

livfun SUMMER 2017

Breaking
Down Borders
for Young
Women

**5 SIMPLE
WAYS**

TO PUSH YOUR LIMITS

**TETHERED...
AND GRATEFUL**

CONSTRAINTS

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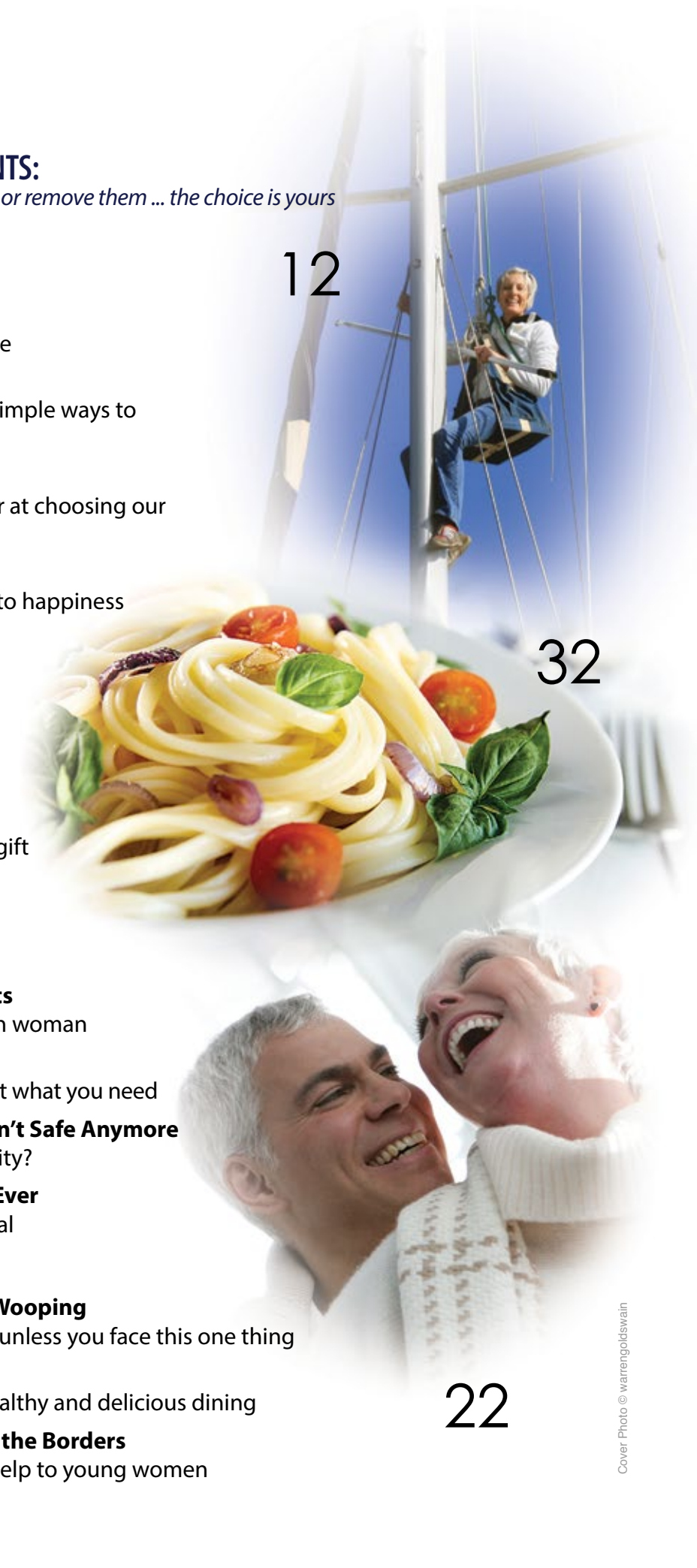
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A Publication of



www.leisurecare.com
999 Third Avenue, Suite 4550
Seattle, WA 98104

Leisure Care
Traci Kuster
Marketing Director

Published four times per year
for distribution to our residents
and their families.

Created by Wise Publishing Group
www.wisepublishinggroup.com

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Production: MLI Design / www.mlidesign.co • **Printing:** Journal Graphics / www.journalgraphics.com

Advertisement



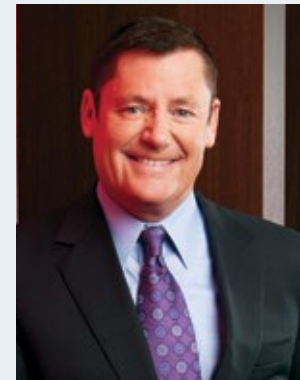
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Dan Madsen
Chairman & CEO, Leisure Care

Letter From the Chairman & CEO

Exploring What's Out There ... and What's In Here
by Dan Madsen

Welcome to the summer issue of LIV FUN. In this issue, we continue to talk about the human experience in terms of stages.

In our last issue, we introduced you to author and popular blogger Mark Manson, who writes about the challenges and joys of being human. As you may remember, Mr. Manson describes our human growth in terms of four stages: mimicry or acting; self-discovery including learning our own constraints; commitment or personal mission; and legacy or giving back. In this issue, our writers share their thoughts about constraints and the human condition, and how understanding and actually playing with them can help us move into a new stage of awareness.

At Leisure Care, we build in opportunities for self-discovery throughout our communities. We encourage our residents and our staff to treat life as a continuing adventure, pushing our boundaries and discovering what's possible tomorrow on the other side of today's limits.

Much of that discovery and exploration happens in the everyday moments, from trying new foods from around the world, to tapping into our unexplored artistic talents. Even more happens when we venture outside our four walls, with our community involvement, our philanthropy, and of course our big, bold adventures through Travel by Leisure Care.

We all face challenges that could hold us back — it comes with being human. My hope is that we'll face these constraints with a spirit of adventure and understanding. Let's encourage each other to grow, learn, expand and explore as we continue to create our lives inside the Leisure Care community.

Dan Madsen
Chairman & CEO, Leisure Care



Style Wise
Expressing Your Unique Self

On Corsets & Yoga Pants

With the current seismic shift in America's political climate, is a similar shift in fashion far behind?

by Beverly Ingle
San Antonio-based freelance writer



“This moment in time begs the questions, “Where will we go from here?” and perhaps more tellingly, “What will we be wearing?”

Fashion is fickle, much like the weather in my home state of Texas. About the rapidly developing fronts that dictate the climate of the day, Texans say, “Give it a minute, and it’ll change.”

In this current swirl of political upheaval and social change, the leading edge of women’s fashion will change too, just as it has for centuries.

Consider the corset, a once ubiquitous part of women’s fashion as early as the 16th century, when they were first made of iron. During the Renaissance, Catherine de Medici is said to have decreed it “poor manners” to have a waist thicker than 13 inches; her court designed a hinged corset to make that inhuman shape a reality. Although the corset evolved into something slightly less torturous, that one garment would be the hardest-working, most-successful constraint to mold and shape women into what society (read: men) wanted them to be.

From the tiny waists of the Renaissance to a more “relaxed shape” deemed to be “predominantly posture support” in the 18th century, from the curvilinear Gibson Girl tiny-waist-accentuated-bosom shape to the somewhat softened silhouette of the Edwardian era, women were squeezed, pushed and plumped every which way but their natural shape.

Of course, bras got in on the action too. In the Roaring Twenties, women wore brassieres that flattened their chests to achieve the popular look of the time. In the 1950s, women donned the conical-but-comical “sweater girl” bra. By the ’70s women had had enough of restrictive fashion and of society’s insistence on defining what a woman should be, and massive change swept through our political, economic and relational landscapes.

Just as women began to actively seek reproductive rights and equitable treatment in the workplace, many of them burned their bras — the universal symbol of constriction and control — in protest.

With the current seismic shift in America’s political climate, is a similar shift in fashion far behind? During the past four administrations — Republican and Democrat alike — we’ve watched women carve out their share of equity and draft their own definitions of what a woman is — not should — be, and how uniquely beautiful all women are.

Laura Bush reflected a quiet grace in stylish but subdued skirt suits. Her persona seemed to be that of a traditional mom in a modern age adhering to conservative values. Michele Obama followed and ushered in a more relaxed perspective and one in which a woman could easily transition from respected professional in a killer dress to a chill girlfriend in her favorite yoga pants.

Women across the U.S. are watching pensively and attentively as the females in the new administration emerge, wondering what harbinger of change their fashion choices might indicate. Does the Jackie Kennedy-esque pale blue suit Melania Trump wore to her husband’s inauguration indicate a shift toward the values and attitudes of the early ’60s?

What do we make of Kellyanne Conway’s structured red, white and blue coat ensemble and the message of staunch patriotism it seems to convey? Perhaps more importantly, what do these fashion statements mean to the women now perfectly at home in their work/life uniform of stretchy leggings and a messy bun?

For perspective, consider the incredible changes wrought by World War II, when women stepped into a bold, new role on the world stage. As American men were called into the armed services, women were called to serve in the vacancies created at home. They shed their work/life uniform of freshly pressed dresses, body-sculpting girdles (the corset’s slightly less wicked cousin), nylons and heels.

The beautifully appropriate attire of wife and mother wasn’t going to cut it in the factories and fields. Instead, these women put on slacks, cotton shirts, kerchiefs and low-heeled, practical shoes ... an external shift that would have an irrevocable effect on their internal perspective and women’s fashions at large.

