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Fall 2020



BY JAKE MANGUS

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Joyful Living Magazine is committed to embracing a lifestyle of joy and abundance.

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How to Be

Happily Single

(while finding a great life-partner)



BY DR. MYRA PERRINE

Once saw a bumper sticker that said, “SINGLE, BROKE, AND HAPPY.” As I thought back to my single years, I smiled remembering that sometimes I was broke, sometimes I was happy, but mostly I just wanted to be married—money or no money—and I certainly wouldn’t have advertised otherwise on the back of my car!

Now, as a married woman (who dated for over two decades), I’ve gained some helpful insights from both sides of the altar. I’m often asked to pass along these pointers to men and women who are not meeting the kind of people with whom they want to spend the rest of their lives. Thus, I’ve had the privilege of assisting a number of single people get on track and begin living the lives they want even before they find a life partner. And in the process of taking responsibility to make the necessary adjustments, voila! Along came a person of interest, and—in due time—the marital knot was tied. Yes, it’s like Jon Gordon said in his 20 tips for a positive life: “Don’t seek happiness. Instead live with love, passion, and purpose, and happiness will find you.” So here’s one insight I’ll pass along that I’ve learned about finding the right life partner.

What does the sign say on your back?

A long time ago, in a land far away, I was dating a handsome prince. Well, okay, he was handsome, but he wasn’t the prince for me. Anyway, when we began going to church together, I noticed I was introducing him to a lot of my attractive, single female friends.

One day I asked him, “Do you wish you’d have met some of these gals before you fell madly in love with me?” (I was feeling quite secure in our relationship that day!) He looked at me with surprise and said, “Are you kidding? Every girl here is wearing a sign on her back.”

Of course, I was intrigued. I didn’t see any signs. To me, these were just lovely ladies. But I remembered when people used to wear billboards that covered their front and back, signs that were hinged at the shoulders. I assumed that was the kind of signboard he was referring to, an advertisement giving clues or indications about what the person was offering.

These were invisible signs, of course, apparently written by each girls’ attitude and identity. So I asked my boyfriend to read the signs to me. He pointed to the first girl, a competent lawyer, whose sign reportedly said, “You really think you’ve got a chance with me? Forget it!” The next sign read, “Please take care of me.” Then there was a “Not interested in losers” sign, an “I’m miserable” sign, an “I’m more special than anyone deserves,” and an “I’m desperate,” sign. Seemingly that day, all my single girlfriends were wearing invisible signs!

The messages, however, did surprise me. I knew these women and considered them great people. But when I thought about it, some had gone through complicated relationships or break-ups that had left them feeling skeptical, hurt, or armored. I finally asked my boyfriend, “And what does the sign on my back say?” He didn’t hesitate. “When I first met you, your sign read, ‘Welcome! Hold on tight; it’s going to be a wild ride!’ Now your sign says, ‘Taken!’”

I was convinced these signs were legit.

Since then, whenever I talk with an unhappy single who wants to be happily married, I share the “sign on your back” story. Then I ask what they think their sign says. If they don’t know, I suggest they ask three or four of their closest friends of both genders. The wording on their sign is

often apparent to me, but I want them to discover it for themselves. And when they become aware of the vibe and message they're giving off, then they can decide if they want to change it to a more genuine indication of who they really are.

Everyone to whom I've suggested this has come back with new insight into themselves and what they've been advertising to the opposite sex. Interestingly, I've noticed that the happier these people become (with their lives and themselves), the more inviting their sign reads. That's one reason I like to help singles intentionality go after the life they want, and as they do, they often meet some really good people from whom they then can

choose to pursue a deeper relationship.

So that's an easy first step. If you're single and you don't want to be, 1) figure out what your sign says, 2) determine what you want it to say, and 3) decide how you can change it to display your authentic heart. If you need help with this, ask some of your closest and wisest friends to assist you, and consider inviting them to be brutally honest. In the end, you may become happier because what you offer and advertise is likely to be the kind of person you will attract.

So, what does your sign say? And if necessary, are you ready to get a new bumper sticker? JL

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BY PAT OTWELL

Dr. Pat Otwell is the author of *Guide to Ministering to Alzheimer's Patients and Their Families* published by Taylor & Francis (Routledge imprint) and can be purchased from Amazon.com.

Tips When Visiting a Parent in a Care Facility Who Has Dementia

Since children of parents who have dementia frequently experience frustration when visiting, these suggestions are offered with the hope that visits will be meaningful for everyone.



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Be Prepared

Learn about the illness and how it affects patients. Resources from the Alzheimer's Association (1-800-272-3900) and attending support groups can be helpful.

Anticipate what might happen and how you would handle various incidents. (1) Your loved one says or does "mean" things due to the illness and limited ways to express anger. Family members are frequent targets so don't take this personally. (2) Ignore repetitious questions or switch topics. (3) Be truthful remembering you don't always have to tell the whole truth! If asked about someone who died, you might say, "I haven't seen George in a while" (without saying he died). Telling the truth keeps you from feeling, and being, guilty! (3) Listen without correcting when your loved one makes inaccurate comments. Arguing tends to escalate making the situation worse. (4) Your parent doesn't want you to leave. Rather than offering an explanation, take him/her to be with others. Exit without emotional "good-bye's." (5) When your parent says or does something that makes you angry, control your feelings and don't be manipulated. Explanations are ineffective due to patients' inability to rationalize. Avoid saying anything you would later regret. Say, "I love you and look forward to seeing you again soon." Then leave.

Try to visit when you're at your best. Your emotions can be "contagious!" A good mood sets the tone for the visit. Make frequent, but brief, visits. Long ones can be emotionally draining. Prepare spiritually by having a devotional time before you go. Ask God for wisdom.

Get Off to a Good Start

Each visit may seem to your parent like it's the first time you've come. Introduce yourself, "Mother, I'm Jill, your daughter." If she's able to remember she has a child(ren), she may think of you as a baby or child. If so, you can say, "Yes, it's hard to believe I'm Jill, your daughter who is now grown." She might engage more in the conversation if she knows your identity.

Let your time be their time. Your visit may be the highlight of your parent's day. Try to enter their world and enjoy the moment.

