

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

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AIR FOR
THE SOUL

CELEBRATING SUMMER
IN A HARD TIME

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humorously calls
herself a 'Joyologist'
—a discipline where 'we
look for joy in the most
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places.'

Dawn Barton

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Picking Ourselves Back Up

A conversation with Robert Glazer, author of 'Elevate'

BARBARA DANZA

As the world continues to open back up from varying states of lockdown, we face the prospect of getting back to normal, resuming our lives, and moving on from a period of time we won't soon forget.

These months have, of course, been experienced differently by different people. However, many of us have, at times, found ourselves feeling rather introspective—reviewing our lives and the way of life we wish to return to.

I recently read Robert Glazer's book, "Elevate: Push Beyond Your Limits and Unlock Success in Yourself and Others." An easily digestible and inspiring read, I found it set just the right tone for a time like this. The book provides a succinct framework to look at the key areas of your life—spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional—and expand your capacity, as Glazer puts it, in each category.

I asked Glazer for his advice as we emerge from lockdowns.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Canceled plans and lots of time at home have allowed people to reflect upon different aspects of their lives. Many people have been rethinking their careers, where they choose to live, how they choose to live, and more. What advice would you give someone who aims to make a big life change?

ROBERT GLAZER: Our most important decisions are driven by our core values—the non-negotiable principles that are most important to us. Consciously or unconsciously, our core values affect our choices in all these factors—where we live, our vocation, who we share our lives with, and more.

The most important advice I would give somebody looking to make a significant life change is to first spend some time reflecting on what's most important to them, and start considering what their core values are. Start by asking: what job would you do for free? What was a personal or professional environment that you found especially motivating, or draining? What sorts of qualities in other people exhaust you most?

By carefully answering these questions and writing down your responses, you'll see plenty of overlapping themes in your answers: these will be the characteristics and traits that inform your core values. Once you start understanding your core values, you can make big life decisions with clarity and confidence. I'm actually developing a full-length course that walks through a core value exercise in detail—that will be coming in the next month or so.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Your book, "Elevate," focuses on four spectrums of life: spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional. How can someone use this framework to get their lives on track as lockdowns ease?

MR. GLAZER: The central premise of "Elevate" is that most high-achieving people I've met and researched have built their



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Robert Glazer

AFRICA STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK



Many people have had the opportunity to invest more time in relationship during lockdown; as we move forward, make a priority of keeping those relationships strong.

capacity in those four areas: spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional capacity. It's important to understand the four capacities so that you can focus on each one intentionally and consistently.

For spiritual capacity, this pertains to understanding who you are at your core—your core values, as discussed above, and your purpose. A lot of people will be effectively pressing reset on their lives and careers after lockdowns ease, so it's important to extensively reflect on what you really want most, and how you can pursue that when the world opens up again.

Intellectual capacity is how you think, learn, plan, and execute. This is essential because, during change and upheaval, the people who excel are constantly learning and adapting. I would encourage people to ask themselves—what skills or knowledge do you need to acquire today to get on track? What productive habits do you want to install into your life to improve your performance?

Physical capacity relates to your health, well-being, and energy; we need it now more than ever. In stressful situations, such as a pandemic, it can be easy to fall out of an exercise routine, stress-eat, or disregard the importance of sleep. To guard against this type of slippage, be proactive with your time; schedule exercise into your day, give yourself time to recover at the end of a long day, and even put away your phone and computer an hour before bed to help you wind down and sleep better.

Emotional capacity encapsulates how you respond to challenging situations, your emotional mindset, and the quality of your relationships. In challenging times, that last one is most crucial: many people have had more time to invest in their relationships during the lockdown. For example, in my own family, we've had dinner as a family for over 60 nights in a row at this point, simply because none of us can travel or socialize, and it's brought us closer together.

When lockdowns start to lift and life returns to normal, I'd encourage you to make those strengthened relationships a part of your new normal. Make a list of the people in your life you want to continue prioritizing and giving your time and energy to, and commit to keeping those bonds strong. At the same time, think about the draining relationships you need to start walking away from. As the saying goes, we're the average of the people we spend the most time with, and if we prioritize our most important, positive relationships, we'll grow in the process.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What challenges do you expect people will commonly face as they get back into the swing of things?

MR. GLAZER: People are going to be resetting their lives, their routines, their working conditions, and even their social habits. It was challenging for people to completely press pause on their daily lives and stay home, and I think it will be similarly challenging at first for people to go back to the new normal.

That commute is going to feel long at first, and it will be an adjustment to be in an office, to be expected to travel for work again or to be surrounded by people all day. While some people will be rejuvenated by these shifts, even those who are happy to be back to normal will struggle at times to manage their energy, time, and commitments.

Capacity-building helps here by giving a framework to design life as you want it when the world returns to normal. You don't just have to fall into your old routines, or struggle to rev back up to pre-lockdown levels of activity. Instead, you can prioritize your time and energy toward the activities that fulfill you and the people who matter most to you. You can set actionable goals for yourself and build habits that help you achieve what you want, rather than trying to figure things out as you go. And you can practice prioritizing your health and energy as well.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What opportunities might people look for post-lockdown?

MR. GLAZER: I think there's going to be some major professional changes as people reevaluate what kind of personal and professional life they want to have. There will be people who were considering changing jobs at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis who will finally have the chance to do that. There will be people who realized during lockdown that they've been spending their career doing something they don't like, or working somewhere that doesn't align with their values, and will be looking to move. Organizations that are committed to helping people find personal and professional fulfillment stand to gain in this type of environment.

Similarly, I think people will have a new appreciation for how short life can feel, and will be wanting to pursue personal and professional goals with new urgency and intention. In short, they'll be looking to build their capacity: to try new things that push them out of their comfort zone, to learn new skills and explore new career opportunities, and to prioritize their physical and mental health. I think they will also shift the focus from being busy to being fulfilled.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Your book encourages leadership. How would you recommend someone help and inspire family, friends, and colleagues around him or her during this unique transition process?

MR. GLAZER: Leading by example and sharing positivity with others is an important piece—it's useful to share the changes you're making with others and inspire them to rethink their own goals and priorities. Also, when people come to you asking for how they can improve, don't just tell them what they want to hear. Instead, respectfully challenge them to consider where they can grow, and offer to help them make those changes. Be an accountability partner, or, if the relationship is appropriate, a mentor.



Dawn Barton has experienced a great deal of tragedy in her life, but she's always strived to find joy.

Choosing Joy in Difficult Times

ANDREW THOMAS

All of us experience painful events in our lives, but it's how we overcome and grow from those experiences that defines us. Dawn Barton, 50, has gone through more traumatic experiences than most of us can imagine, yet she's chosen to live a life of joy.

Tragedy and Pain

In 1992, Barton lost her 9-month-old daughter to a rare bacterial pneumonia after nearly drowning in a bathtub when she slipped from the child-safety ring. Just six months after her daughter passed away, a man broke into her house and sexually assaulted her. The passing of her daughter put an incredible strain on her relationship with her husband, as they grieved in different ways, and they ultimately divorced

shortly afterward. Unfortunately, the hardships would hardly end there.

At age 41, Barton was diagnosed with stage three triple-negative breast cancer, while her second husband was deployed on active duty with the Navy in Bahrain. Not long after, her mother suffered a brain aneurysm and spent a month in the intensive care unit. Two years later, her younger sister was also diagnosed with breast cancer; she unexpectedly died in her sleep three years ago.

Joy

Barton initially lost her faith after her daughter's passing, but overtime she regained it and was able to find joy even in difficult situations. She realized she could grieve, but then she felt she had to choose to seek joy.



Dawn Barton (C) with her family.



Barton's book "Laughing Through the Ugly Cry: ... And Finding Unstoppable Joy."

