

# KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

SERVING ST. CHARLES, GENEVA & BATAVIA

## Reflections on 2020 and a tip on keeping your resolutions

*"We'll take a cup o' kindness yet  
For days of auld lang syne."  
— Robert Burns*

With 2021 underway, you're probably well into (or hopefully not already out of) your New Year's resolutions. If you're into it, "Yay! Keep going!" If you're out of it, "Don't despair!" I have a tip that hopefully can help whether you're in, out or somewhere in between.

Many of us would like to forget 2020 existed with all the serious health trials and difficulties of the year, but now is a good time to reflect with 20/20 hindsight. Coincidentally, reflection is the last part of every yoga pose.

Here's the tip:



**YO  
JOAN!**

**Joan  
Budilovsky**

Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the center of it.

In the left column, write down positive things that happened last year. They need not be grandiose accomplishments. It could be as simple as:

I met a new neighbor I liked.  
I got an "A" in spelling.  
I held my mother's hand.

Write down as many things that you can think of. Think of things that gave you joy, whether big or small.

In the right column, write your disappointments. These could be

huge losses or small hurts. Leave space under each disappointment. For example:

I got a bad haircut.  
(Skip a line)  
I got a "D" in science.  
(Skip a line)  
My heart broke over the death of my loved one.

After you write down your disappointments, write underneath each disappointment something you learned from the experience. For example:

I got a bad haircut.  
Show better pictures to hairstylist.  
I got a "D" in science.  
I need my teacher's help.  
My heart broke over the death of my loved one.

I have a heart with capacity for great love.

Lastly, choose experiences from 2020 you'd like to further expand upon in this new year.

For example:  
2021

Meet more neighbors I like.  
Hold my mother's hand more.  
Show better pictures to hair stylist.  
Ask my teachers for help when needed.

Be patient as my heart grows in its capacity for great love.

Wishing you a beautiful new year.

*Joan Budilovsky is a resident of St Charles. She can be reached at editorial@kcchronicle.com. Her website is Yoyoga.com.*

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## Deep breathing exercises to soothe the mind and body

*"Stay with me, just breathe."* – Pearl Jam

Have you ever noticed the little tummy of an infant at sleep? It moves up and down with each precious baby breath. This is the natural movement of the diaphragm muscle at work. We all have a diaphragm muscle, but over time it can weaken and not function to its fullest capacity. It's located right below the rib cage. As you inhale, it pulls down to give more room for the lungs to expand and fill with air. As you exhale, it pushes up to help move the air out of the lungs.

Over time and with less physical activity, our breathing becomes shallower. The strength and elasticity of



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the diaphragm weakens. The shoulders may try to help to take up some of the slack by raising and lowering with each breath. Do you carry a lot of stress in your shoulders? The remedy may be as simple as strengthening your diaphragm. With breathing exercises, you can learn to not only breathe better and stronger, but also reduce shoulder stress, increase vitality and strengthen your immune system. These days, more than ever, we all could surely use some building up of our immune systems.

Here's a deep breathing exercise you can do right now.

Sit up straight and place your hands at the bottom of your rib cage. Finding the bottom of the rib cage can be a challenge in itself with extra hibernation pounds. Have fun with it and do your best to try to find the bottom of your rib cage. When you get in close proximity, that's where your diaphragm muscle is, too. Let the warmth of your hands welcome a deeper movement of your breath. Watch as the inhale causes your belly to slightly expand out for the lungs to fill. As you exhale, the belly comes down and in.

Regular practice of this focused belly breath movement can strengthen your diaphragm muscle and deep-

en your inspirations. We all know the satisfying sensation of a deep full breath. It beckons a sense of overall good health and vitality. So why not do this more often?

Belly out. Inhale.  
Belly in. Exhale.

After several of these deep breaths, increase the length of your exhale. Long exhales relax the body. Sloooooow those exhales down.

Not only will this focused and slowed breathing relax you, it'll probably make those around you more relaxed as well.

