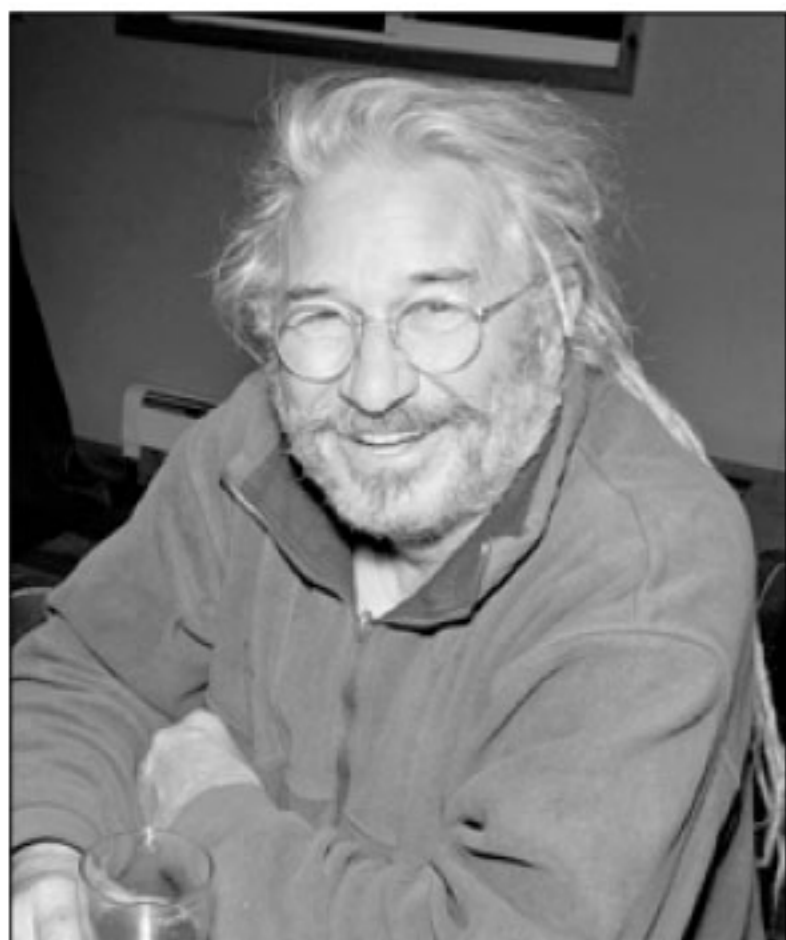


# Out & About

with Lori Sunflower

Article & Photos by Lori Nagel

This month's topic:  
**How Do YOU Get Through Winter?**



**Mark Jacobi:**

Well, it's kind of a function of making your way all the way to Winter Solstice, and then there's this "ahhhh effect", where you're just like, "Oh, it's all downhill from here." And part of the reflection is that "Oh, but it's gonna be like this again in another year," and yet, who cares, right? So ya get through the winter just like, well, are you ready to throw in your towel or not, ya know? I mean, people check out in the winter, cross the veil. And if you're not willing to do that, then tough it through. Or you can go south and be a snowbird—a lot of people do it, and it's respectable—nothing wrong with it.

I grew up in Wisconsin, where it wasn't uncommon to have wind chills of 80 below—for weeks! The coldest I experienced there was negative 97. Where I was working, the guys would get off their shift at 7am, but at 5am they'd go out there and they'd climb under their cars with blow-torches to warm up the oil in their oil pans. Compared to Crestone? It's much better here!

In the wintertime, the mountains and stars feel closer than they've ever felt. I mean, the atmosphere coalesces and drops to the surface. It's thinner and clearer than it is all year long. There's no haze. It's immediate. And that's just a thrill. That's part of what gets you through winter.

Ya know, you have to take these things in stride. I accept the fact that winter weather creates summer weather creates winter weather creates summer weather. And I try to enjoy and appreciate what those dynamics are because it really makes it a richer experience when ya take it in that level of context and recognize that there's a bigger dynamic at play. Frozen water will break rocks apart, and those rocks get broken apart besides, and

then that rock eventually becomes the mineral in the soil, which eventually nourishes the plants that nourish you. And so, all of that dynamic makes it worth it all. It's indomitable, it's larger than me, and it's been going on since way before any of us walked on 2 legs—so ya just have to accept it and dig it!



**Lisa Bodey:**

Chop wood, haul water! The ritual of building a fire every day teaches me appreciation for heat, warmth, light & connection.

Growing up in Indiana, I just remember *fun*—building snow forts, snowball fights, sledding, just lots of running around, ice-skating, so really being outside and playing in it. How does it compare to Crestone? We had fun! (laughing) But honestly, it's a more active lifestyle here, there's more like-minded people who will get out into the elements—snowboarding, skiing, sledding, and appreciating the environment and the seasons—there's a deep respect for all the changes throughout the year.

