

Heart and Home Harmony

Aiming for hearts, homes, and lives in harmony with:
God and His Church, and the rest of His creation through the Holy Spirit.

Issue 2

Summer 2001

Home From New Zealand

By Sandy Maine

On April 23rd I said a tearful good-bye at the Auckland New Zealand airport to Louie and the boys as they boarded the plane for home here in the North Country. My homecoming was delayed by a month because there was still a great deal of unfinished work for me to do on the development of the Thames Natural Soap Company. This is the company that Louie and I were hired to help start early this year. It was to be patterned somewhat off of our own company SunFeather Natural Soaps.

It was fun and enriching to take stock of our 20 years of experience and then create something new from something tried and true. By late April, Louis had completed his part of the project, but my part seemed to have grown more involved than planned. It was looking more and more by early April that I would need more time. It was difficult for me to choose to separate from my family for 4 weeks at a distance of 9000 miles. There was a certain motherly dread in that that is hard to explain, but after seeking guidance through prayer, I felt assured that it would all work out well. Lou and the boys were determined to come home as planned and it was agreed by all that I would stay behind. (Many thanks to Eva Martin for her assistance in our home until my return.)

During the time that we were in

New Zealand we accomplished many things, learned many new things, befriended many fine people and did a fair amount of sight seeing as well. The entire project unfolded as smoothly as it possibly could have. The experience of living and working in this tiny but wonderful country filled us with memories we shall never forget.

Our work began by planning every stage of the business development, from the interior design of the factory and all equipment, to product development, graphic design, promotional planning, financial systems and employee training. It wasn't long before all of the multi faceted plans began to manifest from paper to reality, and by March 1st, we were in the full swing of the project.

We were very taken by the prospect of being able to help create a business that would someday soon serve as a nurturing "back to work training ground" for a number of people who were in recovery from mental illness. Most of the people we were training were to be key personnel in the business and they were of sound mind. But before I left NZ I started working with several of the mentally ill. Some of these people had done things in the past that were unspeakable, and it then became a challenge to find the inner strength to offer them the healing balm of forgiveness that Love proscribes. But


with help and guidance from the Holy Spirit, I was able to gain victory over this challenge, and my reward was to come closer to Love.

Other encounters were easier. I was able to watch the self esteem and confidence grow in people who had not worked for many many years. Here I learned the importance and great value of sociable and meaningful work for people who are disenfranchised members of society due to emotional and physiological malfunctions.

For the short span of 4 months it was interesting to have a 'boss', to

live in a town, to have a dishwasher and a microwave and to send our children on a bus to school each morning. What we found with all of that, was a life that felt too spacious. It was hard to keep ourselves and our children busy during non-school and non-work times.

The upside was more time for relaxation and reflection on what is important in life...helping others, working together and keeping strong and healthy family ties.

All said and done, our experience and what we learned was rich and full. One for which we are very grateful to have had. 

The Mail Box

Hello Luke and Rachel,

Thanks for sending me a copy of Heart and Home Harmony. I have enjoyed reading and rereading it very much.

Your mention of the beaver struck me. I, too, am a zealous and industrious builder, and I wonder if, in God's eye, I too am a pest. I'm sure I know the answer. But it is my creator, and I have committed my life to accepting its will.

I think all religions, spiritual traditions, or whatever you want to call them have defined or described a small part of what we all know as God, but we haven't the equipment to even begin to imagine it. We are circumscribed by the senses given us and simply have not the means to perceive but little of what life is. It is truly a mystery, and as humans, we have become outrageously and obnoxiously egotistical about our place in the scheme of life. We are not better than, for example, the earthworm, minding its own business, cultivating the earth to make it richer, it redeems itself, without war, worry,

or care. Trees bloom faithfully, year after year. Do you hear them complain about ice storms? Or do they respond with resplendent growth, as they stand silently with strength to meet the challenges of the year to come. How dare we even conceive of God or even mention the name?

The family you have created is truly a gift to our community, and I am very grateful for it.

Bryan Lee

Dear Bryan,

Thank you, for writing to us.