“These days, she humorously calls herself a Joyologist: “That’s a scientific discipline (founded by myself) where we look for joy in the most unfriendly, unlikely, inhospitable places. You wouldn’t believe where joy can grow and survive. I’ve seen it for myself, in my own story,” she wrote in her book, “Laughing Through the Ugly Cry: ... And Finding Unstoppable Joy.”

I had the opportunity to speak with Barton about how to find joy even in life's most painful times.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are three easy steps for dealing with life's ups and downs?

DAWN BARTON: The first thing is truly just making that choice to make one little step, whether it be as simple as getting out of the bed in the midst of heartache, but it's a choice to find something good. The next thing for me is I started making a list of things that made me joyful. I called them triggers.

Positive triggers and negative triggers, and I started writing down both so that I knew when something that was a negative trigger to me that I would combat it with this list of joyful things. It was something as simple as writing down colors that I loved. It was putting together a playlist that I loved. I love flowers so I would just go to the grocery store and pick up some flowers. In finding these places I was really grateful.

Really if you sit down and you start thinking about things that you're grateful for, especially in the midst of what we're going through, it really does change your focus.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How is joy possible even when it seems like everything is going wrong in life?

MS. BARTON: I think that joy is always around us. So here we are in the midst of people having to be quarantined and then we have all of this racial unrest going on,

but in the midst of things that feel so hard there is still joy to be had. The stories of the love that happens—I do believe that light always shines through in these really dark times. People rise up and we see the best in people, and that's the joy that happens in the midst of these hard times. You can choose to focus on what's really hard or you can choose to search for those kinds of stories.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Why are belly laughs and ugly cries two of life's greatest gifts?

MS. BARTON: I have experienced more joy than I think most people ever will because I've probably experienced more pain than most people ever will. I think they go hand in hand a little. To appreciate the belly laughs of life when you have that comparison level of what the ugly cries are—what deep pain is—you can recognize unbelievable goodness and joy at just a profoundly beautiful level. You have to be grateful for both.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Why is it important to overcome your pain and find joy?

MS. BARTON: We were not created to be on this earth to sit around and watch Netflix all day long, although I'm particularly good at it. We are not created to sit and eat ice cream and watch Netflix. We are created to make a difference, and making a difference doesn't mean you're doing something huge.

Making a difference sometimes is as simple as going out and smiling at another person. It's reaching out to a friend. We are not created to live in a place of sadness and devastation or self-wallowing. That is not why we are here. I mean what a sad existence that would be if we all stayed in that place rather than making a choice to do good, to spread joy, to get out there, and make a difference.

Fresh Air for the Soul: Celebrating Summer in a Hard Time

JEFF MINICK

My daughter and her family live in a rambling, 140-year old house in rural Pennsylvania. The house sits on the grounds of a private school, where my son-in-law is employed. The place is as peaceful and as quiet as you can imagine.

Recently, my daughter's friend, Lisa, came for a week's visit. Lisa is a nurse in Milwaukee and lives in the middle of that city. Because her apartment lacks air-conditioning, she leaves the windows open. In the week prior to her visit, she slept little at night because of the protests and looting taking place in the nearby streets: the shouts, the chants, the screams, the sound of breaking glass.

Once, she became so frightened for her safety that she fled the apartment to spend the night with her parents.

"This place is just what I needed," Lisa said again and again to my daughter of her property. "It's so quiet here. The sun's out, and everything seems so normal. It's like a breath of fresh air for my soul."

A Falling-Apart Summer?

An old hymn starts with these lyrics:

"I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul."

If you're like me, if you prefer the 'old normal,' then we must make the effort to restore what we have lost during this quarantine.

For many people, "peace like a river" this summer appears an impossibility. Some of us are still in a phase of the pandemic lockdown, riots and protests have brought mayhem to our cities, and we are fast approaching national elections, which means more conflict and turmoil. Because of the pandemic, our summer vacation plans may have fallen apart, sports events are post-

poned or canceled, and swimming pools are closed.

Conducted in late May, a national poll found Americans the unhappiest they've been in 50 years.

Given these circumstances, how do we recreate those relaxed and leisurely summers we once knew, particularly for our children? How do we try to fight against our own unhappiness?

If you're looking for ways to make life "normal," as Lisa put it, and even for a little of that "peace like a river," here are some tips on how to kick into summer and fill it with some wonderful memories.

Establish Limits

Beware of obsession with the news. Good citizens need to keep abreast of the news and understand the implications of events for our country, but to watch television news for hours a day or to return again and again to our electronic devices for the latest reports is unhealthy.

We must be especially aware of the effects of the news and our discussions of it on our smaller children. The old

saying "Little pitchers have big ears" applies here, and those little pitchers also have big imaginations. My 8-year-old granddaughter heard her parents and some friends discussing the burning and looting of recent days, and became extremely anxious that people were coming to set fire to their house.

Companionship

We are just now emerging from a quarantine that has left many of us feeling isolated and alone. Some people talk as if we can never return to the days of parties, concerts, and sports events, and that we are living in the age of the "new normal." If you're like me, if you prefer the "old normal," then we must make the effort to restore what we have lost during this quarantine.

And summer is the perfect time to begin that restoration. Fire up the backyard grill. Invite family members to a potluck supper. Tell your friends to bring a bottle of their favorite wine and host an after-dinner wine tasting, with lemonade or sparkling cider for the younger set. Offer a movie, inviting friends to watch with you.

Take a Break

Whether you've suffered unemployment and can't afford that beach house you rent for a week every July or whether you canceled plans for a trip to Disney World, you still need a vacation, perhaps now more than ever. The word derives from the Latin "vacatio," meaning "leisure, freedom, exempt from duty," and though you may have enjoyed more leisure time during the pandemic, freedom and exemption from duty were likely in short supply.

Consider taking your vacation from home this year.

Here's the difficult part: You have to really make it a vacation, meaning you won't spend time this week painting the kitchen or cleaning out the basement. During this week, close your eyes to cluttered closets and weeds in the garden, and look instead for entertainment, rest, and relaxation. It's time to have some fun.

Most of us live within an easy drive of places we rarely or never visit, historic sites, small towns, nature parks, and art museums. In Front Royal, Virginia, for example, are wineries unfamiliar to me, a small airport offering inexpensive plane rides that would delight visiting grandchildren, several canoeing outfits, and the Skyline Drive. Within an

hour's drive are Civil War battlefields like Manassas and a host of small towns I've never visited. Pack the kids in the car and explore your own backyard.

And pamper yourself. You're on vacation. Instead of cooking supper, dine out at a restaurant or order Chinese takeout. Pack a picnic lunch and some books, set up some lawn chairs or spread out some towels in the backyard or a park, and bask in the sun, reading and building your supply of Vitamin D. Relax. You're on vacation.

Solvitur Ambulando

In the mid-1960s, America went through a 50-mile hiking mania. The Kennedy administration was trying to get Americans to exercise more, some Marines hiked 50 miles in less than 20 hours, and when Robert Kennedy did the same, the 50-mile hike became a craze, with both young and old participating.

We need not hike for 50 miles, but walking is good for all of us. Whether it's five miles on Virginia's Skyline Drive or three miles through the streets of Manhattan, walking gets us out of the house and out of ourselves. Not only is it physically healthy, but walking is also good for the mind and soul as well. In her online article, "Why Famous

DENNIS VAN DE WATER/SHUTTERSTOCK



Walking is good for us, a restorer of both mind and body.

Writers Loved Long Walks," Nicole Bianchi points out that authors such as Thoreau, Dickens, and Hemingway all touted walking as beneficial to their thinking and their writing. Bianchi mentions the old Latin tag, "Solvitur Ambulando," which translates "It is solved by walking."

Often, we can literally walk away our troubles, finding a deeper sense of tranquility through movement and the scenery around us.

