

# FREE

# Conscious

*A free flowing forum of inspired thought*

# Community

**Summer Issue  
2010**

**Look Inside!**

Psychology ..... Page 1  
 Politics ..... Page 2  
 Environmental ..... Page 3  
 Metaphysical ..... Page 5  
 Relating ..... Page 6  
 Health & Healing .... Page 7  
 Community Calendar  
 ..... Page 7

## ARE YOU FEELING BETRAYED?

By Michael Strelcheck

The recent oil spill and the subsequent goings-on in the Gulf of Mexico seem to have hit a nerve in the American psyche. Americans (especially those who have ties that bind them to the Gulf) are in an uproar with what seems to be happening today, feeling betrayed and defenseless. This angry response has been a long time coming for many months now the American consciousness has been bombarded with one shocking incident after another coming to light. First it was the Enron Corporation that cheated the consumer, then it was the Wall Street Banks that deceived the home owners and started a financial meltdown, followed quickly by the news of corrupt dealings within our government, and now the outright falsehoods the giant oil company BP is pedaling about its activities. What's going on?

For the most part Americans have been willing to trust (often blindly) those individuals who lead in industry and politics, due to the sacred ideals the country was founded upon. Americans, being a forgiving sort, allow individuals as well as institutions to mess-up from time to time because they know that in order to make an omelet some eggs must be broken. This attitude has always been a part of the American way, for citizens realize that private enterprise is what has made this country great. But what's happening today seems different for it appears like all we're getting for the 'breaking' of the rules by self-serving individuals and organizations is crumbled-up shells.

Americans are rapidly becoming disenchanted with the present leadership of the country feeling let-down and many are aiming to make a change with their vote. It will be interesting to see just how many political incumbents will still be in office after the next couple years. But, what if these increasing feelings of betrayal run deeper than just our country's leadership? Are these larger situations reflective of something that is playing out in our country's mass consciousness?

Jungian Psychology puts forth the claim that individuals are psychologically connected through a collective unconscious. This perspective suggests that what manifests in the outer world directly reflects the unconscious thoughts of a group of individuals. Applying that idea to what's happening in our country we could say that there is a possibility that all of us (US citizens) are harboring subtle feelings of betrayal in our psyche that are just becoming realized, brought on by a couple of centuries of looking the other way.

Feelings of betrayal are arguably the most difficult for a person to realize because they are based on an assumption. By that I mean one cannot honestly say they have been betrayed until there is concrete proof to validate it, yet one can *feel* betrayed even when there is no evidence of it! Consequently, when one feels betrayed but cannot quickly locate the fact of it, they tend to dismiss or deny their feelings. This is dangerous, for if a person rejects this subtle sensation they could be left open or defenseless to a shocking surprise.

Feelings of betrayal are an important part of a human's awareness, for they notify the mind that's something isn't

### Arline Rowden, Reiki Master Teacher

- ◆ Reiki Sessions & All Levels of Classes
- ◆ 3 Levels of In Depth Chakra Courses
- ◆ Meditation Classes & CD's ◆ Light Body
- ◆ Spiritual Mentoring ◆ Emotional Nature
- ◆ Seva Stress Release Classes
- ◆ Acupressure & Stress Release Sessions

Edgerton, Janesville, Madison  
 608-884-6947 [www.ReikiWisconsin.com](http://www.ReikiWisconsin.com)

right, thus insulating the individual from being 'blind-sided' by an unexpected event or happening.

It's clear that change is in the wind and it's probably why so many past promises are being violated in our country today. The unexpected braking of a promise leads to a loss of trust, which is unsettling in the psyche. Perhaps it would be wise for each of us to hear the warning sirens sounding and look into our own feelings.

How can one recognize the subtle feeling of betrayal? The symptoms are felt in the body as an uneasiness which unsettles the mind causing random thoughts of uncertainty. Often the sense of an imminent betrayal appears in the mind as, "I can't put my finger on it but something doesn't feel right." This happens because the physical body senses some type of shift in its experience. Since the act of betrayal is when someone or something breaks a trust or an agreement - the body notices when a previous commitment, energetically speaking, disappears.

This idea may seem fantastical at first but underestimating one's sensory ability could have dire consequences. As we all have learned, living as a human being is challenging due to the inherent dangers that are a part of physicality. Fortunately, Mother Nature has provided subtle, instinctive senses that can alert us to possible problems. The human 'feeling sense', which is different than an emotion, has the capability to feel the outer environment as well as the energy of another's relationship to it.

If you think about it for a second I bet you've experienced a past situation where you had a 'hunch' that something had changed and, in time, it was validated. In fact I'm further willing to bet that afterward you wished that you had acted upon that feeling!