As a society, we are at a similarly pivotal point both politically and aesthetically. Political change focuses on what needs to be done differently; aesthetic change is the emotional handbag that accessorizes change of all kinds. Both types of change provide plenty of opportunities for navel gazing and beg the questions, “Where will we go from here?” and, more importantly, “What will we be wearing?” ♦

Note to the readers: Our customary “Style Wise” contributor Skye Moody has written the feature article on page 22 of this issue. Watch for Skye to return here in our next issue.



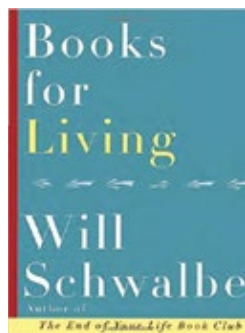
Entertain Your Brain

Books | Movies | Music

The limits and constraints of the human condition make for some compelling stories. Enjoy our picks for this issue.

BOOK REVIEWS

by Misha Stone / Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger
"The seaman tells stories of winds, the ploughman of bulls; the soldier details his wounds, the shepherd his sheep." — Laurence J. Peter



Books for Living

by Will Schwalbe (Knopf, \$25.95)

There is never enough time in life to read everything ever written, so reading a book about books can help expand your horizons. Schwalbe's second memoir, a companion to his lovely and intimate memoir *The End of Your Life Book Club*, is just as poignant and revealing as his first. Schwalbe is a masterful storyteller, detailing his reading experiences from popular thrillers like *The Girl on the Train* to Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *Gift From the Sea* to Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*. His insights into the ways the books we encounter expand our perspectives and broaden our consciousness serve as homage to the power of reading itself. As Schwalbe says, "Perhaps that is why reading is one of the few things you do alone that can make you feel less alone; it's a solitary activity that connects you to others."



My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry

by Fredrik Backman (Washington Square Press, \$16.00)

Swedish author Backman catapulted into the international bestseller ranks with his debut, *A Man Called Ove*, a touching novel about a cantankerous widower; the story also inspired a film adaptation. In his sophomore novel, Backman does not disappoint, bringing to life another spunky senior, as well as her granddaughter and the quirky inhabitants of their apartment dwelling. Seven-year-old Elsa's Granny was larger than life — a globe-trotting doctor who bucked tradition and society's expectations — and when cancer claims her life she leaves letters for Elsa to deliver to those she wronged. The precocious Elsa's quest to deliver the last words of her beloved, hellion Granny brings her closer to hidden truths about her Granny's past and the secret stories of her neighbors. Granny arms Elsa with this advice: "Only different people change the world ... No one normal has ever changed a crapping thing." The connection between a grandmother and granddaughter will bring sweet tears of laughter and loss to any reader.



Negroland: A Memoir

by Margo Jefferson (Vintage, \$16.00)

The product of an upper-class African American family in the 1950s and '60s, Jefferson's brilliant yet elusive memoir examines a lifetime schooled in restraint. Jefferson grew up in wealthy, integrated Chicago suburbs and schools, her father a physician and her mother a beautiful socialite. Her story lifts the veil on a little-discussed portion of African American history: the families who strove to overcome the limitations set against them and succeeded both financially and socially. Later, as a journalist, Jefferson reflects on the complexity of her family's place in society and applies a bracing microscope to her family legacy, her own intellectual journey, and her conflicted feelings about her elevated upbringing. "I'm a chronicler of Negroland, a participant-observer, an elegist, dissenter and admirer; sometime expatriate, ongoing interlocutor." This fascinating memoir will open your eyes to new ways of seeing race and class in American history.

MOVIE REVIEWS

by Robert Horton / Film critic for *Seattle Weekly*
"Always make the audience suffer as much as possible."
 — Alfred Hitchcock



All That Heaven Allows (1955)

A lonely widow, Cary (Jane Wyman) is not quite ready to give up on life, or love. But the small-town gossips who chatter around her — and even her own uptight children — are none too keen on Cary's growing friendship with a younger gardener (Rock Hudson). He reads Thoreau and ignores society's arbitrary rules. But can she do the same? Director Douglas Sirk, a master of color and composition, takes the traditional outline of the "woman's picture" and melds it with a streak of rebelliousness. When her kids give Cary a TV set as a present — Sirk shows her reflection trapped within its cold screen — it's time to break out of the bounds of respectability. This is melodrama at its best and a fine example of the nonconformist streak that bubbles through 1950's pop culture. (DVD available from Netflix; streaming available on YouTube.)

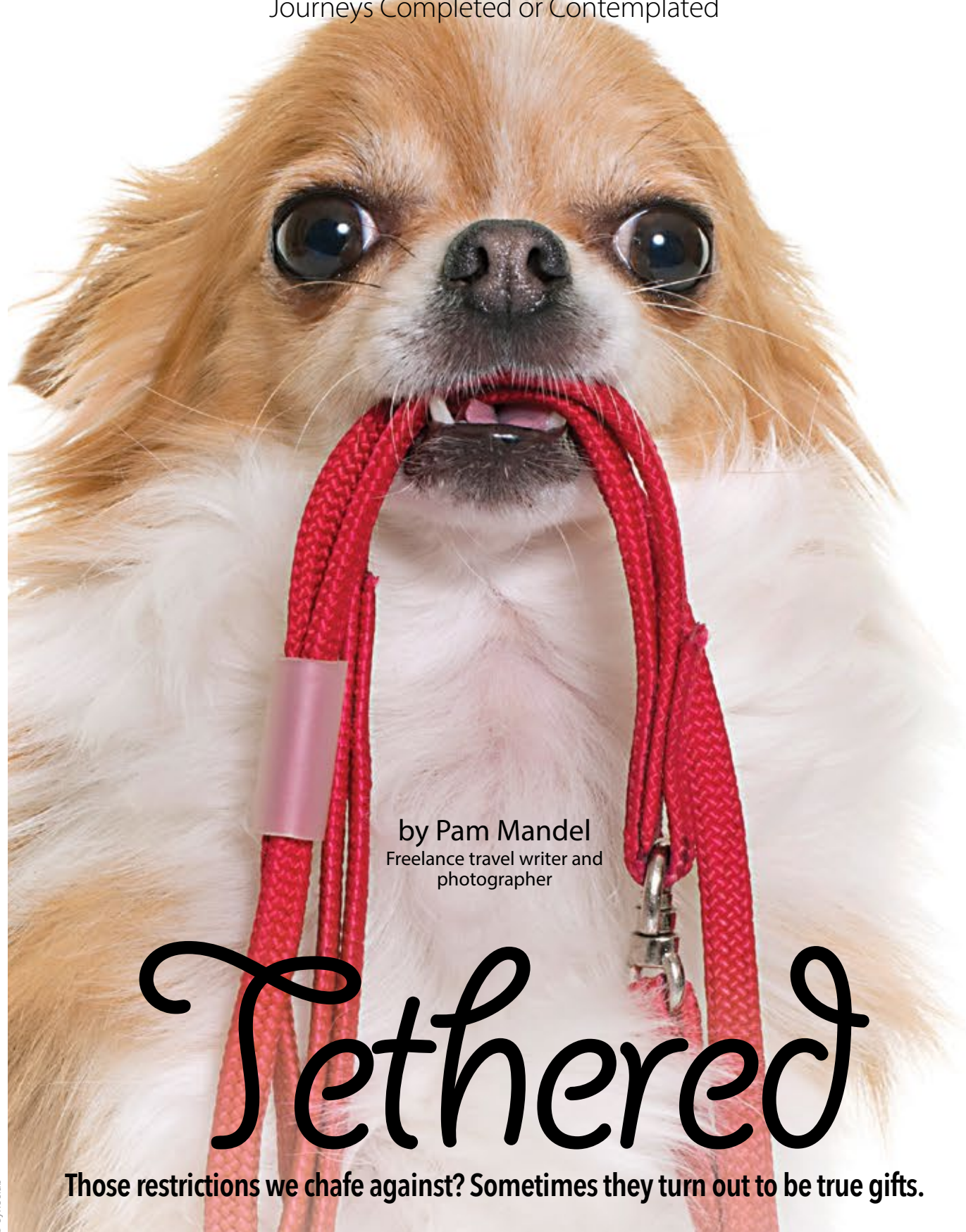


Remains of the Day (1993)

The delicate responsibilities of a proper English butler (Anthony Hopkins) are at the heart of this adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's best-selling novel. In the service of an English lord during the 1930s, our protagonist is so busy keeping an impeccable house running smoothly he hardly notices that his wealthy boss (James Fox) is being irresponsibly naïve when it comes to British-German diplomacy in the years before World War II. The butler also misses the possibilities afforded by a new maid (Emma Thompson), whose sense of life provides a vivid contrast to the butler's rigid, supremely controlled existence — ideal roles for Hopkins and Thompson, needless to say. The film, adapted by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and directed by James Ivory, paints a sad portrait of how the restraints — in class and ambition — of the butler's life have left him sidelined in his own existence. (DVD available from Netflix; streaming available on Amazon Video, Google Play, Vudu, YouTube and iTunes.)

Entertain Your Brain: *Continued on page 40*

Out and About
Journeys Completed or Contemplated



by Pam Mandel
Freelance travel writer and
photographer

Tethered

Those restrictions we chafe against? Sometimes they turn out to be true gifts.

He's always ready to go before I am. I check multiple times for my phone, the house keys ... do I have everything? I check the weather because I want to be dressed for it; he never seems to get cold. He looks in the back door, disappointed to see my shoes are still on the stairs ... what is taking me so long? When he sees I'm not ready — and he knows I won't be, has he not learned? — he rolls his amber-colored eyes and heads to the gate anyway, as though he'd go without me.

