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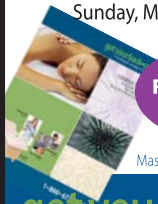
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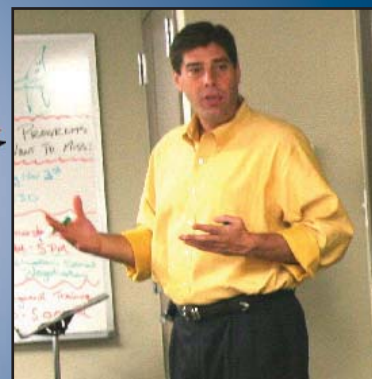
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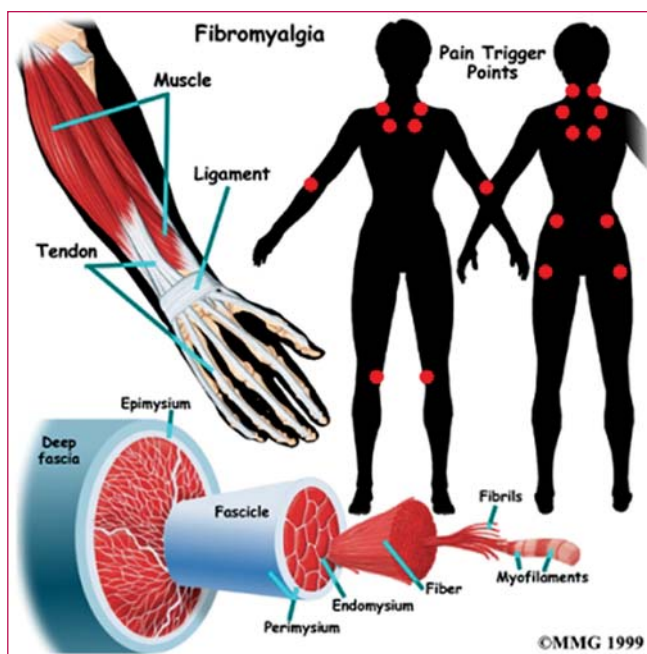
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Unlocking the Mysteries of Fibromyalgia

Autoimmune disorders occur when the body fails to recognize some of its own cells or tissues and initiates an immune system response to attack these “foreign” parts. The result can be pain, fatigue, digestive disorders, sleep disturbance, neuropsychiatric problems, allergies and sensitivities, hormonal imbalances, and a whole host of other symptoms. Rheumatoid and osteoarthritis are autoimmune disorders. So are Lupus, Celiac Disease, Type 1 Diabetes, Sjogren’s syndrome, Grave’s Disease, and Multiple Sclerosis. Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) is an autoimmune disorder that is on a steady increase in our society.



‘I hurt all over and I’m tired all the time,’ that’s Fibromyalgia.” In other words, two sides of the same coin.

Fibromyalgia is not life-threatening. The degree of symptoms may vary greatly from day to day with periods of flare-ups or remission. One thing we do know is that stress plays an important part in developing the syndrome and in symptom manifestation. FMS sufferers usually look “healthy” on the outside and are often very busy, productive people. That outward appearance

Why now? Why FMS? Like all autoimmune disorders (and many other illnesses), stress plays a huge factor, and is there anyone out there who feels *less* stressed than a couple decades ago? The typical profile for FMS patients is someone “running on empty.” They do and do and do for work, family, job, volunteer activities, etc. – rarely making sufficient time to slow down and take care of themselves. Most of these people have a very difficult time saying, “No.”

Although exact diagnostic criteria have yet to be established, we know that the vast preponderance of sufferers (about 90%) are women and it effects 2-4% of the population. It is not contagious, although some recent studies suggest there might be a genetic link. Many scientists suspect an unidentified (or “stealth”) pathogen(s) may be at the root of autoimmune problems, including FMS. People with Lyme Disease often also have FMS symptoms.

Onset of Fibromyalgia is typically between the ages of 20-50, but more and more children and adolescents are presenting with FMS symptoms. A rheumatologist friend of mine once commented, “If someone comes into my office and says, ‘I’m tired all the time and hurt all over,’ I know they probably have chronic fatigue syndrome.” “If they say,

sometimes causes others to have difficulty believing the degree of suffering the person is experiencing. But in fact, that high level of productivity just might be what tips the scale and allows the “burn out” of FMS to occur.

