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Our Hidden Epidemic: Loneliness and the Elderly

JEFF MINICK

Senario 1: Shortly after you've fulfilled a longtime retirement dream and bought a house in Naples, Florida, your wife of 49 years dies of an aneurysm. Your three grown children still live in New England, and you know none of your Florida neighbors.

Martha was always the social one, arranging get-togethers, pushing you to join a book club, inviting friends to the house.

It's summertime, months after the funeral, and except for your early morning walks, you stay indoors to avoid the heat, watching the news too many hours a day, reading, and doing some minor repairs. The kids call once a week, but you spend most of your time alone. You feel cut off from others, but you don't want to admit your depression and loneliness to your children.

Besides, you've just bought the house and would take a financial wallop if you sold it and moved back north.

Scenario 2: Your elderly mother still owns her home in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where you grew up, but you are now approaching your 50th birthday and living with your family in New Orleans. You've encouraged her time and again to come stay with you, but Mom refuses. You call her every two or three days, and lately, she sounds fretful on the phone, worrying about strange noises at night and wondering about three or four times during every conversation whether she has locked the doors.

Most of her old friends and neighbors have either died or moved away, and she spends the bulk of her days alone in a house too big for her.

Scenario 3: You visit your father in a nearby assisted-living facility three times a week, where he is well-cared for and in generally good spirits, despite his crippling arthritis. In the common room, you frequently

see a man sitting in a wheelchair staring blank-faced at the television. When you ask your dad about the man, he shakes his head and says, "Joe's kids live a thousand miles away and dumped him here six months ago. Haven't come to see him since then."

"We try to include him on game nights and get him involved in the community, but I think he's just too depressed and lonely to participate. A loner."

Endangered Health

Even before the arrival of the pandemic and the subsequent stay-at-home orders around the country, loneliness adversely affected the health of large numbers of our older citizens. In her online article, "Facts about Senior Isolation and the Effects of Loneliness That Will Stun You," Claire Samuels points out that the Census Bureau reports 13.8 million, or nearly one-third, of Americans over the age of 65 live alone. While living alone isn't necessarily indicative of loneliness, that danger is much more likely than if we are living with others.

And danger there is. As Samuels and others reveal, the devastating consequences

If we have older neighbors, we can make it a point to visit them, however briefly, throughout the week.

Activities such as dance lessons, knitting clubs, and book clubs provide opportunities to meet and make new friends.



of loneliness and isolation for the elderly include not only mental problems such as depression and anxiety, but also physical consequences. Researchers have linked obesity, high blood pressure, weakened immune systems, cognitive disorders, and early death to chronic loneliness.

An Undiagnosed Malady

Once in its grip, seniors—and I am one—may have trouble finding our way out of our malaise. We sink into depression, often without even knowing it, become more and more lethargic, and begin to regard our sadness and misery as if they were normal. Most of us have our televisions, our phones, and our computers, but we long, knowingly or unknowingly, for human company.

Here's a small example: A man I know dislikes going to the dentist, but didn't know how lonely he was until a dental hygienist cleaned his teeth. When he recognized that her closeness, her idle chatter, and the touch of her latex-gloved fingers on his face had been the highlight of his week, my friend realized he had placed himself in extreme self-isolation without being aware of doing so.

So what can we do about isolation? How can we who are over the age of 65 fight loneliness, and how can we help those unable to help themselves?

Here are some suggestions gleaned from my own experience and from various online sites.

Change Our Ways

This is a tough one, particularly for those who are my age. We have long embraced certain patterns of behavior, and to blow ourselves out of that pattern—some might say rut—is difficult.

Nonetheless, if you feel lonely, here are some tips to widen your horizons and your contact with others.

Enter into the community around you. Volunteer at a local elementary school, as

one 80-year-old man I know did, teaching chess and reading stories to fourth-graders. Tutor in the literacy program at your local library. If you enjoy singing, join a choir. Take a class at the local community college.

Take up a new hobby that involves others. Dance lessons, tai chi, knitting clubs, library-sponsored book clubs: All of these activities and more provide opportunities to meet and make new friends.

Visit your local animal shelter and adopt a pet. Many elderly people I know love their cat or dog, and that love brings happiness in its wake.

Pick some café or coffee bar as your hang-out. Show up four or five times a week, get to know the baristas and some of the customers, listen to the chatter of the people around you. This one definitely has worked for me. Simply being in the presence of others livens up my mood and my day.

You might even consider taking up a job, even one beneath your capabilities. At the laundromat I use, the woman who is sometimes in charge, Viola, just celebrated her 86th birthday. She has children and grandchildren who might care for her, but she enjoys her work. She knows the regulars, earns a little money, keeps active and busy, and feels she is contributing to her family and society.

Helping the Infirm

Many older people reside in nursing homes or assisted care facilities, or are confined to their homes by their infirmities.

For these seniors, we can make our presence known in numerous ways. If we live near an aged parent or grandparent, we can set aside some time to visit them. If distance separates us from them, or if we are worried about spreading COVID-19, we can call them frequently or send them letters. Many nursing homes have volunteers who come to read or play games with the residents, and we can encourage our relatives to take advantage of these services.

If we have older neighbors, we can make it a point to visit them, however briefly, throughout the week.

The last time I saw my mother-in-law before her death in a nursing home in Atlanta—she was suffering from dementia—Dorothy thought I was a high school classmate, though 25 years separated us. It didn't matter. She was just happy to have some company, someone to chat up. The same was true when my grandchildren visited her. She recognized none of them, but it didn't matter. She glowed with happiness whenever visitors came to see her.

Presence Is All It Takes

In "Love Is Not All," Edna St. Vincent Millay wrote these lines:

"Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath,
Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;
Yet many a man is making friends with death
Even as I speak, for lack of love alone."

If we feel alone, we must seek out the laughter, smiles, and voices of others. And if we have elderly relatives, friends, or neighbors, we can bring them the good medicine of ourselves.

Presence defeats the lack of love. Presence conquers loneliness.

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.

Good Thoughts: 45 Years With Bartlett's 'Familiar Quotations'

JEFF MINICK

In his memoir "My Early Life," Winston Churchill wrote: "It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations. Bartlett's 'Familiar Quotations' is an admirable work, and I studied it intently. The quotations when engraved upon the memory give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more."

Like Churchill, I too am a longtime fan of quotations. Though I have packed most of my books in anticipation of a move this summer, two books of quotations sit close at hand: "The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations" and John Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations," given to me as a Christmas gift by my mother in 1975, a detail I know only because Mom recorded the date and her love for me on the volume's first page.

Occasionally, I open these books at random, read a few entries, and receive, as Churchill wrote, "good thoughts."

A Monument Eroded

A note here: I own a 14th edition, published in 1968, of "Familiar Quotations." Editors have since radically changed this work, adding quotes from the Cookie Monster from "Sesame Street," "Star Trek," and The Doors, and removing many former contributors. Justin Kaplan, editor of the 16th edition, once remarked, "I don't happen to like books of great thoughts at all."

In his preface to the 18th edition, editor Geoffrey O'Brien writes of this remodeled version of Bartlett's, "A work that was once dominated by scripture, classical literature, and poetry has opened itself to the multiple voices of mass journalism, recording, movies, radio and television broadcasting, and now the Internet."

Once again, our culture has foregone the classical and embraced the ephemeral. For those readers who prefer a Bartlett's more closely resembling the one owned by Churchill, you may obtain a copy of the 14th edition for under \$10 from AbeBooks.com.

