



Heart of Healing News

Fall / Winter 2006

Special points of interest:

- Detoxification Guide
- Help with Menopause
- Feminine Power
- Book Recommendations: **Wise Women** edited by Susan Cahill. Over 2000 years of spiritual writing by women.
- **Salting the Ocean** edited by Naomi Shihab Nye. 100 Poems by young poets.

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Rebirth

Welcome to the Heart of Healing Newsletter.

A few weeks ago, I suddenly felt a strong urge to create a new healing newsletter. I used to send out newsletters several times per year, but stopped while writing my little book of essays. Now, after a long hiatus, you are present at the rebirth of my newsletter! I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed creating it.

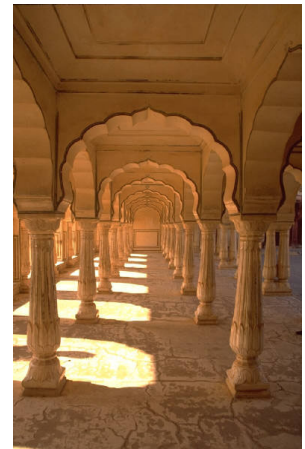
I woke up to a chilly house last week and realized autumn has definitely arrived. It's time for bulky sweaters and boots to come out of hiding. And time for trees to adorn themselves in fall fashion as well. I spy the first yellow leaves on the ash tree outside my window as I write this. The neighbor's burning bush is fiery red in the sun. Nature is slowing down and preparing for winter. It is time for us to prepare as well.

Before the cold and ice of winter makes its debut, I plan to do a bit of fall cleaning. But what I'm planning is not just the usual

clearing of clutter from closets and gutters. My fall clean-up is also internal. Every fall my entire family takes herbs for a few weeks to detoxify and clean out the pollution and chemical insults our bodies have been subjected to this year. We use traditional herbs that have been used by native American people for thousands of years. In this newsletter, I offer you simple detoxification steps to follow if you also feel the urge to do a bit of internal cleansing this fall.

My year has been filled with all sorts of mental and emotional clearing already. With the news that my mom has Alzheimer's came a visceral need to examine what it means to be my mother's daughter. And that led me to examine what being female is all about.

I share some of my thoughts and emotions about my ongoing explorations into the nature of being female in these pages. I look at menopause as well and suggest holistic ways to help mind, body and spirit deal with the ups and downs of becoming



a "wise woman".

I have grown to love and revere that wise female part of me which intuitively understands the cycles and seasons of nature. There is a time of birth and a time of death for every part of the Universe. As I grieve my Mom's illness, I find peace in nature. And I remember that all of our lives are shaped and defined by natural cycles of life, death and rebirth even in this technologically advanced age.

May you know peace and contentment as 2006 ends.

Fall Cleanse

Here is a gentle detoxification routine that my family follows each fall:

Start a Pro-biotic first. You need to be having 1-3 daily bowel movements for the best elimination of toxins. I use Primal Defense from Garden of Life. It comes in powder or pill form.

Next drink tincture of Milk Thistle and Dandelion in a glass of water. Take every morning on an empty stomach for 4-6 weeks. Note: a tincture is herbs suspended in alcohol. HerbPharm is a good brand of herbal tincture to look for.

Finally, to give your body extra help eliminating toxic chemicals and waste, use EmergenC. This provides the extra B and C Vitamins used during a cleanse as well as necessary minerals such as zinc.

Note: Children need 1/3—1/2 the adult dose, based on size.



On Being Female

I was out gathering this morning. My partner was in NY hunting financial reward while I roamed KC gathering food and supplies for my family. As I stood in the checkout lane at the grocery store, I wondered to myself if I am really any different from my hunting-gathering ancestors. No, I don't live on the edge of the forest in a mud hut; I live in the suburbs, drive an SUV and shop on the internet. But I still seem to be hard-wired to tend my home, gather food and prepare it for my "tribe". Is it just me? Am I a throwback?

I consider myself a feminist AND yet I actually enjoy cooking and taking care of my home and kids. According to the feminist ideals of the 1970's, I should abhor cooking and housework and taking care of babies. But at the danger of being flogged by my fellow feminists, I must admit I actually enjoy doing those traditional female tasks.

In the past I tried to fit the male model - e.g. a career as a corporate IT manager. I spent years in meetings debating the best way to build X or sell Y. Thanks, but no thanks. I am thrilled that some people enjoy that type of work. But I can remember sitting in meeting after meeting wondering why we never talked about the important stuff – like how building X will affect our kids and the environment. And if Y will truly help the people we sell it to have happier, healthier lives. I sound like such a touchy-feely chick, don't I? - focused on people and health and happiness. Yes, I sound utterly female and that point of view rarely earned me kudos in the corporate world.