Harley is my walking companion; we've been doing this for over a year now, almost every day. We cancel only in the most extreme of weather or if one of us is sick. We missed a date during a wind-storm recently, and I had to cancel for a few weeks to recover from an injury. We walk, rain or shine, in the pale summer twilight or the dark afternoons of winter. We walk for at least 20 minutes, but if it's a nice day and the calendar is open, we'll take our time. Maybe we'll jump in the car and head to the shores of Puget Sound or to a nearby park for a change of scenery.

Harley has brown hair with a lot of white in it. He's three years old, or maybe he's four; I don't know for sure. He's 12 pounds of rescue dog, a mix of Chihuahua, and some kind of terrier, perhaps. He barks at other dogs, he is afraid of trucks with diesel engines, and he is deeply ambivalent about anyone who isn't me. He's an imperfect dog, and I would never have guessed I could love a critter that isn't human the way I love him.

Harley came home with me on a whim. I've always been a dog person, but I've also always enjoyed an untethered life. Harley's arrival created a whole new set of responsibilities. He needed training and walking, and thanks to his excessive loyalties, I would be the one best to provide for him.

The first time I left him overnight, he refused to eat or leave his crate. If anyone but me tried to walk him, he transformed from 12 pounds of small dog into several hundred pounds of boat anchor. His happiness is strictly dependent on my presence. Best case in Harley's view? I would stay home or take him with me. And I would be the only one to provide the structure he needs to be a well-behaved, content dog.

I've done more than accept these terms. It turns out I genuinely enjoy the changes he requires. The benefits of getting a daily walk have been as great

for me as they are for Harley the Dog. I met more of my neighbors in my time with Harley than in the seven years here without him. I noticed the arrival of spring and departure of fall in a way I'd never before experienced, because I watched the change happen in the same place every day. The trees are bare, and then covered in tight little leaves, and then bursting with blossoms, and then the ground is covered in a blanket of petals. Later, the same walk is covered in orange and red leaves, and once again, the trees are bare.

When I travel with Harley, he makes me observe my new surroundings on a much closer level, because no matter the reason for my travels, Harley and I will walk — at the pace of a small dog — in the neighborhood where we're staying. It is grounding in a completely literal way — we walk, and here we are.

If we are road-tripping, we stop and walk every few hours — it is good for him, and it is even better for me to stretch and breathe and get out from behind the wheel.

When I travel without Harley, my heart wings back home — I scan my phone for photos sent by his babysitters; I study his ears to see if they say he's happy or if he misses me. And when I return home, oh, nothing can beat the fanfare of returning to a dog who loves you. Nothing.

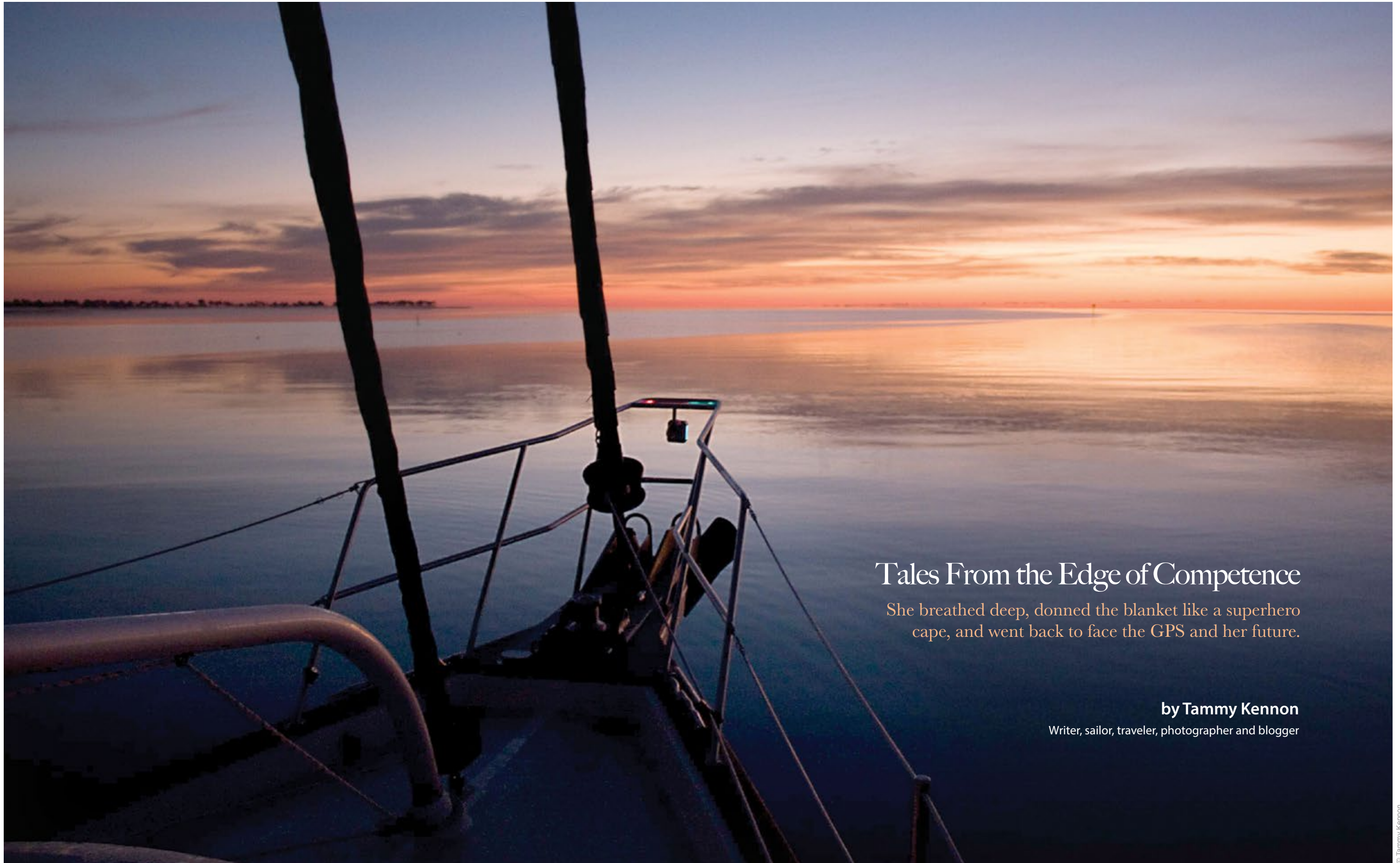
The restrictions Harley has placed around my free range life don't feel like restrictions at all;

they feel like a reasonable return for the happiness he brings me. The order he applies to my messy daily existence isn't a burden when it's rewarded with such gratitude. Harley squeaks with excitement when I prepare his breakfast; that makes it worth getting out of bed earlier than I might like to. If we haven't gone for a walk, he'll bonk me with his stubby, pinkish, brown nose, sometimes putting his paws on my knee to tell me that we both need a walk — get away from the computer already.

Yes, he needs me to be on schedule. Yes, he needs me to take him out, rain or shine, at least once a day. Yes, he needs me to make sure he's vaccinated, trained, groomed, flea-proofed, well-fed and sheltered. His needs aren't complicated, but they are consistent. There is no respite; if I know I cannot be there for Harley, I have to be sure someone else will take care of him. He needs; I provide.

But I don't resent this at all. Instead, I'm grateful. And when I see him dancing by the gate as he waits for our daily constitutional, I know he is too. ♦

"His needs aren't complicated, but they are consistent. His happiness is strictly dependent on my presence."



Tales From the Edge of Competence

She breathed deep, donned the blanket like a superhero cape, and went back to face the GPS and her future.

by **Tammy Kennon**

Writer, sailor, traveler, photographer and blogger

© Tammy Kennon

The ominous blue glow of the new GPS was the only brilliant thing in the cockpit. It was 8 p.m., and I stood shrouded in doubt and a blanket, trying to ward off a late October chill.

The grand launch of my new sailing life was a few hours away, and I had chosen this moment to learn how to use the technology that would guide me from the dock in North Carolina to southern latitudes, dreamy white sand beaches, and turquoise water. I know, it was embarrassingly late to learn how to plot a course, but somehow with all the other mission-critical things on the To-Do list, like *installing* the new GPS, *learning how to use it* just never made it to the top of the list.

I entered the waypoints according to the manual, and everything was humming along ... until it wasn't. The manual and the GPS were at odds. Or maybe it was the middle-woman. Something wasn't right. Every time I finished the route and hit save, it didn't. One time, the screen filled with capital As and foreign symbols and then froze.

This was my first inkling that I was nearing the outer edge of my competence. In just a few hours, I would break the competence barrier and sail well beyond it — at 5 knots.

With five decades of life experience under my belt, I knew myself to be a competent “land” person with a successful career and a thriving business. I lived in a house that I had designed. I drove a car with confidence and knew lots of useful things, like how to use a stove and unclog a toilet. What I didn't know was that the seemingly small step from the dock to the boat was shockingly large. I emerged on the other side a complete amateur. All my old, reliable competencies were utterly useless.

My comfort zone and my competence were left in the dirt.

Our comfort zone is simply that behavioral space where routine and pattern minimize fear, anxiety and risk. We invest much of our lives in crafting that comfort zone, creating a nesting space with a

comfy bed, a just-right chair, and all the daily belongings that grease the skids of everyday living. We eat “comfort” foods, often sharing them with our group of much-loved friends. We nurture an area of expertise, gaining confidence in our abilities.