"The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations"—mine is the 5th edition, published in 1999—is also excellent and available for purchase online.

An Experiment

To test Churchill's proposition that such quotations make us "anxious to read the authors and look for more," I opened my Bartlett's at random to page 796, where I found excerpts from William James, Prince Petr Alekseevich Kropotkin, Sidney Lanier, and John Alexander Joyce. James and Lanier were familiar to me—I long ago read James's "The Varieties of Religious Experience" and bits of Lanier's verse—and Kropotkin I recognized only by his reputation as an anarchist and a revolutionary, but I had never heard of John Alexander Joyce. Two lines of a poem were his only claim to fame:

"I shall love you in December
With the love I gave in May!"

Those two lines led me to Google John Alexander Joyce, where I found the complete poem, "Question and Answer," but also became entangled in a literary mess. Joyce had likely stolen Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem "Solitude" and declared himself the author, Jimmy Walker, later mayor of New York, used Joyce's lines in a song for a musical, and Joyce himself comes across as a bit of a nut, having engraved on his burial monument two of the lines he had pilfered from "Solitude."

I'm not anxious to read more of Joyce, but the 20 minutes I spent bouncing around online were certainly entertaining.

Laughter

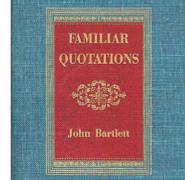
Many quotations from Bartlett's offer humor, intended or not. One of my favorite examples of intentional humor is this entry by American humorist and sportswriter Ring Lardner, a quote from "The Young Immi-



Winston Churchill, a fan of Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations," wrote: "It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations ... The quotations when engraved upon the memory give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more."



John Bartlett (1820–1905), an American writer and publisher best known for Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations."



A centennial edition of Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations."

grants," which Lardner wrote in the vernacular: "Are you lost, daddy? I asked tenderly. 'Shut up,' he explained." Then there's the unintentional humor of Joachim Von Ribbentrop, foreign minister of Nazi Germany, on the maniac who began a war in Europe, invaded Russia, and destroyed Germany: "The Fuhrer is always right."

How'd that work out for you, Joachim?

Support and Strength

Many of us also turn to quotations for inspiration or help. We look for that succinct thought, that compressed idea, which we can carry in our hearts and minds like a talisman available at a moment's notice to bring us hope and courage.

Sometimes, we forget the consolation we can find in the words of others, the strength we can take from them. Instead, we hear that "actions speak louder than words," that "a picture is worth a thousand words," or that "words are cheap."

But I am a writer and a man with few other resources, and sometimes, words are all I have. I look to the words and sentences of other writers to help me make it through another day, another brush with an unpleasant person, another train wreck in my finances.

The words of others have often comforted me in times of distress—who couldn't find solace in the medieval Levant adage, "This too shall pass"?

An Example

Nearly four years ago, my life took a disastrous turn, a catastrophe that I myself had helped precipitate. For months, darkness came not only at dusk, but at dawn, when I would awaken, dull with guilt and remorse, and force myself to slog through another long, bleak day.

Finally, one afternoon, I snatched up a red marker and on the glass exterior door of my basement apartment wrote "Invictus," which is Latin for "Unconquered" and the title of a poem by William Ernest Henley. "Invictus" remained graven on the glass for months, fading but still legible, reminding me several times a day to keep up the fight, to push ahead, to better myself, and to find the right path again.

Better Late Than Never

One minor regret of my life is that I haven't kept a notebook of favorite passages or adages from books I've read. By keeping such a record, not only would I have built a treasure house of the thoughts and opinions of writers I admire, but I would also own a sort of spiritual diary composed of quotations important to me at certain times during my life.

What might I have recorded when my children were born? What quotations would have entered that daybook in the weeks and months following my wife's death? What words might have found their way to those pages during the graduations and weddings of my children, and Christmases spent with my grandchildren?

When I mentioned this regret to a friend, he offered this simple advice, "So, start now."

And so I did. On my desk is an empty composition book, one of those checkered notebooks used by students, on the front of which I have written "Quotes & Notes." On the first page, I had entered the date—May 10, 2020, Mother's Day—and beneath it a single reminder: "Coronavirus Lockdown Week 6: A dark and lonely time." Below that came my first entry:

"You have power over your mind—not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength."
Marcus Aurelius, "Meditations."

Good to remember, and it made me feel better about my "dark and lonely time."

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.

Smartphones Increasingly Affect Modern Relationships

Technology

offers so much, yet how can we ensure it doesn't take just as much away?

SHANNON ROBERTS

Technology has been invaluable to keep us all connected during the COVID-19 pandemic, but could it also be separating us from those we love most?

Smartphones keep us informed and provide a constant stream of news and entertainment. I gifted my husband some wireless headphones because he loves to listen to podcasts. With them, he has access to

news from renowned institutions around the world from any part of the house. I also insisted some years ago that he upgrade to a smartphone.

It opened up a new world, and he can now follow the latest sports results anytime and anywhere.

However, I now find both the smartphone and the wireless headphones a mixed blessing. For instance, while I am happy that he enjoys listening to renowned com-

mentators while he does the dishes in the evening, I get frustrated that this means we can no longer enjoy casual snippets of conversation. When he doesn't hear me, I realize he is wearing the headphones. Likewise, once pushed into getting a smartphone, being a news junkie, he is often now glued to its screen.

The effect of smartphones and social media on relationships is a growing modern dilemma. Technology offers so much, yet

how can we ensure it doesn't take just as much away?

The share of Americans who own a smartphone increased from 35 percent in 2011 to 81 percent in 2019. Those figures represent a huge increase in couples and families with smartphones in their daily lives. I imagine the increase is similar across many countries, and is an adjustment for couples and families around the globe.

According to recent research by the Pew Research Center, 51 percent of Americans say their partner is often or sometimes distracted by their cellphone when they are trying to have a conversation with

them. Women are about twice as likely as men to say that they are bothered by the amount of time their partner spends on their cellphone. This suggests that smartphones are indeed having an effect on families.

I sometimes find myself annoyed by the feeling of being drawn to my phone throughout the day. I find myself looking at it out of habit without any clear purpose, or mindlessly once I put the children to bed because I want some downtime. Really, I would prefer to be doing something else.

There is a constant stream of messages over various platforms, and I often feel pressure to respond—or worry that I will forget to if I don't attend to it straight away.

Perhaps the solution is as simple as being more purposeful, acting with a clear plan in mind instead of out of habit or thoughtlessness. We can enjoy podcasts, but make time for casual conversations, too. We can enjoy online communication, but ensure that our phones are inaccessible for at least a few hours a day. Perhaps we don't need to feel

obliged to respond quickly to messages, but instead, have one time in the day that we clear them all.

Like so many things in life, taking a few moments to have a clear plan can avoid detrimental and mindless habits taking root. A pandemic also brings increased awareness of the fragility of life, and the need to allocate our time carefully.

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The share of Americans who own a smartphone increased to 81 percent in 2019, from 35 percent in 2011.



After his own college experience, Putsch realized there was a gap between academia and industry.

Genius Garage Gives Students Hands-On Engineering Experience

Working together, they get real-world experience building and racing cars and airplanes

ANDREW THOMAS

Ever since Casey Putsch was a child, he's had an interest in race car driving and automotive engineering. His father was passionate about vintage cars, and he would take Putsch to the race track for a variety of events. Growing up, Putsch revealed a knack for mechanics, which was fostered by building his own model cars for slot car racing and model airplanes. Putsch ultimately became an amateur race car driver, and his mechanical background allowed him to go far in the sport. At age 26, he restored a car that had run in American Can-Am race series in the 1960s, and had the opportunity to compete with the car in an international Can-Am reunion race.

