

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

CANDACE ASHWORTH SIMPSON



When Peck began fostering troubled teens, she already had many of the tools she would need.

Helping Families Heal

Parenting expert Nicholeen Peck on the ripple effects of teaching ‘self-government’

CATHERINE YANG

Nicholeen Peck has become known worldwide for teaching good parenting and self-mastery, helping parents to raise children who are calm communicators. After seeing Peck featured a decade ago on a BBC reality TV program in which two wild teenagers spent a week in her home and left with renewed hope to better themselves, audiences worldwide were astounded.

The philosophy of self-empowerment and responsibility was actually one that dawned on Peck in her teenage years—because, as it happens, Peck was herself

▲ Nicholeen Peck has written books for parents and children. She has also created a program at TeachingSelfGovernment.com.

a very difficult 14-year-old.

“I was a really strong-willed child,” Peck said. Her father was a play director, teacher, and public speaker, and her mother reigned in the home, always cooking, canning, growing, and so on. At an age when kids normally pull away from their parents anyway, Peck would butt heads with her father constantly. By then, she’d pulled away so far that her relationship with her parents was at its worst point.

“At that point my parents pretty much had me on lockdown. Quite frankly, they couldn’t trust me, because I was just always arguing with them on something. If a child shows their parents they’re not on the same page, the parents feel they have to keep the child safer by not letting them spread their wings.”

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Delightful Dispatches From a Small Maine City

FRED J. ECKERT

Happening upon “The Detective in the Dooryard: Reflections of a Maine Cop” by Timothy Cotton is like discovering a nice little treasure chest. Open this delightful book and you will find a whole bunch of different gems that will enrich you.

Popular TV host Mike Rowe finds it “a very funny book.” He said he’d assumed that Cotton was “a dedicated cop who wrote amusing stories on the side,” but after reading the book, he said, “I’m now beginning to think he is a dedicated writer who arrests ne’er-do-wells in his spare time.”

Cotton can make you laugh out loud. He can make you tear up. He can lift your mood. He can make you pause and think.

Craig Johnson, the author whose books gave us Netflix’s acclaimed “Longmire” series, said, “To be a good police officer, you have to be a student of human nature, and when you add literary muscle and a razor-sharp wit—you get Timothy Cotton.

For the 57-year-old native Mainer who’s been a police officer for more than 30 years, overseeing the Bangor Police Department’s Facebook page happened to be included among the duties that came with a 2014 promotion he received to sergeant and public information officer.

“I didn’t know anything about social media so I examined what police departments around the country were doing on their Facebook pages,” he said. “Many were very well-produced, highly professional, and some were really fancy, but they just didn’t speak to me. I decided I wanted to take a very different approach.”

He asked the department chief if he could drastically change the tone by injecting humor into his writings about the police and their daily interactions with the good and not-so-good people they encounter. Do it your way, said the chief, as long as you steer clear of politics and religion.

The department’s Facebook following took off from 9,300 followers and just kept zooming. Today, more than 300,000 people in the United States and around the world—nearly 10 times the population of Bangor, Maine—follow what he, with his typical nimble wit, refers to as “the world’s most marginally famous Facebook page.”

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ALL PHOTOS BY BANGOR MAINE POLICE DEPARTMENT/FACEBOOK

Delightful Dispatches From a Small Maine City

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"It's not about me, and it's not some soft-sell, I-love-the-police thing," Cotton said. "I've tried to create the page by writing about people and their relationships to, or with, the police. It's about interaction between cops and people and the funny things we see or do. I like to tell the story of the people we deal with more than us. People don't know the backstory of the person we help or arrest. I like to do it with humor, but I also like to do it with kindness."

Cotton has always been a vociferous reader of comedy, especially the words of Dave Barry, P.J. O'Rourke, and Art Buchwald. Many among his huge following say his writing reminds them of these comic favorites, as well as other great humorists such as Lewis Grizzard and Erma Bombeck. He's been selected as Humor Writer of the Month by the University of Dayton's Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop.

"I'm a guy who likes to be somewhat sarcastic and have a good time," Cotton said.

Does he ever! His offbeat reporting about the police beat in this small Maine city is a delight; you so often find gems that are witty, insightful, inspirational, uplifting, and so fun to read. Cotton can make you laugh out loud. He can make you tear up. He can lift your mood. He can make you pause and think.

Here are a few typical samples of Cotton's musings:

- "Officers were sent to a motel on outer Hammond Street ... to take the report of a person breaking out the windows. This is not the type of tomfoolery that

makes other inn dwellers feel relaxed when smoothing the sheets with their weary bones ... A trio of revelers had consumed alcoholic beverages together for a substantial amount of time. The outcast went all kinds of crazy ... The remaining members of the trio, formerly known as enjoying themselves, escaped the room to summon help. That's when the suspect started taking names and smashing glass. Lashing out is sometimes a cry for help, and that's where Bangor cops come in. The now-bleeding and still-inebriated suspect went to the lobby area where he broke another window. Handcrafted broken glass seems so much more 'artsy.' He then ran for the wood line where he attempted to hide in that pitiful way that people hide when drunk; we refer to it as 'very poorly.' He was taken to the emergency room during his victory lap to jail. Glass is sharp. He was not."

- "A man in a red coat was clearly intoxicated and sleeping on a Rutland Street porch. The porch was not his to sleep on, and the homeowner wisely contacted us to arrange different accommodations. Our officer (a busy young lad) noted that the man smelled of spirits and staggered, as people sometimes do after drinking several too many. When the cop asked him where he was headed, the man said he would like a ride to his grandparents' home in Eagle Lake. Eagle Lake is 155 miles to the north. Ain't nobody got time for that. ... He did not heed the clear and concise warnings to quiet down and the young officer had no choice but to change the venue by applying the stainless restraint devices that we



Cotton "being forced to pat" Otis the puppy.

His offbeat reporting about the police beat in this small Maine city is a delight; you so often find gems that are witty, insightful, inspirational, uplifting, and so fun to read.

seem to use far too often when a moral compass has been lubed—improperly—with alcohol." - "A couple of mobile sommeliers did the 'sip 'n slip' at Governor's restaurant in Bangor. The ladies smelled the cork, popped the top, and didn't stop (to pay) before they took the liquefied grapes on a road-trip down Broadway. Before they left, an employee inquired about them trying to take the wine outside to imbibe, and one of them asked her if she was going to try to stop them. Talk about the Grapes of Wrath—that was naughty! The 'ladies' were found in Old Town by one of their officers. They said the neon lights are bright on Broadway, but, on this day, the dim glow of the every was overcome by the overpowering LEDs of justice."

- "One of our officers was dispatched to go to Norfolk Street to try to locate a motor vehicle that was seen towing a person wearing skis. These are the kinds of complaints that our officers love to handle. We were hopeful to find the adventuresome duo in order to inquire about the best

