

THE JOURNAL OF Creative Aging

SAGE-ING

with Creative Spirit, Grace & Gratitude



A PUBLICATION OF
THE OKANAGAN INSTITUTE
NUMBER 39, WINTER 2022
EDITED BY KAREN CLOSE

KNOW YOURSELF. BE YOURSELF.
LOVE YOURSELF. SHARE YOURSELF.
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The Voices of Creative Aging

CREATIVE AGING is a powerful new social and cultural movement that is stirring the imaginations of communities and people everywhere.

This is the first book to document the movement.

Often called Sage-ing, Creative Aging takes many forms: academic, social and personal. It includes festivals, conferences, classes, group sessions and individual creative pursuits. The Journal Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude was founded by the Okanagan Institute in 2011 to honour the transformational power of creativity. Intended as an initiative for collaboration and sharing, the Journal presents the opportunity for the free exchange of wisdom gleaned from creative engagement.

Sage-ing is about seeking – satisfying inner gnawing and transforming it to knowing and action. Aging can be alchemy when one allows the realisation that to Know Thyself and contribute that

knowing to our culture is indeed one of life's highest purposes. That knowing brings the gratitude, grace and integrity that a life deserves. The creative journey into self is a strong aid to health and wellbeing

for the individual and to our culture. Creative Aging brings together more than 50 essays and galleries of images that showcase the power of the imagination expressed and enjoyed.

CREATIVE AGING

STORIES FROM THE PAGES OF THE JOURNAL
SAGE-ING WITH CREATIVE
SPIRIT, GRACE AND GRATITUDE
EDITED BY
Karen Close and Carolyn Cowan



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WITH CREATIVE SPIRIT,
GRACE & GRATITUDE

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by Theodora Harasymiw

FROM THE EDITOR

This is a wonderful quote from a past issue written by loyal contributor, poet, performer and playwright, Penn Kemp:

“Creativity is a dance between self and others. At its most glorious, it is transcendence, beyond the personal self, beyond age and aging. The necessary tension of creativity is also excitement: the pull between the solitude essential for an art like poetry to be created, and the community needed for its performance, its acknowledgement, its acceptance. Like dance, creativity requires caring, sometimes subtle communication and collaboration.”

Penn describes creativity so beautifully and I hear the echo of her words as this issue has come together. *The Journal* is all about communication and collaboration. In producing this Winter issue, Copy Editor Johanna Beyers and I are very pleased to be joined by new Co-editor Katharine Weinmann. I was delighted to find in Katharine a “thinking partner” eager to seek out and edit stories and other creative submissions for SAGE-ING, several of which are featured in this issue. Together we anticipate the creative dance of re-imagining the journal’s next decade. I share with you Season’s Greetings from Katharine:

A Winter Solstice Blessing by Katharine Weinmann

May this Holy Day season bring time to cherish all that is good and true and beautiful.

May its dark days invite reflection and renewal.

May you be well and safely tucked in with your beloveds at home.

May deep rest, fresh air and sunshine restore you and be like the warm embrace of longed for family and friends.

May moments of anxiety and sadness be held in tenderness, with the support of others.

May strength in body, mind and spirit allow you to embrace life’s uncertainties.

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May good health be your companion, relationships enliven and encourage, work and pastimes fulfill, serve and affirm.

May good food nourish your body, favourite memories and meaningful conversations your heart and mind.

May Nature welcome you to its beauty, magic and wisdom. May gratitude, generosity and grace be your friends.

May patience, love and kindness – given and received – be yours in abundance.

Previously published in *A Wabi Sabi Life*



Photo by Katharine Weinmann

Johanna, Katharine and I offer the creative expressions in this issue to inspire your journey into 2022. The articles invite you to enjoy the bounty of intergenerational sharing enriched by creative spirit as we share our stories and create community.

Please consider how you might contribute your creative voice with a submission to the Spring issue. The title of the new book by resilient Canadian creative Michael J. Fox inspires the theme: *No Time Like the Future*. What better way to engage the interlude a Canadian winter provides for reflection and regeneration.

Karen Close

SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE TO SAGE-ING

The theme to consider for our next issue will be in the FROM THE EDITORS in each issue. Your story is to be original, related to creativity in any of its many forms, as a path to gaining self awareness and wisdom, and/or the act of harvesting your life's wisdom as a legacy for future generations.

Please attach it as a word document (.doc) – not a PDF - to enable editing, using calibri font, 14 pt, 1.5 spacing. 500 – 1500 word maximum (use word count).

Please attach 3-4 photos, separately, including: Your headshot, 2-3 photos related to your article. All photos should be numbered, given a caption, and attached in high resolution jpg. format. Insert the word "photo #" with its caption within the article where you would like each image placed (we'll try to honour this request as layout permits). Please include a brief bio note, written in the third person (one or two short paragraphs of up to 200 words). Your bio will be placed at the end of your article and is intended to give the reader an idea of who you are, your passions and/ or what you do and have done with your life that feels relevant to the article. Please include your preferred contact information, including email, website, blog address – whatever you want included in the publication. In your cover email, please share how you found your way to submitting to Sage-ing. Please email your article and photographs to Karen Close at karensageing@gmail.com and Katharine Weinmann at panache@interbaun.com

Quarterly issues of The Journal go online around a solstice or equinox: March, June, September, and December. We need to receive your intention of submitting an article by the first day of the preceding month or earlier. **Your complete submission is required by the first day of the month preceding publication.**

Antiquity identified a sage as a wise person ... wisdom is a form of goodness, and is not scientific knowledge but another kind of cognition.

– Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 1246b

BECOMING “IN FORMED”

Creating a Journey Inward

Karen Close

“You must embrace your true self by letting your light shine forth, no matter the consequences.” – Madisyn Taylor

Lighting my steps forward:

Sunsets are becoming increasingly important to me as I enter my sunset years. In the above photo I am holding a copy of SAGE-ING and I imagine the light emanating from its pages, lighting my steps forward. I am allowing myself to feel “my light” as well as seeing the bright light coming through the window as the sun sets. January 2022 I will turn 75.

Like so many, as I turned 50 I began my journey into what anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson calls the years of *active wisdom* – an intensified search for *self* and questing within. Such questing often begins around fifty and lasts to about seventy-five. I imagine one’s later years are like the bright intensity before the sun finally sets. Ironically, it is clouds in our lives that can make the colours richer. These years are to be savoured.

Roots support my ‘self’ expansion:

When both our children were in university, I decided it was time to end my focus on being a wife, a homemaker, a mother and a teacher, and begin to unravel the path into me. My roots from these early roles were strong. I wasn’t looking to abandon these roles, but rather to let the essence of their roots support my *self* expansion. My husband had created a successful business and we’d built a comfortable lifestyle. My children were high achievers with independent spirits. Teaching English and Visual Arts exposed me to a rich cultural understanding and the belief that authentic creative expression for all ages fosters the vital link to self and others essential to evolving together. I am very fortunate.

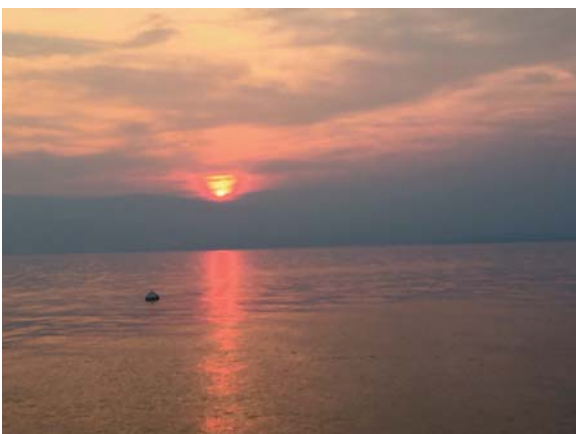
How to fulfill my ‘self’:

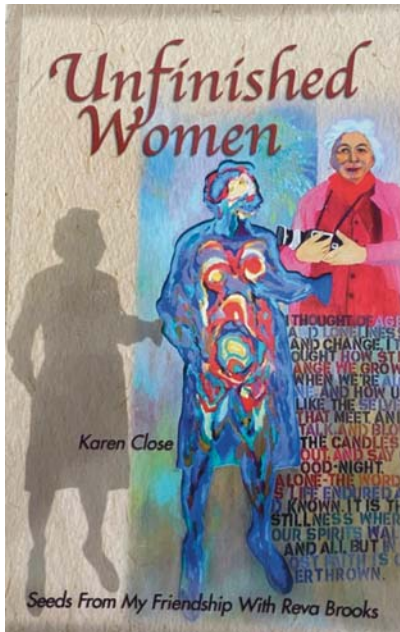
When I first retired, just before turning 50, a friend asked, “But how will you fill your time?” “Oh, I’m not worried about that. I want to learn how to fulfill my *self*.” I wanted to live a life of appreciation, potential, fulfillment and grace, and so I grounded myself into the freedom of having strong roots and time to focus on the seeds within my being that still needed to be cultivated. Circumstances conspired to take me to the cultural hub of San Miguel de Allende in Mexico during the



Photo by Silmara Emde

An August Sunset. Photo by Karen Close





Top: Cover, *Unfinished Women: Seeds from My Friendship with Reva Brooks*.

Artwork by Sylvia Tait

Above: *Haida Totem Pole*

autumn of 1996. After the Second World War, many U.S. soldiers took advantage of the GI bill to enroll in art schools in San Miguel. Seeking new directions, Canadian World War II war artist Leonard Brooks and his wife Reva joined them in 1947. The Brooks had stories to tell. On my visit, a half century later, Reva and I became friends. We filled each other's needs and yearnings. From our deep sharing I wrote the book *Unfinished Women: Seeds from My Friendship with Reva Brooks* (2001). Its writing inspired how I would find fulfillment over the next 25 years.

Wisdom evolves by sharing:

Learning from Reva's strengths and her mistakes strengthened my conviction that wisdom evolves by sharing through participation in a wide variety of intergenerational creative interaction. *Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude*, with its invitation to help build a community of storytellers, was created in 2011. Co-founder, publisher and layout designer Robert MacDonald will also turn 75 in 2022. We share a mutual commitment to contribute our skills to enable the sharing of stories from individuals who have come alive to themselves through creative expression. We believe storytelling, through words, images and movement, is how humans have evolved since the earliest civilizations. I believe to everything there is a history that becomes clearer through the sharing.