Show 'N Tell

Use pictures. Display one of yourself first to indicate you're the one visiting. If applicable, discuss your children, spouse, church involvement, work, etc. Show a picture of relatives when discussed.

Enjoy Music

Sing! Many Christians remember words of hymns which is an uplifting way for your loved one to participate.

If a piano is available, you or your parent might play. A dementia resident at a nursing facility where I served as chaplain artistically played hymns in her 90's!

You might bring a flute or guitar for a sing-along. Listening devices and Christian radio stations are additional ways to enjoy music.

Ponder God's Promises

Many older people find comfort, encouragement, and hope as a result of their faith in Christ. Keep a Bible in your parent's room. Hold it up and say, "This is the Bible. We've read from it often. Let's think about some of God's promises."*

- "... I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5).
- "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).
- "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).
- "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

Pray

What better way to end your visit than to pray? Say, "Mother, let's thank God for all He's done for us." Fold your hands, bow your head, and close your eyes. After you pray, ask if she would like to pray, too. Many dementia patients can pray heartfelt prayers! JL

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Making Sure Your GOLDEN YEARS Are *Golden*

Let's have some straight talk about the journey of aging. We are all aging every day. We are living longer. Just 100 years ago, the average person lived to their mid-fifties. Now, the average life expectancy is in the late seventies. There's a 20-30% chance you will see your 90th birthday if you've made it to 70 years. More than 40 million Americans are age 65 plus. If you're on the hill of fifty beyond, it's a good time to gain some insights on aging to prepare for your golden years.

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BY JOANNE MCCARLEY

Joanne McCarley is the Founder and Director of ShiningCare, Inc. a non-profit agency serving Shasta, Tehama and Siskiyou Counties since 2009. She has over 30 years of experience in social and health services, and is a Certified Geriatric Care Manager from the National Academy of Certified Care Managers. She is an active member of the Professional Aging Life Care Association and holds an Excellence in Care Certification for providing and promoting high standards for dementia care. Joanne also has over 10 years of experience as caregiver for elderly family members, which has resulted in a depth of insight and knowledge beyond her education and professional experience. She is a longtime resident of Shasta County and a graduate of CSU Chico. Since 1989, she has worked and remained active in numerous business and charitable organizations for the betterment of her community. Joanne is happily married, has an adult daughter and enjoys spending time with family & friends, RV travel, kayaking, Bible study and painting.

You'll find remarkable variation in a line-up of people age 65+. We don't all age at the same rate. In many ways, when we age, we are the same as we've always been. While also, things change. It's wise to acknowledge that, and learn how to make this journey of aging golden.

Sometimes the "golden years" don't feel very golden. Along with age come many changes involving losses. We may also be surprised to learn about the benefits and how things get better over time. It's really possible to age well and experience much happiness in the latter chapters of life.

With sound information and insight, you can plan effectively to maximize your independence and travel your path, your way.

There are many theories about physical aging. The simplest explanation is that aging occurs as components in our cells wear out over time, beginning in our twenties. The cells in our body are constantly being replaced. Over the years, those cells don't reproduce as accurately, nor as quickly as before. Bodily processes become less efficient. Healing takes longer. Everything slows down.

There are common chronic conditions that prevent aging well. While we are living longer lives, many of those years can be spent managing multiple chronic conditions. It's these conditions that can profoundly impact our daily experience of life. Diabetes, high blood pressure, COPD, congestive heart failure, Alzheimer's and other dementias are common.

Most of us hope for good health and then to pass away in our sleep. Not very common—or likely! Acceptance of this allows us to look candidly and plan for increasing the quality of our days. No matter our state of health, we can maximize energy, simplify demands, reduce pain and to focus on activities that bring joy and meaning. Lifestyle changes to prevent or manage chronic conditions, like eating well, stopping smoking and being active, can help us feel better and stay independent enough to do things we enjoy.

Drawing on our own strengths and allowing others to assist us makes age related challenges easier. Allowing some assistance helps maintain our highest level of independence and continue enjoying life. It's part of the grace of aging. Bravely looking at potential problematic changes, we can be prepared for when it's time to seek help. With insight, positivity and preparation, we do have the power to make the golden years truly golden! JL

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Informed Innocence



BY LONNIE MARTIN

As times change and the culture within countries, states, counties, and communities begin to shift, bend and twist, we are continually challenged to reevaluate our beliefs, perspectives and points of view. With broad discussions based on race, religion and disease weaving their way into the majority of conversations, it seems important now more than ever to remain engaged and informed. At the same time there is a desire to unplug, shift focus and recalibrate so the weight

of the world does not become our 3am alarm. I have heard many people share deep grief for the state of our country and I have been caught in the crossfire of anger and sadness as volcanic emotion began to bubble, steam and eventually erupt.

As kids we used to play dodgeball not understanding that a child's game would someday be used as a metaphor for the ducking and weaving often required to stay in an intense conversation without being tagged and sidelined by virtue of being offended or offending another. Some say we have been here before and we will be here again, while others believe these are "unprecedented times." No matter your perspective on how we got here, we are here now, but we are not alone.

I remember singing the old Sunday school song, "Oh be careful little eyes what you see, oh be careful little eyes what you see, for the Father up above is looking down with love, oh be careful little eyes what you see." Additional verses urge, be careful little ears what you hear, tongue what you say, hands what you do, feet where you go, heart whom you trust, and mind what you think. This little song takes threads of innocence and simplicity and weaves the message into an intricate tapestry.

Today there is so much external stimuli that it seems anything

but easy to "be careful" of the sights and sounds of opinion and position we see and hear. We are on information overload. Our attention and focus are forced into places we would normally not intentionally travel. While distracted and with attention diverted, there is a great robbery taking place right under our nose. If you stop and look you will see. When we speak, who is listening. . . as we cry, who is seeing . . . when we stare at our phones and I-pads who is over-the-shoulder glancing . . . when we fear, who is trembling? Our children.

