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July 2021
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Our July cover photograph was taken by Thu Tran of 2TPhoto. Photography fuels Tran, an Atlanta-based yoga, family and destination wedding photographer. She loves to feel the energy of what she sees, and make it radiate through her lens. She feels the most alive when she is behind the camera, outdoors, traveling, and or with her family. Tran has previously contributed photos for our yoga section on numerous occasions, and we are grateful! The cover photo was taken at Elohee Center, a retreat facility about 50 miles north of Atlanta in Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia.

For more information: 2TPhoto.com and Elohee.org.

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Raw Chef Winners Crowned

The theme of this year’s raw food competition at the Wonderful Wizard's Raw, a lively three-day festival celebrating raw food, was “aphrodisiacs,” and the winners were: Larese Dockery of IAMOH Herbals in first place, Chanda Lee of Tassili Raw Living in second; and Salice of MetaStated Magic in third. The festival was held the first weekend in June in the backyard of Tassium’s Raw Reality Cafe in Atlanta’s historic West End. “Our annual event is an opportunity to encourage raw food chefs to experience friendly competition and to be creative, knowledgeable, and to think outside the box,” says Tassium Ma’at, founder and owner of the cafe. Dockery’s offering was a chocolate–raspberry sea moss jelly she calls IAMOH Herb-Infused Wild Sea Moss Gel. “It was so good it just tasted sexy!” said Ma’at, who served as one of the competition’s five judges. “And all the sensual ingredients in there to activate and sustain arousal were combined in such a healthy way that it got unanimous agreement by the judges.”

Lee’s offering was pizza. Says Ma’at: “The second-place contestant would have been first if the competition was just based on the food. The pizza was so delicious, you could really taste the love put into it.”

Salice’s was a dessert concoction. “The cinnamon and nuts together blended well for a very sensual eating experience,” says Ma’at. “And then she topped it with the cacao and other goodies that topped off the aphrodisiacal component.”

Winners received custom-made crowns and gift cards to Tassium’s Raw Reality Cafe.

For more information, visit IAMOH-Herbals.Square.site, Mela9atedMagic.com or facebook.com/OrganicFlavas.

Every year, Georgia Organics, the oldest statewide nonprofit providing direct support to small and organic farmers, honors Georgia’s foremost leaders in the organic agriculture and sustainable food community with two awards, the Land Steward Award, which honors those who have contributed significantly to the organic agriculture movement, and the Barbara Petil Pollinator Award, honoring those who’ve shown outstanding community leadership in Georgia’s sustainable farming and food movements.

In 2021, the organization added a third award category: their Farm-to-Restaurant program’s Farmer Champion Award. The award honors restaurants or chefs that have allocated at least 5% of their food costs to local and organic producers, demonstrated a commitment to Georgia producers, and are an example to others that sourcing locally is possible.

All of Georgia Organics’ award winners embody the organization’s ambitious vision to foster a healthy environment, improve personal and public wellness, build a sustainable farm economy, promote food justice as racial justice and protect animal welfare. This year, Jenny and Chris Jackson received Georgia Organics’ Land Steward Award, and Brennan and Gwendolyn Washington of Phoenix Gardens were honored with the Barbara Petil Pollinator Award. The organization’s newest award, Farmer Champion, went to Chris Wilkins of Root Baking Co., Steven Satterfield of Miller Union, Steven Rosslove of Wrecking Bar, and Hugh Acheson and Sam Herndon of Empire State South.

“Georgia Organics’ annual awards are all about celebrating the farmers and food leaders working tirelessly to improve their communities and the soil,” says communications director Mary Elizabeth Kidd. “While we couldn’t gather in person this year, it was so exciting to see farmers, chefs and other supporters come together—via Zoom—to support the winners and celebrate these incredible farmers and chefs in spite of the distance.”

Visit Georgiaorgaonics.org/awards to learn about the organization’s awards and this year’s award winners.

GAIA GARDENS SEeks ORGANIC FARMER

Gaia Gardens, one of Atlanta’s first organic urban farms located just four miles from downtown Atlanta, has begun a search for its next farmer.

An open house is scheduled for 1 p.m. on July 18. A tour of the farm and surrounding community will be followed by a discussion, a Q&A session and a meet and greet. Interested parties should RSVP to Karen Minvielle at KarenMinvielle@gmail.com.

Founded in 1998 within the cohousing community of East Lake Commons (ELC), Gaia Gardens is a five-acre organic garden with two pole barns, a heated greenhouse, two high tunnels, two walk-in coolers, three sheds, two tractors and tools and implements.

The current farmer, Joe Reynolds, is in his 11th year and will depart at the end of 2021. His tenure has been accentuated by community leadership; Reynolds served as a member and chair of the board of Georgia Organics. “We are very sad to see Joe leave us since he, his wife Judith Winfrey and all of his employees have become an integral part of our community,” says Minvielle, who chairs ELC’s garden committee. “It will be exciting to see how Gaia Gardens will grow from fresh new ideas from a new farmer or farming-related organization and see how they stewarded this land.”

