



PHOENIX RISING

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Winter 2024

An Interview with Samuel

channeled by Lea Schultz

What are your recommendations for avoiding concerns about aging, such as depression and even fear, and for approaching advanced age in a positive way?

Humans have a tendency to want to be older in every stage of life until they are older, and then they want to be younger. They're so hard to satisfy.

First, I would say that a whole lot of the problem with aging has to do with the slow debilitation of the human system. But you don't want to live forever in a human form, so it's a good thing it does degenerate.

But the second thing is that it doesn't have to be that way. Aging, as you know it, is more karma than it is genetics. Genetically, there is absolutely a component that says you're likely to live this many decades and you are very likely to have these kinds of illnesses. It's blueprint stuff. But really, if you have had a healthy, active life from your childhood—and I know a lot of young people have healthy, active lives, but then they give that up for thirty or forty years—but if you have had that all of your life, then at the end of life you would not be dealing with the karma of not taking care of the body very well.

The thing that really frustrates people is—as with so many things in life—you can smoke a pack of cigarettes a day for twenty years and when you quit, your body will rebuild. There are so many things like that. But a lifetime of abuse with diet

and movement and the way you think and the environment you live in, all of that is going to create a very debilitating set of conditions. And it's not like, well, when I'm fifty, I'll clean everything up and it'll be all right—which you perhaps could do with other things. So the guilt that comes with aging has a lot to do with regretting decisions made earlier. It stems from knowing what you have and have not done for yourself consistently throughout your life. There is a piece of you that says "Oops, bad decisions." And that guilt creates even more negative consequences.

How can guilt create impressions on the physical? I mean, guilt is a mental thing. So how can that affect the physical?

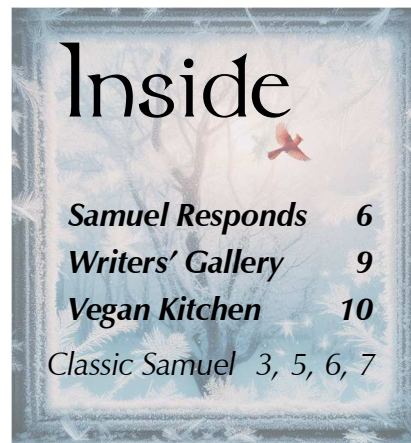
Well, I think you're being an editor and asking that for those who may not know. But the answer is, because the mind has a *profound* effect on the body, which is why part of what you want to keep consistently going on in your life are good mental attitudes and mental beliefs, because these have an effect. What you let in is going to have a lot to do with what shows up.

So don't be a pessimist.

Yes, and don't surround yourself with pessimists, because neither of those is helpful.

Even though aging is an effect of karma—which nobody wants to think about but is very much a major point—aging is also the ticket out for most people, not everybody. Aging is a natural process that is not meant to be painful. It's meant to be a float to the end, like a balloon that is slowly losing its helium. Balloons can last a very long time if that outer shell is doing well. There will definitely be a certain number of leaks, no matter what, but it's a gentle float rather than a rapid downward decline.

One of the things to remember



about aging is that the fear of it makes it worse. However, most people do not fear the aging; they fear the debilitation and the guilt or the shame that often comes with it, even if they're not fully cognizant that that is behind it. And you fear it because you're not living in your now. You are living in what was and getting angry at what is now. So you're resisting, and that process ages you even further.

Many people are afraid of becoming dependent, and that's very understandable. They see themselves as independent, capable, and therefore able to care for themselves, but the fact of it is, you're not, and you never have been from the moment you were born, and you never will be. How you feel about living in a society—and the U.S. is a real big one on this, though not all Western cultures are—in which elder wisdom is often ignored, aging is a shameful process, and relying on others means you have failed is a societal construct that needs to end.

Individual unity is not the same thing as rugged individualism or even a dependent unity. It's neither of those. Your ability to give and receive often shows up the most at the end of your life, and the way you have done that through your life often has a very large effect on having those who want to give to you.

