IN MEMORIAM: WAYNE W. DYER, Ph.D.

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November 18, 2015
7:30pm

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By S.R. Frank

13. Heaven on Earth  
By James Coleman

14. Julian, A Perfect Mountain Retreat  
By Ann Nelson

15. The Miracle behind the miracles  
By Lynne Girdlestone

4. In Memoriam: Wayne W. Dyer, Ph.D.  
By Lindsay McGinty

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By Dr. Juliet Tien (Dr. J), D.N., Sc.

10. The Age of Miracles Begins:  
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By Celia Hales, Ph.D.

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Wayne W. Dyer, Ph.D., was an internationally renowned author and speaker in the field of self-development and spiritual growth. Over the span of his four-decade career, he wrote 42 books, 21 of which became New York Times bestsellers, and this wide readership earned him the affectionate nickname of “the father of motivation” among his fans. Dr. Dyer’s message reached across all markets, generations, and cultures. Even though the self-help industry has seen many new thought leaders emerge in recent years, Dr. Dyer continued to be a pioneer in this ever-expanding field up until his passing.

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Dr. Dyer earned his doctorate in educational counseling from Wayne State University before serving as a professor at St. John’s University in New York. Through his early work as a college educator, and as a clinical psychologist, he discovered the need to make the principles of self-discovery and personal growth available to the general public. In 1976 he began his career as an author by traveling the country selling his first book, Your Erroneous Zones, from the trunk of his car—a book that went on to become one of the best-selling books of all time, with more than 60 million copies sold, printings in 47 languages, and 64 weeks spent on the New York Times bestseller list. Its success landed Dr. Dyer on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson—a dream of Dr. Dyer’s since childhood—a total of 37 times.

After publishing a string of best-selling books on the practical psychology of self-improvement, Dr. Dyer felt a shift in his thinking that led him to explore the spiritual aspects of human experience. “My purpose is to help people look at themselves and begin to shift their concepts,” Dr. Dyer said at the time. “Remember, we are not our country, our race, or religion. We are eternal spirits. Seeing ourselves as spiritual beings without label is a way to transform the world and reach a sacred place for all of humanity.”

In 1993, Dr. Dyer began publishing books with Hay House and quickly became one of the cornerstones of the company. “Wayne and I spoke on the phone every day,” said Reid Tracy, President and CEO of Hay House, Inc. “I will forever cherish our conversations. We began as publisher and author, and that relationship blossomed into a great friendship. That’s no surprise, since Wayne was always ready to connect on a deeper level with everyone he met. Hay House would not have become what it is today without Dr. Wayne Dyer, and we are forever grateful and proud to be the stewards of his legacy. We will do everything we can to share his work with the people who can most benefit from it. That’s what he would have wanted most.”

Dr. Dyer created several audio programs and videos, and appeared on thousands of television and radio shows over the course of his career. His books Manifest Your Destiny, Wisdom of the Ages, There’s a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem, and the New York Times bestsellers 10 Secrets for Success and Inner Peace, The Power of Intention, Inspiration, Change Your Thoughts—Change Your Life, Excuses Begone!, Wishes Fulfilled, and I Can See Clearly Now have all been featured as PBS specials, raising over $200 million for public television stations nationwide and making Dr. Dyer one of PBS’s most successful fund-raisers. This philanthropic spirit was intrinsic to Dr. Dyer, as illustrated by his charitable contributions to his alma mater, Wayne State University, which totaled more than $1 million.

Dr. Dyer’s first feature film, The Shift, was released in 2009, followed in 2012 by the autobiographical film, My Greatest Teacher. The second film dramatized a defining moment in Dyer’s life, when he had visited the grave of his father, who had abandoned him as a young boy. While the intention that day had been to exact some form of vengeance on the man Dyer felt had sent him down a dark path of rage and alcoholism, at the gravesite Dr. Dyer was overcome by inexplicable feelings of love and forgiveness. He credited this experience with changing the trajectory of his life. The date of this experience was August 30, 1974. On the exact same day, 41 years later, Dr. Dyer passed on.

Beyond this formative experience with his father, Dr. Dyer counted among his teachers St. Francis of Assisi, Lao Tzu, Rumi, Carl Jung, and Abraham Maslow. And Dr. Dyer himself acted as a teacher and mentor to emerging authors in his field, such as Anita Moorjani, Scarlett Lewis, and Dana Liesegang.

Despite a childhood spent in orphanages and foster homes, Dr. Dyer made his dreams come true. He lived to teach others to overcome their perceived limits and engage in their “Highest Self.”

“I realize I was this little kid that was just born into the
situation that I was born into,” Dr. Dyer said while reflecting on the publication of his 2014 book *I Can See Clearly Now.* “But as I look back on all of these things and all of these books that have come out of it and the movies that we’ve done and the millions of millions of people who’ve been touched all over the world, I look back and I see that I was in some kind of training since I was a little boy. It’s like these experiences are all gifts, and that’s how you have to look at it.”

Just before his passing, Dr. Dyer had returned from Australia and New Zealand, where he lectured in front of thousands of people. As a father to eight children and six grandchildren, he was back home in Maui looking forward to spending time with his family, while gearing up for the launch of his upcoming book, *Memories of Heaven: Children’s Astounding Recollections of the Time Before They Came to Earth.*

Although he was public with his struggle with leukemia, Dr. Dyer was the healthiest he had been in years, keeping a very active schedule. His death has officially been attributed to heart failure.

In lieu of flowers, Dr. Dyer’s family would like to encourage those wanting to show support, to make a donation in Wayne’s name to one of the following causes he was passionate about: gun safety, non-GMO foods, and education. Please see below for a list of charities he supported.

- **Guns:** Everytown for Gun Safety (https://donate.everytown.org/donate/support-everytown_em/?source=emne_whatever-it-takes&akid=2977.2491508.U9Iodg)

  “He was a strong believer in making guns harder to get, thereby improving the safety of our nation. When he met Scarlett Lewis and heard her son Jesse’s story from Sandy Hook, he was moved to tears and wanted to help tell Jesse’s story in the hope that it would make a difference. If he can do anything from the other side, my guess is he is whispering in the ears of Congress and reminding them to vote with a conscience.” – Tracy Dyer

- **Non GMO:** JustLabelIt.org (https://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/50202/p/salsa/donation/common/public?donate_page_KEY=9661)

  “Anyone who attended one of his talks or spent more than 10 minutes with him, knew how passionate he was about the Genetic Modification of our food supply. He always believed in keeping things simple and food was probably the biggest example of this. Just grow real food and eat it.” – Tracy Dyer

- **Education:** Wayne State University (https://cardinal.wayne.edu/wsugiving/give.cfm)

  “Education was also one of his biggest passions. He was forever grateful to Wayne State University for taking a chance on an inner-city kid who came out of the Navy with a dream to make his life better. As a father, he always told us that as long as we were working toward something, he would always help us fund our educations and that was no small task, with 8 kids.” – Tracy Dyer

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How to Live a Soul-Filled Life

By James Van Praagh
Internationally Renowned #1 New York Times Bestselling Author

“"If you’re on the path you’re meant to be on, everything falls into place; the Universe is telling you that. If you are not on the right path, you will experience roadblocks all along the way, and this is also the Universe telling you to stop, look, and ask if this is where you are supposed to be.”
— James Van Praagh, Unfinished Business: What the Dead Can Teach Us About Life

When they leave their physical bodies behind, the dead gain an amazing perspective on life. Through my ability to connect with the Spirit realm, I have grown to understand that the world is a beautiful classroom where souls come in human form to learn lessons about love and compassion. When they pass over, they can’t wait to share these lessons with the living, but just like the good advice that parents give to their children, these valuable insights from beyond often fall upon deaf ears.