Look for Joy

I have a friend, Anne, who often speaks of sending out love to others. She tries to bring this spirit of love to them in person, and if that isn't an option, through her thoughts and prayer. She is a quiet, generally shy person, and is also one of the most joyful people I know. Her joy is genuine, fed by a sometimes-forced optimism and an uncanny ability to find silver linings in the darkest of clouds.

While speaking to Anne recently, I was reminded of a little book my mother gave me long ago. Though I haven't read James Allen's classic "As a Man Thinketh" for years, his words made a profound impression on my younger self. Allen tells us that we become what we think, that our thoughts shape who and what we are, and that we are capable of controlling those thoughts. If we want to be happier, for instance, we must think our way toward that goal.

Let's do it. Let's aim for joy and find some pleasure in this summer.

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

(Right) Barbers Steve Grimaldi (L) and Chris Pouch cut hair for customers at Grimaldi's Barber Shop in Chesterton, Ind., on May 13, 2020. (Below left) The Bakery on O'Connell St. in Adelaide, Australia, on June 1, 2020. (Below right) A shop assistant makes a coffee in Penarth, Wales, on June 5, 2020.



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The Internet Is No Substitute for Real Life

ANTHONY GILL

I am not one who cries easily. My wife had to inform me that the ending to "Old Yeller" was not a comedy. Nonetheless, when word came down via social media that the Duvall Tavern was reopening after a three-month hiatus, tears welled up in my eyes, immediately and involuntarily.

The Duvall Tavern is a pub and restaurant in a small town just northeast of Seattle. It seats a maximum capacity of about 60 indoors, and probably 90 when the patio opens in summer. The owners offer up a dozen craft and mass-produced beers, a

standard liquor selection, and basic bar fare with some unique dishes rotated weekly.

But more than a building with food service, the Tavern is a gathering place. It is where I go to meet good friends, see infrequent acquaintances, and make new connections. In other words, the Tavern represents not just a commercial enterprise, but a social institution, and a vital one at that.

As we slowly begin to reopen after months of draconian lockdowns on commerce, economists are focusing their attention on the narrow economic

Places such as salons, bakeries, breweries, and gyms not only provide us with goods and services, but also vital spaces to craft friendships, trust, and empathy.

indicators of employment, profit rates, and capital stock (both human and physical). But there is something they are missing—the social capital that stay-at-home orders helped destroy. This cannot be emphasized enough.

Social capital is comprised of all the interactions we have with one another, both big and small, and the knowledge and understanding about people around us that those interactions generate. Adam Smith famously talked about our human propensity to truck, barter, and exchange, but we also have the proclivity to chat, celebrate, and commune. We do this in backyards, at parks, around the water cooler, at sporting events, after religious services, and ... yes ... at the Duvall Tavern.

A flourishing economy needs a healthy dose of social capital. As Peter Boettke, Zachary Caceres, and Adam Martin point out, the economy is a cooperative endeavor writ large, one that emerges via the voluntary agreements of billions of tiny interactions. While Economy 101 classes extol the importance of market competition, commercial activity cannot occur without a strong social fabric that promotes cooperation and trust among individuals.

Uncertainty about the intentions of others, whether they intend to engage honestly or plan to cheat, is ubiquitous in large-scale economies that rely upon anonymous and quasi-anonymous trade. But the social learning embedded in institutions that promote even small-scale human interactions helps to alleviate uncertainty, build trust, and expand trade.

Sociologists have talked about social capital in two forms—bridging and bonding. The latter (bonding) manifests itself in the tight relations formed with individuals that you are in constant contact with—family members, work colleagues, and lifelong friends. These are the several dozen people who you know will be at your funeral.

Bridging social capital, alternatively, represents the weaker relations that we have with one another. It represents the couple at the bar that you might see every other week and talk about football. Or it could be the bakery owner who you visit every few days to buy a coffee and pastry on the way to work.

Your first visit to the bakery probably occurred as the most sterile form of trade presented in Economy 101 textbooks—two dollars exchanged for coffee and a donut. But by the seventh trip, you are asking the baker about her kids, and she might be wondering why you weren't around last Tuesday like you normally are. Neighborhood barbershops and salons are not just places that provide you with haircuts; they provide community space for all sorts of social interactions.

The "idle chat" that occurs in these places is the thread necessary for weaving our social fabric. These may not be your closest friends, but they are friendly faces that you begin to care about, trust, and have empathy for. These are the folks you hope will come to your funeral, or at least

How to Help High School Seniors Cope With Missed Milestones

ALLYSON G. HARRISON

Change is stressful for all of us. It's, therefore, no surprise to find that, in general, people are finding it difficult to cope with the COVID-19 restrictions. None of us knows exactly how to cope with the fallout from this unprecedented situation.

While adults find this forced confinement difficult, young adults who were about to embark on a new chapter in their lives are finding the disruption in normal life events particularly stressful.

Not only are they missing things such as proms or a graduation ceremony, but they're also missing other potentially life-altering events: the track and field championship for which they'd worked hard all year just so they could compete; the conservatory exam to evaluate just how much they'd improved their musical skills; or the summer job that would help them earn money and build a resume for future employment.

Developmental Milestones

And now, the worst cut of all, in many cases, no in-person fall classes at college or university. This means no formal initiation into the freshman class of 2020 for students.

It means not having to decide what personal mementos to bring as you leave home or no tearful goodbye with parents. For those who planned to still live at home, it means not carefully packing one's knapsack for the first day at campus orienta-

tion and no bonding with classmates. Now, this next chapter will most likely happen in their current bedroom, virtually.

These developmental milestones help young adults mark their progress as they transition from child to adult, and yet now, these important events have all been shelved—at least until the pandemic ends.

Once they get through this, they'll feel better able to cope with other future stressful situations.

Our center runs an online transition program for students with either learning or mental health disabilities who are going to college or university next fall. We are hearing a lot from these students about the stress that the current closures and social distancing are causing them. In my role as clinical director of the Regional Assessment and Resource Center at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada, I hear on a daily basis how the pandemic is affecting the mental health of high school seniors.

Not What They Signed Up For

This disruption has meant not only that they have to change the way they learn in high school, but also that they have to take more personal responsibility for engaging

in learning.

This was not what they signed up for, and they find that their teachers are (in general) less adept at managing the online learning environment than they are. These students are learning that it's difficult to change from an in-person to an online learning environment. From some of their parents, we are also hearing that pressuring their children to do their assigned virtual homework is causing friction in their parent-child relationships.

A number of the high school students with whom we work also worry that the change to online learning may mean that they miss out on some of the key foundational knowledge needed to help them succeed. They are, quite rightly, concerned that they won't have the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully deal with first-year curricula.

What Parents and Loved Ones Can Do So, what can parents and significant others in the lives of these young adults do right now to help high school seniors cope?

1. Don't jump in to fix things. Agree and appreciate that this is a stressful time for them, but don't jump in and try to fix things. Allow them to have their feelings and allow them to figure out how to cope with those feelings. Ask them: "What would you like me to do to help you right now?" Offer suggestions if they ask. Give the message that you have faith that they'll find a way to cope.

2. Help youth find positive coping strategies to manage disappointment. In life, we all have to deal with loss and disappointment, and the more we can help young adults learn positive coping skills at these times the better prepared they will be to deal with such negative situations in the future. Learning skills like mindfulness meditation or deep breathing and relaxation can help, as can learning how to create a worry list to contain anxiety and worry.

3. Honor their achievements, even if it is virtually. Help them identify what they wanted most or wish could have happened these past few months. How can they honor what they've achieved? Can they or family find ways to celebrate now? Plan ahead for a big party once social distancing is over? Consider arranging a videoconferencing meeting with important members of their social circle and have speeches. Have everyone tell the young adult how proud they are of their achievements and reinforce for them what being part of their lives means to that particular individual.

4. See the current pandemic challenges as an opportunity to build resiliency. Post-secondary counseling centers in North America have seen an increase in student mental health problems partly due to a lack of resiliency, because many of these students haven't previously dealt with disappointment or even minor stressful events.

have a sad pause knowing you have passed.

