

Connections

Newsletter of the Quest for Life Foundation



SUMMER 2012



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The Times, They are a-Changing

Wherever you look, things seem to be changing and changing with great speed! Whether in our personal, family, community or global lives, change is happening everywhere. Rapid change can disturb our equilibrium and can be difficult to accommodate especially when it is happening in many arenas at the same time. It can feel overwhelming or difficult to find your equilibrium in the midst of the flux and many people find it anxiety provoking.

The positive aspects are that change leads us into unfamiliar territory where we can make new choices, find creative solutions, develop strengths and discover insights that we may never have achieved otherwise. In this way we evolve to meet the challenges in our personal and global lives.

Our programs at the Quest for Life Centre in Bundanoon are flourishing with people wanting to build their resilience and learn to both accommodate the changes they are experiencing as well as achieve some of these benefits, including making meaning of their circumstance. Our external work around the country is also rich with peoples' experience of adapting to a changing environment whether from climate change or natural disasters, through diminishing services within their communities and personal or community tragedies or traumas.

There are two aspects of evolution that we need to be aware of to work skilfully with change. Evolution happens very slowly over eons of time and it also happens relatively quickly when the outer circumstances change abruptly. This applies equally to the great planetary evolutions as well as our personal ones. Human beings wouldn't exist without the sudden demise of the dinosaurs which gave rise to the flourishing of mammals. We are experiencing natural disasters and a changing economic foundation. Thousands of people throughout the world are

gathering to demand change in our political leadership, in the way we treat asylum seekers, in the inequality of pay, in the way we treat the environment. There are no arenas in which change is not happening.

While life often brings us unexpected, unthinkable and sometimes unimaginable crises these are also the impetus for profound self-discovery and insight. Perhaps like me, you would acknowledge that difficult times in life have also been the catalyst for learning things about yourself, about life and love that would have otherwise not occurred. These are often the events that break us open to the deeper questions about the meaning we give to our life and confront us with the challenge to find our equilibrium when all that we knew has been shattered.

All spiritual traditions have encouraged us to treat one another with kindness, respect and compassion and this has never been more important. It is equally important that we exercise these same qualities to ourselves as well. To give love and compassion to others when we haven't attended to our own wellness can lead us into depletion and resentment.

It is when we are well replenished physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually that we have best access to our intuition, humour and creativity. These three qualities are imperative if we are to skilfully navigate the turbulent times in which



we are living and adapt to our changing circumstances. In the lead up to perhaps the busiest and most demanding time of the year, spend some time reflecting on your personal resilience and encourage those that you love to do the same.

Set aside time on a daily basis for a deep reconnection with your own spirit in whatever way works for you – meditation, prayer, yoga, spiritually nourishing reading, rituals or company, being in nature, listening to or making music – and make this a non-negotiable priority for the coming year. You'll find an article within this issue of Connections about building your personal resilience.

The Quest for Life Foundation provides programs and services that help people learn the skills of resilience and assist people to adapt to changing and traumatic circumstances. Three new Board members, Barbara Sanders, Dr David Paul and Sean Gillespie are assisting the Foundation to flourish in changing times. We ask for your support so that the life changing programs and services Quest offers at its Centre in Bundanoon and in the wider community can continue to meet the demand from individuals and communities.

The staff, volunteers, Board and I wish you peace and resilience in your life.

Foundation News

Gillian Maxwell – a dear friend and great supporter of Quest

Twenty years ago Gillian Maxwell invited me to lunch so that she could thank me for the support I had given a young relative of hers and to offer her voluntary services to the Quest for Life Foundation. Soon afterwards, she opened her home in Woollahra for the first non-residential seminar for people with cancer. Gils catered for the event and was a wonderfully warm and welcoming host to the people who travelled from as far away as South Australia to attend.

Gillian also joined the Board of the Quest for Life Foundation and served as a loyal and generous supporter through the years. We became dear friends and there were countless times when Gillian offered her counsel and her listening heart to the struggles of maintaining and growing Quest's services.

When the work of the Foundation moved from Sydney to Bundanoon along with Wendie and me, Gils attended all our



Gillian, Michael and Petrea sharing a laugh at the filming of 'This is Your Life'

residential programs as a volunteer 'support person' to ensure the comfort and ease of Quest participants.

With the purchase of the Centre in Bundanoon, it was Gillian who brought her interior design skills to the colours and fabrics to be used throughout the buildings as well as donating paintings for its walls.

All the while Gils offered her loving heart and listening ear to Wendie and me as we grew Quest into what it is today.

We were so happy for Gillian when she reconnected with Michael Jones, a wonderful man from her earlier life. They shared the last of her years very happily

together. Michael too became a dear friend to us and we were blessed to spend many a meal together with much laughter as well as deep conversation.

Earlier this year, Gillian died after a long journey with multiple myeloma. She is greatly missed by us. She generously left a bequest to the Foundation and this has become the Gillian Maxwell fund specifically to subsidise the attendance of people on our Quest for Life program for people with cancer.

Gillian will live on in our hearts forever and her generosity will ensure that people can attend a program as needed.

Venue Hire

This year we have been delighted to offer the use of our beautiful Centre to guests for their retreats and workshops. We have welcomed many diverse groups who have hired out the Quest for Life Centre from 2 – 5 nights.

Some of the groups we have welcomed are girls on a bereaved children's weekend, participants in a psychotherapy training program, people in a corporate leadership program and several meditation centres who have used the Centre for their retreats.

These have proven to be a great success thanks to our beautiful facility, our chef Susan and her team who have provided fabulous food and our caretaker Frank who has supported everyone during their stay to ensure that a good time is had by all.

We already have several bookings for 2012 so please contact Margie if you would like

to visit Bundanoon and hire the Centre for your next event. Contact Margie at margie@questforlife.com.au or download an information pack from our website www.questforlife.com.au/venue-hire



"On behalf of our 30 students, meditation teacher and staff, I wish to thank the Quest for Life Centre for their excellent facilities and wonderful staff that contributed greatly to the success of our retreat. The meditation hall, accommodation, food, beverages and peaceful environment were just perfect for our needs. All the staff were so understanding and helpful and we look forward to returning for our next two retreats within our two year course."

