

## Reflections, Music, & Events

Volume 3, Issue 5

NOVEMBER 7, 2013

### 2014 Sacred Circles

**First Sunday**

**Potlucks**

**2:30—5:30 p.m.**

**March 2**

Introduction to The Art of Stress Relief

**April 6**

Yoga for You! Creating Optimum Health at Any Age

**May 4**

Ahhhh... Aromatherapy!

**June 1**

Stress Busters for Wonder Women

**July 6**

Reiki for Relaxation and Healing

**August 3**

Creative Crafts to Release Stress

**September 7**

STRESS! Let It Go So You Can Flow

**Join Us!**

**Our Father's House**

26210 Emery Road

Suite 309

Warrensville Hts., OH 44128

**Questions . . .**

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## ~ Creating a Beautiful World ~ One Sacred Soul at a Time



### The Perfect Table

Shirley A. Nelson (San)

Last week I caught a brief segment on channel 8 news in the morning about a new company whose purpose is to help people to create beautiful table settings for the holidays. They showed two or three samples and then told viewers to log on to their website to learn more. I never went to the website but the little bit I saw on channel 8 was intriguing. And, based on what I did see, it seemed that each of those tables were so jammed packed with decorations that it was hard to picture where they would set the food. I figured the cost of those decorations alone would be more than I would spend for a meal for five or six people.

And then I thought, perhaps it's about the show and not the food and that people could always serve themselves from the stove or a counter top where all the food is and come back to the table to eat. Why I took it there, I don't know. It just made me feel like it was a lot of pomp and circumstance and maybe that says something about me. I know that holidays are memory making times for many people and a lot of energy goes into "getting it right". However, even though I consider myself

an artist, of sorts, I find that idea absolutely exhausting. And that probably also says a lot about me and thoughts that I carry about tradition and the havoc that it can wreak upon our lives along side the joy.

When I thought about creating the perfect table, I reflected on a story I recently heard. A woman was extremely excited and nervous about a special guest coming to dinner and she did everything within her power to make it all turn out nice. She had the best food, the prettiest table decorations, and she made sure that the timing was right so that everything would be placed on the table in perfect order while still hot and sizzling for those things that needed to be just so, and she had coached her children to be on their best behavior.

So, the esteemed guest appeared and all were gathered together at the table eating, talking, laughing, and joking when her daughter knocked over her water glass. There was an immediate hush as all eyes stared but the girl's father, bless his soul, came to her rescue and knocked over his water glass. And after he knocked his over, their special guest who was a priest, knocked his glass over and, before long, everyone at the table had knocked their water glass over, including the mother.

There are probably several morals to that story but the one in which I most identify with is that we need not be so anal about things and we must remember to keep it light even if we have to work at it. For goodness sake, it's the holidays—a time to celebrate and to try and be happy. If you must have perfection, wait until afterwards. But, for now, be joyful. When you and your family and friends gather around the table, let it be freeing. Bless everyone with a beautiful smile and a listening ear and, if you can cook, create the dish that others find irresistible. Make it a holiday worth remembering because you brought the **love** to the table. Oh my! Wouldn't I want to sit at that table!

A few years ago I gave my cherished table to Cleveland Furniture Bank with the hope that it would end up in the home of someone who loved it as much as I did. Having to downsize to a smaller place, I was not able to take it with me. Oh, but I loved that table and the stories it would tell if it could only talk. Oh my!

First Sunday Potlucks will start again in March and will go thru to September 2014. Next year's theme is *The Art of Stress Relief* that will include activities to enhance creativity using the book *The Artist Way* by Julia Cameron as a resource. Come join us on the journey!