Exploring nature, words and images feeds my soul on my journey into *self*. I read voraciously; I practise yoga; I became a walker, and a pilgrim; I write about my discoveries and I paint. A trip to Haida Gwaii in 1999 nurtured all of these interests. I loved the idea that the decaying totems I visited in this World Heritage Site were releasing the energy of their creators back to the earth to nourish creative spirit, including mine, into the future. I became deeply involved in painting these totems.

Formline art is a feature in the Indigenous art of the northwest coast of Canada. It is prescriptive and has been developed through shared traditional thinking. It is the positive delineating force of Haida painting, relief and engraving. Formlines are continuous, flowing, curvilinear lines that turn, swell and diminish in a prescribed manner handed down through the generations. Skill evolves as one learns the formlines, which are used for figure outlines and internal design elements. By painting elements of Haida totem poles I rekindled skills I'd let lapse and slowly evolved my own painting voice. Expressing my emotions by letting my brush dance on the surface of my work and by making marks with whatever I might grab fascinated me. I imagined I was generating the energy I was feeling in the totems, but Formline was not of my ancestry and I found it confining. I had my own stories to tell, in my own ways.

In accordance with my roots in the sixties:

In my senior adolescent years I had studied Action Painting, in accordance with my roots in the 60s, a time of free expression and experimentation.



Top left: A painting done in my early sixties:
 Above: A painting done entering my
 seventies
 Top Right: A painting done three years ago



These memories called, and I moved into spontaneous process painting with no other intention than to see where my hand would lead me. I trusted my eyes to guide me into the completion of a work. Study of art history gave me confidence that, if we relax into the process and let the work guide our eyes into its movement, we will discover an innate sense of aesthetic balance, indeed wellness, and give voice to our unconscious. The more I experimented the more excited I became. I let my works form their own realism. The images that I began to perceive in my works tell me stories, stories I had not consciously created. Each time I look at a work the story can change and evolve as my journey inward deepens. To others I have explained that my painting process is like dreaming an image into being. There is no logic. The wonderful gift is that unlike dreams, which dissolve and are difficult to revisit, my paintings stay. I can revisit them and share my unconscious meanderings with others. Sometimes those with whom I share see what I see, and other times their eyes assemble their own images within my works. My joy comes from believing that these conversations, elicited by my works, open participants into deeper communication within themselves and between us. We can each discover and evolve into unexpected directions.

Conversing with my canvases:

Action Painting was predicated on the idea that the creative process involves a dialogue between the artist and the canvas. The more I painted the deeper I went into conversing with my canvases and, I believe, my unconscious. Just as the artist affects the canvas by making a mark on it, that mark in turn affects the artist and determines the next mark. Founder of the term, Harold Rosenberg, explained, "Each stroke had to be a decision and was answered by a new question." Spontaneity is key to the process of Action Painting so as to restrict the conscious mind and the ego's need to direct. Action painters believe there is an existential stance during the act, determined by the individual's freely made choices. Further, Action Painting is about a sharing of emotions between the creator and the viewer, and it credits both Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud's ideas of the unconscious as its underlying foundation. If an artist paints "unconsciously" and spontaneously, the work creates a powerful arena of raw emotion and action in the moment of its creation. Believing that a painting should involve a dialogue between the artist and the canvas, Willem DeKooning suggests the works become an extension of the maker's life—and so it has been for me. In the last 25 years I have given the style a personal rebirth as my way of exploring my *self*. Bloomberg suggests: "The act-painting is the same metaphysical substance as the artist's existence."



Top: KA, an Egyptian hieroglyph
Above: One of my most recent paintings,
which I have titled KA

I feel act-painting spoke forcefully to me from a canvas painted in my early sixties. Several weeks after its completion I sat looking at this work. I sensed I was being summoned to revisit how I perceived the image and felt the urge to turn its orientation. Immediately I saw this old woman with a floppy hat, sitting, contemplative but complacent, with her arms folded across her chest and an animal whispering into her ear. I recalled the book *Women Who Run With the Wolves*, the classic by Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés, that explores the themes of the Wild Woman archetype, referring to Carl Jung's identification of universal images that arise from humans' *collective unconscious*. I felt my painting was inviting me to examine what cultural mores might be standing in the way of gaining greater self-awareness and direction. For several years, dialoguing with my canvases has been an informative quest – I began to experiment with what I call 'In Formed Painting.' Unlike Indigenous formline painting, I allow the painting to freely discover its own form. I always start with my eyes closed, sometimes with my non-dominant hand, with whatever mark-maker I choose, and then quickly relax into a gesture of that moment. That initial line grounds the canvas into my emotions and unconscious inclinations, which then guide how the painting develops. My canvases generally arrive at completion after one to two hours of painting, but directed by all that I have been, learned and thought – my existence, as Bloomberg suggested.

I see that I entered my seventies with unresolved yearnings and echoes of more still to be resolved. In the painting done three years ago, I choose not to see a cage, but rather a private enclave where I can peer into me and the infant soul I was born with. For me, 'In Formed Painting' captures fleeting insights along my journey of being.

Ka, the vital essence:

In ancient Egypt it was believed the *ka*, the vital essence of a person, was transmitted from one generation to the next. I have felt a strong draw to this symbol. I like that my name begins with Ka. Like my painting done in my early sixties, when I sat looking at this new painting, "I sensed I was being summoned to revisit how I perceived the image and felt the urge to turn its orientation" and gain a new perspective. That's when I saw what I perceive to be my 'Ka' emerging. My head is still in my way, but I am reaching for soul essence.

I don't often share my paintings with many because I do them for my own evolution. However, by sharing the story of my creative journey inward I hope to encourage readers of *The Journal* to share their stories. As each of us creates our stories in a creative expression of our choice, we 'in form' ourselves of our becoming in all its wonder. When we reflect and share our stories, we gift our uniqueness to our communities and our culture. This is *active wisdom*. This is Sage-ing.

JUST SAY YES

Creative SAGE-ING

Katharine Weinmann



I'm discovering the gift of saying yes to transformation that arrives every time the act of letting go is guided by the maxim of making space for and trusting that something new is emerging. Recently, the need to let go and release the trappings of what had been an earlier identity opened me to exciting new invitations, challenges and opportunities.

Learning that a friend is intent to shift the focus of her consulting, I asked if she'd like my facilitator tool kit, consisting of all those items that helped me engage groups in meaningful dialogue and purposeful activity. As she sorted and asked me questions about how I'd used the bits and pieces, it was a way of looking back over a skill set and expertise I'd cultivated for several decades. It became an opportunity to "pass it forward" and do a bit of mentoring. While she offered me a bottle of wine in exchange for the lot she took, what I really need are opportunities to share the stories, the bits and pieces of that skill set and my life that were meaningful, valued, where I'd been of use and in service.

For nearly two years I have been letting go of old beliefs, ways of being and professional identity. It has been painful, and I have grieved deeply, albeit a grief that ebbs and flows. I've come to realize that what I particularly miss are the connections and relationships I had because of my work. I cherished those people and the work we did. In a way it was effortless, the result of my own inner work, and integration, of the trust we shared. Of course, the pandemic with lockdowns, physical distancing, social isolation has exacerbated this loss and loneliness, accentuated the grief.

And so, in letting my dreams and ambitions go, my intention is now about learning to listen 'into' what is being asked of me from someplace and someone other than me.

"This world needs us more than ever. It needs our skills, our caring, our perseverance. We still want to contribute. We still want our contribution to be meaningful. But who gets to define meaning? It is the world, not us. Meaning is defined by the situation, the person, the moment. To discover what is meaningful, we need only ask this simple question:

What is needed here? Am I the right person to contribute to this need?

This is a huge shift. We stop asking the world to give us opportunities to fulfill our purpose.

Instead, we look to the world to tell us what it needs from us.

Such a profound shift requires our deep attention... to go deeply into yourself—past, present and future—to discern where you are needed. And then determine where you can best contribute."—Margaret J. Wheatley, 2021

A few months ago, I sent a story to this journal, SAGE-ING. A writer

Letting Go. Photo by Katharine Weinmann





New Life Direction. Photo by Katharine Weinmann

friend shared she'd had a poem and some of her photography published by them. I felt my story, one that had been invited by another online journal and then rejected, might be suitable. Not only did I receive a wonderfully affirming "YES" from Karen, the founder and editor, but it sparked what has now become a meaningful new relationship as I accepted her invitation to meander in conversation, to help her co-imagine the journal's next decade, and eventually to land as her co-editor. Having given a decade to this labour of love, a manifestation of her commitment to honour the transformational power of creativity, especially as we age, Karen sees in me someone, while a decade younger, kindred in valuing the journal's motto: *Know Yourself. Be Yourself. Love Yourself. Share Yourself.* And I recognize in Karen a deeply self-aware, elder creative who lives life to the brim with unabashed curiosity and compassion, someone to inspire in me the same. As Karen pointed out, both our names begin with 'Ka,' considered life force in ancient Egypt, the vital essence of soul to be transmitted from one generation to the next. Perhaps no coincidence that she felt a connection from which her invitation summoned forth.

While SAGE-ING offers me a place to write, as importantly I am seeking out and inviting stories that depict how the creative process shows up in, informs and enhances others' lives – not merely in the typical ways of making art, but in how we live our lives fully, meaningfully. By encouraging first-person anecdotes, insights, questions, wonderings and experiences, these stories illustrate a principle and value of SAGE-ING – that of how we grow into and feel more comfortable sharing our personal vulnerabilities. It becomes more about how we show up in our lives as told through our stories (and less about the wisdom we directly impart) that inspires others, cultivates wisdom and nurtures our inner sage.

This is a shift – looking to the world and listening to what it needs from me. I asked and Karen said yes. She asked and I said yes. I recognize this as a beautiful opportunity where my past and present are coming together to be of use, in meaningful service, where I am needed. And the future will take care of itself. I'm relaxing into the power of yes. Karen and I imagine the pages of *Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude* as a shared gathering place, a rich community of makers co-creating the tomorrow of our yearnings.