Dr. Eng-Kong Tan, Director of Training, Australian Association of Buddhist Counsellors and Psychotherapists

We are thrilled to announce that Petrea is one of four finalists in the running for the Senior Australian of the Year Award 2012 in New South Wales. A great honour indeed! This year over 5000 nominations were received across the country which is the biggest year on record. The winner for each category in NSW will be announced on 23 November at the NSW Australian of the Year Awards. The National winners for each category will be chosen from these State recipients. Congratulations Petrea! Visit www.australianoftheyear.org.au to find out the results.

Foundation News

Quest for Life Wish List

We are often asked...how can I help?

The gardens are flourishing at the Quest for Life Centre and our caretaker Frank attends to them with great care and enthusiasm. He is keen to grow more of the produce that we serve at the Centre and a community garden is in development. Perhaps you remember the north facing fenced-in area at the back of the property that is ripe for expansion of the vegetable gardens as it is bunny proof. It is here that Frank will be establishing raised garden beds so that we can be assured of plentiful veggies.

Below you will find a list of items needed at the Quest for Life Centre. We would be grateful if you can donate any new or used gardening implements or equipment to assist us with this and other projects in the grounds.

Donation Wish List

Most needed is a ground tiller (gifted or loaned) and a trailer (any size will be gratefully accepted).

Other needs:

- Gardening tools and implements: including wheel barrow and hand tools
- Fencing materials: star pickets, chain link fence, netting, sledge hammer, posts
- Watering implements: drip system, buckets, garden hose and nozzles
- Shed tools: sander, grinder (to sharpen blades), set of wrench bolts
- Ride on mower or slasher, a large chain saw, mulcher, blower
- Unwanted bags of sand or soil
- Road base gravel for driveway
- Scaffolding or cherry picker
- Pump for pond by gazebo (700W 240V 50Hz 3.3 A 2800 rpm)
- Outdoor furniture

Please contact us on 02 4883 6599 if you can help!



Foundation News

Rainbow Club — The Gift of Giving Monthly

Our Rainbow Club is a wonderful way for you to support our work and to help make our services as widely available as possible. When you become a member of our Rainbow Club and commit to a regular giving program, you allow us to plan for our future and commit to services and programs for those who need them most.

Your regular donation allows us to reach those most in need of our services. Donations provide subsidised places on programs, access to therapies for participants on low incomes and enable us

to grow and expand our services in ways which would not otherwise be possible.

To register for monthly giving contact us on 02 4883 6599 and we can arrange for your donation to be direct debited from your bank account or credit card. Alternately, you can talk to your employer about having an amount taken directly from your pre-tax income.

Each colour membership is as important as the next so no matter the size, every gift significantly contributes to the lives of those living with the most challenging of circumstances.

	Violet Membership	\$100 monthly
	Indigo Membership	\$75 monthly
	Blue Membership	\$50 monthly
	Green Membership	\$40 monthly
	Yellow Membership	\$25 monthly
	Orange Membership	\$15 monthly
	Red Membership	Volunteer / Pro Bono Support



Quest for Life receives support for Recovering from Trauma program

In the wake of unprecedented disaster in Australia and overseas in the past 12 months, Petrea and the Quest for Life Foundation have been seeking a way to bring the valuable insights, experiences and information from our programs to some of these disaster affected areas.

We recently partnered with the Queensland Rural Women's Network

to run a series of webinars online and programs in flood and cyclone affected communities in Queensland.

We have received very generous support from the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation to enable us to produce a video series for people recovering from trauma, particularly after a natural disaster. Whilst the intent is to support the people affected by the floods and cyclone in Queensland, this resource will be available online and in hard copy for other people and communities who live through disaster and trauma in the future.

Early in 2012 we will commence 3 month programs in two Queensland communities, focused on assisting children in recovering from trauma, how trauma affects adults and how communities can work together

to rebuild emotionally after experiencing widespread trauma. This will consist of 3 one day programs over 3 months, giving people time to experience the program, put the skills in place in their lives and come together in support of one another, building a common vision for the future.

Special thanks to Georgie Somerset, President of the Queensland Rural Women's Network (www.qrwn.org.au) and to Beth and the team at Hunting With Pixels, for their generous support and expertise in video production and editing (www.huntingwithpixels.com.au).



Events News

A Magic Day at the Centre

In late September, when the gardens at Quest were ablaze with spring blossoms, we welcomed 130 people to the Centre for a one day seminar; Healing Journey. People travelled from Perth, Eden, Bathurst, Port Macquarie, Mildura, Canberra, Wangaratta, Albury, Brisbane, the Central Coast and Sydney to re-establish their connection with the Centre or visit it for the first time.

It was wonderful to welcome past participants, their families and friends as well as many people who know us through Facebook, the Facilitator's Blog, ABC radio, our monthly e-newsletters or who had attended previous seminars in Sydney, Canberra and Victoria.

People attending brought such powerful stories of loss, grief, family conflict, despair, anxiety, depression and a variety of challenges including cancer and chronic illnesses. Doesn't sound like a fun day? Well there were certainly tears but far more laughter and good cheer. Sometimes we can't find our laughter until we've shed our tears.

We were reminded again of the capacities of the human spirit that refuses to be diminished by the tragic or difficult

circumstances that life brings. A day spent with heroes is an uplifting and inspiring occasion that doesn't shirk the difficulties but focuses on practical and positive ways to embrace the challenge and turn our circumstances into a deeper understanding of life, love and living well. Thank you to all who travelled to the Centre to create such a special day.

Susan and her kitchen team prepared a delicious and abundant lunch for everyone and, even though it was drizzling for most of the day, the atmosphere was sunny and warm with a level of chatter that was breathtaking! Those who were new to the Centre explored the accommodation buildings so they knew where they would be housed when attending a longer residential program.

Joan was flat out in the shop, assisted by Ann at the till. Rainbow bears disappeared off the shelves at a great rate along with books and CDs. Kate, Wendie and Djuna looked after arrivals and made sure that everyone was attended to. Suzanne had all the administrative details attended to and Samantha made sure there were sufficient chairs and urns hired. Robyn had arranged flowers as usual to brighten all



How to Host an Event for Quest

We are often asked – how can people help Quest? We have developed a kit for those who wish to fundraise for the Quest for Life Foundation. Please visit www.questforlife.com.au/Community-Fund-Raising for further information. Your support makes the work of Quest possible and is very much appreciated.

the rooms and Frank oversaw parking and the beautification of the grounds. There's always a great deal of hard work by staff that makes a day like this run so smoothly. All in all it was a wonderful group effort that allowed everyone to soak up a great day together. Thank you to the staff and volunteers for creating such a warm and welcoming environment for our guests.