And while deep bonding capital is often what we long for most, it is the bridging capital that often gets us there. Bridging capital is about discovery. It is about learning one thing about a new person, finding points of common interest, and then expanding those relationships.

Over the past three months, we've shut that down. No wonder the world seems more ominous. We don't know who to trust because we can't keep our faith alive in one another by being next to one another. The internet, we are discovering, is no substitute.

A year or so ago at the Valley House Brewing Company, just down the road from the Duvall Tavern, I came upon some folks talking about cribbage (a card game). "I play cribbage, let's play." That spontaneous card game became a regular Tuesday gathering over the following months with different people showing up on different weeks. We played cards, drank beer, and talked about fishing, the craft brew industry, cars, and general town gossip.

The 'idle chat' that occurs in these places is the thread necessary for weaving our social fabric.

The network expanded; we attended birthday parties; groups went out on crabbing expeditions and shared recipes; and I found somebody able to fix my home generator's power cord. My life was better because there was a place to create and build social capital. There was a bridge that built bonds.

And then came the lockdown. We tried playing cards over the internet. It was nice, but it wasn't the same. When the smothering isolation of stay-at-home orders became unbearable after just two months, some of us started gathering surreptitiously at the local boat launch to drink beer out of red Solo cups. A couple of us even hugged when we saw each other "masked up" at the Family Grocer, never mind social distancing.

It's not just taverns or breweries. It's gymnasiums, houses of worship, parks, and academic conferences. I could easily exercise at home, and have been with the mini-gym that we constructed for ourselves. However, I genuinely miss the folks in fitness classes who I may only see two or three hours per week. These are not close friends, but they are important acquaintances that over time I've learned I can rely upon for assistance when needed.

More importantly, these "little" interactions reassure me that humans are pretty good people in general. We build social trust together. This occurs similarly after Sunday church services, at college football games, and music concerts. It can also happen when someone stumbles in drunk to

a hotel bar and buys the conference organizers a round of top-shelf whiskey (true story, by the way).

Political economists have long studied how to foster cooperation within societies of self-interested strangers. The basic, rationalist game theory model of cooperation (i.e., the prisoners' dilemma) posits that defection from cooperation is the equilibrium position. But scholars such as Robert Axelrod and others have discovered that repeated interactions, even among strangers, foster cooperation.

The "folk theorem" in economics shows that cooperation can emerge over time even if there are strong incentives to cheat. Continual interaction is the key. Typically, the folk theorem is presented with the same individuals engaging over an "infinite" period of moves. In reality, though, we live the folk theorem every day with differing individuals and in varying contexts. Some of those contexts may only be repeated a few times. Civil society, the arena of social capital, is nothing if not the folk theorem being played out on a massive scale.

Unfortunately, over the past three months, government policies dictating "stay-at-home" and to socially distance ourselves from one another have undermined all of this social capital, particularly the very delicate, yet crucially important, bridging capital. When we look to see how the economy recovers from the economic lockdown, we must not forget to pay particular attention to rebuilding the human relationships that were severed.

Remember that many commercial enterprises provide you not only with the goods and services you desire, but the vital space with which we all need to craft friendships, trust, and empathy. Without that, economies don't function well. No supply-and-demand graph can ever capture that fully. You have to live it to believe it.

If and when your favorite tavern, gymnasium, barbershop, or coffee shop reopens, tell the owner and staff how much you missed them. Not just their products or services, but them. The "them" who give you the opportunity to connect with the community around you. A free market provides us with so much more than mere baubles; it continually builds the social relations we need to live more fulfilled lives. Critics of the free market who call capitalism heartless must be deaf to how loud our commercial system pumps blood through our civil society.

Truth be told, I actually did cry when (spoiler alert) Old Yeller crossed the rainbow bridge. And I did get a little misty-eyed when writing these words. No doubt it is my longing for a whiskey and Tavern Burger, but also probably knowing that I will be seeing some old friends, casual acquaintances, and making new friends once again.

Anthony Gill is a professor of political economy at the University of Washington—Seattle. This article was originally published by the American Institute for Economic Research.



JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

Jordan Stern participates in a parade of vehicles celebrating the area's graduating high school seniors in Aventura, Fla., on May 14, 2020.

The COVID crisis has the potential to act as a yardstick for students. Once they get through this, they'll feel better able to cope with other future stressful situations.

5. Focus on the positive. Having to learn to manage your own time, learn from online content and set your own schedule—these are all valuable transition skills that students need, whether going from high school to post-secondary education or eventually to a job. There are lots of good resources about how to cope with the demands of online learning or a lack of structure in learning environments, and many library websites have shared this type of content.

6. Limit media consumption. Young adults spend much of their time online and this is a good way to keep in touch; but too much is not good, especially if some of those interactions have the potential to be negative or increase anxiety. Studies have

shown a strong link between time spent online and negative mood symptoms.

One of the biggest challenges we hear about from post-secondary students we see at our center is students with attention problems wondering: How can I limit my use of electronics? This might be the time to investigate installing apps that limit the amount of time you can get online.

Remember, teens and young adults, in general, can learn to become quite resilient if left to figure things out on their own and given positive support. Send the message that you have faith they'll succeed, not that you're waiting to rescue them when they fall apart.

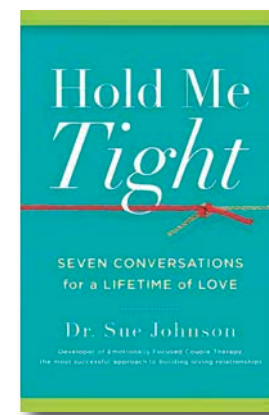
Allyson G. Harrison is an associate professor of psychology and clinical director of the Regional Assessment and Resource Center at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. This article was first published on The Conversation.

7 Books That Will Improve Your Life

MICHAEL COURTER

Books are a legacy of the knowledge and wisdom that people have accumulated and compiled over time.

Here are seven nonfiction books that have enhanced my life in the past few years. They have helped my family and me make vast improvements in the areas of health, stress management, interpersonal relationships, career, positive habits, parenting, and marriage.



'Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love' by Dr. Sue Johnson

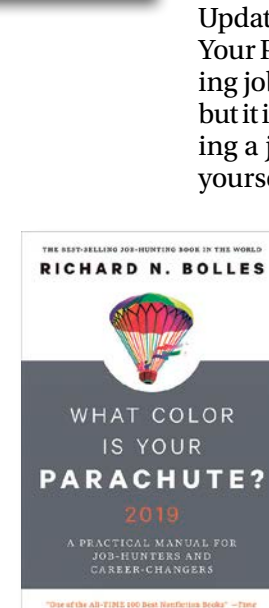
Having developed the most successful form of marital therapy, Sue Johnson understands the essence of love and connection. In "Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love," Johnson eluci-

dates the emotional bonds that underlie love. She points out that breaks in these bonds are the real reason for marital discord and how to repair the rifts.

She walks couples through a series of conversations to reduce conflicts and create the safety and intimacy needed to develop deep emotional bonds between spouses.

'What Color Is Your Parachute?' by Richard N. Bolles

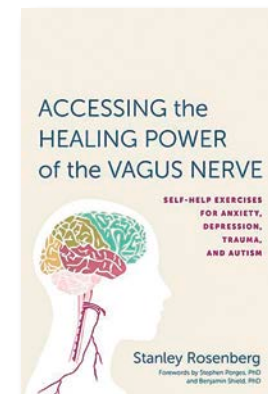
Updated annually, "What Color Is Your Parachute?" is the best-selling job-seeking book of all time, but it is not just a book about finding a job. It is about discovering yourself, finding your best traits, exploring what you love and hate about work, and uncovering your true mission in life. Over the years, I have found myself occasionally repeating the exercises in the book to refine and hone in on my true purpose as my experiences and circumstances change. After you complete the exercises in the book, you are guaranteed to know yourself better at a deep level.



'Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve: Self-Help Exercises for Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, and Autism' by Stanley Rosenberg

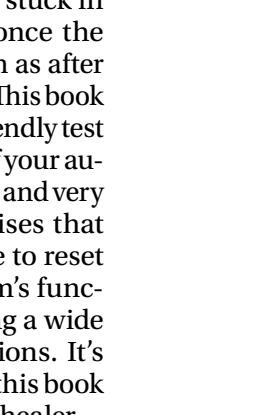
Stanley Rosenberg offers cutting-edge information about the importance of the autonomic nervous system for physical and mental health. This is the system that regulates your normal, calm state of mind and body, which, under stress, shifts into a fight, flight, or freeze response to protect and save you from harm.

A person's nervous system sometimes gets stuck in an overstressed state once the danger has passed, such as after a traumatic experience. This book puts forth a fast, user-friendly test to determine the state of your autonomic nervous system and very simple and easy exercises that anyone can do at home to reset and improve the system's functioning—thus impacting a wide array of health conditions. It's obvious when you read this book that Rosenberg is a true healer.



'Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones' by James Clear

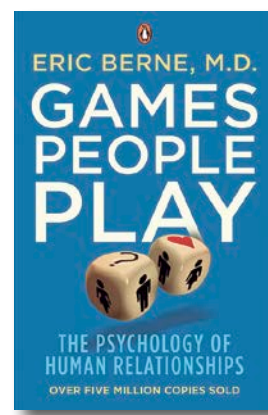
James Clear breaks down the science of personal change. He explains why goals often fail while making small consistent shifts in your habits multiply their benefits over time. In this accessible and practical guide to changing your life, you will learn why changing the way you see yourself is the key to developing the life you always wanted.



'Games People Play' by Eric Berne

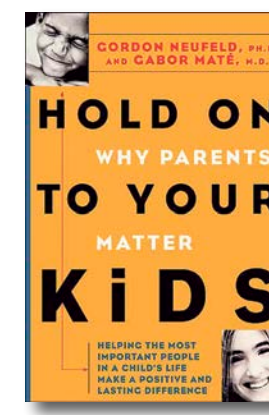
Eric Berne, the founder of a theory of psychology called transactional analysis, was a keen observer of people. He noticed that in many interactions between people, there is a subconscious, hidden goal in the exchange, that the people interacting don't usually realize is happening.

Berne called it a game. The book is presented in a humorous and down-to-earth style, as Berne describes the games he has observed frequently played between people and reveals their hidden, underlying agendas. Reading the book will unveil the hidden gimmicks in the interpersonal interactions around you, and what people are truly seeking—whether that's validation, appreciation, forgiveness, or other things—under the guise of interactions as simple as a conversation.



'Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers' by Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Maté

"Hold On to Your Kids" is not like the other parenting books that focus on strategies and techniques to get your children to toe your line. It breaks down the fundamental shift in the relationship between a parent and child when a child's peers become more important to a child than their parents—something that is happening at an alarming rate in our society. It talks about how to win your children back in the context of effective parenting, where the bond between a parent and child comes first.



Michael Courter is a therapist and counselor who believes in the power of personal growth, repairing relationships, and following your dreams. He can be reached at mc@CourterCounsel.com

Historical Fashion

Self-taught tailor Zack Pinsent hasn't worn modern clothing since age 14

J.H. WHITE

British tailor Zack MacLeod Pinsent's passion for historical-era clothing truly began when he ceremoniously burned his last pair of jeans at the age of 14. He wore clothing from different periods, such as the Victorian era, but came upon the fashions of the Regency and Georgian periods when he was invited to a ball in London and had nothing to wear.

"I went on eBay, found a costume tailcoat, chopped it up to fit me. I still have the photos, and I cringe," he said with a laugh. "But I caught the bug from that point. I really loved the aesthetic."

The 26-year-old tailor now dresses exclusively from the mid-18th-century to early 19th-century Georgian and Regency eras. Now he's made a tailoring business out of it in Brighton and has become one of the UK's foremost experts in crafting bespoke historical clothing for men and women from the years of 1666-1900.

Feeling '10-Foot High'

Georgian and Regency-era dress is not simply attractive for its ornate designs, symbolic embroidery, flattering silhouettes, and bold use of color. It's about wearing something beautiful to make you feel beautiful.

"Wearing what I wear, it makes me feel 10-feet high," he said in a BBC interview. He said that people often judge him, ac-



Blue silk waistcoat, white linen shirt, checkered trousers, and a silk cravat.



Wool tailcoat and waistcoat with black silk cravat and watch fob.

“Clothes throughout history have always had something to say and something to convey. Nowadays clothes have nothing to say; they're completely silent.”

Zack MacLeod Pinsent



British tailor Zack MacLeod Pinsent wears a green wool coat with striped silk waistcoat.

cusings him of dressing only for attention. "If I just wanted to do it for attention, I'd do something that would be far easier, require a lot less research, hand-sewing and everything. I wear [historical clothing] 24/7. It's not just when I pop out of the house or go to a big event, it's all the time. That's what makes it a genuine style as opposed to an affectation," he said in an interview.

If you look at Pinsent's Instagram account with more than 350,000 followers, you can easily see how his exquisite clothing makes him feel that way. But this inner confidence felt when wearing bespoke historical clothing isn't just Pinsent's experience alone. For example, Pinsent was measuring a lady for a Regency gown, which she said she may even wear to her wedding. She sat next to him, discussing samples of fabrics. "She said, 'Oh, I'm a size—' I stopped her and said, 'No, you aren't a size anything. This will be your size. It will fit you,'" Pinsent recalled. "She just burst into tears because her whole life she'd been defined by a number on a label, a completely arbitrary number."

Pinsent explained that these sizes and standards of the modern fashion industry—held by clothing, modeling, and makeup companies—are designed to make people think poorly about themselves. That way they end up consuming more to feel better.

"The whole beauty and fashion industries are geared toward [the idea that] you have to look and be a certain way for you to be of any value," he said.

Pinsent said his client's reaction was unexpected since he's been making bespoke clothing for so long. But, in retrospect, he can see how liberating it is to finally own something made specifically for you. Pinsent's client told him she was so inspired by her interaction with him, she then found local dressmakers near her home and now only buys bespoke.

"Clothes throughout history have always had something to say and something to convey. Nowadays clothes have nothing to say; they're completely silent," he said. Pinsent's tailoring can work within different budgets as well. You can order more simple fabrics like linen or expensive, lavish ones. For example, he's ordered silk velvet handmade in Venice costing 1,000 pounds per yard for one of his clients.

Pinsent explains that Georgian- and Regency-period clothing is also particularly beautiful for its flattering silhouettes and vibrant use of color. For more corpulent men, for example, the high waist creates a smoother line, rather than having one's belly hang over the belt.

"Nowadays men have stuck to navy blue, gray, and brown, which is just so depressing," he said. "The military heroes of their day were running into battle wearing lavishly embroidered uniforms" with hearts, flowers, and other ornate detailing on them.

With modern dress standards, "we've lost a bit of self-respect and sometimes respect for others," he said. "Popping down to the shops in basically your pajamas, [it's hard to be] to be taken seriously at the same time."

Traditional Fabrics

Not only does clothing from these historical eras make one feel confident, but Pinsent uses traditional artisanal practices that help the planet. He uses historically accurate, 100 percent natural fibers such as linen, manufactured relatively close to him, in Ireland, and Belgium, to lower the carbon footprint.

Though cotton is natural, Pinsent doesn't use it since its production is toxic, both figuratively and literally. He explains cotton only became popular with the advent of slavery; today in Bangladesh, for example, an average garment worker makes only \$68 per month, according to a TEDEd video. Because cotton molds, massive amounts of pesticides and water must be used to prepare the cotton thread. For example, more than 30 bathtubs of water are needed to make one cotton T-shirt. Linen, in contrast, is naturally antibacterial and lasts for centuries, as evidenced in ancient Egyptian tombs that have preserved perfectly intact linen wraps.