Conventional medicine has little to offer in treating the underlying causes of fibromyalgia, although pharmaceutical companies are certainly trying hard to find a solution. Lifestyle change is very important. Getting the right amount and right kind of exercise (too much or the wrong kind is just as bad as not enough), deep restorative sleep, and learning to say, “No,” and mean it, rather than taking on more than is reasonable are good ways to start. Massage, acupuncture, psychotherapy, and chiropractic can all help. The newer bioenergetic therapies have also shown a lot of promise.

My best recommendation for someone struggling with FMS, or any autoimmune disorder, is to consult with a physician (usually a rheumatologist), who is very experienced in your particular problem, and compliment that by working with alternative practitioners to achieve a better overall, mind-body balance. Fibromyalgia can be tamed! ▲

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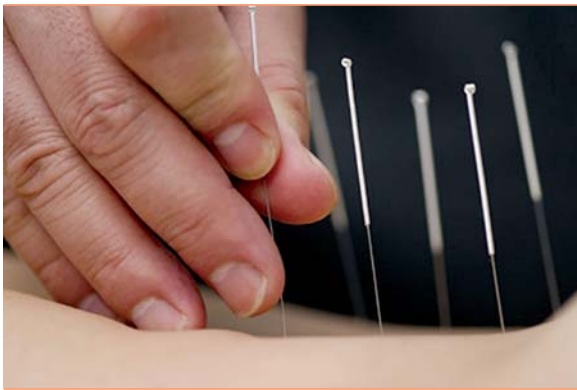


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IN MOST WESTERN CULTURES, ACUPUNCTURE IS CONSIDERED A "NEW ALTERNATIVE" MEDICINE. In reality, Acupuncture has been practiced for over 5,000 years. Very basically, Acupuncture is the insertion of very fine needles, on the body's surface, in order to influence physiological functioning of the body.



The first record of Acupuncture is found in the 4,700 year old *Huang Di Nei Jing*. This is supposed to be the oldest medical textbook in the world. It may have even been written down from earlier theories by Shen Nung, the father of Chinese Medicine. Shen Nung documented theories about circulation, pulse, and the heart over 4,000 years before Western medicine had any concept about them.

Shen Nung theorized that the body had an energy force running throughout it. This energy force is known as Qi. The Qi consists of all essential life activities which include spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical aspects of life. A person's health is influenced by the flow of Qi in the body, also in combination with the universal forces of Yin and Yang. If the flow of Qi is insufficient or unbalanced, Yin and Yang become unbalanced, and illness may occur. Qi travels throughout the body along "Meridians." The acupuncture points are specific locations where the Meridians come to the surface of the skin, and are easily accessible by "needling."

Energy constantly flows up and down these Meridians. When pathways become obstructed, deficient, or unbalanced, Yin and Yang are said to be thrown out of balance. This causes illness. Acupuncture is said to restore the balance.

Acupuncturists can use as many as six types of Acupuncture needles. These needles vary in length, width, and shape. Today, most needles are disposable. There are a few precise methods by which Acupuncturists insert needles. Points can be needled anywhere in the range of 15 degrees to 90 degrees relative to the skin surface. In most cases, a sensation, felt by the patient, is desired. This sensation, which is not pain, is called **deqi**.

One type of Acupuncture treatment in the United States is called Auriculotherapy or Ear Acupuncture. The theory is that since the ear has a rich nerve and blood supply, it would have connections all over the body. For this reason, the ear has many Acupuncture points which correspond to many parts and organs of the body. Auricular Acupuncture has been successful in treating problems ranging from obesity to alcoholism, to drug addiction.

Another popular treatment method is Moxibustion, which is the treatment of diseases by applying heat to Acupuncture points. Moxibustion is used for ailments such as bronchial asthma, bronchitis, certain types of paralysis, and arthritic disorders.

Cupping is another type of treatment. This is a method of stimulating Acupuncture points by applying suction through a glass jar, in which a partial vacuum has been created. This technique produces blood congestion at the site, and therefore stimulates it. Cupping is used for low backache, sprains, soft tissue injuries, and helping relieve fluid from the lungs in chronic bronchitis.

