

# THE VOICE

MAGAZINE  
Vol 20 Iss 46 2012-11-30

## Stress Waist

The cortisol connection

## Smooth Ride

Winter driver

## Eastern Vision

*The House of Tomorrow*

*Plus:  
In Conversation  
From Where I Sit  
and much more!*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



## WINTER RIDE

Maxie van Roye



I have had my license for almost two decades. I have driven in wind and rain and snow and ice and, quite by accident, a thunderstorm that produced tornadoes. I spent two winters in Alaska, where roads don't get salted because we all want to protect the moose. I should know a thing or two about driving in bad weather conditions.

Yet the thing or two flies out of my head when I first notice the snowflakes settling on the windshield of my vehicle. Instead of relying on years of experience, I rely on panic.

It served me well once before.

It all started when I was a teenager. Doesn't it always? Early one morning, shortly after I'd gotten my license, I was on my way home after dropping my dad off at the train station (unforeseen disadvantage of finally getting my license: I had to act as chauffeur at five in the morning). It was my second time on the road alone. It was my first time on the road in the dark. It was my first time on the road after an ice storm.

But at all of 17, I had it together. I crawled down the dark, unlit country road toward my house, secure in the knowledge that I knew what I was doing. And that's when it happened.

When you picture an icy slide, you picture loud skidding, screeches of tires, inevitable crash. But there was none of that. Slowly, silently, the car began to move diagonally across the empty lanes. Slowly, silently, the tree-filled ditch loomed. It took hours to cross ten feet of road. The car was on invisible wires. Moving. Asphalt. Gravel. Dirt. Weeds. Then it stopped.

Wedged in a snowdrift, at six in the morning, on a dark country road. No cellphone. Freezing cold. At least a mile from the nearest house. But my initial thought was not safety, but terror. *Holy crap. My parents are gonna kill me.*

You know how they say you can do crazy things when the adrenaline rush comes? How you can have the strength of Superman, or something? I panicked. I got out of the car and waded into the snowdrift. And then I pushed. With all the nervous energy of a very freaked-out teenager, I pushed.

And the car moved. Upward. Slowly. Weeds, then dirt. Snow crunched and sprayed. Gravel. Asphalt. Road. Oh, my stars.

I crawled back into the seat. I gingerly navigated home. I crept into the house and back into bed. It was a decade before I could even tell the tale. And it will be a few more before I recover from it.

## IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman

**Ingrid D. Johnson, Part II**

*Ingrid D. Johnson is a Winnipeg-based singer-songwriter with a deeply soulful rhythm-and-blues feel that evokes girl pop singers of the early '60s. She recently released her debut full-length album What About Love? with her band The Funky Fresh Crew.*

*A Jamaican who immigrated to Canada with her family at the age of four, Ingrid's contribution to her new country has been commendatory. Past work with the Canadian Red Cross, the RespectED Violence and Abuse Prevention program, Voices Manitoba Youth In Care Network, UNICEF, and finally her work as the spokesperson for the clients of the Laurel Centre (a community resource centre that counsels sexually abused women with addictions) has allowed her to respond to the pain of her own past in a healing way. In the Closet Productions ("A Voice for the Voiceless") further promotes her mission to create music and art for positive social change.*

*Recently she took the time to answer some of Wanda Waterman's questions about creative inspiration and social conscience. See the first part of the interview [here](#).*

**A Focus on Relationships**

I write about relationships because everything in life has to do with relationships. Life is not life without relationships; it's about our relationship with God or our lack of relationship with him, our relationship with others, and the relationship we have with ourselves. We're designed to relate to and with others. That's why relationships are so important. I like to write what I know and how that evolves over time.

**Audience Response**

Most of the time when I perform, people tell me that my music is very inspiring and that my songs are very catchy. I also remember a lady coming up to me at the Fringe Festival in Winnipeg with tears in her eyes. She said that I touched her heart and she had not expected that to happen. It's all very encouraging to me and makes me want to get better and better as an artist.

**Creative Urges**

I create because I have something to say, something to express. I create because creating gives me a sense of purpose. I also create because I love it and I would not be me if I did not create.

