



The Carnelian Center

Fall 2022- Newsletter

The mission of the Carnelian Center is to provide the community with affordable holistic health care while nurturing the individual through art, education and cultural integration. Our vision creates healing in a beautiful, peaceful setting with respect for the ecosystem and the preciousness of water.

The Carnelian Center - PO Box 452 Dixon, NM 87527 / 505-579-9630 / 219 State Road 75 / carneliancenter.org



A Lost Art by Chynna Chilton

Autumn in Dixon, when the leaves are turning gold and early snow covers the Truchas Peaks, something else is going on. It's freezing the garden! When my feet turn pink and numb in the last irrigation of the season and my breath is visible in the evening air I know it's time to make my frostbite salsa. This fall our pantry shelves boast jars of salsa from three batches; one labeled summer salsa, another labeled fall salsa, and the final and my favorite, frostbite salsa.

The art and love for gardening and home preserving food was passed down from my grandmother to my mother and on to me. In this fast pace world of technology, overexposure, and chaos, many times I feel like growing good food is the only thing that really makes any sense.

There are no specific measurements for the frostbite salsa because it's the salsa made from what has survived the frost.

Here's my recipe.

Go to the garden after the first or second fall frost and fill your buckets and baskets with red tomatoes or tomatillos, jalapeños and any other peppers that look hot and yummy, dig your onions and garlic if you've got 'em.

Wash and clean all veggies. If you're using red tomatoes, blanch them and remove the peels. I cup the tomato in one hand and gently cut small cubes off into a very large pot. This can be done with just your fingers depending how you want the tomato part of your salsa. I don't blend my tomatoes because they tend to turn into juice. If using tomatillos, remove husks and roast whole.

Roast all your peppers on a griddle, wood stove, or cast iron skillet, coated generously with sea salt, turning often until peppers have a little burned skin and blisters on all sides. Do the same with peeled, cleaned garlic and onions, roasting on the salt until slightly burned. I suggest using gloves or oiling your hands to chop and remove stems and majority of seeds from peppers. In a blender or food processor add a little bit of juice from your tomatoes with a few chopped peppers and blend small batches for a couple seconds to get your desired texture and add to the tomatoes. Do this with all the veggies until you get the consistency you like. Chop your onions very thin before putting them in a blender or processor and buzz just a second or two to avoid over processing.

Stir your salsa and salt to taste.

I bring my salsa to a boil and strain a little more juice off if it's watery. This juice is delicious straight or over ice with a splash of vodka.

It's now time to can! Cleanliness is of the utmost importance when it comes to safe home canning. I boil all my utensils to sterilise them. Fill your canner (I use a nine quart rack) 2/3rds with clean water and bring to a boil. Our water in Montecito is very hard so I add a little citric acid to my canning water to prevent mineral build up on the jars. The acid will encourage rust to form so make sure to wash your rack and canner with soap and water, and towel dry after each use.

Check your jars carefully for cracks or dinks. Wash and sterilise jars and keep them hot until filling. Inspect bands, discarding any rusty or bent ones. Use only new lids. Wash bands and lids and keep in hot, but not boiling water until use.

Fill your hot, sterile jars with hot salsa, leaving half an inch of headspace. Headspace is one of the key factors in determining whether you will get a good vacuum seal or not on the jar. You shouldn't see bubbles but if you do gently work them out with a sterile chopstick.

A couple of bubbles are fine.

Clean each rim carefully with a clean paper towel and put on the lids, tightening each band only finger tip tight. You don't want the band so tight as to prevent air from coming out during processing, nor do you want it so loose that it will wiggle off in the canner, turning your water bath into salsa soup.

I add a quart of cold water to my boiling canner bath to bring the temperature down so no jars crack when lowered into the canner. Now gently place each jar into the rack and slowly let the rack down into the hot water bath, cover, add more water if necessary to bring water level a couple of inches above the jars, and bring to a rolling boil. Once the water is at a full boil set the timer.

