

June Solstice #2

thru true

wishful thinking? absolutely

wonder wild

#thresholds #flowerpower #dancing #joyfuljourneys #presence #soulfood

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Julia Osterc

Contributors:

Cherry Harris

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thrive true

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Letter from Founder & Co-Creator: Julia Osterc

Sweet Summer Solstice is here in the northern hemisphere where I live, Yet I realize that for some of my dear friends and readers on the southern half of this marvelous Earth, it is the longest night of the year and the stillness of winter has set in. I hope that this offering will fill you with warmth where ever you may be!

Most of the contributors happen to be in the northern hemisphere this time so a summer vibe with flowering gardens and joyful journeys seems to be a common theme. Yet, I love that one of the poems also refers to winter and journeys can also be the inner kind, which might even be more feasible in some ways during winter. I have noticed that I tend to have more time for making art when the days are shorter! During the long days of summer, I tend to be outdoors more, harvesting and preserving food from the garden (we were eating blackberries on our walk last evening) or cooling off in the nearby mountain lake. To everything there is a season...

There is also a full moon this year on the June Solstice, which is apparently a rare event! The art on the cover was started on a Blue Moon last year when I filled the canvas with prayerful intentions and thanks giving while sitting on the porch watching the moon rise and then painted the blue circle with my bare hands in the dark. Now, this second addition of the Thrive True e-zine is a sort of prayerful offering that we may co-exist in a healthy way for our children's children, the Earth, and the amazing, living collective Being that we all form. May we take a moment to breathe in deeply the life force that connects us all. May our prayers and energy unite.

As I've been putting the finishing touches on this offering, I've found myself asking, "who am I to speak about thriving?!" I'm a pretty sensitive soul and definitely have times when despair can start to overwhelm me! Incidents like the recent sad events in Orlando, Florida and even grief stricken characters in a historical novel often break my heart again and again.. maybe that is why my heart feels wide open. The focus on thriving and the name "Thrive True" came about from a prayer, hope, intentional energy, and wild wish for a world in which we are able to thrive together in harmony. I don't have 'thriving' all figured out! I'm simply holding on to hope...

♡ ♡ ♡ *Wishful Thinker? Holy Yes!* ♡ ♡ ♡

Inspired by nature... scattering blessings, wishes, hopes, and dreams like wildflower seeds. May we thrive true together in harmony.

You can subscribe to the [free Thrivalist Newsletter](http://thrivevetrue.com) from the website at thrivevetrue.com to receive this seasonal *Thrive True* e-zine gift each time it is published and thrive with me. ♡

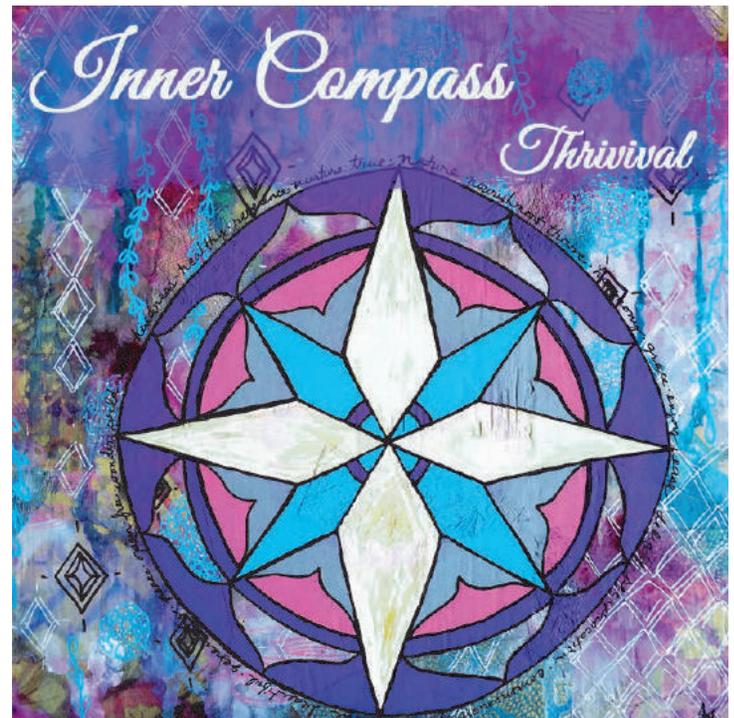
it is how I cope... and finding ways to thrive amidst the bittersweet mystery of life as best I can.

Co-creating this e-zine is one way that I try to spread more sweetness. I'm so grateful for the vision and ability, along with the beautiful co-creators that have so generously helped, to bring this to fruition! Much of the art and poetry within is available from the contributor's websites so please visit the links in their bios at the end of this e-zine if you see something you love! They have all given freely of their time and offerings to contribute.

Putting together the monthly Thrival online course retreats is another way that I try to invite harmony, put forth prayerful energy, and nurture the mind, body, and spirit of myself and others in a creative way. If you'd like to participate, you can use the coupon code "opening" for a sweet special on any of the currently available Thrival course offerings.

Thank you for choosing to accept the gift of this e-zine. May the pages feed the soul with good medicine.

Here's to Joyful Journeys and Thriving True, Julia (aka Jules/Jewels)



Contents... *Yes, there's Treasure Within!*

Yay! The second seasonal offering of the *thrive true* e-zine is here! I imagine it will grow and evolve quite a bit over time from the introductory offerings and I hope you'll enjoy the unfolding! Future offerings may have more or less pages, contributors, embellishments, etc., depending on the season and flow of inspiration, connections, abilities, and energy. If you'd like to collaborate and contribute in the future, you can learn more about what is needed at: thrivetrue.com/cocreate.

If you missed the first issue, you can use this link to check out the archives: <http://thrivetrue.com/thrive-true-e-zine/> Much of the art and poetry shared within is available from the contributor's online shops so please visit the links in their bios at the end if you see something you love! They've all generously contributed without any financial reciprocation since this is currently offered as a gift.

That means there is no marketing budget either so please help us share the love. You can use the social media sharing links on the Thrive True site here: <http://thrivetrue.com/ezine/>

Let's thrive! *Julia*



"Begin" Art above by Mary Pressel Cline

*A journey of a thousand miles must
begin with a single step. - Lao Tzu*

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Sweet souls showering the world with light, beauty, inspiration, grace & generosity.

Beautiful Blessings And Wonderful Wild Wishes Within!



Photograph Above by Julia Osterc

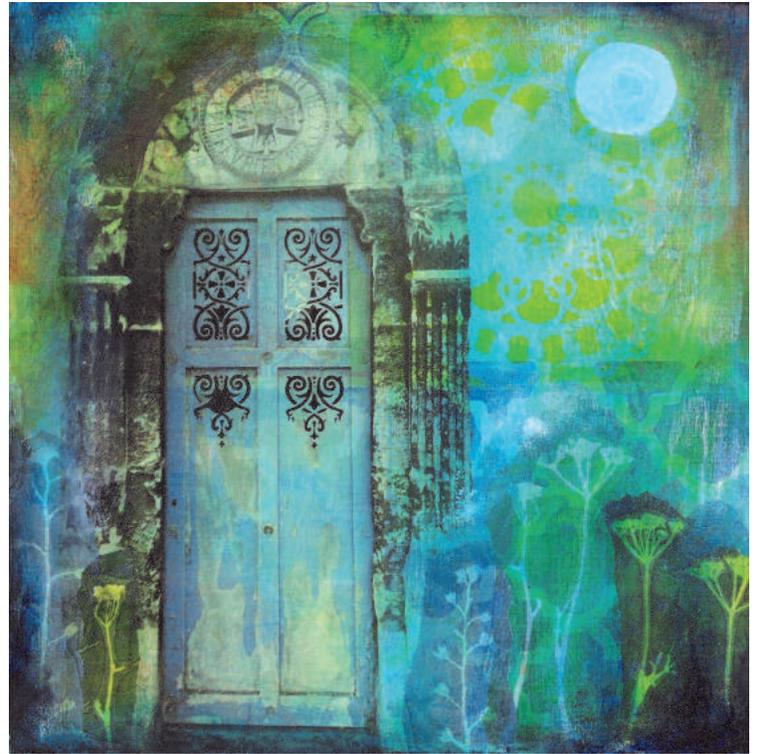
"Roadhouse Blues" Art below by Lucy Brydon



Thresholds... Welcome to the magical world of Scotland artist Lucy Brydon! Please step inside...