In 2011, he even built his own turbine-powered Batmobile, which was known for drawing the attention of the police. In one instance, a police car pulled up next to him at a stop-

light in Columbus, Ohio. The officer jokingly motioned to Putsch that he himself was Batman, but couldn't see Putsch through the tinted glass. Putsch turned on the loudspeaker and growled, "I am Batman," in response. The officer cracked up and drove off laughing.

Academia and Industry
Putsch, who is based in Perrysburg, Ohio, was mentoring engineering students at a local university, and when he returned to his engineering shop, he had an epiphany. He realized he had a facility where students could work and a plethora of professional contacts with a lifetime of wisdom to share.

"I just simply thought if I was going to be involved with racing and airplanes and things like this, why don't I do it in a structured way that will make the difference for young people?" Putsch said.

Putsch realized he had the opportunity to mentor young engineers

“The educational model in America actually does a pretty good job of what it does, but the part that's missing is the real-world cultivation of the individual.”

Casey Putsch, founder, Genius Garage

to help cultivate their passion by giving them hands-on experience, and ultimately get them noticed by employers and give them confidence as their careers began. Reflecting on his own college experience, and seeing a gap between academia and industry, he founded Genius Garage in 2013.

"Industry is really not set up to train their incoming youth, and the educational model in America actually does a pretty good job of what it does, but the part that's missing is the real-world cultivation of the individual," Putsch said.

Putsch's goal is to bridge the gap between academia and industry, and to cultivate our youth to ensure a better future. To close this divide, Putsch provides an environment where young people can grow. He began this initiative by having the young people at Genius Garage start a racing team, which demands real-world business, engineering, and competition skills.



Students from Genius Garage compete at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

"The powerful side effect I found from that is just how much the Genius Garage curriculum matters to industry," Putsch said. "They can hire the best students out of college—the best engineers—but the problem is not the intellectual side for the engineers, they're doing that well in school, the problem is the behavioral side," meaning practical aspects such as hands-on training and learning to work with a team.

Putsch also has profound interests in history, culture, philosophy, and the natural world, which have greatly influenced his career and work with young people. He stresses the importance of growing as an individual, community, nation, and civilization, and believes that people like him have the obligation to lead. He saw an opportunity to help young people, and there was leadership missing, so he decided to take the initiative to make a difference and try to forge a better future for all of us.

"Our youth—our future is succession. It is the future, and if we can't utilize our collective wisdom, and care, and passion, and art in the most constructive and worthwhile way possible to cultivate the so-called garden of humanity for the future, then we're just stuck to be wandering around in the darkness, and that's not good enough for me," Putsch said.

Real-World Application

At Genius Garage, Putsch features a curriculum for a racing team, an aerospace team, and a design team. Each team focuses on one specific project, and young people have to work together to build a car or airplane that can function and compete. Typically a team includes eight students working together for six months.

The curriculum also includes re-

search, writing, and business components. When a student goes into a job interview, their experience at Genius Garage is what gets the most attention. Often, they have to explain to the interviewer that they didn't build a model, but instead an actual functioning car or plane. They often discuss how they overcame adversity and how they came together with their fellow teammates to work toward a common goal during their time at Genius Garage.

When a student secures a job, it's incredibly rewarding for Putsch. "That means everything because that is the moment where the original spark to give young people the opportunity that I never had, that I knew the world needed, that's the moment when it really matters," Putsch said.

Genius Garage acquires many of its vehicles from donors. Most recently, Genius Garage received a donated 1967 Morgan Plus 4 Drophead Coupe from a family in Georgia. The family reached out to Putsch and expressed how supportive they were of the organization's mission, and donated the car.

The young people at Genius Garage have the opportunity to see Old World engineering, and many of those old techniques are valuable because they are potentially relevant to modern and future engineering. In addition to the Morgan, these special historical cars and planes represent the best of engineering, passion, drive, and sport of mankind from a particular time period. These vehicles can be used to teach valuable lessons. Students get hands-on experiences with these vehicles, and they develop an appreciation for history.

"By utilizing the best things from history to teach our young people we're setting them up for success," Putsch said.

'We Would Have Missed Out': Parents Adopt Autistic Baby With Down Syndrome Despite Fears

ROBERT JAY WATSON

Jen and Juan Benito decided to become foster parents to a special-needs baby after having three children of their own, yet they admit there were fixed feelings of uncertainty and downright terror in the beginning.

The parents had wanted to adopt but couldn't afford the hefty fees charged by private adoption agencies. Then a social worker called and asked them if they would be willing to adopt a child with special needs not as a foster child but as one of their own.

This was Jana, soon to affectionately be known as Peanut, who had special needs. "She needed a house and we were ready to take her in," Jen told *The Epoch Times*. "And so even though I was terrified, even though I didn't think I could do it, my answer was yes."

When the family realized that they just couldn't afford the \$30,000 cost of adoption, they turned their sights to fostering. "We thought it would be perfect for us because we had space and love to give," Jen said. After doing all the paperwork and preparation for becoming a foster family, the Benito family got their first call.

It wasn't for a foster placement, however, it was for Peanut's adoption. When the Benitos found out that she had Down syndrome and a heart condition, they were still resolved to take her, though the parents had differing reactions.

Jen said she had "very, very, very little interaction with individuals [who had] any kind of disability growing up." Meanwhile, Juan had worked in the behavioral health system, so it was "no big deal" to him,



Jen Benito with Peanut.



(Top) The Benito children with their mom Jen.

(Bottom left) The Benito family, four years ago, with Peanut in the center.

(Bottom right) Peanut with her dad Juan Benito.

as Jen described it.

The Benitos didn't have much information about Peanut before receiving her, though they welcomed her with open arms, as did their other children, who were surprised to gain a new sibling. "The kids were excited, though they were probably a lot more open about it," Jen said. "Even then, it was about their ability to just love and accept."

The Benitos had been told by the social worker that Peanut was 3 months old. They were amazed to see how tiny she was, only 7 pounds, the weight of an average newborn. Dad Juan gave her the nickname Peanut due to her minute size, and it has stuck ever since.

Welcoming Peanut was just the first step, though, as the family had to go through a lengthy process of getting the adoption formalized and finalized. Despite Peanut's physical and developmental challenges, which include Down syndrome and autism, she almost immediately won the family's heart.

"She loves to be goofy, and makes all of us laugh here," Jen said. "She is considered a non-verbal, and makes us in any kind of vocal communication."

That doesn't mean that Peanut can't get her point across. "We laugh because the look she gives us," Jen adds. "If she could talk, she would

probably be grounded a lot."

While Peanut was diagnosed with many difficulties, she doesn't seem to be aware of her limitations. After long months of physical therapy sessions, she learned how to walk after her third birthday. Mom Jen said that despite having the size and appearance of a younger child, 5-year-old Peanut is "running and jumping on everything and climbing on everything."

One of the most exciting developments is Peanut getting her very own service dog, which will help her be more independent and provide her with emotional support and comfort.

Of course, it's not just Peanut who has changed over the years. Jen and Juan, along with their three other children, have been transformed by the adoption experience. For Jen, raising Peanut helped her find her "purpose and calling," having become an advocate for families with special-needs children. She has kept up a blog called "Raising Peanut" and even published a book about their journey.

