

Summer 2020: Open Minds

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— Thomas Dewar



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Open Minds:

"Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier."

— Dorothea Brande

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THOUGHTS FROM THE HOME OFFICE

Together, We Are One Family



Greetings everyone,

I always look forward to the opportunity to connect with all of our readers a few times a year and write about things that make us all think a little bit outside the box. As I write this introductory letter, it is April 1, 2020, and it feels a bit like April Fools' Day on the grandest scale. Our world has changed so much in the past several weeks, and there's not a person alive who hasn't been somehow affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe we're all yearning for things to go back to normal — to be the way they used to be. I share that yearning, but I also think that "normal" has been redefined forever and, in fact, it is still evolving.

It starts with a familiar foe — this damn virus. But it goes further than that — it taps deep into the human spirit as we realize that there are things bigger than any segment of society. No privilege protects one group over another — we're all vulnerable. As we recognize this vulnerability, we may see a shift in how we all perceive and connect with each other and find common ground. How ironic that something that separates us in such absolute ways can have the effect of bringing us together!

The New Normal that we establish as this pandemic subsides is somewhat unknown, but it is nevertheless unfolding before our very eyes. It makes me hopeful that we may emerge stronger than before and better connected with each other than ever before.

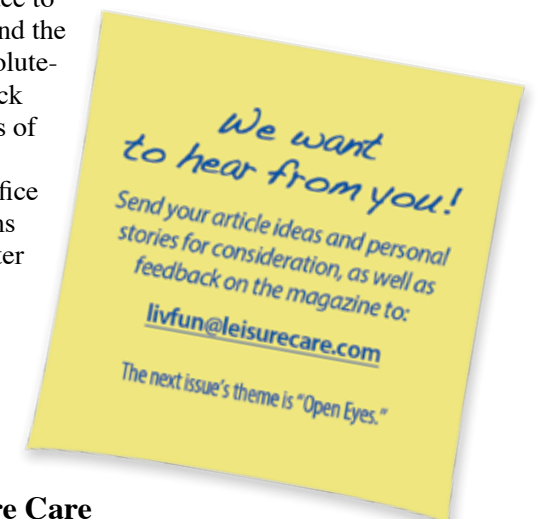
Over the past several weeks as this situation has unfolded, our Seattle home office has had to shift to working remotely at home — only a few of us are established at the office as our Command Central. We are physically apart, but we have never been more united in doing everything we can to support the heroes working in our communities every day. We've been humbled by their dedication, their creativity, their love for their residents and coworkers. It is truly inspiring to see how these teams have come together in this time of crisis when we need all hands on deck. To all Leisure Care employees, thank you! You are true heroes and the embodiment of the culture of our company — of your company.

To all our amazing residents, you have taken the changes in daily routines and normal operations in stride. We've kept the lines of communication open and rolled with the punches together as we learned what we were up against and put every precaution into place to stay safe and secure. The positivity and resilience you've shown and the spirit of teamwork — residents and staff together — has been absolutely incredible. We've even found new ways to have fun — just check out your community's Facebook page for some inspiring examples of the human spirit shining brightly.

As we move forward toward the new normal, we at the home office will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our community teams have everything they need. But we could not have hoped for a better response from all of our staff and residents to this unprecedented challenge. The word "community" has never been more appropriate. Thank you to all of our residents. And a huge thank you to all of our incredible team members in every community — you've risen to the challenge we never knew was coming, and you're knocking it out of the park. Thank you for being Leisure Care.

Respectfully, Greg Clark and the whole team at Leisure Care

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REFLECTIONS

When we gaze into a mirror, we see a reversal of ourselves ... and we wonder ... “which is the real me?”

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler



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I never realized how much time I used to spend studying myself in mirrors ... how fresh or exhausted I appeared to others.

Narcissus, that handsome Greek lad, wondered why so many of his protégés adored him. Among his most fervent admirers was Armeinius, whose advances Narcissus spurned. To ensure Armeinius understood, the haughty Narcissus sent him a sword. Armeinius got the message, drew the sword and killed himself. But before dying, Armeinius called on Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, to settle the score.

Then Nemesis led Narcissus to a still pond where Narcissus gazed into his own reflection and instantly fell rapturously in love with his own image — his punishment for breaking so many hearts. Alas, Narcissus must’ve tried to embrace his reflection because he fell into the pond where, after drowning, he was transformed into a flower.

The cautionary tale was meant to warn humans against vanity and conceit. Still, we narcissistic humans cannot resist constantly gazing at our own reflections. This habit may produce superficial judgment or a deeper reflection of our inner selves. The Wicked Witch may fail to charm a fair image from her looking glass, but one thing is certain: Since the epoch of Greek mythology, humans have been fascinated, if not obsessed, with themselves and their appearance. (I can’t speak for Neanderthals.)

About 6,000 BC, Mesopotamians created mirrors from highly polished stone, like obsidian. In the following epochs, Egyptians, Chinese and Indians alike flattened and polished metals to create mirrors. Naturally, Central and South American and other cultures created their own versions of polished stone or metal alloy mirrors. (Melchior-Bonnet, 1994)

Socrates instructed his young students to study their own images in mirrors and reflect on what they saw. If they saw beauty, then the stu-

dent would have a duty to earn that beauty. If a student discerned an ugly image reflecting back, then a good education could hide his ugliness.

Mirrors ultimately may have been the source of the saying, “Know thyself,” reminding humans to not mistake themselves for God and to “avoid pride by knowing his limits and to improve himself. His was thus not a passive mirror of imitation but an active mirror of transformation.” (Melchior-Bonnet, 1994)

Why do mirrors exist if not to judge ourselves? A flat mirror, a “looking glass,” was intended for personal grooming and no end of preening. Besides offering a close-up view of one’s face, handheld mirrors made great spying tools and were often used to reflect the sun’s heat on sticks to fire up the barbie.

Eventually, mirrors formed the centerpiece of giant telescopes that discovered the vastness of the universe and suggested that “we are not alone.” For some of us, this discovery was exciting news; for others, a misplaced conceit served to convince them that man had not landed on the moon. If you can’t see it, it didn’t happen.

These days, I have little time to check my reflection in the several mirrors in my home. My reflection in the giant brass gong, which I bang at the cocktail hour, escapes my notice. When I do happen to notice myself in a mirror these days, I’m actually startled, as if someone has just popped out of the wall to scare me.

Why? Because for several months I have been caregiver to a very sick man and rarely have time for self-reflection of any sort. To be honest, I’d never realized how much time I used to spend studying myself in mirrors, judging how age is creeping up on me, how fresh or exhausted I appeared to others.

But then, the mirror lies. A mirror reflects a reverse picture of an image. Factually, when I gaze at myself in a mirror, I’m seeing a reversal of myself, and I often wonder, which is the “real me” — the reflection in the mirror or my actual appearance, which I can’t conjure.

Through these past months of caring for this person, shaving his beard, bathing him, dressing him, lifting him from bed to hospital chair, I see more of him than of myself. I’ve also learned that when I do accidentally notice myself in a mirror, I’m actually less judgmental of what I see, even surprised at how much better I look to myself than when I wasted more time gazing into the looking glass. I think this is explained by how little time I spend on myself and how much more time I spend helping others. And too, while caring for someone this intensely, I’ve been given the gift of time to reflect on the deeper image of myself. To my surprise, I am fonder of that new person in the mirror, that strong, capable, brave person who, to her surprise, possesses more compassion, patience and energy than before, when on bad hair days I couldn’t stand her.

I’ve come to believe that, in the case of self-reflection, a mirror is unnecessary. Now I see the best reflection of myself in the eyes of the person I care for, eyes that reflect back gratitude for my ministrations, compassion, and most of all, my gift of dignity to this man who might otherwise drown in his own despair. In his eyes, I see his spirit sparking and realize that eyes are truly a mirror of the soul. ♦

Source:

Melchior-Bonnet, Sabine. (1994). *Histoire Du Miroir*. Albury, U.K.: Imago.

Entertain Your Brain: Books

by Misha Stone

Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

“The trouble with having an open mind, of course, is that people will insist on coming along and trying to put things in it.”

— Terry Pratchett



Recollections of My Nonexistence: A Memoir by Rebecca Solnit (Viking, \$26)
Solnit has built her reputation as a journalist writing on diverse topics like community resilience during natural disasters, artists, and environmental activism. Yet it's her writing on feminism that has cemented her importance as a vital voice in American popular culture. Solnit found her voice living in pre-gentrified San Francisco in the 1980s, where her tenure in a historically black neighborhood opened her up to the racial and sexual politics of her place and time. In acknowledging the ways women have been portrayed in stories and made vulnerable to violence in their lives, she fuels her passion for writing stories that center on women and other marginalized voices. While exploring how her views on feminism continue to grow and change, and crediting young voices as well as elders as her guides, Solnit conveys a commitment to an open mind in her work. This memoir explores how art has the power to subvert the status quo and shift collective consciousness and perspective. It does so with grace, wit and fire.



