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### Keep Pedaling

#### Dear readers,

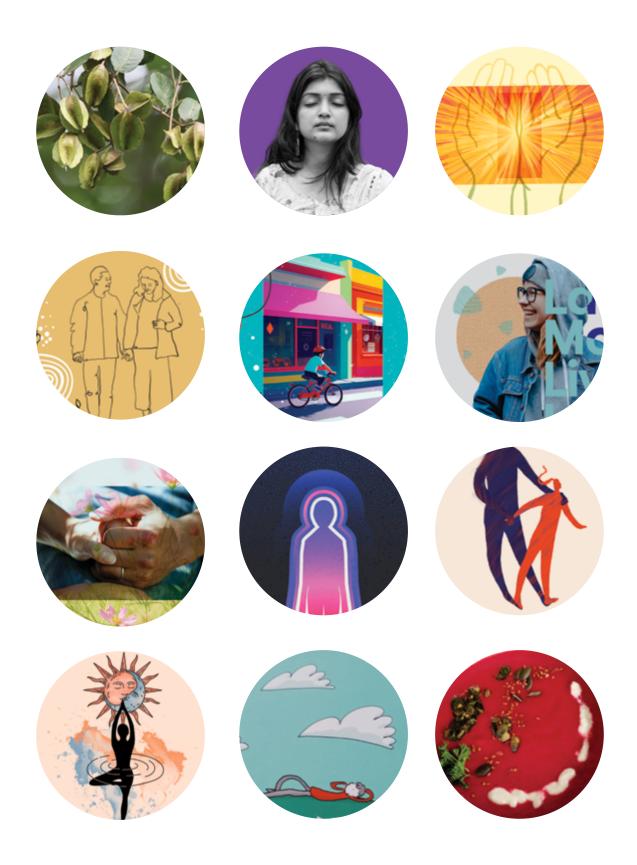
One of the authors in this month's edition challenges us to think about balance in a different way. He speaks about his childhood, of not being able to ride a two-wheeler bike until interest one day dictated that he would. Bingo! Everything fell into place. That is life. When interest calls, everything happens. Then you just keep pedaling.

Our authors and artists explore the practices and attitudes to create balance, knowing full well that it will only happen when we are ready. Daaji shows us how to use the Heartfulness practices for balance. Rosalind Pearmain asks, what does it mean to lose balance, and explains the need to do so at times. Thomas Mogensen's guidance from Babuji is enlightening and liberating – no expectations only experience. Grant Snider shares his creative process, the balance of the practice of creating comics consistently. Ichak Adizes celebrates laughter and lightness, while Francesca Grossman celebrates kindness as a remedy. Stanislas Lajugie discovers the hidden cause of many of our struggles to find balance. Alanda Greene and Kalyani Adusumilli both share their experience with creating balance, and Snehal Deshpande offers some general tips for wellness.

Terran Daily follows up on last month with guidance on how to protect your family from electromagnetic pollution, and Simonne Holm shares her recipe for a wonderful healing vegetable soup.

In the Wisdom Bridge series, Daaji tackles the subject of becoming a parent – some approaches and attitudes that are helpful. And Babuji shares a remedy for heart health.

Happy reading, The editors



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#### **BABUJI**

Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, affectionately known as Babuji, was a revolutionary spiritual scientist and philosopher. He was the founder of the present-day system of Raja Yoga meditation known as Heartfulness.



#### **DAAJI**

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide. He is an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the fields of spirituality, science, and the evolution of consciousness. He has taken our understanding of human potential to a new level.



#### SNEHAL DESHPANDE

Dr. Snehal is a developmental therapist who owns and leads SNEH, an institution dedicated to improving the quality of life of children and their families. She is passionate about spiritual well-being and actively drives the Heartfulness CME initiative for healthcare professionals across India.



#### KALYANI ADUSUMULLI

Kalyani is a health law attorney and writer who lives in Houston, Texas, with her husband and two sons. She is a mental health and mindfulness advocate who went on a journey to find happiness, discovered how to help others be happy, and has become a more authentic version of herself.



#### THOMAS MOGENSEN

Thomas was one of the first Europeans to travel to India to visit Babuji, and wrote two books about his experiences, In the light of His light and Dreams Awakening. He filmed conversations with Babuji that were published in Babuji in Shahjahanpur, and continues to write and translate the literature of the Heartfulness Masters into Danish.



**ICHAK ADIZES** 

Dr. Adizes is a leading management expert. He has received 21 honorary doctorates and is the author of 27 books that have been translated into 36 languages. He is recognized as one of the top 30 thought leaders of America.

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#### STANISLAS LAJUGIE

Stanislas is a civil servant of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of France. He has worked in many countries and enjoys making meditation fashionable wherever he goes. He has developed a course on the science of meditation for universities and corporates.



#### **ROSALIND PEARMAIN**

Ros lives in Abingdon near Oxford, UK, and has worked with groups of all ages during her working life. She has always been interested in how we can change and transform. In recent years she has been teaching psychotherapy and qualitative research and is a Heartfulness trainer.



#### FRANCESCA GROSSMAN

Francesca is published in *The New York Times, Brain, Child Magazine, The Manifest Station, Ed Week, Drunken Boat,* and *Word Riot.*She leads an annual workshop at The Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her manual, *Writing Workshop; How to Create a Culture of Useful Feedback* is popular worldwide.



#### **ALANDA GREENE**

Alanda Greene lives in the Purcell Mountains of British Columbia, Canada. Having a deep connection with nature, she and her husband built their house of stone and timber and a terraced garden, and integrated their life into this rural community. Alanda's primary focus is the conscious integration of spirit with all aspects of life.



#### **TERRAN DAILY**

Terran is an occupational therapist who worked in the USA and Scotland for over 40 years, and now provides Developmental Therapy at the Wellness Center in Kanha Shanti Vanam. She has noticed a dramatic improvement in many children when exposure to EMRs and electronic screens is significantly reduced.



#### **GRANT SNIDER**

Grant is an American cartoonist, comic strip artist, writer, and orthodontist. His strips have been featured in *The New York Review of Books* and *The New York Times Magazine*, and in books like *The Shape of Ideas* and *I Will Judge You by Your Bookshelf*. His latest books are *The Art of Living* and *One Boy Watching*.

self-care

The ingredients of both darkness and light are equally present in all of us... The madness of this planet is largely a result of the human being's difficulty in coming to virtuous balance with himself.

**ELIZABETH GILBERT** 



## Daily Practice Creates Balance

DAAJI introduces a new Heartfulness practice and shows you how setting up a daily routine can create balance in your life.

#### What does a balanced life mean to you?

How often do you find yourself feeling pulled in different directions, juggling many things at once? How do you balance them all? Does a balanced life mean giving equal importance to everything? And how would you do that in a life full of uncertainties? Though you may start your day with a routine mapped out, it is normal to be affected by the unexpected, by big and small personal and work issues, by the actions of others, by stress, ill health, environmental issues, and so on. All these create ripples in everyday life.





#### How to bring about such peace and balance?

One way to bring balance is to establish a regular meditative practice, a routine that positively nurtures your mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Heart-based meditative practices will bring you centeredness, deeper understanding, and a more grounded perspective amidst the unpredictability and dilemmas of life.

Your heart is your conscience. It is there to guide you at every moment. The roots of your emotions lie in your heart; and the condition of your heart determines your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual states. When the heart is clear, so is the mind. When the heart is at peace, the mind is at rest, and you feel balanced.

In the first two editions this year, I introduced the Heartfulness Meditation and Cleaning practices. Morning Meditation relaxes the body and mind, allowing you to dive deeper into the superconscious and subconscious levels of your mind. To feel what unfolds in your inner universe, your heart. Evening Cleaning removes the heaviness and complexities that accumulate during the day, clearing the way for lightness and positive change.

Another core practice is the Heartfulness Prayer, usually done just before bed at night to wind down and prepare for a good night's sleep.

Prayer is communication. It can range from the superficial to the profound: a simple conversation, progressively deeper levels of communication, and eventually a state of communion. Prayer is a potent way to communicate with the divinity within yourself. Like all good communication, it brings connection. Prayer is also a way to establish a state of osmosis in that flow of connection.

When the heart is clear, so is the mind. When the heart is at peace, the mind is at rest, and you feel balanced.



Heartfulness practices help you to go from dealing with life, to balancing it, to integrating the balanced state, and finally creating peace and joy within and all around you.

In the quietness of the evening, before sleep, the mind is open to learning from the day's mistakes, which are often unintentional, vowing not to repeat them going forward. It is a wonderful opportunity for continuous improvement, to compassionately let go of whatever unfortunate things you may have done to others and to yourself, consciously or unconsciously. As you drift off to sleep, a deep inner connection is established throughout the night, and you will wake feeling wellrested and fresh the next morning.

These three practices complement each other. During morning Meditation, you learn to be open and receptive, diving deep into your heart. The inner vacuum created during the evening Cleaning, combined with the

yielding connected state during the Prayer, open the heart to intuition and solutions you may be seeking. This establishes balance in action – you can plan your way forward by resolving issues that caused the imbalance in the first place.

A meditative practice won't always prevent turmoil and challenges from happening, but it will make you stronger from within and more grounded, so that you view all the issues objectively, deal with them wisely without losing focus or stability, learn from them, and consequently emerge as a better version of yourself. This process itself is balance.

And with ongoing practice, you will strengthen this balance, until it becomes so well integrated

into your life that you are able to weather any storm life throws at you; much like a tree drawing sustenance through its roots, which are so deep in the ground that no storm can fell it. Heartfulness practices help you to go from dealing with life, to balancing it, to integrating the balanced state, and finally creating peace and joy within and all around you.

These practices are more effective once you have had three free meditation sessions with a certified trainer. You can find and contact a trainer near you at www. heartspots.heartfulness.org.

I wish you all the best, Daaji

## **Heart Health**

#### BABUJI'S NATURAL REMEDIES:

During his lifetime, BABUJI shared a wealth of knowledge to his associates about the simple natural remedies that he learned and also discovered during his life in northern India. This month we share one of his remedies for heart health, including high cholesterol, angina, and hypertension.<sup>1</sup>



#### METHOD

Place the tree bark in a saucepan of water, bring it to the boil, and let it simmer for at least 10 minutes. This will produce a decoction.

