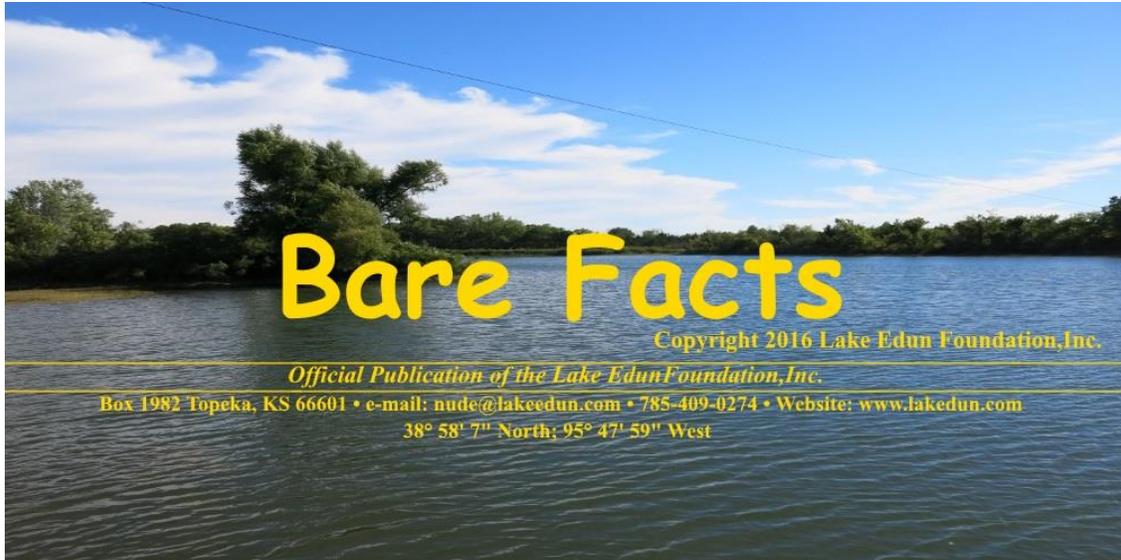


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A Note from the President of the Lake Edun Foundation

Ah, Springtime! Crocuses push glorious purple and sunny yellow blooms through the dry brown leaves, forsythia bursts into golden glow, elms drop their leaf buds and eastern Kansas nudists find scattered warm sunny days to drop their clothes and get a whole body feel of Mother Nature awakening to renewed vigor. What a joy it is to walk through the woods and meadows looking for the first trout lilies to show their beauty while listening to the heart warming music of Spring bird song. Lake Edun is beckoning: Come take a walk or a jog around my trails; lie in the sun and inhale deeply the fresh Spring air; do a few pull-ups on the exercise bars; revel in your good fortune to enjoy this wonderful place and the opportunity to enhance your bodily and mental health. One of the greatest benefits of your Lake Edun Foundation (LEF) membership is the opportunity to get out to the land any time your schedule allows ---and soak up the restorative vibes.

Seven wonderfully energetic volunteers –five Lake Edun members and two prospective members—showed up on windy February 28th to continue work on clearing trees off the dam. This biggest work project is almost finished. We just

need to clear a bit more right down at the water's edge on the lake side and a bit more near the bottom of the dam on the woods side. We have another work day scheduled for Sun. March 20th from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. After work the LEF Board will meet at Lake Edun at 3:00 p.m. Hopefully, many Board members will be able to bring a friend along to help with the work day projects. We always have a good time visiting –laughing with and at each other-- while we work. Join the fun if you can.

Our big social event this month is the Lake Edun Meet & Greet at the Free State Brewery, 636 Massachusetts St., Lawrence, KS on March 12th from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Free State not only has awesome local brews, they also have a consistently tasty menu of good eats. This is a great time for us to bring friends that may be interested in joining LEF. It is an opportunity to get them acquainted with some of our dear naturist friends and let them see that we have a great time together. Free State is saving several big tables for us in the street level rear beer garden so there will be no stairs to climb. Look forward to eating and drinking with you!

Hope you enjoy the new e-mail version of BARE FACTS. Sending it this way will save \$ that we can use improving Lake Edun. Let us know if you need a paper copy and do not have an easy way of printing it off. Nude cheers to all!

Baring Body and Soul

Those of us who are naturists Have moved past cultural norms about nudity and take it for granted as being wholesome and healthy. That which we derive so much pleasure from is viewed as horrifying to much of the textile compulsive public.

