

A TRIBUTE TO JEANNE OHM

pathways

to family wellness™

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Innate
EXPRESSIONS

pathways to family wellness™

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PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELLNESS is an award-winning quarterly publication offering parents thought-provoking articles and resources to make conscious, informed choices for their families' well-being.

The individual articles and links to healthcare information in PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELLNESS are based on the opinions and perspectives of their respective authors.

The information provided is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified healthcare professional and is not intended as medical advice. It is presented as a sharing of knowledge and information.

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We love to hear from you.

If you have stories and photos to share about pregnancy, birth, family wellness lifestyle choices, or healthy recipes and nutrition ideas, please send an e-mail to our editor at: editor@pathwaystofamilywellness.org.



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Children's health begins in pregnancy and birth.

A photograph of a large, light-colored rock with a deep crevice. Numerous small, vibrant purple flowers with yellow centers are growing out of the crevice, following its path. The surrounding area is covered with green grass and other small plants. The lighting is bright, casting shadows on the rock surface.

“A SECRET FREEDOM
OPENS THROUGH A CREVICE
YOU CAN BARELY SEE.”

– RUMI

*What if there were
an organization that recognized
your own unique expression
and human potential?*

What if that same organization represented
the most highly trained practitioners who could provide
specific, gentle care so that you could function at your greatest capacity?
What if this organization of practitioners knew how to care for children
by honoring women throughout their pregnancy and motherhood?

Imagine if doctors truly supported a woman's innate right
to make informed choices for her own family.

Imagine if a safe community of empowered parents existed
to support a mother's inner guidance and desire to grow.

These are the principles and promises of the ICPA and
its community of 6,000 doctors of chiropractic. These 6,000 ICPA members
have come together to serve families. Family is the heart and home of
our human potential. The loving and gentle care of chiropractic for each
individual strengthens the family, strengthens the community,
and opens the possibility for a greater tomorrow.

Welcome to
PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELLNESS...
our avenue for bringing
chiropractic principles into practice
for a more purposeful and fulfilling family life.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

NATURE'S *Intelligence*

We are within a momentous shift; awakening how to act in harmony with Nature's intelligence. From the article "Balancing the Nervous System to Handle Daily Stressors" (on page 44), Jeanne Ohm writes of this shift, saying: "I believe we are in a cultural transition away from pathogenesis, toward a new model called salutogenesis, where we recognize the source, or foundation, of health as *something* to be worked with in its own right."

D.D. Palmer, the discoverer of chiropractic, knew that the secret to health and well-being was in the nervous system. This, I believe, will be what the science of our day leads us to recognize, once science is set free. *The secret to health is in the nervous system.* And the secret of the nervous system is in our relationships—to all things—and supporting the beauty that exists beneath the tensions.

Many cultures reflect this idea. Among the Lakota people, we find the greeting, "Mitakuye oyasin," which translates to "all our relations." This phrase invites all, upon each encounter, to remember the interconnecting intelligence that births the very harmony, coherence, and love we have the pleasure of experiencing. The nervous system is the physical conduit to the beautiful wisdom of nature's intelligence that connects all things together. When our nervous systems are free of obstructions, we come to hear Mother Nature's silent heartbeat. From the soundless presence of her rhythmic song, we become boundless like children, living fully in pure connection to our source.

Jeanne Ohm was a great mother who trusted in others, including first and foremost her children. She knew that if they were connected to their innate intelligence, then their

bodies would be in tune with the only thing that harmonizes them with the whole of life. Jeanne walked in synchrony with the power of a larger force that enthralls living beings with a willingness to stand up and make it count. Like few manage, she survived her childhood upbringing without a loss of that willingness. As a chiropractor, she held great expectations for the future of chiropractic, knowing it has the potential to help change the world. As a leader and visionary, Jeanne saw an exciting movement on the horizon. On the basis of the major premise that Life Expresses Intelligence, she envisioned a new paradigm of science and a pathway to freedom for family wellness.

In these pages, you'll find many articles and past editorials that carry forward her vital message for our present-day world. Jeanne was advancing a living message that is everlasting. May this issue bring hope and courage in our desire to raise the consciousness. And may Jeanne Ohm's story endlessly serve you in clarifying the voice of inner knowing which guides all things forward. 🌀



John Ohm believes that the chiropractic philosophy represents the foundation for the future of biology and medicine; that "life expresses intelligence" in all its manifestations. He believes that the discovery of the 5 Biological Laws of the German New Medicine scientifically substantiates the chiropractic philosophy and way of life. He strives to advance chiropractic principles for a more beautiful world to come.


The Greater Power in Birth

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

There comes a time when every woman in labor needs to “let go of the shore.” This is the time when we either realize that there is a greater power within us that we can go to for the rest of labor...or that the power within is too much, and is something that could overtake us.

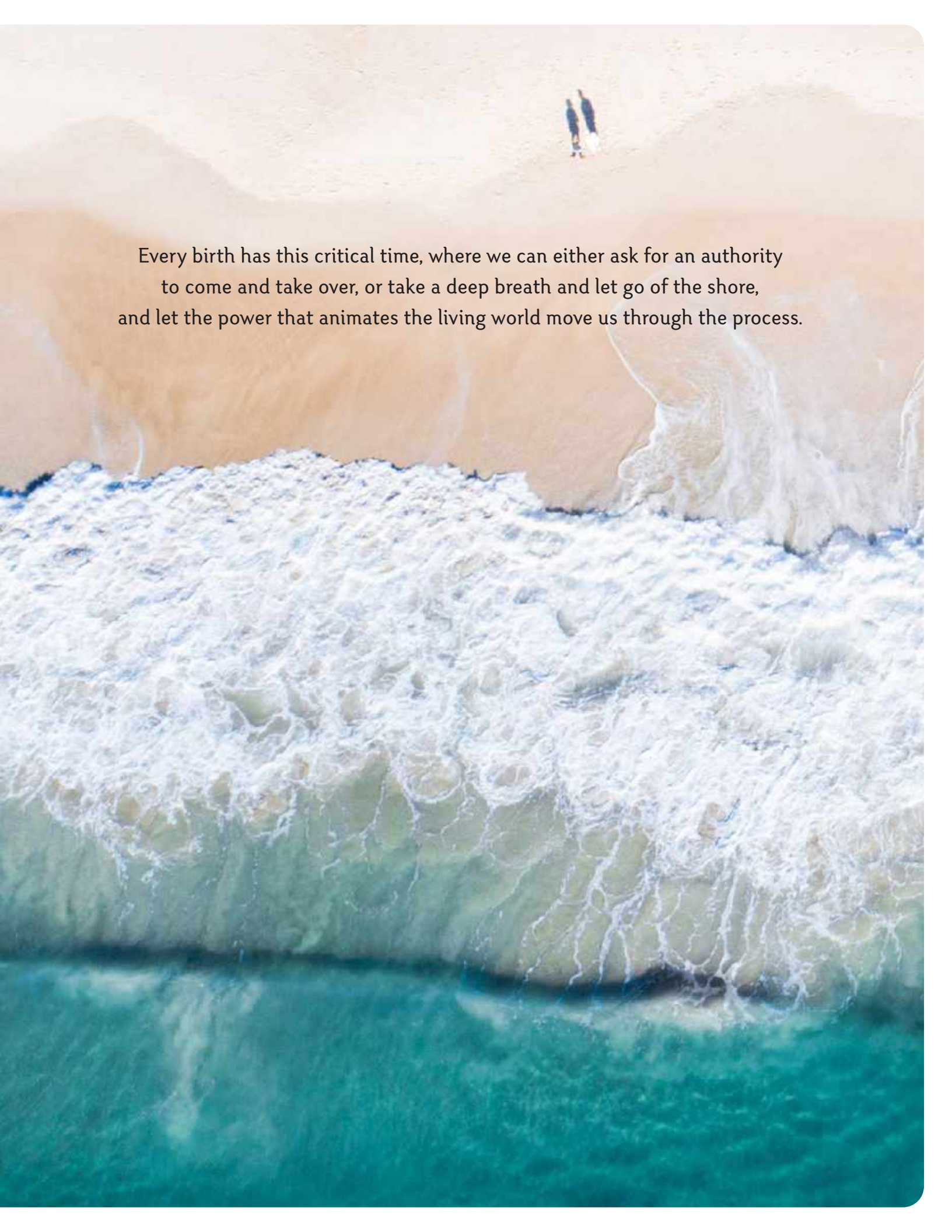
In birth, this is usually the time when we ask for the epidural: “I can’t do this anymore, I need help, give me something.” Or, if we’re home and we can’t have an epidural, maybe we ask to go to the hospital. At this point we’re looking for something outside ourselves to save us—some greater authority to come along and be more powerful than our own autonomous being.

Today, I believe we’re all going through a birth. A birth in our social, religious, economic, legal, and healthcare systems, from an older paradigm to something new. At this time, it is very similar to labor, when we find ourselves holding on to the shore and won’t let go. A time when we’re insisting and begging for some outside authority to rescue us, to take over, to relieve us of our own autonomy, our own strength, and our own ability to make it through.

I see it again and again online: The past few years seem to have been so rough, so difficult, and so oppressive on people, bringing them to the brink of defeat. All I ask is that during this time we remember that every birth has these moments. Every birth has this potential for confrontation. Every birth has this critical time, where we can either ask for an authority to come and take over, or take a deep breath and let go of the shore, and let the power that animates the living world move us through the process. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 62

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An aerial photograph of a beach scene. In the upper portion, two small figures of people stand on a wide, sandy beach, looking out towards the ocean. The middle section of the image is dominated by a large, white, textured mass of crashing waves, creating a complex, lace-like pattern of foam. Below this, the ocean water is a deep, vibrant teal color. The overall composition suggests a moment of contemplation or a critical juncture, as indicated by the overlaid text.

Every birth has this critical time, where we can either ask for an authority to come and take over, or take a deep breath and let go of the shore, and let the power that animates the living world move us through the process.

A close-up photograph of a person wearing a black short-sleeved shirt, holding a baby. The baby is wrapped in a light-colored blanket with a small blue floral pattern. The person's hands are visible, gently holding the baby. The background is a soft, out-of-focus purple and blue light.

ENHANCING OUR BABIES'

Innate Expression

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.



When my husband and I became parents, we had a strong recognition that children were intelligent, conscious beings responsive to their surrounding experiences. The world around us was waking up with what was termed the “Human Potential Movement.” From the vitalistic premise of that movement, we deduced that life is naturally intelligent, and with intelligence comes organization, natural laws, and a sense of order based on principles of function. This premise informed all aspects of our views on family wellness: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. Because the vitalistic perspective recognizes that there is wisdom in how life is organized, we deduced that which is most natural and supportive of normal physiology is usually the optimal choice.

For example, a natural birth with no intervention appears to be most consistent with the vitalistic paradigm. That includes allowing labor to start on its own, supporting the mother’s innate need to move in labor, freeing her to progress at her own pace and birth in her position

of choice, and allowing her to stay connected to her body without artificial induction or pain meds. These birthing practices indicate a respect for the intelligence that supports the mother’s natural, normal physiology. Delayed cord clamping after birth, immediate and continued contact between mother and baby, co-sleeping, on-demand breastfeeding, baby wearing, and caressing and nurturing our babies are all normal, vital functions that naturally support human neurology so our children can maximize their inborn potential. Avoiding alterations to our children’s neurology, their anatomy, their natural immune responses, and their individual psychological expression are also choices that are naturally compatible to the unfolding of human potential.

It has been almost 40 years since obstetrician Frederick Le Boyer published *Birth Without Violence*, a major contribution to the growing Human Potential Movement. It was in that same decade that doctors of chiropractic began showing their patients videos of hospital births to emphasize the crude physical trauma

applied to most babies' necks and spines during routine birth procedures. Yes, the physical, chemical and emotional traumas mothers and their babies are exposed to through hospital procedures during and after birth may very well be one of the biggest contributors to the increase of discord in the western world.

Polyvagal Theory

Stephen Porges, Ph.D., introduced a new model of the autonomic nerve system (ANS) in 2011 called the "Polyvagal Theory." John Chitty, founder of the Colorado School of Energy Studies, has written extensively on the subject, branching into therapy modalities for healing emotional traumas. The following is Chitty's succinct interpretation of Porges's theory.

The Polyvagal Theory is a new understanding of the autonomic nerve system (ANS), arising from the research and writings of Stephen Porges, Ph.D. It uses solid scientific evidence to significantly change the previous commonly accepted view of the ANS, with huge implications for trauma therapies. The ANS is the neuro-endocrine-immune structure that enables survival. Traditionally it has been described as having two branches, parasympathetic (rest/rebuild) and sympathetic (fight/flight). The parasympathetic branch takes care of essential background operations, such as the heart, lungs, and digestion, while the sympathetic branch provides stress responses and procreation strategies and functions. Polyvagal Theory, named for the anatomical basis of Porges's discoveries, changes the picture. Now the ANS has three branches, not two, and they are sequential, not reciprocal. (Actually, "polyvagal" is a misnomer, and not a fully accurate descriptor of the new concept, because the vagus nerve is only one component of the newly-defined third branch. Therefore, in this summary, the new understanding will be referred to by the phrase, "Triune Autonomic.")

The Triune Autonomic view is based on phylogeny, the study of the evolution of living organisms. For example, all animals have some strategy for acquiring food, absorbing nutrients and expelling cell waste. Very primitive, simple animals are stationary feeders in a liquid environment. Later animals developed ways to move about to find food, and modern animals developed capabilities for using tools, social organization, and long-term planning. Throughout the evolutionary chain, survival is the supreme criteria: Characteristics that enhance survival are perpetuated in subsequent form and function.

In the ANS, the parasympathetic system is the oldest, reflecting the survival needs of a primitive passive feeder. It delivers nutrient-rich, oxygenated blood to the system, particularly the brain, and its components regulate heart, lungs and viscera. At a parasympathetic level, stress responses

are primarily limited to adjusting the metabolic rate within a fairly narrow range, and "death feigning" survival tactics.

The sympathetic nerve system is a later development, adding mobility and a wider range of possible survival responses. Newer animals gained more survival options in essential procreative, feeding, and protective behaviors. Limbs for movement and increased sensory awareness developed, and muscular/structural tissues became more sophisticated. The sympathetic system acts as a controller on the primitive parasympathetic system to give a wider range of metabolic responses, shifting resources to muscular, visceral, or other systems as needed in response to survival challenges.

Porges has shown clear evidence of a third, more modern branch of the ANS, with a survival value specific to more sophisticated animals, especially primates. The "social nervous system" is Porges's proposed term for this third branch of the ANS. As brain complexity increases, it takes much longer for newborns to become self-sufficient. In humans, many years are necessary before their enhanced survival capabilities are fully operational. Therefore, structures evolved to secure dependent care for this extended time. Certain emotional affects, specifically the love feelings between a mother and baby, are evidence of this survival mechanism. The social nervous system exists as a controller over the sympathetic system to moderate the more crude "fight/flight" responses to accommodate this dependency.

The anatomy of the social nervous system consists of tools that bond a newborn to the mother. These include voice, hearing, visual contact and facial expression, which are each capable of triggering neurotransmitters inducing pleasurable sensations in the caregiver. These are "hard-wired," precognitive functions that exist in newborns and have a compelling power to engender emotional bonding and biochemical events that we interpret as love, thereby securing protective care during the vulnerable period. Healthy babies exhibit these instantly upon delivery. They experience unsuccessful deployment of these strategies (i.e., betrayal by or alienation from the caregiver) as immediately life-threatening, and justifiably so.

Drawing on the "Theory of Dissolution" (J.H. Jackson, ca. 1910), Porges also shows that under stress, the human system tries its newest, most sophisticated and efficient equipment first. If that doesn't work, older strategies are attempted, and if they don't work, the oldest resources are employed. Therefore, under stress, the human first uses its social/relational tactics, then fight/flight, then immobility, as survival strategies. Each of these stages has characteristic indicators. Also it is clear that with trauma, capacity for using the newer strategies can be eroded, with the older strategies becoming the habitual basis for response.