I process my salsa in pints for 35 minutes.

Using the jar picker upper carefully remove jars and set them a couple of inches apart on a clean towel away from any cold draft. Allow to sit, untouched, for 24 hours. Wipe clean, label and date, and store in a cool dark place. I label with a Sharpie on the lid because I hate labels stuck on jars! If properly canned these beautiful jars will store for years on your shelves. Of course, if you're a salsa addict like us, they won't last that long.

Happy fall and happy canning.



Birth Story by Maria Chilton Introduction by Levi Romero

Maria Elena Chilton is my paisana from Dixon, NM. She is one of the few white locals of the “hippy” generation who can say, “I was born here all my life.” Here, Maria shares the story of her birthing and depicts an upbringing where modern conveniences had been rejected for the more traditional ways of life that so many others were striving to leave behind. “Currently, my primary job is being a mother and homeschool coordinator,” writes Maria.

“Recent events, including the loss of my father and acknowledging my own 50th birthday, have inspired me to pick up the pen and find my voice in recollecting and sharing stories from my life’s experiences.” In the same spirit as her unconventional and experimental upbringing, her career history has also been creative and diverse. “My aspirations are to be the peace that I want to see in the world; live close to nature; expand my repertoire of tools for self-sustainability; teach others whatever I have to offer so that we may lift each other up and contribute to co-create a better world.” Growing up in a small town isn’t easy, especially when your ideals run counter to the accepted notions of prosperity. Here’s to Maria and all whose lifestyles embodied the essence of community and vecindad.

I Was Born Backwards and Premature
on a sheepskin rug in an old adobe casita
near the acequia, in a mountain village.
My parents’ newly purchased home of their own.
The rustic house had no electricity
or running water and no phone.

For a car there was just an old station wagon
which was shared with the neighbors.

My dad pulled me out, literally.

The rains had come,
and the apples were getting ripe.
It was late August, early morning.

Birds were singing.

The neighbors were out in their fields
harvesting chile and corn.

My mom was “nesting,”
so the bedding had all been washed
and was hung on a line in the sun to dry.

She stood naked, cleaning herself
from a communally shared cold-water hose outside.

When she felt a warm gush between her legs,
the contrasting temperature alerting her,
she knew instantly these were “my waters.”

Labor came on fast. Although it was her first birth,
she felt confident. She was a Midwest farm girl,
had witnessed many births, animals that is.

My father was a city boy, born in New York City and raised in LA.

He had never seen anything be born.

But together they had read both
the Mexican and German Home Delivery Handbooks.

So, they considered themselves prepared.

In 1970, In Northern New Mexico,
there weren’t any other alternatives
to a rudimentary Hospital birth,
they knew of no midwives to assist.

Since there were no sheets on the bed,
she made herself comfortable on all fours
on the sheepskin rug on the sunken dirt floor.

My dad was at the rear watching
for the baby’s head to crown;
but when it did there was a crack
through the center of it.

He was certain that the baby was deformed.

They had been to see a Dr. only once
and it was during the latter part of the pregnancy.

The visit was just to make sure that the baby
was positioned correctly.

The Dr. affirmed that the baby was head down.

My mother is sure that I did not turn
and believes that the Dr. was wrong.

He was also very disapproving of home births.

But that’s beside the point.

Deformed or not,
the baby had to come out.

And she wasn’t.

That’s when my dad realized
that I was a girl, presenting backwards.

Butt first and jackknifed, aka Frank Breech.

Running on instinct, he did the only thing that made sense.

He pushed me back in and reaching in with one finger
popped each of my little legs out one at a time.

He usually tells this story on my birthday.

I will always remember how
he made the popping sound
with his finger popping out
from the corner of his mouth.

“Pop,” my little legs were born.

When he tells this part of the story,
his eyes light up and a big smile fills the room.

Then my mama pushes hard one more time
and I slide out into the world,
into my daddy’s loving hands.