Minimum qualifications for the position include organic farming experience, a desire to try something unique and a willingness to collaborate with ELC’s residents.

For more information: tinyurl.com/ mn7532d. Interested parties should email a personal statement and resume to FarmerSearch@eastlakecommons.org.
The CBD Joint & Viva Wellness
Open Second Locations

The CBD Joint, founded by Roz Grigger in 2019, opened its second store in Smyrna in mid-June. The new storefront is located at 668 Windy Hill Road SE in Smyrna; its first store is at 801 Church Street, Unit 100, in Marietta.

The new store has about 1,200 square feet of floor space, which includes a room for healing sessions, plus a lot more space outside for events.

“I am extremely excited for the next level of The CBD Joint,” says Grigger. “This is the 2.0 version—more awesome, innovative, quality products, and we’re partnering with other wellness businesses and services that use CBD in their practice.”

As an example of a “2.0 partnership” with Grigger, Dr. Sherterica Hall, a chiropractor, uses CBD products from The CBD Joint in her practice. The two also help add to each other’s offerings: Grigger offers CBD education to Dr. Hall’s patients, and Dr. Hall provides wellness education to customers of The CBD Joint in Smyrna.

Viva Wellness of Atlanta, located in Marietta, opened its second location in Kennesaw at 1619 Collins Rd, Suite 200, in late June. The company “offers natural solutions for skin care, through our Eminence products, as well as natural hormone pellet therapy,” says Dr. Fatisha Gayton, founder and owner of Viva Wellness. “We also have many non-invasive products to help with skin care and body sculpting, and we have weight loss programs as well.”

Gayton graduated from the Morehouse School of Medicine and served her residency at Emory. She worked for many years as an emergency physician before pursuing her passion for aesthetics by opening her Marietta office last year.

For more information, visit TheCBDJointCollective.com and Viva-Atlanta.com.

CSA Senior Minister Passes Away

The Center for Spiritual Awareness (CSA) of Lakemont, Georgia, announced the passing of senior minister Ron Lindahn on May 14. He was 73 years old.

Lindahn was ordained by Ray Eugene Davis, founder of CSA, in 1978, after meeting him eight years prior. Davis was the last active direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda, who is credited with bringing the philosophy of yoga to the West early in the 20th century. Davis himself passed away in 2018.

“A dedicated kriya yogi, Ron’s sincere, joyous, intelligent service to CSA, to gurus, and to God touched many lives and inspires us to deepen our spiritual unfoldment,” says Clifford Rosen, president of the board of trustees of CSA, in his announcement of Lindahn’s passing.

Lindahn moved to Lakemont after being ordained and worked with Davis for three years. He remained in the area and taught locally and then rejoined CSA full-time in 2005.

As a professional photographer and videographer, Lindahn and his wife, Hélène, produced the film Yogananda and the Kriya Yoga Masters, which honors Yogananda’s impact on America and provides insights about the tradition’s spiritual teachers. When 2020 forced all classes to go online, Lindahn took a leadership role in giving CSA the ability to stream its offerings.

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Sizzling on the Grill
Healthy, Sustainable Summer Fare
by Laura Paisley Beck

For most Americans, summer smells like fresh-cut grass and barbecue sizzling in the backyard. Approximately 64 percent of U.S. adults own a grill or smoker, but common practices are bad for the environment. Fortunately, many great chefs have the problem covered with delicious alternatives to traditional, carbon-emitting methods.

The Downside of Grilling
Most charcoal and all lighter fluids contain chemicals that create air pollution when burned, harming our health and the environment. Better alternatives are sustainably sourced, organic and natural materials, such as charcoal made from bamboo or coconut shells.

Entrepreneur Fred Grosse sought to solve another problem associated with conventional grilling materials: the taste of lighter fluid on barbecue foods. He invented Mojobricks, a carbon-neutral alternative to charcoal designed to impart a smoky flavor to grilled foods. “You’re breathing in 50 percent less particulate matter standing at the grill than if you grill with charcoal or wood,” he says about his bricks made with compressed sawdust from wood mills. “They heat food more efficiently, take up less space than bags of charcoal and keep trees growing in the forest.”

Presentation for the Planet
When hosting backyard dinner parties, consider that paper and plastic dinnerware will end up in the landfill. Ask guests to bring a plate and fork or mix and match whatever dish sets are on hand. Another suggestion is to go vintage. “There has already been so much manufactured of everything, we wouldn’t need to manufacture another plate, for example, for another generation or two,” says Morgan Miller, owner of Rewind Decor antique store in Madison, Wisconsin.

With a few adjustments, eco-grilling is easy, delicious and much better for the planet. Marinate locally sourced ingredients, burn as carbon-neutral a fire as possible and serve up delicious food on real plates that friends and family will help wash. Guests will be inspired and follow suit in their own homes. As Grosse says, “Each small difference adds up to big change.”