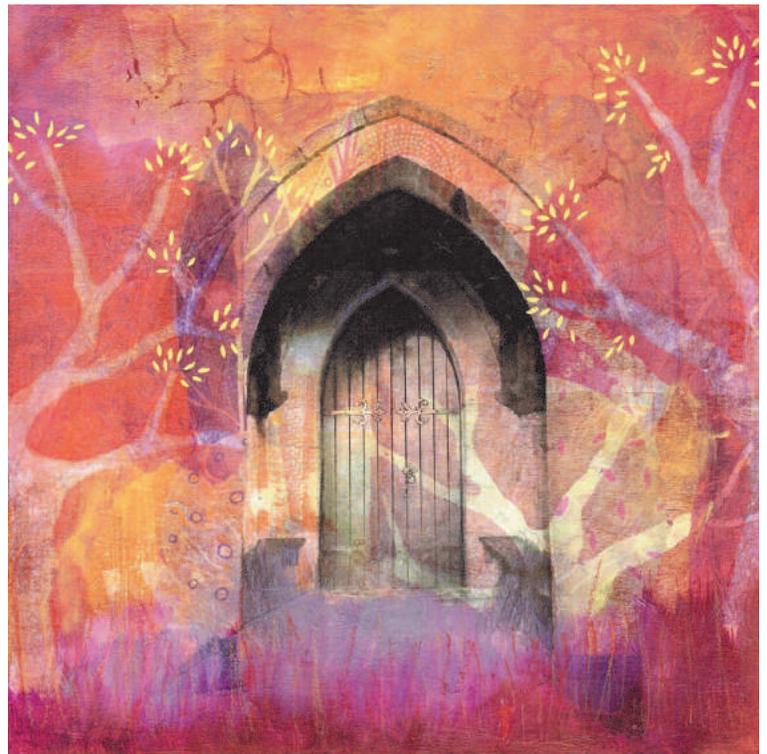
"The Secret Garden"



"Moonlight Drive"



"The Ghost Song"



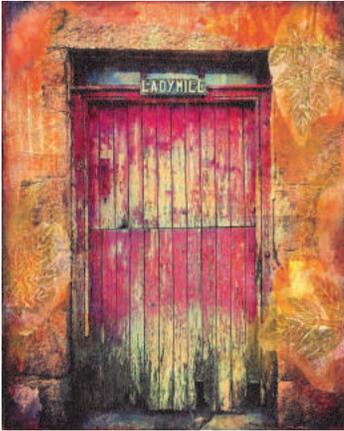
"The End"

Lucy's intriguing thresholds feel as if they could be book covers... and perhaps, that is the case, with each threshold we cross, we step into the stories of our lives.

The original mixed media paintings in this "Thresholds" series are on display at [Art At The Hall](#) and [Monymusk Arts Centre](#) in June. Lucy also offers prints from some of her art in her [online shop](#).



"Hyacinth House"



"People Are Strange"



"Strange Days "



"Break on Through"

*Week to week
Day to day
Hour to hour
The gate is straight
Deep and wide
Break on through to the other side
- Jim Morrison*

*We are ever on the threshold of
new journeys and new discoveries.
- Joseph B. Wirthlin*

Creative Being...

By Mary Pressel Cline

"The important thing is somehow to begin."
- Henry Moore

I love to paint and play with different materials. To get lost in my art is like a prayer or meditation. I set intentions and I light a candle. Sometimes soft music is played. I really love to create. I enjoy putting love back in to the universe especially during an election year.

What happens if you show up and nothing comes out? These are my favorite ways to shift energy:

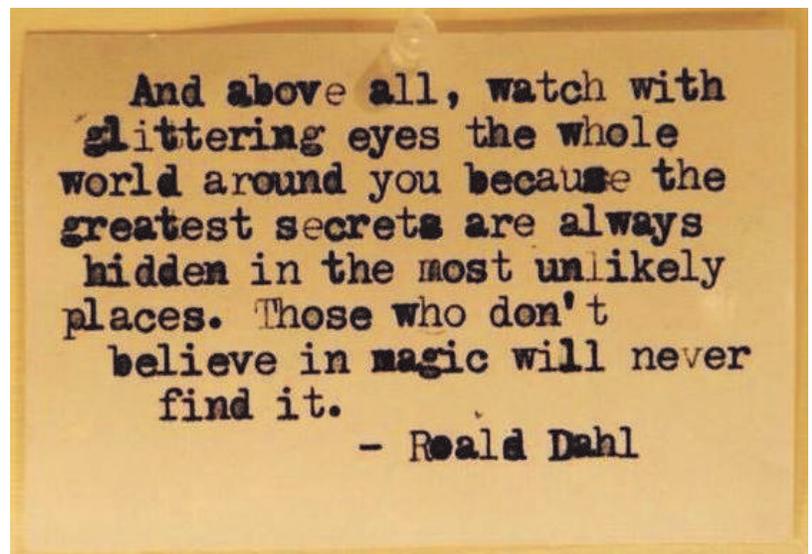
1. Meditate for 10 minutes
2. I have a bowl full of words that delight me. I will grab one of those for inspiration
3. Message a writer friend for a Haiku - thank you Tyna Loafman
4. Drum
5. Get up and dance
6. Go for a walk in nature
7. Choose 3 colors & slap paint on a substrate
8. Check in on your art tribe or browse Pinterest (set timer, this can be a rabbit hole)
9. Write a grocery list and illustrate it
10. Grab a hot cup of tea or coffee and write down things that you are grateful for.

"If an artist tries consciously to do something to others, it is to stretch their eyes, their thoughts, to something they would not see or feel if the artist had not done it. To do this, he has to stretch his own first."
- Henry Moore

Once you get started, the rest should follow and flow.



All Art on this page is by Mary Pressel Cline



Symphony of Sublime Poem by Kasha Glazebrook

The blossoms of your heart
Ferment to gather into
The finest floral bouquet.
Let the world drink of it!
One mouthful at a time.
Imbibe every last drop,
Until you at once enter
A Symphony of Sublime.
It's good juju baby!
When the world is having
Such a Divine. Fine. Time.

*Happiness radiates like the fragrance from a
flower and draws all good things towards you.*

- Maharishi Mahesh Yogi



"Prism, Bubble,
Rainbow Flowers"
Art on this page by
Kasha Glazebrook

Madness in the afternoon of a late summer garden

Poem by Cherry Harris

The intricate splash of orange and
the rude flash of a scarlet thought.
The absurd comedy plop of an unripe
apple from an overhead weeping tree,
gnarled from its past wars.
Now, a chilly breeze.
Sulky clouds just resting,
The blushing sun, temptingly shy.
The grass glared green
It couldn't get any greener if it jumped out and bit me.
The clouds fall about laughing.
But there's an angry mood brewing,
In the heavens this afternoon.
Everyone is irritated without a dance.
Steps are almost forgotten.
The tempo is rusty from impending rain.
This dream is a little too nightmarish for its own good.

Fred the gardener, beams one of 'those' smiles at our
small but feisty party.
His runner beans are gleaming in the warped sunlight.
A polished show.
A bit too green,
It blinds.
Crumpled brown paper bag filled to the brim with multi-
coloured jelly beans.
A lively crack of Fred's runner beans.
He smiles, there's no strings on Fred.
Does he dream of runner beans?
Baskets full of snappy sticks.
Snappy like Fred's grins.
We watch as he chews his multi-coloured beans greedily.
The sun beams its grumpy glow.
Where did our teenage years go?
It's that last dance we need to tread.
And our small party is hot and a little lazy,
The late afternoon sun hazy and playing tricks.
She leaves her smile thoughtfully and
disappears beneath the clouds.



Long Winter

I watched,
On that hot summer's day in June,
As he danced through the sea of scarlet poppies,
His laughter contagious,
His hallucinogenic movement dream-like.
I copied his graceful dance,
still hiding behind an old old tree.
My bare feet still damp from the coolness of a nearby stream.
My hands clasped tightly,
The tip of my tongue in the corner of my mouth,
deep in concentration.