How can you profit from the wisdom of the Spirit world and make the most of every day here on earth? How can you experience the soul-filling life you were meant to live – joyful and without limits or regrets?

Living a soul-based existence.

When you get caught up in the challenges and frustrations of life in the physical world, remind yourself that you are a soul having a human experience – as a soul-being, you have the ability to manifest anything you put your heart and mind to. The trick to living your best life is to focus, every day, on raising your consciousness to the vibration of pure love. By sending out love energy into the world, you become a magnet, drawing love, happiness, and joy back to you.

Experiencing the frequency of love.

Love is our natural state of consciousness, but sometimes, lower frequency emotions can get in the way. How can you raise your consciousness to the level of love and keep it there?

Remember that everything around you can affect your level of consciousness: your experiences, your thoughts, the television shows you watch, things you read. With input coming at you from all sides, it takes focus to stay at a high level. Here’s one way that I keep my consciousness at the level of love.

Visualize the skyscraper of consciousness.

Every day as I start my day, I picture the levels of consciousness as a skyscraper – with emotions like guilt and pity as the lower levels, and love as the penthouse! As I go about my activities, I am aware of what “floor” I am on at that moment. I recognize that my thoughts, words and actions have power to make my “consciousness elevator” go up or down and make the changes needed to keep myself on the higher levels.

Here’s how you can use my skyscraper analogy to live your best life. Draw a picture of a skyscraper. Label the different floors with emotions that you commonly experience – from lowest to highest. For instance, my bottom floor is marked FEAR, and as the elevator goes up, I have GUILT, PITY, ACCEPTANCE, SERVICE, JOY, PEACE, and LOVE.

As you go through your day, think about what floor you’re on, and visualize yourself hitting the elevator button to ride to the next floor. Consciously replace lower level thoughts and feelings with gratitude and love, so you can stay at those higher levels. The view is so much better from the penthouse!

Live without regrets.

Take the opportunity to create a life without limits or regrets. Understand that your thoughts are real, and they have a powerful effect on your life and the lives of those around you. By being mindful of your thoughts, words and actions and working to raise them up to the frequency of love, you can live a soul-filled life today – replacing fear with love, anger with forgiveness, and guilt and self-pity with acceptance and peace.

Keep feeding your soul.

There’s nothing better than being in the presence of, and drawing inspiration from, like minded people – either in person or online. You can learn more about your souls journey and experience the wisdom of the Spirit people firsthand by attending a live event, workshop or spiritual conference. It’s a wonderful way to learn something new, and connect with others who will support you on your journey.

You might want to begin your journey to higher consciousness with an easy, baby step. I
created my free Soul Discoveries Course for just that reason! It consists of a lesson, exercises, and some simple guided meditations all designed to inspire you as you open the door to your own self-awareness and enlightenment. Each meditation has personal reflection points to help you contemplate and interact with Spirit – giving you powerful insights into your soul dimensions and an understanding of how to express your soul’s purpose.

If you want to take your spiritual exploration to the next level, I recommend that you take a course. For years people asked me to teach them my secrets to connecting with the spirit world. These requests inspired me to launch the James Van Praagh School of Mystical Arts. My first course teaches students how to enhance their natural psychic and intuitive gifts, and to become a Certified Psychic and Intuitive Messenger by the JVP School of Mystical Arts.

This course is for anyone who is looking to become masterful at using their intuitive and psychic abilities. Students work online, at their own pace – receiving a new lesson each week. Over 8 weeks they are trained in every facet of psychic development, from reading energy and auras to various psychic tools of the trade. Plus, if they already are—or want to be—a professional psychic, intuitive or healer, they will receive insider insights into how to create a successful, thriving spiritual business.

Internationally renowned #1 New York Times bestselling author of Talking to Heaven, Reaching to Heaven, Healing Grief, Heaven and Earth, Looking Beyond, Meditations, Ghosts Among Us, Unfinished Business, Growing Up In Heaven, Adventures of the Soul, How to Heal a grieving Heart (co-authored with Doreen Virtue) and the soon to be released Power of Love; James Van Praagh is hailed throughout the world as a pioneer of the mediumship movement, and recognized as one of the most accurate spiritual mediums working today. His messages have brought solace, peace and spiritual insights, changing millions view of both life and death. He has received many awards for his dedication to raising the consciousness of the planet.

James has appeared on virtually every national radio and television show including OPRAH, LARRY KING LIVE, DR. PHIL, 48 HOURS, THE VIEW, JOY BEHAR SHOW, CHELA SEA LATELY, COAST TO COAST and many more. He was the host of his own nationally syndicated show BEYOND, still seen in markets around the world. James has also been a successful producer for CBS, creating a mini-series LIVING WITH THE DEAD based on his life and THE DEAD WILL TELL starring Eva Longoria. He was the creator and executive producer of CBS's long running series THE GHOST WHISPERER, starring Jennifer Love Hewitt.

James recently launched The James Van Praagh School of Mystical Arts, a labor of love that has been years in the making. The online school offers a variety of learning experiences, from professional certifications to audio and video courses, with live calls and online forums. For more information about The James Van Praagh School of Mystical Arts go to www.jvpschoolofmysticalarts.com.

Fans of James can tune in to his popular Hay House Radio Show every Tuesday at 11:00 am pacific, and enjoy his online television series, Spirit Talk, on Gaiam TV. He also shares insights and messages from the Spirit realm through his website and blog at http://www.vanpraagh.com and via social media.

James Van Praagh

“Who we are is divine love and that is infinite.”
~ Dr. Wayne Dyer
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Yeast and parasitic infections affect every body in the world. If you suffer from yeast infection symptoms, chances are you also suffer from parasitic infections, because yeasts and parasites are inseparable like “Siamese Twins.” Candida belongs to the yeast family. Candida has 40 to 50 pathological strains that cause human ailments. That’s why many people are familiar with the term “candidiasis.”