What Gets Grilled Matters
Americans eat three times more meat than the global average. To meet the immense demand, mass-produced beef is trucked across the nation with dire environmental impacts including cow methane emissions, the burning of fossil fuels for transport and excessive land use. To curtail these impacts, Americans can choose to reduce or eliminate their beef consumption and when they do decide to grill a ribeye or New York strip, choose local, organic, grass-fed beef.

Eliminating meat is simple as vegetarian and vegan options are innumerable. “Question what a burger is, and off you go with legumes, root vegetables, mush-rooms, cheese or whatever you happen to feel like,” says Martin Nordin, author of Green Burgers. Genevieve Taylor’s new cookbook, Charred, features enticing meals to cook over a flame that include vegetables, spices, nuts, herbs and other inventive ingredients.

Amy Lawrence and Justin Fox Burks, co-authors of Low-Carb Vegetarian, have had a dramatic increase in requests for grilled versions of vegetarian dishes, a sign of increasing outdoor cooking trends. Better alternatives are available in ButcherBox, as you’ll see in our recipe for BBQ Brussels Sprouts.

BBQ Brussels Sprouts Sandwiches with Brussels Sprout Slaw

YIELD: 6 SANDWICHES

2 lb Brussels sprouts
1 cup shredded carrot (about one large)
1 Tbsp mayonnaise
1 Tbsp granary mustard
Kosher salt and cracked black pepper (to taste)
1 white onion (quartered and sliced)
1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
2 Tbsp of The Chubby Vegetarian’s Memphis BBQ Dry Rub
1 cup BBQ sauce
6 hamburger buns

First, make the Brussels sprout slaw. Thinly slice enough of the Brussels sprouts to have 2 cups. Reserve the remainder of the Brussels sprouts. In a large bowl, combine the 2 cups shredded sprouts with the shredded carrot, mayonnaise, mustard and salt and pepper to taste. Toss until well-incorporated. Set aside in the refrigerator until ready to serve. (Makes about 2 cups of slaw.)

Preheat the grill on high for 10 minutes. Cover the grill with a single layer of aluminum foil. Slice the remaining Brussels sprouts in half. In a large bowl, toss the halved Brussels sprouts and the onion with the sesame oil, vinegar and BBQ dry rub until everything is coated. Place the Brussels sprouts on the grill for 5 minutes on one side and 4 minutes on the other side, or until the edges are brown and they’re cooked through. Remove sprouts from the grill and place them into a medium bowl. Pour in BBQ sauce. Using a spatula, toss the Brussels sprouts in the sauce until they’re well-coated.

Put the BBQ Brussels aside until ready to assemble the sandwiches. On the bottom part of each hamburger bun, pile on the BBQ and top it with the slaw.

The Chubby Vegetarian’s Memphis BBQ Dry Rub

(MEASURE ALL INGREDIENTS BY VOLUME)

2 parts chipotle chili powder
2 parts sweet paprika
2 parts smoked paprika
2 parts granulated garlic
2 parts kosher salt
2 parts cracked black pepper
2 parts cumin
2 parts dried thyme

2 parts dried oregano
1 part cinnamon
1 part ground ginger
1 part light brown sugar
1 part powdered, dried porcini mushrooms*

Mix all ingredients in a large food storage container until equally distributed.

*Dried porcini mushrooms can be found at almost any specialty grocery or ordered online. Turn the dried mushrooms into a powder by placing them in a coffee grinder or food processor and pulsing until no large bits remain.

Recipe by Justin Fox Burks and Amy Lawrence of The Chubby Vegetarian blog and cookbooks.

Great Grilling

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Food as Medicine
The Healing Power of Nutrition
by Julie Peterson

Eating is a basic need, but many Americans are not filling this need with healthful choices. Among the more than 700,000 Americans that die each year from heart disease, stroke or Type 2 diabetes, about 45 percent eat meals heavy in salt, processed meat and sugary drinks, and low in fruits, vegetables, fish and nuts, according to a March 2017 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

“I fully understand and empathize with people in the public,” says T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., author of the groundbreaking China Study and founder of The Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies, in Ithaca, New York. Campbell has often stressed that public and professional understanding of nutrition is lacking.

The problems with the Standard American Diet (SAD) start with the very ground it is grown in. Large-scale farming in the U.S. has depleted the soil, producing lower nutrient foods. In addition, many foods are processed by manufacturers to improve shelf life, which further destroys nutrients and requires toxic additives.

“The default choice, the easy choice, is the inexpensive, highly processed food. Our built environment throughout the country has made it easier to find fast food than a produce store,” says Lisa McDowell, director of lifestyle medicine and clinical nutrition at Saint Joseph Mercy Health System, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. SAD is a primary risk factor for high blood pressure, abnormal blood lipids, increased blood glucose and weight gain, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). These intermediate conditions can lead to full-blown chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes, all of which are on the rise. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 60 percent of American adults have at least one chronic disease and 40 percent have two or more, making chronic disease the leading cause of death and disability in the country.

