Staying hydrated is an even bigger challenge for individuals with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia, and this poses a serious health risk.

One young man seems to have solved the challenge with his grandmother and has created an innovative product that is being tested in home-care settings in the U.K.

According to Elizabeth Nelson, individuals with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia may have difficulty staying hydrated for several reasons. Some simply forget to drink water, even when it’s conveniently placed and easy to access. Others may lose their taste for water, no longer finding it appealing to drink and forgetting that it’s so necessary. Still others may suffer from dysphagia, a swallowing disorder, and rely on thickening agents to make it easier to swallow thin liquids like water. (Nelson, 2018)

Seeing his grandmother’s struggles, Lewis Hornby recalls her being rushed to the hospital due to severe dehydration.

“For people with dementia, the symptoms of dehydration are often mistakenly attributed to their underlying condition, meaning it can easily go unnoticed until it becomes life-threatening,” Hornby explains.

He became determined to help her get enough fluids to stay healthy, actually living in a memory care setting for a week to interact with the residents and consulting with dementia psychologists. His solution? Jelly Drops — bright, colorful “candies” filled with water and electrolytes that are easy to eat.

As Hornby explains, “People with dementia find eating much easier than drinking. Even still, it can be difficult to engage and encourage them to eat. I found the best way to overcome this is to offer them a treat!”

The thoughtfully designed package includes a clear lid, putting the brightly colored contents on display and making them easy to access and fun to share. The first time he offered Jelly Drops to his grandmother, she ate seven drops

in 10 minutes. As Hornby explains, that’s equivalent to a cup full of water, a feat that would have taken hours and required a lot of persuasion to achieve.

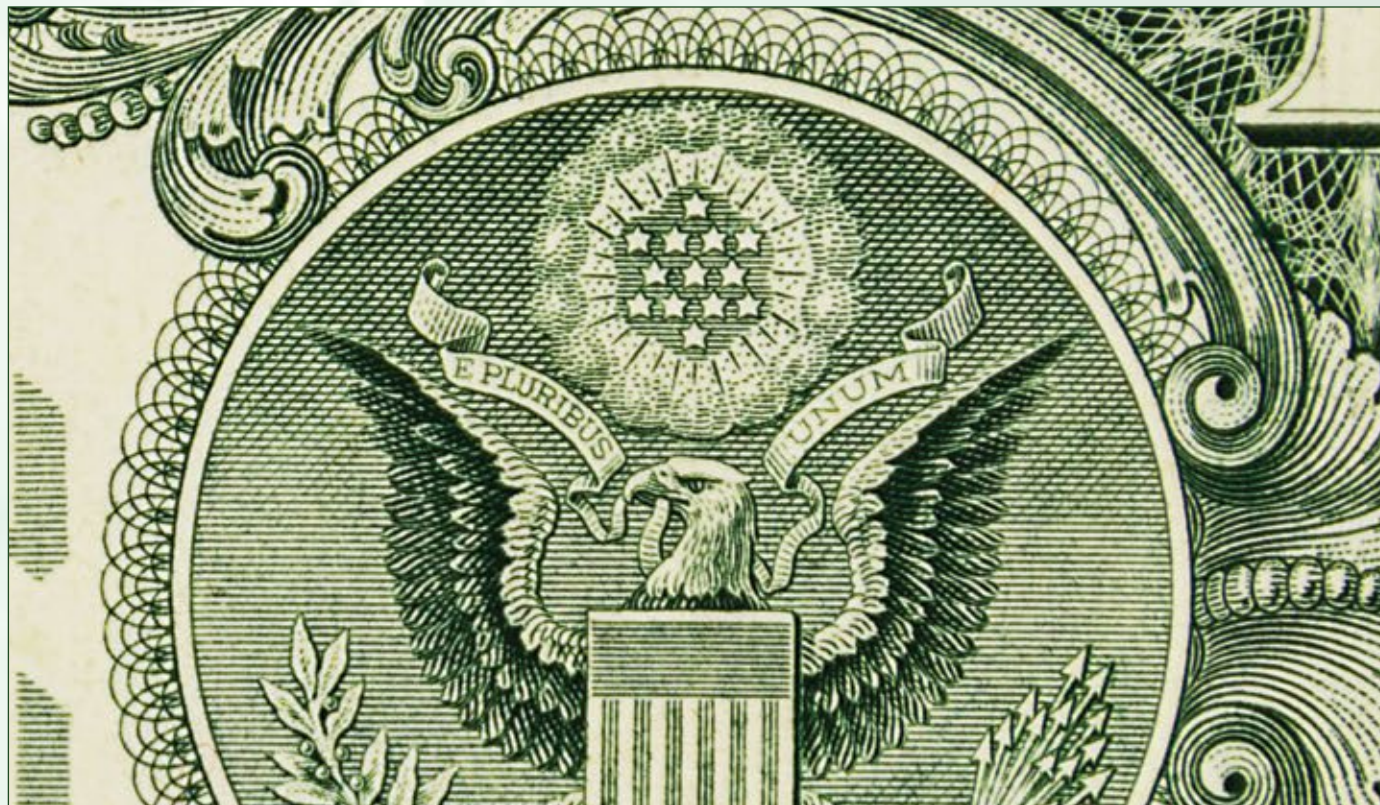
Hornby has gotten tremendous response to his new innovation, and Jelly Drops are being trialed in home-care settings and should soon be available to the public. They’ll come with a booklet for caregivers that offer conversation starters to help make staying hydrated easy and enjoyable.