But I am still and quiet and blue
(my mother forgot to tell him that newborns are blue,
until they start breathing.)

His heart sinks, he is sure I am dead.

His mind goes to the place
where they will bury my tiny body,
under which lilac tree.

But my mom knows better.

She demands he hand her the baby.

He bites the umbilical cord with his teeth and ties it off.

Yes, I was small, and I had an interesting journey. But I made it.

How blessed I am, that my life here
was intended and beckoned

and brought lovingly into this time and place.

The only part of me that was buried
under the lilac tree was my placenta.

After word of my birth spread,
many folks came to my parents seeking advice
and asking for assistance in home deliveries.

For a couple of decades my mother became
the unofficial local midwife.

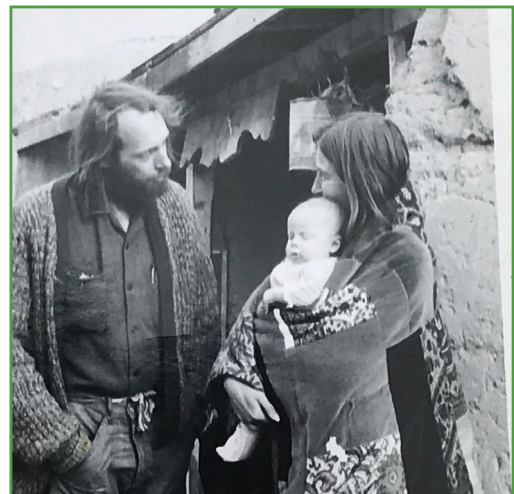
As her oldest daughter I was usually by her side,
naturally helping however I was asked to.

Looking back, I see what an honor that was.

Something I took for granted as normal at the time.

Like having my father close by for almost fifty years.

Now if I can only remember more of his stories, our stories, mine...





Do I Look Healthy In This Crazy? by Clane Haywad

I once watched a lady on a city bus convulse and wail because a person using a cellphone sat near her. The radio waves were damaging her brain, she yodeled. Cancer, cancer, cancer, she moaned. Was she right? Was she crazy? She certainly looked crazy. What does wellness look like? What does healthy look like?

I never thought about wellness or health because I never got sick, which is poor logic and I should know better. I'm rational. Humans aren't wired well for gradual threats. I find it hard to treat my future self.

In contrast my mother Helene was a lifelong vegetarian, occasional a macrobiotic, and finally a vegan so extreme she would not tolerate honey or silk in her environment. She never cheated and never craved. I ate Fritos dipped in ketchup and drink vodka from the bottle in front of her just to balance it out. "Something smells like a rotting carcass. What are you cooking?" She would ask. "Beef stew. Here, let me cover the pot with my fur coat to keep out the odor," I would say.

I was in an elevator with a young man in drug withdrawal, jerking, clutching and itching. He kept dropping a new stick of deodorant and it skittered and clattered across the floor like a live thing. His caretaker stared past me, expressionless. I did my best to see the boy's terrible and mindless need, his pain, and looked carefully away to afford him what dignity I could. Why is there such variety among, say, insects when humans all look basically similar? We are created in one image to share one another's pain. A devout Christian woman told me that when I was in deep pain and it helped.

We think health looks healthy and wellness looks well. With all her certainty and vegan discipline, my mother died overweight and confused on her bedroom floor, clutching her ratty, Kermit-green bathrobe in pain just like any other donut-gobbling American slob. My partner's mom, who ate Lil Smoky sausages, Miracle Whip and enriched white flour, died peacefully at 97 in her sleep at home.

My father, a Digger, always said "Don't believe what you think." In 2020 and 2021, 20 million people stopped believing that working multiple, part-time, low-wage jobs without health care was healthy, and simply stopped showing up. The economists wrung their hands but I thought how liberating and validating it must have felt to walk away from a low-skilled, soul-killing job that barely covered its own child care costs.

