

The Root and Branch

Wholesome living in the northeast of Scotland

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Summer hoodies that don't cost the earth

HOLISTIC THERAPIES

Connecting the spiritual and the physical

ALOE VERA

Calming us from within

NATURAL MINDFULNESS

Get in phase with the moon and feel renewed

AROMATHERAPY

A professional talks about her work

SCOTTISH HERBS

Perfect for chutneys and relishes

30 pages of articles and services

Mar/Apr
2021

Welcome to

The Root and Branch

Wholesome living in the northeast of Scotland



Managing Editor:
Anita Bell



Content Editor:
Rachel Beckett



And joining us:
Fern Geddes: see p 30

Dear readers, welcome to our fourth edition of *The Root and Branch* magazine.

We hope that you have kept well and safe during what has felt like the longest January and February in years. Many of us have struggled with lockdown this time round, winter months, home schooling, loss of work and many other contributing factors have impacted on our overall health and wellbeing. However, as we move forward into the spring months we see hope for brighter days ahead, the birth of new baby lambs, spring flowers, lighter nights and warmer days. The simple things in life have now become the most pleasurable; let's hold onto them.

Happy reading.

With love,
Anita and Rachel xx



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hearing from you.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions please get in touch.

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Published in Aberdeenshire

Cover photo: Alesia Kozik

Connected

Amy Murray suggests three ways that we can create connection in times of separation.

Feeling meaningfully connected is integral to our wellbeing. It brings a sense of alignment, grounding and safety.

With restricted in-person connection these last twelve months, we've become heavily reliant upon substituting this feeling digitally. While we wouldn't be without our Zooms, Facetimes, comedy memes and voice notes to sustain us through lockdowns, these digital solutions can only take us so far.

So how do we meaningfully connect when the world has shut down?

Connection starts within our inner world, rather than what surrounds us externally. Three really easy ways to establish this connection are to draw on the immense power of breath, nature and music.

How to connect

To reconnect within yourself, begin with your **breath**. Place your right hand over your heart and consciously breathe a little more slowly and deeply than you usually would. Making the time you take to inhale the same length as the time to exhale, in steady flow, will bring a sense of calm that allows you to then hear what is going on in your internal world.

In our lives of concrete and brick, it's easy to forget that we are **nature**; nature is not something separate from us that we visit occasionally. Consequently, we need to align with nature daily, even if that's just placing a house plant next to us as we work. The energy from plants, pets and anything in the natural

world is deeply healing and uplifting for our wellbeing. Bring it into your daily life as much as possible.



If you're having an energy slump, the quickest way to pull yourself out of it is by putting on a **music** track that pumps you up, giving the full length of the song your undivided attention. Jump around, shake it out, and give your body and mind an energising boost.

Try these three quick wins today and enjoy feeling more connected within.

Amy Murray is an Empowerment Coach and Content Creator.

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Calming on the inside

Gillian Watt
discovers the
therapeutic
benefits of
Aloe Vera



Photo: Jessica Lewis / Pexels

In non-pandemic times, we always joke that our extended family is the most challenging group of people to invite for dinner. We have dietary issues ranging from mild food intolerances to critically severe food allergies, in addition to coeliacs and IBS thrown into the mix! All the allergies and trigger foods are different, so there's no hope of planning one menu for everyone. Then there are allergies to various animals, so we can't all come if you have animals. Not to mention the mild to brittle asthmatics, as well as the exxcema sufferers. We're a jolly bunch! Yes, this means that some of my family rarely visit my home... even when we are not in lockdown.

So, when I was introduced to Forever

Living products after having sepsis, I began to wonder if Forever Aloe would help anyone else.

During my recovery, aloe kickstarted my immune system again, as well as resetting my gut. I continue drinking my daily morning shot (it's the only shot I ever drink).

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Please get in touch if you would like to find out more about Forever Living products. They may be able to help you just as they have helped me and my family.

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ANDBREATHE...