Are you feeling uneasy about anything in your life right now? If you are - take the time to check out the current state of that situation. In doing so you may save yourself a lot of trouble for your instincts may be trying to alert you to the fact that something has changed.

## Politics

### Welcome To The Party!

By Dale Lucht

Would somebody please tell me what it is that the Tea Party wants? I hear that they want to go back to the good old days. Do they want to go back to the days of segregation? Do they want to go back to nursing, teaching, and secretarial work as the only jobs open to women? Do they want to go back to 8 teams in the National League and 8 teams in the American League? Well, I kind of like that idea. There are too many players nowadays and it is hard to keep up. Life was so much easier when we had fewer choices. Is that what the Tea Party wants? Fewer Choices.

In response to the Tea Party, I wish to announce a new political party. The Diet Soda Party. The DSP contains no fat, no carbs, no

sugar, but some salt, so our language might turn a little salty. The Diet Soda Party would like to go back to the Good-Old Days also. The days when the rich paid their fair share of taxes. The days when corporations actually had their headquarters in the U. S. and they paid corporate income taxes, and actually manufactured products in country. The days when we honored and supported Union Labor.

The Diet Soda Party is the party for the middle class. We want to help and support the lower class. The upper class can kiss our ass. The Diet Soda Party is a Green Party. We need to move from dependence on oil to solar, air, and other alternative forms of energy. The kinds of energy endorsed by Jimmy Carter 30 years ago. The kinds of energy shelved by Reagan and the Republican gang. This oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico shows how dangerous our dependence on oil is to our planet.

We need to move away from the automobile to mass transit. This is why the DSP is a supporter of the Madison to Milwaukee Railroad. Why would I go to Milwaukee? Maybe to see a Brewer game, a play, or gamble at Potawatami. I would much rather take a train and then a bus or cab than drive and park. If you have 2 people in the car, and it costs you 20 gallons of fuel to make the trip; that would be 10 gallons a person. A train could carry 70 people on those 10 gallons. Also consider the wear and tear on the interstate. Conservatively speaking the train would save 10 percent on wear and tear. Accidents and deaths would also decrease by at least 10 percent. The secret of success is to have as many trains as possible running. This increases the convenience.

I know there are some people who think we can't afford the expenditure. I have a suggestion. Establish a State Bank. All money collected by the state is deposited in the Bank of Wisconsin, we would pay ourselves a higher interest rate and pay a lower interest rate on money borrowed. I know this is simplistic and it is probably more complicated. If it could succeed the winners would be the citizens of Wisconsin and not the fat cats, but we've already established that we don't care about them.

I have three more items I have to comment on. First : Ayn Rand and Rand Paul. I really enjoyed "Atlas Shrugged" and "The Fountainhead" when I was younger and considered myself a Libertarian, but I realized that human nature would not self-regulate. We need government for that. Second: Texas, really, Joe McCarthy is a hero? Third: Illegal Aliens. Aren't we supposed to require passports now? We clamp down on the employers, if they don't have a passport then you don't hire them. And you pay them at least minimum wage. Remember, the Diet Soda Party needs you! Unless you're a rich asshole.

John Deits  
Intuitive  
Tarot  
personal readings · special events · parties  
(608)235-2940

*What if*  
**We Practiced Stewardship?**  
By William Collett



The concept is a simple one. When we refer to stewardship we are talking about taking a step back in time; a step back to a simpler time when neighbors helped neighbors and when we were all stewards of each other.

When a neighbor's barn burned down, the entire community stepped in to build a new one. When Mom and Dad got older, we took them into our home and cared for them. When one of us had a problem, all of us helped find a solution.

"Many hands make light work" was more than a cliché....it actually had a meaning.

Now we are "modern." We have "nuclear" families. We expect the government to be all things and provide all assistance. Social Security actually provided social security in its original concept. It was a good idea, born from our desire to help our neighbors. Times changed. Needs changed. The system changed. We either need to pay more and more and more into this system or it will collapse. Cuts are inevitable to keep the government going.

It is equally inevitable the social needs will be the first to be cut back. Already we don't provide enough help to our brave young men and women who protect us. We can't expect the government to meet all of our individual social concerns and many of the social issues they do pursue are not on our "wish list."

*What if* we went back to a simpler time? *What if* we took care of our neighbors with a conscious effort? *What if* you started a mission to assist in the creation of stewardship? Through this type of stewardship you can help without digging deeper into your pockets.

*What if* you spent a bit of time to help a vet, a homeless person, a sick person?

*What if* you could get a thousand other people to join you in this stewardship? And you duplicate this effort with friends and their friends and, you do the math...each and every month.

*What if* we had ten thousand people? *What if...*?

This is more than pay it forward, this is doing it forward.

