

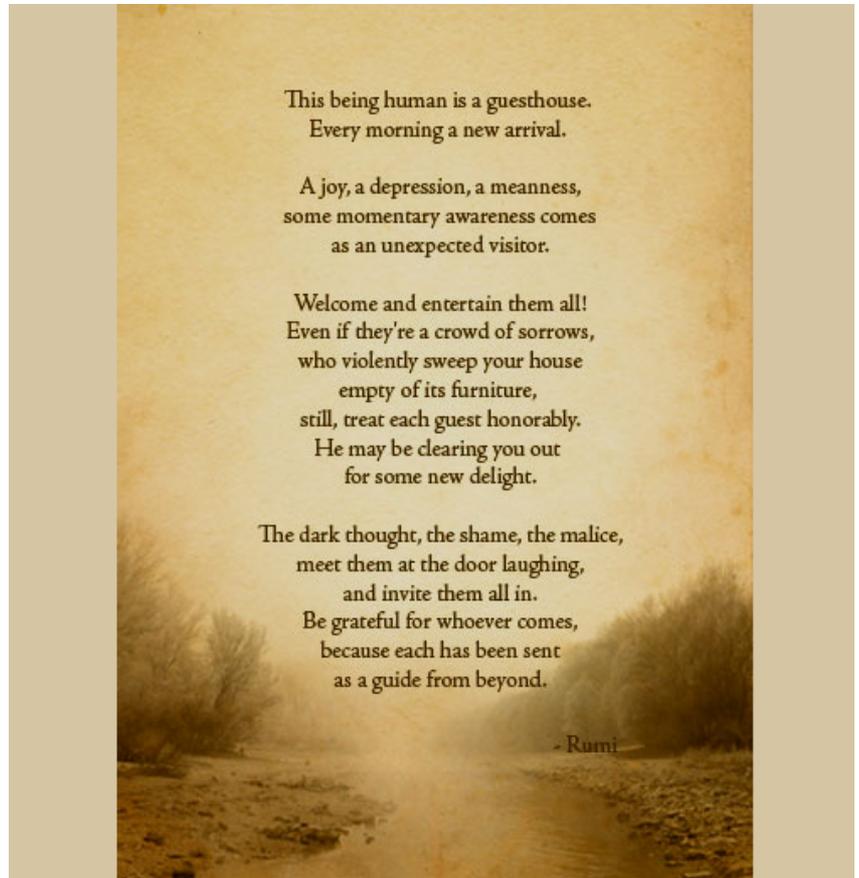


Healing at Hand

Jan 2011
Issue 26
Summer

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This being human is a guesthouse.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them all in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

- Rumi

When the solution is simple,
God is answering.
- Albert Einstein

COMIC RELIEF ...



A man with a nagging secret couldn't keep it any longer. In the confessional he admitted that for years he had been stealing building supplies from the lumberyard where he worked.

"What did you take?", his priest asked.
"Enough to build my own house and enough for my son's house. And houses for our two daughters, and our cottage at the lake."

"This is very serious," the priest said. "I shall have to think of a far-reaching penance. Have you ever done a retreat?"

"No, Father, I haven't," the man replied.
"But if you can get the plans, I can get the lumber."

Greetings . . .

2011 has arrived! – What more can I say beyond the inspiring and meaningful writings of the Persian poet, [Rumi](#).

Everything in life is about arrival and departure, a beginning and an end. And more significantly what is contained between the two; how receptive we are, observing and living it; and how attached we become to someone/something. It is inevitable that we'll label some experiences as pleasant, and others as pain & struggle.

Wisdom through the ages communicates this message: Suffering is not misfortune; it helps one to grow. Suffering and pain open the door to wisdom.

The more attached we become, the greater the loss is felt. Find the courage to continue life living your true self, aspirations, with a sense of purpose. Open the heart to love and serve, serve, serve. Make life meaningful and fulfilling. That power is within all of us.

Like guests, experiences arrive and make their impression, and eventually depart. One can therefore use it as an opportunity of self-learning - to observe, learn, entertain, gain, and to connect. That is living life! Experiencing both sides of the coin guarantees self-growth.

May we welcome the new year with courage for the arrival of numerous opportunities – and to explore them without fear and pain; to experience it with awe; and to learn with receptivity and openness.

Blessings and peace, **Rashidah**

Thai Massage Therapy



Thai massage is one of the four healing methods in traditional Thai medicine, and has been practiced for over 2500 years.

Based on acupressure points according to Indian Ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicine and yoga, Thai massage is unique as it does not seek to relax the body unlike massages, yet it is still remains very popular.