The good news from WHO is that up to 80 percent of heart disease cases, 90 percent of Type 2 diabetes cases and one-third of cancer incidences could be avoided by a healthier diet, as well as lifestyle changes like stopping smoking and increasing physical activity. A healthy diet is not as simple as cutting out convenience foods, because many people literally can’t stop eating them. Studies have compared the addictive properties of added sugar and salt to those of nicotine and cocaine. “Additives like sugar release opioids and dopamine in the brain. The same neurochemical changes in the brain occur in addictions,” says Claire Stagg, DDS, founder of Health Connections Dentistry, in Indian Harbour Beach, Florida, and author of Smile! It’s All Connected, a layperson’s guide that explains the essential connections between the mouth and overall wellness. “People need to be educated, or re-educated, to take ownership of their health by remembering the basic premise that their bodies can be healthy if they get the right nutrients to facilitate and support that basic process.”

Campbell agrees that more people need to be educated. A major theme in his latest book, The Future of Nutrition, is how to sift through the conflicting information that exists.

Healthier Helpings
As the food industry continues to woo Americans with fast and easy processed foods, there are consumer shifts taking place. “About a quarter of U.S. adults are trying to manage a health or medical condition by making healthy food and beverage choices,” stated the NPD Group consumer research firm in 2019. “Younger adults, ages 18 to 24, are particularly interested in using foods to improve their health.”

It turns out that it’s most beneficial to focus on adding what is needed for optimal health, instead of worrying about what to eliminate. As William L.J. M.D., counsels in Eat to Beat Disease, “Human nature abhors deprivation." As president of the Angiogenesis Foundation, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Li advises us to “practice health care at home every day in our own kitchens.” He suggests frequently eating such simple, but disease-defying foods as dark chocolate, walnuts, kiwis, sourdough bread and sauerkraut. “I recommend participating in bigger box stores. They do a great job at making high-quality food available at an inexpensive price," says McDowell. She also suggests batch cooking and planning meals ahead for the week.

The Power of Plants
Plant-based eating is finally becoming mainstream, thanks in part to such eye-opening documentaries as Forks Over Knives, Earthlings, PlantPure Nation and Food, Inc. Research backs up the benefits. In a 2019 study in the Journal of the American Heart Association, Johns Hopkins researchers report that in a 30-year period, people eating a mostly plant-based diet were 32 percent less likely to die from a cardiovascular condition and 25 percent less likely to die from any cause. A 2017 report published in Internationale Journal of Epidemiology suggests that fruits and vegetables are associated with a reduced risk of many chronic diseases and may protect against certain types of cancers.

For treatment, reversal and prevention of chronic disease, the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, in Chesterfield, Missouri, recommends eating a primarily plant-based diet containing minimally processed vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. Campbell says that moving to a 100 percent plant-based diet “and staying there for one to three months, provides an opportunity for virtually everyone to finally crave a salad on a regular basis. This is a place where people have little or no interest to backslide because their taste preferences have profoundly changed.”

As plant-based eating gains momentum, “I recommend participating in bigger box stores. They do a great job at making high-quality food available at an inexpensive price," says McDowell. She also suggests batch cooking and planning meals ahead for the week.

Alternative, covers crops keep nutrients in the soil, requiring less water and naturally sequestering more carbon from the atmosphere. Shorter transit or shipping distances after picking and operator of Tumbleweed Farm with her husband Taylor in Mount Hood, Oregon. Local food is easier on the planet for several reasons. “Large commercial farms work the soil so intensively that they must use synthetic fertilizers to get anything to grow,” says Brock Hall, owner of Florida Fields to Forks, in Malabar, Florida. Alternatively, cover crops keep nutrients in the soil, requiring less water and naturally sequestering more carbon from the atmosphere. Shorter transit or shipping distances after picking uses less pollution-causing fuel.

“Choosing the right food is not only important for our personal health, but also is important for our planet and for our checking account,” says T. Colin Campbell, author of The China Study and The Future of Nutrition. “I have come to believe, and after being in this discipline for 65-plus years, that our choice of food is the easiest and most important choice we can make to address the many existential problems that we now face.”

Eating by the Colors
Eating fruits and vegetables in a rainbow of vibrant colors ensures we get a variety of phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. The federal Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recommends consuming two and one-half cups of vegetables and two cups of fruit each day. McDowell suggests including “deeply pigmented fruits and veggies in at least five different colors, so that you’re getting all of the micronutrients and they’re all working together.”

Food to Heal the Planet
Eating healthy also means making a choice for the health of the planet.

Organic, local and small-farm advocates are speaking out against the industrialized U.S. food system with its extensive use of pesticides, poor treatment of animals and lack of regenerative soil management. Organizations like the Rodale Institute, Regeneration International, Kiss the Ground and the Ecological Farming Association are working to train farmers to regenerate soils to not only restore climate stability, but also provide far healthier foods from nutrient-rich soils.