The New ANS Anatomy

“Three neural circuits form a phylogenically ordered response hierarchy that regulates behavioral and physiological adaptation to safe, dangerous and life threatening environments.”—Stephen Porges, *Polyvagal Theory*

PARASYMPATHETIC “A primitive passive feeding and reproduction system creating a metabolic baseline of operation to manage oxygen and nourishment via the blood.”

SYMPATHETIC “A more sophisticated set of responses enabling mobility for feeding, defense and reproduction via limbs & muscles.”

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT “A sophisticated set of responses supporting massive cortical development, enabling maternal bonding (extended protection of vulnerable immature cortex processors) and social cooperation (language and social structures) via facial functions.”

“The whole sequence is played out in a sub-optimum hospital birth. Newborn babies come out pre-programmed for maternal bonding, including skin-to-skin contact and nursing. Instead they are separated from their mothers (“infant quarantine”) and subjected to painful unnatural procedures, facilitated by mainstream medicine’s old belief that babies are insentient. Since the social engagement system impulses are thwarted, babies then try the older strategy, the sympathetic ANS in the form of angry-sounding crying. When that doesn’t work, and it cannot work unless the adults are sensitive and discerning about such sounds, all they have left is the parasympathetic freeze/immobilization response. The misunderstanding caregivers may interpret this seemingly quiet state as being “good babies,” when actually they are seriously compromised, with potential long-term implications such as reduced immune system, heart rate variability and other ANS functions. Many research studies have repeatedly confirmed the reality and value of a functional social engagement system: Patients with strong and active social connections recover faster and live longer.”

—Excerpted from: *Dancing with Yin and Yang* by John Chitty, Chapter 6: The Autonomic Nervous System.



Understanding Porges's Polyvagal Theory may be the key to health, particularly when looking at birth. The physical and emotional traumas to both the mother and baby in modern birthing practices have a direct effect on the healthy development of the infant's social vagal branch. By depriving children of the proper development of this nerve function from birth, we are directly affecting the social well-being of generations to come.

Technology vs. Intuition

For centuries, women's intuition was respected as a vital contribution to the health and well-being of their families. Personal experience through pregnancy and birth led us to trust the body's natural processes. Our ability to bond with our children gave us great insight into the physical and emotional needs of our families. Women's ability to seek guidance from that quiet place within was honored.

In recent years, technology has seemingly replaced women's wisdom in making family health decisions. It is not so much that the voice of intuition has stopped speaking to us; it is more accurate to say that its validity is being disregarded by our high-tech society. We have been led from trusting the natural process and hearing its internal messages to looking outside ourselves for support and guidance.

Birth can be one of a woman's most gratifying experiences, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The very wisdom of creation comes into fruition. Birth is our gift, our privilege, our very potential for growth in motherhood. When we are allowed to follow the internal rhythms of birthing with confidence and trust, we experience the passionate expression of the life force.

Today, however, the birth process has turned into a technological maneuver. Women are forced to comply with someone else's procedure and schedule. Women are put into positions which defy normal physiological function, impairing the natural momentum. These unnecessary restrictions in birth make women feel afraid and powerless. Fear shuts down the process both psychologically and physically. It actually constricts blood vessels and contracts muscles. This leads to greater pain and longer, less productive labors. The origin of these procedures had nothing to do with being better for the mom or baby, and yet their practice is largely unquestioned.

More often than not, drugs are used to ease pain, further impairing the mother's physical strength and uterine function. She's not told that the drugs can harm her child's developing organs, nerve system, and even intelligence. Women tell me they were never informed that the use of anesthesia is the third leading cause of maternal fatality. Nor are they told that the drugs will actually disconnect her from the natural process and

ALL SYSTEMS, ALL FUNCTIONS, AND
ALL COORDINATION IN THE BODY
DEPEND ON A HEALTHY, FUNCTIONAL
NERVE SYSTEM. A PERSON'S OVERALL
WELL-BEING IS DEPENDENT UPON ITS
PERFORMANCE. WHEN OUR NERVE
SYSTEM IS IMPAIRED, OUR HEALTH
IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED.

her ability to intuitively participate in it.

When there is disconnect between mother and baby, delivery becomes more laborious and the use of force is instituted to extract the baby. Then, adding insult to injury, the baby is whisked away, separated from the comfort of its mother to be probed and poked at instead of nurtured and gently welcomed.

Because of drugs, maternal positions, and lack of respect for a normal body process, women experience undue pain and complications. Undue force and stress has become routine in our modern birthing techniques. Obstetric text books and teaching videos show that most current, normal birthing procedures use excessive amounts of force. Frequently, doctors will grasp the baby's head and use unnecessary force in delivery. Any force applied to the baby's fragile neck may cause nerve system stress to his spinal cord and nerves. This injury has lifelong consequences.

Systems in Harmony

For years I collected videos of our patients' births. I was often appalled by the undue force and twisting applied to the infant's fragile spine. A significant study done by German researcher G. Gutmann showed that more than 80 percent of the 1,000 infants he examined shortly after birth suffered various health problems because of injury to the nerves in their necks. I now can recognize that in addition to spinal nerve impairment, the social vagus (as described by Porges) is probably undergoing significant injury as well. What I have observed in practice since 1981 is that specific, gentle adjustments to these areas restore health in these children.

Clinically, what chiropractors find is significant tension in the infant's spine and cranium; when applying a very

gentle, light touch adjustment to the upper neck, we witness the baby's normal function restored. Reducing interference to the nerve system has an effect on all systems and functions. My more than 30 years in practice have shown me the amazing healing power that is unleashed when the nerve system is freed to function as it was designed to.

The nerve system is the key to health! It coordinates all of the body's systems. Every function depends upon the nerve system to send vital messages from the brain throughout the body. The heart beats because nerve impulses tell it to. The lungs breathe because the nerves are communicating. Digestion works more efficiently with a good nerve supply. And yes, our immune systems function better when our nerves are free of interference. New studies are recognizing that the nerve system and immune system are so directly connected that each is inherently dependent upon the other for proper function.

All systems, all functions, and all coordination in the body depend on a healthy, functional nerve system. A person's overall well-being is dependent upon its performance. When our nerve system is impaired, our health is directly affected. Our bodies then manifest a state of dis-ease—a lack of wellness. These areas of spinal nerve stress interfere with the nerve system's ability to transmit vital impulses to all body systems. It's kind of like being hooked up to the Internet with a broken modem. We have all the latest information we could want, but no way to access it!

Dorland's medical dictionary defines health as a state of physical, emotional and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. Blocking this vital information affects all those aspects of wellness.

Doctors of chiropractic get to the cause of dis-ease. Using specific and gentle techniques, they restore nerve system function by repairing those "electrical shorts" in the spinal and cranial nerves. This results in a greater state of health and well-being.



Additionally, doctors of chiropractic offer supportive, holistic care, respecting and honoring the body's natural ability to heal and function. The philosophy of care is based on normalizing the person's inherent ability to function as it is designed to. Supportive care providers, renewed trust in the body, and the whole-health benefits of chiropractic are being recognized as vital ingredients to a healthier pregnancy, an easier birth, and a forthcoming lifestyle of family well-being.

Spend a moment reflecting on the evolution of life itself. The magnificence of creation is beyond our ability to comprehend. Then take a moment to think about the amazing functions of your body which are happening every second of your existence. Try to fathom their



IT MAKES PRACTICAL SENSE TO UNDERGO CHIROPRACTIC CARE TO ENSURE OUR BODIES ARE WORKING OPTIMALLY THROUGHOUT PREGNANCY IN PREPARATION FOR A SAFER, EASIER BIRTH. THEN, RIGHT AFTER BIRTH, IT IS LOGICAL TO HAVE OUR BABY'S SPINE CHECKED BY A DOCTOR OF CHIROPRACTIC WHO SEES CHILDREN.

magnificent orchestration. Old cells are dying and are being replaced with vibrant new cells. Circulation, respiration, digestion and elimination are all working together in harmony for the good of the whole organism. Every part of your body is performing a function so intricate and imperative in its relationship to the whole.

Think about what you ate for lunch yesterday. Today, the inner intelligence of your body is taking those various ingredients and turning them into living, loving, thinking cells. The expression of life and the harmonious way it works in our bodies is truly amazing.

An Enlightened Outlook

Brilliant works in science come from those who have respect for the wisdom in natural law. For example, Einstein offered modern science a profound outlook. He said, "Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that wisdom is present in the laws of the universe." He combined the search for truth with this enlightened belief. David Bohm termed this intelligence "implicit order." In chiropractic we refer to the existence of a universal intelligence. Science from this premise expands our perspective for greater appreciation, respect and trust in this wisdom.


Mothers, in particular, have experienced the miracle of this inner wisdom—it grew our children from two small cells into the wonderful beings they are today. Think about it: One small sperm cell and one small egg cell united. Together they grew, and in about 265 days, they formed the amazing totality of it all—the human being! There was no outside help, advice or direction—only the intelligence within orchestrated this miraculous process.

Moms, I invite you to continue to strengthen your trust in the body's innate intelligence. As guardians

of our children's future, it behooves us to seek ways to enhance our families' natural health potential by improving the body's normal function right from the start. Your choices in pregnancy, birth, and throughout your children's lives will be expressed for generations to come.

Most children born in the western world today have experienced unnecessary trauma to their tiny spines and delicate nerve systems. This insidious damage, if left uncorrected, will lead to continued malfunction in our children's nerve systems and impair their overall health. It makes practical sense to undergo chiropractic care to ensure our bodies are working optimally throughout pregnancy in preparation for a safer, easier birth. Then, right after birth, it is logical to have our baby's spine checked by a doctor of chiropractic who sees children.

Mothers, you are the ones who make a difference in your family's health and well-being. You alone know the stresses your family has gone through, and now you know the lifelong damage these stresses cause. It is no coincidence that the first, and often greatest, cause of nerve system stress in our society—the birth process—is also where women's intuitive powers have been squelched the most.

As mothers, it is up to us to lead our families to health. Inherently, we have a great respect for the wisdom within, because we are most familiar with its inner promptings and guidance. What is so special about chiropractic is that its basic premise includes regaining trust and assurance in the body's inner wisdom. Doctors of chiropractic guide their practice members to depend on and trust this inner wisdom. They encourage people to trust and respect the body's innate healing capacity once the nerve system stress has been addressed. Not only do they reconnect their patients with this inner intelligence through the physical adjustment, they also support parents' need to follow their own gut instincts when making health choices for their families. In chiropractic there is a deep respect of an innate intelligence and the possibility of true health and well-being. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 44

A romantic and inspirational image featuring the silhouettes of a man and a woman standing on a beach, facing the ocean at sunset. Both individuals have their arms raised in a gesture of joy or triumph. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, purples, and oranges, with scattered clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, glowing effect over the water. The overall mood is one of peace, love, and achievement.

a DEFINING *moment*

*The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious.
It is the source of all true art and science. —ALBERT EINSTEIN*

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

A father in our practice once said to me, “I’m afraid not to vaccinate, and I’m just as afraid to vaccinate.” My response was not to address the list of pros and cons on either side of the vaccination issue. Apparently he had already done that. My response was instead to have him take two steps back, and understand that any choice made from fear is made from a skewed perspective and would be unproductive and unstable. Rather than building on this unstable foundation created by fear, it was more important that he define his core values in life—those essential values from which all of his decisions could be made. Once defined, he would be making a decision from a place of certainty and trust.

Essentially, there are two perspectives about healing. One is mechanistic—it defines life as a random series of events, devoid of an organized and intelligent purpose. Sickness is to be treated, symptoms are to be eliminated, and the body needs expert opinions based on human knowledge to help it heal. The other is vitalistic. It recognizes, respects, and trusts in the intelligence of life and the interconnectedness of this wisdom among all life. Processes of the body are to be trusted, not feared, and an underlying confidence for healing and proper function is emphasized. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, summed up the heart of this perspective well: “Humans are created to be healthy as long as they are whole: body, mind, spirit. People are characterized by self-healing properties that come from within—an innate healing force. Perfect health and harmony is the normal state for all life.”

It is imperative that we define our core values and consciously make our life and health choices from the perspective which resonates best with those values. It is also imperative that we choose practitioners who base their choices on the same foundation.

In PATHWAYS, we offer the perspective of vitalism—the confidence of an inherent intelligence that sustains our very existence. Our articles introduce principles built on this foundation, in the hope that parents will recognize and resonate with it. Shifting to this paradigm is sometimes challenging, especially since the majority of the healthcare industry, news media, laws, and regulations do not support this perspective. It is hard to go against the grain, and we are often met with resistance, opposition, and outright criticism, laced with fear and even intimidation. That powerful emotion—fear—then becomes the motivating factor in our decisions. But fear is too unstable an emotion from which to make any good choices. I am reminded of

the quote from Bertrand Russell: “Collective fear stimulates herd instinct, and tends to produce ferocity toward those who are not regarded as members of the herd.”

In 30 years of making life and health choices for our family, my husband and I have heard all of the arguments used to challenge our vitalistic core beliefs. When we started having our family, there was little to no peer-reviewed evidence on natural birthing, co-sleeping, long-term breastfeeding, vaccination risks, and the refusal of drugs for symptomatic relief. We were labeled irresponsible at best. We were told our beliefs had no scientific validation.

To us, credibility did not come from this perspective devoid of any recognition of vitalism. Our validation came along the lines of an emerging science—one less known, and only sparsely integrated into the healing arts. Max Planck, Nobel Prize-winning physicist and the father of quantum theory, acknowledged this new science well in a 1944 speech: “All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force.... We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.”

Since then, and now in the 21st century, the relationship between this emerging science and health is becoming more accepted. Although promoted over 100 years ago by the founder of chiropractic, D.D. Palmer, the recognition and practice of healthcare from an inherent trust of our amalgamation with a greater intelligence is finally being embraced. Deepak Chopra, M.D., sums up this principle well: “There is an inner intelligence in your body, and that inner intelligence is consciousness. It’s the ultimate in supreme genius, which mirrors the wisdom of the universe.”

As for the father and what he chose for his child—I don’t know for sure. I do know, however, that he understood the importance in parenting of connecting with his wife, going within, and embracing what they know to be true. My appeal to all parents when making life and health choices for their families is to do the same. First, gather the information available in regard to the decision at hand. Then, put all of it aside and recognize the core of your own beliefs. Once you’ve identified these life principles, weigh your choices from this place of knowing. Choose from a state of trust and conviction consistent with these essential values. They are the connection to your strength. From this place of certainty, you will always choose correctly. 🌀

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 22

Guarding the Sacred Space

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

Almost daily, I see parents discussing the benefits of chiropractic care for their children. What many do not know is that chiropractors have included children in their recommendations for health and well-being since the inception of chiropractic.

Consider what D.D. Palmer, the discoverer of chiropractic, said in *The Chiropractor's Adjustor* as far back as 1910: "The principles of Chiropractic should be known and utilized in the growth of the infant and continue as a safeguard throughout life."

Chiropractic care for children is not new, and more parents are making the logical, safe, and informed choice to include it for their families' well-being. A recent report published by the National Center for Health Statistics has put chiropractic care at the top of its list as the most sought-after form of complimentary care for children.

When I first went under chiropractic care 40 years ago, I was fortunate enough to see someone who focused on traditional family care. He explained the importance of the nervous system in controlling all body systems and functions, citing Gray's *Anatomy* and Guyton's *Physiology* as canonical texts on the topic. I learned how the brain sends messages via neurological impulses to the body and how messages from the body communicate via the nervous system back to the brain in a delicately balanced feedback loop.