It's called comfort for a reason; when we lean back and kick up our feet, stress and anxiety kick back too. Unfortunately, so does the brain.

People who study the inside of our heads tell us that our regimented lives lull our brains into repose. Trudging through the same routine day after day digs ruts in the gray matter. Researchers say the best thing for brain health is to get our bodies and our brains moving in new directions.

It sounds easy, but it's not. The brain has three parts, the reptilian, the limbic and the neocortex. The reptilian is the oldest part of the brain, and it has one mission: survival. It is the mental equivalent of the boy who cried wolf. It sees danger and potential death everywhere, imploring us to stay in a safe place, repeat the routine, eat the same foods. It wants us to continue replicating patterns, because they are safe. They haven't killed us — at least so far.

International bestselling author Seth Godin calls the reptilian brain “the resistance,” an apt title for the naysayer in our heads perpetually opposing everything new. In his book *Linchpin*, Godin says, “The resistance would like you to curl up in a corner, avoid all threats, take no risks and hide.” (Godin, 2010)

This constant reptilian voice nagging us about dubious dangers causes us anxiety, usually for no good reason. As Godin notes, anxiety doesn't really protect us from danger, but it does keep us from doing great things. In its worst form, it keeps us from doing anything but slogging through our same routine, day after day, year after year.

Quieting our internal lizard and kicking our brain out of the proverbial recliner has the same positive benefits for brain health that regular



“Great experience takes place at the edge of our competence.”

— Diane Sawyer



© Tammy Kennon

exercise does for the body. The good news is that it takes only a little newness to start burning new neural pathways.

It might be as simple as playing Monopoly or learning to knit. In an extensive study of people between the ages of 75 and 82, the Mayo Clinic found that those who engaged in even the mildest mentally stimulating activities were less likely to develop Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), a condition that increases the risk of developing dementia. And the results were decisive. In the four-year study, they found that those who played games lowered their risk of developing cognitive impairment by a remarkable 78 percent. While playing games had the most impact, other activities, such as social interaction (77 percent), crafts (72 percent) and computer use (70 percent), were also shown to significantly lower impairment risk. (Owens, 2017)

Even doing a routine thing a bit differently can put your brain on alert. That could be as simple as eating something different for breakfast every day for a week or as gutsy as learning to speak a foreign language. Our daily tasks get so routinized that even using the other hand to brush your teeth or sitting in a different chair at the dinner table can cause a noticeable brain shift.

In other words, you don't have to upend your whole life, like I did when I moved on-board a boat.

That night in the cockpit, when I was wrestling with my screaming lizard brain, I almost lost the fight. After three hours of repetitious failure, I took a break. The lizard and I had a little chat; I did some deep breathing, donned the blanket like a superhero cape, and went back to face the GPS and my future.

There was no immediate magic. I failed a few more times, but eventually, of course, the GPS worked. The first baby steps into my new world were mapped, and I dropped into my bunk exhausted. Five hours later, my husband and I untied the lines and set off for southern climes and the edge of my competence, towing my squawking reptile brain in our wake.

And you know what? Diane Sawyer was right. Sailing to the edge of my competence and beyond was among the greatest experiences of my life.

Read more:

Godin, Seth. (2010). *Linchpin: Are You Indispensable?* London: Penguin Group. (Available on Amazon)

Owens, Sarah. (2017). "Learning a New Activity May Ward Off Cognitive Decline, Study Suggests." Read more at www.tinyurl.com/wise-brain.



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Five Simple Ways to Push Your Limits

(From Easiest to Hardest)

Read.	Change your routine.	Learn yoga or a new dance.	Learn a foreign language.	Travel.
If you are already an avid reader, mix up your genre. If you typically read crime novels, try a biography or a self-help book.	This can be as simple as reversing the order of your daily routine or rearranging the furniture in your bedroom.	Getting your heart rate up while learning a new skill amplifies the effect, so get moving in a different way.	Because language is a complex task for the brain, learning a new one is an effective mental workout.	Leaving your physical and mental comfort zones has the greatest impact, but you don't have to go far. Being a tourist in your own city is a wonderful place to start. ♦

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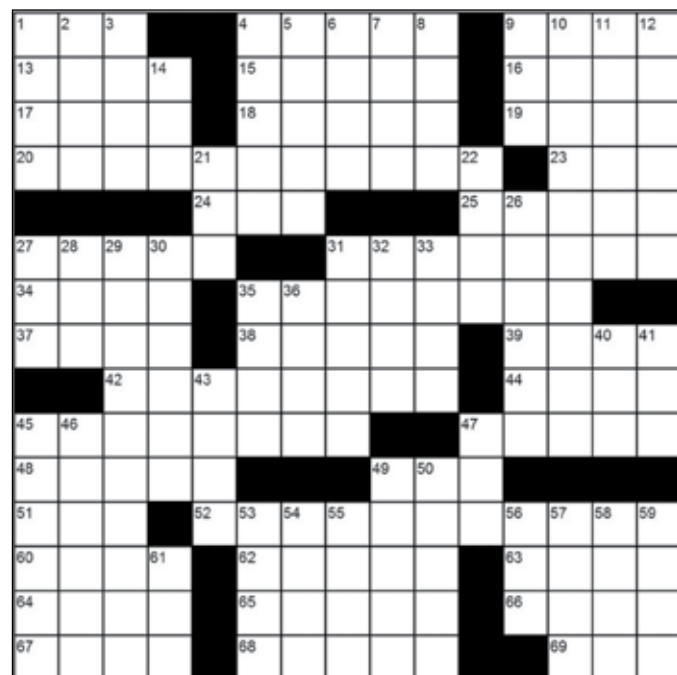
LivFun Brain Games

Crossword & Sudoku

John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

Crossword Puzzle

Spread Out!



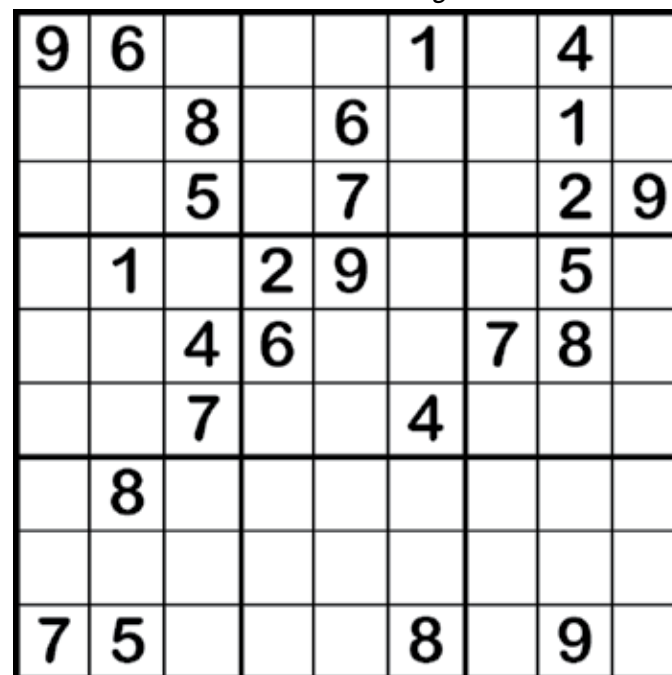
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ACROSS

- 1 First part of a Herbert Simon quote
- 4 Dance in Brazil perhaps
- 9 Expectorated
- 13 Unmoved by, with "to"
- 15 Police blotter word
- 16 Roman Mars
- 17 Common preposition
- 18 Second part of quote
- 19 Peeved
- 20 Dazzling
- 23 Word after Puddy
- 24 One of the compass points
- 25 Laugh fests
- 27 Diamond features
- 31 Type of ballot
- 34 Yemen neighbor
- 35 Third part of quote
- 37 Mine entrance
- 38 Madonna vehicle
- 39 Well-oiled org.?
- 42 One could be good
- 44 Mr. Foxx
- 45 Starbucks choice
- 47 Follow
- 48 Donnybrook
- 49 Something to stand on
- 51 Car accessory
- 52 Last part of quote
- 60 Abbe or Lois
- 62 Diaphanous
- 63 Grainery
- 64 Dueling implement
- 65 Decide to skip
- 66 Cons may be beside them
- 67 Shallow lake
- 68 Italian actress
- 69 Dynamite channel?

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.



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DIFFICULTY ★☆☆☆☆

DOWN

- 1 Olfactory stimulation
- 2 Hawaiian native
- 3 Grub
- 4 Yeggs' targets
- 5 Dress style
- 6 Obey
- 7 Ordered
- 8 Org.
- 9 One way to get around Europe: abbr.
- 10 Patterns
- 11 Introduce air
- 12 African fly
- 14 Dandy
- 21 Paul of the guitar
- 22 Very French?
- 26 Not learned
- 27 Fashion accessory
- 28 Intel competitor
- 29 Glider pilot
- 30 Undivided
- 31 Type of acid
- 32 Piquancy
- 33 Headline
- 35 "Shall we?" "___!"
- 36 Singer Burl
- 40 Internet URL ending
- 41 Alphabetic triplet
- 43 Ooze
- 45 Bald eagle, e.g.
- 46 Wrap below the border?
- 47 Chick precursor
- 49 Feudal lord
- 50 Scandal headline name
- 53 Short-lived football league: abbr.
- 54 Chase away
- 55 Frau companion
- 56 Recipe amt.
- 57 AI with a horn
- 58 Musk of Tesla
- 59 Donny of *Happy Days*
- 61 Big shoes to fill?