Please note: These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. ♦

Source: Nelson, Elizabeth. (2018). “Young Man Invents ‘Water You Can Eat’ to Help Dementia Patients Like His Grandma Stay Hydrated.” The Alzheimer’s Site Blog. Retrieved September 6, 2018, from www.thealzheimerssite.com.

Learn more: To learn more about Lewis and his Jelly Drops, please visit his crowd-funding page: <http://tiny.cc/JellyDrop>

The Spiritual Life in Your Wallet



Money's greatest value lies not in its purchasing power, but in something far more important.

by Mark DiGiovanni
Certified Financial Planner

“Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.”

— Albert Einstein

The hexagram — a six-pointed geometric star figure, the compound of two equilateral triangles, one pointing up and one pointing down — has been featured in religious and spiritual traditions the world over.

The geometric figure has decorated Hindu temples, synagogues, mosques and Christian churches for centuries, including the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Hexagrams identify the meeting spots of Freemasons, and they adorn our money too; if you look on the back of a one-dollar bill, you'll see a hexagram formed by 13 stars above the eagle.

There are many interpretations of what the overlapping triangles that make up the hexagon symbolize. One interpretation that's fairly consistent across time and across different faiths is that the triangle pointing down represents God reaching down to us, and the triangle pointing up represents our reaching up to God.

Allow me to suggest a looser interpretation of the hexagram: The downward-pointing triangle is the spiritual world, while the upward-pointing triangle represents the secular world. The hexagon formed where the two triangles overlap is the world in which we live, where the spiritual and the secular overlap, where both are in fact necessary for this world to exist.

Albert Einstein, who was at least as wise as he was smart, once said, “Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind.” Using Einstein's words as a running start, where money is involved:

- The secular without the spiritual is *pointless*.
- The spiritual without the secular is *rootless*.

If we were to list the most revered and influential people throughout human history, we would expect to find great spiritual leaders noted, like Jesus, Mohammed, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. One group that's almost absent from this list would be the enormously wealthy. Yes, we'd find people of wealth on these lists — people like Henry Ford and Bill Gates — because they've created something of wide public benefit that happened to make them rich. Absent from the list would be figures associated with Wall Street or high finance,

even historic figures like J.P. Morgan. “Building wealth” for its own sake falls among the pointless.

For many of us, nothing represents the secular world with all its flaws more than money. Our beliefs are formed in large part because we've seen too many cases where money has brought out the worst in people. Money certainly has that ability, but money is a mirror; it simply reflects the qualities of those who possess it, for good or for bad.

In truth, money incorporates many of the characteristics of both the secular *and* the spiritual. You can see it and touch it. Money is precise and measurable. You can even roll around in it if you have enough. And almost anything in the secular world can be attained with a sufficient amount of money.

Yet money also mimics characteristics of the spiritual. Money is only of value to those who believe that it is. Once the Confederacy was defeated in the Civil War, Confederate money became worthless overnight because no one believed in its value any longer. In much the same way, those who don't embrace spiritual practices believe those practices have little or no value. They may even view spirituality as something counterfeit. Money, like God, requires a certain element of faith.

To better understand the roles of the secular and the spiritual in your life, look at how you perceive and use money. Do you hang on to it, fearing there won't ever be enough? Or are you generous, gratefully spending what you can on things that make you fulfilled and make others happy?

Money can bring out the worst in our secular selves, but it can also help fulfill our spiritual goals. It might be a major act, such as changing your will to leave part of your estate to a worthy charity. It might be a more modest act, like helping pay tuition for a struggling college student. Or it might be something as simple as providing a homeless person with a warm coat or a hot meal.

If you desire greater harmony and balance between your secular and spiritual worlds, consider changing how you use money. Money's greatest value lies not in its purchasing power, but as a tool of reconciliation between our secular and spiritual worlds. ♦

OUR SOULS

An Owner's Contemplation

soul | sōl | noun

- the spiritual or immaterial part of a human being or animal, regarded as immortal.
- a person's moral or emotional nature or sense of identity.

What is the soul, this thing that makes us human?



by Tammy Kennon

Writer, journalist, sailor and traveler

OUR SOULS

Over the centuries, science has dislodged some long-held beliefs about our humanness and our place in the cosmos. Will science now take away our souls?

Exploring the history of the “soul” is a bumpy ride through science, philosophy, art, literature, religion, spirituality, and lots of -isms. Belief about the soul mines the depths of “self” and “other,” mortality and eternal life, and speculation and the certainty of uncertainty.

Evidence from antiquity reveals that the earliest humans believed in something beyond themselves, a force outside of and distinct from the body. It’s one of the most primal and enduring beliefs of humankind, and throughout the ages, the greatest minds have grappled with the same fundamental questions: What is it that makes us human? What is the “I” in I? And is the soul separate from the body?