The next one day program at the Quest for Life Centre will be held in February so that you can again enjoy the great beauty of the gardens both at Quest and in the Southern Highlands. Pop the date in your diary and book early to ensure a place on the day.

Meditation, Meaning and the Mind Sunday 26 February 2012



Events News

The Quest Team Out and About

Marge Braunstein recently attended the Australasian Spa Association Conference (ASpa) in Noosa thanks to the generous sponsorship from Paul Massa of Phyt's who create beautiful organic skin care products. Quest for Life would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Phyt's for their sponsorship and we look forward to delivering wellness programs to staff and clients of the spa industry.

In July, Petrea King attended WakeUp Sydney's 'A Time for Renewal' Conference where she led a guided meditation, gave a keynote presentation and conducted a workshop. 'A Time for Renewal' was a two-day celebration blending uplifting speakers, meditation, films, live music and participant-led activities and explored wellness, life purpose, creativity, kindness and conscious relationships.

A Special Staff at a Special School

Recently Wendie Batho and I spent a day with an extraordinary group of people at the Nepean School in Seaford just outside of Melbourne. Seventy of these amazing women and men take care of ninety students who have a range of genetic and other challenges including cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and a host of rarer genetic disorders. Most of the students cannot walk and/or struggle with their motor skills. Many of them cannot communicate in easy ways. Some of their students die while in their care.

We were invited to conduct a professional development day to assist the staff with their personal resilience and explore how they deal with grief and loss. A common sadness is felt by the staff when students have to leave because, as young adults, the only thing on offer for them is to enter a nursing home environment where they will not receive the level of care that the staff at Nepean provide.

We were deeply moved by the love and compassion that was exhibited by every staff member regardless of whether they were involved in administration, teaching or

delivering various therapies to the students. The care they showed to one another was also obvious and the genuine love they held for the children was an inspiration to witness. I have never worked with a group of people so profoundly committed to providing compassionate care.

We shared a day of tears, laughter, insights and affirmation of each person's unique value, whether student or staff member. It was wonderful to validate the depth of care and compassion that each person brought to the workplace. We witnessed again that there are ordinary people doing an extraordinary job of loving people simply because they know that love heals and that with love, all things are possible. Every staff member spoke of the privilege of their work and how the rewards of loving are profound.

Thank you to Carolyn Gurrier-Jones, the Deputy Principal, who attended a one day program on the Mornington Peninsula with me in May, and who then invited me to conduct a program for Nepean School staff. It was a privilege to be with you all and the memory of our time together will long live on in our hearts.



Quest Team Out and About



Petrea and friend at the WakeUp Sydney Conference



Margie Braunstein and Paul Massa at ASpa



Presenting at the Health of the Health Professional Conference in Auckland



Petrea and Peter Thoms at the WakeUp Sydney Conference



Petrea onstage at WakeUp Sydney



Petrea and Robert at the Quest for Life Centre

Program News

Programs for 2012

Our core programs Quest for Life and Healing Your Life are still immensely popular. These life-changing programs continue to provide practical strategies for those facing significant challenges in their lives. They are held regularly throughout the year at the Quest for Life Centre in Bundanoon. See the back page of this edition of Connections for upcoming dates.

With the help of our own fundraising efforts and NSW Health we are able to offer subsidies to financially assist those who wish to attend programs but do not have the resources to do so. To discuss which program would best suit your needs or that of someone you know, please contact our program advisor, Suzanne, on 1300 941 488.

Take a Stand for Life

None of us know how much time we have left to live. What is important is that we learn to live each day as fully as we can and make sure we are putting our energy into what is most important for us. This requires us to take a stand for our life, what we want to achieve and how we want to develop the important relationships in our lives.

On the Take a Stand for Life program we have the opportunity to learn the skills to step out of the Reactive and into the Creative - to connect with what is really important to us in our hearts and learn the skills to overcome the Reactive habits and anxieties that keep us stuck and small and not achieving what is important to us.

Like all Quest for Life programs, you will be supported to find your own answers to these questions and go at your own pace as you come to terms with what's important for you now.

Your Facilitators

StJohn and Alexia have been involved in facilitating personal development programs since the 1980s and between them they have supported thousands of people in developing the skills to come to terms with the complicated challenges that life throws at us all. Alexia is recognised for her compassionate humanity and StJohn for his clarity and humour.

**Next program begins:
12-16 March 2012**

"Facilitating this Take a Stand for Life program is such a privilege. The Take a Stand for Life program is for people who are ready to take 5 days out from a busy and often stressful life to quieten, soften and reconnect with what is really important to them. To share the space while people do this and then take their stand for what they are going to do moving forward is an inspiring and deeply moving experience. It's something we all need to do every few years to keep on track."

STJOHN MIALL

"For me it is a wonderful opportunity to share the participant's journey on the Take a Stand for Life program. To see how they arrive on the first day, sometimes fearful, sometimes wary, to where they are on the final day is an awe-inspiring experience to behold. I am thankful that I can play a part in the discovery by each participant of their true potential."

ALEXIA MIALL

Quotes

"Healing Your Life provided a secure environment where I could express my feelings. I gained a greater understanding of inner peace and its importance in my life journey and also a real connectedness to everyone."

RUTH

"Quest for Life was such a life changing experience - bringing back the meaning and importance of life. I have the life strategies that I can put in place when I have ongoing illness challenges in the future."

BRAIDY

"Take a Stand for Life allowed me to escape my life to retreat in peace and gave me a new beginning. The crossroads cleared from my head and focused my mind."

ROBYN

"Quest for Life was much more than I expected. There was a great feeling of love and kindness all around."

LINDA

"Healing Your Life takes you on an amazing healing journey and helps get you into a personal place of healing. It gives you tools to keep living."

LYNDEL



One day programs

Our recent one day program at the Quest for Life Centre was a resounding success. You can read more about this magical day in our Event News on page 6.

The next one day program at the Quest for Life Centre will be held in summer so that you can again enjoy the great beauty of the gardens both at Quest and in the Southern Highlands. Pop the date in your diary and book early to ensure a place on the day. We look forward to welcoming you on one of our one day programs soon!

