

SPIRIT, MIND & BODY

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Beyond Oppression and into the Light

March is National Women's Month and seems a perfect time for us to reflect upon the growth we have made as a gender in a patriarchal society. We need not look far behind us to find examples of women who have overcome great odds, sometimes using only their moral fiber to make strides toward the independence we know today. Strides that have been made along with mountains climbed, to speak out for what they believed in, to count, to matter, to be acknowledged as an individual, and to be respected as a human being. And the podium, the proverbial mountain-top from which they speak has taken many forms including art, dance, literature, music, poetry, silence, rebellion, the underground, and of course the platform of our local and national governments.

When I think of the women of recent past, I think of Joan Baez, Gloria Steinham, Anita Hill, and our very own Diane Feinstein. These well established household

names have enlisted armies to pave the road for our freedom and to their service we owe much gratitude. Let's not forget the unsung heroes that

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stood behind this vocal presence and created a grass roots movement via their daily lives. I think of my mother, and thousands like her, who had the courage to walk away from an abusive relationship to a man she deeply loved. I also think of the lack of resources she had to successfully sustain this courageous decision. I think of all the baby boomer mothers who said, "Unacceptable!" to the idealism of the 1950's and to living a life that was expected of them rather than one of their own choosing.

I think of my aunt who was among the first wave of women to "fly the friendly skies". Coiffed, buffed and aiming to please, as they smiled prettily and sweetly at the business traveler of the 1960's. Those were the days

when they were referred to as "stewardesses" not flight attendants, and were sold as sex symbols on the tail fins of commercial jet liners, "Fly

Me! I'm Gidget" became an everyday mantra to the CEO's that filled those planes. To these women it was a dream come true as they, for the first time in human history, could travel about the world independently of any male counterpart, and be admired by their peers. And what a world to see!

I think not just of people but of issues that today many of us take for granted. I think of the right to vote. I think of the right to earn a fair and competitive wage. I think of the still controversial right to make our own choice about childbirth. I think of the right to buy a car, a house or a castle if we wish, without needing a man to co-sign for our loan. I think of the right to be independent, to be equal, to be free.

We have traveled milestones in the past 50 years but the seed to our growth was

laid well before our waking. Reflecting on the evolutionary progress of this revolutionary movement makes me wonder what changes might be just around the bend, changes that today may seem far-fetched or even unimaginable. What will the women of the future no longer settle for that we perhaps find perfectly acceptable today? We have made such progress and yet a movement with this much force tends to create lifeblood of its own, not knowing when or where or how to stop.

I also think about the oppression that continues to exist. I worry about oppression worldwide that claims so many innocent lives; the numbers which seem overwhelming to even calculate. But even more so I worry about the oppression we continue to experience here, in a country of such advancement and sophistication. Our progress is inspirational and yet I feel there is one crucial step that has not yet been taken. A piece of the puzzle that has yet to be set in place. The final and most essential piece that will make the circle complete and fill in all the gaps.

What is that piece? It is that we, as women, must

believe that we are in fact everything we claim to be. We must believe we are powerful beyond measure. We must believe we are brilliant, resourceful and capable. We must believe in our strength, our intuition, our spirit. We must believe that we are called upon by the Universe to honor our existence. We must be more expressive, more emotional, more sensual, more beautiful. We must permit ourselves to be both pregnant and empty, outspoken and silent, dynamic and humble. To be who we are in full blossom, without guilt or fear or shame. To know this as we know the taste of our own blood. Because to not honor our own likeness is to choose to oppress ourselves, and that is the greatest crime that could ever befall a people.

Honoring ourselves doesn't mean we have to denounce the opposite gender. It means we have to include them in our ripening and become more of who we already are.

"You've had the secret the whole time, Dorthy."

----Glinda the Good Witch of the North

Comedy Explosion Continues March 13th at Last Day Saloon

The Last Day Saloon is happy to continue bringing comedy to Santa Rosa with Comedy Explosion #28, Saturday, March 13th. Doors open at 7:30 PM with the show starting at 8:00 PM.

The opener for the evening George Corrigan is based in San Francisco. George has been working clubs, pubs and corporate events up and down the West Coast. Most recently

he placed third (out of seventy five comics) in the annual Rooster T. Feathers comedy competition.

Also appearing, Tony Castle. Tony has shared the stage with many nationally known comics, such as George Wallace, Chas Elstner, Willie Randolph, Jay Wendell Walker and Don McMillan. Before going on the road, Tony was a regular at Rooster T. Feathers and the Last Laugh in North-

ern California.

Headlining the show is Bay Area Legend Bob Rubin. Bob has appeared in many of Rob Schneider's movies. The most recent being The Animal.

Tickets are \$11 advance and \$13 day of show. Advance tickets are available at The Last Day Saloon in Santa Rosa, Last Record Store or online at www.ticketweb.com.

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