THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE TRADITON

Nurturing Marriage in Tough Times

A conversation with marriage expert Suzanne Venker

BARBARA DANZA

ne of the many profound lessons this challenging year has taught us is just how important our closest relationships are. For some married couples, difficult times may have forged stronger bonds; for others existing issues may have become magnified.

I asked Suzanne Venker, a relationship coach and the author of five books on marriage, for her advice on nurturing marriage in troubled times. Here's what she said.

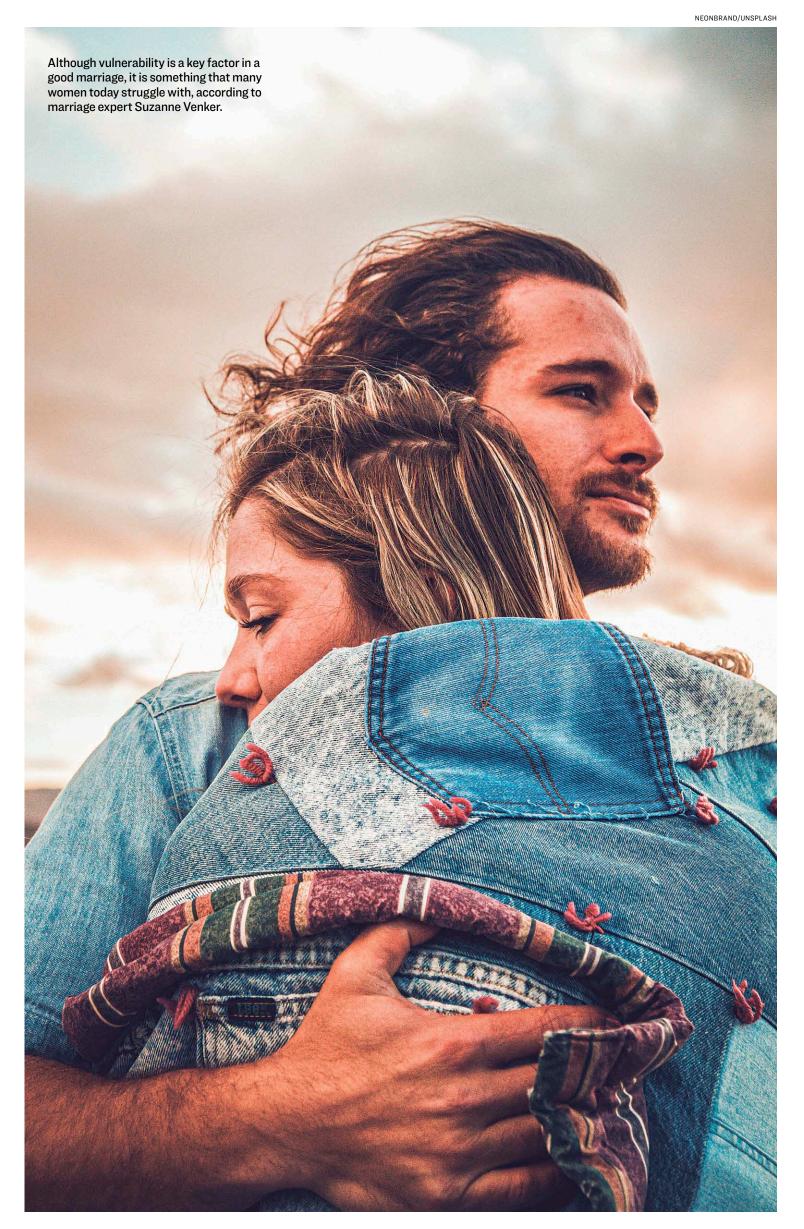
The Epoch Times: Every married couple wants a good marriage. What do you believe are the key characteristics of a good marriage? Suzanne Venker: There are four main aspects of marriage that have the capacity to make or break the relationship. If a couple can agree on those, they have a great shot at a happy marriage. Those four areas are: money, parenting, religion, and in-laws.

Money is the No. 1 source of marital conflict and divorce. This has always been the case, but the nature of the problems has changed. For one thing, men and women are bringing a boatload of student loan debt to the marriage and viewing this debt and "his" and "hers." Nothing is your own after you get married; the entire purpose of marriage is to become one, or part of a team.

If a couple's monies are separate and if there's no transparency, this is a huge indicator the couple is approaching marriage all wrong. To be successful at marriage, you have to work together. All income is joint income when you marry, regardless of who makes what—and both partners need equal spending power. Bottom line: When it comes to money, if you and your spouse are adversaries rather than allies, your marriage will be rocky or will end.

How to parent the children—or more specifically, how to discipline them—is also huge. It is imperative that a couple be on the same page about how to discipline, otherwise the kids wind up in charge because they'll use their parents' disagreements to their advantage and wreak havoc on the marriage.

Continued on **Page 4**



Why We Can 'Believe' in Andrea Bocelli

The Italian tenor's new album shares joy and inspiration

Italian singer Andrea Bocelli in concert at Madison Square Garden in New York on Dec. 13, 2018.

MAUREEN MACKEY

The great Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli has delighted and amazed audiences all over the globe with his stunning vocal performances. Now, a new musical release continues that tradition.

His latest album, "Believe," show-cases songs that have "inspired and sustained Bocelli over the years," according to his publicity postings.

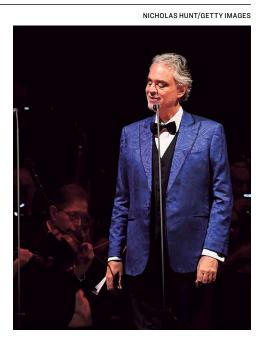
The songs on "Believe" include Bocelli's rousing interpretation of the great Rodgers and Hammerstein "Carousel" tune, "You'll Never Walk Alone," as well as a never-before-heard track

from composer Ennio Morricone

from composer Ennio Morricone.
"I think that this was the best moment for an album speaking to the spirit," said Bocelli on Nov. 13 during the Facebook Live launch of "Believe," which was broadcast around the globe from his home in Tuscany.

"There are many different kinds of music in this album," he added. "We have music by Mozart, there is music by [Ennio] Morricone—somebody will remember that he wrote 'Romanza'—and there is a song written by me," said Bocelli humbly.

Continued on **Page 2**



Continued from Page 1

"Then there are also some songs that I sang in church when I was a child. In my small village, I sang these songs, and not very much in tune" back then, he added lightly.

Notably, during this most difficult year of COVID-19, quarantining, and social distancing, Bocelli addressed his choice of the great song "You'll Never Walk Alone" for "Believe."

"Many people know this song from the soccer," he said (it's the anthem for the Liverpool Football Club). "But in this case, the song has another completely different meaning for me," said Bocelli. "In this album, it was important to have a song speaking to the people alone—just to say, 'Nobody is alone. There is somebody with us who can help in every situation. So be positive. Be optimistic.' This is the sense of the song for me in this context."

"Amazing Grace" is another delightful surprise on this new album. To perform this well-loved Christian hymn, Bocelli collaborated with country singer Alison

"Alison has a beautiful voice, very sweet—and also, she's a very spiritual girl," Bocelli said on Facebook Live about the Grammy-winning Krauss. "For this reason, I really wanted to have this singer next to me on this song."

Bocelli said he loves all of the songs he selected for this album, for a variety of reasons.

"Some songs have a big value as compositions," he said. "Others have a beautiful memory for me when I was a child. Every song is here in my heart."

Bocelli noted earlier in a statement that "the concept behind 'Believe' is based on three words: faith, hope, and charity. These are the three theological virtues of Christianity, yet—quite independently of any religious belief—they are also tne tnree extraorainary keys to giving meaning and completeness to the lives of every one of us."

Andrea Bocelli

on a deserted

sings during

a rehearsal

Piazza del

Duomo in

central Milan

on April 12,

2020, prior to

a livestreamed

performance

during Italy's

lockdown.

In an interview last year with The Epoch Times, Bocelli spoke of his deep faith and how it permeates his music. "The presence of our heavenly father can be felt by all of us, everywhere, and at all times in our lives," he wrote via email. "God is the miracle of love, he is the source of all that is good, he is synonymous with true beauty and the driving force of life itself."