A more relaxed me equals a more relaxed you.

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## Navigating tumultuous waters in our own canoes

*"Here I go again." – Whitesnake*

And again, jumping into my canoe and paddling as hard as I can amid the fierce waters. Waters that keep me moving along in powerful currents developed over many lifetimes.

Each of us comes into this world with slightly different karma canoes and different ways of responding to the tumultuous waters that affect our personal journeys. For example, if someone pushes me, I might hit 'em with my paddle, you might move over, someone else might paddle away, or another might make a joke about it. We're locked in the oceanic waters of lifetimes with our itty-bitty canoes until our awareness heightens and we realize there are other ways to paddle, other ways to



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navigate the raging tides.

As we paddle around like mad, we find ourselves moving in circles, sinking or, with incredible perseverance, finding a way through it all. Once out of the chaos, we're able to take some deep breaths and reflect on what just happened. With deepening inner reflections, a new spiral of awareness dawns. Some might call these shifts in awareness enlightenment (Paramahansa Yogananda), others compassion (Dalai Lama), still others perspective, paradigms and possibilities (professor William H. Schubert).

Right now, our children are going along for the tumultuous ride, but soon they'll be paddling like crazy, too. Paddling along the intense tides of inequities – powerful warring voices of history fueling the turbulent waters of our times. Long histories of forged wars and embedded prejudices – sometimes subtle, often painful, always powerful.

Some of us adults just don't know how to get out of our crazed canoes to help, so locked are we in the frantic currents of our society, our schools, our cultures, ourselves, we feebly try to hand a child a paddle or two, but many of us are barely staying above water ourselves. In fact, some of us are sinking fast. ... Help!

Here's when watching children discovering life can be like being

born again in one's self. There's hope, wonder, excitement, anticipation.

To watch with loving eyes as they naturally question and laugh within the magnificence of this strange new world. As the societal walls and structures begin to build around their open and creative minds, your meditation practice can help a child witness the potential of a transcendent power calmly navigating the changing currents of challenging times.

For those adults sinking fast, have hope because there's a child near you ready to buoy your creative potential and help you shine forward in your seasoned canoe.

• Joan Budilovsky's latest book, "Sages of Young Ages," is available on Amazon.com and Yoyoga.com.

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## Lengthen back, improve posture with the help of music

Spring is here!  
First thing to do is to find Gloria Estefan on YouTube singing, "Turn the Beat Around."

*Turn it up, turn it up, turn it upside down.*

If you're still sitting after hearing that song, there's a good chance your back is curved or starting to curve. A curved back makes your breath shallower. It compresses the lungs, making it difficult for them to fully expand.

Bring your back up straight. Settle into the feeling of your spine lengthening. You might even be able to hear the vertebrae click into place.

*"Love to hear percussion."*

Great! Now bring your focus to the



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back of your neck. Let your shoulders come down away from your ears. Is your chest starting to open a bit more? An open chest allows for an open heart.

*"That the rhythm carries all the action."*

Feel the back of your neck elongating.

Try doing this stretch without moving your chin. Keep the chin parallel to the table or desk. As the shoulders push down, the back of the neck extends and the vertebrae naturally line up.

*"With the syncopated rhythm with the scratch, scratch, scratch."*

A magnificent stretch of your neck can brighten your view! It opens your breath, opens your spine, opens your heart, opens your mind, and of course ...

*"Makes me want to move my body, yeah, yeah, yeah."*

*"Turn the beat around  
Love to hear percussion  
Turn it upside down  
Love to hear percussion  
Love to hear it!"*

*Yeah!*

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## Remove the mask and become your true self with calming face meditation

*"The tears of a clown, when there's no one around." – Smokey Robinson and the Miracles*

When was the last time you smiled when you felt like crying? Or perhaps you laughed while your heart was breaking? Maybe you faced a difficulty sternly clenching your jaw as your stomach turned in angst. Or you skipped happily in to work when in reality you forebodingly dragged yourself out of bed just a few moments earlier.