I will always be creative, no matter what. However, public support is very important, so it is always great when people book me for live shows, buy my CDs and books, subscribe to my YouTube channel (ingriddjohnson), and “like” my Facebook page.

### **On the Horizon**

I want to promote this album and my company’s mission and vision as much as I can by performing live with my band, The Funky Fresh Crew. I hope to tour across Canada, the US, and overseas someday soon. I hope to sell more CDs and books, make some new videos, secure some licensing deals for my songs, and start writing my first novel. I want In The Closet Productions to be successful. I want to make more music in the future, as well.

### **Speaking For Those Who Can’t Speak For Themselves**

I’m compelled to speak up for those who can’t speak up for themselves, because that’s one of the core principles of my Christian faith. I also do it because I know what it is like to be powerless, to be voiceless, and I can empathize.

If I could say one thing to abuse survivors, it would be this: You are not alone. What *they* did was wrong. *You* are not to blame. Don’t bury what happened to you anymore. Tell someone you can trust. Talk about it and don’t let bad coping habits control your life.

### **Inspiration: Getting It, Giving It**

I am inspired by the parables, proverbs, and prophecies in the Bible. When I read them I know that I’m deeply loved by God and that all things are possible with his help. Classic films like *Little Women* and various indie films like Deepa Mehta’s *Water* have inspired me. I also love listening to great vocalists like Billie Holiday, Etta James, Ray Charles, Sade, Anita Baker, and many others.

I’m a Christian. It’s not my religion—it’s my lifestyle, meaning my faith is not based on rituals or man-made traditions. It’s based on one principle, and that’s *love*. So when I write, I write from a truthful and loving place. I write songs that will help people, inform people of important social issues, uplift people, and inspire people to positive social change. I write songs, I pray, that will have a positive impact on people in society.



## HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza



### Stress and Your Size

Stress is ubiquitous today. Our jobs are stressful, our lives are full of deadlines and expectations, and even our families and children are stressed. Many of us feel constantly “under the gun” and, as a result, our health suffers. But did you know that stress can also affect our weight?

#### It's all about the individual

Each of us is unique, responding to life situations in different ways. What stresses one person may not be seen as a major stressor to someone else, but that doesn't change the effect it has on the body. It's all in our unique perception. This is one of the reasons that some people will gain weight under stress while others will lose it (if you're one of those individuals, thank your genetic code!) For many of us, the tendency to put on waistline fat or engage in “stress eating” during periods of strain can amplify those stress levels even more.

#### What happens

When you're under stress, your body produces higher levels of the key stress hormone, cortisol. This elevated cortisol is fine for short periods, but when you face long-term or chronic stress, it can negatively impact your health. Brain cells bathed in cortisol die more quickly, and high cortisol levels contribute to insomnia and other health concerns.

When you're in high-cortisol mode and eat food you don't really need, it's particularly bad for your body. Ordinarily when you eat, the satiety hormone, leptin, kicks in and gives you that feeling of fullness. But this doesn't happen when you're stressed; leptin production is reduced or inhibited, meaning you may have trouble discerning when you're full. Worse, you may still feel “empty” despite that five-course meal.

Additionally, cortisol indirectly controls the amount of fat that the body stores. Typically your body will store around 30 per cent of your calories as fat, to use when needed for extra energy and fuel. However, stress—and therefore cortisol—signals your cells to pack away more fat, up to 70 per cent. This often accounts for the increased waistline fat that accompanies today's stressful lifestyle.

#### What can I do?

Lowering your cortisol may help control weight gain, but it's not as simple as that. Often, it takes a combined effort of several factors. What do you do to reduce your day-to-day tension? A good plan is to regularly engage in something enjoyable, like reading, walking, hiking, or yoga. It may feel as though you

have no time for extras, but in fact spending time doing activities you enjoy has been shown to reduce high cortisol levels.

Botanical medicine can also be helpful. Certain herbs, like *Rhodiola rosea* (rhodiola) reduce cortisol levels as you go about your day-to-day activities. Or seek out an herbal combination like Relora, which offers lowered cortisol with improved sleep patterns.

### Final words

Don't forget that, as with most health issues, weight management isn't limited to one culprit. Although cortisol management may be key to maintaining a healthy weight, there are other factors that may also play a part: current medications (think side effects), food allergies, lack of exercise, and poor diet, to name a few. Get all of these going in your favour and you'll be pleasantly surprised at the results!