*Health is a state of
mind. Wellness is
a state of being.*

It's time to re-charge our batteries and prepare for 2021! Gillian shares tools to alleviate stress, anxiety, grief and tension, leaving us resilient and better equipped to meet the challenges of life. Her tools include Mindfulness, emotional freedom technique (EFT), Reiki, Building Inner Strength with 16 Guidelines, using the outdoors whenever possible.

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Gillian works face-to-face, online or outdoors, with individuals, families, schools, businesses and other organisations. She works from her home studio, near Insch, as well as facilitating outdoor sessions for teenagers and adults. Feel free to get in touch for a chat first, to find out more before making your first booking.

What makes good clothes?

We meet an entrepreneur on a mission...

Clothes are such a lovely way to express ourselves, as well as to keep warm! But the fashion industry has a huge impact on the environment and the staff who make clothing. We meet an entrepreneur who wants to make a difference.

Natalie introduces her brand, Cotton Crab

Hi everyone! I'm Natalie, founder of CottonCrab Clothing. I started CottonCrab Clothing to provide authentic, fair-priced, long-lasting clothing that people feel cosy, comfortable and good in, and that does good too. Together as one big community we can understand and respect the journey that the clothing, and the people who make the clothes that we wear everyday, have been on.



All my products are made from 100% organic cotton, with my sweatshirts and hoodies containing 15% recycled plastic. They are vegan, non-toxic and super soft! I would love to offer some extra support at the moment. Please use code **ROOT** for 20% off.

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Photo: Rachel Claire / Pexels, for illustration only. For Cotton Crab products see inset and advertisement on page 11.



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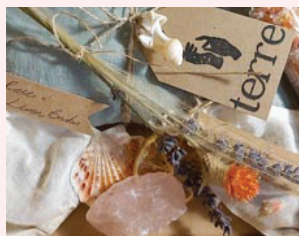
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Clear home, clear mind

Clearing your living space can help your headspace, reflects
Debbie Junor.

Life has changed for all of us. Most of us are spending a lot more time in our homes, noticing areas that need work and focus! This can be challenging and can affect us in many ways. Being organised can reduce stress levels; research suggests that decluttering can have a positive impact on how we feel.

The key is to concentrate on one problem area at a time and break it down into manageable chunks. I always suggest to my clients that they start with something small, rather than saying 'I'm going to tackle the whole spare room in one go'. Too big a goal can be counterproductive; 'baby steps' are the most efficient way to work. This will keep the momentum going to allow you to

complete a task and then feel motivated to start the next one.

When starting to declutter, the biggest hurdle for my clients is tackling the sentimental items they have acquired over the years. People feel guilt over letting these items go, having had them for a long time or been given them by a family member.

I believe that our attachments to loved ones are in our hearts and in our heads. So I ask my clients, 'Is it your taste? Are you going to use it? Do you have space for it?' If the answer to these questions is no, then it is time to let go of this item and let it be

used by someone who is ready to give it a new home!

Lockdown has reminded us all to start valuing experiences and the small things in life, rather than things we own. So this is the perfect time to hit the reset button.


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Debbie Junor can declutter your life

Individual, simple organising techniques and storage ideas will help to create a peaceful home environment that makes the best use of your space and time. We all lead busy lives, juggling work, families and daily jobs which leaves little time for organisation. Once your possessions have been organised they become much more manageable, enabling you to keep on top of things. All you need is someone to help you to start the process. That's what we are here for!



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Calm moments with a cuppa

The tradition of tea drinking gives us much needed moments of calm, away from all the pressures of life, says **Emily Wedderburn**.



Photo: Sam Lion / Pexels

For centuries we have sipped tea to help bring us little moments of peace and quiet throughout our busy days. O.M.Tea was created to evoke moods and memories through the power of tea. One of the many reasons we reach for the kettle is that we seek in these moments some sort of calm, to break up the pressures of the day such as work or looking after our children. These breaks are essential for our productivity and mental well-being, helping us to de-stress and recharge for the rest of the day.

Self-care is something that many of us will admit to

neglecting. It is so important that we take the relationship with ourselves seriously, not just for ourselves but for those around us. Enjoying a moment of calm produces positive feelings, boosting our confidence and self-esteem. We cannot think of a better way to do this than to sit down with a tasty, indulgent cup of tea with a favourite book, Netflix series, natter with a friend or simply to just watch the world go by.