*The Many Faces of Prayer ~ A Healing Balm in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Shirley A. Nelson  
Author

Click here to read an  
↓ excerpt ↓  
<http://tiny.cc/53f07>

## The Many Faces of Prayer

### A Thanksgiving Day Prayer

Lord, so often times, as  
any other day  
When we sit down to our  
meal and pray

We hurry along and make  
fast the blessing  
Thanks, amen. Now please  
pass the dressing

We're slaves to the  
olfactory overload  
We must rush our prayer  
before the food gets cold

But Lord, I'd like to take a

few minutes more  
To really give thanks to  
what I'm thankful for

For my family, my health,  
a nice soft bed  
My friends, my freedom, a  
roof over my head

I'm thankful right now to  
be surrounded by those  
Whose lives touch me  
more than they'll ever  
possibly know

Thankful Lord, that  
You've blessed me beyond  
measure

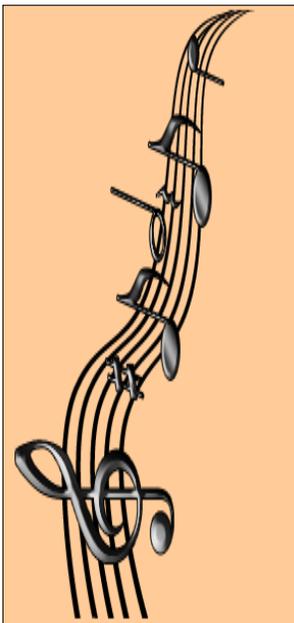
Thankful that in my heart  
lives life's greatest  
treasure

That You, dear Jesus,  
reside in that place  
And I'm ever so grateful  
for Your unending grace

So please, heavenly Father,  
bless this food You've  
provided  
And bless each and every  
person invited

Amen!

-Scott Wesemann, author  
**HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**



## Sacred Music Pick of the Month

### I Am Malala . . .

In this season of thanks  
giving and being aware of  
the blessings that abound, I  
am grateful for many  
things. In a country where  
freedom of speech is taken  
for granted and education is  
the rule of the day, it's hard  
to believe that there are  
places in the world that will  
shoot a young girl in the  
head for going to school

In October 2012 Malala  
Yousafzai almost lost her

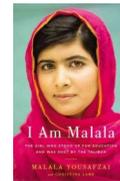
life working to give a voice  
to girls who were banned  
by the Taliban from being  
educated in her home  
country of Pakistan. She  
was nominated for a Nobel  
Peace Prize, and she has  
inspired countless people  
worldwide to stand up for  
what they deserve.

Malala says that the shoot-  
ing has taken away her fear.  
"I have already seen death  
and I know that death is  
supporting me in my cause  
of education. Death does

not want to kill me," she  
says. "Before this attack, I  
might have been a little bit  
afraid how death would be.  
Now I'm not, because I  
have experienced it."

### Rap Song: *I Am Malala*

<http://www.upworthy.com/this-rap-song-is-about-ladies-and-money-but-not-in-the-way-you-think-aa3-2c>



"We cannot  
succeed when half of  
us are held back."

~ Malala Yousafzai



"The most important  
reason for your "no" is  
that you need your  
downtime so you won't  
behave like a jerk  
because you're depleted.  
And you don't want to  
battle an appetite spiked  
by the stress of over-  
commitment. But that's  
your secret; others don't  
need that information.  
So just smile, say no,  
thank you, and keep  
moving."

— Holly Mosier

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

### Stress Busters . . .

**Get active:** Virtually any  
form of physical activity  
can act as a stress reliever.  
Even if you're not an  
athlete or you're out of  
shape, exercise is still a  
good stress reliever.

**Laugh more:** A good  
sense of humor can't cure  
all ailments, but it can help

you feel better, even if you  
have to force a fake laugh  
through your grumpiness.  
When you laugh, it not only  
lightens your mental load  
but also causes positive  
physical changes in your  
body. Laughter fires up and  
then cools down your stress  
response. So read some  
jokes, tell some jokes,  
watch a comedy or hang  
out with your funny friends.

**Connect with others:**  
When you're stressed and  
irritable, your instinct may  
be to wrap yourself in a  
cocoon. Instead, reach out  
to family and friends and  
make social connections.  
Social contact is a good  
stress reliever because it  
offers distraction, provides  
support, and helps you  
tolerate life's up and downs.



# Water the Seeds Not the Weeds

Just a Thought... 