Today's world does not value the "chick" point of view. Profit and progress are priority in business and politics. The importance of caring for the young, the elderly and the ill usually takes a back seat. I believe this is a fundamental problem, this lack of female values in business (and government). U.S. politics could use a lot more "chicks" loudly expressing their touchy-feely 'take care of the children' point of view. Iraq would look a lot different if one iota of female wisdom had entered into our national decision-making process 4 years ago. The AIDS crisis in Africa, ongoing genocide in the Sudan, what schools feed our own U.S. children, national health insurance – in so many areas the female perspective is very different from the male. And it is woefully lacking in most of our national debates.

Don't get me wrong. I am NOT man-bashing here. Most American men don't want to drag women around by their hair anymore. And men did not drag us into the mess in Iraq. They do not force us to use mass quantities of oil in our homes and cars. We all let that happen, male and female alike. What I am saying is that it is now time for women to stop downplaying and stifling their unique perspective and values on world problems. We desperately need thoughtful, balanced solutions to these problems and balance will only happen IF women stop apologizing for thinking differently and start expressing the female perspective on national and world issues.

We must start expressing our unique female point of view without apology! The modern world will never acknowledge or value the female point of view until we women start valuing our unique femaleness. We are different from men in very basic ways. Having monthly menstrual cycles, being pregnant and birthing babies, caring for young children and aging parents, experiencing menopause – all of these female acts shape us in ways men cannot even fathom.

Being female is a core part of every woman's being. The female uterus is the sacred vessel that makes human life possible on Earth. Humanity continues generation after generation because of our uniquely feminine abilities to carry and nourish new life. Our uterus sits within the physical and spiritual core of women *by design*. Our femaleness is central to our very being.

Too often we are taught to turn our femaleness into a problem; menstrual cycles are despised not celebrated, pregnancies are treated like illnesses instead of miracles, uteruses are cut out at the first sign of difficulty, hormones are controlled by medication. Caring for children is sneered at. And we buy it when our emotional cycles are described as wild, erratic, out of control.

We act as if there is something fundamentally flawed about being female. Enough! Let's stop believing femaleness is a messy problem state. Let's celebrate our female cycles instead of acting ashamed of them. Let's do "women's work" with joy and self-respect for the essential and loving

**"No one can
make you feel
inferior without
your consent."**

**Eleanor Roosevelt,
wise woman**

tasks we perform. And let's express our female values out in the world without apology.

When we quietly complain to our friends about what's going on in the world, but never dare to raise our voices at the polls, the world is out of balance. When we downplay the importance of caring for our kids and keeping our homes running smoothly the world is out of balance. When we fail to realize how much we could change the world just by backing our personal beliefs with our pocketbooks, the world stays out of balance.

Let's stop apologizing for having female hormones and uteruses. Let's stop apologizing for having different values and opinions from our father or husband or male colleague. Yes, we are different from men – and it is important that we allow ourselves to be different! The world desperately needs our female viewpoint expressed *right now*. Life requires a balance of both the male and female perspective. The world will dramatically shift and our global politics will transform when we decide to value and love our femaleness. Different decisions about how to vote, what to buy, how to treat the earth and its inhabitants will naturally flow from us when we learn to love being female.

Yes, I am female. And yes I like cooking and being home to greet my kids after school. I hate what America is doing in Iraq and not doing in the Sudan. I believe our immigration policies are very undemocratic. I want all Americans, no matter how poor, to eat a nutritious meal tonight. I want an SUV that gets 60 miles per gallon instead of 25. I want cheap solar power cells for my house and I find it pathetic that U.S. industry hasn't put them on the market yet.

My opinion on world events is uniquely my own and uniquely female. Thank God! I am female. As Helen Reddy put it, "I am woman. Hear me roar!" I intend to express my female point of view every chance I get. Because loving and expressing my female self is the true heart of feminism. And it is the only way to balance and fix this world.

Changes

What is that Chinese blessing? May you live in interesting times? Well, I must be blessed because it has definitely been an interesting year so far. I have been expanding my business – seeing more therapy clients and teaching more classes. At the same time I continue to work on my 2nd book. Oh yes and I try to find plenty of time to be a wife and mom as well. This year I am also dealing with the emotional upheavals that come with having aging parents and a teen-aged son. What a roller coaster! And as if my life weren't chaotic enough, I am in menopause. Hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, afternoon headaches, failing eyesight and a very short fuse on top of all my other life changes – God definitely has a wicked sense of humor. <smile>

In this culture where hot babes with firm bodies fill my TV screen and Botox injections for wrinkles make the front page of the newspaper, getting older and entering menopause can seem a bit depressing. Of course, the wild hormone swings inherent in early menopause make moments of sadness and anger inevitable. And that is not necessarily a bad thing – few things are better at relieving tension and stress than a good cry. But I have decided to go against the grain and focus on the wonderful things about menopause.