Our teas have been created with the finest ingredients to make each blend burst with natural flavours for us to enjoy – there is nothing basic about



Photo: Weronika Karczewska

a cup of O.M.Tea. We have a range of blends to satisfy most tastebuds, available in loose leaf or in our silky tea pyramids, which are 100% biodegradable and plastic-free. Let our teas help you enhance your tea drinking experience when you decide to take your moment of calm.

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Holistic Connections is our online holistic hub for the North East of Scotland. We bring local businesses together, for free, to help them share their expertise and connect with you. Our partners encourage everyone to look after their physical, emotional, social, spiritual, mental health and wellbeing.

Holistic Connections would be delighted for you to join us, please take a look at our website to see what we are all about!

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aromatherapy

Good morning

by **Eve Taylor**

Aromatherapy Thyme

Philippa Lordan
07575170100

Essential oils in therapy

Philippa Lordan talks about her profession as an aromatherapist.

“ Aromatherapy, broken down using (Aroma) to smell and (therapy) to treat gives us the principles which aromatherapy is founded on.

Essential oils are the extraction of the life essence of plants, that have therapeutic value. Essential oils come from flowers, leaves, bark, seeds, roots and even resins. The cost of an essential oil will vary depending on how widely available the source is.

The term ‘aromatherapy’ was first used in 1928 by a French chemist Gattefossé who discovered the therapeutic value of lavender for treating burns.

The main ways essential oils are used are through their ability to be absorbed through the blood stream. How they affect systems in the body and how we respond to their scent.

Essential oils can be used individually but



work better in synergy with each other. A blending process. To achieve a perfect blend, we look at the category the essential oils fall into. Categorized by ‘notes’. A top, middle and base note. A good synergy has a pleasant fragrance, and a balanced blend can be used in a holistic approach for treatment.

When using essential oils at home it is important to ensure you are not contra-indicated. Medical conditions or prescription medications need to be considered carefully.

Essential oil should be stored in a cool environment. Not all

aromatherapy products sold are pure essential oils many are synthetic fragrances that have no therapeutic value.

As a qualified therapist I work using Eve Taylor products in my business. The principles that resonate with me are all essential oils are natural and sustainable sourced, packaging can be recycled. Eve Taylor’s partnership with ‘Trees for the Future’. Should you wish to further explore aromatherapy and how it can serve you please contact me, I would happily support your aromatherapy journey. ”



The Church-Floore by George Herbert (1593-1633):

Mark you the floore? That square and speckled stone,
Which looks so firm and strong,

Is Patience:

And tother black and grave, wherewith each one
Is checker'd all along,

Humilitie:

The gentle rising, which on either hand
Leads to the Quire above,

Is Confidence:

But the sweet cement, which in one sure band
Ties the whole frame, is *Love*

And Charitie.

Hither sometimes Sinne steals, and stains
The marble's neat and curious veins:

But all is cleansed when the marble weeps.

Sometimes Death, puffing at the doore,

Blows all the dust about the floore,

But while he thinks to spoil the room, he sweeps.

Blest be the *Architect*, whose art

Could build so strong in a weak heart.

Allegory

Illustrator and greetings card designer **Rachel Beckett** appreciates the links between words, images and our spiritual consciousness.

The poet George Herbert was a master of allegory: he used tangible objects to represent spiritual qualities, through verbal metaphors. His poem 'The Church-Floore' (see panel) is inspired by architecture. Different types of stone in a church floor represent invaluable Christian virtues.

Personally, having missed out on a proper Christmas, then recently suffered a bereavement and caught covid, I have been reflecting on matters spiritual. Some friendly monks (long story!) heartened me with their prayers. Let's just say, I am in hopeful anticipation of a properly fulfilling Easter celebration this year.

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The limited edition prints are 30 x 30 cm, in four colours (printed from one block), see **www.magpieandjay.co.uk/about/gallery**; also available as cards, with the poem on the back, at **www.magpieandjay.co.uk/about/shop**.