Pinsent said he also needs to stop using terms such as "polyester," which hides the material's true nature.

"It's plastic," he said. "It's not going to go anywhere. It's going to remain on the earth for thousands of years, pollute the fish, and we're going to eat it in sushi."

By making sustainable, bespoke historical clothing, Pinsent is doing more than making handsome fashion. He's accentuating the interconnected relationship between our outer and inner worlds; by wearing beautiful, ethically produced classical regalia, you elevate your spirit as well.

"It's all about taking those smallest steps to be conscious with various things," he said. "We're on this earth for such a short period of time. If the clothing you're wearing isn't making you happy, then you're missing the point."

J.H. White is an arts, culture, and men's fashion journalist living in New York.

'Dynamic Duo' of Lifelong Friends Move Into Same Care Home

ROBERT JAY WATSON

Olive Woodward and Katherine Saville, both 89 years old, met at school in Nottingham, England, during the darkest days of World War II. The two school friends are still close, so close, in fact, that they both live at the same care home, Berry Hill Park, in Nottinghamshire, the United Kingdom. "We knew we would always be friends when we met. She means a lot to me," Saville told the BBC. As for Woodward, her friend is the only person who really knows how to make her smile when she needs it. "If I'm unhappy or in trouble I only have to go to Kathleen and we'll always end up laughing," the elderly friend said.

The staff at the home, including director Kathy Tebbett, have come to appreciate the "dynamic duo" for their humor and love. "They never stop chatting and giggling," Tebbett told the BBC. "It's so endearing, they genuinely love each other and you can see that."

Saville and Woodward both hail from Mansfield, and they sat next to each other in Ravenshead School in Nottingham in 1941, which saw the beginning of their epic friendship. Since then, the two have had jobs, husbands, and children but have always remained close no matter what else was going on in their lives.



(L-R) Olive Woodward and Katherine Saville, both 89, met in elementary school.

A big part of their relationship has been their honesty, sense of adventure, and mischievous humor. "We've stayed friends by telling each other what we think and never arguing," Saville told SNWS. "We are 89 but we look 63 ... We are still good-looking."

Their home director Tebbett confirmed that "the sparkle is still there." "Kathleen is a proper flirt," she added. "Olive is a bit more reserved—but they egg each other on." Though the two have always lived close to each other, moving in together has been the best medicine.

After the deaths of both of their husbands, Saville's in 1989, and Woodward's in 2004, the friends moved into the Berry Hill facility in 2018 together. "When Kathleen moved into the home I missed her and I used to go and see her every Saturday for lunch," Woodward said. "We lived around the corner from each other all our lives so living down the hall seemed an obvious thing to do."

“I feel very lucky to have my best friend down the hall. We've built many memories together and we're making more every day.”

Olive Woodward

With both friends together again, the two have been able to make the most of their golden years. As Woodward put it, "I feel very lucky to have my best friend down the hall. We've built many memories together and we're making more every day."

Meanwhile, Saville having her wing-mate living near her has meant lots of fun. "We're like giggling schoolgirls and we still put on our [lipstick] and get dressed up," she shared. "We always say to each other 'if you've got it, flaunt it.'"

Berry Hill director Tebbett was touched to see the pair back together again. "Since they have been reunited, Kathleen and Olive have been inseparable, causing just as much mischief in the home as they used to when they became friends 78 years ago," she said.

Saville joked, "We don't cause any trouble in the home, but we sometimes have to knock the staff into shape."

How have the two ladies managed to stay so close over all those years? "Put yourself out and go and see your friend," Saville shared. "Don't always wait for them to come and see you."

Home Is Underrated

In our clamor for women's equality, we forgot to validate parenthood and the home

SHANNON ROBERTS

So much of what is magical and joyful about life takes place in the home. Snuggly duvets. Fresh flowers. Creativity. Play. Newborn baby cuddles. Games. The smell of dinner cooking. Fresh coffee. Many of the television shows we love feature home cooking, decluttering, gardening, and home redesign. We like home and homemaking.

But to achieve the sorts of things that make home attractive you need presence, you need cleaning, you need time, you need a cook, you need people to cuddle up with you under snuggly duvets in the morning—even if they are small children who wake you up far too early. In the end it is the tiny, seemingly insignificant moments like these that many of us come to think of as the best things in life.

Yet, in our clamor for women's equality, we forgot to make sure we also validated parenthood and the home as just as professional, real, useful, and attractive an endeavor as any in the workplace. We celebrate female CEOs, female leadership, and female career firsts; we want to make sure women have the choice to do the jobs they want to do and companies can benefit from their influence. Great.

But it is just as important to celebrate the home and celebrate true choice, when home is in fact what many find a fulfilling, productive, or necessary place to be. For many there is a middle ground to be found, somewhere between frantic CEO churning out more widgets or higher stock prices and full-time homemaker.

But if the worth of the home and bringing up children is practically ignored, many will find no sense of self-esteem within the home or in parenthood. Career will be the overriding goal of young people, and parenthood is indeed being increasingly delayed as a result. Thus, many women end up not having as many children as they later realize they would like, or have none at all due to age-related fertility problems. They realize the joy of home and children all too late; it is increasingly something that was never mentioned as a valid option to them.

The emphasis put on career over home and children is one cause of dire fertility rates around the world. The global fertility rate is about 2.4 births per woman, but it has dropped to well below the replacement rate of 2.1 in many countries. A recent Deutsche Bank report by Sanjeev Sanyal suggests the peak in human numbers on Earth will be reached at just 8.7 billion in 2055, and decline to 8 billion by 2100, a far faster decline in population than recent United Nations estimates suggest.

Moreover, at the same time that we appear to celebrate the triumph of work over the home, we worry about a range of societal problems which might be solved by greater community. If we are far-sighted, there are numerous ways in which homemakers contribute hugely to society.

Findings from a recent review of multiple studies indicated that a lack of social connection poses a similar risk of early

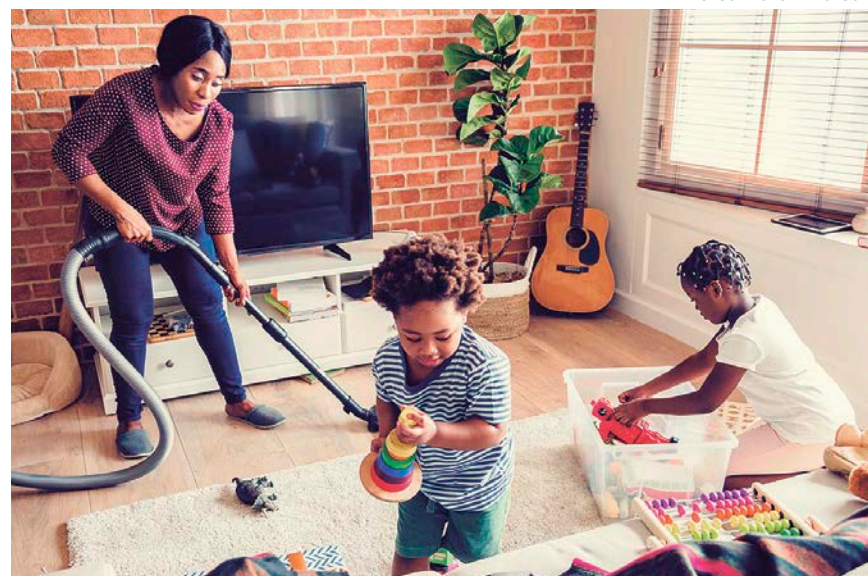
“If the worth of the home and bringing up children is practically ignored, many will find no sense of self-esteem within the home or in parenthood.”

death to physical indicators such as obesity. One study carried out by the Centre for Economics and Business Research found that disconnected communities could be costing the UK economy 32 billion pounds (\$39.8 billion) every year. It also found that neighborliness already delivers substantial economic benefits to UK society, representing an annual saving of 23.8 billion pounds (\$29.6 billion) in total.