## Environmental

### AT WHAT COST?

By Jeanie Johnson

Global Population: 6.9 billion and rising

Peak oil: Historically U.S. reached in 1970s; currently civilization stands at the very edge of this available and cheap resource if not, in reality, on the down slope

Call for Event  
& Class Information

Mo-Fr 10-6  
Sa 10-5, Su 12-4

New crystal find!  
**rainbow "ananda" quartz**  
great selection

unique and inspirational gifts  
vibrational sprays ~ healing stones  
essential oils ~ awesome jewelry

**Peaceful Heart**  
gifts & books

123 S. Main Street · Oregon, WI · 835-5288

[www.peacefulheart.net](http://www.peacefulheart.net)

**Global climate change: Massive changes have been taking place in the planetary system. Many scientists believe these radical changes to be caused by humans**

**Environmental devastation: Ongoing and accelerating**

The native peoples of this continent and all others across the planet spoke of, taught and practiced a connection between humans and all life. Each tribe in each geographical place on earth understood that they were part of an interconnected whole. Within this reality they also saw their responsibility to respect and participate in life and death. These people are our ancestors not merely some group described in a text book. I need not romanticize the indigenous peoples to make a point. The population on the planet before the industrial revolution maintained a fairly steady global number of under one billion. When oil was discovered the line on the graph for population surged upwards like a rocket and it continues to climb. That level of growth (along with the resource depletion that accompanies it) is unsustainable. If that has become too loaded a word these days, let me use *unsupportable* or, simply, we just can't keep living the way we have been.

Whether or not you agree with the statistics and definitions I've used, it would be hard to disagree with the current environmental disaster ongoing in the Gulf of Mexico. We are witnessing millions of gallons of crude pouring into the waters which, of course, will not stay in the Gulf bathtub but will merge with Atlantic waters and continue to pollute for years. The oil is already in the food chain. This has not been the only oil spill since the Exxon Valdez. My niece writes that she cries every night over this. She is twenty-six.

I have questions. How is our respect, care for and participation in life on the planet going? In what ways do we understand our connection with life? I wonder if we civilized people can feel the natural world in a deep way any longer. We are tied in emotional knots, we complain about the pace of our lives, we visit our doctors for more pills for more ails. Is it possible that we

# Metaphysical

## Beliefs and Enlightenment

By Frank Conerton

*In Traditional Wisdom Teachings the term "light" is used symbolically for the consciousness, or metaphorically for one's thinking awareness. —Michael Strelcheck*

"Bounded Rationality" is a theory in psychology which states that we humans are consciously rational in only a limited area of our minds. In this rational sphere we are aware of our thoughts and actions. We are aware of impartially examining evidence, making decisions based on factual evidence, and acting from these rational decisions. If evidence changes, we are able to change our decision and actions. Outside of this rational area we are less aware, often operating on "autopilot", guided by almost invisible habits, beliefs or memories which form boundaries for our conscious awareness.

If you find yourself driving to work while dreaming about a past vacation, you are operating on autopilot, focused more on memory than on the present moment. If you are doing dishes while your mind is coasting, you are operating out of habit, not fully conscious of the present moment. With most habits and memories we can choose to act differently by a conscious act of will.

Beliefs are ideas that we accept as truth, just the way things are. Beliefs are often based on some outside authority. As very young children we are designed to accept anything that we are told. As we get older we start to filter what to accept through our existing beliefs. As we mature we pick up other beliefs to get along with our peers and society. Since these are simply accepted as truth without rational proof, there can be no debate about beliefs. Either someone agrees with your belief, or they are wrong. There is an old adage that you never talk about religion or politics at a party. Religion and politics are both based on beliefs. Talking about them, since they are beliefs, can quickly devolve from debate to argument to a fight – definitely a no-no at most parties.

In this New Age we talk about Enlightenment or increased consciousness. One facet of Enlightenment is not only more awareness of our rational areas of thought, but also increased awareness of our habits, beliefs and memories that form boundaries for the rational areas. With increased awareness we become consciously aware of our beliefs, memories and habits that used to be invisible. Those things which limited our rational mind now come into our awareness, and we can change them!

One of the basic cultural beliefs challenged in the New Age is the theory of the Newtonian Universe.

To Newton, the universe was made up of dead, separate, matter which operated like a machine according to basic laws; the universe as clockworks. Modern physics sees matter in a completely different light. Solid matter is only a perception since we know matter is mostly 99.9% empty space. The idea that matter is inert, dead, is in question as the relationship between consciousness and matter is demonstrated in experiments where the observer affects the outcome.

The old concept of the body as a "meat machine" is being changed as we increase self-awareness. According to Dr. Frederick Bailes in the book "Basic Principles of the Science of the Mind", we could start to see the body "not as flesh and bones, hard and unyielding, but as Spiritual Substance, whose form can be changed as easily as one would alter the form of a rising column of smoke by a slight movement of a finger through it."