Next programs:

Meditation, Meaning and the Mind

26 February 2012

10am – 4pm

Quest for Life Centre, Bundanoon

Practices such as meditation are not just time out in a busy day; some of the many blessings of meditation are increased clarity, joy, presence and good humour. Meditation dramatically increases our resilience and restores our zest for living. With greater balance and harmony within ourselves we re-engage with relationships and the world in a far more conscious way. The teachings are practical in essence and are based on Petrea's work with over 80,000 people living with life's greatest challenges

including cancer, grief, loss, depression and trauma.

The program will be of benefit to the novice and the experienced practitioner alike and all are welcome.



Conscious Evolution

15 April 2012

10am – 4pm

Quest for Life Centre, Bundanoon

Have you noticed that we learn most about ourselves, about love and about life when challenging or distressing events occur in our personal, family or global lives? Illness, relationship breakdown, depression, grief, loss, trauma, natural disasters, economic uncertainties, rapid change – all these experiences cause us to find strengths within ourselves and to be open to new perspectives that create greater peace and meaning. With increased resilience we can

consciously evolve through adversity so that we find a deeper richness in our lives and can creatively respond to whatever the challenge might be.

This practical workshop explores how to align ourselves with the evolving consciousness that is flowering on the planet so we can be of service to something that is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

For bookings please visit www.questforlife.com.au or contact Suzanne 1300 941 488



Tailor made programs

Our facilitators have been out in the community delivering tailor made programs to a wide variety of organisations who have given us wonderful feedback. Not everyone can make it to a residential program and we really love presenting these workshops to our valued participants so they too, can experience the essential Quest for Life teachings about resilience and healing.

Some of the programs we have delivered recently have been for parents and carers of special needs children; multicultural mums preparing their children for the start of school; country people in Sydney for cancer treatments; parents and carers of disabled kids and women's health

centre clientele. There is no end to the possibilities.

Please contact Margie at margie@questforlife.com.au if you would like to find out more about Quest for Life working with your organisation.

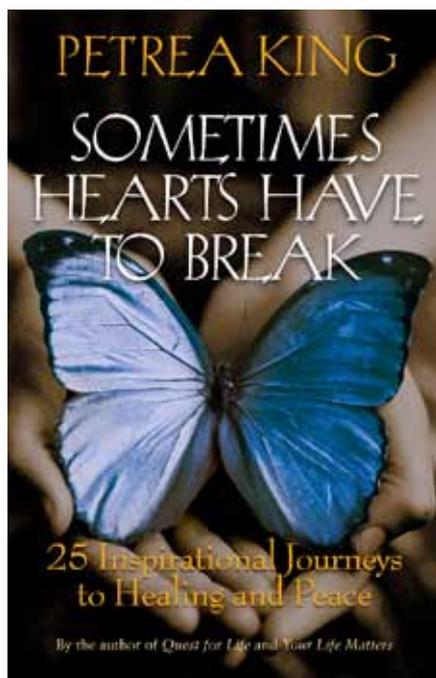


'I have felt the need for PEACE for a long time. This feels like a positive move in that direction.'

BL

Shop News

Book Review: Sometimes Hearts Have To Break



This issue of Connections is all about change and its impact on our lives. Perhaps there is no greater change that impacts on us than the death of someone we love. Even when we know that a loved one has a disease that is likely to result in their death, when they die it always comes as a shock. There seems no real preparation for the loss of their presence in our lives.

We cannot always change the outer circumstances of our lives and many

of us recognise the deep helplessness we feel when someone we love feels like they're slipping away from us. What we are always capable of however, is to change our perspective of the world. This is something which is unique to human beings: we are capable of choosing our response to the events that happen in our lives.

In other words, there are no outside solutions to our challenges, only inside solutions.

Changing our perspective provides us with a path to peace however, trying to change other people doesn't! We frequently ask people in our workshops around the country whether they have had any success in changing other people. So far we haven't had a positive response!

Petrea's book *Sometimes Hearts Have to Break* provides a deep insight into the inner journey many people embark upon when confronted by their mortality. In the early part of the book, Petrea shares her personal story in much greater detail than in her other books. This leads into inspirational and uplifting stories of twenty-five people who were also confronted with their mortality and the impact that had on their own views of the world, of life, relationships, love and living.

Here are some extracts from the introduction to give you a flavour of what follows:

"Life is full of uncertainties. It presents us with the unexpected, the unasked for and, sometimes, the unthinkable. We struggle to understand and accept these events, to find meaning in them".

"Most of us seem to think that we're meant to have blissful childhoods and happy teen years; enter the career of our choice and excel; find the perfect partner who loves, honours and respects us at all times; have children who obey and revere us; find our dream home and pay it off effortlessly; and then, when all that's done, go fishing in our old age. I'm not having one of those lives and I haven't met anyone else who is either."

"We would be better served by understanding that life is a roller coaster ride and we can never be sure what lies over the crest or around the corner. That

it is our responsibility to find and fasten our own seat belt so that when the roller coaster swings to the left when we could have sworn it was meant to go to the right, we're in a position to say "Ah! The scenery isn't quite what I expected, but this is what has happened, what am I going to do about it?"

"If we don't have a seat belt, we can easily get stuck with: Why me? It's not fair! I don't deserve this. It shouldn't have happened to me".

Petrea's thesis is simply this:

"We cannot always control what happens to us, but we can play an active part in how we respond to what happens."

"Each of us holds our own best answers but sometimes we need a safe environment in which to talk through our situation and so discover what those answers might be."

Your ultimate goal can be liberation from fear, anxiety and all limitations and in doing so become an active co-creator of our reality. In this way we choose to see the world and people differently... the world doesn't change, we do.

We can have a future where:

- Our life has purpose
- Every event and everyone has a purpose
- We don't feel like helpless victims of our circumstances

This little gem of a book is a compassionate companion to many people seeking meaning in the unexpected losses that happen in our lives. We can always learn so much from other people's stories. *Sometimes Hearts Have to Break* is full of the wisdom and inspiration that comes through deep reflection on the wondrous gift that life, death and living provides.

Wendie

Shop Special

Soar Like An Eagle CD
Normally \$30, now \$15!