Such a Fun Age by Kiley Reid (Putnam, \$26)
This buzzy debut is a perfect pick for group discussion; it's already been selected for Reese Witherspoon's book club. Reid's breezy but dimensional character-driven novel alternates perspectives from two women: Alix Chamberlain, a white woman juggling two children and a burgeoning brand building women's confidence through asking for what they want in life, and Emira Tucker, a black college grad who babysits for Alix's older daughter, Briar, with whom she has formed a strong bond. When Emira is called late one night to take Briar out of the house after a rock sails through the Chamberlains' window, she is confronted in an upscale market for being with a white child, and the repercussions of this moment unfold in unexpected ways. Illuminating the uneasy nature of transactional relationships, each chapter ups the stakes while revealing how every one of us is flawed and complex. Ease and assurance mark this debut, where the characters are never subsumed by the themes they highlight, offering a sense of balance in their portrayal.



Weather by Jenny Offill (Knopf, \$23.95)
Offill's latest novel after *Dept. of Speculation* also feels like prose poems sewn together to make a gorgeous quilt. In *Weather*, Lizzie works in a library where she lacks the requisite degree, raises her son with her husband, and has a side hustle answering emails for her former mentor's doom-and-gloom climate change podcast, "Hell and High Water." As caretaker for her recovering addict brother, she's honed her skills as a potential shrink and begins to apply those skills answering emails from depressives and doomsday preppers. Interspersed throughout the narrative are lovely, random facts, like "There is a species of moth in Madagascar that drinks the tears of sleeping birds." Offill's slim novel is an evocation of the anxiety-filled modern world, cataloging its sweet moments, as well as its dire prognostications. Droll and funny at times, Lizzie is a winsome and incisive narrator, reflecting how we can learn to keep our minds and eyes open as we absorb the world in all of its terror and beauty.

Entertain Your Brain: Movies

by Robert Horton

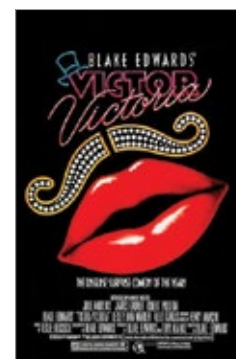
Member, National Society of Film Critics

“Open your eyes, Woody. Sometimes change can be good.”

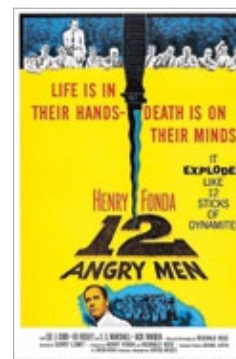
— Bo Beep



Toy Story 4 (2019)
The law of diminishing returns should have kicked in long ago with the *Toy Story* franchise, which began in 1995. But this is Pixar we're talking about, and the cartoon studio plays by its own rules — so perhaps it's no surprise that *Toy Story 4* turns out to be another thoughtful and funny installment. This time our cowboy pal Woody (voiced by Tom Hanks) is the story's poignant heart, as his long years of service wind down and new possibilities appear on the horizon. Joining the ongoing characters from the series is newcomer Forky (Tony Hale), a handmade toy crafted from a plastic fork and some pipe cleaners. Forky has self-esteem issues, as you can imagine, but this just makes him more adorable and triggers Woody's protective impulses. For all its animated fun, *Toy Story 4* comes down to some profound issues — about being open to change and letting go of entrenched fears no matter what you're made of. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, iTunes, VUDU and Disney+.)



Victor/Victoria (1982)
In this wonderfully civilized slapstick comedy, Julie Andrews plays a hard-luck singer trying to make it in 1934 Paris. Noting the success of drag shows, she tries a novel tack: She'll be a female impersonator. It's convoluted — she's a woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a woman — but the ruse works well enough to thoroughly confuse a macho American gangster (James Garner) checking out her act in gay Paree. Andrews' showbiz mentor is played by Robert Preston, in flamboyant form. "How long have you been a homosexual?" she asks him. "How long have you been a soprano?" he replies. Writer-director Blake Edwards, who later turned the film into a Broadway musical (with Andrews, his off-screen wife), uses this situation to liberating ends — here's a world where anything goes and questions of identity and sexual orientation are up for grabs. It was a little ahead of its time for 1982, yet the movie is also a fond throwback to a certain style of well-dressed Hollywood farce; they really don't make 'em like this anymore. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, iTunes and VUDU.)



12 Angry Men (1957)
First performed as a live TV play, *12 Angry Men* returned three years later as a feature film produced by Henry Fonda. It remains not merely a model of courtroom drama, but of how to energize a story that consists almost entirely of talk. In this overheated jury room, Fonda plays the only member who doubts the guilt of a murder suspect. Slowly, through moral suasion and poking at the evidence, Fonda's ethical Everyman steers the other impatient jurors to question their closed-minded rush to judgment. Reginald Rose's screenplay (he was inspired by his own fiery jury experience) lays bare the many impediments to free thinking, from bigotry to overconfidence to a poisonous kind of indifference. Sidney Lumet, at the beginning of a notable career, made his feature-directing debut here, and he had his hands full with a snorting and stamping cast that includes Lee J. Cobb, Ed Begley and Jack Klugman. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, iTunes and VUDU; available on DVD at Netflix.)

Entertain Your Brain: Music

by John Pearson

Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

“I think it would be a far greater world if people were kinder and more respectful to each other.”

— Aretha Franklin



Don't Think Twice, It's All Right (Album cut) — Bob Dylan, 1962

Loosely based on prior traditional and folk tunes, this early Dylan song was a harbinger of many more classics to come. Partially purloined melody and lyric notwithstanding, the album exudes Dylan authenticity and honesty, making it clearly and forever his own. The track first came to this reviewer's attention as an AM radio cover by Peter, Paul and Mary in 1963. Attracted by the interesting chord changes and harmony, the full power of the song escaped me until I heard the original recording on *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* album. As is usually the case, a song's author delivers a better overall performance than a covering artist because, well, who knows better than the writer how to express his or her intention? The directness of the lyric and the resignation in the delivery with an eye toward better things to come combine with Dylan's unique guitar technique to provide a truly enjoyable experience.



Think (Single) — Aretha Franklin, 1968

Written by none other than Aretha herself, this upbeat rocker was released as an A-side single off her *Aretha Now* album and became yet another in her string of Top 10 hits. Its catchy, driving rhythm supports a lyric presumably directed at her beau, exhorting him to think about the consequences of his actions toward her. While this is and will always remain good advice for anyone in literally any situation, there seems to be a second side to the not-so-subtle threat. The repeated chanting of "Freedom!" leads one to wonder if some part of Aretha sees a chance not only to rid her life of a bad actor, but perhaps the glorious golden opportunity of a new freedom for herself.



Think for Yourself (Album cut) — The Beatles, 1965

Written by George Harrison and being his only composition included on the American re-release of the critically acclaimed *Rubber Soul* album, "Think for Yourself" does indeed give the listener something to think about. Musically complex, its lyric is far removed from earlier Beatles numbers in which they enthusiastically harmonize about who loves who and holding hands. While smooth and sophisticated harmonies are present, the song's topic is serious and reminds one that the lovable mop-tops had matured. Seemingly directed to a friend, George later recalled that he likely wrote the song to narrow-minded thinkers in "the government." "Think for Yourself" seems to be a blunt suggestion for self-correction, yet the lyric finishes on a positive note: "The future still looks good, and you've got time to rectify all the things that you should." ♦

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Let's Go Together

There's a lot to love about traveling with others, even if solo traveling has always been your thing.

by Pam Mandel

Freelance travel writer and photographer

A zealously independent traveler, I found myself sick with envy when my friend Mia told me she'd booked a trip to Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. For years, she'd been using a particular tour operator and taking these organized trips with her best girlfriend. Off they'd go, everything planned and organized, and spend three weeks knocking around Cuba or India or some other country. They always had a great time, these two feisty women. Mia couldn't say enough good things about their adventures.

"I'm aching to go to Vietnam," I told Mia. "For years now."

My city has a large Vietnamese population and, at the time, a new wave of Vietnamese artists were showcased on gallery walls downtown. In college, I lived in a heavily Vietnamese neighborhood. I was crazy about the food, the bright flavors of basil and lime.

"Why don't you come along?" Mia asked.

I hemmed and hawed. I couldn't just ... join a group tour. Not after I'd slogged all the way across India solo, schlepped myself to the bottom of the planet, and boarded a ship to Antarctica alone. How would that affect my travel credibility? Would I no longer be considered tough and adventurous? How could I live with myself?

"No, I couldn't."

"Why not? Bring your husband too. The trip isn't sold out."

The husband and I booted up the

laptop and reviewed the trip details. Mia's trip would go to Angkor Wat, the famous 12th-century temple complex in Cambodia that I'd wanted to see since college. She would overnight on a red-sailed junk on picturesque Halong Bay. She'd visit rooftop bars in Ho Chi Minh City, all in the company of her best travel friend. She'd have some free time here and there to shop and eat and nap and make spa visits, but she'd never have to make a hotel reservation or buy a train ticket.

