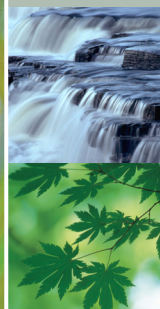
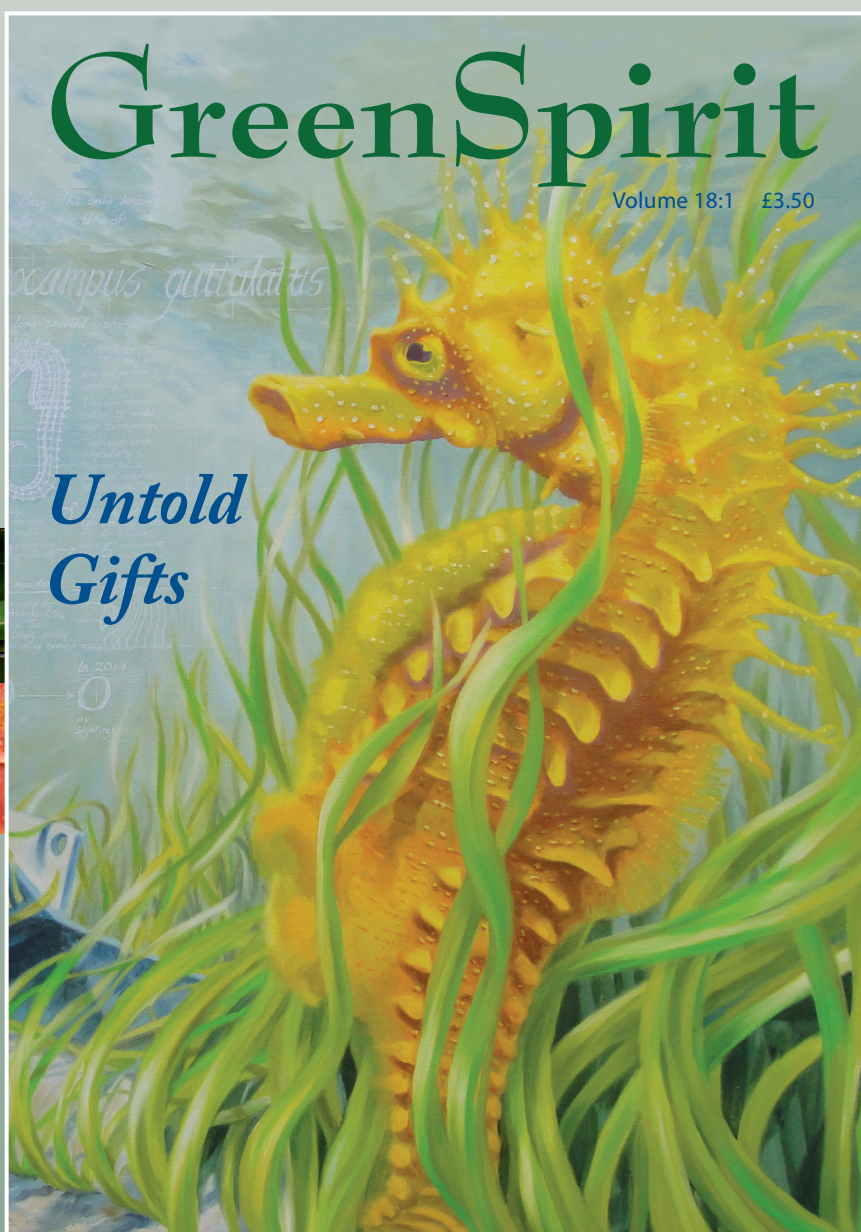


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# The Gift of Healing and Change

*The most unexpected gifts are likely to turn up in our lives at the most difficult of times, writes YVONNE FERRELL, who shares a personal story of bereavement and healing.*

How random life is... I have been a healer for over 30 years and, if I had written this piece seven years ago, I would have taken a different route. But as we grow, so do our experiences – which means life constantly changes, whatever your age.

I remember, in what now seems to be back in another life, that when I first became bold enough to tell people that I worked as a full-time healer, there was always a stunned silence – usually followed by the question, “Is that just for dying people then?”

Fast forward through those 30 years and there is so much more acceptance of healing in all its forms – a gentle touch, listening to someone who is sad, a cuddle for someone who is lonely – and from all its sources – including, perhaps, a companion pet who just accepts you as you are, either sitting at your feet or curling up on your lap. This is a healing gift, from that animal direct to you.