He also said in that interview: "I personally try to honor the talent that I have been gifted. And when I sing, I can take no credit other than that of striving to live up to the instruments that God has given me. I always want to perform to the



fullest, to live up to expectations of awards over the years and been

nominated for many more. He

is considered the biggest-selling

singer in the history of classical

music and is known as well for his

Of the new album, "Believe,"

one Amazon reviewer wrote. "The

music is deeply spiritual and takes

the listener to a place of beauty and

peace, two things I believe most

of us need right now. The music

speaks of tenderness and faith in

Another person shared this sim-

Maureen Mackey, a contributor to

The Epoch Times, Parade Magazine,

and other publications, is a digital

content executive, writer, and editor

ple grace note: "Great music."

crossover into pop.

every selection."

(wnich increase as the years go by).

Bocelli's new album is currently

the No. 1 bestseller in classical

music on Amazon. It comes on

the heels of his "Music for Hope"

performance this past Easter at the

Duomo cathedral in Milan, which

millions of people around the world

watched live. That event was one of

the biggest live-streamed musical

Bocelli also has announced an

upcoming holiday event, "Believe

in Christmas," which he is sched-

uled to perform live from Italy's

Teatro Regio di Parma opera house

on Dec. 12. The ticketed event will

be streamed to fans everywhere

and will include musicians and

special guests.

performances of all time.

Born: Sept. 22, 1958, in Lajatico, Italy

Wife: Veronica Berti (m. 2014; mar-

Children: Amos, Matteo, Virginia

Studio and live albums include

For his album "Passione" (2013), collaborated with Jennifer Lopez and Nelly Furtado

When I sing, I can take no credit other than that of striving to live up to the instruments that God has given me.

the Bad, and the Mixed Bag

able virtue.

blindfold is not only misdirected and ignorant, but also dangerous. This brand of fealty brings into power oppressive dictators in the public square and petty tyrants in our personal lives. The drunkard who can't keep a job, insults his relatives and friends, and belittles his children while at the same time depending on his wife's unfailing fidelity has not only a spouse at his side but an enabler of his rotten behavior.

Loyalty can also be a mixed bag of thoughts and feelings. In "Mother o' Mine," Rudyard Kipling succinctly makes this case:

In the 12 Boy Scout laws, loyalty comes second with this explanation: "Scouts are true to their family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation." That concise definition gives us the heart of fidelity.

And unless that trust is betrayed, such loyalty is a virtue worth practicing.

—Jeff Minick

Andrea Bocelli at a Glance

Learned piano, flute, and saxophone as a child

Diagnosed with congenital glaucoma at five months old; became blind at age 12 after a soccer accident

ried previously to Enrica Cenzatti)

"Viaggio Italiano" (1995), "Aria: The Opera Album" (1998), "Sacred Arias' (1999), "Verdi" (2000), "Cieli di Toscana" (2001), "Sentimento" (2002), "Andrea" (2004), "Amore" (2006), "Under the Desert Sky" (2006), "Incanto" (2008), "Vivere Live in Tuscany" (2008), "My Christmas" (2009), "Concerto: One Night in Central Park" (2011), and "Sì" (2018)

For "Manon Lescaut" (2014), worked with Placido Domingo and Ana Maria

Website: AndreaBocelli.com

Andrea Bocelli

Loyalty: The Good,

As a virtue, loyalty is a double-edged

When we defend a son falsely accused of cheating on an exam, when we stick by a spouse who through a series of blunders has gotten us deeply into debt, we are acting with an admirable largesse of the soul. Such loyalty is a commend-

On the other hand, loyalty that wears a

"If I were hanged on the highest hill Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine! I know whose love would follow me still, Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!" Such forgiveness and love are the byproducts of loyalty.

TRAVEL

Cowpens: The Battle for Land and Country

RACHAEL DYMSKI

Cowpens Battlefield, located in rural western South Carolina, is a beautifully maintained piece of history by the National Park Service. Complete with a paved 1.2-mile battlefield trail, a picnic area, and a resourcespacked visitor center, the 845-acre park feels more like a nature preserve than a tribute to American history.

And yet, this battlefield, surrounded by a variety of trees and stunning scenery, is home to one of the most instrumental battles of the Revolutionary War. The Battle of Cowpens, fought in January 1871, turned the tide of the war and paved the way for the Patriots to victory at Yorktown.

We pulled up to Cowpens Battlefield in late September, admiring the many trees that were just beginning to turn color. We parked our car and unloaded our two toddlers, wondering how much history we could soak up with children in tow.

The battlefield and park are amazingly child-friendly. We had a picnic lunch under some large trees and open pasture (the name for the battlefield came out of the surrounding pastureland), and then walked the self-guided battlefield trail, dotted with plaques and informational boards about the battle.

Serene Grounds

It's hard to imagine that a place so serene and peaceful marks the ground where American Gen. Daniel Morgan outwitted and overtook his enemy, Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton. Commanded

by Lord Charles Cornwallis to destroy Morgan, Tarleton and his British troops pursued the Patriots and scouted Morgan's army near the Pacolet River in South Carolina's backcountry. Prior to Cowpens, the British had been tearing through the South, capturing Savannah, then Charleston and Camden. They were convinced the war was in their pocket and thought the guerrilla warfare in the rural colony backcountry was nothing to worry about.

In January 1871, the colonial population loyalties were split, causing deep conflict and tensions between neighbors and sometimes even families. Both Patriots and Loyalists organized militia, turning against one another with force and devastating their countryside.

This battlefield, surrounded by a variety of trees and stunning scenery, is home to one of the most instrumental battles of the Revolutionary War.

Armies during the Revolutionary War often fought on roads. The Battle of Cowpens was fought along the Green River Road.

three lines on the rich pastureland meadow. He placed his artillery in the middle and his dragoons on either side. in a double envelopment.

Patriots. The British army sufand 500 captured), while the American army suffered less than 100.

of Country

In the midst of this fighting, Gen. Nathanael Greene split his Southern Continental army and commanded Morgan to take his troops into the Carolina backcountry and wreak havoc on the British in whatever way they could: cutting supply lines, hampering operations, causing chaos.

Surprise

When Tarleton caught up to Morgan, he expected an easy victory. He underestimated the way the men of Morgan's army knew their geography, and how hard they were willing to fight for their land. Knowing Tarleton had little

respect for the American militia, Morgan organized his troops into Lt. Col. William Washington's cavalry surprised Tarleton and sent the Portrait of British dragoons scatter-U.S. general ing. When Tarleton sent Daniel Morgan his 71st Highlanders to-(1736–1802) by Charles ward the line, Morgan's Willson Peale, troops reformed, devascirca 1794. tating the British soldiers

In less than an hour, on a scenic, unassuming meadow, a decisive victory was won for the fered nearly 900 casualties (110 dead, more than 200 wounded,

Stepping Up for Love Visiting the Cowpens Battle-

field, my husband and I were reminded that war is fought in the most ordinary of places. Bravery and heroism need no special stage, and the weightiest victories are often found where no one seems to expect them. The victory on this unassuming field changed the course and psychology of the entire war. The British army moved out of the Carolinas and into Virginia, where they surrendered at York-

town in October 1781. In addition to a picnic area and battlefield loop, the park also boasts a museum that contains a reproduction 3-pounder cannon and an hourly view-

ing of the film "Cowpens: A Battle Remembered," and a 3.8-mile auto

loop road that outlines the perimeter of the battlefield. As we sat in the field, munching on cheese and crackers, watching our girls as

they collected fallen leaves and sticks, we reflected on what might have happened in the war had the militia not been willing to step up and defend their land. A love of country, of place, and home led the army

to fight so valiantly at Cowpens. The National Park Service has honored that love of land and place by preserving it so well, and making it accessible for others to explore and learn about it.

Rachael Dymski is an author, florist, and mom to two little girls. She is currently writing a novel about the German occupation of the Channel Islands and blogs on her website, RachaelDymski.com

DEAR JUNE On Family and Relationships



Frustrated Single Looking for Companion

DEAR JUNE I was a virgin until I was 22 years

old and entered into a 10-month relationship with a college classmate. When that relationship ended, I gave my life to Christ and returned to celibacy. Now, I'm 42, have never been married, am still celibate, and finding it increasingly difficult to maintain sexual integrity.

My own mother makes things worse because she is always telling me to "go find someone you have feelings for and do it," after all, "God knows we're not perfect." But Romans 6:1 warns me not to sin more so that God's grace may abound more. And the Bible also says in 1 Corinthians 7:9 that if one burns with lust, get married. Well, I'm on fire and God has not sent me a man. I don't even care about having kids; I just want companionship. Consequently, I've spent the past two decades praying that He either sends me a godly, marriage-minded man

(who I'm physically attracted to, has a job, and doesn't drink or do drugs) or that God shuts down my hormones entirely so that I'm asexual. Seriously.