Strain the mixture, let it cool, and drink a glass of the liquid twice a day.

The mixture will support the removal of blockages from the heart and blood vessels, prevent the build-up of cholesterol, reduce hypertension,

and treat other heart ailments.

It can also be taken in powder form, and in capsules.

#### **INGREDIENTS**

Arjuna tree bark from the species Terminalia arjuna

Water to fill a saucepan

<sup>1</sup> Please note that these remedies are not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Please seek the advice of your physician or qualified health provider. The remedies may be used to complement medical treatment and support recovery.



DR. SNEHAL DESHPANDE is a Developmental Therapist and Certified Life Coach from Mumbai. She leads SNEH, an institution dedicated to improving people's quality of life, and actively drives the Heartfulness CME initiative for healthcare professionals across India. Here, she shares some simple tips on how to create wellness.

ow do naturalness, stillness, human connection, and letting go come into play when we are trying to establish habits and make changes?

It can be difficult to build up a natural routine, like getting up early in the morning, enjoying the sunrise, watching the sunset in the evening, and stopping work after that. We are constantly distracted. So, the first thing I try to do is avoid distractions.

Human connection enables us to give and receive support. If we don't maintain our social connections with all our heart, we lose the ability to ask for help from people. Because every time we are in need, we think, "How can I suddenly ask for help without having a connection." It's great to have deep and meaningful connections, even if a person is not in your inner circle of friends.

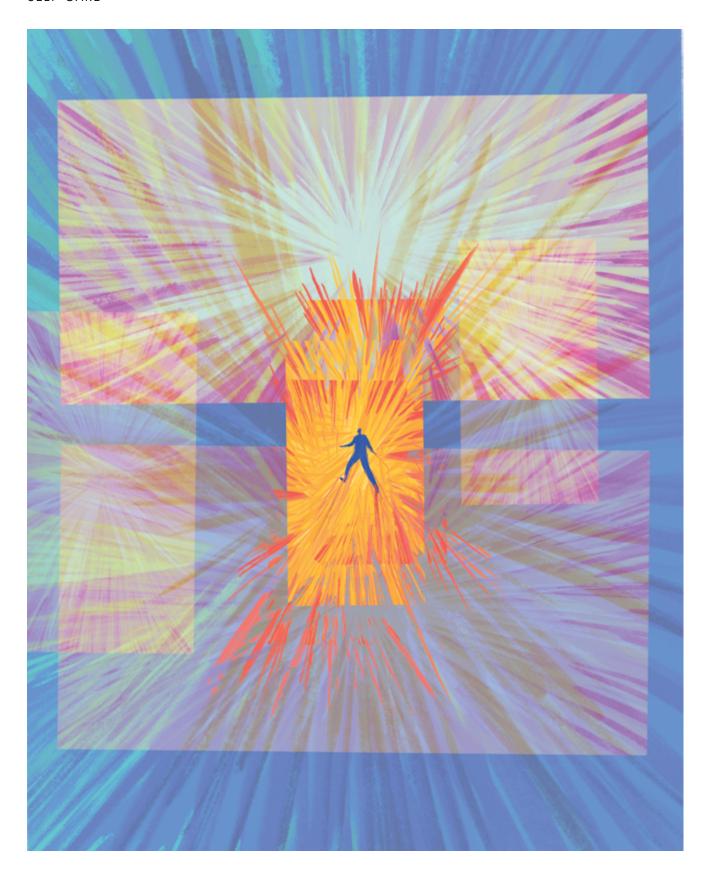
How to go about this? The first thing is self-reflection. Reflect upon:

What you have
What you've done
Who you are
Who you want to be, and
What you're going to do about

We often forget we have to use our own resources. Sometimes we depend on external things, or we blame situations and people. The moment we self-reflect, we can answer all these questions.

Another habit to develop is connecting with ourselves. Spend a couple of moments with your palms together in a prayerful pose. With this small activity, a connection is established between the left brain and the right brain. When you establish this connection, and reflect on

Make an effort to take out time for yourself. I think the busiest person has the most leisure. It is about creating those little pockets of time for yourself within your schedule.





Wellness is all about integrating ourselves in our world, and our reality. It is about allowing healing to happen in a natural way. If every one of us, or even a few of us, start thinking like that, the world will be a better place to live in.

yourself, you give yourself a new level of commitment and the deep potential within.

Make an effort to take out time for yourself. I think the busiest person has the most leisure. It is about creating those little pockets of time for yourself within your schedule.

In a general sense, the moment you are aligned with the universal vibration – the natural energy or superconsciousness – things start happening the way the universe wants. Each of us is unique, and it is our abundant uniqueness that the universe wants us to feel and express. Instead, we seek abundance outside. So, if we can allow the universe to express that abundance, there is nothing like it.

#### Find your natural vibration

I believe we need to understand what takes us away from our natural vibration, and what gives us an inner awakening. It's very essential. We end up going into a dangerous and unhealthy phase when we try to run away from our reality.

Suffering is an integral part of life. We cannot take that away. In fact, it is suffering that makes us. Wellness is all about integrating ourselves in our world, and our reality. It is about allowing healing to happen in a natural way. If every one of us, or even a few of us, start thinking like that, the world will be a better place to live in.

There is something to live for, there's something to feel!

Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL



**KALYANI ADUSUMILLI** shares some tips on leading a balanced life so that our time with others is also more harmonious.

he key to living harmoniously is balance. I'm sure you've heard the old proverb, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," as it's stood the test of time. Less known, perhaps, is its counterpart, "All play and no work makes Jack a mere toy." We need to maintain an equilibrium between the different aspects of our life to be balanced. But for many of us, that's easier said than done!

I have a notoriously sweet tooth. Sometimes, the one thing that keeps me from overindulging is my mother's voice, repeating in my head like a broken record, "Do everything in moderation, Kalyani!" Whether I'm limiting screen time or junk food with my children, I often spout the same sentiment if not the same words, having recognized the wisdom in them. My youngest always laughs in amazement when I tell him that he could go overboard with eating healthy food as well! Like eating too many carrots and turning orange!

How to go about leading a balanced lifestyle?

The best place to start is by making a list! Prioritizing can prove challenging. So if everything is laid out right in front of you, it's easier to see how the different pieces of the puzzle fit.

Whether it's your mind or your body, they are deeply connected: the other will thrive if you take care of one.

Write down what you value and determine whether you're giving it enough attention.

Since our existence relies on health, I'd say it's critical, if not the most important! Yet, it's often something people most neglect. It could be because we're burning the midnight oil, taking care of everyone else and finding no time for ourselves, or because self-destructive behavior has become natural to us. Our mental health inevitably suffers when we neglect our physical health, whether through lack of proper nutrition, exercise, or sleep. It can be the reverse, too, making it a vicious cycle. Whether it's your mind or your body, they are deeply connected: the other will thrive if you take care of one.



Living optimally has to do with fulfillment and satisfaction, not perfection. Look at your list and set goals that align your desire with how you live your life. What are your physical, mental, and emotional needs? Only when you incorporate those will you have actual control and ownership of your life.

Part of the balancing act is also learning to compromise. If you have a family, how will you and your partner prioritize so that responsibilities are symmetric? An unequal relationship becomes a breeding ground for resentment.

Finally, finding enough time to achieve your goals often means simplifying your life. It's impossible to devote yourself fully to anything if you have too much on your plate. If you want your family to spend more time together, try cutting out two hours of everyone's screen time.

We're all tightrope walkers in life. When you find your balance, the steadiness within will keep you upright.

Illustrations by EMI TSE

# inspiration

To light a candle is to cast a shadow.

**URSULA LE GUIN** 







# Ride Your Own Bike

By the end of the 1960s, Westerners were traveling to India to visit Babuji. Among the first were a group of young Danes, who fell in love with Babuji and who were instrumental in bringing the spiritual practices of Heartfulness to the West. One of these pioneers was THOMAS MOGENSEN, who first visited Shahjahanpur in 1971 with his wife and some friends. Here he shares some personal stories about how he found balance and equilibrium, with some wisdom from Babuii.

obody could teach me how to ride a two-wheeler bike. My father, my mother – they all had a go at it. As long as they ran beside me, supporting me with a firm grip on the broomstick mounted behind my saddle, I was all right. As soon as they loosened their grip I lost my balance. It happened over and over again. Letting go, they gave me a slight push into the freedom of biking on my own. I fell and they gave up. I must have been about seven years old.

Then, on a warm sunny summers day, I succeeded in pestering an ice cream out of my mother. The ice cream parlor was not just a short walk away. You had to follow a dirt

road, a mere wheel track, all the way through a plantation of pine trees surrounding our summer house to finally reach the small village. The first thing to catch my attention was Martha's Ice Cream Parlor, a blue painted shack, soda pops, sausages, that sort of thing, and then the ice cream of course.

Anyway, that particular day I jumped my bike, wheeled all the way to Martha's, had my ice cream and wheeled back home again without fully realizing that I was actually biking. Now, had anybody kept pouncing on me, "You must do this ... No, no, not like that," it would have surely created dislike, resentment, sadness, inferiority feelings, and anger. To ever go near

my bike again, I would have had to conquer a samskara as deep as any we toil to get rid of. My interest and curiosity, joy and energetic pedaling would have been blocked from carrying me into the art of mastering my bike. I would have ended up "school tiered," as we say in Danish. For years!

In school, no one could teach me how to read or write properly. Reading took time. My handwriting was a mess of small and capital letters jumping up and down. The teachers worried, and particularly my father. Seventh grade. Something wrong! Then, one fine afternoon, I returned from school, sat down and wrote my thesis for tomorrow in the orderly

handwritten style I still have. A revelation! An angel's gift right out of the blue. What a profound experience producing even more joyous pedaling into reading a ton of books.