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42

Healthy U

Good Health 101 and Beyond

"I have measured out my life with coffee spoons."

— T.S. Eliot



Scientists say your morning coffee may actually help you live longer.

by LIV FUN editorial staff

A little bit of coffee every day may help some people live longer.

That's the buzz surrounding new research on caffeine and how it works in our bodies.

As most coffee lovers already know, caffeine is a powerful brain stimulant; that morning fog seems to magically lift with the first few sips. And now, researchers think they may have uncovered one reason why some coffee drinkers live longer.

According to Stanford University's Dr. David Furman, Ph.D., caffeine seems to reduce the inflammation in our circulatory system that can lead to health issues in many seniors. Reducing that inflammation can prevent or lessen the impact of diseases like Alzheimer's, dementia, cardiovascular disease and even depression. (Goldman, 2017)

Researchers have discovered a link between the presence of metabolites in the bloodstream and higher inflammation in the body. Caffeine, it turns out, may lower these metabolite levels in many people, basically helping to prevent or delay age-related inflammation. This could be very welcome news for those of us who enjoy our coffee and don't want to give it up.

Why the bad rap?

Over the years, caffeine has definitely had a reputation for causing health problems. Scientists are now realizing something important about previous studies on the topic: Many heavy coffee drinkers are also smokers and have a more sedentary lifestyle. These factors may have helped give coffee its bad reputation.

Instead, many researchers now believe coffee can be good for you.

"Studies have shown that coffee may have health benefits, including protecting against Parkinson's disease, type 2 diabetes and liver disease, including liver cancer. It also appears to improve cognitive function and decrease the risk of depression," notes Dr. Donald Hensrud of the Mayo Clinic. (Hensrud, 2014)

"Recent studies have generally found no connection between coffee and an increased risk of cancer or heart disease. In fact, most studies find an association between coffee consumption and decreased overall mortality and, possibly, cardiovascular mortality," Dr. Hensrud continues.

Of course, like anything, moderation is key: Too much caffeine can lead to other problems, including restlessness,

anxiety, headaches, jitteriness, stomach troubles and a racing heartbeat. No one is suggesting you drink coffee all day long ... but a cup or two each day could actually be good for you in the long run.

"Up to 400 milligrams (mg) of caffeine a day appears to be safe for most healthy adults. That's roughly the amount of caffeine in four cups of brewed coffee," according to the Mayo Clinic.

Of course, before making any changes to your diet or lifestyle, please talk to your own healthcare provider. Many seniors have specific reasons to avoid caffeine, and it's important to clear this with your doctor first. If your doctor says it's OK, go ahead and enjoy. Pour one for me too; I'll join you. ♦

Sources:

Goldman, Bruce. (2017). "Caffeine May Counter Age-Related Inflammation." Retrieved February 20, 2017, from www.med.stanford.edu.

Hensrud, Donald, M.D. (2014). "Is Coffee Good or Bad for Me?" Retrieved February 20, 2017, from www.mayoclinic.org.

WHEN SAFE MONEY ISN'T SAFE ANYMORE



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AS A RETIRED INVESTOR, HOW SHOULD YOU REACT TO MARKET VOLATILITY?

by Jake Yetterberg

San Antonio-based retirement planner adviser

Donald Rumsfeld once uttered a great quote about the limitations of our knowledge: “There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don’t know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don’t know we don’t know.”

This is one of my favorite quotes, and it relates directly to investing. The things *we don’t know we don’t know* are what get us in trouble. And it seems that the amount of stuff *we don’t know we don’t know* is rising exponentially. The so-called “safe-haven” investments have been turned upside down in the past decade. The Great Recession, historically low interest rates, uncertainty with the Federal Reserve, stock market volatility, polarizing politics, and worldwide economic malaise have converged to produce the perfect storm against those traditionally safe assets.

For example, who would have thought some of the Big Three automakers would default on their bonds or that interest rates in the U.S. could stay near zero for years at a time? Who would have foreseen that some government 10-year bonds around the world would actually pay a negative yield? These were things we didn’t know we didn’t know. Until we knew.

The Constraints on our Understandings

First, let’s look at bonds, typically touted as a safe investment. The more accurate statement is

that bonds are safe ... *sometimes*. And now isn’t one of those times, for two reasons:

1. When interest rates are low and poised to rise, as they are right now, bonds are a bigger risk. When interest rates rise, the value of your bond actually falls. This isn’t a problem if you plan to hold the bond to maturity, but it is an issue if you plan to tap it in the near-term.

2. The other high-risk time to own bonds is when defaults are high. Until recent years, bond defaults were fairly rare. The defaults from big-name Detroit firms like GM and Chrysler took a lot of us by surprise. We didn’t know it could happen — until it did. Even municipal bonds carry more risk now; for example, Puerto Rico is currently in default on theirs.

What about investing in bank products, typically one of the “safest” bets out there?

The good news is that bank investments are FDIC insured (up to certain limits), but that doesn’t necessarily mean investing there is a good idea.

Let’s say you’re earning one percent on some cash accounts or short-term CDs. Once that earned interest is taxed, your yield may drop to around .75 percent. However, we are also dealing with a long-term average inflation rate of 3.25 percent and a much sharper short-term rate. After taxes and inflation, you are at a negative 2.5 percent or higher every year in spending power.

Over a decade, your purchasing power can decline substantially, which is neither good nor safe.

What’s the Best Way to Handle the Uncertainty?

If you are holding these kinds of investments, there’s no need to panic, but you do need to be aware of the potential downside. You can either:

- Accept these new financial limitations and plan accordingly; or
- Look for alternative safe and insured parking places, as this scenario could last a few years.

There are a number of things you and your advisor can do to make sure your investments are where they should be:

- If you are in a properly diversified portfolio, you can ride out the storm and wait for valuations to return and choose not to worry about the day-to-day fluctuations.
- Adjust allocation levels if necessary. If you have a professional helping you manage your portfolio, they’ve likely already reduced your risk exposure. If you aren’t sure, ask them.
- If you are handling your own finances, be aware of the potential risks so you can adjust as needed, or talk to someone who understands the current market and can advise accordingly.

In investing, as in life, it’s the things *we don’t know we don’t know* that can get us in trouble. Understanding the limitations of our current financial market will help you adjust your thinking, as things truly are different now. As we near all-time market highs and all-time interest rate lows, don’t panic, but do be a little more vigilant. ♦



AGE, STAGE, AND THE COCKTAIL OF *Love*

**BEYOND A CERTAIN AGE, ARE WE ANY BETTER AT
CHOOSING OUR LOVE INTERESTS?**

*“For some reason,
my heart skipped into
my throat. I focused on
my yoga breath while
trying to pretend he
was kidding.”*

My soon-to-be-ex (we’re separated, slogging through the long divorce process) husband and I are having lunch. We’re civilly working through some of the details, when he all too quietly says, “We need to talk.”

I think, *“Isn’t that the wife’s line?”*

I dread what’s coming next, but he surprises me. In an untypically paternal voice, he intones, “Now that we’re separated — again — and this time, we agree, it’s for good — I want you to understand that a lot of men are going to start chasing you ...”

My eyes pop. I’m thinking, *Really?! I try not to smile and wonder if he’s got a list of names. At the same time, it hurts. How-*

ever much we aren’t meant to be married anymore, he’s acknowledging the loss of an intimacy we once shared.

“... and so, I want you to know,” he continues with uncharacteristic gentleness, “that if you choose to conduct an intimate relationship with someone else, it’s OK with me.”

Stunned, I can only think to blurt, “Do you want him to call you first?”

“That would be fine, but not absolutely necessary.”

For some reason, my heart skips into my throat. I focus on my yoga breath while trying to pretend he is kidding. He isn’t.

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler

Flash forward several months, and I now see the value of that conversation. The truth is, as time passes, cultural traditions and social mores change. Thus, I'm dating while still in the final stages of divorce. Individuals change too, moving through life's stages in their own rhythms. When one "partner-for-life" enters a new stage while the other takes off in a different direction, or refuses to change at all, the partnership can run amok. And it hurts.

No matter how happy my disposition, I'm working hard at recognizing and dealing with the pain, even if we have both entered disparate stages. While he cites our "aging" as the reason for our difficulties, I believe the real problem is the stages we have reached; tragically, the fork in the road that leads to separate paths.

Age ... or Stage?

Enter Rob, I'll call him, the new love interest. A friendship evolves into romance. We're peas in a pod, and yet ... I perceive a glitch.

Rob is 18 years younger than I am, and when I gather the courage to raise the age disparity with him, Rob explains that soon after we met, he Googled me, and so has known all along.

"Does it bother you?" I ask.

"No," he says. "As long as it doesn't bother you."

We are both over 50, I rationalize, which means that our relationship stands a fair chance of succeeding. By now, we both should know what bothers us in a relationship, what works, what sabotages. As the relationship grows more intense, we're tested on numerous fronts. We learn a lot about each other very quickly. Over nine months, Rob and I are falling in love. Or is it limerence?





Advertisement

The Limerence Cocktail

Some may charge that Rob and I are merely entering the 10th month of what psychologists call “limerence,” a stage of infatuation first defined by psychologist Dorothy Tennov in her landmark book *Love and Limerence*. (Tennov, 1998)

She describes the symptoms as an intense romantic desire, often with an obsessive or compulsive quality. The emotional swings, intrusive thoughts, and fantasies about the other can be intensely pleasurable. They can also make one feel physically ill; maybe this is the real genesis of the lovesick fool.

