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Sticking With Homeschool

Advice for families who plan to continue learning at home

BARBARA DANZA

For some parents the pandemic lockdown has come with an unexpected side effect: an awakened look at their children's education.

Some parents have come to realize that their kids are mostly bogged down with busywork instead of meaningful learning. Others have experienced the unfortunate surprise of seeing what their children are being taught (and what they're not). Some have felt relief from witnessing their children as they experience a taste of freedom from the confines of school or seeing how they are thriving in their newly found free time. Maybe beauty and peace have returned to their homes. Maybe their children's true nature has gradually reemerged as the space between them and the social environment of school widens.

For others, the awakening has come in the form of questions such as: Is school benefiting my child? Is the environment at school a good one? Are the values being extolled at school in line with those of our family? Is the school's education model the best option available to my child?

As they mull over these ideas, many parents begin to wonder if they could make homeschool a permanent part of their family's life. Some might even be wondering how they were ever convinced otherwise.

If you've come to find yourself pondering these kinds of ideas and are thinking of giving the "crazy" idea of homeschooling a go, I have a few tips to help you get started.

De-Schooling Is Key

Few of us realize how deeply ingrained our notions about school are. We've all been operating on assumptions such as the following: Home is where you live and school is where you learn. Five days a week for six hours a day is the ideal school schedule. You need a degree in education to be able to teach. Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach. Kids need to be pushed, even forced, to learn. The social environment at school is a good one. The teaching strategies and methodologies used in school are tried and true. Kids learn what they need to learn in school.

I imagine comedian Jeff Foxworthy saying, "If you are questioning the assumptions above, you may be a homeschooler."

It takes some time to first, recognize and second, put down the notions that have been deeply ingrained in us and our children for so long. "De-schooling" is a term homeschoolers use to describe the time you allow yourself to do just that. As summer approaches, give yourself and your children time to play, explore, read, make, do, and separate yourselves from the constructs and trappings of school.

Ground Your Homeschool

Before you dive into the nitty-gritty of teach-



As summer approaches, give yourself and your children time to play, explore, read, make, do, and separate yourselves from the constructs and trappings of school.

ing your kids math, literature, science, and history, recognize that you can ground your homeschool in the values that are most significant to your family. The moral character and spiritual values that you deem fundamental should serve as the foundation of your homeschool.

When you make a priority of grounding your children's education in what's truly most important you'll find that learning in every subject takes on a much greater significance in their lives.

Get Inspired

Homeschool is not about bringing what is done at school home. It's something else entirely and it usually develops into something unique to each family that makes it a part of their life. To see the different approaches others take can be quite inspiring. The homeschooling resources and inspiration to be found online and in books and, likely, in your own community are abundant. Immerse yourself in different ideas and possibilities.

Look for homeschooling mamas (and some dads, too) on YouTube and Instagram, and specific teaching ideas on Pinterest. Look for local groups and activities on Facebook. Read one of the best books written for homeschoolers in recent years, "The Brave Learner" by Julie Bogart.

In addition, it's worth the time to familiarize yourself with some of the philosophies of education that homeschoolers have come to appreciate. Of course, homeschool can be anything you want it to be, so you certainly don't need to follow any of these methods or ideologies, but considering these can open your mind to possibilities you may not have yet considered.

Classical education. Based on the trivium, this systematic method of learning incorporates the stages of grammar, logic, and rhetoric and educational ideals of the Renaissance. This philosophy is best summed up in Susan Wise Bauer's seminal book, "The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home."

Charlotte Mason education. Evoking the teaching philosophy of the 19th-century British educator, this method centers on "living books" as opposed to textbooks that have been "written down" for children, along with a focus on good habits, an appreciation for the finest art, and a study of nature. "A Charlotte Mason Education: A Home Schooling How-To Manual" by Catherine Levison is a well-regarded guide.

Waldorf education. Founded by Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, the approach aims to develop a child's "body, soul, and spirit" through practical and creative experience, with an emphasis on individual freedom and autonomy. "Foundations of a Waldorf Education" is a copious collection of lectures Steiner gave on his philosophy.

Unschooling. A term coined by John Holt in the 1970s, unschooling focuses on student-driven education where children learn through play, household work, and their own natural curiosity. For more information, see "Teach Your Own: The John Holt Book of Homeschooling."

Eclectic. This approach is a very common strategy in which homeschoolers take what they like from the methods above

or elsewhere and design their own system of teaching their children.

Focus on Your Children

Get reacquainted with your kids. Watch the way they choose to spend their time and notice the things that light them up. Understand their current interests, their aptitudes, their talents, and their character—and begin to imagine how you can facilitate an education in which they learn how to learn, maximize their inner strengths, and become the truest version of themselves.

Enlist the Kids

Ask your children what they want out of homeschool. Involve them in brainstorming and planning for the coming year. Allow them to choose subjects and topics to explore. Respect them as individuals who have something to contribute to their own education.

Start Small

Finally, when you begin to actually homeschool, start slow and small. Don't try to dive in and cover all of the subjects right off the bat. I recommend starting with either math or language arts first. Focus on one subject for, say, one week. If it's language arts, you can read aloud together, use a curriculum you've chosen, or execute a simple plan you've created. See how it goes.

You'll learn a ton by simply diving into that for a week. It won't all go smoothly. You'll see areas you need to tweak and moments that were so magical you could cry. Adjust. After a week, try something else. You can build upon each week of success until you've established what you consider to be a solid curriculum that's working for you.

Actress and Singer Jen Lilley

Is Fostering Hope to End a Broken System

CATHERINE YANG

Jen Lilley has always been charity-minded. Her father was a judge, her mother worked for a charity, and their home functioned sometimes as a safe house, so there was often someone new staying in their home. Even as a child, Lilley's dream was to be able to make so much money and be able to give it all away. Gifted in many areas and interested in everything from science to law to the performing arts, Lilley ultimately became an actress with a mission to give and to use her platform for positive change.

Lilley says that for her, it stems from her faith; she is a Christian, and faith for Lilley is about living out what you believe.

She has been involved in advocacy and charity since she was a child, with organizations that were doing good around the world. But as an adult, just when she thought she would be able to do more, Lilley started experiencing news fatigue and thinking about all the things she couldn't do.

"The more I watched the news the more helpless I felt, like 'I can't do anything, I can't stop war,'" she said. "So I thought, 'OK Jennifer, turn off the TV. What can you do?'" It hit her that even if she was helping alleviate crises around the world by giving to charities, there might be people in her very own neighborhood who were experiencing loss and need.

"And I might be not helping them because I'm so busy helping everyone else, and not people I'm in touch with one-on-one, and that didn't sit well with me," Lilley said.

Lilley started to do research on the biggest problems in the United States, and her finding was jaw-dropping. The United States is the biggest producer and exporter of child pornography, and the average victim is under the age of 5.

"Huge problem. Nobody wants to talk about it. It's horrifying," Lilley said. "I can't think of a more horrific thing that needs sunlight, and needs change. That has to change, and nobody was talking about it. Most people still aren't talking about it... Nobody wants to! I don't want to talk about it either! But it's a problem so somebody needs to talk about it."

And Lilley has good news.

“It's really hard, because you do get so attached and it's so emotional, but our job is to selflessly love these children, mend them back together, and come alongside their families.”

Jen Lilley



Jen Lilley attends the Step Up Inspiration Awards at the Beverly Wilshire Four Seasons Hotel on May 31, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

These numbers may be horrific, but Lilley has another encouraging one: "If one person out of every three churches were to stand up and become a foster parent, there would be no more children waiting in the foster care system," she said. "That's one person out of every 750, just a conservative estimate. That's crazy. Break it down—I love numbers—it's so doable. It's encouraging."