All of the above are examples of ways we move forward yet hide our true feelings. It's a battle we constantly face (pun intended). Some of us are better at hiding in the facial trenches than others, but the daily skirmishes involve all of us.

For example, it probably wouldn't be effective to break down in tears in the middle of an important presentation – although you might be able to think of an example when this type of



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raw display of emotion encouraged a level of compassion from others that wasn't there earlier. The emotional honesty may have even brought about important changes.

On the other hand, unleashed raw emotions can bring about ridicule and accusations of incompetence. It's a tough world out there, and general societal expectations are to "Buck up!" "Get over it!" and "Get on track or get the heck out!"

One way to release the unwanted stress that builds from pretending to be someone you're not is to take time to remove the mask. Just a few moments throughout the day, observe how your face feels struggling through the chaos.

Calming face meditation can be done

anytime and anywhere. It can help you tune in to a more truthful you. Your breath can be a guiding force in helping you face the hard facts.

### Calming face meditation

Unclench the jaw and let the corners of your mouth relax.

No need to smile or grimace or emotive in any way.

Simply relax the corners of the mouth.

Release the long-held tensions there.

Relax the mouth.

Deep inhale/exhale.

Observe the cheeks constantly pulling the mouth up or down.

Let the stress of moving them float away.

Relax the cheeks.

Deep inhale/exhale.

Close your eyes for a moment so your healing lids can fully caress them.

Soften the eyelids, the eyebrows, the eyelashes.

Relax the eyes.

Deep inhale/exhale.

Calm the forehead, letting the lines of consternation dissolve with each breath.

One by one, the lines fade away.

Relax the forehead.

Deep inhale/exhale.

Soothe the scalp and the hair.

No pulling or tugging. Just let the tensions release there.

Relax the scalp.

Deep inhale/exhale.

Quiet the nose by slowing your inhales and exhales.

Calmly, the breaths move in and out.

Relax the nose.

Gently, quietly, peacefully, let the tensions of your face continue to soften.

Face forward in peace.

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## Honoring those who feel alone at a time of graduation and celebration

*"Yes, the beat goes on." – Sonny & Cher*

Congratulations, graduate! You struggled, you persevered, you made it. Yay! Woo-hoo! There's so many happy end-of-school festivities to attend, and it's all so completely and utterly fantastic. Wow! Yes!

But sorry ... hey there ... yoo-hoo ... excuse me ... umm ... hello?

Might you possibly know of someone, or could you actually be someone, who's not attending the parties? Perhaps you don't feel you fit in, whether it's graduation or Christmas or birthdays or ... heck, anytime there are social gatherings you feel awkward and out of place. Maybe this happens occasionally. Maybe often.

Well, if you relate to the feeling of being on the outside looking in, whether yesterday, today or tomorrow, I can tell you an absolute, unequivocal



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fact you can take with you wherever you go. It exists everywhere around the globe – across the street, across the city, across the world. It's astounding and absolutely true.

You are not alone.

There's an amazing amount of people who are shy, or awkward, or picked on, or left out, or don't know how to become involved, or don't know if they even want to become involved in this crazy, mixed-up world we live in.

Yet many magnificent leaders and perhaps all spiritual guides have lived through this type of social suffering. Each one took time to figure it out and forge their unique way in the world. Some initially were shunned and

slowly worked their way into great acceptance. Some eventually fit in only to be shunned. One in particular died alone on a cross thousands of years ago, yet his spiritual teachings live on to this day in guiding millions.

One thing all great leaders have in common is their ability to look past their own suffering and increase their compassion for others. They all lived through difficult lessons, and they all noticed, and honored, the person in the corner.

You can, too.

At almost every juncture in your life path, you'll have a choice to make between the curse of pride and the blessing of humility. Which path will you choose to follow? Your choices will affect you. They'll affect me. They'll affect all of us. Greatly. Please choose wisely.