Obviously there are many beliefs and memories which separate these two beliefs about the body. Anyone who hit their "crazy bone" against a door

frame has a memory of pain which proves that bone is solid. Anyone whose body has lost strength and endurance because of age has proof that the laws of the "meat machine" are in operation. We have acquired a lifetime of evidence supporting the old beliefs.

Enlightenment is not like throwing a switch and illuminating our entire mind with a powerful beam of consciousness. It seems more like starting a campfire with a spark. First we must nurture the spark in most flammable tinder. Then we can add some wood shavings, then add some twigs, then add some sticks. Each level of tinder must catch hold before we add another or we can smother the fire. Only when the sticks are burning well can we add branches and finally logs.

We may be much closer to "meat machine" than "spiritual substance" in beliefs about our body, but by holding a better thought such as "my body naturally is in a state of well being" we will start a fire. We will shine some light on the beliefs and memories that hold us at the old belief. With this light we can start correcting our beliefs and open the path toward believing our body is spiritual substance.

## A State of Grace

By Janet Zimborski

It is not a secret, nor is it a lie. It is never withheld from anyone, but eludes most. It never accompanies feelings of "if only" or "when I have this or do that". It is not something earned, nor is it synonymous with perfection. It is never a struggle or an age. The universe, our world and everything in it, is full with grace.

Sadly, many humans choose not to allow themselves awareness of it. What else are they missing because they choose to follow the musings of the snake charmers? The ones filled with a need to take from others what doesn't belong to them. They lull their opponents to sleep out of fear, that they will not find their way to the state of grace. The charmers detest the state of grace. They find ways to repel it.

Navigating your way through the illusions that were set up before you is the way to the state of grace. Rekindle YOUR inner strength, wisdom, truth and love. Follow your dreams and ignite your creative fires. This is the way to the state of grace. Let go of the old world of greed and control. Open your heart to see the love all around you. All of nature is in tune with the state of grace. Bask in it.

Look past the snake charmers pollution and noise for a moment. Out of the state of grace the new world will be created and pollution will not exist. The state of grace is and always has been right there all around you and inside you. You can experience it when you WAKE UP to it. It is not yours to buy, to compete for, or manipulate. It is silent, blissful, and full of depth. Simply lay down the mentally exhausting games you have been playing. They are not you. You have been hypnotized into believing what you see and perceive as real. Real begins as you allow the walls of denial around you to fall. Walls constructed of limiting belief systems created out of desperation by the snake charmers. These walls stand in the way of your awareness into the state of grace.

As you remember the state of grace exists, and you begin to feel it, you will be the proof for another and another.

The state of grace is here for all, even the charmers.....they'll see.

# Metaphysical

## Beliefs and Enlightenment

By Frank Conerton

*In Traditional Wisdom Teachings the term "light" is used symbolically for the consciousness, or metaphorically for one's thinking awareness. —Michael Strelcheck*

"Bounded Rationality" is a theory in psychology which states that we humans are consciously rational in only a limited area of our minds. In this rational sphere we are aware of our thoughts and actions. We are aware of impartially examining evidence, making decisions based on factual evidence, and acting from these rational decisions. If evidence changes, we are able to change our decision and actions. Outside of this rational area we are less aware, often operating on "autopilot", guided by almost invisible habits, beliefs or memories which form boundaries for our conscious awareness.

If you find yourself driving to work while dreaming about a past vacation, you are operating on autopilot, focused more on memory than on the present moment. If you are doing dishes while your mind is coasting, you are operating out of habit, not fully conscious of the present moment. With most habits and memories we can choose to act differently by a conscious act of will.

Beliefs are ideas that we accept as truth, just the way things are. Beliefs are often based on some outside authority. As very young children we are designed to accept anything that we are told. As we get older we start to filter what to accept through our existing beliefs. As we mature we pick up other beliefs to get along with our peers and society. Since these are simply accepted as truth without rational proof, there can be no debate about beliefs. Either someone agrees with your belief, or they are wrong. There is an old adage that you never talk about religion or politics at a party. Religion and politics are both based on beliefs. Talking about them, since they are beliefs, can quickly devolve from debate to argument to a fight – definitely a no-no at most parties.

In this New Age we talk about Enlightenment or increased consciousness. One facet of Enlightenment is not only more awareness of our rational areas of thought, but also increased awareness of our habits, beliefs and memories that form boundaries for the rational areas. With increased awareness we become consciously aware of our beliefs, memories and habits that used to be invisible. Those things which limited our rational mind now come into our awareness, and we can change them!

