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A free publication celebrating your evolving spirit • Issue Thirty Five • July 09



BELIEF

If I believe I cannot do something, it makes me incapable of doing it.
But when I believe I can, then I acquire the ability to do it
even if I didn't have it in the beginning. —Mahatma Gandhi

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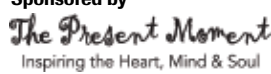
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Belief...



Belief is an interesting topic. We know that religious beliefs and other feelings of "being right" are the basis for so many arguments, and, I think, all of the wars we've seen in recorded history.

I have never understood war myself. I remember as a kid watching the cartoon movie of Gulliver's Travels, the lilliputians had a war going on between the two kingdoms. The two young people in love worried that they could never marry because of their opposing

families/kingdoms. The reason for this war is revealed at the end as Gulliver uncovers the truth. The two kings are brothers, and many years before at breakfast they had soft boiled eggs in small cups. One brother had his egg in the cup with the narrow side at the top. The other brother had the larger side of the egg pointing upward. The argument over which was the correct way to eat a soft boiled egg was the basis for this major war between their kingdoms. The conflict is eventually resolved in the story, and was great for me to see because right then I got it. This is basically what all wars are about. Who is right and who is wrong. Very silly to war about eggs. And what isn't silly to war about?

What if no one is ever right or wrong? It's something to ponder, and I do believe this is the truth. We all enjoy a point of view, and it just IS. This point of view moves and changes as we age and grow with experiences. Right? No. Wrong? No. The One contains All.

We are in the process of evolving this magazine and one of the new features is some regular columns I hope you'll enjoy. There will be a feature story about a local business or practitioner or business in the area, a book review that will complement our theme, a featured column with Annie Burnside which will focus on Family Consciousness and a new column beginning in the next issue with Maggie Wilkins who teaches the wisdom of Eckhart Tolle's Power of Now and New Earth books with his blessing. We are fortunate to have them and I feel they will add a great deal of new substance to this magazine.

Maggie contributed the following statement by Eckhart Tolle which I feel beautifully illustrates and brings a deeper understanding of belief.

"You do not become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already within you and allowing that goodness to emerge. Look how you live. See what you are doing, is it creating suffering or love." Eckhart Tolle, A New Earth

Until next time,

Debbie Mackall, Editor and Publisher

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Issue Thirty Five, July, 2009

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We've got a great Calendar of Events up there (you can sign up to receive it monthly as an email!), all the past issues of the magazine that you can download, as well as info on how to sign up to have *Evolving Your Spirit* delivered to your home if you like.

The next issue of *Evolving Your Spirit* will be available Sept 15. Our theme will be on *Focus*.

Please write in with your ideas and comments to debbie@evolvingyourspirit.com. Thanks!

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Vanished!

by Marlene Buffa

Symbols of ancient cultures, largely go unnoticed in our frenzied lives, but still influence thought patterns and understanding in our modern world. Recent movies on the big-screen such as *National Treasure*, take a delightful look at symbolism and the interpretation of meaning into today's culture. I'm sure Carl Jung proudly smiles at the efforts these movies made to bring the power of symbolism to light in the American society. Lasting symbols merely remind us of the past. Only when we take a look at what symbols represent and how they fit into our lives today, we gain an intrinsic knowledge, appreciation and understanding of vanished ideas which may empower our growth.

Practices

The ancient Greeks believed in many Gods. According to both Greek and Roman beliefs, a God existed for just about every situation or life circumstance. The Gods' personalities also directed, and some believed, demanded, appropriate worship and homage to ensure the requested issue come to bear. The Gods mirrored humans in that they portrayed envy, vanity, love, and anger in a wide range of human emotions. One can speculate that our ancient ancestors projected onto these Gods human qualities to make them seem more real or understandable. In general, Gods ruled the earth and most life events.

To better practice polydeism, the ancients used Oracles to guide them in appeasing the Gods. Delphi, the most notable site for consulting the Oracle, was considered the center of the planet. Delphi hosted the priestess known as the Pythia, to connect

with Apollo. Pythia sat on a tripod seat over an opening (fissure) in the earth. There, she waited for the vapors and fumes to rise from the earth's core to intoxicate her into a trance-like state. Once in this state, she then allowed Apollo to possess her spirit and his prophecy spoke through her. She spoke in riddles, which were interpreted by the priests of the temple. Believers consulted her on everything from important matters of public policy to personal affairs. This methodology survived hundreds, if not thousands of years until Christianity took hold in the early millennium.