Find our submission invitation and guidelines on our homepage www.sageing.ca. We publish quarterly, on the solstices and equinoxes. Consider what evolved when I submitted my story to the Fall issue. It was a lovely way to celebrate the coming of autumn and initiate this new life direction. SAGE-ING's editors look forward to celebrating with you the gifts of your creative sage-ing.

"It is from this place that one can allow the magic of creative spirit to indeed create you. Allowing creative spirit to expand your wisdom invites deep personal scrutiny and challenges one to act from a place of honouring and sharing one's self." –Karen Close, *Creative Aging* (Woodlake Books, 2015)

Katharine Weinmann, MSW

A former psychotherapist and retired leadership coach, Katharine is now a writer of poetry and contemplative, creative nonfiction. In her blog and podcast, *A Wabi Sabi Life*, Katharine shares the beauty in her imperfect, sometimes broken, mostly well-lived and loved life, reminding herself and inviting others to appreciate and allow life to unfold in all its mess and mystery, with all its grit and glory.

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8 EPIPHANIES ON TURNING 80



Bonnie Hutchinson

When my mom was in her eighties, she said this:

“When you’re young, you worry about what people think of you. When you’re middle-aged, you don’t worry so much about what people think of you. When you get old, you find out nobody was thinking about you anyway!”

I thought it was funny. I also thought it didn’t really apply to me. After all, I didn’t spend much time worrying about what people thought of me – at least, that’s what I believed. I didn’t yet have enough self-awareness to realize that in fact I modified my actions and words often in response to what I imagined people might think of me. During this calendar year, I turned 80. Here’s what I’ve been thinking about since this milestone birthday.

1. Nobody needs me. That’s liberating. I’m pleased that people I care about seem to like having me around. But not one of them is dependent on me. Not for anything would I go back to the years of feeling 24/7 crushing responsibility for dependent children. I would not want to go back to the years as a business owner feeling responsible for the well-being and income of employees. I love the freedom of feeling off-duty for the well-being of others. I care about them and want the best for them, but it’s liberating not to feel responsible for them.

2. It’s okay to need others – at least sometimes. For many years, being fiercely independent seemed necessary. From my 80-year-old vantage point, I see that I took on unnecessary pressures. That really came into focus earlier this year when I had a medical adventure. For several months I really did need help from other people. Without being asked, people brought food and cards and flowers. People drove me to medical appointments. People phoned to check if I was okay, and said things that made me laugh. In the midst of what could have been a scary traumatic experience, I have never felt so supported in my life.

3. My definition of “creativity” has changed. For decades, I did not think I was ‘creative.’ My concept of “creative” was “artsy” – painting, making music, drama, dance, sculpture. I didn’t do any of those things, so I didn’t think I was creative.

My concept now is that “create-ivity” is the act of bringing into existence something that did not exist before. Making a meal or writing a letter is an act of creativity. It didn’t occur to me that the thousands of words I wrote every month – whether it was for policy manuals or a weekly column for a rural newspaper – were ‘creative.’ It didn’t occur to me that the training programs

My concept now is that “create-ivity” is the act of bringing into existence something that did not exist before. Making a meal or writing a letter is an act of creativity.



Bonnie's book launch

As I write, I can almost feel parts of my brain understanding things differently than they did before.

I designed and led for organizations were creative. They were just “getting the work done.”

When I’m writing for others, I have the reader in my mind; use plain language; think of what will make sense to whoever will read what I’m writing. However, I’ve recently become aware that perhaps my real writing audience is myself! As I write, I can almost feel parts of my brain understanding things differently than they did before. As Joan Didion once said, “I don’t know what I think until I write about it.”

4. It’s not that there are no obstacles. It’s that when obstacles emerge, resources emerge too. I’m reminded of a quote from Mother Teresa: “I know that God will not send me more than I can handle. But sometimes I wish God didn’t trust me so much.” During the time when I needed daily rides for medical treatments, I didn’t ask anyone to help with driving. When people found out that I was going to have daily treatments for several weeks, they offered to drive. My daughter created a schedule of drivers. Her biggest scheduling challenge? Who would be least offended if they didn’t get asked! More people volunteered than there were days of treatment. Here’s what I took from that experience. If we are this supported by fellow humans, think how supported we are by Divine Consciousness – that higher power that can create galaxies and universes.

5. Just start. Speaking of writing – or any project – you may have noticed that sometimes you stall around before you actually get going on some project that you know is important. Me too! When I avoid getting started, it’s usually because I’m anxious about some part of the project. I’m not sure how to do it, or I’m not sure it will turn out well. Now, after eight decades, I’ve noticed that if I just start, the anxiety begins to dissipate. ANY action is better than no action. One tinystep distracts the brain from its anxiety. One tiny step suggests the next step, and the next ...

6. It’s safe to be spiritual and soul-based. I’m coming out of the closet with a part of my life that I’ve been circumspect about for thirty-plus years. Sometime in my forties, I began to pay attention to my spiritual life. When I say “spiritual,” I don’t mean religious. I mean aspects of human awareness that are beyond physical, emotional and mental – the most expansive consciousness of which humans are capable. I’ve become passionate about ‘practical’ spirituality – expressions of spirit that make a positive difference in the physical, emotional and mental realms.

When I first began spiritual explorations, it was just a fun thing I was doing for myself. Gradually I realized that when I applied spiritual practices to the work I was doing the projects went better. I’d sit in my meditation chair and ask for the highest good for people affected by the project. Amazing things happened. I didn’t tell anyone about that part of my work. I was afraid my clients would think I was flaky. Then I had a client who was aware of the spiritual part of my work, and valued it. That was thrilling.

A book I wrote about *Transitions* incorporated information about spiritual practices. The book launch party was one of the favourite evenings of

After eight decades, each one of which included a few experiences that looked dark and scary but turned out to have hidden gifts.

my life. Eventually I realized that I just wanted to do the spiritual work – not the projects! Now I help people in their 50s, 60s and 70s to tap into their deepest inner wisdom. I host workshops and courses with titles like *12 Soul Powers for Turbulent Times*. A gift of being 80 is that I'm no longer afraid to be public about my spiritual life.

7. "Old" means whatever you think it does. Of milestone birthdays, the one that bothered me most was turning 30. I thought turning 30 meant you had to be a "grown-up" and you couldn't really have much fun anymore. I didn't look forward to turning thirty. Half a century later, I did not look forward to turning eighty. For years, my definition of "old" was "ten years older than my mother." When my mother was in her eighties, that got thin. I changed my definition of "old" to "ten years older than me." Having turned 80, that definition is also getting thin.

But wait! What's wrong with being old? I realized I had a lot of connotations about what 'old' meant – and none of them was flattering. I may not be able to change the cultural perceptions of what 'old' means, but I can change my own perceptions. Yep, compared with most people today, I'm old. "Old" just means I've lived more years than most people. How many years I've been alive is only a piece of information. It doesn't have to have any other meaning.

8. My assumptions about 80 may be incorrect. My assumptions about turning thirty turned out not to be accurate. My epiphanies about turning eighty may also turn out not to be accurate. The difference is now I know my assumptions may not be accurate. After eight decades, each one of which included a few experiences that looked dark and scary but turned out to have hidden gifts, I'm at peace with the understanding that what I assume may not be accurate. My brother has a saying I appreciate: "Every adversity contains the seeds of opportunity." Heading into my ninth decade, I am hopeful – but no longer insistent – that his saying is accurate.

After careers as a graphic artist, teacher, community developer and consultant to non-profit organizations, **Bonnie Hutchinson** now helps people in their 50s, 60s and 70s to tap into their deepest inner wisdom and make this the most fulfilling phase of their lives. As a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, she is keen on helping to raise humanity's vibration for future generations. Bonnie@BonnieHutchinson.com

As Joan Didion once said, "I don't know what I think until I write about it."

AS THE WHEEL TURNS



Top: Penn with her granddaughter Ula
Middle: Ula as Wonder Woman
Above: Gavin and Penn celebrate Penn turning 77

Penn Kemp's *A New Memoir: New Poems* explores the earliest stirrings of the creative imagination in childhood and the joys of associative thinking. With narrative skill and vivid sensual detail, it discovers and uncovers the effect of adult perspectives on a young mind, the puzzling life lessons of parents and teachers, the wisdom and heartbreak of nature. Ironic and lyrical, accurate and ambiguous, playful and profound, these finely tuned poems – whether enlightened moments or deep dives into an evolving self – flow with the ease and excitement that only a seasoned artist can bring. A book full of surprises and affirmation. pennkemp@gmail.com
www.pennkemp.weebly.com

Penn Kemp

“When the wisdom of the Grandmothers is heard, the world will heal.” – Hopi prophecy

Her Orbit of Ellipsis

My granddaughter is going as Wonder Woman for Halloween. She's practised swinging her Lariat of Truth so I'm reading up on Artemis,

protectress of young girls and the archetype for our current Wonder Woman. Arrow to hand, she alights on the mark, drawing her bow on intruders.

Artemis herds young *artoi*, girls of eight or so away from polis, the city, into wilder woods where she reigns Queen and they her willing apprentices stay

snared till puberty. *Artoi*, little Bears, they follow their Great Bear into the chase and Orion hides, the hunter hunted and flung out to constellation.

My granddaughter will go trick or treating and return with a gleeful sack full of eternal returns.

The Law of Sevens

What comes in sevens? The phases we know. Snow White was princess till seven, then shocked into a forest octave

till she was ready
at fourteen to know her
work: to be Queen. So I tell

my granddaughter who's impressed
with being seven! the weight
and roundness of cells, one
cycle complete.

At ten times her age
I contemplate the changing series
in the divine chaos we live.

The number seven will split us
opening the door to the world.

But she, my darling, starting all
over again, whistles away as we
do the round of beds and plates,
one for every dwarf and each of us.

As I age, I continue to find the creativity of children as inspiring as that of artists. My granddaughter's imagination is mythopoeic, in that she lives out archetypes that appeal to her. May we never lose that sense of adventure in living out our magic!

The wheel turns. My granddaughter is now a beautiful fourteen, as imaginative as ever. And when I turned 77 in August this year, I knew I was in for transition, since seven represents change for me.