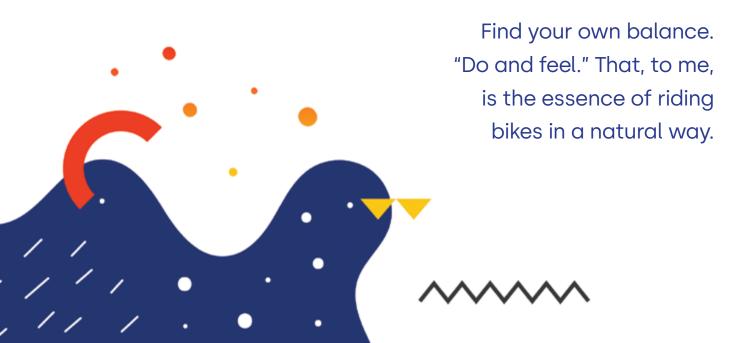
Some weeks before Lalaji's centenary celebration in 1973, I sat alone on Babuji's veranda with Lalaji's book, Truth Eternal, struggling to understand what I was reading. On the verge of giving up, I realized that Babuji had appeared from inside his study, now standing there next to his easy chair watching me. I looked up. With something like disgust he looked at me, then at Lalaji's book, saying, "This is a very old book. Now he has written some new ones. You should write your own book."

With the words, "Now he has written some new ones," he

referred not to Lalaji but to himself and his own books, while I dropped *Truth Eternal* into my lap, leaned back and relaxed just as he, absorbed in his Lalaji, did in his easy chair.

Books are okay, a few inspiring pages on a rainy day, but who wants to become a quotation machine? You know, feed it a question, pull the handle, bing! Right answer, 10 points. Babuji didn't return to his study to fetch a load of books and throw them into my lap on top of Truth Eternal. He didn't say, "You must read all these books within half a year, otherwise you will not ..." He didn't say that. He said, "You should write your own book." He could have said, "You should ride your own bike," because that was in fact what he did for us youngsters hanging around him on the veranda outside his study in Shahjahanpur.

He urged us to ride our own bikes deep into our own interest and curiosity, our joy and vital pedaling, by his grace turning us into what he still wants all of us to become, whether we are good with books or not. The track is clear, the road ready. "Experience will show," he said while literally throwing me empty-handed into conducting my very first group meditation during Lalaji's centenary celebration in Chennai 50 years ago. What an easy and simple way to enjoy the ice creams constantly transmitted to us. "Experience will show." Close your eyes and open that book. There is not a single word in it. Not even a capital letter. Find your own balance. "Do and feel." That, to me, is the essence of riding bikes in a natural way.



# Congratulations Daaji

on receiving the prestigious Padma Bhushan award from the Honorable President of India for the best service to humanity in the field of Spirituality



# Becoming a Parent: Approach and Attitude

In September 2022, DAAJI released his latest bestseller, The Wisdom Bridge, and throughout 2023 we are sharing highlights from the various chapters to give you a taste of the wisdom it offers. This month the excerpt is from the chapter on Principle 3: Preparation Begins Long Before Children Arrive.



#### Relationship Anchors: Acceptance, Friendship and Teamwork

All parents would like to be the best in raising children. So how do they do that? Research shows that one of the best predictors of parenting quality is marital quality.<sup>1,2</sup> In simple terms, happy couples make good parents. That said, couples can't be madly in love or blissfully happy in their relationship all the time. They're not going to agree on every single thing. That's why it's so important to manage expectations.

Relationships hit rough water because of mismatched expectations. Especially expecting the other person to change doesn't work. I am not saying people don't change. What I am saying is accepting the other person as they are is the first step towards change.

I tell my young friends, "When you are in a relationship, focus on yourself. Everything you are expecting from the other person, ask yourself if you could offer that to your partner. The way you are today, do you love that version of yourself? My suggestion is you first build your own empire of moral

qualities. Strengthen your moral muscles before you expect the same from the other."

An attitude of self-improvement gives strength to a relationship. It shows that your ego is not rigid. Most of the time there's friction in relationships because of the clashing egos. When the couple focuses on self-improvement, they give each other the space they need to adjust. In the process, they start developing a friendship.

An attitude of self-improvement gives strength to a relationship.

#### INSPIRATION

#### Discover Friendship in Your Marriage

Couples who have a strong basis of friendship in their relationship enjoy life transitions, including welcoming a new member into the family. Think of your best friend and how you spent time together. With your best friend, life did not feel serious. Days just passed by, and any minor squabble ended with both of you trying to outappease the other. When a couple becomes friendly, accepting the other becomes easy. When there is acceptance, love grows in the relationship.

Becoming friends also helps the couple appreciate the small joys of life. Science also backs this idea. John Gottman of the prestigious Gottman Institute found that the real difference between couples who stuck together and those who didn't wasn't their ability to tackle big problems well, handle conflicts and manage communication. Instead, it was the small things that made a big difference. Drinking coffee together, sharing a sandwich, going out for a walk, doing a crossword, sharing house chores and so on. The dull and mundane stuff turned out to be the glue in the relationship. Couples who stayed together cherished the small moments. They took interest in each other. They were friends first, husband and wife second.

Couples who have a strong basis of friendship in their relationship enjoy life transitions, including welcoming a new member into the family.



Rediscover friendship in your relationship. If you are already friends, continue to deepen the friendship. Raising a family is an ongoing adjustment of lifestyles. Early on in the relationship, if the couple develops mutual respect and appreciation for what each one does, it keeps the relationship harmonious.

In a heartfelt relationship, silence is the best expression of love.

#### Do This

A partner's support is vital for a mother. Simple things like helping out with the dishes, making a cup of tea, helping with the laundry gives a mother meaningful support. For the men who are reading this, try to do everything your wife does at home for a week. Getting the children ready, the chores and everything else. It will give you an appreciation of how much effort it takes to run the house.

And for those of you who do not pay attention to financial planning, investments, and other tasks often handled by men, start taking interest. Taking interest and supporting each other will help strengthen the relationship.



#### Relationships Are Teamwork

One evening, during my walk, I saw an elderly couple sitting on a bench near the river. They shared a sandwich and had some water while watching the river. Then they got up and started walking on the trail along the river. They didn't talk. They just held each other's hands and continued walking for a long way. The

#### INSPIRATION

harmony in their evening ritual was heartfelt.

Often people think that they have to talk and impress the other with their intellect and smart conversation. In an authentic relationship, one doesn't need to impress the other person with words. Instead, the words are replaced with a reassuring

silence. The desire to impress is overridden by the desire to care for the other. The care is expressed in one's actions. In a heartfelt relationship, silence is the best expression of love. Through mere eye contact, this elderly couple conveyed volumes to one another. Their picnic lunch ritual was a masterclass in togetherness.

Relationships are teamwork. Think of your family and close friends

as one team running the relay race. Father, mother, children, grandparents, close friends - all are part of the team. Each member runs their race and passes the baton. We cheer for each other and boost each other. Sometimes the baton slips. But because a teammate fumbles, we don't stop running. We don't walk away from the race. Instead, we run harder to make up for the lost time. Couples who are friends work as a team. They look beyond their individual identities. They see their strength in unity, and they complement each other.

As a couple's compatibility increases, they resonate with each other at a deeper level.



As a couple's compatibility increases, they resonate with each other at a deeper level. Their relationship benefits not only them but those around them as well. We have all experienced this. Think of the awkward evening dinner with a couple that spars over everything from parking to restaurant décor to which dessert to order. Spending time with such couples can drain one's energy. Contrast this with an evening spent with a friendly couple. Their banter, body language, and ability to finish each other's sentences inspire couples' goals. The field of energy created in the two scenarios is of an opposing nature. One gives out an all-consuming and tiring vibration while the other gives a joyful and uplifting vibration.

Happy couples resonate better with each other, and their heartmind fields create a welcoming space for a new soul to enter their lives.

#### Daily Dilemma:

Q: My husband and I often have arguments. Sometimes things get loud. Should I be worried about the psychological impact this will have on my child?

Daaji: I suggest you and your husband try "postponing anger." In general, most of us are experts at postponing. We postpone exercise, meditation, financial planning, and many other things in life.

Try postponing anger. You will be delighted with the results. In the Talmud, the holy book of the Jews, there is a line, "The talk of the child is the talk of the elders at home." So, it's wise to avoid arguments and fights in front of children.

Happy couples
resonate better
with each other,
and their heartmind fields create a
welcoming space
for a new soul to
enter their lives.

<sup>1</sup> 2016. What You Need to Consider Before Having Kids. PsychCentral, accessed 15 January 2022, https:// psychcentral.com/lib/what-youneed-to-consider-before-havingkids#.

<sup>2</sup> Kanoy, K., 2003. Marital relationship and individual psychological characteristics that predict physical punishment of children. Journal of Family Psychology 17, 1: pp. 20–28. https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.17.1.20.

<sup>3</sup> Patel, K.D., 2022. The Wisdom Bridge: Nine Principles to a Life that Echoes in the Hearts of Your Loved Ones. Penguin, India.

To be continued.

Illustrations by JASMEE MUDGAL



## Workplace

There is no such thing as worklife balance. Everything worth fighting for unbalances your life.

**ALAIN DE BOTON** 





DR. ICHAK ADIZES celebrates the beauty and positivity of laughter in relationships and in creating a healthy atmosphere at work, at home, and especially in management.

ack in the early days of my career as an organizational therapist (at that time I was a consultant), I considered laughter to be frivolous. I thought that employees and executives who wasted time on laughter were not serious about their work or companies – that they were lightweights to be avoided or ignored.

I valued highbrow, serious, slow-talking, tight-lipped executives. They seemed to be the heavyweights, the serious leaders.

Well, I changed my mind.

I found that those frivolous leaders, the laughing ones, led their companies to excellent financial results with little or

no turnover of executives or employees. They often achieved an enviable rate of growth.

I also found that I looked forward to going to work in these companies. There was a relaxed atmosphere. People were cooperative, easy to deal with, and addressed problems constructively – especially those that contained elements of conflict. They did not take issues seriously enough to create a depressive atmosphere.

And we know that laughter is the cornerstone of happy marriages and happy people in general.

When we are in emotional pain we have two choices: to cry or laugh.

They are two sides of the same

coin, an initial reaction to fear and even pain.

Think about it. Analyze the next joke or situation you laugh at. Was it something that scared you? The impact of crying is different from the impact of laughing. Crying reduces one's energy. After crying, we feel depleted. After laughing, we feel elated. Energy gets released in a positive growthful way.

So executives, parents, and couples that laugh are manifesting a culture that is positive, creative, and constructive. Those that make you cry, with or without tears, deplete your energy and are thus destructive in nature.

