



*Spiritual Retreats for Body,
Mind, and Soul Stress Relief*

Volume 4, Issue 2
AUGUST 7, 2014

2014 Sacred Circles

Spiritual Retreats for Women

**First Sunday Potlucks
2:30—5:30 p.m.**

**Join us in the next
Circle!**

August 3

Creative Crafts to
Release Stress

September 7

STRESS! Let It Go So
You Can Flow

Retreat Location

26210 Emery Road,
#103
Warrensville Hts., OH
44128

Questions? Contact:

Shirley A. Nelson
sanscircle@gmail.com
216-978-2626



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See Better, Feel Better, Know Better . . .

I recently saw previews about a new movie that will be showing in theaters soon but don't recall the name of it. What I remember is that a couple was happily in love and the man was either a poet or a song writer and his girlfriend asked him to write a poem for or about her. He said, "I can only write poems/songs about sadness, not happiness." They show you enough to get an idea of what it's about and apparently something happens to the girl that puts her near death's door, and then he is able to create. If you saw the trailer, then you know I'm paraphrasing but that was the essence of it.

Even though I don't know the whole story, I resonated with it because there was a time when I was only motivated to create when something sad or tragic happened. Writing was my healing balm. It was cathartic and helped get me through difficult times. It wasn't necessarily anything I would share with others, but it was something that brought a sense of peace and calm.

After a while, *I began noticing that I had a hard time creating if there was no drama and realized that feeling sad had become a habit.*

Trying to get out of the groove that had been imbedded for years took some serious soul searching. Some would argue that a good dose of therapy can probably get you there faster, but will it deepen you spiritually and heal you at the core? Maybe, maybe not. Perhaps you can do both.

In our retreats, the goal has been to educate women and to expand their awareness of spiritual practices and tools that help to wake us up and be more conscious of our behavior. We do this work—letting go of old hurts, dropping judgments, forgiving ourselves and others, so that we can heal

and change our perspective on life. In the end, we see better, feel better, know better, and love better.

I kept doing "the work" and even though I couldn't see the light, I could feel its warmth. Through self-observation, self-forgiveness, and a willingness to let go of the past, the sadness dissolved and joy took its place. No more waiting for the other shoe to fall. However, I must admit, a good tear jerker still gets to me.

Because I know how tough it is to break a bad habit and to learn how to relax, I'm committed to helping others so that they don't invest in prolonged periods of sadness and anxiety and waste their lives. Stepping out of the flow allows you to become aware of the still small voice inside. *The sole purpose of engaging in a retreat is to take time out to still the body, quiet the mind, and uplift the soul, which is done in any number of ways.* This year we were blessed with excellent presentations on yoga, aromatherapy, Reiki, journaling, and creative crafts. We learned a lot about releasing stress and taking better care of ourselves. We laughed and cried and came to appreciate that although stress can be a powerful force, it does not have to beat you down and make your life miserable.

Join us for our final session in the *Art of Stress Relief* on the first Sunday in September at 2:30 p.m. at our current location: 26210 Emery Road, Suite 103, Warrensville Heights, Ohio. If you are not one of the current participants, there is a minimum donation of \$20. First time attendees are free.

*How do you heal? One moment,
one hour, one day at a time.
It is the journey of a lifetime.*

Shirley A. Nelson
San's Sacred Circle



The Many Faces of Prayer ~ A Healing Balm in the 21st Century ~ Shirley A. Nelson ~

The Many Faces of Prayer

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo

There are a lot of people who have asked themselves “How does she do it?” Tina Turner is now 74 years young and has only begun to slow down in the last few years. And when I say that, I am only referring to her electrifying stage performances where she shakes, shimmies, and shouts like she’s in her 20’s. That’s the show business side, the glitz and glamour, but she’s still going strong and creating mystical, peaceful music to heal and delight the soul. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22R4HFD0j3I>)

If you know the story of her life, you know that she suffered immense pain, heartache, and physical abuse in her relationship with Ike. What helped her to break free and find her true self—the courageous, bold, gutsy soul sistah we know today—is her faith.