"What the hell," I said. "Let's do it."

We booked the room and board package, bought plane tickets and travel insurance, and about six weeks later joined this organized tour of Southeast Asia.

The tour group was small and, by some accident of timing, skewed slightly older than usual, meaning about 75% of the group was our age. We immediately became fast friends with two other travelers; our subgroup of six was inseparable by day three. Freed from the tedious business of logistics, we were able to hurl ourselves into enjoying every single moment without one minute of worry about how we'd get to our next location.

It wasn't a perfect trip — no trip is — but when things went wrong, we'd consult our tour guide and she'd fix it for us. Or not, and she'd reassure us that the next night, we'd be somewhere different. We had only the tour operator to blame for that terrible hotel on the Cambodia-Vietnam border,

and because it was the tour operator's fault, we did not argue with each other about it.

On a particularly busy day, I lamented the structured nature of the trip to my husband. I was travel weary; I wanted a day off.

"We could have done this on our own, and it would have been easier going," I said.

"Maybe," he replied. "But we'd have wasted a lot of time just figuring out basic stuff. We don't have to do any of that."

I would have liked another day at the Imperial Palace in Hue, another night in one of the nicest hotels on our trip. But also, it would have been on me to figure out how to get there, where to stay, where to eat ... yeah, he was right.

I'd have missed out on sharing the experiences, too, with Mia and her travel buddy and the friends we made on the tour. I had to admit it. On the whole, this group travel thing was working out just fine.

A few years later I was invited on safari. A group tour in Kenya and Tanzania, 16 people total, game drives, camping. I would see elephants and hippos in the wild and sleep under the bright stars of the Serengeti. The trip would end at a beach resort on the island of Zanzibar where we would visit a sea turtle sanctuary and swim in the bright turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean.

I said yes right away. ♦



“““

I hemmed and hawed. I couldn't just ... join a group tour. Not after I'd slogged all the way across India solo, schlepped to the bottom of the planet, and boarded a ship to Antarctica alone. How could I live with myself?

Breaking the Locks on Your Mental Baggage

We all carry crystalized knowledge that can keep us from being open to new ideas.

by Anna Mathias
Cum laude Fordham grad living in NYC

When Donald Trump was elected the 45th president of the United States in November 2016, I was attending UCLA, rightly known as a highly liberal university. Reaction to the election results was more polarizing than I could have ever imagined.

The night of the election, a large portion of the UCLA student body marched in protest of the results, forcing a shutdown of one of the busiest streets in west Los Angeles. The following morning, in my statistics class, our relatively young professor addressed the elephant in the room. “I’m sure it must have been an emotional night for some of you,” he said, and announced our midterm examination was pushed back to the following week. As one of many who’d forgone studying the night before to watch the breathless news coverage of the election results and the night-long protests, I was relieved.

Though I happened to agree with the opinions of my marching peers, I noticed a disturbing trend that night. Differing political opinions were immediately shunned by the larger community; the idea of listening to different perspectives quickly dissipated. If you weren’t aligned with the protestors’ point of view, your opinions didn’t matter nor hold any merit.

Many class discussions in the weeks following the election turned to heated debates, even shouting matches, replacing the normally meager group participation.

It felt to me that any mental flexibility, at least within the political sphere, had been abandoned, resulting in a highly charged and negative atmosphere — not only across the UCLA campus, but across the United States.

We are often told, encouraged, even cautioned to have an open mind, that doing so opens us up to the possibility of new perspectives and may lead us to change our opinion. As we face another election year, the open-mind admonishment is again peaking. But what exactly is required to have an open mind? And is it truly easier said than done?

According to Dr. Marcia Sirota, the foundation of an open mind is formed on the concept of mental flexibility, which she defines as “the capacity to learn, change our minds, and to see things from a different perspective.” (Sirota, 2015) Having an open mind is just one of the pillars in Sirota’s theory of happiness, and this idea is fascinating to me given our current political climate.

The image that immediately comes to mind is Democrats and Republicans fighting each other. Political conversation has devolved into arguments where opinions are shouted without any intention of listening to a counterargument. Where’s the mental flexibility? Would the folks embroiled in those arguments say they’re happy? They certainly aren’t demonstrating an open mind ... and they definitely don’t look happy.

Drop That Mental Baggage

As Dr. Sirota reminds us, “We need to let go of our unnecessary mental baggage, including hurtful prejudices, false beliefs, incorrect attitudes, inappropriate expectations and unrealistic fears.”

This seems simple enough; yet the burden of our mental baggage — and its effects on our thought processes — can make achieving it seem monumental. Much of our mental baggage is the result of using economized thinking or “crystallized intelligence,” which can have certain advantages; it allows individuals to process information more efficiently and make decisions more easily. With a vast amount of knowledge and experience to pull from, along with some increased difficulty processing new information as our brains mature, older individuals tend to rely on this crystallized intelligence

when faced with new or complex information. (Davis, 2018)

The downside is that it can hinder one’s ability to be open to new ideas. Combine economized thinking with age-related declines in intellectual curiosity and information-processing, and the result is increased mental rigidity. (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2014)

I remember my own grandmother who, as she aged, became less likely to consider other points of view or new concepts. Getting her to see my perspective was often a battle not worth fighting; her black-and-white thought process and refusal to acknowledge other points of view made her opinions steadfast and unbreakable. Yet in hindsight, I see my own rigid thinking at play here too, as I rejected her thoughts out of hand as “old school.”

Research studies on human behavior show us that anyone can harbor innate

biases or prejudices; and they often repeatedly go unnoticed. One prominent example of unspoken, unacknowledged bias is known as The Police Officer’s Dilemma, as studied by the University of Colorado (Correll et al., 2002), in which a video game assesses how players use ethnicity to discern potentially threatening individuals. Essentially, those playing the game must determine when to shoot an individual based on whether they are “threatening” (in this case, armed).

Results in this and similar studies found that participants will shoot an armed threat more quickly and more often when faced with a person of color. The study highlights how anyone can harbor subconscious biases; and even though *these subconscious biases may not necessarily reflect their conscious beliefs, they still affect their decisions.*

“““

The folks embroiled in these debates certainly aren’t demonstrating an open mind ... and they definitely don’t look happy.





Being more informed allows us to avoid decisions based on emotion that results from blindly following implicit biases.

Popping the Filter Bubble

Self-reflection and self-awareness can bring light to these roadblocks that impede our ability to create true happiness for ourselves and more acceptance of those around us. Conscious self-awareness may be the key to thwarting these subconscious biases and prejudices.

Fortunately for all of us, there are simple steps anyone can take to start this process. Journalist Vaibhavi Patria notes some studies indicate just being more informed on biases reduces the extent to which they can affect your life. Being more informed allows us to avoid decisions based on emotion that results from blindly following implicit biases. (Patria, 2018)

Our biases tend to create a filter bubble, or an environment —

often online, but not always — in which we are exposed only to opinions and information that conform to our existing beliefs. This bubble quickly leads to confirmation bias, where we see so many others agreeing with us that we are more assured of being “right.”

Algorithms on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter help create these filter bubbles as they skew content toward a user’s personal preferences. For instance, a politically conservative Facebook user is highly likely to see more conservative content than liberal content on his newsfeed because the algorithm records more engagement and interest in the former than the latter, and then acts to maximize that engagement. The same goes for

the liberal user, who sees more like-minded posts on their own feeds. This feeds our confirmation bias and, ultimately, undermines mental flexibility.

In an unpredictable world, adaptability makes us more able to complete life’s various and constantly evolving tasks; mental rigidity sabotages our innate capacity to adapt in the face of new challenges.

By making a conscious effort to be open to differing perspectives, we can all add to our crystallized intelligence and help decrease the mental rigidity that may come from it. It’s well worth the effort! I’ve learned that staying open to opinions, ideas and thoughts different from my own has contributed to my own happiness and fulfillment. ♦



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Brain Games

John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

Crossword Puzzle

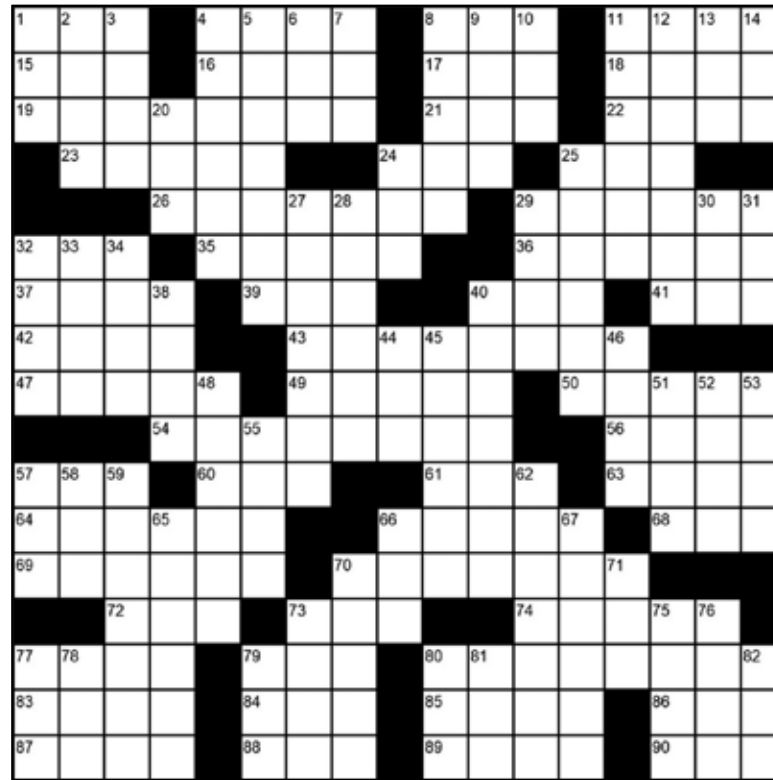
It Simply Can't Be Done!