*Katie D'Souza is an AU graduate and a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently practices in Ontario.*

*Disclaimer: The information contained in this article is for personal interest only; it is not intended for diagnosis or treatment of any condition. Readers are always encouraged to seek the professional advice of a licensed physician or qualified health care practitioner for personal health or medical conditions.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

### AU Holiday Exam Procedures



If you have undergraduate courses ending December 31, 2012, you'll want to note the University's special holiday exam procedures—and order your final examinations as soon as possible.

If your course contract date is December 31, you must submit your exam requests before the University closes for the holidays. Athabasca University will be closed from December 24, 2012, at 4:30 pm MST until January 2, 2013, 8:30 am MST. No examinations will be shipped during that period.

Exam requests received after the close of business on December 24 will be treated as Late Examination Requests, and the Late Examination Request Fee will be assessed.

However, if you submit your exam request before the holiday closure, you will have until January 15, 2013, to take your exam. This is not a course extension; all other course components, including essays, projects, and quizzes, are due by the December 31 course contract date.

For further information, check out the holiday exam policy [here](#), or contact the Information Centre at 1.800.788.9041.



# ANTBOY IN: NARCISSISTIC NEGOTIATION TACTICS

YOU MUST DO MY BIDDING!



WHY?



BECAUSE I AM AWESOME AND MIGHTY AND BEAUTIFUL AND YOU ARE A MERE ANT! ADMIRE ME, NOW!

FRANKLY, I FIND IT HARD TO ADMIRE SOMEONE WITH SUCH A GROSSLY INFLATED EGO.



YOU . . . "FIND IT HARD"? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN??!



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



*From  
Where  
I Sit*

*Hazel Anaka*

## Beats the School of Hard Knocks

Several years ago I wrote a column extolling the virtues of handyman extraordinaire Mike Holmes. Actually, it bordered on becoming an ode. I talked about his gold necklace, bib Carhartt overall, and bulging biceps. That sexiness aside, I said that what most women really love about him is the commitment to get the job done, and done right. He was and is the renovation knight in shining armour.

Mike's become an industry unto himself with TV shows like *Holmes on Homes*, *Holmes Inspection*, and *Make it Right*, all appearing on multiple networks. He's been a celebrity judge on the American and Canadian *Handyman Challenge* reality shows. He writes books and has a syndicated column. Holmes is also a trusted expert and makes appearances at trade shows and on countless lifestyle shows.

Don't get me wrong; I still love Mike and the industry integrity he represents. He is obviously driven and single-minded in his zealous pursuit of competent work done by qualified people. That explains his intensity.

But now I find myself drawn to the sweeter, softer Bryan Baeumler. As the host of several of his own home improvement shows, he's a media darling. The show I enjoy most is *Disaster DIY*, where typically a wife at the end of her rope contacts Bryan to save the day, the project, and the marriage.

The botched projects border on the unbelievable and are often dangerous as well. Think faulty wiring, structural deficiencies, and tripping hazards. Yet no matter how big a buffoon, how lazy, or how much of a procrastinator the DIYer may be, Bryan manages to teach his lessons with humour, tough love, and compassion. He's got a mischievous twinkle in his eye as he plays to the camera and exposes the shoddy workmanship and poor technique.

Baeumler makes a yeoman effort to teach the well-intentioned but bumbling homeowner through coaching, demonstrating, and encouraging him. Sometimes it takes, sometimes it doesn't. When it appears the guy is hopeless at tiling or taping or whatever but has learned some other skill, Bryan steps in and does it himself.

I can't leave Scott McGillivray out of the equation. He's the hot, young star (with great hair) of *Income Property* fame and also has been a guest judge on *Handyman Challenge* along with Baeumler and Holmes. Infinitely successful as a landlord, contractor, and TV personality, he comes across as sensible, grounded,

and fun. He bought his first income property in his early 20s and now owns hundreds. He's passionate and creative in the way he sees potential in unused spaces.

Those are just three great reasons why I love HGTV. I know first-hand how hard it is to be a homeowner, renovator, and human being working without a huge budget or a cast of thousands. We've made our own blunders, so frankly, I'd rather learn from any one of those guys. It sure beats the school of hard knocks, from where I sit.

