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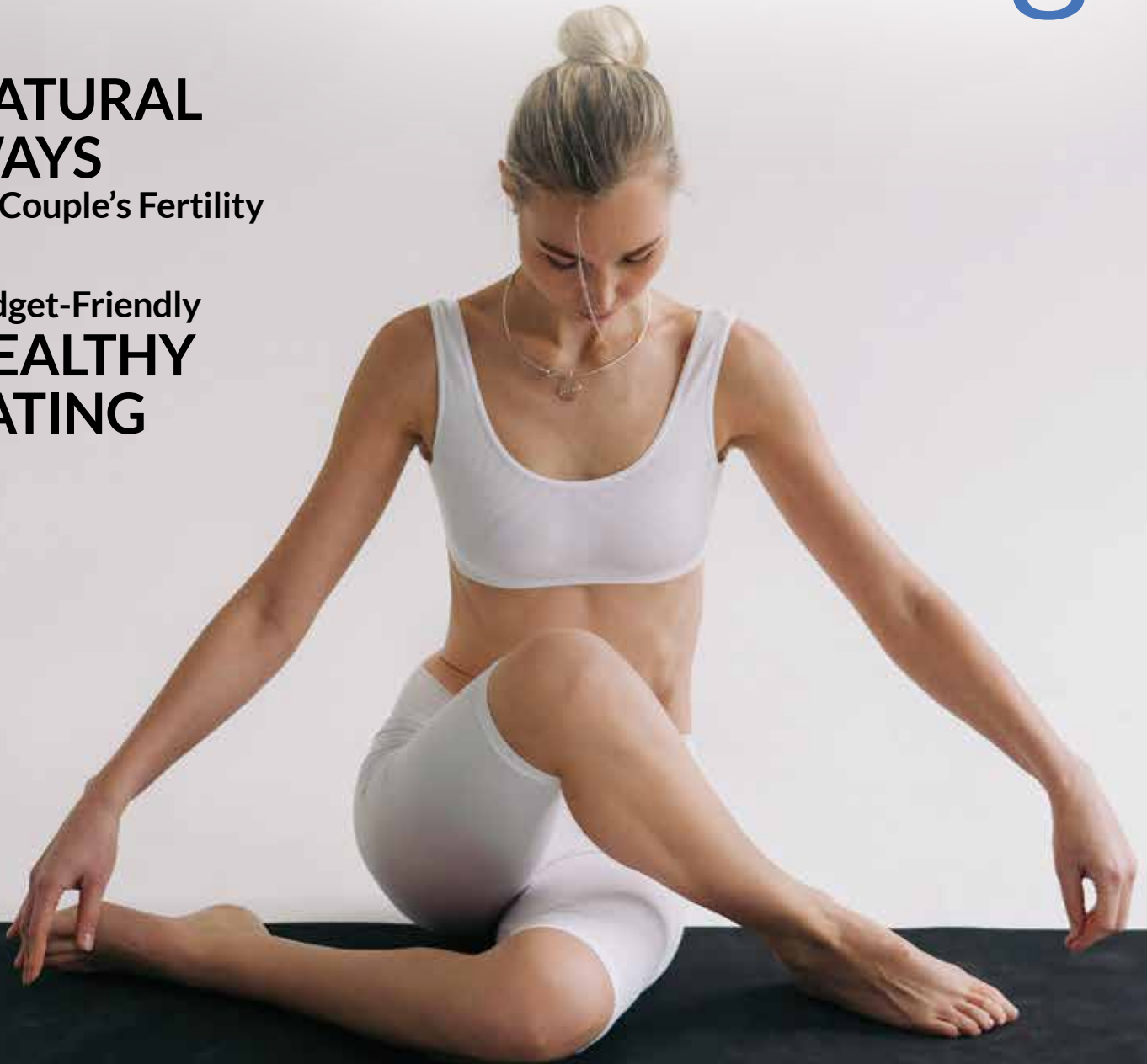
COMPLIMENTARY

# natural awakenings

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## Health & Wellness

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY EDITION

JANUARY 2025

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### **Lisa Mack, Certified Thermographic Technician:**

"What I see in my Thermography, I see inflammation in the mouth, how important it is, you see the bacteria draining down into the lymphatic system and from there I always refer patients to the Holistic Dental Center. Why? Because they can test that bacteria to see exactly what it is so from there he can help you. I am also a patient of the Holistic Dental Center and I absolutely love coming here. The one thing that I love about the center is that when you walk in, it's like you're family. They are very caring and very loving and when you walk out of here you feel like you've been well taken care of...."



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**letter from publisher:**



**Happy New Year 2025!**

**W**e are kicking off the new year by thanking all of you for helping us grow as we bring awareness and messages from local business to our local communities in northern New Jersey. In the new year, we have strengthened our resolve for being a trusted and reliable source of information for your healthy lifestyle and spread the joy with kindness, sharing and caring even more in the coming year 2025.

As always, this issue addresses healthy, budget-friendly lifestyle choices for the whole family. While Dr. Finn gives advise on your gut health, the purpose and strength of positive affirmative thoughts is covered in our first thoughts and new experiences story.

*Natural Awakenings* of North Jersey is your best all-season health and wellness resource for body, mind and soul—the physical body and inner, spiritual, well-being. For regular updates on natural health and wellness, like and follow us on Facebook and Instagram. Find even more great information in our online edition at [NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com](http://NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com).

Enjoy life and stay healthy, stay happy!

Anil Singh, Publisher

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Owner Angela Serritella, a licensed cosmetologist with more than 27 years of experience, says, "It is also great for the relief of minor muscle and joint pain, arthritis, muscle spasms and relieving stiffness. Many have also seen improvements in their stress levels, anxiety, mood and have experienced better sleep."

*Location: 1069 Ringwood Ave., Ste. 311, Haskell. For appointments (required) and more information, email Angela@beautyfio.com or visit InnerBeautyNJ.com. See ad, page 5.*

## Access Bars Quiets the Mind

Theresa Obsuth, an Access Bars practitioner in Paramus, says, "Are you reacting to the smallest of things or can't seem to shut off the intensity of your thoughts no matter what you try? For those feeling stressed, anxious, tired or worried, there is a way to reduce the noise in your head. What if you could experience more peace, quiet and yet be more vibrant than you have ever been?"



Access Bars is a gentle process using points on the head that anyone can receive. When lightly touched, these points stimulate a positive neurological response in the recipient that quiets a racing mind, reduces stress and gives the brain a replenishing space allowing more intuition, awareness and creativity to be experienced. "By having your Access Bars 'run', you actually start to become more present in your life, and the past doesn't project into the future the same way," advises Obsuth.

*Location: 22 Madison Ave., Paramus. For appointments, call 201-655-3836. For more information, visit citm-drfinn.com. See ad, page 13.*

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### Age-Related Balance Issues Studied

In a study published in the journal *PLOS ONE*, 40 adults over 50 completed gait, grip strength, knee strength and balance tests. The gait test consisted of a self-paced walk back and forth on an eight-meter-long walkway. The strength tests were performed seated on a custom-made device that isolated the wrist and knee of the participant's dominant side. For the balance tests, participants stood on both legs with their eyes open for 30 seconds, then on both legs with their eyes closed for 30 seconds. With eyes open, they also stood on their dominant leg for 30 seconds, then switched to their non-dominant leg for another 30 seconds.

The researchers found that the one-legged test on the non-dominant leg showed the highest rate of decline with age. A diminishment in the ability to complete this one-legged balance test, especially for those that cannot balance for five seconds, indicates a significant propensity for falls that hospitalize millions of seniors each year.



microgen from Getty Images/CanvaPro

### Disadvantages of Food Pouches for Children

Sales of children's food pouches with plastic spouts have increased by 900 percent since 2010 and now outsell jarred baby food purees. They are convenient, cost-effective and easy for kids to use without assistance. Traditionally, parents have spoon-fed pureed food from a jar for the first few months of a baby's life. The pouches contain a single ingredient or a mix of vegetables, grains, yogurt and meat.

A 2019 study in *Nutrition Today* found that the food pouches they examined contained significantly more added sugar and fruit juice concentrate than jarred and other packaged toddler foods. Healthcare professionals have raised concerns that over-reliance on the pouches could interfere with nutrition; long-term food preferences; dental hygiene, because the soft food sticks to teeth before being washed away; and speech and language development, as children miss the opportunity to manipulate their tongue and jaw when swallowing lumpy, textured foods. Children reliant on the smooth, sweet taste delivered by the pouches may also develop aversions to natural fruits and vegetables.



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## Homeopathic Treatment for COVID-19

A clinical audit conducted by Health Services Research sought to assess the effectiveness of homeopathic interventions administered in 2020 for 305 outpatients with COVID-19 symptoms. Homeopathy is the treatment of health conditions by minute doses of natural substances. As there is no standard homeopathic remedy, the treatments covered by the audit were individualized for each patient.

Published in *Integrative Medicine Reports*, the audit reported that 70 percent of the patients experienced a full recovery, while 14.4 percent showed no improvement. Most cases (74.4 percent) were resolved within 21 days and 29.2 percent were resolved in less than five days. The authors of the audit also noted that homeopathy was easy to administer and there were no adverse reactions.



chamillewhite/CanvaPro

## Cases of Cannabis-Related Syndrome Double

Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome (CHS) resulting from long-term use of marijuana is characterized by nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain every few weeks to months. CHS symptoms typically begin abruptly, within 24 hours of the last cannabis use, and may be relieved by hot baths or showers, which leads some people to bathe compulsively. Hospitalized patients' symptoms are managed with intravenous fluids and anti-nausea drugs, but the most effective treatment is to stop cannabis use altogether.