If you're going to be living in a society that does not value the elderly, then you want to be sure that you take care of yourself mentally, emotionally, and physically throughout your life and that your heart has been open and freely giving and freely receiving throughout your life. Because, as I said in the beginning, karma is about aging, aging is about karma.

You mentioned in the last interview that people who are aging can get together to talk about it and share their concerns.

Anytime there is a group of people going through challenges, it's always helpful to have a group that can understand what's going on, bounce ideas around, and simply support each other through it, be it aging or illness or concerns about what the next month is going to bring. It's good. Community is based on unity.

One of the most frightening aspects of aging is



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the possibility of succumbing to dementia or Alzheimer's disease, which affect the basic awareness of who we are. How does Spirit continue to interact with a personality that is impaired in this way?

Anytime spirit is interacting with any version of your personality, it's not really easy. And if an individual is functioning with dementia, Alzheimer's or any other kind of neurodegenerative disease, it really isn't any harder for spirit than if you're not experiencing that.

The fact that somebody has forgotten who their children are does not mean that they do not have access to the spirit they are, even if it is maybe—rarely, but maybe—in an altered way. Your brain is not what your entity connects to, so it really doesn't matter spiritually.

Remember too, for many people these neurodegenerative diseases are in their blueprint. They have *chosen* them as a means of leaving or a way of communicating. Sometimes they even knowingly choose the disruption in their personal world—which is how I see such things—because it will make it easier to function outside of the body, outside of this dimensional structure. They want to ensure that they're going to have a point in their life in which they are able, while in form, to put their response to the disease into the Grid as well. So I don't see that as a great horror, because this life that is slowly being forgotten is only the tiniest part of your life. Forgetting those things doesn't mean they're gone.

At the November first-Sunday meeting you

stressed that Guardians need to maintain Divine Neutrality in the next few months and into 2024. How do our personal individual attitudes of neutrality positively affect world conditions?

First, if you've got views about neutrality, you're not being neutral. You're putting out expectations. So you do not want to be thinking that neutrality looks any particular way. Neutrality is a symptom, not a cause, and that's a lot of what's throwing people off.

Let me explain what I mean by that. You're looking at the world through rose-colored glasses, right? The rose color affects everything you see, doesn't it? And as long as it's there and unnoticed—and that's the important part—as long as it is unnoticed, you're not going to be able to be neutral, well, divinely neutral. You're only going to think you are. And the reason I said unnoticed is because if you know, "Alright, everything's looking a little bit pink, so I need to adapt to that. I need to adjust my thinking in that regard. Okay. So if I am wearing the glasses of Western society's beliefs about women, then, I need to adjust my thinking and let that go." Your *recognition* of the state you generally function in changes the function.

Not acting is not the same as Divine Neutrality. *Realizing* you don't need to act is Divine Neutrality. And the only reason you would decide you don't need to act is because you know what beliefs you

have behind that urge to act, and you choose to move or not, based on those beliefs.

Divine Neutrality isn't not seeing what's happening in the world. Divine Neutrality isn't not wanting it to be different. You live in the world; you will see it. Divine Neutrality is about recognizing that there are many more perspectives than the one you're stuck in at that moment, and, because of that, you're choosing not to act.

The Form grew up in San Antonio, and as a result of that, she absorbed tremendous amounts of Spanish, but she knows she can't have a conversation. So much of the world thinks that because they know a little bit, they've got it down, and that rules their action, their beliefs, their behavior. They think it's all that's needed. But Divine Neutrality moves you from the city center to the mountaintop, where the view is totally different. And when you recognize that different view, then you go back to the city center and you allow.

So it sounds very much like what you've said for many years: always remember that there's a greater weave, that what you see is a very limited perspective and it all gets woven into that greater weave.

Can you make it a conscious thing? "I will be divinely neutral."