In the movie, “What’s Love Got To Do With It?” she is shown chanting *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*, a powerful practice that releases the chanter’s present karma / challenges and creates new roots or causes for the flowering of the meditator’s personal enlightenment and brings into being wonderful changes in life.

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is an ancient Buddhist chant/mantra which is from the Lotus Sutra. “Nam” means to honor and Myoho Renge Kyo is the title of the Lotus Sutra which is the Universal Law of Cause and Effect. Thus the mantra “Namu Myoho Renge Kyo” means “I honor the Universal Mystical Law of Cause and Effect.”

I recently attended a prayer service and chanted *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* along with about 100 people. After about fifteen minutes of chanting in unison, it felt like pure bliss, and I left there feeling quite peaceful.

SIT-UP ~ Stay Tuned Spiritually In Tune for Universal Peace



Stress Busters: Six Simple Practices

Some seem to think there is such a thing as being stress free and, if there is, I don’t want any part of it. A little bit of stress never hurt anybody but when it’s out of control we suffer. Just like we need a few germs in our system to keep us healthy, we need a little stress in our lives to keep us peppy. In other words, we tend to run into stressful moments when we’re being stretched and those situations do not always come in a nice package with a pretty bow. No, they can be jagged, rough and mind altering but as tough as they are, we are made better by the experience. It’s not about getting rid of stress. No, it’s about paying attention to your life and doing what is necessary to maintain a healthy state of being.

There is no magic formula for this, and that’s basically because everyone is unique. However, following are six simple practices that can make a difference.

Stretch: Don’t wait for life to stretch you—do it yourself! Become a life long learner and discover new things as long as you have breath. “*One should approach life as one approaches a lover-naked.*” — Marty Rubin

Trust: Trust that life is for you, not against you. “*People that have trust issues only need to look in the mirror. There they will meet the one person that will betray them the most.*” — Shannon L. Alder

Relax: More problems have been resolved by simply relaxing and not trying to force things. “*No one can get inner peace by pouncing on it.*” ~Harry Emerson Fosdick

Exercise: Find an exercise that you love, and do it, or just do the one you hate. Either way gets the job done. “*I would much rather feel the physical soreness that comes with exercise than to feel the psychological soreness that comes with regret.*” — Steve Maraboli

Sleep: Too often when we are upset and agitated, we do or say things we regret and realize later we were just tired. “*Sometimes the most urgent thing you can possibly do is take a complete rest.*” ~ Anonymous

Save: Spare yourself the anxiety of not saving. “*You can be young without money, but you can’t be old without it.*” — Tennessee Williams



Water the Seeds Not the Weeds

Blessed Assurance

The fire call came early on a Thanksgiving morning. It was a house fire that was fully involved and the engine company was first on the scene. We began taking the hose off the back and feeding it to the hydrant. Next, the truck crew arrived along with the rescue squad and we were in full firefighting mode. The family, a husband, wife, and seven year old daughter had made it out safely. Thank God, no one was hurt.

After the fire was fully put out, we began the job of clean-up. It was at this time that I saw the family up close. The parents were explaining to the fire chief how they got out of the house. They were devastated because, after all, it was Thanksgiving morning.

The mother was crying as she talked about the wonderful day she had planned that was not going to happen. Her husband was sitting on the bumper of the engine with his head in his hands. They had lost all of their possessions in the elaborate preparations that were to be Thanksgiving.

While talking to the fire investigator the seven year old daughter kept pulling on her mother's coat tail. This child was the only one smiling and she was yelling at her mother "Mommy, mommy!" Her mother was becoming annoyed as her daughter continued trying to get her attention. "Honey, don't you see I am talking to the fire chief, cried the mother?" The daughter would not be

denied. Her smile turned to laughter as she began yelling at her mother, "Mommy, remember? Mommy, remember? Finally the mother who had been crying about the loss of the house grabbed the child by the arm and yelled "What is it that you want?" The child yelled back, "Remember, 'surrance, surrance!" The mother looked at her daughter very puzzled and said "What are you saying?"