The question arises, how does Acupuncture work? Scientists have no real answer to this; as you know many of the workings of the body are still a mystery. There are a few prevailing theories.

1. Acupuncture raises levels of triglycerides, specific hormones, prostaglandins (pain enzymes), white blood counts, and overall antibody levels. This is called the **Augmentation of Immunity Theory**.
2. The **Endorphin Theory** states that Acupuncture stimulates the secretions of

endorphins in the body (the body's natural high).

3. The **Neurotransmitter Theory** (brain chemicals) states that certain neurotransmitter levels are affected by Acupuncture.
4. The **Circulatory Theory** states that Acupuncture has an effect on the body's circulation.
5. One of the most popular theories is the **Gate Control Theory**. This has to do with the brain's perception of pain.

There are many diseases that can be treated successfully by Acupuncture. The most common ailments currently being treated are: lower backache, neck pain, Arthritis, Headaches, Allergies, and relief of muscles spasms. There have also been trials in the use of Acupuncture in treating anxiety disorders and depression. Likewise, very high success rates have been found in treating addictions to alcohol, nicotine, and "hard" drugs.

In conclusion, Acupuncture is an effective form of treatment alongside, not only other "alternative" forms of treatment, but also alongside mainstream medicine. Acupuncture schools are federally accredited by the ACAOM (Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine). ▲

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Green Your Home



THE EARTH IS GETTING WARMER. LAST WINTER WAS THE WARMEST WINTER IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE SINCE 1881. And energy costs are going up steadily – on average, 10% a year. In two years, electricity rates in Pennsylvania will be deregulated, and most observers expect them to go up even more.

So what can you do about it? All the obvious things: drive less, ride a bike, buy a hybrid... and green your home. Buildings, surprisingly, use 38% of the energy in the U.S., more than transportation or industry. And the Delaware Valley is witnessing a boom in green building, even in the midst of a housing market slowdown. If you want to make your living space less of a burden on the earth, here are a few places to start:

Building a new house uses more raw materials than greening your current home, but built right, a new home can dramatically lower your energy use. A growing number of green builders in the area are delivering homes that use far less energy, and are built using non-toxic and recycled materials.

Builders like Mark Janiczek and Alan Entrekin, for example, specialize in gorgeous, high-end, custom green homes. In Wayne, the new Pembroke North Condominium Project offers 54 luxury, green units. The next project from innovative Philadelphia architects, the McDonald Brothers, Stable Flats, located in Northern Liberties, will be unveiled next year. And the first four, reasonably-priced, Maple Point Solar Townhomes, built in the Juniata section of Philadelphia by long-time green builder, Don Bradley, are now available.

Just outside Phoenixville, Earth Rising Homes is building Chester County's first green development, a unique green condominium building in Kimberton. On-site geothermal heat pumps and solar panels will provide environmentally-friendly heating and cooling, which will be included in the price of the units.

IS IT REALLY GREEN?

How do you tell if a home is really green? The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program is rapidly becoming the standard. Buildings get points for a wide range of environmentally-friendly practices, from efficient use of energy, to conserving water and minimizing construction waste. LEED rates homes at four levels: Certified, Silver, Gold, and the pinnacle of eco-friendly building, LEED Platinum. The Delaware Valley Green Building Council, which puts on frequent, educational programs on green building, can provide more information.

If you're in the market for a green home, you might start with a call to Pennsylvania's first licensed EcoBroker, Lisa Hough, at Prudential Fox & Roach Realtors, or Keller Williams' green realtor, Sherry Reisner.

Or you could have one of the area's growing number of experienced, green architects design a green home specifically for you. They include Re:Vision Architecture, M2, Jeff Hayes, BluPath Design and Kieran Timberlake Associates. Down to Earth Design's Sigi Koko can even design a house for you made of straw bales.

START WHERE YOU LIVE NOW

To make your existing home greener, start with an energy audit from companies like Green Savers or U.S. Green Homes, or Philadelphia's non-profit Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA). They use sophisticated technology to find leaks, improperly installed installation and appliances, and other energy wasters, which can be costing you money and making your home less comfortable.

Healthy Spaces does similar audits of your home – looking for hidden mold, allergens and chemicals which can be making you sick without your realizing it.