This gulf in perspectives clearly demonstrates that each of us construct reality in our minds. For the naturist the naked body is a non issue, although it means comfort, relaxation, acceptance of self and others as they are, etc. To the clothed public, nudity is unthinkable, scary, shameful, etc.

The point of view of naturists and textiles is mutually exclusive. Finding a frame of reference that both share is the only avenue by which a bridge can be built between the two viewpoints. Naturists for the most part, having lived in both worlds can appreciate the difficulty most people have in at least understanding naturism.

Having said this, it is still a temptation for naturists to grow impatient and frustrated with the larger, and usually judgmental larger society.

When we stand in front of a mirror, naked, typically we don't like what we see. We've spent so much of our lives, hiding our bodies from ourselves and others, that there is an uneasiness felt when faced with the truth of our bodies – the scars, the blemishes, the missing or excessive flesh. It is hard to accept that this body is authentic; we want to "fix" it somehow and the normal way to fix it is simply through hiding it. The thought that our students, our co-workers, our bosses, our children would be able to see us stripped down to nothing but our skin sends a ripple of fear coursing through our brains. After all, we have all worked so hard to build our identities which provide us with presence and authority in the community. How will others be able to continue respecting us if they see us naked?

....

Yet, when we do risk taking off our clothes in the company of others who do so as well, we share something that builds relationship and trust....

The act of being nude with others is an act of trust. It reminds us that beneath our social roles and our disguises, we are basically all the same, humans sharing the same planet, the same air, the same goal of achieving a bit of happiness and

contentment in the world we live in.

<http://rglongpre.ca/naturistlens/2014/04/12/baring-the-psyche-in-social-nudity/#comment-2054>

Naked in Denmark

Those of us of European heritage in the English speaking world are a bit different than many on the continent. That is, we tend to be puritanical and feel shame about our body and nudity. This has been going on since at least 1492.

That's over 500 years of body loathing. Don't you think we have wasted enough time on this wretched tradition? Admittedly there are other cultures with far longer histories of body shame than ours. Large portions of Asia and the Middle East come to mind.

Be that as it may, encouraging our culture to develop a healthier attitude toward the body is up to us. Certainly this is no easy task. Many powerful forces in our culture promote the status quo. These include tradition, religious beliefs, law, media, impossible standards of beauty, and the unquestioned belief that nudity and sex are inseparable to name a few.

Changing this complex cluster of beliefs for even a sizable minority is a daunting task. This is true even for Europeans. The majority of Europeans aren't naturists, not even Germans, and many are as prudish as they are here. However, nudity both sexual and non sexual is taken for granted far more in Europe than just about

anywhere else.

The British are regarded as being about as prudish as are Americans. England's famous "Naked Rambler" has spent years in prison for his refusal to wear clothing in public, to cite one famous example. So coming across a British woman's describing her experience while living in Denmark with overcoming body shame was intriguing.

She asserts that Danish children don't grow up paralyzed by the fear of being laughed at the way that English children do. She says she spent her school career avoiding the showers after PE, but in Denmark her friends tell her they were made to shower together after every class, with no separate cubicles. Which she says explains the convivial attitude she noticed at the local pool.

This cultural difference caused her to do some research to understand what is different about Danes attitudes toward the naked body from the British. A Danish psychologist told her that, "Foreigners often comment on how common it is to find Danes naked in the swimming pool or in the sea. Danes are more liberated than their American and British counterparts. It's rooted in their history – from the communal showers and baths to women's liberation in the 1960s. It was quite a Danish phenomenon – camps where people got together and women showed their breasts freely. Nudity is more widely acceptable here and it's built into the social structure."

Challenging herself, she says she decided to join the Danish women and set herself the goal of learning to love her body Danishly. The first step, according to her friends, was to embrace nudity.

“At first I was nervous, but it soon became liberating.

Being naked in front of other women and not feeling judged made me much more accepting of my own body. And seeing how comfortable all the Danish women were in their own skin made my hang-ups about my lack of pin-up perfection seem petty.”