Yeast and parasites affect every body regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, geographical locations, or socio-economic status. They are “equal opportunity” infections! The symptoms of yeast and parasitic infections range from head to toe. They include: foggy mind, chronic fatigue, depression, lack of motivation, irritability, allergies, strep throat, consistent coughing, acid reflux, poor digestion, bloating, sugar craving, gas (flatulence), constipation, diarrhea, arthritis-like aches and pains, skin rash, psoriasis, frequent flu and cold, chronic weight gain or weight loss.

If you identify three or more symptoms, you are definitely infected with yeasts and parasites. How do you contract yeast and parasitic infections? Physical factors such as exposure to a yeasty environment, raw fish and poor dietary habit, etc., can make you vulnerable. Emotional (mental) factors also play a big role. Stress can deplete your immunity and make you susceptible to all kinds of infections especially yeast and parasitic infections. The contemporary medical system is not familiar with the holistic treatment for yeast and parasitic infections; therefore, it can make your symptoms worse! For example, if you receive antibiotics as a treatment for your skin rash or acne, you will have a long journey to struggle through.

The best treatment strategy for candida-yeast-parasite cleanse is using a holistic approach. This approach includes:

1) Anti-yeast nutritional program. Do your best to avoid yeast- and parasite-favorite food such as sugar, dairy, wheat, yeast, caffeine, alcohol, nicotine and chemicals. Starve your little enemies in your body.

2) Herbal therapy: Use potent herbal formulas to remove harmful yeasts and parasites simultaneously and improve your immunity.

3) Stress management through meditation, prayers (or chanting), affirmations, physical exercises, can be very beneficial in reducing the day-to-day stress. If you have pent-up negative emotions such as anger, resentment, fear, regret, guilt, etc., I would suggest that you seek professional help.

Dr. J is the leading expert in treating yeast and parasitic infections and their related illnesses. For more information, please call 1-800-715-3053, or 213-489-1712, or visit website: www.drjsholistichealth.com.
Many of you are familiar with A Course in Miracles, the channeled writing from Helen Schucman and Bill Thetford that purported to be from Jesus. Now there is a continuation, channeled by Mari Perron and entitled A Course of Love. The most exciting announcement of this new work is the fact that we are said to be living in the time of Christ, a new age of miracles.

What is a miracle? Surprisingly, it is not an out-of-time and out-of-space one-time-only insertion into our everyday life. It is a way of living, a new way of thought that takes for granted the primacy of miracles. We are led to understand that miracles are our inheritance, our right in this world—even this conflicted and war-torn world.

We are encouraged to believe that angels are all about us, there to smooth our way, give us a better life. We are encouraged to choose a miracle, but not a specific miracle—instead to choose a new way of life and a new way of thought. It is a way of living that looks to our heart as the guiding force for our being. The benefits are many, and they surround the concept of elevating ourselves to a new height, a non-egoic Christ-consciousness that will allow us to live in peace and harmony.

Like A Course in Miracles before it, A Course of Love encourages us to turn aside from the ego, but not by resisting it, for the ego is made strong when we resist. We just gently make a new decision, a decision to live with acceptance of what life brings. This does not mean that we countenance the violence that is all around us. But we must first change ourselves if we are to have a meaningful impact on our world. And, of course, we want above all to live harmonious lives that will make a difference in the larger world.

To have a chance at Christ-consciousness, we must drop fear and judgment from our repertoire of emotions. Fear is unnatural; likewise, judgment. God’s world requires that we fall in line with what is natural, what has been intended for our living all along. We just got sidetracked into a separation from God that jumbled up our lives.

Now we are hidden to come home. And the return home will be a miracle to end all miracles. A glorious homecoming awaits us all. We will live in this physical world with a Self (capital “S”) that is shared with all, a Self that has been elevated to experience the very best that life has to offer. We do not have to wait for the afterlife to experience this blessing; indeed, we are encouraged not to wait any longer at all, but to welcome the miracle that will set our place in this world as people who know the truth. Our miracle-readiness will do this for us. And then we will go out and perform miracles, as guided to do, by the inner Self.

Miracles are our birthright. We need to stop our struggle, stop our ceaseless seeking, and come home to God through relaxing into His good care.

Celia Hales, Ph.D., is the author of a six-year daily blog entitled, “Miracles Each Day,” a blog that considers A Course in Miracles and A Course of Love. She is a former religion librarian at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.
In the last issue of Awareness Magazine I talked about Single Incident trauma and in this issue I want to discuss what most theorists call, Complex or Relational Trauma.

But first, let me mention that almost all research on the effects of trauma focus on Single Incident trauma because it has a limited effect on the individual and is, hence, easy to treat. Complex trauma, on the other hand, has a profound and pervasive effect on the personhood and usually takes years of successfully treat.

Complex or Relational Trauma arises out of prolonged periods of aversive or abusive stress usually involving entrapment (psychological or physical), repeated violations of personal boundaries (e.g., sexual or in one’s environment), betrayal, rejection and/or confusion resulting from lack of control and helplessness. Common situations include being bullied, harassment, physical, sexual and emotional/verbal abuse, domestic violence and substance abuse, stalking, threats, separation and loss, unresolved grief and neglect.

This is a long list and many children will experience some of these events and not develop a trauma syndrome. Obviously, the more prolonged and the more intense the greater the likelihood a complex trauma syndrome will develop.

Here are some emotional and behavioral problems, somatic and self-concept limitations that can develop from prolonged or intense exposure to abuse environments:

1. Alterations in relations with others such as a general feeling of distrust avoidance behavior and a sense of victimization.
2. Biological and bodily effects often where the nervous system is “set” or balanced too high or too low leading to behavioral and physiological problems.
3. Alterations in affect regulation leading to persistent sadness or difficulty restoring normal feelings.
4. Attention and consciousness considerations such as amnesia, dissociation and even depersonalization.
5. Difficulties with behavioral control leading to excesses (e.g., binge eating), poor impulse control, extreme dependency or oppositional behavior and difficulty following structure.
6. Cognition difficulties maintaining attention, planning and focusing.
7. A sense of helplessness, shame, guilt and self-blame.
8. A sense of despair and hopelessness.

This is a list of outcomes and not of actual traumas. If early trauma was severe or prolonged then the individual may have most of these outcomes. On the other hand, it is up to a skilled clinician to determine to what extent trauma lead to these outcomes. If you see yourself or a loved one in this list, be sure to talk, or have them talk, to a mental health professional (psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, MFT, etc.) who is knowledgeable in the development and dynamics of Complex trauma. Therapies are available to treat these conditions.

Dr. Doctor can be reached at: www.rondoctor.com

Awareness Magazine would like to wish you and yours a Joyful and Peaceful Holiday Season!
Treating Sinusitis Naturally and Correctly

By S.R. Frank

If you suffer from chronic sinusitis and have been through multiple courses of antibiotics then you know the ills of the antibiotic approach. The antibiotics leave you with intestinal problems and often yeast infections while they only getting rid of the sinus infection for 6 months or so. The next time it comes back, you have to try a different antibiotic and this one will cost more and make you feel worse. So why is this cycle escalating? Why aren’t you winning the war when you frequently win the battles? Because the antibiotic solution does more harm than good. It shifts the fauna and flora of bacteria in your sinuses to the ones that are not so easily killed by the antibiotics and leaves you with a more formidable foe after each round. Additionally, the antibiotics are taken systemically, which means that they are coursing through your entire body when you only need them in your sinuses. This distorts all of the fauna in your body and can lead to a yeast infection. What’s a sinus sufferer to do?