For eco-friendly and non-toxic building supplies, try the Environmental Home Store, with stores in Mt. Airy and Lansdale; Earth Mart in Phoenixville; or Greenable, in Center City. There you'll find non-toxic paints and stains, kitchen countertops made from recycled paper, glass or aluminum, flooring and cabinets made – without formaldehyde – from sustainably-harvested wood, and much more. For a wealth of recycled building materials, check out ReStore or Found Matter in Philadelphia, or Frank's Demolition Salvage in Woodlyn.

Homeowners aiming for an environmentally-friendly remodeling job often find themselves forced to educate their contractors about green materials. Fortunately, it's becoming getting easier to find local contractors with experience in green building. Their numbers include K Group, Sunpower Builders, and Buckminster Green.

ENERGY FROM THE EARTH & SUN

There are also a growing number of firms specializing in solar installations, including Epoch Solar, Solardelphia, SunTechnics, Pine Associates, and Alternate Energy and Ecology. Homeowners who want to get their heat and air-conditioning from the earth, using a geothermal heat pump – which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calls the most energy-efficient, environmentally clean method of heating and cooling available – can turn to one of a half-dozen or more local installers. Among them: Apex Geothermal, Polysteel Better World Building Technology, and Sinton Air Conditioning and Heating.

And if you're looking for other ways to address global warming in your own home, try calling your Pennsylvania state representative or senator. While solar panels on homes have shot up all over New Jersey, thanks to strong support from the state government, the Pennsylvania state legislature has been arguing for nearly a year over how to fund a renewable energy program here. ▲

RESOURCES

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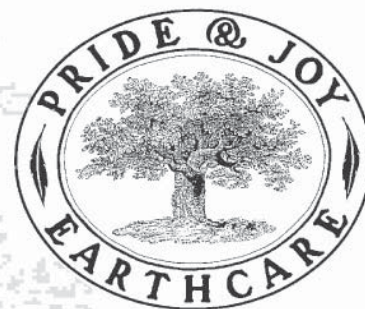
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FENG SHUI IS AN ANCIENT PRACTICE ENCOMPASSING PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE ENERGY FLOW. There is no better way to address it in a home than in its “core” of health and wealth – the kitchen. Families and friends most often congregate in this “heart” of the home. Eating is not only seen as a joyful occasion but also is a time to slow down one’s pace and spend time with one another.

A “Health and Prosperity” Source – the Stove

In Feng Shui much attention is paid to the stove. A stove that is not in good working order may imply health issues or difficulties with financial resources. Make sure all burners, oven light and fan work properly.

Kitchen islands equipped with stove tops are favored as the cook faces into the kitchen area towards family and guests. When facing the wall while cooking, the “chef” has no idea who can sneak up behind. This placement is considered a “vulnerable” less desirable position. One solution is to hang a shiny surface on the wall over the stove, such as a stainless steel plate, so all areas of the kitchen can be seen.

Organization is Key!

The kitchen is an excellent place to manage anti-clutter skills: no extra blenders or faulty appliances on the counter, curb numerous spice racks, and use a bread box. Stow knives in a wooden knife block and put scissors and other sharp utensils in a drawer. Also, keep the breakfast table clear of all excess materials including correspondence, newspapers, and keys. It helps to adorn the table with fresh flowers depending on the area of the room “bagua” that the table is placed. Check with a Feng Shui advisor or a good book for guidance.

It is not easy to keep kitchen drawers organized but you may keep one “junk” drawer. Its perfectly fine to have a drawer devoted to the odds and ends of the house. At the same time, the drawer should still be somewhat organized and open easily. Buy extra inserts at a local home/linens store to compartmentalize as best as possible.

Make the kitchen a safe place to spend time. Do not store heavy or bulky items overhead as you will risk a mishap. It is easier to store large and unwieldy items closer to the floor.

Environmental Safety

It is very important in the kitchen area to use non-toxic substances when cleaning so please re-evaluate your materials. At all times shy away from any type of ammoniac substance as it destroys the water and still leaves traces in our environment over 60 years later! Vinegar disinfects and cleans just as well and is far kinder to the planet.



A Space that Reflects Health

Good nutrition is also good Feng Shui. Healthy, fresh and organic foods make a significant difference in our diets and overall vitality. Make every bite count in quality and quantity. When in doubt, forego the temptation. Start editing your food intake and reevaluate its benefit. If you still have a problem making the decision on whether you want to eat something, just ask yourself this simple question, “Do I want to eat it or wear it?”