For the record, before the COVID ockdowns, I was active in the church and have been since becoming a Christian 20 years ago. Even during the worst times of my life, I volunteered. I also traveled when I could afford it, so it's not a matter of "putting myself out there." Moreover, I cook at home several times a week, have excellent hygiene, and only have about 15 pounds left to lose. I'm no supermodel, but I work with what I've got. I say all of this because I have no idea why I'm still single. Is it because of my political leanings? (I'm a conservative.) My race? (I'm black and have always been willing to date interracially.) That I don't wear short skirts/dresses and stilettos? (I prefer ankle-length hemlines, kitten heels, flats, sneakers, and jeans.)

I honestly don't know why I'm writing to you, but I hope that you reply anyway. —Frustrated Single Celibate, Maryland

Dear Frustrated Single Celibate,

I think it is commendable that you have remained true to your principles in a day and age when chastity is not valued—and is even scorned. I think this demonstrates integrity that a future husband would really value.

I also think that when we allow physical urges to guide us to go against our values, this can lead to feelings of failure, lack of self-worth, and depression. Conversely, when we overcome physical temptation, our will becomes stronger and we are more capable of carrying forth our mission in life.

But it sounds like this is has been going on for a while and you are more than ready for a husband!

Have you tried signing up for any Christian dating sites?

Your politics and race might deter some men but certainly not the one you want to be with so I would not worry about this. Regarding dress and possible other shortfalls, I would recommend you take a look at the book "Fascinating Womanhood." This book was published by a Christian wife and mother in the 1960s

and in it she outlines qualities that make a wife fascinating—mysterious and attractive—to her husband and secure his genuine love. The book also points out is not very long. This is good for your state common ways in which women uncon- of mind, and as young boys thrive on sciously push their husbands away. She vigorous physical play, it can help your also wrote a version for unmarried women called "The Fascinating Girl," which I have not read but might also be helpful in your situation. One of the issues she discusses is dress and has recommendations for how to be modest but also feminine (stilettos and miniskirts are

definitely not required!). Also a thought about children: Even if you don't want your own, how would you feel about marrying a man who has children? If you are willing to be a stepmother this might open up your dating field but if the thought of children in the mix does not appeal or you are unsure, it would be good to be very honest about this.

Lastly, until you find him, I suggest not watching or reading romantic scenes as this kind of imagery will probably make your present situation more difficult.

Sincerely,

I'm a young, stay-at-home mom, living far away from my family in Europe. It often gets very hard and lonely not having family support around or to have grandparents for my son. Please what you would advise to overcome loneliness and create a loving home for my son even though it's exhausting and lonely at times. Thank you!

—Engela P., New York

Dear Engela,

Dear June,

Caring for a young child all day can certainly be lonely, especially this year during lockdown restrictions, and video calls with family don't replace their actual presence.

One idea to allow grandparents to interact with your young son is to them send photos of his books so they can read to him. This way, he will not be focused on the screen and you can have 10-15 minutes of kid-free time to get something done or just relax.

I would also suggest spending time with friends and as much (and safely) you can while still keeping things at home in balance. It might help if you combine visits with some sort of house-

hold chore such as mending. Also, I would try getting outdoors at

least twice a day even if the second time son maintain good behavior. You may need to encourage him to do something really physical such as running as fast as he can to a certain point, rolling down a hill, playing ball, or biking. Setting a goal and admiring his efforts can make this a lot of fun for him, as you see him test his limits and become more skilled. You don't need to do this for overly long,

15 minutes may be enough. Also outdoors, if there are any physical chores such as hauling or digging, let him do as much as he can. And noticing what is taking place in the natural world can be an engaging and quieter outdoor activity after he's burned off

Another thing to consider is maintaining a hobby or two, including ones that can be done in the presence of your son, such as knitting or baking. Hobbies can give you something to look forward to. You could also combine this with activities to connect with family, such as making gifts or writing letters.

Community service can also be an uplifting way to spend your time.

I also recommend creating a structure to your day that includes times you focus solely on him. This can really help keep things operating when you feel lonely and not fully present. Celebrating holidays with traditions from your childhood can help lend a structure to the year and also give you something to look forward to.

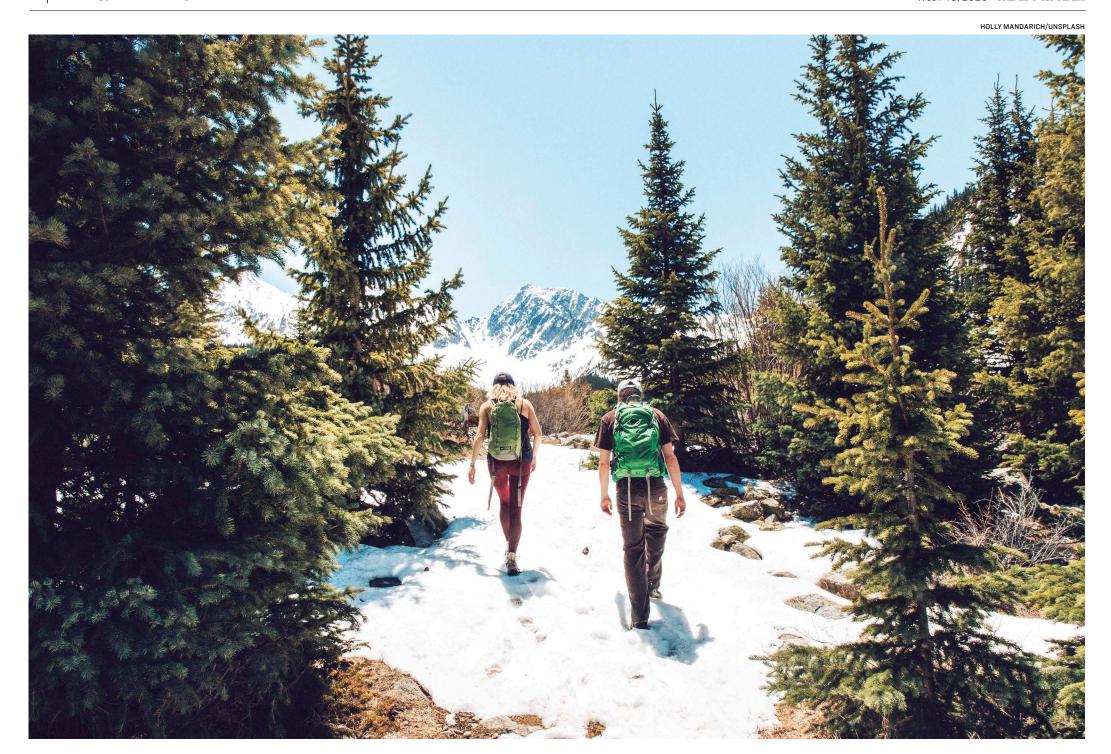
And lastly, it might help to create daily affirmations that remind you of what an important job you are doing.

Sincerely,

Do you have a family or relationship question for our advice columnist, Dear June? Send it to DearJune@EpochTimes. com or Attn: Dear June, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY

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





Nurturing Marriage in Tough Times

A conversation with marriage expert Suzanne Venker

Continued from Page 1

Third, religion. This may seem less important these days, since religion has taken such a precipitous decline, but when kids come along, it still matters. Being the same religion is obviously ideal, but as long as the couple agrees on whose religion to follow, being of two different religions is fine. The real problem, in my opinion, is when one person is a believer and the other one isn't—because that philosophical framework colors so much of what we think and do.

Finally, in-laws. This is tricky territory and can be a big problem, especially if the couple doesn't agree on how often to spend time with the in-laws and especially on how to set boundaries. If the couple views their home as a fortress, where people who can cause division aren't allowed in, they're good to go. Most of the problems with in-laws arise when that is not the case.

In addition to the four items above, I believe a key ingredient of a successful marriage is your attitude, or mindset. Attitude is an undervalued attribute of marriage. How you think matters. If you're invested in marriage as an institution, for example, you're far more likely to do what it takes to make it work. The way you think also affects your approach to problems. When a problem arises, do you assume it's fixable and keep your focus on the problem itself? Or do you view it as insurmountable and make the problems personal by attacking the spouse rather



(Above) Make sure to schedule time for dates with your spouse—but also make sure you have time apart, with friends or alone. (Below) Author and relationship coach Suzanne Venker.



We're all human, and we're no good to anyone if we don't take care of ourselves.