I look healthy, for the most part. I have a beautiful home and new shoes. If I want something I can buy it. I have a gym, apps, devices. I have support, resources, wisdom, intelligence. But at catch me at the wrong moment and I am the face of Death itself, my open mouth a dark hole of anguish while I howl for my dog that the coyote took, my car careening, the valley floor many thousands of feet below me. I'm a miserable spectacle and clearly insane, a menace, not well. Health and wellness doesn't always look healthy or well or even sane.

Voices from the Center

Susan M. Prins

The Carnelian Center is a place of healing - a place of connection, of collaboration, of creativity, and community

Lluvia Lawyer

To me the Carnelian Center is a home away from home a place where I can always find my center. Being a part of the Carnelian Center food bank the last 14 years has been a huge learning experience for me. It has been a lot of work but also something that nourishes my soul in a deep way.

C.J.Robison

Carnelian Center holds space for health. We offer a healthy touch, free supplements, self-help books, parties that bring folks from all generations together, dance lessons and yoga It is the home of the FOOD BANK. For me the Carnelian Center is a quiet, unpretentious place where I can meet my neighbors in health.

Jenny Rizzo

The discount treatment program at the Carnelian Center is a beautiful model. It allows low income community members to pay a sliding scale rate for high quality bodywork, massage, acupuncture, craniosacral, and other healing modalities.

Montse Serra

It's an amazing place to connect, to heal, to share, to grow, to be you in your Body, Mind, and Soul-Spirit. But what is the meaning of all of that? For every person means something different and it is ok and valid. And we care about your feelings.

Roxanne Sanchez

Carnelian center is a space that creates opportunities for the gente to share their healing gifts and to inspire the healer within and around; a hub in the middle of Dixon to support your spiritual path, health and wellness; a space that brings people together in many different creative ways.

Phillip Eliezer Klein

Dixon serves as the hub at the center of a wheel for all the surrounding communities. At the center of this confluence is the Carnelian Center, a place for healing for our community where practitioners join together to form a wheel of support you can call on, offering traditional medicine and natural healing from the heart for the community by the community. At the Center is where all things meet!

Sarah Grant

The Carnelian Center is peaceful and calm. All the practitioners take their healing work and their clients seriously. It is a joy to be there to feel the healing energy and heart.

Maria Chilton

It is an honor and a privilege to provide massage therapy in my own hometown, where the clients who come to see me are often the people whom I already know and love. Being a part of The Carnelian Center helps make this possible. It is not just a means to pay the bills. It is the collaboration of a group of fun loving folks who, together, hold the intention of creating a better world for every body, starting at The Center.

Katalina Gurulé

The Carnelian Center attracted me because it provides a space to access alternative and traditional healing. For healers this is an affordable place to be able to share their healing work with the community. Amazing spaces like this are what make the world a better place.

Jean Zitting

The Carnelian Center has been a consistent presence in Dixon and the surrounding communities. The Center provided uninterrupted food distribution during a difficult time of isolation and has always served as a place for the community to come together with support groups, yoga and dance, celebrations and holistic health services made accessible to all who seek them.

Meet our new practitioner Katalina Olivia Gurulé



I am a native of Northern NM. I was raised in Rio Lucio, NM and have also lived a large part of my life in Albuquerque, NM. I am a Promotora Traditional (promoter of natural/traditional medicine), Herbalist and an Energy Worker. I work as a Licensed Practical Nurse in the surrounding Peñasco area in the fields of Hospice and Home Health Care.

My journey with plants and healing started as a child as I spent a lot of time in nature and have always loved plants. My mother, father and grandparents encouraged my relationship with plants. When I learned about how my grandmothers for generations had used remedios to heal and take care of their families, I became even more fascinated with plants and thirsty for knowledge about plant medicine. I then began to search for teachers.