One of the basic cultural beliefs challenged in the New Age is the theory of the Newtonian Universe.

To Newton, the universe was made up of dead, separate, matter which operated like a machine according to basic laws; the universe as clockworks. Modern physics sees matter in a completely different light. Solid matter is only a perception since we know matter is mostly 99.9% empty space. The idea that matter is inert, dead, is in question as the relationship between consciousness and matter is demonstrated in experiments where the observer affects the outcome.

The old concept of the body as a "meat machine" is being changed as we increase self-awareness. According to Dr. Frederick Bailes in the book "Basic Principles of the Science of the Mind", we could start to see the body "not as flesh and bones, hard and unyielding, but as Spiritual Substance, whose form can be changed as easily as one would alter the form of a rising column of smoke by a slight movement of a finger through it."

Obviously there are many beliefs and memories which separate these two beliefs about the body. Anyone who hit their "crazy bone" against a door

frame has a memory of pain which proves that bone is solid. Anyone whose body has lost strength and endurance because of age has proof that the laws of the "meat machine" are in operation. We have acquired a lifetime of evidence supporting the old beliefs.

Enlightenment is not like throwing a switch and illuminating our entire mind with a powerful beam of consciousness. It seems more like starting a campfire with a spark. First we must nurture the spark in most flammable tinder. Then we can add some wood shavings, then add some twigs, then add some sticks. Each level of tinder must catch hold before we add another or we can smother the fire. Only when the sticks are burning well can we add branches and finally logs.

We may be much closer to "meat machine" than "spiritual substance" in beliefs about our body, but by holding a better thought such as "my body naturally is in a state of well being" we will start a fire. We will shine some light on the beliefs and memories that hold us at the old belief. With this light we can start correcting our beliefs and open the path toward believing our body is spiritual substance.

## A State of Grace

By Janet Zimborski

It is not a secret, nor is it a lie. It is never withheld from anyone, but eludes most. It never accompanies feelings of "if only" or "when I have this or do that". It is not something earned, nor is it synonymous with perfection. It is never a struggle or an age. The universe, our world and everything in it, is full with grace.

Sadly, many humans choose not to allow themselves awareness of it. What else are they missing because they choose to follow the musings of the snake charmers? The ones filled with a need to take from others what doesn't belong to them. They lull their opponents to sleep out of fear, that they will not find their way to the state of grace. The charmers detest the state of grace. They find ways to repel it.

Navigating your way through the illusions that were set up before you is the way to the state of grace. Rekindle YOUR inner strength, wisdom, truth and love. Follow your dreams and ignite your creative fires. This is the way to the state of grace. Let go of the old world of greed and control. Open your heart to see the love all around you. All of nature is in tune with the state of grace. Bask in it.

Look past the snake charmers pollution and noise for a moment. Out of the state of grace the new world will be created and pollution will not exist. The state of grace is and always has been right there all around you and inside you. You can experience it when you WAKE UP to it. It is not yours to buy, to compete for, or manipulate. It is silent, blissful, and full of depth. Simply lay down the mentally exhausting games you have been playing. They are not you. You have been hypnotized into believing what you see and perceive as real. Real begins as you allow the walls of denial around you to fall. Walls constructed of limiting belief systems created out of desperation by the snake charmers. These walls stand in the way of your awareness into the state of grace.

As you remember the state of grace exists, and you begin to feel it, you will be the proof for another and another.

The state of grace is here for all, even the charmers.....they'll see.

# Relating

## Happy Birthdays By Mary Summerbell

My birthday is coming. In two days I'll be fifty-eight years old. I'm taking this occasion as an opportunity to write about birthdays. And aging. And celebrating. And celebrating aging. The focus is on me and one of my all-time-favorite, fascinating subjects - my relationship to myself.

I love birthdays. Even my own. Especially my own. Although I must admit my first internal response to choosing this topic to write on was an almost-sinking feeling of disbelief that I'm this old. When I was young I didn't think much about aging. In my twenties I was occupied with survival issues, and busy doing many of the foolish things young people do. Then, in my thirties, I was married and busy raising a family.

I remember, (contrary, I suppose, to most folks), looking forward to being forty. At forty I finally felt "grown up." Mature and sophisticated and experienced. Aged in a nice way, like cheese, or wine, or a fine old book. It felt good to come to a place in my life where I felt a little bit like I knew what I was doing. I'd figured a few things out and still had a lot to look forward to. In fact, I liked being forty so much I stayed that age for three years.