“I believe if we have a greater understanding of our local and regional food systems, we will be moving in a more sustainable, intentional and responsible direction for ourselves, our communities and the planet,” says Andrea Bemis, author of the farm-to-table cookbook Local Dirt and operator of Tumbleweed Farm with her husband Taylor in Mount Hood, Oregon. Local food is easier on the planet for several reasons. “Large commercial farms work the soil so intensively that they must use synthetic fertilizers to get anything to grow,” says Brock Hall, owner of Florida Fields to Forks, in Malabar, Florida. Alternatively, cover crops keep nutrients in the soil, requiring less water and naturally sequestering more carbon from the atmosphere. Shorter transit or shipping distances after picking uses less pollution-causing fuel.

“Choosing the right food is not only important for our personal health, but also is important for our planet and for our checking account,” says T. Colin Campbell, author of The China Study and The Future of Nutrition. “I have come to believe, and after being in this discipline for 65-plus years, that our choice of food is the easiest and most important choice we can make to address the many existential problems that we now face.”

Food to Heal the Planet
Eating healthy also means making a choice for the health of the planet.
The Shift in the Medical Field

“We, as a society, have gotten locked into focusing on disease cure over health care,” writes T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., author of the bestselling In Defense of Food and The China Study and the recently released The Future of Nutrition. Fortunately, as studies prove that diabetes, kidney disease, cancer and Crohn’s disease improve with changes in diet, the medical community is slowly shifting toward using nutrition in tandem with traditional care to help manage and prevent disease.

Unfortunately, says John Osborne, M.D., director of cardiology at State of the Heart Hall, owner of the Florida Fields to Forks Community, and author of In Defense of Food, “Don’t eat anything your great grandmother wouldn’t recognize as food.” Buying, preparing and eating whole foods may seem laborious at first, but the shift away from “easy foods” can quickly become a way of life as the body begins to feel better. “We hear stories every week about people who have fixed health issues from eating healthy,” says Brock Hall, owner of the Florida Fields to Forks Community supported agriculture (CSA) farm in Malabar, Florida. He adds that everyone “ought to get closer to your food” by growing it or getting to know organic farmers at local markets, self-pick operations or through CSAs.

Healthy eating is about balance. Enjoy comfort foods occasionally, focusing on the bigger picture of more healthful foods overall.

Julie Peterson has contributed to Natural Awakenings for more than a decade. Connect at JuliePeterson2222@gmail.com.

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Insights, a global market research organization, has been growing in popularity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The demand for certain products has been flying off the shelves of vitamin and supplement stores around the country. While the reasons people take them vary, all of them have seen spikes in immune boosters and sleep aid sales. He also saw growth in CBD.

“One of our big sellers is elderberry. Elderberry syrup, elderberry gummies, elderberry everything,” says Greg Lee. Lee manages the eight Good Nutrition stores around Atlanta, and he says that elderberry and other immune-boosting supplements like vitamin C and D3 have been selling fast.

Elderberry gains its immune-boosting properties by being chock-full of antioxidants. A paper exploring the physiological role of antioxidants, published by the National Library of Medicine, states that antioxidant supplementation can significantly improve certain immune responses. The antioxidants speed up the rate of response to certain immune system attacks and can even preserve our immune system responses later in life.

Mart Geier, CEO of Nuts ’ n Berries, an Atlanta-based nutrition store, agrees that elderberry and other immune-boosting vitamins have been in high demand. “The good news is, doctors are telling people to take them,” Geier says. “And so they are coming in.”

Elderberry suppliers weren’t the only ones seeing increased interest in their product. COVID brought with it many struggles, and for some, the stress of the day carried into the night. Sleeping problems soon followed.

“We found that sleep support and things that can help people get a better night’s sleep have been off-the-charts popular,” says Geier. Her most popular product? Chewable melatonin, a hormone whose primary function is to regulate the body’s day and night cycles.

Our bodies naturally produce melatonin, and some people who have trouble falling asleep don’t produce enough of it. For others, their stress is enough to keep them awake. Either way, melatonin supplements are meant to help us fall asleep deeper and easier.

While melatonin may be one of the most popular sleep aids right now, it’s not actually the one Geier recommends. “The fact is, it has a ‘negative biofeedback,’ so if you take it for too long, your body stops making it.”

Geier instead suggests alternative sleep aids like Gaia Health Adrenal Nightly Restore, which she says is made with a blend of herbs that, together with the adrenal support, help solve the problem. Eventually, people don’t have to take any supplements, she reports.

Like Geier and Lee, Deandre Cannon, an Atlanta-based bodybuilder and founder of A Better Rebuild, an e-commerce vitamin and supplement retailer, has seen spikes in immune boosters and sleep aid sales. He also saw growth in CBD.