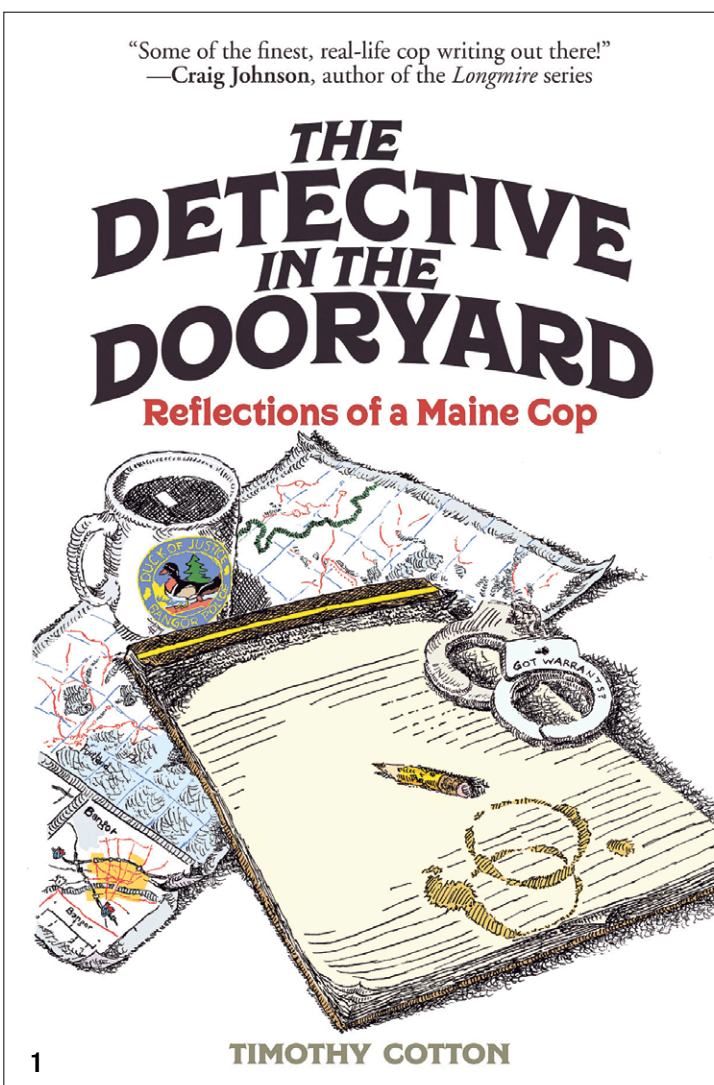
speeds, appropriate rope lengths, and to find out which wax holds up best when applied to skis being used on both hard-packed snow, icy surfaces, and asphalt.

We are not saying that we would not have given them a good dressing-down. We are just saying that this is a crime that could call for a complete reenactment. ... The officer could not find the skijoring souls as they skedaddled slickly, slipping silently into the snowy shadows. We were sad."

These samples are from "Got Warrants" jottings he has posted on the Bangor Police Department's Facebook page. Other reflections of his included in the book are from his personal Facebook page (@TimCottonWrites) which has more than 55,000 followers and is rapidly growing. And some stories are original writings he's done just for the book. He also has a growing following on his Instagram page.

The Duck of Justice

Cotton said that much of what he writes is "borne from thoughts that come and go as I drive or



ride, covering the miles between all the places I love to go." One of the thoughts that came to him led to the Bangor Police Department's adoption of an unusual mascot—a wood duck.

Years ago, he "rescued" a dilapidated taxidermy duck from a trash can in the District Attorney's office and called it "The Duck of Truth." He said its presence "broke the ice with more than one witness to a crime, as well as with a few victims and suspects. The simple joke was that 'you cannot lie in front of the duck.' It worked, and even when it didn't, it gave me great pleasure to say it."

He made the stuffed duck, lovingly refurbished by a taxidermist, his sidekick when he took over the department's Facebook page. He slipped it into photos of officers and Bangor scenes. People couldn't resist asking why a stuffed duck kept showing up in so many photos.

"I didn't answer them," Cotton said. "It made sense to keep it mysterious."

"That mysterious duck, renamed "The Duck of Justice," became an internet star. It helped that web surfers looking for the Department of Justice or DOJ happened to also notice something about a duck at the Bangor police headquarters. People from every state in the United States and from Europe, Asia, and Australia have stopped by to have their picture taken with "The Duck of Justice"—thousands of them!

Its huge Facebook following includes Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's founder and CEO. Many

1. "The Detective in the Dooryard: Reflections of a Maine Cop" by Timothy Cotton.

2. Since Cotton took over the Bangor Police Department's Facebook page, it went from 9,300 to more than 300,000 followers.

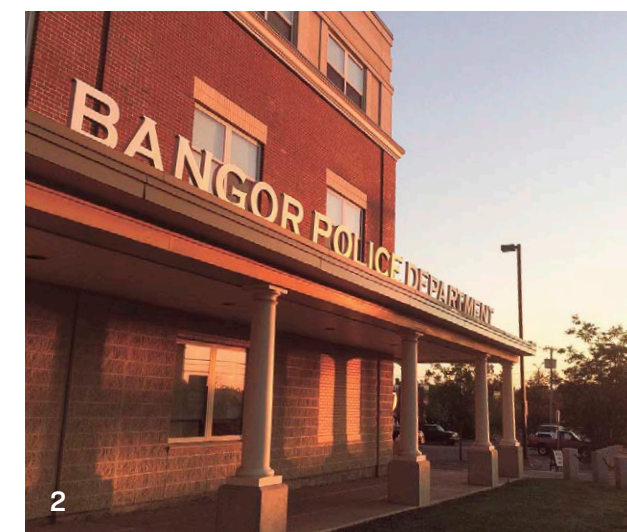
3. The Duck of Justice.

4. Some of Cotton's writings are about the dogs at the Bangor Police Department, such as Aki, who once helped retrieve a lost wedding ring.

5. A pallet left outside of the Bangor Police Department.



Cotton writes an entertaining feature on the Bangor Police Department Facebook page called "Got Warrants?"



thousands of Duck of Justice T-shirts have been sold, with all profits going to community causes. Cotton gifted his Duck of Justice, now a registered trademark, and all rights to it to the City of Bangor.

Runs in the Family

Being a cop runs in the Cotton family. His father was a police officer who became a minister following his retirement. His son is a Maine State Trooper. Cotton worked in a machine shop after graduating from high school; then, after studying at the New England School of Communications, was a popular radio show host in Bangor before joining its

police department.

"Police work isn't glamorous, but it's important," Cotton said. Follow his Facebook postings or read his book, and besides being wonderfully entertained you should also realize that the work police do is often mundane, frequently frustrating, sometimes very dangerous, and always essential for the safety of the people and the protection and property in a society that values the rule of law and enjoying liberty living in an orderly society.

Oh, in case you are wondering, as I did: why is the book titled "The Detective in the Dooryard" rather than "Doorway"? Because, Cotton explained to me, in Maine

and other parts of New England, the area around the door that is most often used to enter is always called the dooryard, whether it be the front yard, the side yard, or the backyard.

If you're at all like me, the one thing you won't like about "The Detective in the Dooryard" is the ending. What you won't like is that it ends. The best way to deal with this is to pick it up now and then and enjoy dipping into it again.

A writer and favorably reviewed novelist himself, Fred J. Eckert has been a member of Congress and twice served under President Ronald Reagan as a U.S. ambassador.

DEAR NEXT GENERATION:

'Always take the high road'

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

Growing up poor in a family that lived barely paycheck to paycheck, I had little direction when I graduated high school. My mother's primary goal for me and my four siblings was for all of us to graduate high school. I assumed this was because she had done so, only to find out later in life that she quit school after the 8th grade and went to work full time during the depression to help her family.

When I graduated, I decided that I was NOT going to live paycheck to paycheck. College was not mentioned and not an option, so I joined the Air Force to learn a skill. I clearly recall telling myself that anything that I did going forward was going to be for me and my family, and therefore I challenged myself to deliver. After returning from Vietnam, I married and went to computer school, obtaining an associate's degree. My wife and I have

done well and were blessed that our three children all graduated from college.

Some of the "maxims" that I learned and have lived by are:

- This is MY life to live—I must do my best, and, most importantly, "do the right thing."

- Today is the first day of the rest of my life—make the most of it.

- Ask yourself, "Is this the right thing?" If not, what can I do if it isn't?

- Laugh at yourself and don't take yourself too seriously.

- Don't be a victim, take responsibility and action—OWN IT!