According to a report in *JAMA Network*, CHS now affects an estimated 2.75 million Americans each year, particularly among men between 16 and 34 years old. From 2017 to 2021, emergency room visits for CHS in the U.S. and Canada doubled. In addition to the gastrointestinal issues, CHS may also cause dehydration, acute kidney injury and low blood levels of chloride, potassium, sodium and bicarbonate. Frequent vomiting may erode tooth enamel and promote tooth loss. Rare severe complications include heart rhythm abnormalities, kidney failure, seizures and death. The rise in CHS coincides with the legalization of recreational cannabis and increases in tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) concentration in cannabis products that cause intoxication.



Mizina from Getty Images/Antonio-Diaz from Getty Images/CanvaPro

## Magnesium To Prevent Kidney Stones

In a study involving 76 adults published in the *Natural Medicine Journal*, researchers evaluated the effectiveness of magnesium supplements to reduce the risk of developing kidney stones. The subjects were divided into three groups; two of the groups took 120 milligrams of either magnesium oxide or magnesium citrate three times a day for eight weeks, while a control group took a placebo. A urine analysis was performed on each participant at the start of the study and after eight weeks.

The researchers found that magnesium citrate significantly reduced 24-hour urine oxalate levels and calcium oxalate supersaturation—two indicators of kidney stone risk. A reduction in the urinary excretion of calcium is believed to reduce the chances of developing kidney stones.



Nadzeya Haroshka from Getty Images

# Gut Health and Functional Medicine

Gut health has become a major focal point in discussions surrounding overall well-being. From digestive discomfort to chronic conditions, research suggests that the gut plays a much more significant role in our health than once thought. Through its emphasis on understanding the root causes of health issues, functional medicine provides a comprehensive framework for improving gut health and in turn, enhancing overall vitality.

## Key Factors in Gut Health Within Functional Medicine

**Gut microbiome imbalance:** The gut microbiome is the collection of trillions of microorganisms living in our digestive tract that play a vital role in digestion, metabolism and immune function. When the balance of these microbes is disrupted due to poor diet, stress, medications or environmental toxins, it can lead to gut dysbiosis, which may contribute to conditions such as leaky gut, irritable bowel syndrome and inflammatory bowel disease. Functional medicine focuses on restoring balance to the microbiome by identifying the specific imbalances at play. Interventions may include probiotic and prebiotic supplementation, dietary changes and even targeted antimicrobial treatments when necessary.

**Diet and nutrition:** One of the cornerstones of functional medicine is the belief that food is medicine. The gut thrives on a diet rich in whole, nutrient-dense foods that provide the necessary vitamins, minerals and fiber to support healthy digestion. A diet high in processed foods, refined sugars and unhealthy fats can contribute to gut imbalances and chronic inflammation.

Functional medicine practitioners work with patients to create personalized nutri-



tion plans that focus on gut-healing foods such as bone broth, fermented foods, fiber-rich vegetables and healthy fats. Additionally, eliminating foods that may be triggering gut problems such as gluten, dairy and processed foods can help to restore balance and improve digestive health.

## The Role of Stress in Gut Health

Chronic stress has been shown to negatively impact the gut microbiome, leading to dysbiosis, inflammation and a weakened immune system. Stress can also disrupt gut motility, contributing to issues like constipation and diarrhea.

Functional medicine takes a holistic approach to stress management, incorporating techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, yoga and breathing exercises to reduce the effects of stress on the gut. Addressing underlying emotional or psychological factors is crucial for long-term gut healing.

## Improving Gut Health Through Functional Medicine

**Comprehensive testing:** Functional medicine practitioners often start by conducting a series of tests to assess the health of the gut microbiome, identify food sensitivities,

check for infections and evaluate nutrient deficiencies. This data helps to create an individualized treatment plan that addresses the unique needs of each patient.

## Targeted nutrition and supplementation:

Based on test results and individual gut health needs, functional medicine practitioners may recommend dietary changes and supplementation. This could include probiotics, prebiotics, digestive enzymes and anti-inflammatory supplements to support gut healing.

## Detoxification and clean eating:

A focus on clean, whole foods and detoxification is essential in functional medicine for gut health. By eliminating processed foods, sugar and harmful chemicals, the body can heal and restore balance to the digestive system.



*Dr. Roman E. Finn, M.D. is the owner of The Center for Integrative and Traditional Medicine, located at 22 Madison Ave., in Paramus. For appointments or more information, call 201-291-0401 or visit [citm-drfinn.com](http://citm-drfinn.com). See ads, pages 23 and back cover.*

# 2025: Seeing Through a New Lens

**W**hat if you changed the lens you viewed the world in this new year? What could that do for you? What would change for you in the coming year? The answer is..... everything!!! What I am about to propose is very different from any other new year's message you are going to hear. If you are ready for a radical shift in your life, then I recommend you read on.

How can I make this bold proposal to you to see your life and your world through a different lens in 2025? I believe so strongly this proposal is the one shift that everyone needs to make to change their world in the most positive way--but most importantly it is a shift in how people view themselves in the most empowering, loving, and bold way.

Most likely, you view yourself as a physical body that has many characteristics of being—mother/father, child, sister/brother, aunt/uncle, career/life calling, worker/expert in your field....I could go on. But do you ever view yourself as something beyond the physical world paradigm of life?

My proposal is to start viewing yourself from the eternal part of you—your Soul, your True Self. This part of you is love at the core, extremely wise, and willing to do whatever it takes to become the best version of you. It is the part that is overshadowed by the ego mind that wants to control you, instill fear in you, and block you from stepping forward in courage on the path you're meant to be on in this life. The ego does this for you to survive but it also severely limits you.



One way to start viewing yourself in this new way is to acknowledge that you are an energy being, first and foremost. Your energy beingness is within and beyond your physical body and regulating your whole physiology. Your energy beingness is your connection to the spiritual realm. There is an inextricable connection between the physical and spiritual realms. We've been programmed to believe that nothing is real unless we can see it, touch it. However, this is one of the most limiting ways to live life. Most likely, it will cost you accomplishing your Divine Mission. It will cost you tapping into your highest potential. It will cost you living as if everything is a miracle. It will cost you the connection to the deepest love, joy, and peace possible. It will cost the

desired evolution of your Soul.

This energy being or Soul is the aspect of you that is intuitive, sensitive, and knowing. Your Soul would love for you to follow its guidance and live a life of extreme happiness, joy, and fulfillment.



*You can learn more about your Soul or True Self in my recent book, *Journey to True Self: Discover Your Divine Magnificence* ([DrAnneDeatly.com/book/](http://DrAnneDeatly.com/book/)). If anyone wants to balance their energy systems to align with their True Self, please contact me at 551-500-5011 or [anne.deatly@gmail.com](mailto:anne.deatly@gmail.com). See ad, page 20.*

# Budget-Friendly Healthy Eating



Eating healthy is a vital part of maintaining overall wellness, but many people believe it comes with a hefty price tag. However, with the right strategies and a touch of creativity, we can enjoy nutritious meals without overspending. Whether feeding a family or cooking for one, embracing budget-friendly nutrition tips can help make the most of the grocery budget while maintaining a balanced and wholesome diet.

■ **Plan for Success:** One of the most effective strategies for eating healthy without overspending is meal planning. Taking a few minutes each week to plan meals can create a grocery list tailored to individual needs and avoid impulse buys.

■ **Establish a Budget:** Decide how much to spend on groceries and follow it.

■ **Plan Meals Around Sales:** Check weekly store flyers or online deals and plan menus around discounted items.

■ **Batch Cooking:** Prepare meals in advance and store them in portions for the week. This reduces the need for expensive, last-minute takeout options.

■ **Embrace Smart Shopping Habits:** Adopting savvy shopping practices can significantly reduce grocery bills, while ensuring buying quality items.

■ **Shop in Bulk:** Purchase items like grains, nuts and spices in bulk for long-term savings.

■ **Avoid Pre-Packaged Foods:** Pre-cut or pre-prepared foods often come at a premium price.

■ **Cook at Home:** Preparing your meals at home is one of the most reliable ways to control both costs and ingredients. Tailor dishes to specific nutritional needs and avoid hidden sugars, salts and unhealthy fats commonly found in processed foods.

■ **Simple Recipes:** Stick to easy recipes that use basic ingredients to save time and money.

■ **One-Pot Meals:** Minimize cleanup and ingredient costs with dishes such as soups, stews and casseroles.

■ **Repurpose Leftovers:** Transform leftovers into new meals to reduce waste and stretch each dollar.

- Vegetarian Chili
- Canned beans
- Diced tomatoes
- Onions and garlic
- Spices such as chili powder and cumin

■ **Cost-saving tip:** Use whatever vegetables there are on hand to make this dish even more versatile.

- Oatmeal with Fruits and Nuts
- Rolled oats

- Splash of milk
- Seasonal fruit
- Handful of nuts or seeds

■ **Cost-saving tip:** Buy oats in bulk and use frozen fruit during off-season.

