Hepatitis C, Asparagus and Tending Our Gardens With Meditation

June 7, 2016 By Matt Starr

I just returned from harvesting asparagus. It's the time of year in Vermont when this delicious vegetable is growing like mad, and when I went out today it was for the first time in 4 days.

Left untended recently, many of the stalks were enormous, spreading out and up like little prehistoric trees. I leveled those to the ground to grow another time, and gathered a basket full of younger, tender ones. There will be more to come tomorrow, and for a lot of June.

Ideally, I will be harvesting every couple of days before the miracle slows and halts for the year. As long as I am consistent with my tending of this patch of garden, and harvest in a timely way, my family and I will be nourished by the asparagus and other fresh vegetables.

I meditate to settle into myself, to heal my overly busy mind and body from the ravages of liver disease. Sitting with awareness only on the breath, you can discover health of mind, body, and spirit. It demands energy and heart, but gives back great treasures. It takes gumption but is not fussy. I sit in the center of my life, and connect with the rhythm of my breath.

After a decade of struggles with hepatitis C and an imperfect liver transplant, I know how one can find healing through the application of healing actions like meditation.

Researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard University, and many other sources, show a positive change for consistent meditators in learning and memory, emotion regulation, decreased stress, sense of self, and perspective taking. That sounds like increased health to me.

How about you? Are you ready to dig in to your inner self to heal, just as one digs into the earth to nourish the body from the harvest?

I love how Wendy Johnson, in Gardening at the Dragon's Gate, speaks to awareness and connection through meditation, both in front of the alter and when gardening.

"Working in the garden is also meditation, though not in the conventional sense of calming down, moving slowly and deliberately, and dwelling in stillness. On the contrary, I am often most alert and settled in the garden when I am working hard, hip-deep in a succulent snarl of spring weeks. My body and mind drop away then, far below wild radish and bull thistle, and I live in the rhythmic pulse of the long green throat of my work".

Can you dig that? There are many avenues that allow us to experience everything falling away except the awareness of breathing, where doors open to acheive reduced stress and improved emotional and physical health.

There are many other components to being more vibrant and healthy, like diet, exercise, and doing things you love. Mindful meditation though, whether on a sitting pillow or in the asparagus patch, is a great place to start.

Check in with me if you would like to talk about how to find healing that includes, but moves beyond, traditional medicine. The healing path is before us. All we need to do is take the first steps on that path.

Anything is Possible.

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