—Jay Decker

When a youngster is given the chance to sell—anytime, door to door or at a bazaar—they need to go for it. The Little League team selling discount cards is perfect. Next, open a savings account and always save at least 25 percent of any earnings (until you marry). Now you're set for life: You can make the sale, and save for the future. Never make a decision that

burns your conscience. Your freedom to make your own way in life is much better than any government handout. Find your faith spiritually, and you will be blessed with a long life.

—Terris Hanenburg

My mom always told me: "If everyone is doing it, you probably shouldn't," and, "Don't do anything you wouldn't like to see on the front page of the newspaper." That's from back in the day when most everyone still knew right from wrong.

—Deborah Kunic

Dear Next Generation,

I have practiced law in a small town in Iowa for 47 years and have accumulated traits that I believe will lead to success. Some of these traits are my own and some have been offered by others. I have categorized them as the 10 character traits that will lead to true success.

• **BE HONEST.** Tell the truth; be sincere;

don't mislead or withhold key information in relationships of trust. No legacy is as rich as honesty—it's still the best policy. Don't steal. If you lose your honesty, there is nothing else to lose. Word travels fast as to who can be trusted. Lying brings great shame.

• **DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY.** Always take the high road; without integrity, all is lost. There is no such thing as a minor lapse of integrity. Leave your good name in case you return. Stand up for your beliefs about right and wrong, even if you stand alone; resist social pressure to do wrong.

• **BE KIND AND CARING. Always be friendly.** Never forget "Please" and "Thank You," and never pass up a chance to say a kind word. Be kind to all, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle. A smile costs nothing and wins friends. Show you care through generosity and compassion; don't be selfish or mean. Control your anger. Do someone a favor.

• **TREAT ALL PEOPLE WITH RESPECT.** Be courteous, polite, and respectful; judge all people on their merits; be tolerant, appreciative, and accepting of individual differences. Keep company with people that uplift you. Steer clear of negative people. Your attitude is a choice—the most important one you will ever make.

• **BE RESPONSIBLE.** If you find an excuse,

don't use it. Never explain. THINK before you act; consider the consequences of your choices; hold yourself accountable and "take your medicine." Do the right thing. It's OK to fail. Seek good mentors and learn from them. Keep your spending below your earnings.

• **PURSUCE EXCELLENCE.** Do your best with what you have always; don't quit easily. Energy and persistence conquer all things. There is no off season. People with goals succeed because they know where they are going. Take the time to celebrate your successes. Never give up. Make yourself proud. Do something every day that you love to do.

• **KEEP PROMISES.** Keep your word and honor your commitments; yes means yes and no means no; pay your debts and don't expect anyone else to support you. Return what you borrow. If you break it, replace it. Don't compromise yourself; you're all you've got.

• **BE LOYAL.** Stand by family, friends, employers, community, and country; don't talk about people behind their backs. Neglect not your family and loved ones. Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them ... a great person is always willing to be little.

• **BE FAIR.** Always treat people fairly. Be open-minded; listen to big people and little people and try to understand what

they are saying and feeling. Everyone wants to be heard. Be comfortable with silence. No cutting in line.

• **BE A GOOD CITIZEN.** Obey the law and respect authority; vote; volunteer your talents. It is in the giving that we receive. Live a life of service. Remember freedom is not free. Your body needs good nutrition and exercise. Make today worth remembering. Look for the positive things in life, and you will find them. You are a special person, and there is no one like you! Be grateful for your many blessings.

—Thomas J. Whorley

What advice would you like to give to the younger generations?

We call on all of our readers to share the timeless values that define right and wrong, and pass the torch, if you will, through your wisdom and hard-earned experience. We feel that the passing down of this wisdom has diminished over time, and that only with a strong moral foundation can future generations thrive.

Send your advice, along with your full name, state, and contact information to NextGeneration@epochtimes.com or mail it to:

Next Generation, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001

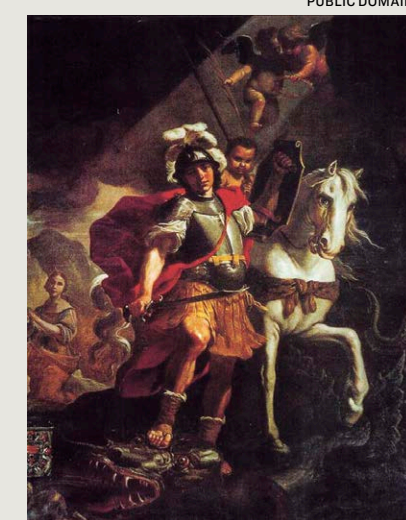
VIRTUES

Courage Wears Many Hats

Courage, the ability to act or speak out despite our fears, undergirds all the other virtues. It allows us to face danger or adversity, to defend and promote the good, and to persevere in a cause to the end.

Most of us have met the lion in the path and known the sickening fear of that encounter. Courage alone can rescue us and keep us moving forward.

Such courage wears many hats. The soldier who falls on a grenade to save his comrades, the teenager who stands beside his friend against a pack of bullies, the single mom who every morning sends her children off to school and herself off to work, the infirm grandmother determined to bring a ray of sunshine to her caregivers: all display grit and bravery.



"St. George Victorious over the Dragon" by Mattia Preti, 1678.

Whatever battles you are fighting, dear readers, and we are all fighting one battle or another, take heart, seek out your inner strength and fortitude, and carry on. In the words of Winston Churchill, "Never flinch, never weary, never despair."

Gather your courage and press ahead.

—Jeff Minick

Helping Families Heal

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Peck was bright and opinionated but always had to get her way. She was sociable and thought of herself as popular, but had made a habit of lying, which fostered distrust. A confluence of factors came together that put Peck on the interesting path she is on today.

'Why Would I Choose to Be Any Other Way?'

Once, Peck and a friend were planning a



Self government means ... being able to determine the cause and effect of any given situation and possessing the knowledge of your behaviors so you can control them.

Nicholeen Peck

big neighborhood party, with all the local kids invited, when all of a sudden, it hit her—she wouldn't be able to go herself, as her parents had all but permanently grounded her. They couldn't trust her.

"This friend's mother asked me a question and it changed my whole life: She said, 'Nicholeen, have you ever thought about just saying OK?' Peck said. She was baffled; as a matter of fact, she hadn't.

"I told her, 'That would never work. That's what they want me to say!' Because a strong-willed person thinks the only way to get your way is to force it." Compliance, much less being sincere about it, isn't even on a strong-willed person's radar, she said, as they have a power-struggle mindset.

In an effort to prove her friend's mother wrong, Peck said she would try it—she would comply with her parents, and watch them not allow her to attend the party in two weeks anyway.

That night, as it happened, was Peck's turn to do the dishes, and it was part of her routine to attempt to weasel her way out of dish duty. Instead of coming up with yet another excuse, Peck said OK and started on the dishes without complaint.

"My parents looked at each other with such an expression of shock," Peck said. She chalked it up to just surprise at being caught off guard and told herself she needed more proof that compliance was something that could change her parents.

A few days later, Peck's mother reminded her to clean her room—an order Peck had ignored for literally months. But this time, Peck said OK and started picking things up immediately.

"And she stood there and she watched me, and I remember she was just leaning in the doorway as I cleaned, and because I still had a little bit of a dishonest bent I pretended I didn't see her watching me," Peck said.

"But as I was just cleaning, there was this kind of voice that rang in my head. And the voice said: 'I am so powerful!'

"All of a sudden, I [realized]: I am so powerful. I am happy and I am cleaning and I [chose] to be happy. And then I said, 'I am never going to [choose] to be anything but happy again.' Why would I?"

"I had found the truth. And that's very important, because strong-willed people are always looking for the truth, and if they find it, they are willing to die on that [hill]."

Having realized this as a teenager, Peck already had many of the tools she would later need in fostering troubled teens.