Moreover, research strongly supports having a single caregiver at home for the first 2 to 3 years of a child's life. The past 10 years have brought staggering changes in how brain development is understood, and Nathan Wallis has become a respected parenting speaker in New Zealand, attracting huge crowds. His research shows: "The number-one driver of mental illness is isolation ... therefore it's especially important for children to form healthy attachments in the first three years of life. Humans are interdependent by nature, and being socially connected gives our brain the peptides and positive hormones that it needs to stay well."

But to achieve community you need people who have time. Homemakers used to have time.

Shannon Roberts is co-editor of MercatorNet's blog on population issues, "Demography is Destiny." This article was originally published on MercatorNet.



For all the emphasis on careers, many do find the home a fulfilling place to be.



It is the small moments that we often look back on with fondness as the best things in life.



Research strongly suggests that having a single caretaker at home during children's first two or three years of life is beneficial to their development.

Playing Left-Handed: A Pianist's Journey

Despite being told she'd never play again, Lisa Spector didn't give up on her music



Professional pianist Lisa Spector.

ANDREW THOMAS

Much like surgeons, musicians' livelihoods depend on their hands; the dexterity required to perform beautiful, moving music requires healthy, strong, flexible fingers. Tragically, when musicians severely injure their fingers and hands, they often give up their instrument altogether. But Lisa Spector, a professional pianist from Half Moon Bay, California, learned to adapt and kept on playing following her own traumatic accident.

The piano has been a lifelong love. From the first moment she first heard her mother play, Spector was hooked.

"I just heard these sounds coming out, and it was like a magnet to my fingers," said Spector, who has been playing since she was seven.

Spector took to piano quickly, eventually attending Juilliard before receiving her graduate degree from the University of Southern California. She has fond memories of playing both domestically and abroad during her 35-year professional career.

A Young Pianist

On her 17th birthday, Spector won a local concerto competition and had the opportunity to play at a three-night concert with a 3,000-strong audience. In her early 20s, she won both the New York and Los Angeles Chopin competitions in graduate school. She also had the opportunity to play abroad in China, Poland, Spain, France, and Italy.

In Spain she was able to visit the place on the island of Mallorca where composer

'How am I ever going to play piano again?' was the first thought that went through Spector's mind after falling.

Lisa Spector bows before an audience.

Chopin wrote much of his music. She also had the chance to perform with an orchestra in China in 1994 in front of 23,000 people.

"It was like an extravaganza where I brought four gowns, and I had costume changes. I had a bodyguard because I was swarmed on stage afterwards, not because of my name, but just because I was American. At that time, that was novel. That was new to them, so that definitely stood out as an unusual experience," Spector recalled.

In 1997, Spector became an entrepreneur and opened her own music school. She taught students ages 4 to 94, and had a faculty that taught a variety of instruments. During the same time, she was creating music to relieve anxiety in dogs. For a while she found herself juggling too many projects at once and her concert career took a back seat.

It would be years before a traumatic accident drove her to return to performing.

The Fall

On June 27, 2017, Spector was walking outside of a shopping mall when she tripped over a curb. She was holding a water bottle in her right hand, and the way she fell crushed her right hand and fingers. The fall happened so rapidly that she thought her fingers had fallen off.

"How am I ever going to play piano again?" was the first thought that went through Spector's mind after falling.

During surgery, doctors discovered she had seven complex fractures in her right

hand and fingers. Her first hand therapist told her she would never play the piano again. However, she learned to become her own health advocate and underwent a variety of both Western and Eastern therapies.

Sometime during the six weeks after her surgery, Spector started to learn how to play short pieces with her left hand if only to keep her passion alive. She was at a party, and someone asked her to play. She played a short prelude with her left hand, and someone approached her after she finished.

A guitarist with tears in his eyes told her that he hadn't touched his instrument in three years because of arthritis in one of his fingers. He told her that watching her play with her left hand only made him realize he didn't have any excuses and told her he was going to pick up the guitar again.

"That was so memorable because that really provided the impetus for my theme that I've created to just 'play on.' Play on no matter what because you just never know who's going to be affected and how it's going to change their life," Spector said.

Spector soon discovered that half of injured musicians give up their instruments, and was determined to make music any way she could.

"That's when I realized it only looks like I play piano with my fingers. I really make music with my heart," she said.

Adapting

Playing with only her left hand came with a variety of challenges. She had trouble maintaining her balance. For the first several months, the left side of her body ached; she was building strength but had to take breaks frequently. She was no longer able to use the middle C note on the keyboard as a reference point, so it was easy to find herself in the wrong octave.

Normally, one would play the melody with the right hand, but Spector was now forced to play both the melody and the harmony with her left hand. The experience made her realize that she might not become a better technician, but she knew she'd become a better musician.

"So I'd had some very challenging, fun, creative music challenges, and I believe that alone has really made me a better musician because it's caused me to listen to myself more creatively," Spector said.

As she had different casts removed and replaced, she gradually began playing with her available right fingers. She continues to work on her right hand and has learned how to adapt her technique for certain pieces of music. The transition back to playing with both hands has been euphoric for Spector.

"It was a high. It was the best high in the world," she said.

Now Spector is in the middle of self-editing her memoir "Left Hand Lemonade: A Musician's Journey from Tragedy to Triumph." She's also currently performing a live concert series on Facebook entitled "Left Hand Lemonade Live With Lisa Spector," which features a reading from her memoir and left-handed, right-handed, and ambidextrous piano playing, at 6 p.m. Pacific time on Saturday nights. The live concerts have been met with tremendously positive responses.

"You hold our hearts while you play," one viewer commented. "Your concert was the best thing I've seen since the crisis began. I was in tears at several points," said another.

"The comments I'm getting are so wonderful because they're all about how much I'm inspiring people, and I'm telling my stories of resilience at a time where it's really helping people," Spector said.



COURTESY OF PHOTOGRAPH

Between Bird and Flower, a Remarkable Likelihood

LOUISE BEVAN

To the untrained eye, this perfect little parcel of petals may look like an origami hummingbird. It is, in fact, a native Australian flower that blooms to emulate the tiny bird perfectly.

The plant that produces this extraordinary flower is known as the green or regal birdflower, scientific name *Crotalaria cunninghamii*. According to Australia's Botanic Gardens & Parks Authority, the plant is an upright shrub with a brief lifespan, prolific in the northern half of Western Australia all the way from the coast into the desert.

The regal birdflower is related to peas and beans. The first part of the plant's scientific name, *Crotalaria*, derives from the Greek word *crotalon*, meaning "rattle" or "castanet," and refers to the way that the seeds rattle in the plant's club-shaped pods when shaken, according to the website.

The Australian-native plant can grow up to 13 feet in height. In bloom, its oval-shaped leaves give way to a mass of large bright-green flowers with purple-brown veins at the end of each branch.

Upon close inspection, it is these green flowers that so closely resemble the wings of a hummingbird in flight. Each bird-looking flower is attached by its "beak"—which in reality is the flower's calyx—to the stem of a branch.

The regal birdflower underwent a steady surge in desirability after a photo of the plant's adorable bird-like flowers went viral in summer of 2019.

When a photo appeared on Reddit, shared by user OctopusPrime, a post-doc scientist studying flower evolution joined the conversation to help unearth the origin of the plant's unique appearance. Despite

COURTESY OF DAVE BLUMER/BOTANIC GARDENS AND PARKS AUTHORITY



The flowers resemble a bird that is attached by its "beak" (the calyx) to the stem.

suggestions to the contrary, the thread eventually discounted the possibility that the plant benefits by masquerading as a hummingbird to human observers.