As a result she says she is, “No longer shackled by self-loathing, I feel privileged to swim among the Danish female community at my local pool.” We applaud this journey of discovery and the embracing of body freedom. This woman demonstrates that regardless of our conditioning, given the right circumstances anyone can make dramatic changes in their perceptions and belief system. Fortunately, everyone doesn’t have to go to Denmark to learn body acceptance. [Ed.]
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/wellbeing/mood-and-mind/how-to-love-your-body-----the-danish-way-h/>

This is My Body

People respond to challenges in different ways. Experiencing abuse, verbal, physical, sexual is a particular kind of abuse aimed at dehumanizing the victim, taking away even the hope of resistance and any sense of worth. It is the ultimate in contempt by the abuser of the abused. To move from victim to victor requires resilience, courage, and ultimately, self acceptance. The

journey required to reach the goal of wholeness and self worth is never easy and comes with significant pain.

Canadian playwright and performer Katie Sly's path to healing has taken the path of radical reclamation, embracing her body and using nude performances to blatantly declare, "This is MY body!" I choose to make use of it for my purposes alone!

Such self empowerment is a powerful antidote to all the messages that her body wasn't her own and could be treated with contempt anytime it suited her abuser. Sadly, too many find it next to impossible to reclaim who they are. Self doubt and shame acts as a dense fog to blind and confuse them.

Ms. Sly's choice of public nudity in her art as an act of defiance and self affirmation is a rare one. While she isn't a naturist, what she is doing through her nudity does point the way toward liberation that others can follow through naturism.

Naturism when framed as self determination is a powerful reclaiming of the self. The self boldly presented without flinching or apology, vulnerable yet incredibly strong. Indeed, the naked truth revealing who I am, no apologies!

The following is an excerpt from Ms. Sly that encapsulates her journey and philosophy. [Ed.]

I feel like I push myself to certain lengths with my body and exposure. I've been abused quite a lot, so I feel that extreme exhibitionism of my body, or exhibitionism in terms of talking publicly about my physical experience, is an act of reclamation.

It's interesting how being comfortable with my



Do Your Children See You Naked?

Raising children is always a tough task. It's a onetime shot, no matter how many children you have. Sure, you gain experience with each child, but every child is different. And every good parent wants to do the best possible by each child.

Like it or not, there are no perfect parents and no perfect children. Instead, it's about being "a good enough parent," to borrow a phrase from famed child psychologist Dr. Bruno Bettelheim.

Numerous books have been written about child-rearing. The internet is loaded with blogs about parenting. There is no end of well intended advice available.

With respect to nudity, a main feature of naturism, as it applies to children and the parent/child relationship a wide range of views are advanced by internet bloggers. Several of these have been referenced in Bare Facts over the years.

Family nudity always comes up eventually in any family. How it is to be handled is where the debate begins. Interestingly, quite a few bloggers, usually mothers, voice opinions about their children's nudity during the pre-school age years positively.

Some even state a positive attitude toward parent's nudity when the kiddos are around, again usually during the pre-school age years. Most become squeamish about family nudity as the children move into the school age years. They nearly always speculate that in time the children will "tell" you that their or your nudity is no longer acceptable and automatically move toward greater privacy when undressed.

Since I don't believe a dress code is included in our DNA, such changes in comfort with family nudity have to come from parental and societal attitudes and pressures. The assumption is widespread that there is a "time" when family nudity is no longer desirable or acceptable.

Behind this widespread belief that there is an age when family nudity is inappropriate is a deeper assumption. Namely, that nudity and sexuality are if not identical, are very closely linked. That this belief isn't a fact escapes most people. Without realizing it, people are engaging in a thought distortion. Just because you believe in something, doesn't make it so.

What little scientific research that has been done on family nudity demonstrates that

children are not harmed by seeing their parents' nude. Indeed, there are scientific studies that show that children raised seeing other nude humans derive positive benefits from the experience. The caveat is that this finding is in the context of non sexualized family or social nudity.

Simple nudity is not seductive. It does not invite or cause sexual arousal or "confusion" for children or anyone else. The linkage of nudity and sex is post puberty, adult phenomenon. This adult way of seeing nudity and sex as equivalent, even by adults is

On the contrary, there is good reason to believe that making nudity a taboo, and a source of shame and punishment leads to negative consequences. The summary of findings by the American Psychological Association in 2007 on The Sexualization of Girls, (<http://www.psych.yorku.ca/leeat/3480/documents/SexualizationofWomentaskforce.pdf>) clearly analyzes the complex negative impact our society has on the socialization of girls through sexualizing them. Males also suffer from these same forces in their lives.