For my fiftieth birthday I had a big party at a Mexican restaurant. Decorated the place with bright colored balloons, and lanterns, and streamers and flowers. I had poster boards filled with photos from throughout my life, (just like they do at funerals, only I wasn't dead yet.) A friend of mine made CDs of my favorite "oldie" songs, taken from albums I still had from back when. I had two cakes that I made myself, from scratch - one carrot with buttercream frosting, the other double chocolate. The whole day was family and friends and food galore. Folks showed up that I hadn't seen in twenty years. Some of them hadn't seen each other for many years. It was so much fun. One of the best times I ever had. I'm so glad I did it.

Now, this year, it seems like I skipped ahead a bit. Not that I lost time, but it sure went forward fast. (Kinda like toilet paper that goes faster the closer you get to the end of the roll.) I'm surprised to find myself so close to being sixty. How did that happen? Honestly, I feel a bit sad. I totally don't mind being middle-aged, but for the first time in my life it's getting difficult to convince myself that middle-aged is what I am. Marking the midpoint of anything is based on knowing the whole of what's being measured. And no one knows how long they will live.

I've always assumed my own longevity. I often say I want to live to be at least a hundred. Now I'm thinking maybe I need to take a better look at that. Even if I do live to be a hundred, or more, I'm well past half way there. Why is that thought such a shock to me? Have I been in pleasant denial? Then I need to get out of it, and face the facts of my mortality - not to be morbid, or to live in grief or fear, but to be more realistic about time, and potential, and possibilities. Not the most cheerful birthday thoughts, I admit, but birthdays are about marking time, aren't they?

I've always struggled with time. It's often been my nemesis. But maybe we could be friends if, in time, I could get closer to what I value most. The words of Jim Croce's song, "Time in a Bottle," come to mind. "There never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do, once you find them." As I get older, and am more aware of it, I feel a new, almost urgent, need to take stock of things in my life. To do an in-depth inventory, not just of my "stuff," my belongings, but my habits, activities, relationships, and most of all my thoughts, ideas, beliefs. What misperceptions have I been functioning under? What lovely illusions? What am I still fooling myself about?

As I approach my sixties, time may not be running out, but it sure is walking at a good, brisk clip. And from this perspective I feel compelled to reconsider

my list of "Things to do Someday." I want to examine my aspirations and ask myself, "If I haven't done this by now, am I ever going to? If yes, then when?" I hate to admit it, but I need to get much more practical about my plans and expectations.

As a soul, inhabiting a body, one of my greatest challenges is realizing limits of resources - of time, and space, and energy. Spirit is infinite, and physical form so frustratingly finite. Even constant reminders don't seem to keep me in mindfulness of my dual nature. What will it take, I wonder, for me to master myself in this respect? I know myself well. And I like to think my preferences and priorities are clearly defined and well established. But, in actuality, in the moment, I am often tempted by something enticing to shift from my original intention, or put off what's important, hoping to have it both ways.

The hardest part, for me, in making choices, is that I find so many things in life to be interesting and exciting. I love so much, and am so diversely curious, that it's difficult to pick what I want. I don't like to eliminate anything for the sake of something else, even if I clearly prefer one thing over another. When unexpected events or unique opportunities come up after I've made plans, I try to fit everything in, somehow. I consistently live in a fantasy world where I trick myself into thinking I can have it all and do it all. Not true, so much, any more.

From now on, when pondering options and possibilities, instead of asking myself what I'd like to do, the better question is, "What would I rather do?" Or, better yet, "Is this what I really want to do with my life?" What's out there, beyond what's just in front of me, that I truly want to pursue? I want to consider better what my primary priorities are, (if that's not redundant), and which activities fit best with them. It all comes down to what's **most** important rather than what's more important.

I can take more control of my life through wiser choices, and by taking the initiative toward my greatest goals. I can create optimum opportunities by inviting them into my life, to help me continue to fulfill my potential. I can be flexible within a solid foundation. I can challenge myself to gain and maintain that precious balance of planning and impulsivity, of structure and spontaneity, of being organized yet ever open to the moment, open to the Great Unknown. I am determined to make great use of the rest of my life, no matter how long. To strive to appreciate every moment, every breath, even in difficulty, and to honor the truth of my age and experience.

As I see it, I am more in my power, now, than I have ever been. More capable of having a positive, uplifting influence on everyone around me. As an eminent elder, I am so able to make a difference in life.

I totally disdain all shades of "over-the-hill" mentality; I have no patience for that crap. To my mind, longevity is an incredible gift, even with whatever limitations age may bring. Every age, every stage of development, has limitations - and strengths. I look to the strengths and advantages of my longevity, and I intend to live my whole life with zest, and pleasure, and vitality, and optimism, and wisdom, and joy and love, (whew!), aging as gracefully and peacefully and happily as I can.