Our kids are so informed with life's issues that the battle to maintain childlike innocence is being taken. They are sponges absorbing every single word, action and deed because they are privy to them all. We cannot completely control the influx of information but there are positive ways we CAN help preserve the innocence of the over informed. #1. Recognize our children have seen and heard more than we think they have, yes even yours. #2 Acknowledge being naive to what children are exposed to does not make a child less exposed or naive. It just helps broaden the divide. #3. Create time to talk and listen. As the world talks at our children, we need to create space to talk with our children and hear their hearts. #4. Faith not fear. Remember as kids we thought adults had all the answers and that fantasy was quickly blown as we become one? Our kids need to be kids. When the backpack is too heavy the parent needs to carry the load. If you are feeling the weight, imagine how much heavier on the shoulders of a child.

The biggest gift and challenge of being a parent is protecting and providing. It is our job to protect innocent hearts, not from being Uninformed, but TOO informed, and to provide the very best navigational tools for the journey so they can face life with faith not fear all while eating ice cream cones with dangling toes looking on at hope on the horizon. We may not be able to change "the times" but we can change how we spend them. So go home and grab your mitt someone wants to play catch. JL



BY SUZANNE LUIS

Suzanne is a counselor at Redding's Transformation Center, she has a Lay Christian Counseling Certificate from Regent University, and is also a licensed with the State of California as a Drug and Alcohol Counselor.

The people in my counseling practice who seem to be the most affected are the children of critical parents. I have discovered that the "inner critic" is a protector or protection; if a child grows up in a judgmental environment, they will judge themselves before the parent can criticize them so that nothing the parents say can cause them more pain. The problem with growing up in a judgmental situation is that the critic becomes how the person deals with people socially to protect themselves from feeling judged by others.

The critical inner voice is a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward ourselves and others. The nagging "voices," that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our self-destructive and maladaptive behavior.

I have listened to lectures from therapists who have suggested asking the criti-

THE INNER CRITIC

cal voice what it's purpose is, one of the voices told the therapist if I don't correct her she will never do anything right!" We know that the critical view is the inner reasoning of the subconscious protective system. It is not a separate personality lest anyone think I am suggesting that this is what is happening questioning the critic can give it a voice and reveal why the person developed it in the first place. There are several ways a counselor can help a client over the critical thoughts it would depend on the client and their needs.

The critical inner voice is not your conscience or a moral guide. What most distinguishes the inner voice from your conscience is its degrading, punishing quality. Its demeaning tone tends to increase our feelings of self-hatred.

One of the ways you can overcome the critic is to write down a compassionate evaluation of yourself. Another thing you can do go back to a memory that was traumatic for you, where someone is telling you something about yourself that was destructive. Ask yourself what you wished you could say about that and say it; in other words, insert your truth into the memory rewrite your story.

Being judged by people we love is one of the most hurtful things that can happen; to overcome it we need to realize it is a lie and refuse to be controlled by the trauma it produced. JL



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COVID-19

Crisis AND Opportunity



BY BOB BOYLE

Dr. Boyle is married with four grown children, and enjoys coaching basketball and playing golf. Dr. Boyle can be reached at: drbobboyle@gmail.com

Dr. Bob Boyle has been practicing as a licensed psychologist in Redding, CA since 1991. Currently, he is the staff psychologist at Far Northern Regional Center and maintains a part-time private practice. He also works with businesses and athletic teams around leadership and team-building. Dr. Boyle is co-author of *A Hitchhiker's Road Map To Leadership*. Dr. Boyle is married with four grown children,

Our world is going through a collective crisis, with the advent of and continuing pandemic of COVID-19. The pandemic has affected us, our families, and our work in many different ways. As individuals - we may know of someone who has tested positive, gotten sick, and maybe even died. The presence of COVID-19 has certainly changed the structure and rhythm of our everyday individual lives. The pandemic has also impacted our family life: from having to homeschool our children, to the challenge of social distancing from other family members, friends, and loved ones. The pandemic has impacted our work lives too, as some of us are working from home and all of us are having to learn new tools (e.g. Zoom) in order to converse with others and get work done. And not being

able to see our clients face-to-face has negatively impacted our work lives. When COVID-19 is referred to as a worldwide crisis – that may be an understatement!

As many of you have probably heard at sometime in the past, the Chinese word for crisis is composed of two characters signifying both “danger” and “opportunity”. At the early stages of the crisis, we became very well acquainted with the plethora of dangers involved with COVID-19. And I certainly don’t want deny or downplay any of the many dangers that this pandemic has brought. But what I would like to focus on for this article is the opportunity that this crisis has also brought to us.

If you are like me, finding (or making) time to assess and reflect upon our lives is a challenging task. We tend to live our lives on “autopilot”, going about the many tasks of living with a certain routine and even mindlessness. One positive aspect of the pandemic is it seems like it has given us time. Time to: spend more quality (and quantity) time with family, to relax at home, to read, and just think! The pandemic has given us time to consider some of the bigger questions of life, and to adjust our course if need be.

I ran across a very interesting “model” that has to do with our response to COVID-19. This model was developed by the Institute of Coaching at Harvard University. For background, the model was developed to address the question of “Who Do I Want To Be During COVID-19”, rather than “What Do I Want To Do”. That’s a very different emphasis, suggesting that the pandemic is giving us an opportunity to more deeply consider our response to it and how we might use this time as an opportunity

One positive aspect of the pandemic is it seems like it has given us *time*.

for personal growth. Here are the three “zones” that the model describes. My suggestion is that we read through the description of the zones, and take a personal inventory of where we currently are and what we need to do to get to where we want to be. Here we go:

1. Fear Zone

- I grab food, toilet paper, and medications that I don't need
- I spread emotions related to fear and anger
- I complain frequently
- I forward all threatening C-19 messages I receive
- I get mad easily

2. Learning Zone

- I start to give up what I can't control
- I stop compulsively consuming what hurts me, from food to news
- I identify my emotions
- I become aware of the situation and think before acting
- I evaluate information before spreading something false
- I recognize that we are all trying to do our best

3. Growth Zone

- I think of others and see how to help them
- I make my talents available to those who need them
- I live in the present and focus on now
- I am who I am and I am who I am becoming
- I thank and appreciate others
- I keep a happy emotional state and spread hope
- I look for a way to adapt to new changes
- I practice quietude, patience, relationships, and creativity

Identify where you have been, where you are currently, and where you want to be. We can use this pandemic crisis to better ourselves and our world. Let's take this opportunity (crisis) to more purposefully decide who we want to be! **JL**

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The Redding Chamber of Commerce is a convener of leaders and influencers, catalyst for business growth, and a champion of a stronger community. Now is the time for all of us in this community to live out the hashtag that has become our battle cry - #BeSafeSupportLocal. It is our focus to play the role of a Sherpa for business by guiding them through this COVID-19 crisis and connecting them with resources and experts with the goal of a rapid economic recovery.