Entering a home through the kitchen is sometimes linked to weight gain. If you or one of your family members is struggling to maintain a healthy weight, consider entering the house through another doorway. If that is not possible, keep most of the food tucked away and have only fresh fruit (in abundance) on the counter. Edit your shopping list considerably. What you do not bring home cannot be eaten.

To continuously have an abundant “feel” to your kitchen and home, you may try this Feng Shui adjustment: Buy 9 oranges and place them in a bowl on the counter at all times: nine is a power number and oranges symbolize good luck. You can replenish them as they get eaten. Be sure to use the older oranges first, so none of them rot or dry out.

A Welcoming Place

Create a comfortable seating arrangement with enough chairs for everyone. If you sit a kitchen counter, provide chairs with a little backing for support. When your kitchen is clean, bright and welcoming, the “heart” of your home is filled with good Feng Shui “chi.” The care and attention you give to enhance this important area of the home creates a powerful, positive energy that supports the health and prosperity of your entire family.

Infuse your kitchen with maximum health and abundance through the energy principles of Feng Shui! ▲



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LANDSCAPING FOR *Wildlife*



WITH SUBURBAN SPRAWL FRAGMENTING AND REDUCING WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHAT WE DO IN OUR YARDS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF WILDLIFE. Suburban yards are usually stripped of most of their topsoil and little concern is given to wildlife when the planning a new landscape. The typical yard has a large lawn area with a few ornamental plants providing little ecological value. By landscaping with nature we can provide some of the necessities for wildlife survival, as well as, creating an aesthetically pleasing environment for people.

When designing an ecological landscape, the vertical levels should be emphasized since they are very important for wildlife survival. The following levels should be considered: soil, groundcover/herbaceous (e.g.: perennials, grasses), understory (small trees and shrubs) and canopy (large trees). Creating plant diversity in the various levels will benefit more animal species since various species have different requirements for their survival. Greater biodiversity helps to keep the ecosystem in balance by keeping various pests under control. Also, if more heavily planted, weeds will be less able to take hold and grow. It should be noted that soil provides the base for plant life and organic care of the soil through mulching, amendments, and organic fertilization is important for the proper function of an ecosystem.

An important first step to take is to reduce the size of the lawn area to make a more ecologically beneficial landscape. Lawns require a lot of resources (time, energy, chemicals, water) to maintain yet sometimes provide little benefit for wildlife. Lawn chemicals contaminate waterways, poison animals and disrupt the soil ecology. Mowing lawns contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. Rainwater runoff, from lawns, is greater than naturalized/landscaped areas because of soil compaction and lack of vegetation. This increase in runoff reduces groundwater recharge and increases flooding.

In a previous article, I emphasized why native plants are very important for the environment and are vital for planning an ecological

landscape. These are plant species that are indigenous to a particular region and have evolved over thousands of years to grow and thrive in the climate, soils and geology of that region. They have co-evolved with the animals, fungi and bacteria to form a complex ecosystem where all parts are interdependent. Since native plants are adapted to a particular region, they should require less maintenance from the homeowner once they are established.

When planning your ecological landscape for wildlife, four needs should be considered: food, water, cover, and nesting.

Plants are the base of the food chain therefore what we plant is very important. Plants provide nectar, fruit, seeds, and leaves as sources of food. Care should be taken when selecting plants so that different sources of food become available during different times of the year. Flowers produce nectar and pollen, which provide food for hummingbirds, butterflies and bees. Bees, important pollinators, have been under environmental stress in recent years – planting to help them is very beneficial. Native plants are an important source of food for butterfly larva and other insects that birds depend on for food. Insects indirectly make plants an available food source to a variety of wild birds and other animals. Seeds and nuts are very important for birds and mammals to survive during cold weather. Reducing deadheading of perennials will help provide more seeds as a food source.

Water is a necessity for all life and should be included in the landscape, especially during extreme weather. Water features also provide an interesting focal point in the landscape. Larger water features such as ponds or streams can a complete habitat for many aquatic organisms. A simple birdbath or dish will provide a good water source for many small animals. Butterflies can get much of their water from the nectar in flowers or from mud puddles. Water also provides a place for birds to bath for both cleaning and cooling. Running water, such as waterfalls or fountains, produce a relaxing sound as well as attracts wildlife.