Although the ancient practices of using Oracles and appealing and appeasing multiple Gods faded away some two thousand years ago, we subtly continue these types of rituals today. Consider various religious "hoops" we jump through to satisfy our interpretation of God. Our written doctrines and dogmas, together with edicts and even dietary restrictions, provide us with a structure to follow, not unlike the ancient Greeks and Romans. We consult various mystics to interpret our dilemmas and seem satisfied that the riddles offered answer our questions. For the most part, the modern world worships one God, but our hopes, dreams, fears and requests remain very similar. We'll go to great lengths to realize our spiritual pursuits, whether it be a trip to our local house of worship or a pilgrimage to the center of the earth.

People

We remain fascinated and intrigued by lost cultures. What happened to

them? Where did they go? Why did they leave?

In his work "Timaeus," Plato brings forth the tale of Atlantis, as told to Socrates by Critias. In part, he relayed to Socrates the following:

"Now in this island of Atlantis there was a great and wonderful empire which had rule over the whole island and several others...

...This vast power, gathered into one, endeavored to subdue at a blow our country and yours and the whole of the region within the straits; and then shone forth, in the excellence of her virtue and strength, among all mankind. She was pre-eminent in courage and military skill, and was the leader of the Hellenes.

...there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of misfortune all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea."

Plato captured for us a brief reference to an island empire of successful warriors, who succumbed to the forces of nature never to rise again. Many myths arose from this primary reference to Atlantis and we often refer to it as a symbol of man's self-destruction.

We can from the analogy of Atlantis in our own lives. In times of self-reflection, examine in what ways you brought down a part of yourself, never again to rise to the surface. Many times, we reach a level of optimum performance and without the emotional and spiritual tools required to sustain that level of ex-

cellence, we falter and destroy that very powerful part of ourselves. Like Atlantis, many reformed smokers, dieters, and drinkers sink back into old habits, submerging themselves in failure at their own choosing. And, like Atlantis, the higher self still exists—it takes searching through layers of muddled thought and murky intentions to discover it again.

Beliefs

Medical history offers us the practice of using leeches to extricate illness and disease from the body. The latter part of the 17th century showed us how hysteria about witches and their craft could overpower common sense and a small community, and eventually spread throughout the western world. Mithracism, the preponderant religion consisting of small groups during the pre-Christian era, enjoyed centuries of change. The localized gatherings, varying in size and belief, also diverse in rituals and initiation, attracted a membership made up of mostly soldiers and lower nobility. Eventually, the church overtook the Mithraic beliefs as a whole and the cult vanished.

The beliefs we held as children, ranging from the boogey man, to the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus, hold sentimental value for us as adults. Our beliefs in a higher power, a Creator and the symbiotic invisible machine of life changes from day to day, as well. When we float beneath the overarching cosmos of spirituality, we find our smaller truisms insignificant. What matters the most is our connection with what we once deemed important in our lives and our embracing the constant flow of

change in our ever evolving souls.

Practices, people, and beliefs vanish from our memory through the earthly timeline. I suggest you travel to the center of your being and listen to the voice of your God. Even if your optimism and power seem lost to you like Atlantis, hold strong knowing that your value exists deep within you and can, at any moment, rise from the depths to resurface as your innermost expression. Revisit your beliefs and lovingly recognize the changes in your life and you'll blossom as a spiritual being in this earthly experience. ✨



Marlene is a freelance writer and Cold Fusion Web Applications developer living in Phoenix, Arizona. Her column, "Words of Mind" is widely published internationally in spiri-

tual and holistic journals, newspapers and magazines, as well as mainstream media.

She lives with 2 Dobermans who run her life and allow her to pay the mortgage, feed and spoil them. In her spare time, Marlene enjoys dancing, photography, solving puzzles, traveling. www.wordsofmind.com



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My Mother Packed My Bags for My Life Journey

by Barbara Redclay

I began the journey with an appropriately sized bag for a small child. My suitcase had gray stripes with white trim and a little white leather handle for a little hand. I ran, I jumped, I giggled and hopped.

My mommy packed my bag and I knew I had everything I needed!