Track 1: Petrea guides you through a progressive relaxation. High on a mountaintop at sunset you relax and enjoy the peace and serenity before floating effortlessly as an eagle. Entering a meditation you absorb the qualities of self-confidence, strength, wisdom and clarity returning refreshed and energised.

Track 2: The beautiful healing music of Solis by Phil Colville.

While stock lasts

Make a Difference With Your Shopping This Christmas

Choose to shop at Pass it Forward Gifts and you will generate a donation that is passed on to help someone in need and have an online shopping experience that will leave you feeling good.

When you shop at Pass it Forward Gifts and select the Quest for Life Foundation as your chosen charity at the time of purchase, Quest will receive 5% of your purchase as a donation.

Pass it Forward's quality products are either made in Australia and support local business, sourced from 3rd world communities or provided by the charities with all proceeds going back to them. The website offers a secure payment service, 100% money back guarantee and an online shopping experience that will leave you feeling good.

Visit www.passitforwardgifts.com.au to begin your shopping and thank you for thinking of Quest while you shop! Your contribution makes a significant difference to people who are unable to afford the full cost of our services.



Recipe

Fruit Iceblocks



These are so refreshing on a hot summer's day, and they're packed with goodness without any artificial flavours or colours. For a change, you can use other fruits instead of strawberries, and coconut milk instead of the yoghurt.

250g strawberries, roughly chopped

2 cups plain yoghurt

3/4 cup apple juice

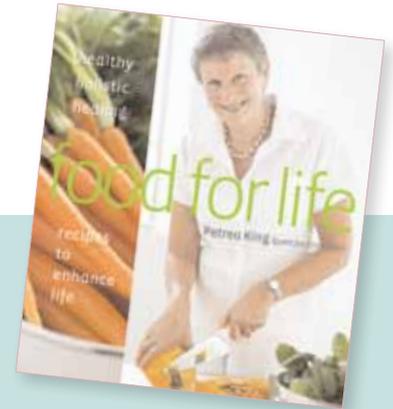
1/4 cup apple concentrate

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Place half the chopped strawberries in a food processor or blender. Add the yoghurt, apple juice, apple concentrate and lemon juice and blend until well combined. Fold through the remaining strawberries.

Pour mixture into iceblock moulds, cover with the tops and freeze for 3-4 hours or until frozen. If using moulds with wooden sticks, freeze the mixture until it's frozen enough to support the wooden sticks (about 40 minutes) then place wooden sticks in the centre of the iceblocks.

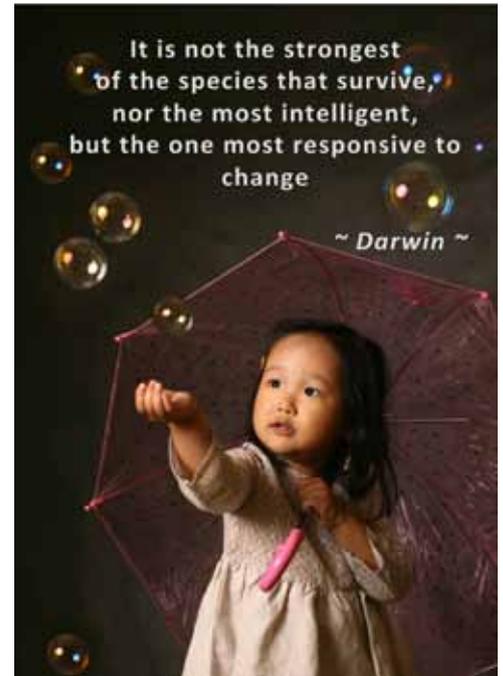
Put back in the freezer until frozen. Remove fruit iceblocks from moulds to serve. Makes 10 iceblocks.



Petrea's Food for Life contains recipes that are both a tonic for your body and your soul. They are healthy and holistic as well as enhancing to life.

Food for Life can be ordered online through the Quest shop.

www.questforlife.com.au/shop



Inspiration

An Inspirational Story – 5 Years After Diagnosis

In September 2006, 5 years ago to the month of writing this, I was diagnosed with mesothelioma (cancer caused by asbestos).

I was then a person living in fear: "I'm scared; I'm dying; there's no hope for me," after being given a prognosis of 6 to 9 months to live. "There is no cure; it's terminal." This was a lot to digest but I then proceeded, together with my family, to do research and see different doctors, receive second and even third opinions until I thought I had the right team on board for me. My family rallied around me and if it wasn't for them I probably wouldn't be here now.

In early 2007 I did the Quest for Life program. It was one of the most humbling and uplifting experiences I've ever had. Quest started me on the road to meditation and visualisation; fruit and vegetable juicing and realising that life was about putting myself (and my beloved family), first and removing the stressful and negative aspects and people as much as possible. Quest helped me put processes into practise.

Another great turning point was learning how important forgiveness is. The Quest program covered this quite a lot because once you can forgive those, present or past, who you feel have hurt you, you can start to feel a sense of freedom and liberation. You realise that you can't change them; they are doing the best job in this world that they know how. This forgiveness can apply to family members, friends or perhaps even work colleagues. For me, I found I could start to cleanse by purging the negatives out of my life and leaving more positives thus allowing myself to grow.

The road with cancer is not necessarily easy; it has many setbacks with emotions and health (more chemo or radiation may happen and I have lost many people that I had grown to love, to this disease), but life always has its ups and downs. You learn to work on your positive mind frame and realise that when you hit rock bottom, the only place is up.



Last week I completed another Quest program, Take a Stand for Life. This program reinforced that my life is on the right track. I still have CT scans and blood tests every two to three months, along with a host of different medications I take and two handfuls of vitamins daily. I still have this disease and will never leave the cancer community. But now and today I feel fantastic. Five years on I feel so grateful and blessed to still be here. Five percent of patients survive to five years with this disease. No one quite knows why I am still here, including me. Maybe it's those longevity genes I inherited! Other than the advice I have already suggested, I would emphasise continuing to work on your immune system and simply not sweating the small stuff.

Another positive in my life that I believe continues to help is the painting I took up one and a half years ago. It started as three hours, one day a week through my local TAFE. I did that for most of 2010 and during this year I've practised what I've learnt. Every time I pick up a brush it's like I'm having my own meditation because everything else on my mind just leaves. It's the most therapeutic thing I've ever done. I'm not suggesting this for everyone but maybe try and find yourself a hobby or past time that takes you away and enables you to heal.