The concept of limerence is hotly debated among psychologists, neurologists and the psychiatric community and has evolved since Tennov put a name, an odd name at that, to the condition, which she ascribes to *all newly romantic relationships*.

More recently, David Sack, MD, reports that limerence has been medically diagnosed as a chemical occurrence in the hypothalamus: A group of biochemical processes simultaneously occur, wherein the pituitary gland releases

norepinephrine, producing a “chemical cocktail” often experienced as euphoria. (Sack, 2012)

“When requited, the feelings may persist over many years,” Sack notes.

This Time Around

If this is limerence, what Rob and I feel, it’s a stage we are sharing, despite the difference in our ages. In fact, my therapist, after meeting separately with both Rob and me, declares that we are in a healthy state of limerence, a romantic state possibly preceding a more “settled” union. As for our age difference, my therapist declares, “It’s not about age. It’s about stage.”

I’m no cougar and find that sobriquet disparaging to both women and men. Normally, I tend to date older men, for no particular reason. This is my first “years younger man” relationship.

But what about other aspects of a successful partnership? Intellectual and emotional maturity are critical factors in all intimate relationships, including the older woman/younger man model, unless, of course, they’re just on a lark in a Reno brothel renting out young cowpokes.

Age, Stage and Love: *Continued on page 41*

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The three Senior Corps programs – RSVP, Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents are administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.





● ●

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Advice for the Journey

Personal Advice and Expert Opinions



by Arica VanGelderens, LLMsw
Clinical social worker and therapist

Question: Last year, my husband and I moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, a city we always dreamed of living in after spending our honeymoon there in the '60s. We finally decided to take the leap when our grandson moved to nearby Albuquerque for his first job out of college.

We've always had a close relationship with him and felt it was a good time for us to act on our plan. We live just an hour away by car, but we rarely see or speak to him, and

I am having a hard time understanding what changed in our relationship. He claims he is just "too busy" and seems to feel genuinely apologetic, but we are starting to think he doesn't care about us like he used to.

I can't help but feel hurt by his behavior, especially because his relocation prompted us to move out here at this time. Is it fair to assume our grandson is distancing himself from us?

Answer: First, congratulations on taking such a positive leap forward by relocating to the city you always wanted to live in! Be proud of that accomplishment. Second, I understand your feelings about your grandson's seemingly distant behavior, but please understand that he is also in the middle of a large transition, both developmentally and literally. He is dealing with all the pressures of early adulthood, along with the stress that comes with a major move and starting a new career. And he is carving out a

life for himself, on his own terms, as young people must.

There will always be growing and learning regardless of your life stage, but your grandson is experiencing some particularly formative and intense developmental "growing pains" right now. Remember that his actions toward you are not personal; they are likely due more to his stage of life and the excitement and challenges he is facing.

I suggest making it clear to him that you will always support him, no matter what, and that you are available if he

needs guidance or help with anything. Also, try validating his feelings by sharing some of your own experiences from that stage of your own life, showing that you understand and empathize with him about his desire to create a life on his own terms.

Communicate your love for him as grandparents, which is unconditional, and assure him that you don't want to interfere in his new life but do want to stay close. With time he will recognize the true value of that kind of relationship in his life. ♦

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Your Life Well Lived

Wellness Advice for Mind, Body and Spirit

It's Time to Give Yourself a WOOPing

Positive thinking is all well and good ... but you'll get nowhere if you fail to face your real obstacles.

by Nancy Gertz
Health and well-being coach
in Boston

© Franck Camhi

"The solution isn't to do away with dreaming and positive thinking. Rather, it's making the most of our fantasies by brushing them up against the very thing most of us are taught to ignore."

— Gabriele Oettingen

As a life coach, I engage with all kinds of people who are trying to achieve certain goals. Some have health-related goals, such as better self-care, more exercise, adequate sleep and practicing mindfulness. Others seek to improve their relationships, manage their time better, practice more prudence with finances, set priorities, and more.

Many of these lovely people introduce themselves to me with a sense of shame or self-deprecation in the way they lay out their challenges. "I really don't know why I can't simply do what it takes." "It's not like I haven't tried, but obviously I don't have patience." "I give up too easily," etc. There's no shortage of ways we berate ourselves. And the more we berate, the more we thwart our chances of success.

W — WISH

Identify a dear, important wish. Start with a short-term wish, something you can accomplish in a week or a month. Maybe even try this for a daily goal, like eating better food or getting more exercise. Your wish must be both feasible and challenging. If it isn't, modify it or postpone it until it is.

Example: *I want to be a better listener with my kids.*

O — OUTCOME

What would be the best outcome if this wish came true? How would you be different as a result of achieving this goal? Why does it matter? Slow down and fully imagine all the wonderful results of achieving this goal. Take a few minutes with it and let it roll around in your brain and in your heart.

Example: *I imagine sitting with my daughter as she tells me about her life in Chicago and how she is feeling as an empty-nester. It's wonderful to have her trust me and share her truths. I am not interrupting, judging or correcting. I'm focused on understanding her. It feels very warm and satisfying. I want this.*

O — OBSTACLE

What is inside you that's blocking the way? Go ahead; list all the excuses you can think of, internal and even external challenges. When it's all splayed out there in front of you, what's the real reason? It might be an emotion, an irrational belief or a bad habit. Maybe you worry that achieving this goal will

Twenty years ago, positive thinking and visualization were presented as the bold new secret sauce for achieving goals. If we could imagine it, vividly, and stay positive no matter what, we could make it happen. While I'm the first person to support the idea of positive thinking, I also know that if wishing is all it takes for dreams to come true, we would all be frustration free, and that's hardly how we feel.

The problem is this: When we focus on our wishes in this positive way, our bodies relax — blood pressure drops, heart rate decreases and we are calmer. Yet change is more likely to happen when we are *activated*, not calm. The discomfort of *not* having what we want generates the energy we need to sustain our efforts to change.

And it does take effort, because for every change, we will run into obstacles. These hurdles are usually deep within us — *our inner voices that sabotage our success.*

According to motivation researcher Gabrielle Oettingen, the secret to real change lies in creating a realistic obstacle-hurdling plan. (Oettingen, 2014)

Oettingen calls her four-step process WOOP: Wish, Outcome, Obstacle and Plan. The process is straightforward, but it takes commitment and concentration on your part. To begin, quietly focus your curiosity on your precious self. Leave the world at your door, and start looking inside to that quiet, still space.

cause new problems. What lurks there in the backstage of your mind and heart? Keep searching until you find yourself nodding your head with the truth of the revelation. This part will probably scare you; that's when you know you've figured it out.

Example: *I have a hard time holding my tongue. I doubt that I'll be able to just listen and not say anything critical. What if I fail and make us even more distant?*

P — PLAN

What can you do to overcome your obstacle? Identify one action you can take when your obstacle appears. Make an "If ... then" plan for your obstacle for how you'll move past it.

Example: *I imagine us sitting together again. This time I am aware of my tendency to speak out. If I start to feel critical or begin to speak in this way, then I will take a moment to breathe, and I will remind myself how much I want her to trust me.*

To build your WOOP-ing skills, start with one short-term goal and watch what happens when you blend positive thinking with obstacle-planning for truly effective change. Real positive change starts when you give yourself a good WOOPing.

Visit www.Woopmylife.org to learn more on the WOOP technique. ♦

Source:

Oettingen, Gabriele. (2014). *Rethinking Positive Thinking: Inside the New Science of Motivation*. USA: Penguin Group.

Live Big. Live Bold.

Your Life, Your Rules



by Isabelle King
Freelance Writer

© Getty Images

Dinner Is Served

Leisure Care's 5-Star
Commitment to Healthy
and Delicious Dining

Summer is just around the corner. The warmer weather brings longer and more active days outside, swimming, hiking, and enjoying the great outdoors. As the temperature goes up, the layers come off, and many find the beginning of summer a great time to focus on diet, nutrition, and a more active lifestyle.

At Leisure Care, we prioritize senior nutrition every season, offering our residents local, seasonal, delicious and nutritious food. We provide our residents with healthy choices to improve the quality of their lives, enrich their retirement, and provide the energy each resident needs to *carpe diem!*

When You Know Better, You Do Better

The legendary poet Maya Angelou once said, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

As the life expectancy of Americans continues to increase, seniors and caregivers are focusing on better nutrition as a key component of healthy aging. We are learning more about the positive effects nutrition has on overall health, and in response senior living communities are changing their menus to reflect these trends and meet the unique nutritional needs of seniors.

Nutrition plays an important role in the aging process. It's proven that the decision to live a healthy lifestyle makes a significant impact on overall health and quality of life. The National Institute of Health advocates a healthy and well-balanced diet for seniors, finding that seniors who eat nutritious foods have a reduced risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, bone loss, anemia, and certain types of cancers.

Our awareness that good nutrition improves health is clearly expanding. In fact, according to market research from Euromonitor International, global sales of healthy food options — including organic and allergen-free foods — are expected to reach \$1 trillion this year.



“The commitment Leisure Care has to a healthy and enjoyable dining experience is one of the greatest differentiating factors for us throughout the industry.”

