

Hornet's Lesson

by Kriss Erickson

When we first moved to an overgrown, wetland/woodland property in South Everett, I saw, amid the tangled foliage, a diamond in the rough. Crawling with blackberries, morning glory vines and alder saplings, much of the ground was impassible.

And yet it was full of unexpected things; surprises just waiting to come into my awareness. For instance, about a week after we moved in, as my husband, Michael, and I emptied a rickety storage area, we noticed an unusual stump. Though it was just an ordinary Douglas fir stump, it was moving. In fact, it looked as if it were breathing.

My seven year-old son thought this was a great adventure. Eager to discover what was making the stump move, he began shredding the pulpy wood with his bare hands. I suggested a more cautious approach. As I used a garden spade to carefully separate the spongy wood, a gray head popped into view. We all



laughed as a mole clumsily climbed out of the stump and quickly burrowed into the damp earth.

I still don't know how a normally ground-dwelling animal like a mole ended up in the middle of a rotting stump. But from the beginning, this property has called me to become aware of

hidden or unusual things.

So I should have known better the following summer when my husband and I were clearing brush and weeds in preparation to plant a "secret garden" toward the back of our property. The ground was loamy and smelled so good and rich that I envisioned my roses growing large and beautiful there. I was so involved in my daydream that I didn't pay attention to where I was digging.

I should explain that a week or so earlier, our American rat terrier, Rizzo, had run to us for help with a yellowjacket that was clinging to his side. Yellowjackets had been making

our land their home for years before we arrived, so we tried to respect their presence. It was challenging to actually welcome them, especially when they acted like nosy neighbors, showing up uninvited at picnics and barbecues and insisting on their share.

So I should have known to be aware of my surroundings even before my shovel hit the particularly soft patch of dirt around a rotting stump. Instead, I thought how easily my roses' roots would grow in the crumbly earth. I worked on removing the small stump while my husband cut blackberry vines a short distance away.

Suddenly I felt a light 'ping' on my right foot. I looked down and couldn't believe what I saw. All I could think was, "Oh no, I've really done it this time!"

From my sockless feet inside my heavy black clogs to the knees of my jeans, I was covered with a solid mass of yellowjackets. Hundreds of the small hornets clung to my body.

That they had climbed on me so silently seemed amazing when I saw where I was standing. The "soft earth" in which my feet had sunk was actually the interior of the yellowjackets' large, wheel-shaped nest.

The sharp "ping" I'd felt wasn't a sting but an experimental nip from one of the hornets to determine if I was a threat or not. I'd destroyed their nest. I was definitely a threat. What to do? If I ran, they'd cloud up and sting me. If I stood still, they'd eventually realize I was a nest invader and sting me.

Did I mention I was also absolutely terrified of hornets and of being stung?

Now what a mess I was in, all because I failed to be as aware of my surroundings as I knew to be.

Panic took over. I ran, falling, getting up, calling to Michael, "Help! Bees! Help! Bees!"

My husband, a quick thinker, used his gloved hands to scoop as many of the hornets off of my legs as he could, while we both ran toward the house. By the time we'd dashed out of the wooded area and across a short bridge, most of the hornets had been left behind where they formed a huge, buzzing tower over their ruined nest. Only one yellowjacket still clung to my jeans

Michael used his gloved hand to remove the stubborn hornet. I ran to the house since the hornets had my scent so were still hunting for me. Amazingly, though I'd been covered with at least 500 yellowjackets, I counted only seven stings.

And yet.

And yet, because I had allowed myself to be unaware in a place that had repeatedly shown me how full of life and wonder it was, the huge, industrious yellowjacket nest was destroyed. After the hornets dissipated, my husband unearthed their nest. Buried beneath the stump in our backyard, the hornets' empire had consisted of two, two-foot wide wheels filled with tiny compartments that housed food and larval yellowjackets.

And yet, when I'd entered their beautifully constructed home uninvited and unannounced, the hornets had treated me with more restraint than most human families would if I'd come crashing through their roof. Instead of a devastating attack, they'd given me a warning nip—a hint that raised my awareness level and gave me time to get away from the nest.

My human tendency to be unaware of what's under my feet caused me to miss a lot. Though I'd cost them their home, the hornets left me with a wonderful gift: a deeper sense of awareness that I've carried with me ever since.

Though the yellowjackets have continued to nest on our property, I've found their nests each year and have marked them off with hazard tape so that my family can live in harmony with our yard's indigenous creatures. Strangely enough, since I crashed through the hornets' nest, my deep fear of them has vanished. In its place is a deep respect, tempered with a healthy dose of awareness, for the creatures that share my space.

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Everything Fits Together

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I continued skipping along my path very happily thinking: "talk to the subconscious during hypnotherapy and that really helps." Then along came the Inverse Wave Therapy. Now, this really works! So I'm thinking wow, this is it, the edges and border are all filled in and this is the last piece of the puzzle.

Inverse Wave Therapy sets up a neutral vibrational frequency to act as a pathway for conducting work with traumas or life issues. Within this neutral field a negative experience is transformed to a positive vibration through rescripting.

This IWT works to get at really deep-seated negative emotions, and bang, I suddenly find another edge piece of the puzzle! I realized that what appear on the surface to be unrelated negative emotions often stem from exactly the same initial negative experience that is repeated over and over again in different lifetimes until we understand the lesson and can see the gift in the experience and release it. This is a big piece of the puzzle, realizing that it is the same thing over and over again.

What I noticed is that my path went from reiki to Reconnective Healing (hands-off therapy) to hypnotherapy (talk therapy) to Inverse Wave Therapy (a combination of both) and each modality plays a part in the ultimate healing. What seems to be the most effective for me is to help the

client trace back to the origins of the negative issue, explore it, then replace it with a positive behavior. Hence, you invert the wave from negative to positive.

All these seemingly unrelated classes and seminars all blended together to become a single focus, a useful healing modality, my healing modality. And in the same way, the seemingly unrelated emotional issues in a particular client all boiled down to the same issue.

Diversity became unity. Wandering around aimlessly became a focused journey. A huge piece of the puzzle suddenly fit into place. We think we have so many problems, but in actuality it can all be one problem! Isn't that great news!

We all know that a puzzle is made up of a lot of pieces, and it is a wonderful exercise to sit still for a moment and realize that much of the puzzle has been completed. It is even more exciting and rewarding to realize that we are all putting together unique sets of diverse puzzle pieces and coming up with our own personal picture of effective energetic healing for ourselves and our clients.

Although there may still be more pieces to come for me as a healer, I can now see the portrait of myself as a practitioner of many complementary modalities that join to create my own unique gift. I can choose from my diverse set of tools to give my clients the best possible healing and growth experience.

Isn't that what we all want?

We want to be healers in order to help clients and each other. I sincerely believe that we are all heading down the same path; some of us take side roads and some of us take the main road, but the ultimate destination is the same. We are all looking for our edge pieces of the puzzle we picked. The game is to guess how they all fit together.

Kathie Brodie is a partner in Harvest of the Heart. Learn more about her at harvestoftheheart.com

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