Over the centuries, science has dislodged some long-held beliefs about our humanness and our place in the cosmos. For instance, astronomers displaced us from our heady position at the center of the Universe — and didn’t

even let us keep center stage in our own solar system. NASA engineers made it possible for us to see our seemingly vast planet as small enough to fit in a single photograph, no bigger than a blue marble in an infinite ocean of stars. Darwin and his theory of biological evolution stripped away our divine origins and placed us alongside the other creatures of the earth. Will science now take away our souls?

What we call the “soul,” scientists call “consciousness,” and many believe that it is brain science that has the best shot at understanding the true nature of the soul or, more importantly, if it even exists. Consciousness has long been believed to lie in the brain, and we now have amazing tools to peek into brain activity — PET, EEG, fMRI, Optical Imaging, MEG and others.

Are we close to solving the mystery of the soul and its relationship to the body?

We don’t necessarily need philosophers or science to tell us where our self-identity or consciousness resides.

THE SOUL/BODY CONUNDRUM

The great minds of the millennia have offered varying theories of the role of the soul and its dependence on the body. Homer was the first to introduce the concept of a soul or a spirit that lives on after death. By the time of the ancient Greek philosophers, “soul” had taken root in the lexicon as the distinguishing characteristic of living things. (Lorenz, 2009)

Plato saw the “soul” as a separate, immortal entity that existed before entering the body and continued on its journey afterwards. On the other hand, Aristotle believed the soul developed over the course of a lifetime, emerging as the complete actualization of a living thing. Consequently, in his view, the soul dies along with the “mortal coil,” as Shakespeare called it. St. Augustine, one of Christianity’s earliest theologians, shared Plato’s belief in the immortality of the soul, describing it as “a special substance, endowed with reason, adapted to rule the body.” (Russell, 2010)

We don’t necessarily need philosophers or science to tell us where our self identity or consciousness resides. We already know from collective experience that we can lose many parts of our bodies without losing the essence of who we are. Doctors can pluck out tonsils, spleens, ovaries and prostates; we can lose limbs, sight and hearing; vital organs can be taken from one body and transplanted into another without destroying our identity.

The late Stephen Hawking, the revolutionary, Nobel Prize-winning physicist, best exemplified the extraneous nature of the physical body. He continued to excel intellectually even as disease slowly chipped away at his body. Near the end of his life, he was reduced to using a single cheek muscle to communicate. Just weeks before his death, he completed his final theory of the cosmos, challenging the modern theories of an expanding universe. Through determination and the help of technology, he continued to be the quintessential and brilliant Stephen Hawking.

WHO HAS A SOUL?

The Theist and Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam, among others) believe that humans are the higher beings on Earth, the sole owners of souls. St. Augustine spoke of this human dominion over nature, where humans are the only “rational creatures” as opposed to “brute animals.”

On the other end of the spectrum, biocentrism suggests that all living beings are on the same footing, so to speak. English naturalist Charles Darwin sparked this line of thought in the 1800s with his theory of evolution. Darwin, in effect, took away human divinity,

toppling humans from a lofty place of supernatural origin and relegating us to a more terrestrial branch in the biological tree. (Darwin, 1838)

Similarly, many Indian religions (Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism, among others) believe humans are not the only ones endowed with a soul. Some believe that humans and animals are not equal, but that some animals are actually higher than humans. Jainists, meanwhile, value the life of all creatures to such an extreme that they go to great pains to avoid stepping on the smallest of insects.

There is a great space
between what we know about consciousness
and what we don't.

SCIENCE OF THE SOUL: THE KNOWN AND THE UNKNOWN

There is a great space between what we know about consciousness and what we don't. In all the exploration of the nature of consciousness, all the new tools at hand, the soul has remained a mystery.

Renowned scientist Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the molecular structure of DNA, doesn't find it mysterious at all. He states with soul-killing bluntness in his book *The Astonishing Hypothesis* that everything we think of as our identity, our joys and sorrow, memories and ambition, even our free will, are “no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.” (Crick, 1995)

Sam Harris, a contemporary neuroscientist, philosopher and author, agrees with Crick that “living” is a process running in our bodies, and when we die, that process ends. However, he talks about that space between the known and the unknown in gentler, more poetic terms. (Harris, 2014)

“While we know many things about ourselves in anatomical, physiological and evolutionary terms, we do not know why it is we are what we are,” Harris says.

“The fact that the Universe is illuminated where you stand — that your thoughts and moods and sensations have a qualitative character — is a mystery, exceeded only by the mystery that there should be something rather than nothing in this universe.”

British psychiatrist and author Iain McGilchrist ponders eloquently about the nature of humanness in a lecture titled *What Happened to the Soul?* (McGilchrist, 2014) He asks whether the concept of the soul is redundant now that “science has made us see it as a superstition,” or are we missing something because we've been unable to apply the scientific method to the soul. In deliberating what the soul might be and what it is not, he weighs morality, philosophy, religion, science and literature, concluding with a quote from American philosopher Eugene Gendlin: “We think more than we can say. We feel more than we can think. We live more than we can feel. And there's much else besides.”

“And perhaps,” McGilchrist concludes, “the soul is what we mean when we reflect on that ‘much else besides.’” ♦



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Advice for the Journey: Personal Advice and Expert Opinions

Unconditional Love *and* Acceptance



by Arica VanGelderren, LLMSW
Clinical social worker and therapist

Question: My husband and I were both raised Catholic, and we raised our two daughters in the Church as well. I wouldn't say our family was especially devout, but we all went to Mass together on Sunday and our daughters attended religious ed classes throughout elementary and middle school.