Good luck to everyone on your personal journey. Why shouldn't you also be in the five to ten percent of survivors? Why shouldn't you wake up in the morning to live and not just to fight cancer? I thank everyone at Quest — especially Petrea who encouraged me to write this article. I also thank the other Quest participants for sharing their personal stories and experiences as so many carried insights and inspiration I took away with me. There is one thing that we need in our lives when times are tough and that is hope. I don't believe there is such a thing as 'false hope'. Have the courage to believe.



Painting by Carol

Story of a Cup

One of our staff at Quest for Life, Suzanne, recently shared this lovely story with all of us... and now we'd like to share it with you. What are the 'cups' in your life?



I just wanted to share a story of how brilliantly the universe works. I was looking for a cup to have my Lady Grey tea in. For me a good cup of tea is an event; it is a time where I can live in the moment and breathe, so the cup had to be perfect. I wanted a cup bigger than a cup, not as clumsy as a mug and the design had to be 'me'. I had been to so many shops looking for just the right cup and had given up!

My mother was in the P&C for a long time where our 19 year old went to primary school. My mother was out recently when she bumped into one of his old teachers who she has known for many years. The teacher said she had a present for my mother and gave it to her: My mother was surprised as they had never exchanged gifts and it was not her birthday for another few months. When she unwrapped it at home it was a china cup, bigger than a normal cup, had a quirky Cancerian woman and crab on it and

proudly said Cancer: My mother said to me the other night that she has a cup that was given to her and she already has too many cups and would I like it.

When I saw it I knew it was what I had been looking for — I am a Cancerian, the artwork is quirky; the china cup is bigger than a normal cup to hold more Lady Grey tea and also has a motif of roses around the picture. My middle name is Rose, so I have a wonderful fondness for this flower.

I have just had the realisation because of the cup — there have been so many tailored things that have appear in our life — fitting us perfectly to a T. I have since made quite a long list of these things; some big like a house, job, car; family pet and others small like a cup. It is very empowering to think you really can manifest what you desire. Sometimes you have to stop looking and trust it will appear!

Words can't express how grateful I am for everything and for how much I'm forever changed for having taken part in the Take a Stand for Life program. I feel so much stronger and clearer on where I am right now and where I am headed. The safety, love and support I felt and received by all was just so amazing and just what I needed to be able to let go, unwind and relax so as to get in touch within and be able to truly feel and understand what I needed to know right now and how I can cope and move forward and heal. I'm still processing it all and as I do I'm expressing it in writing and whatever creative ways I can, so allowing myself to really absorb all I can from the unique experience I've been given, because I am now ready.

Jay, Take a Stand for Life, Sept '11

Listen to your Spirit Whisper to your Heart

Listen to your Spirit
Whisper to your heart
Am I ready to open my heart?
To allow my heart to feel
To feel love so deep
without crumbling into a heap.

I've been receiving
ever so gently
a nudge, letting me know
"Listen to your Spirit ~
Whisper to your heart".

It's time!
To let go of your fear
and feel the pain in your heart
from the love you lost
and allow it to heal.

Now is the time!
to learn to Trust
So you can be ready and open
To receive
And embrace new love
when it comes into your life
for it is on its way.

Jay

What Fluffs You Up?

A frequent question on Quest for Life programs is 'What fluffs you up and makes you feel good?' It is only when we truly understand this and put it into practice that we can begin to live a life of peace and be of any use to ourselves or others.

We recently asked our Facebook community: What fluffs you up? We were inundated with responses! We loved your comments and suggestions so much that we turned them into a video and put them up on YouTube <http://bit.ly/fNT8h5>

Now whilst it hasn't gone viral (obviously not enough giggling babies or cats falling off tables!) it is a lovely showcase of what it is that supports people to live life fully.

We encourage you to watch the video (as there is beautiful imagery!) and see what it inspires in you. And...if you have others to add, put them in the comments section below the video.



Here are just some of the responses:

1. Focusing on my heart for 30 seconds (try it, it feels lovely!)
2. Stopping work and looking out the window at the trees and sky
3. Creative 'free writing' (writing a story without stopping to edit)
4. Going back to bed with a cup of tea
5. Keeping a bud in a vase on my bedside table
6. A long, mindful, deep breath
7. Washing my face with beautiful scented organic face wash

8. Standing outside in the sun and feeling it warm me

9. When the cupboards are full of home baking and the family are all home chatting about their days

10. Sharing a joke and a laugh with my son and getting the occasional hug!

11. I love to get in the garden and gather up my home grown vegies

12. Drinking coffee, alone with a book

13. Taking time to look at the spiders, skinks, dragonflies, damselflies, pond skaters, butterflies, flowers, fungi and everything else as I go

14. Making a circle on my favourite rock and sitting a while in meditation

15. A loving look from my gorgeous man who makes me feel like the most important woman in the world

16. A chat on the phone to my 3 year old grandson

17. Meditating near the ocean

18. The smell of home cooked food to nourish my family

19. Sitting with my eyes closed listening to nature

20. A smile and a hug from my beautiful daughter, who despite all her challenges, knows who mum is

21. The fresh ocean breeze blowing through the house in the afternoon.

There were many more, but we are out of space. Did you notice some common themes? Has it inspired you to fluff yourself up and put some of these moments and experiences into your life? These activities bring us back to the precious present moment and remind us that we are more than our worries and concerns. In order to cope effectively with change, establish some daily touchstones that warm your heart and nourish your spirit. Most of the above list cost nothing but our time – and we have all the time in the world to notice what's around and within us. We'd love to hear your experience, just go to the blog and leave your comments there at <http://bit.ly/fNT8h5>

Inspiration

Bouncing Back from Life's Knocks

The challenges faced by many rural communities and the individuals within them have been mighty over the past years. The future, for many people is also rife with uncertainty; indeed the only certainty is change. Most people find that when a challenge is experienced in one part of their life that their overall resilience allows them to cope and manage. However, prolonged and overwhelming challenges can leave us bereft of meaning and purpose and precipitate us into a crisis of identity and capability. It can strain or break relationships that were once the foundation of our lives and it can cause us to withdraw, isolate and be consumed by despair. So how do we build individual and community resilience so that we maintain our humour, self-respect, courage and capacity to bounce back from life's knocks?

