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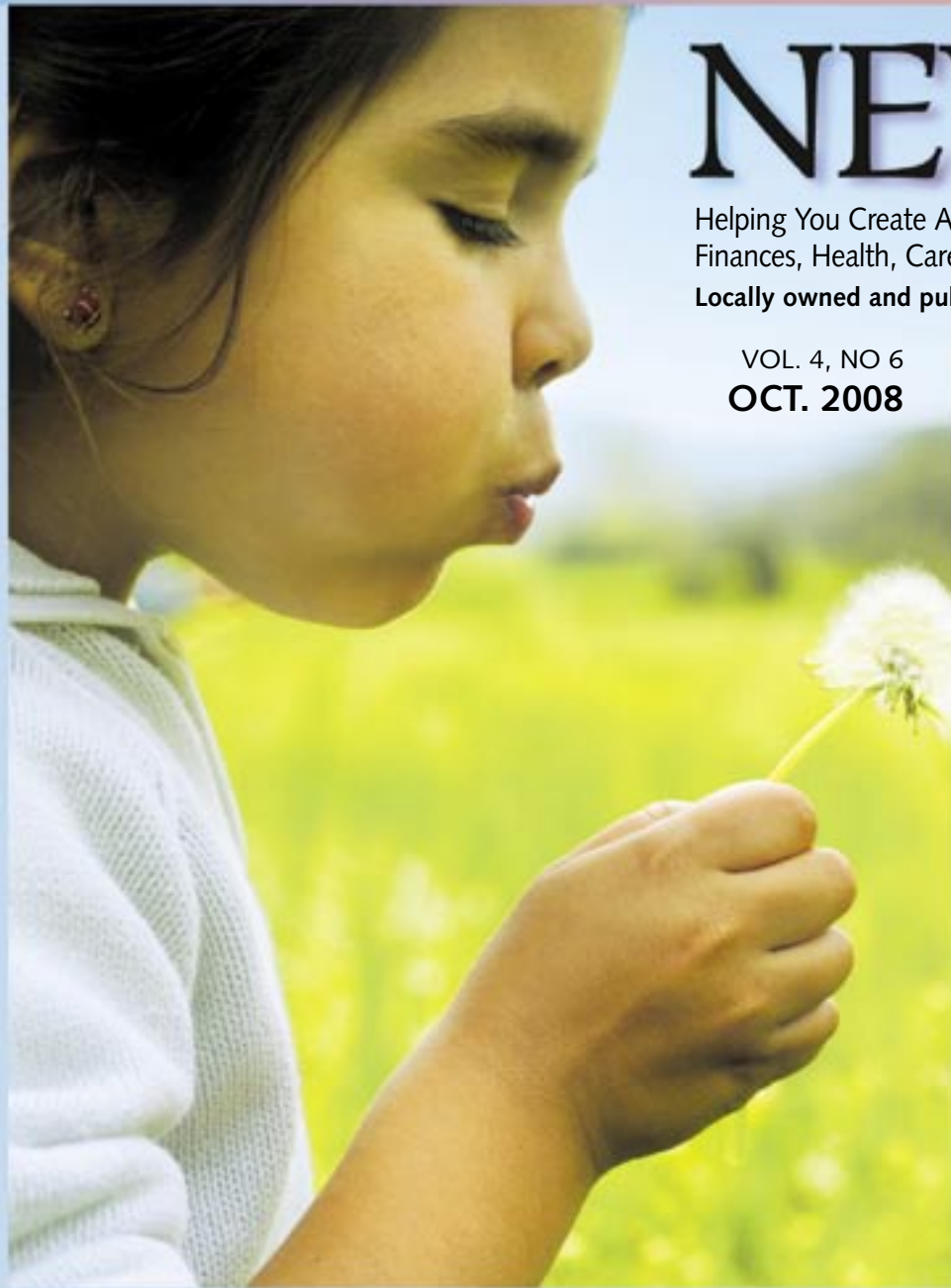
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Sonia Choquette on 10 simple ways to live joyfully

by Krysta Gibson

What if there were some very simple practices you could use every day that would support you in living a happy life? Would you want to know about them? Would you use them?

Sonia Choquette's newest book *The Answer is Simple... Love Yourself, Live Your Spirit* (Hay House, 2008) gives 10 simple but necessary steps that allow a person to make and live their authentic connection with their own spirit. These are as easy – and profound – as breathing, paying attention to messages from the body, and laughing!

Krysta: Sonia, what do you mean by a person's spirit?

Sonia: Your spirit is your essence, your core, your most authentic self. That breath of life that is breathed into you when you first open your eyes. It is the force that enables you to breathe, live and grow. That spirit is your divine essence.

Krysta: How does this contrast with ego?

Sonia: The ego is the summary of your physical self. I like to refer to Einstein who said that the intuitive spirit is our sacred gift. The rational or ego mind is its faithful servant. Sadly, we have thrown away the gift and have become enslaved to the servant.

This personality self is influenced by external survival alone and it is fearful. It clouds our perception, puts up defenses and protects itself. It self-selects out of the flow of life and is very defensive and suspicious.

When you work on a strictly ego level, the lens that you look through is "Me against you and you scare me." So the best we can do is try to manage the external world from getting too close, thus potentially harming us.

The spirit looks past appearance, past the physical, to the essence we all share. Its paradigm is "Me and you, what do we share in common?" This is a much more expanded state of being which is not fearful but joyful. These are two very different frequencies and very different outlooks on life.

Krysta: Do you think that more people are living from ego than from spirit?

Sonia: You would think so, but because spirit is our core essence, people are beginning to see that the ego that is accelerating with fear could very much be the problem. More and more people are leaping out of this consciousness and into spirit.

It is a paradox. Yes, there is a lot of fear. Yes, there is a lot of ego and that's why the external world, at first glance, looks so terrible. However, there is this other force emerging that says, "Wait a minute. I am not going down that rabbit hole, that dead end street." People are beginning to realize that the response to all of this fear is to expand and get open. I find that there is a kind of a reaction, "I can only take so much fear and now I am going the other way."

And that is what we are talking about: "Yes, do go the other way because the frequency of spirit is also contagious and the more of us who live from that fearless frequency of spirit the more we can reverse this fear-based downward spiral."

Krysta: How did you come up with these 10 ways? They are so good and they cover the full spectrum.

Sonia: For 30 years, I've been working with these truths, studying, watching, distilling and observing the consistency

The Healing Power of Jigsaw Puzzles

by Trish Barker

Jigsaw puzzles are hardly new. They've been around since the 1700s, and have evolved from hand-cut wooden educational tools to a huge industry targeting children and adults alike.

They have certainly stood the test of time, providing education and hours of peaceful time passed. What studies are now showing is that these "toys" have lasting benefits both to our health and basic well-being.

We were likely all exposed to jigsaw puzzles in our youth. As toys they are



used to teach words, shapes, colors, and geography, and provide focused, quiet time for children and parents alike. They're used in schools to educate, in waiting rooms to pacify, and are thought to develop fine motor skills in children and prepare them for reading.

Research is now showing the quantifiable benefits of carrying this activity into adulthood. Studies, like the notable MacArthur study, have shown that keeping the mind active with jigsaw puzzles and other mind-flexing activities can actually lead to a longer life expectancy, a

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