- Stir-Fried Vegetables with Rice
- Mixed vegetables
- Soy sauce
- Garlic
- Cooked brown rice



■ **Cost-saving tip:** Use frozen vegetables for convenience and affordability.

- Lentil Soup
- Vegetable broth
- Celery
- Carrots
- Onions
- Garlic
- Lentils



■ **Cost-saving tip:** Lentils are inexpensive and provide a hearty source of protein and fiber.

- Baked Sweet Potatoes with Black Beans
- Salsa
- Canned black beans
- Sweet potatoes
- Cheese



■ **Cost-saving tip:** Use leftover beans in salads or soups to avoid waste.

For more information, visit [NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com](http://NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com).

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## Elephants Mitigate Climate Change

African forest elephants, a smaller cousin of the savanna elephants that inhabit the dense rain forests of central Africa, are natural climate-change mitigators. They shape their forest habitats by dispersing seeds from large, carbon-storing trees through their dung. Some of the seeds of trees responsible for the greatest carbon sequestration do not germinate until they are digested by the elephants.

As they forage for food, African forest elephants trample the dense underbrush, which promotes the growth of taller, denser carbon-capturing trees. Because the litter left from foraging is not easily decomposed, more carbon is accumulated in the soil. A 2019 report in *Nature Geoscience* estimates that one forest elephant can increase net carbon capture capacity by almost 250 acres, the equivalent of one year's worth of emissions from more than 2,000 cars. African forest elephants are critically endangered as a result of illegal poaching and habitat loss.



dangdumrong from Getty Images Signature/CanvaPro

## Drones Reveal Lost Cities

The Silk Road was a series of ancient trade routes that once connected China to the Roman Empire. Research published in the journal *Nature* reported the discovery of two fortified cities—Tashbulak and Tugunbulak—in the mountains of southeastern Uzbekistan, 7,000 feet above sea level. Urban centers above 6,000 feet are rare.

The discovery is important because it had been assumed that ancient trade routes avoided the mountains of Central Asia. Archaeologists used light detection and ranging equipment (LiDAR), a drone mapping technology, to create a detailed map of these large urban centers, which included watchtowers, fortresses, complex buildings and plazas.



Julia Yashina from Getty Images/CanvaPro

## Smart Traffic Signals

Idling in a car waiting for the pre-timed traffic light to turn green can be frustrating, time consuming and a cause of air pollution. A 2023 simulation published in *Applied System Innovation* found that deploying smart traffic lights at a single key intersection in a small Portuguese city reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 32 to 40 percent and wait times by 53 to 95 percent.

Smart traffic lights use a combination of sensors, including vehicle detectors, cameras, and light detection and ranging equipment (LiDAR) to collect traffic data, enabling artificial intelligence algorithms to make real-time adjustments that maximize traffic flow. The investment in these technologies is up to local governments. For example, in late 2023, the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments announced that they would upgrade 45 traffic signals in high-traffic areas in Butler County, Ohio.



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**Online Reviews and Reputation Management:** In the health and wellness industry, word-of-mouth is critical. Online reviews on

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**Community Involvement and Events:** Participating in or hosting local wellness events such as health fairs, fitness challenges or community yoga classes can help connect with potential clients in the local area. Promoting these events online through social media and the website can create buzz and increase visibility.

**E-mail Marketing Campaigns:** E-mail marketing remains one of the most effective ways to keep clients informed and engaged. By offering valuable health tips, special promotions and exclusive offers, businesses can nurture relationships with existing clients while attracting new ones.

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# First Thoughts and New Experiences

Returning to Innocence Through Beginner's Mindset

by Carrie Jackson

The new year brings a fresh focus on growth and forward thinking. An intentional way to harness this is to adopt the Zen Buddhist idea of *shoshin*, or beginner's mind. This approach guides people to experience life with curiosity and openness, helping them let go of old patterns. It is a way of being that encourages practitioners to abandon preconceptions, embrace the world with a sense of wonder and see things from a more optimistic perspective. By examining and releasing old ways of thinking, expressing gratitude and incorporating different practices, the mind, body and heart open to novel opportunities.

## The Beginner's Mindset

"The idea of being open to the situation comes up repeatedly in meditative traditions," says Steve Rogne, owner and director of Zen Shiatsu, in Evanston, Illinois. He notes that in his practice, *shoshin* is an essential part of *shiatsu*, a form of massage therapy that uses gentle pressure to stimulate the body's acupressure points and meridian channels. *Shoshin* can aid in unblocking stagnant energy and harmonizing the flow of *qi*, or vital energy, in the body.

"As a situation arises, we have our natural responses, which may include wanting to change what is happening. Another perspective is to ask, 'What if I accept things the way they are?'" Rogne explains. "Accepting situations for the way they are is the

foundation from which we can respond. It's like a preparation for action without being the endpoint. We can simultaneously be open and respond mindfully."

Learning to accept what is happening can also help us break old patterns of thinking and reacting. "There is a very common human dynamic to move toward the things we want and away from the things we don't want; however, this can lead to a fixed response pattern that limits our growth," says Rogne. "In *shiatsu*, we help people to recognize those patterns and find the balance between active response and trusting with faith. This trains us to listen to our inner wisdom and relax into outcomes that aren't what we prefer."

Mindfully changing patterns can open us up to new experiences that we had previously shut out. "You may find a willingness to move forward in new relationships, even though you've experienced that relationships can be painful, or perhaps you find the willingness to speak up even though there's a chance you won't be heard in the way that you want," Rogne notes.

Keeping a receptive mind helps to open us up physically, as well. "In both *shiatsu* and the *shoshin* mindset, we trust that every person's body is already working on its own healing. When we let go of our fixed holding patterns, the internal circulation is freed up, leaving the best possible opportu-

nity for the body to regain all the healthy rhythms of the organs and reduce conditions such as chronic pain," Rogne asserts.

## Optimism

Having hope and confidence about the future is essential in cultivating a beginner's mind, helping to counter some of the fear and intolerance that can undermine our lives. "A *shoshin* principle is that there is not anything fundamentally wrong with us or with the world. This allows us to move forward with positive faith and engagement," says Rogne.

"Optimism is a belief that good things will happen and that things will work out in the end," says Victor Pertone, founder of the Centre for Optimism, an Australian-based think tank dedicated to fostering realistic and infectious optimism around the world. "With optimism, we enter each experience expecting fresh possibilities, guided by a sense that there's something meaningful to discover."

This positive outlook has myriad benefits. "Optimism nurtures healthy longevity and acts as a powerful protector against major health threats like heart disease, cancer and dementia," says Pertone. "Optimism also lowers the risk of cognitive decline, as optimistic people tend to be more socially and physically active, helping stave off dementia and age-related memory loss." A 2022 study of more than 150,000 racially diverse, older women published in the *Journal of the American*





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*Geriatrics Society* found that the most optimistic women were healthier, lived 4.4 years longer than the least optimistic women and were more likely to live past age 90.

A positive outlook can help navigate the stress and anxiety of life. “Optimism doesn’t mean ignoring the challenge; it means approaching it with the belief that solutions are possible. Optimism and a beginner’s mind work together in this way, helping us to stay open to new paths, resilient in the face of setbacks and appreciative of life’s small, beautiful details,” opines Perton.

Incorporating small, intentional practices into our day can help us cultivate optimism. “Smiling with genuine warmth—even at strangers—can shift our outlook, and asking others, ‘What’s the best thing in your day?’ brings a positive energy to conversations,” says Perton. He also recommends simple grounding practices like gardening, yoga and meditation to nurture curiosity and positivity, noting, “Through these small habits, optimism becomes a daily practice and, in time,

a personal superpower for resilience and joy.”

## Reframing Our Outlook

Reflective practices encourage us to explore our goals with a fresh outlook. “Journaling is a practice that is just for you, and you’re not intending to share it with anyone else,” explains Shawn Brown, a Baltimore-based wellness facilitator and yoga teacher who helps clients find a path to being their authentic selves. “It really allows you to examine what is popping up and what you are curious about. This might be learning a new language or starting a new yoga practice. When we look at things as a beginner, we are open to what we are truly interested in.”

A regular gratitude practice also helps bring us back to a place of grounding. “When we tap into gratitude, it expands our propensity to be creative and allows us to drop into the present moment. This is where we live, but when we think of the future or ruminate on something that happened in the past, we are pulled out,” says Brown. She

encourages clients to take breaks throughout the day and recall a person, place or experience for which they are grateful. “Think about something that makes the corner of your mouth turn into a smile,” she suggests. “It can be as simple as gratitude for your partner who bought dog food or a neighbor who moved a package off the porch. This brings us back into our lives right now, and that’s where the beginner is.”

Cultivating a sense of play can also tap into a shoshin mindset. “As adults, there’s a need to have a goal or expected result in any situation. When you’re a beginner, you don’t have a specific outcome because you’re just learning. Play, especially with kids or an animal, is free-form engagement without the need to get it right or check something off our to-do list. Releasing the need for control and perfection opens us up and expands us for so many other options and possibilities,” Brown says.

Brown encourages her yoga students to be open in the way they approach their practice. “Coming into a pose in a different way can give us a new experience of it,” she says. “My approach to yoga is not that we’re trying to do the posture, it’s that we’re trying to feel the posture. It’s a mirror of our being and can indicate if you are feeling strong, tired, energized or wobbly. Rather than attaching a label of good or bad, you just notice, and that opens us up.”