Suzanne Venker

than the problem? Never underestimate the power of attitude. It can make or break your suc-

cess with anything, and it's no different The Epoch Times: We've been living

through challenging times. From what you've observed, how have marriages been impacted?

Ms. Venker: Unquestionably they've been strained due to spending so much time in close quarters with few opportunities to get out due to everything being closed. Plus with kids home on top of that. It's a lot.

I'm a big believer that being apart from one's spouse on a regular basis is important for perspective and even for sexual attraction. As Violet Crawley said on "Downton Abbey," "Marriage is a long business." Because of this, it's important for couples to have time alone without the other person. When you have no separation, the problems you encounter can feel far less surmountable than if you have time away from each other. Perspective is important.

The Epoch Times: How can couples nurture their marriage, particularly during times like this?

Ms. Venker: I wish I had an easy answer for this, but as long as COVID-19 is with us, I can only say that this too shall pass, so be careful not to come to mistaken conclusions about your marriage since they may be based on temporary circumstances.

Make sure you schedule plenty of alone time as well as time with your friends, and get out on "dates" with your spouse where the pressure of children and running a household aren't weighing on you. This can be as simple as taking a hike or getting a quick bite at whatever restaurants are open.

I would also encourage people to use this time to either escape with a novel or to take up a new hobby, or even a cause.

The Epoch Times: Women receive mixed messages these days about their roles in society and in their relationships. In what ways can a wife contribute to a "peaceful and passionate" marriage, as you put it in your book "How to Be a Wife?"

Ms. Venker: There are so many things women can do to improve or to even fix their marriages! As for the skills I teach, by far women's biggest hurdle is being mentally ready to hear the message since it's so countercultural. For instance, step 1 in "How to Be a Wife" is "Don't direct his traffic," where I essentially tell women to stop telling their husbands what to do. Nagging and complaining doesn't bring out the best in a man, and it won't produce the desired

A better approach is to (a) not say anything or (b) be soft and kind with your overtures. This requires empathy, which is hard for a generation who've been encouraged to be entitled, as though men owe women for centuries of oppression. Not all women will say this is how they think, but the way they talk to men suggests otherwise.

Week 48, 2020 THE EPOCH TIMES

Some of the other steps include: Master the art of respect; focus on what you do have, not on what you don't; and be

Vulnerability is also a key ingredient of a good marriage; but it is something many women, especially today, struggle with. Not only are they distrustful of men and marriage, they've been groomed to do everything themselves and to never "depend on a man"—not just financially but in any way. So the idea of showing gratitude, or asking for help, or admitting they're capable of being hurt is very scary for them. Yet these are the underpinnings of a strong



Never underestimate the power of attitude. It can make or break your success with anything, and it's no different with marriage.

Suzanne Venker

The Epoch Times: Women, in particular, tend to carry the responsibility of maintaining a peaceful and nurturing home for their families. What can women do to alleviate the impact of outside stressors like those we face today? **Ms. Venker:** Take care of themselves! Too many wives and mothers ignore their own wants and needs in favor of their family's. I'm all for making the requisite sacrifices on behalf of one's family, but not at the expense of your own needs. Sure, sometimes this will happen—for husbands and fathers, too. But it can't happen regularly or often without the bottom falling out. We're all human, and we're no good to anyone if we don't take care of ourselves.

The Epoch Times: Do you have any final thoughts or advice to offer readers seeking to maintain peaceful, happy homes during challenging times? **Ms. Venker:** To keep in mind that this pandemic will end and have some grace in the meantime. Be careful not to make rash judgments about your marriage based on a temporary problem. It's true that COVID-19 has highlighted for many couples problems they may have been avoiding in their normal, everyday lives; but this can also be a

turning point in causing people to focus

on what really matters. In short, per-

spective is sorely needed right now.

The underlying reality behind "platonic co-parenting" seems to be a bizarre

New Online 'Mating Sites' Skip the Soulmate

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

oomer parents are frustratded by their lack of grand-children. Meanwhile, millennials complain about the lack of romantic partners.

Never fear, technology has provided a solution! No longer must millennials date to find the love of their life, marry, and have children. Now they can shop online to find the perfect person to breed with before their biological clocks run out, while leaving the door open to find another romantic the two have not married. Oth-

what The Guardian labels the emergence of so-called mating sites online. This trend seems like a bold, pioneering move for a new technological era, but its underlying reality seems to be a bizarre twist on traditional arranged marriages, in which practical concerns prevail over romantic ones.

Highlighting several couples who have tried platonic co-parenting, The Guardian paints a picture of individuals in their 30s joining matchmaking services not for romantic dates, but to find quality dad or mom material for their future child. Jenica Anderson and Stephan DuVal are just one example. They connected on Modamily.com, a website that provides "a new way to family," and talked about whether each would make a good parent for their prospective child. Marriage and romantic fun weren't on the radar, Anderson said. "I really didn't want a own emotional baggage. While

it would convolute things." The two jumped right into the

fray, asking deep questions about parenting styles and past life experiences. They spent a weekend together, and by the end of it "they returned to their lives having found the person they wanted to parent with." Some platonic coparents use test tubes; Anderson and DuVal did it the old-fashioned way, conceiving and giving birth to their daughter within a year.

Iscratched my head as I read this

ation is downright messy. It seeks to give children a stable family, yet in birthing them out-of-wedlock into noncommittal relationships that are open to outside romantic liaisons, parents provide their offspring with increased likelihood of behavioral problems, lower academic performance, economic insecurity, and other issues. The parents, meanwhile, increase their romantic connection; I thought their heart is in the mature place

Anderson and DuVal did fall in love, but judging from the article, ers who found their parenting "Platonic co-parenting" is partner on Modamily.com have hooked up with the person they want to parent with, but are still open to finding someone else to be the love of their life.

> story. On the one hand, it's great that people want to have children and that they realize their biological clocks won't last forever. It's also good that they recognize that the person who makes a fabulous romantic partner might not always make the best parent. On the other hand, such a situ

children first and platonically coparenting them while looking for another romantic partner seems like a decidedly immature move.

of wanting to start a family, having

CHEWY/UNSPLASH

Let's look at the story of Anderson and DuVal again. They liked skipping the flirtation stage and jumping right into the deep questions. They looked at each other through the lens of "What kind of parent would this person be?" rather than, "What kind of sexual partner or soulmate would this oerson be?"

These are the very questions every person considering marriage should be asking. In a strange sense, these people are returning to the original aim of marriage—to live as partners raising the next generation, struggling together to survive in a difficult world. Yet because moderns have made marriage all about love and romance, these people are turning away from that motive and focusing on forming families, but without the sacred bonds of lifelong commitment.

What people forget is that once the sparks are done flying, marriage is more about who will do the dishes, change dirty diapers, spend long nights walking the floor with a colicky baby, or try to reason with a testy teenager. As J.R.R. Tolkien once noted in a letter to his son:

"It is notorious that in fact happy marriages are more common where the 'choosing' by the young persons is even more limited, by parental or family authority, as long as there is a social ethic of plain unromantic responsibility and conjugal fidelity. But even in countries where the romantic tradition has so far affected social arrangements as to make people believe that the choosing of a mate is solely the concern of the young, only the rarest good fortune brings together the man and woman who are really as it were 'destined' for one another, and capable of a very great and splendid love."

In essence, Tolkien seems to be saying that marriages founded upon practical concerns, such as family background and ideological compatibility, may not have the initial passionately romantic scenes à la Romeo and Juliet (whose love story, by the way, ended in tragedy), but they are more likely to make for a happy, lasting tion can be raised and launched into the world. Those who desire to start a family would be wise to pursue such a marriage, rather than sitting around waiting for a soulmate who may never come.

If Tolkien were to speak to the young couples in The Guardian article, he would likely say they're headed in the right direction, but wading in the weeds instead of walking the path. Marriage and family formation should put practicality first, worrying less about romance and more about the character and suitability of the intended spouse as a parent. If these individuals find a person whom they can see being a good father or mother for their child, then it's time to do something about it: get married first and then get started on raising that family.

Annie Holmquist is the editor of Intellectual Takeout. This article was originally published on Intellectual Takeout.

DEAR NEXT GENERATION:

Manners Matter

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

Today young people have an edge in understanding technology better than some of us grandpas, and they are good at teaching us what they know.