Laugh more, cry less, and you will live longer and better.

Just thinking and feeling, Dr. Ichak Kalderon Adizes ichak@adizes.com

https://www.ichakadizes.com/post/managing-with-laughter



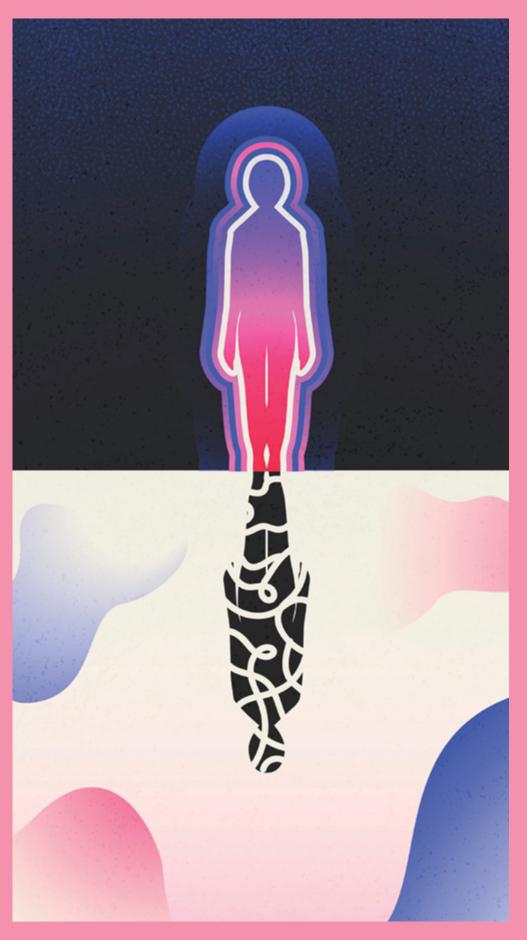
# Who is really Running the Show?

**STANISLAS LAJUGIE** challenges the myth that we make most of the decisions in our lives. Why do we keep encountering similar circumstances, relationships, and problems in life? Why is it so difficult to change our behavior? He explains why, and also how we can transform ourselves.

#### Who Is Running the Show? Your Conscious Mind or Your Subconscious Mind?

In his book, *The Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter and Miracles*, Dr. Bruce Lipton explains that 95% of our daily cognitive activities and decisions are managed by our subconscious minds, meaning that only 5% are managed by our conscious minds. One reason is because the prefrontal cortex, the part of our brain dedicated to attention and conscious awareness, is only a small part of our brain, which can process only a limited amount of information. Translated into data, it can process the equivalent of 40 bits/second, while the subconscious mind can process 40 millions bits/second. Quantitatively, the subconscious is one million times more powerful!

And the subconscious mind is mostly formed during the first six years of life, whereas the development of the prefrontal cortex is not complete until the age of twenty-five. The subconscious mind acts like a hard disk, downloading all the information we absorb from around us. This process is dependent to a large extent on external circumstances. Actually, at that young age there is no faculty to discriminate, as the prefrontal cortex is not fully developed. Therefore, aware or not, willing or not, good or bad, whatever comes is recorded. And the information we receive in that stage of super learning determines our belief system. This becomes the basis of the subconscious mind or the operating system from which our conscious mind operates.



#### What Is the Power of Positive Thinking?

Dr. Lipton invites us to do the mathematics:

- 95% of decisions versus 5%; and
- 40 millions bits/sec capacity of processing information versus 40 bits/sec.

So to be consciously positive is not very powerful, because the subconscious mind can always control or sabotage our intentions.

Even when we consciously have a positive thought, like "I want to be healthy, successful, happy, and have a fulfilling relationship," who is really pulling the strings? The subconscious mind.

What if our early childhood environment was not positive? What if we were told, "Don't do this," "Don't do that," "You don't deserve it, you are not good enough," and these are now our subconscious beliefs?

And, do you want to live a life governed by a subconscious mind that was mostly built during the first six to seven years of life, and was deeply influenced by external circumstances?

Whether or not we were lucky enough to have a positive joyful childhood, we can all learn how to bring about positive deep inner transformation.

#### **Negativity. Is It Worth It?**

To add fuel to the fire, we are wired to be negative, as we explored in "Are Your Thoughts Your Friends?" Negativity sticks to the brain, while positivity flows like water through the brain. The amygdala, which plays a key role in our defense system, is primed to label experiences negatively. It takes five positive experiences to undo a negative one. People will do more to avoid loss than receive gain. We update our appraisal with information that confirms these negative experiences. We ignore, devalue, or alter information.

On top of this, our modern environment is becoming ever more stressful and violent. There is an increasing exposure to violence through multimedia. The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that by the age of 18 the average young person will have viewed around 200,000 acts of violence on television – clearly not so supportive for building a positive subconscious mind!

In his book, *If You're So Smart, Why Aren't You Happy?*, Dr. Raj Raghunathan found that 60 to 70% of his students' spontaneous thoughts were negative, even though 60 to 75% of them expected their thoughts to be positive!

On average, we have 70,000 thoughts a day. If 70% of them are negative, that means one negative thought every 2 seconds! Would that not affect our consciousness, decisions, and the ways we interact with other people?

We can all ponder over our childhood. Whether or not we were lucky enough to have a positive joyful childhood, we can all learn how to bring about positive deep inner transformation.

#### **Keys for Inner Transformation**

Returning to Dr. Lipton, he fortunately mentions some ways to remodel our subconscious mind:

- Heightened awareness to realize the play of the conscious and subconscious mind, e.g. through hypnosis,
- Developing new habits, as the subconscious mind learns through repetitive actions day after day,
- A strong will: every time we become aware of a situation, we can willfully move toward the direction desired, and
- · Meditation.

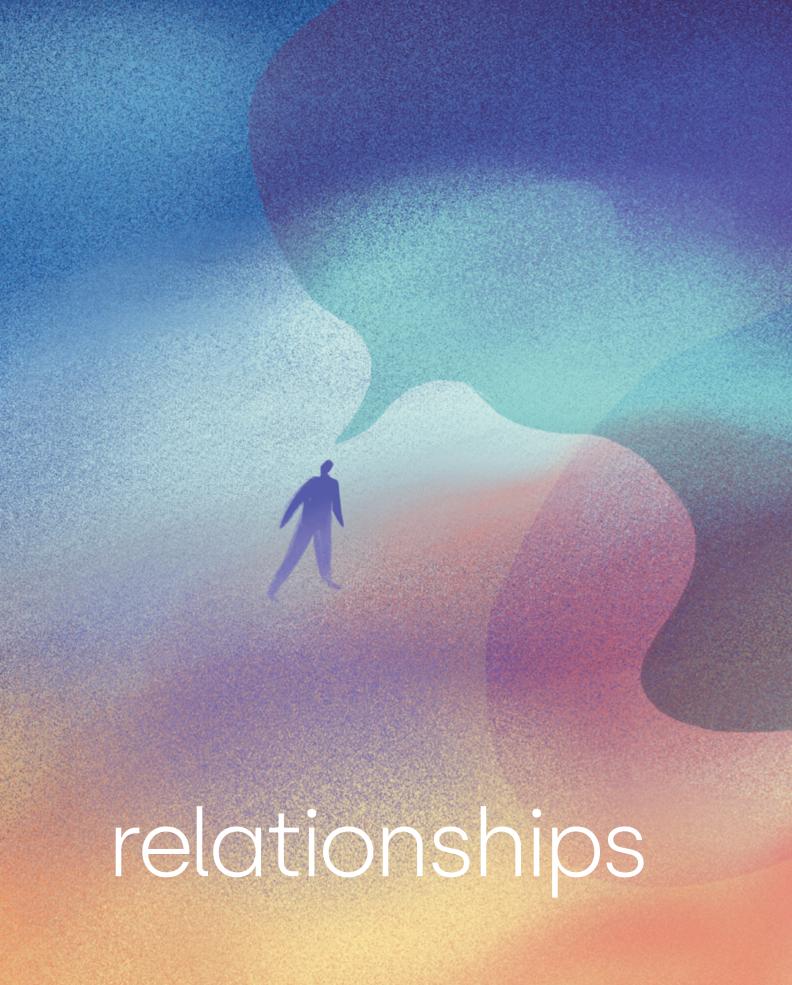
He also highlights the effectiveness of bedtime meditation as prescribed in the Heartfulness practices. Just before sleeping, we naturally access our subconscious mind. By meditating on the heart, we immerse ourselves in heartful meditative states, inviting our subconscious mind to absorb the feelings and qualities of the heart — love, compassion, courage, tolerance, respect, appreciation, generosity, kindness, patience, etc. — and this continues throughout the night while we sleep. We give ourselves a chance to enrich our subconscious mind with values and beliefs that support conscious positive thoughts.

If you sleep eight hours a day in a life of 80 years, that is 26 years of sleep! The practice of bedtime meditation will utilize that time to enrich the mind to your best advantage and well-being!

To put it a different way, if you want authentic conscious living, be happy, joyous, and positive. Make your subconscious mind your friend!

Illustrations from RAWPIXEL.COM





Real dialogue is where two or more people become willing to suspend their certainty in each other's presence.

David Bohm



Pilates teacher once suggested that if you ever suffer an ankle injury, it helps to practice standing on that foot alone (when it is sufficiently recovered) as often as you can. Why? Because the nerves are also injured in sprains and the neural connectivity between the foot and the brain is undermined. Standing on one leg restores the passage of information from the ankle to the brain so that your balance and movement become more resilient again.

I find this a good metaphor. Balance is a shifting and dynamic notion; not about achieving a static point but sustaining dynamic equilibrium, which is far more fluid in living systems. It tells me that what is important with balance is opening and restoring the flow of information. We could say that we become imbalanced whenever we block or close down to a wider understanding of our situation, our relation, and our context. We lose the ground upon which we stand and substitute for more abstract thoughts and memories. It is as if we literally lose our under-standing.

This happens for me when I fall back on old patterns and get stuck. It could happen when I repeat past judgments and ideas about a person or situation that has changed, and get into conflict. We can see this happen with our friends, families, bosses, and also in political situations all the time.