As I traveled, I began to notice I wasn't having so much fun anymore. My bag was getting heavy! How did that happen? I never opened it. I didn't question what was inside. I knew I would have what I needed in there. I didn't know what it might hold and I had no idea when I might need its contents, but I would not question that it was an essential part of my journey—because my mother packed it!

And so—on I walked. Whew. Okay, now this sucker is just getting too heavy! Oops—I hope you didn't hear that. How could I question what my mother so lovingly packed for my life journey? Of course only she would know what I needed and when.

So, angry but obedient, I continued to carry luggage. What? Luggage?

What happened to the sweet little gray striped suitcase with the white leather handle? Where did this bag come from? And what on earth could weigh so much?

I stopped; I looked at it as if for the first time. The bag no longer seemed a part of me, but something unfamiliar and alien.

Should I open it and see what it holds? Good grief! It must be packed with rocks! My progress is slow and tiring and somehow this weight doesn't feel like mine anymore. Who does it belong to? What would happen if I looked inside? At this thought, I snapped to. What was I thinking? How disloyal! My mother packed this bag with great thought and care. I continued my journey.

With each turn in the road, the bag seemed larger and heavier. I stopped once and opened it. Are you surprised? Don't be, I didn't look inside. I had my eyes closed and I quickly snapped it shut.

Finally—filled with anger at this unwelcome load and moving through my life at a pace not of my own

choice, I stopped. I yelled, "No More!"

With anger at my mother for packing this bag—I wanted no more of being tired—no more unquestioned duty.

I opened the bag and tossed all its contents on the side of the road and walked on! Did I go back? No. Did I look at the contents? No.

I walked on, free as a bird. Light, but I wasn't giggling. And I wasn't so happy. Hmmm—is it possible I need a bag?

And with that thought, the bag appeared! By my side, heavy and full as though it had never been left behind.

This time, I opened it. Curiosity stronger than anger, and from somewhere compassion and understanding were with me as I opened each clasp.

Wow! What an accumulation of stuff! But wait—look there—strawberries! The tiny ones that grows wild in the fields. I remember picking them at Aunt Dolly's farm. Mmmm, red lips and fingertips—and a few days later, fresh strawberry jam in jars on Mammy's basement shelves all lined up next to jars of canned peaches and pears and quince jelly. So many wonderful things. Colorful threads for needlework. Look here—herbs! Oh, the smell of rosemary and the softness of sage leaves. Mother shared her love of herbs and cooking by giving me her recipe books. Looking deeper, there were things I recognized and knew I neither wanted nor needed. My mother packed this bag with what she believed was important, because it was what she needed and used on her journey.

With clarity and decisiveness, I placed items by the side of the road.

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I kept
w h a t I
wanted. And in
place of anger, I was joyful
knowing that I carried within me a
love of nature and cooking, smells
and tastes. Laughter and music was
my life sound track. My burden
was light.

Now of course my journey doesn't
end there. I guess you could say that's
when it truly began as "my" journey,
carrying items of my choosing.

How has my journey been since
then? Perfectly imperfect!

I admit, there were times when the
bags weighed me down again. How-
ever, I have no fear at taking inven-
tory now, with tossing and adding.
I learned that many things are tem-
porary. Items come and go as they

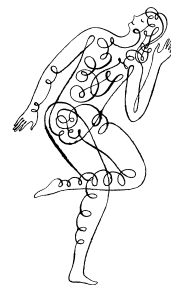
are needed— and some are with me
always. These are my passions. I es-
pecially love those items that I can
trace to my mother. I am grateful.

And so, on my life journey, I carry a
little gray striped suitcase with white
trim and a piece of red yarn tied to
the little white leather handle. And I
walk my life path with a giggle and
a hop. ✨

*In April 2009, with gratitude and joy, Bar-
bara and her family celebrated her mother
on reaching her 97th birthday— now that's
quite a journey!*

You may contact Barbara at [bredcay-
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Choice Point

2012



As they hear 2012 predictions, many wonder if there is any scientific evidence.

Gregg Braden explores the possibility that 2012 will bring a reversal of the Earth's magnetic poles and what such a reversal may mean for the largest population the world has ever seen. In the following essay, using the Maya's incredible accomplishments and predictions as a starting point, he probes what we know today, looking for scientific evidence that the planet's magnetism will reverse and that sunspots or sun storms signify a coming change. Braden draws from physical evidence, quantum theory, and his-

toric trends to gauge the likelihood of massive destruction or the emergence of an empowering new reality in 2012. After weighing the evidence, the choice, he says, is ours.