I am 88 years old now and know there are some things a person will not understand or think about if he or she has not lived through life experiences. These are a few of my thoughts

and findings from my life expe-

- 1. Respect other people's opinions even if you disagree with them. This especially includes your parents.
- 2. Don't judge other people ... that's God's job.
- 3. Always be grateful for what others do for you or give you. They do not owe you anything. To show you are thankful is an important quality of a Christian.
- 4. Be confident, not arrogant. A thin line separates them. It's a slippery slope.
- 5. Don't try to be someone else, they are taken. You are the best YOU. Feel proud and good about that.
- 6. Don't try to elevate yourself around others. If you are comfortable with yourself, are humble, compassionate, and a good listener to others, they will elevate you in their
- 7. Lastly, if you want to feel good, do good for others. For example, do something thoughtful, randomly, for someone without expecting something in return.

—Steve Osborn

I came of age in the 1940s and '50s, and etiquette was hammered into us by every adult, it seemed: parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, sometimes even neighbors. These are some of the rules we had to live by:

- Children are to be seen
- and not heard. • Sit straight with both feet
- on the floor. Always say please and
- thank you. Always ask permission
- with a "May I...?" At meals, always wait until your hostess picks up a utensil before beginning
- Never begin eating before

all things.

- everyone has been served. • "Ladies (and girls) first" in
- Gentlemen open and hold doors for women.
- Gentlemen walk between women and the street on a sidewalk (presumably to protect them from splashing vehicles).

There were many more. Such rules of civility and etiquette seem arcane these days in our brave new world of women's lib-

eration, but something has been lost in that movement. Rudeness and incivility abound, and oldfashioned deference to women is often met with hostility. Lost along with good manners has been polite speech, common courtesy, and respect for others. Without those, life itself becomes ruder and cruder, and anger becomes more common People become more self-centered and community begins to break down. Society as a whole also begins to break down and political conflict grows more widespread.

Without [good manners], life itself becomes ruder and cruder, and anger becomes more common.

The younger generations would do well to learn and practice good manners (even if they seem dated); respect everyone, especially women and seniors, until they prove they don't deserve your respect; do things in moderation and avoid extremes. Obey the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Live by the Boy Scout motto: "Be prepared," and the Boy Scout Law: [Be] "trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent." Be self-sufficient as much as possible, but accept proffered help graciously when you need it, and then do the same for others.

The great western novelist, Louis L'Amour, once wrote that a man's honor was everything, and if he lost it he would have nothing; he would no longer have friends, he could not borrow money, and he would be unable to find honest work. Honor is made up of all the things mentioned above—civility, manners, respect, kindness, moderation, but above all, honesty.

—James Mulholland

What advice would you like to give to the younger gener-

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

lennials aren't worth much, Mr.

A Discreet Act of Kindness Gets Noticed

18-year-old grocery worker helps an elderly man short on cash

DAKSHA DEVNANI

No matter how old you are, a kind gesture can help make a huge difference in someone's life. A humble teen from Kentucky is being praised for his heartwarming act of helping an elderly man who didn't have enough to pay for the groceries at the supermarket where the young man works.

Teo Jordan, a senior at Holmes High School, works at a Kroger in Covington, Kentucky, in the evenings after school, bagging gro-

Last month, as Jordan was diligently carrying out his task, he noticed a senior citizen asking the cashier at the store to put back some items as he didn't have enough money to pay for all of his groceries.

"His total came to \$133 and the old man only had \$100," Brian Mc-Carty, who was standing in the line at the store that day, wrote in a Facebook post.

However, just then, Jordan took out \$35 from his own pocket and went over to pay the cash difference. "He did it very discretely and

Teo Jordan with Brian McCarty.

old man," McCarty wrote. "I don't even think the old man realized the generous donation by this kid." didn't bring embarrassment to the

Jordan, who believes in helping people in need, told WLWT-TV: "I wanted to help the guy. I saw that he didn't have the money for all the groceries that he wanted."

Alluding to the touching gesture,

The 18-year-old has been working at the Kroger store to help his family and save money for a car. Jordan's mother, Stephanie Burton was very proud of her son's gesture. "I'm overwhelmed with joy. You try to instill in your kids right and wrong, but you don't know if they comprehend, so yes I'm very

proud," she said. McCartyhoped that more people could share his post of Jordan's good deed so that his family could realize what a good man they are

"For those that gripe that mil-

Jordan showed that they are doing amazing things and we might get through these times and be OK," McCarty wrote. He further added, "You are a

good soul. The world needs more people like you."

Since sharing the post, Jordan's gesture has gone viral amassing more than 7,000 reactions and some 10,000 shares. Many touched readers took to the comments section, calling him "awesome."

In an update, McCarty wrote that some kindhearted people have reached out and wanted to donate to a college fund for Jordan. "The school has set up a Venmo where he will get all of the donated college funds" when he enrolls in college in fall 2021, McCarty added.



Money is the number one source of marital conflict. It pays to be allies rather than adversaries



Norman Rockwell's illustration "Freedom From Want," appearing in the March 6, 1943, issue of The Saturday Evening Post (it was created in November 1942), has become emblematic of our Thanksgiving celebration. National Archives and Records Administration.



She was known as the "Mother of Thanksgiving" for having taken up the cause of making Thanksgiving a national holiday. Sarah Josepha Hale, 1831, by James Reid Lambdin. Richard's Free Library, Newport, New Hampshire.

Thanksgiving Day gratitude usually involves expressing our appreciation to some form of a higher power, even for nonbelievers.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

A Day of Light and Hope in Our Darkness THANKSGIVING 2020

JEFF MINICK

ost of us know some sort of barebones history about the origins of Thanksgiving, that three-day feast in 1621 at the Pilgrim colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It included some of the colony's Native American allies from the Wampanoag tribe and their chief, Massasoit. Taught among other survival skills how to plant corn by Englishspeaking Squanto (a member of the confederation of Wampanoag tribes), the Pilgrims wanted to celebrate both their survival and their successful harvest.

But what about the 19th-century writer and editor Sarah Josepha Hale? Ever hear of her in relation to Thanksgiving? Me neither.

A Woman of Accomplishment

and a Defender of Tradition In her own day, Sarah Hale (1788-1879) was quite the celebrity.

For one, Hale was a New England poet whose most famous work— "Mary Had a Little Lamb"—is still known and recited by American youngsters. She turned to writing and poetry as a means of income to support herself and her five children after her husband died in the ninth year of their marriage.

Hale's literary accomplishments led to her appointment as the editor



"The First Thanksgiving, of Godey's Lady's Book, a women's 1621," circa 1912 and periodical that she made into the circa 1915, by Jean Leon most popular magazine in the coun-Gerome Ferris. Private try. In addition to her editing skills Collection. Library of and business acumen, for 40 years Congress's Prints and Hale wrote columns as well. Photographs division.

She was a staunch abolitionist but extolled the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, and opposed women's vote. Though criticized as being too traditional in her views, Hale's position as editor and her writing made her, according to the online Encyclopedia, "perhaps the most widely known and most influential women of her time."

Hale also championed restoring or building various historical sites. Through her advocacy and her fundraising, for example, she helped preserve George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, and worked tirelessly soliciting money for the building of the monument that now stands at

But one more jewel belongs in the diadem of this remarkable woman.

The Mother of Thanksgiving

For years, Sarah Hale, through articles and scores of letters, pushed politicians to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. Though New Englanders had long celebrated the occasion—the dates varied from state to state—Thanksgiving did not resonate with the rest of the country.

In 1789, George Washington declared a day of national thanksgiving to honor the victory of the American Revolution and the passage of the Constitution, and John Adams and James Madison did likewise during their presidencies. But otherwise, American leaders showed little interest in this celebration until 1863.

It was in that year—when the country was engaged in a brutal civil war—that Hale, who for 36 years had pushed for a national day of giving thanks, wrote to President Lincoln about this idea and was finally rewarded with success. In his proclamation to the nation, Lincoln declared the last Thursday of November as "A National Day of Thanksgiving and Praise" on which Americans were to ask God to "commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife" and to "heal the

wounds of the nation."

As a result, Sarah Hale earned the nickname of the "Mother of Thanksgiving."

Traditions

Many Americans share certain traditions on Thanksgiving Day. Families gather together, and turkey and dressing, green bean casserole, and pumpkin pie are fixtures on the menu. Some watch televised football games or the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The ongoing pandemic has changed some of these activities, with governors in some states issuing edicts about how Thanksgiving may be celebrated, but for most Americans this holiday remains a celebration of family and food.