ACROSS

- 1 Blvd. crosser
- 4 One who tries harder?
- 8 First part of a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt
- 11 Disfigure
- 15 Loser's short note
- 16 Infamous emperor
- 17 Have title
- 18 "What ____?"
- 19 Guided
- 21 Type of number sys.
- 22 Second part of quote
- 23 Third part of quote
- 24 Danger signal
- 25 Turkey or cat
- 26 Friendly
- 29 Fourth part of quote
- 32 Fifth part of quote
- 35 Forecaster's word
- 36 Summer TV fare
- 37 It's as good as a mile
- 39 Boolean function
- 40 File extension
- 41 Lyon or Grafton
- 42 Sail corner
- 43 Public images
- 47 Analyze
- 49 Fish
- 50 Sixth part of quote
- 54 Protected inventor
- 56 Flatten
- 57 Seventh part of quote
- 60 Neither partner
- 61 Tennis stroke
- 63 Alliance founded April 4, 1949
- 64 Shout attributed to Archimedes
- 66 Be-Bop-_-_-
- 68 Dangerous thing to work without
- 69 Inked
- 70 Frozen dessert
- 72 Poetic preposition
- 73 Done deal, with "in the"
- 74 Not discard
- 77 Goose egg
- 79 Edge
- 80 Final part of quote
- 83 Lash
- 84 Be human
- 85 Lost
- 86 A vote
- 87 Unwelcome sight at the register
- 88 Give it a go
- 89 Reasons
- 90 Tolkien creature

DOWN

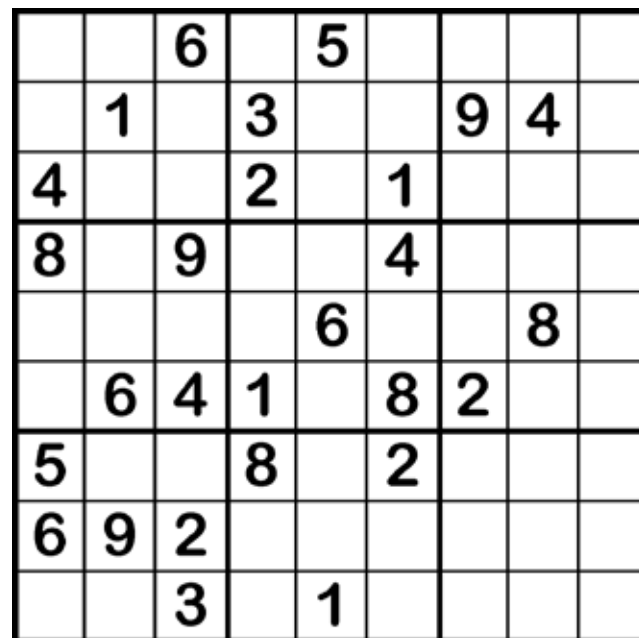
- 1 Give a leg up
- 2 Nothingness
- 3 Continental currency
- 4 Something to drop
- 5 Ex-military
- 6 Wrath
- 7 Type of house or farm
- 8 Alpen call
- 9 Unpaid
- 10 Chapel Hill inst.
- 11 Personal account
- 12 Graduate of 10 Down
- 13 Initials at sea
- 14 Lease
- 20 Last item in a list, perhaps
- 24 Charles or Romano
- 25 Felix followers
- 27 Ophthalmologist's concern
- 28 Student or trainee
- 29 1982 Disney sci-fi film
- 30 Bearded antelope
- 31 Vane direction
- 32 Village People hit
- 33 Fixes a squeak
- 34 Plays for a fool
- 38 Kind of meet
- 40 Distribute shares
- 44 Snitch
- 45 Distends
- 46 Place for splints
- 48 Reb foe
- 51 Persia
- 52 Melody unit
- 53 Muscle problem
- 55 Kind of stool
- 57 58 Down in Peoria
- 58 Overseas agreement
- 59 Coaxed
- 62 Smooth talk
- 65 Make see red
- 66 Prime vac. time for some
- 67 Venues
- 70 Japanese model
- 71 Coffee house sight, maybe
- 73 Irish castle or county
- 75 Eye infection
- 76 "East of ____"
- 77 Line judge org.
- 78 Actress MacGraw
- 79 Done working? (abbr.)
- 80 Crow's cry
- 81 Tray contents
- 82 Cereal bit



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Sudoku

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



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DIFFICULTY ★☆☆☆☆



Healthy U: Good Health 101 and Beyond

The Fascinating World of TeleMed

Is this the new version of a house call?

by LIV FUN staff

About 20 years ago a rather naive young man developed an alarming rash after clearing unwanted plants from around his house foundation. Symptoms appeared on his arms a day or two after the yard work and began to spread dramatically.

Not wanting to take the chance to wait out the infection, or whatever it was, the man set up a doctor's appointment two days after the first symptoms appeared. He had to take time off work and drive over one hour each way to the doctor's office.

After a long wait in the exam room, the doctor eventually opened the door, took one look at the rash, and before even removing his hand from the doorknob said, "That's poison ivy; you have been in some poison ivy."

He prescribed the standard treatment and sent the man on his way with instructions and assurances that all would be well again in one, maybe two weeks.

It occurred to me (yes, I was the man who had never had a poison ivy reaction in his life up to that time) on my drive out of the city that there surely had to be a more efficient way to deal with a problem like this. Couldn't the doctor have viewed a photo of the rash or, even better, conducted a live video session with a patient, drawn the same conclusion, and prescribed the same course of treatment?

It may not have saved the doctor much time, but think of the patient and how the time between the first alarm and the prescription could have been shortened.

Fast forward to this century, and companies like Telamed, Teledoc, Doctors on Demand, Virtual Visits, Virtual Clinics and more offer assistance and diagnosis via computer or smartphone from virtually anywhere on the planet. And the trend is estimated to grow at 18% per year for at least the next few years. (RNCOS, 2020)

Clearly, quick virtual access to a health professional has some real advantages.

Thinking of the simple poison ivy case, the issue could have been quickly diagnosed with a prescription issued on the spot ... along with the doctor's assurance that there is nothing to fear.

In other cases, patients could avoid making travel arrangements to and from the doctor's office and taking time off from work. It would also limit potential patient exposure to other illnesses, something that's certainly on all our minds these days. It's no surprise that, according to eVisit, a recent survey found that 74% of patients prefer online access to healthcare services over in-person visits. (evisit.com, 2018)

One worry eVisit points out is the risk of losing continuity of care in cases where virtual consultations link a patient with random providers. Yet as telemedicine evolves, concerns about provider shuffling might be reduced through the safe and secure sharing of patients' histories.

For most of us, telemedicine won't replace the ongoing relationship with our primary care provider, but it may save a trip to the office for minor complaints. In spite of potential areas for concern around patient privacy and online security, telemedicine can be a useful and convenient option.

By the way, if you are planning any weeding or brush clearing in the garden this summer, be sure to wear gloves and long sleeves. Oh, and check with your doctor's office to see if they are equipped to handle a virtual appointment. Just in case. ♦

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MIND THE GAP

The mindfulness industry can be a pricey place ... but it doesn't have to be.

by LIVFUN staff

“““

The mindfulness movement has launched a billion-dollar industry as people search for answers in an overstressed, overanxious world.

© RealPeopleGroup

Practicing mindfulness and meditation is a beautiful way to feel more present in your life and cultivate joy and gratitude. It can help you resolve internal conflicts and become more accepting of your circumstances and environment.

While some might think the young, trendy yoga warriors have a corner on the mindfulness market, the opposite may be true.

Seniors seem to be at an advantage when it comes to being mindful, according to Jenn Knudsen, a graduate of UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism.

"In our minds, old age is often associated with a variety of ills, from aches and pains to forgetting where you put the keys. But research consistently finds that older adults tend

to experience more positive emotion than their younger counterparts," she notes. (Knudsen, 2018)

Mindfulness, she explains, brings a focus on the here and now, which increases positive emotions while reducing anxiety about the future and regrets about the past. This naturally makes us happier and more carefree.

