



Did you know that cacao, the raw form of chocolate, is classified as a Superfood?

This past month, I completed the Essentials of Superfoods course through [Matthew Kenney Culinary Academy](#) to learn more about creating beautiful food enhanced by nutrient-dense Superfoods.

You can expect to see this influence reflected in new recipes (such as [Beet & Goji Sprouted Garbanzo Superfood Hummus](#)). You can also view photos of some of the food I created on my Instagram food page [@TheSproutedPalate!](#)

February 2017

It's All About LOVE

So much has happened over the past month—in our country, as well as in my own life. Perhaps you've experienced the same? Rounding the corner into the New Year (or two if you count the Lunar New Year) tends to be a time of transition, and this being a year where our country has undergone a "transfer of power", it can be a time of uncertainty, discomfort, hope, or perhaps a gazing out towards the unknown possibilities for helping one another to shape a common future.

Our futures can *only* be common—we are all bound to each other. We must coexist. We are *coexistential*. The fact that we exist together takes precedence over our individual egoic self-interest. Somehow we must take care of each other.

It was tempting to make this month's topic about romantic love, as we have Valentine's Day coming up, and while I typically reserve talking in political terms on this platform, I cannot ignore the fact that vast numbers of people all around the world are feeling unsettled by our new administration. The Women's March this past month was an important indicator of that, and a show of solidarity for championing the values that both women *and* men hold dear, namely basic human rights, the rights that are inherent to simply *being* human.

I'm not trying to sound naïve or utopian here, but the sense



The [Chocoveda Chakra Truffle Box](#) is a great Valentine's Day gift for the yogi in your life!

Each chocolate correlates to one of the seven energy centers with beautiful yantra designs and flavors, including chai, tangerine, ginger/lemongrass, green tea, peppermint, pomegranate, and honey/vanilla. All natural, dairy-free, 70% organic dark chocolate truffles.

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that I get is that it's ALL about LOVE. The basis for every argument, on the right and the left and in between. Deep down, it's love that compels people to act as protectionists, even when fear is the driving emotion. Women



rise up by the millions in the spirit of love to preserve each others' dignity and the rights to their own bodies. On the flip side, others oppose the right to *choose* because they love and value life in all forms. Mind you these debates span every aspect of daily life and there is oftentimes staggering hypocrisy and contradiction on both sides. This is nothing new. There has been division amongst people since the beginning of time. And the differing of viewpoints is a beautiful thing... right up until it causes us to hurt one another.

The unifying quality that all human beings share is LOVE. To me, this is the source of our essence, which goes beyond the mere fact that we exist, and we can use this commonality to identify with each other's struggles. The more we feed into an "us against them" mentality, the further we drift from that innate essence of love and the more we allow hate to seep in. This does not mean sit back and do nothing. By all means voice your viewpoint as a conversation. Love encompasses reason and I appreciate those that have been standing *for* something rather than *against* something. If we can do less opposition and more observation and harness our own instincts for compassion, we can press on together in a meaningful way.



"In a real sense all life is inter-related. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be..."

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Year of the Yin Fire Rooster



Via [Western School of Feng Shui](#), By: Karen Abler Carrasco

"Had enough "monkeying around?" Are you starting to feel the big adventures and choices of last year unravel into a hundred annoying details to get the same results? That's because the Yin Fire Rooster year is HERE NOW! The shift in energies can already be felt strongly, well before the official January 28th, 2017 start date. Some Chinese New Years' energies take the first few months to shift our focus and realign our momentum, especially the yin ones. This yin year, however, announced itself "at the crack of dawn," just like the Rooster itself.

Suddenly, in the midst of all the new explorations and projects into which the curious, insatiable Yang Fire Monkey year of 2016 lured us, we find ourselves getting bogged down with the mechanics of daily life. The forward momentum stutters and slows; our questing attention is corralled by the mundane. The people around us seem to press

"This is the inter-related structure of reality."

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Exciting Announcement!

I am so, so excited to announce that, along with our partners Kent & Himani Williams, Sal and I have begun demolition for a **NEW YOGA STUDIO** in PLEASANT HILL!!!

We will have more details to share in the upcoming weeks... For now, please follow [@Align_Yoga_Studio](#) on Instagram for progress updates on studio construction.



I was not among those marching in one of the many demonstrations worldwide this past month, however I stand united with those who expressed being FOR justice, equality, and basic human decency. That is #WhyIMarch over the next several months, not fearfully or antagonistically, but with strong sentiment in favor of "the spirit of democracy and honoring the champions of human rights, dignity, and justice who have come before us.."

*in on our sensations more keenly,
their opinions feel more strident.
Making and keeping appointments
requires more effort. Even just
getting food and preparing it
seems to take more time and be
more worrisome.*

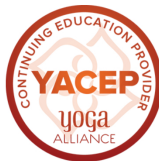
*Yet, we are also more touched by
the small everyday kindnesses we
witness, and there is a growing,
unifying wave of togetherness. If
you pay closer attention this year,
you will actually feel your tender
heart expanding, growing more
confident in making little
overtures of love to everyone
around you."*

[Read more...](#)



Photo: [Mark Ley](#)

Jenni Anspach is a [Yoga Alliance certified E-RYT 500](#) instructor trained in Bikram Yoga, Vinyasa Flow, Yin Yoga, and Stand-up Paddle Yoga. With over 10 years teaching experience, she has instructed students of all backgrounds and ability levels.



Please [click here](#) to find out how you can take action.

Posture Highlight: Heart-Melting Pose



Heart-melting Pose (*Anahatasana*) is a lovely shoulder- and heart-opener. It also creates an upper and mid-back bend, two areas of the spine that not many yoga poses address. This pose can be done in a Yin Yoga way and held for two minutes or more.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Begin on hands and knees.
2. Keep the hips positioned over the knees and gently walk your hands forward while lowering your chest towards the floor.
3. If you have the flexibility, bring your chin onto the floor. **Be mindful of your neck.*
4. Hold for two minutes or longer. Breathe.

BENEFITS:

- Shoulder opener
- Backbend in upper and middle back
- Nice alternative to Child's Pose if you have knee issues

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- Take caution if you have any neck issues

MODIFICATIONS:

- For tingling in the arms and fingers, this may indicate you are compressing a nerve. Readjust your arms.
- For shoulder limitations, move the hands further apart
- If unable to do both arms, do one arm

forward and rest head
on the other arm

I would be so grateful to know how I may
have made an impression on you!

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words! View [TESTIMONIALS](#).



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