Teaching Skill Sets, Not Manipulation

When Peck, a mother of four, had her first child, she went through a lot of effort to stop working so that she could be at home. But when her two oldest were very young, her husband's career went through a change and the family needed to bring in additional income. This led to the Pecks to open their home as a treatment center for foster teens who had behavioral issues and processing difficulties; some had been incarcerated, some had had fetal alcohol syndrome, some had addictions.

The training Peck underwent for the treatment center was intensive, and she realized the big book of skills she was



COURTESY OF NICHOLEEN PECK



▲ (Top) Nicholeen Peck and her husband Spencer.

(Bottom) Peck on a talk show.

given was so similar to those skills she had taught herself since she was 14.

Every child was dealing with multiple issues and typically took an array of medications to deal with them. Peck started to wonder whether she could help the children to not need so many drugs, and whether they could be taught to really master self-control. Regardless of the outcome, working toward these goals would benefit them.

"I decided I was going to teach them self-mastery," she said. "We were going to do the treatment, but my focus was going to be really lasered in on empowering them not just to get out of treatment and step down a level, but also to make a life shift so that it would be something they had for their whole life." She wanted them to step back into the world with the knowledge that "I can conquer anything I want, because I've conquered myself first."

Peck was successful; so much so, that people started asking her to speak at churches, PTA meetings, and support groups. She thought what she was teaching was common sense, and maybe others just weren't aware of some of these skills.

"To train yourself is a normal human process. It's only when people bring in lots of external measures and give people lots of excuses and don't require that they control themselves, that people do not find that power that lies within," she said. Her own problems with habitual lying when she was a young teen gave her insight on how our so-called impulsive behaviors develop and how we can retrain ourselves.

Peck thought the interest in her foster care treatment would be short-lived. But instead, interest grew with each year that passed, and people kept asking where they could buy her book (she didn't have one, nor the time to write). Then someone recommended their family for a BBC reality show, and it blew things out of the water.

Peck initially didn't want to do the show. It wasn't that she was concerned about unruly teens in the house—she'd managed that well for years.

"World's Strictest Parents" was a show that would send pairs of British teenagers to homes of strict host families around the world for a week to try to change their behavior. It's a premise that guarantees drama, but Peck knew there would be no power struggles in her house. She had developed a six-step process (YouTube.com/c/TeachingSelfGovernment) for calmness, and it worked every time, for parents and for children. No matter what the teens did, the Peck family would be calm.

Eventually, Peck agreed to do the show, thinking it might help some other families out there. The producers kept warning her the teens' behaviors would be out of control, but she knew something they didn't. So Hannah and James came to stay with the Pecks for a week, and when the segment aired, it immediately became the popular series' most-watched episode.

"People didn't know that you could have that type of effect on teens, have them want to change their behavior, without getting angry or just giving them what they want—people think those are your only two options, either you be their friend and try to give them what they want, or you fight them and try to bend them to your will. But those aren't your only two options, in fact those two options and everything in between, varying degrees of mixing those two together, are just manipulation," Peck said.

"What I knew was the only way to change a heart was to have traditional, strict values. Traditional, meaning principles: I had to have principles and

Parenting expert Nicholeen Peck on the ripple effects of teaching 'self-government'

CANDACE ASHWORTH SIMPSON

the way of you achieving your goals. All of those things can be changed, and I think it's a tragedy that today so many people think that your feelings have to be followed no matter what in order to find happiness.

"Think of how many hardships, if you look through history, people have overcome. Did they always just follow their feelings? Well, so many of them would have just run and hid, because they were afraid, and surely they were afraid. But they didn't, they found this courage, this strength within to say, 'This is the feeling I have right now, and it's truly a feeling I'm having, but is this a feeling I want to follow? Do I want my actions to follow that?'"

"And all great people do this, if you read biographies of some of the most inspiring people. People who invent, people who explore, people who overcome or who are heroes for whatever reason, we find that they harness this power called self-government."

It's critical for parents to model this behavior so that children may aspire to it. This approach—which isn't about foisting responsibility onto children before they're ready, but rather about wisely leading them toward it—strengthens parent-child relationships. After those two weeks of saying OK and being OK at age 14, Peck and her parents rebuilt their trust.

"This type of parenting program is about making really united, solid relationships," she said. "It's not just about controlling behaviors. In order to do that, you have to know how to solve problems in a way that's not going to break you apart."

Parenting methods that involve manipulating children end up eroding at that relationship.

"It's even marketed to parents: 'Oh, just do this one trick and your kids will be perfect.' You shouldn't be tricking your children. They should know everything that you're going to do or say before you even say it. That way, you remove all of the manipulation," Peck said. It's a system that enables children to realize when they are trying to manipulate things into getting their way as well and move away from that dishonesty.

As Peck started giving more talks, more and more parents would ask, "But what do I say?" She realized they wanted and needed actual scripts, because barring that, they were getting their scripts from popular culture or the media, where the picture of a family is rarely a happy one.

She wrote her book "Roles" because she realized many people didn't understand what roles she was referring to ("you have parents acting like neighbors"), and she tells parents exactly what she says in various situations if they need to use her words as a model.

Helping Families

Peck regularly takes walks with her 18-year-old daughter where they can talk about anything, including the boy her daughter's interested in. Her youngest, her 16-year-old son, gives her hugs and kisses every day. Her two older children are married now and still feel comfortable talking to her about anything. People tell her, "Nicholeen, your kids are the happiest kids I know."

The Peck family doesn't raise teenagers. Years ago, Peck found an article that explained the evolution of the "teenager," actually a rather modern term that was originally used in a derogatory way; "teenagers" were those confused and wayward people who weren't mature enough to be called "young adults."

Prior to World War II, families aimed to raise sons and daughters with the same manners expected of adults, and those children aspired to be like their parents—not how we think of the typical teenager today.

Peck says she and her children are all really good friends, but not because she tried to be their friend.

Along with making clear what family roles are, the Peck family has a family mission and vision, and hold regular family meetings.

Despite the skills, methods, and regular rules—all of which provide the sort of stability a child needs—Peck isn't the kind of person who needs to stick to a script or schedule ("If it's raining, I'll say let's roll up our pants and go play outside in the rain"). It's just that when it comes to family, Peck isn't leaving things to chance. Family is too important.

She thought differently when she was younger.

"You know, I'm going to have to be honest and say that there was a time when I was a young woman, and it before I was married, but I kind of drank some of the social Kool-Aid, and I had some of the negative effects of feminism," Peck said. "There's some good effect from feminism, but then there are these negative or selfish dialogues and these war-like mentalities which are very damaging to society and truthfully tearing a whole lot of women down."

One day, her family gathered at her grandmother's house for Mother's Day, and after dinner someone proposed they go around the room and each say some words of gratitude for their grandmother. People started speaking, and Peck being one of the last, got a chance to listen to everyone else first.

"My grandmother has five children and lots of grandchildren, so the room was full of people," she said. "And as I heard person after person share their tribute and sweet love to my grandmother, I remember looking at my grandmother and thinking to myself, she has got to be the most perfect lady."

"She is sweet and so kind, and she is so strong, spiritually and morally, and she loves everybody, and what I recognized, as everyone went around the room and told stuff about her, things that were instrumental in their lives, I realized that she was the most powerful person in that whole room," Peck said. She had learned that career was supposed to be the top priority in her life, but her grandmother was never a career woman. "She was a mother and a grandmother her whole life and she had dedicated everything to it."

"And when it finally got to me, I felt myself saying this little bit of honesty that I didn't even know was in me," she said. Peck told her grandmother: "I am so grateful for the example of womanhood that you are, and that you have shown me ... Grandma, you have shown me what it really means to be a powerful

It's not about foisting responsibility onto children before they're ready, but wisely leading them toward it.

woman."