You are wondering—correctly—if a conscious view is still a limited view, how can you attain that neutrality? But actually you can; it just doesn't mean you are. What I mean by that is, yes, by all means say, "I am choosing to function in Divine Neutrality here." It doesn't mean you're actually going to be functioning in Divine Neutrality right then at that moment. It does mean that you are consciously stepping away *into* neutrality and that is the start. The key is to be divinely neutral in the middle of the traffic jam, and that takes practice. Like I said, it is a symptom, not a cause.

Now, truthfully, it is a cause because you really do need to choose it. But it's like living love: I say to you, "You are here in this world for one purpose and that purpose is to live your love. Live love." And you think, oh, that's nice, that's easy. And you find out really quickly the thousand things a day that keep you out of that intent. And those thousand things a day become the journey of your lifetime.

Well, so it is with Divine Neutrality. You set it out there and become very aware of the thousand and one things that keep you from being neutral. Divine Neutrality *isn't* not caring. And that's im-

CLASSIC *Samuel*

Gems from the Library archives

At any given moment you have surrounded yourself with exactly the teachers you need at that moment, who will give you the experiences, the lessons, for you to become happy with your life. That's why, more often than not, you choose not to learn—because you might learn something that makes you happy. What a risk!

5/3/1993

portant.

You've recently spoken about acceptance and allowing. It seems those would be important aspects of Divine Neutrality.

A lot of people want to say that accepting and allowing are the same thing, but they're not. I don't have to accept what's going on, insofar as I don't have to like it, I don't have to agree with it. But I can allow that this is another perceptual reality, that this is for a purpose that's not a part of my journey. So I can allow.

As a fellow part of my universe, I can allow you to feel and do and act however you want. It doesn't mean I accept it for myself. Acceptance is congruency; acceptance is allowing. Allowing is not necessarily accepting.

So you are at a corner and neglect to use your turn signal, and it has made the driver behind you very, very angry. At the next stop sign they hop out of their car and run forward to you and you say, "What kind of idiot are you? Don't you know what your turn signals are for?" So with someone angry and yelling at you, are you going to accept or allow or both?

Paula: Allow, I would think.

David: Accept.

So, both.

David: You can accept them, but not allow the behavior.

You can allow that this person has become very, very upset about something you've done and you accept your responsibility for that. That's where they work together. But usually when somebody comes up to you very angry about something they perceive you did, which is a trauma function throughout life—somebody tells you, "You've ruined my life. You've done this horrible stuff."—well, there's nothing you can do to allow them to say or not say that, because that ship has sailed. You can allow within yourself whatever you want, but allowing for what somebody else does is outside of you.

Accepting what they have to say doesn't mean believing it, by the way. Accepting what they have to say and that it has had a profound effect on them is your choice. You accept based on your resilience at the time, pretty much. You *allow* based on your mastery of yourself.

Well, having said all of that, realize in most people's minds that "accept" and "allow" are pretty much the same thing and they use them when they want to defend or deny.

So, while you might say, "Well, there's a vast difference between the two. I accept what's going on. I don't allow it to bother me," that's just background noise to a lot of people, because this society teaches you that to accept it means you allowed it, to allow it means you accepted it. But Divine Neutrality says otherwise. Divine Neutrality says "I allow and I accept, because I am bigger than both of those things. I am functioning at a higher level than that, and so it doesn't matter." It's the top of the mountain.

Please explain how the incoming energy will be affecting the planet, Guardians and mass consciousness as we go into 2024. And will the eclipse be a turning point energetically?

The eclipse will absolutely be a turning point energetically. However, can I say how mass consciousness and Guardians and you as individuals or the world as a whole—where it is right now—are going to respond to all of that? If I could, I would be an extreme danger to the Plan. So I can't.

In general, how has mass consciousness been dealing with the changes of the last three years?