I do not think that in God's eye you are a pest. Before I say more about that let me give a summary of the scheme of life as I see it presented to us from the Bible.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and everything in them, and said it was good. Then He made man and woman in His own image. He told them to multiply and fill the earth,

and subdue it, and to have dominion over the animals.

He put them in the Garden of Eden and told them to tend and keep it. In the middle of the Garden, He put the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He commanded them to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for the day they did they would surely die.

God saw that everything he made was very good.

God made man in His image; He spoke with them and fellowshiped with them.

He had formed man from the dust of the earth. With this earthy nature, they did not resist temptation. They disobeyed God and died spiritually. God barred them from the Garden so they could not eat of the tree of life and live forever in that state. He promised that he would send to them a redeemer.

Each one of us that has come to the knowledge of good and evil has chosen to disobey God. We have fallen short of the glory of God. Like you said “we have become outrageously and obnoxiously egotistical about our place in the scheme of life.” Mankind wars and worries. They misuse, abuse, and waste the resources they are in charge of. This happens when man does not obey God’s laws, that He made for the well being of all His creation.

The rest of creation continues to show His great goodness. We can know He is not the god of confusion when we behold the perfect harmony in nature. Like a plant pushing its way through a sidewalk, nature, in time, triumphs over man’s abuse and returns to order.

Man, by himself, cannot return

his life to order. God loves us, even in our sin and helplessness, and like He promised, sent his Son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sin. Through him we can be freed from our selfishness and returned to harmony with God. His Spirit transforms us more and more into His likeness and reveals to us the glorious riches of the mystery of God.

---the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Psalm 117:2.

Jesus said, **I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.** John 10:10. **Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.** John 16:24

Knowing you, Bryan, we know that when you are zealously and industriously building, you are trying to not waste, misuse, or abuse that which God has put in your care. I believe God smiles to see you use his resources to provide shelter for people that He loves, while you are providing for you and your family, whom He also loves.

When you take that spalted lumber, cut from a log on the verge of decay but still sound, and utilize it in one of your unique houses, you bless the world with a work of art. Your talent employs the character that is etched in the lumber by bacteria that are beginning the work of changing the wood to a different usable form. When you display God’s artwork combined with your own, someone may be reminded to honor the Creator of this web of life. And the more we choose to honor Him the more he can bless us.

May we seek to learn more and more of His great love and pass it on to others.

Luke and Rachel Martin

Criticism for Lunch! How Wonderful!

By Rachel Martin

"The thoughts are too scattered." Inwardly I cringed a little at the criticism of the new poem that I had asked my son to critique. My thoughts protested, "But the others thought it was good."

I took my poem and looked at it again. I began to see parts that were not real clear and the thoughts were a little scattered. After making about half a dozen changes, I read it again. *Really, this is much better than it was. I'm glad he criticized it.*

Oh! How we hate to be criticized! But, oh, how much we can benefit from it! That is, if we will.

Criticism is a little like dandelion greens. By itself, we find it rather bitter to eat. However, if it was served to us with some salt and butter or salad dressing and eggs and maybe bread to eat with it, it becomes edible. Then all those vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and phytochemicals that the greens contain will benefit our growth and health.

Likewise, correction and constructive criticism is important to spiritual growth. It is most helpful though if it is served with lots of love, gentleness, understanding, and encouragement. If all we had to eat were dandelion, we would soon be malnourished. Likewise, we do not thrive on just criticism.

How to Prepare and Serve a Balanced Diet

Some people are better cooks than others are. They can serve a delicious dish with greens in it and you hardly know you are eating greens. Anybody can learn how to cook greens, or roast a turkey, or bake a pie, but how to prepare and serve criticism is another matter.

I admire those who can criticize or correct someone so gracefully that the person is hardly aware that he was criticized. Most of us are nowhere near being that graceful. It is not because the necessary ingredients are not available to properly feed the souls of our friends. God has an abundant storehouse of grace, love, wisdom, and knowledge. Humility will buy all the grace we need.

For criticism to be constructive, it should never be overstated. People exaggerate *all the time* and we often don't give it a second thought. However, words of criticism tend to become further magnified in the hearer's mind. Words like "never" and "always" will probably be taken seriously.