Does the ancient Mayan calendar hold the secret to an epic event that will occur within our lifetimes? If so, does that event hold the key to our future, and perhaps even our very survival? A growing body of evidence suggests that the answer to these questions is, Yes. Now we must ask ourselves, Why?

Choice Point 2012: Bringing it All Together

Now we have the information, and the language, that may answer our question as to the significance of December 21, 2012. From the 8,000-year-old Hindu *Vedas* and the 5,000-year-old Hebrew calendar to the indigenous prophecies of Asia and the Americas, ancient traditions suggest that something really big will happen during our time in history. It is important to note that there is nothing in any of the prophecies that tells us unconditionally that the world itself will end on this date. What they do say is that the world as we have known it will enter a time of change on this date. How we respond to that change will define how we experience it and

"Occurrences in this domain are beyond the reach of exact prediction because of the variety of factors in operation, not because of any lack of order in nature."

— Albert Einstein

Our Date with the Window of Emergence

our lives in the next age of our existence.

What sets the Mayan prophecy apart from the general predictions of other cultures is that it has an expiration date that occurs in our lifetime. The last cycle of the intangible Mayan calendar corresponds to a series of tangible events, some of which are already happening today. Here is what we know for certain:

- The end of the Mayan Great Cycle marks a rare alignment of our planet, our solar system, and the center of our galaxy—one that will not occur again for another 26,000 years.
- On March 10, 2006, a cycle of solar storms ended and a new cycle began. It is predicted to peak in 2012, with an intensity 30–50% greater than previous cycles.
- Scientists agree that Earth's magnetic fields are weakening quickly, and some suspect that we are in the early stage of a polar reversal.
- Correlations between the magnetic fields of the Earth and human experience suggest that it is easier for us to accept change and adapt to new ideas in weaker fields of magnetism.
- Recent validation of quantum principles proves that the way we perceive our world—our beliefs about our experience—strongly influences our physical reality.

With these facts in mind, the December 21 solstice of 2012 appears

by Gregg Braden

to be a great cosmic window of opportunity. The opportunity is for us to benefit from our individual and collective experiences of the past 5,000 years of history, while releasing the destructive beliefs that have created disease in our bodies and limited our life span, led to the differences that have separated us, justified the great wars of history, and destroyed portions of our world. Such a possibility exists only when all of the parameters needed for such a change converge into a single window of time. The 2012 end-date appears to be just such a time.

If (1) the presence of low magnetic fields primes us to adapt to change and accept new experiences, (2) the loss of Earth's magnetic shield allows the direct influence of high-energy fields that are normally deflected to bring change, and (3) both are happening in the general time of the 26,000-year galactic alignment, then it is as if the cosmos has conspired to shower us with the power of what José Argüelles called the galactic "synchronization beam." What a rare and bizarre opportunity. How we receive this opportunity is the choice that we are making today.

In 2005, *Scientific American* published a special edition titled *Crossroads for Planet Earth*, which identified a number of scenarios that, left unchecked, hold the potential to end



life on Earth as we know it today. The point of the issue was that while any one of the scenarios is catastrophic, they are all happening today. Clearly the choices of war, depletion of resources, genocide, technology abuse, and fossil fuel technology are not sustainable for another millennium. To change the way we live, we must change the way we *believe*. Such a change can only come from a powerful and holistic view of who we are in the universe. Of the many things that 2012 represents, it may offer an unprecedented window of precisely such an opportunity.

Are we heading toward a time of unprecedented catastrophe, 1,000 years of peace, or both? No one knows for sure.

While the solar cycles and magnetic reversals are very real and have definitely happened in our ancient past, they have never happened while 6.5 billion people lived on the planet, and certainly not with the majority of those people dependent upon the technology of power grids, communications, computers, and global positioning satellites. Just as uncertainty accompanies any birth, we simply don't know what our birth into such a monumental experience may mean to life, technology, our emotions, and our bodies.

continued on page 18

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*Presenting a new regular feature in **Evolving Your Spirit!** Welcome to Annie Burnside. We think you'll appreciate what she has to offer. She believes and lives as she speaks.*

Annie Burnside is a parent, educator, and professional soul nurturer, residing in the Chicago area. As a soul nurturer, she helps others to awaken to their own spiritual truths by providing spiritual support and encouragement. She assists her clients to view their lives from an expanded spiritual perspective, helping them to remember their divine, intuitive, eternal nature as they integrate this spiritual truth into their life decisions. Burnside's teachings inspire others to reconnect with their spirit and listen to the voice of their own soul. Her open, gentle approach encompasses all spiritual paths.