The eclipse in 2024 is going to be a winding up of a very big cycle of energy that started way back in 2011 or 2012—I'm not good with time. That's a long cycle. So how do you deal with the end of cycles? Well, most people never know a cycle has begun or ended, which is to say, it's just not going to matter very much. But spiritually, energetically, from my point of view, it's a huge difference. But there aren't that many people in the world who function with energy well enough to recognize it as a huge difference.

Of course, if you print that, there will surely be a bunch of people saying, "Eh, I see that difference, I've got it." But that's a part of the process, too.

Stuart: Will they accept or allow that they do that?

Yes. We will accept or allow that they will do that. We will accept *and* allow that they will do that.

When we look at the world today, it's hard to

Divine Neutrality *isn't* not caring.

believe that Fifth Density has been anchored. What is your perspective on the current world situation and its relation to the Densities?

It is a beautiful day outside here in Lexington, Kentucky. It's very warm for November and the sky is blue and the trees are multicolored. It's absolutely gorgeous, so EarthLight has opened the door into this room. And there are things going on outside that doorway that are having a small effect on this room; there's a bit of a breeze going through. But the door was just opened, so it's going to take a bit longer for the full effects to become known.

Right now, what you want to remember is that a Density shift was not written into the Plan.

The Density shift, and the timeline shift that started it going, was a wonderful surprise, but it's the same kind of surprise as if your ten-month-old baby starts to walk. That's a wonderful surprise, but holy moly, what's going to happen now that you have a mobile kid running around? Now, having been a parent, you know the delightful terror that comes with that.

Well, that's sort of what it's like in that humanity has never made it this far. It's wonderful, but humanity is already pretty dangerous, so send a few more Watchers and Helpers and make the unseen a little more visible, and let's bring help wherever it is needed and can be used, because who knows what's next? So the answer to the first part of your question is, I don't know. But it's rather exciting to see what could happen.

You said recently that personal empowerment always requires healing. Can you say more about that relationship between the two of them?

In order for you to fully love yourself, you must heal yourself. But I'm not saying that you must physically heal yourself. You must mentally and emotionally heal yourself. Every life, as I have said over and over, has trauma. You have trauma from childhood and that trauma can be debilitating or it can be a memory you look back on and understand. But the trauma has affected you. It has dented the vessel, and being dented, that vessel has become very used to pouring water out of two different places instead of one, or it has become used to a crooked stream rather than a straight one.

You are on a journey of self-awareness and learning to love yourself. For most people, that means they've got to take away all of their mistakes rather than appreciate them. They've got to be perfect rather than accepting who and what they are—

because all of that self-love starts revealing to you where you have adapted to being *without* love. [To Paula] I see you get the import of that statement. It's because of that that most people stop their journey—they don't want to see that.

That's what needs healing. Not the dents, but the attitude that you're not perfect because of the dents, that's what needs healing.



Samuel is pure, unlimited energy, an intelligence that has communicated through Lea Schultz since 1984, working in the energy of those in his presence to assist them in their spiritual development.



Lea Schultz

CLASSIC *Samuel*

Gems from the Library archives

Anytime you consciously use

Intent

Thought

Word

Deed

for your spiritual enhancement, you are calling your Twelve, because those four functions are the means by which the Twelves originated.

2/2/2014

Samuel

r e s p o n d s . . .

Last summer you spoke about the energy being filtered through Lyra and Andromeda. What effect have those energy filters had on the planet and life force? And will they continue to be the energy filters in 2024?

Yes, they will continue, but I'm not certain that you've seen any difference. You may have, but I'm not certain you would.

Remember that, first, those energies are not actually *from* those constellations; they're from that direction, and the energies are only changing direction as the filters change energy.

The energy is constantly flowing, but if you have a colander that has very large holes in it and another that's a very fine mesh, you've got to choose which one you're going to use.

So the filter is not getting bigger, it's getting smaller, finer and finer. It's at a point where you're getting the grit out, not the gravel. So that might be too fine a difference to notice.