My steps were puppet-like,
at first.
One gruelling pace at a time.
The rest came easily,
Flowing naturally like the never ending rivers of scarlet poppies,
That lay in carpets around our feet.
He saw me hiding behind the oak tree,
Then he took my hands in his,
guiding me into open spaces,
of red,
away from the prison of my own making.

We danced with the accompaniment
Of blackbirds chattering.
The intense black centres of the poppies,
watching, weeping for our happiness.
Their tissue-like petals,
hot from the morning sun,
fell in circles around our dancing feet.
How we laughed into the blueness of the sky.
It had been a long grey winter alone.

Poem by Cherry Harris

*Help us to be ever
faithful gardeners of the
spirit, who know that
without darkness nothing
comes to birth, and with-
out light nothing flowers.*

- May Sarton

After reading the lovely poetry shared here, I was inspired to try to flip the way Cherry Harris uses poems so beautifully to paint with words and instead, try to paint poems. These paintings were already in the process of becoming part of a new "Secret Garden" series so it was sweet synchronicity to "collaborate" with Cherry by letting the essence of these poems infuse the final layers of the painting shared below. I was working with canvases that I'd painted ages ago and didn't love when I decided to collage old seed packets that I had saved (after planting them) onto the old imagery. They went through a few more layers with paint and stencils. Then, when I was about to add botanical details with paint pens, I decided to read Cherry's poetry. It was amazing how aspects harmonized! The painting below even had a bit of a dancing girl still peeking through from the original layer! Serendipity? Then, I thought it would be fun to browse the other contributions for inspiration. I wonder if you can see the various influences if you look after reading all of the content! More 'secrets' from this series to be shared in upcoming blog post. ♡ - Julia



"Painted Lady" Art Above by Julia Osterc

Flower Power... with Julia Osterc & Kerri Aab

Maybe it's the "open" intention that is part of my morning prayer for the day that I'm grateful to be "thriving, true, open, and free, happy and healthy... in harmony with joy and ease." However it may come to be, the synchronicity in life has been astounding lately! I've always felt drawn to natural remedies and have felt quite disappointed over the years that I didn't learn more about herbal medicine growing up as a natural part of cultural education... maybe I've felt the void where a medicine man/woman would have been in a smaller tribal culture. My parents were avid gardeners with huge vegetable gardens on the hippie dirt farm where I was born and later, plenty of tropical fruit in their small jungle like garden after moving to the Florida Keys. Yet, they were learning as they went and had no wealth of herbal wisdom to pass on. I am very thankful for the passion, love, and respect for nature that they did pass on!

I've recently started doing a bit of research.. barely glimpsing a peek into nature's vast medicine treasure chest! Since starting to invite this kind of information, it seems to be flowing towards me from many directions. I have an online art friend, Painted Jaybird, that recently introduced me to some lovely essential oils. Last year, one of my online art course instructors, Alena Hennessy, introduced me to the world of flower essences. Last summer, we made our own sweet rose water from the delightful blooms that grow by our back porch (which we know are not sprayed with anything that we wouldn't want to eat!).

I've recently met another online friend, Kerri Aab, that is a Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner for Bach flower essence remedies! Wow, the internet enables such a wealth of both information and amazing new connections with people around the world. I love being able to type in a particular flower and learn so much online. I've been doing just that while creating the "Secret Garden" mixed media art series. The little butterflies contain messages about the various flower essences.

Continued on the following page...



Photograph Above by Julia Osterc



"Old Fashion Blooms" Art Above by Julia Osterc



"Wild Wishes" Art Below by Julia Osterc

I was curious about the dandelion flower essence since the Thrive True logo has a dandelion in it, my way of incorporating wild wonderful wishful thinking. According to various websites "The soul needing Dandelion flower essence feels a natural intensity and love for life. This flower essence helps foster harmony with others... As tension is released the soul feels inner ease and balance, allowing spiritual forces to flow through the body in a dynamic, effortless way." and "Dandelion is alchemy in a bottle."

Wow! That is so in tune with the "ease" intention/word I chose for the year and the wish that we may thrive in harmony! I purchased my first flower essence earlier this year and checked the bottle after researching this. Sure enough, it has dandelion in the mix!

Still, I'm hesitant to trust all of the information on the internet. My son and I were just discussing it this morning while wondering why bagels have holes. I gave him my hypothesis and said he could look it up online. He said there are probably lots of possible answers online and that we wouldn't know for sure which is the actual one. Hence, it is wonderful to be learning with people that have actual experience with this stuff. In addition to being a Bach Flower Practitioner, Kerri is also an active Reiki practitioner. She does generous morning group Reiki sessions that I participate in (this is a gift that she offers to anyone that would like to participate from her website, seedtoblossom.com; more info in her bio on the contributors page). One of the recent morning emails she sent to the group felt as if it were sent just for me! It was so in synch with something I've been reminding myself this entire month! I've been focusing on embracing my "sweet" and "silly" and not being so serious! Those are 2 adjectives that people have often used to describe me and I used to resist because I wasn't sure they were 'professional' enough. Over the past several months, I've been embracing that energy as part of what makes me authentically me. I immediately replied to Kerri's email to ask if I could have her permission to share that morning's insights with the dear readers of this e-zine offering and thankfully, she said yes. Enjoy this fun little exploration into a beautiful blooming garden full of good medicine!

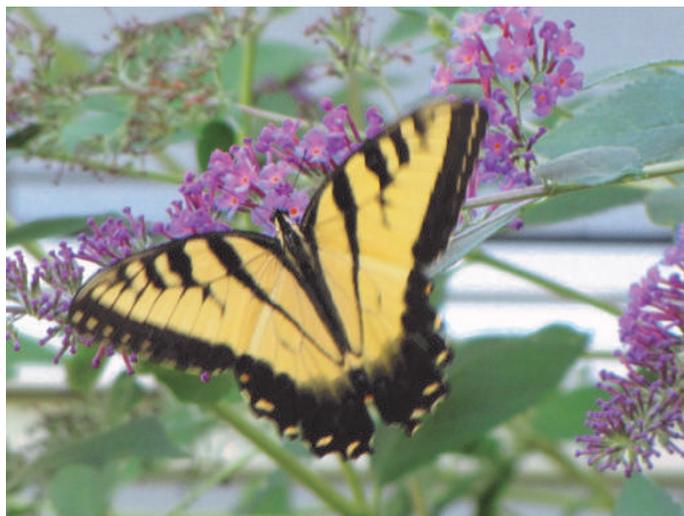


Photo by Julia Osterc - Taken in my garden, which I don't think has any petunias - yet! I love that when I looked online about petunias, another thing it said was "for map-makers." That lends itself so well to the theme that has naturally infused this June e-zine: enjoying the journey!

Pretty petunias prance politely in purple petunia patches

Ok, friends, I think this week's sleep deprivation has finally caught up with me! When I tuned into the group energy this morning, the silly little rhyme-y tongue twister above is what started playing over and over in my head.

Pretty petunias prance politely in purple petunia patches

At first, I resisted this as a legitimate message, and simply passed it off as my tired brain playing with me. But as the session went on, images of purple petunias flooded my mind's eye, along with dancing petunia flower fairies chanting this tongue twister in a sing song sort of way. Resist as I may (and boy did I ever!), I ended up laughing out loud at how silly, fun and child-like it all was.

By the end of our session, the energy of the group was light and buoyant and silly, and right before I closed out, I concretely heard:

Don't take things so seriously! Not everything has to be deeeeeeeep. Life can be joyful and silly, you know!

Aaaaaah... there it is.

All these petunias showed up to get me to laugh, let down my "serious woman sending healing Reiki" persona and remember to be silly and actually ENJOY life.

Got it.

So that's the message I share with you all today -

Be silly!

Have fun!

Prance through some petunias if you need!

Let your hair down!

Dance in the rain!

Chant that tongue twister 5 times fast (I dare you!)