Fostering

Lilley and her husband were part of a mentoring program with Childhelp, an organization dedicated to preventing child abuse, and a young girl they had spent a lot of time getting to know confided in the couple that she was scared because she was going to go back to live with her abusive mother. That spurred the couple into taking foster care classes so they could get licensed and start to help.

They fast-tracked the proceedings, packing their weekends full of classes and paperwork so by the end of two months they were ready to welcome who they thought was going to be an 8-year-old girl into their home.

Instead, "They called us and said, 'Will you take this infant?'" Lilley said. She was reluctant, not least of all because she and her husband have busy schedules—she actually had to be out of town for the next three days, but then promised she would take any child who needed a home once she was back. Child services ended up being able to find someone to take the infant for a weekend while Lilley was gone, and so she had to be ready for a baby once she got back.

"So I sent out this massive email to all my friends, family, producers I knew, actors I knew," Lilley said. She updated everyone about her new situation ("if I can't go for coffee it's because I have spit-up on me and I've been awake all night with an infant") and no pressure, but if they could help with the no-frills essentials ("survival items: I need a crib") that would be great.

Her community really came through for her, but Lilley admits it sort of ended there. When she began fostering, she didn't know any

other foster families, and she still doesn't personally know anyone else who is a foster parent. Lilley and her husband ended up adopting Kayden, the infant they were fostering, and are currently going through the long process of adopting Kayden's younger brother. They have also welcomed their own baby girl into the family.

Fostering is notoriously difficult, and an oft-quoted statistic says half of families stop fostering within their first year because it's so hard. Caring for traumatized children is difficult, getting attached is difficult, and Lilley says one thing she wasn't prepared for was monitoring the visits from biological family members and writing up unbiased reports afterward.

"It's not in a parenting class, like how do you love this bio-Mom or Dad well, when they are the ones who put this child in this situation," Lilley said. The experience of fostering has led Lilley to create her own podcast, Fostering Hope, in hopes of creating an online support system for other foster parents who will inevitably need it.

It Takes a Village

Another project Lilley has just launched is a product of what she can only call divine intervention. Years ago, Lilley made a tentative foray into singing and released a Christmas cover song—her fans wanted more. That led to a Christmas album, something that's been on her bucket list, which only had people asking when she was going to release a real album. Then in 2016, Lilley was able to put together her dream team of writers and producers and made the album.

"It's a classic album, '60s style," she said. "It's feel-good music." Lilley admits it wasn't just for the fans. She had a dream that this album could help support the child advocacy causes so dear to her and that proceeds could go toward charity. She started thinking about and praying on what that could look like, and it came to her through a serendipitous find on social media.

Orphanages and group homes have proven not to be good working models, but Lilley found Project

Orphans, which built a neighborhood in Uganda to give orphans a home. Lilley thought perhaps a neighborhood of foster families could be built in the United States.

Lilley released one single from the album, "King of Hearts," and the money raised was enough to help a Ugandan boy get life-saving heart surgery that he needed. The leftover money was enough to begin the process of creating a neighborhood here at home.

"So the kids aren't stigmatized. The kids they're playing within the neighborhood don't have to explain their backgrounds," Lilley said. She's partnered with Project Orphans, whose founders are looking at a plot of land in Oklahoma, where the first U.S. neighborhood is slated. These foster families would be thoroughly vetted applicants, and it would really have to be a neighborhood with homes on separate plots of land rather than an apartment complex, so there is room for outdoor play.

"You would find stable, loving foster homes that are pro-family reunification, because that's the goal—the goal of foster care is to take these kids and put them back with the bio families," Lilley said.

"It's really hard, because you do get so attached and it's so emotional, but our job is to selflessly love these children, mend them back together, and come alongside their families. And when that is not an option, I want the parents who live in this neighborhood to be open and willing to adopt when necessary," she said.

Lilley wants to build a community with this neighborhood model because she believes it does take a village to raise a child. Her hope is to create this model in one state and be able to replicate it across the nation.

#VoicesThatGive

Before the album could make its debut, Lilley found herself pregnant with her daughter.

"I just put off the album release," Lilley said. It was a classic album anyway, so its release could be pushed. And Lilley wanted to focus on her family.

Lilley thought of Saint Teresa and her famous message to love in our own homes and neighborhoods first.

"If you want to change the world, go home and love your family," Lilley said. "And I've never understood that more than being a mom."

Her debut album "LILLEY" launched on May 1, in conjunction with Foster Care Awareness Month.

At the same time, Lilley is hosting a talent competition, #VoicesThatGive, where anyone can enter through the month of May to win the grand prize of \$10,000, among other career- and category-specific prizes, and a walk-on role in a Hallmark film. The categories are musician, actor, dancer, hidden/unique talent, and Hallmark fan; rules for video submissions can be found online.

"Anyone can enter for free," Lilley said. "I really say anyone because my personal belief is that every person was created on purpose for a purpose with unique talents and gifts to bring to the party."

Rather than a judging panel, the winners will be based on public voting. Everyone gets one vote for free, then one free vote for every friend you get to sign up, and then as many additional votes for \$1 each.

"And then 100 percent of my share of profits will go toward building Project Orphans USA," Lilley said. "It's just really a win-win for everyone and I'm really excited about it."

Barber Gives Homeless Man His First Haircut in Years

JOCELYN NEO

Getting a haircut or just trimming several inches off can make a huge difference to a person's appearance and self-esteem.

A Turkish barber knew this and offered to do a makeover for a homeless man in his city. While the result was incredible, that's not all that the barber did to transform the man.

Anil Cakmak, a hairstylist and a video blogger with the YouTube channel called ASMR Anil Cakmak, works at The ChuckMuck hair salon in Kastamonu in Istanbul. Apart from providing haircut services and relaxing massages to his customers, in January 2020, Cakmak decided to document an amazing makeover transformation of a homeless man named Hayri.

The now-viral video has amassed almost 20.6 million views, and Cakmak told his viewers in an update that all earnings from the video would go to Hayri, his homeless friend.

Cakmak said in the video that Hayri, who has been living on the streets for five years by choice due



The haircut in progress.

to some family issues, visits the salon on some cold mornings to get coffee, tea, or water. However, Cakmak was surprised that the downtrodden man never asked for a haircut.

The blogger then came up with an idea to offer the homeless man a free haircut and makeover treatment. To his surprise, Hayri didn't agree to this random act of kindness on the spot. But Cakmak said Hayri somehow changed his mind the next day and accepted his offer.

The duo then headed to Cakmak's shop to let the touching makeover unfold. Knowing that

his hair might give his kind makeover artist a hard time, Hayri apologized even before Cakmak started working on his hair.

"I am sorry for my hair," said Hayri, to which Cakmak humbly replied, "Don't worry."

"Though Cakmak, who has more than 10 years of experience, assured Hayri that everything was fine, he acknowledged on YouTube that it was a "difficult moment" for him as he tried to work through the knots and tangles in Hayri's hair.

As Cakmak slowly combed through and cut Hayri's matted hair, gradually, the face of a new



The final look.

Hayri emerged. But the skilled hairstylist wasn't quite done yet—he still had to trim Hayri's beard.

After having his hair snipped and trimmed, Hayri was already unrecognizable. To make the man's makeover complete, Cakmak headed to the next task on hand: taking Hayri to a shopping mall to get him a new set of clothes and a new pair of shoes.

The YouTube viewers were touched at how Cakmak respected the fact that Hayri seemed to be a quiet, shy man and that the pro barber didn't bother him much by talking out loud.

Hayri looked totally unrecognizable after the makeover; those who watched the transformation video were also surprised at how different his new look was. "He now looks like an older version of the guy who cut his hair!" a social media user commented. Another added, "He went from looking broke to looking like a rich businessman."

Many viewers also praised Cakmak for his selfless act. A social media user said that the thoughtful gesture must have been rewarding and joyous not only for Cakmak but also for Hayri.