Jen's message to potential foster or adoptive parents is to "be willing to take the risk, because you don't know what is going to come to you."

"If we would have trusted our ... initial fears we would have missed out on someone incredible and amazing," she said.

Medical School Mother-Daughter Graduating Duo Match at Same Hospital

LOUISE BEVAN

An African American mother-daughter duo has made history by graduating from medical school together. In added synchronicity, both of them were also matched to the same hospital system to complete their residencies.

Dr. Cynthia Kudji Sylvester, 49, and her daughter, Dr. Jasmine Kudji, 26, were both offered placements at Louisiana State University Health campuses, reports UMHS. Cynthia is pursuing family medicine at LSU Lafayette while Jasmine is focusing on general surgery at LSU New Orleans; both began their residencies on July 1, 2020.

"This is a time when physicians can be leaders ... make a difference in people's lives," Cynthia told NBC News, speaking of the heightened global need for medics in the wake of the pandemic that has enveloped the world.

"I'm glad I'll get to do something that people need now more than ever with my daughter," she said.

Jasmine described finding out that she and her mom had placed togeth-

“I'm glad I'll get to do something that people need now more than ever with my daughter.”

Cynthia Kudji Sylvester

er at LSU Health as "one of the best moments" of her life so far. "Our life has never been planned," she said, "and you never know what's going to happen."

Cynthia immigrated to the United States with her family from Ghana, West Africa, at the age of 2. She was inspired to pursue medicine on a trip back home when she went to visit some relatives with her mom. At that time, an encounter with a young mother who had approached them to help her sick child made her witness the lack of health care facilities.

"Seeing that disparity really, it shook me, you know, and it made me want to do something about it," Cynthia explained in a joint interview with her daughter on TODAY. Cynthia decided then and there to train as a doctor.

However, as a senior at Tulane University in New Orleans, Cynthia became pregnant with her daughter and put her plans on ice. "I needed a job," she explained. "I needed to bring in an income."

The new mom then attended William Carey University for nursing school and later went on to Loyola



(L-R) Mother and daughter Cynthia Kudji Sylvester and Jasmine Kudji.

University to earn a master's of science in nursing. She then worked as a registered nurse and nurse practitioner for almost a decade. But a nagging sense of imperative convinced her to revisit her original ambition to become a doctor.

Meanwhile, Jasmine grew up inspired by her mom to pursue her own career in medicine. "Growing up, I saw that being a physician was a position of service, and I really valued that," she told NBC. "I could see myself doing that from a young age."

Jasmine took premed classes at LSU before enrolling in the university's School of Medicine in 2015. Cynthia enrolled at the University of Medi-

cine and Health Sciences on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts.

The tight-knit mother-daughter duo found myriad ways to support one another at their time in medical school—including video calls and sharing case studies—despite their prolonged separation. For Cynthia, medical school was a balancing act between her roles as a mom and as a student.

"I was still Jasmine's mom," Cynthia told *The UMHS Endeavour*. "So, if she needed something financially or she needed someone, I still had to be there as mom regardless of whether I was in medical school or not."

People often have mistaken the two to be sisters as they look so young.

"I always tell people we laugh together, we study together, we cry together," Jasmine shared. "I think medical school is one of those experiences that you don't truly understand until you're in it."

The pair, freshly graduated, is now keen to represent other African American women in the medical field.

A 2019 report from the Association of American Medical Colleges claimed that only 5 percent of doctors in the United States identify as black or African American as of 2019. However, black Americans made up 13.4 percent of the U.S. population on the 2019 Census.

In response to this disparity and to encourage other black women to follow their dreams, Cynthia and Jasmine started a blog together, "The M.D. Life," to share their journey with others.

"Representation matters," Cynthia told *Today*. "It's not often that I see people that look like me in my field, so that's why it's so important to us to make sure that we do show our faces and spread our story."

We would love to hear your stories! You can share them with us at emg.inspired@epochtimes.nyc

An Unexpected Reward

A young boy gets a surprise after turning in a lost wallet

LOUISE BEVAN

A Wisconsin mom has shared on social media an uplifting encounter with a good Samaritan who returned a family member's lost wallet without a single cent missing.

Michelle Dahlke, from De Pere, Wisconsin, took to Facebook on May 25 to share the pleasant surprise, after 11-year-old Vince Hietpas from nearby Green Bay returned the wallet, which belonged to her 17-year-old stepson, Chase.

Chase had returned from a Memorial Day fishing trip with a friend only to discover that he'd lost his wallet along the way.

"I got home, checked my drawers, there was nothing in there," he told WFRV.



A door cam shot shows 11-year-old Vince Hietpas ringing the Dahlkes' doorbell.

Vince and his father came across the wallet next to a tree while walking in a local park. They saw the family's address printed on his driver's license and made the journey to their house. The family's doorbell camera showed Vince waiting patiently on the doorstep, wallet in hand, ready to return it to its rightful owner.

"Our watches and our phones were going off saying someone was at the front door," Michelle explained. "We were across the street having a barbecue."

Michelle's husband, Jason, answered the door.

Upon receiving the wallet, Jason gifted Vince what cash was inside—\$2—but as Vince rode off with his dad, Lorenzo, the Dahlkes were wished they had done more.

"I was still kind of in shock that somebody could do a nice gesture like this," Jason said.

So, Michelle decided to track down Vince and his father on social media. "[W]e contacted this family," Michelle later posted on Facebook. "The dad had COVID and was out of work. This family still gave the wallet back even though they have nothing!" Lorenzo had been unable to return to his job at a meat-processing plant

even after recovering from the virus. Vince, nevertheless, was satisfied with how it had turned out.

"We got two dollars and I was happy," he announced, adding, "Doing the right thing is good."

For Chase and the Dahlkes, however, the honest act warranted something more.

Harnessing the generosity of their local community, the Dahlkes started a GoFundMe campaign on behalf of "Vince, the 11-year-old hero, & dad with COVID." At the time of writing, hundreds of generous donors had contributed more than \$10,000.

On June 5, Michelle uploaded a video thanking all the kind donors for their contributions to the fund and explaining that the Dahlkes were presenting Vince and Lorenzo with the first of many installments, including a check for more than \$6,000, a plethora of gift cards, snacks, and clothes for Vince.

When asked what he wanted, the only thing Vince requested was socks, Michelle said. "So thankful for [Vince] and his dad," Michelle later posted on Facebook. "There is so much hate in this world and so much negativity. It's time to focus on the positive."

‘THE MONEY COUPLE’

Saving Marriages With Better Money Conversations

CATHERINE YANG

Bethany and Scott Palmer are better known as The Money Couple—both financial planners of more than 20 years, they have made it their mission to save marriages by making talking about money something accessible and less stressful.

It started years ago, when the Palmers were sitting in a conference room going over an account review with a couple who was financially really well off, but unhappy. “There was just a ton of tension in the room, so finally I was just like, ‘Hey, what is going on with you guys, are you OK?’” Scott said. “All of a sudden she said, ‘Well, we’re here because we’re getting a divorce, and we need to split up the assets.’”

The Palmers had known the couple for a while and had children the same age, so they were shocked, and Bethany asked why they were getting a divorce.

“And they said, ‘We just can’t get along about money,’” Scott said. As the couple’s financial advisers, they couldn’t understand. The couple certainly didn’t lack in money, and everything looked great on paper.