Especially in the new year, Brown urges clients to replace “I have to” with “I get to,” which presents more of a growth mindset. “This is the time to reframe our goals,” she points out. “Trying something new, like taking a West African dance class instead of your regular spin class, shakes up the routine and keeps your mind and body learning. You get to be pushed out of the comfort zone, and that’s where the magic happens.”

*Carrie Jackson is a Chicago-based freelance writer and frequent contributor to Natural Awakenings. Connect at [CarrieJacksonWrites.com](http://CarrieJacksonWrites.com).*



# Exercise With a Smile

## Turning Workouts Into Playtime

by David J. Sautter, NASM (CPT, FNS, PES), ACE (SCS)

When it comes to exercise, many people think of rigid routines, grueling workouts and strict schedules, but joyful movement can make fitness fun, flexible and something to look forward to. It could be as simple as walking through the park, dancing in the living room or playing outside with the kids. Unlike traditional exercise routines that feel like obligations or chores, a joyful approach to fitness focuses on engaging in activities that feel good both physically and mentally.

“Movement does not have to be intense or complex; however, it must be intentional and innate,” says Katia Mashni, a health-and-wellness coach and registered dietitian/nutritionist in Michigan. “When you find and engage in an exercise program you enjoy, you are far more likely to stick to it and adopt it as part of your lifestyle because it makes you happy.” A 2020 study published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* of more than 2,300 adults found that those

engaged in moderate and high levels of activity had significantly higher life satisfaction and happiness than those with low activity levels.

### Fun Fuels Fitness Success

Fun is a powerful motivator when it comes to fitness. A 2020 review of more than 2,800 studies and papers by researchers at Victoria University, in Australia, found that when people had fun exercising, they were significantly more likely to consistently exercise.



Elena Photo/CanvaPro

By regularly engaging in our favorite activities, we can create a healthier relationship with fitness. A study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* of more than 200 participants involved in different levels of activity found that after four weeks, active participants had higher levels of happiness, life satisfaction and self-esteem.

### Adding Joy to Workouts

- **Listen to music.** An energizing playlist of favorites is a surefire way to boost a walking, running or strength-training routine.
- **Exercise with friends or family.** Increase the fun quotient by turning a gym workout or outdoor hike into a social event.
- **Try something new or revisit a childhood favorite.** Explore activities such as biking around the neighborhood, hula-hooping in the backyard or swimming at a local pool or beach. “I encourage people to get curious,” says Courtney Pelitera, a dietitian with a passion for sport and performance nutrition. “Maybe you loved swimming in high school, or you have always wanted to take your dog out on a hike, or the pickleball leagues popping up everywhere sound like fun to you. Try it out! We all start somewhere, and being new to something might even bring you into friendships with others who are also new.”
- **Dance around the house.** Turn household chores into a dance party by moving to the rhythm while cleaning or cooking.
- **Play with pets.** Get active by running, walking or playing fetch with the dog or by creating a fun obstacle course to do together.

### Releasing the Guilt and Pressure

Many people feel judged or intimidated when it comes to fitness. Embrace these strategies to break free from the pressure to exercise perfectly or to follow an intense workout routine.

- **Let go of perfection.** Focus on progress, not perfection. Every bit of movement counts, and it’s okay if goals or milestones are not achieved right away.
- **Set a realistic pace.** Whether starting or returning to fitness, it is important to honestly evaluate exercise readiness. Joyful movement is about doing what feels right for the body.
- **Avoid comparisons to others.** Everyone’s fitness journey is different, and trying to match others can take the joy out of it. Celebrate personal achievements, no matter how small.
- **Focus on fun, not performance.** Place less emphasis on the quality of the exercise movements and more on how pleasing those efforts are.
- **Choose comfortable environments.** Whether a solo walk in nature, a quiet yoga session or dancing at home, choose settings that feel relaxing and happy.
- **Dress for comfort.** Wearing feel-good workout clothes adds confidence and reduces self-conscious discomfort during exercise.

*David J. Sautter is a certified trainer, nutrition specialist, and health and fitness writer.*

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# Secrets to a Joyful Childhood

Building a Family That Laughs and Loves Together

by Christina Connors

There are no sweeter sounds than the giggles of a child playing with a puppy or the giddy singing voice of a little one at bedtime. When these life-affirming moments are consistent and shared among a family, such heartfelt and abiding contentment can be considered a type of joy that becomes second nature, impacting children in enduring ways.

“Joy is the building block for developing resilience, improving mental health and supporting cognitive performance,” says Dr. Chanie Messinger, a Brooklyn-based occupational therapist, educator and motivational speaker. “It’s important to remember that our ability to experience joy is directly dependent upon our ability to be open to experiencing all the rainbow of emotions, including sadness, anger and frustration. To me, creating a joyful home means that, as a family, we practice accepting and holding all of our emotions through joyful play, deep connection and creativity.”

“Everything starts in the home, and our kids take their cues from their parents and caregivers,” says Harmony Longenecker, founder of The Classical Academy of Sarasota, in Florida, a private pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade classical liberal arts school. “It is important to model for our kids how to be grateful, generous and joyful, and doing things together as a family fosters those qualities.”

A systematic review of research published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* suggests that positive family dynamics like cohesion and com-

munication strongly predict the happiness of children and adolescents. Here are some ways to incorporate joy in the home to benefit the whole family.

**Reduce smartphone use.** Children thrive whenever their parents and other family members are fully present in their lives. When spending time together, it is vital to remove distractions as a way of enabling and deepening the connection to one another. Eliminating or reducing smartphone use during family time is an important first step. To learn more, Longenecker recommends reading *The Opt-Out Family: How to Give Your Kids What Technology Can't*, by Erin Loechner.

**Champion a gratitude jar.** Encourage everyone to write down what they are thankful for on pieces of paper and drop them into

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# PASS US AROUND

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a large jar. Once a week, invite each family member to pull out a gratitude note and share it with the group, encouraging discussion.

**Have a family dance party.** “Moving our bodies is a great way to release tension and boost serotonin,” says Messinger. For added fun, stop the music every so often and have everyone freeze in place in outlandish positions that represent an emotion. Family members then take turns guessing what the emotions are. Is it boredom, anger, glee, frustration or anticipation? This enjoyable game can improve the emotional intelligence of children.

**Engage in a child’s favorite activity.** Plan

an afternoon or day trip around a child’s passions, which could be attending a car race for the auto enthusiast, painting outdoors for the child artist or having a family fashion show for the budding clothing designer. “Tapping into what our kids appreciate and noticing what lights them up is how we can create feelings of safety and joy,” says Messinger.

**Hold recurring family meetings.** At the beginning of each season, sit down together and set family goals for the quarter, making sure to include both thoughtful intentions and fun activities. “Communication and setting intentions regularly as a family is not only a fun way to spend time together, but also opens up conversations about the

power of setting intentions and following through,” says Longenecker.

**Get moving outdoors together.** Go for a family bike ride. Take a walk in nature. Visit the zoo. Exercising in the sunshine or under a sparkling night sky is not only great for everyone’s health, but also a fun way to bond and make special memories.

**Keep a tidy household.** A well-ordered home is a joyful one. Make chores fun by playing music while decorating, cooking, cleaning or doing laundry together.

**Develop a family manifesto.** Jointly write down a code of conduct and set of beliefs that identifies the family. “Getting clear on who we are as individuals and as a family helps our kids know their true selves. By helping them develop this inner knowing, it will help them navigate the world with confidence and be less likely to succumb to unhealthy peer pressure,” says Longenecker.

**Hit the reset button.** “Oftentimes being crabby is a habit,” says Longenecker. “Establish a rule: When a family member wakes up crabby, they must return to their room and take a few moments of alone-time to breathe and decide to shift their emotional state to a more positive one. If there are feelings that need to be seen and heard, be sure to help them express those emotions through conversation and cuddling.”

**Practice radical generosity.** The act of giving is healthy for the soul. A beautiful way to practice generosity as a family is to serve together. Volunteer at a local charity, or pay for a stranger’s meal at a restaurant. Such acts of kindness strengthen our empathy muscles and fill our spirits with joy.

*Christina Connors is a writer, singer and creator of Christina’s Cottage, a YouTube series to strengthen kids’ resilience, connection and joy through music, mindful play and the power of the heart. Learn more at [ChristinasCottage444.com](http://ChristinasCottage444.com).*

# The Upcycling Lifestyle

How To Make Anything New Again

by Maya Whitman

In a world overflowing with needless waste, sustainability is the new necessity, and upcycling is trending as a fun, creative practice for all ages. Whether we slather peanut butter on a paper towel tube and roll it in seeds to make a bird feeder or turn a patterned bedsheet into curtains, the point of upcycling is to reduce trash by transforming an obsolete item into something useful or beautiful. It is a way forward that conserves precious resources, reduces our carbon footprint, saves money and provides an outlet to unleash our imagination. Almost anything can be repurposed—from clothing and furniture to household items like wine bottles, cardboard and toothpaste tubes. Many online and offline resources provide inspiration, including books like Calin Duke's *How To Upcycle Nearly Everything*. Cleaning out old drawers and closets or perusing thrift stores opens the door to endless possibilities for personal expression and clever innovation.