*Hazel Anaka's first novel is Lucky Dog. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.*

## CLICK OF THE WRIST

## Alternative Gifts

**If the materialistic push of the holiday season has you feeling disgusted, it might be time for a new take on gift giving. This week's links offer some alternative gift choices and practices that you might not have considered.**

### Catalogue Order

Sure, you could drop \$50 on a gift for someone who already has everything--and who really doesn't want any more "stuff." Or, you could shop a charitable organization's Christmas gift catalogue and "delight your loved one with a thoughtful gift given to the poor in his or her honor." That \$50 could provide four school desks or 50 baby chicks to raise for eggs or meat, or it could feed a child in a developing nation for a year. Talk about a gift from the heart! These catalogues abound among charitable organizations; another possibility is [here](#).

### Gift of a Loan

In a similar vein, Kiva, which "[believes] in fair access to affordable capital for people to improve their own lives," allows donors to make a loan to a needy entrepreneur. You can loan as little as \$25 "to help create opportunity around the world."

### Fair Trade

If you're looking for a physical gift, but still want to support socially responsible practices, consider shopping fair trade sources. Partnerships like Ten Thousand Villages give "opportunities for artisans in developing countries to earn income by bringing their products and stories to our markets through long-term, fair trading relationships." When you buy the beautiful creations, you're supporting artisans across the world while ensuring that they receive fair compensation for their work.



## THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



**Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World**

**Film:** *The House of Tomorrow* (2011)

**Directors:** Hanan Kattan and Shamim Sarif

**Screenwriter:** Shamim Sarif

**Genre:** Documentary

*“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field.*

*I’ll meet you there.*

*When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about.*

*Ideas, language, even the phrase ‘each other’ doesn’t make any sense.”*

Jalal al-Din Rumi

### Roses in the Rubble

This film was released prior to the recent attacks in Gaza and does not in the least anticipate them. There is no mention of Hamas in *The House of Tomorrow*, which was released prior to the conflict, and the film— both realistic and optimistic—doesn’t foreshadow the impending doom.

It’s just a well-crafted argument by two Palestinian women that effectively, objectively, and lovingly outlines the problems and proposes solutions rooted in women’s concerns.

Hostilities between Jews and Arabs in Palestine go back a lot further than 1923, when the Palestine Mandate made provision for an Israeli state within Palestine territory; even back in the centuries when just a remnant of Jews inhabited the land, there were bitter conflicts. The rancour appears to stem back to Biblical times and even today to be based on a mutual misinterpretation of a mythos very distant from today’s crisis, yet utterly bound up with it.

In spite of the recent attacks between Hamas and Israel, *The House of Tomorrow* breeds optimism, oddly enough, offering a glimpse of another side of life in Palestine: the aims, aspirations, and initiatives of women on both sides of the divide who are stubbornly and against all odds striving for peace.

Though it can do nothing to lessen the grief many of us felt in the wake of the daily reports of casualties, the film may lessen the blow of discouragement and hopelessness that these deaths triggered—maybe things just had to get worse before they could really get better.

The goal of bringing women together to forge a new future is highly commendable, and the suggestions the Israeli and Palestinian women give are in keeping with concerns for the well-being of children and a longing for freedom and autonomy.

The film also clarifies something that Western media generally ignores: the fact that historically, for every Jew that has been killed by Hamas, 10 to 100 Palestinian lives have been taken by Israel. Palestinians can't travel freely even within their own regions; a 20-minute car trip will take several hours because of checkpoints, and some trips require reams of red tape.

Israel's infamous Green Line (described in the film as an extreme reaction to the extreme crisis of suicide bombings) has cut off a large majority of Palestinian farmers from their ancestral fields for years, and Palestinians are daily subjected to humiliation and poverty. Those who fled to other countries are in a kind of political limbo, not granted the rights due them in their homelands yet also not qualifying for the rights of the citizens of the countries in which they've taken refuge.

The good news is that there's a worldwide network comprised of both Jews and Palestinians who refuse to give up on the dream of peace in the Holy Land.