The bony spine and cranium house and protect the central nervous system from injury. If, however, their alignment is altered or their movement is impaired, the development and function of the nervous system will be adversely affected. Doctors of chiropractic address these misalignments with specific spinal and cranial adjustments. When we clear obstructions to the nervous system, all physiological systems and functions improve. The nervous system will better regulate the body, and the body will relay positive signals back to the brain.

Following our four years of chiropractic college education, my husband and I opened a family practice in 1981. We took care of infants and children regularly, and throughout the years we noticed a direct relationship between the birth story of the family and the baby's spinal and cranial alignment. Babies who were born with manual pulling, forceps, vacuum, and C-sections

presented with more misalignments than those whose birth procedures were non-invasive.

My clinical observation prompted me to discuss the birth process with all my patients, and I found fathers to be the most receptive to this discussion. Having been present at the birth, dads were able to observe the amount of force used to deliver their children. Remembering the birth, it became obvious to them that their infant's spine had experienced considerable strain during delivery. I think dads who observed these births recognized a certain desire to protect the family which had been overpowered by the formal setting and the people in control of it. Birth trauma often affects the whole family, even if the mother and child are the only ones receiving the physical side of it. I can't describe how powerful it is to see the trauma resolved in each member of the family as the infant's well-being improves under chiropractic care.

Over the years, many parents came to our office concerned about their infants' early behaviors, such as irritability, restless sleep, unwarranted crying, poor feeding habits, back arching, and neck tilts. These are only a few of the possible manifestations of a nervous systems under continuous stress. After a few weeks of regular chiropractic adjustments, the function of their babies' physiology noticeably improved.

I think of the importance of chiropractic for improving physiology from the beginning of life, but this is only a portion, albeit a significant one, of the benefits offered by chiropractic. More and more, I see parents recognizing the core principles of chiropractic in their own lives—that life expresses intelligence, and that the human body has an innate ability to do what it was designed to do, if only we can respect and trust it.

I want to thank all of the dads who are stepping up and becoming involved in making logical, informed choices for their families, and who recognize the science of normal physiology as their guide. I hope that all fathers will come to realize the intimate engagement they have in their children's births, and to see the role they play in keeping the space guarded for the natural beauty of new life to flourish. ☺

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 58

“For you have in your possession a sacred trust.
Guard it well.”

—B.J. PALMER







CHILDHOOD FEVERS

LETTING GO OF THE FEAR

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

As a child, I received three major surgeries before I was 6. Two were completely unnecessary. My father was an insurance salesperson and always “did the right thing.” If I sneezed, we went to the doctor. I believed this to be the norm...until I met my husband’s family. They were a more typical family of the day. They treated most illnesses and even injuries at home. When Tom’s dad had a fever, he bundled himself in long johns, went under the covers, and sweated it out. The rest of his family knew to do the same. The idea that during the time of illnesses the body was exhibiting normal, even healthy function, was new to me. It was not something to be feared. Rather, it was something to observe and care for—at home. Without drugs. Under contemplation, and with a mother’s love and attention.

Fast-forward to our discovery of chiropractic, the philosophy, science, and art that says that the intelligence of life is organized and expresses itself through the body’s ability to adapt and self-regulate. For Tom, this was not a foreign idea. It reinforced the values of healing he learned as a child. For me, it was more challenging. It made sense, but my childhood experiences did not reinforce the idea

of trust in the processes of healing. In my family, trust was more about following the direction of a glorified system of drugs and procedures.

Tom and I got married, and I was able to embody these new chiropractic, life-affirming principles for myself. We chose to have a homebirth. We left the cord intact. We rubbed in the vernix. We cherished Ina May Gaskin’s book *Spiritual Midwifery* enough to where I felt strong. We breastfed and co-slept exclusively with our newborn. We chose not to circumcise. We removed fluoride from our water. We even chose to use arrowroot powder on our baby’s bum instead of talcum. And then came the big test. One of our sons got a fever. A high fever. I defaulted to my upbringing and felt the need to know and even regulate the temperature. So I stuck in the thermometer and gasped at the results. My heart raced and I dropped right into fear mode. I had to do something!

Recently, I watched an interview with Lawrence Palevsky, M.D., a New York-based holistic pediatrician, on *The HighWire with Del Bigtree*. In this interview, Dr. Palevsky succinctly recounts the shift in the medical profession and in family practices that has altered people’s approaches to



OVER DECADES OF CLINICAL PRACTICE, I NOTICED MORE AND MORE FEAR IN THE NEWER GENERATIONS OF PARENTS. TODAY, IT SEEMS TO HAVE REACHED A PEAK.

disease, including fever. He explains how, prior to this shift, most doctors had what he called “feel.” He observed this during his residency, where most of his instructors came out of the 1940s era. They had old traditions handed down to them by the mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and grandfathers of their time. With these traditions came confidence and trust in their approach to disease, whether it was for fever, teething, rash, mucus in the nose, sore throat, shaking chills, or something else. Even in a time when diseases were statistically more dangerous than they are today, there was generally a lot less fear about them.

“The experience of fever has changed” says Dr. Palevsky. “Now fever becomes, ‘Oh my God, my kid’s gonna die!’ Now it’s about using over-the-counter medicines, which are

dangerous to the child, and antibiotics, as soon as possible.”

Clinical medicine used to be about calming people’s fears and subduing rushed decisions through self-composure and caring observation. It has been replaced by machine tests and expedient protocols. What ever happened to the supportive framework of understanding the person within the context of their disease? As Palevsky recounts:

I was teaching medical students in the mid '90s, and they would come to me and say, “Okay, I have a kid with a headache and the MRI showed this...” Before even addressing the MRI, I would ask them basic things like, “Well, did you take a history? Did you take a physical? What’s the child eating? Did the child fall? What did the child take as a supplement?

Is there strife at home? Is the child sleeping?" All these psychosocial and environmental questions were no longer being asked. Students were being trained to avoid the clinical picture and jump straight to a "fix."

In our family chiropractic practice, my husband and I got to care for many kids. We witnessed parents coming to the brink of panic numerous times over childhood illnesses. But over our decades of clinical practice, I noticed more and more fear in the newer generations of parents. Today, it seems to have reached a peak. Any symptom is followed by panic and a search for some prescriptive treatment. There is no calming wisdom present to guide us to observe our child and see that what he needs is already there.

To go back to my son's first fever, that's when the real step for me took place. There I was, in borderline freak-out mode: "Let's DO something!" Like so many of the parents I'd come to care for in my practice, I experienced the fear. "He's hot! Really hot," I said, holding my firstborn. "We have to do something." Tom looked at me, and drew on the trust and wisdom of his own childhood experiences. He said, "This is fine. It's normal. His body is working and we shouldn't be afraid of that—he looks okay." He even broke the thermometer and threw it in the garbage after my third and fourth panicked temperature read. "If it's going to make you continuously afraid, then we don't need it. It's not helpful."

In 1991, Dr. Palevsky started working in an emergency room in the Bronx. Some time afterward, he wanted to see if a private practice would be right for him. So he approached some clinical practices in Manhattan and saw an old-time pediatric disease specialist. He asked this man what he did for the kids who had high fevers, because in the emergency room you're required to do test after test. And the practitioner said, "Larry, if I did all those tests on these kids, I would lose half my practice. There's a simple solution that doesn't require tests: If you have a kid with a 105-degree fever, who's still looking at you, talking, babbling, drinking, peeing, sleeping, is arousable, alert, interactive, and consolable, and then you have another kid who comes in with a one 100.8-degree fever but who can hardly wake up, which fever would you be more concerned about?" The answer: the child with the 100.8-degree fever.

From this experience, Palevsky learned the wisdom of old-time medicine—to treat the patient, not the condition. To help parents manage the self-care of their children, Dr. Palevsky gives them what they need most: support and guidance in observing their children, not fearing the disease.

Most of the families in my practice learn to go through the trial. I'll be with them and I'll hold their hands, but I need them to go through the experience

of their child having a fever, and to watch to see what happens. After the parent has this experience, then it becomes wisdom and real inner knowledge. Right now, there's very little but fear and angst coming from media, other parents, and doctors who mostly carry the same fears. I try to teach parents not to treat the number on the thermometer, but to treat the child, just like that pediatrician taught me many years ago.

Is the child alert, awake, arousable? Is the child interactive, drinking, and urinating? Is the child in respiratory distress? What's the child's color? These are some of the questions Dr. Palevsky reminds parents to ask—questions that don't require a thermometer to answer. Like my husband, who knew to observe our child before making any rash decisions, Dr. Palevsky learned to observe and trust the process from an old-time pediatrician.

"More and more, by going straight to the medicine chest, you're actually ignoring the child," says Palevsky. Tom and I couldn't have put it any better ourselves. The bottom line is, once the fear subsides, the solution comes naturally. Your child, that beautiful human being, is strong and healthy, and the body is intelligent. What he or she needs more than anything else is your loving attention.


As a young, new parent it was harder for me to "trust the process" and tune in to my children despite all my initial fears. But I learned the great benefit that comes once we do. "When kids have their febrile illnesses, regardless of what the cause was—if it didn't need antibiotics, and it took its course without intervention, they would almost always see a developmental growth spurt afterward." This was Dr. Palevsky's pediatric experience, as well as my own personal one as a parent.

The onset of an illness is like the peak of a stressful period in the child's body that requires rest, fluids, and toning it down. After it passes, the child will appear to be more advanced. The immune system and the nervous system will be more mature. The child will have grown.

"There's a list of observations for parents to make posted on my website" says Dr. Palevsky, "so parents can follow a checklist. And I get e-mails from parents who say, if it weren't for your checklist, I wouldn't have made it through. My purpose is really about letting parents gain experience and learn along the way why it's essential to treat the child who has a fever—not the fever. Otherwise, we're going to miss connecting to the child."

Through the years of raising my own kids, I watched them advance past each childhood fever and illness. I learned to let go of the fear. 🧡

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 62



INFORMED, CONSCIOUS CHOICE

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

Every day I'm encouraged by stories of parents who are exercising their options to make informed choices for their families. They are seeking resources and materials that challenge the status quo, and they are implementing this knowledge into their families' lifestyles. I applaud all parents who are moving away from rote patterns of behavior and making a concerted effort for change.


Along with their new choices usually come challenges and seeming roadblocks, as families begin to live these ideals in a world that resists such changes. It takes a deep strength and conviction to express these new viewpoints. I've found that if these perspectives are based in intellect alone, the challenges encountered may be too much to handle. Old fears and internal mental disputes are rekindled, causing us to lean back on old patterns and paradigms.

PATHWAYS is published by parents who are walking this path, experiencing these struggles and forging an expansive, cohesive movement for all of us to grow with and in. This is why our Pathways Connect groups have formed...to nurture these shifts and support each other in our challenges as we increase our awareness.

But even more important than any assistance we can receive from outside is the vigor we can access from within. Here is a place of unlimited power and infinite enthusiasm. To claim this state of internal strength, we must shift the very place from which we make our decisions. We must move out of the mindset of informed choice, and into the realm of conscious choice. This is a movement from mind to heart, from thinking to knowing.

To do so takes some deep soul-searching, exploring the core of our deepest beliefs and convictions about life, its source and our identity within it. Do we resonate with the principles of vitalism? Do we not only recognize the presence of a universal intelligence to which all life is connected, but consciously rely on it from moment to moment?

When we shift our perspective from without (where we make our informed choices) to within (where we make our conscious choices), not only do all of our choices become easier to make, but the strength behind those choices surpasses any power we have ever accessed before.

I am reminded of a poem by Rudyard Kipling my class was required to memorize back in 5th grade. Over the years I have strived to live up to the values it espouses. The more I shift from the mental to the conscious, from the outside to the inside, the more strength I draw from within, and am therefore able to live in greater accordance with this guidance. Such strength allows me to live out the promptings of my conscious choices. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 30

If

By Rudyard Kipling

*If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;*

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;*

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"*

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!*



QUESTION AUTHORITY

Our Right to Make Informed, Conscious Choices

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

I grew up in a family and a generation that believed in America, its Constitution and our Bill of Rights. We had a framed Declaration of Independence in our living room for years. We were taught that tyranny was not tolerable and authority that overstepped its bounds should be questioned and held accountable (and, yes, even rebelled against). We looked up to our forefathers, and honored their principles of sovereign human rights. We trusted in freedom of speech—the inalienable right to express perspectives and opinions for intelligent discussion, debate, and resolution. We held dear our right and responsibility to make informed, conscious choices.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON
The Declaration of Independence

Then somewhere in the fear-based myriad of selective education, contrived crises, and censored news, individuals became numbed and forfeited their autonomous responsibility to discern what is moral and ethical to societal institutions.

In PATHWAYS we frequently cover the importance of informed, conscious choice relating to many aspects of health in pregnancy, birth, and childhood, and we strive to offer the information that has been intentionally filtered out of mainstream media, including concerns relating to vaccines, probably the most controversial and censored topic facing parents today. And instead of honestly and ethically evaluating this scientific evidence, the powers-that-be continue to intimidate and downright suppress all sides, and all data, that go against their agenda.

When the reports of Dr. William Thompson, a whistleblower at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), were completely ignored by mainstream media, it became pitifully evident that vital information was being intentionally censored. Those who managed to bring this information to the surface were ridiculed as “conspiracy theorists” and “cranks.” These labels and fear tactics, with which so many have been indoctrinated, overtook the ethical sensibility and truth-seeking that is necessary for an informed public to emerge.

Some people have brought this issue to a more prominent light. U.S. Congressman Bill Posey quoted Thompson on the floor of the House of Representatives, charging that the CDC intentionally destroyed research findings that indicated that the MMR vaccine caused a huge risk of autism in African-American boys when given before the age of 3 years. Fortunately, Dr. Thompson kept copies of these records, and pressure for an investigation is underway. Will this be the trigger to wake up the American public?


If a Nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.... If we are to guard against ignorance and remain free, it is the responsibility of every American to be informed.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON

As parents whose duty it is to protect and guard our children, we have the right and the responsibility to make freely informed, conscious choices based on all the information available. The AMA declares that it is the legal and ethical obligation of practitioners to present the medical facts accurately to the patient or person responsible for the patient's care. If, however, relevant data is being withheld from the practitioner, and therefore the public, then the special-interest groups withholding this information are creating conditions of ignorance for tyranny to exist, risking and endangering people of all beliefs and all walks of life.

The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it to be always kept alive.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON

PATHWAYS magazine is published by the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association, whose policy is based on informed consent: “The ICPA respects each individual's responsibility to make informed, conscious choices in all aspects of their chosen healthcare.” We strive to bring essential information to parents, including that which appears to be intentionally withheld from the public. We hope to empower our readers to become informed, question authority, and to exercise their sovereign rights for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 47





FLU SEASON

Chance or Choice?

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

As we approach the “flu season” it is important for us to recognize some of the lifestyle dynamics that contribute to our increased susceptibility to the flu.

Our bodies have an incredible ability to adapt to their environments and maintain a state of “ease,” or balance. It is this balance, or proper function, that creates true health and well-being. However, physical, emotional, and chemical stresses adversely affect our bodies’ ability to adapt and maintain this balance.

All summer long we enjoy the outside sunshine, the warm, fresh air, and an increase in physical activities. Schedules are less hectic and there is more opportunity to relax. Fresh fruits and vegetables are in abundance, and we tend to eat lighter, more nutritious foods.

Back to school means back to busy schedules. Time constraint and convenience has many children eating the not-so-nutritious school lunches and resorting to vending machines for quick snacks. School activities and community meetings are in full swing and every “spare” moment after school and on weekends is spent rushing from one activity to another.

Additionally, back to school means at least six hours per day when our children are slouching in uncomfortable chairs at desks and carrying heavy book bags. When summer is over, activity levels are decreased and time outside is often limited to a 20-minute recess period.