When the girls were in middle school, my husband was in a bad car accident. After that, he became more devout, and my youngest daughter followed his lead. My older daughter and I remained practicing Catholics, but we don't feel the same kind of pull to the faith as they do.

My youngest is now raising a family with a man who is highly involved in the Church and committed to a lifestyle that strictly conforms to the values of the Catholic religion. This has caused my daughter to pull away from us, saying that we don't emulate the Catholic values she strives to embody for both herself and her two daughters.

This is just heartbreaking for us, because we love our daughter and granddaughters more than words can express. My husband says we should just let her have her space and that pushing her too much could make things worse, but I feel like I have to do something. Is there some way to bring her back to us?

Answer: As a parent and a grandmother, there is certainly immense fear surrounding the potential loss of the relationships you have with your daughter and granddaughters. It's this fear that causes your anxious response and feeling the need to "do something." Yet simply giving your daughter space as your husband suggests means accepting that you do not have control over the eventual outcome of this situation — and that can be hard to bear.

The reality is that it's perfectly normal for our relationships with our formative religion to change and evolve as we

mature. For some — like your daughter — it means growing even closer to their faith. For others, like yourself and your older daughter, you may find yourself less devout or more open to new ideas.

It's tempting to promise to change to appease your daughter. But you each have your own set of values and beliefs, and compromising them to maintain the relationship will only cause more stress and emotional pain. I understand the threat of losing the relationship with your daughter is heartbreaking on many levels, but being untrue to yourself in order to please her has a much larger cost.

Your daughter may be undergoing her own spiritual struggle, and allowing her space and time to work through it will ultimately yield the most positive result. If you truly want to have an intimate and genuine relationship with your daughter, understand that this will only be possible when you are both able to unconditionally accept each other. If you and your husband have expressed your unconditional love and acceptance of your daughter, you have already done everything you can do to influence the outcome. ♦

The GREAT Balancing Act

© John Sommer

As we enter our elder years, keeping an even keel becomes trickier
... and at the same time much easier to master.

by Carol Pearson

Writer, editor and life-long beach walker

I've long ago given up the three-inch heels. Not because I don't adore a nice shoe; it's simply a matter of logistics.

It doesn't feel that long ago when I was dashing out of the office (in those pretty pumps), running into the day care to pick up the girls (how on earth did I squat down like that to help those little darlings into their snowsuits?), and packing them up into the car.

I'd get home and breathe a sigh of relief when I kicked off those shoes and slipped into something a little more reasonable for the rest of my daily routine.

Nowadays, the pumps are pulled out on special occasions; the weddings, funerals and graduations that now fill up my planner where meetings, business trips and fundraisers used to be. I still care about looking put

together. It's just that getting myself safely from Point A to Point B takes more focus these days; I'm more concerned about staying healthy than being fashionably shod.

It's all about balance now. Without it, we fail to thrive, fail to find that happiness that Thomas Merton speaks of so eloquently: "We cannot be happy if we expect to live all the time at the highest peak of

intensity," the Trappist monk once wrote. (Merton, 2002)

Those days of raising children, building a home, and growing a career were absolutely intense. Admittedly, it's a bit of a shock to finally take off those heels and don the more sensible (if still stylish) shoes of the more mature, wise woman I'm coming to see myself as. Yet in backing down from that intensity, I

find a growing sense of peace, a calm centeredness I never knew before.

The idea of balance manifests itself in both my physical world and my spiritual practice nowadays. Yes, it takes more focus to stay safe on the stairs or navigate a bumpy sidewalk. And it takes a different kind of focus to stay calm, centered and peaceful as the waves of life crash around me. ♦

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Five Practical Steps to Finding Your Balance

Developing a life with a solid, peaceful core takes intentional effort, as Diane Barth, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, explains.

"Finding balance is a lifetime project. It is ongoing. It is not a finite goal at the end of which you will have a peaceful, calm and meaningful life. Balance is a way of living. It is a process," Barth says. She offers five suggestions to help. (Barth, 2014)

1. Realize that balance is a process, not a goal. "Being balanced does not mean being calm, relaxed and content all of the time. Balance often occurs only for a fleeting moment, but it can reappear over and over again."

2. Prioritize. We can't do it all, and we should stop trying. Instead, Barth recommends we look at all we "have" to do and decide for ourselves what's most important at any given time. By making this choice for ourselves, we'll feel more in control.

3. Have goals, both long and short term. A balanced approach to life is not static; life will continue to move and expand as we adopt a less hectic pace, downsize and retire. By setting your own goals, you'll have a say in how it unfolds, rather than being carried away by whatever happens around you.

4. Be specific. When setting those goals, get clear on what that looks like. "It's more useful to say, 'I'm going to spend an hour alone with each [grand]child sometime this week,' than to say, 'I'm going to have quality time with [my family].'"

5. Find a balance partner. As Barth reminds us, "... if you're carrying all the weight, you can't get balanced." Find someone to help share the loads in life, both literally and figuratively. Lean on your friends and family when things trouble you, and accept help when it's offered. It makes us all stronger to do this.