Scott called them two days later to follow up, because he couldn’t understand what kind of money fights they could be having, to the point of wanting a divorce.

“He went on to explain to me that every day, they were having disagreements over money every day,” Scott said. It would start with the morning coffee—he liked to buy a morning cup, she was always handing him a thermos so he could save that money—then client lunches, and so on and so forth.

Palmers interviewed thousands of couples, and the research has culminated into several books, the concept of “money personalities,” and a set of resources to help couples have better discussions about money.

Your Money Language

Together with Stanford statistician Kirk Cameron, the Palmers discovered that there were five distinct “money personalities,” and that everyone has a primary and secondary money personality.

“Interestingly, we discovered that most couples are married to their money opposites—they say that you’re attracted to your opposite, well it’s not different with money either,” Bethany said. And that’s why money-related fights are so common.

There are savers and spenders, but there are also risk-takers, security-seekers, and flyers. These personalities don’t change (children display these personalities as well), so the key to a good relationship is to not try to force change but to artfully compromise—and the personality matrix gives people the tools to do so.

No one wants to sit their partner down and say, “Let’s talk about your debt,” but taking a quiz (TheMoneyCouple.com/resources/money-personality-assessment/) and sharing the results as a conversation starter makes it a lighter, easier way to discuss money.

“If we could come to major discussions knowing more about our spouse, it can really help take the money talk down to one that’s kind of fun to talk about versus one that causes so much discord,” Bethany said.

“Instead of looking at the person and being frustrated or wondering why they’re so different than you are, you can now quantify it,” Scott said.

At the heart of this is compromise: You cannot fundamentally change the ones you love, and realizing that, you can learn to better understand and accommodate their needs.

The assessments not only give couples a way to talk about money on neutral ground, but most of the time, it’s eye-opening for both parties to realize how they look at money themselves.

Some of these personalities are recognizable: Society puts the “saver” on a pedestal with their debt-free, early-retirement lifestyles, but only a third of Americans are savers, and this isn’t the only way to be smart about money, Scott said.

“What about the other 66 percent?” Scott said. “What we find in a lot of relationships is that one person is shamed for the way they do things with money, and the other one is the money guy or the money girl, and it gets frustrating.”

“The reality is, thank God we have spenders in society, thank God we have risk-takers that start businesses, they’re what drive the economy,” Scott said. “There is no right money personality, there is no wrong money personality, there just is what there is.”

The Personalities

Not only is it possible to be married to your complete money opposite, but many people actually have opposing primary and secondary money personalities, which accounts for the ways they struggle with money decisions as well.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF BETHANY AND SCOTT PALMER

“There is a huge difference between savers and security seekers,” Bethany said. “A saver will go to any extreme to save money: a coupon, not doing an activity, whatever. And they can never have enough savings. A security seeker, they don’t care about saving money, they care about having a plan with their money. So they’ll spend, it’s not going to hurt them to spend, but it has to be in a plan.”

Likewise, spenders and risk-takers have distinct differences.

“A spender, they don’t care about spending money on themselves, they don’t care about spending money on gifts—very, very generous—money doesn’t get in the way of any of that,” Bethany said. “The difference between that and a risk-taker, a risk-taker may not care about spending the money but they want to make sure they’re doing something different, something unusual, something that may be more risky, more spur-of-the-moment, unpredictable.”

The Palmers were surprised to find a whole category of people who “couldn’t give a rip about money.”

“The reality is, thank God we have spenders in society, thank God we have risk-takers that start businesses, they’re what drive the economy.”

Scott Palmer

“They really don’t think about it very much. When they go to make a plan, whether it’s to go out to eat or what soccer team to put their kid on, the money component doesn’t even come to mind,” Bethany said. “They fly by the seat of their pants when it comes to money, and they really put relationships before money, and so we just realized that whole category of people who have the flyer personality really goes undefined in our society—people categorize them irresponsible, but they’re really not, they just put relationships before money.”

The Palmers then developed different resources including books, videos, online courses, and pamphlets that guide couples through conversations from a broad level to how to find compromises on specific issues.

It takes a little time to acclimate to the compromises, Scott added, but once couples have the compromises to agree on it’s usually a weight lifted and a total game-changer.

The Compromise

Scott and Bethany are both spenders, but their secondary personalities—Scott’s a security seeker and Bethany’s a risk-taker—completely clash.

That meant Scott was always being the “no” guy, shooting down ideas because of his need for a plan. Then Bethany would either just not tell Scott, which would make him mad, or not do what she wanted, which would make her resentful.

But once they had this language to define their differences, they were able to come up with a compromise that satisfied everyone’s personalities.

“Yeah, let’s absolutely take the risks, but you just let me go through my security-seeking motions to make sure the risk we’re about to take is a good risk—so it really helped our relationship, and it helped our business,” Scott said. “It had a huge impact on our relationship.”

Another area of contention is typically the budget, especially if one person is the saver, and the other is a spender.

A good budget isn’t the end-all, be-all, Bethany said. No matter how well-mapped a budget is, if both parties’ personality needs aren’t met, there is tension.

“Budgets are a big one for people,” Scott said. “So say if you have one person in the relationship who says ‘Hey, this is our budget and we’re sticking to it no matter what,’ they’re probably going to get divorced. Especially if they’re married to a spender who says, ‘Literally, I have no flexibility to spend my money, or our money?’”

“What we tell people is, if you have somebody who is managing the purse-strings so tightly, you’re probably going to end up getting divorced, because the other person is sooner or later just going to throw their arms up and say, ‘Forget it, it’s not working,’” Scott said.

What they recommend is acknowledging the budget is important, but then budgeting in an amount for the spender to spend at will.

“It might slow down the savings plan this person has put together, it might even mean now it’s going to take us three years to get out of debt, instead of one and a half years to get out of debt, but that’s absolutely worth that relationship,” Scott said.

Raising Money-Savvy Children

Bethany and Scott were friends for years before they started dating, because their fathers, who were both financial advisers, knew each other. Despite having that family background in finance, they didn’t

grow up talking about money, and their parents also had recurring disagreements about money.

Bethany says she now knows her mother is a saver and security seeker, and her father is a saver and risk-taker, and she can see in retrospect where their money clashes came from.

“Now I wish they would’ve understood the difference, because he could have said things like ‘My risk-taker needs to spend some money to make some money, and let’s talk about that, let’s see what that looks like,’ and he could have tapped into her security seeker that needs a plan,” Bethany said. She remembers sitting in the back seat thinking “not this again” when recurring money-related bickering would come out (should we stay in, or eat out?).

“This is what’s happening around the world and around the country—and kids seeing it. And kids aren’t modeled good money relationships,” she said.

In fact, your children likely won’t see eye to eye with you on money either, and that relationship can also benefit from understanding the personalities.

“Most of the times, we want our children to think the way we think about money, but they often don’t,” Bethany said. You can spot this in interesting ways, like seeing how your children handle their Halloween candy. (Do they store and ration it? Gorge immediately? Try to trade?) It’s telling enough to predict their future spending habits.

After realizing how beneficial it was to talk to their sons about their money personalities, Scott and Bethany wrote a book, “The 5 Money Conversations to Have With Your Kids at Every Age and Stage,” on how to talk about money with your kids depending on their age. The personality assessment has different age-range versions as well.