But little did I know that my beloved husband would be admitted to hospital a week later and would die a month later. Seventy-seven so far has proved to be a season of immense shifts and swerves as I learn to live alone again in the house we so sweetly shared. I'm contemplating a new life, however different from the old age I'd hoped to live out with him. Consolation comes with grandchildren, their joys and lively presence, and in the unexpected freedom to become the elder I have been preparing for all my life.

CREATIVITY AS A SOURCE OF HOPE AND JOY

Theodora Harasymiw



I am an artist residing in Edmonton, Alberta. I am trained as a painter but I was drawn to mosaic about 12 years ago. My imagination has always been my companion. It was my imagination that created the girl on the other side of the mirror for me to talk with when I was lonely as a child. I had manifested something from nothing. That seemed like quite a superpower. It was the reason blank papers became grand opportunities to delve deeply into that which didn't rely on anybody else, and where images came to be that were the product of my own hand. At the time, I don't think I was aware that this was 'creativity,' despite people commenting and saying, "You're so creative!" "How do you think up these things?" I came to realize that creativity is a deep connection to my inner self, guiding me down a path of voracious curiosity about the world around me.

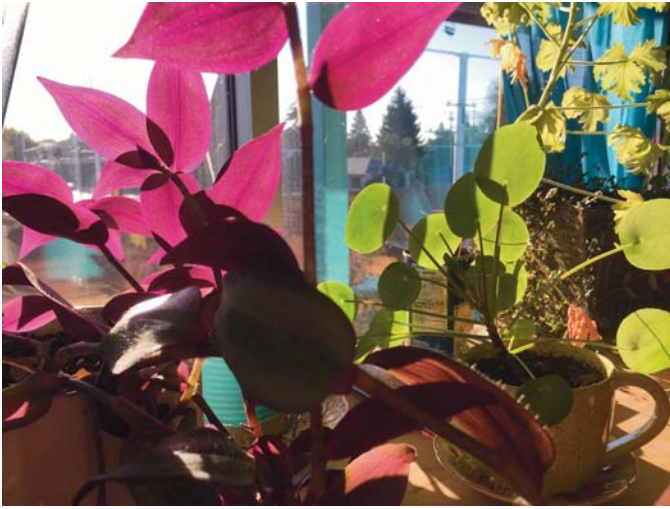
After spending 23 years facilitating Artist in Residency programs in schools throughout Edmonton, gradually it was revealed to me that I was not just teaching art, but observing how the creative process affects individuals. I gained insight during one of my times at the Glenrose Hospital working one on one with young students who were assisting me in painting murals in the hallways. My young assistants were struggling with different mental health challenges. I began to witness a common occurrence: they would be painting the mural alongside me, each of us in silence, when I would sense a shift in them. I sensed a movement from withdrawn and blocked to the moment when 'flow' began. We would lose ourselves in the process of painting and

being present in the moment. A calm would settle, and then they would begin to talk. They would be focused on painting, but they would start to tell me stories about their lives, or talk about something that happened to them, easily and comfortably. It was as if a channel had opened up to their souls as they found a rhythm with the paint brush. This place of flow brought serenity and solace. Looking back, I didn't clue in immediately, but, after a few years of returning for residencies, I came to wait and watch if flow would happen. It didn't happen with every student, but it did with many. There was simply an ease in many when they came to work with me.

It was during this time that I became curious

Colour study 1





Colour study 2

We were all born with the confidence to express our creativity, and, too frequently for many, something or someone has crushed it.

about what my daily dose of creativity was doing for me. The space of creating is where I spend most of my day. It keeps me grounded. It keeps me present. I believe myself to be a very intuitive, aware and connected person. I wondered, “Is this a result of spending so much time in contact with my inner self through creativity? Even on an unconscious level?” I used to believe this flow was simply because I am an artist and an emotional person. I began to wonder, and perhaps there is a bit of stereotyping here, but maybe we have the horse before the cart. Maybe I’m emotional because I spend so much time in a state of flow, working with my craft, and therefore in deeper connection with my soul? Anyone who knows what it is to be lost

in their flow knows how joyous a space that is. It feels as if this is where I am supposed to be – the real me, and nobody can take my *self* from me. Creativity has given me solid, unwavering confidence in myself and a drive to bring this experience to others.

Working in many communities with a diverse range of groups, I continually hear one of two things:

1. I don’t have a creative bone in my body, but I wish I did
2. I used to love drawing/singing/dancing/ (insert own version of self-expression), but someone told me I was bad at it, so I never did it again.

We were all born with the confidence to express our creativity, and, too frequently for many, something or someone has crushed it. This saddens me. The gift of tapping into creativity is something I dream of bringing to others, not of crushing it. When I think of a world with everyone hearing, listening and expressing their creative voices, I imagine freedom and a place filled with joy. Creativity should be a vast playground of boundless exploration where we get to connect on many levels. For me, creativity is a source of hope, joy and opportunity.

Theodora Harasymiw is best known for her large murals found throughout Edmonton, Alberta. They are colourful, graphic and often whimsical. Many are the final products of Artist-in-Residence projects with local schools. A graduate of the University of Alberta’s Fine Arts program, she majored in painting with a minor in the classics. Working in mosaic and paint, where both mediums have completely different effects, allows Theodora to express herself differently. She draws her influences from travels to Europe, the Middle East and Latin America, her strong Ukrainian heritage, and various forms of traditional craft.

“My passion is using art to bring together communities. I believe people are drawn to taking part in something bigger than themselves and I believe everyone has an artist inside, waiting for an opportunity to express itself. Some just don’t know it yet.”

THE GIFT OF VULNERABILITY



Davina Huey

If everything we say or do is our story, what kind of story am I telling today?

I am telling a story about a woman in her 50s who is looking within and feeling this well-worn blanket of self, appreciating both its strength and vulnerability. I relate to this word ‘vulnerable,’ as I know from experience that life is unpredictable. I think many of us are feeling that vulnerability in our current global reality. As difficult as vulnerability is to feel, I believe it opens emotional and spiritual doors and brings with it a sense of humility that seems to challenge our conditioned identities. When I think back to losing my husband to suicide, I remember I felt defenseless, as if all my beliefs about who I was could no longer protect me from feeling raw pain and loss. That vulnerable space drew me deeply inside, and I recognized how connected everything is. Grace allowed me to have the time to heal and gather insights enough to step slowly back into life.

Many transformational stories begin with a great calamity – an experience that takes one out of one’s prescribed idea of self. Life is not all unicorns and butterflies and, while those may show up, a transformational path is often gruelling and can white-knuckle any warrior. There is a crisis of identity, like a fire taking the ego’s home, and what is left behind is a new beginning. My experience left me feeling both fragile and aware of life from new eyes. This is just the beginning of the journey, and it has taken me on many adventures. Stories like this have often been called the Hero or Heroine’s Journey; they are all around us through movies, books and Indigenous teachings. I believe there are many heroes and heroines amongst us in our everyday lives, individuals who may not have written a book or even told anyone of their experience. They are quietly amazing and share their wisdom and creativity with their presence.

How can this journey of transformation lead us into creative states? The word ‘creative’ has descriptions such as inspired, imaginative, fertile and gifted. I think most adults would say that young children are creative and that they are inspired by a relationship that is fresh between themselves and the world. I am wondering if it’s this innocence or humility, the vulnerability that I spoke of earlier, that connects us to our creativity.

Most humans do not voluntarily like to choose vulnerable circumstances. Often, highly creative people actually struggle with an inner vulnerability, an intense sensitivity to their inner and outer environments. My own story is one of transformation and the realization that my life and sensitivities continue to ask me to stay alert and open to inspiration. I can see the power of imagination and taking risks in order to have a creative life. I know that when people hear ‘creative,’ they often say, “That’s not me. I can’t draw or

How can this journey of transformation lead us into creative states?



Top: Indigenous teachers. I am the one front row, right.

Above: *October Sky* band

sing or dance.” However, while those talents may spring from creativity, I believe creativity itself flows through everything, and our job is to stay open to receiving its call.

If we look at the words ‘inspired’ and ‘imaginative,’ these are places where anything could happen; choosing this state can belong to any of us. Possibly, by choosing to regard our own vulnerability as a gift, we can let that openness to what life might present help us to step into a creative state. That shift in perception and willingness to reframe my own trauma helped me to let life and its honest messiness be a part of my inspiration and creativity. Before the shift, my conditioning looked at loss, failure and vulnerability as weaknesses, embarrassing flaws that should be hidden.

I believe now that to be creative is to stand in the force of it all and still say I am here. Even if it feels rough and unrefined at first, keep stepping and see what happens. Surround yourself with people who encourage you to step in, who can celebrate you when you shine and hold you when you fall. Each day becomes a call and response between you and your creations.

I can feel this openness has led me to try new things, such as djembe drumming in a pyramid, ten-day-long silent meditation retreats, singing with my family on stage, making goofy animal sounds with children and even writing this article. This acceptance of myself and others is not done. I am on a journey that lasts a lifetime and I will continue to face the unknown with a myriad of states like fear, courage, joy and creativity.

Davina Huey has recently completed her Masters of Counselling and looks forward to being a support for people looking to unwind their trauma responses to life, to dive deep and get to know who they are, and to step into a meaningful and creative life. She has worked for nearly eight years at the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society and loves working with families and community. Her heart is very grateful and connected to Indigenous people. When Davina was 28 and diagnosed with Lupus and renal failure, a dream guided her to Indigenous healing ways. She feels the Indigenous healers and teachers who were so kind to share with her were an essential part of her healing. She is of Asian and European descent and appreciates the richness of cultural diversity. Davina is on the board of the Kelowna Arts Council and enjoys supporting many kinds of creative projects. She loves singing and guitar and is a member of a band called October Sky. Many of the band’s original songs were written by her husband Robert Macdonald. She looks forward to exploring writing, travelling and spending time with family and friends.

I believe now that to be creative is to stand in the force of it all and still say I am here.

THE MAGIC WHEN WE SHARE

Jacques G. LeBlanc, MD, FRCSC



Accepting that my patients and I are on a journey together was a powerful revelation.