But everything has sped up. Your solar cycle is speeding up. The maximum is coming sooner than your science realized it would. The speed of the planet's internal rotation is speeding up. Everything is speeding up. That's a very physical effect of that energy change. Your concept of time, which is a mental gymnastic—not time, but your concept of it—is also speeding up because you unknowingly are adapting to the increased gamma radiation and the changed magnetics of the planet due to that higher spin.

And the speeding up says that you are—I've got to be careful how I say this—moving closer to Ascension. Now, that doesn't mean you're close. It means everything seeming to speed up is what happens when you come closer to the—to continue with that illustration—to the black hole of Ascension.

That strong energy power is going to force acceleration. And it is.

You recently mentioned that addictions were self-soothing behaviors, which explains why they are so persistent. What advice do you have about overcoming addictions that just keep hanging around?

Well, you know, there are many kinds of addictions that you don't even think of as addictions. I think that you want to clarify that what you mean are the destructive addictions that just keep coming around, because you're also addicted to laughter and love—or maybe not addicted enough to those things. You get the point. But when you become aware of those addictions that are destructive, you've made a massive accomplishment. It's so easy to write that off, but if you recognize it as the success it is, consciously, purposefully write it down—"I see this as an issue"—you have triggered the healing process. That's why I say, "If you can ask the question, you've got the answer." If you know what the issue is, you're ninety-five percent of the way to solving it. So the very first thing is to recognize that

CLASSIC Samuel

Gems from the Library archives

Is it easy for you to think about those things you consider your failures and hard to think about those things you consider successes? Consistent success builds trust. And the reason that you do not fully experience the glories of an Ascended self is because you don't trust—here it comes, sweet souls, dear sweet spiritual souls, who are consciously working to elevate their awareness, here it comes—because you don't really trust your connection with the Source. Because you're not even real sure that you've got one. Darlings, it's built on consistent successes.

3/1/1992

something isn't working for you, although you're really drawn to it.

The second thing is to take a look at what are you getting from it—is it really a problem or not?—because there are a lot of things that are *really* destructive, very horrible addictions, and then there are things that you dislike only because they're keeping you from living up to *your* standard of perfection.

So take a good look at it and look at what it's giving you. Maybe you want exactly what it is giving you. Take a look at *that*. Why do you want it? Where else can you get it? Don't try to just dig a hole and hide it. Don't try to sweep it under the carpet and not notice it.

And don't let it take over your life. If you're addicted to heroin, well, darling, that's a problem, not so much because it's slowly killing you, but it's slowly killing every relationship you have as well. And that's not good. But if you're addicted to nighttime television, you're not really hurting anybody else. You're giving yourself a mind break. You could ask what else would give you that?

The third thing is, once you have figured out what it's giving you, can you replace it? A whole lot of people replace one addiction with another. Human nature is so prone to addiction. Your mind is designed to look for patterns. Your society has you believing that certain repeated activities are good. It's very hard not to be addicted to some things. And not just one or two things; most people have multiple addictions. So when you know what one gives you, look to see how you can replace it with something other than another addiction.

Now, number one is not so hard. Number three is not so hard. Number two is the killer, because you're just going to want to skim the surface without looking at everything you can learn about why it's there for you.

Let me throw this in for fun. Alright, maybe not fun. Children repeat their parents' addictions in a bid to understand the loss of love they received because of it.

With current technology, we are able to create many types of crystals artificially. How would you compare their usefulness with natural crystals in working with spiritual energy?

First, some of the technological crystals are essentially melted versions of the mineral, but I'm not going to refer to that. I'm talking about the chemi-

cally created version, because now most of your computers, for instance, are using manufactured crystals, and they are perhaps not fully, but essentially, dead. There may be lingering life from the original mineral that started the process, but they're essentially dead, whereas a crystalline structure that has grown over millions of years and absorbed the energy and information of those creation forces for millions of years is going to have something to offer.

I was wondering if the purity of artificial crystals might make them more effective.

It's actually the occlusions of a crystal that make it more important. Just like with humans.