Instead of pointing out to someone how bad he is, point to actions or things that need correction. He can deal with guilt, but not with shame. For example, it is better to say, "You are acting lazy," than to say, "You are lazy." Better yet would be to say something like, "If you aren't more diligent in your work, you won't be able to ----".

Sometimes it is good to serve criticism with gentle humor or with a story, especially for children.

And whatever you do, when you've prepared some "greens", do not let someone else serve it. It may get passed around with dirty hands, each one adding some of his own spice to it. Then when the person finally gets some of it ---- well, you know what that might taste like.

Mind Your Manners

When you eat at a friend's house, be polite. If he or she isn't a good cook or you don't like what he or she serves, take it and thank them. Don't reward his kindness in serving you what he thinks you need, by being rude or never going to his house again. Never throw it back in his face.

I know we are not ruminants, but when it comes to criticism, we can chew our cud later. After chewing it thoroughly, we can spit it out if we decide we don't need it or it would be harmful to us. [Children do not have this ability; if the criticism is unjust or untrue, it is like feeding them poison.]

In addition, the criticizer does not have to be able to do it better himself. He just needs to know what it should be like.

Greens are Good for You

Criticism is too. It can help us grow and our performance can be greatly improved. It can make the difference between us doing a mediocre job or an excellent one. Though we may be quite skilled, usually we can be better yet.

Deep inside we know we can use correction, but we would like to think that others see us as perfect. It is when we see God as he is, and

when we see the true worth of ourselves, that we can welcome the help of others to become the jewel that God intends us to be.

With humility like that, criticism won't seem so much like poison, even if it is poorly prepared and served. And when you serve criticism, make it as palatable as you can. Remember that you may have to eat it too.

Pr 10:17 He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.

Pr 13:18 Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

Pr 15:5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

Pr 15:10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.

Pr 15:31 & 32 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

Pr 9:8 & 9 Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Ec 7:5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Phi 2:3,4 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory;

but in lowliness of mind let each
esteem other better than
themselves.

Look not every man on his
own things, but every man also on
the things of others. ♡

Natural Baby Care

By Sandy Maine

Little cherub soft and pink
Enjoys a bath in mommy's sink.
Little one so soft and rosy
Like the petals of a posy.
With chamomile and lavender too,
Little cherub our love is true!!
S Maine

I am just a few months away from having my fourth child! Thanks be to God for this wonderful unexpected blessing for Louie and I and our young boys.

My herb garden will soon be planted with some very special herbs selected just for this very special occasion. I will lovingly grow and then harvest them in their peak of beauty. Then on a balmy morning in early August I will lumber around my farmhouse kitchen with my big belly bumping into the counters, sink and stove.

I will be making fresh baby care products for my new little one.

Here are the recipes I will use.

Herbs and Oats Bath Booty Bags

Even though I am a soapmaker by trade I would never use soap on an infant. Herbal bath booty bags are a much more gentle way to clean your little ones very tender skin.

2 cups powdered oatmeal
1/2 cup dried chamomile flowers
1/2 cup dried lavender flowers
1/4 cup dried calendula marigold flowers.
1 tablespoon dried lemon balm

1 tablespoon dried comfrey leaf

Mix all ingredients and spoon 4 tablespoons into a small cotton draw string pouch. Cotton velvet is very nice to use. Tie the tops well so no mixture can escape. Make lots of these and store for baby's future bath times. To use simply toss the bag into the warm bath water. Squeeze the healing and cleansing juices from the bag as you rub over baby's head and body. Rinse with clear water. You will find that the baby's skin will be wonderfully clean soft and fragrant with a subtle herbal essence.

One bag will last for two days or three baths over several days if stored in the fridge. Then it should be emptied and washed.

Herbal Baby Balm

Use this fragrant healing balm to protect babies bottom from chapping and diaper rash between diaper changes.

1 cup sweet almond oil
3 tablespoons dried or fresh, partially dried, calendula flowers
1 tablespoon dried rose petals
1 tblsp. dried chamomile flowers
2 tablespoons vitamin E oil
4 drops of organic lavender essential oil
5 tablespoons grated beeswax

Warm the almond oil and mix in the herbs. Allow to remain warmed (approx 100 degree F) for 4 hours.