“The way you think about money is often taken to other areas of your life,” Bethany said. Their older son is a risk-taker/security seeker, and one day came home announcing he was going to run for class president. A few days later he decided he was no longer running, and Bethany pointed out it was his opposite dynamic personalities at play. It was just a matter of helping him process and be aware of his decision making so that he could use that to his advantage (he ended up running, and winning).

“Imagine if we could have a whole generation of kids modeled good money communication, and not just modeled a good budget,” Bethany said. “You have to understand the differences and work that into the conversations.”

What Parenting Style Works Best?

Studies show authority and love are both crucial

THOMAS LICKONA

In the early 1960s, when America was on the cusp of social upheaval that would challenge authority at all levels, a University of California-Berkeley psychologist named Diana Baumrind began a longitudinal study aimed at answering a still timely question: How does our parenting style—including our practice of authority as well as love—affect our children’s development of character and competence?

More than 100 parents and their

children participated in Baumrind’s study. When the children were in preschool, middle school, and high school, the researchers spent 50 hours observing each family’s parent-child interactions at home and in the lab, and interviewed parents about those interactions. In addition, the research team observed each child’s peer interactions at school. Finally, they interviewed every child individually when they were in middle school and again in high school.

Based on this research, Baumrind

was able to identify four parenting styles.

Each style was defined by how parents practiced “demandingness” and “responsiveness.” Demandingness referred to the way parents used their authority—how they monitored their children’s activities, exercised control, and motivated compliance with expected behavior. Responsiveness referred to the way parents expressed love—how they responded to their children’s needs and desires and how they helped their child meet parental expectations.

How Kids Turned Out

How did each of the four parenting styles integrate—or fail to integrate—demandingness and responsiveness, and how did kids raised with these different styles turn out?

1. Disengaged parents were neither demanding nor responsive.

Their attitude was basically one of not wanting to be bothered with the responsibilities of childrearing. Some were detached and neglectful; others were cold and rejecting.

OUTCOME: The children of disengaged parents had the worst outcomes. Most did not do well in school and had problems with peer relationships. By the time they were teens, they had the lowest achievement scores of all the youth in the study and the highest levels of anxiety, depression, and drug abuse.

3. Authoritarian parents were demanding, but unresponsive.

They lacked warmth, were very critical, and rarely praised their children’s positive achievements or actions. They micromanaged their children’s activities and insisted on conformity to parental wishes in arbitrary and rigid ways that were unrelated to the child’s interests, abilities, or needs. They made no effort to communicate the reasons for their directives and demands but relied instead on threats and punishment to motivate compliance. The consequences of disobedience were harsh and sometimes unpredictable.

OUTCOME: Children raised in this manner saw their parents as arbitrary and unapproachable. These children lacked confidence and were prone to anxiety, depression, and giving in to peer pressure.

2. Permissive parents were responsive, but undemanding.

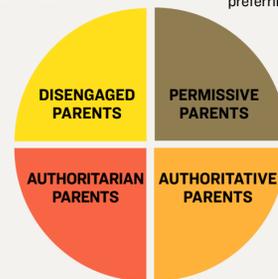
These parents set few rules, frequently indulged their children, and tended to use manipulative methods like bribery or love withdrawal when they did try to motivate compliance. They did not require their children to be responsible or respect the needs of others. They avoided confrontations, preferring to be seen as friends rather than authority figures.

OUTCOME: The children of permissive parents were typically low in self-control, low in consideration of others, and low in achievement motivation. As teens, they were more likely to use drugs than children whose parents were higher in demandingness.

4. Authoritative parents were both demanding and responsive—high in their expectations and high in support.

They were warm and nurturing, encouraged individuality and age-appropriate independence, but also valued obedience to adult requirements. They knew where their children were and what they were doing. They praised positive behavior, gave rational explanations for their rules and expectations, and listened to their child’s perspective. They engaged in a give-and-take but did not base their decisions solely on their child’s desires. Consequences for misbehavior were logically related to the child’s actions.

OUTCOME: Children with authoritative parents showed the highest levels of confidence, respect for others, self-control, and school achievement.



Confirmation From 10-Year Study of 20,000 Families

The superiority of authoritative parenting, with its balanced integration of demandingness and responsiveness, got major confirmation from a 10-year study by Temple University psychologist Laurence Steinberg that focused on just the teen years. Whereas Baumrind study’s looked at 100 families, Steinberg’s investigated 20,000 families—drawn from nine diverse communities across the United States.

To illustrate how the four parenting styles would play out in adolescence, consider how each style would handle a common parent-teen scenario: Your teenager comes home late—after curfew.

- An authoritarian parent would impose a punishment with little or no discussion; the emphasis would be on following the rule, period.
- A permissive parent might be unhappy about the lateness but would avoid a confrontation about it.
- Disengaged parents probably wouldn’t have even set a curfew, or if they had, wouldn’t care much about the lateness.
- Authoritative parents would take the lateness seriously. They would find out why their child was late, discuss the legitimacy of the reason, and help their teen see why a responsible person, regardless of the reason, would phone (or text) to let their parents know they were safe but would be late.

The emphasis of the authoritative parent would be on the teen’s taking the



Your parenting style, including how you practice authority and how you show your love, affects your children’s character and achievement

parent’s perspective and committing to more responsible behavior in the future. If the lateness problem recurred, there would be a discussion of fair consequences to motivate future compliance.

In Steinberg’s study, as in Baumrind’s, teens from authoritative families excelled in all categories. They were the most confident, the least likely to abuse drugs or alcohol, and the least likely to experience problems with anxiety or depression. They invested the most time in their studies and got the best grades.

The major takeaway from the Steinberg and Baumrind studies?

If you want to maximize your contribution to your child’s development of character and competence, integrate demandingness (the essential exercise of your authority) and responsiveness (the essential expression of your love). This balanced, authoritative style of parenting combines these important elements:

- confident authority that sets high but age-appropriate expectations
- a high level of warmth and support that helps children meet those expectations
- rational explanations of parental rules and requirements
- valuing both obedience and age-appropriate independence
- fair and reasonable discipline that holds children accountable to expectations, with an emphasis on the development of responsibility
- parental willingness to engage in a give-and-take that gives kids a fair hearing, with parents making the final decision
- treating children as individuals who have needs and feelings deserving respect

Thomas Lickona (ThomasLickona.com) is a developmental psychologist, director of the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (*Respect and Responsibility*), and author of “How to Raise Kind Kids: And Get Respect, Gratitude, and a Happier Family in the Bargain” (Penguin, 2018). He writes a *Psychology Today* parenting blog, “Raising Kind Kids.” This article by Thomas Lickona was originally published on MercatorNet.com. Republished under a Creative Commons License. If you enjoyed this article, visit MercatorNet.com for more.



The Palmers have developed resources, including a self-quiz, to help couples have better discussions about money.

As it turns out, the vast majority of divorces involve money problems, and the Palmers really don’t find that surprising. According to a study of more than 4,500 couples in the journal *Family Relations*, fights about money are the No. 1 predictor of divorce. Almost every decision we make on a daily basis has some kind of money component attached—what gas to buy, whether to have breakfast at home or buy it on your way to work—and if couples have fundamentally different ways of looking at money, the disagreements become constant.

Scott relayed this couple’s story to Bethany, and she said they should find some resources to help couples fighting about money.

“And what we found was that there was nothing,” Scott said.

Over the next three years, the

‘I Want to Homeschool, but How?’

A bare-bones guide to getting started

BARBARA DANZA

Of all the silver linings to the tumultuous times we’re living through, one of the most significant may turn out to be the apparent influx of families that are about to give homeschooling a try.