The reality is that the storms will come. There will be illness, death, disaster. There will be loads of laundry that don't get folded, appointments that don't go well, and disappointments and worries along the way. There will be days when even burnt toast can feel like the end of the world. But we have a choice. We can allow ourselves to be knocked off balance by the things we can't control, or we can breathe, take a moment to find our center and regain our equilibrium, and know that we are alright.

*"Happiness is not a matter of intensity,
but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony."*

— Thomas Merton



Live Big. Live Bold.

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RACING TOWARD **A DREAM**



**A young man with
special needs gives back.**

by Chris Peterson

Leisure Care Media Manager

and Kristi Todrzak

Former marketing director,
Fairwinds – Woodward Park



The Fairwinds - Woodward Park cheering section comes out to support Austin in his box cart race back in 2006.



Today Austin works at Fairwinds - Woodward Park and brings the same enthusiasm and that terrific smile to the community he loves.

We all need a little encouragement and a little help from time to time. When we do, there is often a special set of folks that play that role in our lives. Can a retirement community serve that purpose? For one little boy in Fresno, California, the answer was a resounding yes.

Vivacious, with a bright smile and a blond shock of hair, Austin Harris is the quintessential image of a California youth. Austin was born on June 6, 1997, with spina bifida and hydrocephalus. These birth defects prevented Austin from walking. Because Austin's spine didn't form completely before he was born, Austin grew up living his life in a wheelchair. Though paraplegic, Austin was like any other little boy his age. He dreamed of playing sports and participating in (what some could call a little dangerous) childhood activities.

In June 2006, three days before his ninth birthday, Austin got the thrilling opportunity to participate in what's become a rite of passage for many kids in Fresno — the Fresno City Firefighters Box Cart Races. Austin got the chance to pilot his very own box cart racer in a race that was open to any kid with a dream of flying down the track.

However, because of Austin's special needs, a regular racer just wasn't going to cut it. Austin needed a vehicle modified for him so he could safely show the crowd what he could do. With Fairwinds - Woodward Park's sponsorship, a local firefighter customized a unique cart with safety belts and specialized seating to accommodate Austin's racing dreams.

On the day of the race, residents and employees from Fairwinds - Woodward Park crowded onto the community's bus for the short trip to the track. In matching T-shirts, they were the largest fan club of any racer at the event and they were all cheering for Austin.

With the support of his friends at Fairwinds - Woodward Park, Austin sailed down Box Car Hill amongst his fellow racers. At the bottom of the hill, with a special trophy in hand, Austin felt like a sports hero, and maybe more importantly, he felt like any other kid who had just blasted down a hill in a box cart at full bore. It wasn't a feeling he would soon forget.

Austin grew into a capable, caring youth. He was playing basketball, baseball, and even water skiing. He

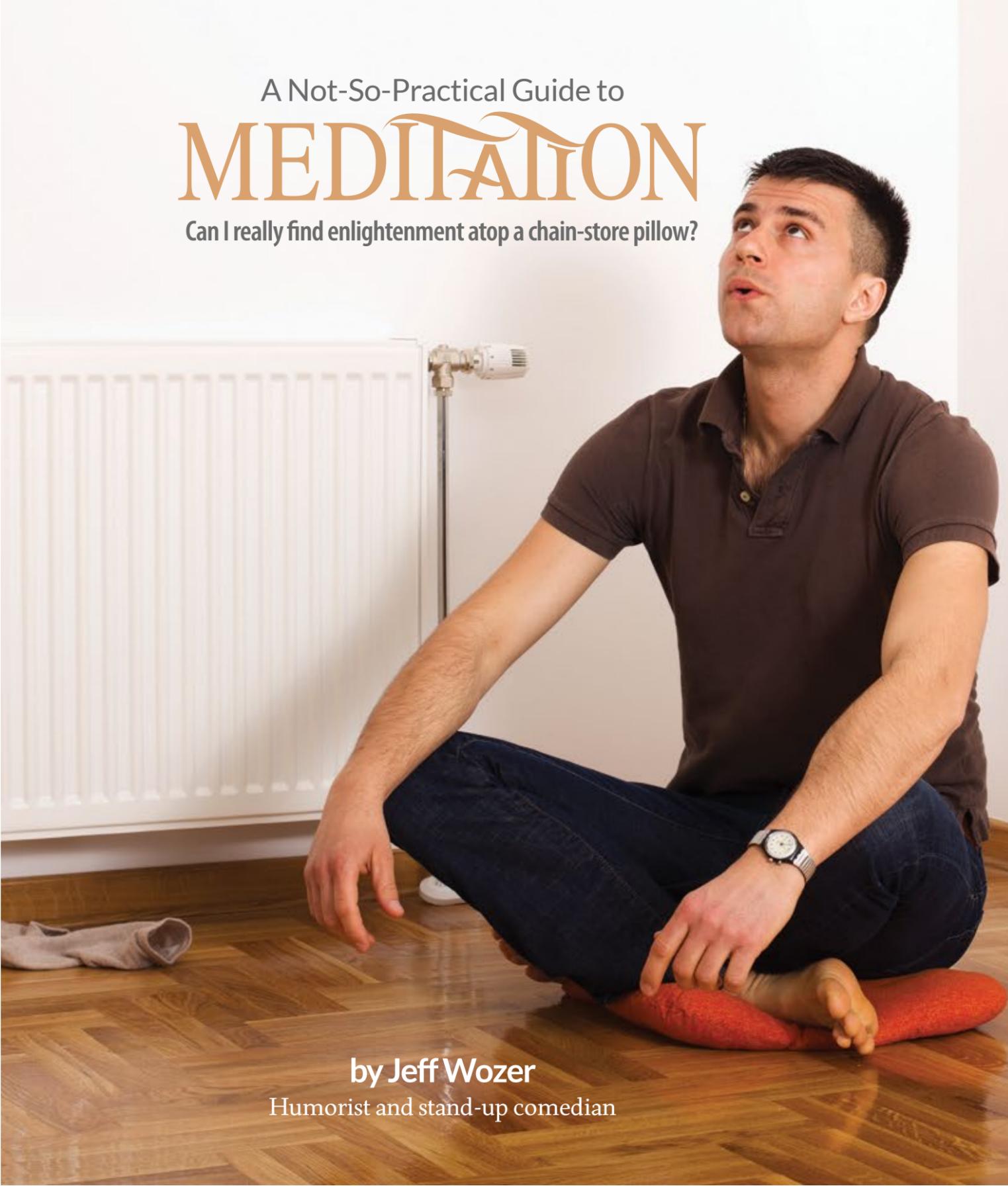
continued to visit Fairwinds - Woodward Park, and his friends at the community became an extension of Austin's social network.