The film loses points for suggesting that resolution lies more in the direction of economic prosperity for Palestinians. For example, a micro-brewery in Muslim-majority Palestine is touted as a great social good, a means of initiating peace, if you will, while there's no suggestion of holding the religious accountable to the dictates of peace in their own tenets of faith.

But the film gains these points back for asserting that when dialogue occurs between the two ethnicities, good things happen: Commonalities are noted, alliances are forged, and the powers-that-be are thwarted in their efforts to divide and conquer. The message is simple. Change is mandatory, possible, and now in progress. Get out of our way.

*House of Tomorrow* manifests five of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is about attainment of the true self; 2) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 3) it gives me tools of kindness, enabling me to respond with compassion and efficacy to the suffering around me; 4) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; and 5) it makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomenon, making living a unique opportunity.

*Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.*

*“The House of Tomorrow . . . [offers] a glimpse of another side of life in Palestine: the aims, aspirations, and initiatives of women on both sides of the divide . . .”*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: Healing Poetry

There's increasing awareness of the healing power of art, and both creating and experiencing it are seen as a form of therapy. In fact, health care practitioners have been offering art therapy to patients to speed the healing process, whether mental or physical. Now, it's the health care workers themselves who have the opportunity to use art to deal with their demanding jobs.

As *The Toronto Star* [reports](#), Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital has hired its first poet in residence, Ronna Bloom, to lead an innovative new program for hospital staff.

The program arose after Bloom conducted several well-received workshops at the hospital last year. It is conducted in a group setting because, as hospital psychiatrist Allan Peterkin told reporters, "We often work in teams around a patient . . . It makes perfect sense that this kind of reflection should happen in a group."

Bloom, a celebrated poet who also has worked as a psychotherapist, told reporters that "it's therapeutic for [hospital staff] to stop, write and reflect," adding that "[it] makes them better at their jobs when they put down the pen and go back."

### Around the World: Parade Paperwork

The annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, one of the most famous parades of the year, is watched by millions across North America. Held in New York City, it's also attended by throngs who brave the cold weather for a closer glimpse of the marching bands, balloons, and floats. But this year, in-person paradegoers got something a little more personal--way too personal.

As PIX 11 News [reports](#), parade goers were showered with confetti that included "social security numbers and banking information for police employees, some of whom are undercover officers."

Macy's told reporters that it uses "commercially manufactured, multicolor confetti, not shredded paper." However, the confetti that rained down on this year's parade included shredded paper that appears to be "documents . . . from the Nassau County Police Department." The shredded strips included confidential personal information as well as license plate numbers, arrest records, and incident reports.

Currently the source of the shredded document confetti is "still a mystery," although the Nassau Police Department is "very concerned" and is investigating whether the scandal resulted from negligence or a deliberate action.

## AUSU UPDATE



### AU Students urge candidates to improve university funding

AU students are concerned about the financial health of Athabasca University and the effect of recent news stories on the reputation of the AUSU membership.

A recent CBC report notes that in recent years the university has made a series of reserve draws to cover budget shortfalls, draining the once \$30-million reserve fund.

Tuition and fees at AU, meanwhile, continue to increase despite the concerns of AUSU that education is becoming increasingly unaffordable in Alberta.

“I’m very concerned about AU’s financial situation,” says AUSU President Bethany Tynes. “AU is increasing student fees, observing hiring freezes, denying sabbaticals, delaying projects, and downsizing their offices due to a lack of available funds. We don’t want to see the quality of our education diminish.”

“At the same time,” Tynes continues, “I am confused by AU Board Chair Barry Walker’s comment to the CBC that AU is ‘in a very sound financial position,’ as the concerns we’ve noted do not support the notion that we’re financially sound.”

Chronic underfunding of public post-secondary education is a factor in AU’s financial stress. AU students have lobbied Alberta in recent years to address the shortfall; our members call on the candidates in Alberta’s provincial election to make post-secondary funding a priority in their platforms and to ensure that all Alberta universities are funded equally and sufficiently. Public post-secondary institutions need a reliable, predictable funding model that provides sufficient base operating funds to support a world-class education.

Athabasca University Students' Union is the largest students' union in Alberta, representing nearly 40,000 undergraduates annually.

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*This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. The Voice does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org).*

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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## THE VOICE

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