At that moment, Peck said she realized the family really is the most powerful unit in society—though she didn't know yet how much she would dedicate herself to helping families.

Many years later, Peck got a call from the Worldwide Organization for Women (WOW), a pro-family non-profit, to speak at a United Nations conference, and she agreed. But before the conference even took place, the president of the organization called Peck asking her to take her role as president, as she was stepping down. Between raising four children, homeschooling, and running her organization, Peck didn't think she had time, but after she took a moment to reflect and pray, she realized her home and organization were running smoothly and many tasks had been delegated, and she in fact did have time. When WOW president Nina Palmer called again, Peck agreed.

"Every year we go to the Conference on the Status of Women at the U.N., and some of these other conferences, and we sit there and listen to everybody talk about sex for class after class," Peck said. "That was a very eye-opening year." Peck hadn't realized there were even forces and groups with the goal of dismantling the family, but they were running amok at the United Nations.

"I realized this was super important, and it matched my other mission, which was to heal families. I need to make sure families have the chance to heal, and even be families," she said. Eighty percent of women in the world still become mothers, and WOW wanted to offer them resources supporting motherhood and family.

In recent months, Peck has been putting videos online to provide resources for families and hopes to be able to train more people. Her speaking schedule has been put or pause or moved online, but she is happy for her time at home and looking forward to the next phase of life.

"I want to be able to do more of whatever it is to make the world a better place," Peck said. "If you want to boil it down: Whatever it takes to make the world a better place for families, for my family and for everybody's family. And actually in my mind that just means I'm doing whatever it is God wills for my life. That's where my happiness comes from."

CANDACE ASHWORTH SIMPSON



▲ The Pecks in a 2015 family photo.

live by them myself." If she has a secret to parenting success, it's this one, she says.

"Then I have to present those truths and principles, as well as skills, to the children, and they would see the truth of those things," she said. "And then when I corrected their problems, it would never be about emotions or anger, it would always be about logic and about appealing to truth."

"[When] these strong-willed kids see the truth of it, they realize they are only battling themselves, and they come out of it. That's what always happens."

Perhaps it sounds too good to be true, but Peck has proven time and time again that this works. Calm and open communication solves problems.

What Is Self-Governance?

Peck's program is rife with many skills that parents can use (to become calm, to teach their children to determine consequences, and so on), but the core of it is about creating the kind of home environment in which children learn to self-govern.

For children, there are four important skills: following instructions, accepting "no" answers, accepting consequences, and disagreeing appropriately. Peck has written corresponding children's books to go along with each skill (featuring her own children in the books).

"Self-government means having a knowledge of cause and effect, being able to determine the cause and effect of any given situation and possessing the knowledge of your behaviors so you can control them," Peck said.

"Understand yourself, and regularly analyze yourself to see if you're getting the effects you want. And if you're not, you might have to change your thoughts, you might have to change your behaviors, you might have to curtail some of your emotional responses that are getting in



▲ Peck does some one-on-one teaching in Park City, Utah.

COURTESY OF NICHOLEEN PECK

IT'S A HARD-KNOCK LIFE: Suffering AND Manhood

JEFF MINICK

“Life is difficult.”
“This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it. Once we truly know that life is difficult—once we truly understand and accept it—then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters.”

Those first two paragraphs from M. Scott Peck’s “The Road Less Traveled” hit me like a punch when I first read them long ago. I already knew life was difficult—I was 33 years old with a wife, an infant daughter, a new business, and a boatload of debt—but those two paragraphs allowed me an escape from fear and discouragement. From that point on, I made a mantra of “life is difficult,” and though my circumstances from then until now have brought challenges, Peck’s five magical sentences have frequently helped me conquer misfortune, take action, fulfill my responsibilities, and keep moving forward.

Lost Boys

Many men and women enter adulthood blind to the idea that struggle and troubles are as natural a part of life as breathing, but males in particular suffer the consequences of that ignorance. Lacking fathers or good mentors, confused by the shifting definitions of manhood, addicted to diversions like drinking, drugs, online pornography, or video games, and sometimes coddled by helicopter parents, they slip into their 20s without a clue that “life is difficult.”

Statistics support this observation. Over 10 times the number of males are in prison compared to females, three times as many men as women commit suicide, and males are far more likely than females to use illicit drugs. The average age of marriage for men is now close to 30—it was 22.5 years in 1970—and marriage itself is in decline.

This prolonged adolescence of our young men is a relatively new phenomenon. Two years ago, when I was trekking through the 11 volumes of Will and Ariel Durant’s “The Story of Civilization,” I was struck again and again by the youth of so many men when they first mounted the public stage. In American history, the same holds true. George Washington was leading military expeditions against the French at age 21; John Adams entered Harvard College at 16; and Andrew Jackson was 14 when he was captured by British forces during the American Revolution and nearly died in a prison camp. These men and others came of age in a world that taught them early on that life could be brutal and harsh, and that they had to man up and tackle tribulations if they were to prevail.

Today’s material advantages have shielded some of our young men from the trials faced by their ancestors and so have prohibited both their growth and ambition, allowing them to shamble through their 20s and even into their 30s as if they were still teenagers, focused on themselves, playing video games every night, partying away with friends, and finding themselves stunned when life throws a hook and knocks them to the canvas.

Grownups

On the other hand, many young men I know became responsible adults early on. Let me introduce you to a few of them.

James, age 35, is a successful attorney in North Carolina, married, and the father of seven children, six of whom are adopted. Mike, 40, is the director of maintenance and a geometry teacher at a small private school in Pennsylvania, married, and the father of seven. Jonathan, 32, is a successful salesman for a computer software company, married, and the father of four children under six years of age; he and his wife also flip houses and own a dozen rental properties here in Front Royal, Virginia. A 25-year-old college graduate in my town, Jeremy, taught himself how to build websites, owns a company that performs that task, and is married with two children and a third on the way. A neighbor, Sam, whom I mentioned in an earlier article, is married with two children, earns his living as an independent contractor, and heads out every weekday morning before sunrise to begin his work.

So what sets these men and others I know apart from some of their contemporaries?



Many men and women enter adulthood blind to the idea that struggle and troubles are as natural a part of life as breathing, but males in particular suffer the consequences of that ignorance.

The prolonged adolescence of young men is a relatively new phenomenon.



It wasn’t unusual in colonial times for men to ascend to the public stage at a younger age: George Washington was leading military expeditions against the French at age 21. Portrait of George Washington by Charles Willson Peale, 1772.

First, they have wives and children, and take their family duties seriously. Married shortly after graduation from college or while in their mid-20s, each of them stepped up to become both breadwinners and leaders in their families. And like all grownups, they have faced and overcome roadblocks and disappointments in their quest for success.

Moreover, none of these men look for handouts or a free ride. They take their work seriously, and unlike some, they recognize the maxim of Jamestown’s John Smith: “If you don’t work, you don’t eat.” They understand they must produce on a daily basis the income necessary for the support of their wives and children.

Finally, they take pride in their work. Like a lot of men I’ve met in my lifetime, they give each task they undertake their best effort, aware that if they cheat others, they are in truth robbing themselves of their own human dignity.

Exemplars

So how are such men made? They don’t just pop up as full-blown grownups like those ancient mythic warriors who sprouted from dragons’ teeth in the soil of Colchis. Where do they come from? How did they learn early on M. Scott Peck’s great truth?

The ones I know grew up in a household with a mother, a father, and several siblings. Most attended church, and their parents stressed the importance of education and hard work. By word and deed, their parents, relatives, mentors, and teachers served as figures of emulation for them.

A Boy Scout leader and a beloved basketball coach, for example, mentored Jeremy. Mike, who attended the school where he now works, often tells stories of the priests and teachers in that institution whose influence shaped his personality and his determination to pursue a virtuous life.