Over the last few months, I’ve personally received numerous messages from friends of all stripes asking for tips, resources, and advice about homeschooling. Every online homeschool group I’m part of has welcomed a significant increase of new members during this time and countless posts by new or potential homeschoolers seeking information and support.

Almost every inquiry boils down to the same basic question: “I want to homeschool, but how do I actually do it?”

The truth is, there are an infinite number of ways to homeschool your children. One of the very best characteristics of homeschooling is that you can make it what you want it to be—what works for your unique family and what most benefits each of your children.

For the newbie, though, especially one who may have never considered homeschooling before, endless possibilities may be overwhelming. Many unexpected homeschoolers are seeking simple, practical steps to ease their anxieties and get them started. That’s what I have for you here.

A caveat or two: First, you should know that every state in the U.S. has different laws when it comes to homeschooling. While, of course, it’s legal to homeschool in every state, some states mandate specific requirements for homeschoolers—while some don’t. Go to your state’s Department of Education website to understand what’s required of you.

Second, the following should be considered merely a jumping-off point. In practice, over time, you’ll come to personalize your homeschool, gaining confidence along the way to try new things, customize learning to your children’s interests and aptitudes, and let go of what doesn’t work for you.

So, how does one homeschool one’s children?

Start at the Core: Math and Language Arts

Fundamentally, every education needs to have a solid foundation in two basic areas: mathematics and language arts—you know, reading, writing, and ‘rithmetic.

The easiest way to make sure you’re solidly covering math is to utilize a program that does the heavy lifting for you. There are countless curriculum options available that teach (either through text or video instruction) and offer practice exercises and assessment tools. Check out math curricular reviews on CathyDuffyReviews.com, choose one you think your child might enjoy, and try it out.

Language arts is a term that has come to incorporate reading, grammar, spelling, writing, and penmanship.

When it comes to reading, I recommend you read “The Read-Aloud Family: Making Meaningful and Lasting Connections With Your Kids,” by Sarah Mackenzie. I think you’ll come away with the understanding that you don’t need a curriculum for “reading,” just a bunch of great books. Make sure those library



JACK FROG/SHUTTERSTOCK

First, you should know that every state in the U.S. has different laws when it comes to homeschooling.

cards are up to date!

You may want to use a curriculum for grammar, spelling, or writing—or all three. The Cathy Duffy Reviews site also covers many of the language arts curricula on the market. Pick one and give it a go.

Check Your Calendar

Now that you’ve got two programs that will form the backbone of your homeschool year, it’s time to get an idea of how much time it would take you and your child to get through each by the end of the year. (Of course, you don’t have to finish in a year, but this exercise will at least provide a gauge of the workload involved.)

Divide the number of lessons in each program by the number of weeks you intend to homeschool this year. (For reference, a typical public school requires 180 days or about 36 weeks of instruction. Some states mandate the number of weeks you must complete.)

Start the year by aiming to cover the determined number of lessons each week. You can, of course, adjust your schedule at any time to meet the needs of your family.

For your first homeschool year, you can provide your children with an excellent education simply by covering math and language arts—especially if you’re incorporating a feast of delicious and varied books for them to devour.

If you’re feeling ambitious, there are, of course, other subjects you can focus on. I recommend studying the following as a family, as opposed to each individual child working on a grade-level version.

History

The key to teaching history is to tell the story in sequential order. History is simply a story and, for some reason, schools teach it in an ad hoc, very selective, out-of-order way that confuses everybody. I recommend the four-volume series, “The Story of the World” by Susan Wise Bauer as the spine of your exploration into history. Through very basic stories, Bauer walks the reader through history from ancient times to modern days. When

you get to a part of history that your family finds particularly interesting, linger there for a while. Watch documentaries, go on field trips, read related fiction and non-fiction books, and go as deep as you’re motivated to before moving on to the next story.

Science

Similarly, see science as an exploration. Science textbooks tend to take super-interesting ideas and discoveries and suck the life out of them. Tackling science in units of interest, or unit studies, can be extremely fun. Ask your kids what they’d like to learn about the natural world and go from there. You may find yourselves camping out under the stars, viewing prehistoric skeletons at the natural history museum, or creating a volcanic eruption in the driveway. Pick a topic and run with it.

The Arts

There’s the appreciation of the arts and the practice of the arts—and both should be an absolute delight.

Art appreciation doesn’t need to be a chore. Hang prints of famous paintings, watch videos about the greatest artists, and visit museums galore. Create an atmosphere where your family gets to admire art regularly. That’s all you have to do. The learning will blow your mind.

Similarly with music, we live in a time where the entire canon of classical music (and more) is at our fingertips. Make playlists, check out composer biographies at the library, and go to concerts when you can. Let the very best music ever written be the soundtrack to your homeschool.

As children show prowess in certain aspects of practicing the arts—whether in dance, musical performance, or art—get them outside instruction to explore their potential.

So Much to Learn

Is there more you can teach? Of course. There’s typing and sewing and foreign language and woodcraft and... As you go along,

you’ll find time for the lessons that are most important to your specific children. Don’t put too much pressure on yourself in the beginning. Homeschool is an ever-evolving endeavor.

Set the Rhythm

As the summer winds down and your first day of homeschool approaches, give some thought to the rhythm of your days. What time will you start each day? How will you start each day? What routines will move you from breakfast through math to lunch to afterschool activities to winding down at night? (For some great thoughts on this, read Pam Barnhill’s “Better Together, Strengthen Your Family, Simplify Your Homeschool, and Savor the Subjects That Matter Most.”) Schedules can be tricky to stick to, but rhythms keep everything grounded. You’ll likely tweak this for a month or more before you feel like you’ve hit a good rhythm. Be patient.

Set the Stage

Finally, get your home ready for homeschool. Gather supplies, tidy up, do what makes you feel good about the space where you’re about to embark on a learning adventure with your kids. The atmosphere of your home will have a lasting impact on your children’s education.

Before you start, if you read only one homeschool book, read “The Brave Learner: Finding Everyday Magic in Homeschool, Learning, and Life” by Julie Bogart.

When the time comes, wake up, start your day with your family, enjoy the successes, forgive the bloopers, and know that tomorrow is another day.

You’ve started to tend a new garden here, and you’ve only just planted the seeds. While you may not see any fruits or even sprouts, the seeds are nestled under well-watered soil, and tomorrow you can water them again with love, patience, hope, and care. Along the way, there will be weeds, droughts, and storms. But as you continue to tend your garden, after many seasons, you’ll behold what blooms. Slow and steady.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 28, 2020



A Thing Of Beauty (Endymion)

by John Keats

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o’er-darkn’d ways
Made for our searching; yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
‘Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven’s brink.

WHAT DID THE ARTIST SAY TO HIS RIVAL?

“CHALLENGE YOU TO DO BETTER!”



ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

“Every artist was first an amateur.”



RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882)

DMITRY19131/SHUTTERSTOCK

A HOT ONE

On July 10, 1913, the world record for the highest observed outdoor temperature was made. The hottest temperature on record was recorded at Greenland Ranch, Death Valley, California. It was a sweltering 134 degrees F.