No wonder the idea of mindfulness has launched a billion-dollar (and growing) industry, as people search for answers in an overstressed, overanxious world. To help make mindfulness easier to attain, there has recently been an explosion of apps, books, online and in-person courses — and even high-tech tools, such as the Muse headband, that translates your mental activity into the sounds of different types of

weather. Mind racing? You'll hear stormy weather. Mind calm? How about a gentle rain?

The theory behind the Muse is it provides biofeedback to help you refocus your thoughts and calm your mind. Yet with a sticker price of around \$350 (not including case and programming bundles) you might be hearing sounds of water rushing down the drain.

From yoga mats to fancy leggings to hundred-dollar sleep apps and pricey mindfulness retreats, it can seem like the business of mindfulness is only for the well-to-do.

The reality? Mindfulness through meditation, silence, yoga or other activities can be achieved with little or no expense.

To help you start or grow a mindfulness practice, we've put together a list of resources available at minimal or no expense.

1. Check the library: Many local and university libraries offer free classes and other resources on meditation, yoga and other mindful activities. Ask about books, CDs or DVDs on meditation on yoga, tai chi and other techniques.

2. Participate in an online class: Many universities offer free online classes and webinars that you can access from your computer or tablet. For example, the UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center offers a number of free guided meditations, as well as fee-based online courses and free podcasts. Go to www.uclahealth.org/marc to access these resources.

3. Try guided mediation: The Chopra Center offers their 21-day meditation challenge several times a year. It's a free program that runs for three weeks, and each day you'll tune in to a short talk then a guided meditation. You can easily listen in on your tablet or download the

app on your phone. Visit www.choprameditation.com to sign up for free.

4. Go outside: When the weather allows, sit outside in a garden, under a tree, by a stream, or near the shore. Nature is the best mindfulness teacher of all ... and it's there for the taking every day.

Happiness and health go hand in hand, and cultivating an attitude of mindfulness protects us as we age, as Knudsen explains.

She believes this is because older adults tend to recognize the precious nature of our lives here on Earth and appreciate the here and now for what it is.

Cultivating an attitude of mindfulness, no matter our age or circumstance, means more happy moments and greater joy. We can all do with some of that. ♦

Source: Knudsen, Jenn. (2018). "How Mindfulness Protects You as You Get Older." *Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley*. Retrieved on March 10, 2020, from www.greatergood.berkeley.edu.

There's a range of benefits from spending time playing the piano.



Playing the Fountain of Youth

by Scott "The Piano Guy"
Houston — 6X Emmy
winner and adult piano teacher



For as long as people have told stories, there have been tales of a fountain of youth — a spring that supposedly restores the youth and health of anyone who drinks or bathes in its waters. Legends of such a fountain have been recounted across the world for thousands of years, appearing in writings by Herodotus, in the *Alexander Romance*, and the stories of Prester John, just to name a few.

Similar tales were also prominent among the indigenous people of the Caribbean, who spoke of the restorative powers of the water in the mythical land of Bimini. And, of course, Ponce De Leon, the first governor of Puerto Rico, was even said to have discovered the fountain of youth somewhere in Florida.

Fantastic storytelling aside, thousands of adults and seniors have discovered their personal "fountain of youth" by taking a fun dip into learning how to play their favorite tunes on a piano. It's been one of the greatest passions in my life to teach adults the incredible joy of becoming a music *maker* as opposed to simply a music *listener*. That distinction may seem subtle, but I've learned it has a transformative effect on those who give it a try. I've seen people truly change their lives for the better, become more active and engaged, and frankly just feel a whole lot better about themselves by simply spending some free time learning to play the keyboard.

Sharon Hubbard Grassele



Like so many people, 65-year-old Sharon Hubbard Grassele always wanted to learn to play the piano. She took piano lessons as a child but wasn't able to stick with it. Later, adult life got in the way, and she wasn't able to find the time to fulfill her dream.

“Well, I had some piano lessons in my life, but I wasn't good,” Sharon confides. “Then I happened to see a short presentation from Scott online. I decided to give it a try. I was a little leery at first, but I gave it my best.”

Her best was all it took, and Sharon has been feeling the positive effects ever since.

Contrary to what many people assume as they ponder learning to play, making music isn't for the special chosen few. It doesn't take some special gift or talent. Rather, it's a part of our human nature that can and should be enjoyed by everyone — everywhere.

Michael O'Halloran



“I'm John bloody Lennon!”

Australian piano student Michael O'Halloran always wanted to learn how to play the piano.

“About five years ago, I was at Lemon Jam, a monthly Sunday event in our little suburb of Lemon Tree Passage, where musicians can hop onto the little concrete stage and belt out some tunes,” Michael recalls. “I've always been in awe of musicians; I called them ‘magicians.’ They were having such fun. I always wondered, ‘What is their secret?’

“I said to my wife Joelle, ‘If those so-and-sos can do it, then so can I.’

“Then I connect with this ‘piano guy’ who said he could teach me to play ‘Imagine’ by John Lennon,” Michael continues. “Scott showed me a C chord. Then he said play the 3rd and 5th notes together, and play the middle C on its own. I sounded like John bloody Lennon! I was so excited.”

Michael confides that his favorite time at the piano is early morning and late at night, and it's never “work” to practice.

“In the last 5 years,” Michael concludes, “I have never once sat and ‘practiced’ piano. I play piano. Good or bad ... I don't care; I'm playing my piano for me. And I'm getting better and better. Sometimes I feel that a piece isn't working for me, and sometimes I rock the heck out of it! I listen to the radio in a different way now too. I don't hear the words, I listen to the chord progressions. So much fun!”



“““

The true fountain of youth is manifested through stimulating activity, which keeps our minds and bodies young.

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Beyond the Music ... the Benefits of Playing

Fun — that’s what I feel playing the piano should be about. Yet without question, there’s more to it than that. Playing piano has some powerful mental and physical benefits too.

1. Music is a great stress reliever.

The fact that passively listening to music from a piano improves our mood is known and accepted by most people, while actively playing piano also acts as a big-time stress buster. Even just a few minutes a day playing the piano can lower your blood pressure, reduce stress, and make you feel much more positive. (Seinfeld et al., 2013)

2. Playing music can improve coordination.

Piano often requires using both your hands doing different things at the same time and forces you to engage parts of your brain that might otherwise not get much stimulation. This deep connection between your brain and your hands further enhances coordination and concentration. Students often report feeling cognitively sharper, even when not playing. (Collins, 2020)

3. Learning to play may ward off age-related cognitive decline.

One study found that learning to play an instrument alters the brain waves in a way that improves a person’s listening and hearing skills. (Baycrest Health Sciences, 2017) Dr. Bernhard Ross explains, “The act of playing music requires many brain systems to work together, such as the hearing, motor and perception systems. This change in brain activity demonstrates the brain’s ability to rewire itself and compensate for injuries or diseases that may hamper a person’s capacity to perform tasks.”

4. Piano playing can help hand mobility.

The simple and somewhat obvious act of using your hands and, even more so, individual fingers to move actively and independently makes your fingers, hands and arms stronger and more flexible. (Watson, 2006) I’ve found it can also help with arthritis in my students who are encouraged to “keep things moving” by their physical therapists.

5. Playing the piano may stimulate beneficial hormones.

The levels of human growth hormone have been found to be increased in adults who play the piano. (Wristen, 2007) These growth hormones basically slow the adverse effects of aging, keeping one energetic and helping to prevent issues like body aches and pains from developing as one ages.

This brings us back to our real-life fountain of youth, which is not some kind of magical water despite all the storytelling and tall tales. The true fountain of youth is manifested through stimulating activity, which keeps our minds and bodies young.

Could you use a dip in the fountain of youth right about now? If so, I’ve found that there is no better activity for adults and seniors than learning to play favorite tunes on the piano or keyboard. Come on in, the water’s warm, and it’s your turn!

For more information or to start learning, visit Scott’s website at pianoinaflash.com/livfun. ♦

LIV FUN Readers

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Advice for the Journey: Personal Advice and Expert Opinions



Build Me a Bubble

Simple strategies to help you keep a positive outlook

by **Julia Hogan, LCPC**

Chicago-based counselor and author of *It's OK to Start With You*

Question: I consider myself a pretty optimistic person. Recently, though, I feel discouraged by all of the negativity in the world. I avoid talking about politics at all costs simply because people get so angry over different views.

I dread turning on the news; it's full of war, diseases, shootings, and so many other devastating things. My friends are constantly complaining about the weather, their children and grandchildren, even the traffic.

You name it, and they've probably complained about it at some point. All of that negative energy is starting to drag me down. How do you protect yourself from all of the negativity in the world?

Answer: It's so easy to feel overwhelmed by all of the negativity out there, especially because we live in a world where information is so easily accessible. It can feel like we are constantly bombarded by all of the bad things happening in the world ... and that does become extremely stressful.

The good news? It doesn't have to be that way. All of that negativity affects you *only if you allow it to*.

One strategy to help you cope is practicing mindfulness. Simply observe the situation before you react, paying attention to your thoughts and emotions in a non-judgmental way. This can be an extremely effective strategy when you find yourself in those situations where all of the positive energy is being sucked out of the room.