Soon, it was 2016, and Austin was graduating from Buchanan High School. Austin had grown into a diligent and kind young man with an exceptional work ethic that others recognized. For two years, Austin had worked as a greeter at Buchanan's Coffee Cave where he greeted customers, took drink orders, and ensured excellent customer service.

He soon enrolled in the Adult Transition Program in the Clovis Unified School District — a program designed to help young adults transition from the support they received through K-12 special education into the independent life of an adult.

In April 2018, Austin was named Mr. Fresno County by the Fresno County Keys4Needs Pageant. The pageant's website states that, "Through the program, inclusion, ability awareness, and special needs advocacy will be spread through community service events, titleholder appearances, and other programs throughout the year." According to its mission statement, the pageant also works to "give opportunity to

Racing Toward a Dream: *Continued on page 42*



A Not-So-Practical Guide to
MEDITATION
Can I really find enlightenment atop a chain-store pillow?

by Jeff Wozer
Humorist and stand-up comedian

“I’m not certain, but I think I pulled a brain stem.”

I’m out of meditation shape. Yesterday, after a seven-week lapse, I resumed meditating. I should have eased into it. A five-minute session at most. I instead mashed the contemplation pedal to the floor, sitting for almost 25 minutes. I’m feeling it today. The temporal lobes are tight. The cerebral cortex feels neuron depleted. And I’m not certain, but I think I pulled a brain stem.

It’s the mind’s payback, perhaps, for allowing my daily meditation regimen to slip for the first time since I began two years ago.

Or, maybe not.

Maybe I’m simply experiencing what human quote-machine Jim Rohn warned of when he gushed, “We all must suffer from one of two pains: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The difference is that discipline weighs ounces while regret weighs tons.”

And God knows my regret ship is already dangerously full, riding low on the choppy sea of life, unable to sustain additional weight.

Why I lapsed I don’t know, for I was enjoying the discipline of meditating. I do know the urge to return came after a chat with Kristie, my yoga instructor, who, by her ability to effortlessly bend

into any position, has me convinced that she’s either a true being of true discipline or was raised on a diet of garden hoses and pipe cleaners. I suspect both, but that is neither here nor there. The point being she’s a devotee to her practice, never treating discipline like a cheap suggestion.

So when she shared her take on meditation, I listened. She said that she normally practices twice a day, usually 20–30 minutes per. But when missing a day or two, she notices how it heaves other aspects of life — diet, exercise, mindset — out of whack.

As I gnawed on this, I realized I could relate. Once I stopped meditating, the days became infected with ambivalence. Willpower began hanging with a nocuous group of to-do list anarchists and exercise pacifists named Ben & Jerry, Ernest & Julio Gallo, and Papa John. Collectively, they took pride in promoting sloth, procrastination and apathy.

It was this head-nodding realization that prompted yesterday’s return to the lotus position. The daily practice of meditating served as the ringleader, as it were, for all other disciplines — exercise, diet, writing. And with it my days were productive, prolific and wildly satisfying.

Guide to Meditation: *Continued on page 43*

*“We began to purge
and reimagine the
entire house.”*

Becoming More Myself

Getting in touch with your soul
might be as simple as rearranging
the furniture.

by Elana Zaiman

Seattle-based Rabbi, chaplain and author

Middle-aged and anticipating an empty nest, my husband felt like changing our space, opening it up. We needed something different for this new chapter in our lives. He even brought in a builder and an architect to help us re-envision.

A friend and contractor with whom we shared our ideas thought the changes we were contemplating may hurt the future resale of our house. Seth wasn't concerned. He wanted the space to speak to us. So did I, yet I wasn't sure a remodel was the answer.