Pretty petunias prance politely in purple petunia patches

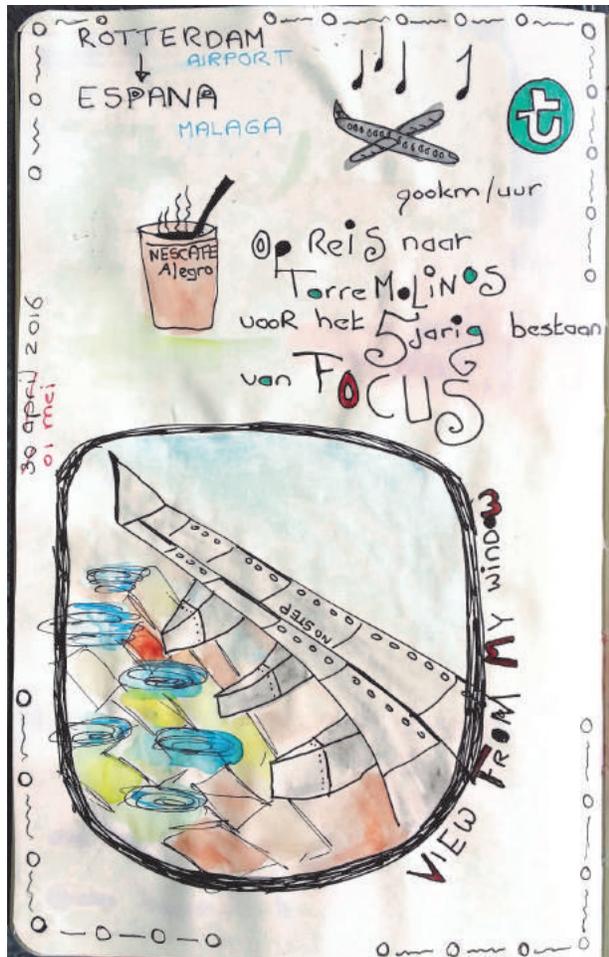
Allow joy and fun and silliness to flow to you and through you today, by whatever means necessary.

Additionally - the flower essence Petunia is helpful for: "creative visualisation and inspiration, for the dreamweavers. This essence allows the realisation that if you can dream it, you can have it. It brings a sense of wonder, puts dreams within reach, imparts the ability to dream the future, ponder the possibilities of optimal futures, bringing an inner knowing that there are no limits and that everything is possible in a self-generated reality."

So friends, dream your dreams, ponder the wonders of the Universe and go have some silly, old fashioned fun today! You won't regret it. I petunia pinky swear! 😊

xoxo Kerri

Joy in the Journey...



journey
jour-ney (jūr'nī), n., pl. -neys, s., -neyed, -neying.
 —n. 1. a course of travel from one place to another, esp. by land. 2. a distance traveled, or suitable for traveling, in a specified time: a day's journey. —v.t. 3. to make a journey; travel. [ME *journey*, t. OF *m. jorner* a day's time, ult. *der. L. diurnus* of the day, daily] —**jour-ney-er**, n. —**Syn.** 1. excursion, jaunt; tour; expedition; pilgrimage. See trip.
jour-ney-man (jūr'nī'man), n., pl. -men. 1. one who has served his apprenticeship at a trade or handicraft, and who works at it for another. 2. Obs. one hired to do work for another usually for a day. [*f. journey* a day's work (obs.) + *MAN*]
jour-ney-work (jūr'nī'wŭrk'), n. the work of a journeyman.
jo-vi-al (jō'vī-əl), adj. 1. endowed with or characterized by a hearty, joyous humor or a spirit of good-fellowship. 2. (cap.) of or pertaining to the god Jove or Jupiter. [*L. s. Jovialis* of Jupiter (in astrology the planet is regarded as exerting a happy influence)] —**jo'vi-al-ly**, adv. —**jo'vi-al-ness**, n.
 —**Syn.** 1. merry, jolly, convivial, gay. **JOVIAL**, **JOCOSE**, **JOCULAR**, **JOCUND** agree in referring to someone who is in a good humor. **JOVIAL** suggests a hearty, joyous humor; a *social* person. **JOCOSE** refers to that which causes laughter; it suggests someone who is playful and gives to jesting; with *jocose* and *comical* *sens.* **JOCULAR** means humorous, facetious, witty, and waggish; *jocular* enough to keep up the spirits of all around him. **JOCUND**, now a literary word, suggests a cheerful, light-hearted, and sprightly gaiety; glad and jocund company. —**Ant.** 1. saturnine, morose, gloomy, staid.
jo-vi-al-ty (jō'vī-əl-ē-tē), n. state or quality of being jovial; merriment; jollity.
joy (jōi), n. 1. an emotion of keen or lively pleasure arising from present or expected good; exultant satisfaction; great gladness; delight. 2. a source or cause of gladness or delight; a thing of beauty is a joy forever. 3. a state of happiness or felicity. 4. the manifestation of glad feeling; outward rejoicing; festive gaiety. —v.t. 5. to feel joy; be glad; rejoice. —v.i. 6. Obs. to gladden. [ME *joie*, t. OF *g. L. gaudia*, pl. of *gaudium* joy, gladness] —**Syn.** 1. rapture. 3. bliss. See pleasure.
joy-ance (jōi'əns), n. Archaic. joyous feeling; gladness.

By Carla Persoon

There is always a place to Journal.

Whenever I go on vacation by car, I always take a big bag with art supplies. I draw, cut and glue from folders, use tickets and whatever is available.

This May we went with our pop choir to Spain by plane and I only took a journal, some markers, glue, scissors, a bit of watercolor and an aqua brush. I made some simple drawings on the beach or at the hotel balcony.

It doesn't have to be ART, as long as you have fun!

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

- Marcel Proust



5 mei
 Met Cora, Irene, Meredith en Tincke
 naar de botanische tuin



en bij een
 markt voor
 5 euro
 lekker
 gelunchd



Alle duifjes op het strand
 sjalalie sjalalala
 Nou die liepen in het zand
 sjalalalie sjalalala
 En er was geen
 stukje brood
 sjalalalie sjalalala
 Dus ze visten naast de boot
 sjalalalie sjalalala

My love for nature
 By Carla Persoon

I love the rain
 when I am inside looking out

I love the cold
 when I am warmed by a fire

I love the snow
 when the sun is shining

I love the wind
 blowing around the house

I love the thunder and lightning
 roaring and lighting up the night

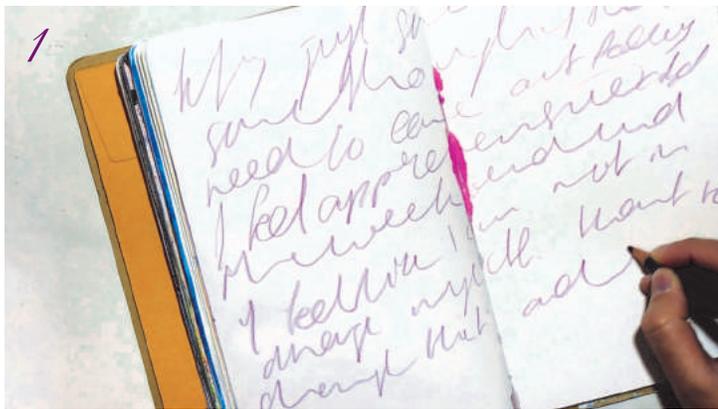
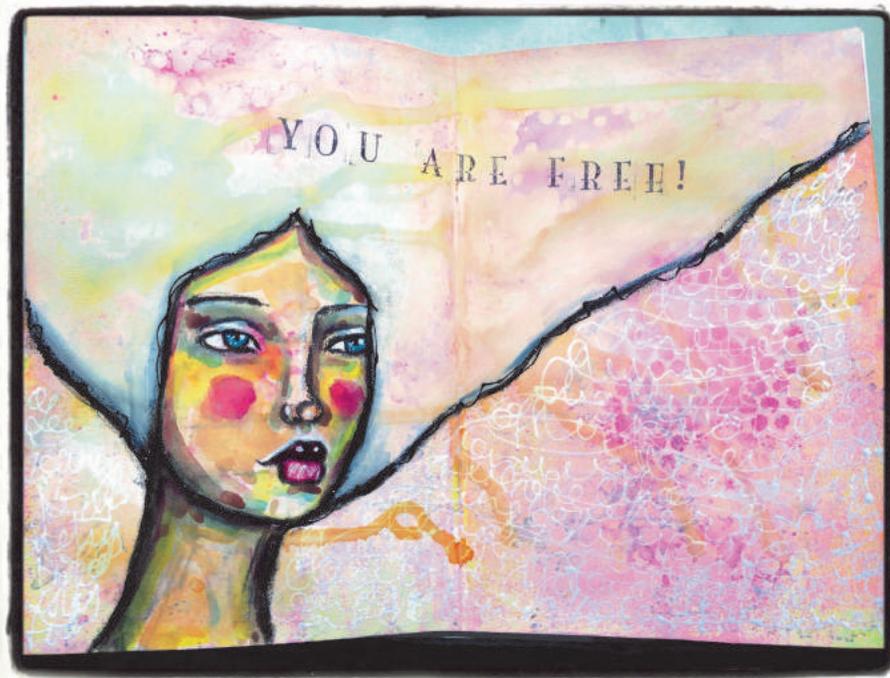


Allowing for Everything...