Annie has written a book called *Soul to Soul Parenting: A Guide to Raising a Spiritually Conscious Family*. It integrates a mother's personal spiritual journey

into a comprehensive guidebook to be shared with the whole family. She currently is with an agent and waiting for the news as to what's happening with the publishing!

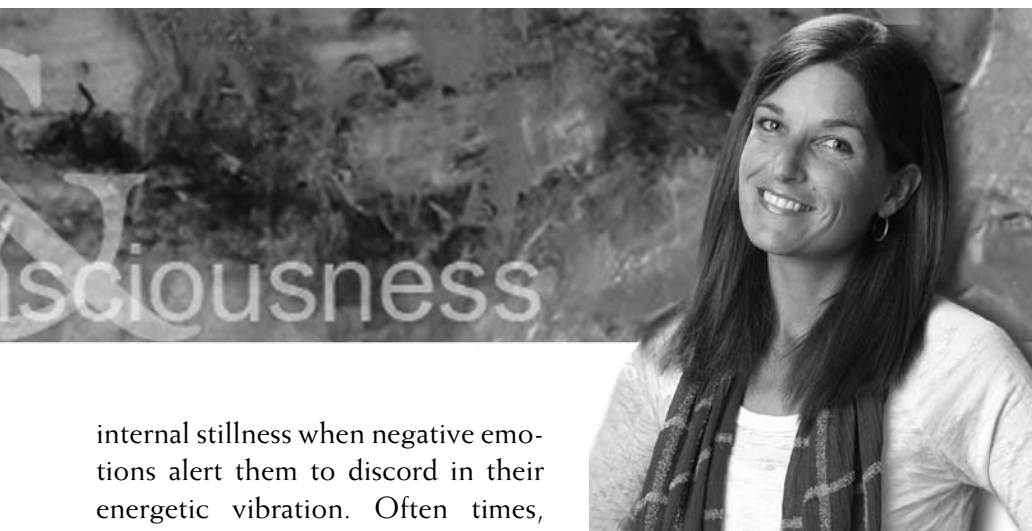
Annie will be writing an ongoing column for *Evolving Your Spirit*, focusing on *Family Discussions* and detailing her own journey of self-discovery—sharing her family's spiritual path that has grown from her awakening.

We hope that as Annie shares one family's continuing spiritual expansion, you will feel invited to begin or continue this beautiful journey that opens perspectives and nourishes souls along with us. You can see tips and suggestions by clicking on Annie's link on our website at www.evolvingyourspirit.com.

Take a Pause

OK—the first suggestion. *Discuss the importance of being tuned in to your emotional guidance system at all times.* Teach your children to recognize when it is time to take a pause from an external focus and seek





internal stillness when negative emotions alert them to discord in their energetic vibration. Often times, disharmonious energy can be diffused somewhat by taking a few moments to reconnect with the deep, quiet space within. This inner pause may allow the outer choices that follow to be of a higher quality.

Conscious Breath and Meditation are two simple ways to redirect discordant energy and begin to once again step into the divine flow that is present reality. Conscious Breath can be done on the spot by taking several deep breaths while focused on the feel of this life-giving air moving through your body in two fluid directions. Meditation is a time-out from the outside world and can be done in a variety of ways in the space of as little as ten minutes, or more depending on your interest and dedication. I feel that the important aspect in this discussion is teaching your children to view *Conscious Breath* and *Meditation* as daily options for shifting negative energy so that future choices may be made from a calmer and more open perspective.

Another big suggestion! *Model the Conscious Breath and Meditation for your children often.* Encourage them to view these two methods as highly beneficial in regard to their taking full responsibility for their interaction with external forces. Stress with them the

importance of being totally cognizant of their emotional state of being so that they may always be aware of their point of attraction in creating their reality.