While it may be tempting to fight back against the complainers in your life or to shut off the TV in a huff and swear to never turn it on again (trust me, I've been there), these responses only result in you getting sucked into the negativity cycle.

Rather than fight the negativity, practice acceptance through mindfulness. Recognize the negative events or feeling and the resistance rising up in you, acknowledge them, and then consciously let them go. Visualize placing them in a river and watching them float away if it helps. When you practice accepting the things that are

stressful in your life, it is much easier to move past them and make room for the positive.

Practicing gratitude is another easy and effective way to make room for more good energy in your life. Science shows us the individuals who kept a gratitude journal reported feeling happier and having an overall positive mood. (Allen, 2018) Practicing gratitude has also been linked to reducing inflammation, improved sleep, less depression and increased resilience.

Try this simple exercise to make more room in your life for positive thoughts: Write down three things you are grateful for each day. That's it. Use sticky notes, a paper napkin, or a journal you keep by your favorite chair. When we note what we are grateful for, we train our brains to notice the positive things in our life and the positive qualities in others (even while they are complaining!).

Over time, mindfulness, acceptance and gratitude will help build up that protective buffer between you and the negativity in the world so it doesn't overwhelm you and stress you out. ♦

Source:

Allen, Summer, Ph.D. (2018) "The Science of Gratitude." *Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkley*. Retrieved on March 2, 2020, from GGSC.berkeley.edu.

Hands on the Wheel

Some practical ways to step up and take more control of your medical future.

by Nancy Gertz

Health and well-being coach in Boston

A friend tells me his doctor will only let him bring two medical complaints to an appointment, because the appointment is limited to 20 minutes.

A client with a complicated set of problems follows my advice and makes a list of questions for her doctor, though she worries that she is demanding too much, imposing herself on him, when he's such a busy guy.

Another client, angry that her doctors didn't take her palliative-care-only wishes to heart, is upset with herself for agreeing to a treatment that backfired on her. She felt rushed to make decisions with not enough information, and she believes the advice she received was more in the interest of the institution than in hers.

Physicians are under mounting pressure these days, both financially and professionally. Appointments are typically much shorter than they used to be, and it's frustrating for both the patient *and* the doctor to feel so rushed. Research on physician burnout shows that less time with patients is at least as stressful for doctors as it is for us as patients. (Hayhurst, 2019)

Most of these hard-working folks would prefer to have more time to

connect with patients, ask questions, hear their stories, and build the kind of trust many of us used to share with our providers in years past. They are in the squeeze just as much as we are.

What can you as a patient do to optimize the situation to get good care and feel well-supported medically?

First, step firmly into your role as a partner in your care.

The old model of having the doctor holding the wheel and driving your care is a thing of the past. Today, you and your providers are working side by side. They are the respected experts in their field, and you are the empowered expert about you — your needs, values, concerns, style of learning, decision-making and more.

Before your visit, take the time to figure out what you need and care about most and how you need the doctor to talk to you in ways you can understand. And if appropriate, it's important that you've explored and can communicate your choices regarding the what-ifs — for advanced illness, surgical complications, or end-of-life planning and care.

With this new feeling of ownership, try the strategies below for generating more productive and positive interactions with providers.

Your Life Well Lived: Wellness Advice for Mind, Body and Spirit



“““

Today, you and your providers are working side by side.

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Hands on the Wheel: Continued on page 43



Live Big. Live Bold.

Your Life, Your Rules

Finding Self-Awareness on the Road to Happiness

**The journey toward our best life
requires us to keep an open mind.**

by **Alissa Sauer**

Blogger and Leisure Care writer

It is said that happiness is a journey, not a destination. It's a by-product of a life well lived, not the end goal. Dr. Marcia Sirota, M.D., believes there are four key principles that together significantly increase happiness for ourselves and those around us. She calls them the four pillars of happiness. The first pillar is having an open heart, the second is having an open mind, the third is having open eyes, and the fourth is having open arms.

If happiness really is a journey, we can expect that on our journey we will evolve and become better, truer versions of ourselves as we walk through the four pillars. It all starts with having an open heart, loving and accepting ourselves so that we can more completely love and accept those around us. Once we love ourselves and love others, we must work toward accepting ourselves and accepting others, embracing our strengths while recognizing our weaknesses.

Self-acceptance, often confused with self-esteem, is a uniquely different concept, separate

from self-esteem. Self-acceptance, a term first coined in 1885, is simply the act or state of accepting oneself, understanding and recognizing one's own abilities and limitations. Once we accept a more accurate, yet still subjective, level of awareness, we can accept others, realizing no person is perfect.

"Happiness and self-acceptance go hand in hand. In fact, your level of self-acceptance determines your level of happiness. The more self-acceptance you have, the more happiness you'll allow yourself to accept, receive and enjoy. In other words, you enjoy as much happiness as you believe you're worthy." — Robert Holden, author of "Happiness Now!"

We are all in progress on a journey to a life well lived. Letting go of perfection in ourselves and others allows us to live more freely in the present, believing we are worthy of happiness and living unhindered from unattainable ideals.

“““

Those who cannot change their minds
cannot change anything.

— George Bernard Shaw

3 Steps

to Living With an Open Mind

1. Journal your negative thoughts, and then let them go.

Being honest with yourself can be incredibly hard. Find somewhere quiet, and make a list of your strengths and weaknesses. It may be easier to start with your strengths, helping to give you confidence before taking a hard look at your weaknesses. As you write your weaknesses and your negative thoughts, pause. Coming from a place of self-forgiveness and grace, let those thoughts go.

Journaling can be a helpful tool here, as writing reinforces a meaning. For example, “I will forgive myself for all things related to (fill in an incident). I will not continue to carry guilt and shame associated with this, and I will forgive all others involved.”

Go through each of your negative thoughts, take them captive, and then release them.

2. Acknowledge your feelings.

You do not need anyone’s permission to feel a certain way. You do not have to apologize for your emotions. Accept your feelings as they are, without suppressing them or numbing them. It is OK to be fully present in your emotions, in the highs and in the lows.

This will ultimately lead to vulnerability in your relationships, and you will gradually become more comfortable with feelings of failure, seeing them as something that *is* and not something shameful or anything to be embarrassed of. Take a risk, acknowledge your feelings, and share your story. You may find true friendship with others starts with being honest with yourself.

3. Accept your weaknesses and celebrate your strengths.

President Theodore Roosevelt captured the essence of self-acceptance when he said, “Comparison is the thief of all joy.”

When you acknowledge your feelings, it may be tempting to compare your shortcomings to others. The truth is that they have their own shortcomings. Stop evaluating yourself on the opinion of others. The constant critical voice in your head will eventually stop as you learn to accept yourself as you are and stop comparing yourself to others.

You will see that even though you have imperfections, you are worthy of happiness. Finding freedom in acceptance on your journey will make you a happier, more loving person who is more accepting of others.

Come as You Are at Leisure Care

Leisure Care communities are places where seniors come to thrive, finding happiness and self-acceptance. We start by hiring people who are accepting of themselves, honest with their shortcomings, and ready and willing to work in a team environment. Our employees are not only accepting of themselves, but accepting of our residents, encouraging them to reach a place of self-acceptance.

The bottom line is that we know who we are. We celebrate strengths, recognize our weaknesses, and crush our goals in a way that is truly empowering. At Leisure Care, residents can start a new chapter finding new interests and making new friends. And it all starts in a loving and accepting environment.

Our residents have chosen a journey of happiness. They care about their futures, their health, and their own well-being and have made that choice evident by moving into a Leisure Care community.

Leisure Care communities offer a wide range of care services, including independent living, assisted living, and memory care. Residents and their families have peace of mind knowing needs are being met in a way that encourages self-acceptance. When we say, “Come as you are,” we mean it.

No matter if the care you need is in the form of assistance with activities of daily living, motivation to attend that group fitness class, help to cultivate meaningful connections, or planning that overdue family reunion, we are here to help. Leisure Care communities encourage residents to seize the day, to see the world, launching new adventures from a safe place.

Self-acceptance is an important pillar on the journey to happiness and will ultimately lead to the freedom to accept others as they are. Come as you are. Come home to Leisure Care. ♦

Learn more:

Read more about Dr. Sirota’s four pillars of happiness at www.marciasirotamd.com.

Find Robert Holden’s book *Happiness Now! Timeless Wisdom for Feeling Good Fast* on Amazon: www.amazon.com/dp/B004HD4WRI.

Worst in Show

A furry reminder of the golden rule of being in the moment

by Jeff Wozer

Humorist and stand-up comedian

I'm currently in day two of a nine-day dog-sitting stint at my brother's house, cursing myself for agreeing to this.

Status as man's best friend has already downgraded to man's most annoying housemate. Only in this case it's housemates. My brother and his wife own four dogs, three of which are golden retrievers, all under the age of three, all with the behavioral charms of spring break drunks in hour two off a whiskey bender.