But enough philosophizing, for now. Time for some fun. I anticipate celebrating my current birthday in the same "Mary" way I always have. I've already lined up my usual, multiple, birthday lunch dates, and a family feast at a favorite restaurant. I always buy myself a lovely present, (at least one. Can't wait to see what I get...) And I welcome whatever else life brings me for a happy day and another wonderful year on Earth. I'm here to enjoy this visit to the max. To take a phrase from a book I've been reading, I've a "great lot of living" yet to do. Including looking forward to planning parties for the rest of my landmark birthdays. Hmmm. Let's see. At sixty, maybe I'll go Jamaican.

**Conscious Community Mission Statement:**  
*Provide a platform for opinions, innovation  
and inspiration for community*

# Health & Healing

From flower child to foster care . . . my name is Sunshine and this is my story.

Sunshine Peterman



Writing to me is a hobby, children are my passion. Put both together and I am able to have a voice that may reach someone somewhere and help a child. That is my hope.

What you may wonder, is what makes me such an expert? I don't claim to be. My writing tends to be from real life experience with my own adopted children. How I

became the mother to nine, may just be a little more interesting than the reality shows that seem to have taken over society these days.

Foster children sometimes get a bad reputation. They are seen as uncontrollable, difficult and having problems that they may or may not be able to overcome. Foster children are known to be broken, unfixable, unwanted and forgotten.

When you read my real story, hopefully you will see that these stereotypes do not *have* to be the case.

I was born in the seventies to hippie parents. My mother was quite young, sixteen when she had me. She loved me, yes, but did not have the family support or knowledge to be a mother. She didn't know how to mother. My father, ten years her senior, had finished college and was hitchhiking around the states from Indiana when he met her at Daytona Beach. They fell in love quickly and I came along shortly after their romance story-book start.

At first, I believe, it was a new, fun thing for them. Having a family, growing their own food in their organic garden, my mother sewing all my clothes and still living the hippy ways. Parties and drugs were also the norm for them in those early years of my life. By the time I was 5, my parents were no longer together. The fairy tale was over. My sister, who is 3 years younger than I, was in the care of my Mother. I was with my Father. She still took me occasionally and my first memories of her are with her healing up speed in a spoon and having me inhale from a joint because she thought it would be funny.

Not long after those episodes, my Father took my sister and me from Florida to his relatives in Indiana for our safety. There was no huge custody fight. He just took us and left. My Mother did not know where we went, she guessed with his family, but they all told her we were not there. She wouldn't go to the police because she was a user, so she let us go. For five years, we never

## Community Calendar

### Earthsong Books & Gifts

2214 Kennedy Rd., Janesville, WI 53545

608-754-3933 [www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com](http://www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com)

**What is Reiki healing?** Thurs., July 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:00

This informative meeting is open to all who are wish to learn more about Reiki. **REIKI GATHERING OF PRACTITIONERS** is open to all who are of Reiki tradition to exchange with others and develop your healing techniques. Inst.: Carol Swanson. Thurs., July 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:30. Cost: \$5.00

**"Imaginality" SUMMER FESTIVAL**

**Saturday, July 10th & Sunday, July 11th, 10:00am. - 5:00pm.** Come help us celebrate this 19th annual event! Health practitioners, jewelry/crafts, health products & Psychic Readers

**Tuesday Nights Meditation & Study Groups**

Every Tues Michael Strelcheck alternates his groups with different topics and/or Wisdom of the Body topics. 7:00pm. Cost: \$5 or \$7.

**I ♥ My Pet Day ~ Sat., Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am-3:00pm**

Featuring businesses that offer products for your pets. Plus readings by an Animal Communicator.

Log on to:

[www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com](http://www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com)

To read the *March/Spring*

**Conscious Community Newsletter**

### Peaceful Heart

123 South Main St., Oregon, WI 53575

608-835-5288 [www.peacefulheart.net](http://www.peacefulheart.net)

**Wed., July 7. Healing Circle** from 11-11:45am, cost is \$5.

Join our guided meditation facilitator, Kaye Cooke, in sending healing energy for anyone needing assistance with their physical, emotional or spiritual well being. Participants are encouraged to bring names of people or situations in need of support. No pre-registration necessary.

**Wed., July 28. Practical Spirituality** from 6:30-8pm, cost is \$10.

In this class we will discuss how to work with our emotional nature to create balance and harmony. All are welcome, no experience necessary. A meditation will follow discussion. Facilitators: Doris Deits, Brian Sieger. Registration is requested but not required. Please call 608-835-5288.