When our dreams are shattered and we feel overwhelmed by our challenges we can reach a point where we say to ourselves, "That's it! Something's got to change, and it's me." We realise that it's not about changing the outer aspects of our lives but how we are dealing with those aspects. If our identity is grounded in the belief that our value lies in what we 'do' rather than who we 'be' then we may find the challenges of flood, a diagnosis, grief, loss, depression, trauma, climate change or family breakdown only highlight our vulnerabilities, limitations and helplessness. If I'm not the person who 'fixes' things, finds solutions and can be relied on to make a positive offering then who am I and what is my value as a man, as a woman?

It is commonly known that people will share the most intimate details of their life with complete strangers. Have you ever sat on a bus and had someone recount their life story to you unbidden? In the cocoon of the bus, plane or train we enter a world apart, devoid of the immediacy of our life; a space to reflect, recount or reminisce. The person leaves the encounter feeling it was complete in itself and resumes their life having purged themselves of whatever might have been bubbling below the surface.

Indeed, people unconsciously seek this 'intimacy-amongst-strangers' for a range of reasons. It may be that whilst people might have many friends, they're not the sort of people who share their feelings easily with others. They may keep their relationships at a fairly superficial level based on the 'doings' in their lives rather than how they feel about their lives.

Sometimes people don't understand their feelings or don't feel skilful in their ability to talk about them with their intimates. Many people don't know how to share vulnerable aspects of themselves or broach painful issues with their partner or loved-ones; or they're fearful about how they'll deal with the reaction others might have to what they have to say. If a person grew up in a household where feelings were not even named let alone dealt with, then the world of feelings may be quite scary. It is often easier to air one's thoughts and feelings with someone with whom you have no emotional involvement – even better if this person can help you understand yourself more deeply or assist you in clarifying your own thinking. Many of the participants in our programs gain great strength from being in the company of complete strangers who understand and share their suffering. They always leave the program having forged trusted friendships and a shared intimacy that they have rarely experienced in their ordinary lives.

More and more people are using drugs, alcohol or prescribed medication to quell their fears and anxieties simply because they don't know a better way of bouncing back from life's knocks. Expressing our feelings in a safe supportive environment allows us to integrate challenging experiences into our life and build resilience. People often recognise their need to deal with their feelings but have no idea how.

We frequently identify closely with our feelings, perhaps even more closely than with our thoughts. Yet we're often afraid to explore our feelings because we believe they might overwhelm us or entail the re-opening of old wounds and we'd rather keep them in

the background of our lives.

Our feelings are messages from a deeper place within us. If we ignore the message another will come, and another until we heed its presence. Once we see this in operation in our life we realise that nothing 'wrong' or 'bad' is happening and that every moment is an opportunity to be aware and present so that we can make appropriate responses to the challenges in our lives. Then we can embrace the vulnerable parts of ourselves instead of living in fear of them. Experience is not what happens to us. It is what we do with what happens to us that makes it a useful experience in our journey towards maturing or evolving as human beings.

It isn't always easy to change how we see reality. We can feel trapped by the reality we perceive and feel that there is no way out. We don't need to change our selves, change others or change the world. We need to change our perceptions of our selves, others and the world. Obviously this is not as easy as it sounds.

Reaching out to others is often very unfamiliar. We may not even have the words to express what we feel or know what we need. This anguish or pain demands of us a new awareness. Instead of resisting, as we have done before, we open our hearts in compassion and our previous defences are no longer needed.

The need for this emotional healing becomes more urgent when we're confronted by challenges and difficulties beyond our control. Many people don't realise that when we're dealing with grief, despair, trauma or tragedy, we're likely to also be confronted with the unresolved issues of our lifetime. This can take people completely by surprise. They wonder why they're pre-occupied with past traumas in addition to the present one.

It is common for people to resist letting their tears fall and yet this is the body's natural release of stored emotion. If you can feel it, you can heal it. The endorphins in our tears give us a sense of relaxation and relief once



shed. They are the body's own pain relievers and contain potent chemicals that soothe us physically, mentally and emotionally. As we let go our resistance to 'what is' and weep the tears of our distress, they become the pathway to our healing.

We are not our feelings; we have feelings. Our identification with our feelings is one of the main obstacles to a more expansive experience of our selves. We live in a culture that places little value on feelings and relegates them to a safe expression through art, music, theatre or other creative mediums of expression. Most of us are taught to keep our feelings firmly under control and only expose those feelings that seem 'nice', safe and socially acceptable. We're then trained to suppress or repress other feelings ~ even from ourselves ~ that might be unpredictable, irrational, outrageous or inappropriate. So we learn that some feelings are 'good' and some are 'bad'.

Through the practice of awareness we increase our capacity to witness our feelings rather than be overwhelmed by them or react from them unconsciously. This separation between self and the experience of emotion is invaluable. It gives us the capacity to choose our response rather than simply to react from the feeling. It gives us a moment's space to decide whether it's useful or appropriate to express the feeling and, if so, how do we do that skilfully, or can we simply witness and release it? This applies to the little irritations in life as well as more serious issues.

The feelings are not the problem ~ you are not responsible for the origin of every feeling that comes into your orbit. You are only responsible for what you do with the feeling. This attitude of awareness eliminates any guilt or shame about the feelings we experience. Some of the more potent feelings of anger, rage, lust, despair, jealousy or fear might enter our awareness as a wave of energy and it is liberating indeed, to witness them rather than give them free reign to motivate our words and actions.

Many adults were taught in their childhood not to feel any feeling too strongly and certainly not to talk about so-called negative feelings ~ hurt, anger, despair, fear, depression or sadness. We may have been taught that even the positive emotions of love, happiness and joy must be kept within controlled bounds. These lessons in suppressing our feelings were generally never given to us consciously. It was conveyed subtly and not so subtly by comments like, 'you shouldn't feel like that', 'there's no reason to feel that way', 'don't get so excited' and of course a very common one, 'big girls/boys don't cry'.

Anger is not a 'bad' emotion. Healthily expressed anger is the discharge of disharmony within our selves. An unhealthy or inappropriate expression of anger is when we experience either 'outrage' or 'enrage' and use it as a means to wound other people or ourselves. Wherever there is anger ~ in our selves, in others, in our community we can choose to see it as a call for help or healing rather than as an attack.