## Dressing Up Drab

According to a 2021 study by market researchers at First Insight and at the Baker Retailing Center in The Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania, upcycled clothing is a favorite among Gen Z consumers that prioritize sustainability over brand-name loyalty. The #UpcycledFashion hashtag is more popular than ever, with more than 427 million views on TikTok, a large driver of Gen Z content.

Sewing a quilt out of old T-shirts or cutting up worn-out jeans to make a stylish boho purse can be weekend projects or rainy-day distractions for bored kids. But for Angela Sawyer, upcycling is a passion and a way

of life. Inspired by her mother and grandmother, as well as a lifelong passion for crafting and art, she created her own YouTube channel @MizAngelaSawyer to teach and motivate others. Her tutorials exhibit the joy that can come from a do-it-yourself lifestyle. "It's fun to see what you can make out of something else," she declares.

Sawyer suggests viewing everything around the house with a new perspective, saying, "Look for anything you use a lot of and have to throw away. What could you make with those, since you have so many?" Her jam is turning outgrown clothes into personal fashion statements.

"Jeans are very popular to upcycle," Sawyer explains. "You can turn them into skirts, patchwork blankets and much more." For the stitching-phobic, there are plenty of no-sew techniques to embellish or repurpose

tired clothes, such as dyeing fabrics (extra points for plant-based dyes); applying self-adhesive trim, patches or lace; adding rhinestones with fabric glue; and tying or braiding fabric pieces together. For beginners, Sawyer recommends watching online YouTube channels that offer easy-to-follow instructions and creative solutions for every craft project.

## Functional Memories

Sentimental mothers are reluctant to give away baby clothes, but upcycling can preserve family memories in the form of patchwork memory quilts, holiday ornaments and clothing for dolls that can be handed down to the next generation. Those inexplicably mismatched socks can be reused as dusting or cleaning mitts, rice-filled hot compresses or eyeglass holders. Old teacups are lovely containers for hand-poured candles, while old forks and spoons can



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be repurposed into musical wind chimes. Even junk mail and glossy, outdated catalogs can be transformed into handmade cards and decoupage jewelry.

### Creativity Prompts

To a creative mind, anything can be repurposed and reimaged. Inventive examples abound, many of which are easy to replicate. Here are a few ideas.

- Use toilet paper rolls as cable organizers to keep the wires from tangling.
- Store earbuds in empty mint containers.
- Transform used wine bottles into rustic flower vases.
- Spruce up old furniture with a fresh coat of paint and re-purpose bent silverware as drawer pulls.
- Make a necklace or earrings with buttons.

- Repurpose an old tennis racket into a trellis for the garden.
- Take broken plates and ceramics, break them down and create a new work of art.
- Place stringed lights in discarded jars for a new lease on life.
- Turn aluminum or plastic containers into house planters.

### Community Crafting

Showing others how to turn trash into treasure or add new life to tired objects is a wonderful motivator for friends, neighbors and future generations. “When a child gets into upcycling, it can give them a sense of accomplishment, which increases confidence,” Sawyer points out. “It can have a ripple effect outside of our communities, too, if we share with others what we are doing and inspire them to do the same.”

*Maya Whitman is a regular contributor to Natural Awakenings.*

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# Advancing a Couple's Fertility

Natural Solutions for Women and Men

by Madiha Saeed, M.D.

The prospect of parenthood can bring a range of emotions to couples trying to conceive—from excitement and jubilation to worry, frustration and sadness. According to the World Health Organization, one in six people worldwide experience infertility in their lifetime. Many couples hoping to conceive turn to costly medications and painful procedures designed to manipulate hormones, help with ovulation issues and prepare a woman's body for pregnancy.

In addition to researching such medications and procedures, couples should explore natural alternatives that nurture and support their ability to conceive. "Fertility is not just about hormones," says Nashat Latib, a certified functional medicine doctor specializing in natural fertility. "Consider what is going on in your whole body."

"Males and females are equally at the root of fertility struggles, and sometimes the roadblocks can come from both sides," observes Aumatma Simmons, a naturopathic doctor, endocrinolo-

gist and author of *Fertility Secrets: What Your Doctor Didn't Tell You About Baby-Making*. "It is essential to pinpoint the root causes of fertility problems."

For women, fertility rates naturally decline with age, from a 25 to 30 percent chance of pregnancy in their early-to-mid-20s to about a 5 percent chance by age 40. Other health concerns such as ovulation issues, endometriosis, uterine fibroids and polycystic ovary syndrome can complicate conception and the ability to carry a baby to term.

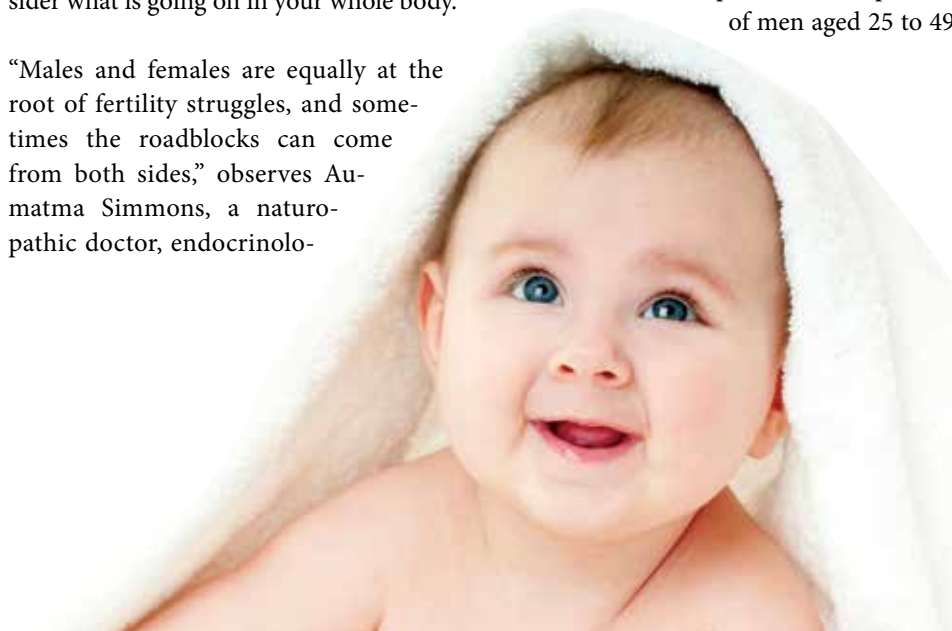
When fertility issues arise, often the focus is placed on women, but about half of the cases can be attributed to the men. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that 12.8 percent of men aged 25 to 49

experience infertility, and the rate is rising. Factors like low sperm production, poor sperm quality, oxidative stress, blockages preventing sperm release, undescended testicles and cancers contribute to male infertility. Other health problems, including diabetes, infections, hormone imbalances, autoimmunity and tumors, can impact both men and women.

## Rainbow Nutrition

Diet plays a significant role in overall reproductive health. Simmons stresses the need for a diet that includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean protein, healthy fats and whole grains to provide the essential nutrients that support fertility. Phytonutrients—natural compounds in plants that provide health benefits—optimize male and female fertility and help the body eliminate toxins. Simmons also recommends limiting processed foods and refined sugar, which can negatively impact hormone balance.

"Nutrients found in cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy and kohlrabi can help regulate and metabolize hormones," says Latib. "Nutrients found in grapes and berries can improve the quality of the eggs and sperm by reducing oxidative stress; protect reproductive cells from damage; support successful embryo implantation; regulate ovulation by modulating hormone levels; and promote hormonal balance. Compounds like lycopene in tomatoes and watermelon have been shown to improve sperm motil-







atlasstudio/CanvaPro

ity and boost immune function by providing antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds.”

Latib adds that pairing foods from different color categories in meals helps maximize the positive effects of phytonutrients. Examples include a berry smoothie with spinach, a stir-fry dish with a rainbow of vegetables, a tomato and mushroom frittata, a cauliflower rice bowl with turmeric and veggies, and a kale salad topped with sweet potato.

### A Clean Lifestyle

Toxins are all around us, and hormone-disrupting chemicals found in cosmetics, plastic packaging, toys, carpets and pesticides can have serious consequences for male and female fertility. Latib suggests using glass instead of plastic whenever possible and eating organic fruits and vegetables to reduce the pesticide and herbicide exposure.

“Be cautious of endocrine disruptors such as bisphenol A, commonly known as BPA, and phthalates that are used to make plastics. They are found in food packaging, water bottles and food-can linings,” says Simmons, adding, “Even ingredients like ‘fragrance’

can contribute to hormonal imbalances and gut-health issues.”

Stress can negatively affect fertility, underscoring the need for stress management. Simmons recommends quitting tobacco use, reducing alcohol intake and practicing yoga or meditation to improve overall reproductive health. Exercise can also reduce tension, improving health and fertility.

Latib recommends high-intensity exercise during the first half of a woman’s menstrual cycle and restorative movement and exercise in the second half of the cycle. For men, she

notes the importance of supporting testosterone levels with regular exercise and sufficient sleep, limiting unhealthy environmental exposures and consuming adequate levels of nutrients like zinc and vitamin D.

### Reducing Inflammation

Chronic inflammation can negatively impact fertility by disrupting hormone balance and damaging reproductive tissues. Oxidative stress occurs when the body’s free radicals and antioxidants are not balanced, leading to damaged reproductive cells and fertility issues.