In a traditional Thai massage, the massage begins with the therapist saying a 'puja'. This is a meditative prayer to remind the therapist of the four divine states of mind in Buddhist teachings: compassion, loving kindness, vicarious joy and mental equanimity. These four states are believed to help the therapist provide a healing experience for the recipient.

Thai massage is provided slowly in order to ensure that one is able to facilitate a tendency towards mindfulness. One receives this massage on a floor mat. This allows for the practitioner to do movements that would be otherwise impossible to perform on a table. The therapist uses his hands, thumbs, fingers, elbows, forearms, knees and feet to apply pressure during the massage. The recipient's body is placed in specific positions in order to create a smooth energy flow within the body. There are generally four positions:

- front or prone,
- back or supine,
- side, and
- seated

Thai massage is often used to assist in loosening joints, stretching muscles and even toning internal organs. Although the massage is not relaxing the after-effect should be deep relaxation and an overall sense of well-being.

<http://www.women24.com>

Life is not a matter of holding good cards, but of playing a poor hand well.

- Robert Louis Stevenson

Human Gift: A sense of humour

Along with self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent will, humour emerges from the blending of the first-mentioned four. Gaining a humorous perspective requires self-awareness, the ability to see the irony and paradox in things and to reassert what is truly important. Humour draws upon creative imagination, the ability to put things together in ways that are truly new and funny. True humour also draws on conscience so that it is genuinely uplifting and doesn't fall into the counterfeit of cynicism or putting people down. It also involves willpower in making the choice to develop a humorous mind-set – not to be reactive, to not be overwhelmed.



Laughter is a great tension releaser. It's a producer of endorphins and other mood-altering chemicals in the brain that give a sense of pleasure and relief from pain. Humour is also the humanizer and equalizer in relationships. It keeps us from taking ourselves too seriously and being constantly uptight, constricted, demanding, over-exacting, disproportionate, imbalanced, and perfectionistic. It enables us to avoid the hazard of being so wrapped up with moral rigidity that we're blind to our own humanness and the realities of the situation.

As with anything else, humour can be carried to excess. It can result in a culture of sarcasm and cutting humour, and it can even produce light-mindedness where nothing is taken seriously.

But true humour is not light-mindedness; it's light-heartedness. And it is one of the fundamental elements of a beautiful family culture. Being around merry, cheerful people who are upbeat and full of good stories and good humour is the very thing that makes people want to be with others. It's also a key to proactivity because it gives you a positive, uplifting, nonreactive way to respond to the ups and downs of daily life.

-Stephen R Covey

What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul - Yiddish proverb

Yoga works for back pain

At least 80% of South Africa's workforce is suffering from severe discomfort and even disability due to problems which arise from lower back pain.



Although there are no official figures available on the cost of disability, it is estimated that worker disability in 1999 cost the economy more than R2 billion according to the SA Society of Physiotherapy. The solution, however, is not complex but is often ignored by Government, medical aids and sufferers.

Billions spent on treatment

The American Arthritis Foundation reports that back pain affects 50 to 80% of people in the USA, with 10% of adults experiencing pain, immobility or stiffness at any one point in time.

Americans spend an estimated US\$24 billion every year on treatment, not taking into account time missed from work. After the common cold, back pain is the most frequent cause of lost work days in adults under 45 and also carries an emotional cost to sufferers.

Physiotherapy under the spotlight

A recent study at the University of Warwick and Oxford University has put routine physiotherapy, a traditional treatment of lower back ailments, under the spotlight.

Published in the British Medical Journal, the study found no difference in results between a group that were treated by physiotherapists and another that was given advice and no treatment.

"The message to take away from this study is that there is no magic wand to curing back pain. If you want to get rid of the pain, you have to play an active role in the process yourself," said report co-author Sarah Stewart-Brown.

In the UK, GPs refer 1,3 million patients every year to NHS physiotherapists, despite the fact that research indicates that physiotherapy may be ineffective for the ailment.

Chris Loker, MD of Moksha Yoga Studio, says that it is not unreasonable to extrapolate the figures from the USA and UK to South Africa: "Like obesity, we are following some alarming health trends emanating from these countries," he says.

"Anecdotally, there seems to be a higher number of back operations per complaints in South Africa. Many of these are unnecessary and avoidable. Researchers have found that doing exercise is the way to get over lower back pain. This flies in the face of those who recommend rest."

Many exercise regimes don't work

"It is critical to keep the spine working in order to increase mobility, but unfortunately many exercise regimes don't work on twisting, rotating, lengthening and strengthening the spine and surrounding muscles, including the abdominal muscles which support the back".

Pilates may be effective in this respect, says Loker, but he believes that the ancient art of yoga offers the solution. "Our increasingly sedentary lifestyle and the amount of time spent in chairs and at desks means that it is critical to work the spine to avoid backache, and more importantly, increase quality of life as we age. What's the point of living longer but hating every minute of it?"