Our commitment is long-standing. We have been a leading voice for business in the greater Redding area since our founding in 1910. Back then, Redding was a town on the brink of great change that came with the railroad's decision to come through this part of the far northern Sacramento Valley. It was the industrial age, and for a hub city surrounded by natural resources, opportunities abounded. The chamber was an influential force in supporting industries such as logging and mining and encouraging the service and retail sectors that followed.

It could be argued that our city is in the midst of another time of great change - a physical transformation the likes of which has not been seen since Interstate 5 was plowed through in the 1960s, bringing expansion in commerce to the eastside of the Sacramento River, punctuated by the annexation of unincorporated Enterprise in the 1970s. One casualty of this expansion was the former commercial center of the city, downtown Redding. A few downtown

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Chamber of Commerce

Recognizes Redding's Renaissance



BY JAKE MANGUS

Jake Mangus has been the President & CEO of the Redding Chamber of Commerce since 2016. Since then, Jake has grown the Chamber to now serve 1175 business members. He recognizes that the health of the business community, and that of the greater community are one in the same. Jake is also the CEO of the Chamber's 501(c)3 the Forward Redding Foundation, which has served as the vehicle for the transformative "Redding City Identity Project".

Jake and his wife, Janet, have been married for 15 years and have chosen Redding as the place to raise their 3 children: Joe (19), Coby (10), and Siena (7).



merchants and other community leaders, in an effort to compete with the newly planned, Mount Shasta Mall, decided it would encourage consumers to continue to patronize downtown businesses if streets could be closed and a roof put over the top of a few blocks to create a climate-controlled shopping experience. For about 4 decades, the Downtown Mall existed and effectively disrupted traffic patterns and never could keep up with the commercial opportunities across town.

What we are witnessing today are the fruits of many who labored and lobbied for years to see community vitality return to the city's core. Public and private financial investment and many local organizations are moving in one direction. Though the Downtown Mall's roof was removed in 2008, confidence is much higher in 2020 that downtown Redding is finally getting its day in the sun.

We look forward to seeing many more people walking and biking and shopping and dining in downtown Redding. If it is true that a downtown is to a city as the heart is to the body, our "heart" just got a burst of adrenaline and is once again beating strong.

Some of the key partners involved in this modern renaissance include, The City of Redding, K2 Development, The McConnell Foundation, V!VA Downtown Redding, Shasta Living Streets, Redding Chamber of Commerce and many additional private investors.



A few of the key projects which comprise more than \$200 million in investment include:

Market Center, located at 1551 Market Street, featuring 82 apartments and 1st floor commercial space. <https://market-centerapartments.com>

Shasta County Courthouse, located across from the current courthouse on Court Street, is a \$170 million project, including 14 courtrooms and administrative offices. <https://www.courts.ca.gov/facilities-shasta.htm>

"Block 7", located in the former California Street Parking Garage, will feature mixed-use projects, a multistory parking garage, and park space. <https://www.mcconnellfoundation.org/its-official-redding-competes-at-state-level-brings-24-million-to-downtown-projects/>

California Street Labs, Bike Depot, and the Diestlehorst to Downtown non-Motorized Improvement Project all encourage a vibrant downtown and a bikeable, walkable, city.

<https://shastalivingstreets.org/california-street-labs>

<https://www.calbike.org/shasta-bike-depot-will-help-redding-embrace-its-potential-as-a-bikeable-city> JL

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view 202



Golden Nuggets and Challenges or the Educational Community



BY DR. CAROL WERTZ

Associate Professor at Simpson University with over 35 years in education and experience in teaching pre-K through adult, Carol has developed a wealth of experience and is ready for a new challenge in answering your educational questions. Please contact her at carolbwertz@gmail.com

Dear Dr. Carol,

With all the changes and uncertainty over school, my children seem to be complaining more. Do you have any suggestions for how to turn that around?

DW

Even though we may be tired of hearing the word, “unprecedented”, that might be the most apt word to describe the challenges the educational community is facing right now. Teachers, administrators, parents, students.....we’re all feeling the pressure and uncertainty of not knowing what school will look like as the months roll on.

Thankfully, there are always lessons to be learned when we face a new situation. I like to call these lessons “gold nuggets”. What character building lessons can we be teaching our children right now that will last a lifetime?

1. Lessons in grace and leadership: Teach your children that everyone deals with situations in a different manner. Some of their classmates may be experiencing fear, some may balk at following the new rules, some may cry more often or complain of sickness, etc. This is a great opportunity for them to show leadership in how to treat others with kindness and compassion. It’s also a good time to have the conversation about grace for teachers too! Teachers have never been in this particular situation before and they’re doing the best they can, although it may not be perfect. We’re all learning together and your child can be part of the solution.

2. Lessons in resilience and flexibility: Young eyes are watching you. Attitudinal cues are coming from you. How are you handling all of this? Change, unpredictability, and loss of control are incredibly stressful, but are you demonstrating that we’ll get through this with positivity and kindness? Stop and ask yourself – what do people see when they watch me right now?
3. Lessons in excellence and integrity: Integrity is sometimes hard for children to understand, but a simple definition is “doing what’s right when no one is looking.” That requires excellence of ourselves. Showing up for class, especially when it’s online, staying attentive, participating, completing assignments without supervision – there are so many distractions! This is true in the classroom as well as with distance learning and is worth a conversation about how to handle interruptions. How do we do our best work when we don’t feel like it? How do we maintain a high standard when no one else seems to care? Help your children with mindset, as well as practical strategies for attaining excellence in all that they do. People WILL notice.
4. Lessons in fun and relaxation: Are you showing your children that we can have fun and find ways to entertain ourselves even with all the precautions that are necessary? Your children are under stress too, and need to take time out to do things they enjoy. Consider introducing them to something new they haven’t done before. From rock painting to cooking to playing badminton together, give them a break and help them discover something new and fun.