I sincerely thank you, graduate, from the bottom of my heart. I thank

you for your struggles. I thank you for seeing mine. Soon you'll be our leader, our teacher in a world that too often honors and applauds those undeserving of accolades. You can certainly change that through one simple act of kindness at a time. One thoughtful welcome to that person struggling in the corner. And there are so many corners of the world to explore. It takes courage to be kind. It's not always easy. Yet one small gesture, one kind heart, can make a world of difference.

Continue your journey ever stronger in your kindnesses. Sure, you may goof up sometimes, but you know that. You understand.

You have a heart.  
Now follow it.

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## Now is the time to start adding 'kind' back into humankind

*"I know you got mountains to climb, but always stay humble and kind." – Tim McGraw*

A recent movie on Netflix follows the action-packed exploits of an accomplished assassin.

Although filled with gratuitous violence, I kept watching hoping for a cinematic answer to what could possibly make a person be this way.

Could it be pure machismo, even though she's a woman? In this bloody movie, her last question to her pleading victim was always something like, "Who hates you so much to want you killed like this?"

I wondered about her motivation for asking. Did she have a soft spot for the person she was about to ruthlessly murder? Was there a gentle glimmer of hope escaping from her coldblooded heart?

Maybe the victim's right answer would put off the gruesome inevitable act? Nope.

The assassin walked away each time with blood on her face and a swag in her step. Since prehistoric



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times, bullies have run rampant.

Clubbing, knifing, spitting, swearing – on the attack of the underdog in some merciless way. We see it today in schools, in road rage, in politics, in grocery lines, in homes. It's everywhere.

Someone angrily trying to one-up another. Yet significant academic research has demonstrated that as rife as bullies have been throughout history, they haven't succeeded over the long haul.

The cultures that have survived the longest are the ones that displayed significant compassion, generosity and altruism. Bioarchaeology is a relatively new field of research first coined in the 1970s by Jane E. Buikstra.

It's basically an anthropological study of ancient bones to determine how people were cared for. In the

process of bone analysis, the disease, age and physical condition of the deceased often can be determined.

And in this process, significant numbers of people were found to have lived completely dependent upon the care of another human. Through fossil analysis – as far back as the Neanderthals – it's been discovered that many people with profound disabilities lived relatively long lives.

Their bones spoke of the loving care of others right up to the tender ways many were buried. Bioarchaeology found that cruel societies had been relatively short-lived in the expanse of human existence.

Cultures more prone to extending tenderness to those most needy were the cultures that survived the longest. In 2014, the Human Generosity Project was founded by scholars Lee Crank and Athena Aktipis.

This project originally involved an investigation into cultural and biological factors behind generous behavior. Multiple researchers have expanded upon this work by using

computer modeling and other high-tech modalities to study generous behavior and its effects on cultures.

Not just American culture but cultures around the globe. Again, the research overwhelmingly supports generosity as the most successful long-term means to survival.

Slow and steady giving wins the ultimate race. Yet in our short-sighted lives, the bullies often appear to be the winners.

The assassin in that movie I watched won all her gory blood-splattered battles and was even able to steadily apply a cool shade of lipstick afterward. But the deep fossilized beauty of archaeology and anthropology, accentuated by ever new research technologies, gives us a more extensive view of the world we live in.

This studied view establishes that in the survival of the fittest, humankind prevails.

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## Move over Karen, Cindy's now in town

*"You were only waiting for this moment to arise." – The Beatles' "Blackbird"*

Everyone needs a personal trainer. And I'm not referring to the trainer at the gym, although this may very well be the personal trainer you need.

By "personal trainer" I mean the person who reminds you about what's important in life. Someone who gently nudges you along in a better direction than where you're mindlessly headed.

This may be a person you see often, such as a parent, teacher, spouse or friend. Or it may be a person you meet in passing and never see again, yet in that passing moment he or she changes your life. It's as if a lightbulb goes off inside you and it's ... BINGO! Yes! I get it now!