## Unconditional Love

*Unconditional love is not so much about how we receive and endure each other, as it is about the deep vow to never, under any condition, stop bringing the flawed truth of who we are to each other.*

Much is said about unconditional love today, and I fear that it has been misconstrued as an extreme form of “turning the other cheek,” which to anyone who has been abused is not good advice. However, this

exaggerated passivity is quite different from the unimpeded flow of love that carries who we are.

In truth, unconditional love does not require a passive acceptance of whatever happens in the name of love. Rather, in the real spaces of our daily relationships, it means maintaining a commitment that no condition will keep us from bringing all of who we are to each other honestly.

For example, on any given day, I might be preoccupied with my own needs, and might overlook or bruise what you need and hurt you. But then you tell me and show me your hurt, and I feel bad, and you

accept that sometimes I go blind to those around me. But we look deeply on each other, and you accept my flaws, but not my behavior, and I am grateful for the chance to work on myself. Somehow, it all brings us closer.

Unconditional love is not the hole in us that receives the dirt, but the sun within that never stops shining.

*Excerpt from “The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have”*

By Mark Nepo

Peace ~  
Rashid



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

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## Spiritual Practice

### Quotes on the Spirit of Thanks Giving and Gratitude . . .

1. “At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.” — Albert Schweitzer
2. “He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not,

but rejoices for those which he has.” — Epictetus

3. “You say grace before meals. All right. But I say grace before the concert and the opera, and grace before the play and pantomime, and grace before I open a book, and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing and grace before I dip the pen in the ink.” — G. K. Chesterton

4. “No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks”. — Unknown
5. “Can you see the holiness in those things you take for granted—a paved road or a washing machine? If you concentrate on finding what is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.” — Rabbi Harold Kushner



## What About the Monkey Mind?

### Take A Few Deep Breaths . . .

If you’re going to do one positive thing for yourself during your day, says Christiane Northrup, M.D., author of *Women’s Bodies, Women’s Wisdom*, a round of really deep breaths is the way to go.

“Breathe fully, through your nose and down into your stomach, so you aerate the base of the lungs,” Dr. Northrup says. “Most women only breathe into the upper third of their lungs.” These short breaths trigger the fight-or-flight response of the nervous system, while deep breathing sends soothing messages throughout your body.

Visualization can help: Think of a square, and imagine each breath traveling up the left side, then over the top, then down the right, and across the bottom. The goal is to make sure your inhalations and exhalations are the same length.



**Mary Grigolia**  
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## SAN's Sacred Circle

"We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude." —  
Cynthia Ozick

Be the Peace that you  
want to see . . .

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.

*Peace & Blessings ~*  
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## Sacred Spaces for Rest and Restoration

### Peace Village ... The Spa for the Soul Haines Falls, NY

I've never been to a retreat at Peace Village, but I'm working on it. I've gotten really good reviews about the grounds, the food, the accommodations, and the programs. The following information was taken from their website.

Retreats at Peace Village have two key components. They are:

1. Examination of some of the deeper truths about human nature. We work with the understanding that there is an energy of goodness within us, and that this increases or decreases according to our habits of thought and feeling. Know-

ing more about our selves, and how we function, gives us the power to think and act more positively.

2. Periods of silence in which to reflect on our higher feelings, values, and purpose in life. Peace of mind, intrinsic to all of us but easily lost when we become trapped in mundane concerns, is restored. This experience helps connect us to an unchanging and infinite source of love and truth.

The aim is to enable participants to recharge their own sense of well-being, and learn how to maintain this strength in everyday life. Lectures, workshops, pure vegetarian food, the beautiful grounds, and a peaceful atmosphere all contribute to the process.

During your stay...

- Study practical aspects of spirituality through classes and workshops.
- Discover new methods to handle life's challenges.
- Enhance or begin a meditation practice.
- Appreciate time spent in solitude and silence in beautiful surroundings.
- Enjoy the rejuvenating effects of a pure, serene, and spiritual setting with vegetarian meals.
- Meet like-minded people on a similar journey. Relax in comfortable rooms with private bath. In most cases, double accommodation is provided.

For more information go to:  
[http://  
www.peacevillageretreat.org/  
index.html](http://www.peacevillageretreat.org/index.html)



The fastest way  
to freedom is to  
feel your feelings.  
~ Gita Bellin