Both Latib and Simmons recommend working with a fertility specialist to assess a couple’s health, fertility and lifestyle factors. The assessment should include hormone testing to measure levels of testosterone, luteinizing hormones, follicle-stimulating hormones and prolactin; nutrient testing for zinc, selenium and antioxidant levels; a gut-health assessment; and a thorough evaluation of environmental toxin exposures.

“Your body is smart,” emphasizes Latib. “Nothing is unexplainable. If you are having trouble conceiving, there is a root cause. A functional fertility practitioner can guide you through the process.”

*Madiha Saeed is a holistic, functional and integrative doctor in Naperville, Illinois, and director of education for Documenting Hope and KnoWEwell.*



# Holistic Medicine: Why Bother?

One of the very most common reasons for patients to seek holistic/functional medical attention is fatigue or feeling “out of sorts”. Often people will search for a holistic approach after first going to their primary care physicians with the same complaints, and that physician may do some basic bloodwork to rule out potentially serious or life-threatening conditions. Upon getting results “within the normal range”, the patient will be told that, essentially, “nothing is wrong”, they are “okay.” That leaves one big unsolved problem: They still don’t FEEL okay!!”

This is where a functional work-up comes into play. There are many possible reasons for feeling “less than well”, “fatigued”, or “not yourself”. Sometimes there may be additional specific symptoms to guide an investigation into the “root cause” of this feeling, sometimes not. Patients may have their own suspicions about the underlying issue perhaps based on preliminary internet research, and this can be quite useful. Past personal or family history may provide additional clues. However, for a functional physician an in-depth investigation entails objective testing to come to meaningful conclusions. Fortunately, many available innovative test options can provide the much-needed answers. And, of course, proper treatment is based on correct and thorough diagnosis.

Vague symptoms of unwellness can actually be caused by a VERY wide variety of physiological imbalances, and in fact the symptoms of many physiological imbalances overlap tremendously. So, without pinpointed testing, treatment would be somewhat hit-and-miss, potentially off the mark, and could even leave serious conditions unattended for an extended period of time.

In a “don’t feel right” or fatigue scenario, MANY issues that might need to be considered, including, (but not limited to) the following:

- Thyroid problems, always a prime suspect
- Poor adrenal function/depleted adrenal reserves: Often ignored, adrenals actually impact many aspects of function, immunological status, mood and energy
- Hormone levels: They can affect mood, sleep, strength, endurance, cognition, confidence, energy, and of course, libido
- Lack of sleep for any reason
- Side effects of medications, even long-term ones that start to cause problems
- Stress: Perhaps this should be number one. Any type of stress, emotional, physical, mental, psychological, spiritual, all can impact health immensely
- Sub-par nutrient levels: B vitamins, Vitamin C, amino acids, antioxidants, Vitamin D3, etc.)
- Poor food choices or inadequate fluid intake
- The population of organisms in the gut (“microbiome”) affects immunology, mood, allergies, energy, and of course, GI health
- Allergies/sensitivities to both environmental elements and foods
- Toxicity: From “heavy” metals (lead, mercury, etc.) organic poisons, mold toxins , etc.
- Sugar intolerance (Hypoglycemia)
- Neurological, Cardiovascular or Pulmonary disorders

## Auto-immunity of any sort

If in fact NONE of these could be identified, the investigation would NOT be considered complete, and further thought would need to be given to what else might be done, might be wrong, and how to correct it. An answer like “You’re fine. Just get some rest.” is not enough when you don’t feel right. If you don’t feel right, this is your body telling you clearly that something IS wrong. Signals from the body should be honored and addressed, not overlooked and not approached with fear, but with thoughtful consideration. It is the role of the functional/holistic physician to search as deeply as necessary to discover the problem(s) and find solutions that will work for you. If health is your priority, as it must be, you simply cannot settle for less.



Since her mentorship with Dr. Robert Atkins, Dr. Robin Ellen Leder has provided functional/holistic medical care to thousands of patients at her Hackensack office, treating a wide variety of hormonal, immunological, metabolic, GI, psychological and auto-immune issues through diet, supplements, and minimal use of medication. She has taken numerous courses in the safe and effective use of bioidentical hormones, thyroid/adrenal treatment, healing of the gut, chelation therapy, the mind/body connection, etc. to achieve long term health and well-being. Each of her patients is evaluated individually, and ultimately decisions are made by doctor and patient working as a team. To learn more about the doctor’s work and approach, visit her website at [drrobin-leder.com](http://drrobin-leder.com), or see her ad, page 3.

## calendar of events

Email [Publisher@NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com](mailto:Publisher@NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com) for guidelines and to submit entries

### Sunday

**Ramsey Farmers Market** – 9 am - 2 pm. Award winning non-profit Ramsey Farmers Market features 50 local vendors, music craft, chef demos and special fun events for whole family. For more information: <http://ramsey-farmersmarket.org/> Location: Erie Plaza Station, 2 West Main St, Ramsey.

### Monday

**THUG Class with Donay** — 6 - 7 pm. Come join ACE certified fitness instructor Donay every Monday at 6 pm for his THUG (thigh, hip, upper body, glutes) class and 7 pm for his Stretch Ability (ab and stretching) class at Strong and Shapely Gym, 150 Union Ave. East Rutherford. Each single class is only \$10 but combine the 2 for \$15. Both classes are co-ed. No membership is required. For more information please email: [donaysfitness4u@gmail.com](mailto:donaysfitness4u@gmail.com) or call 201-894-0138.

### Tuesday

**Weekly Silent Meditation Circle** — 6 - 7 pm. Erica Tait, LCSW, LCADC will conduct the silent meditation session. Dedicate time and practice to come home to self in a most welcoming atmosphere. No meditation experience required. No Cost, donation based in Northvale office. Location: 408 Paulding Ave., Suite 2B, Northvale, NJ. 201-719-5919. More info: Email [info@quantumpsychotherapygroup.com](mailto:info@quantumpsychotherapygroup.com) or visit <https://quantumpsychotherapygroup.com>

### Thursday

**Weekly Neuro-Transformational Guided Meditation Circle** — 10:30-11:30am, Online. Release your stress and relax with Lois Kramer-Perez. Using visualizations along with guided clearing meditations, clear accumulated stress therefore clearing the self. No meditation experience required. Register by 9am to receive the Zoom link from Lois emailed at 10am. Details: [Lois@loiskramerez.com](mailto:Lois@loiskramerez.com). 201-906-5767. Register: [LoisKramerPerez.com/My-Events/](https://www.loiskramerez.com/My-Events/).

### Saturday, January 4

**Holy Fire Reiki 1** – 10:00am - 5:00pm. Come join us for a Reiki 1 Beginner's level consists of an introduction to Reiki Healing and an opening to the blessings of life, including simple hands-on techniques for self-healing. Call 201-788-6322 to register or visit website at [www.essenceofself.com](http://www.essenceofself.com). Location: Essence of Self Ayurveda Spa, 52 Skyline Drive, Ringwood NJ.

### Sunday, January 5

**Awaken Your Power - 8 Week Women's Circle** – 7:00pm - 8:30pm. Step into a sacred space of connection, empowerment, and self-discovery with transformational journey invites women of all walks of life to come together, share their stories, and explore tools to unlock their inner strength and potential. Whether you are looking to reignite your

confidence, build authentic relationships, or simply create space for self-care, this circle provides the nurturing environment you need. Cost \$55 per week or \$440 total. Call (201) 741-4196 to register or visit at [www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter](http://www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter). Location: Ora Wellness Center, 5 Atwood Avenue, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

**Singing Bowls Sound Healing** — 2:30pm - 3:30pm. In the serene and relaxing environment of the salt cave, enjoy the sounds and vibrations of singing bowls and meditation with sound healer Beth Lantigua. Cost \$60. Call 845-290-0678 to register! Visit Website & Register at <https://saltoftheearthcfh.com>. Location: Salt of the Earth, Center for Healing, 811 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Chestnut Ridge, NY.

**Holy Fire Reiki 2** – 10:00am - 5:00pm. Come join us for a Reiki 2 The professional level of Reiki training includes an introduction to symbols, distance healing, and hand placements for full-body treatment of self and others. Call 201-788-6322 to register or visit website at [www.essenceofself.com](http://www.essenceofself.com). Location: Essence of Self Ayurveda Spa, 52 Skyline Drive, Ringwood NJ.

### Monday, January 6

**The Better Breather's Club** — 11:00 am - 12:00 pm. Learn better ways to cope with lung disease while getting the support of others in similar situations. The group provides a safe space where patients can talk openly about their feelings, reduce stress and anxiety, and receive education. Visit Website at [valley-health.com/events](http://valley-health.com/events). Location: The Valley Hospital, 4 Valley Health Plaza, Paramus, NJ.

### Tuesday, January 7

**Yoga & Meditation with Vinni** – 8:30am - 9:30am. Find an equilibrium in the mind, body, and spirit. This is designed to help you center yourself, re-energize, and restore balance to your week. This Hatha Yoga class is designed to release tension and stress stored in the body. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com). Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple, Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

### Wednesday, January 8

**Childbirth Preparation (Lamaze)** — 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm. This class explores a wide range of techniques for creating a safe and satisfying birth experience. Visit Website at [valley-health.com/events](http://valley-health.com/events). Location: Valley Health System, 140 E. Ridgewood Ave, Suite 501N, Paramus, NJ.