I had a BINGO! recently with Cindy. I wish I could say her name was Karen because Karens are getting a bad rap these days, but her name happens to be



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Cindy. And what a lovely name that is.

She's a personal trainer on every level. She helps people achieve better physical fitness through her workout studio but she does more than that. She opens her mind and heart to different body types, ages, conditions, encouraging all with the utmost respect and kindness. It's an absolute joy being around her.

When we last saw each other, we were doing some weightlifting. I was huffing and puffing by the third repetition. She told me how great I was doing.

I responded, "I used to be able to do 30 of these easily."

We laughed.

She then shared something profound, as personal trainers often do. They

somehow have a way of saying it at a time when we really need to hear it, too. Inspiring the downtrodden as well as the huffed and buffed.

She mentioned that in her experience, and she has vast experience, older women rarely ever compare themselves with magazine models or other beautiful women in the media. They compare themselves with themselves 10, 20, 30+ years ago. By doing this, they don't see their current incredibleness. It's like being in a time warp. They're stuck in an applause of who they were rather than who they are.

And this breaks her heart because she sees an amazing woman in front of her. Now. Right now. I wonder if these women really listen when she tells them this.

You know it when someone sees the best in you. You can feel it. They don't even have to say a word. It's a good vibe.

You also know when someone doesn't think well of you. Red flags flut-

ter. It's a bad vibe.

I can't imagine Cindy ever getting a bad vibe. She's Cindy!

Now, to be honest, I haven't seen Cindy under all circumstances. No doubt some days aren't as spectacular as others. She is human after all. Profoundly and exquisitely human.

Why is the term "you're human after all" used as an excuse? It's magnificent to be human. No excuses needed. You're magnificent after all, you human you!

Heck, I'm sure glad there's a Cindy in my life. She's really great. I happen to think we need more Cindy's around here – no offense to Karens.

*"When you plant a seed of love, it is you that blossoms." – Ma Jaya Sati Bhagavati*

*Joan Budilovsky is a resident of St Charles. Her website is Yoyoga.com. And Cindy's in town! Her website is cardiocoffeeandkale.com.*

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## Here's something for all of you 'pains in the neck' out there

*"It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense." – Mark Twain*

Once upon a time, a student went to his teacher complaining about a chronic neck problem he had. Professionals had given him neck exercises to help release the excessive stress he had there, but nothing seemed to work. He just couldn't figure out what was preventing his neck from relaxing. He really was a walking pain in the neck.

The teacher looked over the student with a glance and said, "It is your right



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great toe."

The student was stunned and laughed inwardly at this remark. He respected his teacher so didn't laugh outwardly. After all, his teacher was getting rather old, the poor guy. The student walked away bemused and chuckling.

Nevertheless, he started to pay

more attention to his toe. He'd wiggle it and then laugh at what the teacher saw as the basis for his neck problem. Sometimes when his neck got extra tight, he rubbed his neck and toe at the same time. Two hands, of course. It wasn't easy. Try it sometime.

As he did this he thought, "What a strange teacher, but look at me, I'm playing with my toes!"

And through his pain he'd chuckle. It was during one of those chuckles that his pain momentarily disappeared.

"It's the chuckle that made me forget the pain," he thought. "Certainly it

couldn't be that toe!"

But he didn't forget that brief moment of relief so he continued to massage and wiggle his toes.

Soon his chronic neck pain went away.

Call it coincidence.

Call it a good laugh.

Call it reflexology.

Call it what you may, but any way you call it, it's a true story.

*Letters to Joan Budilovsky can be sent to [editorial@kcchronicle.com](mailto:editorial@kcchronicle.com). Her website is [Yoyoga.com](http://Yoyoga.com).*

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## Yoga for every season and every passing lane

*"Yoga is almost like music in a way; there's no end to it." - Sting*

I often get asked the question, "What kind of yoga do you do?" That's a hard question for me to answer.