Magic has a long and varied history and has captivated and enthralled people for over 2,500 years. Many believe that one has the power to influence the course of events by using mysterious or supernatural forces; a power that allows people (such as witches and wizards) to do impossible things by saying special words or performing special actions. Perhaps that magic is in all of us. Experiences people share, when two hearts are caring, in a slightly different way become our magic moments for all time. Time cannot erase the memory of these magic moments. And I am here to share one of these magical moments, a brief experience perceived as special in many ways.

It all started 30 years ago with the beginning of my career as a pediatric cardiac surgeon and, interestingly, three years ago, with the journey of writing my current book, these two magical stories come together. Let me explain. Going back 30 years, I have operated on and helped many neonates and infants, but somehow retirement came along and a new phase in my life took birth. What treasure in this birth, which I am only now discovering. My life is filled with memories of neonates, infants, children and families. For so many years mornings were similar. Going to work and doing surgery, helping babies and, as much as possible, making families whole and happy. I departed my practice in December 2009 and left some of the magic behind, not knowing it might still enlighten my life.

Along the way, I did what was needed to enjoy my life. To enjoy the memories of my career I came to realize that I needed to remember that I did not need to say goodbye to all. Well into my retirement, memories began to surface and celebrate the past, like a fairy tale. I realized I loved my career, the infants and children and the parents, and a single story would not be enough to celebrate all of them. I could not be moving forward and leaving all these life stories behind. I decided I would honour all these infants, children and families by joining them in their journeys and I would graciously accept to be still in their lives. Accepting that my patients and I are on a journey together was a powerful revelation.

Here begins the second story that started three years ago. I began to collect my ideas about my career, my career steps, some difficult, some challenging, some joyful, some painful. This process led to my new book, *Path of a Healer: a Time to Reflect*. Thirty years of practice came back slowly to my mind, after many days of questioning, of pondering and of unfolding multiple stories. I have to say that looking into my box of pictures, which I have kept preciously hidden, brought back so many stories, and the tears flowed. Several people along the way helped me, questioned me, and brought back the memory of such amazing information. My older brother's memories informed me and expanded my memories and understanding of our family. I had forgotten many aspects of growing up with him, my



Jacques and Marcus

Jacques LeBlanc retired after being a paediatric and adult cardiovascular and thoracic surgeon at B.C. Children's Hospital in Vancouver. Realizing that he had a lot to give back to his profession in the way of experience as a doctor, a teacher, a student of life, a husband and a human being seeking wellness in this rapidly changing world, he created leblancwellness.com. For the last few years he has been a regular contributor to *The Journal*, sharing a belief in recovering the connections we have lost and engaging the new skills we have gained to mitigate loneliness and create wellness.

father and mother and my family. Thank you Jean-Yves. My esteemed colleague Dr. Phil Ashmore was my mentor, friend and at times a father figure. It is with him that I explored the deepest moments of my life. What a conversation it has been! Thank you Phil. Our conversions are the foundation of my book.

Now the book is out, and here is my new magic. I have been blessed to be surrounded by amazing friends, friends who are new to my life path, but are always ready to learn in the most selfless way. One of these friends decided to organize a dinner, a small intimate gathering to celebrate the publication of my book. While it seems unlikely for a cardiac surgeon, I am a little shy to be celebrated in front of my friends, whom I consider to be accomplished in their amazing careers and lives. My wife and I arrive for dinner. The house, although a few weeks before Christmas, is absolutely beautifully decorated. I already know it is a special evening. Our friends are showing up in a full-spirited way despite all the limitations imposed by COVID.

Our hostess had asked me to read a few passages about the book. I had graciously accepted. Here we are sitting, sipping a wonderful warm red cinnamon wine in a magical Christmas living room. After a few warm words about this surgeon she did not know a few years ago, she announces that she has a surprise. Well, do I get a gift, or what? Nothing prepared me for what then happened. The doorbell rang. No, it cannot be DoorDash, as I know there is a wonderful dinner simmering on the stove top. Muffled voices are in the entrance and my friends and I are all wondering. We are sitting a little stiffly on the couch. A somewhat hesitant young woman appears with her 14-year-old son. The cat quickly came out of the bag. I did open-heart surgery on her son Marcus 14 years ago. Hugs, emotions and, despite those many years, I did recognize this loving young mother's face. I know very well that I cannot remember everybody after so many years, but she was there in my memory. I felt for Marcus who asked me if I remembered him, but I could not find any words other than to say that he had grown considerably since I had operated on him at 2 months of age. He laughed.

Life is a collection of events, of emotions and of connectivity, threads that weave together our shared humanity in ways that inspire. The day before our dinner, my friend was organizing her beautifully decorated table, placing red hearts all over the tablecloth. Her grandson was present with a long-time friend, who wondered, "Why so many hearts?" My friend explained, "Well, a cardiac surgeon is coming for dinner tomorrow." A revelation occurred for her grandson's friend, "I had open-heart surgery when I was young." He was not sure who the surgeon was, but at a click of text to his mother the answer came back: Dr. LeBlanc. My dear friend connected the dots to create a magic moment of reconnection for Marcus and me.

There were many, many times in my practice when families have thanked me, written me cards, sent me gifts, and I always felt amazingly privileged and honoured to do what I was doing. Because I do not perform pediatric cardiac surgery anymore, I no longer experience 'the surgical buzz,' if there is such a thing, but the magic remains and is present all around me. It is the magic of life unfolding, and it feels unbelievable.

WOMEN AND OUR NEED FOR CONNECTIVITY



Terri Maracle

Our stories are how we connect, so let us begin with a story.

Once upon a time...

In an ancient land, in a time long ago, there lived a community of women, in a village by a river.

Every week, the women would gather by the river to do their washing. Each would bring the clothes and materials from her family home and together they would use the river rocks to clean the items that their families had used all week.

The women enjoyed this weekly ritual. The chore was made much more enjoyable by sharing the work. Recipes and herbal cures were exchanged, support was given for household issues and ideas were explored, all to pass the time. The women were happy and content.

In time, the male leaders of the village became wary of the time the women were spending together. They feared the information the women were exchanging and the power they seemed to create when all together. The men watched as the women laughed and cried and hugged each other, suspecting they had secrets they were unwilling to share. Their camaraderie was perceived as threatening by the village leaders.

So, the village leaders decided to put an end to the women meeting. But they were afraid that if they demanded this, the women would become angry, and the village leaders were beginning to fear the power within the group of women.

An idea struck... The village leaders would provide each woman with a type of washing board so that she could keep it in her home. This would allow her to do her washing at her own convenience and not have to wait for washing day. This would be done to 'help' the women of the village by letting them know that the leaders were watching out for their welfare and trying to make their lives easier. The women would be safe at home, not open to the dangers that awaited them on the river's edge. Today, we might call this kind of thinking and explanation 'gaslighting,' or psychological manipulation for ulterior gain.

After each woman had been presented with her very own washing board, the village leaders started spreading stories with the intention of demeaning the activities of the group washing time. The sharing of information became known as gossip, and belittled to something no decent woman would want to take part in. The free and open sharing of recipes and herbal

Our stories are how we connect.



My Hearth

Women are remembering the importance of belonging to a community of women.

cures became selective, creating cliques and leaving some women out of the inner circle. The most powerful of healers were labelled as witches, and of course no one wanted to be associated with a witch! Fear for the safety of the women 'alone' down by the river was introduced. Slowly but surely the divisiveness found its way into the psyche of the women, and the seeds of discontent and unease began to grow. The women began to eye each other with suspicion. They stayed home to avoid the gossip, the cliques, and of course the association with a potential witch. Soon they began to praise the village leaders for their thoughtfulness in providing the beautiful washing boards and for showing such concern for their safety.

But in time the women became lonely. The washing was now convenient, but a chore. The sharing of stories that once eased their drudgery and made them feel connected was tainted as gossip. They no longer felt they belonged to a community of women that had been like sisters. Soon loneliness became isolation.

So began the patriarchal way of living. Women were no longer equal members of a thriving community, but became the protected chattels of their husbands. Losing both their status as wise women who cared for the community and the balance with the leaders' masculine energy eroded the women's sense of belonging and unity within the entire community.

Once Upon a Time has now become modern times. Women have realized what has been lost. In exchange for household conveniences, security and social status, they have given up their collective experience of the feminine soul. Women are remembering the importance of belonging to a community of women. They are appreciating the strengths in each other and the complementary exchange of their unique skills. They are recognizing the cost of feeling the jealousy and fear instilled in them over the millennia by being encouraged to aspire to and compete like men.

In response to our growing yearning, we are rekindling the joy that comes from sharing stories and remedies. We feel the excitement forming in the pits of our stomachs as we remember our need for belonging. As natural nurturers we know we need the community of women to care for ourselves. We remember we are stronger together. We are safer together in our societies and in our natural world. We understand our gatherings should not be feared by our modern 'village' leaders, because it is the blend of masculine and feminine that brings balance and prosperity to this world struggling under our current unbalanced lifestyle. We did not forget, we only needed to remember.

Upon reflection on my own life, my happiest times are when I am connected to a like-minded group of women. With my friends, I have learned to do things that I might otherwise never have attempted, making me stronger and more independent, and, most importantly, giving me the absolute knowledge that I am capable of doing anything I choose to do. This gift from my sister women is priceless.

From my mother and grandmother I remember healing remedies – a



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 If you dare
 But be prepared
 To give up
 That which restrains you.

shot of brandy for shock, a cool cloth on a fevered forehead, fresh, brisk air for congestion. These threads of remembrance have stayed safely buried in me, in each of us. Deep down, we all knew that one day we would need to return to and access these threads to balance the scales. We know that women are happiest when they feel connected to family, friends and to groups of like-minded collaborators.

The coronavirus pandemic temporarily sent me back onto the path of isolation. No in-person socializing, no hugs from my grandchildren, no face-to-face intimate conversations, no family gatherings over the holidays. Just masks, social distancing and telecommunications. Despite the frustrations, I discovered that I am resilient. My need for connectivity is so strong that soon video chatting became my new method of connecting with family and friends, and for doing business. It was good, not perfect, but good. I learned that we women will always find a way, as it is deep in our souls to connect with each other. Like our ancient sisters who received the ‘gift’ of washboards, I realized that my isolation was threatening my connectivity, and so decided I could not allow it, that I would find a way.