Love Bigger, Love Wider, Love Deeper

Discuss the importance of choosing to love yourself and others in a bigger, wider, and deeper way. Love is ever-expanding and individuals must continually assess their openness to give and receive love. Encourage your children to always err on the side of bigger, wider, and deeper when it comes to love. Cite many examples in your own life where you chose to increase the love offered and examples where you chose the opposite. Express your feelings after each experience. Invite each family member to share a life experience where he made a more loving choice and one in which he did not. Encourage a comparison of the outcomes created by loving bigger versus remaining neutral or negative.

At the end of the discussion, you may listen to a song (we used Tina Arena's "I Want to Know What Love Is") that encourages loving bigger or meditate together for several minutes focusing on the word LOVE. ✨

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State Street Dance Studio in Geneva

The State Street Dance Studio in Geneva opened its doors for the sole purpose of reaching students of all ages and its abilities to do good work and to *pay it forward* to others. This Studio encourages both faculty and students to raise the bar for themselves, reach out further and put their best foot forward.

Linda Lee Cunningham, the founder and artistic director of the studio firmly believes that dance and movement touch the inner child in us all, whether or not you're studying for sheer pleasure, and/or working toward a professional career.

Linda started dance when she was 3, and started teaching by 14. She believes that we all have a gift in this life, and our job is to pay that forward into the world. Dance and teaching are her gifts, and she has

seen and experienced the therapeutic benefits. Linda said, "Before my heads hit the pillow, I want to know that I paid it forward and that I made a difference."

Many she talks to love to share their stories of their joy in connecting with their inner selves and the open expression dance can bring to their spirits as well as those enjoying their performances.

For example, some children are unable to skip. Linda has learned to teach these kids to skip. It turns out that skipping is a mathematical process and sometimes doesn't come naturally. When these kids learn to skip, they literally squeal with delight. Real magic to watch. They then teach these kids to help others in life that might not have this ability. The ripples continue.

We all move—when did we stop dancing in the parking lot and splashing in the puddles? Linda encourages all to move and play.

The State Street Dance Studio offers a wide variety of classes including Ballet, Pointe, Character, Theater Dance, Tap, Modern, Hip Hop, Jazz, Ballroom, Pilates, Nia, and Yoga. They have many classes for adults as well as children.

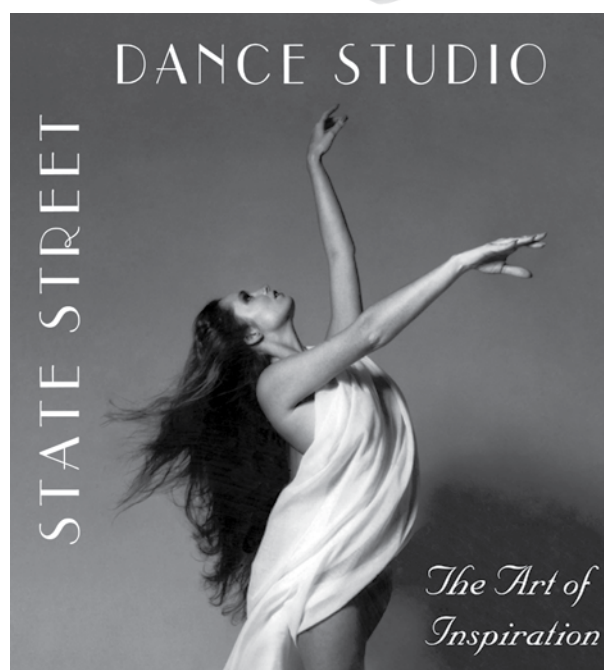
The Philosophy

Their instructors are sought after by a plethora of studios, but they choose State Street because of their common desire to "raise the bar," by bringing Chicago-quality dance education to the Suburbs. In their shared vision, they push the envelope by helping each student reach his or her personal potential, as a dancer and a human being. They strive to inspire excellence of body, mind, and spirit, in a non-competitive/non-judgmental atmosphere. Their students learn that mistakes are crucial to learning, and that learning is the basis for their growth.

Linda says. "I am from the old school of thinking that the competition of dance and movement is within yourself. It has always been there and any time you want to visit your trophy, look no further than INSIDE yourself. I tell all students from 3 to age 103 to follow your heart and everything else will fall into place. Work hard and do what you love."

State Street Dance Studio is committed to teaching and passing on the art of inspiration through dance and physical expression. The studio welcomes students of all ages and abilities to open their arms, spread their wings and let their spirits soar. ✨

For more information, please call State Street Dance Studio at (630) 232-0444. Or check out www.statestreetdancestudio.com Auditions for the Nutcracker Suite are August 23, all are welcome (5 years and up) you can call the studio for information.