Glad you asked. The problem is two fold. First, you are fighting what is a symbiotic relationship of fungus and bacteria with an active agent that kills only the bacteria. Second, the active agent that you are using to kill the bacteria kills only some of the bacteria. The ones that are not susceptible to your chosen antibiotic will take-over the feeding grounds of the ones that you have killed, leaving you with a fauna of germs that you cannot kill. This is really a recipe for how to take a bad neighborhood and make it worse by killing off only the weakest of criminals.

Let’s explore the first point. Your sinuses are host to many fungi. They thrive on the mucopoly saccharides (mucus) that line your sinus passage and produce exotoxins that irritate the sinus membranes. Your immune system does its best to kill these invaders but this is a constant battle, for every breath that you take will contain molds. What makes this problem worse is the fact that the fungus produces a platform of insulation on which the bacteria can live and thrive. The bacteria can digest the conversion of the mucopolysaccharides by the fungus and live on top of them. In this manner, they are insulated from your immune system and from the drugs that you would take to reach them by distribution through your micro-capillary bed.

And so you see, that to approach the problem of sinusitis with merely an antibiotic to kill the bacteria would be only half the solution. You need an anti-fungal as well to attenuate the population of molds (fungi) that inhabit your sinuses and insulate the bacteria from the reach of your immune system.

And now for the second part. It is very important to choose an anti-microbial that will kill ALL the bacteria. Antibiotics work in three discrete manners and can kill three different groups of bacteria. Each type of antibiotic will kill only a portion of the fauna leaving the survivors to take-over the nutritional sinus tissue that the killed bacteria have abandoned. What you want is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial that kills all types of bacteria as evenly as possible so that you don’t just kill the easy ones.

Ah, so you ask, “where can I find such an active agent that kills fungus and all types of bacteria?”

Glad you asked. Clinical studies have shown that an enhanced colloid of silver of 35 parts per million or more, is able to terminate sinus infections in a week or less and this is far better than sinus surgery or antibiotics. What’s more, it can be sprayed directly into the sinuses and so it doesn’t have to be taken systemically.

You apply it ONLY where the infection is occurring; In your nose. If you prefer to use a Neti Pot, you can fill your sinuses with the solution and then close off your nose with your fingers. Sitting this way for 10 or more minutes will kill more bacteria and fungus than a week of antibiotics.

Of course, since you have a sinus infection, the mucosal flow is pretty large. This will flush the antimicrobial from the area in less than 10 minutes. It is absolutely paramount to the success of this therapy that you spray every 20 to 30 minutes. Using the Neti Pot in the morning and evening for 10 minutes works quite well.

So you see, the balanced holistic approach to sinusitis rests with using the right active agent, in the right concentration, in the right place and with the right protocol. If this is done, you will attenuate the fungus and the bacteria while not shifting the fauna and flora. You will re-establish the balance of power in your nose.

Over the past 15 years, Mr. Frank has directed and participated in more than a dozen clinical studies, written numerous papers, articles and books relating to natural solutions for health. His many hours in the clinics and labs have generated patents on respiratory antiseptics and enhancement of colloids.

Let us not be justices of the peace, but angels of peace.

~Thérèse de Lisieux
Heaven on Earth

By James Coleman

Heaven on earth. Everybody wants it. Heaven, paradise, nirvana, valhalla, whatever we call it, is simply a state of never-ending happiness. Many of us associate certain conditions with heaven, like seeing our deceased friends and family, or a certain number of virgins, or wings, harps, and clouds. Heaven means different things to different people.

If we are to experience heaven here, then, we must distinguish eternal happiness, from the much better known temporary happiness. Basically, temporary happiness is a response to desirable surrounding conditions. We are happy when we experience the things we desire. It follows, then, that we are unhappy when we experience things we don’t desire. Temporary happiness comes and goes like sunshine on a partly cloudy day. We want happiness all the time, though. Naturally, we act to control our conditions. Even as infants, we learn how to get desirable conditions through crying or cooing. As adults, we use everything we know, be it physical or metaphysical to conquer our conditions. We are always trying to make our situation perfect; be it the perfect meal, relationship, career, reputation, car, phone, wardrobe, itinerary, bank balance, neighborhood, diet, spiritual practice, exercise regimen, etc. People even measure their power by how large an area they can influence. What can you control?

Whether we are attempting to control our personal conditions or the condition of the planet, we can only get a brief sense of joy, or even satisfaction, as a result of these efforts. And yet, what is the alternative? Is there a practical road to Heaven on earth? Or are we doomed to experience little snatches of happiness every now and then?

Perpetual happiness is real. In fact, it is our natural state, no matter how hard we push it away. And push it away we do. Think about it. Happiness is either “here” or it is “there”. If it isn’t “here” for you, then it’s over there somewhere waiting to be acquired in some way. For most of us, happiness is over there. Heaven is up there, in somebody else’s life, on the other side of death, somewhere else. Anywhere but here. It seems like an unsolvable problem. Except, who is it that gets to decide what is meant by here and there? When we say “here”, we can mean here in this body, here in this room, here on this planet, here in this galaxy, here in this reality, or wherever we decide here is. Just as we determine where here is, we also decide where heaven is.

Heaven is just a decision away. We can indeed control our conditions. Ironically, the way to do that is to give up trying to control our conditions. Instead, we need to reevaluate our priorities. If we want heaven, we have to decide we want happiness more than anything else. That is not as easy as it sounds for most of us. We are far more focused on the perceived means to happiness than on happiness itself.

Most of us have no conscious concept of the intensity of true happiness. Glimpses of heaven may be necessary before we realize what it is we’re talking about. As heaven is our native state, it is always available to experience. We simply have to get past the distractions we have put in the way. There are many ways to achieve this. Meditation is very effective for many. As people meditate, they find peace and happiness helps us focus our energies. However, trying to find heaven doesn’t work, because heaven is characterized by effortlessness. Don’t make it happen. Let it happen.

The technique used is not as important as the motivation. Expecting nothing less than heaven brings heaven. Once, this is done, happiness becomes more and more a part of our daily experience. There is a tipping point, where there are more happy moments than there aren’t. At this point, the realization that one is happy most of the time is heartening and ushers in a quality of life that many can’t even imagine. But at this point, happiness is still fleeting, even if it does seem to stick around much longer than it used to. This increasing satisfaction leads to a clearer view of circumstances and a different concept of our relationship to our world.