When I first started studying yoga eons ago, there was just one type out there that most of us knew about. It was Hatha yoga. This yoga consists of physical postures, breathing exercises and relaxation techniques.

Patanjali was considered the first person to record the oral traditions of yoga. His yoga sutras (sutras is Sanskrit for "simple truths") were compiled around 4 B.C. Within his text are five "yoga yamas" to observe. The Sanskrit word "yama" is translated as abstention. So basically he described a guideline for personal development along the yoga path.

The key to practicing the yamas is to understand them as body/mind exercises. Thoughts can be as powerful as actions. With our combustible society of angry outbursts, imagine the first yama of non-violence taking hold in society on deep levels of thoughtful purpose. Now that is something worth pondering!

Each yoga yama can be studied separately and extensively. They are listed below in ways to practice them. For example: Abstain from



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violence means practice non-violence.

### Yamas

1. Non-violence
2. Non-lying
3. Non-stealing
4. Non-lusting
5. Non-greed

Here is an example of the first study of non-violence in action:

Imagine you get into your car whistling a happy tune as you head out on your travels. A car suddenly cuts you off and you barely avoid a crash. To top that off, as the car passes you, the driver angrily flips you a birdie. Your first reaction may be shock. Then after the danger passes, you get angry. You try to catch up to this idiot not really knowing what you'd do if you did catch up. But catching up in the increasing traffic becomes futile and the other driver gets out of eyesight quickly. You are left fuming with a rage boiling inside.

Just let someone try cutting you off now!

So the tides come and go. It's easy to whistle a happy tune when things



Maddie Hallman (from left), 11, Lindsay Hallman and Rita Grendze participate in a yoga session in June in Elburn.

Sandy Bressner file photo - sbressner@shawmedia.com

are moving along in sync, but it becomes harder when a wrecking ball gets thrown into the mix. It's not an easy practice, but non-violence is the first step in the yoga philosophy to creating a more peaceful world - not the external world but the internal world. Non-violence in personal action, in word and in perhaps the most difficult, thought.

My studies in yoga have supported and deepened my belief that life is good even though the path often can be difficult. Just when I think I've figured an answer out, someone changes the question. There are many "oops" along the way, and yoga offers a compassionate way to improve and forgive oneself in the empowering journey into self-realization. To better understand one's nature, and in turn the intimate connections we have with one another,

seems to me a mighty fine venture. If you'd like to learn more about the yoga yamas, I highly recommend "Yoga of the Heart" by Alice Christensen. It is an artfully crafted book simply written and beautifully explored with a modern perspective on ancient yoga principles.

And as I drive along my merry way, if you perchance cut me off, it'll be the last doggone thing you ever do ... oh, wait ... peace my friend. Wishing you a yama-dama-do day!

• *Joan Budilovsky is the author of many popular books on yoga, including, "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Yoga." This book has been released into multiple editions and numerous foreign translations. Budilovsky can be reached at editorial@kcchronicle.com. Her website is Yoyoga.com.*

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ALSO SERVING SUGAR GROVE

## Viva Las Vegas! Let's take a trip together to vegetarianism

A vegetarian is something I wanted to be when I grew up, but the Czech and Polish dishes of my youth continue to haunt me. Sundays in particular were filled with tantalizing aromas of pork and dumplings or ribs and kasha. It made those Sunday school classes more tolerable knowing I was coming home to a terrific meal afterward.

After our meal on Sundays, we often would visit my uncle and aunt who lived in a small cabin in the woods off Fox Lake. Their lives were quite different than ours. We were suburban apartment dwellers living alongside a busy highway. They were tucked away in nature with sounds of chirping birds rather than car horns as their backdrop.

My uncle was a rugged fisherman. Every day he was up before dawn and



**YO  
JOAN!**  
Joan  
Budilovsky

out in his small boat quietly fishing as the sun rose around him. On our afternoon visits, he proudly would show us his catch for the day. I watched as he skinned the fish still flapping in his hands, blood dripping into the buckets where the rest of the catch awaited their dire fate. My stomach turned. I really loved my uncle.