So, my friends gather around. My kitchen hearth is glowing with firelight and crackling with anticipation. My table is set for tea (or whiskey) and we will begin rebuilding our souls, one story at a time.

As a Canadian woman coming of age in the 1960s, **Terri Maracle** discovered that freedom, authenticity and sovereignty were the real magic that created a life of peace and serenity. Now in her sixties, Terri encourages other women to reclaim their own pathway to peace and serenity and to make their lives more meaningful through connectivity with others, by rediscovering their roots and remembering their wings. Terri is currently working on a manuscript aptly titled *Roots & Wings*. terriblairmaracle@gmail.com

**Women will always
 find a way, as it is deep
 in our souls to connect
 with each other.**

THE LOST ONES

Dianna Watson White Eagle Woman



The Children of the Earth were brought to foreign and mysterious prisons against their will, where their connection to “all that is” was banned. Within the darkened halls of these institutions with crosses on their doors, the black robed ones had a mission from those higher up. Could those offenders not see the purity and Light in these precious little ones? Or did they see it and fear it, as it may have appeared more powerful than they?

It is not possible to beat the Light out of someone’s soul. To punish and abuse a child in an attempt to dim that Light was sadly misrepresented as “the work of God.” The Light within us all never disappears. It can only be hidden from our view, by choice. Did the perpetrators not see the Light within themselves?

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established June 1, 2008 with the purpose of documenting the history and lasting impacts of the Canadian Indian Residential School System on Indigenous students and their families. In the spirit of “Truth,” our country has recently been presented an opportunity to see and hear clearly some disheartening details of our Canadian history. This begs important questions to be considered: How did this go on for so long without any accountability for the missing children? How can we educate ourselves to understand those traumatized by the sometimes unconscionable abuse better? How can we be more compassionate in our connection to our Indigenous brothers and sisters so the past never repeats itself?

I share with you a common Lakota phrase used by many native people: “All My Relations.” It carries the belief that we are all interconnected; all races, all the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom, the stone people, the star nation. We are all children of our Creator. It speaks to the principles of harmony, unity and equality. If the colonizers understood this statement, they would know that what they did to the innocent, they did to themselves. This is the Natural Law.

Those precious children’s vessels were laid to rest within the womb of Mother Earth, their souls held lovingly by Her, until their bodies were and continue to be uncovered. Now the families that remain can begin to let go of that mystery of why their children never came home, and may the journey of healing begin. Not only for those families, but all those others throughout the 162 years, who also experienced the abuse, pain and suffering within their time in the residential school system. This includes those emotionally harmed and damaged by the intergenerational trauma that continues to this day.

Let not all their sufferings and passings go without finding the blessing within. Their souls’ gift could have been to sacrifice their lives so that we may

Drum circle





Top: Teaching drum making
Above: Drumming at Sacred Tree

all learn about Dignity, Respect, Acceptance of differences and the true meaning of Love. May the perpetrators find Humility in their hearts and acknowledge the truth of what really occurred. And may Forgiveness find a place in all our hearts. Even from this place of deep sadness we can choose LOVE.

Today, I feel hopeful in the services my partner and I offer, teaching Indigenous culture to those who had their traditional ways torn from their ancestors. We strongly believe, and see the results, that culture heals. Many of our students reconnect to their soul's calling, their ancestors' ways and Mother Earth while making their own hand drums and learning their elders' songs. It fills the empty spaces in their hearts where addiction was once the only escape from their pain.

Our students' forefathers understood the importance of ceremonies such as the Sacred Pipe Ceremony, the Sun Dance Ceremony, the Sweat Lodge Ceremony, to name a few. We offer this knowledge to those who, sadly, never had the opportunity to learn from their parents or grandparents. The Medicine Wheel is a powerful healing tool which our First Nations ancestors lived by hundreds of years ago. They used it for personal inner reflection and self improvement. Today you may see it referred to as the Wellness Wheel. The Seven Grandfather Teachings, sometimes referred to as the Seven Sacred Teachings, of Love, Respect, Truth, Honesty, Courage, Humility and Wisdom are attributes all nations could live by. The world would be a much healthier place if these precious gifts were honoured and taught to all cultures from an early age.

Once an individual knows, and is allowed to practise the traditional ways of their culture with pride, they develop the capacity to open a doorway to gaining a deeper sense of self. From this place of self-confidence and inner knowingness, they can become more creative and healthy contributors to their families and their community at large.

This quote summarizes my wishes for a better world: "Throughout the world may there be a dawning of Hope. Within each heart may there be an awakening of Love." – Author unknown

Dianna Watson is a First Nations Algonquin from the Temiskaming band in northern Ontario. Her spirit name is White Eagle Woman. Since moving to Kelowna in 1994, Dianna has spent over 20 years in the holistic alternative energy healing world. Since 2010, she has been actively learning more about her native heritage by participating in and hosting drumming circles, attending and supporting indigenous events and sacred ceremonies. Her First Nations mentor and partner has been very instrumental in her growth and education around native history, culture and traditions. Together they offer indigenous teachings about the Medicine Wheel and the Seven Sacred Teachings. They also offer drum- and rattle-making workshops, Healing Circles, Sweat Lodge ceremonies and Sacred Pipe ceremonies. Their acceptance of being a carrier of the Sacred Pipe guides their commitment to be in service, supporting those in need in their community. Through indigenous teachings and ceremonies, they believe culture heals.

Dianna makes Kelowna her home and can be reached at iamdianna@shaw.ca.

ARRIVING AT MY OWN NEW DOOR

Brenda Weinberg



The image of arriving at my own new door and beginning a new stage of life has energized me.

When I read the Kabat-Zinn expression about personal well-being and contentment, “Arriving at your Own Door,” in the last issue of *The Journal*, his description gave birth to a profound new image for me. I have learned that salient images often develop into personal healing and generative forces. Reflecting on Kabat-Zinn’s “arrival,” I know that my image has a companion, a sense of anticipation about a new stage of life, and that my expression is slightly revised: “Arriving at My Own New Door.”

One year ago, I consciously initiated a life change. That was during the Covid-19 crisis when travel and gathering with others outside of one’s personal bubble were severely restricted. That was a time during which I had not seen my daughter and her family for 15 months. Having retired from my psychotherapy practice a few years earlier, I decided to leave my Toronto home for a new apartment close to that family in British Columbia where they had recently moved to a house on the ocean with a mountainous landscape in the distance.

The need or desire to move from a place long lived in is not unusual for people my age. I have lived in Ontario most of my life. Until recently, I had no will or reason to change that fact, although I sometimes said, in a non-grounded manner, that I would love to live by the ocean and mountains. I did not ever expect to do it.

Since selling my home and storing my belongings, I learned that my transition to my new uncompleted apartment has been delayed by at least three months. Now, I have time for conscious integration of my life experiences, a process common to older people. Review, sorting, discarding and packing papers and photos initiated the process, now intensified by the image provided by Kabat-Zinn. The image of arriving at my own new door and beginning a new stage of life has energized me. I feel a sense of grounding, of holding the thread, as I continue engaging with my “school of integrative studies” that appeared in a night dream, propelling me to enter a doctorate programme twelve years ago.

Images come to me through night dreams, daydreams, lapses of thinking, creative activities and meditation. One day, in a chakra meditation and collage workshop, my image arrived in two parts. The first featured a lone bird standing still on one leg, with wings at the sides of her body. The second showed a similar white bird with powerful wings outstretched and full of tension, as if ready to lift off. I knew a few minutes later, in that mysterious way we know in dreams, that the birds were ibises. I had little familiarity with them, except I knew that they were long-legged wading birds with long,



Ibis Woman

curved-down bills.

Following our meditation, in the workshop we looked through magazines for collage images. Collage is an interesting art form that may reveal vistas for people to explore their complex identities and their relationship to knowledge and knowing. When looking for pictures, I could find no ibises, so I used cranes instead. The ibis stand-ins were acceptable within myself to maintain an integrity essential to the creative work engaging me.

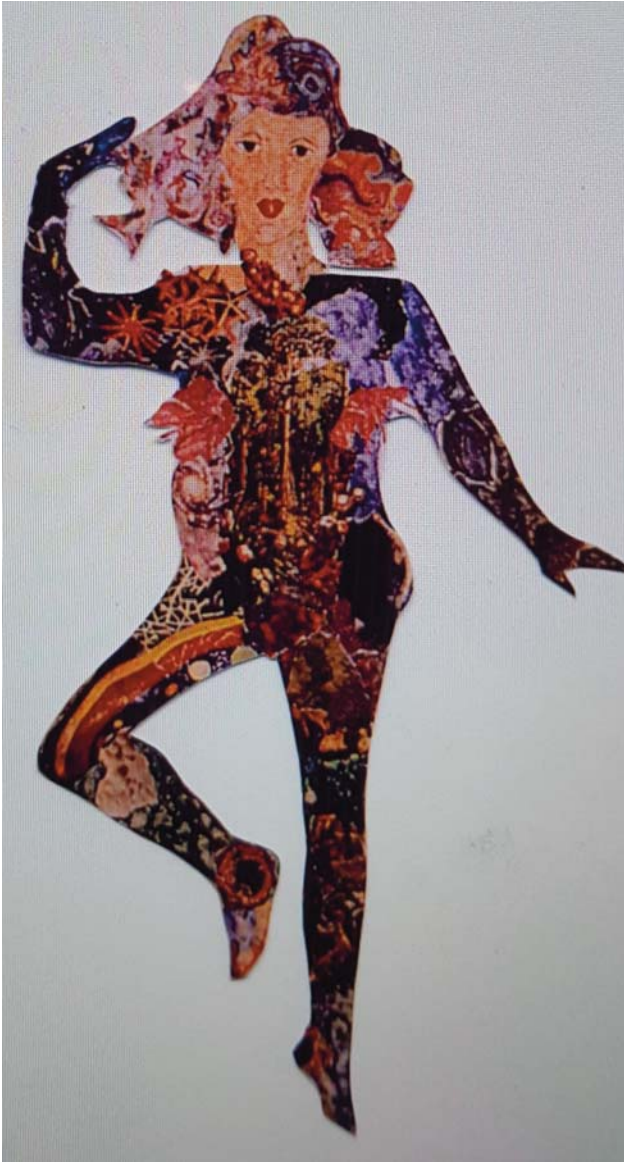
A few minutes into the phase of looking for pictures, the workshop facilitator brought me an image of two large white birds (cranes) engaged in a dance. I saw the difference in postures as indicative of an active, rather than static, process so I incorporated that image into my creative endeavour. Soon after, I found a picture resembling that of the lone bird standing on one leg.