This story telling is always the start and as the blocked energy begins to shift the gift of healing within the organs can occur – for this is the way of the Universe... It’s ancient, tried and tested, and of course it works!

But there are many other forms of unseen healing – or gifting, if you prefer – which, if you look for them, show up in all our lives each and every day and almost always when life is at its darkest. We all have our personal stories that illuminate those healing gifts in our lives – the one I want to share here is my own.

Rewind to seven years ago and a time that was the busy run-up to Christmas 2008. All was normal in my world; the rushing around, food and present shopping, a house full of people coming and going, clients wanting to book a last “before Christmas” appointment before disappearing into family time.

On one of those oh-so-busy mornings, my husband woke feeling unwell. We went to see the doctor who reassured us it was nothing, just one of those winter viruses always so common at that time of the year. Six days later he died.

It was December 21st.

Shock is not a strong enough word for those first feelings that overwhelmed me, but if there can ever be an upside – a sense of a gift in all this – it is the fact that riddled with cancer, as it turned out, he died at home, surrounded by candles, soothing incense, soft music and so much love. For him, his journey and the gift of this life was over, and for me, the transition into single life began.

The sympathy cards and flowers that we all send at such times arrived and were, of course, a great comfort to me – but the single most healing gift at that time was left, literally, on my doorstep.

Christmas had passed but people were still in that holiday lull when I opened my front door early one morning to find a kind of ‘care package’ parcel containing treats of food to entice me to eat; a calming aromatherapy lavender candle to burn; lavender bath oil for peace and a small bottle of wine (much needed!). Even my sad little cat, who was



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When I first trained, all those years ago, “healing” was all about releasing blocked energy within the physical body. We understood there is no illness without an underlying build-up of emotion and so gently guiding someone to tell you their own story was always the beginning of a session and the start of any healing journey.



Yvonne Ferrell

picking up on all my grief, had not been forgotten and the package included some cat treats for him.

Inside my wonderful treat parcel there was a note that simply said, "I know you are not eating, so all these treats are for you."

Even as I write about it now I remember how touched I was by this wonderful simple and healing gift given to me by a client and at one of the darkest times in my life.

In the New Year that followed my husband's sudden death, gifts of a spa day appeared, plus many other self-indulgent, spoil-yourself gestures – all from clients and all thanking me for what I had done for them, now returning, if you like, what they could to me at this difficult time. This is of course how life should be – what goes around comes around, and I believe the energy we send out does come back, in so many ways – and often when we least expect it.

Not so long after my husband's death I also lost the cat that had helped me get through those hard, hard days. Many was the time I had cried into his fur but now he, too, had gone back "home."

I was bereft without my animal companion but within a week or so a very beautiful Bengal cat, full of love and fun, entered my garden, and my life. She had been living for over a decade just five doors up the road from me but had decided, it appeared, that she was moving in. No matter how many times I put her out again, she would find an open window, climb across the roof – anything to make me give in...

Finally, I acquiesced – telling her owner she seemed to have moved in. For five years she stayed with me and what an amazing healer she was – so full of fun, very naughty at times and extremely vocal when coming into the house where we lived, strange as it may sound, as what felt more like a couple than a human and pet. She would even stand in the shower with me in the mornings. She was a great healer and a very great gift for me.

Last year I decided to sell my house, leave my clinic and start a new life, which meant I had to say goodbye to my adopted cat. It broke my heart to leave her behind but I understood full well that her work with me was done and she was needed back home with her original owner.

I have a friend who is a very well-known animal communicator, not to just domestic animals but also with large mammals like leopards and elephants in her native South Africa. She has often told me she gets many calls from people whose pets have gone missing. She tries to explain that the animal may have simply moved on; after completing their work with one family they have gone to answer the call to work with another. This is not true in all cases, of course, but it does seem that often, just as with human relationships, there is a time for moving on. The gift then lies in the fact that if you can understand and accept that you will find yourself changing and growing into who you need to be.

Writing this now, with the celebrations of this latest New Year just behind us and with all the horrible unrest and hatred in our world (albeit coming from a minority), it has never been more important to lead by example because it is with the gift of belief – or faith, if you prefer – that we will overcome darkness and prove that in the end, it is always the light that manifests.

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