It seems that we have to apparently lose our balance, our old stance, in order to find a new one. We have to sometimes let go of what we hold on to in order to keep our sense of upright strength, in order to move forward and explore new territory. Is this what we do every time we take a step and walk forward?

Within psychology, there are many different ways to make sense of how we lose balance in our relationship with the world:

- For those with painful beginnings, we can understandably become fixed on trying to mend early wounds and sufferings with all those we meet. This means we are not really connecting with the present situation and its requirements at all.
- We can become totally preoccupied by our fears, anxieties, and sometimes wishes for others – this often

happens when we become parents.

- In severe situations, the inner self is so fragile that all efforts are extended to protecting it from suffering ever again such as we see in narcissistic responses. With this attempt to protect the self, huge efforts are made to ward off any information that is not the same as we feel and want to hold on to. It is experienced as threatening. We can all feel something of this with our vulnerable egos.
- There are some situations, like trying to reach an airport to catch a plane or be in time for a meeting, when transport breaks down, when our focus and sense of balance are reduced to a very fragile thread like crossing a high wire!
- Jung described the complex of powerful archetypes that we all share in our deep unconscious selves, that also weave together with our personal psychological history. In this way, we can become hyper-sensitized to specific themes, e.g. the abandoned child, the martyr, the good or

bad mother, the oppressive authority, the revolutionary overthrower. They can dominate our responses to situations in such a way we do not allow other information to come in.

 We can also sometimes overidentify with roles that we play at work or in our family, and lose contact with the wider and deeper aspects of our being in the world.

### How can we restore balance?

Taoism is a way of wisdom based on the notion of intrinsic balance within the dynamic flow and interplay of opposites. It requires us to recognize ceaseless movement in living systems, and to resist fixing ideas or attachments to one side of a situation. By not doing, everything is accomplished. By seeking only one side of things we make the other more solid and rigid.

In my very limited exposure to practices such as Tai Chi, I found you have to keep your knees bent. You have to be able to bend with pressure. It is a helpful metaphor to notice the moment of stiffening against and resisting information coming to us, and to mentally relax and move with it.

Sometimes there needs to be time and compassion and healing for our own wounds before we can let ourselves consider those of others.

Pausing and breathing in any situation, taking a step back, and focusing entirely on the present moment are very helpful. In a few minutes we can monitor all the sensory information coming in at this moment: the feel of surfaces meeting the body and feet, the temperature and scent of the air, the sounds we hear, the kind of light and sky that is unfolding, the sense of being alive. Enjoying that moment can then help us be open to exploring what we are feeling in a deeper way.

It can be interesting to consider how many others have been involved in our being in this moment so far today? Those involved in power distribution, manufacture of objects, the cultivation and provision of food, etc.

Doing something physical, being in nature, and talking to someone



else also help us to regain a sense of perspective, a right relation with what is going on.

Finally, meditation is a practice that is especially helpful in restoring balance. It can help us find an inner ground that supports us through harsh winds and shocks. We feel more anchored and rooted to a very deep reality that transcends this small moment.

We need to feel safe to risk being open. "Under-standing" is a wonderful word. I am thinking of it like the roots connecting trees, nourishing and supporting growth among them.

#### For Equilibrium, a Blessing:

Like the joy of the sea coming home to shore,
May the relief of laughter rinse through your soul.
As the wind loves to call things to dance,
May your gravity by lightened by grace.
Like the dignity of moonlight restoring the earth,
May your thoughts incline with reverence and respect.
As water takes whatever shape it is in,
So free may you be about who you become.
As silence smiles on the other side of what's said,
May your sense of irony bring perspective.
As time remains free of all that it frames,
May your mind stay clear of all it names.
May your prayer of listening deepen enough
to hear in the depths the laughter of god.

- John O'Donohue

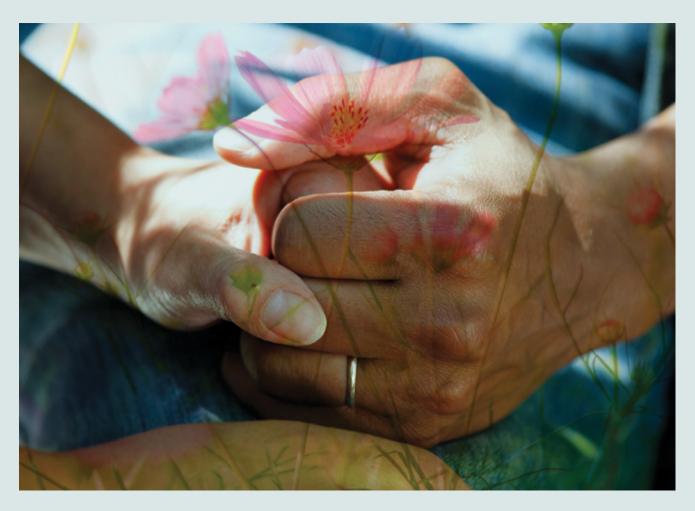
Illustrations by ANANYA PATEL



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# Lindness

# Makes a World of Difference



After thyroid cancer, Crohn's disease, and other autoimmune diseases defined her twenties and thirties, FRANCESCA GROSSMAN was left feeling alone with chronic pain. This invisible companion affected her whole life – intimacy, motherhood, friendship, work, and mental health – but after more than twenty years she started talking to others and discovered that her story was not unique, and neither were her feelings of loneliness and seclusion. Francesca decided to help her fellow chronic pain sufferers feel a little less alone, and her latest book, Not Weakness: Navigating the Culture of Chronic Pain, is a testament to their ability to live and love with chronic pain.

have lived in chronic pain for most of my adult life. One thing I can tell you with absolute certainty is that the difference between living with it and giving up has almost always lived in kindness.

The first time I lost control of my bowels, I was on the platform of the Number 6 train. I was twenty-six, and a cup of coffee I'd sipped led to stomach pain I can only classify as agonizing. Though I did everything I could to get up the subway steps and into a nearby restaurant, my cold shaking body let go three steps from the top. The problem in a situation like that, I have since learned, is walking makes it worse. And stopping gets you nowhere.

I sprinted in shame to my gym, a place that had been my salvation. I rushed into the shower with all my clothes on, peeled them off, pumped bright green body soap into my jeans, and threw away my underwear in a naked dash from the scalding shower to the metal bins.

A young woman wearing a black staff T-shirt approached me in the locker room. I had seen her many times before, folding towels mostly, mopping the floor, and I always nodded my hello. She always nodded back.

"Are you okay?" she asked. I was unable to speak.

"Do you want me to wash and dry those for you?" she asked gently, pointing at the heap of wet clothes on the bench beside me. I sighed, nodded my thanks and sat in tiny white towels for the next forty-five minutes while this beautiful woman did my laundry.

While the moment remains one of my most humiliating, I think it's important to reflect on the kindness this woman showed me. She didn't have to help. She had a lot to do, she was at work, she had a life that did not include cleaning up after me.

We have this assumption that in shameful situations most people will be cruel; they will point and laugh, they will walk away disgusted, and/or they will not help. I'm not sure if that comes from the playground, the horrific news cycle, bad TV, or our own

insecurities, but in my experience it is mostly false.

This example of kindness and help is just one of many I can recount. A woman stopped what she was doing to help me clean up. She looked at me naked and shaking, sitting next to a pile of wet dirty clothes, and she held out her hand to take them. She washed my clothes, and in doing so washed

away some of the shame that had covered me too. Her kindness was a work of grace.

At the time, this was the most humiliating day of my life, and my response was to bury it deep within me. It was only the beginning of the shame I would experience in the next two decades living with a number of autoimmune diseases, which

triggered and caused severe everyday pain and the total breakdown of my body.

Living in chronic pain can leave you feeling like there's no goodness out there, that no one can understand and therefore no one cares. I have experienced – and the women I've interviewed have also – repeated dismissal, silencing, and shame by some of the people who were supposed to care for us. But many people have been saviors. I have had many doctors, nurses, aids, therapists, instructors, and friends who have done everything in their power to make me well. My gratitude runs deep.

The women who spoke to me for my book lit up when I asked them to tell me about their experiences with kindness. In almost every case, they were happy and eager to recount the moments and people who changed their lives simply by being kind.

Samantha was in a near-fatal riding incident in the mid '90s, which left her with severe, constant chronic pain in her leg and shoulder. She told me, "I've run across many kind people. Too many to count. A couple jump to mind.

"The first was a nurse who figured out a way to wash my hair in the hospital after my accident, without me having to ask. She knew it was



We have this assumption that in shameful situations most people will be cruel; they will point and laugh, they will walk away disgusted, and/or they will not help, but in my experience it is mostly false.

bothering me to have dirty hair. Her name was Sophia. I'll never forget her.

"The second was a paramedic who held my hand in the helicopter on the way to the hospital. Never got his name, but I do remember his smile, and the way his simple human touch made me feel that everything would be okay."

Studies show that delivering health care with kindness leads to faster healing, reduced pain, increased immune function, lowered blood pressure, and decreased anxiety. According to Dignity Health, "In a randomized controlled trial of patients with irritable bowel syndrome, patients who were treated by warm practitioners who listened actively and expressed compassion for their condition experienced less pain, less severe symptoms, and greater health improvement than other patients in the study... leading to a general conclusion that better communication and listening have a positive influence on controlling pain."

Love is big. But kindness is often small. Reaching out instead of recoiling. Checking up instead of writing off. Texting, nodding, smiling. A one-armed hug. A calming song, a cool cloth. A sweet phrase. A compliment.



Small gestures that in retrospect make huge differences.

To the nurse that washed Samantha's hair, it is probably just something she is happy to do. To the woman in the black T-shirt, maybe I'm a funny anecdote or maybe I didn't register much at all. I'm sure it seemed like a very small thing to her.