Reflective cards for Easter

Prolonged lockdowns have invited us to reflect. Maybe this year you'd like to send friends or family an Easter card featuring architecture as an allegory for spiritual wellbeing and blessings.

Limited editions, printed in the UK on sustainable card. Sets of 3, 4 or 5 cards (£5 to £8). Full selection at:

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Tessa Williams

Body scan meditation

A body scan meditation focuses on how your physical body feels. You become aware of the physical sensations and learn to release any tension that is being held. This includes parts of the body you can see (skin, hair), and what you cannot see (bones, internal organs, muscles).

This type of meditation is good for finding the connection between the physical and the emotional.

Every emotion we have is expressed in the physical body in a particular way. Using body scan meditation, we can become more conscious of where and how we store our emotions. Over time, we can learn how to read how emotions are expressed in our bodies and learn how to react to and deal with these experiences. The key is not to judge the emotions but to release the physical tension.

Body scan meditation can help with chronic pain, as it systematically relaxes the body. It is also a mindful practice that can help positively manage stress and pain, and promote wellbeing. When practising it, you may begin to notice that pain changes, or you find relief from it and let it go completely.

Debbie Bolton discusses the benefits of body scan meditation for helping us to manage the physical effects of our emotions.



Photo: Andrea Piacquadio / Pexels

Body scan meditation involves scanning the body to find areas of tension, and then releasing that tension. You start at the feet and work up to the head.

Steps to successful body scan meditation

1. Get comfortable in your favourite meditation position and realise that you are safe.
2. Close your eyes (to help focus).
3. Bring your attention to your feet. How do they feel? Is there tension? Pay attention to the muscles and
4. tissue. Even if you do not feel any tension, consciously relax the muscles in your feet. When you feel your feet relaxed, take a few deep breaths.
5. Now move up the body, treating each area in the same way, in the sequence you come to it.
6. Once you have gone through the entire body, take a few more breaths and open your eyes.

LOVE  **ABOVE**

*Contemplate
Life's beauty*



Let nature guide you

Tune into the moon's cycles and find the focus to pursue your dreams, says **Clare Hesketh**.

Hi I'm Clare. I'm a qualified holistic therapist, spiritual coach and crystal healer. I also make products for holistic wellbeing and self care. There's never been a more important time to take care of ourselves spiritually and emotionally. There are many ways you can reconnect with yourself throughout the day when you're feeling overwhelmed. For example, simply by taking a deep breath in, holding it at the peak for a few seconds and breathing slowly out through your mouth can have a calming effect on the mind, bringing you back to your centre.

I myself love rituals, especially those for self-care, such as new moon and full moon cycle rituals. Because the main moon rituals are twice a month, even if I'm pretty busy in between, I'm always guaranteed my twice monthly extra special 'me-time'.



Imagine stepping into a cleansing bath of salt, roses and crystals, with a soothing cup of tea and calming candle light. When I do this on or around the full moon or new moon, I feel like a goddess. By creating my bath ritual kits, my vision and joy is to make other women feel like a goddess too!

Each moon phase brings with it its own energy. The new moon is about cleansing and going within, a time to set intentions.

The full moon is a time to reflect on those intentions and a time to let go of any blocks that may be standing in our way; a time to reassess. So, you see, by following the moon cycles,

you naturally stay on track with your life spiritually and stay motivated towards goals and dreams.

I love empowering men and women on their spiritual journey, so if you would like to find out more please see my website.

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Relish of Scottish sunshine

Anna Wilson of Huntly Herbs talks to us about her business making chutneys and relishes using locally grown herbs and vegetables.