### Join Us!

If you want to contribute to **Conscious Community** By way of an article, ad or assisting with distribution please contact us at

[cc7newsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:cc7newsletter@yahoo.com)

or 608-756-0716

For an ad call  
Bill Collett 608-754-5590

### Hypnosis & Wellness Training Center

**Karen Kent - CH, CI**  
State Certified School

**Stop Smoking\*Weight Management  
Silent Regression Session (SRS)**

608-757-0716

20 S. Main St. #29  
Janesville, WI

Visit us at:  
[www.hypnosistrainingcenter.com](http://www.hypnosistrainingcenter.com)



## ***Products That Inform & Reveal***

***Inspirational \* Metaphysical \* Self-Help \* Guided Imagery & Music CD's  
Intuitive Decks \* Custom Jewelry \* Figurines \* Aromatherapy***

Check out [www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com](http://www.earthsongbooksandgifts.com) for classes & events

**Store Hrs:** Mon-Wed 10-5:30 Thurs-Fri 10-7 Sat 10-5 Sun 12-5

**2214 Kennedy Rd, Janesville, WI 53545 608-754-3933**

knew who our mother was. Not a phone call, nor a letter or even a picture of her was given to us. It wasn't until I was 10 years old that I saw her again, when she finally knew where we were and was allowed to visit us. It was the happiest week of my life. My Father had hoped that they could get back together and that was his motive. Of course, at ten I had no idea of the adult issues surrounding it. I just knew I got to see my Mommy. We did all sorts of fun things. We went ice-skating, out to breakfast at Denny's and my Mother even came to school with me one day. As embarrassing as that was, with her snapping pictures left and right, I was glad she was there. The week went by and we were standing at the airport saying goodbye. I did not know when or where I would see her again. It was hardest I have cried in my life.

During my adolescence, I did the back and forth living with my Father in Indiana, then moving to Florida with my Mother when I got in trouble with him and vice-versa. I wasn't really a bad kid; I got good grades for the most part. I was extremely quiet and just didn't feel like I fit in anywhere. Not in school and not at home. My sister was the perfect one in my Father's eyes. She played sports; they talked and got along. I, on the other hand, look like a carbon copy of my Mother. To this day, I believe because of this, I was treated differently, which ultimately lead to abuse.

It wasn't until I was seventeen that I finally told my sister about the abuse. She told an adult friend of hers and in hours everything familiar, was gone. That night we were taken into state care, placed in the *Guardian's Home*, a shelter for children in 1991. Incidentally, the *Guardian's Home* closed just this past summer.

Being placed in a group home was another traumatic event. Everything is supposed to be for the child's interest, but we were made to feel like we had done something wrong. We were only there for two weeks before a home was found for us. Those two weeks were the longest fourteen days of my life. You really had to watch yourself there. Gangs, hoods, kids who were all hurting and who didn't care if they hurt you, were the norm. Everyone was only interested in one thing. Getting out.

Luckily for us, we didn't have to change schools in our new home. My sister was friends with their daughter. She remembered when we were at the home that they had a foster son before. A social worker called them and asked if they would be interested in us. They said yes. My foster family had their hands full with me. I was a teenager, my senior year of high school. I was used to no rules, doing whatever I felt like, whenever I wanted to. All of a sudden, I had to be home after school. I had chores to do. We had family sit

down meals almost every night. And they wanted to talk to me. It was too much at first and I screwed up as much as I could. No matter what, they still showed me that they loved me. I still had a home. I still had a family. After a while, even though it was a long while, it sunk in. I did matter to someone. I could make something out of myself, no matter what cards life had dealt me. It was up to me to be who I wanted. That year, I was homecoming queen at my high school. Today it's almost embarrassing to say to someone. Back in high school it was a big deal. My foster Mother was so proud. It was funny to watch her run around with her camcorder during the events. We all had to say words to our class on stage at a packed arena homecoming game and I thanked my foster parents for the opportunities they had given me and a home.

I was never adopted. I "aged" out of the system and went off to live my life. What I did gain from it, when I decided to grow up, was a heart for those in the same and mostly a lot worse situations than I was in.

In my late twenties, I read all I could about foster care adoption. It was something I felt obsessed with doing. I felt I had to help some children who were without a home. In 2002, I went back to the *Guardian's Home*. This time, I was sitting in the front reception office. Through the front doors walked a small timid girl with mousse brown hair and huge glasses. "I know that's her," I said to the caseworker who was with me and I was right. It was one of the two children I was there to meet that night, a brother and sister, who were the first sibling group I adopted.

Funny how your life has those full circle moments. For me, that was mine. I think at 35 I have accomplished quite a bit in my life. I love being a Mother. I love helping children.

But most of all I want you to know me by the fact that I was a foster kid and I made it. Now it is my mission to spread the word about adoption and enlighten as much as I can on the issue.

Today, I have a beautiful relationship with my own birth mother. She grew up too, learned hard lessons and became a successful nurse, helping people every day with her compassion.

With your help, more children can find themselves and their lives could be forever changed because of you.

I know mine was and I will be eternally grateful!