Around the same time Seth began contemplating a remodel, a *feng shui* video ended up in my inbox, and I found myself re-intrigued with the power of physical space. I also began reading Irvin Yalom's memoir *Becoming Myself*, about his life as a psychiatrist, and found that this title spoke to me deeply about the possibilities for both internal and external change at this point in my life.

Internally, the questions I was asking myself: What does it mean to become myself now in my mid-50s? What projects are calling me? How do I shift from mothering up close to mothering far away? How do Seth and I return to being a couple and find our way forward together? Seth was asking similar questions.

As we began to re-envision our physical space, we honored our internal questions and further asked ourselves how we could create a space to support us becoming more ourselves and to enable our growth as a couple. Seth's idea to engage together on the project was brilliant because it enabled us to begin to work as partners and to dream together again.

So one afternoon, on a whim, I suggested that we

Becoming More Myself: Continued on page 43

Racing Toward a Dream: *Continued from page 37*

people in the greater Fresno area of all abilities, gender, age, or marital status to interact with and represent our community in a positive manner.”

As part of his adult transition program and with the help of Fairwinds - Woodward Park’s Desiree Valero, Austin, now 21, is giving back to the community that gave him his racing opportunity so many years ago. Through a special internship at the community, Austin is learning what working in a supportive, professional environment is like.

Valero said, “Austin started working for us about a month ago and comes in a few times a week – he takes care of shredding, folding napkins, and then heads over to Bingo.”

As a member of the community’s Activities department, Austin’s strong social nature and his caring make him a natural fit.

Valero said, “Austin felt that he wasn’t doing enough or giving enough, so he came into our community wanting to feel like he had a purpose, wanting to do more, wanting to be someone.”

“Oh my gosh! You have no idea how wonderful it is for me,” Austin commented about his first day of work at Fairwinds - Woodward Park.

His bright smile has become a significant part of the Fairwinds - Woodward Park resident community, and the support of the staff has made a significant impact on Austin’s life.

Valero said, “As time passes you can see the relationships building between Austin and the residents, and it’s been amazing to watch. He is filled with so much desire to do more and has a positive outlook on life that reminds you to be grateful for the moment.”

There is an echo of that day at Box Cart Hill in Austin’s interactions with residents and employees at Fairwinds - Woodward Park. He’s there to cheer the community on and encourage those who need it. He’s setting career goals and learning what it takes to continue to grow as a person with purpose and as a professional.

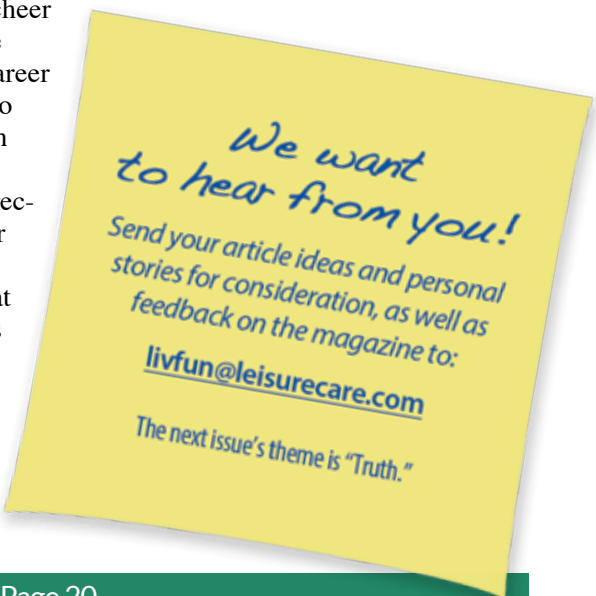
Clint Fowler, Leisure Care’s director of resident services and former general manager of Fairwinds - Woodward Park, said, “Working at Fairwinds - Woodward Park helps Austin develop as a man. Look at the character he’s building. He’s the next generation here. Look as he carries the torch.”

Austin’s enthusiasm touches every job he does. Whether

he’s helping in arts and crafts, encouraging players in bingo, folding napkins for community events, or just visiting with residents, Austin continues to build confidence.

Valero said, “If you know anything about Bingo, it’s a tight community, and the residents have allowed Austin into the Bingo circle, which is awesome.”

Austin continues to work at Fairwinds - Woodward Park in an environment that lets him feel like what he is – a successful Leisure Care employee with passion and purpose to spare. ♦



Guide to Meditation: *Continued from page 39*

So now the question is: Can I maintain a daily practice?

Meditation requires sitting with the stillness of a mushroom and the focus of a great blue heron. I can handle the sitting but struggle with the focus. There’s no dimmer switch on my brain’s thought-bulb. Consequently, mindfulness often feels, to me, like mindlessness.

Yesterday was no exception. After bending into the lotus position atop a Bed, Bath & Beyond floor pillow (found, appropriately enough, in the Beyond section), I let my gaze soften while repeating my personal mantra: “Quiet the mind; pursue the now.”

Yes, I thought, I can feel the mind feathering into a pool of sedated bliss ... *quiet the mind; pursue the now* ... *quiet the mind; pursue the now* ...