“ We make a wide range of organic preserves, many of which include fruit, vegetables and herbs grown here at Whitestones, near Huntly. Everything is made in small batches, and we pride ourselves on the fact that we are producing a genuinely ‘hand-made’ product – it’s a term which is sometimes overused

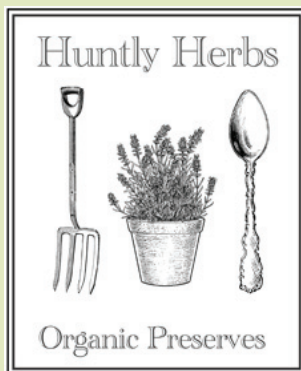


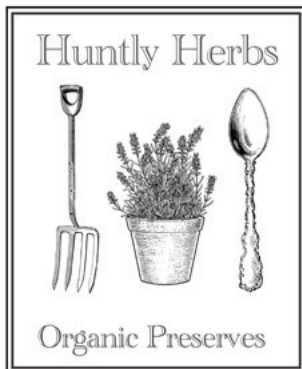
in the food sector! In our case, every single jar has been hand-poured from a hand-stirred pan in our chutney kitchen (and hand-labelled, of course). We also mature all our chutneys before putting them out on sale, which allows the proper full flavour to develop. Over the years we’ve won various awards for our produce, including the Scotland Food and Drink Excellence award – twice

– and a Silver medal in the World Jampionship.

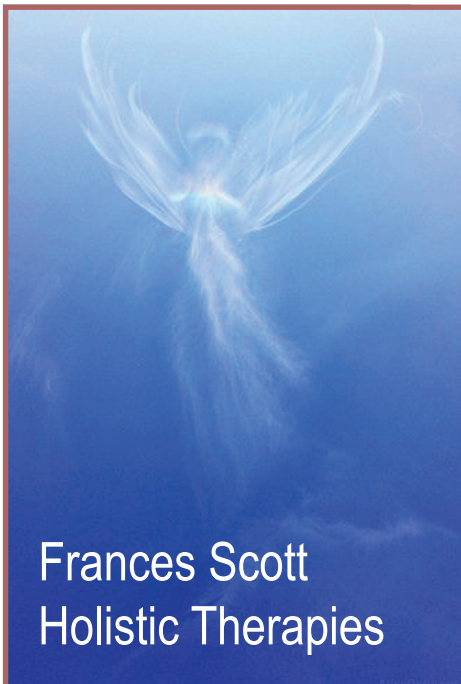
We are registered with the Soil Association both as an organic producer/grower and as an organic processor. All our produce is available through our website; details below. ”

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The chakra for stability

The chakras are energy centres along the body's line of symmetry, used in tantric meditation. In this issue, **Chantal Stuart** considers the Root Chakra associated with stability and security.



The word 'Chakra' originates from Sanskrit and translates as 'wheel', which is how these seven energy centres are thought of – as vortexes of energy that interact with one another and the systems within our bodies. They work together to regulate *ch'i* (or *qi*) which is the name for our life force and energy. Our *ch'i* is believed to flow between these energy centres through pathways called meridians. It is thought that blockages within these energy centres and meridians, which can be caused by trauma and emotional stress, can interrupt the flow of *ch'i* and cause physiological symptoms.

Balancing our chakras has been reported to bring about an increase in energy, vitality and overall sense of wellbeing.

This Root Chakra is the foundation of all seven

chakras. Located at the base of the spine, it may become imbalanced during times of uncertainty or change. We can balance this chakra in a number of ways to restore the free flow of *ch'i*. Close your eyes and visualise red light within this chakra, radiating down through your legs and rooting into the earth. Eating vibrant red foods, such as tomatoes, strawberries and red peppers, and wearing



Red foods to balance the Root Chakra

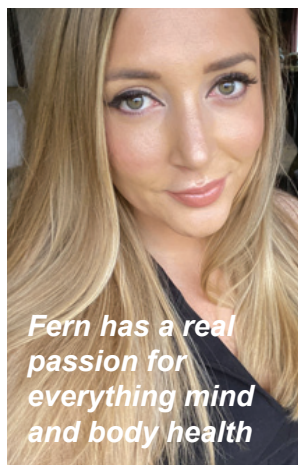
red clothes, walking barefoot and dancing, to ground ourselves, are also thought of as a wonderful way to balance this chakra. Carrying

haematite, bloodstone and smoky quartz crystals and burning earthy cedarwood essential oil – or popping a little in a bath – are also associated with balancing the Root Chakra. Repeating the affirmation 'I am grounded, stable and secure' throughout your day can also help to rewire the neurological 'fight or flight' response in the body and calm the central nervous system.