By Iris Fritschi-Cussens

To me summer feels like a culmination. In spring my mind and body awaken from my wintery hibernation, my life takes on a certain sense of ease and the energy rises until midsummer. It's one of my favourite feelings ever. As someone who struggles with winter depression, and depression in general, having reprieve and feeling positive always feels like a huge gift.

I think you can see this in my art. My art has a lightness recently in the way it looks and also how it feels to create. But it is not a fake veneer of pretty happiness. The way I approach my art is to allow for everything. All the feelings are allowed both heavy and light, sad and happy. That way the creation feels true to who I really am: a complex person with a range of emotions.



If that resonates with you I think you will enjoy the following art journaling method that incorporates expressing your feelings, playing with art supplies and making a pretty page.

(Picture 1)

Start by writing down your thoughts. Scribble illegibly so even you can't read what you have written. Try and really let go, write down anything that comes into your mind whether it's important or trivial, don't censor yourself.



(Picture 2)

Using a brayer and acrylic paint cover up the writing in a symbolic letting go. Because the writing is illegible you can let bits peek through so it adds to the interesting background.

(Picture 3)

Play with ink sprays. Spray and let them pool and drip, blot with a paper towel if needed. Pick colours that speak to you. I used Dylusions ink sprays in Funky Fuchsia and Pure Sunshine.



(Picture 4)

Sketch a face with a Stabilo All pencil and activate with a water brush.



*Be free all worthy spirits, and stretch
yourselves, for greatness and for height.*

- George Chapman

virtue, etc. — **worth-while** (wŭrth/hwil') *adj.* Sufficiently important to occupy the time; of enough value to repay the effort. — **worth-while/ness** *n.*
wor-thy (wŭr/thā) *adj.* -thi-er, -thi-est 1. Possessing worth or value; deserving of respect or honor. 2. Having such qualities as to be deserving of or adapted to some specified thing; suitable; followed by *of* (rarely *for*) or sometimes by an infinitive: He is *worthy* of our praise. — *n.* **pl. -thies** 1. A person of eminent worth. 2. A person or character of local note; a humorous usage. [ME *wurthi*, *worthis*] — **wor-thi-ly** *adv.* — **wor-thi-ness** *n.*
-worthy *combining form* 1. Meriting or deserving: *trust-worthy*. 2. Valuable as; having worth as: *newsworthy*. 3. Fit for: *seaworthy*. [OE *wyrthe* *worthy*]
wot (wot) Present tense, first and third person singular, of **WIT**.



(Picture 5)

Add shading with watercolours. Dry in between layers to get a blotchy watercolour effect.

(Picture 6)

If it speaks to you, you can create tears by letting ink drip down.

(Picture 7)

Paint the hair white and use letter stamps to add a phrase that speaks to you. For me it will usually be a word that jumped out at me during the writing in step 1.

Iris offers more tutorials and online courses at: <http://iris-impressions.com>



Falling into herself...



["Warrior Within"](#) Art Above by Julia Osterc - She is dedicated to survivors of abuse, to those that have battled disease, to those fighting for sanity, to those overcoming grief, to the warrior within each of us.

Sweet Synchronicity keeps surprising me again and again. I read the poem shared on this page soon after having a wonderful vision about a priestess! It was amazing to read Laura's words that felt so in tune with the vision (more about that on the following page thanks to Laura's words that have helped give me courage to tell the story). I immediately asked her if I could share her poem in this offering, and I'm so glad that she said yes! She has such a bold way with words! She bravely speaks her truth in a way that stirs something in my own sweet heart and often feels like the voice of courage in each of us as well. I've had the blessing of collaborating with Laura a few times now, including having the above painting published in her book, [Warrior Soul](#) (available on amazon.com). May we all have the courage to fall into our true selves, Julia

A Woman Falling
- Poem by Laura Probert

A woman
falling into herself
finally owning her worth
body, mind and soul...
this woman is powerful.
She breathes love
sweats courage
eats passion
and drinks bliss.
A woman
nourished by her own light
stoked by her own sensuality
filled up by her own inspiration...
this woman is unstoppable
She sees joy
hears opportunity
feels everything
and lives on those edges.
A woman
coming fiercely alive
by the sheer ache of her soul
decides to listen...
this woman is a priestess.
She casts spells
creates magic
knows things
and follows her own rules.
A woman
jumping off the ledge
free falling into uncertainty
quickly learns to fly...
this woman is brave.
She recognizes doubt
feels fear
calls out shame
and chooses love.
A woman
becoming a warrior
no longer afraid to speak
her wild, real voice...
this woman is here.
She wants rapture
demands respect
takes no shit
and she's ready
to change the world.

Laura Probert, MPT is a holistic physical therapist, published author, inspirational teacher, poet, and black belt in Tae Kwon Do. Learn more about Laura from the contributor page or visit her online at: www.LauraProbert.com

Embracing a Vision, Creating Ceremony & Celebrating a Sacred Circle...

with Julia Osterc

This is the story (or rather, these are my notes as jotted down the morning after) of the vision about the priestess I mentioned on the prior page that occurred shortly before I read Laura's powerful poem! I've experienced so much synchronicity like this recently with other kindred spirits due to similar themes in poems, stories, art, and online courses that it feels amazing to imagine a vast holy consciousness/being at play... yet, when I go to the local Walmart here in the ancient Southern hills (where North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia meet) and look around the parking lot, I imagine most of the people might think I'm a bit "out there!" Still, I feel drawn to open up, as if sitting around a fire together at night under a blanket of stars, sharing stories with one another... so here is a peek into my journal/journey from May 10, 2016 (originally handwritten while outside):

Wow! I experienced the most moving 'vision' I've ever had last night before falling asleep. I was reading the book "[Circle of Stones](#)" (by Judith Duerk) about mothering and the last page I read for the night was about a Great Mother with open arms holding you. After turning the light out, I invited her loving guidance and found myself asking for her help and volunteering and accepting a "call" to be a priestess of sorts, which felt quite unexpected! That term is not one I was really comfortable with, yet that is what came... maybe it's simply a way of being, with love and reverence. This evolved to a kind of ritual/ceremony/celebration... all in the vision/imagination at night as I lay in the dark. I was being 'given' a circle of stones or temple sort of virtual space to hold and host with 4 stones in the center representing family/home/seasons/directions/elements and creating a mandala/medicine circle honoring/loving/inviting/nurturing all those beings that will be part of it... prompted by my willingness to hold such a space. Yet, it was Great Mother that brought the women to be part of it because I don't want to push or pull anyone into it, nor do I have the energy or desire to go find them. Hence, I asked for help so that those that will be glad and grateful to do so will find me and the circle I'm willing and able to host... so that we may share part of our journeys together - to explore, play, create, learn, and grow together. The vision continued to get more and more elaborate with my face being painted and mentors, Carrie-Anne Moss (guide and hostess of the Fierce Grace Collective I participate in) and Alena Hennessy (artist and guide for the Year of Painting and Year of Healing courses I participate in), each holding my hands, escorting, and welcoming me to a bigger circle of peers and taking Mother Earth's water, soil, air, and fire and lighting my candle from hers. I also saw and heard myself letting anyone go that didn't "belong" in the circle with a blessing - that the "long time sun shine upon them, all love surround them, and the pure light within guide the way," and thanking mentors with the same blessing, accepting this vision with the same blessing upon myself, and welcoming fellowship with the same blessing and open arms and heart. In the vision, I was being given a shimmering cloak of light and wearing a daisy headdress and making a mandala/medicine wheel with daisy petals that "love me" and stones, seeds, feathers, and mica and eating rose petals taking in the heart of Mother and blooming with protective thorns. I accepted the circle and role of priestess/medicine woman with a "Holy Yes"... declaring and realizing that I could do so while still having enough time, love, and energy to nurture self, family, and home and host/hold this space with grace and ease WITH Great Mother's help and blessing. I saw myself going through the ages and Great Mother, too, from childhood through adult to holding a frail hand (like my mom's at her death, which disturbed me at first) to seeing her grow strong and transform and fly. I felt held in a sacred womb. I wondered if having boys helps me to seek balance between masculine/feminine energy... harmony. ♡