Discipline needed

Increased quality of life requires a bit of an investment, he believes, in this case the discipline of a regular exercise practice, but the benefits are immense; leading to increased vitality, reduced stress and mental clarity.

"What I don't understand is that major industries shy away from this proven practice and focus more on the drug and operation solution rather than prevention. Maybe it is because there is more money in the former. Yoga is still a cottage industry by comparison, however, if more people took responsibility for their own well-being, instead of adopting a 'pill for every ill' mentality, perhaps this wellness word will become mainstream." – (Moksha Yoga Enterprises) - www.health24.com

Helpful yoga postures for back pain include: The little bridge, the cobra, cat pose, the cow, corpse pose, downward facing dog, etc.

Regular practice of these postures tones the back muscles, strengthen the spine and result in correct spinal alignment.

It is important to work under the guidance of a qualified yoga instructor, and consulting with your health practitioner beforehand.

RIGHT DECISION ON CIRCUMCISION

Researchers have found yet another health benefit of male circumcision.

Partners of circumcised men had a 28% lower rate of infection over two years with the human papilloma virus, HVP, *The Lancet* medical journal reported last week. More than 30 women per 100 000 contract cervical cancer in sub-Saharan Africa each year. – The Times, Jan 20, 2011.

**Always forgive your enemies
- nothing annoys them so
much. - Oscar Wilde**



The soul of Silence

Break your addiction to noise. Switch off the sound and tune into silence

By Helen Wills

I'm not naturally the silent type. My school report cards often had comments like 'talks too much in class' or 'disturbs the other children with her chatting'. I'm the one in the house who turns up the music and loves the sound of kids screaming happily as they chase each other around the garden. I often jump in too quickly when there's a pause in the conversation. To be honest, I can get a little ratty when it gets too quiet.

But lately the endless din in my den has been getting to me. The noise on a typical afternoon in my house sounds like this: a shrieking three-year-old clip-clopping in my high heels on the wooden floor; my son bouncing his ball against the kitchen wall; demented robots at war on BBC Prime; beginners practising recorder, piano and flute; and Avril Lavigne at a volume too high for a slightly stressed parent. And all of this is the background to the usual cacophony of buzzing doorbells, ringing phones, a piercing printer, the neighbour's alarm and endless questions. Even in the black of night I'm sure I can subconsciously hear white noise from the household appliances, not to mention the snoring dogs and barking husband... or is it the other way around? And then there are the noises in my head as I make lists of things to buy, fetch, say, write and remember.

A couple of weeks ago, when my girlfriends and I did our weekly walk in the mountains, I suggested we try it more quietly. After years of enthusiastic yakking on the slopes, we did half our walk in silence (we're not yet so enlightened that we could manage the whole thing without talking!). During this peaceful time, I experienced a state of clarity and bliss and reconnected with something spiritual inside me; it was almost like meditation on the move. Now, every week when we walk, we do our bit of talking therapy but we eagerly await the river at the bottom of the slope, which is the dividing line between chattering and calm. And I've come to realise that silence isn't golden at all. That's a far-too-flash description. Silence is more the colour of an amethyst a beautiful, soft, lilac light.

Someone who knows about the sacredness of silence is Sergio Milandri, a spiritual counsellor who facilitates silent retreats at a sanctuary near Stellenbosch. 'Silence is an avenue to inner awareness,' he explains. 'It's here that we find a deep, still space where we're most in touch with ourselves. Looking within strips away our false identity and forces us to face our true nature.'

People who pathologically talk too much are often masking insecurities subconsciously, they believe if they keep quiet they may be seen as vacant and unworthy. Sergio says we're becoming addicted to busyness and noise, as they keep us from our uncomfortable feelings. Obviously, communication is vital and we don't have to go to the extremes of the Indian yogi who went 19 years without saying a thing, but it may be wise for chatterboxes to consider the yogi's advice: 'Before speaking, consider whether it's an improvement upon silence.'

Silence is one of the fundamental practices of many of the world's religions. In Buddhist meditation, one sits for long periods with the awareness on the breath, and silent prayer lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It's in this quiet space that we slow down, gather our thoughts and, if we're on a spiritual path, connect with a higher being.