Whichever form of balancing you choose, it is most important to ensure that it is a loving and nurturing act of self-care.

*With much love
and light. Chantal*

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Fern has a real passion for everything mind and body health



We think about how the mind affects the body, the body affects the mind, and how they work together to give us a feeling of wholeness and togetherness to feel mentally and physically good within ourselves.

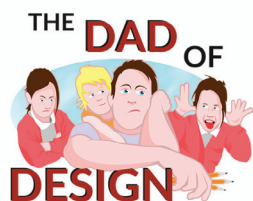
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Memories

How do you ensure that, when your children look back on their childhood, the memories will be happy ones, wonders
Nick Leighton.



Photo: Nick Leighton

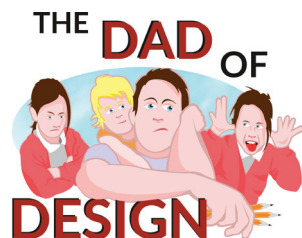
I want to create the best childhood that I possibly can for my kids. I want them to look back on their childhood and to remember that they had a brilliant one. It's hard to know which memories will stick with them and which they'll forget. I try and bring up my kids with one question in mind: **Will they remember today?**

Sometimes I feel guilty after telling them off, just because I worry that these are the memories that will stick with them. I want them to remember me and my partner as good parents, not ones that just sent them to their rooms when they

were naughty. I want them to remember us as parents that loved them and always wanted the best for them. I want them to remember the family days out and our trips to the beach. I want them to remember our caravan holidays and walks along the seafront. I want them to remember the good times, and for them to feel happy whenever they think back to their pasts.

It's hard to know exactly which days will stick with them forever. I guess it's about trying to make sure that the good memories outweigh the bad. We have to fill their childhoods with

as much fun and laughter as we can in order to counteract the arguments, telling-offs and clashing of personalities that are almost inevitable when you are a parent. It's important to be there when they're sad, to reassure them when they doubt, to discipline them fairly when they misbehave and to always tell them that we love them.



Mindful living



Suzanne McDonald uses mindfulness techniques to help people manage anxiety and bring balance and happiness into their lives

I never used to have a daily ritual. In fact, mindfulness and spirituality were the furthest things from my mind while I was bringing my children up. I wish I had been more enlightened back then because I think it would have made for a calmer style of parenting rather than the mindless, angry and frustrated style that became my norm.

Humans need routine. We need a system to follow to help keep us on track and to feeling in control. Once I figured this out, I was free to lead a life in which I felt satisfied and at peace. Mindfulness and ThetaHealing® brought me to this realisation.

I now use a daily mindfulness ritual that helps me stay in balance.

Every morning when I get out of bed, I ground myself by connecting with my heart centre and then with the earth. This is what helps me feel safe and in control. Then, I visualise a golden ball of light around me to energetically protect against negative thoughts coming from other people. After my morning coffee, I then light a candle in the sacred space I have created in my home that is for me only, where there are no distractions or interruptions. I then do a short ThetaHealing meditation. Here's how it goes:

- Take ten long, slow, deep mindful breaths
- Connect with Source energy
- Fill myself with the unconditional love of



Suzanne McDonald is a Mindfulness Coach, ThetaHealing Master Instructor and sound therapist.

Source energy

- Send myself healing from Source energy
- Release any negative thoughts and feelings
- Balance all my chakras
- Connect with my soul family, guides and angels energetically
- Send love and healing to anyone who needs it and has requested it

And that's it. If you'd like to know more about how to connect with Source energy through mindfulness and ThetaHealing, please get in touch to find out more.

www.sourceful.me

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Just

*Just focus on the moment, take it steady;
Don't give a thought to failure or to blame;
Just know that imperfections make you ready
To do enough, and so achieve your aim.
Just wait, and time the moment to perfection
To share the truths you've found as you explored;
Just love too heartily to fear rejection,
And thus in fault and virtue be adored.*