I woke early to bird song and even saw early sun rising and felt a shift. Then, my husband reached over to me and it was almost like a confirmation that yes, I can be a wife and lover and mother and also hold this circle. I also envisioned during the night that the women brought to the circle will gladly and gratefully participate, support and exchange energy, reciprocate financially so that I can make/have a living doing this with plenty of love, time, joy, exploration, money, provision, energy, generosity, etc... enough. I also realized that I don't actually want 100K+ 'followers'... rather an intimate, appreciative, respectful circle of influence, fellowship, communion, connection. This morning, I thought that letting my light shine brighter won't dim others, especially mentors, hence will be passing it on and paying it forward in some way. This is why it is important to me to ask and trust Mother Energy that other souls will and are finding this circle and that I can still be part of other circles and both give and receive, facilitate and follow, share and grow... that weaving my own version of a tapestry/web... creating own recipe from experience is okay and don't need to be a 'guru' or strict with tradition... that part of my offering is actually to mix up own medicine from resources, stories, and experiences I've had so it will be a blend of influences, inspiration, and experience, infused with influences of mentors and ancestors, visions and dreams, needs, hopes, stories, and environment, etc... my part within the Great Song, harmonizing with others. Also, envisioned with each exhale and all that I give, must follow with inhale, receiving back nourishment, energy, sustenance, life... to keep circle going healthy and in balance with deep breaths, lots of in to go with out and also to be in tune with natural rhythms, rest with night after each day, with seasons, etc. When making mandala, I only put the "love me's" in and sent the "love me not's" on down the creek to find home with sun blessing.

I chose to re-create the vision a few days later as best I could (video at: thrivetrue.com/sacred-circle-ceremony-celebration/)... honoring the power of creative ceremony and communion... giving love and attention to this vision and people that share this journey with me. Wild Wishes, Julia



Sacred Circles & Stones... with Julia Osterc

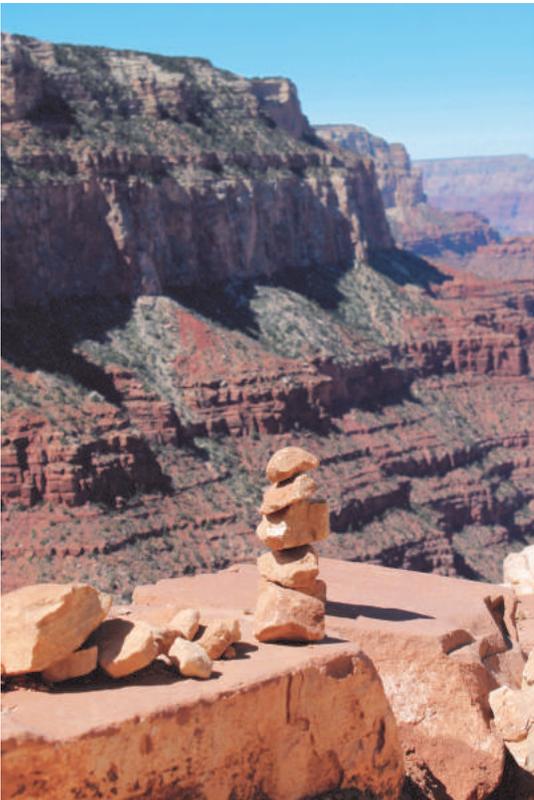
○ ● ○ The sweet Sacred Circles & Stones watercolor series and upcoming July Thrival course exploring Sacred Circles were both partly inspired by the stone structures we've often seen and created on family vacations/journeys (our sort of vision quests). The stones seem to encourage a zen-like simplicity and serene energy/way of being. ● ○ ●

The paintings were created while going with the flow and singing a prayer/blessing (that I recently learned came from lyrics written by Mike Heron of the Incredible String Band and were adopted by Kundalini yogis): "May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide your way on." ♡



Photo above by Julia Osterc taken at Ruby Beach in Washington state U.S.A.
All Art on this page by Julia Osterc

Photo Below & Upper Right Corner taken in Grand Canyon National Park by Julia Osterc



Being Present... with Julia Osterc



Ah... Being Present... Something I wish to be, yet often find elusive! Maybe this will be one of the monthly Thrivival themes to explore in the future since I focus on ideas that I find worthwhile for myself... things I want to explore, re-consider, create, learn about, be, etc. It is something I've written about a bit on the blog over the past few years and a tag I use often on Instagram, #beingpresent. Yet, I find writing and posting sometimes feels like the opposite!

I've recently started reading a book from our lovely library called "[Presence](#)" by Amy Cuddy (Book Club/Recommendations/Reviews seem to be another small part of the monthly Thrivival offerings!). The stance on the cover of the book (that she calls the Wonder Woman pose) reminds me of the image shared above that my husband took when we were on a cross country trip in Badlands National Park in 2013. It was quite a journey! Amy Cuddy's book is really more about an inner journey of sorts thus far. I'm only on page 27, yet I've already found it valuable food for thought. She uses the term "presence" a bit differently than the way I've often intended it and written about. I welcome and appreciate new perspectives that enable me to broaden mine!

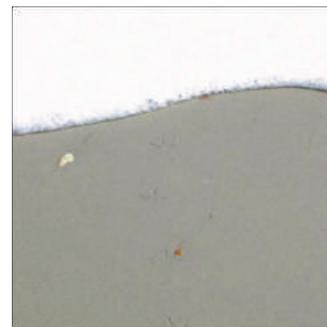
I'm also reminded of a blog post I wrote last year after another family vacation. Reprinted from that blog post: [The Present](#) Time in Rodanthe - Outer Banks, North Carolina, Sept 2015. We made it through the stormy, sandy, flooded road (Hwy 12) to a very windy evening over the Atlantic Ocean for our first Night in Rodanthe! The next day, one seemingly simple question went into my cluttered and chaotic mind.

Thankfully, the rain cleared enough to get our toes in the sand. I had a short time on the beach to myself (husband walking way ahead and kids not down to the beach yet). It was like a little artist's date (as Julia Cameron suggests in her [Artist's Way](#) book) or what I prefer to think of as little vision quests. While enjoying the waves (still raging a bit from the storm so I was staying high on

the beach) and browsing for treasures, a woman asked, "what are you looking for?" I said lightly, "pretty things". She said she wondered if I was looking for anything specific and showed me the ones with purple that she likes. We chatted briefly and she walked on - leaving her initial question rolling around in my head, "what are you looking for?" I thought: nature's gifts... then, presents/presence... then, 'the present!' I was looking for both presents and presence! Though as soon as I started pondering the question, I lost touch with the present - that I hadn't even realized I was looking for! Thankfully, the waves soon lulled me back to "the present" for the rest of the time on the beach.