These gold nuggets are all around us – sometimes it just takes looking at a situation differently to find them. I’d love to hear – and share – the uplifting nuggets you’re finding in the midst of a pandemic. JL



IMMUNE HEALTH



BY BENI JOHNSON

Author of *The Happy Intercessor, Healthy and Free, and The Power of Communion*

In March of 2020, our lives here in the United States, and all around the world, changed. We were hit with an invisible enemy. As I write this article, it is July and many of us thought that our lives would be getting back to normal by now. I'm praying that, as you read this heading into the fall, that will be the case and things will have settled down. I'm not here to share about my feelings about Covid19, though. I'm here to talk about staying healthy not only through this season, but also for the long haul.

Immune health is the key to living a healthy life. But what exactly is it? An article by Medical News Today explains how the immune system functions: "The immune system is spread throughout the body and involves many types of cells, organs, proteins, and tissues. Crucially, it can distinguish our tissue from foreign tissue — self from non-self. Dead and faulty cells are also recognized and cleared away by the immune system."

There are three important characters that play into protecting your immune system; white blood cells, phagocytes and lymphocytes. For example, if the immune system encounters a pathogen (a germ or anything that can cause disease), those amazing white blood cells immediately start to fight the foreign object with the intent to destroy it. Phago-

cytes surround the germ, break it down, and eat it while lymphocytes help to recognize those germs if they ever try and come back again. Fascinating, isn't it? Now that you have had the tiniest of a scientific explanation let's talk about how to keep your immune system healthy, because having a strong immune system will help to keep you from getting sick.

I've heard that your gut holds at least 70 to 80% of your immune system. Bingo! There's our key to good health. We can help our bodies to stay healthy by how we feed our GI (gut) tract.

Here's an easy list of foods from the BBC that will help heal and strengthen your immune system (gut health):

- Eat a wide range of plant-based foods. A healthy gut has a diverse community of microbes, each of which prefers different foods.
- Eat more fiber. Most people eat less than they should. Fruit, vegetables, pulses, nuts and wholegrains all feed healthy bacteria.
- Avoid highly processed foods. They often contain ingredients that either suppress "good" bacteria or increase "bad" bacteria.
- Probiotic foods, such as live yoghurt, might encourage more microbes to grow. Eat them if you enjoy them.

- Choose extra-virgin olive oil over other fats when you can. It contains the highest number of microbe-friendly polyphenols.
- Antibiotics kill our “good” bacteria as well as the “bad.” If you need antibiotics, make sure you eat lots of foods that boost your microbes afterwards.
- If your diet is low in fiber, a sudden increase can cause wind and bloating. This is less likely if you make gradual changes and drink extra water.

Let’s look at a couple of these: Fiber is a big deal and a must in our diet. It’s not only important to keep us regular (pooping 2 to 3 times a day), but also to carry unnecessary—or even harmful—things out of our gut. By eating enough fiber, the extra estrogen or cholesterol hiding in our systems is transported out of our bodies. A good rule of thumb is 25 to 35 grams per day.

Stay away from processed food as much as possible. One good thing that has come from our time of staying at home in 2020 is that many of us have been cooking for ourselves, getting back to the basics of food prep, and knowing exactly what ingredients are in each meal. Many highly processed foods have chemicals, toxins, and/or sugar hiding inside, but good home cooking can avoid those toxins. I encourage you to read the ingredients if you

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320101>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/research/advancements-in-research/fundamentals/in-depth/the-gut-where-bacteria-and-immune-system-meet>

https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/articles/what_should_you_eat_for_a_healthy_gut

buy boxed, processed foods. If there are words in the ingredients that you can’t pronounce, it’s probably a good idea to put it right back on the shelf.

So, the bottom line is this: What you put into your body makes a huge difference to your total health. Keeping your immune system clean, strong, and healthy, allowing your body to work and fight for you, will pay off in great dividends in the long run.

If you want more info and other health tips check out my book, *Healthy and Free*. JL

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BOREDOM

Does **NOT** Need a

QUICK FIX



BY EMILY SCOTT, PHD

Emily Scott, PhD, is a wife, stay at home mom of three, and part time parenting consultant and blogger who has written and spoken on various parenting topics including child development, ACEs, and tips on raising responsible kids. She has lived in the Redding area her whole life, and together with her husband help parents navigate the difficult aspects of parenting at Renewed Hope Parenting. Her website is www.renewedhopeparenting.com

Here are a few reasons boredom is so great:

- Stimulates creative and imagination thinking
- Helps kids find their own ways to entertain themselves, instead of getting a “quick-fix”
- Helps them learn to problem solve
- Helps them develop unique interests
- Helps them exercise their brain
- Helps with critical thinking skills
- Helps them unwind and process their day and what they have learned
- Kids don’t get as bored as easily
- Kids explore and learn at their own pace
- Helps kids learn time management

Parents, we have all heard that dreaded phrase ...

“I’M BORED!”

When kids go from constant entertainment and engagement to nothing, they easily get bored. This often happens during summer or another school break. They want and feel they need to get a quick fix of entertainment. So many times, this leads to TV and iPads, or bugging Mom for something exciting to do.

Being bored is so good for our kids. One study done on boredom showed that kids needed to be bored for 15 minutes before their creative juices kicked in. When they don’t have something to entertain them, they have to find their own entertainment. This leads to their own unique development of creativity and interests, their own games and ideas, their own ways to solve problems and entertain themselves. (It can also lead to trouble, so be sure to monitor your kids.)

As parents, we often feel like it’s our duty to fill our kids’ lives with engaging and educational activities. This is often especially the case during the school year, when we have dance, gymnastics, Kung Fu, baseball, soccer, Girl Scouts, cross-country, plus hours of homework. We want to give our kids every opportunity to succeed in life. But overscheduling them can be detrimental. Many of today’s kids and teens have trouble with anxiety, depression, sleep issues, and mental health issues because of constant stress in their lives.

Doing nothing is not wasting time. Doing nothing can be productive and beneficial for our kids. Allowing for downtime is just as important as many of the other things we feel we need to pack our schedules with. Boredom is not something that needs a quick fix. It is something to be embraced.