One wise single mother of my acquaintance, who cuts hair for a living, recognizes the importance of such men as guides for her son. At great personal sacrifice, she sends her teenage son to a private all-boys school whose mission is to teach its students truth, beauty, and goodness.

Let’s Talk to Them About Suffering and Adversity

The world’s major religions have always recognized that life is difficult, that suffering is a part of the human condition. For most of human history, a harsher environment and the tenets of religious faith taught adolescents that life is tough and often inflicts tribulation and misery, and that men, good men, real men, respond to those trials with stout-hearted grit.

Today, not so much.

If we wish to inculcate our young men with Peck’s great truth, if we wish to raise them as hardy, responsible, and loving individuals who can face life’s vicissitudes with courage and perseverance, then we must educate them daily with those goals in mind. The tests they face in the classroom and on the playing fields, the chores they do, the summer jobs they work, their mentors, our own example: These forces and others shape boys into men.

Let’s end with an anecdote illustrating this point. Beside the bed and breakfast that my wife and I operated in Waynesville, North Carolina, was the Way House, named after the doctor who had built that beautiful brick home around 1900. A descendant told me this story of her great-grandmother, the doctor’s wife.

One day, when her grandsons arrived home from school, Mrs. Way announced she had bought a cow.

“Why’d you buy a cow, Grandma?” they asked.

“Boys,” she told them, “I’ve never known a man to amount to a hill of beans who wasn’t up and at work by dawn. You now have a reason to get up in the morning.”

There was a woman who knew that good men are made, not born.

Life is difficult, yes, but by accepting that truth, we strip those three words of their negative power, and freed from doubt or despair, we can come to grips with the troubles at hand. Let’s make sure our young people know that.

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

ALL PHOTOS BY THOMAS GARNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



(Left) The Hall of Mirrors served as a place for meeting and waiting. The Treaty of Versailles, which ended World War I, was signed here on June 28, 1919.

(Above) Detail of a tapestry in the queen's apartments.

(Below) The Queen's Bedchamber.

(Bottom) The Room of Abundance, in the king's apartments, served as a refreshment room where coffee and wine were served on a sideboard.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

The Palace of VERSAILLES

From 1682 until the French Revolution of 1789, successive kings of France lived, worked, and held court in the most opulent of accommodations: the Palace of Versailles.

King Louis XIV began the tradition after he expanded his father's hilltop chateau, a luxurious rural retreat. Over a period of 50 years, the palace became the largest and most influential chateau in Europe and a source of great artistic invention in architecture, music, theater, and the decorative arts.

Many of the nation's greatest architects designed and built the Palace of Versailles. Architect Louis Le Vau, an early adopter of French Baroque architecture, added two symmetrical wings onto the original chateau, giving the palace its distinctive U-shaped design. Each wing, on either side of the forecourt, contained separate grand apartments for the king and queen. The king's bedchamber was moved to the center

of the U-shaped buildings in 1701.

Architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart, whom many scholars credit with representing the best of French Baroque architects, created the famed Hall of Mirrors and extended the palace estate further with sumptuous additions such as the Royal Chapel and the Grand Trianon. Louis XIV closely oversaw the building of the Grand Trianon, which he commissioned as a retreat from court life. Hardouin-Mansart described it as “a little palace of pink marble and porphyry [igneous rock], with marvelous gardens.”

Louis XIV's great-grandson, King Louis XV, commissioned architect Ange-Jacques Gabriel to create the Royal Opera at Versailles, realizing in 1770 his great-grandfather's idea.

In 1833, King Louis-Philippe afforded the palace an illustrious new role as the Museum of the History of France, which was inaugurated in 1837 and dedicated “to all the glories of France.”



(Top left) A sculpture of Marie-Antoinette by Félix Lecomte, 1783.

(Top right) A view through the doorways in the king's apartments.

(Bottom left) King Louis XIV chose the sun as his emblem; he was known as the Sun King.

(Bottom right) A statue representing the Rhône river.



(Left) The Parterre of the Orangerie. (Right) The palace started as a hunting lodge, became the royal residence, and then a museum from the 19th century onwards. It has 2,300 rooms.

When Homeschool Goes Awry

4 steps to take when it seems like it's just not working

BARBARA DANZA

Stepping on the path of homeschool is not for the faint of heart. In one fell swoop, you're swimming against the current while carrying the responsibility of none other than your precious children's education and future.

No pressure. The first few steps along this path might be the most challenging. A few days in and you may convince yourself that you're not cut out for this, that your child will never cooperate with you, and that this whole experiment just isn't working.

Truth be told, you need much more time than that.

Rocky starts are common and perfection is a myth. The key to starting along this great adventure is to ease in, give yourself and your children grace, slow down, and keep going. It's not uncommon for it to take a year or more before you feel like you've found your groove.

In the meantime, though, there are steps you can take to begin to feel much better about the journey ahead.

Pare Down

I'm going to go out on a limb and guess that you're trying to do too much. We've all done it. You know the kids need math, reading, writing, spelling, and, of course, science, history, art, music, and what about handwriting, typing, handicrafts, instrument lessons, foreign language study, and ... I'm exhausted just typing that.

It's great to have high standards and big dreams. You don't need to take every single subject your child might possibly study and dump it over their heads in the first week, however. In the beginning, pare the workload down to the very bare minimum.

Your goal in the first few weeks and even months is not to produce robotic workhorses but to connect with your children, establish a rhythm and routine to your days, and revel in the fact that you've taken this leap together.

You'd be amazed at how much your children can learn if you simply practice some math and read a variety of books together. Start there. As things start to flow, you'll know when it's a good time to add something else.

Replace Your Schedule With a Rhythm

I'm going to go out on another limb and guess you're overscheduling your day. If you've created an hour-by-hour schedule chock full of chores and copious subjects and to-do's, you're probably making yourself a little crazy. You're supposed to begin



DIM_ON_U4/SHUTTERSTOCK

Establishing a daily rhythm, rather than a schedule, gives you more flexibility.

math lessons at 9 a.m., but your child is still dilly-dallying over her breakfast dishes and you're falling so far behind schedule!

Stop. An easy way to free yourself of the tyranny of your own schedule is to aim for a daily rhythm instead. Map out a very loose framework for how you'd like your day to flow. For example, perhaps there's the early morning time for hygiene, morning chores, breakfast, and generally getting ready for the day's activities.

Next, you have school time. Somewhere in the middle, you break for a nice, relaxing lunch and active time. For young children, that may be it; for older students, perhaps you reconvene for some more schoolwork—perhaps with an emphasis on projects or interest-driven subjects. Perhaps at this time, extra-curricular activities occupy much of your focus.

Finally, you reach the evening, when you tidy up, prepare dinner, and wind down as a family.

This is, of course, just an example. Your rhythm should be the one that works best for your family. The key is to make it much more flexible and to untie it from very specific hours of the day. Simply break your day into blocks—only a few of them. Give it a try and tweak and adjust as needed. The simpler the better. If your tense shoulders relaxed a little bit considering this, you're on your way to better days.

Slow Down

Another common mistake homeschoolers

make is trying to check too many boxes. Checking boxes can make you feel like you're accomplishing something, but learning is not like a formula you can enter into a spreadsheet and expect to produce consistent outputs over time. It's an art form that ebbs and flows. It's messy, unpredictable, and full of wonder.

If you're focused on checking boxes rather than exploring the world through your children's eyes, you're missing the point.

So, stop measuring success by the number of checkmarks you make, and perhaps start measuring by, say, the number of hugs you've given or the one magical moment of the week when your child gaped you with the details of how a shark catches its prey after she read it in a book.

Trade In Your Teacher's Hat for a Student's Hat

You may be trying to imitate the role of a school teacher in your homeschool. But you're a parent, first and foremost. So that means that you love, cherish, and understand your child beyond what any teacher ever could. Second, you're a fellow student.