“I’ve seen a dramatic jump in sales of my CBD gummies,” says Cannon. “I think it’s twofold. People are becoming more aware of the overall health benefits of taking CBD. But COVID was also a stressful time for a lot of people, and when there’s something available to you that you don’t need a prescription for to help with your anxiety, that’s something a lot of people looked into.”

For immune system support, Geier recommends the product MyCommunity by Host Defense, a blend that incorporates mushrooms. For anxiety, Lee recommends ashwagandha, an Ayurvedic herb said to relieve anxiety and help with a number of other ailments. To help with sleep, Cannon recommends CBD. For non-CBD users, Geier recommends Gaia Herbs’ Adrenal Nightly Restore.

While the pandemic saw an increase in the popularity of elderberry, melatonin and CBD, Lee thinks the interest in health products in general will widen and impact the entire vitamins and supplements industry as a whole. Thanks to COVID, more people are thinking about health in general, increasing the traffic to stores like Good Nutrition. The increased awareness and acceptance by the medical world might also be a factor in the trend.

“Over the years, supplements have become more mainstream,” says Lee. “One of the key ones is vitamin D. Doctors now regularly check for it when they do blood tests.” The heightened education, coupled with “better and better technology,” has Lee optimistic for the future.

As more and more citizens become vaccinated and the pandemic starts to wind down, the vitamins and supplements industry will continue to support Americans’ health needs. Retailers like Nuts ’ n Berries, A Better Rebuild, and Good Nutrition are excited to bring the hottest products to their customers and are grateful to have been able to support them during a pandemic-stricken year.

For more information on the retailers, visit NutsNBerries.com, GoodNutritionAtlanta.com or ABetterRebuild.com.
Dr. Edward Bach was an English medical doctor in the early 20th century who saw disease as a physical manifestation of emotions. Bach felt that he could help patients if he could reduce emotional imbalances, which he believed were the causes of physical illness. As he became more dissatisfied with conventional medicine, he looked to nature to find healing remedies. In the early 1930s, Bach settled on 38 healing flowers and trees that would become his signature Bach Flower Remedies. They have been a valued healing modality to countless many throughout the world since then.

As a medical doctor, Dr. Bach worked in bacteria and virus research, but he was dissatisfied with that approach to illness and wanted to find something different and more complete. He started working with flowers and tested many plants before he found the right ones. He discovered that each plant had unique properties that could heal emotional states: fear, uncertainty, lack of interest, loneliness, oversensitivity, despair and overanxiety for others’ welfare.

How the Remedies Are Made

Bach suggested that illness is a message from the body encouraging a change in one’s emotional and mental outlook. As a result, treating only the physical ailment is not enough; emotional factors need to be addressed, too. He pointed out that emotional imbalances lead to stresses that weaken the body, and physical illness can emerge as a result. Yet, as an emotional state gets out of balance, the body cannot heal itself. Hand-produced exclusively in England, Bach Flower Remedies are made from spring water that’s been infused with wild flowers, using either a sun method or the boiling method.

The sun method uses the flowers of blooms from late spring and early summer, which are placed on the surface of a glass bowl filled with fresh spring water. They are left in the sunshine for several hours. The boiling method involves placing flowers and stems in a pan, covering them with spring water and simmering them for 30 minutes. A twig of the same plant is used to remove the flowers, and the contents are filtered, ready for the next stage.

How to Use the Remedies

The goal of the treatment is to peel away the layers of negative emotion until the core problem is uncovered, allowing it to be resolved. As layer after layer is healed, the underlying problem is revealed and can then be addressed.

The typical protocol is to choose from two to seven remedies. Add two drops from the main bottle into a personal bottle that is filled with water. Take four drops of the mixture at least four times a day—either in your beverage or on your tongue. There is no harm if you take it more often.

It is not the disease that is of importance; it is the patient, the way in which he or she is affected, which is our true guide to healing.

―Dr. Edward Bach

The remedies work on a vibrational level, which is why a small dose works so well. They are sometimes confused with essential oils since both are made from plants and capture the vibration of each plant. However, the production methods are entirely different, as are the resulting products.

Bach Flower Remedies are considered safe for plants and animals and recommended by some veterinarians. Animals have emotional imbalances as humans do, and the remedies can help relieve them. The treatment is the same. Plants benefit from remedies, especially if they have been pruned or transplanted.

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Energy Balancing and Gentle Yoga
How One Teacher is Blending Asana with Energy Work
by Sheila Ewers

Science is just beginning to prove what ancient yoga sages and rishis have understood for millennia: everything we know—from the earth, sea, trees, animals, stars and planets to our thoughts, feelings, sounds and colors—everything pulses with energy. Quantum physics now tells us that what we perceive as matter consists of vibration within a field and that all fields are connected, permeating one another and vibrating together. Just as ancient spiritual texts have suggested.