So, the next time your kid comes to you with that inevitable phrase, “I’m bored!” tell them how great it is to be bored and how you know they have the ability to find something productive or fun (and safe) to do. *JL*

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Kid-Friendly Snack Idea and Recipes

Whether you're homeschooling or your kids are in school, you need to have loads of kid-friendly snacks. The following recipes and snack ideas will help you fill their lunchboxes with healthy items. First, make homemade almond butter with a food processor.

ALMOND BUTTER

(Makes 8 servings)

2 cups raw almonds (or nuts of your choice)
Dash of salt

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Place almonds on an ungreased cookie sheet and bake for 12 minutes. Let almonds cool. Place nuts in a food processor. If you like crunchy nut butter, take a few tablespoons of nuts out of the food processor after blending for 30–60 seconds. Set 5 tablespoons aside.

Mix the rest of the nuts in the food processor on high for 5–7 minutes. Add a dash of salt to taste. Stop and stir the mixture about every minute. Remove the creamy mixture from the food processor and place in a bowl. For crunchy almond butter, stir the set-aside chopped nuts into the mixture. Store in the refrigerator.

Use the almond butter to replace peanut butter for typical PB&J sandwiches. You could also add a tablespoon or two of almond butter to your smoothies to increase the protein content. Now create these delicious power balls with your homemade nut butter.



ALMOND BUTTER POWER BALLS

(10 servings)

1 cup almond butter
2 cups organic, gluten-free oatmeal
1 cup chia seeds
1/2 cup flax seeds, ground
1/2 cup honey
Optional: chopped nuts, toasted coconut, raisins, etc.

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Shape into 1–2 inch balls and place on parchment paper. Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container.

Next stop, grab and go snacks. Boil some eggs and store them in the refrigerator to add to lunch boxes or have as a standalone dish. Purchase sugar snap peas for a crunchy snack along with carrot and celery sticks.

Pop some homemade popcorn using heirloom, organic kernels. That's a delicious snack my kids have always enjoyed. Whenever we watch a movie together, I always pop some for the whole family.

If you are interested in additional kid-friendly snacks, check out my article *Healthy Snacks for Kids* on my blog at SusanUNeal.com. **JL**

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BY SUSAN U. NEAL RN, MBA, MHS

Susan U. Neal, RN, MBA, MHS, is an author, speaker, and certified health and wellness coach whose background in nursing and health services led her to seek new ways to educate and coach others to overcome health challenges. Check out her award-winning best-seller *7 Steps to Get Off Sugar and Carbohydrates* at SusanUNeal.com.



FINDING YOUR RHYTHM



BY DEBORAH KOEPFEN

Deborah has a heart for bringing hope and encouragement to others through her own life experiences. Retired from Shasta County Social Services, she now enjoys hiking, kayaking, and fishing with her husband, as well as spending time with family.

Lately I find myself struggling to focus on one thing to do. When I settle on the 'one thing' and head in that direction, that annoying feeling that I 'should be doing something else' takes the wind out of my sails. As a goal-oriented, motivated personality, I've always contended with this issue. But during the recent disruption of schedules and drastic changes due to the pandemic, it's really presenting itself. I keep hearing that this is the perfect time to deal with the unproductive ways of thinking that we all struggle with at times, since stress and challenge usually brings these things to the forefront. This is at the top of my list.

I heard someone say recently that in this time of disruption to life, we have to find our rhythm. It makes sense to me, since all of life is a rhythm. It is what gives us the changing of seasons. It is the basis for music, directs our night and day and our sleep patterns...and is the essence of our very heartbeat. In music, it is rhythm that makes us move, dance, tap our foot, and sway to the beat. Circadian rhythm is our body's internal clock. It's what keeps us awake during the day and helps us to sleep at night. When that rhythm is disrupted, our sleeping, waking, and digestive systems are thrown off and we don't feel our best. Rhythm is the basis for life. During this time of isolation, working from home, home-schooling children, cancelled church services, and total disruption to the norms of life, we're likely to be affected in some way. So, like so many of us in this season, I've had to find a new rhythm.

It's helped me to develop a schedule for my day. I allow myself to flow with changes when needed, but for the most part the more I adhere to the plan, the better. Mornings look like some quiet time, followed by exercise or a walk, breakfast, clean-up, etc. The afternoons are 'free time' to create, work on a project, ponder new ideas or connect with family and friends. I know of many that are using this time to conquer things they've put off for years. Home projects, writing,

personal growth and on-line classes have kept them feeling productive and providing some sense of normalcy.

A word of caution here: when we hear of all that others may be accomplishing, it's tempting to feel unproductive and inefficient, especially if that's not our experience at the moment. Comparing ourselves to others' accomplishments can bring discouragement and dampen our own enthusiasm. Know that our cadence, or rhythm, may be different at the moment. It changes throughout life. Rejoice with others over their accomplishments, but don't let it be your standard. Take time to tap into your own desires and passion. If it's a season of rest, enjoy it!

It's also common to hear that we need to learn to 'be' and not just 'do'. Like many times in life, I've had to learn this lesson by the pendulum method. Since I've always been a do-er, I decided to learn how to just 'be' and do nothing for a while. I quickly learned that's not the answer either, but a delicate balance is necessary. As a wise friend put it recently, 'just let your doing come out of your being'. Food for thought.

As with anything in life, this too shall pass. Find your new rhythm and give yourself grace to grow and learn. **JL**