— Chef Samuel Litvak
Culinary Manager at Leisure Care

© Background photo: Leisure Care / Inset photo: Shironosov

Gallup, a research-based consulting company, conducted its annual Consumption Habits poll by asking 1,009 Americans about the foods they try to include or avoid in their diet. Through its research, Gallup found that of those surveyed:

- 60% avoid sodas.
- 44% include organic foods in their diets.
- 50% avoid sugar.
- 70% seek out grains.
- 90% try to include fruits and vegetables in their regular diet.

Serving the Best, Only the Best

It's safe to say that we now know better. And, because we know better, we are doing better. We know that nutrition is central to the well-being and quality of life of each resident. That's

why dining at Leisure Care communities always has been, and always will be, a top priority.

Every community has a fully functioning restaurant that is open to the public. We want dining to be an experience where residents enjoy the company of friends and family, joining together for a meal that nourishes their body and their soul.

We have more than 40 years of experience operating public restaurants in our Leisure Care communities. Our culinary experts are committed to the health and overall well-being of every guest and resident, creating menus that celebrate multi-generational cuisine and specializing in serving the greatest generation. We don't take this challenge lightly.

Today's seniors are well-traveled and schooled in the art of food preparation and presentation. Internationally inspired cuisine frequently appears on our menus, appealing to a wide range of palates and tastes.

Leisure Care restaurants are sensitive to the special needs and requests of residents and guests. With our Healthy Selection Program, residents can take charge of their own health and nutrition. This program puts an icon on menu items that represent a healthier choice, such as petite dishes, signature fresh fish programs, and low-sodium choices. Our chefs are on-site and available throughout the meal to answer any questions about ingredients or nutritional standards.

Each community restaurant is open to the public, and residents decide when they want to join us. Some stop by for a meal a few times a week, but many residents choose to dine with us daily. Our restaurants are like no other; they reinvent themselves every day with every meal and celebrate life-giving nutrition with every opportunity.

“The commitment Leisure Care has to a healthy and enjoyable dining experience is one of the greatest differentiating factors for us throughout the industry,” explains Chef Samuel Litvak, culinary manager at Leisure Care. “We recognize that our residents look forward to each week's menu, almost as much as when the mailman arrives! Knowing what is on the menu in advance allows our residents to plan

and invite guests and family members to join them for a meal. Meals are one of the most social aspects of the day, and we strive to enhance that experience with engaging, warm service and flavorful, well-prepared meals.”

We care deeply what our residents think about us. Our annual survey gives residents the opportunity to provide us feedback. We consistently hear that our residents want to invest in their health and eat better. Our job is to make sure that residents have every opportunity to do that in delicious ways.

“Our chefs are constantly looking for new and refreshing ways to prepare healthy meals that are lower in sodium, starch and fats. The easiest way to achieve this is to focus on fresh, local and seasonal food — it

simply tastes better that way! We are proud to prepare meals that nourish the bodies and souls of our residents,” says Chef Litvak.

Five-Star Dining, Five-Star Fun

Fun and healthy eating is a community-wide commitment for our chefs. Each month Leisure Care communities submit their favorite healthy recipes and cooking techniques, born from our monthly chef demonstrations and cooking competitions. The winning recipes are then introduced within our communities nationwide.

Check out the award-winning recipes, and learn more about the Chef Challenge and Leisure Care's dining program at www.leisurecare.com/amenities/dining. ♦



Searching for Bliss at 29,000 Feet

How to overcome turbulence on your flight to personal happiness

by Jeff Wozer

Humorist and stand-up comedian

Milton once said: “The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.” And right now, somewhere above the brown-curtained folds of the northern Nevada desert, I’m making a hell of heaven from being stuck in the middle seat.

It’s been years, perhaps decades, since I last sat in the middle seat on a cross-country flight, so its adverse effect comes as a shock, causing me to question everything the sages — Emerson, Aristotle, Buddha — taught me about happiness.

Collectively, they believed happiness to be a state of mind; the mental yield of gratitude and positive focus, independent of status or circumstance. They did not view happiness as an arbitrary mood but a conscious choice, as accessible as oxygen, requiring nothing more than a mere nudge in one’s perspective.

I believed them. I bought in — almost to the point of mantra. Carefree and light-footed my aura.

But the middle seat, I’m quickly learning, is happiness’ kryptonite. It carries all the bounding joy of bunk beds in a honeymoon suite. Wedged between two strangers in cramped quarters, it’s the airline’s version of the last available bed

in a two-star hostel with the community bathroom down the hall.

Compounding middle-seat discomfort is the realization that not only do you not want to not be sitting there, but your seatmates don’t want you sitting there either. They don’t verbalize this; it’s conveyed by their expressions. When I let it be known I’d be shoehorning in between them, they looked at me like I was an uninvited uncle taking a chair at their wedding-party table.

Consequently, my usual disciplines for maintaining a sunny disposition regardless of situation — focused breathing, positive affirmations, shots of whiskey — are failing to rescue my sinking mood.

Determined to prevent the middle seat from becoming my emotional Alamo, I try shifting focus by closing my eyes and slowly reciting a favorite Buddha quote: “Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are. It solely relies on what you think.”

Exactly, I coach myself, we get what we think. However, instead of thinking happy thoughts, I’m only thinking how much I desperately yearn for the window seat. Which brings to mind another nugget from Buddha: “Desire is the root of all suffering.”

“My usual disciplines for maintaining a sunny disposition regardless of situation — focused breathing, positive affirmations, shots of whiskey — are failing to rescue my sinking mood.”

Searching for Bliss: *Continued on page 41*



© Days For Girls

Ethics and Spirituality

Reflections and Contemplations on Life and Living

Breaking Down Borders

An unlikely group comes together to reach across the world to provide help to young women.

by Elana Zaiman

Rabbi, chaplain and writer in Seattle

In March 2016, my friend Ellen (we call her “The Connector”) introduced me to her friend, LueRachelle, and to the work of the Saturday Sewing Sisters. This group of women from the Sarah Allen Sisterhood of the Women’s Ministry of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Seattle gather one Saturday each month to sew washable feminine hygiene kits (based on the Days for Girls template) for girls in Limbe, Cameroon, one of Seattle’s sister cities.

These kits, I learned, enable girls to go to school during their periods so that they don’t fall behind their male classmates, don’t burden their families with the cost of disposable feminine hygiene products, and don’t feel compelled to offer sexual favors to men in their village to be able to afford to purchase these products on their own.

I also learned that some of the women from the Saturday Sewing Sisters travel to Cameroon to hand these girls their individual kits (each kit lasts three years) and to educate them about their periods, reproduction, self-esteem and self-image.

Hearing about this project, I was immediately hooked. I asked myself why and was surprised by the many reasons this resonated so deeply:

... because as a woman, I want all girls to have access to feminine hygiene.

... because as a Jew, my values inform how I show up, not only in the Jewish world, but in the world at large.

... because education, human dignity and self-esteem are high up there on my values list.

... because as a citizen of this country, I am appalled by the hate crimes against African Americans, and in 2016, I sensed that hate crimes were on the rise, and I am not about hate.

... because as a rabbi, I believe in doing something in the world that transcends race and religion and brings people in faith communities and in neighborhood communities together.

For me, this project was a calling to show up in the world in a new way; to expand my sense of community; to increase my understanding of and connections with people I do not have the opportunity to interact with in my work as a rabbi in the Jewish community.

Don’t get me wrong — I believe we all need our own communities for a sense of identity, cohesion and belonging, but for me, in 2016, this was not enough. I needed something more, and I sensed that reaching outward to create a more expansive community would be a way for me to reach more deeply inward.

The only question was how to get involved. Saturday is my Sabbath; joining the Saturday Sewing Sisters was not an option, so I asked LueRachelle if she’d be open to having an additional Sewing Sisters site. I was clear in my ask that it was not just an additional site I was interested in creating, but that I was interested in our communities working together and getting to know one another. When I brought the idea to the rabbi at my synagogue, she was enthusiastic.

In June 2016, 13 women from the First AME Church came to our synagogue to speak about these kits and to demonstrate how they presented them to the girls in Cameroon. Two weeks later, our synagogue hosted its first sewing evening with the help of Claire and Jeanette, Saturday Sewing Circle regulars, who to this day, still guide us.

To that evening, I also invited women from the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Monroe, WA. Over

Breaking Down Borders: *Continued on page 42*

“I needed something more, and I sensed that reaching outward to create a more expansive community would be a way for me to reach more deeply inward.”



42 (2013)

Jackie Robinson starred in a movie about his own life way back in 1950, when he was still in the prime of his career. It took Hollywood a few decades to return the story to the big screen, but *42* turned out to be a solid account of Robinson's hardships while breaking baseball's color barrier. Director Brian Helgeland doesn't skimp on the threats and insults Robinson had to endure during his first season with Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 — to leave out racial epithets would soften what Robinson went through. Dodgers General Manager Branch Rickey (a hammy but effective Harrison Ford) wanted to integrate baseball, but he'd gotten Robinson to agree not to respond to the racial attacks, so Chadwick Boseman (also excellent a year later in a James Brown biopic, *Get On Up*) plays Robinson with a simmering sense of control. The film doesn't offer anything earth-shaking, but it gives a clear account of how courage can break societal constraints — not with a single swing of the bat, but by wearing them down day after difficult day. (DVD available from Netflix; streaming available on Netflix, Amazon Video, Vudu, Google Play, YouTube and iTunes.)