Cover is the next critical element required for wildlife. The various levels in the landscape, as aforementioned, will provide cover for more types of wildlife. It is good to provide a combination of evergreen and deciduous plants. In the winter, evergreen trees and shrubs provide cover when the leaves of deciduous ones have fallen. Thorny plants provide an additional level of protection from predators. Rock piles and brush piles also provide cover for small animals such as chipmunks and salamanders.

Nesting sites are also a necessity for wildlife. Once again, the vertical structure of the landscape is important by providing various locations for different species to breed. The shrub level is the area most used by birds. Some birds nest in the cavity of large trees. Since most large trees are cleared from the suburban landscape, nesting cavity sites are greatly reduced. Nesting boxes can be installed to provide nesting cavities for birds such as swallows, chickadees and eastern bluebirds. The size of the box and entrance hole helps to control what species of bird uses the box. These boxes should be cleaned out yearly for repeated nesting.

In today's fast-paced society many people have lost their connection with nature. "Biophilia," according to biologist E.O. Wilson, describes, "The connections that human beings subconsciously seek with the rest of life." This explains why most people care about plants and animals and have them in their homes. No matter how advanced society becomes, we are still part of nature's web-of-life, and what we do to it will have an affect on us. Making the home landscape more ecologically beneficial to wildlife will help to restore a part of the natural environment. Spending time in an ecological landscape can help us reconnect with nature on physical, mental, and spiritual levels. ▲

FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS SUBJECT:
Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens. Douglas W. Tallamy. 2007
Landscaping for Wildlife in Pennsylvania. Marcus Schneck.



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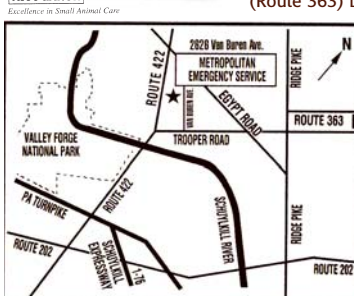
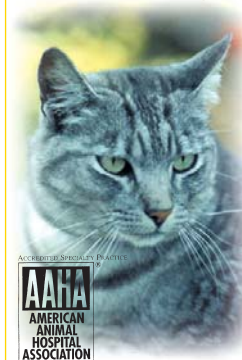
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WELCOME TO THE PREMIER ISSUE OF THE SOUTH JERSEY SECTION OF **YOGA LIVING!** I am very excited to serve as your guide to the best of what South Jersey has to offer in terms of Yoga and Holistic Living.

Inside this section you will find an article by Joan Borysenko, PhD., who is considered by many to be one of the pioneers of mind/body/spirit work. *Joan is coming to South Jersey on June 14, 2008.* In addition, you will be introduced in this section to some of the finest, local, holistic practitioners and service providers available.

Why a South Jersey section? I and many others believe that South Jersey is a haven for yoga and holistic programs, events and activities. Our demographics indicate that South Jersey has an extremely strong holistic community, and is hungry for a specific focus and identity for it's commitment and interest in yoga and holistic services.

As a lifelong holistic and spiritual seeker myself, and a long term resident of South Jersey, it has been very exciting to learn about many of the fine holistic services and offerings here.

When I found myself in the middle of a mid-life crisis about five years ago, I realized that I needed more than just a tweak or adjustment to my lifestyle and priorities. It was then I knew that I needed to make my holistic and spiritual commitments my top priority. As a result, I have availed myself of many of the outstanding practitioners, service providers and programs available in South Jersey.

I hope to share more about my journey in future issues and I look forward to hearing from you – if you have ideas about this section,



want to discuss your services and how they can be featured, or just want to learn more about how to further your journey – as together we trudge the road of happy destiny.

Peace,
Scott

SCOTT ROSEN is the founder of *Transformations Holistic Learning Center* located in Voorhees NJ, resides with his wife and twins in Cherry Hill NJ, and can be reached at Scott@readytotransform.com or by calling 856-470-1399.

Yoga Living

South Jersey Holistic Networking Event

Tuesday May 20, 7-8:30PM

This event is for local holistic practitioners and businesses owners to meet and discuss ways to help one another reach out to the community. Create a strong referral network and make some new like-minded friends!



Join us for a fun and informative gathering at:

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