A few days later, with waves calming, I was again giving thanks to nature and the ocean and beach for whatever gifts they gave. A man walked by and slowed a bit to comment, "a lot of broken ones" and continue on his way. Another statement that crashed around in my head like the waves washing over my feet. I had quickly replied, "It's okay. I'm going to make wind chimes." Yet, as he walked away, I thought, "They may be broken, but I see art and hear music!" I loved the worn smoothness, the interesting shapes and colors, and the sounds the shells made as the waves pulled them back home on the way back to sea. The possible similarity to people is not lost on me. We may be broken, yet we may still be and make beautiful art and music.

I'm reminded of another book that has a place in our home and in my heart: [Gift from the Sea](#) by Anne Morrow Lindburgh. I don't recall if she had similar thoughts. I know I'm grateful for the gifts from nature and the week on a little stretch of land off the coast... an island and the vastness of the ocean. May we all be open to the present in the journey. ♡



Today is gracefully mine...

Today hope visited me
From a tiny pocket of courage
It came from the place of Nowhere
And lightly rested on my shoulder
with ease and delight
Offering me my lilac life
I had once dreamed of
To take in the essence of untethered
beauty that had gone from my view
To smell the scent of honest words,
inhaling truth to restore my soul
And to glance wistfully among the
sparkly dance of forever thoughts
Afraid to ask how long hope could stay
I kept the worry of it drifting off
tucked haphazardly in my shoe
With each step I felt
the pinch of fretful wonder
But in those moments
when I sat still
Knowing that this,
my deepest desire
may leave at a moment's notice
Or vanish into the vapors
of unknown space and time
With no warning and no farewells
I accepted the visitation
with no expectation
for commitment of longevity
My breathing slower,
my thoughts more precise
Vibrant colors
now took the place
of grays and tans,
browns and blacks
My tastes awakened
to the flavors of here and now
My lips reminisced
the shape of a smile
And as I drifted
with hope precariously perched
on my shoulder...I whispered...
Never mind tomorrow...
today is gracefully mine

Poem By Dana C Overman



"Hearlight Angels" Art on this page by Julia Osterc





"A Visit From Above" Art on this page by Ingrid Ieva

To love is human.

To feel pain is human.

*Yet to still love
despite the pain
is pure angel.*

- Rumi

*A sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
A sheltering Angel,
so nothing can harm you.*

~ Irish Blessing

What do you do?

By Julia Osterc

I have been pondering how to explore what I mean when I say 'thrive true' and why I started using the terms thrivalist and thrival. I remember when our boys were learning to read shortly after we moved here 6 years ago. A book my husband was reading was sitting on a table in the living room and I heard my son sounding out the words of the book title: "wa wa what ta to d do wa wa when the sh sh shit hits the fan." Hm....

He had probably never heard the '4 letter word' spoken and didn't know the meaning. I don't even recall what prompted it. I think it may have been a homeschooling book since we were considering (and chose to) homeschool our twin boys. They are great readers now, by the way! :-)

When my husband and I started looking to move out of South Florida, I searched online for "survival real estate." That had a domino effect bringing up survivalist websites, articles, books, and podcasts. We already had a tropical garden raising a bit of fruit for the sheer joy and yumminess of it and those survivalist resources encouraged me to plant vegetables and get our first little silky bantam chickens in our small suburban back yard (we actually moved the chickens with us and I'll save that story for another time!).

Six years ago, we bought a small homestead in the southern most part of the Smoky/Blue Ridge Mountains where we currently live. We planted several fruit trees that first year in an attempt to have a productive (healthy and delicious!) permaculture garden. We put a wood stove in our basement to have heat if the power were to go out for an extended period in the winter. Even though we had city water (which is actually pretty rare where we live way out in the country!), we paid a huge amount to have a well dug (almost 600 feet deep to hit water here in the mountains!). All of these things have been real blessings... when the bugs, mold, or late freeze don't ruin the fruit, it's wonderful to pick blueberries just outside the kitchen door, enjoy the taste of sweet juicy peaches and other homegrown fruit. I love huddling around the wood stove (it has lovely glass doors) with my boys in the winter (even though we've been fortunate to not lose power), and I much prefer the pure taste of the deep well water to chlorinated water!

Yet, there is another side to most of the 'survivalist' resources that can feed "what if" based paranoia, dwell on self defense, and focus energy in ways that don't feel particularly healthy to me. That is what led me to shift my energy and intentions to 'thriving'. I've also been/am a 'survivor' of many things that I wouldn't prefer, such as being molested by my grandfather, substance abuse, date rape, self pity and confusion, helpless when brother-in-law died from heroine overdose the month

Listen to the Music, Do a little Dance, Make a little Love, Sing for the Laughter, Sing for the Tears... Sing for Today...



before he was to be the best man in our wedding, fear and wondering if twin boys would live to actually take a breath on their own when they were born 3 months early and guilt that I couldn't keep them in my womb, overwhelming grief when my mom died from ovarian cancer at the age of 62 (I was 34) and insomnia off and on since then. I don't share to compare wounds and scars (there are sadder stories and my perspective is bound to be biased based on my environment, education, and experience), but to acknowledge the painful aspects of life. I don't deny the pain. Yet, I'd rather celebrate the sweet than choke on the bitter. I would prefer to thrive in spite of pain.

To me, thriving isn't about money in a bank account, though enough to live healthy and generously is definitely nice! It's about seeing the beauty, magic, and wealth in our daily lives... the sweet gentle smile on my face when a butterfly glides by, coffee on the porch while listening to the birds sing, taking time to smell the roses even though they have thorns, watching raindrops make ripples in the little zen goldfish pond that we dug by hand when we first moved in to have water nearby, planting seeds and homegrown fruit and also being grateful for the grocery store! Taking time to walk in the woods or park, fun fingerprinting even though I'm 40 years old, the sound of my baby nephew's giggles when I blow raspberries on his tummy (reminding me of that same joy with my boys long ago), my husband's music filling the air, my preteen twin boys rolling their eyes and trying to hide the smiles when their momma acts silly and goofy! Hugs and holding hands, late night conversations with family (friends and family) when we lose track of time, reading stories to my toddler nieces, warmth of a fire in winter, the feeling of moss under my barefeet, witnessing the magic of fireflies making the air and trees sparkle on summer nights, exploring our world with my boys whether nearby or afar and learning together, playful painting with my nieces, connecting with kindred spirits across the globe in online groups, warm showers, clean water to drink, being able to laugh at and with myself and life, letting go of pity, guilt, and grief as best I can, pausing to watch the trees dance in the wind and smell the rain on the way, and sometimes, even cleaning up shit - literally, as in changing diapers or cleaning

the chicken coop, which is not my favorite job, admittedly, and seeing its value as rich fertilizer for the garden... writing this with my hand in a journal on the porch before typing it so that I can look up and see the bright blue of an indigo bunting sharing this moment with me, having clear nostrils after spring allergies! Doing a 'madlibs' game with my boys inviting laughter to our homeschool, family time with no television in the living room, petting a purring cat, and the way my boys hearts melt when said beloved cat is near... dewdrops on the strawberry leaves in the morning, singing my heart out playing rockband or driving in the car, dancing in my kitchen, remembering the sparkle in my mom's eyes and the joy in her smile, having space in our calendar for creativity, reverence, reflection, and rest... seeing with eyes of wonder, choosing to breathe deep in the present moment... the art of living.

I'm stronger than I ever wanted to be on the inside and thankfully, strong enough on the outside to plant trees, dig ponds, and walk these ancient hills. I don't want to be the kind of light that hurts with its intensity and brightness and leaves anyone feeling sunburn! I want to be the kind of light that glows in the dark and attracts with its song and dance of soft, flickering flames and cozy warmth, the kind that feels good to be near, the kind that can spark another healthy fire to spread the light and warmth when & where needed and appreciated.