You said the mineral kingdom was created as already Ascended. At which Density was it created and at which Density does it function now?

The mineral kingdom functions in mastery already. It is a part of the planetary system, so it works exactly as the planet does at whatever Density, timeline and structure the planet is working on.

CLASSIC *Samuel*

Gems from the Library archives

One purpose in coming into this experience is to manifest love through form. Manifest love—create love, find ways to express it—through form, this stuff. Your form. Those are the easiest spoken instructions for living a gloriously exalted life and the hardest possible living in actuality that there is. And so there is a small disclaimer that goes attached, and that is, you are here to manifest love through form; therefore, do the best you can where you are with what you have at the time.

6/6/1993

That's as much answer as I will give on that.

How does having it function at a higher Density than the rest of life force here help the completion of the Plan?

It allows a blueprint for a function.

Regarding Unidentified Aerial Phenomena: What's in it for the visitors, Watchers and others involved at this time? What do they get out of it?

What does the person who asked this question get out of seeing his grandchildren? Does he need to really interact with them, or can he sometimes just want to be around them? So first, I would ask that.

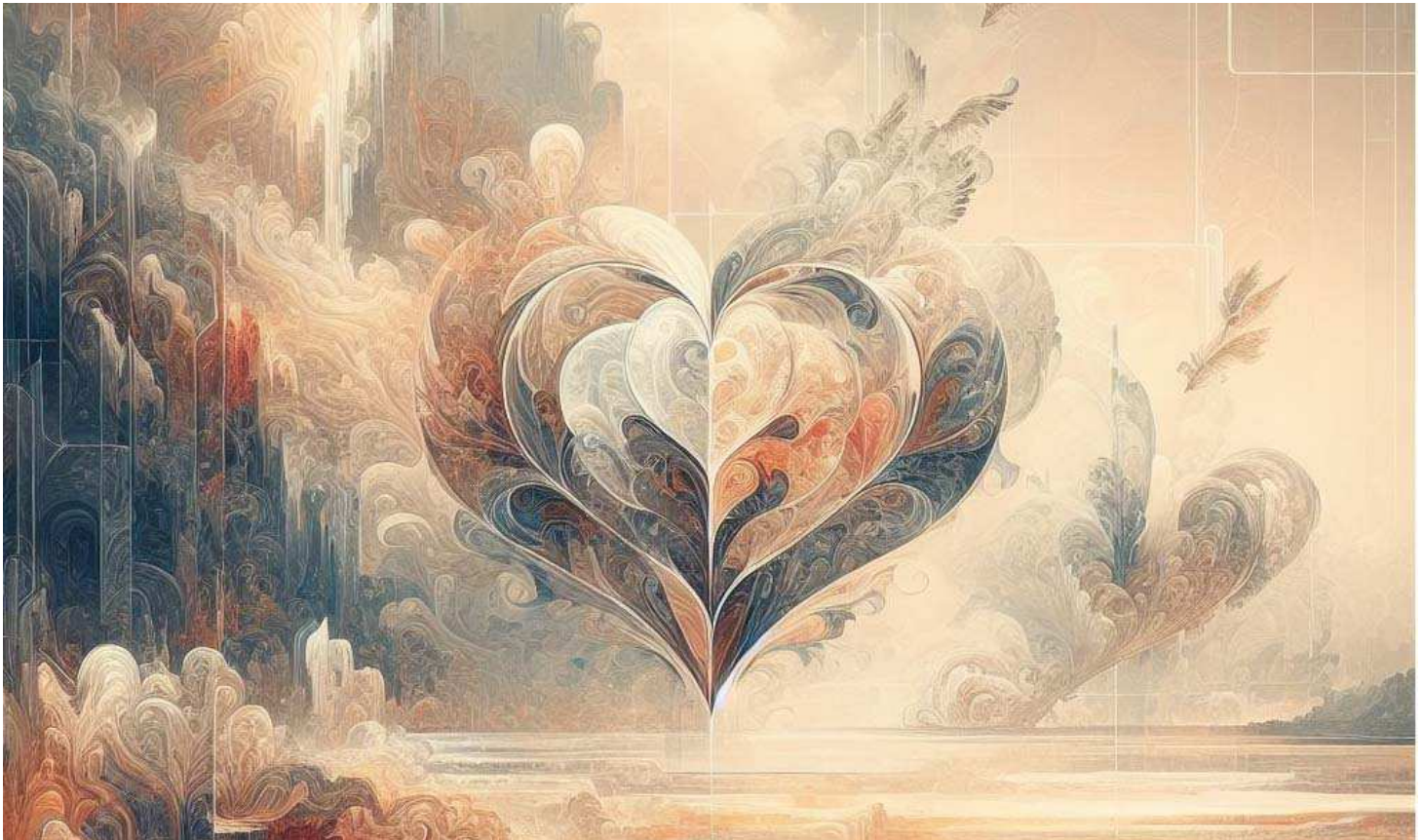
The second thing is, Watchers and those who are Guardians on a very different scale than those on this planet are kind of holding on to the safety net. You might want to picture that you've got a basketball and you throw it through the hoop, but right before it comes through you go and grab the bottom of that net and hold that ball steady in the net. Now, I don't know any reason why anybody would actually want to do that, but that is a good illustration of how the Watchers and the Keepers work to maintain a steady function for the planet, and that is exactly what they're for.