The first teacher I encountered on my path was Medicine Woman Bernadette Torres of Black Lake, NM. She continues to teach me so much about sacred plant medicine, energy, various ceremonies, medicine making and has also been an amazing spiritual guide and support. I also became a student of Curanderas Rita Navarette of Mataxhi, Mexico and Tonita Gonzales of Albuquerque, NM. With them, I have traveled to

Mexico on multiple occasions over the years to learn various Curanderismo healing modalities such as sobadas (traditional massage), ventosas (fire cupping), limpieas (energetic cleansing) and Temazcal (Mexican style sweat lodge). I was also initiated into Usui Reiki Levels 1 & 2 by Reiki Master Paula Terrero of the Dominican Republic. The late and great Arlo Starr, DOM and Monica Lucero, DOM have also been teachers of mine. I worked for them at their Apothecary/Acupuncture Clinic (Red Root Acupuncture & Herbs). They helped to expand my knowledge of herbs, medicine making, TCM and sweat lodge. I have and continue to learn a great deal from Sylvia Ledesma of Austin, TX who is a Promotora Traditional, ceremonial leader and danzante of the Mexica-Conchero Tradition as well as a founding member of Kalpulli Izkalli. From her, I have learned about sacred knowledge passed down from the Mexica-Conchero Tradition, temazcal/sweat lodge and the role of healing as practice in social justice movements.

Over the last several years, I have worked very hard to help create Abuela's Medicina with a number of other female healers and community organizers. The mission of Abuela's Medicina has been to reconnect and preserve ancestral medicine as well as provide access to traditional medicine healing, knowledge and remedies.

In 2021, I moved from Albuquerque back to my home town of Rio Lucio. I am eager to share knowledge that I carry about plants and healing with my community. I would also love to assist with facilitating your healing. I have a unique approach to healing as I mix my knowledge of Western Medicine and Traditional Medicine. At this time, I am offering herbal consultations, plant walks, workshops about herbs/medicine making, pláticas and energy healing such as Reiki and Limpías (energetic cleansings). Please feel free to reach out to me as I am here in service to facilitate healing of my community.



Carnelian Center Practitioner list

Lluvia Lawyer Aby (License #1902)

Massage and Core Synchronism for all ages
Contact: 505-803-1476

Maria Chilton (License #1830)

Transformational Massage, hot stone. Owner - Little River Remedies
Contact: 505-927-2974 / mariachilton70@gmail.com

Montse Serra

Spiritual Healer, Art Therapy, Reiki & Akashics Master.
Contact: 402 5151 2791 / momos.spai@gmail.com

Cathy J. Robison (License #6599)

Massage therapist anatomy based therapeutic massage.
Contact: 505-670-6124

Roderick Oknich

Acutonics® Meridians with tuning forks and other sounds.
Contact: 575-613-3245 / roderickkok@hotmail.com

Katalina Olivia Gurulé

Herbal Consultations. Reiki. Limpías. Licensed Practical Nurse.
Contact: 505-573-0068 / lumbreluna@gmail.com

Sarah Grant (License #1038)

Practices Japanese style Acupuncture
Contact: 505-603-0362 / sarahcrawfordgrant@gmail.com

Jenny Rizzo (License #8019)

Craniosacral therapy, birth and postpartum doula.
Contact: 505-929-9622 / zarizzo@gmail.com

Roxanne Sanchez

Chronic pain. Yoga and Tai Chi teacher .Community Health worker
Contact: 505-417-6135 / roxannesanchez54@gmail.com

Phillip Eliezer Klein (DOM#1256)

Acupuncture, Oriental Medicine & Biodynamic Farming
Contact: 505-226-3066 / info@goodearthmedicine.com

Susan Prins (License #MT8460)

Massage Therapy and Manual Lymph Drainage, Oncology Massage
Contact: 505 901-1272 / smprins@gmail.com

Disclaimer: The ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Carnelian Center or its representatives. The authors do not claim to diagnose or treat disease. The newsletter is intended for entertainment purposes only.