"Wait!" I'd say before he would pick up the next one. "Did you know that fish have probably the most sensitive skin of all creatures? When they swim in packs, they move quickly in all directions without ever touching.

They can feel one another from a distance even through the water that separates them."

"Oh, come on," he would respond, "they're just fish. They're here for us to eat."

After he would finish, my aunt would fry the fish. What a sweet lady. And we'd all eat the fried-up fish together for dinner. I tried to disassociate the delicious food I was eating from all the blood splattering in the buckets, but I couldn't. I quietly ate and inwardly faced my conflicts. My aunt and uncle, so precious and dear to my heart. I knew those dinners were made for us with love. And so began the foundation of my topsy-turvy quest to be a vegetarian.

Over the years since, I've been more of a "flexitarian" due to the perpetual

aromas of roasts around me. Most of my friends are meat eaters. As for me, I mostly am a meat eater. As for me, I trudge along in my vegetarian wannabe ways struggling with my reality that sauerkraut and potato pierogis just don't taste complete without meat.

As we enter this month of Thanksgiving, what are some of your favorite meals? Do certain aromas conjure up heartfelt memories? Might you ever consider being a vegetarian? Oh, please, you say. Yeah, it's not easy, but you being one would sure help me being one. And it most definitely would help those fishies out there. It's a bloody mess. Pass the gravy.

*Letters to Joan Budilovsky can be sent to [editorial@kcchronicle.com](mailto:editorial@kcchronicle.com). Her website is [Yoyoga.com](http://Yoyoga.com).*

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# KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

SERVING ST. CHARLES, GENEVA & BATAVIA

## Who needs Vegas when inward travel is the ultimate trip

Have you ever looked up to someone who ended up disappointing you terribly? Perhaps it was a trusted minister who spoke every Sunday on "how to love" and then filed for divorce.

Or the local health food fanatic you spied at a fast-food restaurant chowing down on fries.

Or maybe it was the soft-spoken Martha Stewie down the block who you happened to overhear screaming full throttle at her kids. What a voice!

And what a struggle life can be.

Where to turn? There's got to be someone out there who has it ALL together? But just when you find someone or something so incredibly good and true, something happens that rattles the bliss. That off-the-chart goodness moves into a B-flat minor ... almost ... not completely ...



**YO JOANI!**  
**Joan Budilovsky**

ahh, forget it.

Life happens. Rust eventually settles in. And the hunt for utopia begins yet again and again.

Until, ultimately, we come to final relaxation or "the corpse pose." What a weird name for a yoga pose. What's the purpose in posing like a corpse? Life is where it's at! All together now: Long Live Life!

Yet life and death are inseparable. You and I, or any life form out there, can't have life without the inevitable death. In learning corpse pose, one actually is learning to live. It's about releasing outer tensions and traveling into the realms of inner peace.

Here are directions for the infamous corpse pose. It can be done sitting or lying on your back.

Start with your feet. Wiggle and tense them. Bring your awareness fully to your feet. Then release the tension, stop their movement, and for several breaths think "relax the feet."

Next move to the legs. Tense them slightly to bring your focus there. And then release the tension and for several breaths think "relax the legs."

Continue the process of tense, release, breathe, relax throughout your body.

The torso: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the torso.

The arms: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the arms.

The shoulders: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the shoulders.

The neck: Tense, release, breathe.

Relax the neck.

The mouth: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the mouth.

The eyes: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the eyes.

The ears: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the ears.

The head: Tense, release, breathe. Relax the head.

The mind: Watch the breath to relax the mind.

When a thought comes along, let it glide away with the exhale.

Release thoughts by simply watching the breath going in and out.

Awareness on the breath:

Breath.

Simple.

Awareness.

*Joan Budilovsky can be reached at [editorial@kcchronicle.com](mailto:editorial@kcchronicle.com). Her website is [Yoyoga.com](http://Yoyoga.com).*

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