As this shift waxes, we experience a place where we see nothing but blessings everywhere. Life as we know it will never be the same. Even when circumstances all but demand unhappiness, we still choose happiness, while being sensitive to those around us who don’t. Finally, in the face of the temporal world, all we see is love. Happiness, then, is never-ending. Heaven is ours. We are home. Heaven is here.

James Coleman is a happiness coach and has been a professional astrologer and spiritual counselor for over 30 years. He is a graduate of A Course in Miracles. thedesertphilosopher.com

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God not only sends special angels into our lives, but sometimes He even sends them back again if we forget to take notes the first time!

~Quoted in The Angels’ Little Instruction Book by Eileen Elias Freeman, 1994
Julian, A Perfect Mountain Retreat

By Ann Nelson

Want an escape from the city? The remote town of Julian, nestled high in pine and oak-covered hills, located just an hour northeast of San Diego and three hours from Los Angeles, is an enchanting destination. This rustic mountain sanctuary, rich in history, with a small town community spirit, has grand stories to tell of fame, fortune and dreams come true. The old storefronts and historic sites date back to the 1870’s. The region’s unspoiled and peaceful countryside offers enticing tales from the past, along with scenes of breathtaking natural beauty. There is no smog, the weather is mild, with summer highs in the 80’s and winter lows in the 30’s. The tree-lined country roads are surrounded with grazing cattle and horses, fruit orchards and open meadows offering endless panoramic views.

Exploring the history of Julian is part of the fun of visiting. We found the best way to discover the true soul of this town was to take a walking tour with David Lewis, a fourth generation Julian historian. Our tour included a trip to Eagle and High Peak Mine, where we traversed through the intricate tunnels of the old gold mine. Exploring the dark hallways was a spooky, yet mesmerizing experience. Visit julianhistory.com for details of the various walking tours. If you want to tour around in an ex-military troop carrier, check out California Overland. The tour guide Joe Raffetto, has a true passion and encyclopedic knowledge of the back country.

The California Wolf Center is another important place to visit. Their goal is to increase awareness and conservation efforts for protecting and understanding the importance of all wildlife and wild lands. The center focuses on history, biology and ecology through education, exhibition, reproduction of endangered species and the studies of captive wolf behavior.

After trekking around the wide-open spaces, you may want to consider spending the rest of the afternoon concentrating on wine tasting. The Menghini Winery and the Volcan Mountain Winery, located down a two-lane county road and almost across the street from each other, are just a few minutes from town. Jeremy’s on the Hill, located a few miles away in Wynola, is a fabulous place for dinner. The owner, a Cordon Bleu-trained chef, offers exquisite farm-to-table cuisine.

Spending the night in Julian is essential if you want to soak up the full flavors of what this small town has to offer. There are lots of B&B’s and boutique hotels, including one of my favorites, The Julian Hotel, dating back to 1897. Before my friend DJ and I left for our trip, we’d heard rave reviews about Orchard Hill Country Inn and discovered it is rated as “one of the top lodges in the west” by Sunset Magazine. This AAA Four Diamond 22-room inn, located one block up the hill from Main Street, oozes with elegance and luscious comfort. Plush robes and home-made cookies welcomed us to our spacious and cozy getaway. Cottages are sprinkled throughout the picturesque grounds, abundant with colorful vegetation and lighted walkways. A hearty complimentary breakfast, as well as afternoon wine and hors d’oeuvres are included.

Before leaving town, we wanted to find out more about the land conservation work that was going on in the area. Visiting with Colleen Bradley, the Executive Director of the Volcan Mountain Foundation, was not only educational, but an inspiration. The mission of the Foundation, created in 1988, is to “conserve and acquire land and practice respectful stewardship through education, public outreach and resource management.” According to Colleen, San Diego County is ground breaking as far as conservation goes. The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and the San Dieguito River Park are in the process of creating the 70-mile Coast to Crest Trail within the 94,000 acre Park. The summit of the Volcan Mountain Wilderness Preserve is the crest of the Park and the Trail. The preserve presently encompasses close to 20,000 acres. Today over 34,000 acres of land are conserved within the 15-mile long Volcan Mountain range. This remarkable slice of wilderness stretches from Lake Henshaw to the Anza-Borrego Desert, feeds four critical watersheds.

(Continued on next page)
The Miracle behind the miracles

By Lynne Girdlestone

Almost everyone has experienced something they would call a ‘miracle’. The word is defined as an effect or extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers. Sometimes it’s a remarkable healing or an unexpected positive change in one’s circumstances, but most often it’s something in the spiritual realm.

*Life* magazine’s cover, in July 1991, asked: “Do you believe in miracles?” and reported that thousands of unexplained miraculous phenomena are occurring worldwide. “I did a little digging,” said editor Peter Bonventre, “and it turned out there’d been a rash of sacred apparitions all over the world... There’s a worldwide spiritual revival, and it’s one of the great stories of our time.”

Then in April 1995, *Time* magazine devoted an eight-page spread to its own cover story on miracles and concluded: “People are hungry for signs.”

Since then, reports of miracles involving people from all faiths (and those of none) are increasingly reaching the media. According to Benjamin Creme, editor of *Share International* magazine, they are all signs of the imminent emergence of Maitreya, the World Teacher, and his group, the Masters of Wisdom. Maitreya comes now, at the beginning of the Age of Aquarius, to show us the way out of our current difficulties and to bring the new teachings which will guide humanity towards its next evolutionary step. Soon we will see Maitreya on television and hear his call for sharing and justice as the only way to peace.

This piece <www.share-international.us/west/miracles.pdf> describes some of the many miracles that have occurred across the world to people of all cultures and spiritual traditions in the past few decades. The following two can be added to this ever-growing list:

* In June 2013 millions began watching the YouTube video of a mysterious ‘spinning statue’ in the Manchester Museum, UK. Thousands flocked to see it and the story was reported by media worldwide. The 10-inch Egyptian statuette, dating from 1800 BC and dedicated to Osiris – god of the afterlife – could be seen in the museum’s time-lapse video rotating by itself in its locked glass cabinet. Scientists and commentators put forward various theories in an attempt to explain the phenomenon, but museum Egyptologist Campbell Price said “That doesn’t explain why neighbouring artefacts haven’t budged an inch or why the statue suddenly started to move after standing for years in perfect stillness, as statues tend to do.”

* Since October 2012, several extraordinary photographs have been recorded by NASA of a gigantic angel-like figure hovering near the sun. Although NASA scientists have given no explanation for the mysterious phenomenon, Benjamin Creme says that, while many people thought the images were UFOs, “our information is that they are ‘angels’, or ‘devas’ as they are known in the East, about half the size of the Earth.”

Creme further explains that these many and varied ‘miracles’ or signs are there to strengthen our faith and to give us the necessary courage and conviction to take on the many tasks needed now to restore balance to our world. We are assured that with guidance and support from Maitreya and his group of Teachers, humanity will learn to live as the one family it truly is – seeing that the needs of all are met and protecting our earthly home.