### Thursday, January 9

**Yoga & Sound Bath Meditation with Kanan** – 8:30am - 9:30am. Learn to align yourself intelligently through proper structure, stability, and strength to feel well daily. Profound, intelligent, and transformative, alignment-based Hatha Vinyasa Yoga is for every age, body type, and fitness level. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com). Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple, Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

### Thursday, January 10

**Stuffed Animal Sleepover and Breakfast** — 4:00 pm. Bring your favorite stuffed animal for a story and a craft. Your furry friend will stay at the library overnight for a sleepover! Visit Website & Register at <https://www.njbulletin.com/>. Location: Paramus Public Library, 116 E. Century Rd, Paramus, NJ.

### Friday, January 11

**Reiki Meditation for Renewal and Alignment with Jen** – 9:00am - 10:00am. Join us for a transformative Reiki meditation session designed to close out your week and energize you for the days ahead. Perfect for anyone seeking to enhance their well-being and raise their vibration to a new level. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com). Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple, Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

### Sunday, January 12

**Singing Bowls Sound Healing** — 2:30pm - 3:30pm. In the serene and relaxing environment of the salt cave, enjoy the sounds and vibrations of singing bowls and meditation with sound healer Beth Lantigua. Cost \$60. Call 845-290-0678 to register! Visit Website & Register at <https://saltoftheearthcfh.com>. Location: Salt of the Earth, Center for Healing, 811 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Chestnut Ridge, NY.

### Monday, January 13

**Full Moon Ceremony** – 6:00pm - 7:30pm. Join us at Ora Wellness Center for a transformative Full Moon Ceremony, a sacred gathering to harness the powerful energy of the full moon. This evening is designed to help you release, reflect, and recharge your mind, body, and spirit. This ceremony is perfect for anyone looking to let go of what no longer serves them and step into their power with clarity and purpose. Cost \$44. Call (201) 741-4196 to register or visit at [www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter](http://www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter). Location: Ora Wellness Center, 5 Atwood Avenue, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

**Meditation for Stress, Anxiety, and Depression** — 5:30pm - 6:30pm. Learn simple meditation techniques to help relax the body, center your mind, and build resistance to stress. With simple tools and strategies for making meditation part of your daily routine, you can transform how you handle stress, anxiety, and depression. Visit Website & Register at [www.inglewoodhealth.org](http://www.inglewoodhealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medicine, Englewood Health - Main Campus 350 Engle Street, Englewood, NJ.

### Tuesday, January 14

**Nutrition for Menopause** — 5:00am - 6:00am. Join us for an in-depth exploration of the hormonal changes that occur before, during, and after menopause, highlighting their effects on appetite, cravings, and digestion. Visit Website & Register at [www.inglewoodhealth.org](http://www.inglewoodhealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medicine, 350 Engle Street Berrie Center 5th Floor, Englewood, NJ.

## Wednesday, January 15

**Vision Board** – 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM & 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Join us for an inspiring Vision Board Workshop designed to help you clarify your goals and manifest your dreams. In this creative and empowering session, you'll use guided visualization, affirmations, and hands-on crafting to bring your aspirations to life on a personalized vision board. Whether you're seeking career success, personal growth, or inner peace, this workshop is the perfect opportunity to focus your energy on the life you want to create. Cost \$55 (includes all supplies). Call (201) 741-4196 to register or visit at [www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter](http://www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter). Location: Ora Wellness Center, 5 Atwood Avenue, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

## Thursday, January 16

**Newborn Care Take Care of Yourself & Your Baby** — 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. This one-session class details all the basics of newborn care for expectant/adoptive parents. Topics will include bathing, bath products, diapering, cord care, temperature taking, sleep patterns as well as your postpartum care/topics. Visit Website at [valleyhealth.com/events](http://valleyhealth.com/events). Location: Valley Health System, 140 E. Ridgewood Ave, Suite 501N, Paramus, NJ.

## Saturday, January 18

**Chemistry Club Age 7-10** — 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Join us for local teens are volunteering their time and expertise in chemistry to teach children ages 7 to 10 how chemical reactions can be interesting, fun, and exciting! Visit Website & Register at <https://www.njbulletin.com/>. Location: Tenafly Public Library, 100 Riveredge Road Teen Space, Tenafly, NJ.

## Sunday, January 19

**Psychic Sunday - Get Your Questions Answered by NJ's Top Psychics** — 1:00pm - 5:00pm. Receive answers, guidance, and insight into your individual messages, and messages from loved ones who have passed. There are 15, 30 and 45 minute sessions available. Visit Website & Register at <https://wellnessgala.com/events/>. Location: Wellness Gala, Enchanted Treasures, 245 South Ave, Garwood, NJ.

## Tuesday, January 21

**Pack It Up: Learn to Live a Smoke-Free Life (4-Session Series)** — 5:50pm - 6:50pm. Our group smoking cessation program will teach you strategies to commit to quitting smoking over the course of four weeks. Visit Website & Register at [www.EnglewoodHealth.org](http://www.EnglewoodHealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medicine, Englewood Health - Main Campus 350 Engle Street Englewood, Englewood, NJ.

## Thursday, January 23

**Meet the Artist Within Workshop with Jenn - Reiki, Meditation & Art** – 7:00pm - 9:00pm. This workshop is led by Reiki Master Teacher, Jenn Dock, a former art teacher, and artist, who will bring the class on a meditative and sound healing journey where all will receive Reiki healing and a self-created art piece. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com).

withus.com. Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

## Sunday, January 26

**Tour of the Family Birth Place** — 2:30pm - 3:30pm. Join us for a small group tour of the Labor and Delivery Unit and Mother/Baby Unit at Englewood Hospital to explore our state-of-the-art facilities, meet our caring staff, and get a sense of what to expect, helping you feel more comfortable and confident when the big day arrives. Visit Website & Register at [www.EnglewoodHealth.org](http://www.EnglewoodHealth.org). Location: Englewood Hospital, 350 Engle Street Englewood, NJ

## Monday, January 27

**Meditation and Yoga for Cancer** — 10:00am - 11:00am. Learn guided meditation, therapeutic yoga, and breath work to relax, refocus, and reconnect in a supportive environment. Participants will be able to interact with each other to create a sense of community. All levels welcomed. Visit Website & Register at [www.EnglewoodHealth.org](http://www.EnglewoodHealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medicine, 350 Engle Street Berrie Center 5th Floor, Englewood, NJ.

## Tuesday, January 28

**Mantra Meditation & Gong Bath Savasana with Chris** – 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Join us this Tuesday for a soothing mantra meditation and gong bath. Ours is a peaceful space to relax, recharge, and reconnect. In our nurturing space for self-healing and renewal, immerse in gentle vibrations of sound and the power of meditation. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com). Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

## Wednesday, January 29

**New Moon Ceremony** – 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM. Join us for a transformative New Moon Ceremony, a sacred space to set intentions and welcome fresh beginnings. This 90-minute experience is designed to help you align with the energy of the new moon, fostering clarity, renewal, and connection with your inner self. Whether you're new to moon ceremonies or a seasoned participant, this event is a beautiful way to align with nature's cycles and honor your personal journey. Cost \$44. Call (201) 741-4196 to register or visit at [www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter](http://www.instagram.com/orawellnesscenter). Location: Ora Wellness Center, 5 Atwood Avenue, Tenafly, NJ 07670.

**Meditation and Movement Using a Chair** — 10:00am - 11:00am. Learn ways to calm your mind and body through mindful meditation, chair stretching/yoga, guided imagery, and breathing techniques. You will relax, focus, and reconnect in the privacy of your own space. Perfect for all levels. Visit Website & Register at [www.EnglewoodHealth.org](http://www.EnglewoodHealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medi-

cine, 350 Engle Street Berrie Center 5th Floor, Englewood, NJ.

## Thursday, January 30

**All in One Art Class** — 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm. Join us for engaging art lessons tailored for all levels and ages, led by renowned artist Sungho Choi. Experience step-by-step techniques in still life, landscape, and portrait drawing and painting. Visit Website & Register at <https://www.njbulletin.com/>. Location: Paramus Public Library, 116 E. Century Rd, Paramus, NJ.

## Sunday, February 2

**Past Life Regression** — 2:30pm - 3:30pm. In the relaxing and healing environment of the salt cave, learn to understand yourself better by connecting with your past life. Led by Lindsey Sass – owner of the NJ Healing Center. Call 845-290-0678 to register! Visit Website & Register at <https://saltoftheearth-cfh.com>. Location: Salt of the Earth, Center for Healing, 811 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Chestnut Ridge, NY.

## Monday, February 3

**The Better Breather's Club** — 11:00 am - 12:00 pm. Learn better ways to cope with lung disease while getting the support of others in similar situations. The group provides a safe space where patients can talk openly about their feelings, reduce stress and anxiety, and receive education. Visit Website at [valleyhealth.com/events](http://valleyhealth.com/events). Location: Valley Health System, 140 E. Ridgewood Ave, Suite 501N, Paramus, NJ.

## Wednesday, February 5

**Yoga for Addiction Recovery and Overcoming Eating Disorders** — 11:00am - 12:00pm. The practice can stabilize your mood, help you relax and manage anxiety, allow you to reconnect with your body, increase self-control and coping skills, explore self-compassion and acceptance, and even improve insomnia. Visit Website & Register at [www.EnglewoodHealth.org](http://www.EnglewoodHealth.org). Location: The Graf Center for Integrative Medicine, 350 Engle Street Berrie Center 5th Floor, Englewood, NJ.