With fall comes the stress of the holiday season as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa are upon us. The exhausting tasks of shopping, preparations, and hectic deadlines combined with our already busy schedules often force us to replace regular good eating habits with fast food substitutes. Takeout food becomes easier to fit into our on-the-go lifestyles than preparing home-cooked meals. Additionally, foods associated with the customs of the holidays (excess carbs, fats, and sweets) add to the mix of increased chemical stress and decrease our family’s immune system function. All that preparation, all those parties, all that rushing, all of those increased stressors begin to take their toll on our family’s health. Physical stress, emotional stress, and chemical stress: a cycle of stress overload leads to decreased function and dis-ease.

It is no secret that an overload of stress affects our health. Numerous studies are being published that

substantiate the direct relationship between stress overload and the body’s ability to cope and adapt. In chiropractic we recognize that an increase in these stresses adversely affects the nervous system, which in turn affects the body’s ability to function in its maximum state of health. Continuous stress overload will lead to a state of dis-ease in our bodies, and our bodies respond with decreased immune function. Considering the amount of stress our families go through returning to school and participating in the holidays, is it any wonder that the holiday season is also synonymous with flu season?

Our lifestyles play an important role in our bodies’ ability to function in a state of health. We are told that more exercise, better diets, and “relaxation time” are all important to keep our immune systems strong and healthy. Choices we make daily and seasonally affect our immune system function.

Although it may seem impossible to resist the stresses imposed on us by the demands of our hectic society, we can reduce the effects these stresses have on our families’ health. Our key to health for our families depends on two ingredients: the lifestyle choices we make that reduce ongoing stressors and what we do to help our bodies adapt to the incoming stressors we cannot change.

Our nerve system and immune system function are intimately connected. Therefore, spinal nerve stress adversely affects both our nerve and immune systems. Reducing interference to the nerve system on a regular basis with chiropractic adjustments allows the immune system to function better. Regular chiropractic care is one way of helping our bodies maintain a state of balance and cope with the never-ending stresses we are exposed to.

Regular chiropractic care makes sense when we are seeking ways for our families to improve immune system function. Chiropractic care works with the body’s inherent ability to restore function and health. Regular spinal adjustments have become a vital ingredient in the family wellness lifestyle. Share your chiropractic experiences and knowledge with other families you know. Tell them about the advantage you have discovered for improved family health with chiropractic! 🧡

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 8



Mama Minou

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

While my husband and I were in college, we started going to a chiropractor who helped us regain our normal function. This was after we were told by medical professionals that we were doomed to have “bad backs” for the rest of our lives. What an amazing journey this was for us!

Both of us had injured our backs—my husband during a car accident, and me while hang gliding. With chiropractic care we both achieved normal function, as well as new levels of health that we didn’t know were possible. My own longstanding conditions from youth finally went away. My allergies to animals were gone, I stopped getting migraine headaches, my asthma attacks dissipated and never returned—even my menstrual cycle became regular! My husband and I decided to become chiropractors after this experience.

But there was one more story that occurred before we headed off to chiropractic college that really opened us up to the power of chiropractic and its insight into family well-being. This story had to do with a certain mother and her babies. In this case, it was our first mama cat, Minou, and her litter of kittens. After her nine-week pregnancy, we marveled at Minou’s natural instincts and ability to birth without assistance. The kittens nursed and grew, but at 2 weeks old, something changed. One became ill, and then two more began to show similar symptoms. Knowing that our chiropractor had worked with animals before, we decided to bring these three kittens to him.

He checked each one with his gentle hands, but to no avail. Two days later we told our chiropractor that nothing changed, and he asked us if anything out of the ordinary had happened recently that could have been stressing them out. Tom and I knew immediately what it could be. Around the time of their births, a large dog had moved in with us so that his family could relocate. Day and night, mama Minou was tense and on edge. Any time the dog so much as peeked into her room, she became terribly frightened. Hearing this, our chiropractor paused and said, “Go home and bring me the mother.” And that’s what we did.

We drove home, picked up Minou, and went back to the office. He checked her spine and found a serious misalignment in her neck vertebrae. He adjusted her twice, and then we brought her home. She settled back in with all her babies, and less than a day later all the kittens became their normal, healthy selves again.

In a previous issue I wrote about the Swahili word *mamatoto*, which literally means “motherbaby.” It reflects an undeniable truth of motherhood that mother and baby are one entity. In his own way, our chiropractor knew this when he advised us to bring Minou in for care. It was an understanding that helped shape our own practice caring for families years later.

And, as we had our own six kiddens along the way, this truth served us immeasurably. Any time my child was sick, I knew I was sick, too. Any time my child experienced fear, I knew that I was afraid, too. I was more than a mother to them. I was a world in and of itself, reflecting to them our mutual experiences. And I’ll never forget the awesome responsibility I felt to be more, for them, than I could have ever been on my own. 🐾

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 61



The Swahili word Mamatoto literally means, “motherbaby.” It reflects an undeniable truth of motherhood that mother and baby are one entity. In his own way, our chiropractor knew this when he advised us to bring Minou in for care. It was an understanding that helped shape and evolve our own practice caring for families years later.

Choosing Our Perspective

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

As we welcome the spring here in the northeastern U.S., there is much to be grateful for. Warmer weather, longer days, budding trees and flowers, and the return of many songbirds singing their hearts out each and every morning to brighten our spirits with hope. We are also grateful to our enthusiastic readers, subscribers, and Pathways Connect supporters, who have grown this magazine into a movement.

PATHWAYS began as a magazine to introduce the varying facets of family wellness so parents could make conscious, informed healthcare choices. Coming from the vitalistic major premise that there is universal intelligence and each individual is a unique expression of this intelligence, PATHWAYS has accompanied many practitioners and parents on their journeys to discover their own innate potentials. With its Pathways Connect Gathering Groups sponsored by practitioners around the world, PATHWAYS has provided support and community as individual families seek out their understanding of conscious living.

There is no denying that we are living in extraordinary times. All facets of our lives are undergoing transformational changes: politics, economics, religion, education, healthcare, parenting, personal awareness. For some, these rapid changes incite uncertainty or fear. Others, however, understand that the seeming upheaval we feel signals an unprecedented shift in consciousness for all humanity. In the words of the Dalai Lama: "I feel optimistic about the future because humanity seems to be growing more mature; scientists are paying more attention to our inner values, to the study of mind and the emotions. There is a clear desire for peace and concern for the environment."

Gregg Braden addressed these changes in his article "Turning Point: Resilience in a Time of Extremes," asking, "Are we willing to embrace the thinking that makes such possibilities a priority? Will we allow the science that reveals the deepest truths about our relationship to ourselves, one another, and the earth to become the passport for our journey?"

These are momentous questions. I believe that the perspective from which we think is critical. I am reminded of the poem "The Blind Men and the Elephant" by John Godfrey Saxe. In this famous literary work, this author captures the epitome of reductionism—that each individual sees only his limited perspective and refuses to expand his consciousness to respect the experience of another. This type of reductionist thinking, so prevalent today, dooms us to separation, failure, and despair.

As a teenager, I came across the book *Seven Arrows* by Hyemeyohsts Storm. I became engrossed in hearing the teaching stories of the Native Americans. One lesson about the importance of perspective seems to offer a solution to the argumentative state that Saxe's six men from Indostan were left in. This teaching described putting a single rock in the center of a circle of people. To each observer, that rock would be perceived differently. Based on each person's own unique experiences in life (even though they lived closely together with the same tribal ways), it was recognized that no two people could possibly observe the rock as the same. Taking this analogy a bit further, the lesson described that if there was an idea being considered, rather than an object, the perspectives would vary even more.

The sheer genius of these people is in understanding that individual perspectives will always differ because each life experience is unique. So how, then, was a sense of unity established to allow for peaceful and



cooperative living among the many perspectives? They did not legislate morality. Instead, they had an inherent understanding that within the whole there was something greater than the sum of its parts, and they had utmost respect for each individual expression as a valuable part of the whole.

In the Native American way, first and foremost, there is a deep recognition of sacred intelligence with an inseparable force that unites all creation. It is this major premise from which they deduce all of their decisions. The Lakota people actually have a greeting that reflects the intertwining connection of this intelligence, "Mitakuye Oyasin." Its translation is "All my relations." At every greeting and encounter, they consciously reestablish their premise of a unifying intelligence and their deep respect for its presence in everyone and everything. Truly, their perspective on life is a vitalistic one.

I leave you with this beautiful Lakota prayer. May it bring you peace and optimism as we journey together during these shifting times 🕊

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A Lakota Prayer

Aho Mitakuye Oyasin. All my relations.

I honor you in this circle of life with me today.

I am grateful for this opportunity to acknowledge you in this prayer.

To the Creator, for the ultimate gift of life, I thank you.

To the mineral nation that has built and maintained my bones and all foundations of life experience, I thank you.

To the plant nation that sustains my organs and body and gives me healing herbs for sickness, I thank you.

To the animal nation that feeds me from your own flesh and offers your loyal companionship in this walk of life, I thank you.

To the human nation that shares my path as a soul upon the sacred wheel of Earthly life, I thank you.

To the spirit nation that guides me invisibly through the ups and downs of life and for carrying the torch of light through the ages, I thank you.

To the Four Winds of Change and Growth, I thank you.

You are all my relations, my relatives, without whom I would not live.

We are in the circle of life together, co-existing, co-dependent, co-creating our destiny. One, not more important than the other.

One nation evolving from the other and yet each dependent upon the one above and the one below. All of us a part of the Great Mystery. Thank you for this Life.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.
The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a WALL!"
The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho, what have we here,
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a SPEAR!"
The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a SNAKE!"
The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he:
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a TREE!"
The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a FAN!"
The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a ROPE!"
And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

—JOHN GODFREY SAXE



A CHILD'S WISDOM

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

**“Life is the primary focus of chiropractic.
It is through the expression of life as
health that spirit can be expressed
through matter via soul. Where soul is
intelligent life, life is intelligent action.”**

—D.D. PALMER

There's a Moody Blues album from the late 60s entitled *To Our Children's Children's Children*; my husband Tom and I used to listen to it frequently. Their songs reflected hope and vision for a new generation of social and spiritual change. When we were still kids, we would spend hours talking about our philosophy of life. One day in high school, we skipped classes and spent the entire day discussing “how kids should be raised.” Being kids ourselves, and still intimate with that perspective, we outlined some essentials.

First and foremost, we agreed that kids are born inherently good and that they are seeking to express their own, innate potential. Allowing this to manifest requires a sense of trust in a greater good, and a respect for a higher intelligence that connects and oversees the expression of all life, kids included. We recognized that kids have their own soul's purpose to fulfill, and that they are here to teach parents as much as parents are here to teach them. In other words, the relationship is multidimensional, and the parameters of “right and wrong” are not a polarized black-and-white set of rules, but rather many hues of color, depending on each moment in time.

That led us to our next conclusion: The spirit of the law, not the letter of the law, should be the determining factor in making rules and enforcing boundaries. Each situation brings its own set of circumstances, and decisions should be adapted to the situation at hand. Parenting requires the ability to shift perspectives, adapt ideas, and, yes, embrace continued growth and change.

When we were just 19, Tom and I were introduced to chiropractic. Although specific spinal adjustments facilitated my healing from a serious injury and also eliminated lifelong symptoms of headaches, asthma, and intense allergies, it was the



philosophy of chiropractic that inspired us to become chiropractors. Here we saw a perspective that recognizes an innate intelligence in all living things, a wisdom that oversees and coordinates function on all levels: physical, emotional, and spiritual. From the traditional teachings of chiropractic, we learned trust and respect for the natural process of life in all situations. We were fortunate to be introduced to the essence of the chiropractic philosophy as being far beyond “healthcare”—it’s a way of life.

Tom and I married and had six wonderful, expressive, and happy kids. We offered an environment of love and security and chose home birth, breastfeeding, co-sleeping, baby wearing, and attachment parenting before these were even terms used in the parenting arena. We, like many chiropractic families, chose these approaches because they respected the evolution and expression of a child’s own innate potential and his or her importance as an individual expressive soul. These ideals are consistent with our philosophy of life, as well as the chiropractic philosophy of honoring our innate wisdom.

As our children grew older, we continued this trust and respect by allowing them to co-create the parameters of our home “boundaries.” Communication between parents and children in our house is safe, open, and very dynamic, with everyone’s input expressed, heard, and considered. Even if choices are made that we do not wholeheartedly agree with, we often allow them so we can all learn and grow together. And so we do.

We continue to realize that children are born with an inherent connection to their source—a deep, inherent wisdom untainted by worldly ways. Allowing them to live and express this wisdom helps us stay connected to our source as well. 📌

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WITH THE EYES OF A CHILD
YOU MUST COME OUT AND SEE
THAT YOUR WORLD’S SPINNING ‘ROUND
AND THROUGH LIFE YOU WILL BE
A SMALL PART OF A HOPE
OF A LOVE THAT EXISTS
IN THE EYES OF A CHILD YOU WILL SEE.

—THE MOODY BLUES

LETTING MUSIC

Awaken

OUR DREAMS

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

A

rt and music have a way of revealing the core ideals of a time. Sometimes those messages last for decades. Growing up in the '70s, we celebrated with passionate, meaningful music. The lyrics were about growth, expansion, finding ourselves, questioning authority, expressing our individual voice...all essential to the momentous paradigm shift the world was embarking on.

There were two classic songs reflective of the youth's perspective in regard to parenting: "Father and Son" by Cat Stevens and "Teach Your Children" by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young. If you have never heard these songs, or if it has been some time since you have, I invite you to check out their words of wisdom. Both reflect the enthusiasm the youth were bursting with. Both held a message still valuable to us as parents today.

The voice of the father in Cat Stevens's song captured the essence of a placating status quo: *"Just relax, take it easy/You're still young, that's your fault/There's so much you have to know."* From our youthful place of freedom-to-be, this advice was restrictive, and the words of the son—*"If they were right, I'd agree/but it's them they know, not me/Now there's a way and I know/that I have to go away"*—was an undefined resolution to follow an inner drive for expression.