Lynne Girdlestone is a long-time volunteer with Share International USA. Please see info about Share International’s free Nov 7 lecture on Page 7.

(Continued from previous page)

Julian...

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Ann Nelson is a freelance writer residing in San Diego.
2016 Year of the Fire Monkey Ignites the World!

In the Taoist philosophy of nature, everything is connected and made of energy. All the energies around us can be categorized under the Five Elements - fire, water, wood, metal, and earth. The Five Element Theory explains how these energies interact similarly to the principles of our ecological system.

By understanding how everything is categorized under the Five Elements, we can understand the cycles and patterns of behavior of everything around us! Animals, colors, seasons, personality traits, careers, even the calendar year can be categorized under the Five Elements.

Every year of the Chinese Almanac is associated to one of the Five Elements and one of the 12 Zodiacs. Each of these aspects are clues to the upcoming year.

2016 is the year of the Fire Monkey. There is a reason why parents often fondly refer to their kids as monkeys! Monkeys are adorable, often too smart for their own good, known to get into all sorts of trouble, are forgivenably charming, and a whole lot of fun to be around. Monkeys are intelligent creatures with an insatiable curiosity. As keen observers, they keep themselves busy on their wild adventures of exploration. Monkey persons are innovative and not afraid to take risks. They make up their own rules and come up with all sorts of imaginative plans to forge their own paths. They rarely worry about what others think and do not mind standing out in the crowd.

Monkey persons shift and change all the time. They do not sit still for very long! Their uninhibited and spontaneous energy is entertaining and they are the life of the party. Full of stamina, Monkey persons are physically active. If they are not dancing or jogging, you can find them volunteering, gardening or taking on some hobby requiring physical labor. Monkey persons are also known for their wisdom and wide spectrum of knowledge and skills. As such, they are natural leaders and persons whom others look to for guidance. Social creatures, Monkeys have a deep need for love. They are very sentimental and romantic, but due to their capricious nature, the Monkey is quite the unpredictable partner. This can make it difficult for their lovers to figure them out.

The Fire element of 2016 indicates that the New Year will be full of exciting prospects. Like fireworks, the fire element is associated to celebration and happy events, especially related to love, such as engagement, marriage, and pregnancy. There should be more people getting married and having babies in 2016. Fire energies spark creativity, invention, marketing, and showmanship. The key fields related to the fire element are: entertainment, solar energy, internet, food, art, and beauty. These businesses are likely to gain worldwide recognition, enjoy great growth, feature special exhibitions, and have record breaking sales.

In the spirit of the Fire Monkey, 2016 will be highlighted with innovations, entrepreneurship, self-trained artists, musicians, entertainers, and chefs of all walks of life who become suddenly famous and wealthy. These unabashed, young and web-savvy talents will defy traditional methods and have a big impact on their respective fields. They will achieve in months what their predecessors struggled to do in years, setting new precedents in their industry for the future.

Similarly in politics, it will be the passionate shakers and movers who have the know-how to get to the hearts of people that shine. There will be some larger-than-life candidates, many who come with unconventional ideas that are in line with the Fire Monkey frequencies. These candidates are favored and supported to take the lead. The Fire element is also a feminine energy related to powerful mid-age females who are highly intuitive, ambitious, daring and extremely outspoken. It should not come as a surprise to see many trailblazing female leaders in 2016 across the globe.

There will be exciting times in 2016. Let’s harness the dynamic energy of the Fire Monkey by refreshing our feng shui and aligning ourselves to these awesome synergistic forces.

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From the beginning of time, animals trod across forests creating an easy track to the present paths, byways, highways, freeways, main streets, side streets, lanes.

Now we are over-used and abused. Drivers go faster at sometimes dangerous speeds definitely more impolite, take more risks. Watch tv, text, send selfies, argue, fight, kill.

That’s man’s fault surely not the asphalt. Will someone find another term to describe this ugly human trait of disrespect for roads that serve you endlessly. How about “Volatile Human in Transit.”

—— Catherine M. Cummings

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Angel Cats Among Us

By Allen and Linda Anderson

People from all over the world send us stories about cats who became angels in their lives. We published Mary Beth Brawley’s story below in the Angel Animals Story of the Week, August 30, 2015. See if you agree that Mary Beth befriended an angel cat.

Mary Beth writes:

In the small town of Georgetown, South Carolina my breakfast spot was the Thomas Café. I knew everybody there so I often went there after I often spent feeding stray cats. I would leave by the café’s back door to see the cats to whom we had given names.

One morning, the café’s dishwasher told me we had a new addition, a very skinny gray cat. I called this cat Gray Boy because he was totally gray in coloring. A very skittish cat, the other cats did not like him. I had to make a special place behind the café to feed Gray and build his confidence so I could catch him to be fixed.

After a few weeks of feeding, we missed Gray for a few days. Then one morning, there was Gray Boy with five baby kittens cuddled in the corner of the building. Instantly, the name changed to Gray Girl!

I took the kittens and Gray Girl to be fixed and found homes for all kittens. Gray Girl soon began to follow me home each morning down the boardwalk along the river. I lived above the store where I worked and had a huge deck that overlooked the water.

Although Gray Girl would come up on the deck, it took her about a year before she’d come inside. I’d leave the door open slightly at night. She soon learned to eat inside my place and slept indoors some nights. She hardly ever meowed and if she did, it was a soft sound.

We became buddies. She knew she had a safe home with a loving mama.

Gray Girl always slept at the foot of my bed. On the morning of September 25th, a little before 5:00, she made the loudest meow I’d ever heard. She jumped off the bed then back up on it. I said, “No, Gray Girl, not yet!” But she was determined for me to get up.

When I walked into the den, all I could see through my French-door blinds was a red-orange sky. I smelled smoke and peeped outside. The deck next door blazed. Its flames leapt onto my deck. I hurriedly dressed and ran down the hall to the front apartment to wake the guy who lived there. I went back to get Gray Girl but could not get her out from under my bed. The smoke was so bad. My heart sank with the fear that I might not be able to save her.

Thirteen people lived above the stores. We all gathered on the street while the fire department tried to fight the fire. A wonderful man, who volunteered with the fire department, told me that when the firemen broke down my backdoor, they saw a gray cat run out. Gray Girl had made it out alive!

The fire consumed seven buildings in a short time. Everything was gone. My neighbor lost his dog, but everyone else survived.

Later that week, someone spotted Gray Girl on top of one of the remaining buildings, so I knew she was still around. I called her every morning and late afternoon. I left food for her behind the café, but with other cats living in the neighborhood, I never knew if she was the one who got it. Three-and-a-half weeks later, I stopped to speak to the store owner. As we talked next to the rubble of her building, I heard a meow.

Gray Girl popped her little head up from a pile of brick. She had found a hole to live in. I was so happy to see her. I got a can of cat food from my car and a towel. As soon as I opened the can and sat it down, she came out to eat. I grabbed her in the towel, took her to the cat carrier in my car, and drove straight to a vet.