"When he first approached the man you can see the darkness in his (Hayri's) eyes," the viewer wrote, "but this kind gesture definitely brought him light."

"Thank you for this act of kindness to someone less fortunate," another wrote. "I can tell that this was hard for you but you were very professional and you made such an incredible difference."

Cakmak, however, said that he only wanted to touch Hayri's heart and show that he's not alone, as he believes that this is "one of the most important feelings" for any human being.

JOHN WOLLWERTH/SHUTTERSTOCK

COURTESY OF JEN LILLEY



Lilley has a podcast, "Fostering Hope," which offers support to other foster parents.

“If you want to change the world, go home and love your family. And I've never understood that more than being a mom.”

Jen Lilley



Huddleston's poll found that 10 percent of Americans are more comfortable talking to their parents about their romantic life than their parents' finances.

How to Talk to Your Parents About Money

Having conversations about finances, aging, and end-of-life issues early is key

CATHERINE YANG

Cameron Huddleston was 35 years old when she realized she hadn't talked to her mother about her finances early enough. She's hardly alone.

Her experience became the launching point for a book, and during her research, she read a survey that found that more parents are comfortable having the sex talk with their children than talking about their finances and aging. She commissioned her own poll, which found that 10 percent of Americans are more comfortable talking to their parents about their romantic life than their parents' finances.

And 9 percent were more comfortable talking about their parents' romantic lives instead of having the money talk.

But aging and money should not be taboo topics, according to Huddleston. In her book "Mom and Dad, We Need to Talk" she gives an in-depth and comprehensive practical guide on how to talk to your parents about their finances, as well as the health and end-of-life issues that finances tie into. It should also persuade you of the necessity of the talk, with a wide range of stories of both success and ones that can serve as warnings.

"I feel like anyone who is in their 40s at least already, they have a story. They have a story of a parent who is already experiencing dementia or some kind of issue where they've had to get involved, or an in-law, or a grandparent," she said. "I think as our very large generation of baby boomers, as they age and live longer, and aren't prepared for long-term care, don't have sufficient retirement savings—I think their children, millennials, they're going to find themselves in a position where they are having to get involved with their parents' lives, as caregivers, as financial caregivers, as they age, and this is just going to be a growing problem.

"And if people aren't having the conversation, they're not going to be prepared when their parents need their help," she said.

This book is for everyone, Huddleston said, because it's never too early to begin the discussion.

"It's for anyone who has parents who are still living because all adults will need to be having these conversations with their parents," she said.

Lived Experience

Huddleston is an award-winning financial journalist, and her mother never treated money as a taboo topic. So she was dismayed when she realized she was too late, and this remains one of her biggest regrets.

Eleven years ago, Huddleston's mother was 65 when she started showing signs of Alzheimer's. Huddleston had been a financial journalist for 15 years, but she was in her mid-30s, and still had kids in diapers, and her mom was just approaching retirement and had always had a good grasp on her personal finances. It didn't seem like a pressing issue—and that's the point.

By the time something happens, like signs of dementia or a health emergency such as a stroke, or death, the family is in crisis mode and has to deal with an emergency without a plan and while emotions are running high. And as the many scenarios outlined in the book show, playing catch up in these situations is both stressful and expensive.

It was in part because she had experience writing about personal finance that Huddleston was able to ask her mother to grant her power of attorney over her financial documents—and she shares a detailed story about the nightmare it can be if you're too late (you have to prove your parent mentally incompetent in court). But even then, that meant Huddleston had to navigate this difficult and emotional situation at a pretty young age, and it's something that could have been planned for.

"I had to play detective," Huddleston said.

She had to dig around and trace back to find what accounts her mother held and how money was being managed. There was an investment account with about \$50,000 that she didn't even know existed until it was about to be closed, and she managed to get about \$36,000 of it and put it toward her mother's long-term care. And then there was persuading her mother it was time to move out of her house because it was no longer safe or responsible to let her live alone. It's a difficult conversation to have when you don't know what they would have wanted.

Huddleston remembered there was actually a perfect opening years before that, when she and her mother brought up long-term care insurance and her mother found

she couldn't get coverage because of a preexisting health condition.

"We would have been talking about a 'what-if' scenario. What if this happens, Mom? What would you want me to do? How would we pay for things? And if we were talking about that, a 'what-if' scenario, there wouldn't have been all these emotions tied to it," she said.

Huddleston was, of course, able to ask her mother questions, but her mother was having more and more memory problems, and that meant Huddleston had to step in and make decisions.

You or your parent can end up feeling like you're overstepping if it wasn't something that was agreed upon earlier. And rather than spending that time enjoying your relationship with your parents, maybe instead you are suddenly the primary caregiver, plus financial adviser, and playing detective trying to figure out how many accounts and investments there are, whether your parents have a will, the state's estate laws, where your parent will live, and whether there is debt.

How to Start, What to Say

After Huddleston shared her story on a podcast interview, the two hosts asked her afterward what they should do—they hadn't yet talked to their parents about finances either. And a few years after her experience, her peers, now in their 40s, were starting to ask her pressing questions because their parents were beginning to have health issues.

There is a massive disconnect between generations because so many parents and adult children aren't talking about money. Several polls show that the majority of adults over 50 don't have financial and legal plans in place, and the majority of parents—close to 70 percent—expect one of their children to be their caregiver and take care of finances should they need it—but these children haven't been informed.

Huddleston has interviewed several experts from financial psychologists to estate planners and spends the first portion of the book dispelling fears. Sometimes, the fear is foundational, as in thinking that if they talk about death, they will only hasten its arrival—which isn't true. People who have had these discussions actually feel more prepared if crisis strikes.

Through stories as examples, Huddleston also touches on why

parents might be reluctant to talk, what not to say (don't make it about your inheritance, it's about their well-being), and when to have these conversations (not during the family vacation).

The book is full of references and resources to help you start the conversation and make sure you cover all the bases. Should you have a will or a living trust? When should power of attorney be granted?

There is also a section on being on the lookout for scams because seniors are losing billions to fraud every year (estimates vary because it is so underreported), and how to talk to your parents about it.

She adds that in some cases, your parents' mistrust isn't unfounded. If you don't have a good grasp of your own finances and aren't responsible with money, maybe a family friend, pastor, or sibling should lead these conversations instead. But they still need to happen.

And it's not just one talk, but an ongoing conversation. You'll want to talk to your parents about whether they have retirement in order, what their long-term care plans are (because even if they don't think they need it, the vast majority of seniors do), where they prefer to live, what they want done with their things after their death, and whether they want your help with any of this—because the goal is not to take over managing your parents' financial fate, but to make sure they're considering these important things.

At heart, this comes from a place of well-placed concern. You might even say that when talking to your parents: "Mom and Dad, you took such good care of me when I was younger. I want to be able to provide that same sort of care if you ever need it," Huddleston wrote in the book as an example.

With the pandemic, many adults are likely thinking of their parents and are concerned for their well-being. Huddleston hopes it can be a reminder to be prepared.

"Honestly, if you're having this conversation in your 20s, and your parents are in their 40s and 50s, it's not too early," she said. "It actually can be the ideal time because you want to have these conversations while your parents are still healthy and relatively young.

"You don't want to wait until there's a health emergency or a financial emergency to have these conversations, because, at that point, it can be too late."

Put on the Mask: Try a Little Stoicism

JEFF MINICK

Many years ago, I worked five days a week, four or five hours a day. As a waiter, I quickly learned that the attitude I brought to my customers' tables had a direct effect on my income.

If I came to work in a rotten mood, grouchy, or sullen, the tips left on the table decreased. If, on the other hand, I took orders and delivered meals with a smile and a kind word, the tips increased. Because I was there to earn money, I became an actor.