What can be done to counter the enormous weight of our culture isn't an easy one. The oppressively negative influence of our culture is so pervasive that it can't be avoided. That pervasiveness largely causes it to become part of the background noise we daily live with and so becomes unnoticed.

Naturism has an agenda that runs counter to the intense sexualization message of our culture, yet this is counter intuitive to most people. Nudity in any form is lumped together with explicitly sexualized nudity. This includes in the family, or works of art, especially in the public square, is interpreted as just more of what they are trying to protect their children from.

Naturists have always insisted that non sexualized social nudity has a positive impact on children and adults by normalizing the human body and socializing children to not link nudity and sex. See Nudist Society 1970, W. Hartman, M Fithian, and D. John, chapter nine: Therapy Nudity and Joy, 1991 by Aileen Goodson, chapter thirteen; and Ruth Barcan, Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy, 2004, pp. 88-91.

Dr. Goodson, p. 314 quotes with approval a study of the "conspiracy of silence, "what the adult world fails to talk about becomes taboo; just as those parts of the body which the adult covers become taboo, even if nothing is ever said against them....Any impulse to inquire becomes in itself a sinful proof of an inner evil....When the very impulse to explore is felt as evil, we create for the child and for ourselves a hierarchy of evil....An unwholesome atmosphere of shame and mystery is created about every aspect of our inner body processes."

Goodson then references sex therapists, "...who report that most of their clients' problems stem from repressions, fears and guilt associated with the "secret private-hidden parts" of their own sexuality as well as those of the opposite sex---anything secret and hidden, of course, becoming inordinately important. English statesman and

orator Edmund Burk observed: "The first and simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind is curiosity."

Despite scientific evidence to the contrary, our society is moving toward ever greater prudery toward nakedness, even in children as Barcan notes, p. 91. Of course, there is little dissemination of this information, and is largely discounted by those learning of it due to their preconceptions about nudity.

However, people continue to question the "prevailing wisdom." The following is from a blog tackling the problem of trying to raise healthy children in the toxic atmosphere of today's world.

She writes, "In order to raise *confident, well-adjusted* children who have a *healthy view* of their bodies and their selves (we say, Body Positive), we do not hide our naked bodies from them, but at the same time, we don't prance around flaunting it either.

There must be balance, and age-appropriateness."

The writer correctly identifies the crucial factor in parent/child relations, saying, "Children learn by observing."

The mechanism she identifies for causing damage to her children is seeing their parents, "...ashamed, running away, covering up, they will *internalize* that behavior as 'normal,' and they *will learn to also feel shame* in their nakedness, rather than self-worth. And there is nothing healthy about that."

The power of modeling can also convey a negative message, "Likewise, if our children see us always flaunting nakedness, they will presume that is 'normal' as well. And while nudity *is* natural, we cannot go out in public that way so we need to *set boundaries*."

Kids have questions and its import to maintain an open and honest dialogue: about their bodies, about sex education, about everything. And if parents don't answer them, they will find their answers out there – from friends, from television, from the internet.

And those answers may not be the healthiest ones. <https://thismamawrites.wordpress.com/2016/02/02/do-you-let-your-kids-see-you-naked/>

While I generally applaud the sentiments the author states, her disclaimer that she and her husband aren't, "prancing around flaunting it (nudity) is a curious statement. What does this mean?

Apparently the implication is that they are nude in front of the kids as minimally as possible. This still implies that nudity is not totally bad, but it should be held to a bare minimum. (Pun intended). Is going about your daily tasks nude if you choose "flaunting" nudity or is it just being yourself and acting normally? Children can easily grasp this concept.

The issue at hand is nudity in the home. Children easily understand the distinction between home and the outside world. That is an easily defined boundary. As the

author says, honest dialogue takes care of children's questions and explains their parent's motives for family nudity. [Ed.]

Upcoming Events

March

12--Sat. Meet & Greet at Free State Brewery, Lawrence, 4-6

20--Sun. Work Day, 10-2

20--Sun. Board Meeting, 3-5 Lake Edun

20--Sun. Sauna, 5:30

April

1--Fri. Meet & Greet at The Blind Tiger, Topeka, 4-6

1--Fri. Sauna, 7

10--Sun. Board Meeting, 3-5 Lake Edun

21--Thurs. Work Day, 2-5

21--Thurs. Full Moon Sauna 6

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