I eventually moved with Gray Girl to Charlotte, North Carolina to a condo near my son and his family. I have a deck on the second floor, and she loves to lie in the sun and is only allowed on the deck when I am there to watch.

I truly believe if she had not awakened me the morning of the fire, I would not be here today and neither would my neighbor. The fire department would not have been there in time, as we were outside when the first fire truck arrived.

My adopted street cat saved my life from a fire which destroyed seven downtown business buildings with apartments above the buildings. The buildings had mostly been there since the 1800s—a terrible loss for Georgetown, the third oldest town in South Carolina.

Gray Girl is an angel cat for sure! I never found out where she came from. I believe she was sent from God to be my angel when I most needed one.

Allen and Linda Anderson are co-founders of Angel Animals Network and authors of a series of books about the spiritual connection between people and animals www.angelanimals.net
PEACE WITH PAIN: YOUR GUIDE TO LIFE IN A MALFUNCTIONING BODY
by Jenna Sundell

Peace with Pain is a reference guide using meditation to manage your life with chronic pain toward a more productive and happier life. We often suffer physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual levels of pain, illness and discomfort. The author guides us to a path of healing through the practice of self-discovery, and teaches how to navigate the modern world of medicine, including the relationships between patient and doctor. You will learn how to take personal responsibility for your state of mind, take back your own personal power and gain control over your pain levels. Besides meditation, you can create rituals to help us relax and let go of problems and lessen pain.

Published by Health Communications, Inc., www.hcibooks.com, or available at local bookstores (amazon.com).

LIFE PULSE MASSAGE: TAOIST TECHNIQUES FOR ENHANCED CIRCULATION AND DETOXIFICATION
by Mantak Chia and Aisha Sieburt

Life Pulse Massage is an illustrated guide to using massage to treat many common ailments, like lower back pain, headaches, sciatica, asthma, and reproductive issues. You will learn how to read pulses to diagnose organ health, and improve the cardiovascular system by opening restricted blood vessels, directing blood flow for healing, balancing blood pressure, and detoxifying your organs and body systems like the heart, lungs, digestive system, and sexual organs. Incorporated are elements of several traditional Chinese and Thai medicines, and classical Taoist philosophy, all to help enhance vital energy balance and lead to better health.

Published by Electric Bliss Publishing, or available at local bookstores (amazon.com).

THE PRACTICE: SIMPLE TOOLS FOR MANAGING STRESS, FINDING INNER PEACE, AND UNCOVERING HAPPINESS
by Barb Schmidt

The Practice offers spiritual guidance to life-changing happiness and peace of mind through training and discipline, using simple techniques requiring just minutes in your day, using a three-part daily routine: Waking Up, Living Present, and Letting Go. Practical advice is given on repetitions of meditation, mantras, inspirational reading, exercise, and reflections and contemplations on your day. You can tap into your inner source of strength and wisdom, and follow a path that leads to inner peace of mind, tranquility and serenity. You can elevate your spirit and nurture your soul by opening up your heart with kindness toward others.

Published by Destiny Books www.DestinyBooks.com, or available at local bookstores (amazon.com).

MIRACULOUS SILENCE: A JOURNEY TO ILLUMINATION AND HEALING THROUGH PRAYER
by Mitra Rahbar

Miraculous Silence is a book of prayers that is a journey into spiritual healing with instructions on how to pray, meditate and the reciting of mantras for every situation. Also included is the ancient practice of using stones to balance bodily energies and as remedies for hundreds of ailments, and they were also used to convey elevated spiritual and social status. All of these practices, inspirational prayers, and meditations will help you to find comfort and renewal. These prayers are gateways to the power of self-love, and together with enlightenment and devotion, you will create healing in your life and the world.

Published by Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin/Penguin Random House www.penguinrandomhouse.com, or available at local bookstores (amazon.com).

(Continued on page 25)
DAVID LANZ & KRISTIN AMARIE
Silhouettes of Love
www.daviddanz.com and www.Amariemusic.com

A master alchemist could not have come up with a more perfect blend of elements than the chemistry created in the music of David Lanz and Kristin Amarie - pure magic! Along with a truly all-star cast of musical accompanists, their new album, *Silhouettes Of Love* is a stunning synergy of new age, smooth jazz, neo-classical influences, and more, which transcends it roots to propel Lanz to a new level and reveals an artistic interaction that is greater than the sum of its parts. I was particularly impressed with her impressive vocal abilities, this album with David Lanz takes it to a new level and introduces her impressive vocal strength.

WOUTER KELLERMAN
Love Language
www.lovelanguagemusic.com

Although South African flute maestro Wouter Kellerman started recording his new release, “Love Language,” back in 2012, he put it aside when the opportunity arose to collaborate with producer Ricky Kej of India on an album called “Winds Of Samsara.” And it’s a good thing he did, as that recording went on to win the GRAMMY in the New Age category in 2014! On “Love Language,” Wouter’s fourth release, a melting pot of sounds from Senegal, Spain, Cuba, India, Greece, and the US, blend in sweet harmony. Wouter’s command of the instrument is beyond impressive as he employs techniques I’ve never heard before. It is an incredibly expansive production that includes the talents of dozens of musicians from around the world. It takes someone with great vision to not only imagine but to implement a project of this magnitude and Wouter Kellerman is definitely one of those visionaries.

STEVEN HALPERN
Mindful Piano
www.StevenHalpern.com

Steven Halpern’s newest release was recorded on the 40th anniversary of his first studio date and the creation of his classic Chakra Suite. Steven shared that on Mindful Piano he entered a deeply meditative space as soon as his fingers touched the keyboard and the music just flowed spontaneously. Although well known for the tone of his iconic Fender Rhodes electric piano, here Steven returns to the grand piano, whose extraordinary sound is further enhanced by the latest development in studio reverb technology creating a depth of field that Steven calls “magical.” Some of the tracks also include the brainwave frequencies for meditation that were featured in his GRAMMY nominated Deep Theta album. Notes float like incense, as the compositions quiet the listener’s analytical thought process allowing a deeper experience of being in the moment. According to Steven, “Mindful Piano will take you on an uplifting journey into the space between the notes.”

MICHAEL HOPPE & GIUDITTA SCORCELLETTI
Nightingale
www.springhillmedia.com

*Nightingale* is an album that is the result of a “chance meeting,” or was it destiny? In 2013, noted new age composer/producer Michael Hoppe and his wife were strolling in Tuscany, when they heard a young woman strumming a guitar and singing in a captivating voice. One thing led to another and a collaboration was born that evolved into this album. Michael and lyricist David George had previously co-written a number of songs and when he heard the sweet voice of Giuditta Scorcelletti, he knew he had finally found the vocalist he had been looking for to breathe life into them. A well-known folk singer in Italy, Giuditta’s voice is absolutely gorgeous and a perfect fit for these heartfelt songs. Accompaniment is centered around acoustic guitar played by her husband Alessandro Bongi, as well as keyboards, cello, bass, and flute on some tracks. Michael Hoppe calls this serendipitous collaboration “a miracle.”