No matter my mood, when I put on my waiter's tie and blue apron, I put a mask on my face.

For the past months, many Americans have worn masks and bandanas to protect themselves against a virus. Eventually, most of us will stop looking as if we were doctors, nurses, and bank robbers, and go unmasked again.

But what about that metaphorical mask I once wore? Is there a deeper meaning in that experience?

Cultural Conflicts

Someone who wears his heart on his sleeve openly displays his emotions. To do so is not necessarily wrong or harmful. Winston Churchill, for example, described himself as a "blubberer" and frequently gave way to tears in public, and no one wants a friend

bottled up so tight that he is forever guessing what he or she is thinking or feeling.

We appreciate the tough guys Clint Eastwood plays in some of his Westerns, but we wouldn't invite those laconic characters to a backyard barbecue unless we wanted a silent retreat.

On the other hand, our therapeutic culture constantly jabbers on about openness. "Share your feelings" is a mantra of our time, and share them we do. On the national stage, college students

share their feelings by shouting down speakers, politicians resort to ad hominem attacks rather than debating issues, and the media injects opinions and feelings into what should be hard news. Celebrities appear on talk shows and tell us how they "feel" about everything under the sun, baring both their emotions and their ignorance.

In our daily lives, some of us do the same. We share ad nauseum our opinions and feelings. We open our mouths and let random thoughts and emotions pop out uncensored. Several times in my life people I barely knew or knew not at all have treated me like a priest in a confessional, sharing stories best kept hidden away.

Stoicism

Maybe it's time to revive the Stoics. My Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary gives one definition of stoicism as "indifference to pleasure or pain." That may be how we think of stoicism: the football player with the busted leg stifling his pain and limping blank-faced from the field, the girl with the broken heart reserving her tears for the privacy of her bedroom, or the store clerk whose wife is dying of cancer treating his customers to a smile and "How may I help you?"

But the philosophy of stoicism cuts deeper than these examples. In his online article "What is Stoicism & 9 Exercises To Get You Started," Ryan Holiday, author and creator of dailystoic.com, writes somewhat awkwardly that stoicism "asserts that virtue (such as wisdom) is happiness and judgment should be based on behavior, rather than words. That we don't control and cannot rely on external events, only on ourselves and on our responses."

In other words, we can practice self-mastery and respond appropriately when a cruel world knocks at our door.

Two of the most famous Stoic



(Left) An illustration of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius by Giovanni Battista Piranesi. (Right) An illustration of Epictetus in "A selection from the Discourses of Epictetus with the Encheiridion" (1890).

philosophers were a slave, Epictetus, and a Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius. Both slave and emperor recognized the importance of self-control and meeting each day's events with equanimity.

Two of the most famous Stoic philosophers were a slave, Epictetus, and a Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius.

Some Guidelines

Of Holiday's nine points, three are of particular interest to me.

First up is Point 6: "Is This Within My Control?" Many of us use a good deal of time and breath debating things over which we have no control. My friend John and I, for example, rail against Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's strict edicts and long shutdown, but unless we take action—writing emails and making phone calls to the governor's office, participating in protests—our words are dust in the wind. Even then, we have no real control. What we can control is our response to the quarantine imposed on us.

Using the philosophy of sto-

icism, Holiday next recommends "Practice Negative Visualization." We should imagine the downside of an enterprise, and so be prepared for things to go wrong. We might, for example, head out to work and find an accident on the freeway has caused a massive traffic jam. By anticipating this possibility, we won't sit in our cars turning the air blue with curses. Instead, having prepared for this eventuality, we may mentally review business plans, listen to an inspirational podcast, or simply enjoy a breather from the stress of work.

Holiday's Point 9 is "Amor Fati: Love Everything That Happens." Amor fati means "love of fate," and like so many of you, I'm not sure I believe in fate, even when events go in my favor. But if we define fate as whatever we happen to encounter during our day, then I would agree with Holiday when he writes "treating each and every moment—no matter how challenging—as something to be embraced, not avoided. To not only be okay with it, but love it and be better for it."

When something goes wrong, Holiday tells us, we do best if we approach the problem as objectively as possible, deal with it, and even learn from it.

Guard Your Hearts and Minds

As Marcus Aurelius wrote in his

"Meditations": "The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts: therefore, guard accordingly, and take care that you entertain no notions unsuitable to virtue and reasonable nature."

We don't have to embrace all of stoicism, though that noble philosophy has great merit and may be the tool some of us need to make our way forward. Indifference to pain and pleasure may be beyond our powers, even undesirable, but we can practice holding our emotions and thoughts in check. We may be depressed or suffering, but to the grocery store cashier's "How are you today?" the best answer remains "I'm fine, thanks. And you?"

By exercising that restraint, by practicing a little stoicism, we make the world a bit brighter and strengthen our control over our hearts and minds.

Guard accordingly, the wise philosopher advises us. And slip on that mask.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Ashville, N.C. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

Forget School. Just Read.

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

The truth is coming to light.

Yesterday, I overheard a public school teacher and mother of several children express an honest opinion about education during the pandemic. Schoolwork varies by teacher and school district, she noted, with some doing almost nothing at all, while others send out huge packets of worksheets. About the latter, she disgustedly said, "It's just busywork!"

She doesn't seem to be the only parent noticing this. As the period of makeshift education at home lengthens from weeks to months, more parents are letting school slide, Leslie Brody explains in *The Wall Street Journal*. Among other things, parents are frustrated with hovering teachers who continually remind children to wash their hands or get to class, or math classes that "end in tears" because they are "too boring and repetitive."

Some parents are trying a new tack, Brody reports:

"Jessica Sansone, a Pilates instructor in Brooklyn, said her fourth-grader, Mateo, tunes in to 30-minute virtual meetings with classmates daily, but she lets him ditch most assignments. She carves the day into half-hour sessions to give him structure, and lets him skip writing so he can read his favorite books, such as the 'Wings of Fire' fantasy series about dragons. She said his teacher has been supportive."

I think she's on to something. So much so, that I'm going out on a limb to suggest that parents should let their younger children ditch school altogether for the next few months.

I can almost hear the gasps. "How can we advocate for children to get even more behind in a time when they're losing aca-



Have your children read the books they like, read some books you choose, or listen to audio books while they draw or build Lego creations or do chores.

"The adults I know who read for pleasure do not make dioramas, take comprehension quizzes, or write five-paragraph essays on a story's main conflict or theme.

Sarah Mackenzie, author, "The Read-Along Family"

demic ground by leaps and bounds?" you might ask.

You misunderstand. I'm not advocating for children to give up on school and get more behind. Instead, I believe that children may actually get ahead with this plan.

Here's the deal. After studying educational methods and practices for a number of years, I've come to the conclusion that one of the best things parents can do is teach their children to become life-long learners. How does one do that? Simple. Teach them to read and love books. If they know how to do those things, then a whole world of learning is opened to them.

Nor am I alone in this assessment. In her book, "The Read-Along Family," Sarah Mackenzie observes that parents and schools kill children's natural interest in reading by forcing them to conform to required book lists or regurgitate a book's content via reports or tests.

"We do it with the best intentions..." Mackenzie assures us, "But good intentions can end in disaster."

"The adults I know who read for pleasure do not make dioramas, take comprehension quizzes, or write five-paragraph essays on a story's main conflict or theme. Real readers enjoy books that pique their interest and curiosity. They talk about them with friends. Sometimes they join book clubs. At those book club meetings, they might enjoy food and drink while discussing open-ended questions. They ask questions that help everyone think more deeply about the book and about what the author might have been trying to say. Questions about what the book might be saying to us."

Can this method work? Can we really risk our children's futures by pulling them out of their makeshift online classes and having them read instead?