"The fact that the flower looks like a bird to humans cannot have evolved adaptively, because as a 'signal receiver,' there is nothing humans could have done to increase the fitness of individuals that evolved this signal (to look like a bird)," the scientist, going by the online moniker Solitary-Bee, commented.

"One could also argue that the resemblance to a bird is adaptive because it signals to another kind of receiver (e.g. her-

JOSE SANCHEZ/UNSPLASH



The green flowers resemble the wings of a hummingbird in flight.

bivore, seed disperser, pollinator). This I would argue is exceptionally unlikely," the scientist continued, "because it is exceptionally unlikely that this flower does indeed appear like a bird to any other observer."

The hummingbird that the flower so perfectly emulates is not even native to Western Australia. The majority consensus in the scientific community is that the regal birdflower's appearance is simply a phenomenon known as pareidolia, a curious tendency among humans to perceive meaningful images within random visual patterns.

The regal birdflower's uncanny simulacrum, however, does belie a legitimate function of the flower as a medicinal aid. According to the Useful Tropical Plants Database, the regal birdflower has long been harvested from the wild for use in medicines and as a potent source of fiber.

Better Homes & Gardens advises that the birdflower will grow in the United States in USDA hardiness zones 10 and 11, including southern California, southern Florida, and Hawaii.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 26, 2020

FROM "The Dizi Gui" AN ANCIENT CHINESE TEXT FOR CHILDREN

Translated by Evan Mantyk of classicalpoets.org

Disciples rules are what the Sage is teaching: "First honor parents and then be trustworthy; Be near to kindness, and with love be reaching; With any strength remaining, you must study."

弟子规，圣人训
首孝弟，次谨信
泛爱众，而亲仁
有余力，则学文



TATIANA BOBKOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

WHAT WILL YOU GET IF YOU THROW YOUR BOOKS INTO THE OCEAN?



YURCHENKO IRYNA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Water is the softest thing, yet it can penetrate mountains and earth. This shows clearly the principle of softness overcoming hardness.

LAOZI

REDCOLLEGEVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 14

ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN SAGUARO CACTI (PART I)

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

In the deserts of the southwest, the very tall saguaro cactus replaces trees. Like trees, many animals depend on the saguaro for housing. Like in trees, woodpeckers often peck holes in the cactus to nest in, and many other animals use these holes when the woodpeckers move out.

Gila woodpeckers are the desert's construction workers, pecking large holes in the cactus to eat. However, the Gila woodpecker also utilizes the cactus for food. The saguaro produces fruits that the woodpeckers like to eat, and saguaros provide a convenient habitat for insects, which the Gilas also like to eat.

While the Gila woodpeckers' favorite habitat is the desert, they also like to inhabit the dry forests of southeastern California and parts of Arizona. Compared to other woodpeckers, Gilas have a plain appearance. Their wings have horizontal, black-and-white stripes, while their entire body and head is tan. Males have a red patch on their foreheads. They are normally about nine inches long.



GILA WOODPECKER

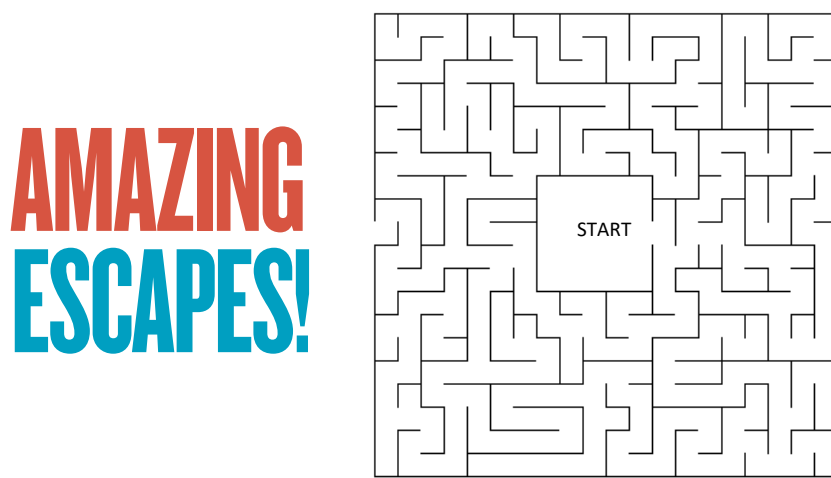
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ELF OWL

If owls are the smallest owls in the world, and are about the size of a sparrow! Being so small, their favorite foods are insects, spiders, and scorpions. Elf owls don't rely on saguaros for nests as much as the Gila woodpecker does, as they also like to nest in mesquites (trees found in the region). They do rely on woodpeckers for their housing, since their nest site is almost always in an old woodpecker hole, whether the hole is in a tree, cactus, or telephone pole. Since most insects don't survive or hibernate in the cold desert winters, elf owls migrate south to Mexico in order to seek out food. Some also live year-round in Mexico and Baja California.

To attract a female, male elf owls will vocalize loudly. When house-hunting, the male chooses a site, then calls to his mate from inside the selected home for her inspection. Females lay and incubate three white eggs in the selected site, while the male brings her food. The male will keep bringing home food after the eggs hatch. Four weeks later, the young fledge, and are cared for by both parents for a few days after.



AMAZING ESCAPES!

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

7	9		
6	7		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1
 $7 + 2 \times (9 - 6)$
 $7 + (6 - 9 + 2)$

Medium puzzle 1

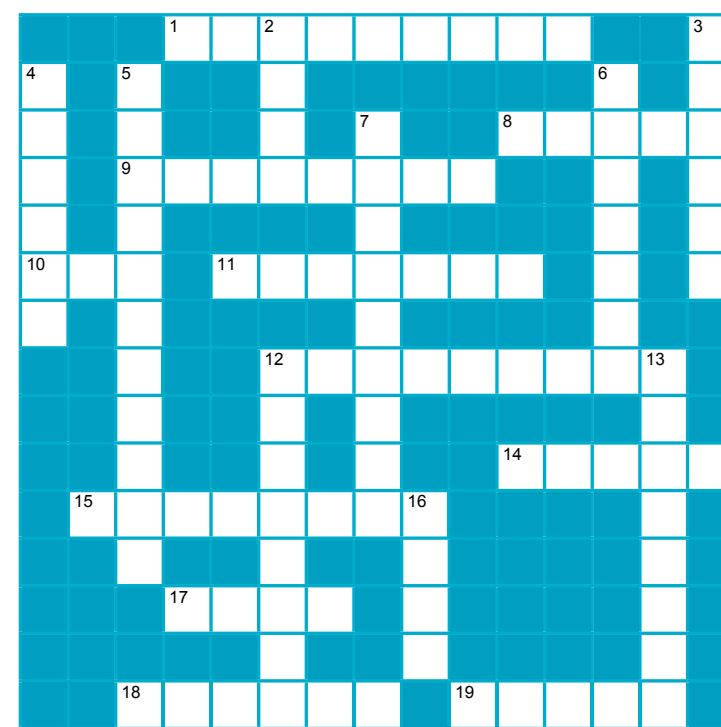
9	14		
7	10		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
 $9 - 7 - 7 + 6 = 01$

Hard puzzle 1

23	31		
17	26		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
 $21 - 82 - 92 + 18$



Down

- Old Glory (4)
- Where the Tea Party was held in 1773 (6)
- Military greeting (6)
- _____ of Independence (11)
- His first name was John (7)

Across

- Thomas (9)
- They rest on a field of blue (5)
- Capitol gang (8)
- It was taxed too much (3)
- Liberty (7)
- 4th displays (9)
- Focus of protests (5)
- There were 13 originally (8)
- Declaration of Independence was signed on the 4th of ____ (4)
- Outdoor meal (6)
- Monroe's successor John (5)

- Party! (9)
- His first name was Ben and he was our first Postmaster General (8)
- Addresses (8)
- Endorse (4)

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In Truth and Tradition,
The Epoch Times

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