Evolving Bookshelf

This is a self-published book, widely available on the net. It's filled with great information, claiming that this is the part of the matrix where you choose to take the red or the blue pill. Which will you choose? Once you know the truth there is no going back.

Knowing vs. Believing

It is easy to confuse believing with knowing and stand up for a belief as we would for something we know to be a certain way. The difference between *knowing* and *believing* is that knowing comes from a deep, core place inside us that becomes alert when recognizing the truth. Believing comes from experiences or perspectives of other people. Beliefs are based on the illusion or box that we are in and knowing comes from experiencing the outside of the box.

You will only know you are on the outside of the box when you compare yourself to other people and see how you used to be.

Beliefs come from fears. We try to protect ourselves with beliefs; it is the part of the human program that preserves us. We create beliefs from past experiences so that we recognize the same pattern that led us to pain the last time and avoid it or fight it when it threatens us again.

Knowing comes from the light. There is no fear or protective mechanism involved, there is no need to defend it because you can see that it is not worth arguing with ignorance.

I think having our beliefs questioned is the scariest thing a person trapped in their beliefs can experience. Most people even have a safety nest of beliefs protecting and reinforcing their main beliefs. The fact that everything is love does not require you to believe, it only requires you to accept. It is possible for you to deny facts but still that doesn't change them.

The bottom line is that knowing frees us, and beliefs can imprison us.

A common belief is that *doubt* and *knowing* are opposites, but we need to doubt our beliefs in order to find knowing. Doubt your belief in limitations, lack, fear and unworthiness. Doubt all negativity and destroy the beliefs they are based on, just make sure to do this in a positive way.

So instead of asking, "Why can't I afford this thing?" ask, "How can I afford it?" These two questions can send you on entirely different quests. The first reinforces your belief that you can't afford it and the second destroys that belief.

Freedom

Freedom is like pregnancy, just like being either pregnant or not, you are either free or you are not. You cannot be partially free. The only way to be completely free is to let go of all of your fears and inhibitions. Only this allows us to experience life to the fullest.

Fear is the main illusion that keeps us from knowing the truth. Why let fear limit you? Be free. Acceptance brings freedom. ✨

Marelize Kloppers' life has been a typical example of how human experience makes us learn and grow. She was born with a questioning mind and her experiences only made her search for the truth even more desperately. Marelize and her daughter Jayde live in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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Limiting and Empowering Beliefs

By Laurie Buchanan, PhD, HHP, CHT, RMT

Whether religious, spiritual or personal, I see that beliefs can be either limiting or empowering.

It seems that Religion has brought comfort to so many people throughout the ages and across the globe. I've seen it give people a sense of a power greater than themselves and provide them with tremendous hope.

Spirituality can be either a part of a specific religion or independent of religion. It can be a self-directed personal inner path. A person can be religious and not spiritual, or a person can be spiritual and not religious. In the most basic sense, I believe that spirituality is based on the belief that something exists outside the understanding of our five physical senses. It is the desire to attain understanding of, or have a relationship with the sacred, with what is divine.

Beliefs are something that we embrace— heart and soul. They are something that we accept as truth. Beliefs can revolve around our self or others and can include a number of things such as faith and identity.

Limiting beliefs are ideas that hold us back; ideas that keep us from becoming the person we want to be or from doing the things we want to do. They are constraining, limiting and usually exclusive. Most of the time, they are not even true; they are myths that we let control our lives. Many times, we are not even consciously aware that we have these beliefs. They often exist in our subconscious, directing our automatic judgments and influencing our decisions.

If you find yourself saying things like, *I can't* or *There's nothing I can do*, or even if you catch yourself using words like *never*, *always*, *all*, and *none*

then you probably have some limiting beliefs. If you feel that your life is not how you want it to be and you feel helpless or hopeless about it, then you probably have limiting beliefs.

Empowering beliefs are ideas that launch you forward and help you to become the person you want to be; a person who actively does the things they want to do. When you find yourself harboring a limiting belief, why not think of a replacement belief—one that bathes you in emotions that bring you joy. Here are some examples of encouraging beliefs:

- I contain unlimited, unleashed potential and possibility.
- My desires manifest when I let go and trust.
- I am worthy, I am capable.
- I have everything that I need.
- I have a Divine purpose.
- I accept my body temple the way it is.
- I have enough time for the important things in my life.
- I am the only person responsible for my attitude.