For an answer, I point to Mackenzie's tale of Jonathan Auxier. Despite living in a book-loving family, Jonathan was floundering in

reading. Trying to rectify this, Jonathan's mother pulled him out of school and began homeschooling him during third grade.

"The main requirement," writes Mackenzie, "was that he read for three hours per day."

"Now, Jonathan wasn't told that his mother had pulled him out of school in order to help him fall in love with books. But she wisely realized that Jonathan would only learn to love reading if he disassociated reading with schoolwork. He needed plenty of time for reading, and he needed the opportunity to choose books he wanted to read—not just books that were assigned to him. She also knew that Jonathan needed to take on the identity of a reader for himself. She couldn't do that for him. All she could do was set up the circumstances to make it more likely to happen."

Did it work? Considering that Jonathan went back to school the next year as a "very strong reader," and that he eventually became an "award-winning writer of middle-grade novels," I think it's safe to say that it did.

So give your younger children a treat. Tell them that they're off the hook for school for the rest of the year. But in place of that, they must read. Have them read the books they like, read some books you choose, or listen to audiobooks while they draw or build Lego creations or do chores.

In between your work schedule, read books together as a family. Talk about them at the dinner table. Write fan fiction off the stories you read. Act out a favorite scene from a book. Turn certain phrases into buzzwords that your family can laugh over. In general? Have fun.

Who knows, you might be surprised when all this is over. Instead of being behind, your children may actually be ahead.

Annie Holmquist is editor of *Intellectual Takeout*, an online magazine and sister publication of *Chronicles*. This article was originally published on *Intellectual Takeout*.



COURTESY CAMERON HUDDLESTON

If people aren't having the conversation, they're not going to be prepared when their parents need their help.

Cameron Huddleston, financial journalist

"Mom and Dad, We Need to Talk" by Cameron Huddleston.



The Myth That Americans Were Poorly Educated Before Mass Government Schooling

Early America had widespread literacy and a vibrant culture of learning

LAWRENCE W. REED

Parents the world over are dealing with massive adjustments in their children's education that they could not have anticipated just three months ago. To one degree or another, pandemic-induced school closures are creating the "mass homeschooling" that FEE's senior education fellow Kerry McDonald predicted two months ago. Who knows, with millions of youngsters absent from government school classrooms, maybe education will become as good as it was before the government ever got involved.

"What?" you exclaim! "Wasn't education lousy or nonexistent before government mandated it, provided it, and subsidized it? That's what my government schoolteachers assured me, so it must be true."

The fact is, at least in early America, education was better and more widespread than most people today realize or were ever told. Sometimes it wasn't "book learning," but it was functional and built for the world most young people confronted at the time. Even without laptops and swimming pools, and on a fraction of what government schools spend today, Americans were a surprisingly learned people in our first hundred years.

I was reminded a few days ago of the amazing achievements of early American education while reading the enthralling book by bestselling author Stephen Mansfield, "Lincoln's Battle With God: A President's Struggle With Faith and What It Meant for America." It traces the spiritual journey of America's 16th president—from fiery atheist to one whose last words to his wife on that tragic evening at Ford's Theater were a promise to "visit the Holy Land and see those places hallowed by the footsteps of the Savior."

In a moment, I'll cite a revealing, extended passage from Mansfield's book, but first I'd like to offer some excellent, related works that come mostly from FEE's own archives.

In 1983, Robert A. Peterson's "Education in Colonial America" revealed some stunning facts and figures. "The Federalist Papers, which are seldom read or understood today even in our universities," says Peterson, "were written for and read by the common man. Literacy rates were as high or higher than they are today." Incredibly, "A study conducted in 1800 by DuPont de Nemours revealed that only four in a thousand Americans were unable to read and write legibly."

Well into the 19th century, writes Susan Alder in "Education in America," "Parents didn't even consider that the civil government in any way had the responsibility or should assume the responsibility of providing for the education of children." Only one state (Massachusetts) even had compulsory schooling laws before the Civil War, yet literacy rates were among the highest in our history.

Great Britain experienced similar trends. In 1996, Edwin West wrote in "The Spread of Education Before Compulsion in Britain and America in the Nineteenth Century" that "when national compulsion was enacted [in 1880], over 95 percent of

Even without laptops and swimming pools, and on a fraction of what government schools spend today, Americans were a surprisingly learned people in our first hundred years.



"Girl Reading" by Edmund C. Tarbell, 1909.

fifteen-year-olds were literate." More than a century later, "40 percent of 21-year-olds in the United Kingdom admit[ed] to difficulties with writing and spelling."

Laws against the education of black slaves date back to as early as 1740, but the desire to read proved too strong to prevent its steady growth, even under bondage. For purposes of religious instruction, it was not uncommon for slaves to be taught reading but not writing. Many taught themselves to write, or learned to do so with the help of others willing to flout the law. Government efforts to outlaw the education of blacks in the Old South may not have been much more effective than today's drug laws. If you wanted it, you could find it.

Estimates of the literacy rate among slaves on the eve of the Civil War range from 10 to 20 percent. By 1880, nearly 40 percent of southern blacks were literate. In 1910, half a century before the federal government involved itself in K-12 funding, black literacy exceeded 70 percent and was comparable to that of whites.

Daniel Lattier said in a 2016 article titled "Did Public Schools Really Improve American Literacy?" that a government school system is no guarantee that young people will actually learn to read and write well. He cites the shocking findings of a study conducted by the US Department of Education: "32 million of American adults are illiterate, 21 percent read below a 5th grade level, and 19 percent of high school graduates are functionally illiterate, which means they can't read well enough to manage daily living and perform tasks required by many jobs."

Compulsory government schools were not established in America because of some widely-perceived failure of private education, which makes it both erroneous and self-serving for the government school establishment to propagate the myth that Americans would be illiterate without it.

As Kerry McDonald wrote in "Public Schools Were Designed to Indocinate Immigrants," the prime motivation for government schooling was something much less benign than a fear of illiteracy. Her remarkable 2019 book, "Unschooling: Raising Curious, Well-Educated Children Outside the Conventional Classroom," explains the viable, self-directed alternatives that far outclass the standardized, test-driven, massively expensive and politicized government schooling of today.

If you're looking for a good history of how America traveled the path of

literacy to a national education crisis, you can find it in a recent, well-documented book by Justin Spears and associates, titled "Failure: The History and Results of America's School System." The way in which government short-changes parents, teachers, and students is heartbreaking.

I promised to share a passage from Stephen Mansfield's book, so now I'm pleased to deliver it. Read it carefully, and let it soak in:

"We should remember that the early English settlers in the New World left England accompanied by fears that they would pursue their 'errand into the wilderness' and become barbarians in the process. Loved ones at home wondered how a people could cross an ocean and live in the wild without losing the literacy, the learning, and the faith that defined them. The early colonists came determined to defy these fears. They brought books, printing presses, and teachers with them and made the founding of schools a priority. Puritans founded Boston in 1630 and established Harvard College within six years. After ten years they had already printed the first book in the colonies, the Bay Psalm Book. Many more would follow. The American colonists were so devoted to education—inspired as they were by their Protestant insistence upon biblical literacy and by their hope of converting and educating the natives—that they created a near-miraculous culture of learning.

This was achieved through an educational free market. Colonial society offered 'Dame schools,' Latin grammar schools, tutors for hire, what would today be called 'home schools,' church schools, schools for the poor, and colleges for the gifted and well-to-do. Enveloping these institutions of learning was a wider culture that prized knowledge as an aid to godliness. Books were cherished and well-read. A respected minister might have thousands of them. Sermons were long and learned. Newspapers were devoured, and elevated discussion of ideas filled taverns and parlors. Citizens formed gatherings for the 'improvement of the mind'—debate societies and reading clubs and even sewing circles at which the latest books from England were read.