I had been waiting to finish writing this... part of my intention for this year was to go with ease... to push less, to trust grace and find the flow. I'm glad I focused on the other pages first because after a recent dream, now it is flowing forth naturally. In the dream, I was at an old favorite oceanside restaurant in the Florida Keys with my dad and family and ran into an ex-boyfriend (I sure hope he is as happy as he appeared in the dream!). He introduced me to his wife and soon one of them asked the question, "so what do you do for a living?" I hesitated thinking about it... because I think people usually mean, 'what is your job' or 'what do you get paid to do?' I have been uncomfortable with this question for a while now. I used to reply, "I homeschool my boys." After pausing (still in the dream though starting to wake up - symbolism noted!), I thought that I didn't really want to reply with "artist," "author," and "guide," though

of course, I would love it if all that actually paid the bills! I remember a woman I once met replying to a man that asked that same question, (with a thick southern accent) "I'm finding myself!" That is the only time I ever met her and that has stuck with me for years now. The next thing that came to me was "breathe" and oh, I like that one! Yes, "breathe and wonder and love." Now, this feels more like it. Then, thinking about what my husband does, the typical reply would probably be that he is a software engineer and yes, that is his occupation on tax forms. Yet, he does so much more, including fill our home with beautiful music (and since we have twins, he changed his share of diapers once upon a time as well). The more I reconsidered the question, "what do you do" as posed in the dream and the possible replies, the better I felt. It seems that an unexpected reply like, "I breathe and wonder, create and explore, dream and love" is more likely to nurture connection... especially since we all do those things in some ways.

This is the kind of wondering/writing prompt that you might find as part of one of the monthly thrival online course/retreat offerings - Reconsidering a question like that and re-visioning the reply from a new perspective. I suppose it was this same question that led me to use the term "thrivalist." Though I had already used the term on my instagram profile for a while, I remember hearing someone suggest that if what we want to do doesn't seem to exist yet, to create the job/role we want. That led me to ponder the idea more thoroughly and revise some of my online efforts in an attempt to better communicate and clarify, for both myself and others, what it is I "do" and while artist, author, facilitator, hostess, cheerleader... are all part of it (along with video editing, web developer, book keeping, photography, scanning, graphic design, networking, marketing, editor, supply management, shipping, taking out the trash, etc!)... I really love the new perspective and possible reply that this dream suggested... I breathe and wonder, create and explore, dream and love, sing and dance, spend time in nature, hug and hold hands, play and discover, hurt and hope, pray and nurture, learn and grow, celebrate and rest, listen to the Great Song of creation! This is really what the thrivals are about... creatively tending to mind, body, & spirit and doing my best to enjoy the journey... travel companions welcome!



"Life Boat" Mixed Media Art Above by Julia Osterc

Wild Wonderful Wishes, Deep Easy Breathing, Sweet Celebration, Healthy Harvests, Joy in the Journey, and Beautiful Blessings to you, Julia

*Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily,
Merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream...*

Contributors

This wouldn't have come to fruition without these magical beings! And, they've unleashed their generosity to give without any financial compensation for their participation! As contributor and poet, Laura Probert, once said to me, I like to think that collaboration multiplies the love and energy by like a zillion times! With a grateful heart, *Julia*



Dana Overman

Dana Overman writes from a personal place while advocating for those who face difficult economic, social, mental health and cultural challenges. Recognizing the need to thrive in her own creative world she chooses to reflect on the issues of life that are easily disregarded, forgotten, misunderstood or simply looked over.

You can find her creative works at www.danaovermanstudio.com



Laura Probert, MPT

Laura Probert, MPT is a holistic physical therapist, published author, inspirational teacher, poet, and black belt in Tae Kwon Do. She'll help you heal the stuff that gets in the way of you writing, creating and running your life and business like the brave healer you are. She's serious about integrating mind, body and soul as a journey to passion and power and it's her mission to show you how.

Find her books and programs at: www.LauraProbert.com



Carla Persoon

I'm Carla and I live in the Netherlands. I've always been a creative person. As a child my favorite presents were art supplies and that never stopped. I am addicted to art journaling and mixed media. Love to play with supplies and create all kinds of art. Because of my love of nature a lot of my work is nature inspired with animals and all kind of flowers.

Visit Carla at: www.carlapersoon.nl



Cherry Harris

Hello, I live on the West Coast of Wales here in the U.K. Home to our very own prestigious Dylan Thomas. I first became hooked on poetry at the age of 14 when a friend introduced me to it. I haven't stopped writing since. I have had two poems published and hope one day to have a novel see the light of day. I do lots of walking and it's usually out in nature when I am inspired. My favourite poets include Sylvia Plath, Emily Dickinson and Emily Bronte. Visit Cherry on Instagram: [@cherry_harris](https://www.instagram.com/cherry_harris)



Ingrid Ieva

Hi friends! I was raised in Chile, South America, and I moved to Canada in my early twenties. After raising my four children and completing a degree at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, I embarked on a spiritual journey in 2007. I've always been a creative person, who enjoys bringing to life the creative ideas that flow through my imagination, whether it is through writing or visual art. I enjoy painting intuitively, as it helps me connect with my Inner Self, my Soul. Visit Ingrid on Facebook: [Ingrid Ieva](https://www.facebook.com/IngridIeva)



Kerri Aab

Hi! I'm Kerri Aab - Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner and owner of Seed to Blossom. I'm thrilled to welcome you to the world of Bach flower remedies and be your guide on your journey to emotional health and wholeness. One on one consultations, custom blends and private trainings are available via internet or phone. I am also an active Reiki practitioner, IntenSati leader and Kundalini yogi.

Visit Kerri at: www.seedtoblossom.com

Life is not a solo act. It's a huge collaboration, and we all need to assemble around us the people who care about us and support us. - Tim Gunn



Kasha Glazebrook

Kasha Glazebrook is a self-taught artist who has been playing with paints since 2013. She lives with her husband and 8 year old daughter Lucy in lovely Costa Rica amongst the wild Toucans and Monkeys.

You can follow her creative journey on Instagram, where she posts art every day:

www.instagram.com/kashaglazebrook



Lucy Brydon

Lucy is an artist & art teacher with over 10 years experience living in the north east of Scotland. She teaches children & adults in various art forms. Her main love is monoprinting using a gelatin plate. "I love to create layers and texture in my work using natural materials and hand cut stencils. I am inspired by nature, the beautiful landscapes and light we have here in Scotland, and the interesting old buildings, doorways and castles. Lucy is currently developing a series of Gelli plate lessons! Visit Lucy at: <https://lucybrydonart.wordpress.com/>



Iris Fritschi-Cussens

Iris is a London-based **mixed media artist** and creative enabler. She lives in the heart of London with her beautiful family (husband, 2 boys & 1 cat).

She is passionate about mixed media art, art journaling and inspiring you to **be free** to create the way you are meant to create and **shine the way you are meant to shine!**

You can Visit Iris at:

<http://iris-impressions.com>



Julia Osterc

Artist, Brave Heart, Cheerleader, Co-Creator, Dreamer, Explorer, Farm Girl, Facilitator, Grateful Guide, Hostess, Medicine Weaver, Mystic, Mountain Momma, Rockband Singer, Sweet Sunshine, Thrivalist, Wild Woman

Getting in tune with my true nature, finding joy in the journey, and celebrating the sweet in a bittersweet life. ♡ Founder of Thrive True in memory of my mom's love for others, nature & life. Visit Julia at www.thrivetrue.com



Mary Pressel Cline

I am an illustrator and mixed media artist. I have been drawing, illustrating, painting, collaging, and creating all kinds of art since I was a child. I believe the world is always in need of a little lift and I try to sow seeds of compassion, joy, and gratitude through my art and what I put out into the world.

Visit Mary at

<http://www.mpcillustrations.com/>



"Sparkle On" Illustration Art
Above by Mary Pressel Cline

Seeds of Kindness...

There are so many ways we may find to celebrate nature, life, and generosity and to scatter seeds of kindness. Inspired by the [Art Abandonment Project](#), I've started leaving [inspirational postcards](#) in public places, such as restrooms, dressing rooms, doctor's waiting rooms, airplanes, and where ever else you may roam, leaving a trail spreading seeds of kindness and scattering sunny smiles. A short and simple sticky note might brighten someone's day. It's easy to make your own or you might buy some from an artist you like, planting seeds of support in addition to sprinkling seeds of kindness around.



www.thrivetrue.com



Know someone else that might enjoy this offering?

We'd be delighted if you choose to [share the link on social media](#) and add your breath to the wildflower wishes that we may thrive true together in harmony, scattering sweet smiles & soul food, grace & generosity, reverence & delight. ♡

www.thrivetrue.com