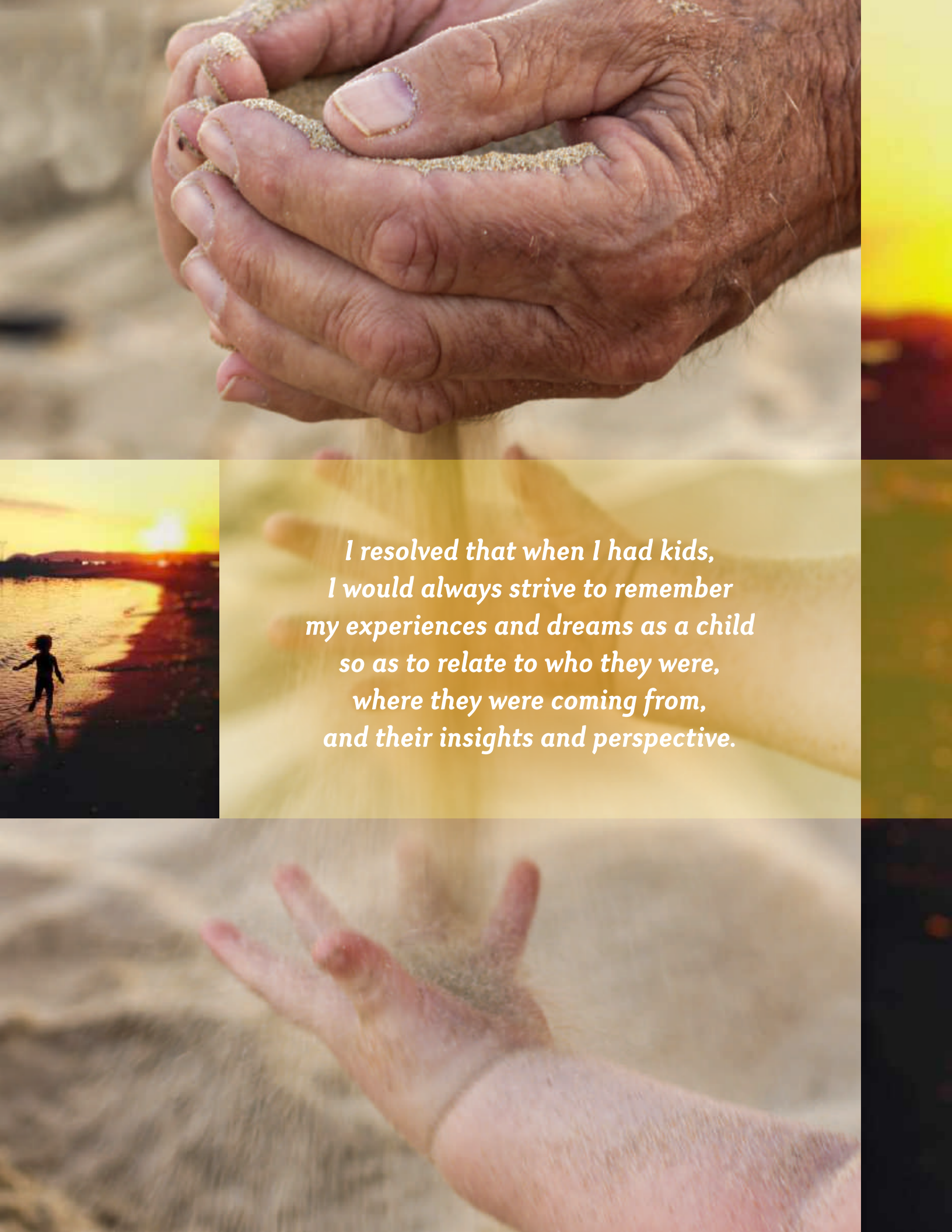
Like many parents of that decade, my father was not sympathetic to the radical changes arising in our society, and he was even less supportive of my enthusiasm for these shifts. I, however, embraced the momentum of the time, and was passionate that I could *"Teach [my] parents well,"* as sung by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young. It was my desire to appeal to his inner knowing, a heartfelt place where I thought he would surely remember his own youthful passions. *"Feed them on your dreams"* was the way CSN&Y put it. Yes, I truly hoped to reawaken within him the aching enthusiasm of youth to discover and explore, and be respected as an individual, unique expression of life. And in so doing, maybe, just maybe, free him of the *"fears he grew by."*

From my cumulative experiences of that decade and my attempts with adult authority to *"help them seek the truth,"* I resolved that when I had kids, I would always strive to remember my childhood experiences and dreams so as to relate to who they were, where they were coming from, and their insights and perspective. I never wanted them to feel that I turned away and *"ordered [them] to listen,"* as I felt had been done to me so many times. Rather, I wanted to develop a deep understanding and lasting relationship with them and my own evolving self. From my own experiences, I knew that as children we most certainly teach our parents well. With our children, and now our grandchildren, we have held this belief as paramount to parenting.

It's funny how a song or poem can transcend time and viscerally reconnect us to an essential part of our being. I can vividly remember the afternoon I approached my father and asked him to hear the words of Cat Stevens's song, "Father and Son." Although my attempt was to get him to feel my exuberance, I didn't realize how much of a personal challenge I was presenting him with. Or maybe I did...

Although I'm no longer a child yearning for her freedom to be heard, I remain as enthusiastic about each of us awakening to and expressing our individual dreams and inner passions. In so doing, may we give "to our children's children's children" the freedom to do the same. 📌

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 46



*I resolved that when I had kids,
I would always strive to remember
my experiences and dreams as a child
so as to relate to who they were,
where they were coming from,
and their insights and perspective.*



FROM JEANNE OHM, D.C.

*In the spirit of PATHWAYS, touching our hearts with
inspiring words of wisdom, I share this passage with you...*

A Child's Song

By Alan Cohen

There is a tribe in Africa where the birth date of a child is counted not from when they've been born, nor from when they are conceived, but from the day that the child was a thought in its mother's mind.

And when a woman decides that she will have a child, she goes off and sits under a tree, by herself, and she listens until she can hear the song of the child that wants to come. And after she's heard the song of this child, she comes back to the man who will be the child's father, and teaches it to him. And then, when they make love to physically conceive the child, some of that time they sing the song of the child, as a way to invite it.

And then, when the mother is pregnant, the mother teaches that child's song to the midwives and the old women of the village, so that when the child is born, the old women and the people around her sing the child's song to welcome it. And then, as the child grows up, the other villagers are taught the child's song. If the child falls, or hurts its knee, someone picks it up and sings its song to it. Or perhaps the child does something wonderful, or goes through the rites of puberty, then as a way of honoring this person, the people of the village sing his or her song.

In the African tribe there is one other occasion upon which the villagers sing to the child. If at any time during his or her life, the person commits a crime or aberrant social act, the individual is called to the center of the village

and the people in the community form a circle around them. Then they sing their song to them.

The tribe recognizes that the correction for antisocial behavior is not punishment; it is love and the remembrance of identity. When you recognize your own song, you have no desire or need to do anything that would hurt another.

And it goes this way through their life. In marriage, the songs are sung, together. And finally, when this child is lying in bed, ready to die, all the villagers know his or her song, and they sing—for the last time—the song to that person.

You may not have grown up in an African tribe that sings your song to you at crucial life transitions, but life is always reminding you when you are in tune with yourself and when you are not. When you feel good, what you are doing matches your song, and when you feel awful, it doesn't. In the end, we shall all recognize our song and sing it well. You may feel a little warbly at the moment, but so have all the great singers. Just keep singing and you'll find your way home. 🎵

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The Imaginal Self

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

Throughout its early life, a caterpillar contains dormant cells, seemingly without function. These are called imaginal cells, and they are the essence from which the future butterfly will be formed. After a stage of over-consumption, the caterpillar buries itself in its cocoon, and the imaginal cells begin to flourish. The caterpillar's own immune system tries to destroy these emerging cells in an attempt to maintain its old identity. However, the new cells grow prolifically and cluster together, and critical mass is reached. With this new identity, the butterfly comes into being.

The growth and proliferation of these cells of the emerging butterfly can be seen as a metaphor for those people who are finding their new identities in the seeming chaos of our world. Cellular biologist Bruce Lipton, Ph.D., relates this stage of the life cycle, as the caterpillar disappears and the butterfly emerges, to the shift in consciousness that is occurring today. He writes:

The challenges and crises the world faces today are actually signs that change is imminent. We are about to face our evolution.

Resembling the metamorphosis of a butterfly from a caterpillar, our current "caterpillar" phase of human civilization is dissolving and reforming as a more advanced, sustainable "butterfly" version of itself. Old, non-sustainable structures are collapsing while new, viable alternatives are evolving.

Evolutionary change will only start when we become participants and stop our fruitless wait for another hero to arise and save us...for we are the heroes we have been looking for! Every day, human "imaginal cells" are creating order out of the impending chaos. Evolutionary actions at the local level are increasing at a logarithmic rate, and frequently unrecognized by the media. So while it appears that nothing is happening on the surface, there is a groundswell of change that is about to erupt.

In the midst of apparent chaos, a new world is emerging like a Phoenix, a world based on love rather than fear, and we are its co-creators. We are, each and all, active participants in what will amount to be the greatest of human adventures, for we are on the threshold of an incredible evolutionary event...the emergence of a new super-organism, Humanity.

Taking his metaphor and applying it to each of us individually, I am led to ask: What is the Imaginal Cell/Self within each of us? The realizable essence that is lying dormant within us, which at the point of critical mass will burst into passionate expression? A conscious existence with distinct power to overcome all resistance to its manifestation? An exuberant expression of intelligence, with directed purpose and representation?

Ah, yes. All this, and so much more. 🌀

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 38

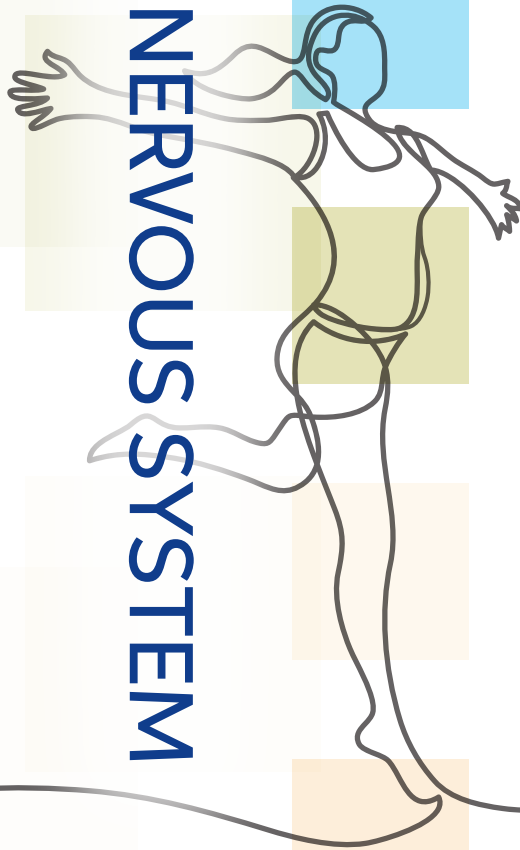
*Overcome fear,
behold wonder.*

—RICHARD BACH



BALANCING

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM



TO HANDLE
DAILY STRESSORS

An interview with Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

In April of 2018 birth practitioners and advocates from all over the world gathered online for a weeklong event called the Birth Healing Summit, created and hosted by Lynn Shulte, P.T. Among the notable appearances and presentations was a spotlight interview with Jeanne Ohm, D.C., editor of *PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELLNESS* and executive coordinator of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association. The conversation was insightful and wide-ranging; we felt it deserved a wider audience, so we're bringing it to you below.

LYNN: Welcome to the Birth Healing Summit. We're talking with Jeanne Ohm, D.C., about balancing the nervous system so moms can handle daily stressors in life. So, Jeanne, how do we do that as moms?

JEANNE: Well, I'll begin by saying that I've been involved in chiropractic for 40 years, and chiropractic is what led me into natural birthing. I think it's important for people to understand what chiropractic is, because chiropractic is one way we can balance the nervous system.

A lot of people think, "Oh, you have a bad back. Go to the chiropractor for treatment." Actually, my story with chiropractic began in that way, after I had fractured my spine hang-gliding. I initially went through orthopedic procedures and drugs, and after a year I was still hurting. My orthopedic doctor told me, "Oh, honey, you're gonna have a bad back for the rest of your life."

Not knowing what to do, I went to a chiropractor who explained to me, "Chiropractic is not about the 'bad back.'" I remember thinking, "Then what am I doing here?" He said, "We work with the nervous system. As I make adjustments on your spine, that takes pressure off your nervous system and allows you to function better on many levels—physiologically, psychologically, socially, and physically."

It's unfortunate that people don't really understand that part of chiropractic. It's why people might ask, "Why would you bring your baby to a chiropractor; do they have a bad back?" They don't realize we're working to enhance the nervous system—the most important system in the body, which runs and controls everything else. When I began to receive chiropractic care as a teenager, my lifelong asthma went away. My allergies and migraine headaches left. Even my menstrual cycle became regular. Then I started to understand what chiropractic was really about. It's not the treatment of any of those conditions, it's just the restoration of normal body function, which may manifest in amazing ways and differently for every person.

At the same time as we restore normal function, chiropractic also strengthens the autonomic nervous system's ability to process future stress. That's huge for pregnancy, birth, and early bonding. It helps us move out of perpetual fight-or-flight activity that has become an unavoidable part of modern living.

LYNN: Absolutely! So you said chiropractic helped you discover natural birthing for yourself. Can you talk about chiropractic as it relates to a more physiological birth?

JEANNE: One aspect of birth that's particularly relevant is the topic of dystocia, or the cause for birth to slow down and stop progressing. *Williams Obstetrics* defines dystocia as being related to three aspects of birth: power, passage, and passenger.

Power is how the uterus is functioning and the ability of the cervix to dilate. It's an intelligent physiological process that's coordinated through the activity of the nervous system. If a pregnant mom's spine is out of alignment, or if she is experiencing undue stress and perceived danger in her environment, her nervous system will shift out of its ideal physiological state for giving birth.

WHEN I BEGAN TO RECEIVE CHIROPRACTIC CARE, MY LIFELONG ASTHMA WENT AWAY. MY ALLERGIES AND MIGRAINES LEFT. EVEN MY MENSTRUAL CYCLE BECAME REGULAR. THEN I STARTED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT CHIROPRACTIC WAS REALLY ABOUT.

A subluxation, or misalignment of the spine, can cause the body to signal a fight-or-flight response, just as external stressors in the birth environment can and often do. Going back to the importance of the autonomic nervous system, if the mother is in this state of fight-or-flight during labor, the cervix won't dilate effectively, and the uterus's function will begin to shut down.

Usually, if the birth is at the hospital, the hospital staff will say early on, "Well, you're not progressing here and we have to do something to get things moving." In reality, what's most needed is to calm the environment, wait for the nervous system to catch back up, and allow the mother to regain autonomic balance. It would be great if there was a chiropractor at every birth, to assure that autonomic balance was achieved for every birthing mother.

So, that's the power of chiropractic in birth, relating back to the importance of the power of the uterus and the ability of the cervix to dilate.

Passage, the second component related to dystocia, is all about the pelvis. Now, if the pelvis is out of alignment, perhaps from early accidents in life or due to modern habits like prolonged sitting and poor posture—something we are all familiar with—then it's going to be harder for the mother and baby to successfully birth. *Williams Obstetrics*

CHIROPRACTIC ASSURES THAT THE SPINE IS ALIGNED SO NO INTERNAL STRESSORS INTERFERE WITH THE BODY'S POWER. IT HELPS ALIGN THE PELVIS SO THAT THE OPTIMAL PASSAGE EXISTS FOR THE BABY TO MOVE THROUGH.



states: “A misaligned pelvis makes birth difficult.” Chiropractors agree, absolutely. And that’s what we do as chiropractors—we adjust the pelvis and bring it back into balance. This also allows the baby, the passenger, to assume an ideal position with respect to the birth process.

Williams Obstetrics says, “The passenger can affect or contribute to dystocia or labor slowing down.” Well, now we know why. When the pelvis is out of alignment, different ligaments and muscles connected to the pelvis start pulling the uterus in a certain way, putting tension on the uterine environment and inhibiting the baby from assuming an ideal position for birth. When we align the pelvis, we actually improve the baby’s ability to get into his or her preferred position for birth, which is almost always head-down, occiput anterior. It’s amazing to me how chiropractic is not yet utilized for every pregnancy, not only to assure a safer, easier birth, but to help show mothers the magnificent intelligence present within the body during birth. In the months before birth, when the baby is trying to find an ideal position, we can see the value of chiropractic care for both mom and baby really shine through.

Addressing the power, passage, and passenger of birth with chiropractic means getting the nervous system working again so that ideal physiological function is present, getting the spine aligned so no internal stressors interfere with that function, and aligning the pelvis so that the optimal passage exists for the baby to align with and traverse through during birth. All this amounts to excellent preparation for natural birth.

LYNN: You mention a lot about the social vagus in your work. Can you tell us more about that and how it relates to those early moments of life after birth?

JEANNE: So most people are familiar with the two branches of the autonomic nervous system: the parasympathetic

and the sympathetic branches. Well, a researcher named Stephen Porges has hypothesized a third branch, called the vagal branch. It’s dedicated to our social interactions, and is therefore often called the “social vagus.” The idea used to be that the sympathetic nervous system handled life’s stressors while the parasympathetic system handled life’s regenerative functions. However, the key new finding from social vagus research shows that all three systems can and will respond to stress in their own unique way, but that the body prefers to use the newest evolutionary system—the social vagus—to process and adapt to most of life’s stressors. Only if the social vagus fails to satisfy our biological needs will the body resort to the older, less-preferred branches of the nervous system, the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches, respectively. In other words, the nervous system prefers to work hierarchically, from its newest to its oldest systems, for dealing with stress and satisfying needs.