In yoga, we call this all-encompassing energy "prana," and most yoga practices focus on optimizing the healthy flow of prana within the body. Yoga asana uses movement to free stagnated prana and release tensions that can cause "dis-ease" and pain, feelings of lethargy, anxiety and depression. Over time, yoga practitioners can learn to gain some control over their own energetic field, often leading to better health and a sense of equanimity, peace, balance and connection to all other beings.

Energy healers also engage with prana; they work with clients to help balance, clear and direct the flow of prana in the body and the energy field surrounding the body. All energy healers—whether they practice reiki, acupuncture, pranic healing, auric cleansing, chakra balancing, sound therapy or any other type—understand that the human energy field is a dynamic system intimately related to one’s physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Working with energy can be a tremendous path to healing.

Yoga + Energy Healing
Recognizing the commonalities in the two practices, yoga teacher Terri O’Connor has developed a unique service that combines energy healing with traditional yoga movement. The owner of Plum Tree Yoga in Roswell, O’Connor is an ERYT500 yoga teacher, a certified reiki master, a graduate of White Winds Institute of Energy Medicine, and a student of Dee Wagner’s Chi for Two relational energetic training. She supports her clients’ ability to feel integrated by providing them with tools to help them build and maintain well-being. O’Connor believes that the combination of physical and energetic modalities enhances each client’s ability to become more vital, aware and functional in their lives.

O’Connor’s private sessions typically begin with a conversation to discuss the client’s concerns and requests for support. As the client relaxes on a massage table,
O’Connor observes the alignment and tensions of the physical body, the flow of energy through the spine, joints, organs and major energetic vortices, or chakras, as well as the bio-energetic field that surrounds the client’s body. As she tunes in, the client’s energy field directs O’Connor to the areas that need to be addressed so she can help restore the energy fields. As a result, cells, tissue and organs are revitalized, and the functions of the physical body are renewed.

The uniqueness of O’Connor’s sessions comes in the way that she folds yoga practice into her energy healing process. Each of O’Connor’s sessions includes a unique, customized sequence of gentle and supported yoga poses to decompress the body, mind and emotions. The client moves off the table and onto a yoga mat where they are given a series of active and passive poses to strengthen, lengthen and align their physical bodies that will help them maintain the energetic openings from the session. Having a physical practice to take home between sessions provides the client with insight and tools to help integrate greater awareness and well-being into their daily lives.

O’Connor’s “hybrid” model empowers clients to take responsibility for maintaining balance within their own physical and energetic bodies. Penny Summers, a client of O’Connor, says, “O’Connor’s work is deep energetic healing. She engages the body’s intelligence to clear old energy and allow for more vitality. When I receive a session, I feel like tight places have unwound mentally and physically and that I have more access to myself and my energy.” Client Steve Howard says, “The pictures and the follow-up via text were huge in helping me develop the techniques I needed to use.”

O’Connor says that energy balancing can also be instrumental in relieving mental and emotional stress, so good health and well-being can be re-established. “Our physical and energetic bodies are in constant communication and always in a state of flux relative to our lifestyle, relationships, families, jobs, activities, challenges and celebrations,” says O’Connor. 

For more information about O’Connor’s Energy Balancing & Gentle Yoga sessions, visit PlumTreeYoga.com/healing, contact her at plumtreecayo@gmail.com or call 404-434-3542.

Sheila Evers, ERYT500, YACEP, owns Blue Lotus Yoga in Johns Creek. A former professor of writing and literature, she leads group and private classes, yoga philosophy workshops, yoga teacher training and retreats. Contact Sheila at Sheila@JohnsCreekYoga.com.

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For centuries, people have sought seclusion through retreats to gain a better understanding of themselves, their lives and their place in the world. The practice might seem odd for the uninitiated. After all, why would one want to go on a meditation retreat when they can meditate at home—or do yoga, adopt new health practices or do any of the other activities that retreats feature? Yet, for those that make retreats a part of their lives, the benefits they reap are often remarkably similar.

To begin, the theme of transformation permeates the feedback of our repeat retreat-goers, each attracted to a different type of retreat. Though their experiences may differ, the benefits they reap are often remarkably similar.

The Mantram of Unification

The sons of men are one and I am one with them. I seek to love, not hate; I seek to serve and not exact due service; I seek to heal, not hurt. Let pain bring due reward of light and love. Let the soul control the outer form, and life and all events, and bring to light the love which underlies the happenings of the time. Let vision come and insight. Let the future stand revealed. Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone. Let love prevail. Let all men love.
them as a “body scrub” for the soul that left everything feeling brand new for her.

The retreats Atkinson attends are a mix of group activities and quiet moments of personal reflection. She says that some of the most impactful aspects of her retreats include those moments when she is able to build bonds with other women. “Raheem is very big on giving Black and Brown women a space to just be,” Atkinson explains. “We don’t get many spaces like that.”

“Every time I’ve gone, I’ve learned something new about myself. And I’ve had this experience with dozens of other women that look like me.” In the end, Atkinson says, that is her motivation for going. “Every time I’ve gone, I’ve learned something new about myself. And I’ve had this experience with dozens of other women that look like me.” In the end, Atkinson says, that is her motivation for going.