## Sunday, February 9

**Sunday Yoga for Adults** — 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Students will learn basic yoga poses and sequences, build strength, and increase flexibility. Mats are available upon request. This program is for Paramus residents over the age of 18. Visit Website & Register at <https://www.njbulletin.com/>. Location: Paramus Public Library, 116 E. Century Rd, Paramus, NJ.

## Tuesday, February 11

**Soak into Soundbath with Kanan** – 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Be guided through relaxing breath, mantra for heart expansion, and soothing crystal healing sound bath designed to promote personal inquiry, and connection to love. All levels are welcome. Bring a blanket and eye pillow if you prefer. Register or visit website at [www.loopwithus.com](http://www.loopwithus.com). Location: Loopwell, 80 Maple Avenue, Montclair, NJ.

*We have more possibilities  
available in each moment than  
we realize.*

—Thich Nhat Hanh

## business directory

To find out how you can be included in Business Directory, email [Publisher@NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com](mailto:Publisher@NaturalAwakeningsNNJ.com)

### DOWSING

**JEANIE PASQUALE, DOWSER**  
Househarmony.org  
Dowsing@househarmony.org  
845-709-5245



It's time to protect your family from 5G, geopathic stress, negative vortices, Hartman and Curry lines. Maybe there is a personal zone having a negative effect on someone in your household? Dowsing can locate, clear, and block these negative vibrations from entering your home. Protect yourself and your home today.

### ENERGY HEALING

**ACCESS CONSCIOUSNESS**  
Theresa Obsuth, Access Bars Practitioner  
Paramus, NJ  
201-655-3836 • Citm-DrFinn.com



What if you are far greater than anyone has ever acknowledged? Where have you not acknowledged this for yourself? What keeps you in frustration of limitation, judgment of yourself and the lack of peace and joy in your life? What if this could all

change easily and create a new way of life for you. Let me introduce you to the process of Access Bars and a way to live life where you function from your own awareness having more happiness and ease. Offering Access Bars and Access Energetic Facelift sessions and classes. *See ad, page 13.*

### FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE

**ROBIN ELLEN LEDER, M.D.**  
A Better Alternative Medical Center  
Hackensack, NJ  
201-525-1155 • DrRobinLeder.com



Since initially working with Dr. Robert Atkins, Dr Leder has successfully delivered a full range of integrative/alternative medical care to thousands of tri-state residents of all ages. Every patient is provided a personalized care. Dr. Leder works with patient to achieve long-term optimal health and the healthiest lifestyle, using diet, supplements, exercise, sleep, exercise, nutrient IV's, coaching/counselling, and always prioritizing non-pharmaceutical options. **SERVICES OFFERED:** Medical Assessment/Comprehensive, Cutting-edge Lab Testing, Individualized Nutrition/Supplement Programs, IV Immune Support, Chelation (heavy metals & arterial plaque), Reconfiguration of the Gut Microbiome, Individual/Couples Counselling, Weight Loss. **MODALITIES:** Chronic Fatigue, Diabetes, GI Distress, Hormonal Imbalances, Psychological Issues/Stress, Thyroid/Adrenal Issues, Excessive Weight, Impaired Memory/Concentration, Autoimmune Disease, Metal Toxicity, ADD/Autism, Food Sensitivities. *See ad, page 3.*

*Ambition is the path to success.  
Persistence is the vehicle you  
arrive in.*

—Bill Bradley

**ROMAN E. FINN, M.D.**  
Center for Integrative & Traditional Medicine  
22 Madison Avenue, Paramus, NJ 07652  
201-291-0401 • citm-drfinn.com



Dr. Roman Finn has successfully combined holistic and integrative ways as well as modern developments in traditional medicine to treat a wide range of conditions including cardiovascular, pulmonary, gastrointestinal, musculoskeletal and immune disorders as well as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, fibromyalgia and stress related conditions. An all-encompassing holistic approach provided through non-invasive testing. Most labs and tests are performed on premises. We are working with major insurance companies and Medicare. *See ad, back cover.*

### HOLISTIC DENTAL CARE

**VLADIMIR GASHINSKY, DDS**  
91 Millburn Ave, Millburn  
973-457-4244 • HolisticDentalCenterNJ.com



We focus on performing holistic dental care that is good for the body as well as the teeth and gums. We put an emphasis on a more natural or holistic approach to dentistry. As a holistic dentist, Dr. Gashinsky treats the cause of the problem and not just the symptoms. He seeks to improve his patients' quality of life through holistic dental care that respects and honors the body. *See ad, page 2.*

### HOME CARE SERVICE

**ENA FORBES, FOUNDER & CEO**  
Mom and Pap's Home Care Service  
50 East Palisade Ave., Englewood  
201-56-3181 • 732-895-8696  
MomAndPapsCare.com



Senior Care Service with dignity is what we do. Mom and Pap's Home Health care is not just another home care agency. We prioritized supportive and attentive care. Our staff is carefully selected to match each client's needs based on their specific needs and personalities which are top priority for ongoing mental stimulation.

### INTUITIVE PRACTITIONER & FENG SHUI

**LOIS KRAMER-PEREZ**  
Intuitive Practitioner, Meditative Clearing & Feng Shui  
201-906-5767 • Fax 201-265-6037  
LoisKramerPerez.com



"If we want to make changes in our lives, we must start from within." Are you ready? Through her own journey of self-discovery, Lois has embraced diverse energy modalities as a way of life, and she wants to share them. Lois has developed simple, effective techniques that help clients sharpen their awareness, clarity and empowerment through *feng shui*, personal meditative clearing, and environmental space clearing. Each of these services can provide anchors for creating change from the inside out. Let's get started! *See ad, page 19.*

### PHONE SYSTEMS, LABEL PRINTING, IT SERVICES

**TELCOMAVEN CONSULTING**  
Prince Plaza, Teaneck  
201-833-4091 • Barry@TelcoMaven.com  
TelcoMaven.com



Business phone solutions: Legacy Avaya, hosted VoIP Outlook integration and texting to landline, printers, copiers, fax, sales, service and supplies, DesignJet plotters sales, service programming and more. For manufacturing and product distribution: Zebra Sato thermal labels for products, GHS, barcodes and shipping. Barcode scanning and complete integration. Fail-safe Internet via 4G/LTE for 100% survivable reliable internet. Backup for phones cameras and credit card processing. Enterprise Solutions: NetGear managed POE switches. Third-generation HIPPA-compliant security firewalls featuring Sonic Wall. VPN and WFH solutions.

### PSYCHIC READINGS

**PSYCHIC READINGS BY DOROTHY**  
365 N. Midland Ave, Saddle Brook, NJ



A third-generation psychic healer who has helped many people over the past 30 years. A certified life, Coach, with practice in NJ for over 20 years. Dorothy will provide you with tools to help overcome any spiritual blockages from your past. She has the ability to see and help where others have failed.

### SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

**CATTLEYA TRIANA SPA**  
5-05 Saddle River Rd  
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410  
201-429-3214



Cattleya Trianae is not only a spa to pamper men and women, but it is guaranteed to help you replenish a finer and smoother look for all skin types, with all-natural products to give you that feeling of zen that you have been looking for. Come take a break and experiencing this feeling yourself. The founder Danely Salama, a Colombian born and graduate of Parisian Beauty Academy Paul Mitchell Partner School, one of the top ranked schools known for their beauty and skin-care industry. *See ad, page 6.*

### YOGA

**PURE BLISS YOGA**  
Zeni Pepper  
pure-bliss-yoga.com



Pure Bliss Yoga was founded by Zeni Pepper, a lifelong yoga and meditation practitioner, who regularly leads classes, workshops, teacher trainings and retreats. Echoing her multi-faceted life experiences, Zeni's yoga classes are varied and deep, infused with energetic practices, philosophy, mythology, poetry and spirituality. She teaches a broad range – from intelligently weaved vinyasa flows, to blissful restorative yoga, meditation and yoga nidra, in group, private or corporate settings. You can follow and connect with her on Facebook or Instagram @zeniyoga.

# Turn Your Passion Into a Business

## Own Your Own Natural Awakenings Magazine!

Make a meaningful impact in your community by becoming the owner of a *Natural Awakenings* magazine. Empower others with current, valuable insights and resources to enhance their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

As a franchise owner, you'll inspire positive change, provide readers with tools for healthier living and connect local businesses with an audience eager for transformation.

### Why Own a *Natural Awakenings* Magazine?

- Create a Healthier Community: Be the go-to resource for wellness and personal growth in your area.
- Boost Your Income: Take control of your financial future with a proven business model.
- Enjoy a Flexible Lifestyle: Work from home while pursuing a fulfilling, dynamic career.

### What We Offer:

- A proven business model with low startup costs.
- Comprehensive training and friendly, ongoing support.
- Flexible work schedule with many work-from-home opportunities.
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Join a thriving network of passionate franchise owners reshaping the future of holistic health and wellness.

Call 239-206-2000 for a FREE evaluation of your community's potential. Learn more or apply today at:

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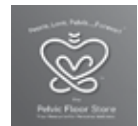
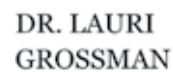
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