Further exploration provided me with a photo from a Korean magazine that attracted me because the white around the woman's head suggested a large hat of white feathers that linked her with the birds and instinctive spiritual energy. Serendipitously, I came across a few images of white-winged women in different positions. The completed collage, which I titled *Ibis Woman*, held a numinous quality for me that satisfied my aesthetic perception and felt whole or complete. At the time, I had no idea what the woman or birds meant in my life.

Following the creative period described above, I held two questions, unanswered: Who is Ibis Woman in me? What am I to learn from this image and experience? In time, I had the answers. As well, I was able to integrate this image with dreams I had during the period, stories I heard from my Korean students about their culture and history, and my own fatigue and need for care that resulted from overextending myself.

In another art process group, we engaged in body-tracing. I assumed the pose of a classical dancer: one leg bent at the knee, foot near my other knee, one hand, palm up, raised towards the sky, and the other hand, palm down, facing the floor. My hand positions reflected a Spirit-Matter/Nature connection. For two months, I lived with the figure unfinished before collaging her body with cut-out pictures of Nature and painting her face and hair. Six years later, I used the figure for a requisite symbol paper for certification in Sandplay Therapy. She became *Dancer: The Inner Artist Archetype*.

I would never have called myself a dancer, although she, *Dancer*, became one of the most significant images I created. *Dancer*, reflecting the natural world, emanated from creations of my inner world as much as a manifestation of an outer activity. For me, it was soul work that echoed a powerful connection to Nature, which I established in my early years with my father. He was a quiet man who was able to hold a space in which I could sense the



Collage of *Dancer: Inner Artist Archetype*

world-at-large, while feeling that we were a part of it.

With my father, I could hear the murmurings of voices of others in that world-at-large. Reflecting, I remember wandering the woods together at my grandparents' farm. The silence was broken only by birdcalls, the sound of cicadas, and the rustling of the last fall's dried leaves underfoot as we hunted for partridge nests in the spring and mentally counted olive eggs from a distance. I remember turning over rocks to see what lived beneath them, looking in hollow trees, and watching hawks soar and circle overhead.

In her book *The Eros of Everyday Life: Essays on Ecology, Gender and Society* (1995), Susan Griffin describes the intimacy with which a child knows Nature:

"It is as a child that one has a different experience of what it is to know the world, Eros not yet restricted to a game of dominance. Flowers, animals, hummingbirds, and dragonflies that still speak. . . . A wave crashing on the shore, leaves falling one by one in a forest, the sun rising up over the crest of a hill, all this is magic and portentous with meaning."

I connect my childhood experiences of Eros metaphorically with my adult life, imagining turning over rocks, looking in hollow trees and glancing upwards as I try to peer into the dark recesses of the soul and unconscious and engage in meaning-making personally. Recalling that imagined experience, I again notice the seemingly silent inner spaces. I track my bodily sensations, internal energy flows and bodily symptoms, the small, furry, pre-human 'creatureness' of my intuition, instincts and bodily

knowing through listening to their murmurings. To hear, I must slow down and attend on many levels.

In *Earthbodies: Rediscovering Our Planetary Senses* (2002), Glen Maziz writes:

"We have . . . learned from myriad voices of the earth – from flowers, rocks, and birds. We can at any moment slow down, attend to nuances, and to the layers and webs of meaning. Then we would start listening to what Bachelard called – the murmuring among things."

In contrast, he also writes:

"We can also choose not to hear any of these voices, then the world is just made up of physical masses in motion that collide with each other in certain generalizable ways."

I am thankful for my father's introduction to the murmurings of Nature so that I developed what Maziz calls a "different sort of ear." This ear has enriched those many years beyond my early childhood.

Arriving at my own new door, I will hear the murmurings of different voices of Nature.

Now, at 82-years-old with cane in hand, I am unable to walk easily in Nature. As I reflect, I know it was this different sort of ear that helped me listen to human beings who spoke in familiar and unfamiliar tongues arising from their experiences with diverse family and cultural traditions. My clients and students opened my heart to their experiences through not only their utterings, but also the silences enveloping their words and the rhythms connecting them. I tried to know them through their words, their silences, their pauses, which poet and educator George Kalamaras made me aware, “act[ed] in a reciprocal fashion in the construction of knowledge.” As a Sandplay therapist, I heard the silences and voices as unique and energizing and saw the empty spaces in sandtrays as invigorating and pregnant with potential.

Arriving at my own new door, I will hear the murmurings of different voices of Nature – the sea and gusting wind, and other non-humans. I anticipate this with excitement.

Brenda Weinberg reflects:

“Although I am retired now in Canada, until the Covid-19 crisis began I was teaching and supervising Sandplay Therapy in Korea for two separate months each year. If the pandemic ceases, I may return to that work. Prior to my retirement, I practised as a psychotherapist/Sandplay therapist in private practice and for the North York (now Toronto) Board of Education in schools for children with developmental delays. I am a teaching member and final case reader for the *International Society for Sandplay Therapy* (ISST) and, until my retirement from the *Ontario Society for Psychotherapists*, I was also a teaching member and supervisor for the *Canadian Association for Sandplay Therapy* (CAST).

My knowledge of the work world is broad. In the 1960s, before I worked in a bookstore, became a mother and began my repeated activity of “going back to school” to study psychology and psychotherapy and finally attain my doctorate, I worked in a bank as a secretary, in a polio lab as a technician, in an elementary school as a first- and second-grade teacher, and for the *National Film Board* as an educational researcher.

Now, at 82-years-of-age, with limited mobility, I have recently moved from my long-lived-in townhouse in Toronto to Victoria, B.C., where I am temporarily residing with my daughter and her family until my new apartment is completed. This recent move is the impetus for my article.”

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AGING WITH AWARENESS



Tenneson Woolf

What Now?

What now in this journey
that has me whispering
more readily to God?
Calling out for connection,
calling out to remember a feeling,
calling out to not get lost.
What now in this journey
of commitment
to find my way home?

Seen

I stand at a kitchen sink window
in a home
that has held a group of us
for several days.
A woman is leaving,
saying goodbyes.
I put down a dish,
to hug her.
She blesses me, whispering slowly into my
ear,
for being the man that I am.
She holds me, in close,
being the woman that she is.
There is such power and gift
in being seen.

Levels of Joy

I am
learning
that joy
has many levels.
There is
the joy that is
external and ready,
right in front of us.
It's puppies,
sunshine,
the leaves turning colors, and birthday
cake.
This joy
pivots the moment
to
delight.
And then
there is the joy underneath that that is
belonging.
Mmm, yes,
joy
through
inherent affiliation.
It's families,
friends,
neighbors,
and united diverse fits.
This joy
syncs us
to
shared humanness.
And then
there is joy
that is belonging
with life itself.
This one
carries us
deep to
being.
It's existing.
It's breath.
It's feeling.
It's this moment, now.
This joy
makes
time stand still
Wondrously.

Integrate the Remnants

I wish
for space
between
to-dos,
to let
the remnants
integrate.
I wish
for peace
with
brain and heart
to let
it all
dwell peacefully.

Tenneson Woolf explains, "All of my life, I've been a person with as much interest in the unseen as I have had in the seen. That has led me to a professional life of facilitation, leading workshops, teaching and, more recently, writing to invite relationships with wisdom and soulfulness. I'm originally from Edmonton, Alberta. I now live in a small town where urban meets rural in Lindon, Utah, in a valley at the foot of the Wasatch Mountains." I can be reached at www.tennesonwoolf.com.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

Annabel Stanley



I have worked hard in the past year (my entire life probably) to prepare for an exhibition that opened in the courtyard at the Kelowna Art Gallery this last September and will be on site until September 2022. The exhibition is called *The Circle of Life* and encompasses the theme of sacred geometry, bees and various forms of three-dimensional spheres.

This project was created as my thirty-year marriage was crumbling around me, and I was evolving who I am. I have always had a creative project on the go, making earrings in my teens, sketching as I travelled around the world, floristry – which began in London, England, in the later 80s and continued as I married and moved on to Whistler, B.C., and onto New Zealand in the early 90s.

My creativity branched out, forgive the pun, when I started to play with weaving, using locally sourced materials that included willow and vine canes. I started with some basic spheres, which led to some fantastic vine cane candelabras hanging from a marquee roof for *Toast Martinborough* in the Wairarapa, New Zealand, at its annual wine celebration. These works were heavy, and I am lucky none came crashing down. Learning new techniques as I rolled has been an adventure.

The Circle of Life exhibition



Our son was born in '97 and by the age of 5 he started having seizures that put him in hospital. The first one came the morning of a local wedding, and I had to send father and son off in an ambulance as I whizzed together the bouquets and table centres and then dropped them off early so I could join my family in hospital. Very quickly, after our son was diagnosed with autism, I realized I couldn't be in retail and on call for the continued trips to hospital. So, when we moved to the Okanagan in 2003, we purchased an acreage with a vineyard, and I combined my weaving with working the grapes. Closing the gates of the vineyard to tend to family is easier than closing the door to a business reliant on retail and customers walking in the door.

When I was home with a sick child, I loved the opportunity to be creative as it always gives me a meditative, calming focus. I remove myself from



Annabel weaving

My form of art has helped me through an emotional last decade.

‘what ifs’ about the past or worries about the future to be present only with the here and now. The smell of willow, alder, poplar or moss makes me feel I am out in the bush – free in nature. In the bend of the vine canes I weave, those very same canes that I have pruned and nurtured for a year to produce the Pinot Noir grapes that are an important part of my income; I imagine *The Circle of Life*. I love the natural fibre – the connection to our ancestors who have woven before me to create vessels to carry produce, or in which to sail across the seas in coracles or currachs. The natural regrowth of the vine continues to supply more material to weave with, year in year out, for millennia, and again I imagine *The Circle of Life*.