They say a quiet heart hears everything, and if you stop and listen carefully to your heart's voice, you'll find the answers to your problems. Silence doesn't have to happen with stillness and solitude. You don't have to attend a religious service, sit in the lotus position staring at a candle or lie quietly beside a stream. You can experience an internal silence in a noisy and crowded shack, on a marathon run with thousands of others or even while listening to loud music. Everyone has a different route into this still space. We all come from a silent place; we had a noisy start; we have a talkative time in-between; and it's only death that shuts us up. But let's not wait until then to really experience this profound and peaceful state. – www.woman24.com

EXERCISE YOUR SPROGS



Exercise your children – because scientists have found that one of the most important parts of fit children brains was 12% larger than those of unfit youngsters. Researchers from the University of Illinois, in the US also found that fitter children are more intelligent and have better memories. Children who exercise from a young age do better at school – The Daily Mail

**Remember, when the world pushes you to your knees,
you're in the perfect position to pray.**



Don't let anger get the best of you

**Manage anger and you can keep it from taking over your life.
It's really that simple, and the steps for managing anger are simple as well**

Understand the cause of your anger

It all comes down to understanding the cause of your anger and your usual response and doing what you can to keep it from taking you in the wrong direction.

Anger is normal and sometimes healthy

The first thing to remember is that anger is not really a negative thing. It is a perfectly normal, even healthy, response which is sometimes necessary to maintaining emotional balance.

How you express anger is what makes it negative

What makes anger become negative is the way you choose to express it. If you let it get too intense and get the better of you, it can have a destructive effect on you and those around you.

In most cases, there are three basic ways that people manage anger. The first and most obvious is expressing it. But expressing it does not mean going over the top.

(1) You need to assert yourself without being destructive

You need to assert yourself and let your feelings be known without allowing your response to become destructive. It is when anger response becomes too violent and physical that it can become dangerous.

Expressing yourself assertively, not aggressively, will help you to let your anger out in a constructive manner.

(2) Suppress, but don't deny your anger

Suppressing your anger can also be quite helpful, but suppressing does not mean ignoring or denying. You need to turn your angry feelings around and do something constructive with them. Learn from them so that you can avoid reacting this way in the future.

But you never want to completely swallow your feelings, as keeping them in can cause physical problems for you including high blood pressure or depression.

(3) Learning how to calm down is the most important way to manage anger

Perhaps the most important way to manage anger is by learning to calm yourself down. Meditation, yoga and other techniques can be used to help you release your emotions without letting anger take over.

When you learn to recognize your response to anger, you can better manage it, getting one step ahead and helping yourself to feel calm and more contained.



There are easy techniques you can use to help control your anger and change your emotional outlook for the better. Learn how to respond to frustrating situations constructively rather than just blowing up.

Try and diffuse a tense moment with humour rather than lose your temper. Or try and find constructive solutions for whatever may be causing your anger and remember not to get upset if you can't fix the problem, not all problems are entirely solvable.

Communication is often the key to managing anger

One of the key elements in helping you manage anger is learning how to communicate better. Often, you can handle emotional situations better if you simply share them with someone else.

Rather than taking all the weight on your own shoulders, you can ease the emotional burden by expressing your feelings and knowing there is someone else you can lean on.

Take control of your emotions and own your anger

Anger is a perfectly normal feeling, so don't beat yourself up for being angry. Instead, try and take control of your emotions before they take over your life. With a few simple steps, you can be on the road to a happier, less stressful life.



Just remember, you need to own your anger rather than letting it own you.

www.all4women.co.za

"Between stimulus and response, there is a space.
In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our happiness."

- **Stephen R Covey**

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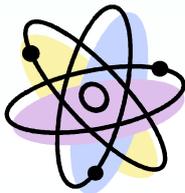
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BOWEN THERAPY CASE STUDY

KAITLYN'S STORY

I am a true believer in the power of Bowen Therapy.

Since Kaitlyn began her treatments she has flourished. She came to Liz Corbett (Bowen Therapist in Canada) as a colicky two month old suffering a birth injury that left her with a limp and twisted left arm.

The analysis from paediatricians and physiotherapists was that it would take a year for the arm's nerves to heal and that she may never have complete strength and her physical developments would lag behind others her age as a result.

With the very first treatment there was improvement. The colic lessened and stopped within a week.

After her initial shoulder procedure, before an hour had passed, she had gained visually increased movement. As time went on and she continued her treatments, she progressed.

Kaitlyn is now seven months and to anyone who doesn't know about the injury they would never guess. She has progressed through the physical milestones as well as any baby would. I believe this is due to her treatments and her own desire to heal. It is truly amazing to witness.

- Carolyn

[Bowen Hands](#), Sept 2006

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Which teeth do carnivorous mammals have that rodents lack?
2. What is the most common language spoken in Bangladesh?
3. What is the official language of Mozambique?
4. What does the word "amandla" mean?
5. In Greek Mythology, who was the goddess of love and beauty?

1. Canines 2. Bengali
3. Portuguese 4. Power 5. Aphrodite

TIME TO CONTEMPLATE

Do not brood over your past mistakes and failures,
as this will only fill your mind with grief, regret, and depression.
Do not repeat them in the future.

- *[Swami Sivananda](#)*