A homeschool parent need not pretend to be the authority on every subject being taught. It's far more authentic and wonderful to delve into the subject alongside your children with wonder and curiosity. Shoulder to shoulder, you can work through that math problem or essay, or follow that forest trail, searching for the items on your scavenger hunt.

Sure, sometimes you'll need to bring in

expertise. Mostly, though, you'll find that you're learning right alongside your children, probably for the first time, if you're a product of the public school system; and you'll see the magic of true learning unfold.

While you're learning, be sure to include good books about education and homeschooling in your reading stack as you go. There's an infinite amount of knowledge, insight, and inspiration to be had from those who've come before you. Soak it all in and gradually apply that which speaks to your good senses.

Take Care of You

Your mood, your happiness, your energy levels, and your perspective will have a huge impact on your homeschool environment. Make sure you take care of yourself.

Exercise, good nutrition, regular breaks, and time spent doing what you love as an individual are crucial for the long-term success of your homeschool. If a messy space bothers you, ensure you have time to tidy up. If time alone renews you, make sure it's a part of your everyday life. Do whatever you need to do to ensure you can show up with your full potential and do your very best.

If you feel like you've gotten off to a rocky start in your homeschool and are considering throwing in the towel, I encourage you to give it a little longer. Try some of these tips and see if you can devise a new lifestyle that will make this rewarding experience work for your family.

However, this is certainly not the custom where I come from. I've attended more than 25 weddings in my life, and gifts were always placed on a table at the reception.

To make the best decision, I would consider the situation of the couple and the type of gift you plan to give, as the best time to do the giving might be different for different weddings. If a couple has already moved into a new home together and what you are giving them is either useful or decorative, you could send it right away. If their move has been postponed, then I would wait and send it to their new address so they have one less thing to pack and haul.

If you are unsure, you can ask the couple directly, or their parents, about the best time for them to receive gifts. If theirs is a destination wedding, then send the gift to their home instead of the ceremony because it will be hard for the couple to transport a large number of gifts.

And if you don't like the idea of coming to the reception empty-handed, you could bring a thoughtful card or a small additional present such as a gift card.

Sincerely, June

Do you have a question for our advice columnist, Dear June? Whether it's a frustrating family matter, a social etiquette issue, a minor annoyance, or a big life question, send it to DearJune@EpochTimes.com or Attn: Dear June, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001

June Kellum is a married mother of two and longtime Epoch Times journalist covering family, relationships, and health topics.

DEAR JUNE with June Kellum



What's Worth Sharing on Social Media?

→ What we can learn from Socrates

Dear Readers,

I would like to draw your attention to a phenomenon on social media that deeply concerns me: People allowing ideological bias to trick them into spreading hateful, untrue messages.

It sounds rather trite to say "don't believe what you read on the internet," but it seems we need a reminder.

The most recent example on my Facebook feed was a post of what appeared to be a screenshot of an article published on Vox. The title was "Dear White Women: White Babies Are White Supremacy," which clearly espoused ludicrous ideas.

I saw the screenshot being shared by someone on Facebook, accompanied by a number of hateful comments aimed at the article's author.

However, this screenshot is fake. The article never actually existed.

The supposed author is Todd VanWerff, a name that appears fabricated. However, at the top of the screenshot is the name and photo of Emily VanDerWerff, who does write for Vox. She said in a post that the screenshot first appeared in June 2019 and she has received harassment and death threats because of it.

She traced the origin of the screenshot to a post on the anonymous site 4chan.

Two things concern me about this: first, that the article was fake (and easily shown to be so) but nonetheless generated real hate; secondly, that we are so willing to believe the worst of people who don't share our views.

There is a story about Socrates that recounts how once in conversation with a friend, the philosopher was asked if he wanted to hear some news about a mutual acquaintance.

Socrates asked his friend if he could be absolutely sure that what he was about

to say was true. The friend was not sure. Socrates then asked if the news was good. It was not. So Socrates asked if the news was useful or necessary. The friend replied again that it was not. Then Socrates said that if the news was not true, good, or useful, he didn't want to hear it.

I think we would be wise to use these criteria—known also as the triple-filter test—to assess what is worthwhile to share on social media.

Using these criteria will also make us less gullible, because then we will not share what we have not verified—and the process of verification reveals just how complex the world is and how little we can really say with confidence.

Indeed, the idea attributed to Socrates that "mankind is made of two kinds of people: wise people who know they're fools, and fools who think they are wise" has a ring of truth.

Dear June,

Weddings I had planned on attending this year reduced the number of guests for the ceremony due to COVID-19 and have postponed the reception portion to next year. What should be the protocol for gifting: send the gift in honor of the marriage ceremony, or wait until the reception?

—Nancy M, Michigan

Dear Nancy,

It may surprise you to learn that under normal circumstances, the recommended protocol is to send wedding gifts either before the marriage/reception day or after it—and some etiquette experts even say up to a year afterward is acceptable!



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

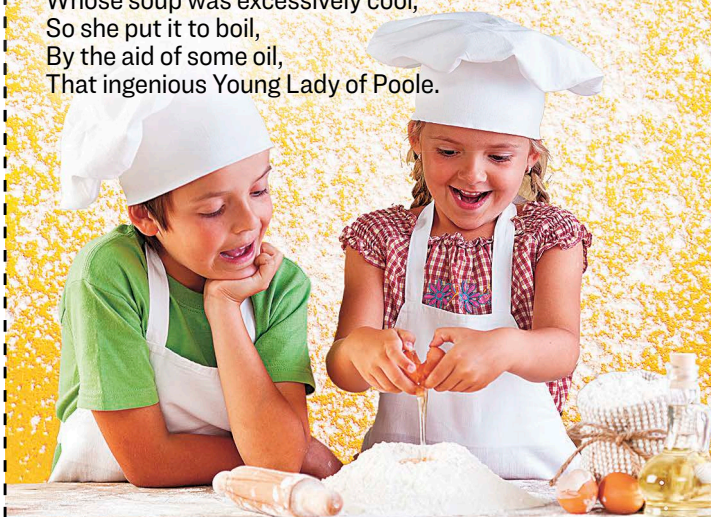


Excerpt From 'Book of Nonsense'

by Edward Lear

46. There was an Old Man of the North,
Who fell into a basin of broth;
But a laudable cook,
Fished him out with a hook,
Which saved that Old Man of the North.

47. There was a Young Lady of Poole,
Whose soup was excessively cool;
So she put it to boil,
By the aid of some oil,
That ingenious Young Lady of Poole.



ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

WHY DID THE GIRL THROW A STICK OF BUTTER OUT THE WINDOW?



ABBYDOG/SHUTTERSTOCK

“Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.”

WINSTON CHURCHILL (1874-1965), FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM



CHAMAU/SHUTTERSTOCK

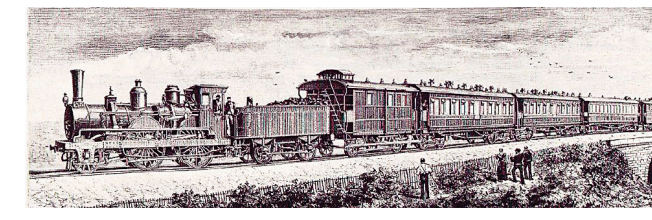
A FAMOUS TRAIN'S MAIDEN JOURNEY

On Oct. 4, 1883, the now famous Orient Express departed for its first journey from Paris to Istanbul. The international route of this passenger train changed throughout the years and was always associated with luxury travel and fantastical legends.

The service continued to run through Europe until 2009.



A poster advertising the winter 1888-1889 timetable.



The first Orient Express in 1883.

By Aidan Danza, age 14

HOW BIRD FEATHERS ARE COLORED

We all know that birds are beautiful.