And most families practice their own special traditions. In a Reader's Digest article, "34 Most Meaningful Thanksgiving Holiday Traditions," Charlotte Hilton Anderson shares some holiday activities sent to her by her readers. Some play games on this day, one family camps out in the living room after the big meal and falls asleep watching television, and another features a "dinosaur hunt" for the young ones, hiding turkey bones around the house and hav-

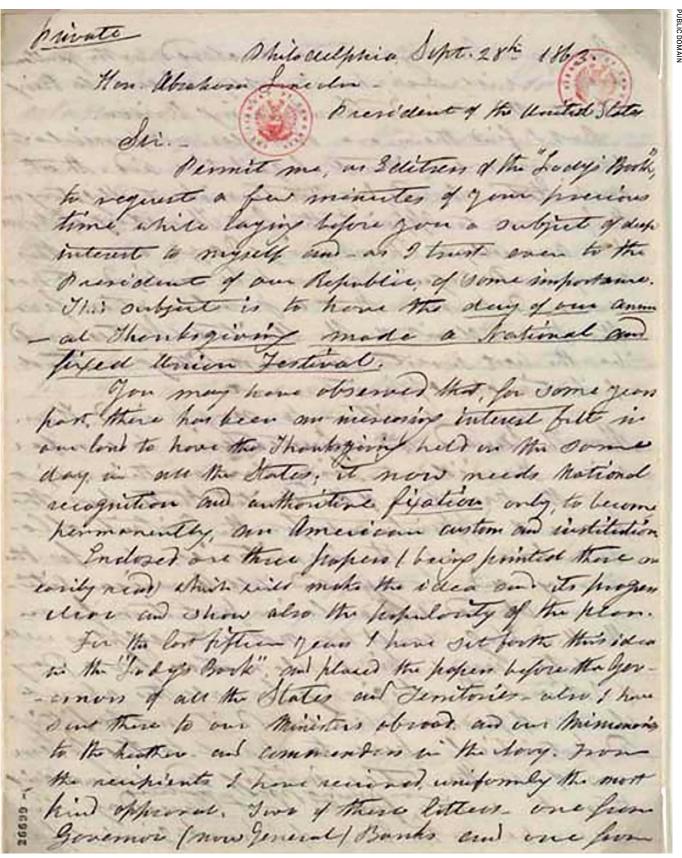
ing the kids track them down. In my household, no Thanksgiving meal would be complete without the "green salad," more formally called "Pacific Lime Mold" or "Lime Cottage Salad." This tart yet sweet con-



"Grace Before the Meal" (or "Mealtime Prayer"), 1885, by Fritz von Uhde. Old National



"The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth," 1914, by Jennie Augusta Brownscombe. Pilgrim Hall Museum,



September 1863 letter from editor Sarah Josepha Hale to President Abraham Lincoln discussing the need for a national Thanksgiving holiday. Library of Congress.

"Signing the Mayflower Compact 1620," 1899, by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris. **Seeds of Liberty: Remembering** the Mayflower Compact The year 2020 marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims in the New World. It's also the quadricentennial of what came to be called the Mayflower Compact

Aware that they had landed far north of their intended destination of Virginia and were therefore under the jurisdiction of no government, the Pilgrims feared that their new colony might disintegrate without government of some sort. Moreover, not all of those who arrived with them shared their religious beliefs, which they suspected might also lead to disharmony.

And so, while still aboard the Mayflower, the leaders of this group drafted and signed a short compact, a covenant establishing a way to "enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience."

These 41 men created an extraordinary document, an agreement in which the signers established their own government. Though the Pilgrims later became part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Mayflower Compact is the first written social contract in American history, the grandfather of our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. By taking matters into their own hands, and by committing themselves, their families, and their descendants to liberty guided by law, they paved the way for American republicanism.

When we're sitting down to eat our Thanksgiving Day dinner, let's pause to give thanks to these early settlers for their wisdom and their vision.

coction livens up the flavor of turkey and dressing, and adds color to the table. Sparkling cider is another staple for this feast.

We also gather before the meal, hold hands, say grace, and then go around the circle with each person sharing something they are grateful for. Some of the little ones are too shy to speak, but every year their older brothers and sisters shed light on their lives and personalities by giving thanks in this way, allowing me to get to know them better.

Gratitude

Sometimes the trials of this long and sometimes dark year we have endured—COVID-19 with its attendant masks, social distancing, and closures, the riots and fires in many of our major cities, a bitter election that has only deepened the already ugly divide among the American people—make gratitude seem in as short supply as some commodities in our grocery stores during the worst of the pandemic. These days, being grateful often requires a summoning of the will, if we even remember to appreciate the good people and things in our lives.

Moreover, Thanksgiving Day gratitude usually involves expressing our appreciation to some form of a higher power, even for nonbelievers. We can offer a "thank you" to a person, but the atheist who spuriously says the Republican. If he becomes presi-"I'm grateful for my children" or "I'm dent, Joe Biden has vowed to bring ral to most Americans as breathing.

grateful for America" is inexact in Americans together again. Given his his language. Exactly who or what does he intend as the recipient of that gratitude?

But to whatever god we may pray, Kamala Harris who surround him, or whatever our circumstances, we can find in the practice of gratitude not only a remembrance of the blessings in our lives but also a source of consolation, hope, and strength. Whether for large gifts like the birth of a child or a successfully treated cancer, or the small everyday pleasures of a cup of coffee and a biscotti, expressing our appreciation, even just to ourselves, frequently lifts our spirits and keeps us moving forward.

To have set an entire day aside just to express this thanks makes Thanksgiving one of the best of holidays.

To Heal the Wounds of the Nation Perhaps, as in that dark time of the Civil War, Lincoln's hopes for that

in the Democrat party, the Trump-

ists versus the Never-Trumpers in

vided as America was then.

On this feast day, let's take a few moments to appreciate the blessings bestowed on us. We flip a switch, first official Thanksgiving should be and a room lights up. We turn on a our hope as well for a country that tap, and hot water cascades from the is almost as terribly and bitterly dispigot. We pull a small device from our pocket and check out the latest Thanksgiving will occur this year news, laugh at a joke Aunt Rosemary at a time when Democrats and sent us, and send a message via so-Republicans are at one another's cial media to our cousin in France. throats, and when both parties show We drive to Grandma's house for our acrimony toward their own memmeal in 30 minutes, a journey that bers—the radical left versus liberals would have taken half a day or more

just a century earlier.

angry rhetoric, the ongoing inves-

tigation into his corruption vis-à-

vis his son Hunter, the radicals like

and the anger of tens of millions of

Americans who believe he stole this

election, the odds of Joe Biden unify-

No—if we are to coexist as a people,

we mustn't depend on politicians

to reunite us. Instead, individuals

must bridge that chasm: America's

sons and daughters who can think

with their hearts, who can reach

out to friends and family members

who hold opposing viewpoints, and

who are grateful to be citizens of the

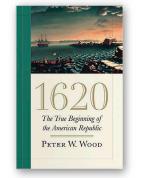
United States.

Let's Make This

Thanksgiving Special

ing the American people are slim.

In addition, we still possess the rights and liberties that are as natu-



A rebuttal of the radical revisionist history of our past called "The 1619 Project" and published by The New York Times.

Some of those liberties are under attack, but when in our history was this not the case? Like our ancestors, we must defend and fight for those rights; otherwise they will vanish. But on Thanksgiving, we can pause to appreciate and treasure them.

Finally, we can use Thanksgiving Day as a teaching moment for our children. Near the end of "1620: A Critical Response to the 1619 Project," a rebuttal of the radical revisionist history of our past published by The New York Times, professor and author Peter W. Wood writes: "A citizen should grow up knowing we are a free people under the rule of law. A citizen should know that it is not some happy accident but the result of an immense effort over many generations. It was the work of courageous men and women who pursued principle even when

the situation seemed hopeless." Let's bear those thoughts in mind in the next few weeks and hope we possess the same valor and virtues of our predecessors.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

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.

Tackling Our Failures in Education

JEFF MINICK

ikes! Yikes, yikes, yikes! And yikes again! While I read his online article "K-12: The Life and Death of the Mind," Bruce Price pointed me to a video titled "Americans testing their knowledge." For 25 minutes, we watch as young people are baffled by questions such as: "If you're driving 70 miles an hour, how long will it take you to go 70 miles?" "Can you name the seven continents?" "What year was America founded?" and "Which is heavier, a pound of rocks or a pound of feathers?" Others are asked to solve simple multiplication problems and haven't a clue as to how to do so.