Then the seven year old child calmly grabbed her mother's arm and pointed it toward the rubble that had been their home.

Smiling very broadly she yelled "I want my new bedroom right there!" At this point everyone on the fire ground stopped what they were doing and stared at this child. Her dad jumped off the bumper and he came over and pulled the child up and began to laugh as he hugged her. The fire chief began to laugh and the rest of us fire fighters began to laugh. The mother turned to us as she looked at the child and her tears had turned to laughter.

And as the child began to talk to her parents she had everybody on that fire ground's undivided attention. The 'surrance she was telling her mother about was the fire insurance on the house. The child began to repeat to her parents what she had heard them talking about earlier in the year. "You said if anything happened to this house we could all get new stuff because we were covered, right?" The parents both nodded, "Yes, you're correct."

"So, said the child, don't be sad. Let's go get new stuff!"

The whole mood of the fire scene changed just like that. We all began to watch the child as she led her parents around the rubble and began pointing out where the new kitchen would go. She mentioned to her father "Daddy, you can now get a new garage." She then told her mother that she wanted her new bedroom to be pink. At this point we were all transformed by a seven year old girl on a Thanksgiving morning.

On the way back to the station I began to think about what had just happened. The youngest person on that fire scene saw something that her parents and the rest of us adults had missed. I began to realize that in the midst of misfortune sometimes we can't see a way out.

It dawned on me that we all have our own internal built-in insurance, an innate intelligence that goes before us to make the crooked places straight. We need to remember that when life throws a monkey wrench into our wonderful plans.

What is inside of us is greater than anything on the outside of us. So, the next time life challenges you, sit still and access your 'surrance. The way shower, the Christ within, is the best policy we can have.

Peace,
Rashid



Rashid Reaves,
Retired fire fighter and paramedic... Planting sacred seeds to enrich your heart and soul. . .

Phone
216-218-0015



San's Sacred Circle was established in 1998 as a lay ministry, grass roots, spiritual support group to nurture and develop sustainable practices for emotional healing and spiritual growth and to cultivate an overall sense of well-being within participants.

Inner wisdom is the compass that bridges your humanity and divinity and everyone has access to this amazing tool that lovingly guides and directs us. Access to the "still, small voice within" occurs through music, meditation, quietness, prayer, dance, and creative art inspired activities. In an environment that is sacred as well as playful, workshop participants connect body, mind, and spirit using their inner compass to transform their lives.

Be the Peace that you want to see . . .

Peace & Blessings ~
Shirley A. Nelson
Workshop Facilitator
Certified Life Skills Coach
Phone: 216-978-2626
sanscircle@gmail.com



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Today, I Celebrate My Birthday!

"Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good."

— Maya Angelou,
Celebrations: Rituals of Peace and Prayer



I Appreciate You!

I'm having another birthday and, like some of you feel, it's not a big thing but it's a good thing and so I count my many blessings!

I love that I wake up with a sound mind and peace in my soul. I love that the ground we walk on does not shake and shimmy and shift beneath our feet. I love that you love and that we have the freedom to love whom we please and to worship as we please.

I love all the folks who love me for me and nothing else (is there anything else?). I love that I've come home to wholeness through the healing of my past and with the help of the angels and the humans who never gave up on me. I love that we have

freedom of expression and can live in a country and say "I believe this or I believe that and it's okay that you don't believe it also."

I love that God is bigger than you and me will ever be and never hesitates to remind us of that!

Birthday's help us to remember that at one point we were born brand new and that we can choose again and again and again to return to the newness in our mind and in our spirit. Whatever you do on your birthday, celebrate the fact that if you need to, you can always begin again.

The best birthday GIFT you can give yourself is FULFILLMENT! Give yourself the gift of GRATITUDE.

Thank you, everyone, for the cards, emails, Facebook messages, and beautiful vibrations sent to help me to remember what a blessing you are. May we all know the joy of one more day in which we can rise up and say "Thank you, God, for being so good to me!"