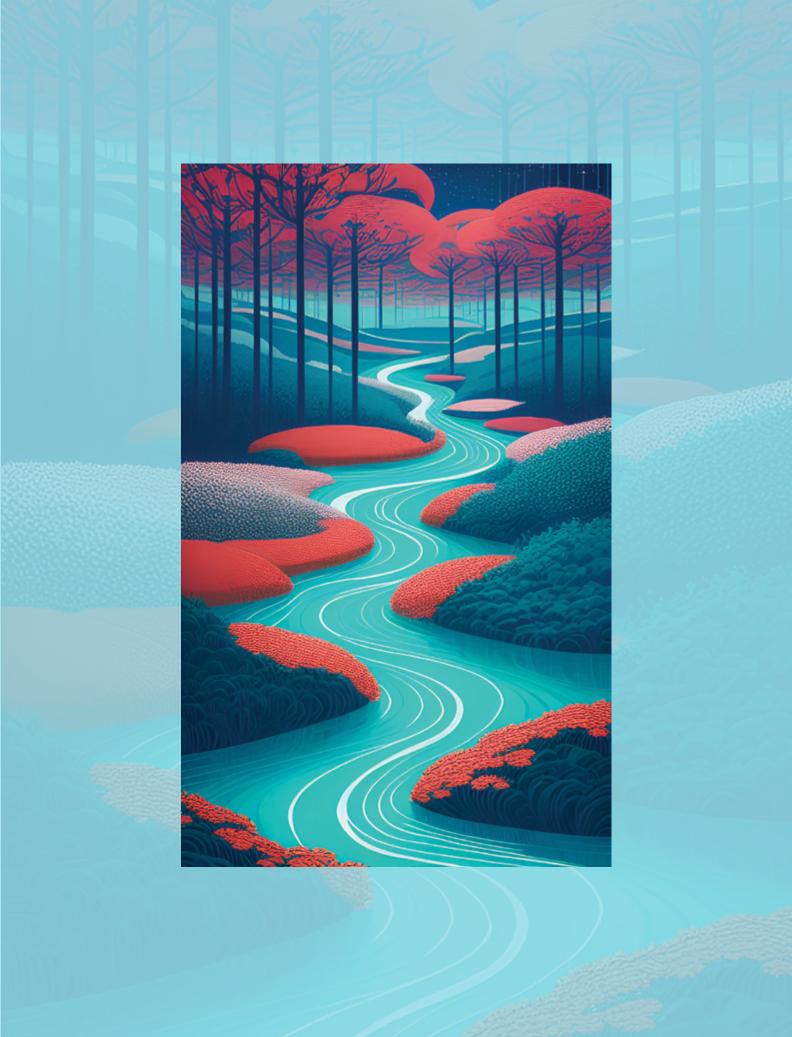
But to me, it was huge. And there is no doubt that small acts of kindness like these helped save my life.

Love is big. But kindness is often small.
Reaching out instead of recoiling.
Checking up instead of writing off.
Texting, nodding, smiling. A one-armed hug. A calming song, a cool cloth.
A sweet phrase. A compliment.
Small gestures that in retrospect make huge differences.



The balance of nature is not a status quo; it is fluid, ever shifting, in a constant state of adjustment.

RACHEL CARSON





ALANDA GREENE explores how to bring balance into a polarized world, even the polarized nature of the environment, climate change and politics. It all starts with us as individuals.

friend from Switzerland called recently, and we shared stories about our respective extreme weather conditions. He was sitting in a down jacket in a late afternoon of mid-summer, a time when he would usually be in swimming shorts at the nearby lakeshore, warmed by the evening sun. I was sweltering in our unprecedented heat even as thick smoke and unsettling dry conditions

threatened fire. We joked about how to balance things – trade some of our heat for the persistent rain and coolness where he lived.

Later I considered how these polarized environmental conditions – fire and flood, heat and cold, dry, and sodden – mirror the social and political situations of our world. Conversations regularly include discussions about the polarities of the times: stances

extreme, positions locked, words and tempers volatile.

When conditions are highly polarized, balance is difficult to maintain. The spinning top spins smooth while the center of gravity is aligned with its physical center, but begins to wobble and crash as the balance moves toward the periphery. Not a perfect metaphor, but you get the meaning. In Chinese Medicine Philosophy, the basic yin and yang energies are part of all aspects of the world. The path to health and well-being exists with the balance of these two functioning in harmony.

Considering this widespread imbalance, I know that the first step to restoring balance must come from me. Until it is present within myself, how can I recognize what is needed to restore it in the outer environment?

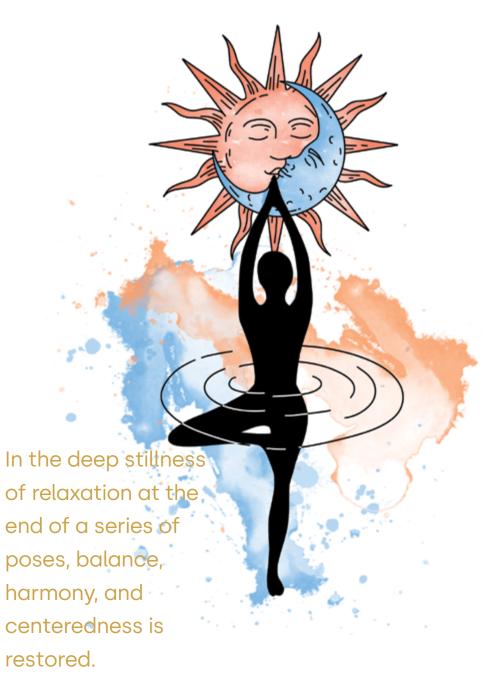
Here, I turn to the teachings of hatha yoga where balance is a key offering. Hatha is a combination of two syllables: *ha* meaning sun and *tha* meaning moon. The word combines the masculine and feminine principles, the active and receptive.

Breathing in, breathing out: one breath, two processes in harmony. Balancing the inward and outward aspects of breath brings immediate and palpable influence to my mind. I move to center, feel harmony and peace. Moving through various poses or asanas,

my body and mind work together, bringing balance between the left and right sides, between tension and relaxation, between action and rest. In the deep stillness of relaxation at the end of a series of poses, balance, harmony, and centeredness are restored.

Systems thinking shows that a very small change can ripple out to have a large and significant effect. Returning to the center, to the balance and harmony within myself, can be this small change.

Illustrations by LAKSHMI GADDAM



# How to Protect



Last month, TERRAN DAILY explained how electromagnetic pollution can negatively impact us all. Here, she explores some practical measures we can all take to protect our families from its adverse effects.



#### Sources of exposure to artificial electromagnetic radiation (EMR)

Problematic electromagnetic radiation in our homes can have many sources, and some are unexpected. Nick Pineault, in his very readable *The Non-Tinfoil Guide to EMFs*, talks about four types of electromagnetic frequencies (EMFs) that have been linked to adverse health: radio frequencies and microwaves (RF), electric

fields (EF), magnetic fields (MF), and dirty electricity (DE).

Most of us think of harmful or potentially harmful EMFs as radio frequencies from cell phones, Wi-fi, etc., but the other three also have negative effects on our health and well-being. In fact, well-known building biologist Oram Miller holds that magnetic frequencies are the most harmful, suppressing the immune system and increasing the risk of cancer. Magnetic frequencies and radio

frequencies reduce melatonin production and disrupt our cells' calcium channels,<sup>2</sup> leading to the same negative effects.

Electric fields are the most common in our homes, but have not been the subject of much research. Dirty electricity can be a big problem for attention and behavior in children, and also appears to be a factor in several chronic diseases like diabetes and multiple sclerosis. Let us take a closer look at each of these.

## Radio frequencies and microwaves

RFs are generated by smart phones, tablets, Wi-fi, Bluetooth, baby monitors, cordless phones, wireless electric meters (smart meters), microwaves, and cellular phone networks (4G and 5G). Quite a lot of research has been done on RFs and their links to brain tumors and other cancers, depression, insomnia, decreased fertility, impaired fetal development, and behavior and learning problems in children.

#### 2. Magnetic fields

MFs are produced by electronic device power supplies, speakers, computer hard drives, appliances with electric motors, induction cookers, your home's electrical panel, electric blankets or heating pads, faulty wiring, and high voltage power lines near the home. Magnetic fields of various intensities have been linked with childhood leukemia and adult cancers, neurodegenerative diseases, insomnia, decreased immunity and, in some people, elevated blood sugar.3

#### 3. Electric fields

EFs form around household wiring, power strips, ungrounded electronics, cords and power supplies, lamps and lighting.

They are not as well studied as other EMFs, but some sources link EFs to decreased melatonin production, chronic fatigue, insomnia, restless leg syndrome, allergies, hyperactivity, depression, and headaches.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. Dirty electricity

DE is electrical current that fluctuates with mini-power surges rather than flowing continuously and smoothly. It is generated any time an electrical current is transformed from AC to DC or DC to AC, as in solar panel inverters or power supplies for electronic devices, or when current is switched rapidly on and off, as happens with energy-saving lightbulbs (CFL, fluorescent, and most LEDs), dimmer switches, variable speed motors, and energy efficient appliances. Dirty electricity has been linked with unstable blood sugar, sleep disturbances, attention and behavior issues, depression and fatigue.5,6

Our lives have become intertwined with all these devices that emit potentially harmful EMFs. Unless you want to go to the wilderness and live off the grid, there is no way to turn back the clock and return to life without electricity, appliances, computers, cell phones, and internet. But there is a lot you can do to minimize your exposure, and your children's exposure, in day-to-day life.

Our lives have become intertwined with all these devices that emit potentially harmful EMFs.

# Tips to reduce EMF exposure in your home

- 1. When possible, eliminate the source of EMFs.
- 2. When you can't eliminate the source, or choose not to,
  - Decrease the amount of time you are exposed, and/or
  - b. Increase the distance between you and the source.
- 3. Give special thought to areas of your home where you spend a lot of time, especially down time where you and your children sleep, meditate, play, relax, or study.

Remember that these tips are especially important for our most vulnerable family members: pregnant women, babies, children, the elderly, and people with chronic illness or health problems, including depression, anxiety, fatigue, and insomnia.



Give special thought to areas of your home where you spend a lot of time, especially down time – where you and your children sleep, meditate, play, relax, or study.



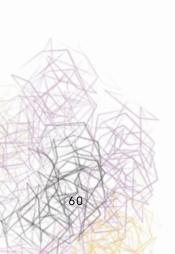
## Specific strategies for reducing exposure

#### 1. Eliminate the source

- Use ethernet connections for your computers. Many homes have ethernet ports throughout the house, or you can run cables to necessary locations. Ethernet cables and connectors are readily available online.
- Choose "dumb" televisions and appliances instead of smart ones. Smart appliances are a source of RF and dirty electricity.
- Have your smart electric meter changed to a traditional analogue meter. Smart meters are a strong source of RF and also produce magnetic fields and dirty electricity. In some places, electric companies are required to make the exchange if you ask for it, though you may need to persist with your request.
- Try putting away your microwave. Going back to conventional cooking is not as inconvenient as you may think!