Then, suddenly, loud-mouthed thoughts began belly flopping into my pool of bliss: Is it OK to meditate atop

a floor pillow decorated with bear and canoe paddle motifs? Instead of the embodiment of Zen, I resemble Deepak Chopra on an Adirondack vacation ... *quiet the mind; pursue the now* ... How come no one makes s’more-scented incense? ... *quiet the mind; pursue* ... I wonder if I could focus better if dressed in a kimono? ... *quiet the mind* ... what occupation does Captain Crunch list on his tax returns: Maritime captain or cereal maker? ...

After five minutes of this ceaseless mind chatter, I felt as frazzled as a hapless substitute teacher standing before a classroom of second-graders crazed on Red Bull and Hostess Ding Dongs.

To regain focus, I began counting breaths. It’s a meditative trick that directs focus to the rhythmic sounds of each inhale and exhale, pulling the plug, as it were, on external distractions and internal thoughts. But even this came with struggle:

One ... two ... three ... four ... Where should I mountain bike today? ... *one ... two ... three ...* Who was the Lone Ranger trying to kid? As soon as he took his mask off, his tan lines revealed his secret identity ... *one ... two ...* Salmon for dinner? ... *one ...* How come in yoga class we’re told to relax our shins? What could they possibly be stressed about? Their only life-purpose is to hold up socks ...

The thoughts were relentless. As fast as I’d dismiss one, another would take its place. I felt as harried as a Colorado Burger King drive-thru worker on the day the state legalized weed.

Eventually, I managed to lullaby the mind long enough to experience that rare and precious flash of meditative zow; a feeling with a built-in sales pitch that cannot be explained, only experienced; a feeling that won’t be boarding my regret ship. I’ll be back here tomorrow. ♦

Becoming More Myself: *Continued from page 41*

rearrange the furniture in our family room. We moved the couch to the right and the table to the left, and here’s what happened. With the couch no longer in front of the floor-to-ceiling bookshelf, the room opened up. It felt more spacious. And the books in the bookshelf were visible. No longer would I have to climb on the couch or reach deep behind it to pull books out. For the first time in close to 19 years I actually saw all the books on our shelves, and as I looked at them, I realized that many of them didn’t speak to me anymore.

The next day, I found myself standing on a chair in front of the bookshelf wiping the shelves of dust, bugs and cobwebs, dusting the spines and pages of books and piling them on the table: to keep, to exchange, and to give away. As I stood on that chair, I remembered back to when I was pregnant and expecting our first child. It was a race against time. Could I unload all of my books onto the shelves before our child arrived? I did. Barely. And here I stood again, so attuned to the shift of time, as our son, now a young man, would soon leave for college.

This cleaning and purging extended to all the bookshelves in our house. I tackled the bookshelves in the basement, on the second-floor landing, and in my home office, moving books to different locations, making give-away piles, and deciding into which bookshelf I intentionally wanted to place each book. I then imagined sitting at the table in our family room with a cup of tea, engaging with the books in this space, and I felt so peaceful.

And it wasn’t just the books. It was clothes and bedding and toys. We began to purge and reimagine the entire house. With fresh paint I touched up the dings on our walls. We began to hand down furniture and replace it with new items to reflect this chapter in our lives. We rearranged our bedroom for better *feng shui* and began to think of a softer, more romantic color to paint our walls.

Tired of my home office and in search of a new creative space, I asked my son if he would be willing to switch his bedroom for my work space. He was game. I began to imagine how I would set up my new office, what color I would paint it, all

the while imagining Gabe’s positive energy and presence filling this space, so I would feel him near even though he would be far away.

When I mentioned to my uncle that I was giving away books, bedding, clothes, rearranging furniture, touching up walls, changing my office, he understood. He said he would often shift the pictures hanging on his walls so that he could see them, because when things were in the same place for a long time, he didn’t really see them anymore.

To make a house into a home is not just about setting things up once and for all; it’s about creatively engaging with our space as we approach different chapters in our lives and creatively reimaging a new space for our souls to live. ♦

Read more:
Benko, Laura. (2016). *The Holistic Home: Feng Shui for Mind, Body, Spirit, Space*. New York: Helios Press. (Available on Amazon.)

Yalom, Irvin D. (2017). *Becoming Myself: A Psychiatrist’s Memoir*. New York: Hachette Book Group. (Available on Amazon.)

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 20

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

DON		CUT		ORB		JOE
THE		MORN		BOAR		OUR
SOUL		THAT		ISWITH		IN
	RIVEN			ADORN		
	ION		NUNNERY		OPT	
ONSET		SANDY		FLAIR		
ACIDIC		SEA		ALLUDE		
FAS		BABA		MENO		LED
	ENE			GNU		
AGI		TOGS		SOUR		CUB
MANCAN		LAP		LEMONY		
CLEAN		VOICE		DOGIE		
	ERS		DEGRADE		PIT	
	RERUN			GENET		
ACADEMIA				AIREDALE		
RAN		PACK		KNIT		TOP
CDT		SEC		AGE		ETA

Answers to Sudoku

5	6	9	8	1	3	7	4	2
1	3	7	9	4	2	6	5	8
8	2	4	5	6	7	3	1	9
4	8	5	7	9	6	2	3	1
2	1	6	3	8	5	9	7	4
9	7	3	4	2	1	5	8	6
7	4	8	6	5	9	1	2	3
3	9	2	1	7	8	4	6	5
6	5	1	2	3	4	8	9	7

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