The intellectual achievements of colonial America were astonishing. Lawrence Cremin, dean of American education historians, estimated the literacy rate of the period at between 80 and 90 percent. Benjamin Franklin taught himself five languages and was not thought exceptional. Jefferson taught himself half a dozen,

including Arabic. George Washington was unceasingly embarrassed by his lack of formal education, and yet readers of his journals today marvel at his intellect and wonder why he ever felt insecure. It was nothing for a man—or in some cases a woman—to learn algebra, geometry, navigation, science, logic, grammar, and history entirely through self-education. A seminarian was usually required to know Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French and German just to begin his studies, instruction which might take place in a log classroom and on a dirt floor.

This culture of learning spilled over onto the American frontier. Though pioneers routinely moved beyond the reach of even basic education, as soon as the first buildings of a town were erected, so too, were voluntary societies to foster intellectual life. Aside from schools for the young, there were debate societies, discussion groups, lyceums, lecture associations, political clubs, and always, Bible societies. The level of learning these groups encouraged was astounding. The language of Shakespeare and classical literature—at the least Virgil, Plutarch, Cicero, and Homer—so permeated the letters and journals of frontier Americans that modern readers have difficulty understanding that generation's literary metaphors. This meant that even a rustic Western settlement could serve as a kind of informal frontier university for the aspiring. It is precisely this legacy and passion for learning that shaped young Abraham Lincoln during his six years in New Salem."

Not bad for a society that hardly even knew what a government school was for generations, wouldn't you say? Why should we blindly assume today that we couldn't possibly get along without government schools? Instead, we should be studying how remarkable it was that we did so well without them.

When I think of the many ways government deceives us into its embrace, one in particular really stands out: It seeks to convince us how helpless we would be without it. It tells us we can't do this, we can't do that, that government possesses magical powers beyond those of mere mortals and that yes, we'd be dumb as dirt and as destitute as drifters if we didn't put it in charge of one thing or another.

When it comes to education, Americans really should know better. Maybe one positive outcome of the virus pandemic is that they will rediscover that they don't need government schools as much as the government told them they do. In fact, we never did.

STYLE

How Men Can Dress According to Body Type

MANY NGOM

Last week, I introduced the art of dressing according to your body type and featured five talented female designers. This week, let's look at men and get sporty with four exceptional athletes as examples.

Unlike the alphabet letters that characterize women's body shapes, we can use geometric forms to identify men's body shapes: the inverted triangle, the trapezoid, the oval, and the rectangle.

Inverted Triangle

Michael Phelps

The inverted triangle body shape is characterized by the shoulders and chest being significantly broader than the waist and hips. This body type is seen in athletes who do bodybuilding or swimming; Michael Phelps is the perfect example. To enhance this type of silhouette, men have to shop smart: the goal is to add a bit of volume at the waist to balance the whole torso.

TOPS: Look for V-neck tops or T-shirts; the neckline gives the illusion of a slimmer chest. For shirts, slim fits or semi-slim fits are best. Different brands have different slim-fit standards, so remember to try on the shirt before buying it. Make sure it has enough room or stretch for your arms.

SUITS: The most important thing to look for in a suit is that it fits your shoulder span perfectly. Now, you might get the perfect fit on your shoulders and chest, but find that it's loose around the waist. The only solution is to have it trimmed. This alteration is essential for this body shape. Try to choose jackets that have a regular lapel. Lapels that are too thin will give the illusion that your shoulders are disproportionate.

PANTS: For athletic builds, the quads need room, so the best option is the straight cut. It has a relaxed feel and is slightly tapered at the bottom, providing comfort and mobility.

WHAT TO AVOID: For tops, avoid too many details, such as large prints, obvious patch pockets (with contrast stitching), horizontal stripes, and jackets with shoulder pads. These accentuate your chest and shoulders—you have no need for that. As for the bottom, avoid skinny pants.



Brad Pitt Short Sleeves Shirt by Alexander McQueen.

Single Breasted Blazer by Dolce & Gabbana.

Twill Chino Pants by Noon Goons.

Oval Shape

Shaquille O'Neal

Regardless of your height, if your shoulders and hips are aligned while your chest is larger, then you have an oval body shape. The goal is to highlight your silhouette.

TOPS: People with an oval body shape often look for clothes that are a size or two bigger, or fit loosely. The idea that the garment has a billowing effect and doesn't stick to the body is comforting. But a loose garment doesn't actually hide your curves; it just emphasizes them. On the other hand, a too-small, super tight top won't define anything; it will just make you look bigger. The key is to choose a top in your size and play with the style, motifs, and fit. Shirts and sweaters are the most structured pieces of clothing for this body shape. Tops with clean shoulders, a structured collar, and a good fit are your best allies.

Don't be afraid to wear well-fitted garments, as they will highlight the shoulders and make your figure look slimmer. Opt for solid colors for knits, and fine stripes or delicate prints for shirts.

SUITS: Choose a fitted suit that accentuates the volume of your shoulders to balance out the volume of your chest and waist. Basically, you are looking for a V shape to create the illusion of a slimmer waist. Finally, look for a single-breasted blazer with three buttons. Always button the top one to keep the illusion of a smaller waist.

PANTS: Remember that the thighs are usually bigger than the calves, so go with straight-cut or semi-fitted pants. Both styles should be worn at the waist. If worn below the waist, the stomach will fall over the belt, making it appear larger.

WHAT TO AVOID: Avoid both extremes—baggy clothes and super tight clothes. Make the following switches in your wardrobe: Opt for suspenders instead of belts, try overalls instead of jeans, and pick out a few hats—fedoras are the best.



Chest Pocket Striped Shirt by Comme Des Garçons.

Single Breasted Jacket by Polo Ralph Lauren.

Tonga Cotton Twill Pants by The Gigi.

Trapezoid

Russell Wilson

The trapezoid body shape is the most balanced one, and is used the most as a model when manufacturing clothing. So, yes, Russell Wilson is lucky in that he can wear pretty anything he wants. The shoulders and chest are rather large and the silhouette is slightly tapered at the waist and hips, but the definition between the chest and the waist is more harmonious and balanced than the inverted triangle shape. Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man illustrates this body shape perfectly.

TOPS: The stretch is your friend. When choosing a polo top, don't hesitate to pick one that has some stretch. The same goes for shirts. Go for slim-fits; they will accentuate your perfect shape. If you want to appear taller, opt for vertical stripes on your shirts. If you want to give the illusion of a bigger torso, go for checkered shirts. For casual jackets, choose ones that sit at the waist or at the hips; they will define your silhouette more.

SUITS: Look for a slim fit. Again, it will fit you like a glove. And if you want to make your waist slimmer and accentuate your chest, a single-button blazer will do the trick.

PANTS: You can wear slim-fitted pants, since your legs are not too bulky, or you can go with a straight cut that sits at the waist and is tapered at the bottom. If you want to get noticed, go for printed bottoms—jacquard in the winter and plaid or stripes in the summer.

WHAT TO AVOID: You can pretty much wear anything but baggy clothes. Stick to clothes with a closer fit for a clean and sophisticated look.



Cotton Pique Polo Shirt by Frescobol Carioica.

Suede Bomber Jacket by The Row.

Straight Leg Washed Jeans by The Row.

Rectangle

Tom Brady

This shape typically describes men who are tall, slim, and lean. Tom Brady isn't slim but his body proportions are all well-aligned: the shoulders, waist, and hips are on the same line. To avoid a "block shape" effect, it's best to create some contrast. Men in this category should choose garments that make the shoulders look wider and the waist slimmer.

TOPS: Nautical tops are perfect for the rectangle shape. Horizontal stripes will give the illusion of a wider torso. Go for mock necks and turtlenecks, as they appear to make the chest look wider. For shirts, choose ones with chest pockets or shoulder tabs. For T-shirts, have fun with different prints: try block prints or thick horizontal stripes.

