

Healthy Wednesday Club

Newsletter Issue 24

July 16th, 2008



It was great to make and hear from new friends in South Africa. Also, more fabulous contributions from Andy, Helen and especially Barry's video of the universe, which is a feature in this week's article. How do you get your head around something 47 billion light years across? That made me wonder about things a little closer and a little smaller, too.

I really appreciate knowing that you are out there reading this newsletter. Please send your emails with suggestions, thoughts and contributions to richhill@iinet.net.au Please support the newsletter by forwarding it to people you think might be interested.

The recipes are from a little cookbook I found in a free giveaway booklet. There's information everywhere! Exercises are inspired by my recent study week at university where we actually study stuff like Imagination in Action. Very, very interesting! Let's start with some amazing images of the power and energy within our own 'space'.

Amazing Energy



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FABULOUS LOW GI FOOD

Grilled prawns with tropical fruits

Ingredients:

24 uncooked large king prawns (1.6kg)
¼ medium pineapple (300g), chopped coarsely
1 slightly firm mango (600g), chopped coarsely
1 slightly firm banana (230g), chopped coarsely
¼ cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves
2 tablespoons lime juice

Herb sauce:

½ cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves
½ cup loosely packed flat-leaf parsley leaves
1 clove garlic, quartered
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 tablespoon olive oil

Method:

To make herb sauce, blend or process ingredients until combined.
Cook prawns on heated lightly oiled grill plate (or grill or barbecue) until changed in colour and cooked through.
Meanwhile, cook fruit on same grill plate until browned lightly.
Combine prawns and fruit in large bowl with mint and juice. Divide prawn mixture among serving bowls; drizzle with sauce.

HEALTHY WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Body: This exercise needs a partner and is even better with 4. First, in pairs, cross over your arms and hold each others hands in a finger grip (like you are grasping a stick). This leaves your thumbs pointing in the air. Wiggle your thumbs around in a sort of thumb wrestling match (although it isn't a competition) and as your thumbs dash about, lean back and away from each other. This will increase the weight pressure on the finger grip and give your forearm and upper arm muscles some resistance exercise. If there are 4 people then have them connect arms over and under. If you're really keen see if you can work out how to create hand links with 2 of the other people.

Mind: When you are in full thumb wrestle and while you are leaning outwards take it in turns to say something you have seen or done recently that was interesting, different or surprising. (Laughter is definitely allowed and pretty much unavoidable!)

Soul: While you are still enjoying the laughter and craziness of the first 2 exercises, release your hand grip and take turns to tell the others in the group something that made your 'eyes shine' recently. This is the term that Benjamin Zander used in his video from the TED talks in Newsletter 22 (check it out in the archives if you missed it).

Why On Earth Make the Universe So Big?

The universe is big, really big. Why would you do that? It certainly gives us humans a lot to contemplate and wonder about, but we've only been doing that for a few hundreds of thousands of years. Even allowing for the possibility of animal species to have some kind of consciousness that we are yet unable to understand, I think it safe to say that the millions of simple celled blobs that make up most of the life forms on this planet are not prone to contemplating the wonders and infiniteness of the universe.

The universe had to wait a very long time before it could be appreciated and even longer before it could be adventured into. Even if you think that the Earth is less than 10,000 years old, space exploration is still a very minor part of our history. But then, we haven't really had much appreciation of the infinitesimal universe either. The idea of tiny particles and the concept of quantum physics is also very new. Everything that relates to knowledge is pretty new. It's only through centuries of dedicated focus that we are starting to figure a few things out.

We may even have had some extraordinary level of knowledge before now, but some humans have had the occasional habit of destroying civilisations and destroying their books and records and memorised wisdom in their grasp for domination and power. Maybe the Mayans had some great stuff in their knowledge base. We don't know what happened to Alexander's library and many dominant groups have both protected and contained the storage of knowledge over the centuries.

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If you've never really given the size of the universe too much thought, other than what is necessary to pass school exams and social conversation, have a look at these videos. Wow! definitely comes to mind. The Hubble telescope has twice stared into a dark and dull patch of space. Rather than just a snapshot, the telescope focused for days, many days and what a surprise it found in the depth of the darkness.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgg2tpUVbXQ>

This next video brings our focus back a bit closer to the still extraordinary vision of the galaxies, nebulae and black holes from our neighbourhood. The Universe is an extraordinarily beautiful place. I hope to find some great vision of the micro-universe for upcoming newsletters, but first, let's look more at the 'big picture'. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okdptx6_MRI

So where do we go in our own lives from such images of grandeur and expanse? In *Choose Hope* I wrote a short piece that dealt directly with the question of grandeur and those things that we think worthy of notice. The key issue is *'those things we think worthy'*. There is a lot of winner/loser world in the choices we make regarding what we consider worthy of our attention. Last weekend, Susie and I decided to take it easy in the wintry weather and snuggle up to a few movies in the warmth of our living-room.

None of the films had particularly great reviews. We watched *The Bucket List* starring Morgan Freeman and Jack Nicholson. I figured there would always be something of value with these lead actors and I was right. I found lots of fascinating things to engage with throughout the movie. I also could see where the reviewers were coming from, but it was such a limiting perspective.

The *really* interesting thing about the film came, for me, in just a single scene where Jack Nicholson delivered one word. I would love to meet with Jack and ask him what he was thinking and feeling in that scene. I also realise that I needed to see the entire film for that single scene to be as powerful as it was. Out of the 'big picture' came a moment of relevance that completely surrounded me, my thoughts and my feelings. Had I been in a more critical frame of mind I might well have missed that moment. Criticism can distract you from the richness of the present, that state of mind we call *mindfulness*.

So, maybe it is nothing to do with whether the Universe is being noticed or not. What is important is that whatever it is that we think we do know, there is a million cabillion squillion gallons of stuff that we don't know. Knowing what we know is great, but knowing that we have much more to know enables us to waylay our criticisms of what things should or could be and have our mind open for the single moment that triggers a breakthrough in our understanding, our knowledge, our experience. This is the nature of the 'creative world way' in my book, *"How the 'real world' Is Driving Us Crazy!"*

I wonder if we can allow the marvelous expanse of the Universe and the mysterious smallness of the quantum to give us a context within which we can find those moments that take us that little bit closer to the extremes in both directions. Surely we have a long, long, long journey to make as a species. I truly hope we don't blow it.

Share your thoughts and suggestions? richhill@iinet.net.au



Here is a view of the Quantum World. How strangely similar to our Solar System. Like Dr Seuss's world of the 'Who', would inhabitants of a Quantum World see us as a galaxy of millions upon millions of cellular 'stars'? What happens when we use our brain to think and expand rather than to just cope and compete?

Looking forward to sharing more thoughts, suggestions, news and making a very Healthy Wednesday connection with you!

Take Care, Richard, Susie and The Healthy Wednesday Team

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