While the ignorance of these young men and women is appalling, we shouldn't blame them. They seem likable and intelligent, but they are a product of what we might at this point euphemistically call our "education system."

That it is possible to spend 13 years in a classroom and graduate so horribly uneducated should shock all of us. Our schools have cheated these students. They have wasted years of their lives sitting at a desk and closing out their high school years unable to identify in which war was fought the Battle of Gettysburg or which planet is closest to Earth.

So how can we change direction and offer students a real education?

The Duty of the Parent

First, we must stop hoping for some enormous turnabout in our public schools, at least for the present. Old ideas about education—memorization, for instance, of basic math facts and dates from history, or learning how to write essays—have long ago gone out the window. Parents relying on a school as a guarantee their children are receiving a quality or even an adequate education may Development.

be sorely disappointed

Parents who have enrolled their children in charter schools or private academies must also keep a watchful eye over what their child is learning. When sixth grade rolls around and Johnny still can't recite his multiplication tables, something is amiss.

In short, the final responsibility for a child's education belongs to the parents. With more and more evidence of failing schools—writers such as Richard Mitchell, E.D. Hirsch, and John Taylor Gatto were addressing this problem more than 25 years ago—parents must stand in the gap and oversee their children's learning.

Whatever your circumstances, here are some practical tips to help your child learn in the home.

First, take the Mama Carson approach to education. When she became aware of her son Ben's poor academic performance, she put him and his brother on a daily reading schedule, limiting their hours in front of a television and their outdoor playtime. She also had her sons write book reports on their reading, delivered not to a teacher at school but to her.

As Candace Owens tells us in "Blackout: How Black America Can Make Its Second Escape From the Democrat Plantation," Ben's mother was born into extreme poverty, married at age 13, had only a third-grade education, and often suffered from depression while single-handedly raising her two sons.

And Ben? Ben Carson graduated third in his class in high school, earned an undergraduate degree from Yale, attended medical school at the University of Michigan, and became a gifted pediatric neurosurgeon. Today he is our nation's Secretary of Housing and Urban

Carson, Owens reports that he believed his mother's refusal to accept excuses for poor performance was what led to his success. When he or his brother came

up with such excuses, she always said, "Do you have a brain?" She meant her sons should be able to think their way out of any problem and take full responsibility

In her interview with Ben

Like Mama Carson, parents need to stress academic learning in the home. We often expect too little of our children in this area, with the result that many of them come nowhere near their capability for learning. Too much screen time and social media account for some of this deficiency, but so too does an overabundance of extracurricular activities. Piano lessons, dance, and soccer may fill up 13-year-old Mary's afternoons, but what are Mom and Dad doing to fill up her mind?

With more and more evidence of failing schools, parents must stand in the gap and oversee their children's learning.

Two Great Tools

Next, consider purchasing the Core Knowledge Series that begins with "What Your Preschooler Needs to Know," an eight-volume set that runs through the sixth grade. Here you'll find everything from history and biography to science, from fairy tales and nursery rhymes to poems and folk tales for more advanced students.



In public schools, older methods of learning, such as memorization, have

this series, also created the Core Knowledge Foundation—not to be confused with Common Core—which offers all sorts of curricula and programs, many of them free of charge. Hirsch's Core Knowledge concept offers the perfect antidote to the lack of knowledge displayed in "Americans testing their knowledge." Having understood that a shared culture is one of the bonds of a well-ordered society, Hirsch gives parents and teachers a core curriculum of the basics all Americans should know. Mother and daughter team Jes-

sie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer's "The Well-Trained Mind" is another excellent resource. Covering K-12, the book contains hundreds of resources, teaching tips on subjects as diverse as biology to logic, and lots of encouragement from these two veteran teachers.

Clubs and Friends

4-H clubs offer all sorts of programs for students, ranging from agriculture to computers and electronics. Though once associated with rural communities, 4-H can now be found in towns and cities across the nation. Consider checking out this amazing resource. Several families I've known highly praise 4-H for the many gifts it has given to their

Finally, if your children's school doesn't offer much in the way of clubs devoted to academics and learning, consider starting one yourself. If Jeremy shows an inter-follow his blog.

E.D. Hirsch, Jr. who put together est in computer programming, get him together once a week with like-minded friends and see if some adult with more expertise than you possess would mentor the group. If Nora loves poetry and plays, assemble some of her friends, serve up some refreshments, and help guide them through "Twelfth Night" or the work of Christina Rossetti.

What If?

Of Ben Carson's triumph over obstacles, Owens writes: "In considering Carson's story, I can't help but wonder, what if? What if the black community as a whole made the decision to let go of every excuse that we perceive to be holding us back? What if we taught ourselves to see only opportunity rather than opposition?"

Those words are true for all of us. What would all of America look like if we put aside excuses, quit relying so heavily on a failed system of education, and gave our children not only the knowledge they deserve, but also the wisdom to see that hard work and determination will put them in charge of their future?

Now these are some life-long virtues worth passing along to

Jeff Minick has four children and

a growing platoon of grandchil-

dren. 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

WHY SHOULD YOU BE

GRATEFUL

OF THE EARTH?

IT CAN REALLY MAKE YOUR DAY

FOR THE

ROTATION

FOR KIDS ONLY THE EPOCH TIMES

A Thanksgiving Poem

by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) The sun hath shed its kindly light Our harvesting is gladly o'er Our fields have felt no killing blight, Our bins are filled with goodly store.

From pestilence, fire, flood, and sword We have been spared by thy decree, And now with humble hearts, O Lord, We come to pay our thanks to thee.

We feel that had our merits been The measure of thy gifts to us, We erring children, born of sin, Might not now be rejoicing thus.

No deed of our hath brought us grace; When thou were nigh our sight was dull, We hid in trembling from thy face. But thou, O God, wert merciful.

Thy mighty hand o'er all the land Hath still been open to bestow Those blessings which our wants demand From heaven, whence all blessings flow.

Thou hast, with ever watchful eye, Looked down on us with holy care, And from thy storehouse in the sky Hast scattered plenty everywhere.

Then lift we up our songs of praise To thee, O Father, good and kind; To thee we consecrate our days: Be thine the temple of each mind.

It is right to be

With incense sweet our thanks ascend: Before thy works our powers pall; Though we should strive years without end, We could not thank thee for them all.

contented with what

we have, but never

with what we are.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH (1765-1832),

SCOTTISH JURIST AND POLITICIAN





MADE OFFICIAL

n Nov. 26, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt

signed a bill establishing the fourth Thursday in November to be Thanksgiving Day. Of course, the holiday had been celebrated for years before that—dating back to the original colonists of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. In 1777, the Continental Congress declared a national Thanksgiving after the Revolutionary War battle at Saratoga. George Washington proclaimed Thanksgiving a holiday in 1789. It was Abraham Lincoln who later decreed Thanksgiving should fall on the last Thursday of November.

In subsequent years, the exact November Thursday to celebrate varied until FDR made it official in 1941. Thank goodness for that

By Aidan Danza, age 14

WATERFOWL IDENTIFICATION

LZF/SHUTTERSTOCK

DABBLERS

t's November, and you know what that means!

world, we will be seeing large numbers of ducks at our local lakes and ponds, be it in the middle of a city park or out in the wilderness.

No, not turkey! In the bird

MALLARD Mallards are the most common duck

found, anywhere, at any time of the year. Males are unmistakable, they have a bright-green head and black bottom; while females are beige and brown, with an orange-and-black bill. The females are a bit more difficult to identify sometimes, as most other female ducks are brown, but the

mallard is usually comparatively larger. Mallards "dabble" for food, which means they will tip their heads and necks into the water while sticking their rumps straight up. If you see a duck dive, you know it is not a mallard!

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK

American black ducks are very similar to mallards, except they are mottled black with brown feather edges, as you can see in the photo. Like mallards, they dabble for food and they share the same body plan as the

mallard: large, muscular, sometimes a bit brawny. All other black-looking ducks dive for food, so this is an important clue for identification. They often hang out in a mallard flock, alone, or in a flock of their own, so keep

in the tarmer's field, geese, brant included, are the cows.