The fourth dog, Muffin, is, well, I don't know what it is other than small. If I had to guess I would say it's part beagle, part John Bolton's mustache. Unlike the goldens, Muffin has zero interest in being my best friend, casual friend, or distant acquaintance. It tolerates me. Not out of choice, but out of realization I'm currently the only occupant who can solve the mystery of door knobs. Otherwise, it maintains an off-putting, don't-call-me-I'll-call-you attitude, which, I suspect, it learned from spending too much time with the cats.

And yes, I'm also watching cats. Three, I was told. But as of yet I've only seen one — some lady's cat they are in month four of watching "for a day or two." I was forewarned it was morbidly obese. But even with a heads up I still gasped when I first spied it in the upstairs hallway.

Obese was an understatement. It looked as if it had eaten nine lives

worth of Meow Mix in the last hour. I didn't dare with the usual bend-down-and-scratch-the-cat-behind-the-ears introductions. I was too rattled by the realization I was sharing space with something that resembled a pouf ottoman with ears.

It was while this Steven-King moment was taking place I remembered I had let Muffin outside. I was told I never had to worry about it leaving the yard. Muffin, like all small dogs, is too self-exalting for the outdoor world. It does its thing and then immediately barks to return inside to the comforts of sofas and carpeting. But today it did its thing and disappeared.

"Muffin!" I shouted.

When it didn't appear out of the shrubbery, I shouted again, listening for the sound of a rattling collar or a distant bark. Nothing. Only taunting silence.

How long had it been outside? I wondered. Five minutes? Ten? Fifteen? I wasn't sure. But I was sure it couldn't have wandered far. Fleet of paw is not part of Muffin's repertoire. Regardless, I needed to act fast.

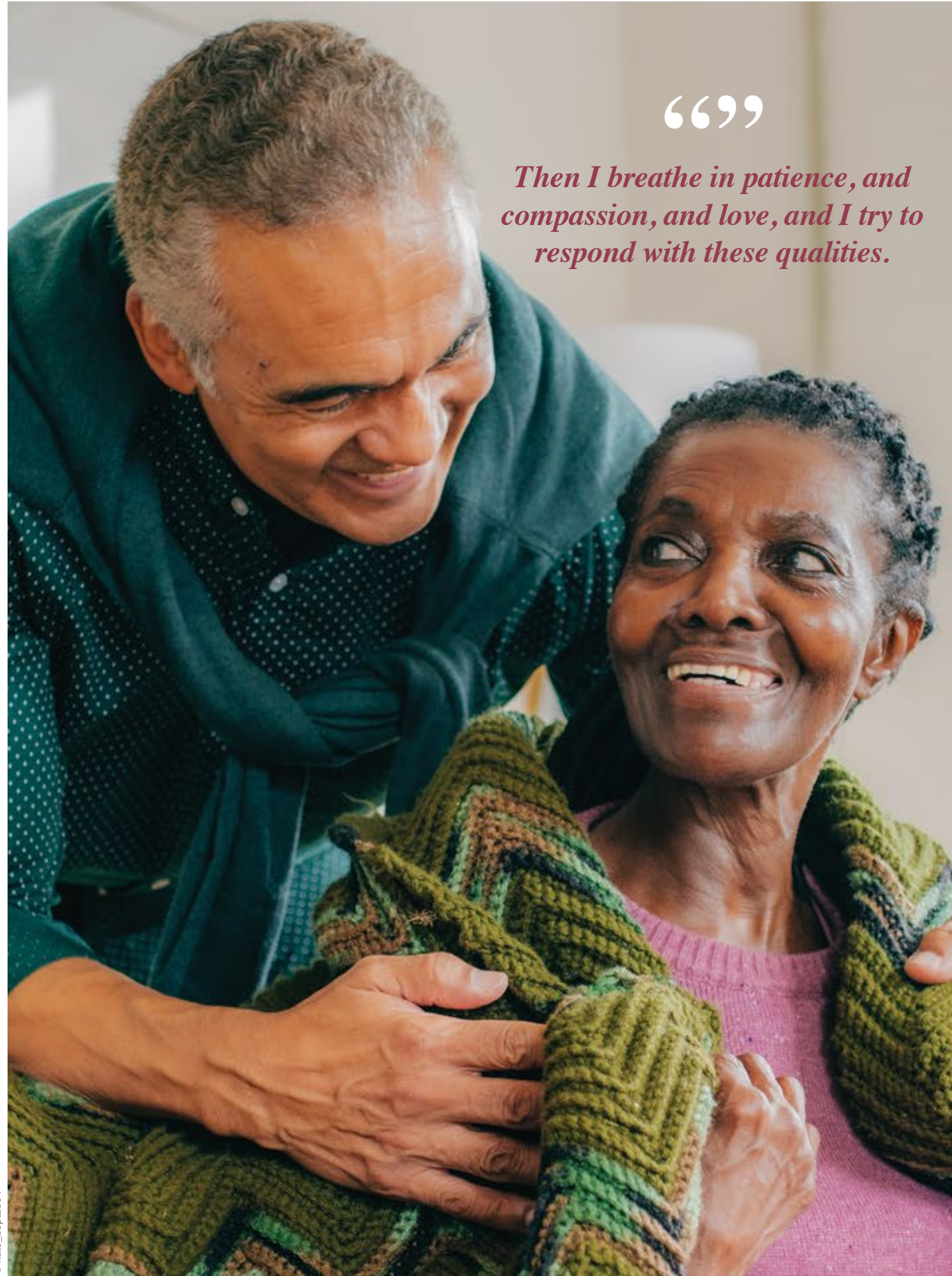
Searching for a dog is stressful. Searching for a dog while walking with three golden retrievers on three separate leashes with three separate agendas is idiocy. I looked like a puppeteer in a windstorm. After every few steps I had to stop to untangle their leashes. It was as if they were doing

Worst in Show: *Continued on page 43*



“““

Instead of dogs, I felt as if I were walking with low-pressure fronts.



“““

Then I breathe in patience, and compassion, and love, and I try to respond with these qualities.

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Love Even More

How we respond ... to anything ... is a choice.
And that choice matters.

by Rabbi Elana Zaiman

Seattle-based Rabbi, chaplain and author

Anger seems to be a go-to response in our world today, flipping someone off for driving too slowly or for moving into our lane without signaling, or snapping back when someone posts disparaging comments about others on social media. But anger is not our only option. We have the opportunity to choose how we respond.

Legend has it that when Benjamin West was asked how he became a painter, he told this story: One day, while his mother was out, he painted a picture of his sister and he made a mess. When his mother returned, she picked up the picture he had painted and said, “What a beautiful picture of your sister.” Then she kissed him.

“With that kiss,” he said, “I became a painter.”

I’m in awe of West’s mother, who, instead of getting angry at her son for making a mess, chose to compliment him on his picture. Was compassion her natural response, or had she worked over the years to cultivate it?

In spring 2015, when our son was 15, we took a family vacation to Berlin. One of our favorite

spots was *Kaufhaus des Westens* (abbreviated as KaDaWe), Berlin’s largest and most famous department store.

One Friday afternoon as the three of us walked the sixth floor, home to kiosk after kiosk of specialty foods (sausages, cheeses, jellies, breads, baked goods, spirits, fruits, vegetables, candies, coffee and tea), we heard the sound of glass shattering. Turning toward the sound, we saw two broken quarter-bottles of champagne on the ground near our feet. It took only a moment for us to realize that the bulky bag our son was carrying was the culprit. We were mortified. We stood there staring at our mess and then looked up at the elegantly dressed man and woman in charge.

“We’re so sorry,” we said. “Can we reimburse you for the bottles we broke?”

The woman scowled.

The man smiled.

“Please do not worry,” he said. “Come up and join us for a glass of champagne. You look like you could use it.”

Love Even More: Continued on page 42

So we stepped up into the kiosk, and this man proceeded to pour my husband and me a glass of champagne. As we drank, we talked about the flavors in the champagne, where we were from, how much we were enjoying our vacation. When we finished our glasses, this man poured each of us a glass of a different champagne that he wanted us to try. His disarming approach facilitated a favorable result: We purchased two expensive bottles of champagne.

Walking back to our hotel, we talked about this man and how he had responded. Instead of scowling at us like the woman, instead of getting angry, yelling, or making us feel even more horrible than we already felt, he chose to respond with compassion. His response mattered.

How We Respond Matters.

While anger may come easier to us than compassion, while impatience may come easier to us than patience, while berating others may come easier to us than praising others, how we respond is not preordained. How we respond is a choice, and that choice is crucial to who we are, how we show up in the world, and how we engage with the people who matter to us most.

I know a woman whose short-term memory is not as strong as it used to be. She will say things like, “My mind’s not working.” She will often repeat a story she has told you, and in her effort to understand an idea she can’t quite grasp, she will ask you to repeat that idea a few times so she can try to make sense of it.

This woman is my mother. When I feel myself getting frustrated or impatient, I take a deep breath in and a deep breath out. Then I breathe in patience, and compassion, and love, and I try to respond with these qualities. Because I don’t want my mother to feel more diminished than she already feels. Because I love her. Because I respect her. Because she is still my mother, and because she is still stunningly emotionally present to me, to my siblings, and to our children. Because one of these days, if I live long enough, I will be in this place, hoping for compassion, kindness and love from the people who matter most to me.