Then strain through two layers of fine cheese cloth. Be sure to squeeze all the goodness out of the herbs as much as you can.

Grate the beeswax into the herb oil mixture and return to a vary low heat until melted. Stir with a whisk until mixture is creamy. Pour into sterilized 2-4 oz jars. Label and store in a dark cool place.

Apply a thin film of balm to baby's bottom after a gentle wash with mild soap and water and a thorough patting dry. If you keep your baby's diaper changed every three hours or as needed, and use this balm, diaper rash should never become a problem.

Herbal Baby Powder

I don't use baby powder on a daily basis. I think that the dusty nature of it is somewhat bothersome to the infant, and it tends to clog the pores, reducing the ability of the skin to do what it was intended to do. I would never use commercial talcum powder on a baby as talc is very harmful to infant *and* adult lungs. As far as a baby powder goes, this one is nice to have on hand for the rare instance when there is chaffing or a fissure in the skin that needs to be kept dry to facilitate healing.

½ cup white cosmetic grade bentonite clay powder

½ cup arrowroot powder

¼ cup slippery elm powder

1 teaspoon comfrey root powder

1 teaspoon goldenseal powder

2 drops balsam peru, optional

Whisk all ingredients together until well blended. Store in a large sugar or salt shaker. Use judiciously!

Herbal Boo Boo Cream

This cream is for diaper rash, cuts,

scrapes and all manner of little boo boos.

1 cup organic extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons dried or fresh, partially dried, calendula flowers

2 tablespoon fresh slices or dried and powdered comfrey root

1 teaspoon goldenseal powder

2 tablespoons vitamin e oil

4 drops of organic lavender essential oil and 3 drops grapefruit oil

5 tablespoons grated beeswax (add more if you want a harder balm)

Warm the olive oil and mix in the herbs in a stainless or glass kettle. Allow to remain warmed (approx 100 degree F) for 4 hours. Then strain through two layers of fine cheese cloth. Be sure to squeeze all the goodness out of the herbs as much as you can.

Grate the beeswax into the herb oil mixture and return to a very low heat until melted. Remove from heat and stir with a whisk until mixture is creamy. Pour into sterilized 2-4 oz jars. Label and store in a dark cool place.

Apply a thin film of balm to baby's bottom after a gentle wash with an unscented mild olive oil soap, and water and a thorough patting dry. Or for cuts and abrasions apply balm under a bandage twice a day until healing is well underway.

Herbal Sleep Pillow

My third son Cody began sleeping through the night when I put an herbal pillow (a gift from an herbalist friend) in his crib. This can't be, I thought to myself, so I took it out one night and put it back the next. Soon I became quite convinced that the herbal pillow was the cause of his full nights sleeping. "I REALLY wish

I'd known about this sooner!" I thought to myself.

Well guess what? This is a trick that I will not fail to use again. Not only that but it's the best gift you could ever offer to the sleepy parents of a baby who is restless at night.

- 1/2 cup dried chamomile
- 1/2 cup dried lavender flowers
- 1/2 cup dried rose petals
- 1/2 cup dried hops (should be light green in color with a yellow dust)
- Anything less than this is too old, rancid and not effective.
- 4 drops organic lavender oil

Gently mix all ingredients together and spoon into a 4 X 6 inch sack made of soft natural fiber with a tight weave. Fold the open end over and sew securely shut. Place pillow near baby's head at night to help facilitate peaceful sleep.

Infant Massage

The benefits of infant massage are far reaching! To mention a few:

Improves sleep.

Stimulates endorphins fostering a happier more relaxed baby.

Better elimination of body wastes. (A more comfortable baby is a happier baby!)

Aids in muscle and nerve development.

Helps with parent- child bonding.

There are many excellent books on this topic so read up!

Peaceful Music

The baby looks as though he or she is an angel, so why not sing or play tranquil harp and flute music for your little one at a regular time each day? Right before nap time worked well for my little ones. They really seemed to look forward to their concert each day and it helped them to understand and get into the mood for NAP TIME!! I also kept a small handheld finger harp on hand and it was always just what was needed to take a cranky baby above and beyond at any time of day or night. ♡

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