

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Doorknob Gazette appears quarterly, is written primarily from a Buddhist psychology viewpoint, and is intended to support the growth and understanding of its readers. Any errors in thinking or presentation are mine.

It is called *The Doorknob Gazette* because I am generally pushing my deadline when I go to press. In therapy, bringing up something important on the way out at the end of a session is known as "doorknobbing."

If you would rather not receive this, please call me at (541)349-0595. Leave your name and address and ask to be removed. If you found this somewhere and would like to have it mailed to you, do likewise, (with the opposite request, of course!). I never sell or share my mailing lists, and apart from the occasional event postcard, I will only send you this newsletter.

I am in search of more locations for distribution of the *Gazette*. I supply simple lucite brochure holders for shelf or wall placement. If you have space, or know someone who does, please contact me.

May this newsletter benefit all beings.

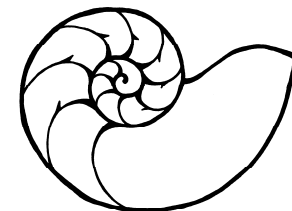
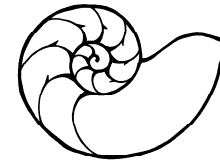


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Address Correction Requested



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Everything has its wonders, even
darkness and silence, and I've learned
that whatever state I may be in,
therein to be content.

-- Helen Keller

Dear Ones,

I am forever telling people (including myself) to be a little friendlier to themselves in times of stress.

What does that mean? When I say friendliness, kindness or compassion, I am not talking about some vague, spiritual shouldism of how to behave. I mean our innate, natural human response to any being in pain (yelping puppy, crying child), the organic heart-sense we offer freely to anyone who needs it, except, usually, us!

We don't have to invent kindness, learn it, or even think about it much. All we really need is get out of our own way. With a little intention, practice, and an adjustment in our field of vision, we can include ourselves in our own natural circles of kindness.

How it works. When we begin to have awareness of how we cause ourselves problems – through ways we act or think, or beliefs we hold – many of us come down hard on ourselves. We tell ourselves we shouldn't do that or think that or feel that. We object to whatever we have noticed. This awareness is tender, a hidden part of ourselves we are just beginning to communicate with. A harsh response is only going to send our awareness scurrying away. It won't heal the pain, and it won't "cure" the behavior (thought pattern, feeling...). If we are trying to understand something about ourselves, we won't get there through being mean.

If we berate ourselves, we resort to mindlessness to manage the pain and fear of berating ourselves, and we don't get any further with our investigation. We become our own least cooperative witness.

True mindfulness – the path to develop-

ing deeper relationships with ourselves and others, healing our pain and enjoying our lives – requires us to meld awareness with compassion. Otherwise we are just grimly staring ourselves down.


What to do? Take a step back from what you discover about yourself. Let it be simply information. You are not your thoughts, you are not your behavior.

Meet everything about yourself with kindness, and a friendly curiosity. Ask yourself, "How does this work?" rather than "Why the heck did I do that?"

Consider how you would speak to a friend having a hard time, or a small child who fell and skinned her knee: There, there, it will be okay. Let this be your mantra.

Set your intention to befriend yourself no matter what. Befriend even the harsh voice that says you're not doing it right, you're supposed to befriend yourself, you idiot! That voice *really* needs love!

Why bother? If we keep berating ourselves for our feelings and thoughts, we will keep hiding from ourselves. Hiding increases our feelings of isolation, loneliness, depression, and anxiety. It is unnecessary to suffer this way. If we show ourselves kindness, we blossom. Connecting with ourselves connects us to the world at large, which could use more kindness and connection. As we go, so goes the world.

When we stop judging ourselves, even for a moment, the possibility of happiness arises. Our hearts begin to open. Acceptance of ourselves, as we find ourselves to be in each moment, is the kindest gift we can bring. It is all we want, after all, and all we really, truly need. 

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The Doorknob Gazette is currently available at my office, by mail, and at the offices of:

- Dr. Arthur Ticknor, Chiropractor
1245 Charnelton Street, Suite 7
- KellyRose Zuvuya,
Full Spectrum Bioenergetic Healing,
260 E. 15th Avenue, Suite F
- Downtown Hair, 1390 Oak Street

Back issues can be found at:
www.ContemplativePsychotherapy.com
on the Forms page.



New at the office - I now have a white noise machine just outside my office door to add an extra layer of privacy. You may notice a low roaring sound as you approach - don't worry, it doesn't bite!



Book Recommendation

Finding the Center Within: The Healing Way of Mindfulness Meditation by Thomas and Beverly Bien

The Bienes offer, in clear and gentle prose, a path to working with difficult emotions, healing relationships, and developing a daily mindfulness practice.



Ker Cleary is a Contemplative psychotherapist in private practice in Eugene, Oregon. She specializes in helping people with depression and anxiety feel better. For more information, call (541) 349-0595 or visit www.ContemplativePsychotherapy.com