A great example is in healthy infants, who will first attempt using the social vagus branch of their nervous system to get their biological needs met, by using subtle communications and vocalizations—expressions that are controlled by the vagus nerve. If this method fails them, which it often may, infants will resort to crying and screaming, indicative of the sympathetic branch of the nervous system being active. Usually, this sympathetic approach will solve the problem. However, when it doesn’t, and their needs are still not met for a sufficiently long period of time, then the infant will resort to what’s called “parasympathetic shutdown,” which is the body’s oldest stress-management system. It goes back to the reptilian “freeze” response. Often, parents and professionals will interpret this latter systemic response as a positive form of “self-soothing.” In reality, it’s a sub-optimal nervous system state of being, and a last resort for dealing with unresolvable stress.

All this relates directly to birth and those early moments of life, because the methods babies adopt for dealing with



stress become conditioned as the preferred method moving forward. Looking at the world today, it's apparent that the social vagus method of stress management, including calm communication and social interaction, is in short supply.

John Chitty, Ph.D., has looked extensively at the issue of the hierarchical nervous system and the vagus nerve as it relates to birth. At birth we often cut the cord right away. We sever the connection and even separate the baby from his mother to wash the vernix off, inject him with foreign elements, circumcise him, or perform other interventions—all of which are profoundly intense and far beyond the social vagus's ability to adapt. The result is that the baby's nervous system gets primed, right from day one, to employ the sympathetic fight-or-flight or the parasympathetic shutdown responses to life and its stressors. The ideal response, and the biologically appropriate one, is provided by the activation of the vagus nerve, opening up the social responses and cues that come naturally whenever we allow the mother and baby to bond and look at each other in the eyes in peace and quiet. It's what midwives have been encouraging mothers and babies to do for as long as they've been around the birth setting.


Think about it: All throughout pregnancy, the baby has been hearing the mother's voice, the rhythm of her heartbeat. He's tasted and smelled her presence in the womb, has felt her movements, and experienced the world through mom's experience. Connecting to the mother after birth is so important to offer a smooth, even pleasurable transition into the world, and this allows the baby to open up and activate the social vagus portion of the nervous system, bringing it to its fullest expression. All this can have a tremendous influence for the rest of his or her life. To have that baby right there, physically connected, so that mom can look into that baby's eyes, and the baby can look back and smell and feel and taste and know that she's close to home...that's what opens up this higher level in the nervous system. It allows us to connect with our environment better, with other people, and communicate in an embodied, nonverbal way. This is higher social functioning.

With typical birthing in the modern world, we've been separating babies from their mothers and robbing them both of this sacred connection—in effect,

shutting down their higher nervous systems and encouraging them to employ the more primitive aspects. Recovering from this and helping families come back into higher social functioning becomes a primary concern. Chiropractors know the importance of this and can offer practical solutions. And so we can see the importance of chiropractic care, not only for pregnancy and birth, but for the early years of life to assure that we establish healthy nervous system function and wake the child up to the higher functioning that's innate to our species. Having a chiropractor at birth, especially if the birth is traumatic, can do so much for the baby's nervous system and to wake up the social vagus whenever it gets violated or circumvented by

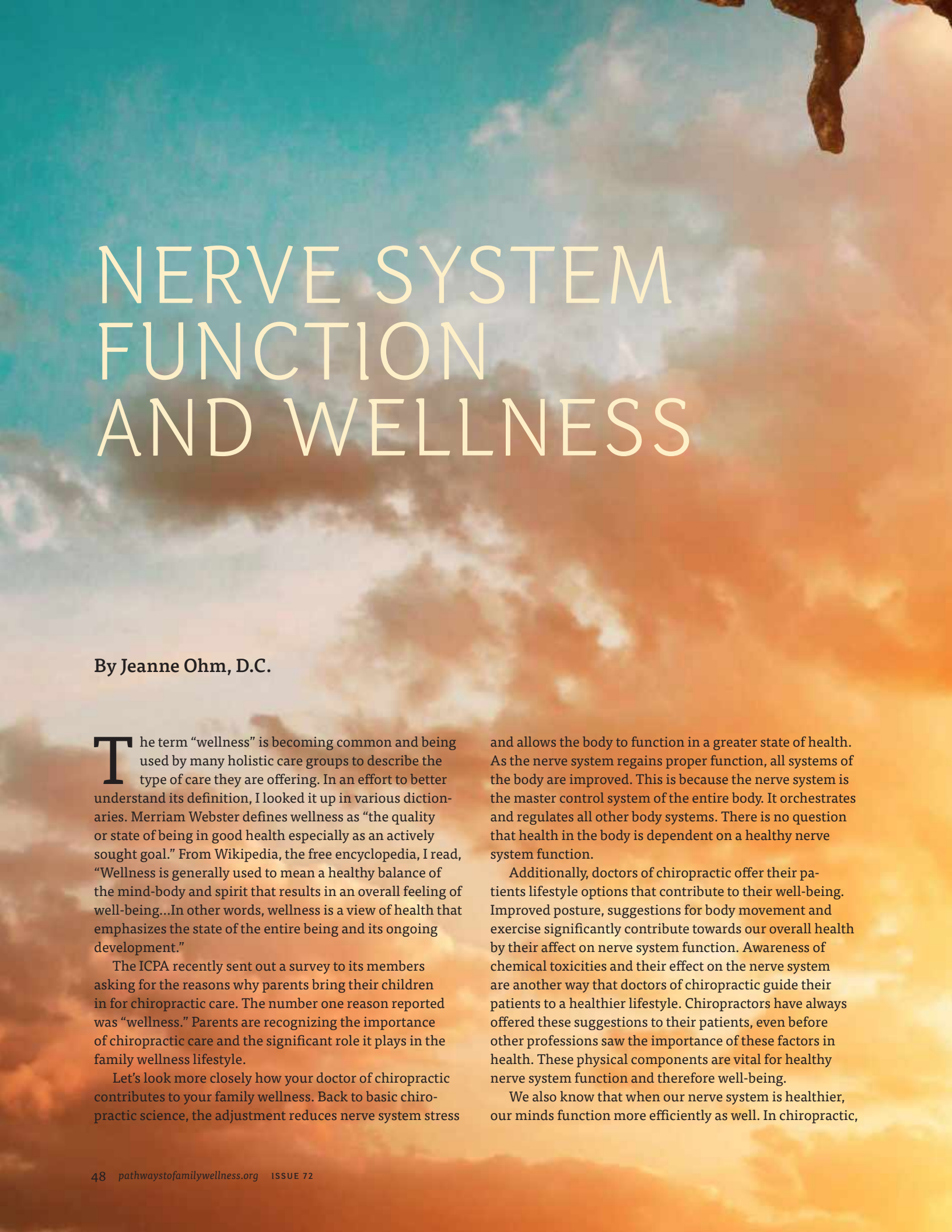
extreme birth conditions. This is so vital for future bonding and things like nursing, and for thriving. It's amazing to see positive changes happen in practice, it's really kinda cool to witness it and be a part of it.

LYNN: That's incredible! And just to mention, also, the fact that walking into a hospital to have a birth can lead to trauma because hospitals see birth, intrinsically, as a medical event, through their pathogenic model. Birth is deemed a medical event from which we must be "saved."

JEANNE: Right, pathogenesis is fear-based. It assumes something is wrong. Birth has no place in that pathogenic model. I believe we are in a cultural transition away from pathogenesis, toward a new model called salutogenesis, where we recognize the source, or foundation, of health as something to be worked with in its own right. It's really about respecting and honoring normal physiological function that's been around for millions of years. The greatest evidence-based science that exists is normal physiology. This understanding really goes beyond birth and into our life as a whole, and our ability to be effective mothers and guardians of our inherent power as a species. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 62

This article was adapted from the Birth Healing Summit interview with Jeanne Ohm, D.C., and Lynn Schulte, P.T. Discover more at InstituteForBirthHealing.com. View article resources and author information here: pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html.



NERVE SYSTEM FUNCTION AND WELLNESS

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

The term “wellness” is becoming common and being used by many holistic care groups to describe the type of care they are offering. In an effort to better understand its definition, I looked it up in various dictionaries. Merriam Webster defines wellness as “the quality or state of being in good health especially as an actively sought goal.” From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, I read, “Wellness is generally used to mean a healthy balance of the mind-body and spirit that results in an overall feeling of well-being...In other words, wellness is a view of health that emphasizes the state of the entire being and its ongoing development.”

The ICPA recently sent out a survey to its members asking for the reasons why parents bring their children in for chiropractic care. The number one reason reported was “wellness.” Parents are recognizing the importance of chiropractic care and the significant role it plays in the family wellness lifestyle.

Let’s look more closely how your doctor of chiropractic contributes to your family wellness. Back to basic chiropractic science, the adjustment reduces nerve system stress

and allows the body to function in a greater state of health. As the nerve system regains proper function, all systems of the body are improved. This is because the nerve system is the master control system of the entire body. It orchestrates and regulates all other body systems. There is no question that health in the body is dependent on a healthy nerve system function.

Additionally, doctors of chiropractic offer their patients lifestyle options that contribute to their well-being. Improved posture, suggestions for body movement and exercise significantly contribute towards our overall health by their affect on nerve system function. Awareness of chemical toxicities and their effect on the nerve system are another way that doctors of chiropractic guide their patients to a healthier lifestyle. Chiropractors have always offered these suggestions to their patients, even before other professions saw the importance of these factors in health. These physical components are vital for healthy nerve system function and therefore well-being.

We also know that when our nerve system is healthier, our minds function more efficiently as well. In chiropractic,



our specific work with the nerve system has a significant effect on our ability to affect the way we think and behave. An overloaded, ill-functioning nerve system cannot handle additional physical or emotional stress overload. PATHWAYS has frequently published articles and testimonials supporting the positive effect chiropractic adjustments have had on people's thoughts and feelings. In one issue, a young boy diagnosed with ADHD said this to his mother about the adjustment: "It takes the noise out of my head." How profound is his statement in realizing the direct correlation between nerve system function and the ability to think and feel clearly.

So too, our feelings and attitudes have a direct correlation to our nerve system. Current science is demonstrating the direct relationship between our thoughts and feelings and our nerve system function. In other words, feelings of despair and hopelessness create a stress overload on our nerve system, and, once again, an overloaded nerve system creates malfunction in our bodies.

What chiropractic offers is the physical adjustment to reduce nerve system stress and a complementary philosophy to support nerve system function as well. In this way it is uniquely affecting nerve system function from two perspectives, and therefore offers a deeper level of health and wellness.

The chiropractic philosophy of health is: recognition, respect, and trust in the body's innate purpose to heal and be well. Understanding this empowering view of health is a huge benefit to reducing nerve system stress as feelings of despair and fear about healing are replaced with hope and confidence. Current scientific studies are showing us that those two feelings are essential for true and lasting healing and wellness.

Chiropractic care is pioneering the wellness movement because of its unique ability to enhance nerve system function on both of these levels. Join the many families who have made chiropractic care the largest natural healing movement today. [📌](#)

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 14



Pathways CONNECT

There's untold value in gathering together
at a time of momentous evolution


By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

A movement is created out of an increased collective social need. Unmistakably, we are experiencing such a movement, a time of conscious wake-up. In just about every aspect of the orientation of our society—education, parenting, healthcare, politics, economics, science, religion, and more—the once-accepted status quo is going through an exciting evolution. We're waking up and consciously realizing that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Support for a movement often comes from the spontaneous formation and enthusiasm of community. What may appear to be serendipitous collaboration between people turns into a collective of cultural creatives born out of its unique ability to fill a need. Such has been the case with PATHWAYS, how it began and how it now supports the greater shift in consciousness that we are all experiencing. During this time of rapid evolution, I am reminded of a saying from B.J. Palmer, the developer of chiropractic: "We never know how far reaching something we may think, say or do today will affect the lives of millions tomorrow."

PATHWAYS magazine was started as a membership benefit for ICPA, a non-profit whose mission is research, training and public education for the family wellness lifestyle. Its purpose was to offer practitioners a magazine for their reception areas that compiled issues and resources for parents to make informed, conscious choices. PATHWAYS was enthusiastically received; soon after its launch in 2004, patients in those practices were asking to subscribe and providers were asking to buy issues in bulk to share in their communities. You, our readership, realized that PATHWAYS was the start of a community—people of like mind and heart seeking ideals to share and discuss. Since then, our successful Pathways Connect movement launched...Gathering Groups can now be found at more than 250 locations worldwide. One author describes these groups as "the watering hole" where parents and practitioners can meet and drink from the wells of resources and discuss our contributions in this time of conscious shifting.

I want to thank each and every one of you who are seeing the vision and supporting the movement with your enthusiasm for PATHWAYS. Each subscription serves to fund the logistics of production and distribution so that more readers can make personal lifestyle changes in accordance with the shift. If you are receiving a complimentary copy from your practitioner and you "pay it forward" to another, you are part of the expansion of this greater movement. When you upgrade from utilizing the complimentary copy you receive at your provider's office to a paid subscription, you are deepening your commitment to support and expand this movement. By doing so, we give another thirsty person the opportunity to come to the well and glean the resources in PATHWAYS, and consciously participate in this global shift.

As each person becomes aware of this shifting paradigm and turns from fearing to embracing the process, the easier it will be for us to cooperatively create the healing and loving growth so needed during this time. As we recognize that everything each of us thinks, says, and does has a far-reaching effect on the entire whole, we passionately embrace the expression of our daily lives as a contribution toward fulfilling this momentous, expanding vision. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 34



Our **INNER** Knowing

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

For six years, it has been my privilege to meet and connect with numerous authors, heads of organizations and practitioners through **PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELLNESS** magazine. Our authors are from all walks of life, each integrating his or her perspective and specialty of the family-wellness lifestyle into their writings. Aspects of parenting, health, holism, nutrition, pregnancy, birth, child care, and new-edge science, along with countless resources supporting these topics, have been explored and shared to contribute to the shift in consciousness our earth so desperately cries out for. Meeting these writers and learning from them has truly been a growing experience for me, and, I'm sure, for our readers.

What I see as a common thread tying our contributors all together has been the willingness to open their perspectives, challenge the status quo, embrace their inner wisdom and stand forward on their inner knowing. **PATHWAYS** is filled with strong and courageous statements from these leaders whose intent is to challenge our readers to awaken their consciousness.

In every issue of **PATHWAYS**, there is a synchronicity of articles, concepts, visions, and goals. Where does this synchronicity come from? Having conversed with every author, I see another common thread: recognition of their source of knowing. Yes, their knowledge has come from years of experience. And the passion with which they share it has been fueled by their connection to a greater knowing, and a willingness to trust this inner wisdom and dedicate their lives to its expression.

We can all relate to hearing the voice of knowing from within. Sometimes called intuition or guidance, this voice will speak to us about decisions both trivial and life-changing. I have learned that the more we listen to this voice, the louder it speaks. The more we trust in its guidance, the further we grow and succeed.

When my husband and I were first exploring the field of chiropractic, we were exposed to many writings from its founder, D.D. Palmer, and its developer, his son B.J. Palmer. One of my favorite stories exemplifying listening to this voice was printed in B.J. Palmer's book, *The Bigness of the*



Fellow Within—a story titled, “That Something.” It reflects a time in the writer’s life before he “awakened,” as he terms it. It was a rough time in his life, filled with strife and discord. He was homeless, poverty-stricken, hungry, and dissolute. He recounts a moment when he asked a stranger in the street for a meal, and the stranger’s reply.

“No,” he answered, a note of pity in his voice. “I cannot help you. No man can.” “But you could feed me,” I said, with some petulance in my voice. “It is not food you need!” “What then?” I asked. “That Something,” was his reply.

The author then recounts an experience of falling asleep, having a dream and hearing a voice.