MUSIC REVIEWS

by John Pearson / Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

"Without a reunion, the Eagles are forever young, like James Dean." — Glenn Frey



Eric Clapton Unplugged (Live Album) — Eric Clapton, 1992

Released when he was 47 years old and less than two years after the tragic death of his young son, Clapton performs acoustically before a small live audience. The album received mostly positive reviews at the time and produced a couple of singles that continue to receive airplay. While it is not unusual for guitarists to pick up and play electric, acoustic, 12-string, and perhaps other versions and relatives of the instrument, Clapton rose to fame playing heavily amplified hard rock and blues. The decision to limit himself to acoustic makes for a refreshing and surprisingly upbeat performance; witness the startling transformation of "Layla" into the softer, shuffle version included here. The musicians backing Clapton are professional and unobtrusive when they need to be but also occasionally sparkle on their own, like one memorable solo by pianist Chuck Leavell in "Old Love."



Red Headed Stranger (Album) — Willie Nelson, 1975

The album that Columbia executives at first thought sounded like an under-produced demo was certified gold less than one year after its release and went double platinum in 1986. The album, which has been called "the Sgt. Pepper's of country music," contains Nelson's first number one hit as a singer ("Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain") and spawned one of his memorable nicknames. Significantly, he obtained full creative control of the recording and eschewed the sound equalization, layering and heavy instrumentation common at the time. By limiting these effects and using the framework of a "concept" album — a work with an over-arching theme — *Red Headed Stranger* succeeds brilliantly in its relentless progression from crisis to resolution, finishing with the poignantly elegant lyrics in "Hands on the Wheel."



Take It to the Limit (Single) — The Eagles, 1975

Although the title might indicate a desire to rush to the brink of disaster, the lyrics to this composition are reassuringly benign yet contain some of rock's most iconic phrases — "All alone at the end of the evening ...," "You know I've always been a dreamer ...," and, of course, the memorable title phrase itself. The execution is top notch, as expected from The Eagles, with their tight harmonies, flawless instrumentation and professional arrangement. It's sad to think that the pressure of the live performance of this song in particular led directly to the departure of lead singer Randy Meisner from the band. ♦

After age 50, crucial relationship issues are most often definable within a short period of time spent together. At this age, we tend to tolerate differences in tastes, habits or opinion, are generally more patient, wiser. Temperament and day-to-day compatibility form undeniable requisites for becoming longstanding best friends, the ultimate proof of a successful partnership.

Interestingly, Rob and I are at opposite ends of the Boomer generation, thus we share much in common culturally. Rob is a devoted fan of auto races; I'm curious to attend a race with him, to discover what about car races excites him. At age 20, I would've turned my nose up at the thought.

But a stage in life is more than culture, more than both of us liking the Beach Boys, for example. Shar-

ing a certain philosophical approach to life is critical to a healthy relationship. Maturity may be the key aspect of what makes a relationship work between two individuals almost a generation apart.

As for relationships between much older men and younger women, I offer one instance of what age versus stage implies. I once shared an apartment in New York with a woman who dated, then married, a very famous photographer who was old enough to be her father. From the beginning, they knew they were a match. She was 24, nerdy and intellectually mature, far beyond her age group. He was mid-50s, a romantic, emotionally wounded from covering the Vietnam war, searching for a soulmate. They stayed blissfully married for decades, until, sadly, he passed away, leaving a young widow.

Matches between couples whose ages radically differ don't always work, but when they do, it's a match made in heaven. I can say without hesitation that if both partners, no matter their age differences, are in the same intellectual and emotional ballpark, ready for what the other has to offer, have lived long enough, experienced enough to feel it's a match, then it's a match. It's not age, but stage that predicts the success of a true partnership. *

Sources:

Sack, David, M.D. (2012). "Limerence and the Biochemical Roots of Love Addiction." Retrieved on March 21, 2017, from www.huffingtonpost.com.
Tennov, Dorothy. (1998). *Love and Limerence: The Experience of Being in Love*. Reprinted in 2012, by Scarborough House.

Maybe so, but I can explain. I'm partial to the pastoral nature of window seats. Two seats removed from the press of aisle traffic, it affords calming views and a comforting sense of privacy. And, most importantly, a wall for sleeping purposes.

My head is more susceptible than most to the pulls of gravity. As soon as my eyes close, my head sags like a pine branch burdened with wet snow. More times than I care to admit, I have embarrassingly found my head pressed against the shoulder of a middle-seat mate or dangling over the armrest into the aisle like some hapless tranquilized black bear slumped over a suburban tree branch.

With eyes still shut I try again, this time reciting Aristotle: "Happiness depends on ourselves."

And then Emerson: "We do not suspect the days to be gods."

Nothing. No happiness jumpstart. Only a strange surfacing conviction that if I ever switch careers to join the priesthood, I'll be certain to instruct confession-goers, "As penance, say seven Hail Mary's, two Our Fathers, and sit in the middle seat on your next cross-country flight, amen."

Determined, I jump online for guidance and find a trove of happiness tips on *Psychology Today's* website championing the power of gratitude. Study after study proves gratitude to be the cornerstone of happy people. One study, published by psychologists Stephen Schueller and Acacia Parks, showed how writing down things you're grateful for improved a person's well-being. (Zilca, 2014) I give it a try:

- 1) I'm not sitting with seatmates who want to share pictures of their cats.
 - 2) I'm not the future of the teenager across the aisle with the neck tattoo.
 - 3) I'm not flying to North Korea.
- Like a just-opened bottle of red wine, I allow these thoughts a few minutes to breathe — but nothing. No shift in mood. I continue my research.

And then — boom! I come across an *Atlantic Monthly* article that approaches happiness from a different angle. Titled "Buy Experiences, Not Things," it, in a nut, concludes that experiences, not possessions, create happiness. Think, for example, something you purchased — a sofa, a shirt, a computer — and compare it with a memory. The memory carries infinitely more smile-power. (Hamblin, 2014)

This even applies to bad experiences. Unlike a bad purchase, a bad experience, with time, can bloom into a fond memory. Several years ago I inadvertently flipped a canoe carrying my 80-something parents on Colorado's Evergreen Lake. At the time it was a real-life horror show. But now we howl with laughter at the experience.

In applying this to my present situation, the walls of discontent begin to crack with the realization this middle seat is providing me an experience. Something I would not have "enjoyed" in either the window or aisle seat. Further proof, or so I hope, even a bad experience becomes a good story. ♦

Read more:

Hamblin, James. (2014, October 7). "Buy Experiences, Not Things." Retrieved March 14, 2017, from www.theatlantic.com.
Zilca, Ran. (2014, July 9). "5 Ways to Make Yourself Happier in the Next 5 Minutes." Retrieved March 14, 2017, from www.psychologytoday.com.

Breaking Down Borders: Continued from page 39

time, I've invited neighbors, elementary, junior high and high school students. I even invited a group of trick-or-treaters who knocked on my door. I continue to invite people I meet at conferences, clergy gatherings and cafes.

The beauty of this project: It's hands-on. As we reach out to help girls on another continent, as we sew, cut patterns, snip threads, affix snaps, and thread ribbons to make drawstring bags, we share stories, build trust and create relationships. In fact, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community recently began a partner site at their mosque.

We have visited each other's congregations. We have worshipped together, and we will continue to develop programs to grow in our understanding of one another. We also have a new name: the Seattle Limbe Sewing Circle, to be inclusive of the different days on which we meet and of the men and boys who join us.

My soul is growing, and it's not just mine alone. Our African American, Muslim, Asian, Jewish, agnostic and atheist souls are growing together. While it's true that our differences — religion, skin color, yarmulkes and hijabs — could be a deterrent, they are not. Creating this more expansive

community has helped to diminish the distance between us and to celebrate our differences and similarities in ways that unite us, and we need that now.

In the words of Martin Luther King, "Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not-too-distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood [and sisterhood]* will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty." Amen to that. ♦

*Asterisk is my addition.

Days for Girls was founded in 2008 by current CEO Celeste Mergens. Celeste was working to meet the basic needs for an orphanage outside Nairobi, a massive challenge due to post-election violence that caused the population of the orphanage to swell. Celeste realized that girls in the orphanage were sitting on cardboard for days each month, missing school, and staying alone in their rooms because they lacked access to hygiene products. This was the impetus

for creating the first DfG Kits. Since that time, the Kit has been through 28 different iterations, each informed by feedback from women and girls across the world. Kits have reached more than 640,000 women and girls in over 100 countries.

Visit www.daysforgirls.org to learn more about the DfG sewing circles and how you can get involved.



BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 18

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

ONE	SAMBA	SPAT
DEAF	ALIAS	ARES
ONTO	FINDS	SORE
RESPL	ENDENT	TAT
ESE	RIOTS	
BASES	ABSENTEE	
OMAN	LIMITS	BY
ADIT	EVITA	OPEC
L	LISTENER	REDD
ESPRESSO	ENSUE	
MELLEE	LEG	
BRA	PUSHING	THEM
LANE	SHEER	SILLO
EPEE	FORGO	PROS
MERE	LOREN	TNT

Answers to Sudoku

9	6	3	5	2	1	8	4	7
2	7	8	4	6	9	5	1	3
1	4	5	8	7	3	6	2	9
8	1	6	2	9	7	3	5	4
3	9	4	6	1	5	7	8	2
5	2	7	3	8	4	9	6	1
6	8	9	7	4	2	1	3	5
4	3	1	9	5	6	2	7	8
7	5	2	1	3	8	4	9	6



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