

Susan Josephs
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Topic: Change or Time

Keep The Change

Sitting at breakfast one morning, in our sun-lit kitchen great-room, I excitedly inform our teenage children about my massage therapist's newest technique. "Pat calls it 'toning' because, after each massage is completed, she uses her voice to tone different vibrational sounds into the center of your chakras in order to balance them." My veterinarian husband joins us before heading down the hawthorn tree-lined path to his animal hospital.

Our home and hospital share this lush ten-acre Connecticut property alive with fauna, trees, lawns, and perennial gardens that my husband planted and nurtures in every season. As he drinks his coffee, eats his "everything" bagel, and plays with our four dogs, I repeat the story. "You should try it Michael. It's very relaxing."

"Susan," he says, "I bought you a perfectly good membership to the gym. If you want 'toning', that's where you should go." I roll my eyes. I laugh. The kids are equally amused. This is not the first time he's misconstrued my meaning or misunderstood my explorations.

Michael's interpretation affirms our different ways of perceiving the world. He favors the sciences, physics, anatomy, physiology, and chemistry. I resonate to metaphysics, astrology, dreams, and numerology. I've spent years as an intuitive counselor and past-life regression therapist, calling my practice, "Inner Work".

He begrudgingly once accompanied me to the Edgar Cayce Institute in Virginia, where, on their psychic ability test, he scored the highest of the entire group. But, with his veterinary perspective, he refuses to take any of it seriously. He often refers to my interests as hocus-pocus. I've learned to pick my battles and ignore the commentary.

Imagine my surprise when he tells me that, after 15 years in practice, he has decided to return to his 1980 alma mater, Colorado State University Veterinary School, to study veterinary acupuncture. During an entire semester, he travels to CSU for four days each month, joining a class of practicing veterinarians. He recounts to me that before beginning their course work, he and his fellow classmates daily perform Tai Chi and meditate. I pine to be a fly on that wall. The vision of them, many in cowboy boots and hats, strikes me as hilarious. Veterinarians are among the most conservative professionals. I can't imagine a more unlikely group of people learning about Eastern medicine and its holistic approach.

Midway through the course upon returning home, he spreads his new tomes and intricate, unfamiliar, diagrammatic charts across our long, antique oak kitchen table. (The diagrams remind me of astrology charts.) "I feel like my head is about to explode," my husband laments. "I am having to think about things in a totally different way than I ever have before." I spot The Nine Star Ki, the Chinese book of astrology and elements. It's one of the many books he'll be using for diagnoses. It's a book I use as well.

I disappear upstairs and return with my own copy of The Nine Star Ki. On the inside flap I'd noted a purchase date some twenty years earlier. "You mean you're studying this oogah-boogah?" I tease.

"Keep the change," I venture, with a kiss. "I like the new you."