BRANT WOOD DUCK Brant are actually geese. They are

These are the most beautiful ducks ever to grace North America. Their dark dabblers, like the black duck, but they have light bellies, brown backs. appearance is unmistakable, no and long navy-blue necks with a white other male duck has so many colors! fleck near the head, they're also much Females are a soft gray-brown, with a larger than the black duck. You may prominent shining blue wing patch, like see them grazing in fields with their a sapphire ring. They are quite difficult to find, living many in secluded, short, stubby bills meant for that wooded swamps, but every once in a purpose. Note also their large, long, deep-chested body plan. Whereas while they will show up in all sorts of black ducks are like the small sheep



10 Classics That Should Be on Every Child's Bookshelf **BARBARA DANZA** 'The Chronicles of Narnia' Velveteen Rabbit" will touch by C. S. Lewis the heart of any reader, young

he best children's books are those that stand the test of time, and that can be enjoyed by adults as well as children. As C.S. Lewis famously said, "A children's story that can only be enjoyed by children is not a good children's story in the slightest."

Stocking a child's bookshelf with such classic stories is a **Aesop's Fables** priceless gift and one that can enhance the lives of the entire family. Here are 10 classics that every child, young and old, can enjoy.

'The Secret Garden' by **Frances Hodgson Burnett**

First published in 1911, this lovely story tells the tale of young, forlorn Mary and what becomes of her when she is sent to live with her lonely uncle in his manor on the moor. The audio version narrated by Susie Berneis is quite nice as well.

'The Trumpet of the Swan' by E.B. White

It's hard not to smile while reading E.B. White's delightful tale of Louis the trumpeter swan, his friendship with a young boy, and his way to serenade the swan he loves. Centering on themes of and peppered with wholesome humor throughout with prose only White could deliver so beautifully, it's a must-have.

of these stories is excellent.

enjoy over and over.

Johanna Spyri's classic trans-

of Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddleduck, Tom Kitten, and so resourcefulness in finding a generation should expericourage, freedom, and love, her humorous and mischie-

'The Velveteen Rabbit' by Margery Williams Speaking of rabbits, "The ary tradition.

This collection of seven enchanting books should be at the very top of your shopping list for the young people in your life. These are the stories you enjoy over and over again. The audiobookversion, narrated by actors including Derek Jacobi, Lynn Redgrave, and Patrick Stewart,

The ultimate in classics, Aesop's Fables still delivers relevant and familiar moral lessons after more than 2,000 years. A collection of these traditional tales is great to

'Heidi' by Johanna Spyri

ports the reader to the crisp air of the Swiss Alps. The endearing tale of a young orphan, them. A bit heavy in battle Heidi, and the beauty she content and a more chalbrings to the lives of all who lenging read than the aforeknow her, is delightful and appropriate for all ages in the ries are probably better for original, unabridged format.

The Tales of Beatrix Potter Beatrix Potter's familiar tales

many others are darling and pleasing stories that every ence. Potter's love of nature shines through every page as vous characters come to life.

or old. It's full of love and a unique spiritual quality that the reader doesn't soon forget. It is a quintessential readaloud storybook. 'The Wind in the Willows'

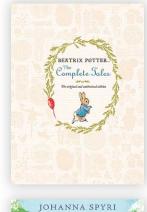
by Kenneth Grahame The timeless adventures of Mole, Water Rat, Badger, and Toad are deeply imaginative and entertaining for both children and adults. It's a book the whole family

J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy and 'The Hobbit'

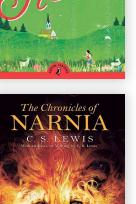
These Tolkien classics are epic storytelling beyond compare, and no list of classic children's literature would be complete without mentioned books, these stoan older age group, but when the kids are ready, dive in.

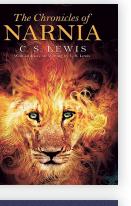
Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales

No children's library would be complete without selections from the master of fairy tales, Hans Christian Andersen. Whether gathered as a compilation or enjoyed in separate books, familiar stories such as "The Snow Queen," "The Ugly Duckling," and "The Nightingale" are a fundamental part of our liter-

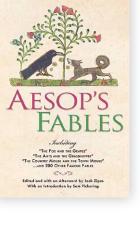






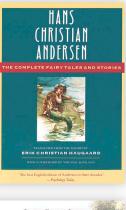








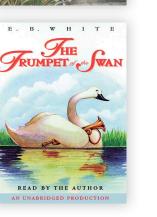






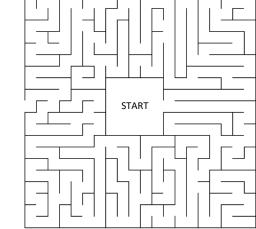












USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, - AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: $6 + (7 \times 3) + 1 = 28$ and $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$



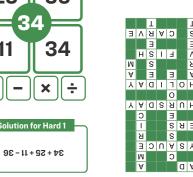
Solution For Easy 1

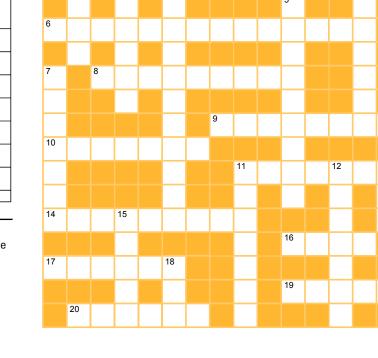
l-01+9×9

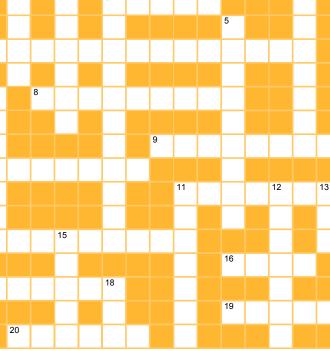


18+4+4-2









2 Supper (6) **4** "God Bless _____" (7)

1 American treat! (4)

3 Thanksgiving dinner dish? (11)

5 Baking dish (9) **7** Early American settler (7)

11 Autumn, typically (7) **12** A sweet finish (7)

13 Sweet potato (3)

15 Thanksgiving dinner (5) 18 Turkey alternative (3)



10 Turkey innards (7)

What we have lots of on

Thanksgiving always falls **19** Thanksgiving honor (5) on this day (8)

20 Fall (6)

17 One of the Three Sisters (6)

11 Thanksgiving is just one (7)

14 One of the pilgrim's ships (9)

16 Unusual Thanksgiving dish? (4)

What Our Readers Say (#29)

Now I truly feel as if I can breathe while reading the news as presented by The Epoch Times - THANK YOU ... Thank you for your years in the trenches and for rising to be a beacon in this dark world. Shine on, Epoch Times, shine on! **



The Epoch Times has made it SAFE to read the news again! As a former English teacher, I am educated in knowing when writing and verbal communication posing as "news" crosses into the sector of "opinion" - a line which has become obliterated in mainstream media and standard "news outlets" these days. Mainly I believe this is due to the 24/7 news cycle, but that's a soapbox for anther day. Most American news sources have become so biased in their reporting that they truly believe their bias and opinion is reporting the truth - and even though it may be true in their eyes, both liberal and conservative sides are often far from the full truth. The Epoch Times is a true breath of fresh air, being forthright in its bias: FOR Democracy and AGAINST Communism. With that bias clearly communicated, ET presents the news of our nation and world in prose which delivers the facts concisely and without the tendency or need to emote or opine. The news "air" is so toxic everywhere else I turn that I had all but stopped reading the news and instead was relying on those around me to keep me abreast of critical and timely news events. Now I truly feel as if I can breathe while reading the news as presented by The Epoch Times - THANK YOU. Thank you for providing a safe place for me to exercise my civic responsibility of gathering data/news and being informed, while at the same time

allowing me to think for myself.

Thank you for your years in the

trenches and for rising to be a

beacon in this dark world. Shine on,

KAREN LEIGH FULLER

Epoch Times, shine on!



The Epoch Times is the best source I know for honorable, fair and truthful news reporting in the traditions of the network news giants of the 20th century!

JAMES G NEEDHAM



They make reading the paper fun again. A source you can trust. Their unbiased reports...let you decide.

JIM LEDSOME



Objectively informative, balanced news.

CHARLES BROWN JOHNSON



Finally!!! Years ago I swore off the deceptive mainstream media and avoided USA Today while traveling like it was the plague (too soon?), local newspapers, and, God forbid, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and rest of their ilk. A great newspaper without an agenda outside of telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth (Judge Judy would be proud). Colorful pictures, great articles and timely "complete" news. My wife and I both love it and encourage all of our neighbors and friends who come over to our house to enjoy! Great job and keep up the great work Epoch Times!

BOBBY GOUGLER



Journalism - at least the real news kind - is alive and well at Epoch!

PHIL BARNETT

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