If you have a question for Samuel, please e-mail it to:
phoenixrising@phoenixinstitute.org

What do they get out of it? What do your lungs get out of holding air? What does your heart get out of beating? They get to do what they're made for. They get to be what they are at this stage of spiritual evolution. It's because it's what they do.

Are they invested in the Plan? Were they involved in creating the Plan?

Some and some. Some are from outside of this specific version of the Plan. This Plan is about love. Maybe you remember, long ago I had story time and talked about a great conference of higher beings. All of those higher beings came together and said, "We want to try something new. We're kind of bored. It's boring here on Olympus," or wherever they were. If I were to tell that story now, I would tell you that it was your entity connecting in with your various personalities, creating your universe. That finally you are able to be in charge of it. And in creating your universe, you created everything that could possibly challenge you or benefit your growth. So really, they're all you in the big picture.



Writers' Gallery

Once upon a time, there was a Guardian who woke up to her compact sometime in her mid-thirties. Up to that moment, her life had been a confusing sequence of events, eventually leading her to Samuel. Who would have guessed?

It took a roundabout trip over seven years for the connection to be made. After settling in Atlanta, the soon-to-be-awakened Guardian met a friend who invited her to a metaphysical event that involved channeling. That invitation changed everything.

Over the following years, I, that Guardian, have learned so much from Samuel. First and foremost are lessons about living love. But I've also learned about the many things that can get in the way of that. The biggest is fear, fear and then maybe more fear. Fear of what? It can be anything, really, but for me it's mostly fear of not being enough or of not

having enough of anything, especially love. Those are the first fears I learned during childhood.

Samuel has also taught me about core issues. These are the fear-based balls and chains that have followed me throughout my life until I was able

to recognize what was happening. Samuel is very good at pointing out core issues, whereas the Universe is much less gentle.

But along with pointing them out, Samuel has also taught me how to recognize and heal them. This was the most important step I took in my adulthood. Of course, the Universe has also been great at pointing them out too. It does this by allowing undesirable events to keep happening over and over, forcing me to pull up my big-girl panties and deal with them.

Procrastination has not been my friend. Things would seem fine until the day a two-by-four event would wake me up. I learned over time that it was much less painful to not let things get to the two-by-

four level, because there is no ducking a two-by-four, and they hurt.

So, you ask, why I am sharing this with Guardians who have gone through the same sort of lessons for years? It's because things have changed in the last two years and these lessons have taken on an amazing twist. Healing has taken place and I no longer need to remember what Samuel said about each lesson. Now I *know* and I live it.