SUITS: Look for a slim fit. It will define your shoulders and give shape to your waist. Aside from the suit, try a longer, knee-length coat. It will create equilibrium and balance from your shoulders to your knees.

PANTS: If your legs are slim, wear straight-leg or semi-fitted pants. Semi-fitted pants will be roomy at the hips and slimmer at the ankles, creating a nice harmony.

WHAT TO AVOID: Any vertical stripes, whether on tops or bottoms, are not recommended. Also avoid super skinny pants, the ones that are so tight that they look like leggings. Overall, too-tight pants and vertical stripes give the illusion of a longer body.



Long Sleeve Striped Top by Brunello Cucinelli.

Reversible Wool and Cotton Overcoat by Mackintosh.

Cotton Blend Slim Pants by Incotex.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CLYDE HEATH



Images of Heath's protagonist Booker Weed.

Growing Pains

Learning How to Make Good Choices

ANDREW THOMAS

Life can be like a yo-yo sometimes—full of ups and downs. Nobody knows that better than Clyde Heath, who's used his story of a tumultuous childhood to help kids make good choices.

Heath's home life growing up was turbulent, to say the least. His parents divorced when he was two years old, and his mother was consistently finding and leaving different men. He lived with his grandma when he was in elementary school, but she passed away when he was 10. And yet, despite an unstable home life, Heath learned to make good choices.

There were instances where he wouldn't see his mother for days at a time. She would call and let him know she had to work, but Heath suspected she was up to something else.

"She would marry a guy who was either an alcoholic, or a drug addict, or abusive—or sometimes all three. The rule was if you hear some yelling and screaming or some things breaking, it was time to get under my bed, so that was the routine. I would get under my bed to try and stay safe. It was always a violent home," Heath said.

Bad Examples

In order to cope with his home life, Heath participated in after-school programs. It was there that he was introduced to Duncan spin tops. When life got out of hand at home, he would go outside and play with his spin tops. Playing with the toys kept him focused, and his interest took him to several competitions in southern California; he even won a city championship in Santa Ana.

Meantime, his older brother was always getting into trouble. At age 15, he was already stealing cars, and the trouble he got into gave Heath an example of what not to do. Instead of teaming up with his brother, he got heavily involved in baseball and focused on sports.

"In my own mind, I had already said for some reason, that was not the way I wanted to live. I grew up with examples—watching the things around me and thinking it's just not the right thing to do," Heath said.

When Heath's grandmother passed away, he went back into his mother's care. His baseball coach, who was like a father figure to him, became a mentor. He had always told Heath's mother that if they needed a place to stay they were welcome. A couple of years later, Heath and his mother's car broke down; his coach sent money for them to buy a used car. They also ended up staying at the coach's home.

Heath's coach didn't want him

to leave with his mother, and Heath and his family ended up staying at his house for a year when he was in the eighth grade. His coach had conditions for his mother if she wanted to take him back—she had to get a job and a place to stay. Eventually, Heath went back to live with his mother in ninth grade.

Unbeknownst to Heath's coach and his family, the place where Heath's mother was living was a rundown motel, and drugs and prostitutes were commonplace. She had met another man, and the night Heath arrived at the hotel, the man took them for a ride in an old, restored Bentley. That same night, there was a knock on the door. When Heath opened the door, there was a SWAT team with their guns drawn. His mother's boyfriend had broken out of prison and stolen the Bentley, and the SWAT team came in and arrested him.

"The irony is they had released me to my mom thinking she was back on her feet, when actually she was back in the same scenario I had grown up in. I guess a little bit worse," Heath said.

At the end of Heath's freshman year of high school, he and his mother experienced yet another traumatic event. Heath had been away for the weekend, and when he came home, he knocked on the door. His mother opened the curtains slightly, and all he could see was a bloodshot eye. A man she had met the night before had beaten her so severely that Heath almost couldn't recognize her. The same man returned the next night and broke all of the windows of their car.

During Heath's sophomore year, his mother met a man who was somewhat decent. He was able to provide for them and his own two sons, and Heath's mother started to stay home and become more responsible. Heath started playing guitar and participated in a variety of sports, including football, basketball, swimming, baseball, and badminton. He also continued to attend church.

"The rest of high school was pretty stable. I was involved in my youth group a lot, and that kept me pretty straight and narrow for my high school years," Heath said.

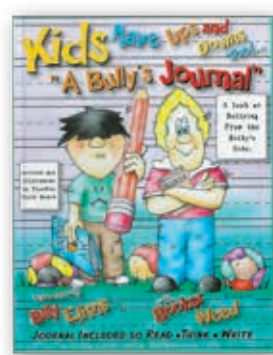
Footbag and Yo-Yo

After high school, Heath enlisted in the Army, and after he was honorably discharged, he began a career in aerospace working on the guidance system for the Peacekeeper Missile Program as a methods analyst and program element manager.

In 1982, Heath, then 22, and his brother-in-law went to a frisbee and footbag festival. Footbag is a sport also commonly known



1. Clyde Heath is the author of book series "Kids Have Ups and Downs Too!" He strives to convey to children that they have the ability to make good choices despite any difficult circumstances they may face.
2. Heath's creative workspace.
3. Heath at an assembly.



Heath's second book in the series "Kids Have Ups and Downs Too!: A Bully's Journal."

by the brand name "Hacky Sack." They eventually met the founders of the sport, who offered to come to his town to teach a footbag clinic. Heath ultimately became a certified footbag instructor.

Heath got laid off from his aerospace job in the late 1990s. While praying one day, he heard a little voice that told him, "You're going to minister the kids, and you're going to have to fly to do it." He only shared this experience with his wife a couple of years later.

Heath didn't know what the words meant at the time, but in a few years, in 2003, he received a call. That week, his wife had prayed and asked God to give Heath a job that would be unique, involve travel, and would make good use of his childhood experiences. His former career in aerospace had been unique, and he thought he could leverage the adversity he had experienced as a child to help kids.

The prayer was answered, and he was offered an interview at an educational performance company and was given a box of yo-yos. Shortly after, he started to learn basic tricks to present a 45-minute character education assembly at

schools across the country and the world.

The show consists of a 45-minute biblically based character education assembly program and begins with a 12-minute story using yo-yo tricks, followed by humor and character education. The storytelling, humor, and message that kids can become champions are the kids' favorite parts of the show.

"We're able to tell a positive character-building message through fun and humor. It's not your typical classroom environment within a school assembly," Heath said.

Heath visits two to three schools a day, and has traveled to England, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and Canada, and 38 states in the United States. He performs at 450 schools a year, and has educated 1.6 million kids on what it means to make good choices. Once schools open again, he plans to continue performing the show.

Good Choices

Heath hopes kids are encouraged to make good choices, and his passion for working with kids motivated him to write a series entitled "Kids Have Ups and Downs Too!"—a play on words for yo-yos. The first installment in the series recounts Heath's life growing up, and how he learned to make good choices despite his home, neighborhood, and school life, which is a theme throughout the series.

"I felt like it was my obligation whether it be to society or to my community—the things I went through as a kid were not for nothing. There was something to learn from every incident," Heath said.

The second book in the series "Kids Have Ups and Downs Too! A Bully's Journal" examines the bully's perspective. Heath's character and protagonist, Booker Weed, befriends the school bully and ends up helping him turn into a different kid largely by playing footbag with him.

His next book, "Kids Have Ups and Downs Too!: A Road Trip," will be out this fall. His protagonist Booker Weed travels to Character County and visits the cities of Respect, Caring, Fairness, Responsibility, and Honesty. When children read each chapter, they learn the meaning of each character trait. By the time Booker Weed gets through the fifth city, he has learned what it takes to be a star.

Each book has a few blank pages at the end so if something in the stories resonates with a kid, they can write about it.