S_PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 14

LESSER KNOWN AFRICAN ANIMALS

(PART I)

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

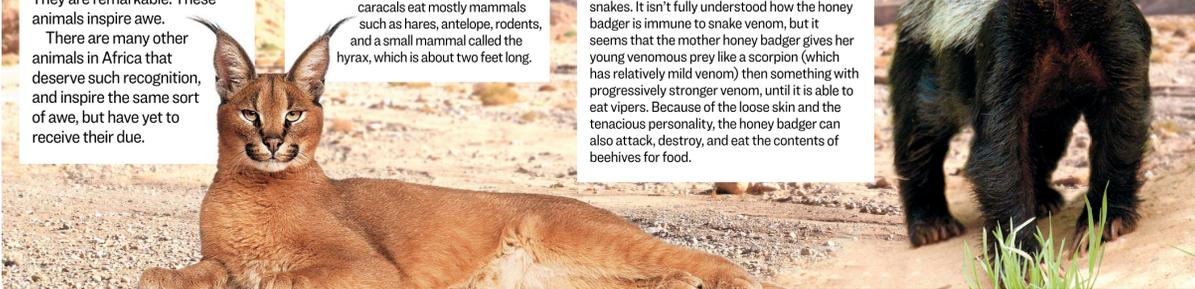
Many animals of Africa are well known—cheetahs, lions, wildebeest, rhinos, zebras, and giraffes are the most famous.

And for good reason: They are remarkable. These animals inspire awe. There are many other animals in Africa that deserve such recognition, and inspire the same sort of awe, but have yet to receive their due.

CARACAL

Caracals are cats that inhabit the entire continent of Africa, as well as the Middle East and Central Asia. They like to live in habitat “edges,” where one habitat meets another. The caracal looks mostly plain, its coat is sandy brown color. Their faces have some black markings, and long ears with black tufts. Their underbellies are white.

What makes them remarkable is their ability to catch birds. With their muscular hind legs, the caracal can jump up to 10 feet into the air to catch a low-flying bird. Though this technique is highly refined, birds are not their main food choice; caracals eat mostly mammals such as hares, antelope, rodents, and a small mammal called the hyrax, which is about two feet long.



HONEY BADGER

Honey badgers are mammals that live in most parts of Africa (excluding the Sahara and the Mediterranean coast region) as well as the Middle East, Central and Western Asia, and India. They are stocky and muscular with white fur above, and black below. They have very long claws. Honey badgers eat almost any kind of animal, and will also eat plants.

What makes honey badgers remarkable is their amazing grit. When being attacked and bitten by an unsuspecting predator, such as an inexperienced lion, the honey badger can simply turn around in its very loose skin, and bite the offender back. They also eat venomous snakes. It isn’t fully understood how the honey badger is immune to snake venom, but it seems that the mother honey badger gives her young venomous prey like a scorpion (which has relatively mild venom) then something with progressively stronger venom, until it is able to eat vipers. Because of the loose skin and the tenacious personality, the honey badger can also attack, destroy, and eat the contents of beehives for food.

Honey badger chasing a black backed jackal in Etosha National Park, Namibia.



A Boy and His Dog

EMG INSPIRED STAFF

It was his first day of first grade, and young Dylan Bliss was just about to head to class for the first time when he paused for a photo next to his brand-new puppy, Ruger.

Eleven years later, with Dylan’s graduation from Alvirne High School in Hudson, New Hampshire, Ruger was back in the picture—looking much older but happy—next to Dylan in a cap and gown, kneeling in the same pose as in first grade.

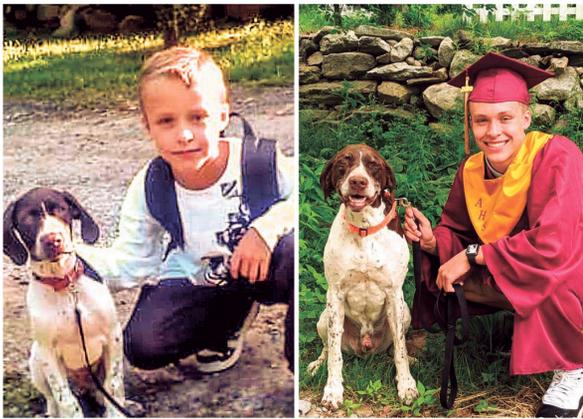
So many adventures and memories filled the years between those two photos, said Dylan’s mom, Corie—memories that seem to be written on the faces of the boy and his dog. “He was always there with us,” Dylan told WMUR-TV. “No matter if it was vacations or coming home from school, leaving school. He was always there on the couch or hiking with us. So, he’s kind of in all my memories.”

Dylan’s mom put the two photos together side by side and posted them on a local community Facebook page on June 16, where many Facebook users saw the charming comparison, commented, liked, and shared thousands of times. One of the comments read: “Such a great memory! Congrats!”

Corie also wrote a caption above the photo that read:

“No matter if it was vacations or coming home from school, leaving school. He was always there on the couch or hiking with us. So, he’s kind of in all my memories.”

Dylan Bliss



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CORIE BLISS

Dylan Bliss and his dog Ruger, pictured while Bliss was in the first grade, and again 11 years later, on the occasion of his high school graduation.

“Congratulations to our son and all the 2020 graduates. Our beloved dog Ruger is terminal and battling cancer, we were so thankful to still have him here with us for our son’s graduation last night. 1st day 1st grade vs. graduation night 12th grade #mansbestfriend.”

Although it doesn’t show in the photo, Ruger has cancer, as Corie said.

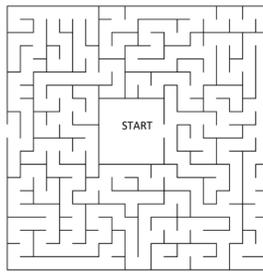
“At the end of the day, when he’s laying down, you can tell he’s not himself,” Dylan said. “When he’s outside, you would never

know that he has cancer.” The family takes yearly camping trips with Ruger, where the family dog enjoys running and swimming, KAKE reported. However, with his declining health, they are trying to get in one last summer vacation at his favorite spot.

Meanwhile, it’s comforting to know Ruger has a happy life on the family’s small farm, with space to run around, a pool to swim in, and critters to play with.

“He has a very nice life,” Corie said.

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

2	10		
66			
2	7		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1
2 x 2 - 7 = 10
2 x 7 = 14

Medium puzzle 1

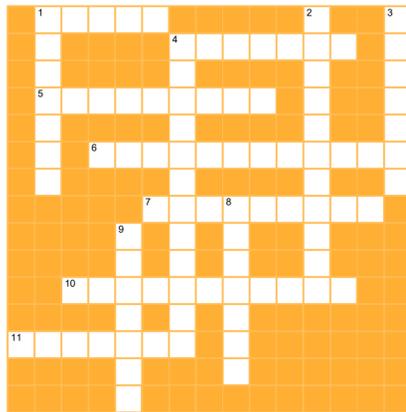
9	13		
56			
6	11		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
6 - 61 + (9 - 14)
11 - 61 + 9 = 6

Hard puzzle 1

22	33		
76			
2	12		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
2 - 21 + 2 x 88



Down

- Craft involving stringing tiny objects (7)
- Sampler technique (5-6)
- Making beach candles (7)
- Chinese craft called “Jian zhi” (12)
- Knotty craft (7)
- The oldest known cloth (7)

Across

- A dyeing art? (5)
- Activity involving firing (7)
- Art coated in varnish (9)
- Flower arranging (12)
- A “hooking” craft (3-6)
- Penmanship (11)
- Creating poetry or short stories (7)

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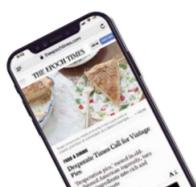
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