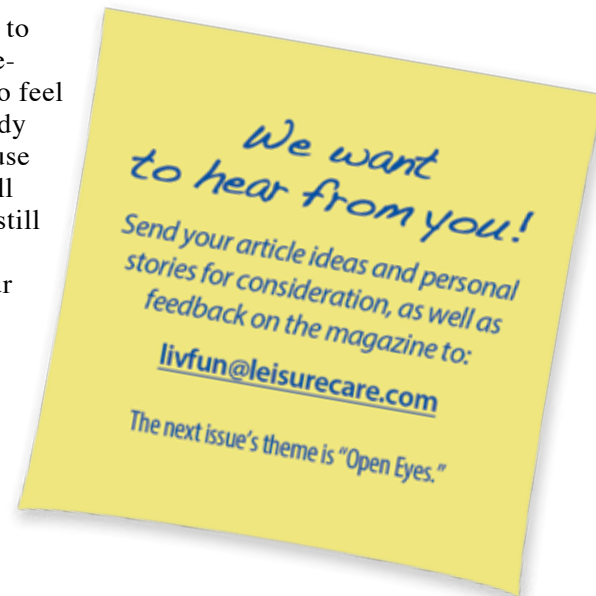
More than 300 years ago, a man came to the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism, to complain about

his son who had turned away from religion. This bothered the man terribly. So he asked the Baal Shem Tov what to do.

“Do you love your son?” the Baal Shem Tov asked.

“Of course, I do,” said the man.

“Then love him even more.” Maybe love for one another is the crux of it all. And if love is not enough, then we must love each other even more. ♦



1. What are your top three priorities for this visit?

Rank them in order, write them down, and bring them with you to the appointment. When your doctor asks, “Why are you here today?” state clearly, “I want to be sure we cover these things.”

This way you both know the game plan and can circle back at the end of the appointment to sum things up and make a plan for anything on your list that didn’t get addressed. If you don’t feel clear enough to list your goals or priorities, it may help to talk them out with a caregiver, family member or friend.

2. What do you need to learn from this appointment?

We all know it can be more difficult to think clearly when we are sitting in an exam room; it’s much easier when we are planning for the appointment at home. Take time ahead of your visit to write out a list of questions you want answers to. This is especially important if you have a new diagnosis and/or a set of decisions to make. Bring a copy for yourself and your doctor, and an extra copy if you (wisely) brought someone along with you.

Odds are you won’t go through the list in the order you wrote your questions, so before the appointment is over, take the time to go down the list and see if there is anything left that you need to bring up. This might require some assertiveness that feels a little pushy. It’s perfectly appropriate for you to say, “Thank you, Doctor. Let me just look at my list one more time to be sure I have all the information I need.”

3. Who can you bring with you?

How can you remember the important details?

Note-taking during an appointment is generally hard for a patient to manage. It can make a world of difference to have someone else listening to the answers with you. If that’s not possible, a smartphone can do the trick for recording a conversation. Ask someone to help you set up your phone to record a voice memo; all you’ll have to do is press the “Record” button (after getting the provider’s nod for permission to record, of course).

If these strategies aren’t available, stop every now and then to take notes

during the conversation. Again, don’t be shy. Simply say, “I want to write something down. Please wait a moment.” If you want something repeated for your notes, ask the provider to do so. If you need something spelled out, like the name of a medication or recommended procedure, ask to have it spelled aloud. Remember, this is you, with your hands on the wheel, taking good care of yourself. You have every right to ask these questions.

4. What’s next?

Before you leave the appointment, you and your provider should discuss next steps. If there is anything you don’t understand or if you don’t feel completely ready to agree to the recommendations, be sure to speak up.

“I’d like to give this more thought” is a perfectly fair statement if that’s how you feel. A patient is not obliged to proceed in any direction that doesn’t feel right at the moment. When there is urgency, you can be sure the doctor will say so.

Good healthcare is a true partnership ... and it’s up to you to do your part. ♦

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 20

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

A	V	E		A	V	I	S		Y	O	U		M	A	U	L
I	O	U		N	E	R	O		O	W	N		E	L	S	E
D	I	R	E	C	T	E	D		D	E	C		M	U	S	T
	D	O	T	H	E			R	E	D		T	O	M		
			C	O	R	D	I	A	L		T	H	I	N	G	S
Y	O		R	A	I	N	Y		R	E	R		R	U	N	S
M	I	S		N	O	T			D	O	C		S	U	E	
C	L	E	W		P	E	R	S	O	N	A	S				
A	S	S	A	Y		T	R	A	W	L		T	H	I	N	K
			P	A	T	E	N	T	E	E			I	R	O	N
Y	O		N	O	R			L	O	B		N	A	T	O	
E	U	R	E	K	A			A	L	U	L	A		N	E	T
S	I	G	N	E	D			C	U	S	T	A	R	D		
		E	R	E		B	A	G		R	E	U	S	E		
N	A	D	A		R	I	M		C	A	N	N	O	T	D	O
F	L	O	G		E	R	R		A	S	E	A		Y	E	A
L	I	N	E		T	R	Y		W	H	Y	S		E	N	T

Answers to Sudoku

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

it on purpose, auditioning for a role, big on slapstick, as a vaudevillian bloodhound team.

“No!” I’d yell at the goldens. And then quickly follow with, “Muffin!” Any neighbor hearing this probably became alarmed, thinking there was some odd breakfast dissident marching down the street protesting small cup-shaped cakes shouting, “No Muffin! No Muffin! No Muffin!”

With no sight of Muffin among the houses, I headed to an adjacent park, Spaulding Lake, from which the neighborhood is built around and named after, thinking if I were a dog this is where I’d go (although in Muffin’s case, if the option existed it probably would have beelined to a spa for a facial).

With room to run, I let the goldens off their leashes. All three, without hesitating, plunged into the lake. Goldens, I’m convinced, did not descend from wolves, but rather from yard sprinklers. Every other minute all three felt the need to sprint up to me and shake as if to say, “Here, we brought you some.” Instead of dogs, I felt as if I were walking with low-pressure fronts.

And Harper, or who I call Hyper Harper, even felt compelled to repeatedly jump on me, behaving as if it had an eye

for fashion and decided my shorts and T-shirt would turn some heads with the daring addition of muddy paw-print motifs.

Ease up, I tried reminding myself. There is nothing intentional about their actions. Only pure, organic joy. Three running, splashing, leaping exemplars to the awe of living in the now. Yet instead of sharing the moment, I was too busy cursing myself, again, for agreeing to watching these peace-of-mind saboteurs.

Exasperated, I decided to return to the house, drop off the goldens, and resume searching for Muffin on my own. But there, at the door, was Muffin, standing with aloof indifference. There was no wagging of its tail. No barking of joy. No whimpering of relief. Instead it stared at me like some country-club diva angrily waiting for her hired help to hold the door for her.

Meanwhile, behind me, in the yard, the three goldens, with dirt and grass clippings clinging to their saturated furs, were wrestling in the grass over the chewing rights to a stick.

“Look at them,” I lectured. “You need to enjoy the moment more.” And as I said this, I wasn’t sure if I was addressing Muffin or myself. ♦

Leisure Care Retirement Communities



Live Big. Live Bold.

ARIZONA

Broadway Proper
Fairwinds - Desert Point

CALIFORNIA

Bella Villaggio
Fairwinds - Ivy Ranch
Fairwinds - West Hills
Fairwinds - Woodward Park
Heritage Estates
Springfield Place
The Woodlake

COLORADO

Mackenzie Place - Colorado Springs
Mackenzie Place - Fort Collins
San Marino
The Carillon at Belleview Station
The Carillon at Boulder Creek

CONNECTICUT

The Landing of North Haven
The Linden at Woodbridge

FLORIDA

The Landing of Lake Worth
The Willows

IDAHO

Fairwinds - Sand Creek

MASSACHUSETTS

The Cottages at Dartmouth Village
The Linden at Danvers
The Linden at Dedham

MARYLAND

The Landing of Silver Spring

MISSOURI

Fairwinds - River's Edge
The Landing of O'Fallon

NORTH CAROLINA

Treeo of Raleigh

NEW MEXICO

Fairwinds - Rio Rancho

NEW YORK

The Village at Mill Landing
The Village at Unity
The Village Townhomes

OKLAHOMA

The Linden at Stonehaven Square

OREGON

Canfield Place
Markham House
Russellville Park
The Ackerly at Sherwood
The Ackerly at Timberland

PENNSYLVANIA

The Landing of Collegeville
The Landing of Southampton
The Landing of Towamencin

UTAH

Treeo - Orem
Treeo - South Ogden

WASHINGTON

Fairwinds - Brighton Court
Fairwinds - Brittany Park
Fairwinds - Redmond
Fairwinds - Spokane
Hawthorne Court
Murano
Van Mall
Washington Oakes
Woodland Terrace

www.leisurecare.com