My form of art has helped me through an emotional last decade as my ex removed himself both emotionally and physically from our family and home. While this transition has not been easy to talk about, continuing to design and plan for an artistic future – when my own emotional future was so precarious – has filled my mind with a different passion. Creative construction fills my brain, placating the stress.

I draw solace and inspiration from the story of a well-known willow artist in Ireland, Louise McLean. She recently posted on Instagram her latest creation of an Irish creel basket inspired by her childhood in Derry, Northern Ireland, during the Troubles in the seventies. To escape the bomb threats and daily nightmares, her family escaped for caravan holidays to the coastal town of Ballycastle where she would watch the fishermen coming ashore with various baskets for their catch. Weaving, she replaced an unhappy time with a happy memory, inspiring her future.

Weaving has been a salve during the worrying times of health challenges for my son – a fulfillment of body, mind and spirit as I immerse myself in the planning and collecting of natural fibres from the beautiful Okanagan valleys and mountains with my dogs alongside. Then, weaving what I collect into a finished creation and ultimately sharing with the public brings fulfillment. I also love to teach my art so that others can learn and practise this ancient tradition, as no one is ever too old or too young, as long as their fingers work. I enjoy the shared energy that a group of weavers creates, as conversations roll and experiences are shared. Then there is the gift of pride in a completed piece taken home and shown off and, hopefully, shared with others.

I can be a bit of a task master and have to remind myself that it is the journey, not the destination, that matters – the lessons we learn along the way, that joy and happiness have to be part of our daily lives, and knowing that my happiness in weaving has been such a big part of my life journey. Creation and art with natural fibres is part of my DNA; it is a part of who I am. I think the phoenix had to burn to emerge from the fire and push me to



Top: Working in my vineyard

Above: Our dog Snoopy loves my weavings

embrace my creative heritage for myself and my son. My father is from a long line of artists; his great-grandfather was Charles Augustus Henry Lutyens, a famous painter specializing in portraits and horses. My father's great-uncle was Sir Edwin Lutyens, described by British writer and architectural historian Gavin Stamp as "Surely the greatest architect of the twentieth century." Praise indeed.

My mother is very creative. I would awake some mornings with a stitched or knitted surprise for my small selection of dolls or stuffed miniature animals. She was also a great gardener, trained at Waterperry Gardens near Oxford under the stern tuition of English horticulturist Beatrix Havergal.

I am who I am because my art has created me. My creativity has given me the ability to live the life I do with my many friends and family here in the Okanagan and around the world as I share my story.

"Smile and the world smiles with you, cry and you cry alone." –Stanley Gordon West

"Smile and the world smiles with you. Slobber and they'll put you out doors." – Snoopy

Annabel Stanley is a natural fibre artist, weaving for over twenty years with vine canes, dogwood, willow, moss and other materials, giving a vibrant natural effect when exhibited inside and outside. Influenced by willow artist Serena De La Haye and environmental sculptor Andrew Goldsworthy, Annabel has studied with coracle builder Peter Faulkener, trained in willow sculpture with Julieann Worrall Hood in Wiltshire, England, and later learned new styles of weaving with Martha Cloudsley from B.C. On her vineyard, bordering the McDougall Rim hiking trails in West Kelowna, Annabel and her dogs regularly walk and gather.

Annabel has exhibited her works in New Zealand and B.C., and has been featured in *The NZ Gardener*, *NZ Cuisine*, on *NZ National TV* and in the first edition of *Sculpture Pacific in Canada*.

Sharing her time between family, working in her vineyard, weaving and teaching workshops as well as coaching cross-country skiing for the Special Olympics keeps Annabel smiling with enthusiasm for life.

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**I am who I am because
my art has created me.**

DREAM TIME

Destanne Norris



Do you remember daydreaming as a child? I wonder how many of you still daydream. To give ourselves time to drift off into reverie, to imagine ourselves in another reality or new possibility is healthy and good for us according to recent research. (No proof needed for children who innately daydream and love doing it because it feels good; it's fun and it's play.)

In the summer of 2020, when I visited the small village of New Denver in the West Kootenays where I had all my elementary school years, a flood of memories from my childhood – dreams and images – came floating back into my mind. I can relate to writer Julian Barnes' idea that “memories of childhood were the dreams that stayed with you after you woke.” One of those childhood dreams was my dream of becoming an artist.

The summer of my return, as I looped around the two main streets on my motorcycle, I discovered the seasonal local art gallery called the Hidden Garden Gallery. I learned the gallery was run by a group of dedicated artists and art supporters. I imagined myself exhibiting my artwork in this venue. What would it be like to return, as a visual artist and author in my seventh decade, to this historic town on the shores of the pristine Slocan Lake – to this quiet place I once called home and where people I knew still lived? My vision manifested this past July 2021 at the Hidden Garden Gallery in an exhibition that I entitled *Dream Time*.

The artworks in the exhibition were a combination of acrylic paintings and painted wooden cutouts. The brightly coloured paintings with gestural brushwork and movement were acrylic landscapes, in a way like dreamscapes, derived from imagination, memory and intuition. This new body of work began to emerge four months after the publication of my book, *Leah's Gift: A Story about Reframing Loss*, about the loss of my daughter twenty-five years ago. I was filled with an exuberant way of 'breathing life in' – much like a curious, happy child, despite the pandemic that was affecting the world around me. My new work mirrored this *joie de vivre*.

I saw in some of the paintings I had made these interesting cloud shapes that were biomorphic in nature. I pondered these shapes – the meaning and symbolism of clouds, and how various shapes like these would look as cutouts of wood, then painted and mounted a couple of inches off the wall. I wasn't set up in my studio with woodworking tools or woodworking skills to speak of, but my dad, David Norris, who is 83 years old, was. I explained my idea to my dad and what I would love his help with. Without hesitation he gave me his time and expertise and made space for me and my project in his shop. I worked with him most days over a two-week period.

While I learned from him how to use a bandsaw, belt sander and spiral sander safely, most meaningful to me was the time we spent together and the



Middle: Poster, *Dream Time*

Above: Entrance to *Dream Time* at Hidden Garden Gallery



Top: Three generations share
Middle: Destanne working with her dad on
the cutouts
Above: Cutout, *Dreamscape Ten in situ*

Destanne Norris was awarded a BFA (Honours) Degree in Painting and Drawing from the University of Victoria in British Columbia in 1987 and a Master of Fine Art Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, in 2009. She has also participated in a number of art-in-residence programs.

Norris' paintings have been exhibited in Canada, Australia and Germany in public, university, artist-run and commercial galleries. Her paintings have been purchased by many national and international private collectors and are found in corporate and public collections: the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Pentiction Art Gallery, Jasper National Park, the Consulate General Japan and Finning Canada, to name a few. She is represented by Gallery Odin, Silver Star Mountain, B.C., and Headbones Gallery, Vernon, B.C.

<https://www.destannenorris.com/>

greater insight into his life I received as we explored memories and his recollections of what life was like for him during the years we lived in New Denver when I was a young girl. I found out more about my dad and saw his life in his hands; I watched him as we sat and hand-sanded the rough edges on the wooden cutouts; his well-worn, generous palms and thick fingers – reflecting a lifetime of hard work – know so much. His hands that held and cared for his family, these two hands contain his heart and the hearts of his family.

I documented dad and our time working together with my iPhone in digital images and videos with the intention of having a short film made about my exhibition process. My 23-year-old niece, Justine Robert, a diploma graduate of the Vancouver Film School, was the perfect person to ask for help. Thankfully, she was between film series (she is the second camera person on the *Nancy Drew* TV series), and she excitedly agreed to create a video for me. It was a special, distant collaboration between us using technology. I shared my unedited video footage, still images and exhibition information with her, then she brought the story to life incorporating some of her own videos and using her talents in editing and video creation. The result was *Dream Time: A Peek into the Exhibition Process*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2Zb6B4PsRo&t=45s>, a nine-minute video on my exhibit.

Many people commented on feeling uplifted when they came to see the *Dream Time* exhibition of colourful, seriously playful paintings and painted wooden cloud-shaped cutouts, which hung like punctuation marks around the more traditional-shaped paintings. They may have felt some of the joy that I did when I was in the process of making the artwork and preparing for the exhibition, though they may not have known it as such.

“No man is an island entire of itself...” writes poet John Donne. This is certainly true when it comes to dreaming an art exhibition into being. It includes everything and everyone that helps to make an exhibition happen and then experiencing it – it’s much bigger and more than the artist who is just part of the whole. *Dream Time* was an example of this and filled me with a grateful heart. I’m grateful for the knowledge I gained and the deeper connections I felt through my intergenerational collaborations with my dad and niece Justine (which spanned three generations and sixty years in my family). I’m grateful for the authentic communication I experienced and the new and renewed relationships that were created; and, lastly, I’m grateful for the time to dream.

Dreaming is vital for well-being; when we rest and relax our minds, when we allow ourselves to tap into our imaginations, our unconscious minds, our intuition, there is healing. When we are creative, we may realize new possibilities and may make new discoveries that may, at some level, make a difference. Take a little *dream time*, you’ll be thankful you did.

SAGE-ING WITH CREATIVE SPIRIT, GRACE & GRATITUDE

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Sage-ing With Creative Spirit, Grace and Gratitude exists to honour the transformational power of creativity. We are a quarterly journal intended as an initiative for collaboration and sharing. We present the opportunity for the free exchange of wisdom gleaned from creative engagement. We invite all ages to contribute their discoveries.

Sage-ing is about seeking - satisfying inner gnawing and transforming it to knowing and action. Ageing can be alchemy when one allows the realisation that to *Know Thyself* and contribute that knowing to our culture is indeed one of life's highest purposes. That knowing brings the gratitude, grace and integrity that a life deserves. The creative journey into self is a strong aid to health and well-being for the individual and to our culture.

This journal exists for all those serious in exploring their creativity, in a chosen expression. It is a forum for publication and exposure to other artists, both emerging and established. It is an easel for any form of artistry undertaken out of personal intuition and imagination.