I am NOT turning into a wrinkled old crone. I AM becoming a wise woman who has wrinkles. A wise woman who has lived enough of life to know exactly what I like and what I don't like. I have *finally* learned to trust my own instincts and fill my life with people and experiences that nurture and support me. And I would not trade in my reading glasses for a 20 year-old body if you paid me. I remember all too well how insecure and uncomfortable I was in my own skin at that age. Thanks but no thanks – I will keep my wrinkles and wild gray hairs and aging ovaries as long as I also get to keep my confidence, experience and wisdom.

And I am content to be finished raising babies; no more toting diaper bags and handling toddler tantrums. I really enjoy raising these funny and amazing beings I call my kids - they seem to get more mature with each passing day. And I like the way they get more and more independent



AVOID XENO-HORMONES

Many foods today contain chemicals known as xeno-hormones. These chemicals come from the pesticides, herbicides and growth hormones sprayed on fruits and vegetables or fed to livestock. Xeno-hormones are similar in structure to natural estrogens and play havoc with a woman's natural hormone balance. Xeno-hormones in your diet can leave your body with too little progesterone to balance out all the natural and fake estrogen compounds.

Xeno-Hormone Problems:
Menopausal Hot Flashes
Mood Swings Fibroids
Night Sweats
Fibrocystic Breasts
Endometriosis Infertility
Painful Periods Irregular Menstrual Cycles
Increased Risk of Breast & Ovarian Cancer

What you can do: Avoid conventional meat, poultry and dairy as much as possible (conventional = from cows and chickens fed growth hormones, antibiotics and feed sprayed with pesticides). Choose organic meat, poultry and dairy for yourself and your kids. Clean fruits and vegetables with a citrus spray before you eat them. And consider an herbal detoxification process to help your body eliminate these harmful chemicals.

A Gift from
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Healing Treatments for:
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Newborn Colic

To:

Changes (cont. from page 3)

with each passing year. Soon they won't need me at all – and that is as it should be.

I look around at my friends who are on the far side of menopause and I smile at the thought of joining their ranks. What a loving, vibrant, wise group of women! Yes, I am entering a new phase. And yes there is chaos in the midst of this life shift. But those waves of emotional and physical change serve a wonderful purpose – they wash away the dust and clutter that I have accumulated over 4 decades of living. They make space for my wise woman to bloom and flourish in new and beautiful ways.

Hooray for a bit of chaos. Hooray for life shifting. Hello wrinkles and gray hairs – I welcome you. I love becoming a wise woman. :)

Note: Here is a list of herbs and hormones that you can buy over the counter. But if you have severe hormone swings and problems, Seek guidance from a health professional familiar with female hormones and natural remedies.

Herbal Help for Menopause

First, take the online test at womentowomen.com to find out if your hormone ratio is out of balance. Out of balance estrogen and progesterone cause most women's problems.

It is also possible to test your hormone levels by mail. You can find out exactly what your hormone levels are without a lot of hassle. A simple saliva test is available at www.salivatest.com that accurately measures levels of progesterone, estrogen and other hormones in the body. I have used this lab and am impressed with their procedures and reports.

Progesterone Cream – I call this my magic cream! Bio-identical progesterone helps to balance out a woman's estrogen to progesterone ratio. If you believe that you need progesterone, make certain that you get bio-identical progesterone (**NOT** progestin). And get it from a source that guarantees the strength

Beans, Beans, Beans – eat beans, lentils and peas. This is a way to add natural plant estrogens to your diet.

Dong Quai – a traditional Chinese remedy for menopausal symptoms that has been used for generations.

Black Cohosh – an herbal remedy used by Native Americans for centuries.

Soy Isoflavones – eat tofu, soy nuts or drink soy milk. I recommend milk from organic, non-GMO soybeans. This is another way to get plant estrogens.

Great Books on Menopause

[The Wisdom of Menopause](#)
by Northrup

[What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Menopause](#)
by Lee & Hopkins.

[Women At The Change](#)
by Compton

[Before the Change: Taking Charge of Your Perimenopause](#)
by Gittleman

[Yoga and The Wisdom of Menopause](#)
by Francina

For Younger Women With Hormone Problems:

[What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Premenopause](#)

“We can do no great things, only small things with great love.”

**Mother Teresa,
wise woman**