But, do you know where their colors come from? The sources are very interesting.

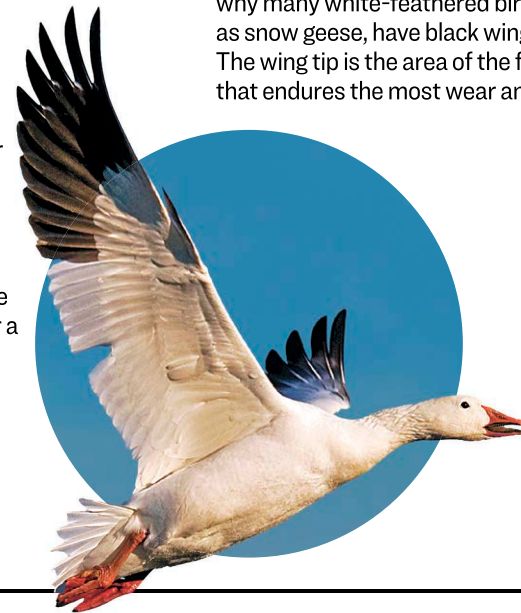


CAROTENOIDS

Carotenoids are pigments that birds acquire through their food. They are responsible for red, orange, and yellow. These birds all eat food rich in carotenoids, including dogwood berries. Carotenoids are present in many other organisms (living things) including carrots, pumpkins, salmon, apples, peaches, and strawberries. Since these brilliant-colored plumages are acquired via diet, vivid colors may actually be an indication for a female bird looking for a mate. If she sees a brightly colored male, she knows that he is good at providing for himself and would be good at providing for a family, as well.

MELANINS

Melanins are responsible for the browns, blacks, grays, rusty reds, and pale yellow. Unlike carotenoids, melanin is manufactured by the bird itself. Melanin is present in most animals with brown, black, or gray on their bodies. A notable example includes the black panther. Melanin also happens to make birds' feathers stronger. This is why many white-feathered birds, such as snow geese, have black wing tips. The wing tip is the area of the feather that endures the most wear and tear.



PORPHYRINS

Porphyrins give birds red, brown, green, and pink colors. However, they glow when put under an ultraviolet light. Since some birds can see into the ultraviolet spectrum, porphyrins may produce a more vivid color than we humans can see. Porphyrins are found in owls and pigeons, among others.

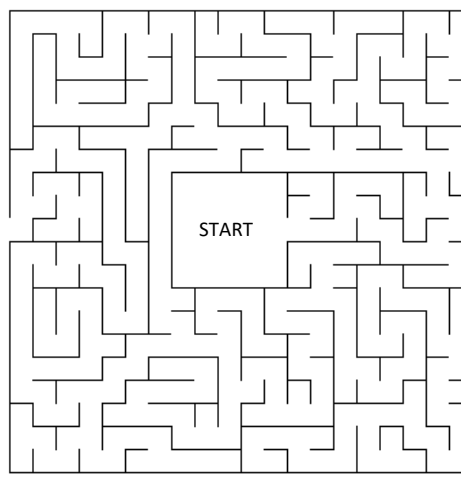


STRUCTURAL COLORS

Structural colors are colors that are not produced by the bird itself, but by the sun and our eyes. The structure of the feather behaves like a prism when light is reflected onto the structure of the feather. The feather allows certain colors (usually blues, purples, and greens) to shine out of the feathers, creating iridescence (shiny feathers), or flat (non-iridescent) blue feathers.



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	5		
60			
2	3		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1
2 + 2 = 4 + 9
6 + 9 = (2 + 2)

Medium puzzle 1

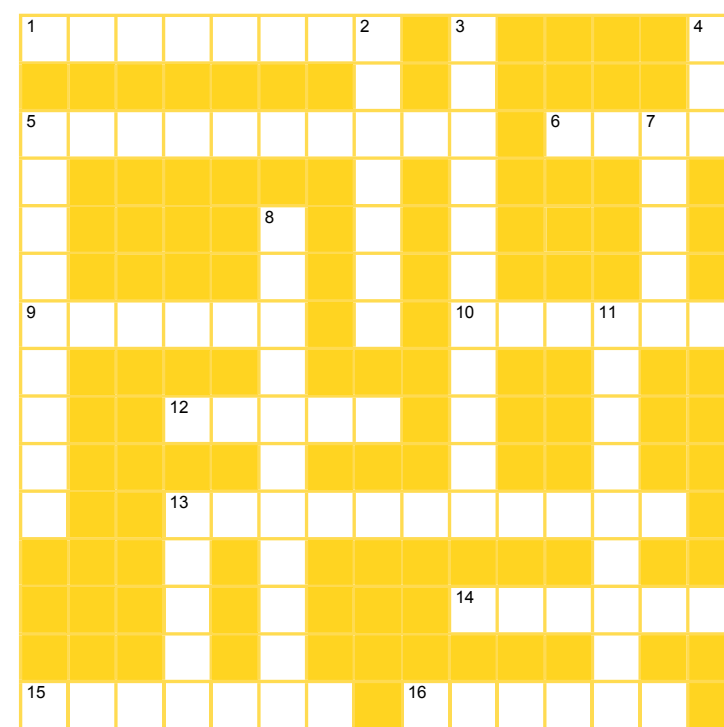
2	14		
68			
2	12		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
21 + 2 + 2 = 25
21 + 21 + (2 + 2)

Hard puzzle 1

15	22		
30			
2	22		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
22 - 22 + 2 = 51

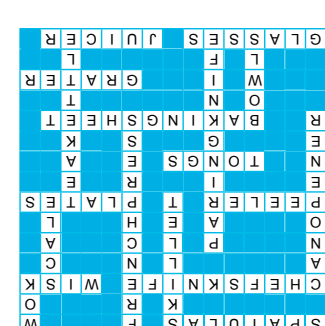


Across

- Pancake flippers (8)
- Big cutter (10)
- Omelet fluffer (4)
- Potato skinner? (6)
- Dishes (6)

Down

- Frying pan (7)
- Type of coffee maker (11)
- Asian stir-fry pan (3)
- Reveals tinned foods (9)
- Weights ingredients (5)
- Small cutter/peeler (11)
- Hot whistler (9)
- Containers for Chili, soup or cereal (5)



Across

- Used to pick up hot items (5)
- Place for future cookies (11)
- Preps Mozzarella for pizza (6)
- They make drinking easier (7)
- Helps you drink your veggies (6)



Welcome to a different kind of news

Hi there, Epoch VIP! It's a pleasure to finally meet you. We're really excited to have you here so you can experience The Epoch Times for yourself—and see if we live up to the hype.

You may already know that we do journalism a little differently; maybe that's why you're here. In our reporting, we always try to distill a story down to the facts and get readers as close to the truth as we can. We think that's the greatest responsibility we shoulder as a media outlet in today's rapidly changing world (and we're quite proud of it!). But of course, we're not here to tell you what

to think about us. That's not what we think media should do. Instead, we'd suggest you find some quiet time, take a comfortable seat and have a look at our content—from news and opinion to food, mind & body as well as life & tradition. We're firm believers in letting our work speak for itself, which leaves room for our readers to be the true judges of whether we've done a good job. That said, we're always open to feedback as being media isn't simply about disseminating information: it's about participating in a bigger societal conversation. And there'd be no conversation if someone wasn't on the

other side reacting to our articles. The way we see it, we're always in a partnership with our readers—with your suggestions and support, we hope to deliver a more improved reading experience for you every week. All this is why when you subscribe, you don't just become a subscriber: you become the newest team member in our journey to bring back traditional, fact-based journalism. And we'd love to have you onboard. Judging by the fact that you're reading this letter now, we think you have excellent taste.

In truth and tradition,
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