KATHY SANBORN
Lights of Laniakea
www.kathysanborn.com

Kathy Sanborn’s seventh album, *Lights of Laniakea* marks a new chapter in this vocalist/composer’s repertoire. Teaming with GRAMMY winning musician Ricky Kej, Kathy combines her trademark silky vocals and heartfelt compositions with Ricky’s consummate arranging skills to create a sound that is earthy and ethereal at the same time, combining musical elements from the US and India. A 2015 winner in the American Songwriting Awards, Kathy’s inspirational lyrics and breathy vocals are both spiritual and sensual, and the album, in her words, “explores our universal
The Death Café

“The other day, I invited someone to join me in a conversation about death. That someone scoffed. They laughed. They scowled. I waited. ‘That’s a little... creepy, don’t you think?’ They asked. ‘I mean, how morbid can you be? What’s WRONG with you?’”

- Why I Talk About Death by Kate Brassington

Epiphanies happen, out of nowhere an “aha” moment, a flash of insight, a nudge from within. And, when that spark of awareness flares-up, as it did for me – at a café focusing on death – I knew exactly what I had to do.

The Death Café is a social gathering of people who eat cake, drink coffee and talk about death. The goal: “To increase awareness of death to help people make the most of their finite lives.” In Southern California, these events are held in libraries, churches and other public venues. The time allotment is about two hours.

In 2010 Jon Underwood, a British self-proclaimed “death entrepreneur,” developed a model for the Death Café. Since 2011, the Death Café has spread to 31 countries in North America, Europe and Australia, and has offered over 2,300 events, all on a volunteer basis.

I attended a café in San Diego, at a public library. In preparation, I went to their website: www.deathcafe.com. The site included an entertaining six minute video by Kate Brassington. The video, friendly in its presentation, with a young lady’s voice, and music playing in the background, addressed the issues surrounding death, directly. For days after the viewing, the video lingered with me.

At the library, our facilitator, a professional hospice worker, described the Death Café concept. “It’s a group directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counseling session.”

We broke into two groups of four, all new to the experience, eager to talk. To the question, why are you here? The answers were as different as the people in the room. “I want to be able to discuss these issues with my aging father,” stated one woman. Another said, “I lost a child, made mistakes in dealing with the death process; I’m here to learn.” And my response: “I’m not getting any younger, so I want to get comfortable with the whole concept of death – my death.”

In the center of our table a glass jar contained perhaps fifty strips of paper, each with a question. For example: “Do you remember the death of your first pet? How did you deal with it?” Or, “What should you say or not say to a friend who is facing death?” And “If you died today, do you want people reading your diaries?” A question was picked and read by one in the group. We went around the table giving our responses. Two hours passed, feeling like ten minutes.

Between questions and answers I found myself dashing to the refreshment table – fresh strawberries, chocolate covered strawberries, pastries, coffee, tea, and juice. Food and drink are a part of the Death Café experience. Food, associated with significant events in life, like weddings and funerals, helped make the café experience comforting, as though we were in someone’s home, chatting about . . . well, death. By the end of the two hours, we had bonded as a group, and could have easily gone out to lunch afterwards to continue the conversation.

With only a few minutes remaining, out of nowhere I started talking about Wayne Dyer, the self-help pioneer who recently passed away at age 75. I’ve never read anything by Mr. Dyer, yet his comments about death had suddenly become profoundly important. He couldn’t wait, he said, “For this next adventure to begin and had no fear of dying.”

The following days I kept thinking about Dyer’s comments: “No fear of dying.” “No fear.” “No fear.” The epiphany. I wanted that! I wanted to embrace his philosophy. When the time comes I want to say: “I have lived more than a full life; I contributed, and had great adventures. And now I’m ready, without fear; ready for death, ready for what lies ahead.”

In the coming days there’s work to do. Have I made a contribution? Am I living up to my potential? Is the bucket list being honored? Are my affairs in order?

As I finish writing this piece, my thoughts drift back to the opening lines of Kate’s video: “And now, listen... Yes! ... It’s morbid. Yes, it’s disturbing. It’s dark and twisted. Yes, it’s morbid. But it’s not death I’m referring to, nor dying. It’s the life and the living we submit ourselves to when we don’t allow death into the room.”

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Robert Ross can be reached at: SanDiegoRoss@yahoo.com

Book Reviews...

(Continued from page 23)

Gary A. Miller is a horticulturist, naturalist, and part Hunkpapa Lakota (mother was born and raised on the Standing Rock Reservation), and educated in the ways of nature, survival skills, and the material culture of many tribes.

Music Reviews...

(Continued from previous page)

desire to live in the light – in the immeasurable heaven that is our home.” Kathy’s music is a unique and intriguing blend of new age, smooth jazz, and world music influences, creating a dreamy ambiance that is as relaxing as it is uplifting; contemporary, yet timeless. Lights of Laniakea provides an enchanting listening experience to tune into the cosmos and drift away on.

Michael Diamond is a music producer, recording artist, and music journalist in the San Francisco Bay area with over 30 years of experience writing for nationally-published magazines and more recently worldwide on the internet. He currently has five CDs including two with new-age music pioneer Steven Halpern. For additional reviews of CD’s, DVD’s, and more, please visit: www.michaeldiamondmusic.com

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.”

— Aristotle
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NOVEMBER 7, 2015 – 9th Annual Los Angeles VisionWalk. 9:00 a.m. Woodley Park, Van Nuys, 6350 Woodley Avenue Van Nuys, CA 91436

NOVEMBER 7 – 8 – Veda MeLA – DTLA’s First Celebration of the Vedic Arts Brings Yoga and Ayurveda, in Classes, Workshops, and Events, from Ancient India to Modern Los Angeles! The event will feature globally-celebrated speakers, authors, yoganis, and social change activists including yoga teachers Kia Miller, Sianna Sherman and Sara Ezrin, speakers Mallika Chopra, Christopher Chapple, Mark Whitwell, Phillip Goldberg and more. Topics will include beyond-introductory level discussion of Yoga, Ayurveda, Jyotish, Vastu, Mantra, Meditation, and Yantra. In addition to the events and speakers, Veda MeLA will include an exhibit hall that will be a feast for all the senses in every way: exhibits, music, healing touches/bodywork, bright colors, smells (herbs and essential oils), food and drink (juices, kombucha, and healthy eats). The REEF, 1933 S. Broadway, Downtown Los Angeles. Workshops/Yoga: Saturday: 8:45a.m.-6:45p.m. Sunday: 8:45a.m.-5p.m. Exhibit Hall: Saturday: 10a.m.-7p.m. Sunday: 10a.m.-6p.m. For the full lineup, schedules, tickets, info and more, please go to www.vedamela.com.

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