For example, I found my dream retirement home in north Georgia in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. It's got a Scottish Highlands kind of vibe with lots of rolling hills, and streams. When I first moved here, I noticed a large banner strung across someone's fence. From far away I read in very large black letters: LGBT. I thought, yeah! Diversity! When I got closer the banner actually read: L – Liberty, G – Guns, B – Beer, T – Trump. Bless their hearts!

All my core issue healing has come into play this year. There is a person on the board of the homeowners' association, where I'm the treasurer. This person is an individual with violent tendencies. He's very controlling, and past presidents have avoided confronting him on his flagrant property violations because they didn't want to be abused.

Samuel's teachings about compassionate confrontation have not worked with this person in the past, but Samuel has also said that help is always available to those who need it. That's why the Universe made lawyers and property surveyors, right? I had an outside authority settle the property ownership issue with him because he *had* to listen to the law.

The miracle for me is that I am no longer fearful about not being enough. It doesn't matter if people don't like me when I ask them to follow the bylaws and covenants for the association. It's not about me anymore. What matters is that I am fair, transparent and serve equally with the other people on the board. What matters is that I live love and practice Divine Neutrality as much as possible. It's not easy but I just do it.

From Learning to Being

by Pat O'Malley

In the Vegan Kitchen

by Mary Claire O'Neal



Herbed Lentil Kale Soup



I had a similar soup to this when I was visiting Tuscany many years ago. It's fragrant and very nutritious, with super-foods lentils and kale as the main ingredients and a bit of brown basmati rice to make it a complete meal. It's a friendly recipe for people with allergies and sensitivities—gluten-free, low fat and sodium, and with no onion or garlic (you won't miss them). Cam and I usually eat on this all week and never tire of it.

4 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
3 stalks organic celery, chopped or diagonally sliced
3–4 small organic potatoes, cut into large pieces
1½ cup sliced mushrooms—oyster, royal trumpet, lions mane, or chicken of the woods (optional)
2 bay leaves
2½ TBSP fresh rosemary, chopped (or 2 TBSP dried)
1½ TBSP fresh thyme, chopped (or 2 tsp dried)
1½ TBSP dried oregano
10–12 cups water

1 lb. dried lentils: tiny black “caviar” lentils, small French green lentils or green lentils
¼ cup of dry red wine (optional)
½ cup organic brown basmati rice
1 lb. fresh organic kale (curly or Tuscan), tough stems removed and leaves chopped
Juice of 1 large lemon
3 TBSP apple cider vinegar
Dash ground cayenne (optional)
Fresh ground black pepper to taste
Salt to taste (optional)

Rinse lentils and soak for 12–24 hours.* Rinse a couple of times after soaking. Set aside.

In a large soup pot, heat the oil on low and gently sauté the bay leaves, rosemary, thyme, and oregano for about 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Add celery, potatoes and mushrooms. Sauté for 2–3 minutes, stirring constantly, coating all the vegetables with the herb oil.

Add lentils, water, and rice and stir briefly. Bring soup to a simmer on medium high heat, then lower heat and cover. Simmer until lentils are very tender and rice is done—about 50 minutes.

Add the wine (optional). Mix in kale and some extra rosemary, oregano, and/or thyme if needed for personal taste. Cover and let simmer for about 5-10 minutes.

Turn off heat and let stand for about 20–30 minutes.

Squeeze in lemon juice and apple cider vinegar. Add black pepper, salt, and cayenne (if used) and adjust seasonings and juice to taste. Stir in more water if the soup is too thick.

Serves about 10 — If you double or triple this recipe, use the full measurements of herbs for the original volume and then half the herb measurements for each time you increase the volume of the soup.

*I've found that legumes don't produce as much gas when soaked and rinsed. Lentils also have a better texture when cooked after soaking. You can also cook the soaked, rinsed lentils in your Instant Pot first.