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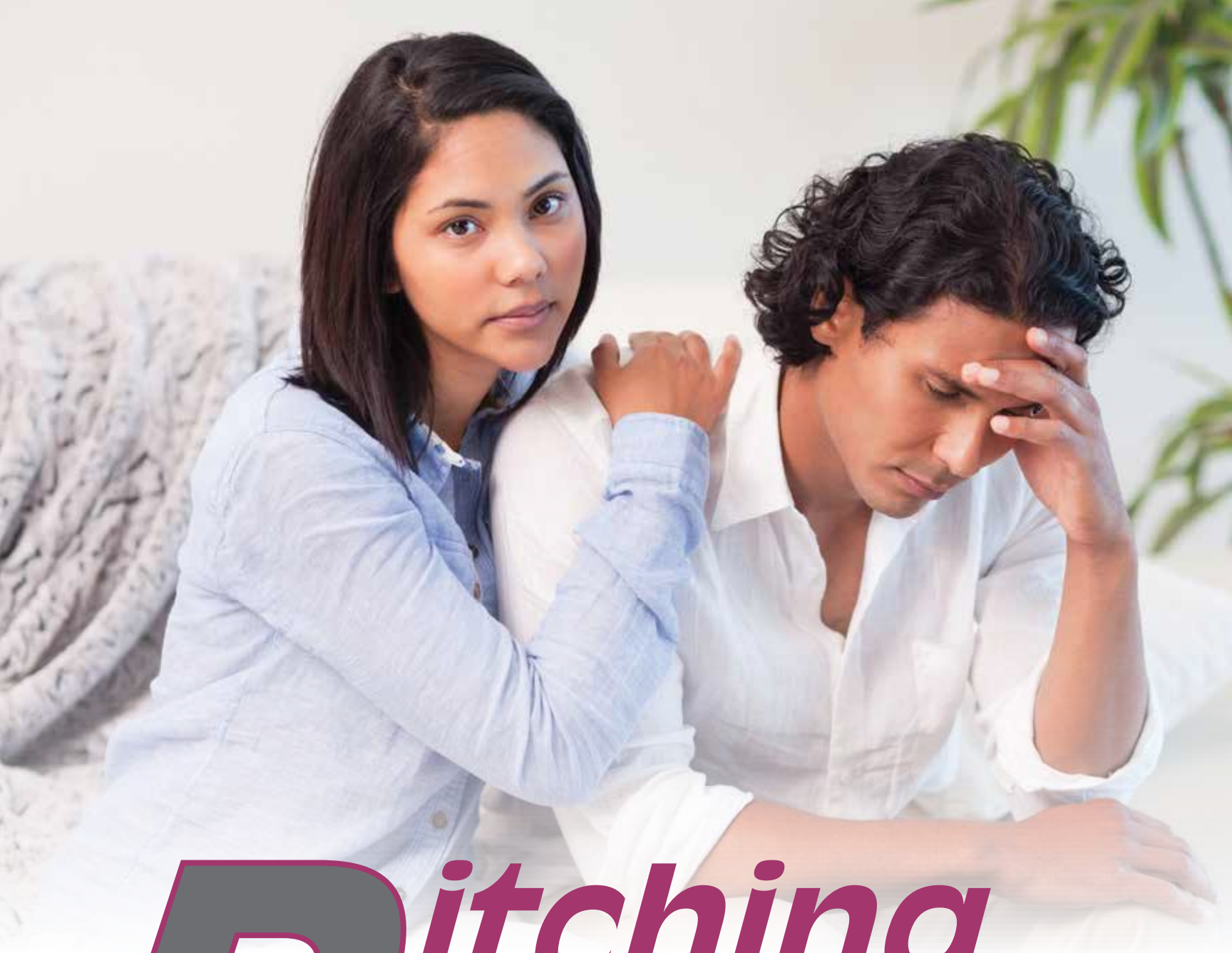
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Ditching Depression



BY MARTIN WILES

Martin Wiles is a freelance editor, English teacher, and author. He is Managing Editor for Christian Devotions and a proof-editor for *Courier Publishing*. His most recent book, *A Whisper in the Woods: Quiet Escapes in a Busy World*, released in December 2019.

I've faced it, fought it, and ditched it.

SADD was first named by Norman Rosenthal and his colleagues at the National Institute of Mental Health in 1984. Other names include winter blues, summer depression, and seasonal depression. Symptoms include oversleeping, overeating, difficulty waking up, lack of energy, trouble concentrating, and withdrawing from friends, family, and social activities. But SADD is only one type of depression. De-

pression grows from medical, self-inflicted, circumstance-related, or others-instigated sources.

While we may not initially know the cause of depression, ditching depression involves consulting the proper sources.

Depression often comes when circumstances are not in our favor. Circumstances that others have created, but that impact our life. Circumstances that we don't like—or appreciate—but feel we have no control over. We can try running from them, but they have a way of hounding us. Often, these unfavorable circumstances lead to another emotion we don't necessarily appreciate: fear. And once fear takes over, depression can follow closely behind.

Depression—and its causes—is unique to the individual, so no one source of healing works for every person. Some consult the Bible, prayer, and small-group gatherings. Others try reading books or talking to close friends. For some, depression won't heal without a visit to a doctor, psychologist, or psychiatrist. This may involve counseling, medicine, or both. When depression results from a chemical imbalance, all the reading and talking in the world won't help. Medicine helps us cope with the symptoms so we can function.

I remember one such foray into depression. The decisions of another had caused my family pain. In the midst of trying to hold my family together, I lost my job. As I experienced rejection from the hundreds of resumes I sent out, I felt the dark clouds gathering over my head. Chest pains moved in regularly. I began to imagine all the things that might be physically wrong with me. I visited my family doctor who knew my circumstances, diagnosed me with depression, and prescribed medicine. But the medicine made my stomach hurt. And I made several trips to the emergency rooms with chest pains. Numerous tests revealed nothing. When I returned to my doctor, he bluntly said, "You're depressed. Take the medicine and stay out of the emergency room."

Ditching depression also entails admitting our helplessness. Depression often brings feelings of "darkness," as if we're lingering under an ominous cloud that won't dissipate. The darkness resembles the blackness I've experienced on cave tours. While I enjoy pondering underground structures, hearing facts about stalactites and stalagmites, watching fish in underground streams, and viewing the few other forms of animal life that inhabit the cool dark atmosphere, one part makes me nervous: when the guide barks, "Now everyone stand still," and then slams the light switch to the "off" position.

I was vulnerable in the dark cave. Depression makes us that way. Helplessness isn't easy to admit. We're more likely to think we can conquer anything. But like the addict who must confess their addiction before help becomes effective, so conquering depression involves admitting our inability to overcome without assistance. Depression can dissolve self-made attitudes into humbling ones where we find ourselves reaching out to sources we never imagined.

Although depression doesn't carry with it the stigma it once did, not many people enjoy openly admitting they are depressed. We would rather hide it by masking our emotional pain with denial. We don't have to parade our emotional baggage before others, but admission is a part of the healing process.