Regardless of the religious tradition, spiritual path or personal perspective that we choose to embrace, the potential exists for it to be positive, uplifting, constructive and healing. The choice is ours. ✨

Laurie Buchanan, is a Holistic Health Practitioner and the owner of HolEssence in Crystal Lak. Her specific areas of focus are Energy Medicine, Personal Development and Spiritual Growth. Please visit her website at www.HolEssence.com.


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If you enjoy picking up free magazines like Evolving Your Spirit at Whole Foods, it would be so helpful if you will ask them where it is, or if they carry it. We just received a call from the Hinsdale store to ask us to stop distributing them there. The woman said she was throwing them into the recycling bin! Perhaps if they find out that their customers want to pick them up, they will allow us to continue to distribute there. Thank You!

We do know, however, that ancient humans may have experienced similar, though less-intense cycles, some that may have even occurred as recently as 10,000 years ago. While biblical and oral traditions suggest that such a time is certainly not "business as usual," the fact that people lived to record those cycles tells us that such events are survivable. The new discoveries linking the physics of belief with reality also tell us that how we feel about our experience has a direct effect upon what we actually experience. For our date with 2012, this suggests that if we live life focused upon all of the bad things that may happen, we will miss the joyous experiences that may actually keep those bad things from happening.

Today, when you ask the Mayan descendants what happened to their ancestors, they will tell the story of the generation of timekeepers who, one day, left their temples, observatories, and pyramids, walked into the jungles, and simply "vanished," returning to the place from where they had come. Regardless of what their story means to us, it is clear that whoever those original Maya were, they knew something in their time that we are just beginning to understand in ours. The key to their message is that their secret was more than the precise representation of time on a stone slab. The one piece of their wisdom that they could not inscribe into their hieroglyphic message is precisely the piece that gives meaning to the end of their cycle. The piece of their wisdom is us and whether we can embrace the fact that we are a family in this world, very possibly part of a greater family in the cosmos.

From these perspectives, the solstice of December 21, 2012, becomes a powerful window for our collective emergence into our greatest potential. Such a moment is so rare that we have been preparing for it for over 5,000 years, and it will be another 26,000 years before the same opportunity cycles around again. As the source of our light—our sun—moves into perfect alignment with the center of our galaxy, are we ready to receive the greatest gift of all—the gift of our true selves? The stage is set, the choice is ours, the cosmos is waiting. Do we have the wisdom to marry science, history, tradition, and belief into the miracle that awaits us on December 21, 2012? ✖

Adapted from the author's chapter in the anthology, The Mystery of 2012: Predictions, Prophecies and Possibilities (Sounds True, 2007. Paperback release: January 2009)



Gregg Braden stands at the crossroads where science meets spirituality. A former earth scientist and aerospace computer systems designer, Braden is now considered a leading authority on the spiritual philosophy of ancient and indigenous traditions throughout the world.

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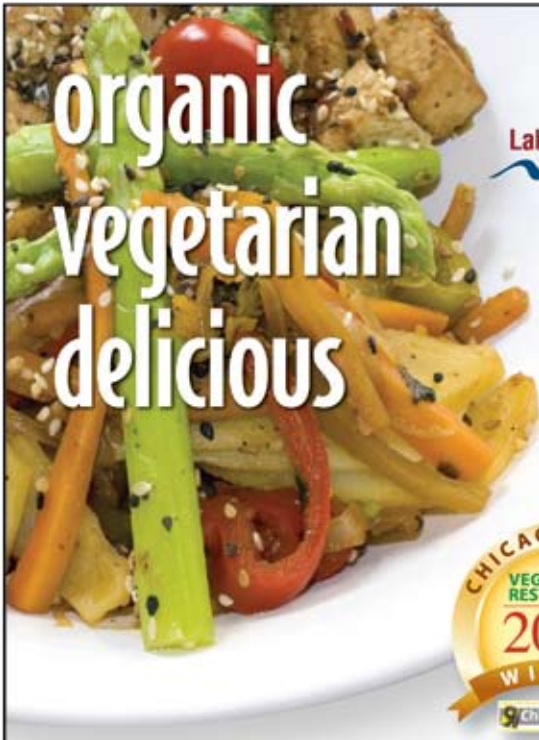
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