“Who are you?” I asked. “I am ‘That Something,’” came the reply. “But where are you?” “I am hidden in your soul.” For some moments I thought over what was said. Then I stammered, “How—how did you get there?” “I was born there.” “Why have I not known you were there before?” “No man knows it,”

answered the voice, “until he awakes.” “Are you in other men’s souls, as well?” “There is ‘That Something’ in every man’s soul, which can move the mountains or dry the seas.” “Then you must be Faith!” “Yes,” came the answer, “I am Faith, but I am more—I am that which makes men face the fires of hell, and win.” “Then you must be Confidence, as well.” “Yes, I am more than Confidence—I am that which makes the babbling brooks lift worlds upon their wavelets.” “You are Power,” I cried. “Yes, I am more than Power,” answered the voice. “I am that which makes the wretched failure lift up himself and rule the world.” “You are Ambition—I know you now.” “Yes, I am all you say—Faith, Confidence, Power, Ambition, and more. For greater than all is ‘That Something.’ I am that which every man must find in his soul or else he will be but a clutter of the earth on which he lives.”

“But how can man find you?” “Even as you are finding me now. First you must awaken, then seek, and when you have found you must learn to control...” “Control what?” I asked, confused. “‘That Something’...borrow it from your soul and baptize your life with it. Anoint your eyes, that you may see; anoint your ears, that you may hear; anoint your heart, that you may be!”

“But tell me,” I cried frantically, for the voice was trailing off to almost nothing, “how can I do this? How? How?”

“This is the secret,” came the voice to me as the whisper of a gentle breeze, “these words—‘I will!’”

The story continues with how the author listened to the voice, and followed its moment-to-moment promptings. By doing so, within one year’s time, he not only had a job, but was approaching the highest level of management in the company. Opportunities and shifts in all areas of his life occurred.

I know that throughout my life, when I have listened to this voice, it has led me to creation, success, and fulfillment on all levels of expression. I know all of our authors are propelled by this voice, and so the synchronicity of our message has become a movement.

When hundreds of people of like mind, heart and vision come together, there is a shift in consciousness that ripples the earth. ☺

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 26

Shifting from Warrior to Hero

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

On our path of self-discovery, as we shift from a mechanistic paradigm to a vitalistic one, there is a bit of warrior within each of us. As we've incorporated our new beliefs into our lives, we may have faced adversaries from every corner: health practitioners, the government, and even some family members and friends. The histories of chiropractic and most holistic models of care are fraught with these challenges. Many PATHWAYS readers have been through similar battles. For survival, some have developed a defensive warrior persona. Hearing their stories, we can usually say, "Rightly so!"

There is a more productive model than warrior in the shift from mechanism to vitalism, however, because the warrior mode is based on fear. Power by fear begets fear, and does not honor the vitalistic paradigm. What we are faced with is a new path, one that transforms the warrior persona into the hero. We do this by honoring the quest—the principle the hero is striving for—not the fight.

A warrior is "a person engaged or experienced in warfare; a person engaged in some struggle or conflict."

A warrior is someone who is trained to fight. Warriors are usually selected, willingly or not, to develop skills for battle—to engage in a struggle or conflict. They are instructed to take up the sword. They are trained to take the fear they will face and turn it into fear-based power toward their opponent. Therefore, they are using the very same fear-based tactics to fight the battle, as opposed to rising above the fear and transcending the experience. The important thing to note here is that very often, warriors are blinded by imposed righteousness. They are called to carry out a mission based on what they have been told is true. They are willing to destroy with fear and manipulation—all tactics which are counterintuitive to the vitalistic paradigm. Warriors are "resisting evil." The resistance itself creates engagement with the very thing they are against.


A hero is "a person admired for his or her achievements and noble qualities. One who shows great courage."

Unlike the warrior, a hero is someone who usually has not chosen this path. There is no formal training

process. Rather, heroes are compelled from within to carry forth a truth, a torch of illumination for humanity. In focusing on this ideal and in the process of claiming this principle, heroes face their fears. They become empowered by courage, which comes from the root word *cour*, or "heart." It is the ability to do something that you know is difficult or dangerous. People who rely on courage recognize that the state of fear is disempowering. They do not surrender their strength by participating in fear-based interactions.

Instead, heroes gain their courage by focusing on the essence of their principle—their mission toward truth, their virtuous cause. Their conscious attention to the truth they seek to embody allows them to draw deeper strength from within, fortified by integrity. This is leadership from Above-Down-Inside-Out.

With PATHWAYS, we are seeing the hero in all of us. Heroes include the practitioner who has strived for years to embody the vitalistic principles in practice; the mother who turns from her family's fear-based astonishment and chooses a natural birth; the parents who make conscious health choices for their children in spite of their pediatrician's refusal to support them; and all the people who are facing their own personal, learned fears who need our support, respect, and acceptance for their place on this paradigm-shifting path.

So yes, PATHWAYS is more than a magazine, it is a movement. It unites heroes. It builds community. It honors our journey...for the raising of the consciousness. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 40



The Conscious Breath

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

Birth may be one of the most profound experiences we ever encounter. We try to plan and arrange what will happen, but with every birth comes the unknown. All natural processes follow a course that is not necessarily measurable and predictable. At these times we become challenged to choose between what we think is best and what is actually best. We teeter between trust and fear; our ability to access our higher knowing is put to the test.

When Tom and I were introduced to the chiropractic principle that life is intelligent, it resonated with both of us. We recognized that in this intelligent order, all beings had consciousness and purpose. Birth gives us the opportunity to viscerally experience this principle, and our six homebirths gave us the challenges, understanding, and forthcoming assurances to deepen our trust in it.

So far, all of our children have chosen homebirths with midwives. Witnessing the births of their siblings and their own children has reinforced their experiences of life's wisdom. They know that homebirth midwives, much like chiropractors, are the practitioners who resonate most strongly with these principles, which they value greatly. Midwives have a deep respect for life's intelligent processes, and they have the respect and strength to follow its guidance. They too, have a strong certainty that babies are sentient beings who play a vital, conscious role in birth. And yet at every birth their confidence gets challenged. That's how their strength gets even sturdier.

Our sixth grandchild, as our first five, was born at home with our favorite midwife. Labor progressed steadily throughout the day. All was well. Late afternoon, our daughter-in-law was 8-9 centimeters dilated, and we began to prepare to meet the baby. Progress continued in a steady manner for a couple more hours, until the midwife announced the baby was in an incomplete breech presentation. Just the day before, the baby had been in the optimal, head-down position. Why had he shifted? With that announcement, the mom's urge to push melted away. Was it the fear of breech? Or was

it the perfect wisdom of her body slowing down to ease the breech baby out?

The midwife suggested that if we wanted to transfer to a hospital, the window to do so was right then. We hesitated. Maybe we were afraid of stepping into a panic-filled system. Or perhaps our inherent trust that all would be well kept us from moving. We teetered between our mental naggings and our higher sense of knowing. For the rest of the birth, we all got to witness a dance: between three chiropractors, two midwives, one sibling, two birthing parents, and, yes, the baby. When one became

apprehensive, another stepped up with assurance. When one showed anxiety, another relieved it with ease. When one displayed doubt, another demonstrated skill. At the same time, all of us were cognizant that the baby was also making choices. His heart rate stayed strong and he steadily moved down the canal.

We were all challenged. We all faced doubt. We all submitted to the unsure outcome.

One foot came out, and then the butt. His other leg was folded up; it exited with a flop. His heart tones remained consistent. Unusual to this type of breech, the arms were above the head. The midwife reached up to bring them down. Contractions stopped, and pushing was exhausting. The midwife stepped in again, assisting with the head. The baby came out, with the placenta following almost immediately.

The midwife breathed into the blue baby; I adjusted his atlas. His mother told him she loved him. And he took his first breath...the pinkness of his body demonstrating the action of life's longing for itself. He looked up at his mother with the wisdom of the ages. His lips curled into a smile.

It was one of the most beautiful, emotional, strengthening dances I have ever experienced. Each of us carrying the other, each of us doubting, and yet at the same time, trusting. Ultimately, we learned an even deeper respect for both the mother and baby's innate wisdom. ☺

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 44



ON CHILDREN

KAHLIL GIBRAN

Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.
You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them,
but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.
You are the bows from which your children
as living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,
and He bends you with His might
that His arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.



Siblings at Birth:

A Rite
OF
Passage
INTO THE
Family

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

Photos courtesy of the Ohm family



We birthed all six of our children at home. Although the first four were what are now called “unattended” births (meaning no official birth practitioner was present), all but our first were attended by their siblings. For my husband and me, the decision to have our children with us at birth seemed most fitting. We considered birth to be the expansion of the family, and therefore an experience that the whole family should partake in.

In each of our births, our kids observed, casually commented, and interacted to the level that they each chose. They were free to come in and out of our room throughout the whole process, and they all elected to be present for the actual moment of birth. Regardless of their age, they did not react with fear or anxiousness. Rather, there was in all of them a sense of awe.

Having our kids present at birth was one of the best family decisions we ever made. It set us up, in part, to be the close family that we are today. Certainly, each and every one of our kids got real clear about where they came from. They saw how they were an inherent part of their mother. They developed a profound trust in the abilities of the human body. They watched their mother gather strength and courage to complete a challenging process. They experienced their father providing unconditional love and unwavering support to their mother. And when they witnessed their sibling emerge into this world, and the miracle of life's first breath, they saw how the baby was cuddled, embraced, loved, and accepted, just as they had been. They gained an immediate protectiveness and connection with the new baby as their own.

Children also bring their profound wisdom to birth. After my fifth baby was born, I curled up in bed with him, drawing him close to my breast as I had done with the others. His older brother, who had just witnessed me shedding the necessary blood, sweat, and tears, snuggled up behind me and said, “Aww, it was all worth it, wasn't it?”

I believe that being present at birth allows a child to connect to their primal, human, vulnerable self in order to better unite with their liberating, invincible, spiritual essence. As individuals, they are strengthened in their trust and respect for the inborn intelligence that resides in each of us. This powerful experience imprints itself on their very being. Best of all, the value of birth becomes established as a familial tradition. Now our children have had their own homebirth experiences with all of their baby's siblings present. And then, shortly after, all cousins, aunts, and uncles show up to celebrate and honor the precious new expression of life. We all share in the emotions, the love, and some much-appreciated food. Everyone bonds together as a family just a bit more tightly.

For our family, these births continue to contribute to the special connection we now share. We all live within five minutes of each other. We get together every night of the week for dinner. We share our minds and emotions with diverse and interesting conversations. We share our love as we witness the cousins joyfully play. We partake of some much-appreciated food. 🍷

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 48



First the Chicken, Then the Egg

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

I love eggs. Always have, and I expect I always will. Eggs are an easy, quick, and inexpensive source of protein, and with my busy professional and personal life, I need protein to stay grounded. I remember when there was hype about eggs having too much cholesterol. People were cutting out eggs and resorting to some form of liquid egg in a carton. I didn't buy into it, and continued eating my daily dosage of two eggs—over easy, please.

More than 30 years ago, when my husband and I were in college, living the student poverty lifestyle—these were the days before college loans—we got chickens. They were delightful. Entertaining. Easy.

We let our chickens run free. It fit with our personal philosophy of life. Little did we know the nutritious benefit our philosophically motivated farming provided. We didn't know the term “free-range,” nor had the adjective “pastured” even been coined. We just figured the chickens would be happier running around the yard rather than...well, cooped up. And they did seem to be happy. The way they ran on their two skinny legs was amusing. Their language was entertaining. They made me laugh. And they provided us with the best eggs we'd ever tasted. Now, 30 years later, we have chickens again.

Why on earth do you have chickens?

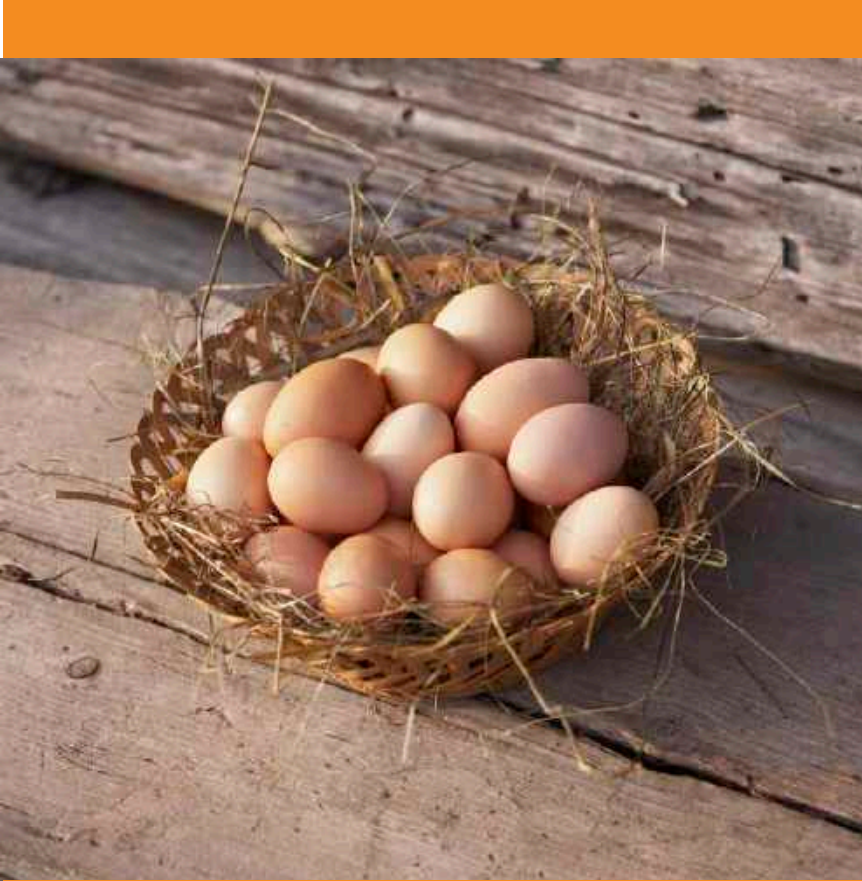
When people ask me this question, I know they have never tasted the difference between pastured, grass-range chicken eggs and the myriad of eggs with misleading labels sold today. Maybe I'm just “strutting my stuff,” but the difference a chicken's diet and lifestyle make in an egg's nutritional outcome, and downright eating pleasure, is huge. Almost all conventional chickens are raised in caged confinement: close, uncomfortable, dark quarters with limited or no access to sunlight, fresh air, or fields. These living conditions breed diseases and are the main source of salmonella. The American Egg Board's egg-safety reference calculates the odds of an egg containing bacterium *Salmonella enteritidis* (Se) as

1 in 20,000 eggs, or 0.005 percent. At that rate, you might encounter a contaminated egg once every 84 years. But even though the bacteria is rare, the chickens are given antibiotics and their eggs go through a cleaning process with toxic chemicals. To maximize production, artificial light is imposed on the chickens, even out of season. And, of course, the chickens are fed genetically modified grains, soy, cottonseed, and fillers with artificial vitamins. They never have access to green grass, tasty grubs, and natural seeds, their healthiest and most natural diet. I believe in informed choice. Here is the lowdown on the various terms being used to describe chicken raising: organic, vegetarian-fed, cage-free, free-range, and pastured. It is important to define these terms, as their very names mislead and confuse.

Organic: “Not everything it's cracked up to be.” This label merely states that the chicken's food sources are free of harmful chemicals. It does not clarify how the chickens were raised, or if they had access to a pasture or not. Trendy, but not relevant.

Vegetarian-Fed: “Ruffle your feathers.” Since most people think grains should comprise the majority of the chicken's diet, a vegetarian-fed chicken seems appealing. The truth of the matter is that chickens need protein from grubs and bugs, as well as fresh greens and seeds. “Vegetarian-fed” is another designer term, and guarantees that the chickens do not have access to the pasture, where it would be virtually impossible to keep them from eating grubs.