Additionally, ditching depression requires determining if unwise behaviors crouch at the root of our struggle.

Charlie* was a good girl who grew up in a home with parents who taught her the difference between right and wrong. When a teenager, she discovered Jesus at a church revival and after graduation from high school married her high school sweetheart. But somewhere along the way, Charlie changed. She ditched her family values, and her new friends led her down roads her parents had warned against. Eventually, she walked out on her family. She thought she was doing what she wanted, but depression—along with a number of other unwanted consequences—followed.

Unwise decisions and raucous behavior can be a major cause of depression. Anytime we walk away from the good in life and pursue things that harm us and others, an emotional struggle develops.

If not quickly settled by turning back to honorable living, we will lose our emotional war to depression. Unwise decisions always take us farther than we want to go, keep us longer than we want to stay, and cost us more than we want to pay.

When I was young and living in the flatlands of my home state, summer thunderstorms quickly filled ditches along the secondary roads. Running through them and splashing in them provided just the joy my boyhood heart needed. But no one enjoys playing in the ditches of depression. Although we may not be able to completely avoid bouts with depression, we can take some actions that move us out of our soaked state and back onto dry ground. **JL**

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Depression—and its causes—is unique to the individual, so no one source of healing works for every person.



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From **DISDAIN** to *Brotherly Love.*



BY MARSHALL JONES

He was 40 years my senior and had been coming into our gun shop since I was a boy. For his privacy let's call him Mr Stern. Though a highly respected physician, to me he was just a grouchy old guy who was never satisfied and cheap to boot. One day as he dropped off a rifle to be customized (oh dread I thought), I suddenly felt called upon to conduct an experiment, it felt like a directive from the Lord. Looking back I have no doubt it was from God, as I don't think I could have masterminded it on my own.

My experiment was to try to please him by doing work so nice that there wouldn't be anything to complain about.

This job had some pretty technical work and we had done this job for him before, which each time he criticized, unfairly in my mind. My experiment was to try to please him by doing work so nice that there wouldn't be anything to complain about.

Now my workers did top of the line work but this job I did myself. Treating it like it was my own project, making each piece absolutely perfect. It would normally have been three or four hours of shop time but I spent probably 12 hours on it, working evenings and getting it done in just a few days. It was my best work.

Upon delivery Mr Stern's face brightened and after looking it over closely (with a magnifying glass) said it was very nice, which was the nicest thing I had ever heard him say up to that time. When presented with the bill, which was only a fraction of its value, he even smiled. It led to some chatting about our sport and it turned out we had a lot in common.

Mr Stern started coming by at least weekly and our chats were pleasant and got longer and longer. Pretty soon we started shooting together and then hunting. It seems my experiment changed not only the way he responded to me but also the way I interacted with him.

After that I knew what kind of quality he expected and would deliver it. If I didn't charge him market price then he would tip me the difference. Seems he wasn't really cheap after all, he just liked extremely high quality. Having lived through the great Depression and being raised by missionary parents, he was thrifty but would spend on high quality.

We went on to hunt four African Safaris together, three of which had only been possible with his financial help. On those trips there's a lot of time to talk during travel and he opened up about his life and spirituality like no one ever had, other than my wife. Before his passing, he even dowered each of our children.

For the cost of a small effort I was awarded a very special friend. The kind of loving trusting friendship that you see only a few times in a lifetime. My life was greatly enriched. I'll always remember him as a warm, generous guy, surprisingly funny, albeit with a stern face. Today I can't picture my life not having known him.

You can imagine some of the things I learned from my experiment. Why not go out and give it a try on someone, the relational rewards could be tremendous. JL



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BY MIKE MAESHIRO

Mike is a business owner, life coach, public speaker and author. He wrote his first book entitled "themikeboard" which is a compilation of maxims on spirituality and wisdom. He is a course instructor at Bethel School, runs an intuitive life coaching practice and travels the world teaching on spiritual intelligence, pursuing dreams and entrepreneurship. He lives in Redding, CA.

It's one of the most painful things: allowing ourselves to be susceptible to compassion while refusing to coddle destructive patterns in people's lives.

Everyone is on their own journey, at their own pace, currently operating at their own level of maturity. Everyone has their baggage, their strengths, their passion, their fears, their desires, their needs, their insecurities, their lifestyles, their habits, their dysfunctions, their partnerships with evil. It's a really interesting dynamic to have to manage continually.

When you're leading a group, a team, a company, or an organization, your perspective naturally elevates and you end up having to address and manage dynamics others don't need to care about or can't see. You practically get to a place where you don't have time or emotional capacity to pastor and father every person in their mess, you start having to draw lines and boundaries with team members who refuse to take ownership over their own lives or to change the sabotaging beliefs and behaviors that steal from their own success.

Some days, I feel like a mega winner. So much so, I almost forget my life is real and have trouble comprehending that I get to be me. Other days, like today, I feel a pang of pain for those I'm leading whom I won't rescue. Sometimes not rescuing people can feel heartless.

It's one of the most painful things: allowing ourselves to be susceptible to compassion while refusing to coddle destructive patterns in people's lives. It's a lot easier to either just give in to enablement or shut dysfunctional people out entirely. It's more emotionally expensive and challenging to maintain connection with compassion while choosing to let people make their own mistakes and experience the consequences of their choices; but love tends to sit there.

Love tends to refuse to look away from carnage while also refusing to violate the choice of another. Often, we like to impose our will on our loved ones to prevent the pain in ourselves of seeing them struggle...but this is actually selfish. We don't impose to help, we impose to protect ourselves from compassion. We're not heartless, we're cowards. It's selfish to numb or avoid the pain and also sabotage to one struggling from a real solution, should they ever end up wanting it.

So at the end of this day, I don't agree with defeat. I don't agree with the idea that I'm a terrible person, that I'm a tyrant, that I'm heartless for not rescuing people. I agree that being in the midst of pain and brokenness can suck and it's okay. Somewhere along the way, I forgot their wholeness isn't my responsibility so I'll crawl back into my Dad's lap and let Him remind me of what's real and whose job it is to hold the world. I'll wake up tomorrow still holding love's hand. I'll greet the broken ones and remember what it's like to be a kid, a responsible, productive, authoritative kid. JL





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