While some only rarely attend retreats, others have made it part of their lifestyle. Over the last 15 years, Cynthia Vannoy estimates she has attended more than 30 retreats of different kinds, most of them Buddhist.

“Going on a retreat is a critical way to stay connected with your spiritual self,” explains Vannoy. It functions as ongoing...
Growing Food Security
The Benefits of Urban Gardening
by Laura Paisley Beck

For a lot of Americans, healthy food is scarce. According to FeedingAmerica.org, more than 35 million Americans faced food insecurity in 2019. That number is expected to increase substantially due to the pandemic, which disrupted the food supply chain in ways that most Americans have never seen.

The good news is that urban and localized gardening can bring fresh, healthy, organic, sustainable and affordable food to nearly every household. A 2013 abstract from Michigan State University published in Agriculture & Food Security states that urban gardens could not only provide healthy food, but also create a more resilient food system.

During the pandemic, many people jumped at the chance to put in a garden, and in cities, where available land is limited, creative solutions have emerged. Just about any space could serve as a viable garden, including a spare room, rooftop, shipping containers or an empty warehouse. With hydroponics, no soil is required and with vertical systems, plants can grow as tall as desired.

But it’s not just about growing food. Thomas believes gardening empowers people to take control of their diet and their health, not only physiologically, but psychologically and spiritually. “It doesn’t just stop at the garden,” she says. “How you treat your body and other people has a positive healthy impact, as well.”
Tips to Get Started
Follow local gardeners on social media to get ideas.

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Reach Out Today: To Find Out How We Can Help Paul@naatlanta.com
Years ago, my awakening came when my financial advisor casually befuddled me with an off-the-cuff question. “How tolerant of risk are you?” Calmly, I responded, “Not tolerant. At all.” Gracefully, she coaxed me with a well-worn monologue about the importance of risk tolerance. She said, “When you can tolerate a little more risk, your gains can be much greater than your losses.” This simple and targeted explanation hit me in a powerful way. It changed my life and saved it at the same time.

You see, once upon a time, I was extremely risk-averse. I am a woman so afraid of childbirth that I chose adoption as the safest alternative. I still avoid crowds, rollercoasters and people who believe that citizens need or deserve guns. I don’t enjoy any activity that involves falling, blood loss or loss of limbs. I can’t watch action movies because of the blood. I am delighted by the mask mandate and, although I am fully vaccinated, I just ordered a new color palette of masks which I plan to wear for the long haul.

My fear of risk should be no surprise. Fear has been genetically instilled. I am an African American woman raised by a wary ancestry. Distrust is my nature. Objectively, I know that my former fearfulness was unreasonable, overarching and cultural due to an undeniable history. I only reveal these deeply held secrets, not because I am proud, but because I celebrate how much I’ve grown. I understand how fear limits the very expanse of the soul. The ability to take risks is one of the foundational attributes of freedom.

As the bad news in 2020 droned on and on about rage politics, indecision, mass murders, racial reckoning and inert and inept politicians, my four walls started to close in on me. So many of the ideals and truths that I held sacred were being washed away by a raging sea of newfangled hatred. The only way I could handle it was to shout, “I gotta get out of here!” at Chris Cuomo every night.

The “Apocalypse of 2020” sent souls scurrying, desperate for something new to counteract the constant vertigo. Out of the blue, risk whispered in my ear: “Stop complaining. Do something.” Nevertheless, armed with an ever-expanding list of new things to fear—travel, hotel rooms, rental cars, door handles, poorly vented restaurants, public bathrooms, groceries, recalled hand sanitizer, deadly vaccines—I prepared my house for sale. I found a realtor, mapped out a safe four-day version of the journey to our new destination and took bold steps forward to a new unknown.

“How tolerant of risk are you?”

As I listened to these concerns about our move, it became even more exhilarating to me. The non-existent answer to their inquiries made it even more liberating. It would just be my spouse and me, braving the wild, wild West as we had always dreamed. We had only each other to rely on. The not knowing is the very promise of new possibilities that will restore the energy that the pandemic has sucked out of us.

It was the most significant calculated risk of my entire life. What did I really have to lose but the tragic regret of not acting on the call from my tattered spirit? I needed to stretch myself further than ever before. I had become too complacent. I needed to re-learn how to use all of my faculties, survive a whole new set of challenges, learn my way and be present in each moment. Now, in the wilderness, we are charged with becoming kinder, gentler human beings and keeping our eyes open. The animals are always watching.

July is the month we celebrate independence; making this risky move has been the most formidable way for me to show my independence. This month, I celebrate risking everything I have ever known to gain everything I have yet to know.

Author and coach Kim Green works with clients who are ready for transformation in their writing or in their lives. An Atlanta resident for 18 years, she only recently moved to Arizona. Reach her at BlankPageConsult.com or 678-938-2777.

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