An understanding of anger can help us become less fearful of it and more skilful in its presence. Anger is also healthy when it is the enabling force that helps us set clear boundaries, to speak our truth or to reclaim our power when we've habitually given it away to other people or situations. Any strong feeling is an energy that needs to move, that needs to be discharged or expressed.

It is helpful to realise that we're rarely upset for the reasons we think. Below the surface of anger may well fester a range of beliefs, unmet needs or feelings that we haven't become consciously aware of. This gives us a better perspective from which to respond to anger rather than simply to react to, or from it. If we can't control the outer circumstances of our lives it can cause us to wonder what our value is as a human being. Our rational mind may tell us that we can't control the weather, the climate, the behaviour of other people and yet we feel diminished and devalued by the intensity of the despair we may feel.

There are basically three ways of dealing with our feelings. We can deny they exist, which

takes energy to keep them from being shown either to ourselves or other people. We can indulge them and immerse ourselves in them; these people either splatter their emotions around freely perhaps with the excuse, 'It's just the way I am!' or they implode becoming moody, sulky and emotionally unavailable to other people. Or we can consciously acknowledge our feelings and either witness them or give them expression in a way that doesn't wound others or ourselves. This often requires understanding and assistance as it may be a very new way of dealing with what is unfamiliar and uncharted. The company of other people who understand how despair, grief or feeling trapped actually feels can be very healing and therapeutic in itself.

Reaching out to other people in similar circumstances is often a very challenging thing to do. However, when we have the courage to utter what may have been unutterable we immediately find common ground with other people who likewise suffer. Our willingness to embrace these challenges and not just 'soldier on' can begin the positive process of building self-esteem and resilience.

With resilience we have access to our intuition, humour and creativity. These are essentials if we are to meet our challenges skilfully. Our intuition allows us to draw on past experience and the richness of the present moment and at the same time, be open to new insights, information and wisdom. Our humour allows us to embrace the challenges with a lightness of being and an ability to not take things so personally. And our creativity enables us to draw upon the whole of our being so that we bring forth innovative solutions and wise and compassionate actions, words or approaches.

No one can give us resilience. However, there are proven building blocks to resilience that can be learned and implemented by everyone who desires to develop their capacity to embrace their challenges. With resilience we can embrace every moment, regardless of its challenges, with an open heart and a quiet mind.

Diary Dates *January - June 2012*

For bookings and more information on our programs and available subsidies, please visit www.questforlife.com.au or phone 1300 941 488

The Quest for Life Foundation

The Quest for Life Foundation was established in 1989 by Petrea King to further her work. Since her unexpected recovery from leukaemia in 1984, Petrea has devoted her life to counselling people, facilitating support groups, running residential programs and lecturing widely on health, spirituality and healing.

In 1998 generous benefactors made it possible for the Quest for Life Foundation to purchase an 103 year-old guest house in Bundanoon and after undergoing major refurbishments the Quest for Life Centre opened in May 1999. The Centre, set in 9 tree filled acres, provides an oasis for time out and an ideal environment for reflection, healing and the learning of new and valuable life skills.

The NSW Health Department supports the programs by providing an annual grant to subsidise places for people on low incomes. Further fundraising by Quest also provides limited additional subsidies to enable those in dire financial stress to attend these programs.

Our Philosophy

There are many events in life that stop us in our tracks and cause us to consider how best to meet the challenge we face: an unexpected diagnosis, an accident, loss or tragedy can be such an impetus.

Other people seek more meaningful ways of managing the challenging circumstances of chronic illness, multiple loss, anxiety, relationship breakdown, depression or the consequences of past abuse. Others choose to take time-out to review their life with the intention of deepening their relationship with themselves and living a more satisfying and meaningful life in the future. Since 1985 more than 80,000 people have attended residential programs or counselling with Petrea and her team of trained health professionals.

Our nationally acclaimed programs provide compassionate support as well as practical self-help techniques and strategies that complement and support people's medical treatment. Our programs enable people to regain a sense of

control over their lives and actively participate in their own healing. Most people leave our programs confident in their ability to meet the significant challenges they face in their lives. Our programs endeavour to support each participant so that they leave with a greater understanding of themselves and a deeper respect for their unique story. Topics are tailored to the people attending each program and vary accordingly. They may include the following:

- A spiritual perspective on life, love and healing
- Relaxation, visualization and meditation techniques
- Peace of mind: what it is and how to have it
- Harnessing the mind for healing
- Identifying the physical, mental and emotional causes of stress
- Intuition as a guiding force for positive living
- Understanding the mind-body connection and the role of epigenetics
- Practical strategies for increasing health using complementary therapies
- Managing pain, sleep, symptoms and side-effects
- Learning to live skilfully with stress and move beyond difficult emotions
- Enhancing communication, resilience, relationships and connectedness
- Creating an environment for physical, emotional and spiritual healing
- Rearranging priorities and moving on after trauma
- Forgiveness and attitudinal healing
- Techniques for living in the present

Our Programs

Healing Your Life

Suitable for people seeking healing after a challenging or traumatic experience or who live with private anguish, depression, trauma or loss. If you're ready to review your life, clarify your future or get 'unstuck' from a state of mind that is unhelpful, then this residential program can change your life in powerful and positive ways.

30 January - 3 February, 19 - 23 March, 7 - 11 May, 25 - 29 June

Quest for Life

An inspiring, practical, educational and experiential self-help residential program for men and women living with cancer or other serious illness. Suitable for people seeking to make a positive contribution to their health and to make meaning of their experience. Partners and loved ones are encouraged to attend also.

13 - 17 February, 16 - 20 April, 4 - 8 June

Take a Stand for Life

A nurturing residential program specifically designed to develop skills to support a rich and rewarding life, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

12 - 16 March

A day with Petrea King

Inspiring one day programs providing in depth information about specific subjects and an opportunity for people to either refresh their experiences from the longer residential programs or to give them a taste of what they might experience if they attended one.

26 Feb Meditation, Meaning and the Mind, Quest for Life Centre, Bundanoon

15 April Conscious Evolution, Quest for Life Centre, Bundanoon

Free Introductory Evening

Regular information evenings held in Sydney and the Central Coast as well as online via webinar to provide information on our philosophy, our programs and services.

Please visit our website for the next scheduled evening.

Petrea's events

Petrea appears and facilitates at many events and conferences and speaks on ABC radio regularly.

Please visit our website for Petrea's upcoming events.

Connections



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