- Dispose of the baby monitor. Standard baby monitors emit as much RF as a cell phone, and infants are especially vulnerable. Hardwired baby monitors are safer, or maybe baby can sleep near enough to you that you can hear her cry.
- Use old fashioned incandescent light bulbs instead of CFL bulbs (the curly ones) or fluorescent tubes, especially in relaxation and study areas. Many of us changed to CFL as they use less electricity. But we didn't know that they emit lots of dirty electricity and have been found to contribute to attention and behavior issues, sleep disturbance, depression, fatigue, irritability, and even unstable blood sugar.<sup>7</sup>
- Use off-on switches instead of dimmer switches. Like CFL and fluorescent lights, dimmer switches work by very rapidly switching current on and off, which creates dirty electricity.
- Unplug lamps and other electric devices when not in use, or switch them off at the wall, especially in the bedroom at night. They produce electrical fields even when turned off and may interfere with sleep.
- Have an electrician check your home for wiring errors. Errors can produce strong magnetic fields, which have been linked with several cancers and also reduced melatonin synthesis.<sup>8</sup>





- 2. Reduce the amount of time you are exposed or increase your distance from the source
- Cell phones are a part of life, but they are also a strong source of RF.

Never keep a cell phone in your pocket or immediately next to your body when it is connected to the network. Keeping cell phones in an RF blocking pouch is the safest, but even putting them in a shoulder bag or backpack is better than right next to your body in your pocket.

When talking on the phone, use wired earbuds or the speaker phone, rather than holding the phone to your ear. Bluetooth earbuds are problematic. They emit weaker RF than the cell phone itself, but are right inside your ear, close to your brain, so not the best choice.

Sleep with your cell phone turned off or in another room. If you need the alarm or some other function, sleep with the phone in airplane mode.

Consider keeping your phone on airplane mode or in an RF blocking pouch, except when you need to make a call. You can check your messages and email at intervals. • While working on your computer, use a wired ethernet connection or work with the Wi-fi turned off when you don't actively need it.

Even if you use ethernet to eliminate RFs, your laptop's hard drive produces magnetic fields that can be harmful. Your lap is a sensitive area, near reproductive and other organs, so place your laptop on a desk or table. EMR barriers are available for maximum safety. Using a barrier, you can even safely rest a laptop on your lap.

- Smart meters are a source of RF, MF, and EF. If you must have a smart meter, sleep, meditate, study, play, or relax as far away from it as possible, and/or consider getting a smart meter shield, available online.
- Solar power inverters are a strong source of dirty electricity, so try to locate them away from daily household activities.
- Your home's electrical panel is surrounded by a strong magnetic field. Arrange your home so that you and your

Sleep with your cell phone turned off or in another room. If you need the alarm or some other function, sleep with the phone in airplane mode.





family are seldom within 4 feet of the panel, especially during downtime activities.

- Electronic power supplies are a source of magnetic fields when in use. I used to meditate with my computer charging in an outlet near my head, and wondered why my meditation was disturbed! Since I moved it to an outlet in another room, meditation is much easier.
- Your microwave oven produces both RF and a strong magnetic field. If you choose to use a microwave, your EMF exposure can be limited by

standing at least 6 feet away from it.

- High power lines are a source of a very strong electromagnetic field and are associated with increased risk of childhood leukemia, miscarriage, and even Alzheimer's disease. When choosing a home, avoid areas near high power lines.
- Power strips produce electrical fields. As with electronic chargers, avoid sleeping, meditating, studying, playing, or relaxing near them, unless they are unplugged or turned off at the wall.

• If you have a smart TV, don't allow children to sit close to it. Give them a designated seat several feet away.

# Special considerations for fertility and pregnancy

If you are pregnant, hoping to conceive, or you are a man of reproductive age, please use the above tips to decrease EMF exposure in general, and take extra care to protect abdominal and reproductive areas. Be sure not to carry cell phones in your pockets or use laptops sitting directly on your lap.



## EMF harmonizing or neutralizing devices

There are many devices on the market that use chips, diodes, crystals, shungite, and frequencies to "harmonize or neutralize" artificial EMFs. Some of these products have been developed with careful research and testing, while others may have been developed based on hearsay or speculation. It is important when considering these products to look for tests conducted by reputable independent laboratories. Do the websites show any tests? What were the

tests measuring? What were the results?

Then use your common sense and intuition to decide if it is a product you choose to spend your money on. Several of the most reputable of these companies emphasize that their products should not be used as a substitute for reducing your EMF exposure. Since none of us can eliminate our exposure completely, either inside or outside our homes, these products could be a good addition to using EMF reduction measures.

One way to restore the body's electrochemical balance costs nothing at all – walk barefoot on the Earth!



The surface of the Earth is electrically conductive, and is constantly emitting negative ions, which can be absorbed into the body through direct contact with your feet. These negative ions counteract the oxidative stress caused by exposure to artificial EMFs, toxins, and stress, decreasing inflammatory responses and strengthening the immune system.

#### Time in nature

One way to restore the body's electrochemical balance costs nothing at all – walk barefoot on the Earth! The surface of the Earth is electrically conductive, and is constantly emitting negative ions, which can be absorbed into the body through direct contact with your feet. These negative ions counteract the oxidative stress caused by exposure to artificial EMFs, toxins, and stress, decreasing inflammatory responses and strengthening the immune system.<sup>10</sup> And if your time in nature takes you away from cities, cell phone towers, wind turbines, and other strong sources of EMFs, you can tune into the Schumann Resonance, Mother Earth's heartbeat, as well. Why not consider an EMF detox vacation? Get away into nature, walk barefoot, and leave your smart phones at home!

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Illustrations by JASMEE MUDGAL

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Blank, M., 2014. Overpowered: What Science Tells Us about the Dangers of Cell Phones and Other Wi-Fi-Age Devices. Seven Stories Press, New York.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Chevalier, G. et al, 2012. Earthing: Health Implications of Reconnecting the Human Body to the Earth's Surface Electrons, Journal of Environmental and Public Health, 2012: 291541. https://www.ncbi.nlm. nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3265077/

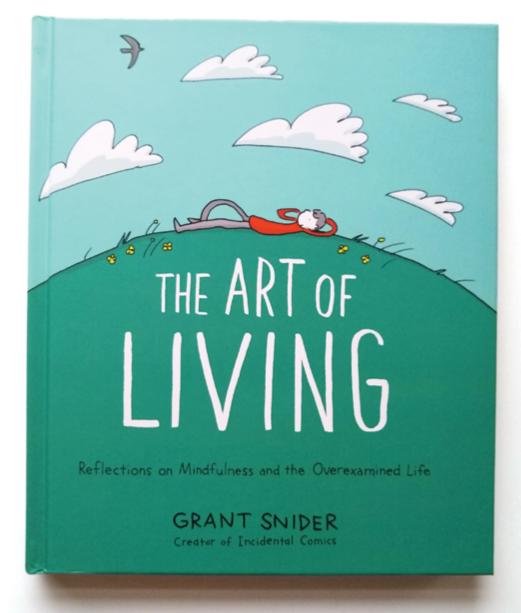
# CREATIVITY





# 

**GRANT SNIDER** began drawing and writing before he knew what he was doing. His comics have appeared in The New York Times Book Review, The Kansas City Star, The Best American Comics 2013, and all across the internet. You can explore his work at http://www. incidentalcomics.com/. Here he is interviewed by **KASHISH KALWANI** about what inspires him and brings him such success.



### Q: So, Grant, how are you doing?

Good, I just got my daily run in, went through some puddles, my socks are wet. Good feeling for the middle of the afternoon here.

Q: Nice. When I first saw your comics, I was curious about you – they are not necessarily humorous, but they are so relevant, so thoughtful. When I see the thoughtfulness behind your work, your intentional seeing of the world, it makes me feel very relevant, like, "Yes, I see you, and I feel you." So could you tell us more about this style of comics?

Well, a lot of comics come from that first person perspective, basically because it's easy to draw a single character moving through the panel and encountering the world. Over time, that's how I started drawing them. It became like a conversation with myself in the form of my character avatar, walking around thinking deep thoughts or not too deep ones, coming up with various conflicts, usually internal, and hopefully resolving them by the last panel.

Ever since I started in single comics in 2009, I've had the goal to draw a single page comic strip per week. And most weeks I have achieved that goal. I've done a few that are more than one page, some I don't quite get to the page, but it's been a nice recurring conversation with myself.

It's nice to hear you say that you can find some relatability in them because I don't want to just be a solo conversation, you know?

Q: Yes, absolutely. I know so many people from the Heartfulness community who follow your page on Instagram, and it's fun to pick it up and share the comic with one another.

That's much appreciated. It's the cool thing about the internet – if you like something you retweet it, or send it to somebody on Facebook, or Instagram message, and it's really powerful how social media can be a force for good if the artist's message is worth sharing.



I think with anything, like a writing practice, a meditation practice, a spiritual or nonspiritual practice, it's really about consistency.

Q: Truly, yes.

I know you already touched upon one comic per week, but could you share more about your drawing routine? What does your process look like?

It really changes based on where I am in life. I used to cram it all in on a Saturday, when I had not as many work or family obligations. That got to be pretty exhausting. When my kids were a little bit younger, I would wake up really early in the morning, which you'll see because a lot of the comic strips reference those early morning hours, like looking out the window to see the sunrise, because I was literally sitting at the drawing table watching the sunrise, you know, a couple cups of coffee down. And now that my work schedule is different, and my youngest child is two, so he's not quite waking up at the crack of dawn anymore, I do more in regular hours, a few hours a day, a few times a week, which is much more mentally healthy.

I really think it's about finding that balance of the practice. It doesn't really matter when I'm doing the work, it's that I'm revisiting it and doing it consistently. I think with anything, like a writing practice,

a meditation practice, a spiritual or non-spiritual practice, it's really about consistency rather than, "Oh, I'm going to do this amazing thing once a month," then the next month you're not doing it at all.