In regards to winter preparations—it's all about the wood! I've learned how to run a chainsaw and log splitter and keep gear in my truck—a hat, gloves, boots, extra clothes—because even if I don't need it, someone is going to.

To stay warm, dress in layers! Wool, natural fibers, animal skins. Also, tsa lung is a Tibetan breathwork that teaches you about your internal elements and heat generation.

My favorite winter wildlife . . . the ravens, the owls, the rabbits. The elk herd comes through where I live, so I really appreciate the elk herd in the winter. It's the only time I really get to interact with them. And the coyotes howling are always a pleasure—they're all over out there.

Winter is a time for me to push myself beyond my current boundaries. To really dive into the shadow. Where are the areas that I need to grow, that I need to expand, where do I need to learn to contract and say no. Personal growth is where I occupy a lot of my time in the winter.

My hardest Crestone winter was living in my 1976 trailer with a broken window—the bear had come through—no real heat, leaking roof, while I was building my tiny house and working outside every day.

Winter cuddling techniques include random dogs, cats, and imported men. You don't have to put the imported men in there! (laugh-ter)



**Matthew Gray-Stathatos:**

A lot of indoors. Video games. Tai Chi and meditation. Ride horses. Work on music—make little music sets. I do a lot of working—just try and keep myself busy. Occasionally I'll build a snowman. I dunno, it's pretty boring out here in winter, though. Not a lot to do. That's why everyone ends up going to the bar. It's like, "Well, what're we gonna do? I guess we're all goin' to the bar." Everyone's like, "Well, everyone just drinks here in this town," but there's nothin' to do. I just kinda keep to myself a lot—just work and go home. That's probably the simplest way of getting through winter.

I'm a snowboarder, and Monarch Mountain had a lot of awesome snow this year. I've gone to a lot of campfires this winter, too, which is fun, cuz it's all cold, but you can hang out with some friends and roast some marshmallows. Sometimes me and some of my friends would just be like "Hey, let's go up to the mountains and start a fire and kick it," ya know?

As far as preparations go, make sure you got a lot of warm clothes! And boots. Boots was something I learned. It was my first winter, and I was like, "Oh, I'll be fine!" My shoes just got destroyed and I needed boots, man.

To keep warm, I'm very active when I'm outside to keep my blood flowin'. Other than that, a lot of quilts. We have a propane heater that goes through the house. Even though it's really cold, I'd rather live in Crestone, at the base of a mountain, and get that nice, fresh breath of air, than be in a city in the winter, because you just breathe in that nastiness the whole time.

The mountains and stars are awesome here in wintertime! There's just something a little more magical and sparkly about 'em. They're great in the summer, too, but there's just something about winter, having the snow on the

mountains and having the moon shining on in it and reflecting the snow on there and then you see all these twinkly stars. I don't know, I feel like the stars are prettier when it's colder out. Might just be me, but . . .



**Wonder Bob:**

Any way I can! With a lot of prayer and patience. I learned I can cycle my breath, to circulate Chi in the body to create heat. The first winter I was here, I spent it outside, with no heat, just to see if my body could do it. And it did.

I live simply, in a 12-ft diameter yurt with no running water, a little propane heater, and a south-facing sunroom. I manage my activities, including bathing, around when the sunroom is warm. I have to be patient and match my cycle with the rhythm of weather and temperature.

Crestone is a magical place, the capstone of consciousness and the crossroads of infinite possibility. When we put ourselves out on the edge of the wild, we can have a conversation with All That Is. Without the congestion, light pollution and human chatter, we can commune with the stars and nature in a more efficient way. It's almost as if we can speak to them and they hear us. They send little acknowledgements through twinkles and shooting stars. I ponder, "Wait a minute, how can you hear me? How is this possible?" This clarity in wintertime is profound. We're in a high vibratory space with more snow, which really is crystalline consciousness. It's kind of a translator to the cosmos. You can feel the unified field of that crystalline consciousness that's high on the mountain. I can only imagine what it's like up on the mountain. There's no way I'm going up there! Cuz it's *cold!*

Just last night, I had 20 coyotes circle my yurt, inches away from the wall, and they started singing. I was in the middle of a coyote song! Great-horned owls hang out in my tree and hoot all night long. Sometimes a herd of elk will circle around, making weird and strange noises throughout the night—like a cross between aliens and pigeons. And the birds! I see some really cool birds.

Winter is a great time to contemplate and self-reflect. I review what I've accomplished the year before. I go within, reconnect with the earth, reconnect with the cosmos, and the mountain. I imagine what I can create for the next year. It's a whole reset experience. It's truly valuable time.

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