Cage-Free: “Ruffle your feathers.” I was a bit annoyed when I found out the real meaning of this marketing label. It insinuates that the chickens are free to roam, and are not confined to the dismal living conditions of a cage. In reality, the chickens may not be caged, but are usually confined to dark barns they can never leave. At best, they have access to fenced bare dirt or cement yards stripped of all plants and potential nourishment. That yard access, however, is usually designated by the term “free-range.”



*Chick-chick-chick-chick-chicken
lay a little egg for me.
Chick-chick-chick-chick-chicken
I want one for my tea.
I haven't had an egg since breakfast
and now it's half-past three.
Oh, chick-chick-chick-chick-chicken,
Lay a little egg for me!*

© 1925 by Fred Holt/Thomas McGhee/Irving King
Performed by Makin' Music



Free-Range: **“Caught with egg on your face.”** Again, the implication is that these chickens are roaming a lush, green pasture with unlimited access to grasses, grubs, and sunlight. The term has become abused, because many commercial poultry farms can simply place a small door in a huge barn with access to the outdoors. Access, however does not guarantee that the chicken will make it outside. And “outdoors” in these setups could mean a dirt or concrete patch. The legal qualifications to use this term are that chickens need only a small patch of dirt to be on instead of being caged. No pastured diet is considered in this legal definition. The term “free-range” is often confused by the public as meaning pastured.

Pastured: **“Something to crow about.”** There are three types of pastured poultry. Some are kept in movable, floorless “tractors” with continued access to grass. Ideally, the tractors are moved daily to give the chickens access to new grass for eating and cleaner areas, free of daily droppings. Another system provides free access to large areas of pasture, secured by movable electric fences to keep foxes out (foxes can deplete a flock rapidly). The third option, fenceless pastured, is the freest lifestyle for the chicken—and often the most traumatic for the farmer. I have chased many a fox and flailed my arms at numerous hawks.

The term “pastured poultry” makes people think of pasteurization. A more user-friendly term would be “grass-fed,” but the term “free-range,” which implies chickens happily grazing in the pasture, seems to have better market appeal. Unfortunately, as you have just read, “free range” is really not so free. Pastured poultry comes from small farms that sell their wares at local markets. Supermarkets, and even most health food stores, do not carry pastured eggs. Pastured eggs can also come from your own backyard. Many families are now raising hens in their yards, enjoying their many benefits.



How nutritious are eggs?

Eggs are an easy and inexpensive source of protein with at least 9 amino acids. In general, eggs contain almost all vitamins (except for C) with high levels of all B vitamins, and a good source of folic acid, A, D, and E. Eggs provide a high source of the nutrient choline, which is important in the regulation of the nervous system, brain and cardiovascular system. Eggs are also a rich source of many essential minerals.

Eggs from pastured hens have been shown to offer even greater nutritional value. In 2007, *Mother Earth News* conducted an egg testing project to establish just this. Their testing



found that, compared to official U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrient data for commercial eggs, eggs from hens raised on pasture may contain:

- 1/3 less cholesterol
- 1/4 less saturated fat
- 2/3 more vitamin A
- 3 times more omega-3 fatty acids
- 3 times more vitamin E
- 7 times more beta-carotene



THERE IS NOTHING LIKE
GOING OUT TO THE HEN-
HOUSE AND FINDING THE
FRESHLY LAID TREASURES,
THANKING THE LAYING
HENS FOR THEIR GIFTS,
AND COMING BACK TO
THE KITCHEN AND CRACK-
ING THEM IN OUR PAN.

Additional studies supporting the superior nutritional benefits of pastured eggs are listed on motherearthnews.com. Also on the site is a blog, where some readers have criticized their study design. Really, now—if you read the ingredients of commercial feed, it's obvious that a natural pastured diet has to be better, nutritionally. At the time of writing this article, I just read that com-

mercial farmers are adding arsenic to their feed to “fatten up” their poultry. Although I’m not sure if they are adding this to laying feed, it does put my antennae up in terms of trusting commercial feeding procedures.


I am also a firm believer that a happy hen is a healthy hen. I’m not waiting for the peer-reviewed literature on this, either. I know there are some that would argue the mind/body connection of health with me until the chickens come home to roost, but for me, well...the proof is in the pan.

The first time I cracked open a true pastured egg and looked at the yolk, my jaw dropped. The deep, rich orange color of the yolk was striking. The whites did not run all over the pan; rather, they held a firm shape. The shell was also stronger than any egg shell I had ever cracked. The visuals were impressive, and the taste was outstanding.

To this day, I appreciate every opportunity I get to eat a real egg. Every morning I ask my granddaughter if she wants to eat “the best eggs in the world.” There is nothing like going out to the henhouse and finding the freshly laid treasures, thanking the laying hens for their gifts, and coming back to the kitchen and cracking them in our pan. When our production is low, I buy eggs from a local sustainable farm that also pastures its hens. There is no comparison to any other eggs. If you want to locate fresh pastured eggs in your community and read more about their benefits, you can visit eatwild.com

and localharvest.com, or find your local Westin A. Price chapter and ask them. Or, you can get a few backyard chickens yourself, even if you live in the city (visit urbanchicken.org to find out how). In that way, you offer your family good quality nutrition and unusually amusing entertainment.

Watching the antics of the chickens as I let them out to pasture in the morning and return them to roost at night has become a welcome break in my day. They have unique personalities, and their mannerisms can be hilarious. Our menagerie consists of numerous chickens of all ages, one very curious peacock, a few rabbits undergoing an identity crisis, and some resident cats, who are slow to recover from their hunting addiction. The entertainment surpasses most TV sitcoms. Since humor has been shown to improve your immunity, I feel the frequent laughs my flock gives me is even another huge benefit. One weekend I was away teaching and I got a text message from my son. A friend had dropped off abandoned baby ducks. *Ducks! Oh, no—they’re so high maintenance*, was my first thought. *Well*, I rationalized, *they do produce great eggs*.

Then my son sent me a photo... “Oh!” I responded, “they are so duckin’ cute.” 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 27





The Wisdom

Inspired by the Natives of the Earth

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

The Creator gathered all of creation for advice.

“I want to hide something from the humans until they are ready for it.
It is the Wisdom of Life.”

The Eagle said, “Give it to me. I will take it to the highest mountain.”
The Creator said, “No. They will go there and find it.”

The Salmon said, “Give it to me, I will hide it in the rapids of the rivers.”
The Creator said, “No. There it will wash away to the bottom of the ocean.”

The Buffalo said, “I will bury it on the Great Plains to guide them.”
And the Creator said, “They will cut into the skin of the earth and find it
before they are ready.”

Then Grandmother Mole, who lives in the breast of Mother Earth,
and who is blind but sees within, said “Put it inside of them.”

And the Creator said, “It is done.” ☯

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THE SHIFT

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

It is a time of great change. Leaders in science are calling it “the shift.” Leaders in healing are referring to it as the raising of the consciousness. Even politicians are talking about the readiness for our social change and our responsibility as individuals to contribute. Everyone is recognizing that the awareness and participation of each and every one of us is necessary. From a perspective of vitalism, what does that mean?

In times of great change, before the shift occurs, there is usually intense polarization. Fostering the polarization is the use of guilt and fear to maintain the old and fading modes of power. It is important we are aware of these tactics and that we do not fall prey to their influence. This means that we must not allow fear and guilt to motivate us to remain motionless and it also means that we must not resort to using these stifling emotions in our zeal to rush the change.

From a vitalistic perspective, this shift is inevitable. It carries its own momentum and will bring a state of balance and ease. Being true to the vitalistic principle, now is a time for us to trust this process with thoughts and actions consistent with this trust.

In PATHWAYS, we have seen vitalism described as the recognition that there is a wise and conscious intelligence within us that reflects the wisdom of the universe. This wisdom is at the very core of our existence. It is the essence of who we are. In vitalism there is a respect of and trust in this wisdom, a recognition that we are all connected with this wisdom...not just those who agree with us, but everyone. We have a responsibility to ourselves and to others—for the “good of the whole.”

Sometimes, in these great shifts of consciousness, when we are bombarded with emotions of fear and guilt, we find ourselves losing sight of the greater picture and we react with like emotions. We must remember that these reactions serve to stall the momentum of the shift we are most desirous of. The emotion of guilt is strengthened when we are dwelling on the past and

the emotion of fear is fed when we are focusing on the future. Both emotions lead to judgment and judgment is counterproductive to the change that is needed.

I do believe the state of being consistent with the vitalistic principle is love. It fosters respect and trust. It subsides the antagonistic, unfruitful emotions of guilt, fear, judgment. It creates balance and ease. The “golden rule” tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. So we attempt to love our neighbor and seem to forget that it is first necessary to love our selves!

In the following poem by Marianne Williamson, we can begin to remember who we are and how we can begin to love ourselves. Then and only then will we be able to transfer this love to others and therefore productively participate in this momentous and exciting shift.

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate,
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not darkness, that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, “Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous,
talented, and fabulous?”*

Actually—who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.


Your playing small doesn’t serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

*It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone,
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give
other people permission to do the same.*

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

To all of our readers—welcome to PATHWAYS...
one more step in the raising of the consciousness. 

APPEARED IN PATHWAYS ISSUE 19

The Connecting Intelligence

By Jeanne Ohm, D.C.

There is an ancient Greek aphorism: “Know Thyself.” The age-old question implied by these words—what is the purpose of our existence?—is still stirring. As I have said many times, when we define our paradigm of credence—that is, the major premise we understand to be true—we can deduce from this premise our life’s purpose and therefore account for all choices we make in our lives. In *PATHWAYS*, we make our deductions from the principle of vitalism.

The vitalistic paradigm of life and healing is a perspective that recognizes the presence of an inborn intelligence. Vitalism is defined by *The Oxford English Dictionary* as “The theory that the origin and phenomena of life are dependent on a force or principle distinct from purely chemical or physical forces.”

Max Planck, the physicist known for originating the quantum theory, offers this insight: “All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force.... We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.”

In chiropractic, we call the inborn intelligence in living matter “innate intelligence,” and recognize it as a connecting, collaborating, coordinating force that intelligently unifies all function, activity and life.

Deepak Chopra confirms, “Intelligence is present everywhere in our bodies...our own innate intelligence is far superior to any we can try to substitute from the outside.” This vitalistic statement offers a sense of reassuring guidance and direction with purpose. This is a pinnacle of understanding that shifts our state of consciousness from fear to trust, which leads to living in a state of balance and ease.

Along with our recognition of this wise force comes our perceived identity. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a visionary French Jesuit, paleontologist, biologist, and philosopher, said, “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience, but spiritual beings having a human experience.”

When my husband, Tom, and I were first deciding to become chiropractors, it was this quote from B.J. Palmer, the developer of chiropractic, that gave us the greatest incentive to do so: “In our hasty thinking to secure an education, we are prone to say, ‘I am a body with a soul.’ Rather we should say and think, ‘I am that innate intelligence with a body in which to express myself.’”

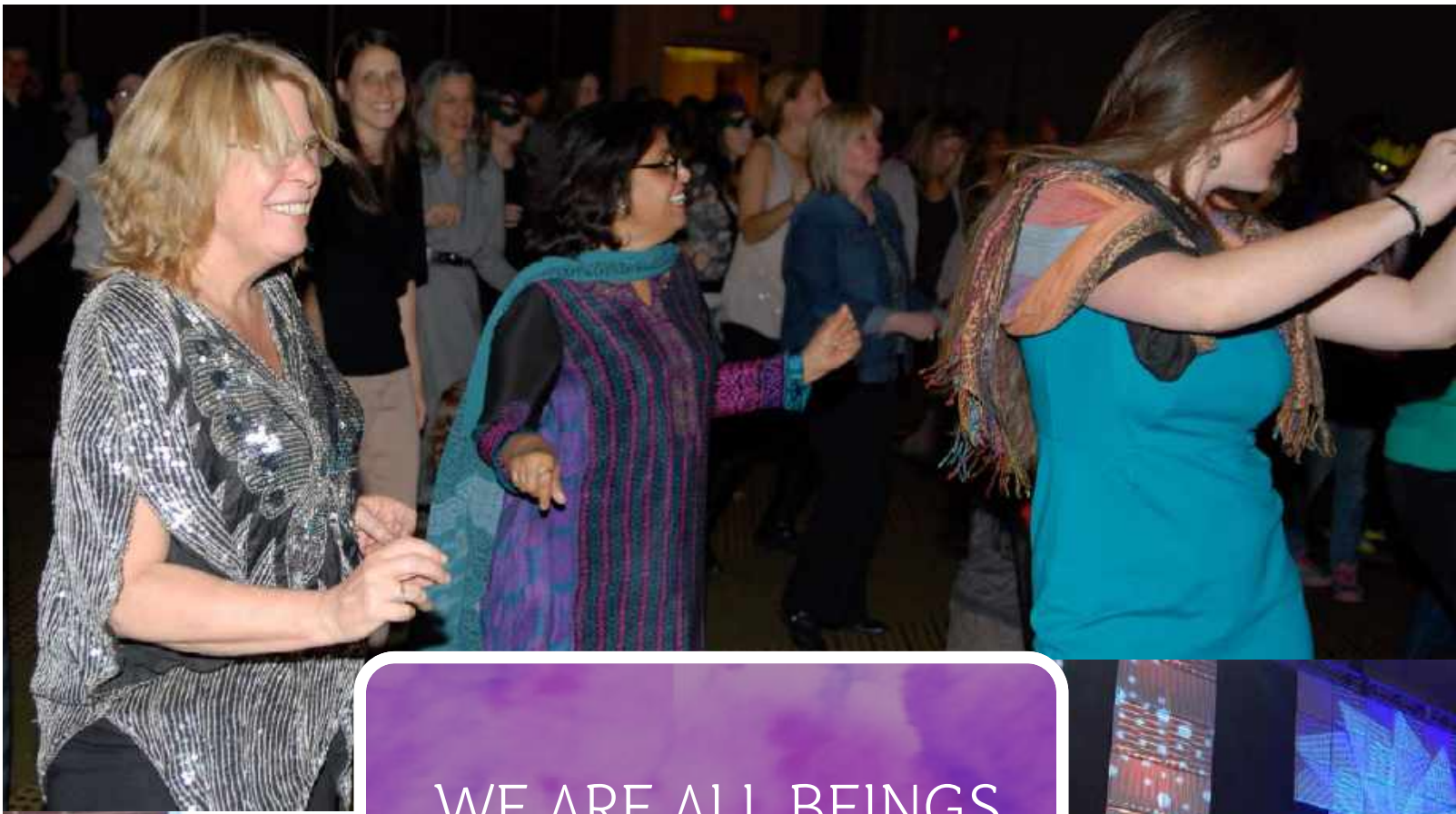
What is this innate intelligence? This soul? This consciousness? Deepak Chopra says it’s the deeper self beyond our body, mind, personality, and ego, where we discover a realm of expanded creativity and freedom, an experience of connected consciousness to all that is.

Our human recognition of this interconnectivity is exemplified in numerous international greetings: “Namaste” in India means, “The divinity in me recognizes the divinity in you.” The Mayans declare, “In’ Lakesh,” which means, “I am another you.” An African greeting, “Eh-ti-zain,” asks, “How is your soul perceiving the world?” The Lakota welcome each other with this phrase, “Mitakuye Oyasin,” meaning “All my relations.” The familiar Hawaiian hello, “Aloha,” translates to “I recognize the presence of the Divine Breath in you.” And the German salutation, “Grüss Gott,” proclaims, “Greetings, God.”

The more trust we have that we are continuously connected in and through this intelligent matrix—and yes, the more we acknowledge that our essence is this intelligence—the freer we are to begin the path of discovery of who it is we really are. 🌀

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WE ARE ALL BEINGS
in a body needing to
LOVE AND BE LOVED.





*It really
IS
that simple.*





“What the *caterpillar*
calls the end of the world,
the master calls a *butterfly*.”
~ RICHARD BACH, *Illusions*