"I want my kids to understand that no matter what's happening in our home, in our neighborhood, or with their friends, they have what it takes to make good choices," Heath said.

FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

A Boy's Song

by James Hogg

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

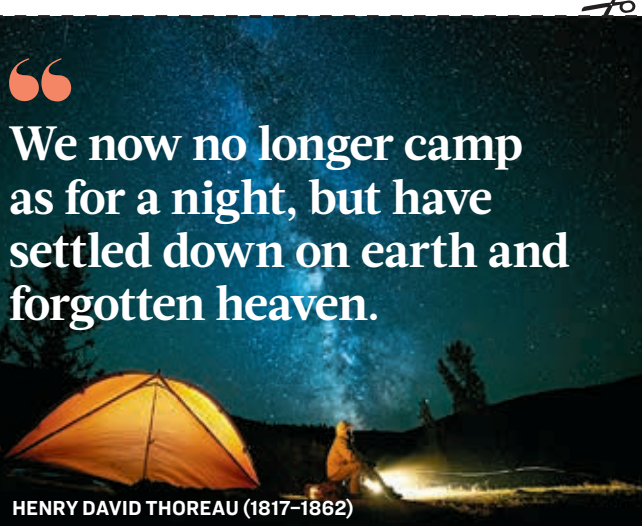
Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay;
To trace the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.



HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862)



HORSE CRAZY/SHUTTERSTOCK

"We now no longer camp as for a night, but have settled down on earth and forgotten heaven."

WHAT DO HORSES DO WHEN THEY'RE TIRED?

By Aidan Danza, age 13

THE FABULOUS MOONS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM (PART III)

W

e now conclude our journey through the solar system's moons at our biggest planet, Jupiter, and its Galilean moons (named for their discoverer, Galileo Galilei). These moons vary widely, but they are all very large and rather volatile.

IO

Io might have one of the shortest names of anything in our solar system, but don't let that fool you! Slightly larger than our moon, Io is the third-largest of Jupiter's moons, and is a sickly, yellow-brown color dotted with volcanoes.

Just like our moon, one side of Io always points toward Jupiter. Since Io is close to Ganymede and Europa (featured in the last article), its orbit is affected by gravitational

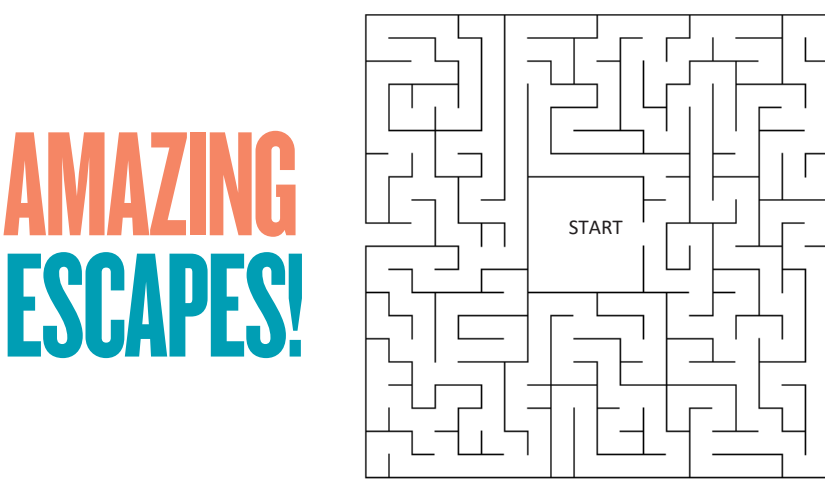
GANYMEDE

Ganymede is the solar system's largest moon, and the only one with a magnetic field. It's even larger than Mercury! Compared to Io, it is very calm. Its surface is varying shades of brown and beige. It is composed of an iron core, which generates the magnetic field, a mantle of rock, and a very thick crust of ice, with some rocks mixed in. Ganymede also has an extremely thin oxygen atmosphere.

CALLISTO

Callisto is a dark gray-brown moon, speckled with white spots that look like stars. It is very heavily cratered, which suggests it has almost no tectonic or volcanic activity. It is the third-largest moon in the solar system.

Its interior makeup is unknown, but data from the Galileo spacecraft suggests that it might have an ocean under its cratered surface, adding to the list of moons that may have oceans under their surfaces. It also has an extremely thin carbon dioxide, oxygen, and hydrogen atmosphere.



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, -, AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1 + (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1

5	6
1	6

Solution For Easy 1
1 = (6 - 5 x 6)

Medium puzzle 1

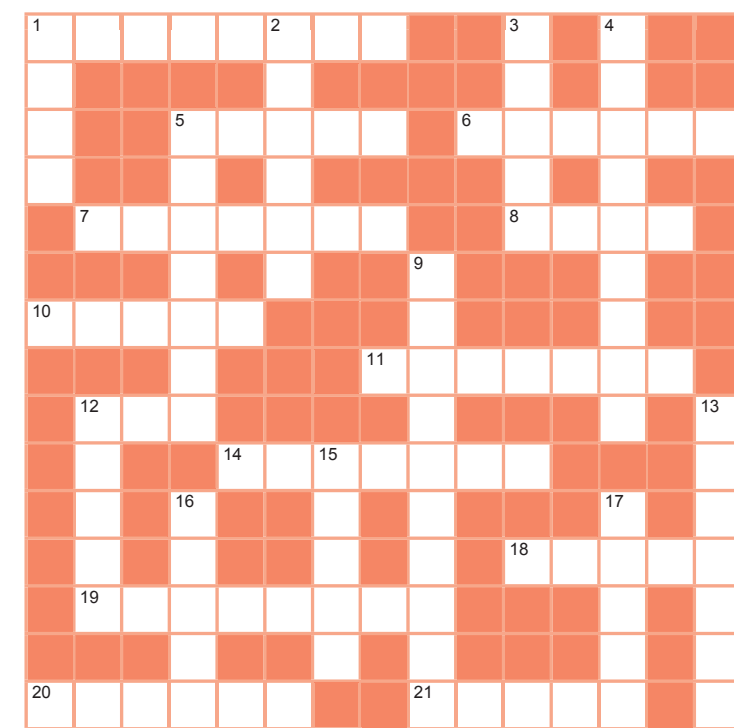
12	20
7	12

Solution for Medium 1
21 = (2 - 12 - 02)

Hard puzzle 1

22	32
5	30

Solution For Hard 1
9 = (06 - 26) - 22



- Across**
- 1 Mosquito repellent (3,5)
 - 5 Birchbark river cruiser (5)
 - 6 Camping is a way to "get back to ____" (6)
 - 7 Needed after the sun goes down (7)
 - 8 Needed to practice knot tying (4)
 - 10 Stay hydrated! Drink this! (5)
 - 11 "____ is man's best medicine": Hippocrates (7)
 - 12 Camping (3)
 - 14 Lighter alternative (7)
 - 15 Meadow feature (5)
 - 19 Lifeguards supervise this activity (8)
 - 20 Excellent camping buddy (6)
 - 21 Protection from rain (5)
- Down**
- 1 Fish hook fodder (4)
 - 2 You may find one in a State Park (6)
 - 3 Camping furniture (5)
 - 4 Gear (9)
 - 5 Where campers carry water (7)
 - 7 This is called a "torch" in England (10)

- Across**
- 12 You may need them for fishing, but you don't need them at picnics (5)
 - 13 Camper's table setting (4,3)
 - 15 Hiker's path (5)
 - 16 Most important camping tool (5)
 - 17 "Capture The Flag" and "Hide and Seek" e.g. (5)



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This might be your first time actually meeting us in person, which is great! Not that our online edition isn't just as good, but there's nothing quite like the feel of a good old-fashioned newspaper in your hands over a cup of coffee—at least, in our opinion.

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