*Just choose the dream that chimes with your desires,
And plan the steps you need to make it true;
Just keep your nerve through problems and crossed wires;
Be proud to strive and see the project through.
Just shrug and smile when taunted by naysayers
Who point out flaws and say it's all gone wrong.
Just file it back! Then build it up in layers,
And as your work comes right, burst out in song.*

*Just take a chance, and win. Then take a second.
One time in four you'll get a winning streak.
Just savour it, and know what you have reckoned:
That losing, when it's planned for, won't be bleak.
Just push the door you thought was locked, and enter
The world of where you really want to be.
Just trust your judgement. Love is at the centre
To guide your efforts with integrity.*

*Just share your fun and friendship with all comers,
And any one of them may help you thrive.
Just know that winters always lead to summers.
Nurture your hopes – it's good to be alive!
Just love the way you grow your own life's story,
As hour by hour it all slots into place;
Just celebrate your fragile human glory:
A well-lived life within the human race.*

Spread the love and lift your spirits

Jon Macdonald, co-founder of AlwaysChoose, discusses ways to lift our spirits when warm and happy days still seem too far off.



Coach Jon Macdonald

Many of us will be glad to see the back of winter. Short days, long nights, fleeting sunlight and toneless skies. How do you become enlivened when spring still seems far off?

We often find that the people we guide are looking in the wrong places for what to do. Many over-complicate their winter survival strategy. Some push too hard into achievement-mode. Others sabotage themselves by doing things that deplete rather than uplift them. Both are such common traits and ones that, without a watchful eye, can easily be what we end up doing.

Our answer? The secret is to choose to be in service to others in some way. Big or small, it doesn't matter.

All that matters is the act of giving without asking for anything in return. Your happiness and aliveness can be powerfully uplifted from these simple acts of service.

We have taught thousands of people how to live lit-up inside. From this place we support them in being the gift to the world that they are, through the uniqueness of themselves and through what most calls them in their life.

And we always start with guiding you to remember that you really are already the most amazing person. To be alive, right here, right now, is incredible. You are incredible simply by existing. In remembering this, choose to be you as much as you can be, not what others expect you to be. Be the amazing person

that you are, whatever is going on for you right now, in the unique way only you know how.

We are all making choices each and every moment, and to choose to step into life as fully as you can, as yourself, is what we teach here at AlwaysChoose.

This choice is yours in each moment, and it starts with recognising the innate goodness of who you are and what you can give to the world.

From everything I have done in my life, and after many years of exploration, experimentation and learning, in the end, being myself most fully means to be in service to others. And writing this today is part of this. So, my final suggestion for you, to uplift you at the tail-end of winter, is to ask yourself in what way could you be in service to someone else over the next few days? Try it. This alone can make your days a joy as we get ready to step into spring.

www.alwayschoose.com

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The Root and Branch

Wholesome living in Mearns, Kincardineshire and Angus

We welcome **Fern Geddes**, our new Managing Editor for *The Root and Branch Magazine*, covering Mearns, Kincardineshire and Angus.

For all advertising enquiries please contact
fern@rootandbranchmagazine.co.uk



“ I am very excited to start connecting with like minded people, growing businesses or offering services within Health and Wellbeing from Mearns, Kincardineshire and Angus. This is such an exciting time to connect, share what you are passionate about and spread the word of the amazing services you offer to help everyone in your area focus on healthy living and a wholesome life. The Root and Branch brings such a variety of meaningful services to the forefront and helps a vast amount of people reach out to services that really make a difference in their lives. I am really looking forward to connecting with you all. ”

Photo: Fern Geddes

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The Root and Branch

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Photo: Artem Beliaikim / Pexels

If **you are** looking for a new project, have an interest in healthy living and want to support local wholesome living businesses, you could be the person to help us expand our mission to new areas of Scotland and the UK.

Skills required: you will need to be a good networker and team member, with a genuine interest in health and wellbeing, excellent communication and computer skills, proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite (5), a knowledge of social media and a passion to make our magazine successful in your area.



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