Q: I really like the word "consistency," because even the Heartfulness meditation practice that I follow requires consistency. Even though it is recommended that we meditate for an hour every morning, if that's not possible, it's still good to show up for five minutes every day and be consistent about it. That works wonders.

It's about showing up. I'm speaking mainly from a cartooning standpoint, but this could be applied to a lot of other practices. Some days, it feels like "Man, I really want to get to the drawing table." I have so many good ideas that are bursting with possibility. Other days it feels like a chore. But inevitably, like I had to do yesterday, I sit through the drudgery until it eventually drops away. And even if it isn't the most pleasant experience, I get a good day's work done. Obviously, it's more fun when it is joyous, but that's not going to be every single time you show up. Unfortunately.

Q: I truly understand that.

So what are your sources of inspiration? How do you sustain your motivation?

It depends on what kind of project I'm working on. To be generic about it, my sketchbook is the source of all the ideas. But what I put in my sketchbook varies.

At times I'll be into life drawing, so I'll go out on my lunch breaks or on a weekend with colored pencils and do detailed drawings. And they eventually get filtered into the comics in a scene in a panel. Sometimes I'll be reading an amazing book, and it'll be like, "Oh, this is such a great insight, I need to put this down." I'll do a little spin on it, maybe have my character commenting on it somehow. That'll work its way into a comic strip.

Occasionally, it'll be my daughter or one of my sons doing something ridiculous: "This is just too good, I have to make this into a drawing." It's finding those little snippets of interest in my daily routine, capturing them in the sketchbook and then taking that sketchbook with me later to the drawing table when I'm working. "Okay, what piece of this can

I turn into a part of a bigger project? What is really speaking to me today?"

And sometimes it's a matter of combining things. I'll have an idea from a couple years ago, with a spin on something I came up with last week, and together that makes something completely new.

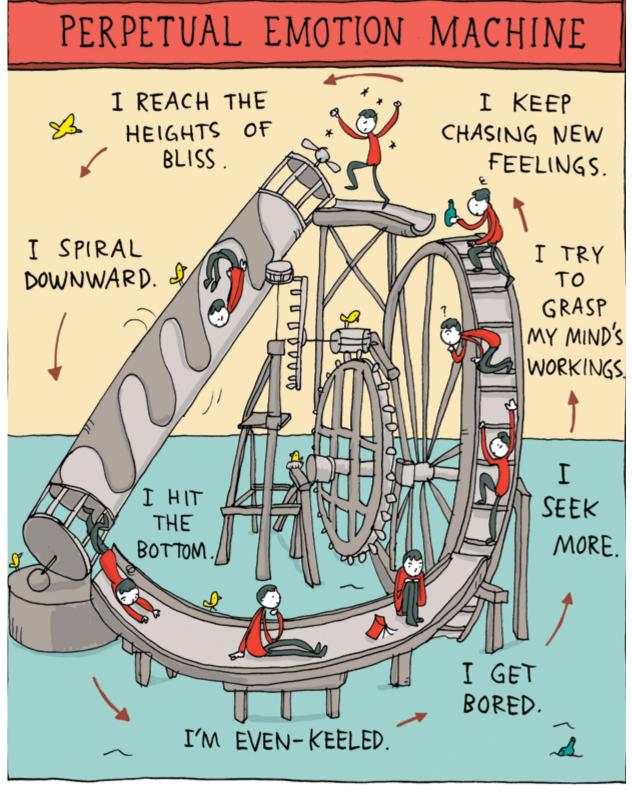
Q: I really like how you bring your kids into the process. How do they view you as an artist?

I've probably shared this anecdote before. My son Trent is eight and he's really into comics. He always compliments my work and says he likes to read it, but then he puts a caveat, "Dad, you need to do something funny." I do sometimes feel like I'm a little serious or lacking that sense of humor that I look for when I read comics. But I really liked that feedback, and I'll try to put something funny in my next book, especially for Trent.

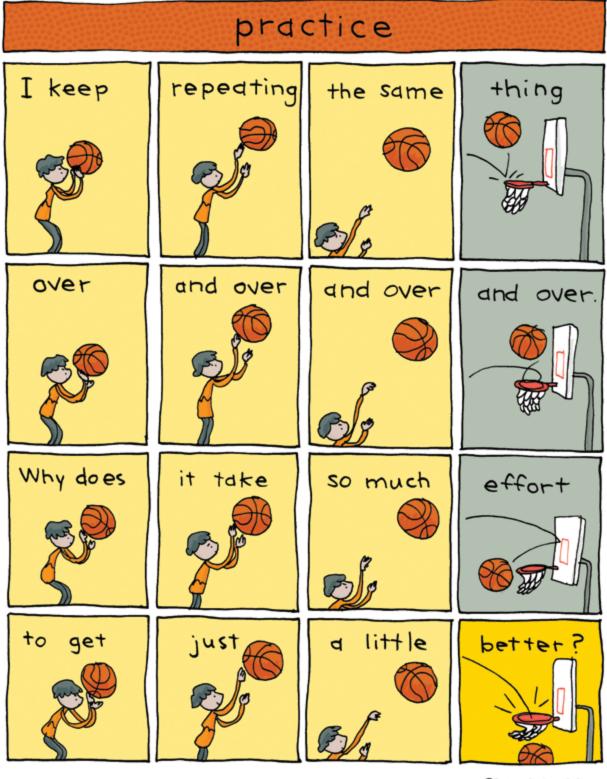
Q: I love honest feedback. What message do you hope people can take away from your comics?

I don't want to limit it to a single message, but something important is an openness to experience, to your own

Something important is an openness to experience, to your own thoughts and feelings, and a willingness to share those thoughts and feelings with others - in my case through art, for others it might be a different form. I hope people see that attitude of openness and can be inspired by it in their daily life.



GRANT SNIDER



GRANT SNIDER

When people get busy with everyday obligations, a lot of times their art or their writing falls through the cracks and is lost. Just keeping that consistent routine of writing or drawing, of being alone with your thoughts, is a really powerful thing.

thoughts and feelings, and a willingness to share those thoughts and feelings with others – in my case through art, for others it might be a different form. I hope people see that attitude of openness and can be inspired by it in their daily life.

I've never thought about the broader reason why I'm doing it. I do get a lot of joy out of it, and I hope other people do too. Really, finding those small pieces of joy would be another overarching goal for my comics.

Q: It's wonderful that you have chosen happiness and joy.

Yes, and I've tried the other way as far as the art style goes. Occasionally I'll do a comic from a space of negative emotion that doesn't have an ending that is uplifting or hopeful. And when I show it to my first readers, my wife Kayla and my brother Gavin, they say, "This is falling flat; it doesn't really work for me." While it's good to capture those negative emotions honestly on the page, I always want to leave the reader, and more so myself, with hope at the end, even if I've still not quite resolved that negativity.

Q: What is your advice for a beginner in this field?

Just keep doing it and sharing it. I know that if at age 20 I had seen where I would be with my comics now at age 37, I might not recognize that person. But I would be really happy that they'd been read by a lot of people, that they were still doing it, and still finding the motivation and the time to make it a big part of their life. When people get busy with everyday obligations, a lot of times their art or their writing falls through the cracks and is lost. Just keeping that consistent routine of writing or drawing, of being alone with your thoughts, is a really powerful thing.

Q: Thank you.

Illustrations by GRANT SNIDER

# Healing Soup

**SIMONNE HOLM** is the founder of the Alkaline Institute and is dedicated to helping people to thrive on their health journey through creative food projects, cooking, and lifestyle. Here she shares a colorful nutritious vegetable soup that is simple to make and tastes delicious.

his is an easy way to cook a vegetable soup rich in flavor and color. The vegetables have many health benefits and they are low in calories and a great source of nutrients and fiber. You can spice it up as per your choice. Use more chili, fresh herbs, and lemon juice for taste. Cook with joy and enjoy. Prep time 10 minutes. Cook time 30 minutes. Serves 2 people.

#### **INGREDIENTS**

3 to 4 large fresh beets

1 big onion

2 cloves garlic

1 tablespoon ginger

1 to 2 celery stalks

1 large sweet potato or 1 carrot

1 to 2 parsnips

½ to 1 teaspoon chili, fresh or

1 teaspoon Himalaya salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 liter water

1 teaspoon vegetable bouillon

2 tablespoons fresh thyme and basil or 1 teaspoon dried herbs

1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice

3 to 4 tablespoons cold pressed olive oil



#### **PREPARATION**

Wash or peel the vegetables and roughly chop them into the samesized pieces.

Add 1 liter of water in a medium pot, add the chopped onions, and cook for 5 minutes.

Turn down the heat, add the rest of the vegetables, and cook for another 25 minutes. The vegetables should be fully cooked.

Add the fresh or dried herbs and turn off the heat.

Blend the vegetable soup with the olive oil and lemon juice.

Make sure that your blender jar can handle the warm soup or first let it cool for another 5 minutes.

Add salt, pepper, and chili to taste.

You can warm the soup again after blending. It also tastes good cold.

#### **Toast seeds**

Add ½ cup of pumpkin or sesame seeds to a skillet over medium heat. Dry roast them until golden brown, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 4 minutes.

Transfer to a plate to cool completely.



The seeds have many potential health benefits and have been used in folk medicine for thousands of years.

#### **Assemble your plate**

Sprinkle the beetroot soup with toasted seeds, fresh parsley, coconut crème, or have it just as it is.

When the Divinity at the center of every atom in our food resonates with the Divinity within us, food becomes a potent source of goodness.

— Daaji

To learn more about the Alkaline Diet, visit Simonne's website at **www. Alkaline-institute.com** 

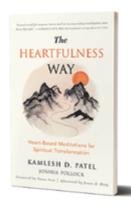
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# heartfulness

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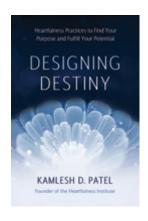
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HFNLife strives to bring products to make your life simple and convenient. We offer a set of curated partners in apparel, accessories, eye-care, home staples, organic foods and more. The affiliation of our partner organizations with Heartfulness Institute helps in financially sustaining the programs which we conduct in various places across the world. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1001/journal.org/10.1001



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